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The Miyawaki Man ... pg 8 in India



The fight continues...

Karnataka CM in trouble

Governor gives sanction to prosecute Siddaramaiah

Bengaluru: In a trouble for Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah Governor Thaawarchand 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 showcause 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 Thaawarchand Gehlot had issued a "showcause notice" on July 26 directing the CM to sub

mit his reply to the allegations against him within seven days as to why

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

permission for prosecution

should not be granted

"gross misuse of the Consti-

tutional Office ' of the

Governor. T.J. Abraham, who is one of the complainants in this case, said he would ap-

proach the special court for public representatives and plead before it to take cogni-

sance of the sanction granted by Governor Thaawarchand 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

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

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 Adraee, 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 aluminum, as well as a dairy

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

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 Maharahstra?

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 constrains 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, Navaratir, 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 held elections after Diwali and hence justifies the postponement of elections.

Though the leaders from the three-party ruling combine Mahavuti shv awav 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 Mahavuti 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 crea-

tion of a humancentric "Global Development Compact" for the Giodai South to ia cilitate 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

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

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 international concern on August 14, a

ieaith 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 In-

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



In view of the World Health Organi-

zation (WHO) again declaring Monkeypox a public health emergency of 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

Mpox outbreak

ministry It was decided that as a matter of abundant caution, certain meas-

ures 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 selflimiting 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 state-

ment 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



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

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

Mainank Patel, the owner of the Tobacco House store at 2580 Airport Road, died

day morning, the Salisbury Post reported. Patel leaves behind his seven-and-a-halfmonth 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

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

been released.

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

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 ar-

rests 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,

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 re-

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 illtreatment, as well as severe restrictions on the exercise of freedoms of expression and peaceful assembly," the

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.

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 un-

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

Bv Correspondent

Pune: The Mahayuti government in Maharashtra on Saturday formally launched the ambitious "Maihi 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

"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 Uddhav 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 vou more than Rs 3.000. They (MVA) are opposing this scheme, but Mahayti is standing with you," Shinde told the gathering of women. Mahayuti allies believe the potential goodwill created by the cash transfer ini-

prospects in Maharashtra. "Women are so happy with this scheme. Some vested interests tried to put a

spanner in the scheme rollout, with some of them approaching the court," Shin-Shinde hit back at the MVA for dubbing the Rs 1,500 allocation grossly inad-

equate. The opposition bloc

had assured an increase in

the monthly cash transfer

assistance if voted to "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



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

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 security requirements for J&K. "Election dates in two

states (J&K and Harvana) 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

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

To a query about ten-

Chhatrapati Sambhaiinagar over alleged objectionable remarks by Hindu religious leader Ramgiri Maharaj against Prophet Mohammad and Islam, Pa-

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

war said it is not in the in-

terest of society.

"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

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

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

able to keep together and hence they are trying to confuse people by accusing the Mahayuti of purposefully delaying the elections. "Uddhav 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

"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. Postpolls, 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

MHADA webinar for home buyers

bai 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, stepby-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, MHA-DA has organized this webinar to address any queries and offer comprehensive guidance to applicants. The participants cab 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 @

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 ioctors, 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 rapemurder incident at RG Kar 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 wellequipped 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 24hour nationwide withdraw-

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

IMA vice-president Shiv-

kumar Utture said private doctors and hospitals in Maharashtra began the 24 hour protest at around 6 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 countrymade pistol in his office in Mumbai's Bhendi Bazar

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

Iqbal Mohammad

suspecting financial also dealt in importexport 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 rakhi on eve of Raksh Bandhan.

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

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

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



itv's (MMRDA) Metro 4 (Wadala—Kasarwadavali) and Metro 5 (Thane-Bhiwandi) lines.

Mumbai Metropolitan Re-

gion Development Author-

The 29-km ring metro project will run along the

Elevated: 26,00 km

Elevated: 20 Nos

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

periphery of the west side

of Thane city with 22 sta-

tions on the route. It will be

operational by 2029. It will

connect critical areas such

as Naupada, Wagle Estate,

Dongripada, Hiranandani

Estate, Kolshet, and

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 Congress president Mal-

likarjun 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 gath-

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

er momentum.

"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

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

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 Mumbra 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 enmity 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 whenever I get a notice," he had said on Friday.

QUOTE OF THE DAY

CM face."

Compensation to parents of boy killed

The copy of the order is-

The judge, in his order, ab-

solved the other respondent

insurance company, Bajaj Al-

lianz General Insurance Co.

Ltd, accepting its counsel,

Arvind Tiwari's argument

that the insurance papers

submitted before the tribunal

The petitioners were the

parents of the deceased, Mo-

hammad Kadir Imamuddin

Hawari (36), labourer and

Farjana Kadir Hawari (33),

residents of Nalla Sopara in

had been fabricated.

sued on August 5 was made

available on Saturday.



Sanjay Raut, MP, Shiv Sena (UBT)

Thane: The Motor Accident

Claims Tribunal (MACT) in

Maharashtra's Thane dis-

trict has awarded a compen-

sation of Rs 5 lakh to the

parents of a five-vear-old

boy who was killed in a road

MACT chairman and prin-

cipal district judge SBAgraw-

al directed the owner of the

tempo involved in the acci-

dent 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.

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

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

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

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

"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

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 channelwhich 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

claim petition.

Palghar district.

Appearing for the peti-

tioners, 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

insurance company specifi-

cally contended that the in-

surance policy was fake and

sought dismissal of the

Advocate Tiwari of the

later died of the injuries.

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 Ka-

poor Ahuia. 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 Narayanchandra 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 Balasubramaniam Senjundhar (37) and Akhilesh Gajraj Yadav (37), said an official.

Woman injures man's private parts Thane: A 30-year-old man To protect herself, the

hurried to a hospital when a woman injured his private 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.

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 A badly injured Raccha

rushed out of her house to seek medical help. He has been hospitalised, the offi-

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?



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

"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...

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

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 ruthlessly 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

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 Xaviars College, Mumbai. The views are personal.)

Pragmatic progressive



Shoumojit Banerjee

m 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



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 firmhe 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 fis-

cal 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

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

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?



Mangesh Kulkarni

efence 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 de-

fence 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 52week 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

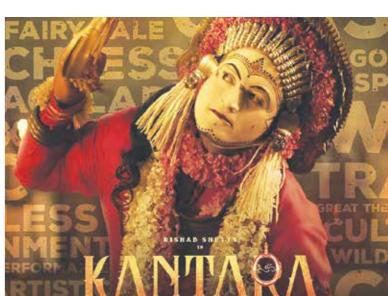


Shoma A. Chatterji

The 70 th 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 Swapan Mullick who was then in an editorial position in The Statesman in Kolkata. The following year, the award went to the famous veteran writer, journalist and filmmaker Chidananda Dasgupta. Joshy Joseph, a nationalaward-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.

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-topeople 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 seniore journalist from Islamabad. Views personal

SUNDAY INTERVIEW

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



r. 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-

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.

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.



Pics: Bhushan Koyande

SPOTLIGHT

Can Dharavi project become a political issue?

By
Naresh Kamath



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

"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." he 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-



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'

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 opposition 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 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 cognisance 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.





AI tool think life a chef, generates 1.18L recipes

By Sugandha Jha

New Delhi: Can an AIgenerated recipe help someone win a cook off?

"Ratatouille", an artificial intelligence (AI)-powered tool, developed by a professor and a research scholar of the Indraprastha Institute of Information Technology (IIIT), Delhi, could make this possible.

Designed to "think like a chef", the tool can generate more than 1.18 lakh "unique" traditional recipes from 74 countries, claimed its developers --Prof. Ganesh Bagler and PhD scholar Mansi Goel of the institute's Infosys Centre for Artificial Intelligence.

Moreover, "Ratatouille" -- a name inspired from an animated movie in which a rat helps an aspiring chef become one -- has passed a rigorous test conducted by a 24-member panel of faculty chefs from the Institute of Hotel Management Catering and Nutrition (IHM) in Delhi's Pusa, according to them.

Bagler -- a professor of network science, network biology and computational gastronomy -- and Goel -- a

New Delhi: Passengers

travelling on Namo Bharat

trains can now rent a power

bank with the rental plans

starting at Rs 50, the NCRTC

now available at Sahibabad

The first such service is

In addition, there are

plans to introduce electric

said in a statement.

RRTS station, it said.



student at the centre -- developed the tool in a lab at the IIIT over nine years using large language models, a technology that drives ChatGPT, a widely used AIpowered platform for writing and learning.

"We began around nine years ago, exploring recipes and ingredient patterns. We have done three main things here. First, we compiled data and created structured databases of recipes, including over 1.18 lakh recipes from 74 countries, along with data on flavour molecules, nutrition profiles and carbon footprints," Bagler told

He said then algorithms

vehicle charging facilities at

various stations, and prepa-

rations are underway, the

The rental power bank

comes equipped with three

types of charging pins to ac-

commodate different devic-

es, including iPhones, micro

USB, and C-port connec-

tions. The rental plans start

statement said

were applied to this data to generate "novel recipes" that follow patterns found in existing recipes.

Talking about the test "Ratatouille" underwent, he said, "Finally, we conducted 'turing test for chefs'. We presented chefs with recipes from our database and AI-generated recipes in a format that made it impossible to distinguish between them.

"We also asked the chefs to determine if the recipes were genuine or computergenerated. We achieved a 70 per cent success rate, meaning the chefs couldn't reliably tell the difference," Bagler said.

The IHM panel of chefs

at just Rs 50, with an annual

plan available for Rs 1,199, it

a power bank and take it

with them during their jour-

ney. Special automated ma-

chines are being installed at

RRTS stations to facilitate

this service, the statement

The commuters can rent

Power banks on rent on Namo Bharat trains

stated.

evaluated 1,472 recipes on a scale of zero-to-five, where zero meant the recipe was fake and five meant it was genuine, he said.

Next, the developers planned to evaluate the recipes by actually cooking them and using sensory panels to assess taste, flavour, aroma, and

This helped make the AIgenerated recipes "not only novel but also palatable", Bagler said.

The project, which aimed at enhancing culinary creativity by leveraging AI and making food computable, has been published in the Nature Partner Journal, 'Systems Biology and Applications'. The idea to come up with

such an AI tool struck Bagler while he was taking a class at the IIT-Jodhpur in 2015. "It started with my curiosity about food. I realized over time the potential (of the project) for industrial and societal applications. The field of computational gastronomy, which originated in India, offers significant opportunities for innovation and im-

provement," he said. -PTI

Passengers can rent a

power bank from these ma\

chines and return it at any

similar machine across the

NCR. This facility addresses

the growing need for mobile

phone charging, providing a

convenient solution for to-

day's commuters, it stated.

expanded to other RRTS sta-

The service will soon be

Warning of mass exodus of foreign businesses

Karachi: The slow and erratic performance of the internet in Pakistan due to a controversial firewall system being installed by the government has led to business and industry associations warning of a mass exodus of foreign businesses from the country.

The warnings by the Pakistan Business Council (PBC) and the Pakistan Software Houses Association (PSHA) came months after some of the top companies, including Uber, Pfizer, Shell, Eli Elly (USA), Sanofi (France), Telenor (Norway). Lotto Chemical (South Korea) sold either their entire or partial holdings to local companies.

The move indicated a substantial outflow of foreign investments and questioned Pakistan's investment climate, economic policies and regulatory hurdles.

"Many multinational companies (MNCs) are either planning to relocate their back offices from Pakistan or have already done so, as the reported imposition of a firewall causes widespread internet disruptions across the country," the PBC said in a

tions as well, the statement said.

The operation and management of the Namo Bharat train are handled by 'DB-RRTS Operations India'. Special attention is given to the comfort and facilities for passengers on the Namo Bharat train and at RRTS stations, it said.

Identify high-value cash transactions at hotels, hospitals: CBDT to IT dept

By Neelabh Srivastava

New Delhi: Rampant cash transactions in business sectors like hotels, luxury brand sales, hospitals and IVF clinics need to be checked in a "non-intrusive" manner, the CBDT has asked the I-T department.

The apex body for direct taxes administration in the country -- the Central Board of Direct Taxes -- has also asked the tax department to undertake "concerted efforts" to recover arrear demands which have been witnessing a "steep rise" since the last financial year.

The CBDT recently issued an annual action plan dossier called the central action plan (CAP) 2024-25.

Senior officials told PTI that transactions over Rs 2 lakh in cash were required to be reported through a statement of financial transaction (SFT) by financial institutions but that was not happening.

"While examining such reports, it is noticed that the circumvention of these provisions is widely prevalent," the Board told the I-T department.

"Further, although section 139A requires PAN (permanent account number) to be provided or obtained in specified transactions, there is no reporting/ verification mechanism for determining the compliance with this obligation,"

In any case, it said, "high value" consumption expenditure needs to be verified with information about the taxpayer and therefore, it is imperative to identify the sources which could be involved in possible circumvention.

The department identified some of the businesses. such as hotels, banquet halls, luxury brand retailers, IVF clinics, hospitals, designer clothing stores, and NRI quota medical college seats, where the nonadherence to these rules and large cash transactions was being found.

"Such sources will have to be identified and a verification exercise could be conducted by calling for information in a non-intrusive manner," the CBDT directed the tax department.

A senior officer said the extent of cash in the economy can be gauged from the fact that during the 2023-24 fiscal, the tax department mounted 1.100 searches or raids across the country to check tax evasion, resulting in seizure of assets amount ing to about Rs 2,500 crore out of which Rs 1,700 crore was in cash.

The CBDT also informed the I-T authorities that "new opportunities for identification of potential taxpayers have opened up due to data mining and data analytics" and effective use of such data may result in "identification of a large number of potential taxpayers.'

"The case of non-filers and those whose ITRs (income tax returns) do not match with financial transactions done by them are selected based on rules through management information system and taken up for e-Verification. The outcome of e- Verification results in widening and deep-

QUOTE OF THE DAY

The Board said the tax department has been given a target to add in the current fiscal 10 per cent more tax return filers to what the filer base was at the end of 2023-24.

The CBDT also expressed concern over the figures of arrear demand "increasing" over the past years, saying it has gone up from Rs 24,51,099 crore, as on April 1, 2023, to Rs 43,00,232 crore on April 1, 2024.

'This is a very steep rise which requires immediate and urgent action," it said.

"Keeping in view the past trends of the arrear demand and cash collections, it is imperative that concerted efforts continue to be made to reverse the trend of increasing arrear demand and to initiate the process of reducing the figure to more manageable levels," it added.

The Board also declared in the action plan that a "special team" headed by a Principal Commissioner of I-T be formed in each region by September end to act and recover tax arrears from the top 5.000 cases -- about 60 per cent of the total demand of over Rs 43 lakh

The special teams will locate physical records and other details of the top 5,000 cases with a "deeper and quick analysis," it said.

India exports first consignment of fig juice to Poland



New Delhi: India has exported the first consignment of fig juice to Poland as part of its initiative to increase shipments of unique agro products from the country, the commerce ministry said on Saturday.

The Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA) facilitated the export of India's first ready-to-drink fig juice, made from GI-tagged Purandar Figs, to Poland, it said. The GI (geographical indication) tag provides legal protection to that item, preventing unauthorized use by others, and helps in promoting exports of the product.

The shipments reflect the potential of Indian agroproducts in global markets, it added.

Institutional holding in Morepen up 10.6% from 4.9%, post QIP

Mumbai: Morepen Laboratories has seen an increase in its institutional shareholding following the successful completion of its qualified institutional placement.

Stating QIP as historic as this capital event came in the company after almost 30 years, Sushil Suri, Chairman & Managing Director, Morepen Laboratories addressing equity analysts said, "The major point of excitement is that now our institutional holding has gone up. We had a very nominal institutional holding between 3% to 4%. Now, at the close of the QIP, our institutional holding has gone up to 10.61% or 10.67%, as per 4.91% earlier."

The company had issued 3.68 crore shares at an indicative price of Rs 57.23 per share through QIP

The idea here (behind the QIP issue) is that now we

would say all the eminent institutional global investors, and all the legacy players in our capital stack -- Bank of America, Samsung, Citigroup, Societe Generale, Nomura, to name a few, BNP Paribas, Morgan Stanley, Eminence, Suri said.

The proceeds from the QIP issue would be used primarily for capacity expansion for glucometers, BP monitors, and of course, the APIs, Suri

India is becoming the manufacturing hub, both for medical devices and for the API. So the whole world is looking at India as a capacity base or a manufacturing base. So since we had only limited capacities, we were not able to participate in a big way, he said.

"Whether U.S. and Europe, everybody's looking at India as a partner now. So in short, we'll be part of the

have all the institutional, I China Plus One model, which we all have been talking about. But now with this capital, we will be able to participate on a bigger scale," Suri said.

> Morepen, which is into pharmaceutical and medical devices business, has seen revenue share of medical devices rise to 30 percent of its total turnover.

> The medical devices business industry in India is only \$11 billion, which is around Rs 90,000 crores and as per the government estimate, it is going to be \$50 billion in 2030, Suri said.

> India had launched the Productivity Linked Incentive (PLI) scheme to boost domestic manufacturing and enhance exports. Prior to the launch of PLI, India imported 90 percent of medical devices and the net imports of medical devices decreased for the first time last year in 2023.

Metro services extended to 21 cities

New Delhi: Union Housing and Urban Affairs Minister Manohar Lal on Saturday said that 700 km of new metro lines have been made operational in the last ten years, bringing the total operational length to 945 km, and extending metro services to 21 cities across the country.

He said that prior to 2014, the metro rail system in India was limited to just 248 km and operational in only five cities.

Highlighting the rapid progress, Manohar Lal said that before 2014, on an average, only 600 meters of metro line was being constructed every month.

This figure has today increased tenfold to six km every month, demonstrating the government's commitment to urban develop ment under Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visionary leadership, the minister

"Prior to 2014, the metro rail system in India was limited to just 248 km and operational in only five cities.



Gita Gopinath, **IMF** Deputy **Managing Director**

"Tariff rates in India are higher than in its other peer economies. If it wants to be an important player on the world stage and an important part of global supply chains, it is going to require reducing those tariffs."

Ongoing NFOs					
NFO	Closure Date				
HDFC NIFTY500 Multicap 50:25:25 Index Fund	20-Aug-2024				
Motilal Oswal Business Cycle Fund	21-Aug-2024				
Bandhan Nifty Bank Index Fund	22-Aug-2024				
Aditya Birla Sun Life Nifty India Defence Index Fund	23-Aug-2024				
Bank of India Business Cycle Fund	23-Aug-2024				
Mirae Asset Nifty500 Multicap 50:25:25 ETF	26-Aug-2024				
DSP Nifty Top 10 Equal Weight ETF	30-Aug-2024				
DSP Nifty Top 10 Equal Weight Index Fund	30-Aug-2024				
Source - AMFI website					

Loans against mutual fund are not ideal for long term expenses: Krishna Kanhaiya the units are pledged, rethe lock-in period can be from January to December

As mutual fund units are emerging as the new collateral for pledging beyond conventional gold and real estate, The Perfect Voice spoke with Krishna Kanhaiya, Director and CEO, Mirae Asset Financial Services - a NBFC that lends against mutual fund units and securities to gather more insights on the subject. Excerpts..

It has been over two years since you launched loan against mutual iourney of your loan book so far in terms of the type of retail investors?

Launched in July 2022, our loan book has doubled from December 2023 till date after having surged 2023. With our digital first approach, we have seen borrowers in the age group of 30-50 years for their needs including marriage, home renovations, children's education, and travel What is the market size

of loan against mutual funds in India and how seamlessly can an individual complete the

Unfortunately, there isn't a published report that specifically outlines the market size for loans against mutual funds. This type of loan is typically categorized under the broader umbrella of loans against securities, which also includes loans against shares, insurance policies, gold, property, and

However, we believe that the potential market size for loans against mutual funds is significant. This belief is rooted in the current scale of individual investors' Assets Under Management (AUM), which, as of July 2024, stands at an impressive Rs 39.50 lakh crore.

Compare to gold loan or loan against property, how convenient and cost effective it is, in terms of interest rate, to borrow against MF

Some of the challenges with a loan against properties include valuation of the property, depending on the condition of the property and the time-consuming and tedious process along with high processing fees



INTERVIEW

and other charges. Moreover, the borrower has to submit income documents to prove his or her repayment capability, even if it is a secured loan and interest rate may differ on credit score of the borrower, age. type of property and repayment capability among

In case of availing gold loans, interest rate is higher compared to loan against mutual funds and the process is physical as the borrower has to visit the branch or the relationship manager has to collect gold from the applicant's place. Valuation of gold is based on gold purity and yellow metal below 18K is not accepted and the entire value of ornament is not

What are the risks including margin call that an individual should bear in mind while borrowing against MF units? Any of your experience of default

If the market falls, your

 $eligible\ loan\ limit\ is\ revised$ as per the current market value of the pledged mutual funds on a daily basis. Where the borrower's utilized amount is higher than his or her revised eligible limit, you receive a margin call to regularize your loan account within the stipulated timeline either by depositing additional funds or by pledging additional mutual fund units collateral.

We recommend our clients to not utilise 100% of the loan limit and to maintain a buffer to avoid such margin calls. Pledged mutual funds may be invoked if the borrower fails to regularize the account or repay vour over-dues within the stipulated time period. Till

demption will not be possible. Loans against mutual fund are not ideal for long term expenses and against short term investments and they should not be used for speculative purposes in the capital market. Are all mutual fund

units eligible to be pledged for borrowing or there restrictions?

Not all mutual fund units are eligible for pledging to borrow against them. Closeended mutual fund schemes are not eligible for pledging as they cannot be invoked in case of default. Hence, only open-ended schemes can be pledged to avail loan against mutual funds. Tax saving schemes (ELSS) outside of pledged to avail the overdraft facility. Is the borrower enti-

tled to receive benefits like dividend and other benefits if any, from the pledged units during the period?

Yes, the borrower is entitled to receive benefits such as dividends and other related benefits from the pledged units during the period of the loan. When a borrower pledges their mutual fund units as collateral for a loan, they retain full ownership of those units. This means that, even though the units are pledged, the borrower continues to be the legal owner and thus is entitled to all the benefits that come with ownership.

Setback to Tahawwur Rana, US court says he is extraditable to India

By Lalit K Jha

Washington: In a major setback to Pakistani-origin Canadian businessman Tahawwur Rana, who is sought by India for his involvement in the 2008 Mumbai terror attack, the US Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit has ruled that he is extraditable to India under the extradition treaty between the two countries.

"The (India US Extradition) Treaty permits Rana's extradition," the court said in its ruling on August 15.

Ruling on an appeal filed by Rana, a panel of judges of the US Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit affirmed the District Court in the Central District of California's denial of his habeas corpus petition challenging a magistrate judge's certification of his as extraditable to India for his alleged participation in terrorist attacks in Mumbai.

Under the limited scope of habeas review of an extradition order, the panel held that Rana's alleged offense fell within the terms of the extradition treaty between the United States and India, which included a Non Bis in Idem (double jeopardy) exception to extraditability "when the person sought has been convicted or acquitted in the Requested State for the offence for which extradition is requested".

Relying on the plain text of the treaty, the State Department's technical analysis, and persuasive case law of other circuits, the panel held that the word "offence" refers to a charged crime, rather than underlying acts, and requires an analysis of



the elements of each crime.

The panel of three judges concluded that a co-conspirator's plea agreement did not compel a different result. The panel held that the Non Bis in Idem exception did not apply because the Indian charges contained distinct elements from the crimes for which Rana was acquitted in the United States.

In its ruling, the panel also held that India provided sufficient competent evidence to support the magistrate judge's finding of probable cause that Rana committed the charged crimes. The three panel of judges were Milan D Smith, Bridget S Bade, and Sidney A

Rana, a Pakistani national, was tried in a US district court on charges related to his support for a terrorist organisation that carried out large scale terrorist attacks in Mumbai. A jury convicted Rana of providing material support to a foreign terrorist organisation and conspiring to provide material support to a foiled plot to carry out terrorist attacks in

Denmark. However, the jury acquitted Rana of conspiring to provide material support to terrorism related to the attacks in India. After Rana

provided sufficient competent evidence to support the magistrate judge's finding of probable cause that Rana committed the served seven years in prison charged crimes. for those convictions and upon his compassionate release, India issued a request for his extradition to try him

for his alleged participation

Before the magistrate

iudge who initially decided

Rana's extraditability (the

extradition court), Rana ar-

gued that the US extradition

treaty with India protected

him from extradition be-

cause of its Non Bis in Idem

(double jeopardy) provision.

He also argued that India did

not provide sufficient evi-

dence to demonstrate prob-

able cause that he committed

The extradition court re-

jected Rana's arguments and

certified that he was extra-

ditable. After Rana raised

the same arguments in a ha-

beas petition in district court

(the habeas court), the ha-

beas court affirmed the ex-

tradition court's findings of

facts and conclusions of law.

gued that he cannot be extra-

dited based on conduct for

which he was acquitted in

the United States because

the word "offence" refers to

underlying acts. The US gov-

ernment argued that "of-

fence" refers to a charged

crime and requires an analy-

sis of the elements of each

In his appeal, Rana ar-

the charged crimes.

in the Mumbai attacks.

charged crime.

the panel also

held that India

Thus, according to the government, the Treaty permits Rana's extradition because the Indian charges contain distinct elements from the crimes for which he was acquitted in the United

Judge Smith said that the Treaty's plain terms, the post-ratification understanding of the signatories, and persuasive precedent all support the government's interpretation. Rana argued, however, that, based on the government's interpretation of the Treaty in Headley's plea agreement, we should judicially estop the government from advocating for its current interpretation of the Treaty. "We decline to do so,"

"Because the parties do not dispute that the crimes charged in India have elements independent from those under which Rana was prosecuted in the United States, the Treaty permits Rana's extradition," Judge Smith said. Rana has the option of appealing against this ruling. He still has not run out of all the legal options to prevent his extradition to

Judge Smith said.



Seattle Performance during the First India Day celebrations, in Greater Seattle area, USA, Saturday

Walz's China experience draws GOP attacks

Washington: Minnesota Governor Tim Walz has a history with China. And Republicans are seizing on it.

At 25, Walz taught a year of high school in China. He returned for his honeymoon and many more times with American exchange students. As a congressman, he served on a committee tracking China's human rights and met figures like the Dalai

Now that Walz is the Democratic vice presidential nominee, Republicans have accused him of a decadeslong relationship with "Communist China" and even opened an investigation. The attacks reflect how, amid a tense U.S.-China relationship, visits once seen as simple cultural interactions have become a target for political opponents. Ultimately, Beijing does not expect U.S. policy to thaw regardless of who is in the White House, experts say.

With competition defining Washington's relationship with Beijing, any interaction with China appears to be "regarded with skepticism, if not outright suspicion," and it's become "a well-worn tactic to attack opponents simply for having a China line in their resumes," said Kyle Jaros, an associate professor of global affairs at the Univer-

sity of Notre Dame. "The assumption behind these attack lines is that having China connections makes individuals beholden or sympathetic to China and compromises U.S. interests," Jaros said. "There is definitely such a thing as being too cozy with one's geopolitical rival, but blanket China-bashing and excluding people with firsthand China experience from U.S. policymaking is also bad for U.S. interests."

Republican Rep. James Comer, chair of the House Oversight and Accountability Committee, announced on Friday an investigation into Walz's China connections, including the student trips he had organized. Comer said he asked the FBI for information on whether Walz could have targeted by or recruited for Beijing's influence

Walz's "longstanding and cozy relationship with China" should be a concern for Americans, Comer said in a statement. Walz spokesman Teddy Tschann pointed to the governor's record in standing up to China's Communist Party and fighting for human rights and democracy.

'Republicans are twisting basic facts and desperately lying to distract from the Trump-Vance agenda,' Tschann said. Scrutiny started almost immediately after Walz was named Vice President Kamala Harris' running mate in the November presidential election. "Communist China is very happy with" Walz, Richard Grenell, former acting director of national intelligence in President Donald Trump's administration, posted on the social media platform X.

Republican Sen. Tom Cotton of Arkansas wrote on X that Walz "owes the American people an explanation about his unusual, 35-year relationship with Communist China." Sen. Marco Rubio, a Florida Republican, called Walz "an example of how Beijing patiently grooms future American leaders."

Walz was 26 when he returned from a one-year teaching gig in China. He spoke kindly of the Chinese

people and said they had been "mistreated and cheated" by their government. He told the newspaper Chadron Record in his home state of Nebraska that he wished they had proper leadership.

Walz returned to China in 1994 for his honeymoon. He got married on June 4, the fifth anniversary of the bloody crackdown of the student-led pro-democracy movement in Tiananmen Square, which remains a political taboo in China.

Later, when Walz came to Washington as a Minnesota congressman, he became a champion for China's human rights and served on a congressional committee that tracks the issue. He called a lunch with the Dalai Lama "life-changing."

He also posed for photos with Hong Kong pro-democracy activist Joshua Wong, who testified before Congress in 2019 when the territory was engulfed in monthslong protests over an unpopular proposal to allow suspects to be extradited to China for trial that raised concerns about Hong Kong's autonomy. Beijing sees the Tibetan spiritual leader and Wong as threats to its rule and disapproved of U.S. politicians meeting them.

QUOTE OF THE DAY



Bill Gates Founder, Microsoft

"From manufacturing safe lowcost vaccines to the remarkable leadership shown by the Indian diaspora to India's Digital Public Infrastructure - India's ingenuity is helping not just Indians, but the whole world. **Countries across the Global** South are leveraging India's experience to build their DPI systems."



supporters attend an and anti-**American** Sanaa. Yemen

Indonesia celebrates Independence Day in unfinished future Capital

Penajam Paser: Indonesia marked 79 years of independence on Saturday with a ceremony in the unfinished future capital of Nusantara, which was planned to relieve pressure on Jakarta but whose construction has lagged behind schedule.

Hundreds of officials and invited guests wearing the traditional clothes of Indonesian tribes gathered on a stretch of grass amid the ongoing construction of government buildings and and view of construction cranes in the center of the Nusantara city.

Indonesia's President Joko Widodo and Cabinet ministers attended the Independence Day ceremony at the new Presidential Palace, built in the shape of the mythical eagle-winged protector figure Garuda.

The celebration was initially planned to inaugurate Nusantara as the country's new capital, but with construction behind schedule



it's not clear when the trans fer will take place.

Widodo said earlier in the week that 8,000 guests would be invited, but the number was later reduced to 1,300 because adequate infrastructure in not place.

The celebration at the new State Palace on the island of Borneo was held simultaneously with a celebration at the Merdeka Palace in Jakarta that was attended by Vice President Ma'ruf Amin.

Widodo began working at the new presidential palace in Nusantara in late July and held his first Cabinet meeting there on Tuesday.

More than 5,000 officers from Indonesia's police and military were deployed for the ceremony and 76 honorary flag-bearers marched behind the national red-and-

Jakarta, with about 10 million people in the city limits and three times that number in the greater metropolitan area, floods regularly and its streets are so clogged that congestion costs the economy ann estimated \$4.5 billion

white banner.

The air and groundwater in the old capital, on the northwestern coast of the Java island, are heavily pol-

luted, and it has been described as the world's most rapidly sinking city. It is estimated that one-third of the city could be submerged by 2050, because of uncontrolled ground water extraction, as well as the rise of the Java Sea due to climate change. The construction of the

new capital began in mid-2022, spread over an area of about 2,600 square kilometers (1,000 square miles) carved out of Borneo's jungle. Officials say it will be a futuristic green city with abundant forests and parks, powered by renewable energy sources and using smart waste management.

But the project has been dogged by criticism from environmentalists and Indigenous communities, who say it degrades the environment, further shrinks the habitat of endangered animals such as orangutans, and displaces Indigenous people who rely on the land for their livelihoods.

20 Nigerian students abducted by gunmen

Abuja: At least 20 Nigerian university students were abducted by gunmen who ambushed their vehicles in the country's north central region, police said Friday

The students were travelling to the south for a conference of medical students when they were ambushed in Benue state on Thursday evening, according to Benue police spokesperson Catherine Anene. The attack happened along Benue's Otukpo road, a notorious hotspot for kidnappings.

Such kidnappings have become common in parts of northern Nigeria, where dozens of armed groups take advantage of limited security presence to carry out attacks in villages and along major roads. Most victims are released only after the payment of ransoms that sometimes run into the thousands of dollars. The attacks have also forced many to abandon road trips.

How mpox became a global health emergency

Goma (Congo): Sarah Bagheni had a headache, fever, and itchy and unusual skin lesions for days, but she had no inkling that her symptoms might have been caused by mpox and that she might be another case in a growing global health emergency.

She also has no idea where to go to get medical help.

She and her husband live in the Bulengo displacement camp in eastern Congo, a region that is effectively ground zero for a series of mpox outbreaks in Africa.

This year's alarming rise in cases, including a new form of the virus identified by scientists in eastern Congo, led the World Health Organization to declare it a global health emergency on Wednesday. It said the new variant could spread beyond the five African countries where it had already been detected — a timely warning that came a day before Sweden reported its first case of the new strain.

In the vast central African nation of Congo, which has had more than 96% of the world's roughly 17,000 recorded cases of mpox this year — and some 500 deaths from the disease — many of the most vulnerable seem unaware of its existence or

"We know nothing about this," Bagheni's husband, Habumuremyiza Hire, said Thursday about mpox. "I watch her condition helplessly because I don't know what to do. We continue to share the same room.'

Millions are thought to be out of reach of medical help or advice in the conflict-torn east, where dozens of rebel groups have been fighting Congolese army forces for years over mineral-rich areas, causing a huge displacement crisis. Hundreds of thousands of people like Bagheni and her husband have been forced into overcrowded refugee camps around Goma, while more

Conditions in the camps are dire and medical facilities are almost nonexistent.

have taken refuge in the city.

Mahoro Faustin, who runs the Bulengo camp, said that about three months ago, administrators first started noticing people in the camp exhibiting fever, body aches and chills — symptoms that could signal malaria, measles or mpox.

There is no way of knowing how many mpox cases there might be in Bulengo because of a lack of testing, he said. There haven't been any recent health campaigns to educate the tens of thousands of people in the camp about mpox, and Faustin said he's worried about how many people might be undiagnosed

"Just look at the overcrowding here," he said, pointing to a sea of ramshackle tents. "If nothing is done, we will all be infected here, or maybe we are already all infected."

Around 70% of the new mpox cases in the Goma area in the last two months that were registered at a treatment center run by Medair were from displacement camps, said Dr. Pierre Olivier Ngadjole, the international aid group's health advisor in Congo. The youngest of those cases was a month-old baby and the oldest a 90-yearold, he said.

In severe cases of mpox, people can develop lesions on the face, hands, arms, chest

and genitals. While the disease originated in animals, the virus has in recent years been spreading between people via close physical contact, including sex.

Bagheni's best hope of getting a diagnosis for her lesions is a government hospital that's a two-hour drive away. That's likely out of the question, given that she already struggles with mobility having previously had both her legs amputated.

Seven million people are internally displaced in Congo, with more than 5.5 million of them in the country's east, according the U.N. refugee agency. Congo has the largest displacement camp population in Africa, and one

of the largest in the world. The humanitarian crisis in eastern Congo has almost every possible complication when it comes to stopping an



mpox outbreak, said Dr. Chris Beyrer, director of Duke University's Global Health Institute.

That includes war, illicit mining industries that attract sex workers, transient populations near border regions, and entrenched poverty. He also said the global community missed multiple warning signs.

"We're paying attention to it now, but mpox has been spreading since 2017 in Congo and Nigeria," Beyrer said, adding that experts have long been calling for vaccines to be shared with Africa, but to little effect. He said the WHO's emergency declaration was "late in coming," with more than a dozen

Beyrer said that unlike COVID-19 or HIV, there's a good vaccine and good treatments and diagnostics for mpox, but "the access issues are worse than ever" in places like eastern Congo.

In 2022, there were outbreaks in more than 70 countries around the world, including the United States, which led the WHO to also declare an emergency that lasted until mid-2023. It was

This year has alarming rise in cases, including a new form of the virus identified by scientists in eastern Congo

largely shut down in wealthy countries within months through the use of vaccines and treatments, but few doses have been made available in Africa.

The new and possibly more infectious strain of mpox was first detected this year in a mining town in eastern Congo, about 450 kilometers (280 miles) south of Goma. It's unclear how much the new strain is to blame, but Congo is now enduring its worst outbreak yet and at least 13 African countries have recorded cases, four of them for the first time.

The Miyawaki Man in India

Dr. Radhakrishnan Nair, a businessman and environmental activist, talks about Miyawaki forests in India.

't was sometime in 2011 when Dr Radhakrishna LNair, a 51-year-old Gujarat-based businessman and environmentalist, saw a bird's nest come crashing down on the road. The nest was filled with eggs. The bird started cawing in distress. She had no other place to go to. As Nair looked around, it was evident that birds no longer could find a safe place; trees were being cut down ruthlessly for a road project.

This experience prompted him to build a forest and create a safe haven for his winged friends. Nair brought an acre of

barren land and decided to build the forest using method of plantation, which

was first developed in the 1970s. Named after Japanese botanist Akira Miyawaki, the method's objective is to densify the green cover within a small parcel of land at a fast pace. Miyawaki mirrors nature and provides a home to various shrubs, plants, insects and birds creating biodiversity of a natural forest.

The Miyawaki method of plantation is a process of afforestation that involves planting native species of trees to grow urban forests and expand the green cover of an area. In this method, species of plants that are native to the area are planted in close pockets of land. It is essential to plant these seedlings as closely as possible as it not only saves space but the saplings also support each other in growth. As the saplings are close together, they com-

pete for sunlight helping the forest play its natural course of 'survival of the fittest' which prevents the growth of weeds or other parasitic plants.

The Miyawaki method is designed to accelerate plant growth by 10 times and create a 30 times denser plantation compared to traditional methods. This approach allows for creating a forest in just 20 to 30 years, whereas conventional methods typically take 200 to 300 years.

Born in the state of Kerala, Nair shifted to Karnataka at a young age. Even as a school-going boy, Nair enjoyed visiting the forest de-

Toya Sen

partment during his school vacations to help plant trees in his vicinity. "After coming to Umbergaon and becoming an industrialist, I never thought about these things, however after seeing 175 trees being cut, and seeing the bird crying for help, I felt that I should continue to work towards developing these patches of forests, especially on barren lands where most people believe that there is no scope of any

vegetation to grow," he says. He first started out by planting in hospitals, schools, and in various newly built residential complexes. Gradually, his work with the Miyawaki method started to gain attention and many industrialists as well as state governments began to work with him. In the year 2014, Nair along with Dipen Jain founded a nonprofit organization, Forest



To successfully grow a forest, Dr. Nair and his team of experts develop a master plan using the Miyawaki method of plantation. As the method mimics a forest, the team first identifies the native trees in the region and divides them into four layers – shrub, sub-tree, tree, and canopy.

Creators, with a mission to bring back lost forests by us-

ing the Miyawaki method. Some of his recent projects involve the JNPT Miyawaki Forest which was funded by the SBI Foundation. In this project around 1 lakh trees were planted. Other projects such as Haritha Svargam at Manda, Gujarat funded by the Coromandel Murugappa group and the HDFC Parivartan Oxygen Park at Baruch, wherein 40,000 and 15,000 trees were planted

respectively. To successfully grow a forest, Dr. Nair and his team of experts develop a master plan using the Miyawaki method of plantation. As the method mimics a forest, the team first identifies the native trees in the region and divides them into four layers - shrub, sub-tree, tree, and canopy. The team then analyzes the quality of the soil and mixes it with biomass which enhances the soil's nutrients and water retention capacity. Sometimes, Nair and his team encounter a few obstacles while making such plans, for example, while working on the Miyawaki forest in Kutch, Gujarat, the team encountered Gando Bawal (also known as "mad tree"), a type of shrub in the

area. The team had to re-

move these shrubs and

fence the area. Another issue Dr. Nair and his team often face is finding land in village areas, as most of these lands are used for

How long does it take for a full-fledged dense forest to be grown through the Miyawaki method? Dr. Nair states that in one year after the trees are planted, a dense forest of 12 to 15 feet is grown. These trees initially are three to four feet high and through various irrigation methods such as drip irrigation and through the use of a sprinkler system, in three years, these trees grow up to be around 30 to 35 feet tall. He visits the forest daily for a month after planting the seedlings. Following this, he visits the

The Miyawaki method is designed to accelerate plant growth by 10 times and create a 30 times denser plantation compared to traditional methods.

forest every three months for three years. Once the forests become self-sustaining after three years, he decreases his visits to once every six months or once

One of Nair's most suc-

cessful projects, the Smritivan Earthquake Memorial in Bhuj which commemorates the victims of the 2001Gujarat Earthquake was assessed by the Gujarat Ecology Commission, to evaluate and see the impact the Miyawaki plantation has on the region. As per the report, the project covered an area of 470 acres of land, and houses the world's largest Miyawaki Forests with over 300,000 plants. A total of 117 natives tree species with over two lakh saplings were planted. The evaluation fruited positive results, stating, within one year of the tree planting, the forest has welcomed 28 butterfly species, 18 insect species, 21 reptile species, 9 mammal species and 79 bird species, enhancing the overall biodiversity of the region. The plantation has also promoted Bhuj's cultural and social values. It has become a socio-cultural hub, attracting visitors, supporting local businesses and customs.

Despite his dedication to environment conservation, Dr Nair does not condemn industrialization and development which often lead to cutting trees and polluting the environment. "We live in a developing country, and due to population growth, people need spaces to live, roads to walk, things to eat and drink. Many industries and industrialists are investing in our state, therefore you cannot stop development" he says. Dr Nair holds a pragmatic approach to modernization stating that even an environment activist like him still needs the metro trains to travel on. He advises people to counter deforestation by building tiny urban forests of their own. "When a builder, builds new residential complexes, instead of making luxurious lawns, gardens and swimming pools, convert them into tiny dense forests, so that the carbon absorption can be high," says Dr Nair.

While he lives in Umbergaon, a city in Gujarat, Dr. Nair continues to travel across the country turning barren lands into lush green forests, providing homes for wildlife, and proving that development and conservation can go hand in hand. His work has inspired many, from local communities to big businesses and governments, to adopt greener practices. Dr. Nair's efforts with Forest Creators highlight the potential for creating green spaces even in a developing world. His continuous endeavor to develop thriving forests highlights the significance of preserving our planet for future generations.

> The writer is a student of law in Mumbai.

Sunita Williams facing health issues



New York: Astronaut Sunita Williams, who has been aboard the International Space Station (ISS) along with her peer Barry Wilmore, seems to be facing a health issue. The duo's return on Boeing's Starliner has encountered some serious complications, delaying it for days. Even as Boeing considers alternatives like SpaceX's Crew Dragon to bring the astronauts back, new reports state that Williams, 58, is experiencing eyesight issues on the ISS. This condition is reportedly linked to the prolonged exposure

to microgravity Williams' condition is known as Spaceflight Associated Neuro-ocular Syndrome (SANS) and it reportedly affects the fluid distribution in the body leading to issues with vision. This condition causes blurry vision and can also change the structure of the

eye. Scans of Wiliams' retina, cornea, and lens have been conducted to gauge her eve health.

On the other hand, SpaceX's Crew Dragon mission is slated for September 2024. Williams and Wilmore are likely to return to Earth on this mission which will prolong their stay in space to over eight months from the initially planned eight days. The Crew Dragon mission is expected to return to Earth in February 2025.

Boeing has been harshly criticised for its delayed and costly space missions. Now, opting for the SpaceX spacecraft will be another dampener for the aerospace company. In the last couple of months, numerous reports have suggested that Boeing has been grappling with a series of technical issues and delays that resulted in monumental

nesto began to pound Bermuda late Friday with heavy winds and rain after

San Juan: Hurricane Er-

officials in the tiny British territory in the middle of the Atlantic Ocean opened shelters and closed governnent offices The Category 2 storm lo-

cated 95 miles (150 kilometres) south-southwest of Bermuda was packing maximum sustained winds of 100 mph (155 kph). It was moving northeast at 13 mph (20 kph).

Ernesto's large eye will likely be very near or over Bermuda early Saturday morning, with significant coastal flooding expected, according to the National Hurricane Centre. "Preparations to protect life and property should be rushed to completion," the centre

The storm was forecast to dump between 6 to 9 inches of rain. Forecasters noted that Ernesto was a large hurricane, with hurricaneforce winds extending up to 75 miles (120 kilometres) from the centre and tropical-storm-force winds extending up to 275 miles (445

In preparation for the storm, officials in the wealthy British territory suspended public transportation and closed the airport on Friday night.

National Security Minis-



Hurricane Ernesto lashes Bermuda

ter Michael Weeks warned of dangerous weather conditions starting late Friday, with more than 14 per cent of customers already without power and growing.

"Hurricane Ernesto seriously threatens our community," he said. "This is not a storm to be taken lightly."

Dangerous surf and rip currents are also possible on the Turks and Caicos, the Bahamas and Atlantic Canada during the next few days, according to the

Ernesto was forecast to be near or east of Newfoundland by Monday night. Bermuda is an archipelago of 181 tiny islands whose

the size of Manhattan. According to AccuWeather, it's uncommon for the eve of a hurricane to make landfall. It noted that since 1850, only 11 of 130 tropical storms that have come with-

total land mass is roughly

in 100 miles (160 kilometres) of Bermuda have made landfall.

The island is a renowned offshore financial centre with sturdy construction. and given its elevation, storm surge is not as problematic as it is with low-lying islands.

Ernesto previously battered the northeast Caribbean, where it left hundreds of thousands of people without power or water in Puerto Rico after swiping past the US territory as a tropical storm.

More than 180,000 out of nearly 1.5 million clients were still without power more than two days after the storm. Another 170,000 were without water as the National Weather Service issued yet another severe heat advisory, warning of "dangerously hot and humid conditions.

"It's not easy," said An-

drés Cabrera, 60, who lives in the north coastal city of Carolina and had no water or power.

Like many on the island, he could not afford a generator or solar panels. Cabrera said he was relying for relief on the wind that comes in from the street."

Officials said they hoped to restore power to 90% of nearly 1.5 million customers in Puerto Rico by Sunday, but have not said when they expect power to be fully restored.

Of 152 locations of critical infrastructure without electricity that are being prioritised, 36 now have power, said Juan Saca, president of Luma Energy, a private company that operates the transmission and distribution of power on the

In the neighbouring US Virgin Islands, crews also were working to restore power, with 80 per cent of customers back online.

Ernesto is the fifth named storm and the third hurricane of this year's Atlantic

hurricane season The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration has predicted an above-average Atlantic hurricane season this year because of record warm ocean temperatures. It forecast 17 to 25 named storms, with four to seven major hurricanes.



Meghalaya HC bans single-use plastic

High Court has banned single use plastic in temples and shops across the

The High Court Bench headed by Chief Justice S Vaidyanathan also advocated for introduction of tetra pak cartons, which are primarily made from paper and could be an effective alternative to replace plastics. The fight against plastics is not just an environmental crusade, but a battle for the health and future of our

planet. "To begin with, such a move can be started from temple premises. Temple authorities must ensure that there is no usage of plastic bags in and around the worshipping places," the Division Bench said in an order while hearing a PIL on the matter on

Friday. "CCTV cameras shall be installed in all temples, so that if anybody carries plastics inside the temple. that can be curtailed to some extent," it added.

The bench also imposed a ban on shops from storing and using plastic bags proposing heavy fines to be imposed on violators.

"If any shops are found to have stored plastic bags. a heavy fine should be im-

Shillong: The Meghalaya posed on them and if the practice is continued, such shops should be kept under lock and seal," the bench stated.

> Directing the state government to be vigilant, the bench also ordered that the plastic items are stopped at the entry level itself.

> "A periodical raid should be conducted in all shops and the Government of Meghalaya should think of imposing huge amount of fine against those who use plastics within the state of Meghalaya," it said, adding that strict enforcement of law will help eradicate plastic from society.

Citing how strong laws in Singapore force the same Indian who throws rubbish on the floor in his country to dispose of wastes in a designated dustbin in that country, the bench said, "Strict prohibitory measures and imposition of heavy fine on violators are the only solution to eradicate plastics from society, in addition to spreading awareness about the menace of

The high court has also asked the state government to file an affidavit on the matter.

plastics.

Guwahati: The Assam State Disaster Management Authority (ASDMA) has signed an MoU with the Geological Survey of India (GSI) for implementation of experimental regional Landslide Early Warning System (LEWS) for combating the problem of landslides in the state.

The MoU was signed by ASDMA CEO Gyanendra Dev Tripathi and Siladitya Sengupta, deputy director general, SU: Assam, GSI on Friday, an official state-

The problem of landslides sometimes goes un-

MoU for early warning system for landslides In addition to lives lost, ard maps, dynamic short



noticed or individual landslides are being dealt with ad-hoc response mechanisms, and the problem keeps on recurring every

large numbers of houses along with infrastructures destroyed in landslides in the hilly terrains of Dima Hasao, Karbi Anglong, Cachar, Karimganj and Kamrup Metropolitan districts.

During recent times, one of the major thrust areas in landslide risk reduction is the development of a regional LEWS for a large area with inputs from static landslide susceptibility and haz-

and long-term rainfall forecasts, etc. The MoU was signed be-

tween ASDMA and GSI with the objective of institutional cooperation and implementation of an experimental regional Early Warning Forecast system for making an operational model on landslides for Dima Hasao and Cachar districts, the statement said. It would be extended to the entire state later, it added.

The GSI had launched 'Bhooskhalan' app where people, institutions, government agencies, etc, can upload incidences of landslides in their respective areas to make it more efficient in predicting and mitigating disasters as cloud sourcing.

A portal to get all the updates about landslides in India, called GSI's 'Bhusanket', is now available online as well, the statement said.

- PTI

sanction his prosecution

and Tejasvi Surya, at a

press conference, rejected

the Congress' allegation

that Karnataka Governor

Thaawarchand Gehlot's

decision was motivated by

politics and claimed that it

was a serious case of cor-

ruption involving Siddara-

Surya said the Karna-

taka government has con-

stituted two commissions,

one headed by an ex-IAS

officer and another by a

former high court judge,

to look into the allegations

Congress workers and

supporters on Saturday

staged protests in Bengal-

In Bengaluru, a massive

of corruption.

maiah and his family.

BJP MPs Sambit Patra

in the case.

Won't resign, did no wrong



Bengaluru Karnataka Deputy Chief Minister D K Shivakumar along with other cabinet members addresses a press conference, at Vidhana Soudha in Bengaluru

Bengaluru: Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah on Saturday ruled out his resignation, following the Governor granting sanction to prosecute him. in connection with the Mysuru Urban Development Authority (MUDA) site allotment 'scam', and said he had done no wrong to step down.

Siddaramaiah was first a deputy chief minister and then chief minister when decisions were taken related to the land, while his son was a member of the Mysuru body made the which allotment.

Terming Governor Thaawarchand Gehlot's decision as "anti-Constitution and against law", he said. It will be questioned in court and that he will battle it out legally.

"It is a big conspiracy to dislodge the elected government. They (BJP) have done this in several states including Delhi,

Jharkhand. A conspiracy has been designed to destabilise the elected government in Karnataka also. The Central government, BJP, JD(S) and others are involved in this conspiracy," Siddaramaiah told reporters here.

Parameshwara on Saturday

decried that the Governor's

after Thaawarchand Gehlot

granted sanction to prosecute

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah

in connection with alternative

site scam in the Mysuru Urban

Governor Gehlot, which is now

Development Authority.

He claimed that there was

pressure from the top on

In the MUDA 'scam', it is

sites were allotted to

in an upmarket area in

Mysuru, which had higher

property value as compared

to the location of her land

alleged that compensatory

Siddaramaiah's wife Parvathi

office has been 'misused'

Home Minister

"High command (of Congress) is with me, the entire Cabinet and the government is with me. All Congress MLAs, MLCs, Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha members are with me....I have done no wrong to resign," he

which had been "acquired" by

Addressing reporters here,

Parameshwara said, "It is

clear that there is pressure

from the top. There was no

clear information that the

the MUDA.

Siddaramaiah denies allegations

Accusing the opposition of wrong doings and behaving illegally and anti-Constitutionally, he further said, "They are using Raj Bhavan as a political pawn. The Governor is functioning like a puppet in the hands of the Central government. In November, sanction was sought against Kumaraswamy (also former CM) by Lokayukta in an alleged case regarding issue of mining licences, after an inquiry. He was not issued a notice. What does it mean -- that the notice is issued to me (by the Governor)? It is a big conspiracy."

CONGRESS WORKERS BJP SEEKS RESIGNATION PROTEST

The BJP on Saturday asked Siddaramaiah to step down from his post to ensure an impartial probe into his alleged role in the MUDA site allotment "scam" as it welcomed the governor's decision to

uru, Mysuru, Mandya and several other parts of the state against the permission granted by Governor Thaawarchand Gehlot to prosecute Siddaramaiah. **GOVERNOR'S OFFICE HAS BEEN MISUSED: HOME MINISTER** protest was organised by Congress workers and CM had given any direction or even given oral instruction." Yet, Siddaramaiah was served

members of Karnataka Pradesh Kurubara Sangha at Gandhi Nagar here dea showcause notice. 'We had categorically manding removal of the explained with minute details Governor. In Mysuru, following the governor's raising slogans "down showcause notice, how he down anti-people BJP and (CM) has been framed... JD(S), down down to BJP even if the Governor grants agent governor" and holdpermission then we naturally ing placards "Go back feel that there was a pressure Governor" in Kannada, from the top," he alleged. "We have been saying this from the Congress workers althe beginning that the office leged conspiracy against of the Governor has been the AHINDA (an acronym misused. Now it's proved.' for minorities, backward The Minister said the CM will classes, Dalits and Adivafight it legally. "The CM will sis) leader. They also set discuss with the legal team tyres on fire as a mark of to decide the future course of protest in Siddaramaiah's

Genetic connections between Alzheimer's disease, heart conditions found: Study

New Delhi: A new study has uncovered genes that could be related to heart conditions and Alzheimer's disease, suggesting that the two could have similar origins.

Researchers said that evidence increasingly links people having the heart condition with a quicker cognitive decline and a 26 per cent increased risk of dementia, affecting one's memory and thinking, and interfering with daily activities. Alzheimer's disease is the most common form of dementia.

Coronary artery disease is a condition in which blood flow to the heart is restricted due to narrowing of blood vessels. Even as abnormal levels of fat in blood and inflammation could be possible shared risk factors between having coronary artery disease and developing Alzheimer's disease, the researchers at Edith Cowan University, Australia, said that the processes underlying the link remain unclear.

In this study, they employed genetic methods to examine the intricate relationship between heart disease and Alzheimer's disease.

The team chose to study seven heart disease-related factors, such as coronary artery disease and angina, and 13 lipids, including cholesterol - both 'good' and 'bad'. Previous studies have long suggested lipids to play a role in the development of Alzheimer's disease, they

"Our comprehensive analysis reveals a significant and positive global genetic correlation between Alzheimer's disease and three lipid traits: LDL ('bad' cholesterol), triglycerides, and total cholesterol," the authors wrote in the study published

derscores the genetic interplay in cardiovascular risk factors," they wrote. By applying genetic approaches to gain a deeper understanding of the relationship between Alzheimer's disease and coronary artery disease, we have un-

in the International Journal

This suggests that certain lipids, not all, may have a

more direct genetic link

with Alzheimer's disease.

However, many of the li-

pids that the authors studied

were genetically related

with coronary artery

"Specifically, we found

significant genetic correla-

tions between coronary artery disease traits and lipid

profiles such as HDL, LDL,

triglycerides, and total cholesterol, aligning with the

existing literature that un-

of Molecular Sciences.

they said.

the underlying mechanisms linking these conditions, corresponding author Emmanuel Adewuyi, from Edith Cowan University, said.

covered novel insights into

PTI

Section of bridge over Ganga collapses in Bihar

Khagaria/Bhagalpur: A section of an under-construction bridge over the Ganga collapsed in Bihar on Saturday, officials said.

Khagaria's District Magistrate Amit Kumar Pandey told PTI that a slab of the Aguwani-Sultanganj bridge collapsed around 8 am.

"I must tell one thing the entire structure of the under-construction bridge, which is faulty, is supposed to be dismantled by the contractor. The construction work has already been stopped there. The contractor is dismantling the structure at the direction of the Patna High Court," he said. No casualty was reported

in the incident, he said. Last year, four-five pillars of the bridge collapsed,

causing the entire section to

collapse into the river.

A slew of bridges have collapsed in the state over the last few months, raising questions over the quality of construction.

Telangana man

Hyderabad: A 32-year-old

man from Hanamkonda dis-

dies in US

QUOTE OF THE DAY



Chandra Kumar Bose. grandnephew of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose

"After all here was a man who had once given the slip to the British and undertook an arduous trek from Calcutta through north India to Afghanistan, eventually reaching Berlin by air through Moscow. Only a few years later in the midst of a raging world war, he survived an even more perilous voyage by submarine from Germany to South East Asia. How could such a man die!"

Kedarnath trek route reopened after 15-day closure

Dehradun: The trek route to Kedarnath which was heavily damaged by landslides triggered by heavy rain on the night of July 31 has been repaired and reopened for pilgrims after a 15-day closure.

The 19-km long route which was blocked at 29 places by landslide debris was restored on Friday, officials here said.

Around 260 labourers worked day and night to repair and reopen the route for pilgrims, they said.

The route has been repaired now except a couple of spots where security per-



sonnel are helping the pilgrims cross the road, they

A series of landslides had

occurred along the route after heavy rain lashed the area on July 31 leaving thousands of pilgrims

Aided by the Indian Air Force and private helicopters more than 11,000 pilgrims stranded at places along the route, including Bhimbali and Lincholi. were evacuated to safety by SDRF, NDRF and police per sonnel during a rescue operation that lasted nearly a

Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami personally monitored the entire rescue operation visiting the rainhit areas of Rudraprayag district several times during the operation.

trict of Telangana has died in the US, his family members said on Saturday and requested the Central and Telangana governments to help

in bringing his body back home. A Rajesh, from Atmakur mandal died in Mississippi, US, and some of his friends staying in the US informed the family about his death on Thursday saying he died on August 14, even as the family awaits clarity on his death. Rajesh's mother and other family members were inconsolable after coming to

> know about his death. "We got a call informing about the death and to collect his body. We request the Central and state governments to help in bringing back Rajesh's body," the family members told the media. Rajesh's uncle Bikshapathi said Rajesh's family is financially poor and they are not in a position to go to the US and he also requested the help of the Centre and the state government to bring his body to his native place.

The family members also

Organ trade racket in guise of medical tourism

New Delhi: The National Investigation Agency (NIA) on Saturday charge sheeted four accused in a Nedumbassery (Kerala) trans-national organ trade racket in the guise of medical tourism, an official statement said.

The accused were involved in induc-

ing gullible youth into donating their organs for money and trafficking the same to foreign nations as part of a major illegal organ trade racket, it

They would identify prospective organ donors in India to exploit them by inducing and offering them money through agents and through social media, as per the NIA investigations.

The gang also approached the Indian patients in need of transplantation



and charged around Rs 50 lakh from them to facilitate their organ transplantation in Iran, said the statement issued by the NIA.

The donors and recipients were made to believe that organ trade is legal in Iran, it said.

The investigations further revealed that the accused had forged documents, including seals and signatures of various offices and officers of the government, to facilitate their illegal organ trading, the statement said.

While three of the accused, identified as Sabith Korukulath Nasar, Sajith Shyam, Bellamkonda Ram Prasad, have been arrested, the fourth, Madhu Jayakumar, is absconding, it said.

All four have been charged under various sections of the Indian Penal Code (IPC) before a special NIA court in Ernakulam (Kerala), an official said.

The NIA, which had taken over the case on July 3, 2024 from the Nedumbassery Police, is continuing with its investigation.

Sabarmati Express derails near Kanpur

New Delhi: The Sabarmati Express train derailed between Kanpur and Bhimsen station in Uttar Pradesh at 2:30 am on Saturday, a Railway Board official said.

"No injury to any person

has been reported as of now. We are trying to find details regarding the number of coaches derailed," the official said. "The loco pilot said that some boulder hit the cattle guard (front portion) of the engine which had got badly damaged and bent," he added. According to the Railways, seven trains have been cancelled and three diverted



due to the derailment. Shashi Kant Tripathi, Chief Public Relation Officer (CPRO) of the North Central Railway Zone, under which the accident site falls, said that buses were arranged to carry passengers from the accident site to the Kanpur Railway

"Besides, an eight coaches MEMU train departed from Kanpur to the accident site to carry passengers back to Kanpur so that further arrangements can be done to send them to their respective destinations," Tripathi said.

said the exact details about how Rajesh died were still not known to them, though it was said he had a "high" sugar level and died of stroke, but "we don't know the rea-

Delhi HC restrains unauthorised use of content

Taarak Mehta Ka Ooltah Chashmah

New Delhi: The Delhi High Court has restrained the unauthorised use of name, characters and content of popular TV show 'Taarak Mehta Ka Ooltah Chashmah'.

The makers of the show, which was stated to have been on air for over 16 years with approximately 4,000 episodes, alleged that several entities were using its names, images of characters, etc. for commercial gains by running websites, selling merchandise and even publishing "sexually explicit and vulgar" videos on YouTube.

In an interim order passed against several known and unknown entities on a lawsuit by show's producer, Justice Mini Pushkarna said if the ex-parte ad interim injunction is not granted, the plaintiff will suffer an irreparable loss.

The plaintiff, Neela Film Productions Pvt Ltd, said it has statutory rights over several registered trademarks in India pertaining to their show and its characters, some of its trademarks being 'Taarak Mehta Ka Ooltah Chashmah', 'Ooltah Chashmah', 'Taarak Mehta', 'Jethaalal', 'Gokuldhaam', etc.

The court was informed that while the plaintiff enjoys copyright of its various characters and animations, some entities were unauthorisedly selling merchandise such as T-shirts. posters and stickers bearing the images and dialogues of characters from the show, through websites and e-commerce platforms. It was also claimed that there was content generated through use of artificial intelligence or deep fakes of characters as well as video games.

"An order of ex parte ad-in-

terim injunction is passed thereby restraining the defendant nos. 1 to 12 and 14 to 21, (including the John Doe parties)... from in any manner ...publishing ...offering for sale on their websites ...the plaintiff's copyrighted material/registered trademarks, including, but not limited to the title, the characters, format and underlying materials in the said show or anything else, which otherwise amounts to an infringement of the plaintiff's copyright/registered trademarks/passing off

of the goods/services offered by the defendants," the court said in an order passed on August 14.

The court further ordered that YouTube videos, which contain character or material from the show, including pornographic content, were required to be brought down by those making the uploads. In case the infringing videos are not brought down within 48 hours, the IT Ministry and the Department of Telecom will ask the respective internet service providers/intermediaries to suspend all links or videos, the court said. It also granted liberty to the plaintiff to notify



YouTube to block/suspend all the infringing links and also directed the platform to provide

the plaintiff with the necessary details of offending uploaders.









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, Indone.
- 3 A participant prepares her kite during Denpasar international kite festival in Sanur, Bali, Indonesia on Friday.
- 4. Dancers of the Ballet Folklórico of Mexico perform during a gala event at the Bellas **Artes Fine Arts Center in Mexico City om** 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 iinger 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 have 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...

rıveq 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

"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-

New Delhi: Champion hi's Dwarka before continu- flight to Delhi. wrestler Vinesh Phogat ar- ing their journey towards

> 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

"She came as a champion on day 1 into the games vii lage 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 post-

"Vinesh 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 exciting 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

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 medallist 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

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 long with her coach and shooting great Jaspal Rana for a freewheeling 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

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.

dance forms. I was training

in France, I wasn't able to

'...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 coachplayer combinations in Indian sports right now.

"I have been learning horse riding for sometime now," she retorted immediately, 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 eniov. 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.

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

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.'