

**NATION**

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**SAIRA BANU SAYS DILIP KUMAR SHOULD GET BHARAT RATNA**



**Flood situation critical in Assam, neighbouring states**

The flood situation in the northeast took a turn for the worse on Friday as incessant rainfall pounded parts of the region for the fourth consecutive day, leaving its major rivers in spate, officials said. Nine more people, including two children, died in rain-related incidents in Assam, raising the toll in this year's floods and landslides to 55, a bulletin by the state's disaster management authority said. The deaths were reported from Hojai, Nalbari, Bajali, Dhubri, Kamrup, Kokrajhar, and Sonitpur districts. Two people were also reported missing in Hojai and Sonitpur. A total of 18.94 lakh people have been affected by the heavy rain and subsequent flood and landslides in 28 districts of the state, the bulletin issued by Assam State Disaster Management Authority (AS-



DMA) said. The situation is no better in Meghalaya and Arunachal Pradesh, where roads have been damaged due to landslides and villages are largely flooded. Sohra (erstwhile Cherrapunji) in Meghalaya recorded a massive 972 mm of rainfall in 24 hours ending 8:30 am on Friday, while Mawsynram received 1003.6 mm showers during the same period, IMD officials said. At least 18 people have died over the past two days in Meghalaya in flash floods and landslides, officials stated. They also said that the government will be paying ex-gratia to the kin of the deceased. In Assam, landslides were reported in Dima Hasao, Goalpara, Hojai, Kamrup and Kamrup (Metropolitan) and Morigaon.

**BANKING & FINANCE**

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**ASIAN SHARES SINK AFTER INFLATION-DRIVEN RETREAT ON WALL STREET**



**States must recognise strength & define targets for India to become \$5 trillion economy: PM Modi**

Every state must recognise its strength, define its targets and develop a roadmap to achieve the same as this is essential for India to become a \$5 trillion economy, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said at the national conference of Chief Secretaries which concluded on Friday. "Urban areas will be key in future development and employment generation. Therefore, urban local bodies must be strengthened, and urban planning should be done innovatively," Prime Minister Modi said. The conference, chaired by the Prime Minister, was attended by young district collectors and magistrates from states and union territories as well as the officials from Union ministries. Appreciating the extensive sessions, the Prime Minister said that the deliberations were useful in laying out a roadmap for the sectors. He stressed that the Centre and states work together



as "Team India". The action points and fresh ideas discussed at the conference must be implemented without delay, he said. Emphasising on minimum government and maximum governance, Prime Minister Modi stressed the need to ensure greater ease of living in India. He also said that decriminalisation of minor offences should be taken up in mission mode. He also spoke on the usage of drones in the service industry, such as for the delivery of essential drugs or horticultural products especially in hilly areas, which would add more economic value to the farmers and service providers.

**POTPOURRI**

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**TERI AASHIQI MEIN - SHANTANU BHAMARE, ELENA TUTEJA & TEAM CELEBRATES SUCCESS OF 1 MILLION VIEWS!**



**72 trains cancelled following violence at Secunderabad station**



Railway authorities have cancelled as many as 72 trains following large-scale violence that rocked Secunderabad railway station on Friday. The South Central Railway (SCR) also partially cancelled 12 trains and diverted three others. All trains originating from Secunderabad or passing through the station were cancelled following violent protest by hundreds of youth against the Central government's new army recruitment policy "Agnipath". A SCR official said train services were suspended to ensure safety of the travelling public. The cancellation of trains and the confusion

that prevailed about operation of some trains caused severe inconvenience to passengers. The cancelled trains include Hyderabad-Shalimar, Umdanagar-Secunderabad, Secunderabad-Umdanagar, and Secunderabad-Sainagar Shirdi. Secunderabad-Repalle, which was to originate at Secunderabad, originated at Cheralapalli station. Howrah-Secunderabad, Sirpur Kaghaznagar-Secunderabad, Hyderabad-Kurnool City and Guntur-Vikarabad were partially cancelled. East Coast Railway announced cancellation of Danapur-Secunderabad and Patna-Ernakulam trains.

**Farmers, 'khap' panchayats join stir in Haryana against Agnipath scheme**



The agitation against the Central government's Agnipath recruitment scheme continued for a second day on Friday, with protesters blocking roads and railway tracks in parts of Haryana, largely close to the National Capital Region (NCR), farmers' organisations and khap panchayats (community courts) joining the stir. Anticipating violence, the government has suspended internet services in Faridabad district's Ballabgarh, whereas prohibitory orders under Section 144 CrPc, restricting gathering of more than four persons, have been imposed in Gurugram.

**Goal of USD 5 trillion GDP appears to be case of 'shifting goalposts': Chidambaram**

With Chief Economic Advisor V Anantha Nageswaran citing the IMF forecast that the Indian economy would cross USD 5 trillion by 2026-27, senior Congress leader P Chidambaram on Sunday said the goal of a USD 5 trillion GDP appears to be a case of "shifting goalposts" as the original target year was 2023-24. Speaking at the finance ministry's iconic week celebrations of 'Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav', Nageswaran had said last week that IMF has forecast the Indian economy to cross USD 5 trillion by 2026-27.



**India's palm oil imports dip 33 pc in May: SEA**

India's palm oil imports declined by 33.20 per cent to 5,14,022 tonne during May this year, but there was sharp rise in shipment of RBD palmolein oil by refineries, industry body Solvent Extractors Association (SEA) said on Tuesday. India, the world's leading vegetable oil buyer, imported 7,69,602 tonnes of palm oils in May 2021. The country's total vegetable oil imports declined to 10,05,547 tonne in May this year, compared to 12,13,142 tonne in the year-ago period. The share of palm oil is about



50 per cent of the country's total vegetable oil imports. According to the SEA, Indonesia has lifted the ban on export of palm oil with some conditions from May 23 and also reduced export tax. This will increase exports from Indonesia and have a dampening effect on

global prices. Among palm oil products, import of crude palm oil (CPO) declined to 4.09 lakh tonnes in May this year, from 7.55 lakh tonnes in the year-ago period, as per the SEA data. However, the import of RBD palmolein rose sharply to 1 lakh tonnes from 2,075 tonnes, while that of crude palm kernel oil (CPKO) declined to 4,265 tonnes from 11,894 tonnes in the said period. Among soft oils, the import of soyabean oil increased sharply to 3.73 lakh tonnes in May this year, as against 2.67 lakh tonnes in the

same period of the previous year. Whereas import of sunflower oil fell marginally to 1.18 lakh tonnes, as against 1.75 lakh tonnes in the said period. According to the SEA, edible oils stock as on June 1 this year, was estimated to have been at 4.84 lakh tonnes and about 17.65 lakh tonnes was in the pipeline. India imports palm oil mainly from Indonesia and Malaysia, and a small quantity of crude soft oil, including soyabean oil from Argentina. Sunflower oil is imported from Ukraine and Russia.

**Presidential poll: Cong says will play constructive role in deciding consensus oppn candidate**



The Congress Wednesday said it will play a constructive role in ensuring all opposition parties arrive at a consensus candidate for the presidential poll, and urged them to be proactive rather than reactive in making the decision. Leader of Opposition in Rajya Sabha Mallikarjun Kharge made the remarks after attending a meeting of opposition parties called by TMC chief Mamata Banerjee. The Congress MP said his party has no particular candidate in mind for the poll, and that it will sit together with other parties to arrive at a name acceptable to all. The opposition meeting was attended by Kharge, Jairam Ramesh and Randeep Surjewala on behalf of the Congress.

Kharge said the consensus opposition candidate for the highest constitutional post in the country should be someone committed to uphold the Constitution and preserve the secular fabric of "our diverse society and speak out boldly against the forces of prejudice, hatred, bigotry and polarisation".

**Retail inflation eases to 7.04% in May 2022**

Retail inflation eased to 7.04 per cent in May, mainly on account of softening food prices, though it remained above the RBI's upper tolerance level for the fifth consecutive month, government data showed on Monday. The Consumer Price Index (CPI) based inflation was 7.79 per cent in April. In May 2021, the retail inflation stood at 6.3 per cent. Inflation in the food basket was 7.97 per cent in May 2022, marginally lower than 8.31 per cent in the previous month, as per the data released by the National Statistical Office (NSO). The Reserve Bank, which factors in the CPI in its monetary policy, had earlier this month raised the inflation forecast for the current financial year to 6.7 per cent from its previous estimate of 5.7 per cent. As per the RBI's projections, inflation in the first quarter of the fiscal is likely to be 7.5 per cent and at 7.4 per cent in the following three months. It is expected to decline to 6.2 per cent and 5.8 per cent in the third and fourth quarters, respectively. The government has tasked the RBI to ensure inflation remains at 4 per cent with margin of 2 per cent on either side.

**'Agnipath' will provide good opportunity to NCC cadets'**

The new 'Agnipath' scheme for recruitment in the armed forces will provide a good opportunity to National Cadet Corps cadets, Director General of the NCC Lt Gen Gurbirpal Singh said here on Wednesday. He was speaking to reporters on the sidelines of the passing-out parade of Associate NCC Officers at Kamptee here. To a question about the new recruitment scheme, Lt Gen Singh said 'B' and 'C' certificate holders of the NCC get a special weightage for recruitment in the armed forces. Under the Agnipath scheme, NCC cadets have a good opportunity to become 'Agniveer' for four years and they



can follow other professions afterwards, he said. The main objective of the NCC is to make youths and cadets responsible citizens, and NCC cadets who become Agniveer will become more responsible citizens when go back to civilian life, Singh added.

**J-K: Draft electoral rolls to be prepared by August 31**

Setting in motion the process of holding assembly polls in Jammu and Kashmir, the Election Commission has initiated the revision of electoral rolls following the delimitation exercise in the union territory and the draft rolls will be prepared by August 31, sources said on Wednesday. Chief Election Commissioner Rajiv Kumar and Election Commissioner Anup Chandra Pandey carried out a review and directed the Jammu and Kashmir Chief Electoral Officer to map the redrawn assembly constituencies. The electoral roll revision needs to be carried out before the first assembly election is



conducted in the Union territory of Jammu and Kashmir. Officials said that intensive and time-bound pre-revision activities are required due to the redrawing of electoral constituencies. Directions have also been given for the appointment of officials for the work on up-

dating voter list. Re-serialisation, mapping and renaming of polling stations post the delimitation will be done by June 30, in addition to the identification of polling stations for those villages where new booths need to be created. After the delimitation, some of the earlier polling stations may come under more than one new constituency or may be completely shifted to another constituency. The polling stations will be mapped accordingly. The appointment of booth level officers and their proper training will be done by July 5. Verification and rationalisation of polling booths will be done by July 25.

**GoM fails to reach consensus on GST rate rationalisation**

NEW DELHI: A panel of state ministers on GST rate rationalisation on Friday failed to reach a consensus as some members opposed changes to tax slabs and rates, sources said. The Group of Ministers will, however, present a status report to the GST Council on the consensus which was arrived at the previous meeting of the GoM on November 20, 2021, they added. The GoM will seek an extension to submit its final report, they said, adding issues of tax rates will also be raised in the upcoming Council meeting later this month. The GST Council, chaired by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, is scheduled to meet on June 28 and 29 in Srinagar. The Council had last year set up a seven-member panel of state ministers, headed by Karnataka Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai, to suggest ways to augment revenue by rationalising tax rates. The GoM has been mandated to review items under inverted duty structure to help minimise refund payout, and review the GST exempt list with an objective to expand the tax base and eliminate breaking of input tax credit (ITC) chain.

**Fitch expects RBI to raise interest rates to 5.9 pc by Dec-end**

Fitch Ratings on Tuesday said the Reserve Bank is likely to raise interest rates further to 5.9 per cent by December 2022, on deteriorating inflation outlook. In its update to Global Economic Outlook, Fitch said India's economy faces a worsening external environment, elevated commodity prices, and tighter global monetary policy. "Given the deteriorating outlook for inflation, we now expect the RBI to lift rates further to 5.9 per cent by December 2022 and to 6.15 per cent by the end of 2023 (vs. previous forecast of 5 per cent) and to be unchanged in 2024," Fitch said. Last month in an unscheduled policy announcement, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) raised rates by 40 basis points to 4.4 per cent, and subsequently to 4.9 per cent last week. The RBI has forecast inflation to be 6.7 per cent by the end of current fiscal. The retail inflation for May came in at 7.04 per cent. "Inflation has risen to an eight-year high and broadens across more CPI categories, posing a severe challenge to consum-



ers. In the past three months, food inflation has increased by an average of 7.3 per cent year-on-year, while healthcare bills are rising at a similar pace," Fitch said. According to Fitch, the April-June quarter growth is likely to improve on a rebound in consumption as COVID-19 cases subsided towards end-March. "GDP grew by 4.1 per cent year-on-year in 1Q22 (January-March) compared to our March forecast of 4.8 per cent. We now expect the economy to grow by 7.8 per cent this year (2022-2023), revised down from our previous forecast of 8.5 per cent," Fitch said. Fitch had last week upped outlook on India's sovereign rating to 'stable' from 'negative' after two years citing diminishing downside risks to medium-term growth on rapid economic recovery.

**Cong and corruption 'made for each other': Naqvi**



Union minister Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi on Monday alleged that the Congress and corruption are "made for each other", and claimed that the opposition party was carrying out a "satyagraha for corruption". The minority affairs minister's attack on the opposition party came after Congress leaders took to the streets on Monday as Rahul Gandhi appeared before the Enforcement Directorate for questioning in a money laundering case. Naqvi said that with the family facing allegations, the Congress was "fabricating agitation". He said this proves that the Congress and corruption are "made for each other". The country has earlier witnessed 'satyagraha' against corruption, but the country is witnessing the Congress' culture of "satyagraha for corruption" for the first time. The Congress' attempt to show strength on the streets during investigation into a corruption case shows its brazen attitude despite indulging in graft, Naqvi told reporters.

**SIT arrests four men in 1984 anti-Sikh riots case in Kanpur**

The Special Investigation Team (SIT), probing the mass killings during the anti-Sikh riots in 1984, arrested four men accused of setting a building to fire in which three persons were burnt to death, a senior official said on Thursday. The arrests were made on Wednesday by the SIT, headed by Deputy Inspector General of Police (DIG) Balendu Bhushan Singh, from the Ghatampur area of Kanpur. The SIT, constituted by the Uttar Pradesh government on May 27, 2019, on the orders of the Supreme Court, has been probing the anti-Sikh riots' cases for the last three years and efforts are on to nab more suspects, DIG Singh said. It had identified 96 persons as prime suspects, of which 22 have died. Complete information about 11 suspects was gathered and it helped the SIT to nab four of them, he said. The four arrested accused were identified as Saifullah, Yogendra Singh, Vijay Narayan Singh and Abdul Rahman, all sexagenarian residents of the Ghatampur area. They have been charged un-



der Indian Penal Code sections 396 (dacoity with murder) and 336 (act endangering life or safety of others), he said, adding they have been sent to jail. Elaborating further, the DIG said the four arrested accused had accompanied dozens of others in a couple of buses to reach Nirala Nagar for setting the house of one Gurudyal Singh on fire in 1984. There were 12 families residing at Gurudyal's house as tenants and during the attack, three persons were burnt alive. A rioter, identified as Rajesh Gupta, was also shot dead during cross-firing, he added. We have been investigating 11 cases after identifying 96 prime suspects exploring facts

from witnesses settled in Delhi, Punjab and Rajasthan. SIT also found that 22 (persons) have already died, Bhushan Singh said. The SIT was formed to re-investigate the cases of the 1984 anti-Sikh riots that had led to 127 casualties in Kanpur, one of the worst-hit cities. Crucial evidence, including blood samples, had been taken about a year ago from a locked house in the city's Govind Nagar area, which was attacked by a mob during the riots that followed the assassination of then prime minister Indira Gandhi by her Sikh bodyguards. The SIT had entered the house with a forensic team, the DIG said.

**Stalin condemns ED action against Sonia, Rahul Gandhi**

Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M.K. Stalin on Wednesday condemned the central government for "political vendetta" against Congress party leaders Sonia Gandhi and her son Rahul Gandhi. "I condemn the outrageous act of political vendetta against Congress party and its leaders Sonia Gandhi and Thiru Rahul Gandhi by the ruling BJP govt using the Enforcement Directorate," Stalin said. "Having no answers to the pressing issues of the common man, BJP uses such diversionary tactics to save itself from the public ire. Political opponents should be fought politically, not by 'forcing' the Enforcement Directorate," Stalin added. Summoned by the Enforcement Directorate in connection with the National Herald case, Rahul Gandhi has been appearing before the authorities in Delhi for the past three days.



# “Don’t Put a time limit on Dreams” Arvind Kejriwal on ‘Agnipath’

Amid protests in several states over the recently announced Agnipath scheme, Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) convener and Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal today urged the centre not to limit the service period for the new recruits in the armed forces to just four years.

In a series of tweets, Arvind Kejriwal extended his support to the Army aspirants who are protesting against the scheme

With this, Kejriwal has continued the growing list of politicians who have condemned the scheme, under which soldiers will be recruited in the armed forces as ‘Agniveers’ on a contractual basis for a four-year period, followed by compulsory retirement for most without gratuity and pension benefits.

Earlier, Samajwadi Party



president Akhilesh Yadav this morning called the move “negligent” and potentially “fatal” for the country’s future.

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi, BJP MP Varun Gandhi, Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) leader Tejashwi Yadav have also condemned the scheme.

Agnipath has also faced criticism from some of the Army veterans, who argue that the

four-year tenure will hit the fighting spirit in the ranks and make them risk-averse.

Protests against the scheme continued across Bihar for the second consecutive day on Thursday as demonstrators disrupted railway and road traffic in several districts. Protests have been reported from several parts of neighbouring Uttar Pradesh as well.

Naven Jaihind said, he is con-

# AK-47 gun provided to every Kashmiri Hindu for self-defence: AAP

SATISH HANDA

Addressing a press conference here Naveen Jaihind Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) Convener in Haryana said that in view of present situation in Kashmir where Kashmiri Pandit as well as Hindus living in Kashmir are facing severe danger to their lives due to target killing by terrorists. He said, in case early stern action will not be taken against terrorism and antisocial elements grooming in Kashmir state by the government situation similar as in past may be repeated when countless residents of these communities living, settled in Kashmir valley since years were killed, robbed, became homeless and compelled to migrate to other places from Kashmir state to remain alive leaving everything behind.

Naven Jaihind said, he is con-



tinuously visiting every district in Haryana state to make an appeal to youths to come forward in support of community residing in Kashmir at Jantar Mantar New Delhi on 26th June 2022. He said, recent protest rally held at Rohtak in Haryana attended by large number of people from all 36 ‘Biradaris’ was merely a trailer, whereas proposed rally to be held at Jantar Mantar New Delhi on 26th June will exhibit

complete film. Jaihind made an appeal to youths to come forward in support of community residing in Kashmir valley.

AAP leader said, withdrawal of Section 370 in Jammu-Kashmir was an appreciable step taken by ruling government in the country but Kashmiri Pandit and innocent Hindus are still living under the shadow of terror and terrorism with repeated cases of target killings by the terrorists reported in the

valley since past sometime as a result Kashmiri Pandits as well as Hindu families settled again in Kashmir valley have started migrating from the state again due to fear and save their lives. He said, government should take immediate action to stop killings and shifting of community families from the state to avoid situation as witnessed in past.

Jaihind strongly condemned ‘Agni Vir Yozna’ introduced by Union government in which unemployed youths will be offered jobs in para-military forces including army, air force and navy for a period of four years which according to him was a cruel joke for youths. Raising a question AAP leader said that a youth employed under this scheme will only be able to learn how to use his weapon in a period of only four years and will not be possible for him to end terrorism.

# Debt-ridden tempo driver ends his life in Greater Noida



A 28-year-old tempo driver, reeling under financial debt, was found dead in a Greater Noida park on Wednesday in a suspected case of suicide, police officials said.

The body was found in the park in front of Ansal Mall, under Knowledge Park police station limits, the officials said. A police spokesperson said a purse was found from his clothes after which the identity of the dead could be established. “The man was identified as a native of Kanauj district in Uttar Pradesh. His family was contacted and they said he worked as a tempo driver,” the official said. “The man was reeling under financial debt. He had purchased the tempo on loan but was unable to payback the money and the lender had impounded the tempo also. Recently he had called up his family and informed them that he was under stress and considering suicide,” the official said, citing information from his family.

# Agnipath : Protest disrupts traffic on Yamuna Expressway

Protests against the Centre’s Agnipath scheme continued on Friday as scores of youngsters descended on Yamuna Expressway and blocked traffic movement briefly, officials said.

The movement through Jewar toll plaza between Greater Noida and Mathura-Agra was blocked for around an hour from 12 pm, the officials said.

“Police personnel in large numbers were rushed to the protest spot in view of the law and order situation,” a police official said. A traffic police official said movement was briefly disrupted at the Jewar toll plaza due to the protests and several vehicles were diverted from Pari Chowk. “Normal traffic movement was restored on the Yamuna Expressway in Jewar around 1.30 pm,” the traffic official said. Protests have erupted in several states since Wednesday against the Agnipath scheme to recruit jawans into the army, the navy and the air force for a four-year period followed by compulsory retirement for most without gratuity and pension benefits.

# Wife stabbed by husband in south Delhi slum

A 28-year-old woman was stabbed to death allegedly by her husband near her house in south Delhi’s Neb Sarai area on Monday, police said.

The deceased has been identified as Renu, a resident of Harijan Basti in Neb Sarai, they said. A fight between the two led to the stabbing of the woman by her husband, a senior police officer said. The husband fled after the allegedly killing his wife. “On Monday, at 11.33 a, a PCR call regarding stabbing of a lady by her husband was received from Harijan Basti, Neb Sarai. “The staff of Mehrauli police station reached the spot where the injured lady was found to have been taken to Mohan hospital where the injured was found declared brought dead by the doctor, Deputy Commissioner of Police (South) Benita Mary Jaiker said.

# 5 arrested for smuggling liquor from Delhi to UP



Five people were arrested over the weekend in Noida for allegedly smuggling liquor from Delhi into Uttar Pradesh, officials said on Monday. Over 15 cartons of liquor were also seized on Saturday and Sunday and three vehicles in which the alcohol was being transported were also impounded, officials from the Gautam Buddha Nagar excise department said.

Two people in one vehicle were arrested on Saturday during inspection at the Noida-Delhi border. Three people in two different vehicles were arrested on Sunday, District Excise Officer Rakesh Bahadur Singh told PTI. Bringing liquor meant for sale in Delhi to Uttar Pradesh is prohibited and legal action is being taken against offenders for denting the state’s revenue, the excise officer said. Only one unsealed bottle is permitted if somebody from Delhi is entering UP through Noida, Singh said. Over 70 people have been arrested since April at the border points of Delhi in Noida by the excise department, with the help of the local police, as crackdown continued on liquor smuggling, according to the officials. The UP government instructed officials for the crackdown keeping in view the revenue loss to the state as heavy discounts on alcohol rates continued being offered in Delhi, they said.

# Heavy rains lash parts of Delhi

Heavy rains lashed parts of the capital on Friday afternoon bringing much-needed respite from the heat.

The weather office had predicted thunderstorms with light to moderate intensity rains in the national capital.

“Thunderstorm with light to moderate intensity rain and gusty winds with speed of 30-40 Km/h would occur over and adjoining areas of entire Delhi and NCR (Loni Dehat, Hindon AF Station, Ghaziabad, Indirapuram, Chhapraula, Noida,

Dadri, Greater Noida,” the Met office had tweeted at 1:50 pm.

Heavy rains also lashed parts of Delhi on Friday morning. The minimum temperature plummeted by five notches to 22.8 degrees Celsius, according to the India Meteorological Department (IMD).

The weather office had earlier said the city received 7 mm of rainfall in the last 24 hours ending 8.30 am on Friday. The maximum temperature during the day is expected to settle at 37 degrees Celsius.

# CJI Ramana visits SC judge M R Shah at Delhi hospital

Chief Justice of India (CJI) N V Ramana visited a private hospital here on Thursday to inquire about the health conditions of Supreme Court judge Justice M R Shah, who was airlifted to Delhi after he fell sick in Himachal Pradesh.

The CJI visited Justice Shah at the Escorts Hospital in the evening and inquired about

his health from the doctors attending him, an official source said.

Earlier in the day, Justice Shah had complained of discomfort in chest in Himachal Pradesh. To allay the speculation, in a video message later, the apex court judge said he is “okay and stable” and coming back to Delhi.

# BJP expels Rajasthan MLA for cross-voting in RS polls

The BJP on Wednesday expelled its MLA Shobharani Kushwah from the party for cross-voting in the Rajya Sabha elections in Rajasthan.

In a letter to Kushwah, BJP Central Disciplinary Committee secretary Om Pathak said separate action would be taken against her for violation of discipline. “You are expelled from the party with immediate effect and also relieved of other responsibilities given by the party,” the letter read.

In the Rajya Sabha elections held on June 10, Kushwah had voted in favour of Congress candidate Pramod Tiwari in violation of the party whip. The BJP had issued a show-cause notice the same day and had suspended Kushwah.

The MLA had to reply to the



notice by June 19, but before that, she issued a statement to the media targeting the BJP. The MLA said the party asked her to vote for such an independent candidate in the Rajya Sabha elections who was openly discussing cross voting. Shobharani Kushwah is the

wife of former BSP MLA B L Kushwah, who was disqualified as a legislator in December 2016 after being convicted in a murder case. She won the bypoll necessitated by the disqualification on a BJP ticket in 2017. In 2018, she won the seat again in the assembly elections.

# Kartikey & Kuldeep may prove a healthy tonic for ruling government in Haryana

Satish Handa

The present scenario reveals, victory of independent contestant Kartikey Sharma son of former Union Minister Vinod Sharma also won Vidhan Sabha polls twice at Ambala City constituency on behalf of Congress and a senior Congress leader Kuldeep Bishnoi son of former Haryana Chief Minister Ch.Bhajan Lal presently Adampur Vidhan Sabha constituency MLA now expelled from the party by Congress high command allegedly cross voting against Congress candidate Ajay Makan in recent Rajya Sabha polls. The victory of Kartikey supported by BJP and possibility of Kuldeep Bishnoi joining hands with BJP at this stage as per available sources may prove a healthy tonic for ruling BJP-JJP government in Haryana state.

According to sources, both Manohar Lal Khatter Chief Minister and Dushyant Chautala Deputy Chief Minister have played an important role in victory of both candidates likely to strengthen BJP network in Haryana state and also likely to attract large number of ‘Brahmin’ and ‘Bishnoi’ voters in the state during 2024 Vidhan Sabha and Lok sabha polls.

Haryana Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khatter has played an historic political role in the victory of both newly elected Rajya



Sabha members and Manohar government in the state has become more powerful. Soon after declaration of result he met newly elected Rajya Sabha members to welcome, offer them sweets and congratulate the winners. According to Khatter, C ongress high command in spite of seven days training to Congress MLAs at a resort remained unsuccessful, whereas only one day’s training to BJP MLAs have brought victory to their both candidates. Khatter assured to win majority of seats in coming municipal polls in Haryana state next month because voters in urban areas are well aware that only BJP and Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s policies are in a position to give a stable government in the state as well as in country. It cannot be denied, a senior leader like Kuldeep Bishnoi feeling suffocated in Congress declared to cast his vote according to his mind as a result senior Congress leader and former Union Minister Ajay Makan was defeated due to his cross voting.

# Elderly man killed by nephew over land dispute in UP

An elderly man was killed by his nephew in a village here on Monday over a land dispute, police said. Inspector Sudhir Kumar Singh, in-charge of Colonelganj police station, said that Bharat Ram Shukla (56), a resident of Ganwalia village was cleaning the land outside his house when his nephew Akash Shukla alias Golu arrived and the two indulged in a dispute over the same piece of land. Akash hit his uncle with a spade, causing serious injuries on his head, Singh said.

Fire authorities said ini-

# Action against industries in Haryana using underground water without permission

SATISH HANDA

According to recent notification by Haryana state government use of underground water by private industries in the state without obtaining permission from Haryana Water Management Authority will be treated illegal and action will be taken against such units with fine. Information reveals that there are nearly 25000 industrial units in Haryana state registered with State Pollution Control Board observing measures to control pollution, out of these hardly 2500 industrial units has taken permission from the government to use water procured from underground. Keshni Anand Arora Chairperson Haryana Water Management Board told that



a campaign has been started against those industrial units in the state collecting underground water with the help of submersible pump or manually for use in the industry without obtaining permission from Board. She told that Deputy Commissioners of all districts in the state have been directed to take stern action against those units found violating directions by enforcement officers deployed in every district in the state.

# 20 shanties, godown charred in fire in Gurugram

At least 20 shanties and a plastic godown were gutted in a fire that broke out in the early hours of Monday, officials said. No casualties were immediately reported in the blaze which may have occurred due to a cylinder explosion at a slum in Bajghera village, they said. Around 20 fire vehicles were deployed to douse the fire since 1 am, but the operation was not completed even after 13 hours, they said.

Fire authorities said ini-

tially, local fire vehicles were deployed, but as the situation went out of hand, fire tenders from Faridabad, Rewari, Hajar and Bahadurgarh too were summoned. Officer Ramesh Saini said according to eyewitnesses, the fire broke out at a slum and later spread across the godown. “It appears that a cylinder in the jhuggi exploded. No casualties are reported yet. We are dousing the fire from each part of the area,” Saini said.

# Radio producer Rita Mukherjee passes away: Ex-DG of AIR

Radio producer Rita Mukherjee, who produced a number of wonderful shows and excelled in the medium, has passed away, a former director general of All India Radio (AIR) said on Thursday.

Tributes poured in from various quarters as news about her demise circulated on social media. Fayyaz Shehryar, former DG of AIR, said, “The news is distressing”. “She lived alone in south Delhi. Rita Mukherjee was the chief producer of National Programme of Features at AIR when she had attained



the age of superannuation, about 20 years ago. She produced a picture of her on his Twitter handle and Facebook account, and paid his tribute to the former colleague. “She received ‘MelvilleMellow’s baton of creative broadcasting & upheld the ethics & served the Public as per the mandate, didn’t spare anyone who tried to defile or denigrate the hard earned reputation of @AkashvaniAIR. And now, at 81, she leaves for the next destination,” he tweeted.

post-mortem, meaning she had died at her home, alone and it is terrible, he said. Shehryar also posted a picture of her on his Twitter handle and Facebook account, and paid his tribute to the former colleague. “She received ‘MelvilleMellow’s baton of creative broadcasting & upheld the ethics & served the Public as per the mandate, didn’t spare anyone who tried to defile or denigrate the hard earned reputation of @AkashvaniAIR. And now, at 81, she leaves for the next destination,” he tweeted.

# Man stabbed to death over trivial issue in Delhi

A man was stabbed to death and three others sustained minor injuries during a quarrel between two families over a trivial issue in northwest Delhi’s Jahangirpuri area, police said on Friday.

The deceased was identified as Abdul Mutalif (42), a resident of Jahangirpuri’s E-Block, they said.

According to police, they received information around 10.45 pm on Thursday about an argument between two neighbours in Jahangirpuri’s E-Block.

During inquiry, it was found that an argument broke out between two minor boys after the bicycle of one of them accidentally hit the other. Later, their families intervened and the argument escalated, Dep-

uty Commissioner of Police (northwest) Usha Rangnani said.

It was found that four injured persons went to Babu Jagjivan Ram Memorial (BJRM) Hospital where Abdul Mutalif succumbed to his injuries, she said.

Mukhia alias Mohammad Russaq, his brother Mohammad Rutaj, along with a few others, hit Mutalif, Shahida Khatoon, Abdul Wahid and Shabnam, the police said.

Rutaj stabbed Mutalif in the chest. Shahida, Shabnam and Abdul Wahid sustained minor injuries, they said.

A case has been registered in the matter. Rutaj (31) has been arrested. Russaq is on the run and efforts are being made to arrest him, the police said.

# Delhi HC dismisses plea for hate speech FIR against BJP leaders

The Delhi High Court on Monday dismissed a petition by CPI(M) leaders Brinda Karat and KM Tiwari challenging the trial court’s refusal to direct the registration of an FIR against Union Minister Anurag Thakur and his BJP colleague and MP Praveesh Verma for their alleged hate speeches concerning anti-CAA protest at Shaheen Bagh here.

Justice Chandra Dhari Singh, who had reserved the verdict on March 25, refused to interfere with the trial court’s order and said that under the law, the requisite sanction is required to be obtained from the competent authority for the registration of FIR in the present facts.

The judge said that the trial court rightly decided the petitioners’ plea and that

no case for exercise of the high court’s writ jurisdiction was made out in view of the presence of alternate remedy under the law.

The petitioners had assailed the trial court order before the high court on the ground that a cognisable offence is made out against the two leaders in the present case and an FIR should be lodged against them for their alleged hate speeches concerning the anti-CAA protest at Shaheen Bagh here and that they were only asking the police to investigate the matter.

The petitioners had claimed in their complaint before the trial court that Thakur and Verma had sought to incite people as a result of which three inci-



dents of firing took place at two different protest sites in Delhi.

Delhi Police had defended the trial court order, saying that it rightly held that it does not have jurisdiction to deal with the case and referred to the Supreme Court’s judgements which said that if a judge is saying he does not

have jurisdiction, he should not comment on merits and that is the right approach.

It was the petitioners’ grievance that at the Rithala rally here, Thakur had, on January 27, 2020, egged on the crowd to raise an incendiary slogan shoot the traitors after lashing out at anti-CAA protesters. They had further claimed

that Verma had, on January 28, 2020, allegedly made incendiary comments against the anti-CAA protesters in Shaheen Bagh.

The trial court had, on August 26, 2021, dismissed the petitioners’ complaint on the ground that it was not sustainable as the requisite sanction from the competent authority, the central government, was not obtained.

In the complaint, Karat and Tiwari had sought lodging of FIRs under various sections, including 153-A (promoting enmity between different groups on grounds of religion, race, place of birth, residence, language, etc.), 153-B (imputations, assertions prejudicial to national integration) and 295-A (deliberate and malicious acts, intended to outrage

religious feelings of any class by insulting its religion or religious beliefs) of the IPC.

It had also sought action under other sections of the IPC, including 298 (uttering words, etc., with deliberate intent to wound the religious feelings of any person), 504 (intentional insult with intent to provoke breach of the peace), 505 (statements conducing to public mischief) and 506 (punishment for criminal intimidation).

The maximum punishment for the offences is a jail term of seven years.

The petitioners had approached the trial court after Karat’s written complaints to the Commissioner of Police and the SHO, Parliament Street, were stated to have failed to elicit any response.

# Govt arrogant, 'police brutality' will not yield results: Sachin Pilot

Congress leader Sachin Pilot, detained by police amid protests over Rahul Gandhi's questioning by the Enforcement Directorate, said on Wednesday that the government is "arrogant" and asserted that "police brutality" will not yield results as the party was steadfast in its resolve to expose attempts to intimidate the Opposition.

The former Rajasthan deputy chief minister said he was entering the AICC headquarters here along with some leaders when they were "shoved into a bus" and taken to Narela police station.

He alleged that the police carried the AICC headquarters, carried out a "lathi-charge" and mistreated women functionaries, MPs and other leaders.



"We were just entering the party office and for no reason we were just shoved into a bus and taken to a police station and we don't know what next they plan to do with us,"

"Police brutality and intimidation will not yield results because we are steadfast in our resolve to expose the undue pressure being exerted on agencies to intimidate the Opposition," the former Union minister said.

He alleged that the government is acting out of "arrogance" and not allowing any voice of protest.

"We wanted a peaceful march just to show solidarity and to expose the fact that the government is vindictive and is attacking all anti-BJP and Congress leaders, maligning their image, to divert attention from issues such as Kashmiri Pandits being massacred in the Kashmir Valley, inflation, unemployment and poverty," he said.

Earlier, in a tweet, Pilot said the "politics of hatred and revenge" the central government is doing is a "big threat to democracy".

"BJP's efforts to suppress the truth through untruth, injustice and immorality will never succeed. Truth is on Rahul Gandhi and the Congress' side that will neither bow down nor be afraid of any atrocities," Pilot said.

The Congress alleged that some Delhi Police personnel forcibly entered its headquarters and beat up party workers and leaders on Wednesday.

The party demanded that an FIR for "criminal trespass" be registered, the erring police personnel be suspended and disciplinary action initiated against them.

## Government should reconsider Agnipath scheme: Hooda

CHANDIGARH: Senior Congress leader Bhupinder Singh Hooda on Wednesday lashed out at the Centre over its "Agnipath" scheme, saying it neither favours the country nor the youth.

He requested the government to reconsider and rationalise it by ensuring permanent jobs to soldiers who complete their four-year term in the armed forces.

The Centre on Tuesday unveiled the ambitious "Agnipath" scheme for recruitment of the youth aged between 17 and a half and 21 in the Army, Navy and the Air Force, largely on a four-year short-term contractual basis. The youth recruited under the scheme will be known as 'Agniveers'. After the completion of the four-year tenure, 25 per cent of the recruits from each specific batch will be offered regular service.

"It has far-reaching consequences and these have not been fully considered while preparing this scheme. In the long run, the policy would have a detrimental impact on our national security," Hooda claimed in a statement here.

"It seems the government is compromising with the security of the country with the intention of saving money on salary, pension, gratuity



and halving the strength of the armed forces," the former Haryana chief minister alleged.

Hooda claimed that a large number of youth have become overage due to the closure of Army recruitment for the past three years due to the Covid pandemic. "The hopes of the youth who had been waiting for the Army recruitment for the last many years and also those who had given written examination, physical test for Army recruitment and were waiting for the results have been dashed after the implementation of this new policy," he said. The Congress leader demanded that the government should consider giving relaxation in age limit to the youth who have become overage in the past three years.

Counting the shortcomings of the scheme, Hooda said 75 per cent of the soldiers who will be recruited in the army as Agniveers will be retired after four years.

## Akhilesh seeks votes in name of religion: Balyan

Union Minister of State Sanjeev Balyan on Monday hit out at Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav, alleging the opposition leader seeks votes in the name of religion.

"Akhilesh Yadav seeks votes in the name of religion. If he stops seeking votes on this basis, his shop will close down," said Balyan who arrived here to address a public meeting.

The minister's statement came a day after Yadav criticised the ruling BJP over the violence following Friday prayers on June 10. Violence had taken place in parts of the state over now-suspended BJP spokesperson Nupur Sharma's remarks against Prophet Mohammed.

"It is no secret that the BJP's politics is based on hatred and division of society on the instructions of its parent organisation RSS," he said.

To a question on the Enforcement Directorate (ED) notice to Congress leader and MP Rahul Gandhi, Balyan said the agency's job is to enforce if there is a wrongdoing. They do scams and when the government acts, they allege oppression, the minister said.



## Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) develops an Indian Standard for 'Non-electric cooling cabinet made of clay'



Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS), the National Standards Body of India, has developed an Indian Standard, IS 17693: 2022 for 'non-electric cooling cabinet made of clay'.

Named as 'Mitticool refrigerator', Mansukh Bhai Prajapati from Gujarat is the innovator behind the refrigerator which projects an eco-friendly technology. BIS standard specifies the construction and performance requirements of a cooling cabinet made out of clay, which operates on the principle of evaporative cooling. These cabinets may be used to store perishable foodstuff without the need of electricity. This standard helps BIS in fulfilling 6 out of 17 United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) like No poverty, Zero hunger, Gender equality, Affordable and clean energy, Industry, innovation, and infrastructure, and Responsible

consumption and production.

It is a natural refrigerator made primarily from clay to store vegetables, fruits, milk, and also for cooling water. It provides natural coolness to foodstuffs stored in it without requiring any electricity. Fruits, vegetables, and milk can be stored reasonably fresh without deteriorating their quality. The efficacy of the product is boundless. To name a few, it is playing an influential role in reviving the pottery culture, tradition, and heritage; connecting people back to roots in better healthier ways; promoting sustainable consumption; economically empowering the indigent community; working towards green and cool earth, economic development and employment generation; and finally contributing towards rural women upliftment and making them financially independent.

## PM to dedicate Pragati Maidan Integrated Transit Corridor project on 19th June

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will dedicate to the nation the main tunnel and five underpasses of Pragati Maidan Integrated Transit Corridor Project on 19th June, 2022 at 10:30 AM. He will also address the gathering on the occasion. The Integrated Transit Corridor project is an integral part of Pragati Maidan Redevelopment Project.



The Pragati Maidan Integrated Transit Corridor project has been built at a cost of more than Rs. 920 crore, entirely funded by the Central Government. It is aimed to provide hassle free and smooth access to the new world class exhibition and convention centre being developed at Pragati Maidan, thereby facilitating easy participation of exhibitors and visitors in the programmes

being held at Pragati Maidan.

The impact of the project, however, will be much beyond Pragati Maidan as it will ensure hassle-free vehicular movement, helping save time and cost of commuters in a big way. It is part of the overarching vision of the government to ensure ease of living for people through transforming urban infrastructure. The main Tunnel connects Ring Road with India Gate via Purana Qila Road passing through Pragati Maidan. The six lane divided Tunnel has multiple purposes, including access to the huge basement parking of Pragati Maidan. A unique component of the Tunnel is that two cross tunnels below the main tunnel road have been constructed in order to facilitate movement of the traffic from either side of the parking lot.

## Gross Tax collections for the Financial Year 2022-23 grown at about 40%

The figures of Direct Tax collections for the Financial Year 2022-23, as on 16.06.2022 show that net collections are at Rs.3,39,225 crore compared to Rs. 2,33,651 crore over the corresponding period of the preceding year, representing an increase of 45% over the collections of the preceding year. The net collection (as on 16.06.2022) in F.Y. 2022-23 has registered a growth of 171% over the corresponding period of F.Y. 2020-21 when the net collection was Rs. 1,25,065 crore, and a growth of 103% over the corresponding period of F.Y. 2019-20 when the net collection was Rs. 1,67,432 crore. The Net Direct Tax collection of Rs. 3,39,225 crore (as on 16.06.2022) include Corporation



Tax (CIT) at Rs. 1,70,583 crore (net of refund) and Personal Income Tax (PIT) including Security Transaction Tax (STT) at Rs. 1,67,960 crore (net of refund). The Gross collection of Direct Taxes (before adjusting for refunds) for the F.Y. 2022-23 stands at Rs. 3,69,559 crore compared to Rs. 2,64,382 crore in the corresponding period of the preceding year, representing an increase of almost 40% over the collections of the preceding year.

## I&B secy releases Prasar Bharati's procurement policy

Information and Broadcasting Ministry Secretary Apurva Chandra on Wednesday released a policy of Prasar Bharati for procurement of materials, services, and work of the specified quality at the "most competitive prices" in a fair, just, and transparent manner.

The ministry said there was a need to bring in "a uniform and well-documented" policy guideline and processes in place to ensure that critical works are completed on time in a well-coordinated manner with the fewest cost overruns possible.

"In the spirit of ease of doing business at Prasar Bharati, for the first time a procurement policy was released by the I&B Secretary Apurva Chandra in the presence of Prasar Bharati



Member (Finance) DPS Negi, Additional Secretary Neerja Sekhar and other officials," the ministry said in a statement.

It said the policy is a directive to all procurement entities in all Prasar Bharati verticals, including All India Radio (AIR) and Doordarshan (DD), for procurement of materials, services, and work of the specified quality at the most

competitive prices in a fair, just, and transparent manner.

"To accomplish this, Prasar Bharati was in need of a uniform and well-documented policy guideline and processes in place, ensuring that critical works are completed on time, in a well-coordinated manner, and with the fewest cost overruns possible," the ministry added.

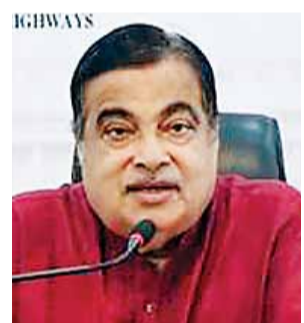
## Nitin Gadkari proposes setting up of Innovation Bank for new ideas, research findings & technologies to focus on 'Quality' in infrastructure development

Union Minister for Road Transport and Highways Nitin Gadkari has proposed setting up of Innovation Bank for new ideas, research findings and technologies to focus on 'Quality' in infrastructure development. Virtually addressing the inaugural function of the 222<sup>nd</sup> Mid-Term Council Meeting of the Indian Roads Congress (IRC) he said new initiatives are expected from IRC. Innovation should be the focus area for all Engineers. He said IRC should develop a World-class state-of-art laboratory with the help of IITs and global institutions in the world.

Gadkari said infrastructure development has an important role in fulfilling the vision of Prime Minister Narendra Modi to make India a 5 trillion-dollar economy and

Road infrastructure is directly linked to the prosperity of that region. He said Road infrastructure connects people, culture and society and brings prosperity through socio-economic development.

The Minister said in the last 8 years, the length of National



Highways has gone up by more than 50% from 91,000 km in 2014 to about 1.47 Lakh km now. He said our government is dedicatedly working towards expanding the National Highway network to 2 lakh kilometers by 2025. In last 8 years, our team has created multiple world records, he added.

Nitin Gadkari said Government is very committed to the development of the North East region. He said NHIDCL is playing a vital role in developing infrastructure in this region. The National Highway share of the region stands at 10%. He said till date, 2344 km highway is constructed at the cost of Rs. 45,000 crore.

## Will Neeraj Chopra breach 90m barrier in Kuortane Games?



Olympic champion Neeraj Chopra will be primed to breach the 90m mark during the Kuortane Games in Finland on Saturday after his spectacular return to action in Turkey where he had sent his spear to 89.30m for a new national record.

The 24-year-old Indian superstar's spear landed 70cm short of the 90m mark, the gold standard of the javelin world at the Paavo Nurmi Games in Turku, Finland, on Tuesday in his first competition after winning gold in Tokyo in August last year.

He was second in a star-studded field behind local athlete Oliver Helander, who was the surprise gold winner with a personal best of 89.83m.

Chopra will be competing for the second time this week at the Kuortane Games, which is a silver-level event in the World Athletics Continental Tour.

## Land acquired after possession and payment of compensation vests with state: Supreme Court

Land acquired by authorities after its possession and payment of compensation under the Land Acquisition Act vests with the State, free from all encumbrances, the Supreme Court has said.

A vacation bench of justices M R Shah and Aniruddha Bose agreed with the view of the Allahabad High Court that any person retaining possession of the land thereafter has to be treated as a trespasser.

The apex court was hearing a plea filed by a Uttar Pradesh resident, challenging a notice dated February 2 issued by the Greater Noida Industrial Development Authority, asking him to remove unauthorised encroachments over a piece of land situated under its notified area.

The top court noted that the petitioner's land was acquired, its possession taken over and the payment of compensation under the Land Acquisition Act, 1894 paid.

"In that view of the matter, the petitioner has no right to occupy and/or continue with the possession, as after the acquisi-



tion, the land absolutely vests with the state government. The high court has rightly refused to interfere and we are in complete agreement with the view taken by the high court.

"Therefore, we see no reason to interfere with the impugned order in exercise of our powers under Article 136 of the Constitution of India. The Special Leave Petition is, accordingly, dismissed," the bench said.

The high court had said after the acquisition of land and passing of award, the land vests with the State, free from all encumbrances.

The Uttar Pradesh government had contended that the possession of the land in question was taken in 1996 and even the entry of the revenue record was changed.

## Gadkari emphasizes on maintaining equilibrium between ecology, environment and development

Union Minister for Road Transport and Highways, Nitin Gadkari has emphasized on maintaining equilibrium between ecology, environment and development. Inaugurating 'Industrial Decarbonization Summit 2022' (IDS-2022) - Road Map for Carbon Neutrality by 2070 he said to overcome power shortage, it is essential to develop alternative fuels. He said eccentric one sided approach in these issues is not beneficial for the country.

Nitin Gadkari said in the coming days, we have to strengthen our economy and at the same time save the environment. He said our priority is green hydrogen, by using Biotechnology we can increase the productivity of Biomass and by using Biomass we can make Bio-ethanol, Bio-LNG and Bio-CNG. He said pollution will decrease by usage of methanol and ethanol. The Minister said that a focused road map should be created and adequate research must be done so that we reduce our imports and increase exports

## SC issues notice to CBI, ED on bail plea of actor in Ponzi schemes cases



The Supreme Court Monday sought responses from CBI and the Enforcement Directorate (ED) on a plea of actor Mohd Naseer seeking bail in connection with criminal cases related to alleged cheating and siphoning of funds in the names of Ponzi schemes.

Naseer, a visually impaired actor who had acted in the 2009 Bollywood Hindi movie - 'The Shadow, the Dark Side of Truth', is in jail from 2019 in connection with the cases lodged by CBI and the ED. A vacation bench comprising justices A S Bopanna and Vikram Nath sought replies of the probe agencies within three weeks after senior advocate Siddharth Bhatnagar, appearing for the jailed actor, said the Orissa High Court, which reserved the order on the bail plea on June 12, 2020, was yet to deliver it.

## Left parties demand scrapping of Agnipath scheme

The Left parties on Thursday demanded that the Agnipath scheme be scrapped and be taken up in Parliament for discussion, alleging that it does a "disservice" to India's national interests.

The government had unveiled the scheme on Tuesday saying it will overhaul the decades-old selection process to bring in fitter and younger troops to tackle future security challenges facing the nation.

Around 46,000 soldiers will be recruited this year between the ages of 17 and a half years and 21 years into the Army, Navy and the Air Force.

"The Polit Bureau of the CPI(M) strongly disapproves the 'Agnipath' scheme that does disservice to India's national interests. Professional armed forces cannot be raised by recruiting 'soldiers on contract' for a period of four years. This scheme, to save pension money, severely



compromises the quality and efficiency of our professional armed forces," CPIM general secretary Sitaram Yechury said in a tweet.

He further said that for the last two years there has been no recruitment in the Indian Army and instead of recruiting regular soldiers into the armed forces, this scheme leaves such contract soldiers with no other prospects of employment after four years.

"This creates a dangerous situation where they may end up serving private militias. This has hazardous implications for our social fabric already under severe strain. It is criminal to call upon our youth to be prepared to make the supreme sacrifice without the minimum protection of job security. The spontaneous protests in various parts of the country, reflects the anger against this scheme.

## Saira Banu says Dilip Kumar should get Bharat Ratna

MUMBAI: Veteran actor Saira Banu says her late husband actor Dilip Kumar should be honoured with the Bharat Ratna as he is the "kohinoor" of the country.

Saira attended the Bharat Ratna Dr Ambedkar Award on late Tuesday evening, where union minister Ramdas Athawale presented the honour to Dilip Kumar, who passed away last year aged 98. At the event, Athawale said he would request Prime Minister Narendra Modi to consider awarding Bharat Ratna, the highest civilian honour of the country, to the Hindi cinema



legend. When asked about the same, Saira Banu told reporters, "It should happen, God willing, because Dilip sahab has been the 'Kohinoor' of our country. So 'Kohinoor' should definitely receive a Bharat Ratna." Saira Banu and

Dilip Kumar got married in 1966. The couple acted together in several films including "Sagina" and "Gopi". At the event, the 77-year-old actor repeatedly broke down while receiving the honour. "This is the reason I don't attend any functions because I feel terrible, but what do I do," she said, wiping her tears. Saira said she feels that Dilip Kumar continues to be with her as a solid support. "I feel he is still here, watching everything, being with me. He is not in my memories.

# Taming inflation should be the top priority for now

The latest retail inflation numbers point to a slight softening in the pace of price gains, and that should provide policymakers some solace that recent interventions appear to be working. Inflation measured by the Consumer Price Index (CPI), slowed 75 basis points from April's 95-month high of 7.79%, to 7.04% in May. While it is hard to quantify the effect that the RBI's surprise 40 basis points interest rate increase of early May had on prices, the Centre's May 21 decision to cut the excise duty on petrol and diesel by Rs 8 and Rs 6, respectively, seems to have had an immediate impact. Inflation in the transport and communication category of the CPI slowed by 137 basis points to 9.54% last month. This key category, with a weight of 8.59 that places it behind only cereals and housing, captures the pump prices of the main transportation fuels, making it a crucial indicator of price pressures in the economy. A closer look, however, shows inflation in the category continued to quicken sequentially, even if at a slower pace. Rural consumers, who have comparatively lower purchasing power than their urban peers and yet are heavily reliant on the fuels for farm operations, experienced a significantly slower softening of only 42bps over the year. With the price of the Indian basket of crude oil now having surged by almost 8.5% from April to a 10-year high this month, and the rupee plunging to successive new record lows against the dollar, it would be unwise to drop one's guard. Food prices, the other driver of retail price gains, offered far less respite with the Consumer Food Price Index (inflation slowing by only 34 basis points to 7.97%. With the RBI's consumer confidence survey showing an appreciable deterioration in households' expectations of the one-year ahead price level, authorities must proactively try to tame inflation.

## LETTERBOX

Readers' feedback adds value to the newspaper. Please email comments on reports, features and columns to [fwletters@gmail.com](mailto:fwletters@gmail.com). We will publish them on this page.

**"Whenever you see a successful business, someone once made a courageous decision."**  
- Peter F. Drucker

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**GAURAV GOGOI** EXPLORES HOW INDIA CAN RESPOND TO GROWING ANAEMIA WITH PRACTICAL SOLUTIONS

# Malnutrition remains a key worry

Good nutrition has the power to empower the present and future generations. India's greatest national treasure is its people — especially women and children — but even after 75 years of independence, a majority of them do not get the required diet to meet their nutritional needs. A child's nutritional status is directly linked to their mother. Poor nutrition among pregnant women affects the nutritional status of the child and has a greater chance to affect future generations. Undernourished children are at risk of under-performing in studies and have limited job prospects. This vicious cycle restrains the development of the country, whose workforce, affected mentally and physically, has reduced work capacity.

While there has been some progress in tackling malnutrition among children and women over the past decade, the improvement has been modest at best. This is despite declining rates of poverty, increased self-sufficiency in food production, and the implementation of a range of government programmes. The National Family Health Survey (NFHS-5) has shown marginal improvement in different nutrition indicators, indicating that the pace of progress is slow. Children in several States are more undernourished now than they were five years ago.

While there was some reduction in stunting rates (35.5 per cent from 38.4 per cent in NFHS-4) 13 States or Union Territories have seen an increase in stunted children since NFHS-4; this includes Gujarat, Maharashtra, West Bengal and Kerala. (Stunting is defined as low height-for-age.) Malnutrition trends across NFHS surveys show that wasting, the most visible and life-threatening form of malnutrition, has either risen or has remained stagnant over the years (Wasting is defined as low weight-for-height).



India also has the highest prevalence of anaemia in the world (Anaemia is defined as the condition in which the number of red blood cells or the haemoglobin concentration within them is lower than normal). The NFHS-5 survey indicates that more than 57 per cent of women (15-49 years) and over 67 per cent children (six-59 months) suffer from anaemia. My home State, Assam, is among the low-performing States, with a huge burden of anaemic cases — 66.4 per cent of women (15-49 years) and 68.4 per cent children (6-59 months) are affected. It is imperative to introspect about these problems, which remain persistent, pervasive, and serious. Anaemia has major consequences in terms of human health and development: it reduces the work capacity of individuals, in turn impacting the economy and overall national growth. Developing countries lose up to 4.05 per cent in GDP per annum due to iron deficiency anaemia; India loses up to 1.18 per cent of GDP annually.

## Step up the financing

There is a greater need now to increase investment in women and children's health and nutrition to ensure their sustainable development and improved quality of life. While the Government's focus has been on the consolidation of several programmes to improve outcomes, there is a need for increased financial commitment. Experts have pointed out that Saksham Anganwadi and the Prime Minister's Overarching Scheme for Holistic Nourishment (POSHAN) 2.0 programme have seen only a marginal increase in budgetary allocation this year (Rs 20,263 crore from Rs 20,105 crore in 2021-22). Additionally, 32 per cent of funds released under POSHAN Abhiyaan to States and Union Territories have not been utilised.

India must adopt an outcome-oriented approach on nutrition programmes. It is crucial that parliamentarians begin monitoring needs and interventions in their constituencies and raise awareness on the issues, impact, and solutions to

address the challenges at the local level. There has to be direct engagement with nutritionally vulnerable groups (this includes the elderly, pregnant women, those with special needs and young children), and contribute toward ensuring last-mile delivery of key nutrition services and interventions. This will ensure greater awareness on the one hand and proper planning and implementation of programmes at the grass-roots level on the other, which can then be replicated at the district and national levels.

With basic education and general awareness, every individual is informed, takes initiatives at the personal level and can become an agent of change. Various studies highlight a strong link between mothers' education and improved access and compliance with nutrition interventions among children. We must ensure our young population has a competitive advantage; nutrition and health are foundational to that outcome.

I strongly believe that there should be a process to monitor and evaluate programmes and address systemic and on the ground challenges. As a policymaker, I recommend that a new or existing committee or the relevant standing committees meet and deliberate over effective policy decisions, monitor the implementation of schemes, and review nutritional status across States. The country's response to malnutrition and its growing anaemia burden should be practical and innovative. This is critical to make an India that is malnutrition-free and anaemia-free a reality, and not just an aspiration. Every one is a stakeholder and should contribute towards ending malnutrition and anaemia. We should not become part of a tragedy that is preventable.

Gaurav Gogoi is Member of Parliament (Congress party) for Kuliabor, Assam. Views are personal.



**TRIDIVESH SINGH MAINI** DELVES INTO THE MULTIPLE POLICY WOES FACED BY THE US PRESIDENT

# Biden tries hard to deal with internal, external challenges

A lot of commentators have repeatedly drawn attention to the multiple foreign policy challenges which the US President Joe Biden administration has been facing over the past year — while the first major challenge for Biden was the exit of US troops from Afghanistan, the Ukraine-Russia conflict has had even broader economic and geopolitical ramifications.

The US economy has, not unexpectedly, borne the brunt of the Ukraine-Russia crisis. A strong reiteration of this point is that consumer inflation hit a 40-year high in May, 2022 increased 8.6% from the previous year. According to US Labour Department data which came out on June 10, 2022, food and gas (gas prices had reached USD 4.99 a gallon last week) were major contributors towards the steep rise in inflation. While in May 2022, energy costs rose 34.6% from a year earlier, groceries, jumped 11.9% from last year.

The economic situation has dented US President, Joe Biden's popularity. In an ABC News/Ipsos poll published on June 4, 2022, only 28 per cent of voters said they approved of the way Biden had handled the problem of inflation, while 27 per cent approved how he is handling the increase in gas prices. According to the poll a whopping 80% of voters said that inflation would influence their vote in the mid terms later this year.

The US President during his visit to Los Angeles, last week confessed the challenge posed by inflation, but also pointed to the fact that unemployment had dropped to its lowest in 52 years.

Biden's popularity has also dropped amongst democrat law makers, party members and voters who believe he would be a liability for the Democrats were he to stand



as President in 2024. Biden's age has also been cited as a major drawback (in 2024, Biden will be 82). Democrat strategist David Axelrod in an interview to the New York Times stated:

"The presidency is a monstrously taxing job and the stark reality is the president would be closer to 90 than 80 at the end of a second term, and that would be a major issue." He also said that Biden has not got credit for a number of his achievements because of not seeming to be in control.

Biden's foreign policy so far

Biden, an old foreign policy hand, while not deviating significantly from Donald Trump's foreign policy on a number of issues — including China — has tried to send out a message, that he is less isolationist and is keen to work closely with allies — specially to counter China and Russia. Biden an establishment has not been an idealist, though he has tried to bring in the

'moral dimension' into foreign policy. The US President has faced scathing criticism especially from the US withdrawal from Afghanistan as well as his handling of the Ukraine crisis. US economy and Biden's Foreign Policy Given his low approval ratings, and the mid-term elections in November 2022, Biden's foreign policy will be driven by domestic politics — especially the state of the US economy.

If one were to look at the Biden Administration's openness towards removing tariffs on certain Chinese products, such as household goods, bicycles, imposed by former US President Donald Trump it is driven by the urge to control inflation (tariffs on steel and aluminium are likely to remain in place)

US Commerce secretary, Gina Raimondo while commenting on the same said: "We are looking at it. In fact, the president has asked us on his team to analyze that. And

we are in the process of doing that for him and he will have to make that decision."

Biden also needs to keep oil prices down before the November mid-term election. His policy vis-a-vis the Middle East is important in this context. First, even if the Iran Nuclear deal 2015 can not be revived, it is likely that Biden will allow Iran to sell oil (ever since the Ukraine crisis both Iran and Venezuela have been selling oil).

Second, Saudi Arabia which had earlier refused to drill more oil has agreed to do so (Saudi Arabia led OPEC and its allies agreed to a higher than expected increase in oil production), and Biden's visit to Saudi Arabia in July is important in this context. While he had been scathing in his criticism of Saudi Arabia for its human rights record, and had cold shouldered Crown Prince Muhammad Bin Salman (MBS), who shared close relations with Biden's predecessor, a reset of relations is likely during his visit. While commenting on his upcoming visit to Saudi Arabia, the US President said: "The commitments from the Saudis don't relate to anything having to do with energy. It happens to be a larger meeting taking place in Saudi Arabia."

In conclusion, the Biden administration faces numerous challenges and to address some of the economic challenges at home he will need to tweak his foreign policy. It remains to be seen how political constituencies, in the US, respond to the lifting of tariffs on certain Chinese products and the outreach towards Saudi Arabia.

Tridivesh Singh Maini is a policy analyst, commentator and writer. He is also a visiting faculty, Jindal School of International Affairs, OP Jindal Global University, Sonipat.

## BOOKS: REVIEW

# Book: Tech brought more Southpaws into cricket

Technology has brought more left-handers into cricket. Leading Cricket thinkers Nathan Leamon, Ben Jones, and others write in "Hitting Against the Spin — How Cricket Really Works".

If this sounds like science fiction, take a look behind the scenes at a Formula 1 team to see it in action. There are more human elements to Cricket than we know.

The authors say that Cricket will follow FI's lead (once we figure out how to calculate the tyre wear of a fast bowler).

In the early 1990s 25% of Test cricket's top order batsmen were left-handed. The home team provided both umpires. The International Panel of Umpires was established and the standard of

umpiring in Test matches grew over the next 25 years.

"First, one neutral umpire was introduced, then two. Hawk-Eye was introduced, which helped improve umpires' understanding and made their decision-making more efficient.

"Finally the introduction of the Decision Review System, and the professional training of the most skilled umpires in the country, raised standards even further.

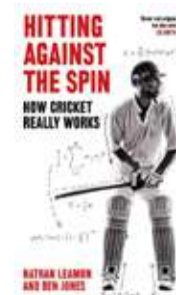
"The accuracy of umpiring decisions increased simultaneously and independently, and the proportion of left-handers began to rise as well." Leamon and Jones write that left-handed openers grew in popularity as umpiring became more accurate. They eventually outnumbered

**'Hopefully, we'll solve puzzles that you have been pondering for years and show you new ways of thinking. It will be difficult in places and as geeky as your imagination will allow'**

right-handers.

This was no accident. Better umpiring was the direct and unintended consequence of increased success for left-handed batsmen.

"Left-handed openers have always enjoyed an advantage under the LBW laws, but pre-1990



**Hitting Against the Spin — How Cricket Really Works**  
By Nathan Leamon & Ben Jones  
Constable, 400 pages; Rs 899

inconsistent umpiring was too blunt to reveal this advantage. If the umpire gives out, your law protection against ball pitching outside of your leg stump is not applicable to you.

"But as the precision of decision-making grew, the value of that protection grew as well, and so did performance of left-handers in the top ranks.

"This was, of necessity, only one of many ways that improving the umpires changed Test cricket's patterns and trends. Constable/Hachette published the book. This is just one of many amaz-

ing gems in the book. It takes you on a fascinating whistle stop tour of modern Cricket, sports analytics, and brings Cricket into the 21st Century by revealing its long-kept secrets.

It sheds light on international Cricket and explains the hidden workings and dynamics.

It examines the forces that influence Cricket and, in turn, the cricketers who play it. It reveals the invisible forces that decide which players succeed or fail, which tactics work, and which teams win or lose.

It reveals the hidden hands that have shaped the game, and the people who play it.

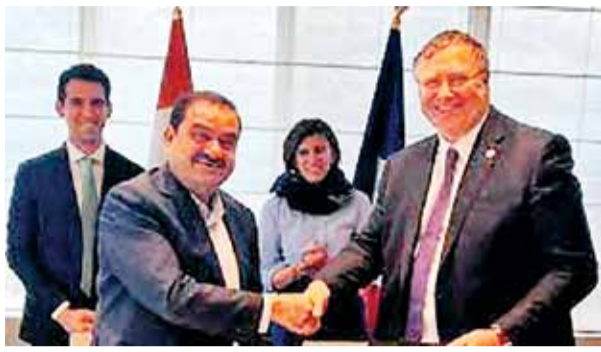
"Hopefully, we'll solve puzzles that you have been pondering for years and show you new ways of thinking. It will be difficult in places and as geeky as your imagination will allow. The authors say that it will be enjoyable and you'll see Cricket differently afterward."

# Adani and TotalEnergies to create the world's largest green hydrogen ecosystem

Adani, India's fastest-growing diversified business portfolio, and energy supermajor TotalEnergies of France, have entered into a new partnership to jointly create the world's largest green hydrogen ecosystem. In this strategic alliance, TotalEnergies will acquire 25% minority interest in Adani New Industries Ltd (ANIL) from Adani Enterprises Ltd (AEL).

The new partnership, centered on green hydrogen, is expected to transform the energy landscape both in India and globally. Both Adani and TotalEnergies are pioneers in energy transition and clean energy adoption, and this joint energy platform further strengthens the public ESG commitments made by both companies. ANIL's ambition is to invest over USD 50 billion over the next 10 years in green hydrogen and associated ecosystem. In the initial phase, ANIL will develop green hydrogen production capacity of 1 million ton per annum before 2030.

"The strategic value of the Adani-TotalEnergies relationship is immense at both the business level and the ambition



level," said Mr. Gautam Adani, Chairman, Adani Group. "In our journey to become the largest green hydrogen player in the world, the partnership with TotalEnergies adds several dimensions that include R&D, market reach and an understanding of the end consumer. This fundamentally allows us to shape market demand. This is why I find the continued extension of our partnership to hold such great value. Our confidence in our ability to produce the world's least expensive electron is what will drive our ability to produce the world's least expensive green hydrogen. This partnership will open up a number of exciting

downstream pathways."

"TotalEnergies' entry into ANIL is a major milestone in implementing our renewable and low carbon hydrogen strategy, where we want to not only decarbonize the hydrogen used in our European refineries by 2030, but also pioneer the mass production of green hydrogen to meet demand, as the market will take off by the end of this decade," said Mr. Patrick Pouyann, Chairman and CEO of TotalEnergies. "We are also very pleased with this agreement, which further strengthens our alliance with the Adani Group in India and contributes to the valorization

of India's abundant low-cost renewable power potential. This future production capacity of 1 million ton per annum of green hydrogen will be a major step in increasing TotalEnergies' share of new decarbonized molecules including biofuels, biogas, hydrogen, and e-fuels to 25% of its energy production and sales by 2050."

This partnership builds on the exceptional synergies between the two platforms. While Adani will bring its deep knowledge of the Indian market, rapid execution capabilities, operations excellence and capital management philosophy to the partnership, TotalEnergies will bring its deep understanding of the global and European market, credit enhancement and financial strength to lower the financing costs, and expertise in underlying technologies. The complementary strengths of the partners will help ANIL deliver the largest green hydrogen ecosystem in the world, which, in turn, will deliver the lowest cost of Green Hydrogen to the consumer and help accelerate the global energy transition.

## AirAsia India expands its network to Uttar Pradesh, adds Lucknow as its latest destination with 112 weekly direct flights

FW DESK  
Mumbai

AirAsia India today announced that it is expanding its network to Lucknow with daily direct flights connecting Lucknow to Bengaluru, Delhi, Goa, Kolkata and Mumbai with fares starting from Rs 4,064. The flight operations will start from 5th Aug 2022. Inaugural fares are now open for booking on all major booking channels. NeuPass is a rewards program by Tata Neu where members get benefits such as additional discounts on flights, 5% assured NeuCoins and free Red Carpet priority service.

In addition to NeuPass members, students, senior citizens, SMEs, dependents and members of the armed forces can also avail special fares on airasia.co.in. By offering fab deals, unique benefits and fantastic value to guests, the airline has consistently tried to enhance guest experience. In addition to providing nonstop connectivity to Bengaluru, Delhi, Goa, Kolkata and Mumbai, AirAsia India would also be connecting Lucknow through convenient one-stop itineraries to other stations on its network such as Srinagar,



Cochin, Hyderabad, Guwahati and others.

Speaking about the announcement, Ankur Garg, Chief Commercial Officer, AirAsia India, said, "We are delighted to add Lucknow to our network and looking forward to commencing operations in Uttar Pradesh from Aug'22. The future prospects in travel have been a contributing factor in zeroing in on Lucknow as our next destination. By operating 112 weekly direct flights to Bengaluru, Delhi, Goa, Kolkata and Mumbai from Lucknow, we look forward to delivering a convenient and pleasant flying experience to our guests. Our cushioned and comfortable seats, a wide choice of oven-hot

meals from our award winning 'Gourmair' menu, and the benefits of NeuPass would provide a distinct experience to the flyers in Uttar Pradesh."

India, AirAsia (India) Private Limited is a subsidiary of Tata Sons Private Limited. AirAsia India commenced operations on 12th June 2014 and flies over 50 direct and 100 connecting routes across India. The airline offers plush leather seats, hot meals and Red Carpet priority services. AirAsia India has consistently embraced technology to deliver operational efficiency and enhance guest experiences, offering fast bookings, fab value and fantastic deals on its award-winning mobile apps and website airasia.co.in.

## Statement by TVS Motor on Agnipath Scheme

The Agnipath scheme will have a significant positive impact on society, and contribute greatly to nation building. Agniveers will play a key role in furthering economic growth and strengthening society in the coming years, - Mr. Sudarshan Venu, MD, TVS Motor Company.

TVS Motor Company is a reputed two and three-wheeler manufacturer globally, championing progress through Sustainable Mobility with four state-of-the-art manufacturing facilities in Hosur, Mysuru and Nagarah in India and Karawang in Indonesia. Rooted in its 100-year legacy of Trust, Value, and Passion for Customers and Exactness, we take pride in making internationally aspirational products of the highest quality through innovative and sustainable processes.

We are the only two-wheeler company to have received the prestigious Deming Prize. Our products lead in their respective categories in the J.D. Power IQS and APEAL surveys. We have been ranked No. 1 Company in the J.D. Power Customer Service Satisfaction Survey for consecutive four years.

## Mamta Binani completes a triumphant 25 years in her profession



In 1996, she was named the All-India Topper in the Institute of Company Secretaries of India's Intermediate Examinations. She has served as the Chairperson of the Institute of Company Secretaries of India's Eastern India Regional Council, receiving the D. L. Mazumdar Silver Medal and the Mauji Ram Memorial Award. She received the prestigious 'Bharat Nirman Awards' for 'Excellence in Professional Services,' making her the first Company Secretary to receive this honor.

She has received a number of awards namely, 'Tejaswini Award', 'Hello Kolkata', 'KKMERS', Best President Award, Lions Clubs International District 322B2. She was the first Indian to receive the 'TWIRC Women of the Year in Restructuring (Asia) Award, 2021'. Binani has also been felicitated at the 15th Edition of Asian Business & Social Forum 2021, Awards & Business E-Summit, on 26th October 2021 at Emirates Ball Room, Marriott Marquis Hotel, Dubai.

## Schneider Electric launches 'Innovate to Inspire' - a supply chain hackathon for start-ups

MUMBAI: Schneider Electric the global leader in digital transformation of energy automation and management, today announced the launch of 'Innovate to Inspire' - a supply chain hackathon for start-ups. The hackathon which will be powered by K-Tech Innovation Hub, IKP will focus on finding solutions specific to the global supply chain challenges.

Future-ready platforms powered by new technologies and start-ups built on innovation are the keys to solving today's business obstacles. The hackathon will bring industry leaders and enthusiasts from across the country together to co-create innovative supply chain solutions. In line with recent advances, the supply chain industry has an immense potential to grow further, powered by new-age technologies.

This initiative will offer an opportunity to partner and collaborate with Schneider Electric by competing to solve industrial use cases and providing the best solutions. Selected start-ups will get a chance to work with Schneider Electric along with receiving professional mentorship and the opportunity to network and scale themselves up.

Javed Ahmad, Sr. Vice President, Global Supply Chain, International Region, Schneider Electric, emphasised the significance of the hackathon for the continued growth of the supply chain industry and said, "The supply chain industry has been showcasing exponential growth. With this, energy demands are also growing in tandem."

## JK Tyre celebrates 4 decades of Motorsport in India

MUMBAI: JK Tyre, the name that stands synonymous to motorsport in the country is celebrating over four decades of their motorsport journey. While the pandemic did not deter the spirit of the brand in last two years as they successfully hosted their racing championship coupled with all annual events, the team today announced their plans for 2022.

Present at the event, India's decorated rally driver and Arjuna Awardee Gaurav Gill announced his participation in the World Rally Championship



(WRC) 2022. The three-time APRC (Asia Pacific Rally Championship) champion and seven-time INRC (Indian National Rally Championship) champion is all geared up to participate in

## 40% of youths spend 4 hrs daily on the Net

BY NARVIJAY SINGH

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is spreading rapidly and is becoming more powerful day by day than before. It is the mechanical form of the human brain, with the help of which many functions are being performed through computers, smartphones, and machines. Innovative applications of AI are emerging one after the other in medical science, computer science, and commercial processes. Your smartphone is called smart because it is powered by AI and the internet, and in the blink of an eye, you can do many impossible tasks with the help of this handy gadget. It is surprising that the smartphone alone has replaced many of the tools and technologies that had existed over the years and thus has changed the lifestyle of people the world over. Now you do not



wear a wristwatch to check the time and don't rely on the radio set or a tape recorder to listen to your favorite songs or music. The camera has already disappeared from the scene. The calculator also met a similar fate. The mobilephone alone is doing a lot of work now and behind it is the power of AI. There is so much about AI that no matter how many times it interferes in our lives, there are some things that only humans can do well.

generation relied on their memory for multiplication or daily calculations and did most of the counting with their minds, the youth of Gen Z could not walk a step without a smartphone or the Internet. They need calculators for simple addition and subtraction and the Internet for solutions to every problem, big or small. 40 percent of the youth of this generation are those who spend more than four hours on the internet every day and use the internet to make their everyday decisions. This generation maintained contact with the outside world only through the Internet at the time of the Covid pandemic. The period of the lockdown was such that it was not possible to go anywhere and mutual contacts were also broken, in such a situation, from ordering medicines to necessary video or zoom meetings, these youths kept the pace of work.

Children born in or after 1995 are now in their prime phase and are between the ages of 25 and 30. One thing is very clear in the case of these youths, who are also called Generation Z, that they depend excessively on the Internet. Because of this, while people of the previous

## Ravi Bulchandani to join the board of Rent Alpha Private Limited

Rent Alpha Pvt. Ltd., a leasing and residual management company and owner of CapSave Finance, an NBFC, announced the appointment of Ravi Bulchandani to its Board of Directors.

"The addition of Ravi Bulchandani to the Board will bring a huge amount of global knowledge to Rent Alpha," said Bharat Bhise, founder and CEO of Bravia Capital, majority owner in Rent Alpha. "Ravi was a senior global strategic adviser at 4 of the 10 largest financial institutions in the world. I am confident that with Ravi's advice, we will be one step closer to fine-tuning Rent Alpha's business model and taking it to the next level, alongside the world's best companies in this space."

"We welcome Mr. Bulchandani to the Board of Rent Alpha, and we are eager to work with him as we grow to become one of India's leading residual management companies," said Jinesh Jain, CEO of Rent Alpha.

## Globe Toyota clocks 154 pc growth in May 2022

KULBIR SINGH KALSI  
Chandigarh

Globe Toyota, known for speedy and efficient service, allowing customers to experience the convenience and pleasure of owning a Toyota automobile, logged an incredible growth of 154% in May-2022 as compared to the last corresponding period of May-2021.

Commenting on the May 2022 performance, figures for which have come out, Vivek Datta, CEO and MD, Globe Toyota, said: "Demand continues to peak as we have very encouraging booking orders and inquiries for all our models. The cool new Glanza has received an overwhelming response from our customers as



their trust and faith in the brand helps us perform better."

Datta further said that segment-leading models like Innova Crysta and Fortuner continue to perform well and generate healthy booking orders. "Camry Hybrid and Vellfire continue to garner strong demand and our

focus for going forward would be to meet the immediate needs of our customers," added Datta.

Reflecting further, Datta revealed that Toyota Hilux is being appreciated very well in the region as Hilux is aimed at fulfilling the needs of the customers seeking an incredible lifestyle utility vehicle that is best suited for off-roading adventure drives on tough terrains, and everyday city use.

Hilux's global reputation as a powerful performer is attributed to its rigid Innovative Multi-purpose Vehicle (IMV) platform and a powerful power train system with a 2.8 L four-cylinder turbo diesel engine and is available in an option of 6-speed automatic or 6-speed manual transmission.

## India Fintech market expected to expand at CAGR of 31 per cent up to 2025: ASSOCHAM PwC Report

FW DESK  
New Delhi

India's Fintech is poised to grow at compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 31% up to 2025 and this growth has also fuelled the Fintech focused need in the Indian talent pool. Indian Fintechs raised funding worth USD 10.6 billion in 2021.

The global fintech industry has maintained significant momentum and seen considerable expansion. According to the ASSOCHAM PwC Report, rising consumer demand, innovative business models, technologies, and cost-effective services have resulted in the industry growing steadily. The report, titled, "The Changing Face of Financial Services: Growth of Fintech in India", is jointly conducted by the Associated Chambers of Commerce and Industry of India (ASSOCHAM) with PwC.

"The Fintech has the poten-



tial to transform the financial landscape, strengthen the efficiency of financial institutions and provide consumers with a variety of financial products at competitive prices," says Deepak Sood, Secretary General, ASSOCHAM.

The Indian Fintech Story have enabled doors for more Fintech unicorns that are not even a decade old. The Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI) launched in 2009 has introduced a new set of infrastructure to enable Indian Fintech ecosystem. This included API Products, UPI,

Aadhar, e-KYC, Digi Locker as public infra.

The pandemic's digital adoption has undoubtedly played a significant role in the shift to digital payments with a seamless customer experience. It served as a tipping point for the widespread adoption of Fintech products. The number of new demat accounts increased by around 63 percent in FY22 compared to FY21.

The pandemic has quickened the digitisation of various parts of the financial services value chain and the Fintech-

SAAS segment has been developing innovative solutions like app-based bookkeeping and zero-code payment solution to this change. The Fintech-SAAS segment is expected to grow from a market size of USD 4.6 billion in 2022 to USD 12.6 billion in 2025, according to the report.

According to the joint study, Fintech has emerged as one of the India's fastest growing sectors and garnered increasing interest from all the possible stakeholders both within and outside the country.

MSEs are a major area of focus as the sector has been traditionally underserved by financial companies with over 80% of 63.4 million MSEs in India lacking access to formal lending channels. Apart from innovations in business models such as embedded finance, the environmental, social and governance (ESG) aspect is poised to be a key promoter of sectoral growth.

## Cosmo Ferrites announces Vikas Puri as Business Head for India operations

FW DESK  
Mumbai

Cosmo Ferrites Limited, a leading manufacturer and exporter of Soft Ferrites and an emerging player in wire wound magnetic components, today announced the appointment of Vikas Puri as Business Head for their operations in India. In his new role, Vikas will be responsible for devising strategic solutions to everyday operations and will be expected to strengthen Cosmo Ferrites' presence in the fast-growing ferrites market space.

A seasoned business leader with above 29 years of experience, Vikas holds laurels of working in diverse areas of EMS, Automotive and Power Electronics. In his past tenures, he has served in a number of leadership roles, including Business Head (India) of Varroc Lighting Systems, Managing Director of Marquardt India Pvt. Ltd., SBU Head of Minda Stoneridge Instruments Ltd., and Director Operations of General Electric. Throughout his career, he has been driven by a passion to leverage innovation in product management to better enable providers to deliver best of the services.

Welcoming him, Pankaj Poddar, Group CEO, Cosmo Films and Cosmo Ferrites said, "I am delighted to welcome Vikas as our new Business Head for Ferrites operations in India. He has a sharp business acumen with a knowledge of diverse sectors. His experience in building effective portfolios and achieving market leadership through winning teams make him a great asset at Cosmo Ferrites. We look forward to working with him and welcome his inputs in attaining our strategic goals."



Commenting on his new role, Vikas Puri, Business Head, Cosmo Ferrites Limited said, "I am honoured to take up this responsibility that the company has entrusted me with. With Cosmo Ferrites operating at record levels and with a deep and talented leadership bench in place, it is now time for me to add value from my role. I will be exploring uncharted avenues to grow our business through various initiatives. I am obsessed with enhancing business practices with innovation, and I will ensure Cosmo Ferrites continues to be at the forefront of ferrites industry."

Vikas has done his Bachelor of Engineering in Electronics & Communication from SDM College of engineering and is an alumnus of National Institute of Labour Education Madras.

About Cosmo Ferrites Limited: Established in 1986, Cosmo Ferrites Limited is the largest producer of manganese (MnZn) based Soft Ferrite cores in India. Cosmo Ferrites is also the leading soft ferrite core exporter from India exporting to more than 50 countries across the Globe. The Company has a State-of-the-art manufacturing facility located in the foothills of Himalaya in the State of Himachal Pradesh. The products manufactured goes into multiple applications in Electronics industry. The Company is also into manufacturing of wire wound magnetic components, a forward integration of Soft Ferrites.

## Tata Pravesh Dealership launched in Bahadurgarh for Doors & Windows by Tata Steel



KULBIR SINGH KALSI  
Bahadurgarh

Tata Pravesh, the new stalwart brand in Tata Steel's portfolio, launched its dealership at Jaswi Metals, G1, Ground Floor, Galleria Market, Omxax City, Jhajjar Road, Bahadurgarh here today, to offer the complete range of stunning and strong home solutions including steel doors to windows and ventilators.

Pankaj, Dealership Owner, Bahadurgarh, Tata Pravesh, said, "Each product of Tata Pravesh has the strength of steel and the beauty of wood. The cutting-edge products are long lasting and ensure ultimate security for a house. Combining the strength of steel and the beauty of wood, Tata Pravesh doors and windows offer complete peace of mind to its users in terms of price, quality, durability and security."

# Asian shares sink after inflation-driven retreat on Wall Street

Shares sank in Asia on Monday after a report that US inflation worsened last month sent stocks reeling on Wall Street.

Major regional markets dropped more than 2 per cent in early trading Monday, while US futures slipped more than 1 per cent. On Friday, the S&P 500 sank 2.9 per cent, locking in its ninth losing week in the last 10.

Investors had hoped the highly anticipated consumer price report would show the worst inflation in generations had slowed a touch last month, passing its peak. Instead, the US government said inflation accelerated to 8.6 per cent in May from 8.3 per cent the

month before.

Investors took Friday's report to suggest the Federal Reserve will persist in raising interest rates and making other moves in order to slow the economy, to try to force down inflation.

Tokyo's Nikkei 225 index lost 2.6 per cent to 27,018.01 and the Hang Seng in Hong Kong skidded 3 per cent to 21,145.27. In South Korea, the Kospi declined 3.18 per cent to 2,516.95 as a truckers strike raised concern over supply chain disruptions. The Shanghai Composite index dropped 1 per cent to 3,253.04.

Thailand's benchmark fell 1.4 per cent, and markets in Aus-



tralia were closed for a holiday.

Regional concerns have also been weighing on sentiment, as China combats more outbreaks of coronavirus after easing some

precautions in recent weeks.

That means previous optimism surrounding China's reopening may also take a pause, as the resumption of mass-test-

ing in Beijing and Shanghai seems to place Covid-19 risks at the forefront once again," Jun Rong Yeap of IG said in a commentary.

On Friday, the S&P 500 shed 117 points to 3,900.86 and tumbling bond prices sent Treasury yields to their highest levels in years. The Dow Jones Industrial Average lost 2.7 per cent to 31,392.79, and the Nasdaq composite dropped 3.5 per cent to 11,340.02.

The growing expectation is for the Fed to raise its key short-term interest rate by half a percentage point at each of its next three meetings, beginning next week. Only once since 2000 has the Fed raised rates

by that much, last month.

Surging prices and expectations about Fed policy have sent the two-year Treasury yield to its highest level since 2008 and the S&P 500 down 18.7 per cent from its record set in early January. High-growth technology stocks, cryptocurrencies and other big winners of the pandemic's earlier days have been hurting the most, but the damage is broadening as retailers and others warn about upcoming profits.

Record-low interest rates engineered by the Fed and other central banks have helped keep investment prices high. Now the easy mode for investors is being switched off. Since higher inter-

est rates make borrowing more expensive, dragging on spending and investments by households and companies, there also is a risk the Fed could push the U.S. economy into a recession.

Investors also worry food and fuel costs may keep surging, regardless of how aggressively the Fed moves, partly because of the crisis in Ukraine, which is a major breadbasket for the world.

Another report Friday showed consumer sentiment worsening more than economists expected. Much of the souring in the University of Michigan's preliminary reading was due to higher gasoline prices.

## India-Japan hold Finance Dialogue in New Delhi



Masato Kanda, Vice Minister of Finance for International Affairs, Japan, and Mr. Ajay Seth, Secretary, Department of Economic Affairs, Ministry of Finance, held the first India-Japan Finance Dialogue here today.

In view of the growing importance of India-Japan relations in recent years, the dialogue on India-Japan financial cooperation, which had been held at the level of Deputy Director-Generals, was upgraded to the level of Vice Minister/Secretary.

The Japanese delegation included the representatives from Ministry of Finance, Financial Services Agency, and financial institutions. From Indian side, the representatives from Ministry of Finance, Reserve Bank of India, Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India, Securities and Exchange Board of India, and financial institutions participated in the discussion.

The participants exchanged their views on the macroeconomic situation, financial system, financial digitalization and investment environment in both countries, and confirmed that both sides will continue to work closely together as they hold presidency of G20 and G7 next year. The participants including private financial institutions also discussed various financial regulation issues towards further expansion of investment in India.

## Gold climbs by Rs 416, silver zooms Rs 1014



Gold prices in the national capital on Friday rallied by Rs 416 to Rs 50,802 per 10 grams, according to HDFC Securities. In the previous trade, the yellow metal settled at Rs 50,386 per 10 grams. Silver also surged by Rs 1,014 to Rs 61,343 per kg from Rs 60,329 per kg in the previous trade. "Spot gold prices for 24-carat gold in Delhi were up by Rs 416 reflecting overnight rally in COMEX gold prices," said Tapan Patel, Senior Analyst (Commodities) at HDFC Securities.

## Duplicate watches worth Rs 1 crore seized, five held

The Crime Branch Control of the Economic Offences Wing (EOW) raided wrist watch shops at Manish Market and Al Saba Market in South Mumbai and seized duplicate watches of prominent brands worth Rs 1.06 crore, an official said on Thursday. Five persons were arrested, he added. The raid was conducted by six teams of EOW on Wednesday.

## DFS holds meeting with Public Sector Banks, Insurance Companies & Financial Institutions to identify ways to support Agniveers



The Union Cabinet on 14th June, 2022 approved an attractive recruitment scheme for Indian youth service in the Armed Forces called AGNIPATH and the youth selected under this scheme will be known as 'Agniveers'. AGNIPATH allows patriotic and motivated youth to serve in the Armed Forces for the period of four years. The AGNIPATH scheme has been designed to enable a youthful profile of the Armed Forces.

In order to identify ways in which the Banks and Financial Institutions can support the 'Agniveers' on completion of their tenure of duty, the Secretary, Department of Financial Services (DFS) held a meeting with Chief Executives of Public Sector Banks (PSBs), Public Sector Insurance Companies (PSICs) and Financial Insti-

tutions (FIs), here today. In the meeting, Joint Secretary, Department of Military Affairs made a presentation on the salient aspects of the AGNIPATH scheme.

During the meeting, it was decided that PSBs, PSICs and FIs would explore employment opportunities for 'Agniveers' in suitable capacities based on their educational qualifications and skills through suitable benefits/relaxations, etc.

It was also decided that Banks would explore possibilities of supporting 'Agniveers' through suitable credit facilities for skill upgradation, education for setting up businesses and to take up self-employment. The existing Government schemes such as MUDRA, Stand Up India etc. would be leveraged for extending such support to 'Agniveers'.

## GST Council to meet on June 28-29 in Srinagar

The GST Council, chaired by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, will meet on June 28 and 29 in Srinagar.

"The 47th meeting of the GST Council will be held on June 28-29, 2022 (Tuesday & Wednesday) in Srinagar," the finance minister's office tweeted.

This is the second time that the GST Council meeting is being held in Srinagar. Before the launch of the Goods and Services Tax (GST) on July 1, 2017, the 14th meeting of the Council was held on May 18 and 19 in the city. GST rates on 1,211 items were approved at the two-day meeting.

The 47th GST Council meeting assumes significance as it is expected to discuss the report of the panel of state ministers on rate rationalisation and also the tax rate on casinos, race courses and online gaming.

The GST Council, chaired by the Union Finance Minister and comprising state counterparts, is also expected to discuss certain simplifications in procedures.

Ahead of the Council meeting, the panel of state ministers on GST rate rationalisation is scheduled to meet on June 17 to discuss possible tweaking in tax rates, sources said.

The Group of Ministers (GoM) is likely to discuss possible changes in tax slabs, the sources said, adding that the



final report of the panel would take some more time. The Council had last year set up a seven-member panel of state ministers, headed by Karnataka Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai, to suggest ways to augment revenue by rationalising tax rates. The GoM had last met in November 2021.

The GoM has been mandated to review items under inverted duty structure to help minimise refund payout, and review the GST exempt list with an objective to expand the tax base and eliminate breaking of input tax credit (ITC) chain. Under GST, a four-tier structure exempts or imposes a low tax rate of 5 per cent on essential items and levies the top rate of 28 per cent on cars and demerit goods. The other slabs of tax are 12 and 18

per cent. Besides, a cess is imposed on the highest slab of 28 per cent on luxury, demerit and sin goods. The Council will also consider a report of the panel of ministers on applicability of GST on casinos, race courses and online gaming.

The group of state ministers unanimously decided on hiking the tax rate on these services to 28 per cent, besides working out a method of valuing these services for the purpose of levying this tax. Currently, casinos, horse racing and online gaming services attract 18 per cent GST.

The Council may also consider some modification in summary return and monthly tax payment form GSTR-3B with a view to check fake input tax credit claims and expedite settlement of genuine ones.

## Markets decline for 6th day, Sensex sheds 135 points



Benchmark indices extended their losing streak to the sixth straight session on Friday, with the Sensex declining 135 points in choppy trade amid mixed global markets, unabated foreign fund outflows, and rising crude oil prices.

The BSE benchmark declined 135.37 points or 0.26 per cent to settle at 51,360.42. During the day, the benchmark faced volatility and tanked 574.57 points or 1.11 per cent to its one-year low of 50,921.22. The NSE Nifty went lower by 67.10 points or 0.44 per cent to end at 15,293.50.

From the Sensex pack, Titan, Wipro, Dr Reddy's, Asian Paints, Sun Pharma, PowerGrid, Larsen & Toubro, UltraTech Cement, Maruti, TCS and Hindustan Unilever were the biggest laggards.

On the other hand, Bajaj Finance, Bajaj Finserv, Reliance Industries and ICICI

Bank were among the gainers. In Asia, markets in Tokyo and Seoul ended lower, while Hong Kong and Shanghai posted gains. European markets were trading in the green in mid-session deals.

Stock exchanges in the US ended sharply lower on Thursday.

"The dominant theme impacting equity markets globally is the synchronised global monetary tightening and the consequent fears of economic slowdown," said V K Vijayakumar, Chief Investment Strategist at Geojit Financial Services. Meanwhile, international oil benchmark Brent crude jumped 0.96 per cent to USD 120.96 per barrel. Foreign institutional investors (FIIs) remained net sellers in the capital market, as they sold shares worth Rs 3,257.65 crore on Thursday, as per exchange data.

## Rupee settles flat at 78.09 against US dollar



The rupee pared initial gains to settle just 1 paisa higher at 78.09 (provisional) against the US dollar on Friday amid a muted trend in domestic equities and unabated foreign capital outflows.

A strong dollar overseas and higher crude prices also kept the domestic unit under pressure, forex dealers said.

At the interbank forex market, the rupee opened strong at 78.03 against the greenback and witnessed an intra-day high of 78.02 and a low of 78.09.

It finally ended at 78.09, registering a gain of 1 paisa over its previous close of 78.10.

The dollar index, which gauges the greenback's strength against a basket of six currencies, climbed 0.71 per cent to 104.37.

Brent crude futures, the global oil benchmark, spurted 0.96 per cent to USD 120.96 per barrel.

On the domestic equity market front, the BSE Sensex ended 135.37 points or 0.26 per cent lower at 51,360.42, while the broader NSE Nifty fell 67.10 points or 0.44 per cent to 15,293.50.

Foreign institutional investors were net sellers in the capital market on Thursday as they offloaded shares worth Rs 3,257.65 crore, as per exchange data.

## India leads and delivers at the WTO 12th Ministerial Conference: Piyush Goyal

India has been able to secure a favourable outcome at the WTO after many years, despite a strong global campaign against our farmers & fishermen, said Union Minister of Commerce & Industry, Consumer Affairs and Food & Public Distribution and Textiles, Piyush Goyal, after conclusion of the WTO 12th Ministerial Conference in Geneva today. Termining the just concluded MC12 as an "outcome oriented" success, Shri Goyal said the Indian delegation, guided constantly by the Prime Minister Narendra Modi, has been 100 percent successful in portraying before the world the priority issues for India and the developing world.

Goyal said the Indian delegation leveraged India's strong



relationship with the world, which the Prime Minister Narendra Modi has nurtured over the last few years.

"Few countries attempted to create false campaign, initially on Sunday and Monday, that India is obstinate due to which no progress is being made. The real situation has emerged before us all, the issues raised by India, on which Prime Minister had

asked us to focus upon, now the whole world acknowledges that was the correct agenda and ultimately India played a vital role in arriving at all solutions," Shri Goyal told a press conference in Geneva.

Stating that it is a proud day for 135 crore Indians at the WTO today, Goyal said India took the lead and was at the center of the conference. "It turned the tide of

negotiations from full failure, gloom & doom to optimism, enthusiasm and consensus based decision. India's efforts to bring members on a table to discuss issues irrespective of the existing geopolitical order has ensured that the world order is not broken," he said.

Admitting that India and the Developing countries accepted certain compromising decisions when the WTO was established 30 years ago and during the Uruguay Round of negotiations, Goyal said India today bats on the front foot rather than being fearful on various issues be it Environment, Startups, MSMEs or gender equality. This is a result of the confidence of New India. India is able to build consensus & get a Win-Win outcome for the world, he said.

## SBI hikes minimum interest rate on home loans to 7.55 pc

The country's largest lender State Bank of India has hiked the minimum interest rates for home loans to 7.55 per cent effective Wednesday.

The move follows a 50 basis points hike in repo rate to 4.90 per cent by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) last week. In May also RBI had hiked repo rate by 40 basis points. The lender has hiked its External Benchmark-based Lending Rate (EBLR) to a minimum of 7.55 per cent effective today as compared to 7.05 per cent earlier, as per the bank's website.

The lender also adds a credit risk premium over the EBLR. The bank has increased its Marginal Cost of funds-based Lending Rate (MCLR) by 20 basis points effective June 15. On Tuesday, SBI hiked the interest rates by up to 20 basis points on domestic term deposits of below Rs 2 crore for select tenors. For deposits of 211 days to less than 1 year, the lender will offer interest rate at 4.60 per cent, as against 4.40 per cent earlier. Likewise, for domestic term deposits of 1 year to less



than 2 years, customers can earn an interest of 5.30 per cent, up by 0.20 per cent.

On tenor of 2 years to less than 3 years, SBI has raised the interest rate to 5.35 per cent from 5.20 per cent. The lender has also revised the interest rates on domestic bulk term deposits of Rs 2 crore and above for select tenors by up to 75 bps. For tenors of 1 year to less than 2 years, customers having bulk deposits will earn an interest of 4.75 per cent from 4 per cent earlier, with effect from June 14, 2022. Another state-owned lender Bank of Baroda (BoB) on Wednesday announced a hike in its fixed deposit interest rates on domestic term deposits including Non-Resident Ordinary (NRO) and Non Resident External (NRE) term deposits of below Rs 2 crore by up to 40 basis points.

## Tata Steel unveils green investment plan for UK steel tube mill

Tata Steel has unveiled a 7-million pound investment plan for its Hartlepool Tube Mill in north-east England that the Indian steel major says will cut carbon emissions, improve capacity and reduce costs to strengthen its UK business.

The investment will go into a new slitter which will allow the Hartlepool site to process coils of steel delivered from Tata's Port Talbot steelmaking site in South Wales. All of the steel products made at the site, where almost 300 people work producing up to 200,000 tonnes of steel tubes a year, are 100 per cent recyclable and the investment is forecast to pay for itself in less than three years.

This project will allow us to bring a vital process on site, which in turn will free up thousands of tonnes of capacity at the Port Talbot site, Andrew Ward, Works Manager of Tata Steel in Hartlepool, said last week.

This will improve our efficiency and reduce overall CO2 emissions from our steel



processing as well as reducing the total costs across the business, he said.

Currently, wide steel slabs are slit in Port Talbot before being rolled and sent to Hartlepool to be turned into steel tubes, which are then used in a wide range of products such as agricultural machinery, sports stadiums, steel-framed buildings and the energy sector.

The new project is expected to take more than a year to complete and is the second major investment announced by the Indian company in the UK this year after an invest-

ment plan for its site at Corby in the north-eastern England region. Both projects will further strengthen the UK business, improving services to customers and using the latest available technology to reduce environmental emissions, Tata Steel UK said.

Andrew Ward added: Above all, safety will be a key factor in this investment both during the construction phase and when the new slitter is up and running. It will feature the latest computer-controlled technology, which reduces the need for our employees to be close to any hazardous operations and

it will be as energy-efficient as possible. The new slitter line will optimise the UK value chain for our smaller tube product range, allowing steel coil to flow through the chain and provide flexibility with on-site slitting. This investment will support the ongoing drive to improve customer delivery performance and responsiveness which the Hartlepool 20 Mill team pride themselves upon.

Tata Steel in the UK says it has the ambition to produce net-zero steel by 2050 at the latest and to have reduced 30 per cent of CO2 emissions by 2030. The vast majority of that work will need to happen in South Wales, where the company's largest operational site is.

Tata Steel says it is developing detailed plans for this transition to future steelmaking based on low CO2 technologies and is close to knowing which will best help achieve its ambitions.

with steelmaking in the Netherlands and the UK, and manufacturing plants across Europe. The company's tube products are used across a broad range of industries, including construction, machinery fabrication, energy and automotive. Next week, the company will be at the Wire and Tube 2022 fair in Dusseldorf, Germany, after a long gap due to the coronavirus pandemic.

After the last few years, we are really looking forward to this opportunity to connect with so many customers in one place and showcase our broad tube portfolio, said Anil Jhanji, Chief Commercial Officer for Tata Steel UK.

We are making major investments to further strengthen our Tubes business and, as we come out of the coronavirus pandemic, I look forward to meeting all our customers to demonstrate how we can help them succeed in their markets, added Tony Waite, Tata Steel Director of Sales Tubes and Engineering.

# INTERNATIONAL

## Sri Lanka to introduce guaranteed weekly fuel quota for consumers at filling stations from next month

**COLOMBO:** The Sri Lankan government plans to introduce a fuel rationing scheme from next month, under which registered consumers at filling stations would be guaranteed a weekly quota, a senior minister said on Sunday.

The island nation has been experiencing long lines for fuel refilling since mid-February with pressure coming on the diesel supplies for thermal power generation.

By early April, the island was experiencing 10-hour power cuts due to shortages of diesel and furnace oil for power generation. We have no choice but to register consumers at filling stations and give them a guaranteed weekly quota until we are able to strengthen the financial situation, restore 24 Hour Power and a steady Supply of fuel. I hope to have this system in place by the 1st week of July, Energy Minister Kanchana Wijesekera tweeted on Sunday.

The minister said that the supply of fuel should be man-



aged until there is a round-the-clock 24-hour uninterrupted supply of electricity and fuel. This paucity has led to reports of stockpiling and hoarding of fuel. Wijesekera hoped that this measure of imposing a fuel quota would go a long way in addressing the crisis. With the financial restrictions in place, the Ceylon Petroleum Corporation imports fuel to manage for a week, but some consumers stockpile fuel for a month or more for their machinery and generators, he said in another tweet. He said that 24-hour

power supply costs an additional USD 100 million monthly for diesel, furnace oil and naphtha.

The shortage in gas supply has increased the demand for electricity and kerosene, and the monthly fuel bill that was USD 200 million four months ago, now stands at USD 550 million, the minister added.

Meanwhile, the last of the fuel shipments due under the Indian Line of Credit are arriving in Sri Lanka later this month, with no indications on the sustenance of future supplies, which are dependent on India's assistance.

We are expecting the last diesel shipment under ILC (Indian Line of Credit) on June 16 and the last petrol shipment on June 22," Wijesekera told reporters on Saturday. Sri Lanka's fuel purchases have been totally dependent on the ILC -- a USD 500 million credit line initially which was supplemented with another USD 200 million later.

Wijesekera said the minimum daily requirement of diesel was 5,000 metric tonnes as people need it to run private generators due to the power cuts imposed. India has helped Sri Lanka with thousands of tonnes of diesel and petrol, apart from food and medical supplies, to help ease the acute fuel shortage in the debt-ridden island nation.

The economic crisis in Sri Lanka has prompted an acute shortage of essential items like food, medicine, cooking gas and other fuel, toilet paper and even matches, with citizens for months being forced to wait in lines lasting hours outside stores to buy fuel and cooking gas.

## Blinken US assures Sri Lanka of support to promote American investments once the IMF negotiations are over



**COLOMBO:** US Secretary of State Antony Blinken has assured crisis-hit Sri Lanka of support to promote American investments in the country after the completion of IMF negotiations, as he spoke with Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe to discuss the island nation's current economic and political challenges.

The two leaders spoke over the phone on Monday. Wickremesinghe explained the current status of the negotiations with the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

He further said that Sri Lanka

is willing to have closer cooperation with the US.

"It was a pleasure speaking to Secretary of State @SecBlinken. I briefed him on the current economic situation and requested for our countries to work closer. He assured his support to further promote US investments in Sri Lanka upon the completion of IMF negotiations," Wickremesinghe tweeted.

Sri Lanka has decided to seek the assistance of the Washington-based global lender to combat the worst economic crisis since its independence from Britain in 1948. The talks be-

tween Sri Lanka and the IMF commenced on April 18.

US State Department in a statement said, "The Secretary and Prime Minister discussed Sri Lanka's current economic and political challenges."

"The Secretary affirmed the United States' commitment to the Sri Lankan people during this challenging time and the importance of supporting reforms that address the concerns of all Sri Lankans, including on democratic governance and human rights," it said.

The nearly bankrupt country, with an acute foreign currency crisis that resulted in foreign debt default, announced in April that it is suspending nearly USD 7 billion foreign debt repayment due for this year out of about USD 25 billion due through 2026. Sri Lanka's total foreign debt stands at USD 51 billion.

The IMF in May said that it requires sufficient assurance from the country that it will restore debt sustainability during the debt restructuring process.

## Britain's Queen becomes world's second-longest reigning monarch



Britain's Queen Elizabeth II on 12<sup>th</sup> June overtook Thailand's King to become the world's second-longest reigning monarch in history, after France's Louis XIV.

The UK has been celebrating the 96-year-old Queen's Platinum Jubilee to mark 70 years of service to the nation with grand events taking place last weekend. Now she has overtaken Thailand's King Bhumibol Adulyadej, who reigned for 70 years and 126 days between 1927 and 2016, to set another record. Louis XIV of France remains the longest-reigning monarch, with a 72-year and 110-day reign from 1643 until 1715. Crowned in 1953, Queen Elizabeth II became the longest-serving British monarch in September 2015, surpassing her great-great-grandmother Queen Victoria.

After four days of royal parades, street parties, pageantry and other events held across the UK and the Commonwealth to mark the Platinum Jubilee milestone, the monarch thanked the nation in a letter, saying that she had been "humbled and deeply touched", and that "this renewed sense of togetherness will be felt for many years to come". "When it comes to how to mark 70 years as your Queen, there is no guidebook to follow. It really is a first, the letter read. "But I have been humbled and deeply touched that so many people have taken to the streets to celebrate my Platinum Jubilee," she said.

The Queen has been hit with some age-related mobility problems and chose to miss some of the events, with her son and heir Prince Charles and second in line Prince William and close ranks of the royal family joining. But she did appear on the balcony of Buckingham Palace at the end of the Jubilee Pageant as the extended Bank Holiday weekend drew to a close.

## New York state to protect abortion providers under new laws



New York has expanded legal protections for people seeking and providing abortions in the state under legislation signed by Gov. Kathy Hochul on June 12.

The Democratic governor pushed for the laws in anticipation of the US Supreme Court potentially overruling its 1973 Roe v. Wade's decision, which established a constitutional right to abortion. A ruling that could weaken or end abortion protections is expected as early as this week, and abortion providers are worried New York will see a surge in out-of-state residents.

Today, we are taking action to protect our service providers from the retaliatory actions of anti-abortion states and ensure that New York will always be a safe harbor for those seeking reproductive healthcare," Hochul said. Out-of-state residents accounted for nearly 9% or 7,000 out of roughly 79,000 abortions performed in New York in 2019, according to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. That's up from 5% or roughly 4,700 out of 93,000 in 2015.

One new law protects abortion providers from arrest, extradition and legal proceedings in other states by forbidding New York state and local courts and law enforcement agencies from cooperating in most scenarios.

## Austrian govt presents package to cushion inflation

The Austrian government on Tuesday presented a package of measures aimed at cushioning the impact of high inflation that includes 500-euro (523) payments for all residents and a three-month delay to a new levy on carbon dioxide emissions.

The government, a coalition of Chancellor Karl Nehammer's conservatives and the environmentalist Greens, put the price of immediate measures at about 5 billion euros and said the package will cost a total of 28 billion euros through 2026.

It says it aims to bring relief first to people on low incomes; the unemployed and people on



low pensions are slated to get a payment of 300 euros each.

That's in addition to 500 euros each for everyone half of that for children, and half of it described as a climate bonus.

The government decided to delay from July until October the introduction of a CO2 pricing plan that envisions an initial levy of 30 euros per ton of carbon dioxide, rising to 55 euros in 2025.

Other measures include electricity price compensation for business and a grant for energy-intensive companies and, in the longer term, a move to address wage increases being eaten up when they move recipients into a higher tax bracket.

Austria's annual inflation rate hit 8% in May, in line with similar rates in other European countries fueled by the Russian invasion of Ukraine.

## Indo-bangladesh bilateral exercise "ex Sampriti-X" concludes at Jashore, Bangladesh



Indo-Bangladesh bilateral Joint Military Exercise "Ex SAMPRITI-X" concluded at Jashore Military Station, Bangladesh. The Closing Ceremony of the 10th edition of "Ex Sampriti" was attended by Lieutenant General Ataul Hakim Sarwar Hasan, Chief of General Staff, Bangladesh Army along with Major General Praveen Chhabra, General Officer Commanding 20 Mountain Division of Indian Army and Major General Md Nurul Anwar, General Officer Commanding 55 Division of Bangladesh Army.

The aim of the exercise was to strengthen the military relations between the two countries. The exercise also provided an opportunity to the contingents from both the Armies to understand each other's tactical drills and operational techniques as well as to share their experience on Counter Insurgency/Counter Terrorism, Peace Keeping and Disaster Relief Operation under the United Nations mandate. Senior officers of both the Armies conveyed their appreciation to the participating contingents for achieving the objectives of the Exercise.

## China city mayor apologises over COVID-19 lockdown response

The mayor of a northeastern Chinese city on the North Korean border that had been under lockdown for more than 50 days has apologised for failures in his administration's work amid widespread - but often disguised - dissatisfaction over the government's heavy-handed approach to handling the pandemic.

Dandong Mayor Hao Jijun gave no specifics, but said government work and basic services had been unsatisfactory, for which he offered his apologies, according to a statement issued by the city government late Monday.

It is highly unusual for a ranking Communist Party official to publicly concede errors, particularly regard-



ing the headline zero-COVID policy that has been repeatedly endorsed by top officials under President and party leader Xi Jinping. Despite reporting only a handful of cases, Dandong had seen one of the strictest lockdowns in China, with even deliveries of food and other necessities banned, according to unofficial sources.

## China accuses US of trying to 'hijack' support in Asia

China's defence minister accused the United States on 12th June of trying to hijack the support of countries in the Asia-Pacific region to turn them against Beijing, saying Washington is seeking to advance its own interests under the guise of multilateralism.

Defence Minister Gen Wei Fenghe lashed out at US Secretary of Defence Lloyd Austin, rejecting his smearing accusation the day before at the Shangri-La Dialogue that China was causing instability with its claim to the self-governing island of Taiwan and its destabilizing military activity in the area. Austin had stressed the need for multilateral partnerships with nations in the Indo-Pacific, which Wei suggested was an attempt to back China into a corner.

No country should impose its will on others or bully others under the guise of multilateralism, he said. The strategy is an attempt to build an exclusive small group



in the name of a free and open Indo-Pacific to hijack countries in our region and target one specific country - it is a strategy to create conflict and confrontation to contain and encircle others.

China has been rapidly modernising its military and seeking to expand its influence and ambitions in the region, recently signing a security agreement with the Solomon Islands that many fear could lead to a Chinese naval base in the Pacific, and breaking ground this past week on a naval

port expansion project in Cambodia that could give Beijing a foothold in the Gulf of Thailand. Last year US officials accused China of testing a hypersonic missile, a weapon harder for missile defense systems to counter, but China insisted it had been a routine test of a spacecraft.

Answering a question about the test on Sunday, Wei came the closest so far to acknowledging it was, indeed, a hypersonic missile, saying, "As for hypersonic weapons, many countries are developing weapons and I think there's no surprise that China is doing so. China will develop its military, he added. I think it's natural. US Secretary of State Antony Blinken last month said China represented the most serious long-term challenge to the international order for the United States, with its claims to Taiwan and efforts to dominate the strategic South China Sea.

## Two members of Iran's Revolutionary Guard die amid tensions

Two members of the paramilitary Revolutionary Guard's aerospace division died as martyrs in Iran in separate incidents over the weekend, Iranian media reported on Monday. The term is typically a designation given to those on important assignments.

The deaths of the two men come as tensions remain high over Iran's tattered nuclear deal with world powers, and its uranium enrichment program that is now closest it has ever been to weapons-grade levels. While authorities offered no suggestion of foul play in the men's deaths, Israel has been accused of killing other high-ranking Guard members amid the growing crisis.

The semiofficial Fars and Tasnim news agencies, believed to be close to the Guard, identified one of the dead as Ali Kamani and said he died in Iran's central city of Khomein. Tasnim said that Kamani died in a car accident, without elaborating.

The news agencies did not give a rank for Kamani. However, a photo published by Tasnim showed the man wearing the epaulettes of a second lieutenant in the Guard's aerospace programme, which runs Iran's ballistic missile program as well as some of the country's air defences. Khomein, the birthplace of the Grand Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini who led the 1979 Islamic Revolution, is in the province of Markazi. That



province is also home to Iran's Arak heavy water reactor, a key nuclear program site that has air defences around it.

Fars alone reported on the death of the second man, whom it identified as Mohammad Abdous. The agency published a picture of Abdous in civilian clothes at the Imam Reza Shrine in the city of Mashhad, Iran.

Fars said that Abdous died on a mission while working in Iran's Semnan province. Rural Semnan province, east of Tehran, is home to the Imam Khomeini Spaceport, which has been used in satellite launches.

The report of the two men's deaths come about a week and half after the reported death of Guard Col. Ali Esmailzadeh, a member of its expeditionary Quds Force, under unclear circumstances. In May, two gunmen on a motorcycle shot and killed Guard Col. Hassan Sayyad Khodaei in Tehran. There has been no claim of responsibility for the attack. Iranian officials have blamed global arrogance code for the United States and Israel for Khodaei's killing.

## Economic and Social cost of Brain drain in India

**DR. HARVINDER KAUR**

According to the Oxford Dictionary, 'brain-drain' can be defined as 'the movement of highly skilled and qualified people to a country where they can work in better conditions and earn more money.' The word 'brain-drain' is related to the emigration of various technologists, doctors and scientists from the so-called 'third world' and developing countries to more 'first world' and developed nations, such as the United States, the United Kingdom, Germany, England, etc.

Based on data provided by the Ministry of Home Affairs, "1,37,26,945 Indians have travelled overseas in the last 5 years" on an employment visa. That is, between January 2016 and March 18, 2021. As many as 4.78 lakh people from Punjab left the country for employment from January 2016 to March 2021 and 2.62 lakh students for studies during this period. Punjab is placed third in the country, after Andhra Pradesh (2.82 lakh) and Maharashtra (2.64 lakh). Also, over 1.26 lakh people from Chandigarh moved abroad in January 2016 for employment and 31482 from Haryana. 43,135 from Haryana flew overseas during the period for higher education and Haryana will also be in the queue. The main

motive of these youth is to get settled abroad. Around 1.5-2 lakh youngsters from Punjab go abroad every year to study and earn a living. Around Rs. 30,000 crore goes to foreign institutions in the form of fees and other expenses, which constitutes 20% of Punjab's budget. More than half of the first-rankers of standard 10th and 12th board exams between 1996-2015 -- the brightest Indian minds -- migrated abroad and are still employed there. In Budget 2019-20, India allocated Rs 6.43 lakh crore of public funds towards education, part of which went into subsidising the studies of skilled emigrant Indians. In this way, the investment in the Indian educational system indirectly contributes to the progress of foreign nations.

Students choosing to move abroad for higher education cost India about \$17 billion a year in lost revenue, according to a study by the Associated Chambers of Commerce and Industry of India (ASSO-CHAM). Not only students but the migration of businessmen also affected revenue. Studies have found that 23,000 Indian millionaires have left India since 2014 and that nearly 7,000 millionaires left in 2019 alone, costing the country billions in tax revenue. Since 2015, nearly 9 lakh Indians have given up their citizenship.



These are the economic cost of brain drain. It is typically seen in terms of economic cost because emigrants generally take with them their government-sponsored education or training from other resources. India is facing a shortage of skilled labour, particularly in crucial fields like healthcare and engineering. At the same time, for higher education and jobs, a large number of trained staff emigrate each year. The trend of brain drain has a beneficial impact on the host country, and another nation's brain drain becomes a brain benefit for the receiving country. Most developing countries, including India, one of the major nations impacted, suffer from brain drain, and developed nations such as the United States of America have benefited from this phenomenon.

We can see that the intensifying 'brain drain' phenomenon has resulted in an outflow of skilled workers and professionals. About 30 per cent of physi-

cians in the National Health Services, England, are of Indian descent according to a study.

Another significant finding of the study is that while there is only one doctor for every 2,400 Indians, there is one Indian doctor in the US for every 1,325 Americans. As per government reports, India has 1.7 nurses per 1,000 population and a doctor-to-patient ratio of 1:1,404 which is well below the WHO norm of three nurses per 1,000 population and a doctor-to-patient ratio of 1:1,100.

Several factors can cause brain-drain, namely a country's political unrest, lack of economic opportunity, the standard of living or personal reasons. In every part of the world, there is a need for qualified professionals. Better living standards and quality of life, higher wages, access to sophisticated technology, and more sustainable political environments in developed countries, however, tend to attract professionals from lesser developed

countries like India.

There are strong pull and push factors associated with the migration of workers, in terms of higher pay and better opportunities in the destination countries. Lack of higher education opportunities is one of the major reasons for brain drain. The increasing cut-offs, reservation policy and leaking of competitive exams make access to higher education difficult in India. Abroad, they have an advantage over students from other countries in terms of skills and knowledge. India's Gross domestic expenditure on research has stayed at 0.7% of the GDP for years. India has one of the lowest GERD/GDP ratios among the BRICS nations. So, brilliant minds in R&D tend to migrate to other countries to continue their research. Developed countries offer better pay to sectors like health, research, IT, etc. Income is one of the main triggers of emigration from India. Non-recognition of talents is another big reason. The chances of being recognized in one's field are difficult in a populous country like India. Bright minds choose foreign countries where their work is appreciated more. Moreover, the developed countries provide better living standards, salaries, tax benefits, etc, which becomes a great attraction for emigration.

## US sanctions 93 Nicaraguan officials for crackdown



The US State Department imposed visa restrictions Monday on 93 more Nicaraguan officials for their role in supporting the regime of President Daniel Ortega.

Ortega jailed dozens of opposition figures in order to win a fourth consecutive term in Nov 7 elections that were broadly criticized as a farce. He has also outlawed dozens of nongovernmental organizations.

Since then, dozens of opponents have been tried or convicted in brief trials on vague charges equivalent to treason.

The State Department announced it had pulled the visas of judges who convicted the opposition leaders, as well as legislators who had cooperated in banning NGOs and civic groups. The department said in a statement that legislators and Interior Ministry officials helped the regime to tighten its authoritarian grip over Nicaraguan citizens and institutions by using repressive laws to strip more than 400 NGOs and a dozen universities of their legal status.

## Teri Aashiqui Mein - Shantanu Bhamare, Elena Tuteja & Team Celebrates Success of 1 Million Views!

It was double celebration for Producer & Actor Shantanu Bhamare one was his birthday on 12th June and other was on same day 'Teri Aashiqui Mein' Romantic Album Produced by him crossed 1 Million Views!



'Teri Aashiqui Mein' Song sung by famous Bollywood Singer Aaman Trikha, Directed by Rajeev Chaudhari ('Beimaan Love' & 'RED' fame), choreographed by famous Jeet Singh, Cinematographed by DOP Akram Khan, Still Photography by Ramakant Munde, Editing done by Parth Bhat, DI & VFX done by my famous Amit Jalan - Image Devices. Whole Team of 'Teri Aashiqui Mein' celebrated this

success today at Raheja Classic Club, Andheri, West, Mumbai. They had put in 1 Million+ Views written standees in the function as well as they had cut 1 Million Written Cake in the function.

## Malaika Arora's debut book to be on nutrition

Actor Malaika Arora is all set to foray into the literary world with her debut book on nutrition.

The book will offer readers a deep dive into Arora's healthy eating routine and cover some key elements of food and nutrition like relationship between eating right and overall well-being, challenges associated with food deprivation; and process of mastering discipline in eating with a guide on how to mix nutrition plan with fitness goals.

Talking about her book, Arora says, "It will help us share our insights with people at large. I personally believe in the comprehensive well-being



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of our body. Concentrating on just one, does not support the other. So the idea is to promote

good health inside out and we have barely scratched the surface as of now."

The book is being agented by The Sunflower Seeds literary consulting. The publication date or the publisher's name are yet to be announced.

Speaking about the project, Preeti Chaturvedi, founder and CEO of The Sunflower Seeds, says health is a huge focus for Indian readers.

"Malaika's overall level of fitness is a testimony to the principles of healthy eating that she lives by. While her followers have engaged with her on social media, the book will offer them a unique opportunity to understand the concept and details of healthy living in much greater detail in Malaika's terms."

## POTPOURRI

More responsibility on viewers to ascertain veracity of news, says Jaideep Ahlawat



"Paatal Lok" star Jaideep Ahlawat says in the age of social media where information is just a tap away for a person with a smartphone, the responsibility to "filter" right from wrong rests more on viewers.

Ahlawat currently stars in the ZEE5 drama series "The Broken News", in which he plays the role of Dipankar Sanyal, a TRP hungry media baron and top anchor at Josh 24/7 News.

"Everyone has to be more responsible in times like these where anyone who has a smartphone is barraged with information. Media is regarded as the fourth pillar of democracy but now it's also upon viewers to filter what is right and wrong," the 44-year-old actor told PTI in a Zoom interview.

## Rasika Dugal begins prep for 'Mirzapur' season 3



Actor Rasika Dugal said she has started rehearsals for the much awaited third season of the popular crime drama series "Mirzapur".

Dugal took to Instagram and shared a reel, showing several trunks with the name tags of the show's primary characters.

On the show, the 37-year-old actor features as the deviant Beena Tripathi. "Prep #Mirzapur3," she wrote.

Produced by Ritesh Sidhwani and Farhan Akhtar under Excel Entertainment, the first season of the Prime Video series premiered in 2018 garnering acclaim and becoming a pop culture phenomenon. Its second season, which was released in 2020, was one of the most watched shows in India. The show is headlined by Ali Fazal, who features as the gun-toting gangster Guddu Pandit, and Pankaj Tripathi as don Kaleen Bhैया. "Mirzapur" also stars Shweta Tripathi Sharma, Kullbhusan Kharbanda, Vijay Varma and Isha Talwar, among others.

## Vir Das tests +ve for COVID-19

Actor-comedian Vir Das on Wednesday revealed that he has tested positive for the novel coronavirus. The 43-year-old actor shared the news by posting a picture of his COVID-19 home test result on Instagram.

Das, who is currently in Gujarat, apologised to his fans and said that his upcoming comedy shows in the state will now take place at a later date. "Gujarat. Woke up showing symptoms, rapid tested and now going to get RTPCR tested. Team is currently working on new dates for the Gujarat show. We're gonna try and come back in a few weeks whenever the venues are available. "Your tickets will be refunded if you'd like. Sorry Gujarat! I'm super sad about this, but I hope to see you real soon. I hope you'll come back on the new dates," the actor-comedian wrote in the caption. Das had earlier tested positive for COVID-19 in January this year.



## I did not evade dope testing agencies, asserts quarter-miler Aishwarya Mishra

Refuting assumptions that she deliberately evaded dope testing agencies after emerging champion in the Federation Cup in April, Maharashtra quarter-miler Aishwarya Mishra on Monday asserted that she did not run away from the authorities but was in Uttar Pradesh on a personal visit. Her personal coach Sumit Singh had last month said that Mishra was at a village in UP, looking after her ailing grandmother.

Asked if it was true that she had evaded a dope test, she told to medial, "It's not true, I was in UP at that time, even nobody from my family knew where I was." She said she will speak on



the matter later. Mishra won the third heat of the women's 200m in the National Inter-State Senior Championships of Monday with a time of 23.73s to qualify for Tuesday's finals and was faster than star sprinter Hima Das (24.40s), who also made it to the medal round.

The 24-year-old Mishra was allowed to take part in both the 200m and 400m by the Athletics Federation of India (AFI). She however got disqualified in the 400m heats after making a false start. Mishra can be tested during the championships as the dope testing team from the National Anti-Doping Agency is here.

Last month, Mishra had given the authorities a torrid time. Not only the dope testers from NADA, even the Athletics Integrity Unit (AIU), an independent body established by World Athletics, chased her to collect samples but could not find her whereabouts.

## Gaurav Gill returns to WRC-2 with Safari Rally in Kenya



India's decorated rally driver and Arjuna Awardee Gaurav Gill on Wednesday announced his return to the World Rally Championship (WRC) 2022 after a two-year hiatus.

The three-time APRC (Asia Pacific Rally Championship) champion and a seven-time INRC (Indian National Rally Championship) champion will take part in the WRC Safari Rally in Kenya scheduled from June 23 to 26. The 40-year-old will be driving the Skoda Fabia R5 in WRC 2, a car he is familiar with, with Brazilian co-driver Gabriel Morales. Touted as one of the most challenging rallies on the WRC calendar, the Safari features 19 special stages covering almost 365km of competition crossing challenging closed dirt roads, rocky and rutted tracks and unpredictable weather which can transform dry and dusty trails into muddy bogs.

## Goa govt to seek fitness certificate from sports coaches

Goa Sports Minister Govind Gaude has said coaches employed with the department will have to submit a fitness certificate every two years.

While talking to Media, Gaude said he had conducted surprise visits to various sports facilities in the state where coaches were not found many a times.

Once coaches are employed, the sports department never checks their fitness, said



Gaude, who took charge of the ministry in March this year.

Can an unfit coach produce a fit player? he asked. We will make a rule that every

two years, they will have to produce a physical fitness certificate, which will also be good for their own well-being," the minister said. The min-

ister claimed that out of 130 coaches in the department, only 35-40 are professional, while the others need training. The coaches were earlier recruited by the department either due to their experience in the field or excellence in a particular sport. "They are not trained coaches, he said.

They should be well trained in all aspects. They should undergo training at the National Institute of Sports, Gaude said.

## Afghanistan completes T20 sweep as Zimbabwe replaces coach

HARARE: Afghanistan won the final Twenty20 against Zimbabwe by 35 runs to complete a clean sweep of all six limited-overs games on its tour.

Afghanistan added a 3-0 T20 series win to its 3-0 victory in the one-day internationals.

Teenage left-arm spinner Noor Ahmad delivered the final win for Afghanistan at Harare Sports Club with 4-10 on his international debut. The 17-year-old Ahmad was pivotal as Zimbabwe was restricted to 90-9 in 20 overs chasing Afghanistan's modest 125-8.

As Zimbabwe slipped to a sixth straight defeat against Afghanistan to follow a T20 series loss against minnow Na-



mibia last month, it was announced that former captain Dave Houghton had replaced Lal Chand Rajput as Zimbabwe coach. Rajput was moved to the role of technical director in what Zimbabwe Cricket called a reshuffle of its coaching team.

The changes were made after an emergency board meeting on Tuesday. The 64-year-old Houghton was Zimbabwe captain when the country played its first test in 1992 and had a previous stint as head coach in the late 1990s.

## Sindhu, Sen eye consistency as focus shifts to Indonesia Open



Two-time Olympic medallist P V Sindhu and rising star Lakshya Sen will seek consistency as they lead the Indian charge at the Indonesia Open Super 1000 badminton tournament beginning here on Tuesday.

Sindhu has managed to secure two Super 300 titles -- the Syed Modi International and the Swiss Open -- this year but she has looked vulnerable against top players, facing defeats at the hands of Thailand's Ratchanok Intanon, China's Chen Yu Fei and Korea's An Se Young. However, the former world champion is known to up her game in big events and she will look to gear up for next month's Commonwealth Games with another good show at the Istora Gelora Bung Karno when she opens against China's He Bing Jiao, whom she had beaten at Badminton Asia Championship. If Sindhu, seeded seventh, can cross the opening two rounds, she is likely to face the third seeded An Se Young, who has an overwhelming 5-0 record against the Indian.

Only the top 32 in the world compete in the USD 1,200,000 BWF world tour event, which will also see the return of three-time former world champion and Rio Olympic gold medallist Carolina Marin after recovering from a knee injury.

Indian veteran Saina Nehwal, who is trying to make a comeback to her best after battling multiple fitness issues in the last few months, will skip this event as she plans to compete at the Malaysia Open next week.

In men's singles, eighth seed Sen and HS Prannoy -- the two architects of India's epic Thomas Cup win -- will cross sword in an all Indian contest.

## 'Squid Game' season 2 officially greenlit at Netflix

Streaming service Netflix has officially renewed its hit Korean survival drama series "Squid Game" for a second season with writer-director Hwang Dong-hyuk promising fans that "a whole new round is coming".

Hwang also revealed that Song Gi-hun aka player no 456, played by Lee Jung-jae, and The Front Man, a mysterious character essayed by Lee Byung-hun, will reprise their roles.

He also teased the return of Gong Yoo, who played the unnamed character of a man in the suit with 'ddakji' who recruits players into the 'Squid Game', a series of Korean's



children games with a deadly twist whose last surviving contestant will be rewarded 45.6 billion won as cash prize.

In a note shared on Netflix's social media pages late Sunday night, the acclaimed director thanked viewers for loving the

show, which only saw the light of day 12 years after it was conceived. "It took 12 years to bring the first season of 'Squid Game' to life last year. But it took 12 days for 'Squid Game' to become the most popular Netflix series ever.

## Ranji Trophy SF: Mumbai have slight upper hand against UP



Record champions Mumbai, who are back to their ruthless best, face a high on confidence Uttar Pradesh in what promises to be an intriguing semifinal of the Ranji Trophy, beginning here on Tuesday.

The in-form Mumbai batters will be up against a varied UP attack, which will be bolstered by the addition of pacer Mohsin Khan. The 41-time Ranji champions made it to the last four with a world record 725-run

hammering of Uttarakhand and will aim to carry the momentum into the game. UP decimated Karnataka by five wickets.

Mumbai will once again rely on their batters to set the tone. All eyes would be on Prithvi Shaw, who will have to be at his best against Mohsin and Co.

The two other big impact players are Yashasvi Jaiswal and an in-form Sarfaraz Khan who would be oozing with confidence after their hundreds in the last game.

Sarfaraz has pummeled opposition attacks into submission at will. And thus it will indeed be a challenge for the UP bowling unit to stop him.

A complete **KNOWLEDGE CAPSULE**

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