

# THE PERFECT VOICE



If we receive your support, we can give you more than Rs 3,000 ... pg 2



The Miyawaki Man in India ... pg 8



The fight continues... ... pg 10

## Karnataka CM in trouble

### Governor gives sanction to prosecute Siddaramaiah

**Bengaluru:** In a trouble for Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah Governor Thaaarchand Gehlot on Saturday granted sanction for his prosecution in connection with Mysuru Urban Development Authority (MUDA) site allotment 'scam'.

"The Governor has granted sanction for prosecution against the Chief Minister. It is based on three petitions filed by -- T J Abraham, Pradeep Kumar and Snehamayi Krishna," a senior official at the Raj Bhavan told PTI.

The Congress workers protested against Gehlot across Karnataka. In an unusual turn, the state Cabinet held a special meeting on Saturday evening. The Cabinet has advised the Governor to take back a show-cause notice issued to the CM. In case the Governor rejects the Cabinet's advice the government will fight the matter legally.

Unmoved by the action Siddaramaiah announced that he will not resign from the post as he has not done anything wrong.



Based on a petition filed by advocate-activist T J Abraham, Governor Thaaarchand Gehlot had issued a "show-cause notice" on July 26 directing the CM to submit his reply to the allegations against him within seven days as to why permission for prosecution should not be granted against him.

The Karnataka government had on August 1 "strongly advised" the Governor to withdraw his "show-cause notice" to the Chief Minister and alleged

"gross misuse of the Constitutional Office" of the Governor.

T.J. Abraham, who is one of the complainants in this case, said he would approach the special court for public representatives and plead before it to take cognisance of the sanction granted by Governor Thaaarchand Gehlot to prosecute him. "We will submit this permission before the special court requesting the judge to take cognisance of it or refer it under 156(3) of CrPC. I will do it on August

21," Abraham told reporters here.

In the MUDA 'scam', it is alleged that compensatory sites were allotted to Siddaramaiah's wife Parvathi in an upmarket area in Mysuru, which had higher property value as compared to the location of her land which had been "acquired" by the MUDA.

The MUDA had allotted plots to Parvathi under a 50:50 ratio scheme in lieu of 3.16 acres of her land, where MUDA developed a residential layout.

Under the controversial scheme, MUDA allotted 50 per cent of developed land to the land losers in lieu of undeveloped land acquired from them for forming residential layouts.

The BJP leaders have claimed that the MUDA "scam" is of the magnitude of Rs 4,000 crore to Rs 5,000 crore.

The Congress government on July 14 constituted a single member inquiry commission under former High Court Judge Justice P N Desai to probe the MUDA 'scam'.

## 10 killed in Israeli strike in southern Lebanon



**Nabatieh (Lebanon):** An Israeli strike in southern Lebanon early Saturday killed at least 10 Syrian nationals, according to Lebanon's Health Ministry.

The strike on Wadi al-Kfour in Nabatieh province is among the deadliest in Lebanon since the Hezbollah militant group and Israeli military started trading strikes on October 8, a day after Hamas attacked southern Israel and sparked the Israel-Hamas war in Gaza. Hezbollah maintains that it will stop its attacks once a cease-fire is reached in the Gaza Strip.

Among the dead were a woman and her two children, the ministry said. Five others were wounded, two of whom in critical condition. An Arabic-language spokesperson for the Israeli military, Avichay Adrae, said the strike in the southern province targeted a weapons depot belonging to Hezbollah.

Mohammad Shoaib, who runs a slaughterhouse in Wadi al-Kfour, said the area struck was an "industrial and civilian area" that contained factories producing bricks, metal, and aluminium, as well as a dairy farm.

## Mahayuti eyes political gains in delayed Assembly election

By Abhijit Mulye

**Mumbai:** Contrary to expectations, the Election Commission of India (ECI) on Friday did not announce the dates for the upcoming assembly elections in Maharashtra. The opposition Maharashtra Vikas Aghadi (MVA) was quick to blame the ruling combine accusing them of purposefully delaying the elections. The ruling alliance, however, junked the charges levelled by the opposition while stating that the opposition is making baseless claims because they see a devastating defeat ahead.

Among these claims and counter claims, it remains to be seen as to how the ECI decision is likely to affect the political situation in Maharashtra?

The election commission, while justifying its decision to not announce dates for assembly elections in Maharashtra along with the J & K and Haryana on Friday, blamed it on the constraints on security forces and poor pace of pre-election preparations on the recent heavy monsoon spell in the state. They also cited several rituals, religious practices (Pitru Paksha) and festivals like Janmashtami, Ganesh Chaturthi, Navaratri, Dasara and Diwali as potential hurdles in seamless operations related to election



processes. The opposition, however, didn't pay heed to the ECI logic in delaying assembly polls.

"They have sensed that the tide is against them and thus want to ensure the elections are held in November," said NCP-SP state President Jayant Patil.

In 2014 as well as in 2019 assembly polls took place in Maharashtra in the month of October. That was necessitated by the fact that the terms of previous assemblies ended in the month of October and there was a statutory obligation to have a new assembly in place before that. In case of the current Assembly, its term concludes on 26 November, if one counts five years since the first meeting of the newly elected MLAs was held. This gives ample time for the administration to hold elections after Diwali and hence justifies the postponement of elections.

Though the leaders from the three-party ruling combine Mahayuti shy away

from saying so, the postponement of elections is expected to benefit them. Their poor performance in the Lok Sabha had boosted the morale of the opposition MVA. The MVA won as many as 30 Lok Sabha seats. However, in terms of vote share the Mahayuti has lost only about 1.5 percent of its votes to the opposition combine and hence, the ruling combine is confident of winning back the lost votes if it gets sufficient time ahead of the assembly elections.

With the ECI decision on Friday now it is clear that now the political parties of Maharashtra will now get almost two months for campaign. The ruling combine is expected to use the time to ensure its schemes are well advertised and that the benefits reach the last person, while the opposition would try to highlight the failure of the state government and build on the advantage they had in Lok Sabha elections held in April-May earlier this year.

## PM Modi proposes 'Global Development Compact'

**New Delhi:** Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday proposed the creation of a human-centric "Global Development Compact" for the Global South to facilitate trade, technology sharing and concessional financing based on India's growth journey and in line with the priorities of the developing countries.



The needy countries will not be burdened with debt in the name of development finance, Modi said, announcing the 'Compact' at the third India-hosted virtual Voice of the Global South Summit, amid concerns over many countries falling into the Chinese 'debt trap' under Beijing's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI).

The prime minister also urged the Global South to work unitedly in confronting food and energy security crises and the challenge of terrorism and extremism.

India hosted the third edition of the summit in sync with its commitment and priorities for the Global South or the developing countries.

The 'Global Development Compact' will be inspired by the development priorities set by the countries of the Global South, Modi said.

## Risk of large outbreak currently low for India

**New Delhi:** There are currently no reported cases of Monkeypox in India even though cautionary measures will be put in place to prevent and control the spread of the disease, the Union health ministry said on Saturday.

At a review meeting held during the day, although the possibility of a few imported cases being detected in the coming weeks was not entirely ruled out, it was assessed that the risk of a large outbreak with sustained transmission is low for India at present.

Since WHO first declared the outbreak a public health emergency of international concern in 2022, a total of 30 cases were detected in India with the last case being reported this March, the health ministry said in a statement.

There are no reported cases of Monkeypox in India as of now, it said.

The situation is being monitored closely by the ministry, the statement



said. In view of the World Health Organization (WHO) again declaring Monkeypox a public health emergency of international concern on August 14, a detailed review of the situation and the preparedness was taken by Union Health Minister J P Nadda at the meeting with the senior officials of his ministry.

It was decided that as a matter of abundant caution, certain measures such as sensitizing the health units at all airports, seaports and ground crossings; readying the testing laboratories (32); gearing up health facilities for detecting, isolating and managing any case are put in place.

At the meeting, it was noted that Monkeypox infections are usually self-limiting lasting between 2-4 weeks and patients generally recover with supportive management.

The transmission requires prolonged close contact with an infected case and is generally through the sexual route, direct contact with body/lesion fluid, or contaminated clothing/linen of an infected person, the statement said.

The WHO's declaration of 2022 was revoked in May 2023. Since 2022, WHO has globally reported 99,176 cases and 208 deaths due to Monkeypox from 116 countries. - PTI



Students tie handmade 'rakhis' to a tree ahead of Raksha Bandhan festival, in Thane on Saturday. Pic: PTI

## Teenager kills Indian-origin man in US

**Washington:** A 36-year-old Indian-origin man has been shot and killed after a teenage boy robbed a convenience store in the US state of North Carolina, authorities said.

Mainank Patel, the owner of the Tobacco House store at 2580 Airport Road, died after the shooting on Tues-

day morning, the Salisbury Post reported. Patel leaves behind his seven-and-a-half-month pregnant wife, Ami, and their 5-year-old daughter.

A juvenile male is in custody for the crime, according to Rowan County Sheriff's Office. Because the young man is a juvenile, deputies

are not able to release his name. The juvenile was arrested Tuesday evening but no additional details have been released.

Deputies initially responded to the Tobacco House convenience store in response to a 911 hang-up call, said Captain Mark McDaniel, public informa-

tion officer for the Rowan County Sheriff's Office.

While they were en route to the location, communications were received that there had been a shooting. When the deputies arrived on scene they found Patel suffering from multiple gunshot wounds, said McDaniel.

## Nearly 650 killed in 25 days in Bangladesh violence: UN report

**Dhaka/Geneva:** Nearly 650 people have been killed in the recent unrest in Bangladesh between July 16 and August 11, the UN Human Rights Office has said in a preliminary report, suggesting a thorough, impartial and transparent investigation into reports of extrajudicial killings, arbitrary arrests and detentions.

According to the 10-page report titled "Preliminary Analysis of Recent Protests and Unrest in Bangladesh", nearly 400 deaths were reported between July 16 and August 4 while around 250 people were reportedly killed following the new wave of protests between August 5 and 6, leading to the ouster of former prime

minister Sheikh Hasina.

The available public reports by media and the protest movement itself claimed that between July 16 and August 11, more than 600 people were killed due to the wave of violence following the Anti-Discriminatory Student demonstrations.

The number of reported killings in revenge attacks since that time remains to be determined, the report, released on Friday in Geneva, said.

Several deaths were reported between August 7 and 11, including those who died while undergoing medical treatment for injuries sustained in the violence, the UNHCR report suggested.



Those killed include protesters, bystanders, journalists and several security forces personnel, it said, adding that thousands of protesters and bystanders

were injured, with hospitals overwhelmed by the influx of patients.

The report said the reported death toll was likely an underestimate as infor-

mation collection faced a hindrance by restrictions on movement due to the curfew and the internet shutdown.

Furthermore, hospitals were reportedly prevented

by state authorities from providing details of those killed and injured, the report suggested.

Triggered by the reinstatement of a quota system for the allocation of jobs in civil services, the student protests in Bangladesh in mid-June turned violent, with reports of severe human rights violations by security forces.

"There are strong indications, warranting further independent investigation, that the security forces used unnecessary and disproportionate force in their response to the situation," the report said.

"Additional, alleged violations, that also warrant thorough, impartial and

transparent investigations included extrajudicial killings, arbitrary arrests and detention, enforced disappearances, torture and ill-treatment, as well as severe restrictions on the exercise of freedoms of expression and peaceful assembly," the report said.

There were also reports of looting, arson and attacks on members of religious minorities, as well as reprisals against and revenge killings of members of the former ruling party and police following the resignation of Hasina on August 5, the report said.

Nobel Laureate Muhammad Yunus was sworn in on August 8 as the Chief Adviser of the interim govern-

ment after he was chosen by President Mohammed Shahabuddin following the dissolution of the Parliament, a decision prompted by a demand by the Anti-Discrimination Student Movement.

The Bangladesh National Hindu Grand Alliance said the minority community faced attacks and threats in 278 locations across 48 districts since the fall of the Sheikh Hasina-led government, terming it as an "assault on the Hindu religion".

Several Hindu temples, homes and businesses of the minority community in Bangladesh were destroyed this month amidst the unrest. - PTI

# If we receive your support, we can give you more

The CM Shinde seeks votes of the women in lieu of cash ahead of Assembly election

By Correspondent

**Pune:** The Mahayuti government in Maharashtra on Saturday formally launched the ambitious "Majhi Ladki Bahin" scheme for eligible women, with Chief Minister Eknath Shinde hinting at doubling the monthly stipend from Rs 1,500 to Rs 3,000 if the alliance is voted to power in elections.

More than 1 crore women are expected to benefit from this scheme whose launch coincided with Rakshabandhan festivities beginning Monday.

The Shiv Sena-BJP-NCP government, facing a tough assembly polls battle against the opposition Maha Vikas Aghadi in coming months, came up with the "Mukhyamantri Majhi Ladki Bahin"

scheme, months after a debacle in Lok Sabha elections in Maharashtra.

The scheme, modelled on the MP government's "Ladli Behna Yojana", provides monthly Rs 1,500 assistance to the married, divorced, and destitute women in the 21-60 age group with Rs 2.5 lakh annual family income ceiling.

"If we receive your support, we can manage to give you more than Rs 3,000," Shinde said at the launch event marked by the display of pyrotechnics on a specially-created ramp-cum-walk way at Shiv Chhatrapati Sports Complex in Balewadi area of Pune.

The scheme was launched by the CM and Deputy Chief Ministers Devendra Fadnavis and Ajit Pawar, who

belong to BJP and NCP, respectively at the glittering event attended by women in large numbers.

The opposition parties from MVA, including Udhav Thackeray-led Shiv Sena (UBT), have accused the state government of trying to buy women's votes and questioned the "paltry" allocation of Rs 1,500.

"If you give us the strength, the current amount of Rs 1,500 will become Rs 2,000. If we receive your support, we can give you more than Rs 3,000. They (MVA) are opposing this scheme, but Mahayuti is standing with you," Shinde told the gathering of women. Mahayuti allies believe the potential goodwill created by the cash transfer initiative will boost its poll

prospects in Maharashtra.

"Women are so happy with this scheme. Some vested interests tried to put a spanner in the scheme roll-out, with some of them approaching the court," Shinde said.

Shinde hit back at the MVA for dubbing the Rs 1,500 allocation grossly inadequate. The opposition bloc had assured an increase in the monthly cash transfer assistance if voted to power.

"The opposition will never realise the value of Rs 1,500. We are not born with a golden spoon in the mouth. Maha Vikas Aghadi was in power for 2.5 years. Did they give a single rupee to women? Don't worry, this scheme will continue," the chief minister added.



Chief Minister Eknath Shinde and Deputy Chief Ministers Devendra Fadnavis and Ajit Pawar during the launch of 'Mukhyamantri Majhi Ladki Bahin' scheme at Balewadi area, in Pune district on Saturday.

## No truth in what PM says: Pawar

**Nagpur:** NCP (SP) chief Sharad Pawar on Saturday wondered why the upcoming state elections are not being held simultaneously despite Prime Minister Narendra Modi pushing for 'one nation one election'.

Speaking to journalists in Nagpur on the sidelines of an event, the 82-year-old politician said there is no "truth in what PM Modi says".

Modi in his Independence Day speech had pitched for 'one nation one election', he said.

The Election Commission on Friday announced three-phase polls in J&K and a single-round voting



in Haryana in September-October. It said assembly elections in Maharashtra,

which were held along with Haryana in 2019, will be announced later due to secu-

rity requirements for J&K.

"Election dates in two states (J&K and Haryana) have been announced but polls in Jharkhand and Maharashtra have not been declared. Hence, there is no truth in what he (PM Modi) says," said the NCP (SP) chief.

The opposition Maharashtra Vikas Aghadi (MVA) allies Shiv Sena (UBT) and the NCP (SP) had earlier criticised the Election Commission over the poll schedule and said it seemed the BJP-led Mahayuti wanted more time to "fool" the people of Maharashtra with its fake promises.

To a query about ten-

sions in Nashik and Chhatrapati Sambhajinagar over alleged objectionable remarks by Hindu religious leader Ramgiri Maharaj against Prophet Mohammad and Islam, Pawar said it is not in the interest of society.

The religious leader has said that he made the statement in reaction to the atrocities against Hindus in Bangladesh.

"There is a need for peace today, and society and politicians should be patient and cautious about it," Pawar said. The responsibility of the government and the home department should be fixed, he said.

## Slugfest over delayed election

By Abhijit Mulye

**Mumbai:** Leader of opposition in the state assembly and senior Congress leader in the state Vijay Wadettiwar on Saturday accused the ruling combine in the state of "conspiring" to create instability in the state to be able to retain power and for that they wanted the elections in the state to be delayed. He also said that the mood in the state is completely in favour of the MVA and that the ruling alliance is just buying time to try turn atmosphere in their favour.

Mumbai BJP Chief Ashish Shelar, however, said that the opposition alliance

is not confident of being able to keep together and hence they are trying to confuse people by accusing the Mahayuti of purposefully delaying the elections. "Udhav Thackeray's appeal to announce CM's face ahead of elections also indicates the same thing," he added.

"The state government is providing ₹1,500 monthly under the Ladki Bahin Yojana to over 15 million women in the state. Delaying the election by a month will enable the crediting of the fourth instalment, totalling ₹9,000 crore in beneficiaries' accounts. Additionally, several other schemes, including PM-Kisan Yojana, Aro-

gya Doot, and youth stipends, offer cash benefits to recipients. This should help create a favourable atmosphere for the ruling parties," said Dinesh Shinde, spokesperson of the CM Eknath Shinde-led Shiv Sena.

"Our aim would be to minimise negativity towards our party. We will also have more time for course correction, such as addressing disillusionment among our cadre. Post-polls, measures like appointing hard-core and loyal party workers to key positions have already begun," said a BJP leader who doesn't want to be named.

## MHADA webinar for home buyers

**Mumbai:** The Mumbai Housing and Area Development Board, a unit of MHADA, has organised a live webinar on Monday at 12 noon aimed at guiding applicants through the online application process for its upcoming housing lottery. This initiative is designed to provide clear, step-by-step instructions to ensure a seamless and straightforward experience for all participants.

The online registration for the sale of 2,030 flats across various housing projects in Mumbai commenced on August 9, 2024. Applicants can submit their applications via MHADA's official website <https://housing.mhada.gov.in> or through the mobile application.

As the entire lottery process is conducted online, MHADA has organized this webinar to address any queries and offer comprehensive guidance to applicants. The participants can join the live session by visiting <https://youtube.com/live/asSycqY6Dvc?feature=share>. The webinar link has also been provided to registered applicants via SMS and is available on MHADA's website <https://mhada.gov.in>. Additionally, the webinar will be streamed live on MHADA's official YouTube channel and Facebook page @mhadaofficial.



## Private doctors join stir

By Correspondent

**Mumbai:** Healthcare services in Maharashtra were hit on Saturday with private practitioners responding to IMA's call and joining government resident doctors, observing an indefinite strike since August 13, in protest against the rape-murder of a post-graduate trainee at a Kolkata hospital.

Except for emergencies, elective services such as outpatient departments, planned surgeries, and lab procedures were affected, according to the Maharashtra Association of Resident Doctors (MARD).

Resident doctors resorted to an indefinite strike on Tuesday to express solidarity with their counterparts from other cities demonstrating against the rape-murder incident at RG Kar Medical College and Hospi-

tal dated August 9.

The Central-MARD has demanded an impartial and transparent investigation into the Kolkata incident, speedy formation of an expert committee for implementation of the Central Healthcare Protection Act, improved security measures, including fully functional CCTVs and well-equipped guards, quality hostels, and proper on-call rooms for resident doctors.

Pratik Debaje, president of Maharashtra State Association of Residential Doctors (Central-MARD), said representatives met Deputy Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis in Nagpur and Medical Education Minister Hasan Mushrif in Kolhapur and raised their demands.

Indian Medical Association has announced a 24-hour nationwide withdrawal of non-emergency

services from 6 am on Saturday to protest the rape-murder incident and the subsequent vandalism at the Kolkata hospital.

IMA vice-president Shivkumar Utture said private doctors and hospitals in Maharashtra began the 24-hour protest at around 6 am.

Elective services were suspended, while emergency services were being attended to, he said.

The Mumbai civic body moved medical officers from peripheral to tertiary hospitals to manage services, a Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) official said.

He said 43 doctors reported for work at the civic-run King Edward Memorial Hospital, 41 in Lokmanya Tilak Municipal General Hospital, 45 in R N Cooper Hospital, and 45 in BYL Nair Hospital.

### QUOTE OF THE DAY



Rajendra Shingne, MLA, NCP

**"I had unwillingly supported Ajit Pawar because our district bank was facing financial problem. Now, the state government has allotted Rs 300 crore to the bank. However, I will always remain grateful to Sharad Pawar because he has shaped me."**

## Businessman shoots self dead

**Mumbai:** A 52-year-old businessman allegedly killed himself by firing a round from a country-made pistol in his office in Mumbai's Bhandi Bazar area, with police

suspecting financial loss and mounting debt as the primary reasons, an official said on Saturday.

Iqbal Mohammad Sivani, a transporter who

also dealt in import-export business, fatally shot himself in his head on Friday night. He was a resident of Mazgaon area, also in south Mumbai, the official said.



Students in Nagpur prepare a giant rakhhi on eve of Rakshabandhan.

Pic: PTI

## Is Sujata Saunik on her way out?

By Correspondent

**Mumbai:** The state government is seriously thinking of shunting out Sujata Saunik from the coveted Chief Secretary's post. In turn the government has offered her the State election commissioner's post, sources said.

Significantly, Saunik, an IAS officer of the 1987 batch, broke a 64-year-old pattern in Maharashtra when she became the first woman chief secretary of the state. Earlier, IAS officers like Chandra Iyengar, Chitkala Zutshi and Medha Gadgil lost their chance to become chief secretary and were superseded by their juniors for various reasons. However, news is doing the rounds in the corridors of Mantralaya



that Saunik is likely to be appointed as State Election Commissioner.

Incumbent state election commissioner UPS Madan is retiring on September 4. Sources in Mantralaya have pointed out that Saunik, is scheduled to retire in June next year. So she will enjoy her present post for one year. On the contrary if she accepts a

new assignment she will get a full five years tenure. However, no decision is taken on this contentious issue.

Nevertheless, half a dozen bureaucrats are running for the state election commissioner's post. Additional Chief Secretary Rajgopal Deora, Principal secretary Dinesh Waghmare are among others who are lobbying for this post. Former Chief Secretary Nitin Karir's name is also doing the rounds.

Though uncertainty prevails over this issue, officials in Mantralaya are curiously steering at Chief Secretary's office. As the elections to the state Assembly are approaching fast, the Mahayuti government is in a precarious situation over this appointment.

## Leopard killed in road accident



**Thane:** A one-year-old male leopard was killed after being hit by a vehicle on the Mumbai-Nashik highway in the district, a forest official said.

The carcass was found near Jawhar Phata on Thursday.

The animal likely strayed onto the highway in search of water and came under the wheels of a vehicle, the official said.

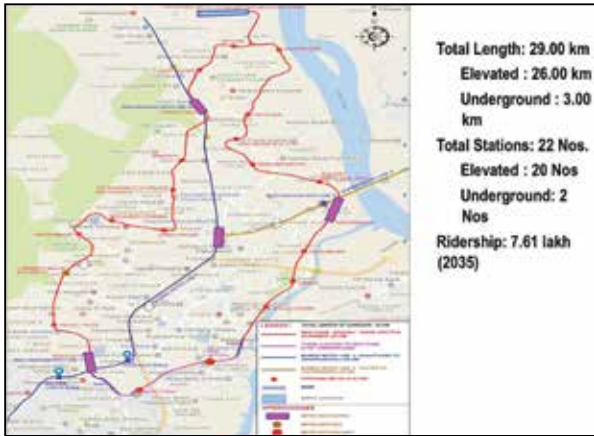
The dense forests of Tansa Sanctuary and surrounding areas in Shahapur taluka are home to a variety of wildlife. In view of the rising number of wildlife accidents, the forest department is planning to install warning signs along the highway to alert drivers, the official said.

# Modi fulfils Shinde's metro dream

By Swapnil R Mishra

**Mumbai:** The Union Cabinet has given its nod for one more dream of Chief Minister Eknath Shinde for his hometown, Thane. The Union government gave its nod to Thane Integral Ring Metro Rail, a brain child of Shinde.

The Thane Ring Metro project is designed to bridge connectivity gaps between densely populated areas on either side of Ghodbunder Road and the Eastern Express Highway. It aims to provide a fast, alternative route linking Thane's dense neighbourhoods with major central railway stations. Additionally, the project will function as a feeder line to the



Mumbai Metropolitan Region Development Authority's (MMRDA) Metro 4 (Wadala—Kasarwadavali) and Metro 5 (Thane—Bhiwandi) lines.

The 29-km ring metro project will run along the

periphery of the west side of Thane city with 22 stations on the route. It will be operational by 2029. It will connect critical areas such as Naupada, Wagle Estate, Dongripada, Hiranandani Estate, Kolshet, and

Saket.

According to senior officials, this project will provide a sustainable and efficient mode of transport, facilitate the city's realisation of its economic potential, and ease traffic congestion.

The estimated cost of the project is Rs 12,200.10 crore, with equal equity from the Government of India and Government of Maharashtra as well as part-funding from bilateral agencies. Funds would also be raised through other financing methods such as by selling station naming and access rights for corporate, monetisation of assets, and value capture financing route, the official made it clear.



Hindu organisations protested against the violence in Bangladesh in Thane on Saturday.

## Four cops suspended for cheating

**Mumbai:** Four police personnel serving in Thane district have been suspended for allegedly helping a candidate during a recent recruitment examination, a senior official said on Saturday.

The candidate's father is a serving police constable.

District Superintendent of Police D S Swami told PTI that the accused were caught helping the candidate in CCTV footage.

All four -- a sub-inspector and three constables -- were suspended after inquiry, while the selection of the candidate was cancelled, he said.

## UT, Pawar to share dais with Rahul

By Correspondent

**Mumbai:** Maharashtra Vikas Aghadi (MVA) leaders Uddhav Thackeray and Sharad Pawar will share the stage with Lok Sabha opposition leader Rahul Gandhi in Mumbai to mark the birth anniversary of former PM Rajiv Gandhi on August 20.

Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge and AICC in-charge for Maharashtra, Ramesh Chennithala, will also attend the rally to be organised at Bandra Kurla Complex, the party stated on Saturday.

The Congress has planned several programmes in Mumbai, the birthplace of Rajiv Gandhi, to mark his birth anniversary.



MVA constituents - the Congress, NCP (SP), and Shiv Sena (UBT) - had declared to contest the upcoming Maharashtra assembly elections together. Deliberations for the sharing of seats are yet to gather momentum.

A meeting of MVA allies was held on August 16 in which Shiv Sena (UBT) president Uddhav Thackeray demanded the alliance

declare its Chief Ministerial face in advance without waiting for the scorecard of each constituent in the assembly elections, due in October-November.

The MVA trounced the Mahayuti alliance in Lok Sabha elections by bagging 30 of the 48 Lok Sabha seats in Maharashtra, with the BJP losing 14 constituencies of the 23 it had won in 2019.

## Protest in Thane over Bangladesh

By Correspondent

**Thane:** The Hindu organisations protested against the violence against the Hindu community in Bangladesh on Saturday.

The protest was held at Manpada area of the city. The protesters displayed placards and formed a human chain. They made a resolution to protest in only in a peaceful way. "Our intention is to send out our feelings to the government so that it could take necessary action," a protestor said.

Around 300 people had joined the protest.

## FIR against Ramgiri Maharaj in Thane

**Thane:** Police in Maharashtra's Thane district have registered a case against Hindu religious leader Ramgiri Maharaj over his alleged objectionable remarks against Prophet Mohammad and Islam, an official said on Saturday.

The remarks were allegedly made recently by Ramgiri Maharaj at Shah Panchale village in Sinnar taluka of Nashik district during a religious event and its video went viral on social media, police had said earlier.

The Mumbai police have booked the religious



leader under BNS section 302 (uttering words with intent to wound religious feelings) and many others, including the ones dealing with outraging religious feelings, promoting enmi-

ty between groups over religion, intentional insult with intent to provoke breach of peace and criminal intimidation.

Ramgiri Maharaj also faces FIRs in Nashik and Chhatrapati Sambhajinagar districts of the state. The religious leader has said that he made the statement in reaction to the atrocities against Hindus in Bangladesh.

"The only motive was that Hindus should unite. Now, I will face whatever may come. If a case has been filed, I will see when- ever I get a notice," he had said on Friday.

## QUOTE OF THE DAY



Sanjay Raut, MP, Shiv Sena (UBT)

"What is wrong with Uddhav Thackeray's demand? Thackeray is a former chief minister. His face is acceptable to everyone. He didn't speak about himself. If anyone has the courage, they should declare their CM face."

## Compensation to parents of boy killed

**Thane:** The Motor Accident Claims Tribunal (MACT) in Maharashtra's Thane district has awarded a compensation of Rs 5 lakh to the parents of a five-year-old boy who was killed in a road accident in 2017.

MACT chairman and principal district judge SB Agrawal directed the owner of the tempo involved in the accident to pay the compensation amount to the parents of the deceased along with interest at 7.50 per cent per annum from the date of petition till the payment is realised.

The copy of the order issued on August 5 was made available on Saturday.

The judge, in his order, absolved the other respondent insurance company, Bajaj Allianz General Insurance Co. Ltd, accepting its counsel, Arvind Tiwari's argument that the insurance papers submitted before the tribunal had been fabricated.

The petitioners were the parents of the deceased, Mohammad Kadir Imamuddin Hawari (36), labourer and Farjana Kadir Hawari (33), residents of Nalla Sopara in

Palghar district.

Appearing for the petitioners, counsel Sachin L Mane told the tribunal that the boy, Kumar Alaman Kadir Hawari, was walking to school with his mother on February 6, 2017, when a speeding tempo driven in a rash and negligent manner knocked him down. He died later died of the injuries.

Advocate Tiwari of the insurance company specifically contended that the insurance policy was fake and sought dismissal of the claim petition.

## Navi Mumbai mall receives bomb threat

**Mumbai:** A prominent mall in Vashi area of Navi Mumbai was vacated on Saturday after receiving a bomb threat, which turned out to be a hoax as no suspicious object was found during the search, police said.

The InOrbit mall received an e-mail stating, "Hello there, I planted bombs in the building every person inside the building will be kill (sic)", at around 11:59 AM, a Vashi police station official said.

The mall was immediately evacuated and the Bomb Detection and Disposal Squad, ATS officials, Fire Brigade personnel, and police conducted a search with a dog squad, the official said, adding that a bomb or suspicious item was not found.

"The search was called off at around 2:50 PM, following which the mall was reopened for people at around 3 PM," he said.

Police are investigating the source of the e-mail and trying to identify its sender.

## Woman saved from plunging into sea from Atal Setu



By Correspondent

**Mumbai:** A taxi driver and four traffic cops displayed remarkable alertness and agility to save a 56-year-old woman who was about to fall into the Arabian Sea from Atal Setu, an official said on Saturday.

A visual of the dramatic rescue on the sea bridge, which connects south Mumbai to Navi Mumbai, has been widely shared on social media.

Around 7 pm on Friday, Mulund resident Reema Mukesh Patel reached Atal

Setu in a taxi and stopped the vehicle on the Nhava Sheva side.

The official said she walked to the side crash barrier and sat on the railing.

In the viral video, the taxi driver can be seen standing close to her. Just then, a police patrolling vehicle pulls over. Seeing the cops, the woman seems to lose her sitting position and falls.

The taxi driver grabs the falling woman by her hair in a split second. As Patel hangs precariously, her

body dangling, four traffic cops sprint and climb onto the railing, shows the video.

"One of the cops bent down and held her just in time, managing to save her," the official said. The four cops then slowly pulled the woman up to safety, he said.

"The woman said she lost her balance in panic after seeing the police approach her. Nhava Sheva police are probing further," the official added.

## Two held for not declaring foreign gold

**Mumbai:** The Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI) on Saturday arrested two passengers after they landed at the Mumbai International Airport from Abu Dhabi for allegedly carrying 4.52 kg of gold dust in wax form without paying Customs duty, an official said.

The value of the seized gold is estimated at Rs 3.33 crore, he said.

The duo was detained on specific intelligence after they crossed the Customs green channel - which is meant for passengers not having any dutiable goods.

DRI officials found four packets of foreign-origin gold (gold dust in wax form) in tailor-made pockets of a jacket worn by one of the passengers. These packets were handed over to him by another passenger in Abu Dhabi.

The duo was arrested under relevant sections of the Customs Act, officials added.

## I'm not done yet, there's more to come: Sooraj Barjatya

**Mumbai:** Filmmaker Sooraj Barjatya has expressed his deep gratitude and honour upon winning the National Film Award for best director for "Uunchai," saying his journey in cinema is far from over and there are many more stories to be told.

At the 70th edition of the National Film Awards for the year 2022, announced on Friday, the adventure drama film, which centred on four ageing friends readying to scale Mt Everest, also won Neena Gupta her second best supporting actress trophy.

Barjatya said his best director win evoked memories of his 1994 classic,



"Hum Aapke Hain Koun...!", which was honoured with the National Film Award for best popular film providing wholesome entertainment.

"I'm humbled to be honoured amongst the best that the country has seen in cinema during 2022. It takes me back 30 years when

'Hum Aapke Hain Koun' won the National Award for best film. The rush and happiness that I felt as a young director then was crazy!

"But today, as I get the National Award for best director for 'Uunchai', there is a sense of gratitude and calmness. The joy and happiness are much more in-

ternal today! As a director, my job for the last 35 years has been to keep telling stories. And I'm not done yet, there's much more to come," the director said in a statement.

Starring Amitabh Bachchan, Anupam Kher, Boman Irani and Danny Denzongpa, "Uunchai" was released in November 2022 and marked Barjatya's return to the big screen after a gap of seven years since the release of "Prem Ratan Dhan Payo", starring Salman Khan and Sonam Kapoor Ahuja.

The movie chronicled the story of four friends in their twilight years who embark on a trek that turns

out to be a personal, emotional and spiritual journey as they battle their physical limitations and discover the true meaning of freedom.

"I feel I have truly climbed Mount Everest today. This immense recognition belongs to my entire team of senior actors and technicians, who fought the pandemic and shot at unheard locations with me," said Barjatya, also known for directing family dramas like "Hum Saath-Saath Hain" and "Vivah".

"Our National Film Awards unite our industry because they are a celebration of films made in every language," he added. - PTI

## Bag with chemical catches fire in flight

**Mumbai:** Five persons have been arrested here after a bag with an inflammable chemical caught fire before it was loaded on a Mumbai-Addis Ababa flight of Ethiopian Airlines at the Mumbai international airport, police said on Saturday.

Samir Narayanachandra Bishwas (31), a resident of Nadiyal in West Bengal who was allegedly carrying the bag, was arrested along with Nandan Dinesh Yadav (26), Suresh Subba Singh (46), Vishwanath Balasubramanian Senjundhar (37) and Akhilesh Gajraj Yadav (37), said an official.

## Woman injures man's private parts

**Thane:** A 30-year-old man hurried to a hospital when a woman injured his private parts with a metal spatula to thwart his alleged unwanted advances in Maharashtra's Thane district, an official said on Saturday.

Accused Anil Satyanarayan Raccha was drunk when he tried to misbehave with the 26-year-old woman at her home in the Bhiwandi area, he said.

Police said the Raccha and the woman know each other. Around 4.30 pm on Friday, Raccha went to her house and tried to make sexual overtures. He also allegedly flashed her.

To protect herself, the woman raised an alarm, ran to her kitchen and picked up a metal spatula. She struck Raccha with the utensil and injured his genitals, the official said, citing the FIR.

A badly injured Raccha rushed out of her house to seek medical help. He has been hospitalised, the official said.

On a complaint by the woman, the Bhiwandi town police have registered a case against Raccha for outraging the modesty of a woman, sexual harassment and trespass under the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita.

## MY CORNER

The question –  
Is woman a human?By  
Anishkaa Muthe

Happy Independence Day...

But the question is, Who is Independent?

Is it the woman who clutches at her pepper spray and keys when walking back home?

Or is the woman who covers every inch of her body even in boiling heat when going to work?

Alas, they always have excuses don't they?

"She was asking for it" she was an 83-year-old woman.

"She shouldn't be out late at night" she was killed in broad daylight

"Her character must be the problem" she was a nun

"She must be out alone" she was with a male friend

"Her clothes must've been skimpy" she was in her hospital uniform

But they never run out of excuses...

They say we are a free and democratic country, our people have a voice, but when these people talk, their internet is shut down, they are hit...

We are a democratic country, but where is her justice? Why do her killers roam free? Why is the evidence tampered with? Why is she killed if she raises her voice?

We are a free country, but where is she safe? "At home" he barged in her house and crushed her face with a rock; "With her parents" her father ruth-

lessly raped her for 2yrs;

"At work" 10 men ruthlessly raped her during her shift at her hospital;

"Maybe in presence of God"

She was raped during a religious procession.

Why is she never allowed to feel safe and secure? Why is her life at risk in every passing moment of her life?

Oh no! Wait, I forgot the biggest question, Does it matter? She is a woman, but is she human?

Of course not, she is an object of amusement, a victim to blame.

This country prides itself on its rich culture. We worship goddesses and "Mata" that is the Mother is holy in our tradition, but we don't respect the woman in front of our eyes? We worship idols but we treat a woman in flesh and blood like an object. Our mythology mentions Mahabharata, a war waged because a woman was humiliated; it mentions Lanka Dahan, a kingdom burned to search for an abducted woman; but now we only hold candles in front of pictures of women, who have been victims of monstrosity. So tell me, What culture have we preserved? How true is our worship?

Is this the masculinity we talk about? Is this the "Strength" men pride themselves upon? Or is this just disguised cowardice?

Is this monstrosity in the name of patriarchy, really Power? Or is it just some insecure men trying to feel powerful?

You say, not all men, but what about those that are? They still keep her from leaving her house, they still keep her from raising her voice, what about those men?

But well, this is my democratic country, my blood runs colder as I type every word, fearing what will come next and what will become of me...

So, Happy Independence Day to all those who are free.

But to those who aren't; well, I've nothing more left to say...

(The writer is a student of Saint Xaviers College, Mumbai. The views are personal.)

By  
Shoumojit Banerjee

Tim Walz, the 41st governor of Minnesota, is a study in contrasts—a pragmatic leader who has seamlessly blended his rural roots with a progressive vision for his state. Since taking office in January 2019 to picked as running mate for Kamala Harris, the Democratic nominee for the US presidency, Walz has carved out a reputation as a consensus-builder, deftly navigating the often-turbulent waters of Minnesota's polarized political landscape. His rise from a small-town schoolteacher and football coach to the highest office in the state is emblematic of a broader shift in American politics, where traditional boundaries between urban and rural, conservative and liberal, are getting increasingly blurred.

In an increasingly polarized American political field, Tim Walz, Minnesota's 41st governor who was chosen as the running mate for Kamala Harris, the Democratic nominee for the US presidency, defies easy categorization. Walz treads the golden meridian, blending his rural roots with progressive ideals, emphasizing unity and pragmatic governance. A former teacher and congressman, Walz has adroitly navigated Minnesota's political divide thus far. Yet, can his centrism ensure the Democratic Party rallies around him on a national scale?

## From Heartland to the Capitol

Born in 1964 in West Point, Nebraska, Walz's upbringing in America's heartland has profoundly shaped his political philosophy. The son of a public-school administrator and a community activist, Walz was instilled early on with values of public service and the belief that government can be a force for good. After graduating from high school, he attended Chadron State College, where he earned a degree in social science education. His path seemed destined for the classroom, and for many years, that is exactly where he stayed.

Walz moved to Minnesota in 1996, where he took up a teaching position in Mankato. There, he coached high school football and quickly became a respected figure in the community. But Walz's ambitions extended beyond the confines of the school.

He saw the struggles of rural Minnesotans—challenges that were often overlooked by policymakers in St. Paul and Washington, D.C. In 2006, he decided to take his concerns to Congress, running for the U.S. House of Representatives in Minnesota's 1st District, a largely rural area that had been a Republican stronghold for decades.



Tim Walz

NEWSMAKER  
OF THE WEEK

His campaign was an uphill battle, but Walz's folksy demeanour, combined with his ability to connect with voters on both sides of the aisle, led to a surprise victory. He won re-election five times, becoming known in Congress for his work on veterans' issues, agriculture and education. Walz's moderate stance and willingness to reach out on both sides of the divide made him stand out in the increasingly polarized environment of Washington.

Walz's tenure as governor has been marked

by his pragmatic approach to governance. His first term began in a period of relative prosperity, and his administration focused on a broad array of issues, from healthcare to education to infrastructure. However, the COVID-19 pandemic, which struck during the second year of his governorship, would come to define much of his time in office.

Minnesota's response to the pandemic was one of the more cautious in the Midwest, with Walz implementing strict lockdowns and mask mandates, sparking controversy particularly in Minnesota's more conservative rural areas. Yet, Walz's background as a teacher and coach shone through in his approach—he sought to educate rather than dictate, to persuade rather than compel.

Walz has championed a number of progressive causes, including climate action, racial justice, and economic equality. In the wake of George Floyd's murder in Minneapolis, which ignited a nationwide movement for racial justice, Walz's response was measured but firm—he condemned the actions of the police officers involved while also calling for systemic changes to prevent such tragedies in the future.

Yet, for all his progressive stances, Walz remains deeply attuned to the concerns of rural Minnesotans who feel overwhelmed by rapid changes in the urban centers.

Walz's ability to straddle the line between urban progressivism and rural conservatism is perhaps his greatest political strength.

As a former U.S. Representative for Minnesota's 1st Congressional District, Walz was known for his moderate views, often aligning with the Democratic Party on social issues while maintaining a pragmatic approach to fiscal and economic policies.

This centrism is both his strength and his weakness, making Walz a difficult figure for the Democratic Party to rally around on a national scale.

On one hand, Walz's ability to appeal to both rural and urban voters is key to his electoral success. In a state like Minnesota, evenly split between Democrats and Republicans, Walz's centrist approach - his support for labour unions, public education, and healthcare reform resonates with the Democratic base - while his pragmatic approach to issues like gun rights and agriculture wins over more conservative voters.

Yet, as political pressures intensify, progressives within the Democratic party may view him as insufficiently committed to their agenda, while moderates may find his balancing act increasingly untenable.

What's causing decline  
in defence shares?By  
Mangesh Kulkarni

Defence shares have generated substantial wealth for their investors over the past five years. The Indian government has been taking steps to encourage local defence production and reduce dependence on foreign imports. The Indian defence industry has achieved notable progress in developing advanced technologies and systems, including missile defence systems, fighter aircraft, submarines, and unmanned aerial vehicles. Both state-owned and private defence companies in India play a crucial role in the production of defence equipment and supplies.

In the Union Budget for 2023-24, the government increased the capi-

tal allocations for modernising and developing infrastructure for the Defence Services to ₹1,62,600 crores, showing a rise of 6.7% from the previous fiscal year. Furthermore, the Ministry of Defence aims to achieve a turnover of ₹1.75 lakh crore in aerospace and defence manufacturing by 2025. Despite these developments, defence stocks have seen a decline in recent days. Let's find out the reasons behind this decline.

In anticipation of better fundamentals, investors have been aggressively purchasing defence stocks. Many stocks within this sector have seen a surge in value, ranging from 5x to 20x over the last three years. However, earnings have not kept pace with this growth, leading to these stocks being overvalued. This overvaluation has slowed down the pace of incremental buying.

On the other hand, mutual fund managers have strategically sold off their defence stock holdings due to concerns over rising valuations. The most recent data on shareholding patterns indicates that mutual funds are reducing their positions in nu-



merous defence stocks.

For investors, the primary question remains: what should our strategy be? Defence stocks have seen a significant correction from their 52-week highs, yet their valuations remain high. Therefore, it's reasonable to expect a time correction in these stocks. The defence sector in India is undoubtedly a promising area, with excellent prospects. However, it's essential to seize this opportunity while managing risk. Investors can take advantage of this current situation by investing in defence funds through systematic investment plans (SIPs).

S. No.	Stock	Current Price	52-week high	% down from 52-week high	PE ratio
1	BEML	3732	5488	-32	54.3
2	Bharat Dynamics	1318	1794	-27	83.6
3	Cochin Shipyard	2198	2979	-26	65.3
4	Paras Defence	1208	1592	-24	122.9
5	Solar Industries	10497	13298	-21	102.7
6	Data Patterns	2920	3655	-20	86.6
7	Astra Microwave	877	1059	-17	61.7
8	HAL	4769	5674	-16	38.8
9	Mazagon Dock	4974	5860	-15	43.3
10	Bharat Electronics	303	340	-11	52.3

Source - Screener

Why are cinema writers  
marginalised in awards?

There is a need to promote and encourage the best writers who put light on the cinemas

By  
Shoma A. Chatterji

The 70th Annual National Awards for films, actors, music directors and technicians in 2022 were declared on August 16. The Awards are decided by a jury chosen carefully by the members of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting on the basis of these members' track record and experience in the film industry. There is a section on Feature Films in the national category and then there are Best Feature films in regional languages. There is also a section in non-fiction or documentary films classified into many sections which is very beneficial for relative newcomers and documentary filmmakers whose films are open only in film festivals.

There is one more category known as the Best Writing on Cinema. This is divided into two segments - The Best Book on Cinema and The Best Writing on Cinema with a separate expert jury. All Indian regional languages including English entries can be submitted by entrants. While the Best Book on Cinema is chosen from entries of entire books on cinema entered by authors, the Best Writing on Cinema is for a collection of published articles published with the byline of the journalists and clippings of the published articles during the year prior to the award. Best Writing on Indian Cinema in both sections are awarded with Swarna Kamal (Golden Lotus).

Though the National Awards for different sections of cinema began in 1954, the Writing awards began in



1981 at the 29th National Film Awards. However, the media pays scant attention to the Best Writing Awards and as a result, many brilliant journalists and authors specializing in cinema do not send their entries for selection. The time-span between media announcement of entries and the last date is so marginal that many writers miss out on sending in their entries. Surprisingly, several filmmakers have bagged the National Award for the Best Writing on Cinema in the Best Books section. Among them are Adoor Gopalakrishnan (Cinemayude Lokam) in Malayalam in 1983, veteran actress Bhanumathi Ramakrishna (Naalo Nenu) in Telugu, noted actor Bharath Gopi for the book Abhinava Anibhavan in Malayalam in 1993.

The first award for journalistic articles in the same "Best Writing on Cinema" was begun in the year 1984 and the award went to Swapna Mulklick who was then in an editorial position in The Statesman in Kolkata. The following year, the award went to the famous veteran writer, jour-

nalist and filmmaker Chidananda Dasgupta. Joshy Joseph, a national-award-winning filmmaker of documentary films, bagged this award in writing on cinema in 2010.

Very few eminent journalists have bagged these two awards under the Best Writing on Cinema mainly because it lacks publicity, media coverage and so on. Fewer journalists have bagged both the awards in this category - for the Best Book and for the Best Articles on Cinema in previous years. Among them is Manmohan Singh Chadda who won both awards for the Best Book on Cinema and for the Best Film Critic in Hindi. He still involves in research on cinema.

This writer is the only woman who has won both awards, the Best Articles in 1990 and for the Best Book on Cinema in English in 2002. This section demands more media coverage and a longer span for entry into the competition which has great jury members and the awards, as far as I know, is completely free of political interference.

(The writer is a film enthusiast. The views are personal.)

LETTER FROM PAKISTAN

# A Shared Victory

## How Arshad Nadeem and Neeraj Chopra's Achievements Reflect a Glimmer of Hope for India-Pakistan Relations



By  
Kaswar Klasra

Pakistan and India mark their 77th Independence Day, a rare moment of unity has emerged from the sports fields. Arshad Nadeem's gold medal in the javelin, India's silver medal in the same event, and a bronze in hockey have won over a billion hearts.

The two nations, born from the same subcontinent in 1947, have fought three full-scale wars and continue to have tense relations. However, sports have often served as a bridge, offering a rare opportunity for both sides to find common ground, even if only temporarily.

Arshad openly acknowledged Neeraj Chopra's generosity and kindness during his challenging times. His victory, over a formidable rival, was a moment of national pride for Pakistan. Yet, what stood out was not the rivalry but the camaraderie between the two athletes. Pakistanis also extended their admiration for the bronze medal secured by the Indian hockey team at the Paris Olympics.

The million-dollar question now is whether these moments of sportsmanship can translate into something more substantial for the strained India-Pakistan relationship.

Analysts are cautiously optimistic but note that significant progress remains uncertain.

Some Pakistanis saw Nadeem's gold win as a symbolic victory, retribution for Pakistan's loss to India in the recent T20 Cricket World Cup. Others viewed it as a respectful rivalry.

This gesture was celebrated across both countries. Chopra's mother, called Nadeem "like her son." Nadeem's mother described Chopra as "like a brother" to her son and prayed for his success. These goodwill gestures from the athletes' families add a personal touch to the narrative, resonating with people across the border. Even Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi acknowledged the significance of these gestures, highlighting the potential for sports to unite nations.

Historically, sports have been used as a diplomacy tool, from US-China "ping-pong diplomacy" in the 1970s to recent efforts between North and South Korea through joint participation in sporting events. The deep-rooted animosities and the geopolitical stakes between India and Pakistan present a significant challenge.

On May 30, 2024, former Pakistan Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif admitted that Pakistan had violated the 1999 peace agreement with India through military adventurism in Kargil. This rare admission suggests a shift towards a more objective view in Pakistan and the possibility of a reopening of dialogue after the

upcoming elections in India.

The road to peace between India and Pakistan is fraught with challenges. The two nations have been here before, with moments of hope quickly dashed by the realities of geopolitics. The Kargil conflict, which followed the Lahore Declaration, is a stark reminder of how quickly things can unravel.

The media also has a role in influencing the trajectory of India-Pakistan relations in public opinion. In both countries, there is a deep reservoir of mistrust, fueled by decades of conflict, propaganda, and political rhetoric. Yet, there is also a desire for peace, particularly among the younger generations who are not burdened by the historical baggage of their elders.

The sportsmanship by Nadeem and Chopra, and the positive reactions it has elicited, suggest a desire for peace on both sides. Social media amplified these voices, with goodwill messages crossing the border. While sports alone cannot change the course of history, they can foster the conditions for dialogue by humanizing the "enemy" and highlighting shared humanity.

Despite the hopeful signs, significant challenges such as the unresolved issue of Kashmir remain a flashpoint, with both sides deeply entrenched in their positions. The rise of nationalist politics in both countries has further complicated the situation, making it difficult for leaders to take the kind of bold steps that are necessary



### As Pakistan and India celebrate their 77th Independence Day, sports achievements by Arshad Nadeem and Neeraj Chopra, including medals and mutual respect, offer a rare moment of unity. Despite ongoing tensions and challenges, these gestures of camaraderie could inspire renewed dialogue and cooperation between the nations.

for a breakthrough.

Powerful forces within both countries, especially the military establishments, have a vested interest in maintaining the status quo, often hindering negotiations. The history of India-Pakistan relations has shown how hardliners have repeatedly derailed promising initiatives.

Additionally, the economic disparity between the two nations with India's larger economy and more advanced infrastructure creates insecurity in Pakistan. For any peace process to be successful, it must address these asymmetries and provide assurances to both sides that their interests will be protected.

While the international community can encourage dialogue and support for initiatives that promote peace, the primary responsibility

lies with the leaders and people of India and Pakistan.

Both governments will need to take steps to build trust and initiate dialogue, such as increasing people-to-people exchanges, easing visa restrictions, and enhancing trade and cultural ties.

As both nations celebrate their independence, let us hope that this spirit of sportsmanship displayed by Arshad Nadeem and Neeraj Chopra offers a rare and hopeful moment of unity. Their mutual respect and the heartfelt gestures from their families have resonated deeply across borders. As we look to the future, let this spirit of camaraderie inspire a new chapter in India-Pakistan relations, marked by cooperation and mutual respect.

The writer is senior journalist from Islamabad. Views personal

SUNDAY INTERVIEW

## Impact on natural fishing is a concern: Dr. Hemant Savra



The natural breeding of fishes is a concern. There are some areas which are the breeding spots for specific fishes. People are worried that they will not get enough fish.

Dr. Hemant Savra, the Member of Parliament from Palghar, says the Vadhvan Port will bring prosperity in the region. He addresses the concerns of the locals over the infrastructure project. He, however, is hopeful that the concerns would be resolved in a peaceful manner. Dr. Savra talked to Kiran D. Tare. Excerpts...

**Why is Vadhvan important?**

The most important thing is it is in the sea. On the land around 5,000 acre or 1500 will be created. There is a dedicated line for railways and highways. Only that part of land acquisition will take place. Around 11.50 lakhs employments will be generated. The first phase will be developed in 2029. The total cost is around Rs. 76,220 crore. The Union government has allotted around Rs. 45,000 so far.

**What about environment destruction?**

Around 1,500 hectares of area is disturbing. It is not a small area so naturally there is some kind of disturbance is there. The natural breeding of fishes is a concern. There are some areas which are the breeding spots for specific fishes. People are worried that they will not get enough fish.

**What is the solution?**

The natural fishing areas can be cre-

ated. The port area is the deepest in the sea. Around 20 meter deep. We don't require that much deepness for fishing. We will consult the fisheries department for that. We have to convince people that that they will get enough compensation. I think they will understand our point.

**What are your plans to project Palghar as a logistics hub?**

There is no need to project Palghar as a logistics hub. It has already acquired that identity. It will automatically come on the logistic map. It only bullet train but also a dedicated freight corridor is coming up in this region. There is a dedicated highway too. Palghar's geographical position near Mumbai gives us an advantage.



SPOTLIGHT

# Can Dharavi project become a political issue?

By  
Naresh Kamath



Rahul Shewale:  
Shiv Sena leader and former MP, South Central Mumbai,

**"The entire scheme will become unviable if unreasonable demands like 500 square feet houses or rehabilitation of all existing tenants in Dharavi itself is insisted. In slum redevelopment schemes, non eligible people are not even considered while here we are talking of providing everyone of decent house irrespective of their cut of date."**

The Dharavi revamp project, one of the most ambitious urban redevelopment plans in India, is set to become a thorny political issue in the upcoming Maharashtra Assembly election.

The project aims to transform Dharavi, Asia's largest slum, into a modern urban space. While the initiative promises economic, social, and infrastructural benefits, it also brings with it a host of controversies and challenges that are heating up the political debate ahead of the Assembly poll.

Despite its dense population, substandard living conditions, and lack of basic amenities, Dharavi is also a thriving hub of small-scale industries, including pottery, leather, textiles, and recycling, generating an estimated annual turnover of over \$1 billion.

The Dharavi revamp project, initiated in 2004, aims to redevelop the entire area into a well-planned urban space with residential, commercial, and industrial zones. The project has seen numerous delays and modifications over the years due to various political, legal, and financial hurdles. In 2018, the Maharashtra government approved a new plan to kickstart the redevelopment process, with significant investment from both public and private sectors.

### POLITICAL IMPLICATIONS

The Dharavi revamp project holds significant political weight for several reasons. Firstly, it directly impacts a substantial voter base. The residents of Dharavi represent a diverse demographic, including various linguistic, cultural, and religious communities. Any changes to their living conditions and livelihoods will undoubtedly influence their voting behaviour.

Both the ruling Mahayuti and opposition MVA parties are keenly aware of this equation and will accordingly attune their rhetoric in a bid to maximize support.

Given the ruling coalition's poor showing in the Lok Sabha election in May this year, the project is a litmus test for the incumbent government's ability to deliver on large-scale infrastructure promises ahead of the As-



Pics : Bhushan Koyande

sembly poll.

The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), along with its alliance partner - CM Shinde's Shiv Sena, has often underscored urban development and infrastructure improvement as an integral part of its 'good governance' agenda.

The successful implementation of the Dharavi revamp would bolster their claims of effective governance and development, whereas delays or failures could be used by opposition parties to criticize the government's inefficiency and inability to address the needs of the urban poor.

In the 2024 Lok Sabha elections, the Dharavi redevelopment project proved a significant issue for the op-

position Shiv Sena (UBT), its MVA ally the Congress and the Shinde-led Sena with the former candidate trouncing the latter's nominee.

The MVA's candidate, Anil Desai of the Uddhav Thackeray-led Sena (UBT) defeated his opponent, incumbent MP Rahul Shewale of the Eknath Shinde camp with Mr. Desai, aided by the Congress, gaining a solid lead of 36,857 votes against Mr. Shewale from the Dharavi assembly segment, ultimately defeating the latter by over 50,000 votes.

Besides political opposition, civil society organizations and advocacy groups will play a crucial role in shaping the narrative around the Dharavi revamp project. These

groups, representing the interests of Dharavi residents, will be vocal in their demands for transparency, fair treatment, and participation in the decision-making process.

Liases Foras, a real estate research firm, which conducted an informal survey found that more than 80% of the residents work in Dharavi itself saving precious travelling time. It revealed that many of these industrial units have huge spaces inside the slums where thousands of workers are housed. In addition, it found that entire families take part in the cottage industries which they operate from their own homes.

Pankaj Kapoor, managing director of Liases Foras, a real estate research

firm said the whole revamp project had fundamental inherent flaws. "Dharavi has a thriving informal economy and this all will be destroyed if skyscrapers come up across Dharavi without taking cognizance of these issues. Once you formalise it, the price advantage will go away and all things will become costlier," said Kapoor.

The outcome of the revamp project will not only shape the future of Dharavi but also potentially determine the political landscape of Maharashtra in the years to come. With ruling coalition on the backfoot after its Lok Sabha rout, a lot is at stake on just how it navigates the Dharavi revamp project minefield.















**AROUND THE WORLD**

1. Jaipur Artists during the 'Kalash Yatra' in the 'Shravan' month, in Jaipur on Saturday.
2. A participant bears the weight of other men above him as people climb on greased poles to retrieve prizes in a greased-pole climbing competition during the 79th Independence Day anniversary at Ancol Beach in Jakarta, Indonesia.
3. A participant prepares her kite during Denpasar international kite festival in Sanur, Bali, Indonesia on Friday.
4. Dancers of the Ballet Folklorico of Mexico perform during a gala event at the Bellas Artes Fine Arts Center in Mexico City on Friday.
5. Ethnic Karen people tie white threads on wrist during their traditional Wrist Tying Ceremony at National Race Village in Yangon, Myanmar on Saturday.



**Confident of 25 medals' target: Jhajharia**

**By Amit Anand**  
New Delhi: The shadow of Pramod Bhagat controversy won't linger on the Indian contingent, and Paralympic Committee of India president Devendra Jhajharia is hopeful of winning at least 25 medals at the upcoming Paralympics. India has an 84-member

contingent across 12 disciplines for the Paralympics slated in Paris from August 28-September 8. Tokyo Paralympics gold medal-winning shuttler Pramod Bhagat was handed an 18-month suspension for breaching BWF's anti-doping whereabouts clause. "Look, there is no doubt that Pramod Bhagat is our star athlete but the target of 25 medals that we have set is from our current contingent of 84 players. Pramod Bhagat is not included in this," the two-time Paralympics gold medal-winning javelin thrower Jhajharia told 'PTI Bhasha'. "Pramod being a gold medal winner of the last Games not being in the Indian team is extremely sad and unfortunate, but we cannot do anything." Asked about his confidence about target of 25 medals, he said,



Vinesh arrived from Paris to New Delhi on Saturday.

**The FIGHT continues...**

New Delhi: Champion wrestler Vinesh Phogat arrived at the Indira Gandhi International Airport here on Saturday following the heartbreak in Paris Olympics where she was disqualified for being overweight after reaching the 50kg final. "I would like to thank the entire country, I'm really lucky. Thanks for supporting me in my fight. It's not over yet the fight will continue," said Phogat after her arrival. Vinesh's caravan left for her native village Balali in Haryana and on the way she met her supporters, positioned at different spots. A group of 50 followed her jeep. They offered prayers at a temple in Del-

hi's Dwarka before continuing their journey towards Balali. There was a thick security cover as Phogat, who was found 100 grams overweight on the day of her bout earlier this month, landed in the national capital. Phogat had to stay back in Paris after she had appealed to the Court of Arbitration for Sport for a joint silver which was eventually dismissed on Wednesday. London Olympics bronze medal-winning shooter Gagan Narang, who was the chief de mission of the Indian contingent in Paris, called her a champion, posting a photo with Phogat at the Paris airport. Both of them were on the same

flight to Delhi. "She came as a champion on day 1 into the games village and she will always remain our champion. Sometimes one doesn't need an Olympic medal to inspire a billion dreams.. @vineshphogat you have inspired generations. Salute to your grit," Narang posted on X. "The country is returning to the country. People have come here at the (Delhi) airport to welcome her. People are also waiting to welcome her at our village. People are excited to meet Vinesh and encourage her," her brother Harvinder Phogat said. Vinesh Phogat shared a heartfelt message on her social media account.

**Manu's plans during break from shooting**

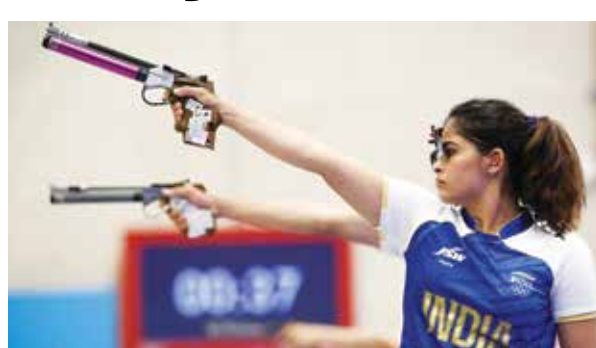
**Horse riding, Bharatnatyam and Skating**

New Delhi: Her shooting hand bruised by repeated pistol recoils during unrelenting training, Manu Bhaker will take a well-deserved three month break. But it will be no vacation. The double Olympic medalist will continue her other routines including yoga and waking up at 6 am -- which she hates. And oh yes. She also plans to catch up on her hobbies -- horse riding, skating, Bharatnatyam and violin practice to name a few. The 22-year-old, who won bronze medals in the 10m air pistol and 10m air pistol mixed team (partnering Sarabjot Singh), talked to PTI. She came along with her coach and shooting great Jaspal Rana for a free-wheeling interaction. Proudly flaunting her

medals, the vivacious youngster from Haryana's Jhajjar spoke about her Paris preparations, how the Tokyo setback was nothing more than a distant memory now, and also her plans to indulge in everything that she put on hold for her Olympic dreams. "Now, I have some time off and I can probably do that (martial arts) again," said Bhaker, a karate kid in her teens before a change of heart led her to shooting. "I was not able to get that kind of time to invest myself into that (martial arts). Finally, I can take time off for my hobbies, and I have many, many hobbies. Horse riding... personally, I love

horse riding, skating, I can still manage on the roads, then fitness, I really enjoy working out. "Then, I have dance (as a hobby) also, I am learning Bharatnatyam. I love the dance forms. I was training in France, I wasn't able to get time, not able to cope up with the (Bharatnatyam) classes," said Bhaker, whose trainer is from Tamil Nadu. "She takes my classes personally and then I have violin also," she added. As she revealed her bucket list for the "holiday", Rana had a faint smile on his face and he also made it a point to shake his head in disapproval at the very mention of horse riding. "...then she has to come back in one piece," Rana said, drawing a laugh from Bhaker. "Skating and horse riding are something she should not be doing and she'll be responsible for whatever happens."

Who rides a horse thinking that they will fall?" he wondered aloud. A bemused Bhaker was not going to back down easily, their banter also being a reflection of the easy equation between one of the most talked about coach-player combinations in Indian sports right now. "I have been learning horse riding for sometime now," she retorted immedi-



ately, asserting that she would be responsible if anything goes haywire. "I was waiting that after the Olympic, I will do horse riding. And so many other things I want to do like skydiving, scuba diving. I've waited for so long," she said, inviting another shake of the head from Rana. On his part, Rana was clear that the break was to ensure that the youngster's

shooting hand gets back to full fitness. "This (pointing to her injured hand) is the reason we are making her rest for three months. Because this (injury) has been for the last eight months and it has not healed till now," Rana said. "So rest is mandatory for the hand, and we had decided much before the World Cup (Final) was awarded to New Delhi)... Our decision to stop for three months was before that," he added. "It will not be very easy but this break is required. It's not something we'll enjoy. It's only the shooting part which will not be there but her mental (training) waking up in the morning for yoga, everything will be as per what we were doing. Because that's the lifestyle she has to follow."

Bhaker will not compete in the the season-ending prestigious ISSF World Cup Final for elite shooters from across the world in October in Delhi, and also likely skip the national championships and the camps that will follow to tend to her injured hand. Bhaker had done a rendition of the national anthem on a violin, gifted to her by her brother, and a video of it went viral after her Paris performance. "Yes, I was able to manage something on the violin, but I'm only on the basics," said the champion shooter. "Indian classical is my preference, but I'm only like beginning to learn it, so I'm not at the advanced level. I'm just one month into it... just the basics." - PTI

