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45 Assistant Professors posts to be filled at MNJ Cancer Hospital

Hyderabad: The Telangana State Medical and Health Services Recruitment Board (TS MHSRB) has invited applications from doctors to fill up 45 posts of Assistant Professors for various specialties in State-run Mehdi Nawaj Jung Institute of Oncology and Regional Cancer Centre (MNJ), Red Hills.

Eligible senior doctors can access online applications from July 12 and the last date for submitting online application is 5 pm on July 19. Applications submitted in online mode only will be accepted.

MediBuddy's internal data indicates rise in Dengue tests in Hyd

Hyderabad: Analyzing its internal data in the last few weeks, digital healthcare platform MediBuddy indicated a rising trend in dengue test requests, particularly in Bengaluru and Hyderabad, raising concerns about the spread of the mosquito-borne disease during the monsoon season.

Examining recent data from the user base, MediBuddy found that out of all dengue tests conducted across major Indian cities, a staggering 71 per cent requests originated from Bengaluru alone, while Hyderabad accounted for 14 per cent. Other cities including Kolkata, Mumbai, Noida, Thane, Nagpur, and Delhi hovered between 4 per cent and 2 per cent.

PM Modi holds discussion with economists, NITI Aayog officials in run-up to Budget



GNS News Agency, July 10

New Delhi: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday held a meeting with senior NITI Aayog officials and leading economists as part of the wider consultations in the run-up to the Union Budget 2024-25. The Modi 3.0 government will present its first full budget on July 23.

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman along with Planning Minister Rao Inderjit Singh, Chief Economic Advisor V Anantha Nageswaran, Economist Surjit Bhalla, Agricultural Economist Ashok Gulati and veteran banker K V Kamath were also present at the meeting. This will be the first major economic document of the Modi 3.0 government, which is expected to outline a road map for making India a developed nation by 2047. FM Sitharaman has already held widespread discussions including captains of Indian industry, state finance ministers and economists to elicit their views for the forthcoming Budget.

Cabinet panel on Rythu Bharosa meets farmers in Utnoor, says will consider their feedback



GNS News Agency, July 10

A Rythu Bharosa conference was organized in Utnoor of Adilabad district on Thursday under the auspices of the ministerial sub-committee to collect feedback on the procedures of the Rythu Bharosa scheme. Deputy CM Bhatti Vikramarka stated that Rythu Bharosa meetings are being held to gather everyone's views and that the government's decision will be based on the opinions of the farmers. During the workshop, Minister Tummala Nageswara Rao announced plans to construct the Pranahita-Chevella project at Thammidihatti and stated that the government is considering designing schemes for small farmers. Minister Ponguleti Srinivas Reddy emphasized the importance of discussing with the people and implementing the schemes, with the opinions collected being discussed in the assembly before a final decision is made.

NEET-UG 2024: Supreme Court to hear petitions on July 18

GNS News Agency, July 10

New Delhi: The Supreme Court on Thursday adjourned till July 18 the hearing of a clutch of petitions seeking cancellation, re-test and probe into alleged malpractices in the conduct of NEET-UG 2024 as the responses of the Centre and the National Testing Agency (NTA) were yet to be received by some parties.

Amid the festering row over the all-India examination, the top court noted that separate affidavits filed on Wednesday by the Centre and the NTA, which conducts the test, have not been received by counsel for some of the petitioners. "The further hearing shall be on Thursday (July 18)," a Bench headed by Chief Justice DY Chandrachud said. During the brief hearing, counsel for the petitioners sought listing of the pleas on July 15 but Mehta said he would be unavailable that day. The Bench said it has received a status report from the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) on the progress made in the probe into alleged irregularities in the conduct of NEET-UG 2024. In an additional affidavit filed in the apex court on Wednesday, the Centre said data analytics of the results of NEET-UG 2024 was conducted by IIT Madras which found there was neither any indication of "mass malpractice" nor a localised set of candidates benefiting from it and scoring abnormally high marks.

After having presented an interim budget ahead of the Lok Sabha polls, the Finance Minister will now present the full budget for 2024-25 that ensures the economy continues on the high growth trajectory and creates more jobs during the third term of the Modi government. Sitharaman is expected to increase the exemption limit for income tax to give some relief to the middle class. This would place more disposable income in the hands of consumers and lead to an increase in demand to fuel economic growth. Given the low fiscal deficit, the hefty Rs 2.11 lakh crore dividend from the RBI and the buoyancy in taxes, the Finance Minister has a lot of headroom for pushing ahead with policies aimed at accelerating growth and implementing social welfare schemes aimed at uplifting the poor. Prime Minister Modi has already declared that "the next 5 years will be a decisive fight against poverty."

FM Sitharaman will be presenting the budget at a time when the Indian economy has clocked a robust 8.2 per cent growth in 2023-24, which is the fastest among the world's major economies, and inflation is coming down to below 5 per cent. The RBI has stated that the economy is headed to an over 8 per cent growth trajectory. The fiscal deficit has also been reduced from more than 9 per cent of GDP in 2020-21 to the targeted level of 5.1 per cent for 2024-25. This has strengthened the macroeconomic fundamentals of the economy. S&P Global Rating raised India's sovereign rating outlook to 'positive' from 'stable', citing the country's improving finances and strong economic growth.

Farmers to resume agitation on legal guarantee to MSP, loan waiver

GNS News Agency, July 10

New Delhi: Farmers' body SKM on Thursday announced it will resume its agitation over its pending demands, including a legal guarantee to MSP and loan waiver, and submit a memorandum to the Prime Minister and the leader of opposition in the Lok Sabha.

The Samyukt Kisan Morcha (SKM), which led the 2020-21 farmers' protest, made the announcement a day after its general



body met. "The general body has decided to resume the agitation demanding implementation of the agreement, dated December 9, 2021, that the

Need to find more solutions amongst ourselves, EAM Jaishankar tells Bay of Bengal nations

GNS News Agency, July 10

New Delhi: Asserting that longstanding goals such as capacity building and economic cooperation have acquired a new urgency, External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar on Thursday called for deepening and broadening of activities between the Bay of Bengal countries. "Global and regional developments also make it imperative that we find more solutions amongst ourselves," he said in his opening remarks at the two-day 2nd BIMSTEC Foreign Ministers' Retreat which began in New Delhi. "For India, BIMSTEC (Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation) represents the interaction of the 'Neighbourhood First' outlook, the 'Act East' policy and the SAGAR vision. Each of these endeavours is being pursued with a specific focus on the Bay of Bengal by the collaborative potential that has long remained under-realised. Our challenge is to change that for the better and to do so rapidly," he stated. The EAM is hosting his counterparts for the significant meet which brings together seven countries of South and South East Asia for multifaceted cooperation. "The Retreat will present an opportunity for the Foreign Ministers of the BIMSTEC countries to discuss, in an informal setting, avenues to broaden and deepen cooperation across various sectors including in the fields of security, connectivity, trade and investment, people to people contacts etc, in the Bay of Bengal region and littoral," the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said in a statement. The first edition of the BIMSTEC Foreign Ministers' Retreat was held in Bangkok in July 2023 as India continues to reiterate its commitment to promote connectivity and linkages in the shared Bay of Bengal region. Bangladesh Foreign Minister Hasan Mahmud, Thailand Foreign Minister Maris Sangiampongsa (current BIMSTEC chair), Bhutan Foreign Minister D.N. Dhunghyel, Nepal Foreign Secretary Sewa Lamsal and Myanmar's Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister U Than Swe and State Minister of Foreign Affairs of Sri Lanka Tharaka Balasuriya are attending the meeting which is expected to bolster regional cooperation. Last month, as he congratulated Prime Minister Narendra Modi on the BJP-led NDA's third consecutive term, Thailand Prime Minister Srettha

GNS News Agency, July 10

Vienna: Indian companies are keen to explore investment opportunities in Austria across areas such as Research and Development, artificial intelligence (AI) and software in sustainability areas for addressing the European market, industry experts as Prime Minister Narendra Modi concluded his historic visit to the country. Speaking at the India-Austria Business Forum in Vienna, organised by the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) with Austrian Federal Economic Chamber and Federation of Austrian Industries in conjunction with Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Austria, Martin Kocher,

Minister of Labour and Economy, Austria stressed that we value the Indian startup ecosystem as one of the most vibrant in the



world. He added that there are cooperation opportunities in renewable energy, smart cities, audio-visual and films, tourism and other sectors. Sanjiv Puri, President, CII, said we must encourage two-way cooperation in sustainable agriculture, water treatment and food processing."

In critical areas in sustainability cooperation of circularity, adaptation to weather disruptions and biodiversity, Austrian technology partnerships can help India in these areas through AI, advanced sensors and other new tech instruments," said Puri. Talking about India-

Austria trade relations, R. K. Singh, Secretary, Department for Promotion of Investments and Internal Trade, Ministry of Commerce and Industry said that the two-way trade between India and Austria is worth about \$2 billion which is relatively well balanced."

KTR asks for mega powerloom cluster in Sircilla



With the BJP-led government at the Centre, he asked Sanjay to convince Prime Minister Narendra Modi and take responsibility for this project.

GNS News Agency, July 10

Hyderabad: BRS working president and Sircilla MLA KT Rama Rao urged Union Minister of State for Home Bandi Sanjay to work towards setting up a mega powerloom cluster in Sircilla. With the BJP-led government at the Centre, he asked Sanjay to convince Prime Minister Narendra Modi and take responsibility for this project. "The BJP has been in power at the Centre for past ten years, and you were elected as the MP for this region for second consecutive term. Yet, we have been disappointed repeatedly," he remarked.

The BRS working president shot a missive to Bandi Sanjay said his decade-long efforts to bring the cluster to Sircilla, including multiple meetings with union Ministers like Smriti Irani and Arun Jaitley, which yielded no results. He reminded despite such requests to support earlier, the Karimnagar MP did not respond. "I would like to remind you that as the union Minister, you have a great opportunity to alleviate the sufferings of weavers from Sircilla and serve them," he added. Rama Rao highlighted the dire situation of handloom workers in Sircilla, exacerbated by the Congress government's neglect of welfare schemes for weavers. He emphasised the urgent need for support from the Centre, pointing out the skilled labour and resources available in the region. "This is a critical time to support Sircilla's handloom workers. Establishing a mega power loom cluster as part of the new Union Budget, could alleviate their problems and reduce suicides by providing ample work," he stated. He urged Sanjay to use his position to secure this project in the upcoming Union Budget, stressing the benefits it would bring to the weavers community. He opined that such an initiative could end the weavers' suicides in the region forever as they would have ample work. He suggested that Sanjay take the initiative and meet Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman ahead of the budget presentation and explain the importance of establishing the mega power loom cluster in Sircilla by making necessary budgetary allocations. The former minister criticised the lack of support from the Centre over the past decade and appealed to Sanjay to advocate for Sircilla's development. He reminded that the MPs from BJP-ruled States were getting adequate funds and projects allocated in their favour, and emphasised the need for the BJP MPs from Telangana to make similar efforts for development of the State. "The people of Telangana believed in your promises of development. It's time to fulfill that trust," he concluded.



Thavisin said that he is already looking forward to the Indian leader's visit to the country in September this year for the BIMSTEC Summit. "While Prime Minister Modi will be visiting Thailand in September this year to attend the BIMSTEC Summit; on my part, I look forward to paying an official visit to India at the earliest opportunity to realise the full potential of our relations," said Thavisin.

CM Revanth honours Padma Shri awardees with Rs 25L cheques

GNS News Agency, July 10 Hyderabad: Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy on Wednesday presented a cheque of Rs 25 lakh each to five Padma Shri awardees at the Secretariat. Gaddam... Hyderabad: Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy on Wednesday presented a cheque of Rs 25 lakh each to five Padma Shri awardees at the Secretariat. Gaddam Sammayya, Dasari Kondappa, Velu Anandachari, Kurella Vithalacharya, and Ketavath Somlal were presented with cheques worth Rs 25 lakhs each by Revanth Reddy.

Indian Chronicle

English Daily

SC ensures equality

The Supreme Court on Wednesday affirmed that Muslim women are entitled to maintenance under Section 125 of the Code of Criminal Procedure (CrPC). Justices BV Nagarathna and Augustine George Masih underscored the principle that maintenance is not a form of charity but a fundamental right of all married women, irrespective of their religion. The ruling comes in response to an appeal by Mohd Abdul Samad, who challenged the Telangana High Court's decision to uphold a family court's maintenance order. Samad argued that a divorced Muslim woman should seek maintenance solely under the Muslim Women (Protection of Rights on Divorce) Act, 1986. However, the SC dismissed his appeal, asserting that Section 125 is a secular provision applicable to all women.

This verdict is reminiscent of the historic Shah Bano case, where the apex court ruled in favour of a divorced Muslim woman's right to maintenance under Section 125. Despite the subsequent enactment of the 1986 Act, which initially sought to limit this right, the court's recent decision reinforces the enduring applicability of Section 125. The evolution of the Act and subsequent judicial precedents have progressively expanded the maintenance rights of divorced Muslim women. The 2001 Danial Latifi case upheld the Act but extended maintenance rights beyond the iddat period until remarriage. The latest ruling aligns with these developments, ensuring that Muslim women are not deprived of their entitlements. By affirming that maintenance is a right for all married women, the court has taken a significant step towards gender justice and equality in India. This ruling not only upholds constitutional principles but also strengthens the social and economic security of Muslim women, setting a precedent for future cases.

Hindenburg's attack on Adani Group has Chinese links, claims senior lawyer

GNS News Agency, July 10

New Delhi: In a sensational claim, senior lawyer Mahesh Jethmalani has alleged that a businessman with Chinese links had commissioned the report by short-seller Hindenburg Research which led to shares of Adani Group companies taking a hit. In a lengthy post on X, Jethmalani claimed that Mark Kingdon, the American businessman behind Kingdon Capital Management LLC, had hired Hindenburg to prepare a report on the Adani Group.

"Here's a huge smoking gun in the sordid episode of the short sale of Adani shares by Hindenburg," he posted on X. "For those who want to learn about accomplished #Chinese spy #AnlaCheng who along with her husband #MarkKingdon hired #Hindenburg for a research report on #Adani, engaged the services of Kotak to facilitate a trading account to short sell Adani shares," Jethmalani further said. "For those who want to learn about accomplished #Chinese spy #AnlaCheng who along with her husband #MarkKingdon hired #Hindenburg for a research report on #Adani, engaged the services of Kotak to facilitate a trading account to short sell Adani shares; who made millions of dollars..." pic.twitter.com/XhA9lFMFE2

They "made millions of dollars from their short selling; who eroded Adani market cap enormously, with no thought for several Indian retail investors who they financially decimated through their nefarious design to promote Chinese strategic interests by destroying an Indian corporate competitor who had prevailed in many bids over the Chinese State in strategic international projects," the senior lawyer alleged. Kingdon also approached Kotak's international investment arm Kotak Mahindra Investments Limited (KMIL) to set up an offshore fund as well as offshore accounts to trade in Adani shares. This led to the creation of the Kotak India Opportunity Fund (KIOF). Earlier this week, the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) issued a show-cause notice to Hindenburg Research, Nathan Anderson and the entities of Mauritius-based foreign portfolio investor (FPI) Kingdon for trading violations in the scrip of Adani Enterprises Ltd, leading up to the Hindenburg report and thereafter. An investigation by the markets regulator also exposed that Kotak Mahindra and Hindenburg conspired together to take short positions in Adani shares. The "smoking gun" referred to by Jethmalani was his revelation that Kingdon's wife Anla Cheng, a Chinese-American, who has a large shareholding in the Kingdon Master Fund, is a lobbyist for Chinese interests in the United States. "She was the CEO of #SupChina a pro-China media corporate initiative which morphed into an entity called The China Project after a whistleblower accused SupChina of news subversion in China's interest in a sworn statement before the US Congress," the lawyer posted. The China Project shut down after calls for an investigation into its subversive activities by some US senators including having links with the Chinese Communist Party. The latter clearly has a bone to pick with the Adani Group," he added. Jethmalani claimed that the actions of Cheng and Kingdon were prompted by the Adani Group thwarting Chinese interests in several parts of the globe, including outbidding Chinese players for the Haifa Port in Israel and coal projects near Sri Lanka's Jaffna. Jethmalani also posed three major questions. "Who introduced the Kingdons to KMIL, what due diligence was conducted by KMIL regarding the Kingdons and did it participate in the short sell as a principal," he asked. The second question was whether all the Indian people, organisations and entities who helped Hindenburg knew about the short-selling plan and whether they benefited from it. Jethmalani specifically mentioned politicians, in an apparent dig at the opposition, which has used the Adani-Hindenburg issue to target the group and the government on several occasions. The lawyer also asked whether these people and entities knew about the Chinese link. Hindenburg had alleged that while markets regulator SEBI "seemingly tied itself in knots to claim jurisdiction over us, its notice conspicuously failed to name the party that has an actual tie to India: Kotak Bank, one of India's largest banks and brokerage firms founded by Uday Kotak, which created and oversaw the offshore fund structure used by our investor partner to bet against Adani".

Godhra court sentences Pakistani national to 2 years in prison for 'illegal stay'



GNS News Agency, July 10

The accused had sought a visitors' visa for India from October 7, 2005, to January 1, 2006, which only allowed her to stay in New Delhi for 30 days, but she had been living in Godhra since December 17, 2005, in violation of the visa conditions. The accused had sought a visitors' visa for India from October 7, 2005, to January 1, 2006, which only allowed her to stay in New Delhi for 30 days, but she had been living in Godhra since December 17, 2005, in violation of the visa conditions.

A local court in Gujarat's Godhra on Wednesday sentenced a Pakistani woman to two years in prison for "illegal stay" in the town. The Second Additional Chief Judicial Magistrate sentenced Hajarabano, 47, to simple imprisonment and also ordered her to a Rs 5,000 fine, with an additional imprisonment of six months if the fine is not paid. The court contended Hajarabano, arrested on November 22, 2006, had "not been able to prove her Indian citizenship".

The prosecution's case was that the FIR was lodged on November 11, 2006, at the Godhra town police station under The Foreigners Act, 1946, and the chargesheet was filed on January 23, 2007. The prosecution had contended the accused holds a Pakistani passport that was valid up to May 11, 2009. The accused had sought a visitors' visa for India from October 7, 2005, to January 1, 2006, which only allowed her to stay in New Delhi for 30 days, but she had been living in Godhra since December 17, 2005, in violation of the visa conditions. Supported by four Supreme Court precedents, where foreign nationals had been acquitted in similar cases, the defence argued

that the accused must be acquitted as she had not committed any crime. The defence also argued that her father is an Indian national and she should be considered an Indian national as per the Citizenship Act. Moreover, she had married an Indian national residing in Godhra, it added.

Mohammad Ismail Mamda, who claimed to be the father of the accused, stated in his deposition that he left Pakistan in 1971 and has been a resident of Godhra since the 1980s. According to Mamda, his daughter was taken and raised in Pakistan for 11 years before she returned to India. Mamda provided documents proving his Indian citizenship but said he was "unaware" of how his daughter arrived in India. The court observed the accused's husband, Siddiq Farahim Surat, a Godhra resident, also "claimed to have sought a long-term visa for his wife but did not inform the same to the police during the investigation and cannot provide any proof on record about the application". According to the documentary evidence, the court observed that the accused was born in Karachi in 1977, her father's name was Muhammad Bhatuk, and her Pakistani passport was that of Godhra Colony in New Karachi. The court also held that the accused failed to prove she was born in India and was taken away to Pakistan in her childhood.

The court said the Indian citizenship held by Mamda was questionable as he was a former Pakistani national living in Godhra and the citizenship was sought through a court order. Stating that the defence had failed to prove that the applicant was an Indian national, the court said, "A Judge does not preside over a criminal trial merely to see that no innocent man is punished. A Judge also presides to see that the guilty man does not escape. Both are public duties. The proof beyond a reasonable doubt is a mere guideline and not a fetish. Reasonable doubt is not an imaginary, trivial, or merely possible doubt, but a fair doubt based upon reason and common sense. Therefore, the reasonable doubt should be cleared by the records and not be imaginary." The court further laid the onus of proof on the accused and said, "When a person claims to have Indian Citizenship, the burden of proving the citizenship lies on the individual... The prosecution has been able to prove that the accused had been living in India illegally without any permit or visa." The court said the days the accused spent in custody after her arrest would be accounted for in the two-year sentence.

WhatsApp conversations can't be read as evidence without certificate under Evidence Act: Delhi HC



GNS News Agency, July 10

The Delhi High Court has recently said that WhatsApp conversations cannot be read as evidence without a proper certificate as mandated under the Evidence Act, 1872. The HC was hearing a plea by Dell International Services India Private Ltd against a December 12, 2023, order of the Delhi State Consumer Dispute Redressal Commission where the Commission upheld the district consumer commission's order of July 2023. The District Commission had refused to take on record the written statement filed by Dell on the ground that the same was filed beyond the period of limitation. The complainant before the district commission had filed a complaint against Dell in 2022. Dell had filed a screenshot of a conversation between it and the complainant to demonstrate that the entire copy of the complaint along with all the annexures was not received by Dell and it was handed over to Dell's counsel before the District Commission only on January 31, 2023.

Oath-taking impasse ends, 2 TMC MLAs sworn in

GNS News Agency, July 10

The impasse over the swearing-in of two newly elected Trinamool Congress (TMC) MLAs in West Bengal ended on Friday with Legislative Assembly Speaker Biman Banerjee administering the oath to Sayantika Banerjee of Baranagar and Reyat Housen Sarkar from Bhagawangola. Though West Bengal Governor C V Ananda Bose had deputed Deputy Speaker Ashish Banerjee to administer the oath, he refused to do so, saying "it does not seem good that Deputy Speaker is administering oath while Speaker is present".

During a Business Advisory committee meeting before the Assembly session, the Speaker had a talk with the Deputy Speaker, following which he agreed to administer the oath. But when the session began, the Deputy Speaker said the Speaker should administer the oath as he was present. Eventually, violating the Governor's directive, the Speaker administered the oath to the two MLAs.

The face-off between the TMC government and Governor Bose over the swearing-in ceremony began in the second week of June after the Governor asked the two MLAs to come to the Raj Bhavan for the oath-taking ceremony and they refused. The Governor, who normally assigns either the Speaker or the Deputy Speaker to give oath to the legislators, sent a letter inviting the MLAs to take oath at the Raj Bhavan on June 26. However, the letter reportedly did not mention who would administer the oath. This led the TMC to announce that it would not attend the swearing-in ceremony. "It is insulting to a people's representative. The letter (from Raj Bhavan) only mentioned that a person who will be selected by the governor will administer the oath. This is unprecedented in a democratic system. We will not attend the ceremony," state Parliamentary Affairs Minister Sobhandeb Chattopadhyay said. The two newly elected MLAs then started a protest at the Assembly demanding that Gover-

A single judge bench of Justice Subramonium Prasad in its July 2 order noted that the District Commission "examined the matter in great detail" – and called for postal receipts of the documents which were sent along with the summons that were received by Dell on December 23, 2022. The HC said the District Commission "analysed the weight of the documents sent along with the summons and the postal charges and came to the conclusion that (a) complete set of documents was sent along with the summons and the same was received by the Petitioner (Dell) on 23.12.2022." The District Commission then held that Dell's application for condonation of delay of seven days in filing its Written Statement to the complaint is "not bona fide". Justice Prasad, thereafter, said, "The screenshot of WhatsApp conversations cannot be taken into account by this Court while dealing with a Writ Petition under Article 226 of the Constitution of India, more so, when there is nothing to show that the conversations were produced before the State Commission as this Court does not find any reference of the same in the present Writ Petition. Further, there is no discussion of the same in the Order of the State Commission. In any event, the WhatsApp conversations cannot be read as evidence without there being a proper certificate as mandated under the Evidence Act, 1872." It further said that Dell filed its Written Statement only on January 31 last year and raised a plea that it had not received a complete set of documents along with the summons when, in fact, a complete set of documents was served to it along with the summons. "In view of the above, this Court does not find any reason to hold that the reason given by the District Commission in refusing to condone the delay in filing the written submission is erroneous. Accordingly, the Writ Petition is dismissed..." the HC said.



nor Bose come to the Assembly to administer the oath or assign the Speaker to take up the task.

Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee also launched a scathing attack against the Governor for the delay in the swearing-in ceremony. "The two legislators have been elected by people's mandate. What right does the Governor have to stop them from taking oath? It has been almost a month that uncertainties are shrouding the issue," Banerjee said at state secretariat Nabanna last week. "They [the MLA-elects] are right. Either the Governor should nominate the Speaker or the Deputy Speaker to administer the oath, or he should go to the Assembly himself and do the needful. Why will the two MLAs go to the Raj Bhavan? As it is, after what happened in the Raj Bhavan, women are scared to go there."

I have received complaints," Banerjee added, hinting at the police complaint filed by a temporary female staff of the Raj Bhavan accusing the Governor of molestation. While Assembly Speaker Biman Banerjee sought the attention of President Droupadi Murmu in the matter, Governor Bose hit back at Mamata Banerjee, saying, "Raj Bhavan neither cares for the absurd machinations nor deems it appropriate to respond to waste-bin material."

Gujarat govt prematurely retires GAS Class-1 officer



GNS News Agency, July 10

Gujarat class 1 officer premature retirement The notification enlists the FIR filed in Dahod as well as four other chargesheets in different departmental inquiries cases initiated against Pandya since 2021.

The Gujarat government enforced the premature retirement of the Class-1 officer of the Gujarat Administrative Services (GAS) five months after the Dahod district police arrested S J Pandya, the deputy director of Sardar Patel Institute of Public Administration (SPIPA) for his alleged involvement in the six bogus government offices scam. The scam was pertaining to the alleged siphoning of funds worth Rs 18.6 crore meant for the tribal sub-plan in the district. The Gujarat Government notification signed by the Secretary of the General Administrative Department notifies that GAS (Senior scale) officer Pandya has been prematurely retired with "immediate effect" from the afternoon of July 5. Pandya, who is currently in judicial custody in Dahod, is "deemed under suspension" since his arrest in February this year.

Dealer booked 2 months after 2 kids died inside abandoned car in Mumbai

GNS News Agency, July 10

The incident happened on April 24, when siblings Sajid Sheikh (7) and Muskan (5) got into the abandoned car to play. The incident happened on April 24, when siblings Sajid Sheikh (7) and Muskan (5) got into the abandoned car to play. More than two months after two children aged seven and five were found dead inside an abandoned Mercedes car at Antop Hill area, the Mumbai police have booked the dealer of the vehicle for negligence. Police, who had initially claimed that it was an accidental death, registered the case late Wednesday after detailed postmortem and forensic examination reports. Deputy Commissioner of Police Prashant Kadam (Zone IV) said, "We have registered a case but we have not yet arrested the culprit identified as Rajkumar Pandey. Our investigation is still underway." The incident happened on April 24, when siblings Sajid Sheikh (7) and Muskan (5) got into the abandoned car to play, during which they allegedly got trapped and died of suffocation. An officer said, "We believe that the two minors went to the back seat of the car to play. As the doors were jammed, they must have found it difficult to open the (back) doors due to which they panicked and could not think of ways to get out of the car." The two children reportedly went missing at around 1.30 pm on April 24, following which their mother, Syra, started looking for them. The father, who works as a labourer, was asleep.

"After he woke up at 6 pm, they started looking for them and as they could not find the children, they reported the matter to police," an officer said. A team was dispatched to the spot and during the search, a police officer checked the abandoned car around 10pm and found the bodies inside. The postmortem was subsequently conducted but as the doctors had reserved their opinions, their blood samples were sent for forensic examination. "The final reports revealed that they died of suffocation after inhaling carbon monoxide following which a decision to register a case against him was taken. It was his negligence that had caused the incident because he cannot abandon a car anywhere for these many days," the officer said. The family of the two children had claimed that local people had been requesting Pandey to remove the car for a long time. "If only Pandey had acted promptly and removed the car, my children would have been alive today. The car has been lying abandoned even before we started living here," Syra had earlier said. Speaking with The Indian Express, Pandey, however, claimed that he was surprised how the children managed to open the doors of the vehicle. He claimed that the doors had been jammed for months and even the mechanic could not open them.

Administration made lapses, says Rahul Gandhi on Hathras stampede

GNS News Agency, July 10

Hathras: Leader of opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi on Friday said there were lapses on the part of the administration in the Hathras stampede incident that killed over 100 people, but added that he did not want to make it "political". Speaking to reporters after meeting the victims of the stampede in Uttar Pradesh's Hathras here on Friday morning, Gandhi said, "It is a matter of grief that so many families have suffered, so many people lost their lives." "I don't want to speak from a political prism but there have been some lapses on the part of the administration," the senior Congress leader said. On Friday morning, he met the family members of those who died in the stampede in Uttar Pradesh's Hathras. Gandhi left from Delhi early morning on Friday by road for Hathras and was accompanied by state Congress chief Ajay Rai, state Congress in-charge Avinash Pande, party spokesperson Supriya Shrinete and other office bearers. Gandhi reached Vibhav Nagar colony's Green Park in Hathras around 9 am. Gandhi was accompanied by UP Congress chief Rai and local district president Chandragupta Vikramaditya during his interaction with the families inside the park.

Maharashtra bill against unfair practices in competitive exams proposes 5 years in jail



GNS News Agency, July 10

The Maharashtra government on Friday introduced a bill to prevent the use of unfair means in competitive exams, with a provision of imprisonment for up to five years. "At present, there is no specific substantive law to deal with unfair means adopted or offences committed by various entities involved in the conduct of competitive examinations. Therefore, it is imperative that the elements that exploit vulnerabilities of examination system are identified and effectively dealt with by a comprehensive state legislation," the statement of objects and reasons said. The bill was tabled in the Maharashtra Assembly by minister Shambhuraj Desai.

The objective of the Maharashtra Competitive Examination (Prevention of Unfair Means) Act, 2024, is to bring greater transparency, fairness and credibility to the competitive examination system and to reassure the youth that their sincere and genuine efforts will be fairly rewarded and their future is safe. The salient features of the Bill are to specify the duties of paper setters; to impose liability on the service providers and other persons associated therewith; to provide for punishment for offences committed and stringent punishment for organised crimes and to empower the officers not below the rank of deputy superintendent of police or assistant commissioner of police to investigate the offence.

As per the bill, an offence under this act shall be punished with three years which may extend up to five years and with a fine up to Rs 10 lakh. The service provider shall be liable to be punished with a fine up to Rs 1 crore and the proportionate cost of the exam shall be recovered and the provider shall be barred for four years. The person responsible from the service provider may face jail for up to 10 years and a fine of not less than Rs 1 crore. Earlier in the week, the Opposition had demanded that the government bring an Act against the malpractices in competitive exams along the lines of the Centre's Public Examinations (Prevention of Unfair Means) Act, 2024. Deputy Chief Minister and Home Minister Devendra Fadnis had announced that the Act will be brought in the ongoing Monsoon Session.

FIR against Bajrang Dal leaders for breaking into Gujarat Congress headquarters

GNS News Agency, July 10

Gujarat Congress headquarters Congress party's symbol outside party office, after it was defaced allegedly by members of Bajrang Dal over Leader of Opposition Rahul Gandhi's speech during a discussion on the Motion of Thanks to the President's address in the Lok Sabha. The Ahmedabad police lodged an FIR on July 3 against Bajrang Dal leaders for criminal trespass and unlawful assembly, following a complaint by Gujarat Congress MLA Shailesh Parmar who alleged a dozen Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP) and Bajrang Dal leaders broke into the Congress headquarters, Rajiv Gandhi Bhavan, in Ahmedabad, Gujarat. The FIR was lodged at Ahmedabad's Ellisbridge police station. The Bajrang Dal leader Jwalit Mehta, former BJP councillor Falguni Shah's son Rutvij Shah, one Chintan Lodha, and another 'eight to nine unknown persons' were booked under BNS sections 189 (2), 324 (2), 329 (3), 351 (2). According to the complaint, the trespassing took place on July 2 at around 4 am when the leaders from the organisations climbed the premises gate and threatened the security guard and his family. Parmar's complaint said that the accused trespassed protesting against Congress MP Rahul Gandhi's speech at the Parliament on July 1.

Gandhi as the Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha triggered a row by taking a swipe at the BJP, saying that



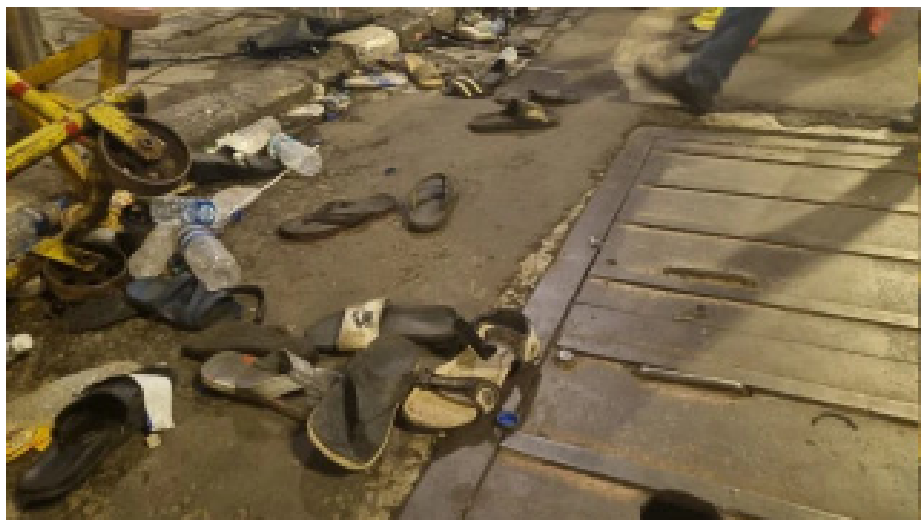
those who call themselves Hindus are engaged in "violence and hate" round the clock. Terming the remarks as allegedly "anti-Hindu", the BJP demanded an apology from Gandhi. The Congress party's flags and banners were torn. Gandhi's posters were defaced with stickers and black colour was sprayed as a mark of protest, the VHP had said earlier. The Ellisbridge police inspector B D Jilariya said none of the accused have been arrested or detained so far in this connection to this case. Earlier on July 2, following a clash between the Congress and BJP workers Tuesday evening outside the Gujarat Congress headquarters in Ahmedabad, the police lodged two FIRs and had arrested five accused Congress leaders and workers, who are presently in police custody.

After Team India's T20 World Cup victory parade, BMC collects over 11,000 kg waste from Mumbai's Marine Drive

GNS News Agency, July 10

Mumbai parade India cricket team in a drive that went on overnight, the civic body pressed 100 staffers, including labourers, to ensure that the filth-laden swathes are cleared even before the morning walkers could hit the promenade on Friday. From shoes and clothes to plastic bottles — a day after a barrage of Mumbaiers gathered to cheer for the T20 World Cup winning Indian Cricket Team's parade, the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) collected a whopping 11,500 kg (11.5 metric tonne) of waste along the Marine Drive stretch. A senior BMC official said, "Due to the large number of people who had arrived in the area, the cleanliness activities were hampered at several intervals. Even then, the drive was completed by 8 am, by which time, we cleared and loaded waste into one compactor, one dumper and five SCBVs. Most of the waste loaded into the small vehicles were fluffy materials, which occupies volumes but not much weight," said a senior civic official. In a drive that went on overnight, the civic body pressed its staffers alongside 25 labourers who had been roped in through NGOs, to ensure that the filth-laden swathes are cleared even before the morning walkers could hit the promenade on Friday.

India cricket team parade By the time the victory-parade came to an end and the sea of fans trickled into a stream of few, the swathes along Marine Drive were left riddled with garbage ranging from plastic bottles, chip wrappers, cups, paper, clothes to even shoes and chappals, which several visitors lost in the chaos of the frenzied crowd. Wasting no time, at 11.30 pm on Thursday, the BMC roped in 25 labourers through NGOs, who conducted the cleanliness drive during the night while civic staffers from the solid waste man-



agement department were pressed into action in the wee hours. Working overnight, the civic staffers loaded two vehicles — one dumper and one compactor — with over nine metric tonne of waste. According to a senior BMC official, the capacity of one dumper is three metric tonne and one compactor holds up to six metric tonne of waste. Alongside this, the civic body also filled five small closed body vehicles (SCBV) with odd articles like shoes, chappals and other recyclable materials, which were later unloaded at the Suraksha Garden. Each SCBV has a holding capacity of 500 kg. The cleanliness drive was wrapped up by 8 am on Friday. Mumbai India cricket team parade Several citizens who flocked the Marine Drive promenade for their early morning walk took to social media and lauded the civic staffers for clearing the litter overnight. (Source: Express Photos/BMC) According to the civic body, the waste from the five small jeeps which comprised recyclable materials like shoes and slippers will be sent for

reprocessing. Several citizens who flocked the Marine Drive promenade for their early morning walk took to social media and lauded the civic staffers for clearing the litter overnight. An X user, @ivaibhavk, shared a video and wrote, "A big thank you to the sanitation workers of the Mumbai Municipal Corporation. Before the citizens who celebrated the World Cup victory parade woke up, the sanitation workers had already cleaned and tidied up the Marine Drive area. The previous night, the Marine Drive area was littered with thousands of shoes and sandals, and these workers were busy removing the garbage until dawn. By morning, they had restored Mumbai to its original state. We should all express our gratitude to these workers. Attached are two videos, one from the night and one from the morning." A big thank you to the sanitation workers of the Mumbai Municipal Corporation. Before the citizens who celebrated the World Cup victory parade woke up, the sanitation workers had already cleaned and tidied up the Marine Drive area.

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'No hurdle in prohibiting sale of plastic flowers of less than 100 micron thickness': Bombay High Court seeks responses from Centre, Maharashtra



GNS News Agency, July 10

The Bombay High Court on Friday noted that "there does not appear to be any impediment in prohibiting use and sale of plastic flowers of thickness less than 100 microns". A division bench of Chief Justice Devendra Kumar Upadhyaya and Justice Amit Borkar, while hearing a writ plea seeking ban on the use of artificial flowers used for decoration or gifts, directed the Maharashtra and Central governments to file affidavits in reply to the plea.

The petition filed by Growers Flowers Council (GFCI) raised concerns over the use of plastic flowers with thickness of less than 100 microns, referring to a report of International Association of Packaging Research Institutes (IAPRI) which stated that maximum thickness of plastic flower is usually 30 microns and minimum and average thickness is 29 microns, which is less than 100 microns. Advocate Aseem Naphade appearing for GFCI submitted that the Maharashtra Pollution Control Board (MPCB) had issued a notification on March 8, 2022 prohibiting production, stocking, distribution and sale of single-use plastic items. Referring to various notifications issued by the Ministry of Environment and Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC), the items including earbuds with plastic sticks, carry bags, plates, cutlery, glasses, cigarette packets and banners with thickness of less than 100 microns were prohibited for sale. However, he added that the said notification did not specifically mention plas-

tic flowers and as their thickness is less than 100 microns, they ought to be included in the list of items prohibited. Their use, sale and distribution is still prevalent in entire Maharashtra, causing harm to the environment and the ecosystem, Naphade argued. He said the Maharashtra Non-Biodegradable Garbage (Control) Act, 2006 also empowered the state government to issue notification prohibiting the use of such materials. Moreover, Naphade said that the October 14, 2020 letter by the state Commissioner of Agriculture to the Union MoEFCC explicitly expressed concern over use of plastic flower, though single-use plastic is banned for various purposes.

The petitioner sought direction to the central government under Environment Protection (EP) Act, 1986 to issue necessary prohibitory orders to check and ban the use of plastic flowers of thickness of less than 100 microns. "Concerns needs to be addressed at the earliest for the simple reason that if other items less than 100 microns have been prohibited, there does not appear to be any impediment in prohibiting plastic flowers as well," the bench noted. It issued notices and directed the Union MoEFCC, Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) along with state government and MPCB to file an affidavit responding to the issues raised in the plea within four weeks and asked petitioner to file rejoinder to the same a week thereafter. "Having regard to the significance of issues raised in plea, and the impact of use of plastic flowers of less than 100 microns thickness on the ecosystem and environment, we expect from all concerned to take up the matter with serious earnestness," the bench noted in the order. Seeking serious steps by the authorities, Chief Justice Upadhyaya, who earlier worked as Allahabad High Court judge, orally remarked, "I must tell you a horrifying experience. A protection home for over 200 destitute children in Lucknow contained those facing cerebral palsy and was running well. But when I interacted with the person managing the protection home, there were children who cannot differentiate between edibles and non edibles and in their excreta, this plastic was found. It is shocking. Therefore you have to be very serious."

Bengaluru-Chennai expressway to be inaugurated before December by PM Modi: Nitin Gadkari

GNS News Agency, July 10

Union Road Transport Minister Nitin Gadkari on Thursday announced that the Bengaluru-Chennai greenfield (new) expressway will be inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi before December this year. The Union minister made the announcement while addressing the state executive meeting of BJP leaders in Bengaluru on Gadkari had earlier announced that the estimated time of completion was March 2024. The 262 km-long expressway is expected to reduce travel time between the two cities to only two hours. On Thursday, he also stated that he will make efforts to complete the Rs 17,000 crore-worth Satellite Town Ring Road (STRR) project in Karnataka by December end. Gadkari said he urged Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah and Deputy Chief Minister D K Shivakumar during a meeting in New Delhi to ensure smooth environmental clearances and land acquisition in the state to expedite road infrastructure projects.

The 'new alignment' Bengaluru-Chennai highway will connect Hoskote (in Bengaluru) to Sriperumbudur in the Kanchipuram district (40 km from Chennai). The expressway is one of the 36 new expressways being developed by the NHAI, the foundation for which was laid by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in May 2022. The 262 km-long Bengaluru-Chennai expressway is being built at a cost of over Rs 17,930 crore and will pass through the states of Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, and Tamil Nadu. The highway will be eight lanes for a distance of 240 km, with the remainder being an elevated stretch of 22 km.



Nearly 2,650 hectares of land were acquired for the project. The works are underway in three phases, with the first phase covering a distance of 62.6 km between Hoskote and Bethamangala in Karnataka. The second phase covers a stretch of 85 km, from Bethamangala to Gudipala in Andhra Pradesh. The third phase consists of 106 km, connecting Gudipala to Sriperumbudur in Tamil Nadu. The Centre has also proposed to construct a Bengaluru-Mangaluru greenfield expressway and Mangaluru-Chennai expressway through Bengaluru. Meanwhile, the delayed STRR project is being implemented by the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) under the Bharatmala Pariyojana. The STRR project aims to reduce 30 per cent of transient traffic in Bengaluru by helping commuters avoid travelling through the city to reach nearby towns.

Southwest monsoon brings rainfall to 70 talukas in southern Gujarat

GNS News Agency, July 10

As Southwest monsoon takes over Gujarat, rains lashed the southern districts of the state, with nearly 70 talukas seeing showers from Friday 6 am to noon, according to the State Emergency Operation Centre (SEOC) in Gandhinagar. Umarpada in Surat received 87 mm of rainfall within six hours, while Navsari district's Khergam and Vandsa recorded 82 mm and 67 mm respectively in the same time. Kaprada, in the district of Valsad, recorded 64 mm of rainfall, and Surat's Kamrej received 58 mm.

Dediapada in Narmada district received 54 mm followed by Waghai (51 mm) in Dang, Gandevis (43 mm), Chikhli (42 mm), Navsari (41 mm) in Navsari district and Dolvan (40 mm) in Tapi. Meanwhile, the India Meteorological Department (IMD) has issued a forecast of heavy rains in the districts of Banaskantha, Patan, Mehsana, Sabarkantha, Narmada, Surat, Tapi, Navsari and Valsad on Friday, while also predicting light to moderate rainfall across the rest of the state. Significant rainfall recorded in 52 talukas, highest in Danta. The SEOC had also recorded significant rainfall in 52 talukas of the state in 24 hours from 6 am. As per the centre's data, the highest rainfall — of 202 mm, or 8.08 inches — was reported in the Danta taluka of Banaskantha district, with 100 mm or 4



inches in Vadgam taluka of the same district. The city of Ahmedabad also reported heavy rainfall Thursday night. While Kadana taluka of the Mahisagar district received 84 mm i.e. 3.36 inches of rain, Shehra taluka of Panchmahal district received 71 mm or 2.84 inches. In Narmada's Tilakwada taluka, it poured for 67 mm or 2.68 inches, while Khanpur in Mahisagar district saw 57 mm or 2.28 inches in this time period. Apart from this, more than two inches of rain has been recorded in Kathal and Galateswar talukas. Six more talukas received one and a half inches of rain, while ten of them saw one inch.

Government issues high alert on fraudsters sending fake e-mails to extort money

GNS News Agency, July 10

New Delhi: The government on Thursday issued a high alert for the public over several fake and fraudulent e-mails that have been circulated by fraudsters to defraud many people. Such fake emails have a letter as attachment which bear the names and signatures of Sandeep Khirwar, ADG, Cyber Crime and Economic Offence, Delhi Police Headquarters, Delhi and that of Anupam Prakash, Joint Secretary (COFEPOSA), Central

Economic Intelligence Bureau (CEIB), together with stamps and logos of CEIB, Intelligence Bureau and Cyber Cell, Delhi. According to statement of Finance Ministry, the letter makes allegations of child pornography, paedophilia, cyber pornography, sexual explicit exhibit, grooming etc. levelled against the receivers of the said e-mails. The fraudsters have used different e-mail addresses for sending the aforementioned fake e-mails with attachments. The police have been alerted to take necessary action in the matter.

TMC MP Mahua Moitra dares Delhi Police as NCW seeks FIR over 'pajama' remark



GNS News Agency, July 10

Trinamool Congress (TMC) MP Mahua Moitra on Friday challenged the Delhi Police to take immediate action after the National Commission for Women (NCW) sought an FIR against her over derogatory remarks against its chairperson Rekha Sharma. "Come on Delhi Police please take action immediately on these suo moto orders. Am in Nadia in case you need me in the next 3 days to make a quick arrest," Mahua Moitra posted on X. "I Can Hold My Own Umbrella," she added, doubling down on her earlier controversial remark on a video that showed the NCW chairperson's arrival at the site of a stampede that recently took place in Uttar Pradesh's

Hathras. In the video, other persons were seen holding umbrellas for Sharma, an action which seemed insensitive to many. "She is too busy holding up her boss's pajamas," Mahua Moitra had replied to a post.

The NCW said it strongly condemns the defamatory remarks and requests strict action against Moitra. "The crude remarks are outrageous and a violation of a woman's right to dignity. The Commission observed that this remark attracts Section 79 of the Bharatiya Nyay Sanhita, 2023," the NCW said in a post on X. "An FIR should be registered against Moitra and a detailed action report should be communicated to the Commission within 3 days," the NCW wrote. BJP national spokesperson Shehzad Poonawalla termed Moitra's comment on the microblogging site as "extremely indecent, objectionable and shameful", and said this is the "true face" of the TMC and the opposition parties' INDIA bloc. "MP Mahua Moitra who justified and remained silent during Sandeshkhali, Chopra Talibani flogging, silent on Swati Maliwal now makes a disgusting comment at a woman that too the NCW Chief," he charged. The BJP spokesperson also targeted the Congress and the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) over the TMC MP's comment and asked, "Will Priyanka Vadra, Rahul Gandhi, (Mallikarjun) Kharge ji, Sonia Gandhi, Priyanka Chaturvedi, AAP call this out?" "Will Mamata Didi act on her? Nope, just like they remained silent on Sandeshkhali and (flogging of a couple) in Chopra (West Bengal)," he added.

India can develop one of world's major cruise tourism destination: Official

GNS News Agency, July 10

Panaji: India has the potential to develop one of the world's major cruise tourism destinations with persistent interest among international cruise carriers to visit domestic destinations like Lakshadweep, Andaman and Nicobar Islands and Pondicherry, besides existing destinations like Cochin, Goa and Mumbai, said Indian Ports Association chairman Rajiv Jalota said on Friday. Speaking on the sidelines of a conference on the future of Indian Ports, Jalota, who is also chairman of the Mumbai Port Authority, said with the right policies in place, India will be well-placed to tap into the growing market. "India is seeing a lot of traction. There was tremendous traction for India (at a recent cruise tourism conference) among the big cruise lines as well as the adventure excursion of those small cruise lines. Pondicherry, Lakshadweep, Andaman and Nicobar are in great demand by the international community," Jalota, who is also the chairman of the cruise tourism cell, said. Every year, India receives international cruises from Europe via the Red Sea, from Gulf Countries as well as cruise ships from Singapore and SouthEast Asia. On the domestic front, Cordelia Cruises operate cruise ships from Mumbai via Goa, Cochin, and Lakshadweep, including Sri Lanka, as part of existing itineraries.

At Goa's Mormugao Port, which is among the major ports to receive cruise tourism vessels, its chairman N Vinodkumar said the port was expecting an increase in footfalls this year. "For the next season, we are already getting calls because last season also we saw an increase in the number of vessels. Last year we had a total of 1.20 lakh (120,000) passengers out of which 90,000 were domestic passengers and the rest international. The number of ports will be higher," Vinodkumar said.

He added, "We are providing 1% of the cruise passengers of the world. Our number will easily reach 10% in the next four years. Cruise terminals are also making a lot of money... There is a lot of potential". Officials present at the conference said they expect cruise tourism to grow further, given the states can provide the itineraries and develop destinations that can attract international cruise tourists.

"We have made some plans for 100 days of policy changes. A lot of work has to be done by the states in



providing the proper itinerary and improving the destinations. We have taken it up with the tourism ministry and the tourism ministry will impress the respective state government," an official, who did not wish to be named, said. Among the international cruise companies who have expressed interest are MSC Cruises, a Swiss-Italian shipping company, and Royal Caribbean International, which are looking to commence operations in India, connecting coastal tourism destinations. However, according to officials familiar with the process, the international cruise liners have raised concerns regarding the tax regime they will be subjected to. "They are in talks with our revenue department. Some data is being asked from them. For India to take a call to give some benefit is a difficult task. If we can do something in the next three or four months, then two years later, orders for more ships can be placed," the official mentioned above said. Goa's Mormugao Port, which is expected to receive an even higher number of cruise ship visits this season, is hopeful it can launch its upgraded cruise terminal in January next year. According to officials, last year's cruise tourism season was blighted by the Red Sea crisis in the wake of the Israel-Hamas war, which led to several cruise liners using the Suez Canal and the Red Sea to travel to the Indian Ocean, cancelling their visits to Indian destinations, adversely affecting the growth of the sector. Meanwhile, the Directorate of Lighthouses and Lightships has launched a coastal vessel tracking system for the Andaman and Nicobar Islands that will be aimed at monitoring the movement of vessels around the strategically significant islands similar to a VTS that operates in the Gulf of Kutch that provides data to the 12 ports of Kutch.

BJP names 24 leaders to oversee states including poll-bound Haryana, Jharkhand



GNS News Agency, July 10

New Delhi: The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) on Friday announced the appointment of 24 members as in-charges and co-in-charges for several states, including the poll-bound Haryana and Jharkhand and the Union territory of Jammu and Kashmir. Party president JP Nadda appointed former president of the Rajasthan unit, Satish Poonia, as the in-charge for Haryana and Rajya Sabha MP Surendra Nagar as the co-in-charge. The BJP's performance in Rajasthan during the Lok Sabha polls has flagged concern in the party. The BJP, which has been in power in the state for a decade, lost five of the 10 Lok Sabha seats in the recently held polls. In the last assembly polls too, the party could only form a government with support from the Jananayak Janata Party. The two have since parted ways, and the BJP has announced it will contest polls on its own.

In Jharkhand, senior party leader and Rajya Sabha MP Laxmikant Bajpai has been given charge of the state; he was earlier the election in-charge for the 2024 Lok Sabha polls. In the 2019 assembly polls, the BJP lost the election, and the Jharkhand Mukti Morch came to power. In the recent Lok Sabha polls, the party won eight of 14 seats, which was down from 11 in 2019. The party recently appointed former Madhya Pradesh CM and now Union minister Shivraj Singh Chauhan and Assam CM Himanta Biswa Sarma as election in-charges (for the assembly polls) of Jharkhand.

In Jammu and Kashmir, where elections are to be held by September as per the Supreme Court's direction, the BJP retained national general secretary Tarun Chugh as its in-charge and Ashish Sood as the co-in-charge. Union minister G Kishen Reddy will oversee the election in Jammu and Kashmir, where polls have not been held since 2018 when the assembly was dissolved following

the collapse of the BJP-PDP (People's Democratic Party) coalition government. There is no word yet on whether the party will announce a new party president or a working president after JP Nadda was made the Union minister. Nadda continues to be president till his successor is appointed.

Member of Parliament Ajit Gopchade has been given charge of Manipur, where violence between the Kuki and the Meitei communities has emerged as a concern for the party. The government's efforts notwithstanding, the violence in the state has continued for over a year. Prime Minister Narendra Modi recently told Parliament that normalcy is beginning to be restored in the northeastern state and cautioned that those who continue to "fan the fire" of communal violence will be "rejected" by the people of Manipur. Lok Sabha MP from Odisha's Puri constituency, Sambit Patra, has been retained as the coordinator of northeastern states and former Union minister V Muraleedharan as the joint coordinator. Anil Anthony, who unsuccessfully contested the Lok Sabha polls from Kerala, has been made in-charge of Nagaland and Meghalaya. In Bihar, where the party is in power with its ally, the Janata Dal (United), national general secretary Vinod Tawde and Rajya Sabha MP Deepak Prakash will continue to oversee the state. Bihar will go to polls in 2025. Tawde also oversaw the Lok Sabhas polls in the state.

Former Union minister Prakash Javadekar will continue in Kerala as the state in-charge and Odisha MP Aparajita Sarangi, will be the co-in-charge. Former chief minister of Gujarat Vijay Rupani has been given charge of Punjab with Punjab MLA Narendra Singh as the co-in-charge. Former UP minister Shrikant has been given the charge of Himachal Pradesh and MLA Sanjay Tandon is the co-in-charge.

Raghunath Kulkarni has been appointed as the in-charge for Andaman and Nicobar, and Ashok Singh, a legislator from Assam, appointed as Arunachal Pradesh in-charge. Bihar MLA Nitin Nabin as the in-charge for Chhattisgarh and national general secretary Radha Mohan Das Agarwal and MP Sudhakar Reddy will be state in-charges in Karnataka; the earlier were election in-charges in the state. Vijay Pal Tomar has been given the charge of Odisha and Lata Usendi is the co-in-charge. Nirmal Kumar Surana has been retained as the in-charge of Puducherry. Dushyant Kumar Gautam, the party's national general secretary, will continue as the in-charge of Uttarakhand and Rekha Verma has been made co-in-charge.

African Swine Fever outbreak reported in Kerala: Know symptoms, precautions and modes of transmission

GNS News Agency, July 10

Authorities in Thrissur ordered the culling of 310 pigs on Friday after an outbreak of African Swine Fever (ASF) was reported in a private farm in Madakkathara panchayat in the district.

According to officials, the area within a one-kilometre radius of the affected farm has been declared a disease-affected area, and the area within a 10-km radius has been declared a disease surveillance area, reported PTI. The African Swine Flu was reported earlier this year in Alappuzha. According to The Indian Express, an ASF outbreak was reported in India for the first time in 2020 in Assam, in which over 2900 pigs died. According to World Organisations for Animal Health (WOAH), African Swine Fever is a highly contagious viral disease of domestic and wild pigs, with a potential mortality rate of 100 per cent. According to Boehringer Ingelheim, a German-based pharmaceutical company, the disease was first detected in Africa in the early 1900s. According to WOAH, 57 countries and territories have reported the presence of ASF, affecting 506,000 pigs and more than 20,400 wild boars since January 2022. A total of 6847 outbreaks have been reported among domestic pigs across the globe since January 2022, with 26.55 per cent being recorded from Asia and 70 per cent being reported from Europe, according to WOAH.

African swine fever virus (ASFV) is a DNA virus in the Asfarviridae family. This virus is resistant to low temperatures and remains viable for long periods in blood, faeces and tissues, especially in infected, uncooked or undercooked pork products. This disease does not pose any danger to humans or their health. However, it does have an effect on the swine population which is reared for its meat. According to Food Outlook, a biannual report on global food markets released by the Food and Agricultural Organisation of the United Nations in June 2024, the global pig meat trade forecasted over 10 million tonnes in 2024. How does it spread?

According to WOAH, African Swine Fever is highly contagious has various modes of transmission such as direct, indirect, transstadial, transovarial, and



sexual. Direct transmission refers to transmission via contact between infected animals and healthy animals that can lead to the spread of the virus. Indirect transmission of ASFV happens through feeding on garbage containing infected meat products, biological vectors and transmission through objects containing the virus, as the microbe is able to survive on surfaces like contacted objects for days. This could also mean that travelling from one country to another lacking proper bio-security practices can also cause the spread of the virus. According to WOAH, the virus is "highly resistant in the environment", thus capable of surviving on clothes, boots, wheels and so on. Other modes of transmission include transstadial (spreads through different stages of an organism's life), transovarial (transmitted from a parent to offspring) and sexual (viral transmission through mating). In an extremely acute form, the symptoms of African Swine Fever include fever, and the animals suffer a sudden death with a few signs. In its acute form, there are symptoms such as reddening of the skin, anorexia, listlessness, discolouration of mucous, lack of coordination within 24-48 hours of death, and diarrhoea among others. Visible and invisible lesions may also occur in the infected animals. During outbreaks, culling of swine and proper disposal of the cadaver is essential. There should also be proper designation and surveillance of infected zones. Possible tracing sources of the virus and spread of the virus should be investigated.

BJP slams AAP govt over monsoon preparedness claim: 'They sold Delhi Jal Board to tanker mafia'



GNS News Agency, July 10

Delhi's Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) unit president Virendra Sachdeva on Friday hit out at the Arvind Kejriwal government over monsoon preparedness in the capital. "Delhi Water Minister is lying... They sold the Delhi Jal Board to the tanker mafia... The drains were not cleaned... There is a possibility of a flood and she (Atishi) is saying that they are prepared, they will find out in the coming days," Sachdeva told ANI on Delhi water minister Atishi's statement of her government being prepared to tackle the flood-like situation in the city.

Delhi Water Minister (Atishi) is lying. Earlier, their (AAP) leaders had claimed that they had cleaned all the drains of Delhi but after just two hours of rainfall, there was waterlogging in the city and 11 people lost their lives. Now, she (Atishi) is claiming that they have made arrangements for flood, but I want to tell them that lies cannot work every time. They have only looted Delhi and people are fed up with them," he told news agency PTI. "We took the stake of the preparations of Delhi govt and all the concerned departments regarding flood relief and flood control. We hope that the flood situation doesn't occur in Delhi. But, if the level of water in Yamuna rises, Delhi govt is ready to deal with that," Atishi had said in a press conference. "Last year, Delhi saw the highest recorded level of Yamuna. In 2023, Yamuna reached well above the danger mark at 208.66 metre. Since last year, people living near Yamuna faced a lot of hardships, so the Delhi government is preparing to deal with any such situation," she added. "A 24/7 control room related to flood has been

formed under the leadership of DM East. This flood control room will have people from all the concerned departments deployed there," the AAP minister said. Delhi Minister and AAP leader Atishi addresses a press conference regarding flood control in the national capital during the monsoon season in New Delhi on Friday. (PTI) Delhi Minister and AAP leader Atishi addresses a press conference regarding flood control in the national capital during the monsoon season in New Delhi on Friday. (PTI)

WW2-era bomb found in Bengal village disposed of by Air Force

GNS News Agency, July 10

Kolkata: Indian Air Force officials on Friday disposed of a World War 2-era bomb through a controlled explosion at Bhulanpur village in West Bengal's Jhargram district, police said. The bomb was found by the villagers on June 29 when they were digging a field. The district administration initially informed the Criminal Investigation Department (CID), but its bomb disposal squad said after inspection that the device should be handled by military personnel. "The state government officially approached the Indian Air Force, and their experts arrived from the Kalaikunda air base in West Midnapore district. They stacked around 1000 sandbags in rows around the bomb to create a buffer wall. All houses in the area were vacated before the explosion as a safety measure," a police official said on condition of anonymity. Sharing an image of the operation on X, chief minister Mamata Banerjee wrote, "The bomb was safely and successfully defused. I thank everyone involved for the good work done." This is not the first time that WW2-era bombs have been found in this region. A few were found in the 1990s," a district official said. Located in the Gopiballapur community block of Jhargram district, Bhulanpur village stands by the Subamarekha river.

Investigating officer should invoke protective provision under BNS in case of criminal medical negligence: IMA writes to PM

GNS News Agency, July 10

New Delhi, The Indian Medical Association has written to Prime Minister Narendra Modi highlighting that an investigating officer should invoke the protective provision under the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita in cases of alleged criminal medical negligence. The IMA pointed out that there is no criminal intent on the part of a doctor while treating a patient and there is no negligence to attract criminal prosecution. "Union Home Minister Amit Shah ji acknowledged on the floor of the Parliament that death during treatment is not murder. The new BNS legislation brought up by your Government reflects on this aspect in section 26. IMA kindly request the Government that the investigating officer invoke this provision in cases of alleged medical negligence. In the rarest of rare cases which might be considered as recklessness the investigating officer may prefer the case to an expert committee for opinion," the IMA said in the letter sent recently.

When contacted, IMA President Dr R V Asokan said that Section 26 in the BNS clearly states that doctors fall

outside the purview of criminal law and demanded that the provision under Section 106.1 should be deleted so that doctors are exempted from criminal prosecution. "At present, police charge doctors under Section 106.1 in cases of alleged criminal medical negligence and do not follow the provision of Section 26. A crime necessarily has to have a criminal intent. In the absence of mens rea doctors can be held responsible only in civil law. Accordingly IMA is committed to work towards exempting the doctors from criminal prosecution," Dr Asokan said.

The IMA in its letter also highlighted that doctors of the country however are passing through difficult times in practising the profession and that there is an ambience of fear and mistrust in hospitals. The violence on doctors and hospitals has reached epidemic proportions and is a "national shame". "Your government had initiated a bill on violence on doctors and hospitals. It was even put up for public comments. However, the Bill is yet to be introduced in the Parliament.

'Nation needs something...': Joe Biden's hypothetical withdrawal speech



GNS News Agency, July 10

Will Joe Biden withdraw from the US presidential contest? The pressure is mounting on him to quit the race in the aftermath of his disastrous performance during the first debate with Donald Trump. But as of now, Biden remains defiant. "I'm not going anywhere," the US President told a crowd gathered for a July Fourth barbecue on the White House South Lawn. Later, during evening fireworks, he stood on the balcony with his family and Vice President Kamala Harris and her husband, Doug Emhoff, in a clear show of support. Harris at one point grabbed Biden's hand and held it high in the air, and later the two hugged.

In a Wednesday night meeting with Democratic governors, Biden acknowledged that he needs to get more sleep and limit evening events so he can turn in earlier to be rested for the job, according to three people familiar with the meeting, who also spoke on condition of anonymity. One person said the president joked that his health was fine, it was his brain that had challenges. Meanwhile, The Washington Post editorial board has published an opinion piece imagining a scenario in which President

Joe Biden withdraws from the presidential race. The article, titled "What if Biden spoke these words?" presents a hypothetical concession speech for Biden, suggesting the president might step down and call for a convention to find his replacement.

The piece reflects ongoing concerns following his recent debate performance against former President Donald Trump. During the debate, Biden was seen losing his train of thought and failing to challenge Trump effectively, causing disappointment among Democrats. In the theoretical speech, Biden reflects on his extensive political career, stating, "A large part of me still wants to stay in the fight. But, at this moment, the nation needs something I cannot provide: a leader with the energy to run a vigorous campaign and then to work for America, at all hours, for the next four years." The speech also compares Biden's potential step down to George Washington's decision to leave office despite no constitutional requirement, recognizing the time for service coming to an end.

The proposed speech calls for a new process to select a Democratic nominee, including debates among candidates leading up to the party's nominating convention in August. The article suggests that Vice President Kamala Harris would be a willing participant in this process, reflecting her position as a logical successor. Read Washington Post article here. In his concluding part, Biden says: "Americans, I invite you to search your soul as I have. Are we so unsure of ourselves that we will empower a would-be king, one who has been given expansive powers by an activist Supreme Court? Or will we look back on Washington's example, in the spring of American life, and recognize that our independence is built on service, sacrifice, a willingness to assume the best in one another and the belief there will be better seasons to come?"

'Changing UK not like flicking switch, but...': 5 things PM Starmer said

GNS News Agency, July 10

British Prime Minister Keir Starmer pledged to lead a "government focused on serving the nation" with a mission to renew the country. Addressing the public outside 10 Downing Street, Starmer acknowledged widespread disillusionment and cynicism toward politics but affirmed his commitment to restoring trust in government. Accompanied by his wife, Victoria, Starmer received applause from supporters as they arrived at the residence and greeted them warmly.

1. "The work of change starts now. We will rebuild Britain, brick by brick, focusing on rebuilding the infrastructure of opportunity," Starmer said.

2. Starmer praised Rishi Sunak for serving as UK's first British Asian. "The extra effort that that will have required" - should not be "underestimated by anyone". He also said he recognises the "dedication and hard work" Sunak brought to his leadership, BBC reported. 3. "With respect and humility, I invite everyone to join this government of service in our mission for national renewal," he said.

4. "My government will fight every day until you believe again. From now on, you have a government unburdened by doctrine, guided only by the determination to serve your interest," he added.



5. Starmer said that he acknowledges the complexity of changing a nation: "Transforming a country isn't like flipping a switch; it will take time. But we start now." He said, "Service is the foundation of hope. Our nation needs a profound reset, a rediscovery of who we are. Through the storms of history, our strength lies in navigating to calmer waters." Labour leader Keir Starmer officially became the prime minister of Britain on Friday, following his party's overwhelming victory in the elections after being in opposition for over a decade. Starmer assumed the role of the nation's leader after a private ceremony at Buckingham Palace with King Charles III.

Bows at the ready, Chad villagers battle kidnappings

GNS News Agency, July 10

Bows and spears to hand, young villagers file through a wood in southwestern Chad, watching their leader for signals as they train to counter kidnappings. Breaking up into small groups, some crouch behind eucalyptus tree trunks while others crawl on through the undergrowth in the early morning sunlight. Another signal is given and everyone stops in their tracks the strings of the bows and the elastic of slingshots are drawn back in the direction of an imaginary target. A chorus of raised voices orders the hostages to be released and that weapons be put down.

For more than 20 years, isolated villages in the densely populated Mayo-Kebbi Ouest region have been a hunting ground for kidnappers. Feeling abandoned by the Chadian state, residents have formed committees to fight the wave of abductions using the few means at their disposal. "Around 1:00 am, armed men came into my father's house and abducted us with my cousin," student Beatrice Naguita said, blankly staring into the distance. "For two weeks as captives in the brush, while my father got together the sum demanded, we were tortured," Naguita, 22, said of the April 2023 ordeal. "As a woman, I lost my dignity," she added, speaking in the ochre earthen courtyard of her home in Pala, the region's main town. Barka Tao, coordinator of the Organisation for Support of Development Initiatives, said precise figures for kidnappers were hard to come by.

"Some people refuse to talk out of fear of reprisals, but there could have been nearly 1,500 victims in 20 years," he said. It used to be children from the Fulani semi-nomadic herder community, also known as the Peul, who were targeted because the group was perceived as wealthy. But over the last decade, farmers, traders, civil servants, teachers and NGO workers have also been taken; no one is beyond risk. Tao's organisation says kidnappings have been on the rise, with ever-higher ransoms, increasing violence and, at times, resulting in the death of the hostage. One of the poorest countries in the world, Chad, a vast Sahelian nation in central Africa, has long grappled with rebellions and coups. Its less arid regions, such as the south, also see frequent and deadly

clashes when sedentary farmers accuse nomadic herders of allowing their animals to graze on their land or trample crops. Kidnappers can also benefit from the complicity of some within the villages, Tao said, adding it was sometimes due to jealousy or just for payment. "There is also complicity among village chiefs and even within the security forces," Tao said, showing documents with contacts purportedly found in kidnappers' telephones. The authorities did not respond to AFP requests for comment on the claims. Security Minister Mahamat Charfadine Margui acknowledged that local collusion occurred. He said that after he took up his job in March 2023 he removed local officials in the area, including the governor and gendarmerie commanders. "But that didn't solve the problem. It's much more complex," he said. Kidnappers also hide out and operate on the other side of Chad's porous borders, in Cameroon and the Central African Republic. Army reinforcements since 2020 have not stopped the scourge. Another hurdle is that the region known as the Triangle of Death is outside the state's control, said Nestor Deli, 51, a journalist and author who has been writing about the kidnappings for more than 20 years. "The state seems more preoccupied with rebellions in the north and it considers that an epiphenomenon," he said. All over, residents have had enough, taking it upon themselves to get organised into committees to keep watch.

"We are like civil intelligence agents. We are the eyes and the ears of the governor and security forces, to whom we pass the information," Amos Mbaïro Nangyo, 35, who coordinates one of the groups, said. "We guide the gendarmes in the bush, but we are also the first to go after the criminals following a kidnapping," the manager of a security company added. "We chase them, armed with our bows and our spears," he continued, watching his recruits train in the woods. Mbaïro Nangyo claims that more than 4,000 young people have joined anti-kidnapping groups. Faced with the Kalashnikov-wielding kidnappers however, they have little at their disposal. "It's dangerous volunteer work and we ask the state for resources so we can move about, motorbikes and horses or even just boots," he said.

As Iran holds presidential election, envoy to India says new leader to be elected by...

GNS News Agency, July 10 "Today, we are holding the second round of the presidential election. More than 700 polling centres are accepting the votes of the Iranians. We hope that by tomorrow morning, we will have a new President," Elahi told news agency ANI after casting his vote at a special polling centre in New Delhi. The Iranian ambassador further stressed that the Asian nation's foreign and internal policies 'will not change'. The presidential election, a snap poll, was necessitated due to the demise of then President Ebrahim Raisi, who was among the victims of a May 19 helicopter crash. Raisi, the Islamic Republic's eighth president, was elected in 2021, and the next election was originally scheduled in 2025. Friday's second round of polling was held as no candidate secured a majority in the first leg on June 28. Also, the voter turnout in the first phase stood at only 39.93%, the lowest for any major election in the country since the 1979 Islamic Revolution. Of the four candidates who participated in the first round, the two who advanced to the second and final leg are Masoud Pezeshkian and



Saeed Jalili. While the former is a reformist, the latter is a hardline conservative. In the first phase, they secured 10,415,991 and 9,473,298 votes, respectively. Meanwhile, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, Iran's Supreme Leader, also appealed to the people to come out and vote, pointing to how this would be the 'deciding round' of the polling process.

US labour market generates 206,000 jobs in June, unemployment rate increases to 4.1%

GNS News Agency, July 10

In a dynamic and often volatile business environment, the need to have good leaders in any organisation can't be over emphasized. This crucial soft skill not only impacts your career trajectory notably, it is a significant marker for an organisation's growth as well. IIM Calcutta's Executive Programme in Leadership and Management offers a targeted approach to career advancement for senior professionals. It prepares the ground for sharpening critical skills in strategic thinking, decision-making, and team management. Focusing on leadership development, it empowers professionals to become more effective managers, drive innovation, guide long-term goals, and motivate their teams for organizational success. Such future-ready leaders are able to better anticipate, prepare for, and respond to disruptions.

If you are a senior professional keen on taking your career to the next level, then you ought to consider IIM Calcutta's Executive Programme in Leadership and Management. Whether you are a senior professional with over 10 years of experience, keen on upskilling to lead your team better and achieve your company's strategic goals, or a business entrepreneur seeking to enhance your strategic thinking and leadership capabilities, this programme is an ideal option. By opting for IIM Calcutta, you will have access to expertise from a globally recognized institution, consistently ranked among India's top business schools (including No. 1 by Fortune and BT-MDRA in 2023). Suffice to say, IIM Calcutta is at the forefront of business education in India. This programme offers top-tier education tailored for seasoned leaders. It equips them to come up with innovative and agile strategies and insights that are vital for success of any business. Here are some of the key features of this programme that sets it apart: Faculty-guided Capstone Project: You have the opportunity to apply your knowledge in real-world scenarios, receive feedback and exhibit your findings. In addition to honing practical skills, you will also get valuable insights from industry experts. Immersive Campus Learning: Engage in two 10-day immersive sessions at IIM Calcutta, and delve deep into advanced leadership concepts and hands-on learning.

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ies: Hone your skills relevant to the programme with real-world case studies. Apply acquired knowledge to real-life situations for impactful learning.

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Women forced to flee Myanmar as junta enforces conscription to bolster troops

GNS News Agency, July 10

Estelle knew she had to flee Myanmar. The military junta had just announced it would introduce conscription to bolster its forces against myriad armed groups challenging its power, and she was terrified she would be forced to fight. The former government worker, whose name has been changed to protect her identity, is among thousands of people who have decided to leave their homes since the mandatory military service law was announced in February, and then came into effect in April. Some people have risked their lives to trek through jungles and ford rivers, crossing into neighbouring countries without documentation because the military has made it increasingly difficult to leave through formal channels. Others have fled to areas under the control of armed groups fighting against the military, or have joined these groups themselves. The mass exodus is taking place as the military regime faces its most serious crisis since it took power in a 2021 coup, which sparked widespread protests. The street demonstrations, which were met with a brutal crackdown, morphed into an armed resistance movement that has seen newer anti-coup forces join with many of Myanmar's autonomy-seeking ethnic armed groups, posing the most significant challenge to the military in decades. The UN Human Rights Office says more than 5,000 people have been killed by the military since the coup, including more than 1,000 women. Around 3 million people have been displaced. Estelle had to sneak out of the country because she had joined a country-wide Civil Disobedience Movement after the coup and faced international travel restrictions as a result. She and a friend paid the equivalent of around \$280 each in Myanmar's kyat currency to travel by car from the city of Mawlamyine to the border with Thailand and then hired a smuggler to take them across the Moei River. "It was just the two of us girls travelling with a man we didn't know," Estelle said. "We were scared we would be arrested or trafficked." But they took the risk anyway despite the fact that, at 36, Estelle falls outside the age range for conscription. A few days after its initial announcement, the junta also pledged to exempt women for the time being. "That's just words," she said. "We never know when the time will come when they will make difficulties for us." The junta has been accused by Western governments of systematic atrocities and excessive use of air strikes and artillery in civilian areas. It has dismissed that as misinformation and says it is targeting "terrorists". In a report published in July, the UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Myanmar, Tom Andrews, said women's rights organisations had identified increasing reports of the trafficking of women and girls following the enactment of the conscription law. "Women are using dangerous channels to flee the country amid fears of conscription, putting them at high risk of trafficking and other



forms of exploitation. Conscription exemptions for married women also raise the risk of early and forced marriage for girls and women," Mr. Andrews wrote. The military call-up comes on top of an economic crisis that has sent the currency spiralling lower and caused unemployment to surge. The World Bank says women have been particularly hard hit by the economic downturn that followed the COVID-19 pandemic and the coup. "There is no safe place for women and girls ... they have to survive in risky situations," she said. Women were at the forefront of resistance to the 2021 coup and have also joined armed groups fighting the military. Around one-fifth of the 20,000 political prisoners in Myanmar are female, according to a local rights group. Women from the Rohingya, a mostly Muslim minority from Myanmar's Rakhine State, have also faced fresh hardships after years of abuses. Although Rohingya are not eligible for conscription under the law because they are denied citizenship, the military has conscripted more than 1,000 Rohingya men and boys since February using methods including abduction, threats and false promises of citizenship, according to a Human Rights Watch report. And this has had an effect on women and the economic welfare of their households. "Families are worried ... Women don't want their husbands to go," said Sofia, a Rohingya women's protection specialist in Rakhine State, who also used a pseudonym for security reasons. The International Organization for Migration in Thailand said it had seen a steady increase in people crossing the border from Myanmar, including a nearly 30% increase between January and February. Women were more likely than men to enter without official documentation, it added. But it's not just military conscription that some women have to fear. In the eastern Shan State, at least three ethnic armed groups have announced mandatory service policies in recent months. Two of these groups conscript women. Fear of being conscripted into an ethnic armed group drove 16-year-old Christine, who also did not give her real name for security reasons, from her home in Lashio township in February after one of the armed groups there told her grandmother that Christine and her siblings would have to serve in its forces.

Tariff hikes on Chinese goods and Red Sea crisis are fuelling container shortages, impacting exporters



Shortages have also resurfaced as voyage time of ships has increased amid the ongoing Red Sea crisis and fresh trade tensions between the US and China. Shortages have also resurfaced as voyage time of ships has increased amid the ongoing Red Sea crisis and fresh trade tensions between the US and China. (Photo: Unsplash)

As European Union's 37.6 per cent tariffs on imports of Chinese Electric Vehicles (EVs) kick in from Friday, barely a month before US tariffs are slated to come into effect, India exporters as well as traders globally are hit by unprecedented container shortages. At a review meeting in the Commerce Ministry last month, exporters brought up concerns of a sudden shortage of containers, pointing at structural weakness that has been hurting Indian goods exports since the COVID-19 pandemic. Shortages have also resurfaced as voyage time of ships has increased amid the ongoing Red Sea crisis and fresh trade tensions between the US and China. The Indian Express explains why Indian exporters are facing repeated shortages of basic infrastructure for trade. Indian exporters are finding fewer containers for exports amid an increased demand for the steel boxes. This is primarily on account of the demand from Chinese exporters in the backdrop of fresh US and EU tariffs on products from China. In order to beat the steep US and EU tariffs, which in case of the US go up to as high as 100 per cent on Electric Vehicles (EVs) and 50 per cent on semiconductors that are set to come into effect on August 1, exporters are scrambling to ship as many items as possible. Due to the scale of trade between the US and China, container demand has gone up leaving Indian exporters with fewer containers for exports. This has added to the already short supply due to the Red Sea crisis.

The Red Sea shipping route is still under blockade amid near-daily attacks targeting commercial vessels by Yemen's Houthi rebels that has slashed traffic through the route by 90 per cent compared to December last year

as per US Defence Intelligence Agency report. Last month, a bulk carrier reportedly sank indicating escalation of tensions in the crucial maritime route. This has resulted in more ships taking the longer route via the Cape of Good Hope route and spending more time on the sea blocking a higher number of containers for reuse. The Red Sea crisis has also increased port congestion. Reuters reported that global port congestion has reached an 18-month high, with 60 per cent of ships waiting at anchor located in Asia. Tariffs hikes have been a part and parcel of trade between the US and China for several years, especially beginning in the Donald Trump administration but shipping routes and containers did not have the impact as they are seen this time. One reason is that the US under Joe Biden not only kept the Trump era tariffs unchanged, he has targeted EV, the fastest growing traded item as per World Trade Organization (WTO). This urgency is displayed by Chinese traders also in the backdrop of significant over capacity of EV items in China. But China is set to lose out on two major markets: the US and the European Union. To make matters worse, Canada is also mulling higher duty on Chinese EVs. Indonesia has also announced an import tariff of up to 200 percent on a range of Chinese goods.

While the reasons for the ongoing container crunch may be different this time around, the root cause of such repeated concerns is India's limited capacity for container manufacturing and complete dependence on China for the steel boxes crucial for global goods trade. China is the largest exporter of containers and makes up for 95 per cent of the large steel boxes production globally. Much of the container manufacturing in China is done by a handful of highly subsidized state owned enterprises that has sparked security concerns in the US, EU as well as in India. Realizing high dependence on China for crucial port operation calls for domestic manufacturing of containers began after COVID-19. The US has initiated plans to de-risk its ports from over reliance on Chinese containers and cranes. India also began production after 2021. The Indian Express had reported in 2021 that state-owned wagon manufacturer Braithwaite, and engineering major Bharat Heavy Electricals Limited had received an order from Container Corporation of India (CONCOR) to develop and produce 1000 containers each. However, the production did not go as expected. Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw told Parliament last year that CONCOR was facing problems in supply and procurement of domestic containers. Vaishnaw told Parliament in April that CONCOR had placed orders for 19,000 containers on seven indigenous container manufacturers located in Andhra Pradesh, West Bengal, Chhattisgarh, Punjab, Maharashtra, and Gujarat but till 31 March 2023, about 500 containers had been delivered to CONCOR.

India needs to sustain growth trajectory for next two decades, says NK Singh

GNS News Agency, July 10

India needs to sustain its current growth trajectory for the next two decades as it hopes to achieve developed nation status, NK Singh, Chairperson of the 15th Finance Commission and former Member of Parliament in the Rajya Sabha, said Wednesday. Singh was conferred an Honorary Fellowship by the London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE) at a ceremony in London. In his acceptance speech titled "The India Era", Singh highlighted the country's growth trajectory as it hopes to achieve developed nation status by 2047. "This is the third term of Prime Minister Modi, he and all members of the Council of Ministers are deeply committed to a developed India by 2047 ... for the next two decades, India needs to sustain this kind of growth trajectory. The Indian growth story also demonstrates that democracy and development are not inimical to each other," he said. "From time immemorial, India has been a mine of precious ideas; ushering in the India age is predicated in this deep belief, in our quest, in our anxiety, in our earnestness, in our restlessness to achieve what is ordained for us," Singh said.

Singh is the Co-Convenor of the High Level Expert Group for the reforms of Multilateral Development Banks (MDBs) formed by the G20 and the President of the New Delhi-based Institute of Economic Growth. On the award, Singh said, "It is a humbling moment for me considering the stature of many of my predecessors. The LSE has been a centre of academic excellence since its inception in 1895. Its connection with India has been an intensive, inquisitive and integral relationship." Previous Indian recipients of the award include Dr BR Ambedkar, former Chairperson of Tata Group Ratan Tata, Nobel laureate Amartya Sen, and former President of India KR Narayanan. The Honorary Fellowship was awarded at a ceremony in central London by LSE President and Vice-



Chancellor Larry Kramer on July 3. Singh has been at the forefront of policy-making in India, from his involvement in India's economic reforms of 1991, as Secretary to Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee, and as Secretary in various departments in the Ministry of Finance. In response to an invitation to the ceremony, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said, "NK Singh's profound expertise in fiscal policy, coupled with his unwavering commitment to fiscal prudence, transparency, and cooperative federalism, epitomises his enduring legacy ... Throughout his decades of public service, (he) has exemplified leadership in key positions, including the Chairmanship of the 15th Finance Commission and the Fiscal Responsibility and Budget Management Review Committee." "As a Member of Parliament, he (NK Singh) made notable contributions including the Committee's dealing with public accounts, foreign affairs and human resource development. In the diplomatic domain, he is well-known for his efforts at forging a closer relationship between India and Japan... (and was) deeply involved in India's G20 Presidency, serving as the Co-Convenor of the Independent Expert Group for the Reforms of Multilateral Development Banks," Minister of External Affairs S Jaishankar said in response to an invitation to the ceremony.

New model of Producer Price Index to capture input prices better on the anvil

New model of Producer Price Index to capture input prices better on the anvil. The government is also planning on moving from WPI to PPI in line with most G20 economies. The Department of Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) secretary Rajesh Kumar Singh on Friday said that the department has finalised a new model of the Producer Price Index (PPI) to efficiently capture input prices in the economy and has shared it with the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

Singh during a press briefing said that the government is also working towards changing the base year of the wholesale price index (WPI) from 2011-12 adding that the government is slo mulling on moving from the WPI to PPI going ahead in line with most G20 economies. Consultations regarding the same have been undertaken with the ministry of statistics and programme implementation (MoSPI), he said. "It has to go through a process, including National Statistical Commission (NSC) but we are on the job... The model from our side is final and we have shown it to the IMF," Singh said. Commenting on requests to change the base year of the WPI, he said this is also one of the issues that the government is considering. The DPIIT in 2021 had issued a draft technical report of a working group, which had suggested revising the base year of WPI. "Government, including MoSPI, looks at other statistical indicators, including the



The Department of Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) secretary Rajesh Kumar Singh on Friday said that the department has finalised a new model of the Producer Price Index (PPI) to efficiently capture input prices in the economy and has shared it with the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

CPI and various other indicators. I suspect you can expect some sort of an update of the base year eventually, but whether there will be one particular base year or different... because our studies show that other countries have multiple base years for different types of indices," Singh said. Singh said that there will be a transitional phase where both the indices will be there, but call on it is yet to be taken.

Why Sudha Murty stopped shopping and has not bought a sari in 30 years



Did you know Sudha Murty has not bought a sari in the last 30 years? The Rajya Sabha MP and author has made a name for herself, along with husband and Infosys founder Narayana Murthy, for embracing simplicity despite being millionaires. In a recent interview, Murty revealed she has had a "100 per cent no shopping policy" for over two decades. Want to know the reason? A trip to Varanasi almost 30 years ago.

"It is said that when you go to Kashi, you should give up something you like very much. I used to love shopping, so my promise to the Ganga was that I would give up shopping for this lifetime," the engineer-turned-philanthropist said in the interview.

The 73-year-old explained that the reason she has been able to stick to this commitment is because of her humble upbringing. She revealed her parents and grandparents lived a minimal, pared-down life. "When my mother passed away six years ago it took us just half an hour to give away the things in her cupboard because she had just 8-10 sarees in it. When my grandma passed away 32 years ago, she had just four sarees. They travelled light on this earth and since that has been part of my upbringing, I found it easier to adopt a simpler life with fewer possessions," the author told the Voice of Fashion. Ever since Murty gave up shopping, she has only been wearing the saris gifted to her by her sisters or close friends, and occasionally the NGOs that she worked with. She revealed that her "most cherished possessions" are two hand-embroidered saris, which were gifted to her by the women she met and changed the life of, while working as the chairperson of the non-profit charitable organisation Infosys Foundation. Murty also shared that her husband gifted her two simple saris for their wedding. "I was so happy to have them. I did not want more. Even today, I find it difficult to understand the seasonal trends and seasonal collections from fashion designers. How long can you go on following the dictates of fashion? I believe in possessing just enough for my basic needs and if you visit our house you will see we have very little stuff around."

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In the fabulous world of beauty, every skincare ritual and makeup application is an art form. This diverse industry celebrates individuality and transformation, showing how a touch of elegance can turn the mundane into something magical. Whether it's achieving flawless complexion, enhancing natural features, or expressing creativity through colour and texture, the beauty industry thrives on innovation and inclusivity, ensuring everyone can find products that resonate with their unique style and preferences. This summer, Amazon Beauty is revolutionising the online beauty shopping experience by offering a curated selection of top brands, trending skincare ingredients, new product launches, and unique finds, all at great value with the convenience of Amazon's fast delivery and trusted shopping experience.

With Amazon Beauty's Global Beauty Store customers can choose from a curated selection of 60+ international beauty brands and over 5,000 products. From catering to different skin tones and types to addressing specific skincare concerns, it embraces a spectrum of requirements. So, whether you're a skincare junkie or a makeup maven, this beauty wonderland has everything you need. Let's dive into the hub for all your skincare and makeup dreams – Amazon Beauty's Global Beauty Store! First things first, let's talk glow-up goals. Whether you're obsessed with that flawless K-beauty glass skin or the effortlessly chic Parisian look, Amazon Beauty's Global Beauty Store is here to make your beauty fantasies come true. We're talking about over 60+ iconic brands like Anastasia Beverly Hills, NUDESTIX, Beauty of Joseon, AXIS-Y, and more! And the best part? You can grab these goodies at up to 40% off. Yes, you read that right – beauty steals galore! Let's dive into some must-have picks that will have your vanity looking straight out of a beauty influencer's dream. CeraVe Moisturizing Cream: Every skincare routine deserves a hero that delivers results. Enter the CeraVe Moisturizing Cream – a dermatologist-recommended gem that epitomises hydration and nourishment. Whether used on the face or body, it delivers intense, long-lasting moisture, making it a must-have for your routine. Anastasia Beverly Hills Luminous Founda-

tion: Get ready to meet your new BFF. This foundation gives you medium coverage with a lightweight feel, leaving your skin looking fresh and radiant. Perfect for everyday glam and those extra special occasions. rom&nd Juicy Lasting Tint: Say hello to long-lasting, bold lip color that feels as good as it looks. This K-beauty gem keeps your lips moisturized and vibrant all day. Swipe on and slay, babes! NUDESTIX Nudies Blush: For that natural, sun-kissed glow, this blush is a game-changer. Easy to apply and perfect for on-the-go touch-ups, it's a makeup bag essential. ANUA Heartleaf 77 Clear Pad: If you're all about that flawless skin life, these pads are a must. They soothe, hydrate, and balance your skin, making them perfect for sensitive and acne-prone skin. inde wild Moonlight Scalp Serum: Hair goals, anyone? This scalp serum is packed with natural ingredients to nourish your roots and leave your hair looking stronger and shinier. Chopard Oud Malaki: Ideal for those who appreciate the finer things in life, Chopard Oud Malaki exudes confidence and sophistication with every spray. So, discover the art of refined fragrance and transform your scent into a signature of distinction and luxury. Amazon Beauty's Global Beauty Store isn't just about products; it's about discovering the best beauty secrets from around the globe. From Korean skincare miracles to French perfume artistry, every product is handpicked for its exceptional quality and advanced formulations. Whether you're a skincare newbie or a makeup maven, there's something for everyone. So, what are you waiting for? Dive into Amazon Beauty's Global Beauty Store which offers over 5,000 products at up to 40% off, and get ready to glow like never before. Your beauty journey just got a major upgrade, and it's time to shine!

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Confused by all the TikTok trends? This glossary might help

Since the social media platform made its U.S. debut almost six years ago, short videos posted there have created a rapidly changing menu of food and fashion fads. Many of these latest rages have gone on to inspire sales of countless products and to shape news coverage despite having names that can confuse people who are not chronically online. TikTok also has popularized phrases like "I'm looking for a man in finance" – from a satirical song about searching for a tall, wealthy man who works in the finance industry and "the ick" – an expression of disgust or repulsion, as Merriam-Webster puts it. Barbiecore: Barbie is known for pink, and so is Barbiecore. The color crept into fashion, beauty and food in 2022, and was even recommended by The Associated Press for holiday gifts that year. According to the fashion company LYST, the trend began after pictures of a pink-clad Margot Robbie surfaced online in June 2022, a year

before the actor's "Barbie" movie came out and toy maker Mattel launched its own marketing blitz to promote the color. Barbiecore was a heavy hit both on Instagram and TikTok, where more than 72,000 videos have been posted with the trend's name as a hashtag. Coastal grandma: A beachfront, white linen-clad fashion look that incorporates light blue and loose clothing in a way that subtly communicates a peaceful and carefree lifestyle. Lex Nicoleta, a TikTok creator who has 325,000 followers on the platform, coined the term. Cottagecore: This style captures colors and patterns from countryside meadows. Think greenery, long flowery dresses and the aesthetic of Middle-earth, the planet's mythological past as imagined in J.R.R. Tolkien's "The Lord of the Rings." TikTok, Barbiecore According to the fashion company LYST, the "Barbiecore" trend began after pictures of a pink-clad Margot Robbie surfaced online in June 2022.

When Juhi Chawla said she refused to work with Madhuri Dixit because of her 'ego problems': 'I had some insecurity'



Juhi Chawla and Madhuri Dixit were the biggest movie stars in the 1990s. They started their career around the same time, and also experienced success together and as it happens in the entertainment business, they were often pitted against each other. So much so that Juhi once refused a Yash Chopra film because of her "ego problems" with Madhuri. In an earlier interview with Zoom, Juhi shared, "We started our careers at the same time. She had Tezaab and I had Qayamat Se Qayamat Tak in the same year. Throughout our careers, we were always compared to each other. It was always like one of us is number one, the other is number two, or the other way. This went on for a long time." In the early 1990s,

both actors were at the top of their game and delivered many hit films.

Juhi Chawla shared that Yash Chopra offered her Dil To Pagal Hai, but the role she was offered was seen as that of the 'supporting actor' which bothered her, and so she refused the film. "After I had worked with Yash ji in Darr, he wanted to make Dil To Pagal Hai, and he wanted to work with Madhuri Dixit. He asked that I do the other role. And I was like 'I should do the other role?' I had some insecurity and some ego problems so I didn't do it. That was the only one opportunity (we had to work together)," she recalled. The role that was offered to Juhi was eventually done by Karisma Kapoor, who got a National Award for her performance in the film. Dil To Pagal Hai also starred Shah Rukh Khan. Juhi and Madhuri worked together in 2014's Gulab Gang. At the time, Madhuri told PTI that she never saw Juhi as her competitor. "I never thought of her as my competitor. I never had any qualms about working with anyone. This is my thinking that we are actors not horses running towards one finish line. It is a creative field and we like certain roles and work with people we like. It is not that I have not worked in two-heroine projects earlier. I worked with Preity Zinta (Yeh Raaste Hain Pyaar Ke), Aishwarya Rai (Devdas) and Karisma Kapoor (Dil To Pagal Hai)," she said.

Farah Khan reveals producer offered her Rs 10 crore to cast his son in Happy New Year: 'What if Shah Rukh gets to know'



Being in the film industry for decades, Farah Khan is a treasure trove of stories. Recently, the choreographer-filmmaker opened up about being offered Rs 10 crore by a producer to cast his son in the Shah Rukh Khan-starrer Happy New Year. Farah recalled the incident and revealed that she outright refused the offer, instead casting Vivaan Shah, the son of Naseerudin Shah and Ratna Pathak Shah, in the role.

Farah shared this anecdote in a recent interaction with comedian and writer Zakir Khan, who she invited to her home for lunch. She recounted, "You won't believe it, but during Happy New Year, a producer offered me Rs 10 crore to cast his son. Being a 'Jhansi Ki Rani,' I said, 'I will never do this.' I won't do injustice to the film. What if Shah Rukh gets to know that I took Rs 10 crore to cast

him in the film? Never, I won't do that. I took Vivaan Shah in the film because I thought I will take the person who fits perfectly in the character and the film." Happy New Year (2014) was Farah Khan's fourth and her last directorial venture, following Tees Maar Khan, Main Hoon Na, and Om Shanti Om. This film marked her third collaboration with Shah Rukh Khan. The action-comedy was produced by Gauri Khan under the banner of Red Chillies Entertainment.

Besides SRK and Vivaan, the film also starred Deepika Padukone, Abhishek Bachchan, Sonu Sood, Boman Irani, and Jackie Shroff in pivotal roles. With a total budget of Rs 140 crore, Happy New Year grossed Rs 408 crore at the box office. However, it received negative reviews from critics for its writing and lengthy runtime.

Rajinikanth, Mohan Babu share adorable moment on Hyderabad-bound flight,

A photo has surfaced online showing Tamil superstar Rajinikanth and Telugu star Mohan Babu sharing an adorable moment on a flight en route to Hyderabad. Tamil superstar Rajinikanth and Telugu star Mohan Babu on a flight to Hyderabad. Both Tamil superstar Rajinikanth and Telugu star Mohan Babu began their careers around the same time in the '70s and have since become iconic figures with massive fan followings in their respective film industries. At the same time, the two also share a deep and enduring friendship that has lasted for decades.

Now, a photo has surfaced online showing the two stars sharing an adorable moment on a flight en route to Hyderabad. Babu had recently arrived in Chennai to attend Tamil actor Sarathkumar's daughter Varalaxmi's wedding reception. After the event, the actor returned to Hyderabad with Rajinikanth, who was heading there for the filming of his upcoming movie. Taking to X (formerly Twitter), Mohan Babu posted a photo showing him sitting next to Rajinikanth, who has one arm around Babu's shoulder and the other holding the actor's chin. The candid shot appears to have been taken while the friends were sharing a light moment., a video featuring the two of them exiting the Hyderabad airport together also surfaced



on social media, winning the hearts of fans. Pedarayudu (1995) was the last film in which Rajini and Babu shared the screen. Incidentally, this also remains Rajini's last proper Telugu film to date. Reports indicate that Rajinikanth is in Hyderabad to shoot for director Lokesh Kanagaraj's ambitious film Coolie. A week ago, Kanagaraj shared a photo of himself with Rajinikanth in costume and makeup and captioned it, "Look test for Coolie. On floors from July."

First look of Rashmika Mandanna from 'Kubera' unveiled

Mumbai: The first look of Rashmika Mandanna from the upcoming film 'Kubera' was unveiled on Friday. In the film, the actress is set to portray a character that promises to be both intriguing and refreshing. The poster shows her dressed in an Indian suit, holding a suitcase against the backdrop of a forest. Rashmika's appearance in the poster exudes a blend of mystery and allure, setting the stage for what could be another memorable performance. The teaser video shows Rashmika's character digging in the ground of the dark forest, discovering

a large suitcase full of money. This compelling scene, combined with DSP's electrifying music, heightens the sense of anticipation and curiosity. As a recent update, the video teaser of the first look poster reached 2 million real time views within a few hours of its release. National Award-winning director Sekhar Kammula said: "In storytelling, fortune favours those who embrace the unexpected. The best moments often come when and from whom you least expect it. Rashmika's character captures this essence, adding surprise and depth that are crucial to our film 'Kubera'."

'Salman Khan never chills alone, is a complete Punjabi at heart,' says Mukesh Rishi as he recalls Judwaa days



Mukesh Rishi, who has appeared in popular films like Sarfarosh and Sooryavansham, recently opened up about his experience of working with film star Salman Khan back in the 1990s. At the time, Salman had just started experiencing stardom and was one of the biggest film stars of the time. Mukesh and Salman worked together in Judwaa, directed by David Dhawan. Mukesh described Salman as a "Punjabi at heart."

He shared with Bollywood Bubble, "It was my first film with David Dhawan. Salman was a big star then." He recalled that he got a lot of time to talk to Salman and

said, "Salman is not the kind of guy who chills alone. If it's a room or lobby or anywhere, he likes to chill with people. He is completely like a Punjabi in that respect. Staying together, being with friends." In Judwaa, Mukesh played the role of a villain named Tiger Pandey.

In an earlier interview, Mukesh had opened up about his friendship with the Khan family. He shared an incident where his son was at a restaurant and when Sohail Khan (Salman's brother) found out, he paid his bill. "Abhi ek din mera beta ek restaurant mein gaya tha apne friends ke saath. Waha Sohail Khan bhi aaye the. Phir baato baato mein pata chal ki wo waha hai. Jaate jaate Sohail saara bill pay kar ke chale gaye. Ye sab dosti se kam thodi hai (Recently, my son was at a restaurant, and Sohail Khan was also there. Sohail found out, and quietly paid the entire bill. This is friendship)," he shared with Bollywood Thikana. Mukesh Rishi is most known for his work in Aamir Khan-starrer Sarfarosh where he played Inspector Salim. At the film's recent 25th year celebration, Aamir and director John Matthew Matthan hinted towards making the film's sequel. "Aamir is keen. I am also planning to make it, but unless you get the freedom and choice to do it and if it is not pleasurable for you then, how are others going to enjoy your film?" the director told indianexpress.com.

Grammy-winning composer Ricky Kej says Liver Doc 'not completely wrong' for calling out Samantha Ruth Prabhu: 'You endorse sugary, unhealthy foods'

Three-time Grammy Award-winning composer Ricky Kej, of Indian descent, has commented on the matter, supporting The Liver Doc's statement against Samantha Ruth Prabhu, while condemning her choice of words. Three-time Grammy Award-winning composer Ricky Kej and Telugu-Tamil actor Samantha Ruth Prabhu. (Images: Ricky, Samantha/Facebook) It appears that the Samantha Ruth Prabhu-The Liver Doc episode is snowballing into a major controversy, with even eminent personalities weighing in on the matter and sharing their two cents on it. Now, three-time Grammy Award-winning composer Ricky Kej, of Indian descent, has entered the chat, supporting The Liver Doc's statement, while condemning his choice of words. Meanwhile, Varun Dhawan has come out in her support.

It all started when Samantha endorsed on her podcast, Take 20, nebulising hydrogen peroxide and distilled water as an alternative treatment for viral infections. Calling her "health and science illiterate," medical influencer Cyriac Abby Philips aka The Liver Doc noted on X (formerly Twitter) that she could've been jailed for making such claims in a "rational and progressive society." Earlier today, Samantha issued a lengthy statement responding to the doctor's remarks. Mentioning that she landed on treatments that "worked wonderfully" for her after lots of "trial and error," the Kushi actor mentioned that this treatment was suggested by a medical professional with over 25 years' experience, who "chose to advocate alternative therapy" after leaving behind his education in "conventional medicine". She, however, also said that she will be 'more careful' about medical advices henceforth. Many celebrities, including Rhea Chakraborty and Manchu Lakshmi, had assembled in the post's comment section, expressing their support and love for their colleague. Addressing Samantha in the comment section, Kej wrote, "Get well soon! You have gone through a lot, and deserve to be well. About medical advice, it would be best not shared by non-medical professionals especially celebs with influence. More-so since you also endorse processed foods for pets, and sugary unhealthy foods. While we understand that this is done for the money, it is natural that there will be suspicion about everything that you praise." Left: Influential Indian actress Ms.



Samantha Ruth who is unfortunately a health and science illiterate advising millions of her followers to inhale hydrogen-peroxide to prevent and treat respiratory viral infections. Right: Scientific society, The Asthma and Allergy Foundation... pic.twitter.com/lhn2xocKU

Ms. Samantha Ruth Prabhu has responded to my "provocative" criticism of her endorsement of unscientific, pseudoscientific and baseless alternative medicine therapies by playing the victim card and endorsing more alternative practices. "So the Doctor who attacked you (I cannot see his comments) may have been rude, but he was not completely wrong. One cannot play with people's lives with advice, which is half-baked. Especially people with huge influence. It is not the responsibility of the said Doctor to get in touch with yours. He will rightly respond to you, since you are the one advocating the treatment," he added. After Samantha issued the statement, The Liver Doc had lashed out at her for the "endorsement of unscientific, pseudoscientific and baseless alternative medicine therapies by playing the victim card and endorsing more alternative practices." "She is a serial offender in the context of healthcare misinformation and she has been in the line of fire previously too," he added. Varun, who is working with Samantha on a Citadel offshoot, meanwhile, shared a heart icon on his response while actor Rhea Chakraborty wrote, "Potatoes gonna potato."

Kalki 2898 AD: 'Let's save analysis for later and celebrate Indian Cinema', says Nag Ashwin amid comparisons and trolling of Prabhas-starrer

For sometime now, producers, exhibitors, and distributors of films from South India have expressed their displeasure on how reviews by self-styled social media 'critics' is impacting their business. A lot of films that released lately, especially the ones high on VFX, have been a target of trolls and comparisons. Kalki 2898 AD also received a similar treatment upon its release. However, in his latest post on X, the director of the film Nag Ashwin has requested his followers to "save the analysis for later and celebrate Indian Cinema this weekend."

Soon after Kalki's release, social media was flooded with reviews about the Prabhas, Deepika Padukone, Kamal Haasan, and Amitabh Bachchan starrer film. While some called the first half dragged, others claimed Deepika Padukone had more screen time than Prabhas. Several others also said that Amitabh Bachchan overshadowed Prabhas' character, while Disha Patani's work was also criticised. There were also a set of people, who tar-



geted Adipurush director Om Raut and asked him to learn how to make historical films without hurting people's sentiments.

Amid all the reviews, analysis and comparisons, on Friday, Nag Ashwin took to his X handle to share a strong message with his followers. He wrote, "This weekend, let's celebrate. The fandoms, the audiences, the languages that have come together. The doors that have opened, the possibilities for future filmmakers that are unlocked. Let's save the analysis for later. This weekend let's celebrate Indian Cinema!" This weekend, let's celebrate. The fandoms, the audiences, the languages that have come together. The doors that have opened, the possibilities for future filmmakers that are unlocked. Let's save the analysis for later. This

weekend let's celebrate Indian Cinema!" This weekend, let's celebrate. The fandoms, the audiences, the languages that have come together. The doors that have opened, the possibilities for future filmmakers that are unlocked. Let's save the analysis for later. This weekend let's celebrate Indian Cinema! #KALKI2898AD... Nag Ashwin's film has managed to cross the Rs 700 crore mark within seven days of its release.

However, the film witnessed a significant drop in the theatre occupancy compared to its opening

weekend. It needs to be seen if the film manages to cross the Rs 1000 crore mark in its second weekend. The film, which had been in the making for around five years, is reportedly made on a budget of Rs 600 crore.

Apart from Prabhas, Deepika Padukone, Kamal Haasan, and Amitabh Bachchan, the film also features actors Vijay Deverakonda, Dulquer Salmaan, and Mrunal Thakur in cameo roles. Produced by Vyjayanthi Movies, Kalki 2898 AD hit the theatres worldwide on June 27.

On Test debut, England's Gus Atkinson nabs seven wickets as West Indies are bundled out for 121



GNS News Agency, July 10

Atkinson removed Kraigg Braithwaite, Kirk McKenzie, Alick Athanaze, Jason Holder, Joshua Da Silva, Alzarri Joseph and Shamar Joseph as he finished with bowling figures of 7/45 off his 12 overs – third-best

for an England bowler on Test debut. The 26-year-old's 7-fer came on Day 1 of what is England pace veteran James Anderson's last Test match. Anderson claimed the last wicket – his 701st in Tests – to wrap up the Windies innings. Best bowling figures for England on Test debut

"All the build-up around Jimmy might've helped the likes of Gus Atkinson and Jamie Smith because they've gone under the radar a bit, it's allowed them to just crack on," former England captain Michael Vaughan told BBC Sport. "But that's a very promising start from Atkinson. He bowled with good zip and pace at the first time of asking. For a long time now England have wanted to build this crop of fast bowlers and he has delivered," Vaughan added. West Indies are in England for a three-match Test series. While the Windies are currently sixth in the 2023/25 World Test Championship (WTC) points table, England are at the bottom of the nine-team tally. Ben Stokes and Co are playing their first Test series since the 4-1 defeat in India earlier this year.

Gambhir is yet to ink salary deal, first big 'Test' would be 'Down Under'

GNS News Agency, July 10

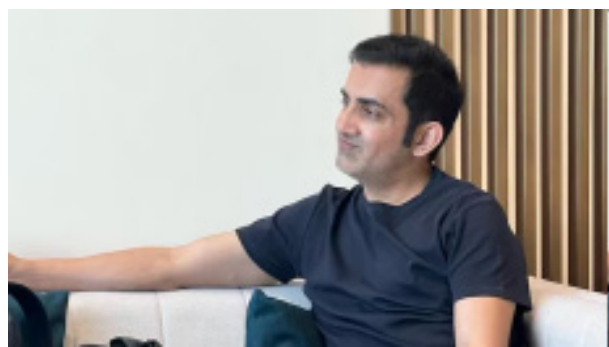
The financial nitty-gritties of Gautam Gambhir's appointment as India's head coach are yet to be worked out but that's the "last of his concerns" right now as he is focussed on getting a support staff of choice to prepare for the enormous challenges that await him during the three-year stint.

On Tuesday, BCCI secretary Jay Shah officially announced Gambhir's appointment, which was on cards for a long time. However, it is learnt that his salary is yet to be finalised although it is expected to be in the same bracket as that of his predecessors Rahul Dravid and Ravi Shastri. "For Gautam, it was important that he took charge and salary and other stuff can be worked out as it's not going anywhere. It is similar to the case of Ravi Shastri in 2014 when he was first made Director of Cricket over head coach Duncan Fletcher," a BCCI source told PTI.

"The day Ravi joined, he didn't even have a contract and things worked out. In case of Gautam also, some finer details are being worked out. The salary will be in the same range of Rahul Dravid," he added.

It is understood that Gambhir will be given his own team to work with, who will also closely co-ordinate with the NCA (National Cricket Academy) coaches, who look after the pathways teams (India A and U-19) as well as the targeted players. "I look forward to working closely with the BCCI, Head of Cricket – Mr VVS Laxman, the support staff, and, most importantly, the players, as we work towards achieving success in the upcoming tournaments," Gambhir had said. Laxman is currently in Zimbabwe with the young T20 team, but it is expected that once he is back, the NCA head, along with the new head coach and chairman of selectors Ajit Agarkar, the two captains Rohit Sharma and Hardik Pandya will have a discussion on the road ahead. Brainstorming over support staff there is a lot of interest surrounding who will be Gambhir's core support staff. Abhishek Nayar, the head of KKR's academy and a former Mumbai stalwart has been one of the key back-room strategists for the IPL franchise. He is also known to be a life coach, who has helped players one-on-one on professional basis.

More importantly, he is one of current captain Rohit Sharma's closest friends. Having ticked all boxes, he looks set to be one of the assistant coaches. One BCCI office-bearer, who primarily operates from Delhi, is believed to have floated the names of L Balaji and Zaheer Khan as two prospective candidates for the bowling coach's job. A few other reports have indicated R Vinay Kumar's name, believed to be Gambhir's choice. However, it is understood that the BCCI has rejected the proposal even though there's no confirmation of such a development from BCCI



secretary Jay Shah, the man who matters in BCCI. As far as the fielding coach's role is concerned, Jonty Rhodes' name seems to have cropped up again but if one looks at the trend of the past two coaching cycles, BCCI has always preferred one of its home-grown talents in the set-up.

For instance, R Sridhar was a core member of Shastri's team and worked through the ranks in the NCA and the India U-19 set-up. Ditto for T Dilip, who worked extensively under Dravid at NCA and also went for India A assignments. There is a school of thought that perhaps Munish Bali, who has been around the set-up for some time now and knows most of the youngsters coming through the system, can be given a try as well. The T20I and ODI squad for the Sri Lanka series will be announced in the next few days but the IPL-winning former KKR mentor's priority for the next one year would be the two traditional formats -- ODIs and Tests. Major challenges ahead Gambhir's first big test would certainly be Australia, where India under Ravi Shastri's tutelage had won back-to-back Test series in 2018-19 and 2020-21. After 33 years (since 1991-92), India and Australia will be engaged in a five-Test series with the opening Test starting on one of the bounciest tracks -- the Optus Stadium in Perth. While Gambhir had spent an enormous amount of time strategising for Delhi as its captain between 2013-17 in the Ranji Trophy, his standing as a red-ball coach will hinge a lot on a series, which will also prove to be decisive as far as India's qualification for the World Test Championship is concerned. In between, there would be the Champions Trophy in Pakistan but the BCCI is yet to give its go-ahead to the schedule. Gambhir, who has always spoken about the sacrifices of the Indian Army, has been dead against playing any cricket in Pakistan. Now on BCCI payrolls once again, it will be interesting to see what would be his stand about playing there when a major ICC title is at stake, should the tournament go ahead as planned.

Argentina take dig at Drake after rapper loses USD 300k in Copa bet

GNS News Agency, July 10

Argentina took a shot at music artist Drake after the Canadian lost USD 300,000 on a bet his country would beat the defending champions in Tuesday's Copa America semi-final. Argentina posted a photo on Instagram using rap rival Kendrick Lamar's song to send him a message.

Argentina reached the final of Copa America by beating Canada in the semi-final of the tournament. Lionel Messi scored a solitary goal alongside Julian Alvarez as Argentina dominated the proceedings on Wednesday, 10 July. After winning the match, the football team took a shot at music artist Drake after the Canadian lost \$300,000 on a bet his country would beat the defending champions in Tuesday's Copa America semi-final, using rap rival Kendrick Lamar's song to send him a message. Drake posted an image on Instagram that showed his bet would have given him a \$2.88 million payout if Canada won, but goals from Julian Alvarez and Lionel Messi moved Argen-



tina into a fourth final in five editions. The World Cup winners responded to Drake's post with a photo accompanied by the caption: "Not like us", the title of a 'diss' track released by Lamar in May which criticised the Canadian artist and which has been streamed nearly half a billion times on Spotify. Drake placed a \$300k bet on Canada to beat Argentina. After Argentina won, the official account of the Argentina national team played Kendrick Lamar's Drake diss track on their insta post and added the

song title "Not Like Us" to their post-match graphic. pic.twitter.com/zFAQ1Bd4YB — Footy Humour (@FootyHumour) July 10, 2024 The music video has over 115 million views on YouTube after both rappers released several solo tracks taking aim at each other. Argentina are looking to secure a record 16th Copa America title and will play either Uruguay or Colombia in Sunday's final. Lionel Messi broke a series of records as he inspired Argentina into their seventh Copa

America final. Messi's side defeated a spirited Canada 2-0 in the semi-final in front of a packed house in New Jersey on Tuesday. Messi scored his 14th goal in Copa America to go level with Peru's Paolo Guerrero and Chile's Eduardo Vargas and be three shy of the all-time record in the tournament. Messi and Julian Alvarez's goals sealed the deal for Argentina in their semi-final against Canada. It was the 7th time Argentina, 15-time champions, reached the final of the Copa América. 2010.

Sunil Chhetri promises full commitment to Indian football at Durand Cup unveiling



GNS News Agency, July 10

Indian football legend Sunil Chhetri expressed his unwavering dedication to the sport and the future of Indian football during the Durand Cup trophy tour flag-off ceremony. With President Droupadi Murmu in attendance, Chhetri highlighted India's need to improve its standing in Asia. In an emotional and inspiring speech, Indian football legend Sunil Chhetri reaffirmed his unwavering dedication to the sport and the future of Indian football. Although he has retired from his international career, Chhetri remains deeply committed to the progress of the national team and its aspirations. Chhetri's remarks came during the flag-off ceremony of the Durand Cup trophy tour, attended by President Droupadi Murmu. Reflecting on his storied career and the journey ahead for Indian football, Chhetri expressed confidence that India will eventually reach the heights envisioned by its passionate supporters.

"I have experienced a lot of ups and downs in my career, but one thing is constant, that is one day, we will reach that level which all of us have dreamt of," said

Real Madrid set to officially present Kylian Mbappe on July 16 at Santiago Bernabéu

GNS News Agency, July 10

Kylian Mbappe Real Madrid Kylian Mbappe of France reacts after losing a semifinal match between Spain and France at the Euro 2024 soccer tournament in Munich, Germany, Tuesday, July 9, 2024. (AP Photo/Antonio Calanni)

Real Madrid will present Kylian Mbappe as an official Galactico next Tuesday at the iconic Santiago Bernabéu, the club said in a statement on Wednesday. "Real Madrid C. F. is pleased to announce that Kylian Mbappé will be presented at the Santiago Bernabéu stadium on Tuesday 16 July at noon. President of Real Madrid, Florentino Pérez, will welcome Kylian Mbappé to Real Madrid City for the formal signing of the contract that links our new player to the club for the next five seasons," the statement read. "Following the presentation, Kylian Mbappé will speak to the media in the press room at the Santiago Bernabéu," it added.

Last month, the Spanish club had announced the much-anticipated signing of France captain. Mbappe, who announced his departure from Ligue 1 champions Paris Saint Germain in May, has joined the La Liga champions on a free transfer with an initial agreement for five seasons, the club confirmed. "A dream come true, So happy and proud to join the club of my dream, Real Madrid. Nobody can understand how excited I am right

now. Can't wait to see you, Madridistas, and thanks for your unbelievable support," Mbappe wrote on his social media, posting his childhood photos wearing a Real Madrid kit, alongside Cristiano Ronaldo during his time at the club. Mbappe's affinity to the club in the Spanish capital has been long known. The World Cup winner with France has been linked to the club over the years. In 2022, reports of a move to Spain had been loud but Mbappe would extend his contract until June 2024, after an even elusive deal was offered by the Parisian club. Mbappe recently participated in the Euro, scoring just 1 goal which came from the penalty spot and providing 1 assist as France were dumped out by Spain in the semifinal on Tuesday.

Chhetri, who retired from international football last month after setting numerous national records. While Chhetri's international career may be over, his influence continues as he remains active in domestic football. With a contract with Bengaluru FC extending until next year, Chhetri has yet to decide when he will retire from club football. "I can't do much now as I am retired but I will do everything I can to take India to that promised land. We have a lot to work for, but we will be at that place we want to be," Chhetri, who turns 40 next month, stated.

Chhetri's comments come at a turbulent time for Indian football. The national team recently failed to qualify for the third round of the FIFA World Cup qualifiers, leading to the dismissal of coach Igor Stimac. Chhetri emphasized that India's focus should be on improving its standing in Asia before setting sights on the World Cup. During Chhetri's 19-year-long illustrious career, India has been in the top 20 in Asia but not in the top 10. Currently, India is in 22nd place in Asia and 124th in the world, a steep drop in one year. However, in July 2023, India entered the top 100 in the FIFA rankings following their Intercontinental Cup and SAFF Championship victories. The Durand Cup, commencing in Kolkata on July 27, holds special significance for Chhetri. He reminisced about his discovery and rise to national prominence after participating in the century-old tournament in 2002 with Delhi club City FC. "I was discovered in this tournament when I was playing for a Delhi club. This is not just a tournament. There is a lot of tradition and history of Indian football associated with it," said Chhetri, who led Bengaluru FC to the Durand Cup title win in 2022. "Durand Cup is the springboard of many a talented player in this country," added the former captain of Asia's oldest—and the world's fifth oldest—tournament, which was first held in Shimla in 1888.



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Pakistan sack Wahab Riaz and Abdul Razzaq from seven-member selection committee



GNS News Agency, July 10

Abdul Razzaq and Wahab Riaz have been sacked from the PCB selection committee. (PCB) Abdul Razzaq and Wahab Riaz have been sacked from the PCB selection committee. (PCB) Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) has sacked Wahab Riaz and Abdul Razzaq from the senior national selection committee.

The decision was made after Pakistan's underwhelming run at the T20 World Cup held in the West Indies and the USA. Pakistan finished third in a group that were topped by India and hosts United States. The Babar Azam-led side lost to India after being stunned

by the USA in a Super Over defeat. While Razzaq served in both the men's and women's national selection setup, Wahab served as the chief selector for the men's side before being reduced to a member of the seven-member committee a few months ago. The committee has not had a chief selector in this period.

According to an International Cricket Council (ICC) statement, "Pakistan have further confirmed the restructuring of the selection committee with details on its composition to be soon announced." Wahab, who appeared in three World Cups for Pakistan, also served as the senior team manager during the recent T20 World Cup tour to the Americas. Since 2020, the PCB has had six high-profile selectors with Wahab, Mohammad Wasim, Shahid Afridi, Inzamam-ul-Haq, Haroon Rashid, and Misbah-ul-Haq in varying and brief tenures. The remaining five selection committee members of the current set-up are the head coach (Gary Kisten for ODIs and T20Is; Jason Gillespie for Tests), captain Babar Azam, Mohammad Yousuf, Asad Shafiq and data analyst Bilal Afzal. Pakistan are next slated to host Bangladesh for a two-match Test series starting August. They will also host England for three Tests before embarking on limited-overs tours to Australia, Zimbabwe and South Africa later this year.

Jasmine Paolini reaches semifinals, makes history for Italy

GNS News Agency, July 10

London: French Open finalist Jasmine Paolini remained on course for a second successive major final as she defeated Emma Navarro in the quarterfinal to become the woman player from Italy to reach the semifinals at Wimbledon on Tuesday. Paolini rolled to a dominant 6-2, 6-1 win over the No. 19 seed Navarro to reach the semifinals of the grass-court Grand Slam for the first time.

Italian women had previously lost all four quarterfinals in Wimbledon before Paolini's 58-minute triumph on Centre Court, which was also her first-ever win against Navarro — who had upset No. 2 seed Coco Gauff in the Round of 16 — in four tries. Down an early break at 2-1, Paolini soared to win 11 of the next 12 games, ending the match with 19 winners — more than triple Navarro's six — as both players hit 12 unforced errors. She only faced the one break point in the first set and saved all three she faced in the second set while break-

ing Navarro's serve five times in total.

Donna Vekic of Croatia pulled off a come-from-behind victory to reach the first Grand Slam semifinal of her career, halting the Cinderella run of qualifier Lulu Sun of New Zealand 5-7, 6-4, 6-1 at Wimbledon on Tuesday. In her third Grand Slam quarterfinal and first at Wimbledon, World No. 37 Vekic had to battle hard to overcome 123rd-ranked Sun, who was aiming to become only the second qualifier to reach the ladies' singles semifinals at Wimbledon. The 28-year-old Vekic eventually edged past 23-year-old Sun after 2 hours and 8 minutes of play on No. 1 Court, breaking new personal ground at a Grand Slam event by making the final four. In the Open Era (since 1968), only Barbora Strycova (53), Anastasia Pavlyuchenkova (52), Elena Likhovtseva (46), and Roberta Vinci (44) took more Grand Slam appearances to make a maiden semifinal.