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Continental Hospitals announces completion of 100 robot-assisted surgeries

Hyderabad: The surgeons at Hyderabad-based Continental Hospitals announced completion of 100 robot-assisted surgeries that were carried out using indigenously developed surgical robotic system known as SSI Mantra, developed by SS Innovations. Traditionally, robotic-assisted devices surgeries are usually imported. However, this is perhaps for the first time that such a large number of patients in Hyderabad underwent procedures using a local-made robotic system. The indigenously developed robotic system can be applied to conduct procedures in General, Gynaecological, Urological, Oncological, along with key specialties Gastroenterology, Oncology, Cardiology, and Multi-Organ Transplants surgeries.

Hyderabad braces for moderate showers, yellow alert issued in Telangana

Hyderabad: Hyderabad is set to experience moderate showers on Saturday as the developing low-pressure area (LPA) has intensified monsoon winds, resulting in more extensive rainfall across Telangana.

According to meteorologists, the city will see overcast skies and swift-moving showers, creating a cool and breezy atmosphere. The rains are expected to persist, with scattered showers likely through the afternoon and into the night, easing the humid weather of recent days. For Saturday, the India Meteorological Department (IMD) has issued a yellow alert for several Telangana districts, warning of the likelihood of heavy rainfall in isolated areas.

PM Modi invites Ukraine President to India, Zelensky accepts



GNS News Agency, August 24

Kyiv: During his historic visit to Ukraine, Prime Minister Narendra Modi invited President Volodymyr Zelensky to visit India and the Ukrainian leader accepted the invitation. During his talks with Zelensky, PM Modi reaffirmed India's principled position and commitment to a peaceful settlement to the ongoing Russia-Ukraine conflict through dialogue and diplomacy. He also reiterated India's readiness to contribute in "all possible ways" to facilitate the speedy return of peace in the region.

Later, in a press briefing after the talks between the two leaders, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar stated that PM Modi had invited President Zelensky to visit India and the latter had accepted saying he would be happy to visit the "big and great" country. PM Modi had invited President Zelensky to India during the wide-ranging talks between the two leaders on Friday. PM Modi's visit to Kyiv amid tight security was the first-ever trip to Ukraine by an Indian PM since it became independent over three decades ago.

External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar told the media, "It's significant that our prime minister has visited Ukraine for the first time since 1992. It is natural on such occasions that he extends an invitation, which he did in this case. So we expect that at some point, as per his convenience, President Zelensky will visit India. The joint statement issued at the end of the visit also mentioned that the Indian PM had invited the Ukrainian President to visit India. Asked by the media about PM Modi's invitation, President Zelensky said he would be happy to visit India at a mutually convenient time. "Yes because when you begin a strategic partnership, and you begin some dialogue, I think that you don't need to waste time and do a big pause and that's why I think it will be good to meet together again," he said. The Ukrainian President also said he wants India to be on the side of his country in the war with Russia. "I read a lot about your big and great country. It's very interesting. I very much need your country on our side. I will be happy to come to India as soon as your government and Prime Minister will be ready to see me," Zelensky said. However, the President made it clear that the visit would depend on the situation in the war-ravaged nation.

Telangana High Court Stays Demolition of N Convention Center



GNS News Agency, August 24

The Telangana High Court has intervened in the ongoing demolition case involving the N Convention Center, which is linked to popular Tollywood actor Nagarjuna. On Saturday, the court issued an interim order halting the demolition activities that were initiated by the Hyderabad authorities, known as HYDRA. This development comes after the Hyderabad authorities began a crackdown on illegal constructions in the Gandipet FTL and buffer zones, targeting unauthorized structures, including embankments. Reports surfaced alleging that the N Convention Center was built on land that encroaches upon Tammidi Cheruvu, leading to complaints and scrutiny from local residents. However, the demolitions had already taken place early Saturday morning as HYDRA completely razed the N Convention Center.

Hyderabad-bound helicopter crashes in Pune; 4 occupants survive mishap

Pune: A helicopter flying from Mumbai to Hyderabad crashed in Pune's Mulshi tehsil on Saturday afternoon, police said. All four occupants survived the crash that took place near Paud, though they may have suffered injuries, an official said. "The captain of the helicopter is being taken to hospital, while the other three are stable. The helicopter belongs to Global Vectra company. The cause of the crash is yet to be ascertained," he said.

India believes in resolving war with peace, which is game changer for our diplomacy: Defence expert

GNS News Agency, August 24

New Delhi: India will play an important role in bringing peace to war-torn Ukraine while maintaining good ties with Russia also, said a noted Defence Expert on Saturday. He also stated that Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Ukraine on the eve of that country's independence day is a significant milestone in this direction.

Defence expert Colonel Dinesh Nain (Retd) while sharing his views on India's ties with both countries engaged in a military face-off, said, "Russia-Ukraine have been at war since 2022. It has had a disastrous impact on civilian life, killing thousands of civilians, injuring many thousands more, and destroying civilian property and



infrastructure. In such a situation, maintaining good relations with both the countries is a big achievement for India. "Ukraine and US think that only India can help in resolving the war between the two countries, and bringing peace," he added. "India is not on any side, but it is neutral," he

asserted. Robinder Sachdev, a senior Foreign Affairs Expert said that the strength and vibrancy of Indian diplomacy is visible on the world stage now. "India has good relations with Russia and Ukraine. India believes in resolving war with peace. NATO countries always want to resolve conflict but

on their terms. No country believes in taking the path of mediation. As a result, it has increased India's respect and it has proved to be a game-changer for our diplomacy," he said.

Notably, Prime Minister Modi visited Ukraine at the invitation of President Volodymyr Zelensky on Friday, where he discussed with the leader various viewpoints on achieving a peaceful conclusion to the continuing conflict. PM Modi's visit to Ukraine is also the first by an Indian Prime Minister in the last 30 years, after the two nations established diplomatic relations three decades ago. Before leaving for the Ukraine visit, PM Modi had reiterated, "This is not an era of war and any conflict should be resolved through diplomacy and dialogue."

KTR condemns attack on BRS workers at Women's Commission office



GNS News Agency, August 24

Hyderabad: Taking a strong exception to the attack on BRS leaders and elected women representatives who came along with him to the State Women's Commission, BRS working president K T Rama Rao on Saturday appealed to the Commission to take up the issue suo moto and initiate an inquiry. Talking to media persons after appearing before the Commission, he said Mahila Congress workers led by their president had indulged in the attack taking advantage of the occasion. The assailants armed with devices such as nail cutters resorted to the attack. This was a reprehensible act calling for condemnation, he said.

He explained that he had already expressed his

regrets openly for a mention that rolled down from him unintentionally. As a person with respect to institutions such as the Women's Commission, he said he had appeared before the panel and presented his side of the issue. "I appeared before the Commission as a law abiding citizen and one who has high regard for women. I came to the Commission with good intentions. But the Congress party's attack on BRS leaders was not justified. The entire media was witness to the episode," he said.

The BRS leader stated that he wanted to take up the plight of women in the State during the last eight months and tried to explain to the Chairperson multiple instances of atrocities on women and attacks on children. But the Commission wanted to approach it in a different form. "We will approach the Commission once again to represent all such issues very soon," he said, also asking the Commission to take up issues related to safety and protection of women in the State with all seriousness. The plight of students in the welfare hostels remained a concern. Incidents such as rapes on a Dalit woman in Shadnagar and a similar incident involving a Chenchu woman in Kolhapur were causing concern. BRS leader Sunitha Lakshma Reddy appealed to the Commission to take up suo moto issues such as attack on the two women journalists at Kondareddy and stand up in support of women in the State. The Commission as well as the State government had the responsibility to ensure that such attacks targeting BRS women leaders were not repeated in future. Former Minister P Sabitha Indra Reddy and Satyavathi Rathod also condemned the attack.

Present state of MNREGA is a living monument of Modi's betrayal of rural India: Kharage



GNS News Agency, August 24

Marking the enactment day of Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act, Congress president Mallikarjun Kharage criticised the Centre for its handling of the flagship programme alleging that the present state of the scheme is "a living monument of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's betrayal" of rural India. MNREGA was enacted by the Congress-led UPA government on August 23, 2005. The programme, he said, is facing multiple problems such as low wages, abysmal work days and deletion of job cards. "In the guise of using technology and AADHAAR, the Modi Govt has deleted over 7 crore workers' job cards, cutting these households off from MGNREGA work," he said in a post on X. He listed out other steps taken by the government that have impacted the scheme including low budgetary allocation. "This year's Budget allocation for MNREGA is just 1.78% of the total budgetary allocation, which marks a 10-year low in the scheme's funding. The lower allocation by the Modi government contributes to artificially suppressing the demand for work under the scheme," Mr. Kharage argued. The Economic Survey, Mr. Kharage said,

has already laid the groundwork to justify the low allocation by claiming that the MNREGA demand does not necessarily correlate with rural distress. The scheme has been suffering on account of low wages that have not kept up with the market rates. "For instance, since 2014, the daily wage rate for Uttar Pradesh has increased just 4% per year, when inflation has been much higher than that. Today, a labourer earns on an average a mere ₹213 per day. The Congress is committed to provide ₹400 per day as National Minimum Wage," he said. Even though rural inflation is higher than urban inflation for 13 straight months, the Narendra Modi government's "rank apathy" towards rural poor continues, the Congress chief said. "The present state of MNREGA is a living monument of PM Modi's betrayal of rural India!" Mr. Kharage said.

Telugu actor Nagarjuna responds to HYDRA demolition; says N Convention is not illegal

GNS News Agency, August 24

Hyderabad: Following HYDRA's demolition of the N Convention centre owned by him, actor Nagarjuna responded saying that the demolition was unlawful and that the structure was not illegal. "Pained by the unlawful manner of demolition carried out in respect of N Convention, contrary to existing stay orders and Court cases. I thought it fit to issue this statement to place on record certain facts for protecting my reputation and to indicate that we have not done any actions in violation of law," he said.

Amit Shah offers prayers at temples of Chhattisgarh for country's prosperity



GNS News Agency, August 24

Raipur: Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Saturday offered prayers at Mahaprabhu Vallabhacharya temple and Champeshwar Mahadev in Chhattisgarh for the happiness and prosperity of the countrymen. He was accompanied by Chief Minister Vishnu Deo Sai, Deputy Chief Minister Vijay Sharma and MP Brijmohan Agarwal. The Union Home Minister was accorded a warm welcome and gifted the idol of Mahaprabhu Vallabhacharya. Vallabhacharya Nidhi Trust also welcomed Amit Shah and gifted him an idol of Shrinathji.

On the occasion, former Minister Chandrashekhar Sahu, Sarva Gujrati Samaj president Pritesh Gandhi Padiya, Vallabhacharya Trust President Chetan Adhiya, Apex Banks' former President Ashok Bajaj and Champaran Sarpanch Radhik Dhruv were present. Amit Shah is on a three-day visit to Chhattisgarh to chair meetings for reviewing anti-Naxal operations. His visit began on Friday evening. It is also his first visit to the state during the third tenure of the Modi government. Vallabhacharya ji founded the Pushtimarg tradition and led the Krishna Bhakti Andolan across the country. Followers of the Pushti sect of Vaishnavism gather at the birthplace of Mahaprabhu Vallabhacharya for worship. Mahaprabhu Vallabhacharya and Bhakti Andolan's Acharyas ignited the flame of devotion to Krishna. It is said that Vallabhacharya's mother experienced pain during her stay at Banaras and she gave birth to him in Chmaparan near Champeshwar Mahadev temple. In India, there has always been a tradition of pilgrimages from North to South (to and fro). The pilgrimage passes through places of worship. Champaran in itself reflects India's unique cultural richness. Besides, the city reflects, Mahaprabhu Vallabhacharya's childhood and his beautiful memories are mentioned in religious texts like 'Chaurasi Vaishnavo Ki Varta' and 'Vallabh Digvijay'. Rajiv Lochan Mandir, dedicated to Lord Vishnu, is located a little further from Champaran. The devotees start Panchkosi Parkirama from here and offer water at Champeshwar Mahadev. The Champakeshwara temple, dedicated to Lord Krishna and Radha, is another famous temple in Champaran, which is located near the Shree Mahaprabhuji Pragatya Sthal temple complex.

Choppadandi police register cases against BRS leaders, arrest them in the night

GNS News Agency, August 24

On Thursday, BRS activists, led by Choppadandi party in-charge and former MLA Sunke Ravishankar, staged a protest demonstration in Choppadandi as part of a state-wide agitation. The police detained several protesting BRS leaders, including Ravishankar and former district libraries chairman Enugu Ravinder Reddy, but they were later released on personal bonds. On Thursday, BRS activists, led by Choppadandi party in-charge and former MLA Sunke Ravishankar, staged a protest demonstration in Choppadandi as part of a state-wide agitation. The police detained several protesting BRS leaders, including Ravishankar and former district libraries chairman Enugu Ravinder Reddy, but they were later released on personal bonds. Karimnagar: Choppadandi police arrested BRS leaders and registered the cases under various sections for mobilizing the mob and obstructing the duties of public servants. As part of the state-wide agitation on Thursday,

CHANGE OF NAME

I, MADASTU KALAVATHI W/O MADASTU VENKATI (Old Name) born on 18-01-1972 at Sangvi K Earlier was holding passport No.C1761721 DT: 20-08-2024 hereby changing my name and henceforth in future I would be known as BARE KALAVATHI W/O MADASTU VENKATI (New name) H.No.3-1-2-2, Tatiguda, Adilabad 504001 Telangana.

DECLARANT.
BARE KALAVATHI
W/O MADASTU VENKATI

Place: Adilabad
Date: 24-08-2024

Indian Chronicle

English Daily

Ram Madhav returns

IN the last Assembly elections held in Jammu and Kashmir in 2014, the Bharatiya Janata Party won 25 seats, more than double the 11 it got in 2008. With a three-seat lead, Peoples Democratic Party patriarch Mufti Mohammad Sayeed became the Chief Minister, but the man of the moment was Ram Madhav. The RSS's poster boy was credited with the BJP's electoral success and for engineering an alliance with the PDP. Out of favour for nearly five years, Madhav's induction as BJP's election incharge in the UT, along with Union minister G Kishan Reddy, marks an end to his political hiatus. Madhav is back in familiar territory — but with a vastly altered political, geographical and electoral landscape. The abrogation of Article 370, bifurcation of the state into UTs and the delimitation exercise have changed the dynamics. The BJP may fancy its chances with the Jammu division gaining seats in the redrawn electoral map, but the new assignment, and at such short notice, will test Madhav's skills.

Madhav's return is being attributed to the RSS asserting itself and the BJP being pragmatic. His recent opinion piece, suggesting that the 2024 Lok Sabha election result was a mandate for humility, is a sign of the times. A pushback is apparent against the BJP's perceived brand of politics that reeks of arrogance, with no room for accommodating contrary views. Madhav has a point to prove on a personal level, and his experience in building bridges with the unlikely of candidates could come in handy for the party.

J&K has been without an elected government since 2018. The restoration of the democratic process through three-phase elections provides an opportunity to all political parties to let people's issues take centre stage. What the UT deserves is a campaign that offers hope.

Khanna temple theft case solved: Punjab Police arrest 4 men from Uttarakhand, UP; recover 3.63 kg of stolen silver



GNS News Agency, August 24

A week after massive protests erupted in Khanna in Punjab's Ludhiana district after thieves barged into a local temple early on August 15 and stole gold and silver ornaments, the police on Thursday said the case had been solved with the arrest of four men, including those from Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand. The police said that 3 kg 630 grams of silver ornaments stolen from the temple have been recovered from the accused. Of the five accused identified in the case, four have been arrested, including a jeweller from Uttar Pradesh to whom the stolen ornaments were allegedly sold, the Khanna police said.

The accused had also allegedly desecrated the symbol of Lord Shiva while stealing the silver plating at the Shivpuri temple and this had led to massive protests by the Hindu community. The protesters had blocked the Ludhiana-Delhi National Highway for hours, demanding the immediate arrest of the accused. Khanna Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Ashwini Gotyal said that the accused entered the temple through the window panes on the roof and stole various gold and silver ornaments, including a silver gagar placed above the Shivaling, a silver garland around the Shivaling, a silver flute placed on the Lord Krishna idol, silver crowns and gold ornaments of all the idols, etc. They also desecrated the Shivaling, she added. Special teams were formed to trace the accused. CCTV footage was obtained and the photographs of the suspects were shared through social media, Gotyal said. During the investigation, the police received information that an interstate gang of thieves was carrying out thefts in temples and religious places. The Khanna police, with the help of Uttarakhand Police, then identified the main accused as Resham Singh alias Rinku of Sindh Jhala from Udhampur district in Uttarakhand. Singh, 32, a farmer, was arrested from Delhi. He was previously booked in at least 10 such theft cases registered in Chandigarh, Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh and Punjab, the police said. With the help of Chandigarh Police, another accused, Ravi Kumar, who hails from Mahindpur in Punjab's Ropar district, was arrested in Chandigarh. Another accused named Honey, also from Mahindpur, was arrested from Ropar. SSP Gotyal said that Mohit, an accused hailing from Utawal in Uttar Pradesh's Aligarh district, is yet to be arrested. He is also a history-sheeter with five previous cases registered against him in Uttarakhand and Uttar Pradesh, the police said. "During investigation, it came to light that this gang of thieves used to sell the stolen silver and gold ornaments to a jeweller identified as Rajeev Kumar alias Soni, a resident of Kumarapuram in Lucknow," Gotyal said, adding that he was arrested from Lucknow. An offence under Section 317 (2) (Whoever dishonestly receives or retains any stolen property, knowing or having reason to believe the same to be stolen property) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) was added in the case. The SSP further said that the arrested accused have confessed to the theft and desecration at the temple and that various cases were registered against them in different states for stealing from religious places. "From the investigation conducted so far, it has come to light that this gang of thieves has committed theft at many religious places in different states and they used to sell stolen gold/silver ornaments to a jeweller in Lucknow," she added. The First Information Report (FIR) in the case was registered under sections 299 (deliberately outraging religious sentiments of any class or community), 305 (theft) and 331(4) (house trespass) of the BNS at Khanna City 1 police station.

'Who is there to protect us?': At Kolkata's RG Kar Hospital, echoes of anger



GNS News Agency, August 24

A table with a garlanded, female portrait stands beneath a shamiana — a makeshift shrine — at the entrance of RG Kar Medical College and Hospital in Kolkata. In front of it is a stretcher which functions as a candle stand. Posters, each expressing a different shade of anger, hang from the tarpaulin roof, bearing messages like 'We Deserve Justice' and 'O King, Where Is Your Robe?' Each day, a fresh garland of flowers is placed at the shrine, which has become the epicentre of protests against the rape and murder of a 31-year-old trainee doctor on August 9. The outrage, it seems, has spread across the country, drawing people from all walks of life.

Mornings start early at the hospital. By 9 am, students and protesters begin to assemble near the shrine. The protesters include photographers, vloggers, YouTubers, everyone trying to make sense of the tragedy in their own way, some with more sincerity than others. Prashanta Kar is a struggling actor who has been a regular at the protest site. He claims he is satiated doing odd jobs for the protesting doctors. "I fill in with sloganeering at times when they are too tired, I want to be a part of this because I feel it's something much bigger than me," he says. Jatin, a 21-year-old engineering student from Indore, travelled to Kolkata three days after hearing about the incident, a city he has not been to before. For two days, he stood silently at the protest site, holding placards and chanting slogans in Bengali, a language he doesn't speak. He steadfastly avoided cameras, talking only when they were switched off. His message was simple: "We want justice for the girl." Maniruddin Ahmed, 42, travelled from Khardah, a northern suburb in West Bengal, with his pre-teen daughter to join the protest on Independence Day. "As a father, I couldn't stay silent. I have to show my daughter that I tried to make this world a safer place for her," Ahmed said, his voice heavy with emotion. Dr Sourav Roy, a junior doctor at the hospital, voices the collective frustration of his colleagues. A day after the Supreme pulled up the West Bengal government over the rape and murder of the woman doctor and put in place a nine-member panel to recommend solutions to issues related to the safety and well-being of medical professionals, Roy, his voice hoarse from chanting slogans, says, "It has been 12 days since the incident happened, but apart from the initial arrest of one person, no other arrests have been made. While we welcome the statement of the CJI, it's not a closure for us. We want justice for our colleague." Another junior doctor, who was on duty on the night of the incident and spoke on condition of anonymity, claims there have been instances when unauthorised individuals took photos of female doctors without consent.

"Security is the biggest issue here (RG Kar Hospital), especially when we are in the Emergency Room, because the ER is a place which is open to everyone. We take in patients as they come. There have been so many instances where we have had to face drunken mobs, drunken patients coming in, and there isn't a machinery in place to check them. When we are working in the trauma room, we don't even have time to focus on the fact that we

are being harassed by some outsider. Because you are so focused on the patient," she tells indianexpress.com. "This happened recently too when a colleague tending to the patient, and a group of strangers just walked in and took pictures of her from all angles and without her consent, and only when a co-worker saw it, it was flagged and then it was reported to the police. This is just one of the many incidents that all of us face on a daily basis, and that is where, again, the question arises, who is there to protect us?" She alleges security issues have been flagged to authorities in the past too but no action was taken. The West Bengal government on Monday announced setting up of a Special Investigation Team (SIT) to probe into alleged financial irregularities at the RG Kar Hospital from January 2021. The period corresponds to the tenure of Dr Sandip Ghosh, who joined as the principal of the medical college in mid-2021. A walk around the densely-populated campus proves as much. It doesn't take more than 15-20 minutes to cover the entire campus, and one can't differentiate where the hospital area ends and doctors' quarters begin. There are signs reading, 'Trespassers Not Allowed', but they are pointedly ignored as is evident from settlements of patient's families across the campus. "We had men undressing in front of the ladies hostel earlier this year, but thankfully the guards shooed them away," says a woman doctor on condition of anonymity.

Despite the incidents of harassment, the doctors at RG Kar remain resolute. Jigme Wangchuk, a junior doctor, holds a placard reading "Justice for Abhaya" — a sobriquet used by some media houses to refer to the victim. "They call her Abhaya, meaning fearless, but the truth is, most women in this country live in fear," he says. Jigme's words resonate deeply in a nation still grappling with the implications of this tragedy. "No amount of security cameras or guards will bring justice unless all those who were involved in this heinous incident are punished. We have heard that the CCTV footage has been tampered with, if that is proved, the college authorities should be punished too."

Another junior doctor, who dreamt of becoming a trauma surgeon, says she changed her career plans "after facing harassment" every day. "I wanted to specialise in trauma surgery because I loved the adrenaline rush. It's important to state that not many women enter this field because it is considered to be a man's domain. But after working here in this situation, after facing these small harassments every day, I chose to take up something lighter... we have been failed by authorities." The doctors further say that relentless demands of their work — long shifts and inadequate rest facilities — compound the challenges. "Anything can happen to us at any time. We're overworked. 36-hour shifts are common. Sometimes, it can go up to 40 hours. It's very exhausting when you keep working and there's hardly any time for you to take a break to sleep. And there are very few on-call rooms where we can rest. Not all departments have on-call rooms, so we just sleep on the floor, or benches or empty patient beds when they are available." "Our seniors, batchmates, have all been very welcoming. We are a close-knit bunch, because the campus isn't that big, so we are constantly crammed together. It also means we have had our best moments in a very limited space. And another great thing about RG Kar is that it is known to give you a lot of clinical exposure. Every day, a humongous number of patients walk in through its doors. It was all very exciting," says a doctor who spoke on the condition of anonymity. As early dusk falls, the RG Kar campus fills with people from across the city. Candles are lit, hymns are sung, and human chains form in solidarity. This has been the ritual for the past two weeks, though some doctors don't know how much longer they can carry on with the protests. "We have patients coming to us and telling us that we are fighting the right fight. That they are with us. I hope this anger is not wasted," says Shabnam Begum, a senior doctor at the hospital.

Central Railway partners with NGO to boost mental wellbeing of frontline workers



GNS News Agency, August 24

Project Mumbai, known for its initiatives like the Smiling Schools Project and mental wellness programmes for Mumbai Police and prison inmates, is leading the initiative. The NGO has plans to expand the initiative to other Central Railway employees in the future. The Central Railway, in collaboration with NGO Project Mumbai, has launched a series of emotional and mental wellbeing sessions aimed at enhancing the resilience of its frontline staff, particularly motormen. These sessions, conducted by trained counsellors, are designed to help staff cope with work-related stress and trauma, said an official of the Central Railway on Thursday. Project Mumbai, known for its initiatives like the Smiling Schools Project and mental wellness programmes for Mumbai Police and prison inmates, is leading the initiative. The NGO's counsellors began the sessions on August 1, starting at the CST Headquarters. The sessions, held approximately every fortnight, last about two hours and cover a range of topics, including recognising symptoms of stress, understanding the mind-body connection, and taking proactive measures to prevent stress. Shahana Siddique, who leads the mental health initiative, emphasised the importance of encouraging participants to seek professional help when necessary. She noted that the initial hesitation among participants quickly dissipates, leading to more engagement and open discussions.

The NGO also provides a safe space for participants to reach out for private sessions, with the service being offered free of charge to railway employees. On an average, about 50 participants attend each session, with many reporting a positive change in their outlook. One senior motorman, speaking anonymously, shared his initial scepticism about the sessions but ultimately found them beneficial. "It made me aware of not just my own challenges but also the concerns my colleagues are facing," he said. Motormen and other frontline staff frequently face

challenges such as commuter anger, incidents on the tracks, and other stressful situations. The wellbeing sessions aim to equip them with the tools to manage these pressures effectively. Project Mumbai plans to extend these sessions to ticket collectors and railway police as part of a broader initiative to support the mental health of all Central Railway employees. Central Railway's Mumbai division is one of the busiest railway networks, operating 1,810 local services daily, including 66 AC services. The trains, running at intervals as short as three minutes, transport millions of passengers each day.

Gujarat Cong MLAs stage walkout, allege discrimination in taking up questions

GNS News Agency, August 24

Gujarat Congress MLAs walked out from the Assembly on Day Two of the ongoing Monsoon Session on Thursday alleging discrimination in taking up questions in the House. Soon after House proceedings commenced with short notice questions on Thursday, nearly 10 Congress MLAs stood up flashing posters on the Rajkot game zone fire, among others. But Speaker Shankar Chaudhary directed Assembly sergeants to take away the posters, leading to the walkout by Congress MLAs. Congress MLA Shailesh Parmar said, "It is not clear why this discrimination and why the ministers are scared to respond to questions raised by Congress MLAs. Yesterday (Wednesday), only one short-term question by the Congress was accepted and replied to while today (Thursday) there is none." Despite requests by Speaker Chaudhary to raise the issues after short-notice question time, Congress MLAs continued their protest. The Speaker explained that short-notice questions are taken only after the approval of the minister concerned. Responding to Chavda's allegation of discrimination, the Speaker stated that Congress MLAs can raise questions depending on their strength in the House. After the Assembly bypolls held simultaneously with the Lok Sabha elections this year, the Congress, which had won 17 seats in the 2022 Assembly elections, is left with just 12 MLAs while the BJP has 161 MLAs in the 182-member House.

'Duty of Maharashtra Govt to trace missing children, women,' Bombay HC seeks state reply on PIL claiming inaction by authorities



GNS News Agency, August 24 Mumbai The Court directed the respondent state authorities to file an affidavit in reply containing a mechanism, if any, available to the state and its authorities not only to trace the missing children/women but also how to check such incidents. Observing that it was the duty of the Maharashtra Government to trace missing children and women, protect them, and give them safe shelter or custody, the Bombay High Court on Thursday sought an affidavit in reply by the state on measures taken to deal with such cases. It also sought a response from the Government Railway Police (GRP) on measures taken to check human trafficking cases and a reply from the Maharashtra State Commission for Women (MSCW) suggesting measures to be adopted by the state government to curb such incidents.

A division bench of Chief Justice Devendra Kumar Upadhyaya and Justice Amit Borkar passed an order in a PIL by Shahaji Jagtap from Sangli, a former soldier, who is at present a government employee, seeking direction to the state police to trace over one lakh women who went missing from Maharashtra between 2019 and 2021. The petition raised concern over alleged inaction by state authorities in taking necessary steps warranted in cases where many women and children are reported missing. The petitioner, through advocate Manjiri Parasnis, submitted that while searching for his missing daughter, he came across information provided by the Union Ministry of Home Affairs in the Lok Sabha on March 14, 2023, which said that the number of children below 18 years reported missing in Maharashtra was 'very high'. As per the data, in 2019, 2020, and 2021, the number of children reported missing was 4,562, 3,356, and 4,129, respectively. Similarly, there were over one lakh cases of missing women aged 18 and above in Maharashtra from 2019 to 2021.

"There may be various causes of children and women going missing. However, it is the duty of the state to trace them and protect them and if necessary give them safe custody. One of the reasons for such staggering number of missing children and women, possibly is menace of human trafficking for which all authorities, including all government departments, police, railways, etc. need to work in tandem to check such instances," the bench noted in its order. The petitioner also referred to the Supreme Court order of November 2022 that passed several directions to the authorities to curb the incidents of missing women and children. The Court directed the respondent state authorities to file an affidavit in reply containing a mechanism, if any, available to the state and its authorities not only to trace the missing children/women but also how to check such incidents. "Affidavit shall also disclose measures in place and are being applied by Maharashtra to check missing of young children and women. We also call upon MSCW to file a response and suggest measures to be adopted and taken by the state to check such incidents. We also call upon the head of GRP-Maharashtra to file an affidavit bringing on record the steps/measures taken by GRP to check human trafficking," the bench noted. Seeking the replies within four weeks followed by a rejoinder from the petitioner within two weeks after that, the bench posted further hearing after six weeks on October 4.

2 men in Delhi's 'KTM Bike Gang' arrested; 'learnt snatching techniques from YouTube', say police

GNS News Agency, August 24

The two serial chain snatchers of the notorious 'KTM Bike Gang', involved in the recent 26 snatching incidents in a span of four hours from Delhi's Trans-Yamuna stretch such as Anand Vihar ISBT, Sunlight Colony, Sarai Kale Khan, Shastri Park and Usmanpur, were arrested last week, the police said.

The police nabbed Shahrugh and Asif, both residents of Shastri Park, in a trap laid at the Geeta Colony flyover on August 19. Shahrugh was involved in over 23 cases of robbery, snatching and thefts, they said, adding that they learnt the techniques of snatching through YouTube and other videos. DCP (Shahdara) Surender Choudhary said that special teams were formed to keep a watch on KTM bikers who zoomed around the city on stolen sports bikes in Dhoom style, in view of the frequent incidents of chain and mobile snatching. "Shahrugh got out of jail in November last year and conspired to form a syndicate of snatching valuables from people using his bike riding skills. He got in touch with Asif, also an efficient bike rider...and wanted to make a quick buck to satisfy the needs of his girlfriend," Choudhary said. The police team beefed up the search for the criminals after a chain snatching incident by KTM bikers was reported at Geeta Colony flyover on August 9 morning by a woman. They tracked the vehicles by analysing CCTV footage and Automatic Number Plate Detection cameras and found them to be stolen from the Nizamuddin area. "Both the riders were wearing helmets. More than 650 cameras were analysed in areas such as Gandhi Nagar Pushta, Shastri Park, Usmanpur Pushta. The bike was zeroed in at Jagatpuri, moving through narrow alleys," said an officer. They were booked under Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) Section 112 pertaining to petty organised crime. A top police officer said that the criminals, who called themselves KBG (KTM Bike Gang) champions, used to steal a KTM motorbike and then go on a snatching spree, taking hold of items such as gold ornaments and mobile phones, in a single day and then disappear for the next 10 to 15 days. The criminal activities are mostly centered in North, South-east, Northeast of Delhi and Shahdara, he added.

How a group of school-going girls in Mumbai helped police catch man who harassed them at a bus stop



GNS News Agency, August 24

In 2016, a senior citizen walking past a group of teenage girls in Mumbai touched them inappropriately. Before the girls could react, he returned and touched one of them again. This time, he left, mouthing a "sorry". Seven years later, the man was convicted and sentenced to three years imprisonment — all due to the gumption of the young girls who decided not to ignore his actions.

It was April 5, 2016. A group of girls on their way back from school after an examination were waiting for an autorickshaw near a bus stop close to their home when an older-looking man walked past them, touching one of them inappropriately. As the girls realised what had taken place, the man returned, and touched one of them again, saying "sorry". One of the girls was quick to react. She took a photograph of the man on her mobile phone before he could leave. The girls then decided to follow him

to trace his address. After they saw him enter a building, they dialled 103, the Mumbai police women helpline number. Once the girls informed the control room about the incident, women police personnel were immediately sent to the location. Based on the photograph and his description, the police located the man and arrested him. The 66-year-old used to work as an actor and stayed in the same locality as the girls. He was charged with sexual harassment under the Indian Penal Code and relevant sections of the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act. The girls played a big role during the man's trial too. The two girls who had been sexually harassed, a Class 9 and Class 7 student, told the court how they went about tracing him. The man, in his defence, claimed that he was falsely implicated and that no such incident took place as the girls had not raised a hue and cry after the alleged harassment.

The special court, however, said that the testimonies of the girls established that the harassment had taken place. It said that the girls would not have expected an old man to harass them and were naturally afraid and did not know what to do at first, refusing to accept the man's contention that they did not shout. The court said that it was only when the man returned and misbehaved again that they mustered the courage to follow him. "This conduct, in my opinion, is perfectly understandable as it is only when young girls are repeatedly subjected to molestation and when they are all together that they find the necessary courage to take steps regarding the same," the court said in its final judgment in the case. In 2023, based on the testimonies of the two girls in court and other evidence, a special court convicted the man and sentenced him to three years imprisonment.

NRI booked after Punjab AAP leader's estranged wife alleges sexual harassment

GNS News Agency, August 24

The Ludhiana Rural police on Wednesday registered an FIR against a Canada-based NRI man for alleged sexual harassment on the complaint of a woman who is the estranged wife of an Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) leader from Patiala. In her complaint, the woman told police that she had been living at the NRI's house in Ludhiana and taking care of it as the accused was settled in Canada. She alleged that the NRI, with whom she had a good family relationship, recently started harassing her on his India visit and forced her into a physical relationship.

The woman told police: "I told about the entire issue to the NRI's son but he ignored it. On July 13, around 5 pm, the man forced me to have a physical relationship. He touched me with bad intentions. When I opposed it, he ran away. He physically and mentally harassed me several times, of which I have proofs in the form of photos and videos." Ludhiana Rural Senior Superintendent of Police Navneet Singh Bains said an FIR had been registered against the NRI under Section 75 (sexual harass-



ment) of Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS). The police said he is in his 60s and lives in Mississauga, Canada. The SSP said allegations against him are being verified. When The Indian Express tried to contact the woman's estranged husband, the man who picked up the phone identified himself as the AAP leader's brother. He said, "Our family has no relation with the woman now as she and my brother are separated. Their matrimonial dispute is sub-judice."

National Green Tribunal fines Punjab Rs 1,000 crore for legacy waste and sewage management failure

GNS News Agency, August 24

The National Green Tribunal (NGT) has imposed a whopping Rs 1,000-crore penalty on the Punjab Government for "persistent defiance and non-compliance of environment laws" with regard to solid and liquid waste management and issued notices asking why proceedings should not be initiated against top officials for defying an earlier order. The tribunal has asked the state government to deposit Rs 1,026,19,08,000 towards environmental compensation with the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) within one month. It stated the Government was fined Rs 2,080 crore on September 22, 2022, for the same issue and asked to create a ring fence account for the amount. But neither the penalty was paid nor the ring fence account created.

"Since Chief Secretary has also failed in compliance of Tribunal order dated 22.09.2022 with regard to creation of ring-fence account of Rs 2,080 crore, this is clear that the order of this Tribunal has been defied and disobeyed, which is also an offence under Section 26 of NGT Act, 2010," the order stated. "Besides, continuous violation and non-compliance and breach of mandate of Section 24 of Water Act, 1974, is also an offence under Section 43 of said Act and when offence is by Government Department, Section 48 is also attracted, which declares that Head of the Department shall be deemed to be guilty of the offence and shall be liable to be prosecuted against and punished," the order added. The tribunal has sent showcause notices to Chief Secretary Anurag Verma and Tejveer Singh, Additional Chief Secretary (Urban Development). The duo has been asked to submit their response within a month. The case will come up for the next hearing on September 27.

After the tribunal order, Chief Secretary Verma held a meeting with deputy commissioners on Wednesday. A source said Verma came down heavily on the deputy commissioners and gave them targets for completing solid waste management and sewage treatment plants. "He told us that this cannot go on forever. This work has to be completed. We are dealing with the legacy solid waste and sewage. It cannot be a matter of days. When the legacy waste has been generated for so many years, we cannot handle it in a day. It will require time," an official said on the condition of anonymity. Another government official said, "We will now hold meetings. We will talk to the finance department about the fine. Also, the state can appeal against the order."

The issue dates back to September 2, 2014, when the Supreme Court transferred the proceedings of the Almitra H Patel vs Union of India case to the tribunal. The tribunal, after noticing that SWM Rules 2016 had been notified on April 8, 2016, disposed of the matter on December 12 in 2016 with several directions. The matters of solid waste and liquid waste were both disposed of with a direction that further monitoring be continued at the level of chief secretaries and the Central Monitoring Committee headed by the secretary in the Ministry of Jal Shakti. As the things did not improve, then chief secretary V K Janjua had to appear before tribunal on July 25, 2022. The order said that as the chief secretary did not submit any response, the tribunal could not take note of the status of the compliance of the CPCB directions. It added that after a monitoring committee report in 2022,



the tribunal had observed that there was a large-scale failure and violation on the part of the state. The matter related to the Ludhiana Municipal Corporation was specifically referred by the monitoring committee. Out of 1100 TPD, wet and dry waste generated, only 49 per cent was being treated. Similar violations were noted in other municipal councils in various districts. The tribunal said it was taking a very lenient view in the matter since the compensation would have to be paid from the public exchequer. If compensation on existing legacy waste—53.87 lakh MT—is computed at the rate of one paisa per kilogram per day for past six months, it will be: The NGT expressed its disbelief that there was an untreated sewage figure of 314.06 MLD. Even if it is 314.06 million litres per day, which is the admitted gas in June, 2024, and compute it for the last six months at the rate of one paisa per litre per day, the compensation for 180 days will be:

Investment trainer in Pune duped of Rs 35 lakh in share trading cyber fraud

Pune The Indian Express reported earlier this month that between January and July this year, as many as 272 people from Pune lost their life savings and deposits totalling over Rs 125 crore to cybercriminals in online share trading frauds. A 45-year-old engineer from Pune allegedly lost Rs 35 lakh in an online share trading fraud. The police said cyber criminals promised him high returns through institutional investments and initial public offerings (IPOs). The engineer who takes online classes about share market investments registered a complaint earlier this week. In April, he joined a WhatsApp group where members and administrators discussed different stock investment options and the high returns they were getting. Later, one of the administrators contacted him in a private chat and asked him to share screenshots from his Demat account and a list of his shareholdings. The administrator began sending him messages about certain stocks and how investing in them would lead to higher gains. He was asked to download a phone-based investment application, which the investigation later found to be fraudulent.

Dabur to set up first plant in South India, to invest Rs 400 crore in Tamil Nadu, says Minister Rajaa



GNS News Agency, August 24

Dabur India will set up a Rs 400 crore manufacturing plant in the state's Villupuram district, marking the FMCG company's maiden foray into the South. Dabur India will set up a Rs 400 crore manufacturing plant in the

state's Villupuram district, marking the FMCG company's maiden foray into the South. The Tamil Nadu government on Thursday said home and personal care products maker Dabur India will set up a Rs 400 crore manufacturing plant in the state's Villupuram district, marking the FMCG company's maiden foray into the South. State Industries Minister TRB Rajaa said a pact was inked on Thursday for this purpose.

In South India, at the SIPCOT Food Park in #Tindivanam, Villupuram district," Rajaa said in a post on 'X'. He said the company will invest Rs 400 crore in this facility which will create over 250 jobs. "More importantly, it will open up new opportunities for farmers in the nearby #Delta region to sell #AgroProduce to be processed in this facility," he added. Dabur's decision to choose Tamil Nadu is a testament to the state's thriving industrial ecosystem and availability of a work-ready labour force, Rajaa added.

Where does the buck stop? Chandigarh administration makes no headway in fixing responsibility for accidental deaths

GNS News Agency, August 24

Electrocution of a 17-year-old boy, a tree collapse that killed a Class 10 student, a toy train mishap in which an 11-year-old boy died, and a fire at a paying guest facility in which three girls were charred to death: These were some of the major accidental deaths in Chandigarh in the past four years, leading to the Chandigarh Administration ordering magisterial probes. However, in all these cases, either the probe panels have failed to submit their reports, or the Chandigarh Administration has been sitting on their findings without fixing responsibility for these mishaps so far. On July 15 this year, a 17-year-old boy was electrocuted in Sector 8. Mayank was returning from the gym, and when he tried taking a shorter route, he apparently came in contact with the live wire near a transformer in Sector 8, Chandigarh. The Chandigarh Administration suspended the executive and sub-divisional engineers of the power department on the directions of Administrator Banwarilal Purohit. On July 19, Purohit ordered a magisterial probe into the death. Deputy Commissioner Vinay Pratap Singh said Sub Divisional Magistrate (Central) Naveen would conduct the magisterial inquiry within 10 days by associating with technical experts. After inspecting the spot of electrocution, Purohit expressed his displeasure at the power transformers' "uncovered and exposed fuses" and instructed the Chandigarh Administration's engineering department to take immediate measures to ensure the safety of residents in the vicinity of electric transformers and poles. In June this year, an 11-year-old boy, Shahbaz Singh, died of head injuries after falling from a toy train at Elante Mall in Chandigarh.

The Chandigarh Police arrested the driver of the toy train and booked the mall management. After the death, the Chandigarh administration ordered a high-level probe. Additional Deputy Commissioner Amandeep Bhatti was tasked with submitting a probe report.

Tree collapse at school On July 8, 2022, a 16-year-old Class 10 student, Heerakshi, was crushed to death as a portion of a 250-year-old heritage peepal tree at Carmel Convent School collapsed on her. A total of 18 of her schoolmates were injured, with one student even losing her arm in the incident. A one-man panel led by Justice (retired) Jitendra Chauhan submitted its report in February 2023, indicting the Chandigarh Administration's engineering department for the tree collapse. Carmel convent tree incident, Chandigarh news, Indian Express



Carmel convent tree incident. Justice Chauhan's report said, "The tragedy has happened due to lapses by the engineering department, Chandigarh Administration as the officials did not visit the spot and did not devise the specific protocol to keep such trees in good health and to accord specialised treatment if any, available to strengthen the tree." However, the UT administration has yet to fix responsibility for the tree collapse. Students burnt alive at paying guest facility In February 2020, three students — Pakshi Grover, 19; Muskan Mehta, 22; and Riya Arora, 19 — were burnt alive while two others — Famina Sardana, 23; and Jasmine, 19 — suffered injuries in a fire that broke out in a paying guest accommodation for women. Violations such as non-registration of paying guests, lack of police verification, and structural flaws were initially discovered. Mandip Brar, then deputy commissioner, ordered a probe by then SDM Satish Jain. Even in this case, there has been no progress so far. No officials have been held accountable for allowing the PG to operate in their jurisdiction despite its flaws, and no impactful corrective measures have been taken.

What does Chandigarh Administration say? When contacted, a high-ranking officer of the Chandigarh Administration told The Indian Express, "The Carmel tree collapse report has been in public for the last one year. The ADC has submitted the mall toy train report. The electrocution case report is awaited from the SDM." When asked if anyone had been held accountable in the toy train mishap, the officer said, "We will let the public know." When asked if any action had been taken based on the report on the Carmel tree collapse, the official did not reply.

Delhi Ola cab driver, brother-in-law arrested for snatching mobile phones from pedestrians

GNS News Agency, August 24

An Ola cab driver and his brother-in-law were arrested in Delhi recently for allegedly snatching mobile phones and other items from pedestrians in Vivek Vihar, GTB Enclave and Mansarovar Park, the police said. The police said the accused, Taiyab, 28, a resident of Brahmपुरi and his relative Tauseef, 25, took cues from popular TV crime series Crime Patrol to evade arrest. They were nabbed from near Shamsan Ghat, old Seemapuri on August 17, said an officer. According to the police, they noticed a common pattern in the string of snatching incidents as all of them happened during early morning hours. CCTV footage revealed that the same two people executed all the offences, they added. An officer said that Taiyab's cab was tracked using Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) technology and by tracing the halting points using the details provided by Ola. Inspired by Crime Patrol, Taiyab immediately put his phone on flight mode after taking a ride, to avoid the police from tracking him, he said. However, the investi-



gators used Internet Protocol Detail Record (IPDR) and Call Detail Record (CDR) of his phone number to record his last location and thus set a trap near the old Seemapuri roundabout. On August 17, Taiyab was caught while heading towards the Apsara border with Tauseef on a Pulsar bike without a number plate, the police said.

Victim's aunt arrested for 'helping accused'

Kannauj rape case, Kannauj rape case Victim's aunt arrested, Lucknow news, Uttar Pradesh news, Lucknow, India news, Indian Express, Indian Express India news, Indian Express India The incident also sparked a political war of words, with the ruling BJP claiming that the accused is a member of the Samajwadi Party (SP) with close ties to senior SP leaders. DAYS AFTER arresting a 48-year-old businessman and former block pramukh for allegedly sexually assaulting a teenage girl on the pretext of arranging a job for her, the Kannauj police on Wednesday arrested the victim's 34-year-old aunt for allegedly helping the accused. She took her niece to a college run by the accused, Nawab Singh, where the alleged incident occurred. "After the medical examination of the girl, her aunt fled. A police team was formed to locate her. On Wednesday, after a tip-off, the police arrested the aunt from an area in Kannauj," said Superintendent of Police Amit Kumar Anand. The police revealed that the aunt initially cooperated with the investigation and even visited the police station to file the FIR. How-

ever, she began raising objections when the girl was sent for a medical examination. The examination was only carried out after the girl's parents, who work in Ghaziabad, arrived. The parents learned of the incident through the police, as the aunt, who was present at the time, did not inform them, said a police officer. During interrogation, the aunt revealed to the police that the Nawab Singh's brother had promised her Rs 10 lakh to stall the girl's medical examination and alter her statement in court. She also admitted that he had instructed her to implicate a few other persons to divert the investigation, police said. The police also found that the woman had been in a relationship with the former block pramukh for the past six years. According to the police, late on Sunday evening (August 11), the girl called the control room and reported that some of her clothes had been removed and that an attempt was made to do "something wrong" to her. A police team rescued her and took Nawab Singh to the police station for questioning. The girl informed the police that on Sunday, she and her aunt went to Lucknow for some work.

Assam govt tables bill to abolish Muslim marriages, divorce act



GNS News Agency, August 24

Assam, Himanta Biswa Sarma resignation, Independence Day, Himanta Biswa Sarma, bomb-like objects in Assam, Indian express news, current affairs Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma. The Assam government on Thursday introduced a bill to repeal a law to register marriages and divorces of Muslims, stating that it had scope to allow marriages of minors from the community.

Revenue and Disaster Management Minister Jogen Mohan tabled The Assam Repealing Bill, 2024 in the Assam Assembly to abolish The Assam Moslem Marriages and Divorces Registration Act, 1935 and the Assam Repealing Ordinance 2024. "There remains a scope of registering marriages of intended person below 21 years (in case of male) and 18 years (in case of female)," he said in the Statement of Object and Reasons of the Repealing Bill.

It hardly had any provisions for monitoring the implementation of the Act throughout the state and it attracted huge amounts of litigation in the court, he added. "There is a scope of misuse by both authorised licensee (Muslim marriage Registrars) as well as by citizens for underage/minor marriages and forcefully arranged marriages without the consent of the parties," Mohan said. Besides, the registration of marriages and divorces were not mandatory, and the registration mechanism was informal that left a lot of scope for non-compliance of the norms, he added. "It is a pre-independence Act adopted by British India Government for the then Province of Assam for Muslim religious and social arrangements," the minister said.

On Wednesday, Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma said that the Assam government will introduce a bill in the ongoing Autumn Session for compulsory government registration of marriage and divorce of Muslim people. Addressing a press conference after a cabinet meeting, Sarma said the government will table the Assam Compulsory Registration of Muslim Marriage and Divorce Bill, 2024. Last month, the Cabinet had approved the Repealing Bill to abolish the Assam Muslim Marriages and Divorce Registration Act and Rules of 1935, which permitted underage marriages under specific conditions. The Assam Cabinet had approved the decision to repeal the Act on February 23, in a bid to end the social menace of child marriage in the state. The opposition parties had decried the decision, terming it 'discriminatory against the Muslims' brought in to polarise the voters in an election year.

ULI India's first Product Council to drive sustainability, ESG goals for new office spaces



GNS News Agency, August 24

India is witnessing large-scale urbanisation, and the real estate sector is set to boom over the next 4-5 years. In what is expected to offer a major boost to this space, the Urban Land Institute (ULI) held its first prestigious ULI Product Council preview meet in Mumbai earlier this week. India's real estate sector requires a strategic think tank to steer its growth towards high-quality, demand-driven projects. By fostering collaborative closed-door dialogues among industry leaders and stakeholders representing all realms of the industry, this organisation can introduce global best practices to the domestic market. Founded about 80 years ago, ULI is the oldest built environment platform in the world, with a presence in 86 countries worldwide. ULI's USP is a global membership of 45,000+ members across the spectrum of built environments. This is the only multidisciplinary platform where real estate developers, investors, architects, planners, engineers, lawyers, and media professionals come together to discuss how we can build better cities.

With great achievements in the US, EU and Asia, ULI entered the Indian market two years ago. "While ULI is a well-known brand in the built environment globally, we are new in India. ULI's plan for India is to replicate its international success locally while adapting its mission priorities to India. ULI has three mission priorities – decarbonisation, housing attainability and education of the next generation of young leaders," said Manasvini Hariharan, Director, ULI India. ULI has more than 30 product councils to drive action, each themed on a different aspect of real estate, such as office, residential, sustainability, tourism, hospitality, airports, logistics, capital markets, infrastructure, technology, and more. "Product Councils are a closed-door forum of senior industry leaders for candid conversation, knowledge sharing and meaningful discussions on a particular theme. Chatham House rules apply, and members bring collective experience and insight to critical business challenges," Hariharan explained. In India, it has made its foray through the Office Council.

Talking about how India will benefit from a forum like this, Gautam Saraf, managing director of Mumbai and New Business, Cushman and Wakefield, said: "There is immense power in knowledge and collective action, and ULI can act as a medium that helps the industry come

together and visualise the India that we all want to build. Today, everything from the way we work to the way we live has been transitioning at a fast pace. Complex external factors such as carbon neutrality commitments, technology, rapid urbanisation, global workplace evolution, etc., act as disruptors during the normal course of business. By sharing knowledge and perspectives, ULI product councils can offer cross-learning opportunities for its members. "Sustainability and ESG Over the next five years, the office council's mission is to make sustainability a theme across the industry. Decision makers will form part of the Product Council and work in unison towards the larger goal of decarbonisation and the education of the next generation. This will create many positive synergies that will go in the right direction. Just as China is regarded as the factory to the world, India is the office to the world. A majority of large companies have already built sustainability into their fabric. This extends to the office real estate that they operate out of. Today, they insist on partnering with landlords, developers, or corporates committed to carbon neutrality. "Real estate forms part of the built environment, contributing 40 percent of greenhouse emissions. Using a platform like ULI, we as stakeholders can collectively change the narrative to ensure from design to construction, leasing and asset management, all aspects related to carbon neutrality," said Saraf, who joined ULI earlier this year to drive change. ESG is the theme of today – it is something that India should have already initiated work on. The new-age employee is attracted to the workplace of the future, which has natural light, social spaces, renewable energy, and reduced embodied carbon. This workspace will encourage people to come to work, reduce attrition, and encourage occupancy. The ULI advantage

ULI is a not-for-profit organisation created with the intent of bringing in stakeholders with experiences within the industry to shape the future of the organisation. Some of those learnings at a global level can easily be adapted to the Indian context. "The cross-pollination of ideas and learning within ULI is one of the key outcomes that one could expect from a ULI association," said Quaiser Parvez, Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Nucleus Office Parks.

Here, bigwigs from the real estate industry, who may be competitors outside the room, can come together and discuss their strengths and weaknesses and look at pain points that need to be addressed as a community. Outside of the Product Council meeting room, they can be back to being competitors. The Indian chapter of ULI's first Product Council already has a line-up of strategic goals. "There are four goals: We are looking at having a close-knit community of people who can share experience-based insights to understand what the trends are, something which we rely on reports and massive anecdotes. Second, we want to discuss best practices, particularly in developing, investing and managing these building operations. The third goal is networking; the last is sustainability, one of ULI's key focus areas," Parvez said.

Vigyan Yuva awardee Radhakrishnan Mahalakshmi: Decoding complex proteins

GNS News Agency, August 24

This year's Yuva Vigyan Shanti Swarup Bhatnagar award for Biological Sciences is shared by two scientists who study membrane proteins, but of different kinds. Radhakrishnan Mahalakshmi, professor of biological sciences at the Indian Institute of Science Education and Research (IISERB), describes her work with beta-barrel membrane proteins, and its implications for therapeutics. I study beta-barrel membrane proteins, which are a unique kind of membrane protein with unique functions. Beta-barrel proteins are involved in transport of a wide variety of molecules from ions to proteins, and are indispensable to the survival of the cell. I try to understand how beta barrel membrane proteins fold, which refers the process of its conversion into a compact defined structure, and how this folding relates to regulation at the molecular level.

Beta-barrel membrane proteins are extremely difficult to study, which is why we know very little about them. I study them through various biophysical methods. We study these proteins at the molecular level, that is at the level of amino acids, which are the building blocks of proteins. Through the methods I have developed, I have successfully identified unique regulators of folding, stability and function for these proteins. This information will help me design peptidomimetics (these are protein-like



structures that scientists create to mimic proteins and peptides) as next-generation therapeutics.

My multifaceted approach to membrane protein biophysics is the first of its kind in India, and is also very unique globally. Thus far, no other laboratory anywhere has successfully integrated membrane protein folding kinetics with thermodynamic equilibrium and a coupled single molecule-in vivo functional study for human mitochondrial beta-barrels. Using the information I have successfully obtained, I plan to design novel peptidomimetics as next-generation therapeutics to target antibiotic resistance (in TB and other bacterial diseases), cancer, and neurodegeneration.

'Either abnormal or...': Uddhav reacts as Shinde calls Badlapur protests 'politically motivated'

GNS News Agency, August 24

Eknath Shinde's statement alleging 'political motive' behind the violent protests in Thane district's Badlapur over the alleged sexual assault of two four-year-old girls, is one that can only be made by an 'abnormal person,' ex-Maharashtra chief minister Uddhav Thackeray remarked on Thursday.

"Those who feel there is politics behind the Badlapur protest are either abnormal or protector of the culprits," Thackeray said at a press conference without naming Shinde, Maharashtra's chief minister who succeeded him in the top post a day after the violent stir, Shinde had also claimed that most of the protestors were 'not from Badlapur.' At least 25 police personnel were injured in stone-pelting at the Badlapur railway station and other parts of the town during the protest. Eventually,



police had to resort to a lathi-charge to disperse the crowd occupying railway tracks for several hours. The opposition Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA), a three-party alliance of which Thackeray's Shiv Sena (UBT) is a constituent along with the Congress and Nationalist Congress Party (Sharadchandra Pawar), will hold a state-wide

bandh (shutdown) on Saturday to protest the Badlapur incident and the rise in crime against women in the state. "There is no political motive behind the bandh. It is aimed at creating awareness that the security of women should be a priority. It also aims to awaken the government," the Shiv Sena (UBT) chief stated in Mumbai. Meanwhile, hav-

ing taken suo motu cognisance of the incident, the Bombay high court, in a hearing on Wednesday, questioned the Maharashtra Police over its handling of the case. Also, the Maharashtra government has already announced that the accused, 23-year-old Akshay Shinde, a contractual cleaner in the girls' school, will be tried in a fast-track court;

Heat on wildlife department over tiger deaths, Madhya Pradesh replaces top official

GNS News Agency, August 24

Subharanjan Sen has been replaced as the Acting Principal Chief Conservator of Forests (Wildlife), as the Madhya Pradesh wildlife department faces heat after the National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA) sought a response from it after the red flags raised by an SIT regarding tiger deaths in the state. A transfer order by Kishore Kumar Kanyal, Deputy Secretary of the MP Forest department issued Wednesday read: "The State Government hereby transfers Shri V. N. Ambade, IFS-1988, Principal Chief Conservator of Forests (Planning and Forest Land Records), Headquarters, Bhopal, on administrative grounds and temporarily posts him as the Principal Chief Conservator of Forests (Wildlife), Madhya Pradesh, Bhopal with immediate effect until further orders."



next batch of Cheetahs that are expected to arrive in the state later this year. Hailing from the district of Nagpur, Ambade early years in the service saw him posted as an Assistant Conservator of Forests (ACF) Probationer in Chhindwara from August 1990 to May 1991. From 1991 to 1993, he served as the Sub-Divisional Officer (SDO) in Gariband and East Raipur, and then as Divisional Forest Officer (DFO) in Sarguja (1993-1994). His work in Madhav National Park, Shivpuri, as DFO from 1994 to 1996. Ambade served as an instructor at the Ranger College in Balaghat from 1996 to 1997, and later as Deputy Director of Indravati National Park in Jagdalpur (1997-1998). He held numerous key positions in forest divisions and wildlife sanctuaries, where he managed both conservation efforts and administrative responsibilities. He was promoted to Divisional Forest Officer (DFO) in Nauradehi Wildlife Sanctuary and other postings in Bhopal and Jabalpur. In 2007, Ambade became Conservator of Forests (Research & Extension) in Seoni, a role that involved overseeing research initiatives and the dissemination of forestry practices. He continued to climb the ranks, eventually serving in senior roles such as Chief Conservator of Forests (Project) in Bhopal, and in administrative positions at the Ministry of Agriculture in the Government of India. In 2019, Ambade was made the Additional Principal Chief Conservator of Forests (APCCF) and Deputy Director General of Forests (Central) at the Regional Office in Nagpur.

When asked about the reasons related to Sen's sudden departure, a senior forest department officer said, "Sen was a junior officer compared to Ambade. He was looking after the PCCF (wildlife) as an acting chief. He has been replaced by an experienced officer. It has nothing to do with the Tiger death reports of BTR and Shahdol. It's a matter of seniority. Sen will continue to look after major responsibilities in the department." The Indian Express had published a report on August 6 highlighting the red flags raised by the Special Investigation Team regarding the deaths of 43 tigers between 2021 and 2023 in the Bandhavgarh Tiger Reserve (BTR) and Shahdol Forest Circle. Shoddy investigations by wildlife officials into possible poaching cases, lapses during the post-mortem process, and medical negligence that led to tiger deaths were some of the issues flagged by the SIT. Sen, at the time wrote to the NTCA on August 9, acknowledging that in "some cases, it was found that the NTCA Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) and the guidelines issued by the Wildlife Headquarters were not fully adhered to following the death incidents of the tigers." Ambade, who will replace Sen will have his hands full as he would have to oversee the establishment of the NTCA protocols across the state in dealing with tiger deaths and also prepare Gandhi Sagar wildlife sanctuary to welcome the

Occasional harassment or misbehaviour does not amount to abetment to suicide: Madhya Pradesh HC



GNS News Agency, August 24

Mere harassment or misbehaviour not abetment of suicide: MP High court The High court said "the principle flowing from these judgments is that the overt act of accused person must be of such a nature where the victim had no option but to commit suicide." "Even assuming that the petitioner misbehaved with deceased, the conduct does not fall within the ambit of "incitement" or "instigation", the order read. The court explained that instigation means "to goad, urge, provoke, incite or encourage to do act." "There is no positive or direct allegation that the petitioner intended death of Vandana or he has goaded, urged, provoked, incited or encouraged Vandana to commit suicide. The general and omnibus allegations which have been made against the applicant are trivial in nature, which generally take place in every household. Mere occasional harassment or misbehaviour does not amount to abetment to suicide," the court said.

The High court said "the principle flowing from these judgments is that the overt act of accused person must be of such a nature where the victim had no option but to commit suicide." "Even assuming that the petitioner misbehaved with deceased, the conduct does not fall within the ambit of "incitement" or "instigation", the order read. The court explained that instigation means "to goad, urge, provoke, incite or encourage to do act." "There is no positive or direct allegation that the petitioner intended death of Vandana or he has goaded, urged, provoked, incited or encouraged Vandana to commit suicide. The general and omnibus allegations which have been made against the applicant are trivial in nature, which generally take place in every household. Mere occasional harassment or misbehaviour does not amount to abetment to suicide," the court said.

Actor-politician Vijay gears up for 2026 Assembly polls, unveils party flag

GNS News Agency, August 24

Tamil Nadu: Actor-politician Vijay gears up for 2026 Assembly polls, unveils party flag Actor-turned-politician and Tamilaga Vettri Kazhagam president Vijay unveils party flag at party headquarters, on the outskirts of Chennai, Chennai: Popular Tamil film actor-turned-politician Vijay unveiled the flag of his political party — Tamizhaga Vetri Kazhagam — on Thursday and hoisted it at his party headquarters in Panaiyur near here. The two-coloured flag with maroon on top and bottom, has yellow in the middle with a motif of two fighting tuskers on either side of the Vaagai flower. The unveiling of the flag and also official launch of the party anthem heralds a new chapter in Tamil Nadu politics marked by the entry of the Tamizhaga Vetri Kazhagam (TVK), which is gearing up to face the 2026 Assembly elections in the state. Though Vijay announced the launch of his political outfit in February, he chose not to contest the 2024 Lok Sabha elections nor did it support any party during the polls. While unveiling the TVK flag, the top actor took a pledge along with his party workers.

According to the prosecution case, the woman was found hanging on 18 June, 2023 when her husband returned after taking his children out for a haircut. The relatives of the women complained to the police that the husband used "manhandle her after intoxication."

Following this the police in Shivpuri district arrested the husband and his cousin brother under Section 306 read with Section 34 of IPC. The trial court has also framed charges against the accused on January 10, 2024 "for constituting common intention to instigate" the woman to commit suicide. While deciding the matter, the court perused Supreme Court judgement Gangula Mohan Reddy V/s. State of Andhra Pradesh which ruled that, "Abetment involves a mental process of instigating a person or intentionally aiding a person in doing of a thing. Without a positive act on the part of the accused to instigate or aid in committing suicide, conviction cannot be sustained."

Sri Lanka Supreme Court says Ranil Wickremesinghe guilty of 'arbitrary and unlawful' conduct



GNS News Agency, August 24

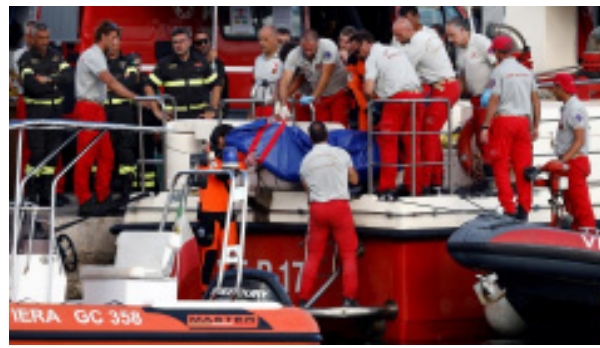
Sri Lanka's Supreme Court on Thursday (August 22, 2024) found President Ranil Wickremesinghe guilty of "arbitrary and unlawful" conduct, in the postponement of local body elections scheduled last year, even as he campaigns hard for a mandate in the September 21 presidential contest. President Wickremesinghe rose to the island nation's top office in July 2022, not winning a national election, but through an extraordinary parliamentary vote. He replaced President Gotabaya Rajapaksa, who fled the country and resigned amid mass protests triggered by a severe financial meltdown.

While local government elections were due soon after — they would have given citizens a say after the country's economy crashed — the Wickremesinghe administration maintained it could not afford to spend on an

election amid urgent efforts towards economic revival. The elections to Sri Lanka's local authorities, scheduled to be held in March 2023 and later April 2023, were postponed. The Election Commission said reasons for the move were "beyond" its control and Mr. Wickremesinghe, who is also Finance Minister, came under sharp attack for "blocking funds" needed for the election. The government's position coincided with painful austerity measures, including a steep rise in indirect taxes, introduced by the government as part of its International Monetary Fund-led programme aimed at recovery. Crisis-hit citizens, who were reeling under the impact of high living costs, growing poverty, and joblessness, came under greater pressure.

Opposition politicians and rights groups filed multiple Fundamental Rights petitions in the Supreme Court, challenging the government's position that they said violated the Constitution. A five-member bench led by Chief Justice Jayantha Jayasuriya on Thursday (August 22, 2024) directed the Election Commission to hold the local government election "at the earlier possible", while holding the "executive branch" liable for the infringement of citizens' fundamental rights. The ruling comes at a time when Mr. Wickremesinghe is appealing to Sri Lankan voters to back him, so he can continue his "economic reform" agenda. He faces strong opponents in Leader of Opposition Sajith Premadasa and Leader of the Opposition National People's Power alliance Anura Kumara Dissanayake, who are fierce critics of Mr. Wickremesinghe's policies.

Five bodies found, one still missing in U.K. tycoon shipwreck off Sicily



GNS News Agency, August 24

Divers searching the wreck of a superyacht that sank off Sicily found the bodies of five passengers on Wednesday and searched for one more as questions intensified about why the vessel sank so quickly when a nearby sailboat remained largely unscathed. Rescue crews brought four body bags ashore into port at Porticello. Salvatore Cocina, head of the Sicily civil protection agency, said a fifth body had been located. Divers at the scene said they would try to recover it on Thursday while continuing the search for the sixth.

The discovery made clear the operation to search the hull on the seabed 50 meters (164 feet) underwater had quickly turned into a recovery one, not a rescue, given the amount of time that had passed and with no signs of life emerging over three days of searching. The Bayesian, a 56-meter (184-foot) British-flagged yacht, went down in a storm early on Monday as it was moored about a kilometer (a half-mile) offshore. Civil protection officials said they believed the ship was struck by a tornado over the water, known as a waterspout, and sank quickly.

Fifteen people escaped in a lifeboat and were rescued by a nearby sailboat. One body was recovered on Monday — that of the ship's chef, Recaldo Thomas, of Antigua. Thomas was born in Canada, according to his cousin David Isaac, but would visit his parents' homeland of Antigua as a child, moving permanently to the tiny eastern Caribbean island in his early 20s. Italian officials previously listed Antigua and Canada as the nationality of people on board. The fate of six missing passengers had driven the search effort, including British tech magnate Mike Lynch, his 18-year-old daughter and associates who had successfully defended him in a recent U.S. federal fraud trial. Lynch's spokesperson did not respond to a request for comment Wednesday.

Meanwhile, investigators from the Termini Imerese Public Prosecutor's Office were acquiring evidence for their criminal investigation, which they opened immediately after the tragedy even though no formal suspects have been publicly identified. Questions have abounded about what caused the superyacht, built in 2008 by Italian shipyard Perini Navi, to sink so quickly, when the nearby Sir Robert Baden Powell sailboat was largely spared and managed to rescue the survivors. Rescue boats take part in a search operation, after a luxury yacht, which was carrying British entrepreneur Mike Lynch, sank off the coast of Porticello, near the Sicilian city of Palermo, Italy.

Giovanni Costantino, head of The Italian Sea Group, which owns the shipmaker, blamed human error for the disaster, which he said took 16 minutes. "The ship sank because it took on water. From where, the investigators will say," he told RAI state television after he met with prosecutors. Costantino cited AIS ship tracking data which he said showed the Bayesian had taken on water for four minutes when a sudden gust of wind flipped it and it con-

tinued taking on water. The ship straightened up slightly and then went down, he said. But was it merely the case of a freak waterspout that knocked the ship to its side and allowed water to pour in through open hatches? What was the position of the keel, which on a large sailboat like the Bayesian might have been retractable, to allow it to enter shallower ports? "There's a lot of uncertainty as to whether it had a lifting keel and whether it might have been up," said Jean-Baptiste Soupeze, a fellow of the Royal Institute of Naval Architects and the editor of the Journal of Sailing Technology. "But if it had, then that would reduce the amount of stability that the vessel had, and therefore made it easier for it to roll over on its side," he said in an interview. The captain of the sailboat that came to the Bayesian's rescue said his craft had sustained minimal damage — the frame of a sun awning broke — even with winds that he estimated reached 12 on the Beaufort wind scale, which is the highest hurricane-strength force on the scale.

He said he had remained anchored with his engines running to try to maintain the ship's position as the storm, which was forecast, rolled in. "Another possibility is to have anchor before the storm and to run downwind at open sea," Karsten Bornersaid in a text message. But he said that might not have been a viable option for the Bayesian, given its trademark 75-meter (246-foot) tall mast. "If there was a stability problem, caused by the extremely tall mast, it would not have been better at open sea," he said. Yachts like the Bayesian are required to have watertight, sub-compartments that are specifically designed to prevent a rapid, catastrophic sinking even when some parts fill with water. "So for the vessel to sink, especially this fast, you are really looking at taking water on board very quickly, but also in a number of locations along the length of the vessel, which again indicates that it might have been rolled over on its side," Soupeze said. Italian coast guard and fire rescue divers continued the underwater search in dangerous and time-consuming conditions. Because of the wreck's depth, which requires special precautions, divers working in tag teams could only spend about 12 minutes at a time searching, though reinforcements outfitted with special equipment to enable longer dives were also on the wreck Wednesday.

In all, some 27 divers were taking rotations, including four who helped with the recovery of the 2012 Costa Concordia disaster off Tuscany. They called the Porticello wreck a "little Concordia," fire crews said in a statement, which for the first time on Wednesday referred to the operation as a "recovery." The limited dive time was designed in part to avoid decompression sickness, also known as the "bends," which can occur when divers stay underwater for long periods and ascend too quickly, allowing nitrogen gas dissolved in the blood to form bubbles.

"The longer you stay, the slower your ascent has to be," said Simon Rogerson, the editor of SCUBA magazine. He said the tight turnaround time suggested the operation's managers were trying to limit the risks and recovery time after each dive. "It sounds like they're operating essentially on no decompression or very tight decompression, or they're being extremely conservative," he said. Additionally, the divers were working in extremely tight spaces, with debris floating around them, limited visibility and air tanks on their backs. "We are trying to advance in tight spaces, but any single thing slows us down," said Luca Cari, spokesman for the fire rescue service. "An electric panel could set us back for five hours. These aren't normal conditions. We're at the limit of possibility." "It's not a question of entering the cabin to inspect it," he added. "They've arrived at the level of the cabins, but it's not like you can open the door."

Antony Blinken ends latest Mideast visit without a cease-fire, warning 'time is of the essence'

GNS News Agency, August 24

U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken ended his ninth visit to the Middle East since the war in Gaza began without securing any major breakthrough for a cease-fire deal, warning on Tuesday (August 20, 2024) that "time is of the essence" even as Hamas and Israel signalled that challenges remain. After meetings in fellow mediating countries Egypt and Qatar, Mr. Blinken said that because Israel has accepted a proposal to bridge gaps with the militant group, the focus turns to do everything possible to "get Hamas on board" and ensure both sides agree to key details on implementation.

"Our message is simple. It's clear and it's urgent," he told reporters before leaving Qatar. "We need to get a cease-fire and hostage agreement over the finish line, and we need to do it now. Time is of the essence." There has been added urgency after the recent targeted killings of militant leaders of Hamas and Hezbollah in Iran and Lebanon, both attributed to Israel and vows of retaliation that have sparked fears of a wider regional war. Few details have been released about the so-called bridging proposal put forth by the U.S., Egypt and Qatar. Mr. Blinken said it is "very clear on the schedule and the locations of (Israeli military) withdrawals from Gaza." Earlier on Tuesday (August 20, 2024), Hamas called the latest proposal a reversal of what it had agreed to, accusing the U.S. of acquiescing to new conditions from Israel. There was no immediate U.S. response to that. Mr. Blinken's comments on ending his latest Israel-Hamas peace mission were notably bare of the optimism that Biden administration officials expressed going into his trip, and earlier. The upbeat tone through much of the spring and summer — with U.S. officials at times describing a cease-fire and hostage deal as nearer than ever — reflected necessary messaging, at least in part, said Jonathan Panikoff, director of the Scowcroft Middle East Security Initiative at the Atlantic Council's Middle East Program. "If they don't project optimism then it won't create... even the potential for sufficient momentum to keep things going," Mr. Panikoff said. "Americans have little alternative to continuing to push Israel and Hamas to agree to a negotiated end to fighting, but it's fundamentally about Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Hamas leader Yahya Sinwar, who helped mastermind the October 7, 2023 attacks," Mr. Panikoff said. And they are "the two people that have been, frankly, most sceptical from the beginning" about making peace. Mr. Netanyahu, meanwhile, met with right-wing groups of families of fallen soldiers and hostages in Gaza. The groups, which oppose a cease-fire deal, said he told them Israel will not abandon two strategic corridors in Gaza whose control has been an obstacle in the talks. Netanyahu's office did not comment on their account.

A senior U.S. official rejected as "totally untrue" that

Mr. Netanyahu had told Mr. Blinken that Israel would never leave the Philadelphi and Netzarim corridors. Such statements are "not constructive to getting a cease-fire deal across the finish line," the official said, speaking on condition of anonymity to discuss Mr. Blinken's private diplomatic talks. Mr. Blinken's meetings in Egypt, which borders Gaza, and in Qatar, which hosts some Hamas leaders in exile, came a day after he met Mr. Netanyahu. Wide gaps appeared to remain between Israel and Hamas, though angry statements often serve as pressure tactics during negotiations. "Both men have seen their political standing improve at home, as Israelis turn their attention from the war in Gaza to a threatened wider conflict with Iran and Hezbollah, and as Hamas further consolidates Sinwar's leadership of the group. That's lessened the pressure on to close a deal," Mr. Panikoff said.

And while the U.S. could try restricting arms sales to Israel to push it to end the war with Hamas, Mr. Panikoff argued that risks making Mr. Netanyahu dig in his heels further, instead. Prime Minister Netanyahu's meeting with the families came as Israel's military said it recovered the bodies of six hostages taken in Hamas' October 7, 2023 attack that started the war, bringing fresh grief for many Israelis who have long pressed Netanyahu to agree to a cease-fire that would bring the remaining hostages home. New protests were held Tuesday (August 20, 2024). "The longer they're there, the more body bags we get," said one protester, Adi Israeli, in Tel Aviv. Israel's military said it recovered the six bodies in an overnight operation in southern Gaza, saying they were killed when troops were operating in Khan Younis. Hamas says some captives have been killed in Israeli airstrikes, though returning hostages have talked about difficult conditions, including lack of food or medications. The recovery of the remains also is a blow to Hamas, which hopes to exchange hostages for Palestinian prisoners, an Israeli withdrawal and a lasting cease-fire. The military said it had identified the remains of Chaim Perry (80), Yoram Metzger (80), Avraham Munder (79), Alexander Dancyg (76), Nadav Popplewell (51), and Yagev Buchstav (35). Kibbutz Nir Oz, the farming community where Mr. Munder was among around 80 residents seized, said he died after "months of physical and mental torture." Israeli authorities previously determined the other five were dead. Hamas is still believed to be holding around 110 hostages captured during the Oct. 7 attacks, when militants killed some 1,200 people, mostly civilians. Israeli authorities estimate around a third are dead. Over 100 other hostages were released during last year's cease-fire in exchange for Palestinians imprisoned in Israel. Israel's retaliatory offensive has killed over 40,000 Palestinians, according to Gaza's Health Ministry, which does not distinguish between civilians and combatants in its count.

Tim Walz accepts V-P nomination at DNC; builds on Kamala Harris's momentum after Bill Clinton tears into Trump

GNS News Agency, August 24

U.S. Minnesota Governor Tim Walz accepted his party's nomination for vice president Wednesday (August 21, 2024) night, using his Democratic National Convention address to thank the packed arena for "bringing the joy" to a U.S. election transformed by the elevation of his running mate, Vice President Kamala Harris. "We're all here tonight for one beautiful, simple, reason: We love this country," Mr. Walz said as thousands of delegates hoisted vertical placards reading "Coach Walz" in red, white and blue.

Mr. Walz described his upbringing in Nebraska and teaching and coaching football in Minnesota and told the crowd, "Thank you for bringing the joy to this fight." "While other States were banning books from their schools, we were banishing hunger from ours," he said. In a dig at his Republican counterpart, J.D. Vance, he added, "I had 24 kids in my high school class, and none of them went to Yale." "When Mr. Walz talked about the difficulty conceiving his daughter, Hope, she made a heart with her hands and held it over her chest. His son, Gus, wept watching his dad speak and at least once shouted, "That's my dad!"

"I haven't given a lot of speeches like this but I've given a lot of pep talks," Mr. Walz said. Democrats gathered at Chicago's United Center are hoping to build on the momentum Ms. Harris has brought since taking over the top of the party's presidential ticket last month. Former U.S. President Bill Clinton speaks on Day 3 of the Democratic National Convention (DNC) at the United Center, in Chicago, Illinois, U.S., August 21. Many Americans had never heard of Mr. Walz until Ms. Harris made him her running mate. In his first weeks of campaigning, he's charmed supporters with his background and helped to balance Ms. Harris' coastal background as a cultural representative of Midwestern States whose voters she needs this fall.

But Mr. Walz also has faced scrutiny, including questions about embellishing his background. His wife this week clarified that she did not undergo in vitro fertilization, as Mr. Walz has repeatedly claimed, but used other fertility treatments. Republicans also have criticised Walz for a 2018 comment he made about carrying weapons in war. Though he served in the National Guard for 24 years, he did not deploy to a war zone.



Bill Clinton denounces Donald Trump. Mr. Walz's speech followed former President Bill Clinton who returned to a place he knows well, the Democratic National Convention stage, to denounce Donald Trump as selfish and praise Kamala Harris as focused on the needs of Americans — firing up his party with his trademark off-the-cuff flourishes. Mr. Clinton was meant to add heft to a third DNC night headlined by vice presidential nominee Tim Walz's introduction to a national audience. "We've got a pretty clear choice it seems to me. Kamala Harris, for the people. And the other guy who has proved, even more than the first go-around, that he's about me, myself and I," Mr. Clinton said. The nation's 42nd president and a veteran of his party's political convention going back decades, Mr. Clinton was once declared the "secretary of explaining stuff" by Barack Obama, whose reelection bid in 2012 was bolstered by a Mr. Clinton stemwinder at that year's DNC. Now 78 — the same age as Mr. Trump — Mr. Clinton's delivery was sometimes halting, his movements slower and he mispronounced Ms. Harris' first name twice. His left hand often shook when he wasn't using it to grip the lectern. Still, he delivered several memorable, home-spun pronouncements including asking, "What does her opponent do with his voice? He mostly talks about himself. So the next time you hear him, don't count the lies, count the I's."

Trump slams DNC. Mr. Trump bashed the convention as a "charade" and noted the fact that he has been a frequent topic of conversation. He also singled out his predecessor, Mr. Obama, for a highly critical convention speech Tuesday night, saying Obama had been "nasty."

Iran's hard-line parliament approves all members of president's Cabinet, first time since 2001

GNS News Agency, August 24

Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian speaks during the debate on his proposed ministers at an open session of parliament, in Tehran, Iran, Wednesday, Aug. 21, 2024. Iran's hard-line parliament on Wednesday approved all members of reformist President Masoud Pezeshkian's Cabinet, the first time in over two decades a leader has been able to get all of his officials through the body. Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian speaks during the debate on his proposed ministers at an open session of parliament, in Tehran, Iran, Wednesday, Aug. 21, 2024. Iran's hard-line parliament on Wednesday approved all members of reformist President Masoud Pezeshkian's Cabinet, the first time in over two decades a leader has been able to get all of his officials through the body. (AP Photo/Vahid Salemi) | Photo Credit: Vahid Salemi. Iran's hard-line parliament on Wednesday (August 21) approved all members of reformist President Masoud Pezeshkian's Cabinet, the first time in over two decades a leader has been able to get all of his officials through the body. The approval marks an early win for Mr. Pezeshkian, a longtime lawmaker who found himself catapulted into the presidency after a helicopter crash in May killed his hard-line predecessor. Getting his officials approved shows Mr. Pezeshkian picked a Cabinet of consensus with names palatable to all of the power centers within Iran's theocracy, as opposed to going for controversial choices as well. Underlining that point, Mr. Pezeshkian immediately posted an image online with him standing next to Iran's judiciary chief, a Shiite cleric, and the country's parliament speaker, a hard-liner he once faced in the election. "Consensus for Iran," he wrote in the caption.

Former Foreign Minister Mohamad Javad Zarif, who campaigned for Pezeshkian in his election, later resigned as a vice president for the new leader over the Cabinet selections. Among those in Mr. Pezeshkian's new Cabinet is Abbas Araghchi, 61, a career diplomat who will be Iran's new foreign minister. Mr. Araghchi was a



member of the Iranian negotiating team that reached a nuclear deal with world powers in 2015 that capped Tehran's nuclear program in return for the lifting of sanctions. In 2018, then-President Donald Trump pulled the U.S. out of the deal and imposed more sanctions on Iran. Pezeshkian said during his presidential campaign that he would try to revive the nuclear deal. The candidate who received the most support from lawmakers was the country's new defense minister, Aziz Nasirzadeh, who received 281 votes out of 288 present lawmakers. The chamber has 290 seats. The only female minister proposed, Housing and Road Minister Farzaneh Sadegh, a 47-year-old architect, received 231 votes. She is the first female minister in Iran in more than a decade. The parliament also approved Pezeshkian's proposed Intelligence Minister Ismail Khatib, as well as Justice Minister Amin Hossein Rahimi, both of whom served under the late President Ebrahim Raisi. Pezeshkian also put Raisi's minister of industries, Abbas Aliabadi, in the post of energy minister. Dropping proposed ministers has been a tradition in Iran's parliament, making Pezeshkian's success that much more striking. Former reformist President Mohammad Khatami was the only president who received vote of confidence for all of his proposed ministers in both 1997 and 2001.

India surpasses China to become Russia's top oil buyer in July



more than a year ago, data on Indian shipments from trade and industry sources showed.

That surpassed China's July oil imports from Russia of 1.76 million bpd via pipelines and shipments, based on Chinese customs data. Indian refiners have been gorging on Russian oil sold at discounts after Western nations imposed sanctions against Moscow and curtailed their energy purchases in response to Russia's invasion of Ukraine. "India's requirement for Russian oil is going to go up as long as there are no further tightening of sanctions," an Indian refining source said.

India's trade with Russia has increased since Russia began its war against Ukraine in February 2022 mainly because of oil and fertiliser imports, a move helping to keep a lid on global prices and controlling inflation. India's rising purchases are changing the flow of Russian ESPO Blend crude from traditional Chinese buyers to South Asia. ESPO imports to India jumped in July to 188,000 bpd as larger Suezmax vessels were used, according to the data. Refiners in northeast China are typically the biggest ESPO buyers because of their close proximity, but their demand has fallen because of tepid fuel demand. Iraq continued to be the second-largest oil supplier to India last month, followed by Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates. India's crude purchases from the Middle East rose 4% in July, pushing up the region's share in India's overall mix to 40% from 38% in June, the data showed.

Ministerial panel on GST rate rationalisation to meet today, to make a presentation to Council on September 9

The ministerial panel is likely to discuss the deliberations held so far regarding rate rejig under the indirect tax regime. It will then make a presentation to the Council next month, officials said. The ministerial panel is likely to discuss the deliberations held so far regarding rate rejig under the indirect tax regime. It will then make a presentation to the Council next month, officials said. Ahead of the 54th meeting of the Goods and Services Tax (GST) on September 9, the Group of Ministers (GoM) on rate rationalisation is meeting today. The ministerial panel is likely to discuss the deliberations held so far regarding rate rejig under the indirect tax regime. It will then make a presentation to the Council next month, officials said.

While a change in tax slabs may not happen immediately, the committee is expected to review the list of items in each GST slab and decide on their fitment accordingly. For instance, items of mass public use are likely to be recommended for a shift from the high rate slab of 12 per cent to 5 per cent, one of the officials said. "A change in slabs will not happen immediately. Around 70 per cent of the GST revenue is coming from 18 per cent tax slab. Even a 1 percentage points reduction in the 18 per cent rate to 17 per cent would result in 3.5 percentage points reduction in revenue. So the change in slabs is not going to be easy," a senior government official told. However, common-use items are to be in focus as the ministerial panel will discuss their rate fitment into various GST slabs, the official added. The ministerial committee would be asked to present the work done so far for a wide ranging discussion in the Council. The GoM will also recommend the timeline for various rate change measures, and whether it would be feasible to change rates on some items or not, the official said.

Bihar's Deputy Chief Minister Samrat Chaudhary is the convenor of the seven-member GoM on rate rationalisation under GST. Other members of the GoM are Uttar Pradesh Finance Minister Suresh Kumar Khanna, Goa Transport Minister Mauvin Godinho, Rajasthan Medical, and Health Services Minister Gajendra Singh along with West Bengal Finance Minister Chandrima Bhattacharya, Karnataka Revenue Minister Krishna Byre Gowda, and Kerala Finance Minister K N Balagopal. Any such recommendation of tweaks in rates or tax slabs by the GoM would then require final approval

India-Africa partnership a catalyst for accelerated global rebalancing, strengthening of the Global South

Vice President Jagdeep Dhankhar noted that India's diplomatic footprint in Africa is rising, with the opening of 16 new diplomatic missions, bringing the total number of Indian missions on the continent to 46. (Photo: Twitter/@MEAIndia) Vice President Jagdeep Dhankhar noted that India's diplomatic footprint in Africa is rising, with the opening of 16 new diplomatic missions, bringing the total number of Indian missions on the continent to 46.

The partnership between India and Africa could serve as a catalyst for accelerated global rebalancing and the strengthening of the Global South, which augurs well for global peace and harmony, Vice President Jagdeep Dhankhar said, stressing that India has historically never believed in expansion.

"India's participation, India's footprint... is antithetical to expansion. Historically, this nation has never believed in expansion, and therefore, this partnership, which is deeply rooted in history, has the potential to contribute to significant global change for the betterment of humanity," Dhankhar said at the 19th CII India Africa Business Conclave. The International Monetary Fund (IMF) last year highlighted that rising average debt ratios in sub-Saharan Africa had sparked concerns of a looming credit crisis in the region, noting that while China is a major credit provider to sub-Saharan Africa, it imposes harsh terms on debtors.

The Vice President said that a resurgent Africa and a rising India can provide great impetus to South-South cooperation, particularly in areas such as clean technology, climate-resilient agriculture, maritime security, connectivity, and the green economy. He noted that India's diplomatic footprint in Africa is rising, with the opening of 16 new diplomatic missions, bringing the total number of Indian missions on the continent to 46. "During COVID-19, India assisted Africa with medical supplies and vaccines. India and Africa share strong defence ties, with the Indian military providing training and being the third-largest contributor to peacekeeping forces. India has invested over \$12.37 billion in 206 infrastructure projects across 43 African countries, impacting millions of lives. India also provides capacity-building training and educational opportunities, reflecting its commitment to the African Union's priorities," Dhankhar said.



of the GST Council. The GST has five key tax slabs: zero, 5 per cent, 12 per cent, 18 per cent and 28 per cent. A compensation cess, ranging between 1 per cent to 290 per cent, is levied on demerit and luxury goods over and above the topmost rate of 28 per cent. A merger of 5 per cent and 12 per cent slabs or 12 per cent and 18 per cent slabs has been deliberated upon earlier as well but has not been taken up formally for a decision.

In its previous meeting held in June, the GST Council, which had met for the first time since the formation of the new Union government, tweaked tax rates on some items, and took a series of steps to bring down litigation and ease compliance for taxpayers. The GST Council in its 45th meeting held in September 2021 at Lucknow had deliberated upon the revenue situation and the revenue neutral rate having fallen to 11.6 per cent from 15.5 per cent. The GST Council had then set up a GoM to examine rate rationalisation. The committee had submitted an interim report in June 2022. While there have been internal discussions about merger of slabs or creation of a new slab in between 12 per cent and 18 per cent, the concerns have centred around whether it would create any revenue losses for the states and the Centre. The concern of maintaining revenue neutrality has weighed on such discussions earlier. Revenue neutrality is seen as a crucial factor as a study by the RBI had earlier shown that while the Chief Economic Advisor's report had pegged the revenue neutral rate at 15.3 per cent, the weighted average GST rate stood at 14.4 per cent in May 2017, and subsequently dropped to 11.6 per cent by September 2019.



Referring to Africa's rich natural resources and its demographic advantage, Dhankhar stated that the region is emerging as a highly attractive destination for investments and partnerships. And India remains committed to partnering with Africa in its quest for value addition in its industrial sectors through innovative solutions, he said. Meanwhile, Chinese lending to sub-Saharan Africa has drawn considerable attention and criticism for imposing relatively harsh terms on debtors and using natural resources as collateral, the IMF said, adding that other concerns include the lack of standardisation and transparency in public debt because Chinese lenders do not systematically document loans to individual overseas borrowers, leading to significant data gaps. "China has forged deep economic ties with countries in sub-Saharan Africa over the past 20 years, making it the region's largest single-country trading partner. China buys one-fifth of the region's exports—metals, minerals, and fuel—and provides most of the manufactured goods and machinery imported by African countries," the IMF said in its report last year. The IMF reported that the average debt ratio in sub-Saharan Africa has almost doubled in just a decade—from 30 per cent of GDP at the end of 2013 to almost 60 per cent of GDP by the end of 2022, and repaying this debt has also become much costlier. As of 2022, more than half of the low-income countries in sub-Saharan Africa were assessed by the IMF to be at high risk of, or already in, debt distress.

'Relationships today are not as beautiful': Praseon Joshi on crafting timeless tales for modern Indian audience



Not many voices in Indian storytelling stand out with the kind of authenticity and originality Praseon Joshi embodies. His contributions to Hindi cinema and advertising have consistently expanded the boundaries of creativity, weaving together his unique experiences and cultural roots into lyrics and stories that resonate deeply. From the ground-breaking lines of Rang De Basanti to the soulful compositions of Taare Zameen Par, his words capture emotions that are universal and deeply personal. In his latest endeavour, Joshi continues to push the frontiers of Indian storytelling with the world's first mega musical centered on Shri Krishna, titled Rajadhiraaj: Love, Life, Leela. This production—with a cast of over 100 performers and stunning visuals at the Nita Mukesh Ambani Cultural Centre (NMACC) in Mumbai—explores the untold stories of Krishna, offering a vivid portrayal of his dual journeys from Vraj to Mewar and Mathura to Dwarka.

In an interview with indianexpress.com, the Padma Shree awardee shares insights into his creative process, spiritual journey, upbringing in Uttarakhand, and the challenges of bringing this epic tale to the stage. Read the edited excerpts below: offers a vivid glimpse into the dual journeys of Shri Krishna from Vraj to Mewar and Mathura to Dwarka. Rajadhiraaj offers a vivid glimpse into the dual journeys of Shri Krishna from Vraj to Mewar and Mathura to Dwarka. (Source: PR Handout)

Q: Your work has resonated deeply with audiences across various mediums. How has your writing evolved, and what drives you to continue exploring new narratives?

Praseon Joshi: Exploration drives my creative process, pushing me to uncover new aspects of my craft and self. From addressing dyslexia in Taare Zameen Par to exploring sports in Bhaag Milkha Bhaag, each project broadens my perspective. With Rajadhiraaj, I immersed myself in the vast and complex subject of Krishna. My spiritual background and extensive research helped me present this timeless story through a contemporary lens.

Q: How do you strike a balance between artistic expression and commercial success in your projects?

Praseon Joshi: For me, authenticity is paramount. Commercial success follows when you genuinely connect with people. When that happens, commercial success often follows. Take Rang De Basanti for example—I tapped into authentic youth experiences from my college days. Similarly, with 'Rajadhiraaj', I drew from my spiritual upbringing in Uttarakhand.

Q: What aspects of Shri Krishna's life did you find most compelling to bring to the stage?

Praseon Joshi: I approached Krishna's story from the perspective that Krishna is what you seek within yourself. For the people of Vrindavan, he represents childlike innocence. For Radha, he's a lover. In Dwarka, he's seen as a ruler. To Arjun, he's a philosophical guide. I wanted to explore how Krishna adapts to fulfill different spiritual needs, emphasising that the truth lies in what a person is seeking.

Q: How did you approach intertwining Shri Krishna's dual journeys from Vraj to Mewar and Mathura to Dwarka? Were there any particular challenges in ensuring a seamless narrative?

Praseon Joshi: The biggest challenge—and the reason I was brought on board—was weaving together various aspects of Krishna's life with clarity. I established different vantage points to view Krishna, sacrificing some well-known stories due to time constraints, and including lesser-known tales, like that of Jambavan, to offer a fresh perspective. The key was balancing familiar and unfamiliar elements while maintaining the central message. Praseon Joshi "I grew accustomed to seeing people come to meditate or explore spiritual paths," Praseon said about his upbringing.

Q: Shri Krishna holds deep cultural and spiritual significance in India. How did you ensure that the portrayal of Rajadhiraaj resonates with both devout followers and the general audience?

Praseon Joshi: I had great people to test this—Dhanraj Nathwani, who conceptualised Rajadhiraaj, and executive producer Bhoomi Nathwani—both devout followers. My spiritual upbringing in Uttarakhand shaped my approach, but the challenge was connecting with those

who see Krishna differently. I realised that Krishna touches on universal emotions—like the mother-child bond, love, and justice—that resonate with everyone. For example, the scene where Krishna leaves for Mathura brings tears to all, regardless of their level of devotion. I've tried to capture this authenticity.

Q: How did this all start? Whose brainchild was this?

Praseon Joshi: This project is the brainchild of Dhanraj ji and Bhoomi ji. As Krishna devotees, they had the desire to create something like this, but needed help with form and execution. That's where I saw my role—to humbly contribute. Writing these love songs and connecting with this rich tradition has been a beautiful experience. In the process, I've grown, becoming gentler and softer in my approach. Krishna's water-like quality, a softness that engulfs you, has truly influenced me.

Q: Can you share a little bit about your journey?

Praseon Joshi: I'm proud to have been born in Uttarakhand, a place that instilled a sense of liberation in me from a young age. As a hub for seekers from around the world, I was exposed to a wide range of thinkers and philosophies, from Vedantic scholars to those studying Western philosophy like Hegel, Kant, Derrida, and Lacan. My upbringing was deeply influenced by music, as both my parents were classical musicians. I learned Indian classical music for a few years before studying physics. This diverse background has allowed me to draw intriguing connections, such as between spirituality and AI or Vedantic ideas and quantum physics. Poetry has been another crucial dimension of my life—not just reading poems, but experiencing the poetry of life through relationships and human connections. These three elements—spirituality, science, and poetry—have profoundly shaped my worldview. I also draw inspiration from the strong women in my life, especially my grandmother. She lost her husband at 19, was initially illiterate, but eventually retired as a school principal. Her journey taught me the essence of true feminist values.

Q: How did your foray into the world of advertising and Bollywood begin?

Praseon Joshi: As a middle-class person, education was paramount. After completing my MBA from IMT Ghaziabad, I sought to establish myself financially. Advertising provided that foundation, allowing me to utilise my language skills and thinking abilities. Over time, people appreciated my work, and I eventually became the chairman of Asia Pacific for McCann, one of the world's largest advertising firms. I've managed to balance my day job in advertising with my passion for writing songs, stories, and plays.

Q: Writing for a live musical is different from film or television. How did you adapt your storytelling techniques to engage a live audience?

Praseon Joshi: While I had experience writing and directing plays in college, this musical was a new challenge. Working with a fantastic team, including Shruti Sharma and Parthiv Gohil, helped immensely. My background as a natural storyteller allowed me to visualise how dialogues could seamlessly transition into songs. Collaborating with music directors Sachin and Jigar was a joy. We used songs to advance the story, especially when dialogues became too heavy. This approach helped maintain audience engagement throughout the performance. Praseon Joshi 20 original songs were composed by ace music composers Sachin-Jigar, blending Indian classical music with a Western symphony orchestra.

Q: In the present day, many young people are becoming inquisitive about Hindu scriptures and philosophies. What do you think can be done to encourage more children to read and understand them?

Praseon Joshi: Parents play a crucial role in presenting our scriptures and stories in ways that resonate with today's generation. We need to simplify these narratives while instilling pride in our civilisation. Unfortunately, youngsters are led to believe there's little to be proud of in our heritage. While logic is important, emotional connection is essential, as younger generations are forgetting how to feel. Our scriptures were meant to evoke emotion, and relationships today suffer from a lack of grace. Simplifying and modernising these messages is key, and addressing youthful curiosity is vital. In this play, I've included a young girl's character who asks naive questions, and her father answers. Both aspects are important—understanding that our perception in Indian civilisation is different, and simplifying and modernising our messages.

Q: What advice would you give to young lyricists and writers who look up to you?

Praseon Joshi: Be brave and be yourself. Embrace your unique experiences and perspectives. When I entered the film industry, I didn't conform to existing norms, and stayed true to my background from Uttarakhand. I brought my own vocabulary and way of expressing myself. Don't shy away from expressing your individuality—have confidence in your authentic voice.

The reason planes avoid flying over the Tibetan plateau

The Tibetan plateau, with its towering mountains and vast, remote landscapes, is one of the most geographically challenging regions in the world. Despite its strategic location between major aviation routes, commercial aeroplanes almost universally avoid flying over this region.

The decision to steer clear of Tibetan airspace is not coincidental; it involves a combination of safety concerns, technical limitations, and environmental factors. Flying over Tibet presents unique challenges that set it apart from other high-altitude regions. R A Singh, retired joint director education department and geography expert, Ambedkar Nagar, Uttar Pradesh, tells indianexpress.com, "Flying over the Tibetan plateau, often called the 'roof of the world,' is a breathtaking experience, with stunning views of towering mountains and vast, untouched landscapes. However, for commercial airlines, the high-altitude terrain presents a unique set of challenges that make it a less-than-ideal flight path."

So, what are these challenges?

Singh says, "The Tibetan plateau's average elevation exceeds 4,500 metres (14,764 feet), and that thin air has some serious consequences for commercial aviation. Jet engines rely on oxygen for combustion. At high altitudes, the thinner air reduces the available oxygen, resulting in decreased engine power and thrust. This means aircraft must fly faster to generate enough lift, po-

tentially increasing fuel consumption and limiting payload capacity." Thinner air also affects an aircraft's ability to generate lift during takeoff and landing, he informs. This necessitates longer runways, which are often scarce in high-altitude regions like Tibet. "In the event of an in-flight emergency, such as engine failure or decompression, the options are limited in Tibet. The high altitude and rugged terrain make it difficult to find suitable landing sites, posing a significant risk to passengers and crew," Singh adds. Maintaining adequate cabin pressure is crucial at high altitudes to prevent hypoxia (oxygen deprivation). However, flying over the Tibetan plateau can put additional stress on the aircraft's pressurisation system, increasing the potential for problems. Festive offer While turbulence and challenging weather conditions can occur in any high-altitude area, the unique combination of extreme altitude While turbulence and challenging weather conditions can occur in any high-altitude area, the unique combination of extreme altitude One of the most significant reasons airlines avoid Tibetan airspace is the lack of suitable emergency landing sites. In the event of an emergency, pilots need to be able to reach a safe landing area quickly. The vast, sparsely populated, and mountainous terrain of Tibet makes this a challenge, according to Singh. He continues, "While there are a few airports in the region, they are often located in remote areas with limited facilities and infrastructure.

Kamal Haasan praises PS Vinothraj's Kottukkaali: 'A beautiful rationalist story told in a wonderful cinematic language'



GNS News Agency, August 24

With just a day left for the release of PS Vinothraj's Kottukkaali, the film received its biggest promotional screening. Kamal Haasan attended a special screening of the film, headlined by Soori and Anna Ben, and the legendary actor-filmmaker was effusive with his praise for Kottukkaali. Kamal penned a comprehensive three-page letter talking about the various nuances in the film, the themes it explored, the performances of all the cast members, the brave choices of Vinothraj, and

Sivakarthykayan's decision to back the film.

The letter also explored the importance of audiences understanding and appreciating such films to elevate Tamil cinema to the next level. He emphasised on the runtime of the film, which is just a shade over 100 minutes, and the absence of a background musical score, and felt Kottukkaali has moved on from the era of the song-and-dance in Tamil cinema. Kamal also discussed in detail about the way Vinothraj draws parallels between his central characters and a bunch of animals, and elements of nature. Thanking Kamal Haasan for taking out time to appreciate his production venture, Sivakarthykayan wrote, "A moment to cherish for our team Kottukkaali. Appreciation from the pioneer of Indian cinema, our Ulaganayagan Kamal Haasan Sir. This letter is a treasure. Thank you so much Sir (sic). Interestingly, Kamal Haasan is backing Sivakarthykayan's next film, Amaran, directed by Rajkumar Periasamy.

The film, which is based on the life of late Captain Mukund Varadarajan, is set to hit the screens on October 31 for the festive season of Diwali. Meanwhile, Kamal Haasan, who is currently working in Mani Ratnam's Thug Life, will next star in National award-winning stunt choreographer duo Anbariv's directorial debut.

Where are Hindi cinema's angry young women?



Rekha avenging herself in Khoon Bhari Maang, Alia Bhatt and Shefali Shah in Darlings; there are multiple examples of how women have to face extreme situations of pain and humiliation to express anger. Rekha avenging herself in Khoon Bhari Maang, Alia Bhatt and Shefali Shah in Darlings; there are multiple examples of how women have to face extreme situations of pain and humiliation to express anger.

As a huge Javed Akhtar fan, I was thrilled when I saw the promotional videos for Angry Young Men, a new series streaming on Prime Video India. The show looks at the life and work of Salim-Javed, two screenwriters who redefined how heroes were written in Hindi cinema, created the most long-lasting impact on pop culture with their dialogues and memorable characters, and were a major factor in catapulting Amitabh Bachchan to superstardom. The show's title refers to the angry young man, a phrase coined to describe the angry, disgruntled male protagonists created by the duo. The 'angry young man' was not just a creative breakthrough, his angst was cathartic to an Indian population disillusioned by their quality of life and political events of the 70's and 80's. Ranjani Mazumdar aptly writes in her article 'The Cult of the Angry Young Man', published in 2022, "The angry man was positioned as a figure who experiences, remembers, and carries a past of deprivation that affects his psychological make-up." Vijay, as he was often called, became iconic for being angry about economic deprivation, financial disparity, disappointing or absent fathers, and the inherent injustice of how much a very few had while the vast population suffered in poverty. I couldn't help but wonder, by the same definition, where were the angry young women? Or angry middle-aged and bitter old women? Where was the other half of the population that is continually side-lined, belittled, overworked but paid less, physically and emotionally abused, denied basic rights to education and independent decision-making? Why has Bollywood not done enough to explore the issues or triggers for a woman's anger?

While men can be angry and lash out at the world over a bad breakup, or turn into angry 'animals' because daddy didn't give them attention, a woman's anger in Hindi cinema is almost always linked to revenge or seeking justice for an unconscionable crime. They are allowed to feel rage when they have to avenge an unspeakable horror like rape or seek justice after they face repeated instances of abuse or discrimination. Whether it's Ketan Mehta's searing film Mirch Masala where Smita Patil and a group of women from her village attack a lecherous subedar played by Naseeruddin Shah to stop his harassment, Zeenat Aman in Insaf ka Tarazu, Dimple Kapadia in Zakhmi Aurat, Rekha avenging herself in Khoon Bhari Maang, Sushama Deshpande who seeks justice for her granddaughter who gets raped in the Marathi film Aaji, Rani Mukherji and Vidya Balan in No One Killed Jessica, Alia Bhatt and Shefali Shah in Darlings, or Triptii Dimri in Bulbbul; there are multiple ex-

amples of how women have to face extreme situations of pain and humiliation to express anger. Interestingly, when she does get angry or express anger, a woman is often likened to Durga and Kali, ennobling her rage as a righteous necessity against undeniable evil, not just a regular emotion she may experience at least once a day. Vidya Balan gave us a breakthrough performance in Kahaani as a highly trained agent and widow who avenges the death of her husband and kills a man responsible for a bio-terror attack. However, instead of just allowing her to be a wounded woman who gets justice for herself and the families of all the victims, she is likened through visuals and a voiceover to Goddess Durga who Hindus believe killed an evil demon Mahishasura, and she symbolises the victory of good over evil. Unfortunately, by deifying an angry woman, we deny her the right to be human. In most cases when a woman displays anger or is irritable she is considered annoying instead of annoyed. Ironically, anger builds inside a woman because she is never allowed to express it. She is supposed to put a lid on her feelings and appear outwardly calm for fear of being thought hysterical, hormonal, emotional, unprofessional, weak, a diva, or the eternal favourite, a b*tch. Can you imagine a woman acting like Kabir Singh after a breakup, like Pushparaj because she is poor, or like Ranbir Kapoor in Animal because she had a toxic relationship with her mother? Impossible. Instead, a woman internalises her rage, sometimes numbs herself with food like Shefali Shah's messy and memorable scene in Dil Dhadakne Do, but mostly convinces herself that expressing her feelings will not bring about any actual change.

Cinema and societal conditioning have linked women to tolerance, sacrifice, unconditional love, adjustment, and patience for so long, that there is a subconscious pressure to be in a state of constant calm and passiveness. Women are expected to tolerate more and react less, compromise as mothers, wives, and employees but never appear upset or disgruntled. In her essay 'The Functions of Female Rage' written on the 50th anniversary of the Roe v Wade ruling, writer Megan Nolan makes an interesting comment about how women resist expressing anger because it may impact their safety. Nolan says, "Many of us assume well-practised expressions of impassivity when being harassed, because shouting back, or even rolling our eyes, invites the possibility of physical escalation. It's difficult to feel safe expressing anger, but it's also unpleasant - not only for others to experience, but for the person feeling it." There are only a handful of instances I can remember from films I have seen in the past decade where a woman freely expressed her anger without wanting to avenge herself or anyone else. Vidya Balan confronting her family over their criticism of her job in Tumhari Sulu, Kangana Ranaut expressing anger and grief about losing out on an opportunity for a better professional life in Panga, Alia Bhatt losing her temper with Ranveer Singh's family in Rocky Aur Rani Kii Prem Kahaani, and Vidya again confronting her father about his inconsiderate behaviour in Do and Do Pyaar. Ranveer Singh and Alia Bhatt in Karan Johar's Rocky Aur Rani Kii Prem Kahaani Ranveer Singh and Alia Bhatt in Karan Johar's Rocky Aur Rani Kii Prem Kahaani. Perhaps it's because few women play real, fully actualised characters in mainstream cinema. However, the more likely reason is that realistic complex characters for women who get angry simply because they can are rarely written in Bollywood. Forget Madonna and whore, women are usually divided into pleasant and easy to deal with, or complex, prone to emotions, and opinionated. Sadly the two are not mutually exclusive, one is just better at keeping up the appearance of not being the other.

Adil Hussain says he never blamed Sandeep Reddy Vanga, challenges director's claim that Kabir Singh made him famous: 'Is he more popular than Ang Lee?'



Actor Adil Hussain, who played a supporting role in the controversial film Kabir Singh, defended his choice to criticise the movie, but clarified that he wasn't criticising its director, Sandeep Reddy Vanga. The actor said that he will continue to call out misogyny and violence in films, and that he blames no one but himself for having done Kabir Singh, because he didn't read the entire script before signing on. In an interview with India Today NE, he was also asked to respond to Vanga's claims that a small role in Kabir Singh got him more fame than the rest of his career. "How do I respond to that? Is Ang Lee less famous than him? Is Mira Nair less famous? Ang Lee was an Oscar-winner before Life of Pi," he said. Adil has worked with both filmmakers. Also read - Adil Hussain

says he regrets acting in Kabir Singh, walked out of the film in 20 minutes: 'It legitimizes male misogyny, glorifies violence'

He said that Indian society is susceptible to believing what it sees on the big screen as reality, and so, filmmakers have an added responsibility to be more sensitive. "Cinema is a powerful medium, it can influence you deeply. In a country where they build statues of heroes and worship them, what sort of films do you want to make? You have to take into account the innocence and the intellectual level of the mass audience. If you make a movie that glorifies violence and misogyny, I will always retain my right to criticise you," he said. Adil said that he can understand that Vanga is upset about what he said. "But I have never blamed him. I have said that it's my fault that I didn't read the script. I might give you 100 explanations about why I didn't read the script. But they should not be counted. The fault lies with me. I should have read the script. I read my scene only, and I did the film. It's my fault, and when I watched the film, I realised that I had made a big blunder," he said. Adil also said that it's always easier to trigger base instincts like 'fear, anger, hatred, jealousy', and stressed on his right to criticise what he doesn't like, and defended Vanga's right to disagree with him. In an earlier interview with Zoom, when he was asked if he'd have done Vanga's Kabir Singh follow-up Animal, Adil said, "Never." He then added, "Even if they paid me Rs 100-200 crore, I would never do it."

Nikitin Dheer's latest tattoo is inspired by Ravan: 'Ravan made an everlasting impression on me'

Actor Nikitin Dheer is known for his role as Thangabali in Chennai Express and his antagonist avatar in Salman Khan's Ready. While Nikitin has played striking roles on the big screen, his latest stint on TV as Ravan in the mythological show Srimad Ramayan has garnered him lots of praise. Recently, the actor penned a long note on Instagram dedicating his tattoo to Ravan and shared how the character has left an ever-lasting impression on him.

In his long post on Instagram, Nikitin Dheer wrote, "What is life, but a mirror of our experiences. The only wealth we truly have is our body. Tattoos have been believed by the Santal people of our country as the only thing we carry to our after life. Every tattoo is a strong impression made by life or an event that left an indelible imprint on the soul that needs to be transferred to the skin. So is this tattoo for????..its a thanks to ?????? for giving me the opportunity to live this character for 9 months..to try and understand his mind..he made an everlasting impression on me..just like the people who watched the interpretation shall remember him." The note further read, "???? truly believed in ??? ???. ? . He knew that there won't be a ???? like him ever again, there won't be a king like him ever again, there won't be a demon like him ever again, there won't be a Bhramin like him ever again..the ????, when he played it's said the



Gods would descend to hear the sound from it and when he held the Chandhrahas the same Gods would hide in fear from his wrath. I thank him for coming in my life and I thank you all for your love and blessings. I share this moment with you. Reacting to this, fans praised Nikitin Dheer for his performance and wrote, "The character shall remain with you and with us." Another fan wrote, "Sir you lived the character, it was a once in a lifetime performance." On the film front, Nikitin will next be seen in the Kannada movie Martin, which stars Dhruva Sarja in the lead role.

On Mardaani's 10th anniversary, YRF announces the third installment for Rani Mukerji's film

Rani Mukerji's second innings in Bollywood has been all about resilience. In 2014, when the actress returned to the big screen as a cop in Mardaani, she certainly left the audience stunned. Now as the film completes 10 years, YRF revisits Rani's strong portrayal and Shivani Shivaji Roy. On this occasion, the production house has also announced the third installment of the Mardaani franchise. Pegged as the biggest solo-female-led film, Mardaani's second installment was released in 2019. Five years after Mardaani 2 the makers dropped a video today sharing that the next installment of Mardaani is coming soon. In the third installment, Rani's character is expected to be as feisty as she was in the earlier two films.

While both the earlier parts of Mardaani fared decently at the box office, the first installment had collected close to Rs 60 crores worldwide. Mardaani 2 fared better than the first one, collecting more than Rs 67 crores worldwide. Back in 2014, Mardaani found a lot of critical acclaim, many had said that the film revolutionized the portrayal of women as cops, considering how it is a male-dominated field. Many people within the industry also appreciated Rani Mukerji's daredevil and fierce avatar in



the movie. Talking about taking up a role that was so raw, Rani Mukerji had told PTI, "I think the 33 percent reserved positions for women Police especially in Mumbai and Gujarat need to be filled up as soon as possible and I strongly appeal that more women come forward and fill these positions and work for a cause. My intention behind doing this film was to inspire women." More details on the third installment of Mardaani are awaited. Rani Mukerji's last outing on the big screen was in Mrs Chatterjee v/s Norway released in 2023.

John Abraham had just Rs 550 in his bank account when he joined Bollywood, declared that he doesn't need industry's support to survive

Actor John Abraham recently spoke about his humble beginnings, and stressed on the importance of living a middle-class lifestyle even today, after he has accumulated significant wealth. John has been actively investing his money ever since he landed his first job, and it's paid off handsomely for him. But he has also spoken often about coming from nothing, and surviving in the film industry without the backing of a godfather.

Appearing on Aap Ki Adalat in 2010, John reflected on his seven years in the film business, and said that he's the first outsider star after Shah Rukh Khan and Akshay Kumar to establish himself in Bollywood. He said, "I am here by myself. For me, sustaining myself is a little difficult. I have to keep proving myself. John did well in Dhoom? Let's see. Garam Masala was a hit? Let's see. New York? Let's wait and watch..."

John said that he prefers this to easy accomplishments. "I still remember, I only had Rs 550 in my Bank of Maharashtra account when I started out in the industry. Just Rs 550. And my salary at the time was Rs 4,800. I'm talking about 2003. Looking back at where I've come from, the only thing I want to go out on my own terms, and to survive on my own terms. I don't need the support of anybody else. John Abraham is an individual, he is nobody's friend or enemy."



In a recent interview with Ranveer Allahbadia, John said that he still lives a frugal lifestyle. "I don't want to create a false impression, but every piece of clothing I own can fit inside a single suitcase. I don't have many clothes, and I want to keep it simple. I usually wear slippers. I drive a pickup truck," he said, adding that his elderly parents still use public transport. "My mom is 74 years old, and my father is 12 years older than her; he's 86. To this day, the have just one small car, and they mostly travel by autos and buses. I don't say this to create an impression, but I have middle-class values, and this is my biggest advantage," he said. John was most recently seen in the film Vedaa,

59th Maharashtra State Film Awards: Asha Parekh, Shivaji Satam, Anuradha Paudwal honoured, here's the winners list

On August 21, the Maharashtra State Government bestowed both the 58th and 59th Maharashtra State Film Awards simultaneously—first time in the history. The event honoured the veteran actor Shivaji Satam, famously known for his role as ACP Pradyuman in the popular television series C.I.D., with Chitrapati V Shantaram Lifetime Achievement Award and Asha Parekh with the Late Raj Kapoor Lifetime Achievement Award. The accolades were accompanied by significant cash prizes as well as citations. Meanwhile, the Chitrapati V. Shantaram Special Contribution Award was given to writer-director-actor Dighal Lanjekar, whereas the Late Raj Kapoor Special Contribution Award was presented to N Chandra for his contribution in Indian cinema.

The ethereal voice of veteran singer Anuradha Paudwal was also celebrated at the event with the Lata Mangeshkar Award for 2024. Actress Rohini Hattangadi and singer Sudesh Bhosle were also honoured at the event for their contributions to cinema and music,



respectively. The event took place at the Dome SVP Stadium in Worli. It was attended by Maharashtra Chief Minister Eknath Shinde, Deputy CMs Devendra Fadnis and Ajit Pawar, Assembly Speaker Rahul Narvekar, Cultural Affairs Minister Sudhir Mungantiwar, Education Minister Deepak Kesarkar, and Minister of Skills, Employment,

Wrestler Aman Sehrawat shares fafda-jalebi with Taarak Mehta's Jethalal, Dilip Joshi.



GNS News Agency, August 24 Indian wrestler Aman Sehrawat had a fan moment when Taarak Mehta Ka Ooltah Chashmah's Jethalal, actor Dilip Joshi visited him. The wrestler shared a fafda-jalebi snack with the actor and said that it was like a dream come true to meet the actor who brings an instant smile on his face.

Talking to Instagram, Aman, who won a bronze medal at the recently concluded Paris Olympics 2024, shared pictures with the actor and wrote, "Today I felt great meeting Jethalal (Dilip Joshi) @maakasamdilipjoshi Seeing these always makes me laugh and happiness in 'Tarak Mehta Ka Ulta Chasma', thank you so much for visiting me." In the pictures we see Aman and Dilip sharing a warm conversation over snacks. Dilip also handed over a goody bag to Aman, celebrating his big win at the Olympics. Aman's fans and social media followers poured in their love on wrestler's candid expression of love for Joshi. One user wrote, "Bast bahi aman ????", another

person commented, "2 Legends!," yet another person wrote, "Jethalal ji has come to meet Aman Bhai, the dream comes true ???."

On winning the coveted bronze medal for India, Aman took to social media to express his happiness over his victory. Sharing a picture against the Eiffel Tower, he had written, "I am so happy and grateful to everyone for winning the Bronze medal at the Paris 2024 Olympics! Everything is possible with hard work and dedication. This journey taught me the importance of focus and training. I started wrestling with my role models, and today my biggest win would be if people adopt this game after seeing me." Aman won a bronze medal at Olympics 2024 as he came third in the men's freestyle 57 kg wrestling match. The athlete, on his return to India after the completion of Olympics, was honoured by Indian Prime Minister Mr Narendra Modi, Chief Minister of Haryana Nayab Saini and others.

Afghanistan name former India fielding coach R Sridhar as assistant coach for NZ and SA series

GNS News Agency, August 24

Afghanistan cricket team new assistant coach R Sridhar Sridhar, who was India's fielding coach before T Dilip took over, has been named as Afghanistan's assistant coach for the upcoming bilaterals against New Zealand and South Africa. (AP) Afghanistan Cricket Board have appointed former India fielding coach R Sridhar as assistant coach for the men's national team for the upcoming bilateral series against New Zealand and South Africa. "It is worth mentioning that the Afghanistan Cricket Board has appointed Sridhar as the assistant coach for the e-off Test against New Zealand and the 3-match ODI series against South Africa. The Afghanistan Cricket Board wish Sridhar fills the role effectively and hope to have long term contract with him in the future," the board stated. Sridhar, who played 35 first-class matches and 15 List A matches for Hyderabad, was part of the Indian coaching staff between 2014 and 2021. He was replaced by T Dilip when Rahul Dravid took over as head coach in November 2021. Afghanistan men's national team are scheduled to play New Zealand in a one-off Test and South Africa across three ODIs in September. Afghanistan have been on a fine run of late. Led by Rashid Khan, Afghanistan had made a historic first appearance in an



ICC tournament semifinal at 2024 T20 World Cup after defeating the likes of New Zealand and Australia. Last year at the ODI World Cup in India, the team had got the better of former champions England, Pakistan and Sri Lanka. Sridhar's appointment is the latest among a rich list of overseas signings for the coaching staff since former England batter Jonathan Trott took over. For the ODI World Cup,

Afghanistan had roped in Ajay Jadeja as the team mentor. Similarly at the T20 World Cup, Dwayne Bravo as bowling consultant.

We didn't want to do anything different between ODI and T20I WCs: Rahul Dravid



GNS News Agency, August 24

Rahul Dravid India T20 World Cup coach The Bengaluru man said he and the rest of the coaching staff did not want to break the set pattern of a cordial dressing room. Former India head coach Rahul Dravid on Wednesday said the support staff strived to carry the energetic "team atmosphere" from the ODI World Cup in 2023 to the T20 showpiece, and the approach helped the team to end a barren run in ICC tournaments. Dravid masterminded India's triumph in the T20 World Cup in the Americas before signing off from his role as the head coach. "Honestly, I didn't want to do anything different. I think we ran a fantastic campaign in the one-day World Cup, Rohit and the team, everyone involved in that one-day World Cup, we ran a superb campaign," Dravid said at the Ceat Cricket Rating Awards here. India had suffered a heartbreaking defeat against Australia in the ODI World Cup final at Ahmedabad. "There's nothing we could have done more in terms of our preparation, the planning, the execution of what we needed to do for 10 games in a row to dominate, to win the game we did, play the game we did," said Dravid.

The Bengaluru man said he and the rest of the coaching staff did not want to break the set pattern of a cordial dressing room. "I did not want to change anything. If you'd asked me and we had a discussion with our support staff, we'd get together with the coaches and say, 'what do you think we should do differently?'" "The common consensus (among the team) was we need to do exactly what we did. We need to create the same energy, create the same vibe, the same team atmosphere that we had and then just hope that on the day, we'll have a little bit of luck," he said. Though he did not experience playing in a

World Cup in either of the limited-over formats in India, he was able to soak in all the elation as the head coach. "To travel all over this country and to be able to experience that joy and passion of the fans. I've never been a part of a World Cup as a player in India, but just the experience as a coach to go from city to city and just walk and see what this game meant to the people of this country was phenomenal. It was incredible," he said. Dravid said Australia were the better team during the ODI World Cup final. "I thought we ran a phenomenal campaign. We came unstuck in the final and Australia played better cricket than us on the day. They were a better team and congratulations (to them). That can happen in sport and that's what sport is about," he said.

Zaheer Khan in talks with Lucknow Super Giants for mentorship role

New Delhi: Former India pacer Zaheer Khan is in contention to assume the mentorship role of Lucknow Super Giants ahead of the next season of the Indian Premier League. The 45-year-old was head of global development at Mumbai Indians (MI) and before that held the position of director of cricket for the franchise from 2018-2022. As a player, Zaheer has featured in 100 IPL games as part of three franchises — MI, Royal Challengers Bangalore and Delhi Daredevils across 10 seasons, claiming 102 wickets at an economy of 7.59. "Zaheer Khan is in talks with Lucknow Super Giants (LSG) for a mentorship role with the franchise keen on bringing in a top former India player well-versed with T20 cricket to have a strong presence within their coaching setup following the departure of Gautam Gambhir," a report in ESPNcricinfo said. "Apart from the role of mentor, LSG are also keen on giving Zaheer a wider profile that will mean involvement with the scouting and player-development programmes during the off season."



No Arshad Nadeem, but Neeraj Chopra faces high-quality field and injury concern at Lausanne Diamond League

GNS News Agency, August 24 Pakistan's Olympic champion Arshad Nadeem won't be in action but javelin enthusiasts can expect a riveting contest between six of the 12 finalists of the Paris Olympics during the Lausanne Diamond League on Thursday night. All of them have something to prove after missing out on the top step of the podium at Stade de France a fortnight ago.

Three years ago, Neeraj Chopra returned to a grand reception in India after winning a historic gold at the Tokyo Olympics. This time, the Olympic silver medallist stayed put in Europe, his first stop after the French capital being Magglingen in Switzerland. He posted a video of him training in a gymnasium a few days after the Olympic final. A long-term groin injury affected his runway speed at the Olympics but despite that, Chopra believes he can target becoming the Diamond League Champion in Brussels a month from now. The next stop for men in the javelin throw, after Lausanne, will be Zurich on September 5 followed by the final in the Belgian capital over a week later, where only the top 6 based on points accrued over the season will get an entry. Chopra is joint-fourth with seven points received for finishing second at Doha in May. Two years back, he became the Diamond League Champion for the first time and finished second behind Czech Republic's Jakub Vadlejch last year.

Putting aside the disappointment for not being able to defend his Olympic gold, Chopra has found the motivation to finish the season on a high. In a media interaction last week, he spoke about making corrections in his technique suggested by coach Klaus Bartonietz. "In the next month, I need to work on the line of the javelin while releasing it. I was throwing the javelin slightly inwards at Paris. My arm speed was really good. Coach Klaus Bartonietz was telling me that if the line of the throw was right, I could have got a few more metres at the Paris Olympics. So in the next month, I will work on the line of the javelin release," Chopra had said. Not only has he put on hold the celebration for winning his second Olympic medal, but Chopra is also prepared to wait a while before taking a break to get a medical solution for his groin injury. "After Tokyo, I felt I should have continued my season, like other athletes from around the world do. Luckily, in Paris, the groin injury that has hampered me for many years, did not exacerbate, so I can continue my season. I will finish the season while keeping my groin as safe as possible and then return to India. After that, I will decide on getting treated for the groin injury," Chopra said last week.



While the Indian will be a favourite to win at Lausanne, the competition will be tough. Grenada's Anderson Peters is capable of producing big throws towards the end of a competition even if he starts gingerly. In the Olympic final, he had three throws over 87 metres, with a best of 88.54 metres. Peters, a two-time World Champion, is second on the Diamond League standings with 13 points, just one less than leader Vadlejch. The Czech is another competitor Chopra will have to contend with. He will be looking to atone for missing an Olympic medal by four centimetres. The defending Diamond League champion has been one of the most consistent throwers over the past three years and has the range to touch the high 80-metres zone.

If Vadlejch is a threat, so is Germany's Julian Weber. He was pushed down to sixth spot at the Olympic Games but is no lightweight having won the Paris leg of the Diamond League. Add to the mix Julius Yego, the 2015 World Champion, who at 35 has gained a second wind. A fifth-place finish at the Olympics, nearly a decade after his last major medal, makes him one to watch out for. The Olympics was a rare instance when Chopra struggled to put together a series of high-quality throws. He responded to Nadeem's gold-medal-winning second round effort of 92.97 metres with his season-best of 89.45 metres but fouled the rest of his attempts — losing balance and crossing the line twice. When he was competing in Paris, Chopra said 60 to 70 percent of his focus was on not aggravating the groin injury. With the Diamond League title in his sights, he will have to refocus on getting the big throws. He missed out on gold, but can get his hands on a glittering diamond-shaped trophy in less than a month's time.

Focus on playing fast bowling well has compromised India's prowess against spin: assistant coach Ryan ten Doeschate

GNS News Agency, August 24

Ryan ten Doeschate India cricket team Sri Lanka's Dunith Wellalage celebrates the wicket of India's Rohit Sharma during the third one-day international (ODI) cricket match between India and Sri Lanka at the R. Premadasa International Cricket Stadium, in Colombo, Wednesday, August 7, 2024. India's new assistant coach Ryan ten Doeschate believes the focus on playing high-quality fast bowling may have inadvertently affected Indian batsmen's game against spinners. The former Dutch cricketer, who joined the team during the ODI leg of the Sri Lankan tour, saw the batsmen crumbling on the slow turners in Colombo as they lost the three-match series 2-0. Ten Doeschate, who has been involved in the IPL first as a player and then as a coach at Kolkata Knight Riders, said one of his focus areas would be to help Indian batsmen's game against spinners. "The Indian mindset has become so driven to do well overseas that the focus has moved away from what was once their strength — playing spin," Ten Doeschate said in an interview with TalkSport Cricket. "I guess one of the challenges that I wasn't expecting and kind of overlooked is the playing of spin," he added. In the three ODIs in Colombo, where India chased targets between 230-250, they ended up losing 27 off their 30 wickets to spinners. India's proficiency against spinners has been an issue for a while, especially in Tests, but has now spilled into the white-ball formats as well. Ten Doeschate attributed this to Indian batsmen's desire to do well in English and Australian conditions that has inadvertently made them compromise their natural strengths. "We were undone in Sri Lanka, and I think the mindset of the Indians has been so driven to do well overseas. I think the focus has moved to doing well in Australia and doing well in England, and we've kind of let playing spin, which was always the strength of the Indian team, fall back a little bit. So that's



one thing I'm looking forward to, helping get to that position where Indians are the best players of spin in the world again," he said.

Under new head coach Gautam Gambhir, India don't have a specialist batting coach, but apart from Ten Doeschate have Abhishek Nayar as assistant coach. The plan, Ten Doeschate revealed, is to make mental adjustments rather than tweak the technical side of the game. "I don't think much of what we're going to bring is technical knowledge to these guys. It's more about mindsets, situational awareness, how we think they can control certain phases of the game. It's about throwing ideas out there, de-briefing and keeping the mental space really good. That's going to be really important," the Dutchman said.

Talking about his new role with the Indian team, where he was a surprise candidate handpicked by Gambhir, Ten Doeschate said it is "exciting and daunting at the same time." "In terms of timing, it's quite difficult to walk into a team that's just come back with the World Cup, but in terms of what's ahead for the next 18 months, it's mouthwatering as a coach. It's all the series you want to be involved in and all the challenges you want to come up against," he added.

Deshwal sisters Saanvi and Anvi star at national swim meet; Paris Olympian Dhinidhi bags 5 gold medals

GNS News Agency, August 24 The Deshwal twins, Saanvi and Anvi, collectively bagged four gold and four silver medals, underlining their dominance in the pool. The Deshwal twins, Saanvi and Anvi, collectively bagged four gold and four silver medals, underlining their dominance in the pool. The twins' multi-medal haul, Deshwal twins Saanvi and Anvi powered Maharashtra to the title in the Girls' Group II category at the 40th Sub-Junior & 50th Junior National Aquatic Championships in Bhubaneswar.

Swimmers from Karnataka — the state that won the overall championship title with 799 points — and Maharashtra dominated the competition organised by the Swimming Federation of India, which saw more than 1,000 athletes participating. Paris Olympian Dhinidhi Desinghu, the youngest athlete in India's contingent, ended the tournament with five gold medals, more than any other swimmer. She was adjudged the best swimmer in Girls Group II. Dhinidhi's performance would have been good enough for Karnataka to win the title in this category, thus ensuring a clean sweep for the southern state, but Saanvi and Anvi had other ideas.

The Deshwal twins bagged four gold and four silver medals between them, underlining their dominance in



the pool. On the opening day, Saanvi shattered the meet record in 50m breaststroke, clocking 34.32 seconds and surpassing the previous record of 34.69 seconds set in 2022. It was one of the 11 records broken during the meet.

The championship concluded with Saanvi setting another Junior National Record in the 100m breaststroke, finishing in 1:15.30 seconds, breaking the record set in 2018. The teenager's remarkable performance marks her out as someone to watch out for. Saanvi and Anvi, both students of Bombay Scottish School,