

THE PERFECT VOICE



HAPPY INDEPENDENCE DAY



How is Raj playing in the hands of BJP

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Tokyo bronze holds more significance: Sreejesh

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“Social justice top priority for government”

New Delhi: President Droupadi Murmu on Wednesday emphasised the need to strengthen affirmative action as a tool for inclusion while urging the rejection of divisive tendencies rooted in perceived social hierarchies.

In her address to the nation on the eve of 78th Independence Day, Murmu highlighted the steady progress of political democracy in India, asserting that it reflects advancements towards social democracy.

She noted that the nation thrives on its diversity and plurality, moving forward as a cohesive entity.

“Social justice is a top priority for the Narendra Modi government, which has initiated unprecedented measures for the welfare of Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, and other marginalised communities,” the president stated.

She quoted B R Ambedkar, the architect of the Indian Constitution, emphasising that “political democracy cannot last unless there lies at the base of it social democracy” and said steady progress of political democracy testifies to the progress made towards the consolidation of social democracy.

The spirit of inclusion pervades every aspect of our social life. We move to-



gether as a cohesive nation with our diversity and plurality. Affirmative action must be strengthened as an instrument of inclusion. I firmly believe that in a vast country like ours, tendencies that stoke discord based on perceived social hierarchies have to be rejected,” she said.

Lauding the president’s speech, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said, “An inspiring address by Rashtrapati Ji on the eve of our Independence Day. It motivates us to keep working to build a prosperous and developed India.”

Murmu also detailed several government initiatives aimed at uplifting marginalised groups, including the Pradhan Mantri Samajik Utthan evam Rozgar Adharit Jankalyan (PM-SURAJ), which provides direct financial assistance, and the Pradhan Mantri Janjati Adivasi Nyaya Maha Abhiyan (PM-JANMAN), focused on improving the socio-economic conditions of Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs).

She also mentioned the NAMASTE scheme, designed to eliminate manual scavenging by ensuring sanitation workers do not engage in hazardous tasks.

The president stressed the importance of justice in its broadest sense, particularly in terms of gender and climate justice.

She acknowledged that while women in Indian society are seen as equals, traditional prejudices persist.

Murmu noted that government efforts have tripled budget allocations for women’s welfare over the past decade, leading to increased female labor participation and an improved sex ratio at birth.

“But I am glad to note that the government has given equal importance to women’s welfare and women’s empowerment. The budget allocation for this purpose has more than tripled in the last decade,” she said. She cited the Nari Shakti Vandan Adhinyam (Women Reservation Act) as a significant step towards women’s empowerment.

Speaking about the 2024 Lok Sabha elections, Murmu highlighted the record number of nearly 97 crore eligible voters, describing it as the largest electoral exercise in history.

Vinesh Phogat’s appeal rejected



Paris: Indian wrestler Vinesh Phogat’s appeal against her disqualification from Olympic Games final has been rejected by the ad-hoc division of the Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS), the Indian Olympic Association said on Wednesday.

Vinesh was disqualified for being 100gm overweight at the time of the weigh-in on the morning of the women’s 50kg freestyle final last week.

In a statement, IOA President PT Usha expressed “shock and disappointment at the decision of the Sole Arbitrator at the CAS to dismiss wrestler Vinesh Phogat’s application against the United World Wrestling (UWW) and the International Olympic Committee (IOC).”

“The operative part of the August 14 decision, which dismisses Vinesh’s application to be awarded a shared silver medal in women’s 50 kg category at the Paris Olympic Games has significant implications for her in particular and the sporting community at large,” the IOA stated.

The rejection of Vinesh’s appeal means India’s tally from the Paris Olympics will be of six medals which includes one silver and five bronze.



Thoubal Police personnel take part in a Tiranga bike rally on the eve of Independence Day, in Thoubal, Manipur, Wednesday. (PTI Photo)

Army captain martyred; one terrorist killed

Jammu: An Army captain and a terrorist were killed in an ongoing operation in the higher reaches of Jammu region’s Doda district on Wednesday.

A civilian was also injured in the encounter that broke out on the eve of Independence Day and is the latest in a series of incidents in the Jammu region that has witnessed a spike in violence of late.

This is the fourth encounter in recent days in the Udhampur-Doda-Kishtwar region of Jammu and Kashmir.

Bullets rang out on Wednesday morning in a thickly-forested area during a cordon-and-search operation (CASO) launched by a joint team of security personnel to track down a group of foreign terrorists hiding in the Shivgarh-Sasar belt, the officials said.

Captain Deepak Singh was critically injured during the operations and shifted to a military hospital where he succumbed to his injuries, they added.

“One terrorist has been neutralised in the ongoing operation. One AK 47 has

been recovered. Intermittent exchange of firing continues as the operations are ongoing,” the Army said in a post on X.

Four blood-soaked rucksacks were seized from the site of the encounter, leading officials to initially believe that a total of four terrorists were killed. M-4 carbines were also found, the officials said. However, the death of only one terrorist has been confirmed.

The terrorists crossed into Doda from a forest area near Patnitop in adjacent Udhampur district after a

brief exchange of fire between security forces and the ultras there on Tuesday evening, officials said.

They said the security forces established contact with the terrorists in Udhampur around 6 pm on Tuesday. An encounter broke out about half an hour later and continued intermittently until both sides paused. A cordon was established overnight.

At about 7:30 am on Wednesday, there was a renewed exchange of fire in Doda where the terrorists had fled to, the officials said.

“Supari allegation defamation”

By Anand Mishra

Mumbai: Former Mumbai Police Commissioner Sanjay Pandey has refuted Home Minister Devendra Fadnavis’ allegations over an alleged ‘contract’ to frame him in false cases. Pandey said accusing a police officer of taking a supari (contract) is defamation of the entire police force.

“As far as I know, till now I have only heard that goons and gangsters were given ‘supari’. This is the first such instance of giving ‘supari’ to the policemen,” Pandey said in an exclusive interview to The Perfect Voice. He was reacting to

Fadnavis’ allegation that the then Maharashtra Vikas Aghadi (MVA) government had given a contract to Pandey to implicate him and his colleague in the BJP Girish Mahajan in false cases.

“I have no need to give clarification about these baseless allegations. Accusing a police officer of taking ‘supari’ is a defamation of the entire police force and government servants not only in Maharashtra but entire India. What else can I say about this?” Pandey said.

He refuted the allegation that the police force was working under political



From Former DG Sanjay Pandey

pressure. When asked about his successor Param Bir Singh’s allegations against then Home Minister Anil Deshmukh over alleged monthly extortion of Rs 100 crore Pandey shrugged his shoulders. “Only he (Singh) knows about this and he can tell. What can I say about this?”

Centre cuts short NSG DG’s tenure

New Delhi: The Union government on Wednesday curtailed the tenure of NSG Director General (DG) Nalin Prabhat and ordered his deputation from the Andhra Pradesh cadre to the AG-MUT cadre.

The ACC has also approved the “inter-cadre deputation of Prabhat, IPS from Andhra Pradesh to AGMUT cadre initially for a period of three years from the date of joining the AG-MUT cadre or until further orders, whichever is earlier, in relaxation of inter-cadre deputation guidelines”, the order stated. “It is understood that the IPS officer could be given a new task.”

We had blood streaming down our faces

The hero of Tiger Hill recounts the story of valour and courage

By Aditi Pai

Mumbai, August 14, 2024: When he fearlessly charged towards the Pakistani army, despite taking 17 bullets, Subedar Major Captain Yogendra Singh Yadav, made history as the youngest Indian ever to be awarded the Param Vir Chakra, the highest gallantry award. He was only 19 years old during the Kargil War when he played a key role in capturing Tiger Hill which led to India’s victory over Pakistan Army. This year, on July 26, India marked 25 years of the victory which came at a price of lives of 545 brave officers and jawans.

When Yadav opened his eyes after what seemed like eternal deep sleep, all he saw was the ceiling fan rotating. He looked around; every muscle and sinew in his body hurting. He realised that he was in the army hospital at Srinagar. His last memory was of



neutralising the enemy camp and ploughing down the treacherous mountain while bleeding profusely. He had awakened after three days. And the horrifying events of the past three days started flashing in front of his eyes. “God kept me alive so that I could tell the tale of the unparalleled valour of our battalion and our brave men who were martyred while protecting our motherland,” Yadav tells The Perfect Voice.

Soon after he completed his military training, Yadav, the son of an army

man living in Bulandshahar, joined the 18 Grenadiers battalion and was part of the Ghatok Force Commando platoon. Within two years, he was thrust into the heart of the bloody war with Pakistan—at Tiger Hill. Yadav was on leave for his wedding on May 5, 1999 and was to resume duty on May 20. By then, Pakistani soldiers had infiltrated into Indian territory and taken position across 160 km of Indian land in Kashmir. Yadav joined duty and was posted in Manasbal in the Ganderbal district of Kashmir when

his platoon received orders to move to the Drass sector.

The Pakistanis had captured Tololing peak which gave them a sweeping view and access to the Kashmir Leh highway. Control over a key stretch of this highway meant that movement of the Indian troops would be halted preventing them from reaching forward posts. Tololing had to be cleared but the initial attempts had not been successful. On May 22, the infantry launched a well-planned attack which continued for several days and claimed numerous lives. “We climbed for 22 days and our battalion lost two officers, two junior commissioned officers and 21 jawans,” says Yadav who was part of the brave 18 Grenadiers who played a key role, along with 2 Rajputana Rifles, in winning back Tololing.

Cont. on page 2...

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How is Raj playing in the hands of BJP

By Suyash Padate

Mumbai: After declaring 'unconditional support' for the ruling Mahayuti in the Lok Sabha elections, the MNS has now decided to go solo in the forthcoming state Assembly elections. Just months ago, Thackeray had extended unconditional support to Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the NDA in the Lok Sabha elections has now taken the U turn and started preparing for nearly 225 to 250 seats out of a total of 288 assembly seats.

According to sources, the BJP has a full-fledged plan to queer the pitch of UBT Sena not only in the Assembly elections but even in upcoming Municipal Corporation elections. The state leadership of BJP has already swung in to the action. The Lok Sabha election results came as a shocker to the ruling Mahayuti. The Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) in the State, bagged 30 of the 48 seats, while Mahayuti tally was just 17. Looking at Assembly seat perspective, the MVA's decisive victory meant that it had the upper hand in 157 seats, while the Mahayuti was ahead in just 128 seats.



Against this backdrop dividing Marathi votes of UBT Sena is one of the strategies. The bigwigs of saffron party strongly feel that the MNS is the right tool to execute this plan of action. In a strategic political move, the BJP is considering the MNS as a reliable party to check UBT Sena, the sources added further.

When contacted initially MNS leaders were tight lipped. On insistence MNS spokesperson Sandip Deshpande said our party cannot wait for a proposal from the Mahayuti alliance. "There is no consensus between the BJP, Shiv Sena Shinde camp, and

NCP Ajit Pawar camp on seat sharing. So we choose our path," Deshpande pointed out.

Another senior MNS leader said a pre-assembly poll alliance with the Mahayuti seemed difficult at a time the three principal constituents of the ruling alliance are struggling for political space and bickering over seats. We cannot afford to sit at home if the Mahayuti refuses to concede seats to us. The leader claimed voters are frustrated with the politics of the Mahayuti and the Opposition Maha Vikas Aghadi. MNS is the best option for them and they will vote for the MNS.

Mumbai-London Air India flight returns

Mumbai: A London-bound Air India flight, which departed from here on Wednesday morning with 354 people on board returned to the city after the pilot-in-command reported pressurisation issue in the cabin, a source said.

The aircraft landed safely, the source said. "Air India flight AI-129 that had departed from here Wednesday morning returned to the city after the pilot reported pressurisation issue in the Boeing 777 aircraft cabin," the source told PTI.

The flight departed from Mumbai at 8.36 am and returned to the city at around 11.30 am.

Meanwhile, an Air India statement said: "The flight operating from Mumbai to London made an air-return to Mumbai due to a technical issue. The aircraft landed safely at Mumbai for precautionary checks."

The airline also said it has already made alternative arrangements to fly the passengers to their destination.

Air India said it has offered full refunds on cancellation and complimentary rescheduling to another date, if so desired by passengers.

- PTI



Students of NCC on the eve of Independence Day in Mumbai on Wednesday.

Pic: Bhushan Kayande

Consumer panel junks woman's complaint against Uber for drivers refusing rides with pet dog

Mumbai: A consumer commission here has dismissed a woman's complaint against cab aggregator Uber for its drivers refusing her rides when she was accompanied by her pet dog.

There is no law or legal provision in India regarding the transportation of pets in public vehicles, said the District Consumer Disputes Redressal Commission, Central Mumbai, in an order passed on Tuesday.

In her complaint filed in June 2022, the woman, a Wadala resident, stated that despite the company's pet-friendly policies, she was denied a ride by Uber drivers on two occasions after she informed them that her pet dog would be traveling with her.

The woman demanded Rs 10 lakh in compensation for "deficiency in service, unfair trade practices, mental agony, and litigation expenses".

She also requested the commission to direct the company to take measures



to allow commuters to travel with pets and stray animals in the cabs.

Uber India pointed out that the complainant did not make the drivers -- against whom the woman had the grievance -- parties to the case.

There was no evidence to back her allegations except that she informed the drivers about traveling with a pet dog, it said.

There was no policy in India regarding allowing pet animals to travel in public transport, the company said, demanding that the complainant be dismissed.

The commission, after reviewing the company's business model, noted that the drivers canceled the ride at their discretion, and Uber India could not be

blamed for it. "Additionally, there is no evidence showing that the complainant informed the driver that a pet would be accompanying them, nor is there any established law or provision in India regarding pet transportation in public vehicles," it observed.

Nor did the woman provide any evidence to show that the policies related to pets, which may be applicable in other countries where Uber operates, are binding on the company in India too, said the commission.

But it noted that her "concerns regarding the need for a pet-friendly environment are acknowledged and appear to be made in good faith and essential."

"The absence of any binding agreements, specific legal provisions, or established rules on this matter prevents us from granting the relief as requested," the commission said, while dismissing her plea.

- PTI

Asha Parekh to get Award

Mumbai: Veteran actor Asha Parekh, known for her roles in several Hindi films like "Kati Patang", "Teesri Manzil" and "Caravan", will be honoured with the 'Raj Kapoor Lifetime Achievement Award' by the Maharashtra government, an official said.

Actor Shivaji Satam, best known for his role as ACP Pradyuman on the TV series "CID", has also been chosen for the state government's 'Chitrapati V Shantaram Lifetime Achievement Award', he said.

The awards distribution ceremony will take place on August 21 evening at the NSCI Dome at Worli in Mumbai. Chief Minister Eknath Shinde, Deputy Chief Ministers Devendra Fadnis and Ajit Pawar will attend the event.

Director N Chandra, known for his films "Tezaab" and "Ankush", will be given the 'Raj Kapoor Special Contribution Award', while writer-director Diggala Lanjekar will be honoured with the 'Chitrapati V Shantaram Special Contribution Award', the official said.

QUOTE OF THE DAY



Piyush Goyal Union Minister for Commerce

"The Coastal Road will now be extended till Bhayandar. There will be 4-5 packages to distribute the construction work. Once the entire stretch is operational, it will be a huge relief for Mumbaikars who commute daily by vehicle."

Dignitaries wish on Navroz

Mumbai: The dignitaries have extended their wishes to the Parsi community on the occasion of Navroz. The Parsi New Year will be celebrated on Thursday.

It is celebrated by millions worldwide with joy. Rooted in Zoroastrianism, Navroz has been observed for over 3,000 years, symbolizing the rebirth of nature and the triumph of good over evil.

The Maharashtra government has appreciated the contribution of the Parsi community in the state's development.

"If everything goes according to the plan, we will expand"

Former Mumbai police commissioner and ex-Maharashtra DGP Sanjay Pandey's post retirement life is abuzz with loads of visitors meeting him for some or other reasons in his Oshiwara office. Few needing some helping hand while others, mostly from civil society, offering him their help to set up a political party. Always flanked by die-hard supporters, Pandey has started preliminary works to run an organisation after his name and then turning it into a political party. He talked to **The Perfect Voice** representative Anand Mishra about his political plans. Excerpts...



Former DG Sanjay Pandey

THE PERFECT INTERVIEW

You have a good fan following. They want you to enter the electoral fray. Are you ready?
You are right. Like-minded people are joining us and we want to mark our presence not only in Mumbai but in entire Maharashtra. Assembly elections are ahead of us, but this does not mean that we want to limit ourselves to the state only. If everything goes according to the plan, we will expand our wings across the country by giving it the form of a mass movement.

What will be the main agenda of your party or organization?
Bringing transparency in the system will be the

working-class people.
How far has the process of forming the party gone?
At present, it is a platform only, because till now the name of the party has not been finalized and its registration has also not been initiated. Unanimously, we have decided to float 'Sanjay Pandey Vichar Manch' as an organization. Our effort will be to complete the process of establishing ourselves as a political party as soon as possible. Forming a political party is not in the hands of a single person.
Where will the money come from to run the party?
Earlier, I also used to think that everything is a game of money in public life. But when you have good people with you, then there is no need for money. Nothing is going to happen by taking out processions, organizing flag rallies and shouting ear-tearing slogans. Your intentions should just be clear. That's all.
According to me, if you think that you will be able to woo voters with schemes like 'Ladki Bahin' or 'Ladka Bhau', then you are on the wrong side. Today's generation is very clever and knows everything behind the scenes and hidden between the lines. And I have full faith in their wisdom.

first and foremost agenda. We believe that whatever work we do, we should do it with a citizen-centric approach. The 'Mumbai Citizens Forum' started by me is still doing its job. Apart from this, today all the parties take the votes of the working class engaged in the government or private sector, people of civil society or farmers or anyone who works in the unorganized sector. But when it comes to returning the value of their votes to these stakeholders, this does not seem to be happening. Our party will clearly take their side and will do whatever is possible within the ambit of law. We would also not want this working class to get involved in any kind of unionism. Our party would like to connect with the families of these

MPCB launches Ganesh app

By Correspondent

Mumbai: After months of preparation, the team of the Maharashtra Pollution Control Board (MPCB) has created an app called "Eco Bappa" for sculptors who create eco-friendly Ganesha idols. This app was launched by the Chief Minister Eknath Shinde and his deputy Ajit Pawar.

The function was jointly organised yesterday by MPCB and the department of environment changes at Sahyadri, the state guest house. Ganesha idols are made from clay, paper pulp, turmeric, coconut, raw banana, betel nut. MPCB took a presentation of such sculptors in the state. After that "Eco Bappa" app has been created. About 250 to 300 sculptors of the state who make Ganesha idols mainly from Shadu clay and other materials are registered in this app.

This app will contain the sculptor's mobile number, e-mail address, photograph of the Ganesh idol created by them. Aspirants must go to the app and register their demand. If a customer searches for a sculptor by phone or e-mail on the Eco app, they will get information about which sculptors are available in their area.

The Pollution Control Board will function as only the regulatory body. Implementation has to be

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EDITORIAL

Dawn of a New Voice

Today, as we embark on the launch of this new newspaper, we stand at a pivotal moment in the history of Indian journalism. This is not just the birth of a publication; it is the reaffirmation of a profession that, despite its challenges, remains the cornerstone of a free and informed society. As we step into this new venture, we do so with a profound understanding of the landscape we are in, fraught with challenges.

Our independence from political parties and industrial influences ensures that we remain free, fearless, and dedicated to the truth.

George Orwell famously said, "Journalism is printing what someone else does not want printed: everything else is public relations." In an era of misinformation, where the lines between fact and opinion are increasingly blurred, the role of the journalist is under unprecedented scrutiny. We live in a time when the very notion of truth is contested, where "fake news" has become a weapon wielded by those who seek to undermine the free press. The challenge before us is not just to report the facts but to safeguard the truth, to stand as a bulwark against the tides of falsehood that threaten to erode public trust.

We are here to provide a platform for the stories that matter, to give voice to the voiceless, and to hold the powerful to account. We are here to serve the public interest, not corporate interests; to illuminate, not obfuscate. The strength of any newspaper lies not just in its editors and reporters, but in its readers. It is you, the public, who give meaning to our work. Your engagement, your curiosity, your demand for accountability are what drive us to do better and to never settle for less than the truth.

Our coverage will span every aspect of human life, representing everyone as a human being. We are especially committed to issues that matter most. To that end, we will dedicate an entire page to news, reportage, and features on critical environmental and scientific issues. While we champion the preservation of Mother Earth, we recognize the need for balanced development. Our stance advocates for a harmony between progress and environmental stewardship.

The Perfect Voice will also serve as your platform to address civic concerns. We will help you navigate political developments and shed light on economic trends and personal finance matters.

Our motto, 'Your Voice, Our Efforts,' reflects our commitment to standing with society for just causes.

Renowned voices will contribute to our publication on a wide range of subjects. In the coming days, you will catch a glimpse of the topics we have carefully curated for you. As a reader, we invite you to contribute your expertise and insights, and we welcome your suggestions and constructive criticism.

As we move forward, we ask for your support, your trust, and your critical eye. Together, we can navigate the complexities of this modern age and ensure that the light of truth continues to shine. Wishing you all a Happy Independence Day!

RSS Role in Freedom Struggle



By
Ratan Sharda

The Indian independence struggle, often narrated through the lives of a few prominent leaders, is only a partial story. But emerging documents now reveal a more complete picture. Kalyan Kumar De's book 'Netaji' reveals British archive information linking public outrage over INA trials and the naval rebellion to the British's decision to leave.

Few are aware that the first revolt for independence was led by the Maruthu Pandiyar brothers at Tamil Nadi in 1801. Similarly, the contributions of figures like Subramanya Bharathi, VO Chidambaram Pillai, Kumarswamy Mudaliar, Birsa Munda, and U Tirod Sing Syiemlieh are rarely mentioned in favour of more widely recognised leaders like Gandhi and Nehru.

The Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) has received little recognition. Founded in 1925, the RSS focused on spiritual patriotism rooted in India's Hindu culture, inspired by Bankimchandra, Lokmanya Tilak, and Savarkar. Dr. Hedgewar advocated for nationalism based on Bharat's cultural and geographical identity.

He initially revolted against the British during his school days. While studying medicine in Kolkata, he joined the Anusheelan Samiti and led against the British-imposed restrictions on Indian doctors. As a Congress joint secretary, his advocacy for 'complete freedom' was rejected in favour of limited self-rule. His support for the non-cooperation movement led to a nine-month prison term.

Realising that India's divisions-caste, orthodoxy, parochial conflicts, and language, hindered the unity required to overthrow the British. After conferring with leaders of Hindu Mahasabha and Congress, he established a new organisation apart from politics, the RSS.

The original RSS pledged to work with complete commitment for the freedom of the Hindu Rashtra, that is, Bharat. Dr. Hedgewar envisioned an all-India organisation prepared to fight for freedom after WWII. Before his passing, he regretted not completing this task by 1940 to seize this historic moment. His vision became clearer when we see that the Quit India movement was launched in 1942 and the INA was formed.

The second RSS sarsanghchalaak, Shri Guruji, worked to make the RSS a strong all-India organisation. At this time, the Quit India came to the fore, and RSS swayamsevaks participated in the movement.

Since RSS's biggest and most powerful participation was in Vidarbha, two towns, Chimur and Ashti, saw a takeover of government with 'Patri Sarkar.' Multiple Swayamsevak were either shot, hanged, or imprisoned.



The Indian independence struggle has often been portrayed through a limited lens. Emerging documents reveal a more detailed picture, highlighting the RSS, founded on spiritual patriotism rooted in India's Hindu culture. The swayamsevaks not only actively contributed to the freedom movement but also played a heroic role in post-independence colonial liberation within India."

The RSS further supported the Quit India movement by providing shelter and legal assistance in fighting cases of satyagrahis and these leaders.

When independence was declared, RSS volunteers protected the people of Punjab and Sindh and assisted many of them in escaping from the newly formed Pakistan. Hundreds of swayamsevaks sacrificed their lives, families, and businesses.

Even before the Indian army marched into Jammu and Kashmir after the signing of the treaty of accession, it was the RSS that stood with the Dogra army and later the Indian army to provide support.

They aided in the construction of roads, bridges, and runways; and picked up ammunition dropped by air force planes.

As unbelievable as it may sound, there were small colonies in India even after independence. Pondicherry was liberated with a treaty with the French in 1954. Dadra Nagar Haveli was liberated by RSS swayamsevaks led by Vinyakrao Apte, Sanghchalaak of Pune, in 1954. Thousands of swayamsevaks liberated Goa under the leadership of Jagannathrao Joshi. Rajbhau Mahkal from Indore was shot through the eye and lost his life, holding the Tricolour aloft.

In my book "Sangh & Swaraj", I have included the names of 33 swayamsevaks who lost their lives defending Hindus in the Amritsar riots. Other books like "Now it Can be Told", "Jammu Kashmir ki Ankahi Kahani", and "Jyoti Jala Nij Pran ki" must be read to understand the contribution of the RSS, before and after Independence.

Post World War II, the British Raj decided to give up on Bharat as they realised the rising anger against INA trials and the Naval rebellion. I do not negate the sacrifices of Indians under the non-violent path of freedom struggle, but request historians and others to take a balanced view and give credit where it is due. We all pay our respects to all the freedom fighters, whether saints, patriotic sadhus, janajaati leaders, revolutionaries, Congress, or others like the RSS. To truly understand our struggle for independence, we must revisit it with the depth and nuance it deserves, as the venerable historian R.C. Majumdar began, and finally give voice to the silenced narratives that shaped our nation.

The Echoes of 1971: Bangladesh's Path from Victory to Recent Strife



By
Raja Menon

"Jung hai jurrat toh mohabbat kya hai
Kaid parinde ki hasrat kya hai
Aazadi ke naam pe kitne hai maatam
insaan pe insaan hai aakhir kya haakam"

"If war is audacity, then what is love?
What is the desire of a caged bird?
How many mourning's are there in the name of freedom?
What is the right of man over man."

Pippa, a 2023 Hindi-language biographical war film, concludes with these lyrics by Shellee set to music by A.R. Rahman, reflecting the inevitable loss of conflict despite the euphoria of victory.

On December 16, 1971, Bangladeshis overthrew the brutal authoritarian West Pakistani regime that seemed unstoppable and had the support of the United States. I believe they could because they were pushed to the limit with no means of self-expression. When you're treated like you do not matter and your way of life is under attack, leading you to lose all hope, you will be driven to fight. However, that victory came at a tremendous cost: millions were killed, around 400,000 women were raped, and in desperation, the regime murdered intellectuals and potential leaders.

US leaders Nixon and Kissinger ignores the genocide despite US Consul General in Dhaka, Arthur Blood's "Blood telegrams," urging action. Instead, they supported the regime with arms and sent a naval fleet. While India provided political and military assistance, the victory was unequivocally that of the Bangladeshi people.



In 1971, the people overthrew the brutal West Pakistani regime through armed struggle, driven by a lack of self-expression and extreme desperation. Despite significant economic progress under Sheikh Hasina, many are feeling now feel hopeless, leading to renewed calls for action.

J. Krishnamurthy, the philosopher, said all conflict comes from ownership. Thus, when a few individuals attempt to hoard resources while alienating the majority, conflict becomes inevitable. During the making of Pippa and on previous trips to Bangladesh, I was fortunate to meet with diverse people-intellectuals, artists, musicians, business-people, and students. I noticed one common characteristic: their incredible cultural capital: a deep value for their tradition, music, and way of life. To me, it seems like this unity is what empowers them to rise in revolt whenever necessary.

With Sheikh Hasina at the helm

for 15 years, Bangladesh prospered economically, and social indicators improved. I wonder, why did we witness these recent events? How are the two rebellions similar? What lessons can we learn from these situations? I am neither a political scientist nor well-versed in Bangladesh's politics. However, as a filmmaker I observed that in historical and recent conflicts, people in power seemed disconnected from ordinary people, believing they could be subdued by force. The events of 1971 demonstrated that no force can stand against the human need for self-determination and expression. There is no comparison to the brutality or issues that drove 1971. However, when people are pushed into despair, it triggers a need to express themselves. They will stand up for their rights.

Propaganda and curated truth do not change reality. Suppressing dissent does not eliminate it. Without room for debate, conversation, or credibility for opposing points of view, the festering angst, even over minor issues can spiral into something much deeper. The need to be released from subjugation gives rise to rebellion, with a new beginning being the only acceptable solution.

Instability only benefits bad actors who use it for their political gain. I hope that through the next few months, all political parties will find solutions to ensure Bangladesh's stability. I hope, that the future is not taken for granted.

(The writer is a filmmaker. Views personal)

Rising Drone Threats and India's Response



By
Rajiv Nayan

Since 2019, Punjab and several other states have reported a sharp increase in drone sightings and incidents, particularly related to smuggling operations involving arms and drugs. The possibility of terrorist attacks or incidents targeting critical infrastructure using drones cannot be dismissed. India has already experienced attacks on military installations involving drones.

India has also faced drone attacks from the Houthis at sea, with 22 Indians onboard a British oil tanker being affected. While this may be considered a case of mistaken identity, where Indians were not the direct target, the incident underscores the growing threat posed by the proliferation of drones.

The increased involvement of China and Pakistan in drone-related activities is a serious concern for the Indian security community. In just a few months, over 100 drones flying from Pakistan were intercepted, a number consistent with previous years. Chinese-made drones, readily available at prices ranging from 1 lakh and 5 lakhs, are easily accessible to terrorists and criminals.

Pakistan-based groups like Lashkar-e-Taiba and Jaish-e-Mohammad have been identified as being behind the smuggling of arms, IEDs, and narcotics into India via drones. Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) has reportedly established six drone centers across the border, facilitating these smuggling operations with the assistance of the Pakistan Rangers.

Meanwhile, the India-Bangladesh border, once relatively stable due to Bangladesh's economic growth and



India confronts growing drone threats, fueled by increased smuggling and terrorism, with significant concerns over Chinese and Pakistani involvement. In response, the country is boosting border security, advancing domestic drone technology, and implementing stringent regulations to address this rising challenge.

Sheikh Hasina's cooperation, now faces uncertainty following her ouster and subsequent unrest.

There are concerns that the ISI may seek to exploit other frontiers as well. While unrest continued even after her departure, the formation of an interim government has slightly calmed the atmosphere, lingering fears persist, causing people to flee toward the Indian borders.

To counter these evolving threats, India's smart border management now requires smart policing. The use of drones, initially intended for other zones, could also prove effective in managing the Eastern border.

The frequent use of drones

against India has compelled the country to adopt a multi-pronged approach to address this menace. Indian diplomacy has engaged with like-minded nations in various bilateral and multilateral forums, aligning with global efforts to counter the threat posed by drones. For surveillance purposes, India has purchased drones from several countries and is also collaborating with others to produce drones domestically.

India is aware of the dangers posed by 'off-the-shelf' drones operated by terrorists or violent extremists worldwide. As a precaution, warnings and restrictions against drone use have been prominently displayed near sensitive installations. Additionally, an Interpol alert highlights the potential for drones to deliver chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear, and explosive materials in conflict zones.

The global threat landscape also raises concerns about possible terrorist attacks against soft targets, such as crowded public places.

Moreover, India has taken significant steps to develop indigenous drone technology. Under the IDEX (Innovation for Defence Excellence) initiative, start-ups have demonstrated their capabilities in counter-drone measures, and some indigenous anti-drone systems have already been inducted. Currently, 72 certified companies either manufacture or import drones in India, and they are being encouraged to develop both drone and counter-drone capabilities locally.

In addition, India has established a legal framework through the Drone Rules, 2021, and created institutions like the Drone Emergency Response System and the BSF Drone and Cyber Forensic Lab in New Delhi to tackle the security challenges posed by drones.

Anti-drone systems have been deployed along the border, with all security agencies coordinating their efforts. The focus must now shift to bolstering security along the Bangladesh border.

(The writer is a security expert. Views personal)



VADHVAN PORT PROJECT

A watershed moment in India's maritime saga

In June this year, the Narendra Modi-led Union cabinet cleared the decks for developing a state-of-the-art, "all-weather greenfield deep-draft major port" in Vadhvan near Dahanu in Maharashtra which is to be built at a whopping cost of Rs. 76,200 crores.

Since then, epithets like 'game-changer' and 'revolutionary' have been frequently bandied about in news reports while mentioning this ambitious project, a veritable engineering marvel which is planned to be operational by 2030.

Vadhvan, sited near Dahanu in the state's Palghar district around 150 km from Mumbai, is all of this and much more.

It is believed that the expansion of the port could revolutionize India's maritime sector and Indian business, besides acting as the hinge of which Maharashtra development would pivot for the next two decades.

Vadhvan is to be three times bigger than India's mega-ports - the government-run Jawaharlal Nehru Port Authority (JNPA) in Mumbai and the Adani-owned Mundra, the largest private port in the country while having the capacity to accommodate the world's biggest cargo ships that can sail in with 24,000 TEUs.

Such is the depth of ambition behind its conception that this major port, India's thirteenth and Maharashtra's third, is to be transformed into taking its place among the top ten container ports in the world.

As a touchstone of the Central government's Sagarmala Program, Vadhvan's strategic importance is hard to overstate: it is positioned as a hub port in the Arabian Sea, strategically catering to container traffic bound for the Gulf, Europe and even African nations, essaying a crucial part in the India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor (IMEEEEC) with Minister for Ports, Shipping and



Waterways Sarbananda Sonowal stating that Vadhvan would act as the main feeder port of the IMEEEC and propel cargo movement to Chabahar Port in Iran.

The employment potential is enormous with the infrastructure expected to create around 12 lakh employment opportunities.

Today, the country does not have a single port to accommodate the largest container ships in the world.

Once Vadhvan sees the light of day, it will have a cargo handling capacity of 298 million metric tonnes per annum including approximately 23.2 million Twenty-Foot Equivalent Units (TEUs) of containers, which exceeds the capacity

of any Indian port and positions it among Asia's largest ports. (TEU is the general unit for cargo capacity, germane to container ships and container ports)

The project, a joint venture between the JNPA and the Maharashtra Maritime Board (MMB), with a shareholding of 74% and 26% respectively, will also reduce the burden on the Jawaharlal Nehru Port which has been constrained in terms of cargo evacuation for the past several decades owing to the ever-burgeoning Mumbai city as well as due to limited depth of the harbour (barely 15 meters) which allows the mooring of only small ships. Because of this geographical constraint, cargo ships coming to India are compelled to first unload

the goods at Colombo or Singapore and bring them back to India with the help of small ships.

That problem will disappear with the expansion of the port at Vadhvan as its projected capacity to handle container ships ranging from 16,000 to 24,000 TEUs is expected to make trade highly cost-effective.

Geographically, the Arabian coast at Vadhvan is ideally suited for a new port as there is a natural depth of 20 meters near the shore.

So, what will propel Vadhvan into the ranks of a world-class mega port?

Automation in port container terminals (fully automatic and semi-automatic) will help avoid port congestion and avoid delays which in turn will reduce port storage charges. Vadhvan will be integrated with state-of-the-art systems for monitoring and evaluation of various port equipment.

Keeping in mind environmental concerns, Vadhvan is to be constructed as a green port with the optimal utilization of efficient systems to reduce fuel consumption and air pollution.

A raft of sustainable solutions has been conceptualized during the construction phase itself; for instance, the use of green additives in concrete mixes.

As part of the employment generation process, skill development will form a vital component with various training programs to be organized for youth in the construction phase. There are proposed open sea cage culture training programmes that are to be facilitated by NGOs to aid fishermen. Several other training programmes have already been conducted which includes computer software, tailoring, heavy vehicle driving and mechanics, custom services, and more. Over 156 candidates have already been employed locally after pursuing these training programs.

“Vadhvan Port will bring prosperity”

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

How do you look at the proposed Vadhvan Port project?

This is a very important project. The Prime Minister has given his approval to this project. Vadhvan will be the largest port, deepest port in India having capacity of around nine ports. Also, it will be the ninth largest port all over the world. It will drastically change not only Palghar but overall India's economy.



What is so special about Vadhvan Port?

The most important thing is it is designed in the sea. On the land, around 5,000 acre area which is close to 1,500 hectares is being created. That will be dedicated for the railway and highway. Only that part of land acquisition will take place. The first phase will open in 2029. The total cost is around Rs 76,000 crore. The Union government has allotted Rs 45,000 crore recently. So it is a very important project for Palghar district. It will change the overall scenario of Palghar.

What about employment generation?

This project will generate around 11.50 lakh jobs. The locals are going to get a lot of employment opportunities. Apart from jobs, all other sectors will bloom here. That includes the hotel industry, service industry and tourism. There will be prosperity with the economic boom.

There is a bullet train project as well. 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.

STATUS OF VARIOUS ACTIVITIES

- MoEF&CC, GoI has granted **Environmental Clearance** and Coastal Regulation Zone Approval to the project on 16th Feb, 2024.
- MoU with State Departments for **Power Supply** scheme for 80 MVA has been finalized in consultation with MSETCL & MSEDCL.
- Water Supply** with The water reservation of about 12.5 MLD has been allocated from Kurze Dam Palghar by Water Resource Dept of Govt of Maharashtra. The water supply scheme through Maharashtra Jeevan Pradhikaran (MJP) has been finalized.
- Investment proposal:** Investment of Rs 76220 Crore is recommended by PIB & approved by Union Cabinet on 19th June, 2024.

- Sand Mining Composite license under OAMDR Act 2002 for reservation is received from Ministry of Mines through extraordinary Gazette of India CG-DI-E-22122023-250813 on 21st December 2023 and consultation with other Ministries is in process by Ministry of Mines for obtaining license for sand mining.
- Road connectivity:** To be implemented through NHAI (32 Km). The land acquisition process for road and rail connectivity is in process through NHAI and LAC of NHAI has approved 3(A) proposal
- The Proposal for Geo Physical survey at Quarry site is in process through Forest Dept.
- Rail connectivity:** Vadhvan Port is about 12 Km at New Palghar Station (DFCC) and to be implemented by Indian Railway [Western Railway]



BRIEF

Kumarmangalam's kids join Hindalco board
Aditya Birla group Chairman Kumar Mangalam's children Ananya and Aryaman have been inducted into the board aluminium company Hindalco, as per stock exchange filing. Ananya Birla runs the second largest micro-finance institution in India called Svatantra Microfin while Aryaman brings his experience in venture capital investing and professional sports.

WPI inflation drops to 2.04% in July
India's wholesale price index (WPI) inflation declined to 2.04 percent in July after rising for four consecutive months, as per a government statement released Wednesday. In the preceding months of June and May, the WPI stood at 3.36 percent and 2.61 percent and in the month of July last year it stood at 4.18 percent, the statement by Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade said.

Wipro releases 'Pulse of Cloud' report
Wipro Limited has released its first 'Pulse of Cloud' report highlighting the evolving dynamics of cloud and artificial intelligence (AI) adoption across industries. The report reveals the impact of AI on cloud investments, with over half (54%) of the surveyed organizations citing AI as the main driver of their cloud investments. Further, as organizations prepare for an AI-driven future, they are increasing investments in cloud, with more than half of respondents indicating that they are increasing investments in hybrid (54%) and public (56%) cloud. And while a majority of respondents (55%) say their cloud adoption is currently outstripping AI adoption, more than one third (35%) say they are advancing in tandem with both technologies.

Airtel services near Indo-China border
Bharti Airtel has launched its network in Phobrang village on the Indo-China border. Despite having to endure challenges like travelling through tough terrains, braving severe climatic conditions and passing through highly sensitive zones, Airtel's network roll-out team persevered until they had successfully executed the deployment.

HAL declared net profit of Rs 1,437 cr
HAL declared a net profit of 1,437.16 crore in Q1 FY25 as against Rs 814.24 crore in the year-ago period. The company's total income increased by 17.54% to Rs 5,083.85 crore from Rs 4,325.29 crore, but revenue and total income decreased quarter-on-quarter. HAL's total expense increased by 8.22% and revenue from operations increased by 11.04%, but profit slipped by 66.65% on a sequential basis. The state-owned company manufactures military aircraft, helicopters, engines, and offers maintenance and repair services, with maintenance being its biggest business.

Godrej Consumer Products to foray into pet foods

Mumbai: Godrej Consumer Product Ltd (GCPL) has forayed into the Rs 5,000 crore pet food category by forming a subsidiary – Godrej Pet Care (GPC), the company said in a statement to the stock exchange.
"To give a perspective, only ~10% of Indians own a pet of which only 10% feed packaged food and that too only 40% of the time," said Sudhir Sitapati, Managing Director and CEO, GCPL.
Calorie conversion in

Indian skin-care spend seen rising in sync with rising incomes

Mumbai: Indians are increasingly getting conscious about their skin care with a shift seen towards science-based skin care products, said a report by a global investment banking firm.
Data from Google search trends show a sharp spike in search for skin care 'active' ingredients like Niacinamide, Retinol and Vitamin C in the last 5 years, the report by Goldman Sachs said.
The average Indian consumer is becoming increasingly aware and educated about specific ingredients and their role in addressing skin care needs. Influencing them are a combination of advertising, peer groups, social media influencers and dermatologists (some of whom now have YouTube channels), the report said.
However, India continues to lag behind Indonesia and China when it comes to per capita consumption of skin care and one-fourth and one-fifteenth, respectively, the report said, quoting Euromonitor data.
As per the report, India's skin care market is still at a nascent stage with per capita annual beauty spend at US\$10 in 2023, compared to China's annual per capita beauty spend at \$40 and mature markets like the US having a per capita spend of over \$200.

| Country | USD |
|---------|-----|
| India | 10 |
| China | 40 |
| USA | 200 |

Exhibit 10: Skin care spend per capita shows the prematuration opportunity that can be unlocked in India by brands

Wine drinking picks-up in April-June

By Kailas Rajwadkar
Mumbai: Despite the significant headwinds due to restriction during the parliamentary election in April-June quarter, wine drinking had picked up leading to above expected revenue and profit for Sula Vineyards.
"A really encouraging trend for us is that wine drinking is picking up well beyond the metros with states like Telangana, Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Haryana, among others performing strongly for us in Q1," said Rajeev Samant, CEO, Sula Vineyards.
Several dry days and scorching heat wave had restricted the movement of alcoholic beverages, the company said in its communication to the stock exchange.
But the company reported a net profit of Rs 14.6 crore on net revenue of Rs 129.7 crore, up 6.8 percent and 9.8 percent respectively over the corresponding quarter last year.
The Pune's Porsche incident resulted in the closure of pubs and this affected the Sula. However, the Sula management noticed these external challenges have gradually softened in the current quarter, resulting in some uptick in offtakes during July, said the quarterly update from Way2Wealth – an investment consultancy firm.
According to an industry report released last year, India's wine industry had a turnover of around Rs 1,000 crore of which Maharashtra's account for a lion's share with Nashik accounting for a substantial percentage and hence termed as the wine capital of the



country. Nashik is followed by Sangli, Pune, Solapur, Buldhana and Ahmednagar as per the industry report.
Sula has been a consistent market leader in the Indian wine industry in terms of sales volume and value since FY09 crossing ~50% market share by value in the domestic 100% grapes wine market.
The management is confident of delivering positive results going forward, driven by premiumisation, focusing on its own brands and marketing and digitalization expansion also the good harvest this year, the ongoing boom in domestic wine tourism, and more consumers choosing premium Indian wines, these trends bode well for the future, Way2 Wealth said.

Maharashtra shines in NSE growth of investors

By Correspondent
Mumbai: The National Stock Exchange (NSE) witnessed a 13.9% increase in the number of active investors, positioning Maharashtra as the leading state with the highest number of active market users.
On MoM basis, the active investor base on the NSE has seen a notable surge, climbing to 1.5 crore in June, marking the third consecutive month of growth in this metric. A report from the NSE reveals that the monthly trading activity among individuals has grown by 13.1% from May to June, indicating a consistent trend towards

increased market engagement.
As of June, the NSE recorded a significant number of active domestic market investors from the top 10 states in India, with a total of 1.2 crore individuals. These states include Maharashtra, Gujarat, Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, Rajasthan, Karnataka, Delhi, Tamil Nadu, Madhya Pradesh, and Haryana.
Maharashtra emerged as the leading state in June, significantly contributing to the influx of new and active investors into the stock markets. Moreover, the report highlights a year-on-year increase in the number of registered investors, reaching 9.7 crore at the end of June, a substantial rise from approximately 7.6 crore at the same time the previous year.
Regionally, the South and East of India have seen substantial growth in the active investor base, with an increase of 16.8% to 29.1 lakh and 15.6% to 16.7 lakh, respectively, in the month of June.
The Northern and Western regions have also experienced growth, with investor bases reaching 55 lakh and 56 lakh, respectively, in June 2024. This data underscores a broad and consistent expansion in investor participation across various regions of India.

ED summons Mohit Burman

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) has formally summoned Mohit Burman, the Chairman of Dabur India, alongside three independent directors of Care Health Insurance and the manager responsible for the open offer, in relation to an investigation into potential money laundering activities associated with the Burman family's open offer to Religare Enterprises (REL) shareholders. This investigation is centered around allegations that funds were diverted from Religare Finance, a non-banking financial institution (NBFC) operating within the Religare Group, to entities linked to the open offer. Dabur stock has fallen more than 10% from peak after making a high of Rs. 662 on 23 July.

All eyes on Ather's \$450 mn IPO

By Correspondent
Mumbai: Ather Energy, a Bengaluru-based electric two-wheeler manufacturer, is poised to launch its Initial Public Offering (IPO). It is anticipated that the company will submit its preliminary red herring prospectus to the Securities Exchange Board of India (Sebi) in September 2024 for its IPO. This offering is expected to raise a substantial amount of over \$450 million.
The company has already garnered significant investment, raising \$71 million from the government-backed National Investment and Infrastructure Fund Limited (NIIF), valuing the company at \$1.3 billion. This valuation places Ather Energy among the unicorn club, having achieved a valuation of over \$1 billion before its IPO. It marks the fifth company in India to surpass this valuation threshold this year, alongside Rapido, Perfios, Krutrim, and Porter.
In May of this year, Ather Energy secured an additional \$34 million in funding through a blend of debt and equity, predominantly from venture debt and its co-founders. Data platform Tracxn reports that the company has successfully raised \$502 million across 19 rounds of funding as of August 13.
The journey of Ather Energy began in 2013, founded by Tarun Mehta and Swapnil Jain, both graduates of IIT Madras. Mehta's enthusiasm for electric vehicles prompted him to leave his position at Ashok Leyland in 2012 to dedicate himself to enhancing battery packs.

Recognizing that battery packs were merely one component of the challenge, Mehta and his team embarked on the ambitious task of developing an entirely new electric vehicle. Jain joined Mehta in this endeavor, conceptualizing Ather Energy with him in 2012.
The company's investor base includes notable entities such as Tiger Global Management, the co-founders of Flipkart, Sachin and Binny Bansal, Innoven Capital, among others. Presently, Ather Energy operates two manufacturing facilities in Hosur, Tamil Nadu, with one dedicated to battery production and the other to vehicle assembly. Plans are underway for the establishment of its fourth facility in Maharashtra, with an investment exceeding Rs 2,000 crore.

Zepto plans to raise \$310 M

By Correspondent
Mumbai: Quick-commerce grocery delivery platform Zepto, currently headquartered in Singapore, is set to shift its operations to India ahead of its initial public offering (IPO) filing. This strategic move is part of Zepto's ambitious plans to further its growth and valuation.
The company, which has been in operation for three years, is poised to raise an additional \$310 million, significantly increasing its valuation to \$5 billion. This represents a 40 percent increase from its valuation at the time of its most recent funding round, which occurred just over a month ago.
The new funding round is expected to attract a diverse group of investors, including Mars Growth Capital—a partnership managed by Mitsubishi UFJ Financial Group Inc and Liquidity Group from Israel. This collaboration is in addition to existing investors such as General Catalyst and other notable entities.

As deposits lag credit growth, Indian banking at crossroads

By Correspondent
Mumbai: August 14, 2024: Indian banking system is undergoing a paradigm shift with average depositors shifting their allegiance towards the capital market through systematic investment plan (SIP) making the lenders starved for deposits.
to other investment avenues like mutual funds that can be threatened into a structural liquidity management issue.
RBI Governor at the industry event did point out that customers were increasingly allocating their savings to mutual funds, insurance funds and pension funds that has led to the decline in the share of bank deposits. As a result, interest rates on the deposits might firm up.
According to a report by brokerage house – KR Choksey on State Bank of India after the latter's Apr-Jun results – "The cost of deposits (for SBI) increased by 45 bps year-on-year and 19 bps quarter-on-quarter. The increase in the term deposit rates over the past two quarters resulted in the increase in overall cost of funds (for the bank)."
Last week, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman commenting on the need to reverse the flagging deposit growth rate called upon banks to focus on mobilizing small deposits.
Banks need to take the old-fashioned route to bring back focus on mobilising "small deposits" and not just big deposits in order to reverse the flagging deposit growth rate, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said Saturday.
"It's right that credit is going through digital format and collection of deposits is not. Huge big deposits have always been a very lazy banker's job but the trickles which come are going to be the bread and butter money to lend regularly," the Finance Minister said adding that small deposits though a grinding monotony is where the bread and butter lies for the banker.
Stating it as a positive caution to the banks, RBI Governor Das said that they have been witnessing a 300-400 basis points gap between deposits and credit growth, with deposits being lower. Though RBI doesn't see a crisis, if unattended can lead to a potential structural liquidity management issue.

QUOTE OF THE DAY

“This new facility will soon make Hyderabad the largest presence for Cognizant in India. I hope you will soon grow so big you will have one lakh employees in Hyderabad.”

Revanth Reddy
Telangana CM

Financial Independence - Why and How to Achieve?

By Mangesh Kulkarni
In the 77 years that have passed since India won its independence, the country has seen a significant upturn in the financial standing of its citizens. Less than 3% of all Indians now live in extreme poverty, and according to a report by the People Research on India's Consumer Economy (PRICE), the middle class in India grew by 6.3% per year between 1995 and 2021. In fact, the middle class now represents 31% of India's population and is projected to hit 38% by 2031 and 60% by 2047.
This journey from being poor to middle class and going from middle class to attaining a state of affluence takes many years. Climbing this ladder is difficult and time-consuming, and when one does climb that ladder, staying there can be even more difficult. The biggest fear in the minds of the

- Keep your expenses low
- Spend less, invest more
- Invest aggressively in equities, real estate and gold when you are young
- Avoid buying depreciating assets by taking loans and paying EMIs
- Don't focus exclusively on returns, liquidity is also important
- Always keep an emergency fund that's equivalent to 12 months of your expenses. Gradually, increase this amount to 36 months of expenses

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5 SIGNS OF GOOD HEALTH

India is only 4%. China, which was remarkably similar to India 15 years ago, has 20% pet ownership of 25%, he said in the statement that was released to share first quarter financial performance.
While the opportunity is clear, we believe that our right to win as a group is high. GAVL, our group company, is the market leader in animal feed and has a good understanding of pet foods R&D, with competitive advantages in supply chain, Sitapati said. GCPL will invest the entire capital of Rs 500 crore in GPC over a period of 5 years, post which we see GPC becoming cash flow positive.
GAVL will manufacture the pet food for GCPL, as well as conduct the research and development work.
"Lead times to set up capex are long, and we hope to commence manufacturing in the second half of next year," Sitapati said. According to a recent

industry report, pet adoption is on the rise in India with the number of pets growing at 10% every year. Apart from rising disposable income, key driver include preference for nuclear families and delayed child-bearing among working couples, the report said.
Another industry report had estimated India's pet food market size at USD 0.85 billion in 2024, and is expected to reach USD 1.87 billion by 2029, growing at a CAGR of 17.08% during the forecast period (2024-2029).

middle class is "What will happen if we lose our jobs or if our business goes through a rough patch?" This feeling of insecurity is the biggest challenge that many Indians face. This fear can only be overcome by achieving financial independence.
To understand financial independence, we need to understand two types of incomes, viz., active income and passive income. The salary we earn from our jobs, or the profits we earn from our business is active income. Passive income can be anything for which we are not actually working on a regular basis, so it could be rental income from an apartment that we own, or the interest that our FDs earn, or dividends from any stocks that we have invested in. If passive income alone is sufficient to take care of our day-to-day expenses, in a sustainable manner over the long term, we can say we have achieved financial independence.
In traditional society, 60 years was the base retirement age. But with changing times, some individuals say that they wish to retire earlier, possibly when they are in their 40s. This, of course, is only possible if one has one or more sustainable means of earning passive income. Accomplishing this may not be the easiest thing in the world, but one can start by analysing and evaluating one's financial situation, setting financial goals pertaining to savings, investments and setting up streams of passive income, and having a plan in place for achieving these goals. Managing debt is an important part of achieving long-term financial independence.



BRIEF

Foxconn Chairman meets PM, discusses investment plan

Jindal Stainless starts nickel pig iron smelter in Indonesia

Jindal Stainless has commissioned its Nickel Pig Iron smelter facility located in an industrial park in Halmaheha Islands, Indonesia, eight months ahead of the scheduled timeline. Through this joint venture (JV) with New Yaking Pte. Ltd., Jindal Stainless has ensured the long-term availability of nickel for stainless steel production. In March 2023, Jindal Stainless had announced a collaborative agreement with New Yaking Pte. Ltd by acquiring 49% equity interest for around USD 157 million.

Glenmark Q1 net profit at Rs 340.2 crore

Glenmark Pharma reported a net profit of Rs 340.2 crore in the Apr-Jun quarter compared to Rs 37.7 crore in the corresponding quarter last year. Consolidated revenue for the first quarter grew by 6.9 percent to Rs 3,244.2 crore over the same quarter last year.

Hinduja Global Solution net profit jumps

Business process management firm Hinduja Global Solutions has posted a multifold jump in its consolidated profit to Rs 161.5 crore in the first quarter ended June 30, mainly due to sale proceeds of healthcare business received during the period.

The company reported a profit of Rs 16.64 crore a year ago. Without the one-time gain from the sale of the healthcare business, HGS recorded a loss of Rs 57 crore during the reported quarter from continuing operations. The revenue from operations of Hinduja Global Solutions (HGS) declined by 3.6 per cent.

New Delhi: The chairman of iPhone contract manufacturer Foxconn, Young Liu, called on Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday and discussed the company's investment plan in India.

"Wonderful to meet Mr. Young Liu, the Chairman of Hon Hai Technology Group (Foxconn). I highlighted the wonderful opportunities India offers in futuristic sectors. We also

had excellent discussions on their investment plans in India in states like Karnataka, Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh," Modi said in a post on social media platform X.

Liu had also visited India in July last year to attend the Semicon India conclave where he met Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Liu was conferred Padma Bhushan, the third-highest civilian award, on the eve of

the 75th Republic Day this year. Foxconn is estimated to employ over 40,000 people in India. The company's total investment in India is estimated to be in the range of USD 9-10 billion.

The company is in the process of expanding its iPhone production facility, setting up a chip plant in a joint venture with HCL Group, an electric vehicle manufacturing unit and an Apple AirPods plant.

Maharashtra deliberately excluded: NCP (SP)

Mumbai: The NCP (Sharadchandra Pawar) on Wednesday accused the BJP-led NDA of deliberately ignoring Maharashtra during discussions on Foxconn's investment plans in India.

"Once again, Maharashtra is not a part of the excellent discussions on the investment plans of Foxconn in India. Does this also mean that Maharashtra is not a part of the won-

derful opportunities India offers in futuristic sectors?" NCP (SP) national spokesperson Clyde Crasto tweeted.

Reacting to Prime Minister Narendra Modi's tweet about meeting Young Liu, the Chairman of Hon Hai Technology Group (Foxconn), Crasto alleged Maharashtra was always neglected and badly treated by the NDA government.

The Maha Vikas Aghadi of Shiv Sena (UBT), NCP (SP), and Congress had claimed that the Foxconn-Vedanta semi-conductor plant was initially planned in Maharashtra, but was diverted to Gujarat ahead of the assembly elections in that state in 2022.

Foxconn last year announced its withdrawal from the semi-conductor joint venture with Vedanta.



New Delhi Union Minister of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare Shivraj Singh Chauhan addresses the gathering during a felicitation program of 'Lakhpati and Drone Didis' at Pusa, in New Delhi on Wednesday (PTI Photo)

Govt monitoring trade with Bangladesh: Commerce Secretary

New Delhi: India is monitoring the situation in Bangladesh and taking steps to improve the cross-border trade between the two nations, Commerce Secretary Sunil Barthwal said on Wednesday.

Domestic exporters have expressed concerns over the political crisis in Bangladesh and said developments in the neighbouring country would have implications on bilateral trade.

Barthwal said that the situation in Bangladesh is improving fast and "we are monitoring the trade which is happening across the borders and what we feel that is whatever disruptions were there, they have been largely addressed".

"We also believe that between India and Bangladesh, there should be improvement in trade. So we feel that whatever best ef-

orts, we can make for improving the trade, we should do that and we are doing that".

On August 8, Nobel laureate Muhammad Yunus returned to Bangladesh from Paris to take oath as the head of Bangladesh's interim government, three days after Sheikh Hasina resigned as Prime Minister and fled the country following widespread protests against her regime.

India's exports to Bangladesh in July rose by 11.13 per cent to USD 803.52 million. During April-July, exports increased by 10.76 per cent to USD 3.58 billion.

Bangladesh is India's biggest trade partner in South Asia and India is the second biggest trade partner of the neighbouring country in Asia.

India's exports to Bangladesh dipped to USD 11 billion in 2023-24 from USD

12.21 billion in 2022-23. Imports too declined to USD 1.84 billion in the last fiscal from USD 2 billion in 2022-23.

India's main exports include vegetables, coffee, tea, spices, sugar, confectionary, refined petroleum oil, chemicals, cotton, iron, steel and vehicles. The main import items are fish, plastic, leather and apparel, among others.

"We are monitoring things. We want that trade relations to be restored...we are watching the situation. It will be premature to say how things will change and happen," he added.

Federation of Indian Export Organisations (FIEO) President Ashwani Kumar said that returning of normalcy of trade between India and Bangladesh will not only further give a boost to the overall order bookings but also to the labour-intensive sectors of exports.

SMEs turn to capital markets

Kolkata: Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) are increasingly turning to the capital markets for funding, with 780 SMEs listed on the NSE and BSE as of June 2023, a senior official said on Wednesday, adding that these companies have raised approximately Rs 11,000 crore.

The combined market capitalisation of these SMEs now exceeds Rs 1.6 lakh crore, Shekhar Chaudhary, director of the financial markets division at the department of economic affairs, said.

Speaking at the 10th edition of the CII (East) Capital Markets Conclave, Chaudhary emphasised the vital role capital markets play in India's economic growth and development.

A report on SME Initial Public Offerings (IPOs) was released during the event. Experts discussed how capital markets could drive India's economic future by empowering SMEs to make significant contributions to the country's GDP.

QUOTE OF THE DAY



Jitendra Singh
Minister for Science and Technology

"If the last industrial revolution in the 1990s was IT-driven, the next one in the 21st century will be bioeconomy driven."

Tata Steel acquires equity

New Delhi: Tata Steel on Wednesday said it has acquired about 116 crore equity shares in its Singapore-based arm for USD 182 million.

"Tata Steel acquired 1,15,92,35,669 ordinary equity shares of face value USD 0.157 each aggregating to USD 182 million (Rs 1,528.24 crore) in T Steel Holdings Pte Ltd (TSHP)," the company said in an exchange filing.

Post this acquisition, TSHP will continue to be a wholly-owned subsidiary of the company, it added.

India, Russia discussing rupee-rouble trade

New Delhi: India and Russia are discussing holding trade in local currencies and reducing non-tariff barriers by Moscow to boost the bilateral trade, Commerce Secretary Sunil Barthwal said on Wednesday.

The secretary raised these issues during his meetings with Russian Minister for Economic Development Maxim Reshetnikov; Russia's Deputy Minister of Industry and Trade Alexey Gruzdev; Head of FSVPS (Federal Service for Veterinary and Phytosanitary Supervision) Sergei Dankvert of the Russian Federation last month.

"We discussed a lot of issues to improve trade between India and Russia. We also discussed how to facilitate rupee-rouble trade, how non-tariff measures are impacting our trade and how they should be reduced," he told reporters here.

He added that Russia has started working to cut the barriers. Indian export sectors such as meat and pharma face issues in Russia.

India, Barthwal said, also discussed diversification of

trade beyond petroleum products.

"We are expecting that even in non-petroleum trade, there will be a good improvement in volumes," he said.

Further, the secretary said that balancing bilateral trade is key at present as there is a trade imbalance.

"The rupee-rouble trade will also be affected only when there is more balance of trade," he said adding that over 53 vostro accounts have been opened.

The meetings with Russia hold significance as both countries look to increase the bilateral trade to USD 100 billion by 2030.

India is focussing on various sectors like electronics, besides taking up issues of non-trade barriers in areas like shrimp and pharma, to boost exports to sanction-hit Russia and move towards achieving this target.

At present, the bilateral trade stands at about USD 67 billion.

India's exports to Russia stood at USD 4.3 billion in 2023-24 while imports were USD 61.4 billion.

योजना सर्व स्पर्शी ... गतिमान आणि पारदर्शी !

- नमो शेतकरी महासन्मान योजना
- मुख्यमंत्री बळीराजा मोफत वीज योजना
- मुख्यमंत्री कृषी व अन्न प्रक्रिया योजना
- मुख्यमंत्री तीर्थ दर्शन योजना
- मुख्यमंत्री माझी लाडकी बहीण योजना
- मुख्यमंत्री युवा कार्य प्रशिक्षण योजना
- मुख्यमंत्री माझी शाळा सुंदर शाळा
- मुख्यमंत्री अन्नपूर्णा योजना
- मुख्यमंत्री वयोश्री योजना
- मुलींना मोफत व्यावसायिक शिक्षण

अशा अनेक लोकहिताच्या योजना शासनाने हाती घेऊन प्रगतीचा वेग वाढविण्यात यश मिळवले आहे.

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| TOP 5 GAINERS | |
|---------------|-------------------|
| % | Volume |
| +2.29 | TCS 32,26,545 |
| +1.96 | HCLTECH 39,32,148 |
| +1.47 | TECHM 28,33,790 |
| +1.25 | INFY 74,50,718 |
| +1.16 | M&M 26,09,359 |

| TOP 5 LOSERS | |
|--------------|----------------------|
| % | POINTS |
| -4.03 | DIVISLAB 7,29,449 |
| -3.17 | HEROMOTOCO 21,85,163 |
| -3.1 | COALINDIA 47,66,889 |
| -2.35 | ULTRACEMCO 4,04,673 |
| -2.14 | DRREDDY 3,45,593 |

Source: BSE



Nanar bauxite mining project:

Residents raise concerns over health hazards

By Esha Lohia

Mumbai : In May 2019, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP)-led coalition government headed by then Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis had allocated a bauxite mining project at Nanar (in Ratnagiri district) in the State's verdant Konkan coastal belt to a firm based in the neighbouring state of Goa. The project was given to Goa-based Sociedade De Fomento Industrial Pvt. Ltd. - a member company of Fomento Resources - following an auction even as the controversial Nanar refinery project was facing strident protests by the local populace.

After a successful campaign, in which parties of the opposition Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) coalition jumped into the fray, stalled the proposed refinery project, villagers of Nanar and adjacent Humdara- Ghodepaiwadi (Sagave Village) now are embroiled in another campaign to prevent the bauxite mining project from taking off. The proposed Nanar Bauxite mining site spans 358 acres whereas the Sagave site covers approximately 297 acres of land, following an auction in May 2019. Fomento resources headed by Amber Timblo purchased the electoral bonds through subsidiaries such as Infrastructure Logistics Pvt. Ltd. and Hardeh Ores Pvt. Ltd. whereas Gamma Iron India Limited is deployed for the bauxite mining project located in Humdara- Ghodepaiwadi (Sagave Village). According to sources, the Timblo family, who run the Fomento



group, are said to be major donors to the ruling BJP. The bauxite project has been hanging fire for a number of reasons with the 2019 Maharashtra Assembly election followed by the COVID-19 pandemic coming in way of its implementation. The vociferous protests against the proposed oil refinery in Nanar, which allegedly threatened to destroy Konkani's rich biodiversity, helped create an atmosphere against the bauxite mining project there.

What is the project?

As per the pre-feasibility report to obtain environmental clearance, the proposed Bauxite mine is to be developed by the opencast mechanized mining method (a surface mining technique where heavy machinery is used to efficiently remove overburden and extract minerals from large open pits or quarries). While assuring that all recommended environmental protective measures including "dust suppression, water treatment, water conservation, soil conservation and afforestation will be undertaken to mitigate with the impacts caused by mining activities," the re-

port says that the opening of the bauxite mine would contribute towards socio-economic upliftment in Nanar, by providing employment to 135 persons directly and around 225 persons indirectly. "The extracted bauxite will be sold domestically or further exported. Considering the ore production of 2.2 million tonnes during the present approved mining plan period (i.e. 5 years after the execution of Mining Lease) and subsequent 0.9 million tonnes per annum of ore production, the expected life of the mine is about 14 years from the date of execution of mining operations," says the report. The project proponents also promise to improve sanitation, health and education in nearby villages while facilitating promotion of cultural and religious activities along with repairs of transport roads, thus generating employment opportunities to villagers hitherto dependent solely on agricultural activities. However, locals are vehemently opposed to the project. They fear that the mining activities will irreparably damage the environment and nearby

plantation, deplete groundwater resources, and disrupt the livelihoods of fishermen as well. Villagers have been irked after the Nanar gram panchayat last month informed them of a public hearing on the bauxite mining proposals. The Maharashtra Pollution Control Board (MPCB) had announced the public hearing of the bauxite mining projects to be held on August 29 (Nanar) and September 5 (Sagave) respectively. The villagers' ire against the proposed bauxite mining projects has now led to speculation that the public hearing could be postponed for an indefinite period. On August 10, the villagers had met with Guardian Minister of Ratnagiri and State Industries Minister Uday Samant.

Objections of residents

The MPCB's draft report on the environmental impact assessment of the project assures that the project proponent will take all precautionary measures "to reduce the impact of mining operations on air, water, noise and soil and ensure that all control measures shall comply with the prescribed standards." The report also added that the proposed production of ore will be carried out by fully mechanised open-cast mining, with no drilling and blasting. However, villagers remain sceptical. Satyajit Chavan, a local activist, says, "People in the Konkan region are nature lovers. They are all too aware of the false promises made by companies in the past in the name of employment opportuni-

ties, environmental protection as per their previous experience. So, people here do not want such a red-category project." There are concerns related to health hazards as well due to the particulate matter and pollution caused by the mining, Chavan observes. Laterite is made up of this bauxite and iron oxide, aluminium oxide. While not entirely but parts of the laterite plateau in the region is home to Alphonso mango and cashew plantation. Moreover, it's a spongy laterite plateau that serves as a natural reservoir, storing water for downstream villages throughout the year. According to Chavan, "While the bauxite specified region may not encompass Alphonso mangocashew plantation, the surrounding area has thousands of this Alphonso mango plantation that also has a GI tag." He observed that residents of the Konkan region were well-versed with the implications of mining by educating themselves on issues faced by people in Dapoli, Mandangad and other regions with established bauxite mining sites. "Transportation by the dumpers is proven to be dangerous as people get killed in accidents because of the rash driving of the dumpers," Chavan adds. While the ruling Mahayuti coalition is expected to tread warily on this issue given the Assembly election is barely a couple of months away, it remains to be seen if the opposition MVA seeks to capitalize on the controversy.

'Environmental degradation resulting in increasing incidents of landslides'

Sringeri: Environmentalist and author Dr. Kalkuli Vittal Hegde, who is spearheading the environmental movement in the Malnad areas in Karnataka, has said unscientific methods of development and scant respect for structural integrity of hills were among reasons for incidents of landslides in Shiroor and Wayanad recently. He also expressed concern over the increase in landslides and erratic rainfall in the Western Ghats. "Too much use of fossil fuels and irresponsible development models have resulted in a great degree of topsoil erosion on both sides of the Western Ghats, which is a barometer of the environmental health of the Southern Peninsular region," he said. Hegde is the first environmental expert on the Malnad regions (hilly terrain) of the southern peninsular region, to collect rain related statistics from 1895 to 2020 and beyond until the current monsoon. "We were already warned by unexplained occurrences of cyclones even on the western seaboard of the Arabian Sea since 2020. But we chose to ignore the signals, and now we have enough and more rain than the typical monsoons every alternative year and the increase of volumes of rain in certain areas like Kodagu, Wayanad, the coastal region, and the slopes of Western Ghats on the western region is fearsome." Major landslides hit the Mundakkai and Chooralamal regions of Wayanad on July 30 almost decimating both the areas, leaving over 230 people dead.

EXPLAINER

Nar-Par-Girna river linking

Enhanced irrigation facilities on card

Mumbai: The Maharashtra government has approved the river linking project Nar-Par-Girna with an aim to irrigate the parched areas of Nashik and Jalgaon districts in North Maharashtra region. Once completed this project will drastically improve the irrigation facilities in this region.

What is the project?

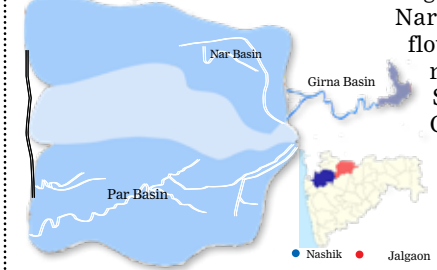
The Nar river is in Peth taluka and Par river is in Surgana taluka of Nashik district. The Girna basin is on the east of the mountain in Jalgaon district. The Nar and Par rivers flow through Gujarat into Arabian Sea. The river Girna flows through Nashik and Jalgaon before merging with river Tapi. The river linking is a project to divert the surplus water from 20 small proposed dams of west-flowing rivers such as the Ambika, Auranga, and Nar-Par basins to the east side - Girna river of Tapi basin. Through this scheme, 10.64 thousand million cubic feet (TMC) of water is proposed to fetch from Nar-Par to Girna. It will benefit 49,516 hectares in Nashik and Jalgaon districts. The project's cost is estimated at Rs 7,015 crore.

Who will get the benefit?

The residents and farmers in Kalvan, Satana, Deola, Malegaon, Chalisgaon, Pachora, Bhadgaon, Erandol, Dharangaon, Amlaner could increase their area under irrigation. A part of Dhule district will also come under the irrigation under this project. The Tapi Irrigation Development Corporation (TIDC) had conceived a detailed plan consisting of 22 dams to transfer all the surplus water from the four west flowing basins into eastern Maharashtra.

Political dividend

The approval to the river linking project has come as a boost for the Mahayuti government ahead of the Assembly elections due in October. The Maharashtra government had locked horns with Gujarat over sharing the water of Girna river and Narmada. The Mahayuti government's success in maintaining Maharashtra's stand is expected to give the ruling dispensation some political dividends in the north Maharashtra region. There are 35 out of 288 Assembly seats in the north Maharashtra region that includes Jalgaon, Dhule, Nandurbar and Nashik.



Volunteers try to extinguish the fire in northern Athens, Monday, Aug. 12, 2024, as hundreds of firefighters tackle a major wildfire raging out of control on fringes of Greek capital. (APPTI)

Kerala announces Rs 6 lakh compensation to kin of deceased

Thiruvananthapuram: Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan on Wednesday announced a compensation of Rs six lakh to the next of kin of those who died in the massive landslides that hit Wayanad district recently and claimed over 200 lives. Vijayan said that of the Rs six lakh, Rs four lakh would come from the State Disaster Relief Fund and the remaining from the Chief Minister's Disaster Relief Fund (CMDRF). He also announced that Rs 75,000 would be allocated to those who lost eyes and limbs or suffered disability up to 60 per cent in the

landslides. The CM also said that Rs 50,000 financial assistance would be given to those who suffered disability between 40 to 60 per cent or suffered very serious injuries in the disaster. Besides that, the survivors opting for rented accommodation or living with their relatives will get Rs 6,000 per month towards rent as part of the rehabilitation of the victims, he said. This amount, however, will not be available to those who get rent-free or fully sponsored accommodation, he added. In cases of partial sponsorship, the remaining

amount will be allowed as monthly rent up to a maximum of Rs 6,000, the CM said at a press conference here. Vijayan also said that so far 231 bodies and 206 body parts have been found, following the massive landslides that hit parts of Wayanad on July 30. A total of 401 samples of bodies and body parts underwent DNA testing and of them 349 were found to be of 248 persons - 121 males and 127 females, he further said. The CM also said that the five-member expert team led by senior scientist John Matthai of the National Centre for Geosciences,

which has been tasked by the State Disaster Management Authority to inspect the landslide-hit areas in Wayanad's Meppadi panchayat, was carrying out its work. The team will assess the possible dangers in different parts of the disaster-stricken area and nearby sites as well as how the disaster happened and what phenomena occurred in the landslides, he said. Vijayan further said that additionally a drone-based LIDAR survey will also be carried out to determine what is underneath the disaster-stricken areas and how the land there can be used in future.

Heat wave caused 47,000 deaths in Europe in 2023

Madrid : In an alarming sign, more than 47,000 people died in otherwise cold Europe due to heat wave in 2023. The countries in south Europe were the most hit. The year 2023 was officially the world's hottest year. This data has come to fore in a study report by the Barcelona Institute for Global Health (ISGlobal). The report was published on August 11. The study replicated the methodology used last year in another paper published in Nature Medicine, which estimated that heat caused more than 60,000 deaths during the summer of 2022, which represented the highest heat-related mortality burden of the last decade. The researchers used temperature and mortality records from 823 regions in 35 European countries for the period 2015-2019 to fit epidemiological models to estimate heat-related mortality in each European region over the entire year 2023. They estimated that 47,690 people died from causes related to high temperature. The highest heat-related mortalities were recorded in Greece, Bulgaria, Italy and Spain. Two episodes of high temperatures in mid-July



and late August would have accounted for more than 57 per cent of the overall estimated mortality, with more than 27,000 deaths. Using this method, it was estimated that if the temperatures recorded in 2023 had occurred in the period 2000-2004, the estimated heat-related mortality would have exceeded the number of 85,000 deaths, that is, 80 per cent higher than the result arising from the vulnerability to heat in the period 2015-2019. "Our results show how there have been societal adaptation processes to high temperatures during the present century, which have dramatically reduced the heat-related vulnerability and mortality burden of recent summers, especially among the elderly", says Elisa Gallo, researcher at ISGlobal and first author of the study.

ISRO to launch new satellite today

Mumbai: The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) is going to launch its latest earth observation satellite, EOS-08 on Thursday morning. The satellite will be launched aboard the third and final developmental flight of the Small Satellite Launch Vehicle (SSLV-D3). The launch will take place from the Satish Dhawan Space Centre in Sriharikota. ISRO has said that the primary goals of the satellite is to develop a microsatellite, creating payload instruments compatible with the microsatellite bus, and incorporating new technologies for future satellites. The spacecraft, with a mission life of one year, has a mass of approximately 175.5 kg and generates around 420 W of power. The EOIR payload is designed to capture images in the Mid-Wave IR (MIR) and Long-Wave IR (LWIR) bands during both day and night, useful for applications such as satellite-based surveillance, disaster monitoring, environmental monitoring, fire detection, and more. This mission marks the completion of the SSLV Development Project.

Results of elephant census delayed

By Gaurav Saini

New Delhi: India will have to wait until June next year for the results of the latest elephant census, as the population estimation has been delayed in some northeastern states, sources said. Wild elephants are found in forested, hilly tracts across four regions of India: the foothills of the Himalayas in the north, the northeastern states, eastern and central India, and the Western and Eastern Ghats in the southern parts of the country. A source told PTI that data collection and analysis from the northeast have not yet been completed. The primary reasons for the delay in the region are "heavy monsoon rains, floods and the limited capacity" of the forest staff, the sources added. The entire process involves creating shapefiles, capacity building, data collection, and data processing. As a result, the numbers from the latest elephant estimation exercise will only be available by June next year, they said. An official from the



| Numbers speak | India is home to more than 60 percent of the world's wild Asian elephants |
|---------------|---|
| 29,964 | Elephants in India as per census in 2017 |
| 110,000 sq km | Area in India where elephants spread |
| 65,000 sq km | Area of India's 33 elephant reserves |
| 10,139 | No of elephants in northeast region |
| 3,128 | No of elephants in east-central region |
| 2,085 | No of elephants in northwest region |
| 11,960 | No of elephants in southern region |
| 6,049 | Highest number of elephants in Karnataka |
| 528 | Elephants lost in the past five years due to unnatural causes |
| 2,853 | No of human deaths because of elephants in last five years |

Wildlife Institute of India (WII) said satellite data for elephant population estimation had to be collected during the first phase of the tiger population estimation since the two exercises have been converged now. "But that could not happen in the northeast. We are doing it now. The WII

Upgraded app to enhance flood monitoring

New Delhi: The Union Minister for Jal Shakti C R Paatil has unveiled version 2.0 of 'FloodWatch India' mobile application, aimed at providing a more comprehensive and detailed overview of flood conditions across the country. The upgraded app, developed by the Central Water Commission (CWC), builds on its first version launched last year. The initial version offered flood forecasts from 200 monitoring stations. In a statement, the Jal Shakti Ministry said that version 2.0 significantly expands this scope, integrating real-time data from 592 flood monitoring stations across the country. This expansion aims to provide users with a more extensive and detailed flood condition overview. The new version includes data on the storage positions of 150 major reservoirs. This feature is designed to offer insights into potential flood risks in downstream areas, aiding in better preparedness and response. 'FloodWatch India' utilises advanced technologies such as satellite data analysis and mathematical modelling.



Parents, Wake Up!



By
Praveen Dixit



The Nirbhaya case in Delhi remains hauntingly unforgettable. Yet similar crimes by juveniles aged 16-18 persist across India. Factors such as family issues, poverty, and exposure to inappropriate content fuel this dangerous trend. Effective measures like counseling, occupational training, and community involvement are urgently needed to prevent juvenile delinquency.

Investigations reveal that many of these acts are committed by juveniles aged 16-18. In addition to gang rapes, rapes, dacoities, and murders, there are reports of juveniles involved in rash and drunk driving in luxury cars, often resulting in the deaths of innocent pedestrians and two-wheeler riders. These incidents invariably provoke public outrage, with a demand for an explanation from law enforcement and questioning the government's effectiveness in addressing these issues. Often, public anger escalates to demands for the immediate execution of the accused, even if the suspect is a juvenile. Data compiled by the National Crime Record Bureau (NCRB) from all states reveals an increasing number of incidents involving juveniles aged 16 to 18 as suspects. According to the Juvenile Justice Act (JJA) 2015, a person below the age of 18 is considered a juvenile. The JJA stipu-

lates that minors aged 16-18 be treated as adults when involved in heinous crimes. Heinous crimes are those offenses that warrant punishment for more than seven years. Several factors contribute to juvenile delinquency, including the absence of care and affection from parents due to division in the family, large families, and poverty. Urbanisation and easy access to the internet

expose children to inappropriate and pornographic content. Advertisements, TV/OTT serials, and cinemas also have an adverse impact. In red-light areas, children are often forced out during business hours, leading them into bad company and the use of illegal substances. Additionally, adolescent boys may steal to impress their friends and meet their needs.

Analysis of undertrial juveniles reveals most come from deprived backgrounds, having dropped out of school or attended irregularly. Lacking education and vocational skills, many work as casual labourers. Due to dysfunctional families, these children lacked mental or social support. Their family situations involved poverty, forced child labour, inadequate parenting, continuous stress, or crises like death, desertion, etc. Moreover, NCRB data shows that drug addiction is leading to an alarming rise in serious crimes among children from affluent families.

Although these children might have broken the law, police officers must remain sensitive to their circumstances. As the Commissioner of Police in Nagpur, I ensured they received counselling and school enrolment, if eligible. Others received vocational training, helping them become responsible individuals contributing to their families' income. The police should seek action from the Juvenile Justice Board against the parents of such children and safeguard them from adult offenders who might coerce them into crime. Collaborating with voluntary organisations, child psychiatrists, child guidance clinics, social care workers, and probation officers is crucial to address the root cause of juvenile delinquency. Efforts should be made to identify at-risk, destitute, and neglected children before they become delinquent. Regular patrolling in urban areas prone to delinquency should be organised.

My initiatives for recreational programmes, like sporting events, holiday camps, and band displays created enthusiasm and engagement among the community.

(The writer is a former DGP, Maharashtra. Views personal)

How the IMEC will Boost India's Trade and Reduce Reliance on China



By
Naveen Singhal

Trade routes and economic corridors have become essential arteries of global commerce, driving economic growth, fostering regional integration, and enhancing geopolitical stability. These networks facilitate the efficient movement of goods, services, and resources across international borders, making them indispensable for modern economies.

The newest ambitious economic corridor project on the global stage is the India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor (IMEC). This ambitious project aims to enhance economic connectivity and cooperation across these regions, providing new trade routes, boosting economic development, and reducing dependency on any single global power. The IMEC promises to open new markets, improve supply chain resilience, and foster geopolitical stability by strengthening ties between India, the Middle East, and Europe.

The Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for the India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor

(IMEC) was signed on September 9, 2023. The initiative was launched by India, the US, UAE, Saudi Arabia, Italy, France, Germany, and the European Union, representing around 50% of the global GDP.

The India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor (IMEC) is set to feature two key corridors. The Eastern corridor will include sea routes from Indian ports to Duqm in Oman and Dubai in the UAE. From the Middle East ports, a rail network will extend through Saudi Arabia to Haifa, Israel, creating a seamless link across the region.

The West/North Corridor of the India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor (IMEC) will feature a sea lane extending from Haifa, Israel, to various Mediterranean ports in Europe. Additionally, there are plans to construct an underwater pipeline from Israel to Italy to transport green hydrogen produced in Gulf countries to Europe.

Unfortunately, the proposed rail line passing through the UAE and Saudi Arabia to Israel has been disrupted due to the Israel-Gaza conflict, which began in October 2023.

The India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor (IMEC) offers several notable benefits. A significant advantage is the reduction of Chinese influence, particularly in the Gulf nations. By diversifying supply chains, the IMEC project aims to decrease dependency on China. It will provide independent options to those dominated by China, mitigating risks associated

with over-reliance on Chinese suppliers and markets. The project aims to foster regional cooperation, create a more balanced trade network, and reduce China's strategic leverage. Additionally, improved infrastructure and logistics under the IMEC offer independent transport options, diminishing the need for Chinese-controlled routes.

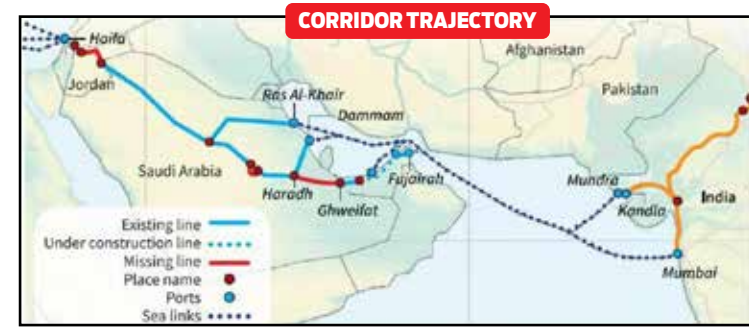
Another benefit of the IMEC is a safer and more reliable route compared with the Gulf of Aden and the Red Sea, which have recently experienced attacks from the Houthi rebels.

For European Union countries, the corridor is expected to be particularly beneficial for securing a green hydrogen supply, supporting the EU's ambitious net-zero targets.

IMEC provides India with efficient trade routes to Europe and the Middle East, boosting economic activity and attracting foreign investment. The project will involve substantial infrastructure development, including improved port facilities and rail connections, enhancing India's logistics and transport sectors. Additionally, India's role in the IMEC will strengthen its geopolitical influence and strategic partnerships in the region, create job opportunities across various sectors, and facilitate technological and knowledge exchange, benefiting its industrial and technological capabilities.

By diversifying supply chains, the IMEC will reduce dependence on any single trade route and enhance resilience against global disruptions. Recent incidents, such as the near-blockage of the Suez Canal due to Houthi attacks, underscore the vulnerability of existing routes and highlight the need for alternatives like the IMEC. As global trade continues to grow, the IMEC represents a crucial step toward a more secure and interconnected future.

(The writer is a maritime expert. Views personal)



Swarajya Lost, Swarajya Gained



By
Dr. Uday S. Kulkarni



people, yet the Marathas emerged from this ordeal of fire stronger than before.

The freedom earned after four centuries of thraldom, was precious. From the mid-seventeenth to the early-nineteenth century, the Marathas under the Chhatrapatis and the Peshwas, regained their political freedom, rebuilt the lost cultural emblems of their ancient faith, and for a century and more were the paramount power in India. Their rule extended at different times from Attock to Cuttack, the plains of Kumaon to the Cauvery, from Gujarat to the Maratha Ditch of Kolkata. Indeed, the cultural renaissance of India and its indigenous people, was during this crucial period in our re-

About eight centuries ago, probing attacks into India led to the formation of a full-fledged Sultanate in Delhi, founded by men who professed a different belief, lifestyle and jurisprudence.

cent History. The importance of this freedom has not been sufficiently realised; the Marathas were the first indigenous Empire after centuries of foreign rule. It was also the last before we once again succumbed to a foreign power.

Swarajya was lost, and after the battle of 1857 led by the four Maratha chiefs - Nana Saheb Peshwa, Rana Saheb, Tantia Tope and Laxmi Bai - the fight for freedom continued until it was achieved in 1947.

The cost of regaining Swarajya was high indeed. The heroes of the movement - unknown and unnamed - were in lakhs. That freedom, and what it means, is often lost sight of. The word 'Swarajya' is used only twice in our history; first by Chhatrapati Shivaji and then by Lokmanya Tilak. And at both times we were under foreign rule.

Since 1947, India has progressed across many fields and can no longer be ignored.

The next hundred years are, however, crucial. Free from divisions that are often fomented for narrow political ends, we need to take fresh guard and focus on being the greatest nation on earth. We owe this to those who gave us our Swarajya.

(The writer is a historian. Views personal)

The Evolution of Indo-US Ties from 1947 to Today



By
Sumant Vidwans

India, the world's largest democracy, shares a deep bond with the U.S., home to the largest Indian diaspora. Since India's independence in 1947, the Indo-US relationship has been evolving significantly. On this Independence Day, let us look at the history of this pivotal partnership from its origins to now.

The U.S. was one of the first countries to recognise India as an independent country. On August 15, 1947, President Harry S. Truman sent a congratulatory message to Lord Louis Mountbatten, the Governor-General of India. Interestingly, on November 1, 1946, the American Embassy in New Delhi upgraded from a mission to an embassy, indicating the anticipation of India's impending independence.

Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru visited the US in 1949. His meeting with President Harry S. Truman was intended to solidify Indo-US ties, but the relationship remained cautious due to India's non-aligned stance during the Cold War. The US also declined to provide any economic aid to struggling India.

The US supported Pakistan during the Bangladesh Liberation War and the Indo-Pak War of 1971. When India conducted its first-ever nuclear test under Prime Minister Indira Gandhi in 1974, it also resulted in another significant setback in bilateral relations, with nuclear non-proliferation becoming a contentious issue between the two countries.

The Janata Party coalition came to power in 1977. This government aimed to adopt a more non-aligned and independent foreign policy, seeking to distance itself from the strong Soviet alignment of the previous Congress government. Ef-

orts were made to improve relations with the US, as a counterbalance to Soviet ties, but the US remained wary of India's commitment to non-alignment and its nuclear ambitions.

Prime Minister Morarji Desai sought to enhance economic cooperation between the two countries. US President Jimmy Carter's visit to India in January 1978 was overshadowed by tensions over nuclear issues. The US tried to pressure India to sign the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), which India refused, insisting on its right to maintain a nuclear deterrent in a region with nuclear powers like China and, potentially, Pakistan.

Rajiv Gandhi came to power after the assassination of his mother, Indira Gandhi, in 1984. He represented a younger, more modern, and technologically focused leadership, which created some optimism in the West, including the United States. He was also keen on modernising India's economy and military, and he saw an opportunity to engage with the United States for technology, investment, and defence cooperation. In 1985, he met with President Reagan in the US to discuss economic cooperation, technology transfers, and regional security.

Besides disagreements over the NPT, shifting regional dynamics also raised concerns for India. The two countries had differing views

on several regional issues, particularly regarding US military support for Pakistan and the Mujahideen in Afghanistan during the Soviet-Afghan War.

The end of the Cold War and India's economic liberalisation in the 1990s marked a turning point in relations. The liberalisation policies opened Indian markets to American businesses, fostering economic ties. President Bill Clinton's visit to India in 2000 symbolised a thaw in relations and the beginning of a strategic partnership. The landmark US-India Civil Nuclear Agreement in 2005 allowed India access to civilian nuclear technology, underscoring growing trust between the two nations.

India and the US have their conflicts with China, and that is also a reason that despite the suspicions, disagreements, and various ups and downs, the relationship between the two countries has continued to grow as both are dealing with a common adversary.

In 2016, the US designated India as a "Major Defense Partner," reflecting deepening defence cooperation. Agreements like the Basic Exchange and Cooperation Agreement (BECA) and participation in multilateral groups such as The Quad (comprising the US, India, Japan, and Australia) highlight the strategic alignment of interests, particularly in the Indo-Pacific region.

Nuclear proliferation may not be a frequently mentioned anymore, but the US immigration policy is an issue that impacts millions of Indians who live and work in the US on temporary work visas. They are waiting for employment-based Green Cards, with wait times extending to multiple decades due to the per-country quota. This backlog has significant implications, causing uncertainty for individuals and families. Advocacy for reforms, such as the EAGLE Act to eliminate per-country caps, is ongoing, but substantial progress remains to be seen.

The 2024 US presidential election will significantly impact Indo-US relations, but we will have to wait at least until early next year to see the full extent.

(The writer is an IT professional. Views personal)

On India's Independence Day, we trace the evolving Indo-US relationship from 1947 to today. From early recognition and cautious Cold War ties to strategic partnerships and economic cooperation, the bond has strengthened despite challenges.



CBI begins probe into Kolkata doctor's rape, murder case

Kolkata: A team of senior CBI officers, who reached Kolkata on Wednesday morning, began its investigation into the alleged rape and murder of a woman doctor at a state-run hospital in West Bengal, officials said.

The CBI team, which comprises medical and forensic experts, will visit the RG Kar Medical College and Hospital's seminar hall where the body of the trainee doctor was found on August 9, they said.

Three groups of CBI officers have been formed to investigate the matter, a central agency official said.

"One group will visit the RG Kar Medical College and Hospital, and talk to the witnesses and the doctors who were on duty on that night. Another team will take the arrested civic volunteer to a local court after medical tests and plea for his custody, while another will coordinate with the Kolkata Police sleuths who were conducting the investigation," he told PTI.

The Calcutta High Court on Tuesday ordered the transfer of the probe from the Kolkata Police to the central agency.

A source in the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) said that the agency has filed an FIR under various sections of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) in New Delhi in connection with the alleged rape and murder of the doctor.

"Today, our officers will seek the call details of the deceased woman and those on duty on that day. They may submit the FIR in a local court," another central



agency source said.

The Kolkata Police handed over Sanjoy Roy, who was arrested in connection with the case, to the CBI at the CGO Complex here after his medical tests were conducted at the state-run SSKM Hospital.

Two CBI officers on Tuesday evening went to the Tala Police Station here and took documents related to the Kolkata Police's investigation.

The court had on Tuesday directed the city police to hand over the case diary to the central probe agency by the evening, and all other documents by 10 am on August 14.

Victim's parent misguided: BJP

The BJP on Wednesday accused West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee of siding with the accused instead of the victim in the case of rape and murder of a doctor in Kolkata, and demanded her resignation.

BJP national spokesperson Gaurav Bhatia claimed that no woman in the state will feel safe if she continues as chief minister. "You (Banerjee) did not

perform your moral duty. You should immediately resign," he told reporters, alleging that she tried to save the accused of the crime, which has shocked the nation.

Bhatia cited the critical comments of the Calcutta High Court about the handling of the case before it transferred the investigation to the CBI, as he addressed the CM as "nir-mamta" (pitiless) Banerjee. He said the local police first informed the victim's parents that their daughter was sick and then claimed that she had committed suicide.

The parents were made to wait for three hours before they could see her body, he said, alleging that attempts were made to destroy evidence and shield the accused.

Questions on hospital: Rahul

The Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi on Wednesday said the attempt to save the accused instead of providing justice to the victim raises serious questions on the hospital and the local administration.

Assam hospital faces criticism

Guwahati: The Silchar Medical College and Hospital in Assam on Wednesday cancelled its advisory to women doctors and other staffers asking them to avoid going alone to isolated places at night. SMCH's Principal cum Chief Superintendent Dr Bhaskar Gupta had issued the advisory, following the recent rape and murder of a trainee doctor at R G Kar Medical College in Kolkata. "The advisory issued earlier stands cancelled and a new advisory will be issued soon in this regard," Gupta said. The advisory was cancelled following protests from students who demanded enhanced security measures in the hospital.

The entire country is shocked by the gruesome incident of rape and murder of the junior doctor in Kolkata, said the former Congress president, adding there is an atmosphere of insecurity among the doctors' community and women with the revelations about the manner of the cruel and inhuman act against her.

"The attempt to save the accused instead of providing justice to the victim raises serious questions on the hospital and the local administration," Gandhi said in a post on X in Hindi.

"This incident has forced us to think that if doctors are not safe in a place like a medical college, then how can the parents send their daughters outside for studies? Why are even the strict laws made after the Nirbhaya case unsuccessful in preventing such crimes?" he said.



Kangana Ranaut at the trailer launch event of her directorial 'Emergency' on Wednesday.

Would love to direct and produce a film with all three Khans: Kangana Ranaut

Mumbai: Actor-filmmaker Kangana Ranaut on Wednesday said she aspires to bring together the three Khans -- Shah Rukh, Salman and Aamir -- in one film that she would love to direct and produce.

Ranaut was speaking at the trailer launch event of her directorial "Emergency", in which she stars in the role of former prime minister Indira Gandhi. The film will hit the screens September 6.

The actor said she regrets not being able to direct her late "Knock Out" co-star Irrfan Khan, whom

she described as "one of my favourite Khans".

"I would love to produce and direct a film on all three Khans. I would also love to show their talented side where they can both act and look good. They can also do something which has a significant (impact) on society."

"They are talented and add a lot of revenue to the industry. We should be eternally grateful to them. They engage with a mass of people who need that kind of engagement," Ranaut told reporters here.

Shah Rukh and Salman

have worked together in films such as "Karan Arjun" and "Kuch Kuch Hota Hai", whereas Salman and Aamir have co-starred in "Andaz Apna Apna". The Khan trio is yet to team up for a big screen project.

Ranaut, who had a cameo in Salman's 2011 film "Ready", said all three Khans have an "artistic side" which has not been explored in many movies.

"I would love to explore that with so many actors. One actor I would always regret not being able to direct is Irrfan Khan Sahib. He is one of my favourite Khans. I would always

miss him," she added.

"Emergency" marks Ranaut's first release after being elected an MP on a BJP ticket from Mandi, in her native Himachal Pradesh. She made her directorial debut with 2019's "Manikarnika: The Queen of Jhansi" where she shared the directing credit with Krish Jagarlamudi.

The movie also stars Anupam Kher, Mahima Chaudhary, Milind Soman, Shreyas Talpade, Vishak Nair, and the late Satish Kaushik in pivotal roles. It is produced by Zee Studios and Ranaut's Manikarnika Films.

India keen to advance ties with Bangladesh

Dhaka: India is interested in advancing its relationship with Bangladesh under the interim government led by Muhammad Yunus, Indian High Commissioner Pranay Verma said on Wednesday but did not comment on how long the ousted leader Sheikh Hasina would stay in India.

Verma's remarks came after a meeting with Foreign Affairs Adviser Md Touhid Hossain at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, The Daily Star newspaper reported.

"We are interested in advancing our relationship with Bangladesh," Verma told the media after a meeting with Foreign Affairs Adviser Hossain at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Nobel laureate Yunus was appointed as the head of the interim government on Tuesday after Prime Minister Hasina resigned and fled to India on August 5 following widespread protests against her government over a controversial quota system in jobs. This was the first meet-



ing by the Indian envoy Verma with Touhid Hossain after the formation of the interim government following the fall of the Hasina-led Awami League government.

Verma attended the oath-taking ceremony of Muhammad Yunus as the head of the interim government of Bangladesh last Thursday.

However, he did not say anything about how long Hasina would stay in India, the report said.

Prime Minister Naren-

dra Modi last week extended best wishes to Yunus as he took oath as the head of an interim government in Bangladesh, hoping for an early return of normalcy and ensuring the safety of Hindus and other minority communities in that country.

"Hasina's comments not conducive"

Bangladesh's interim government wants to work closely with India to promote bilateral relations, Foreign Affairs Adviser Md Touhid Hossain said on

Wednesday, but indicated that deposed premier Sheikh Hasina's public statement from India are "not conducive" to fostering better bilateral ties.

Hossain's statement came after Indian High Commissioner Pranay Verma paid a courtesy call on him and discussed bilateral ties in the wake of the recent developments in Bangladesh, which witnessed large scale violence and attacks on minorities and temples.

During the meeting, Hos-

Hindu family's house torched

Dhaka: Arsonists torched a house belonging to a Hindu family with no political affiliation in northwest Bangladesh, a media report said on Wednesday, in the latest incident of targeted attacks on the minority community after the fall of the Sheikh Hasina-led government. The incident in Farabari Mandirpara village in Akcha union under Thakurgaon Sadar upazila took place on Tuesday evening, hours after Chief Advisor to the interim government Yunus Muhammad assured the distressed minority community that his government would punish the perpetrators.

sain said Bangladesh wants to work closely with India to promote bilateral relations and stressed more 'people-centric engagement' in the upcoming days.

Hossain affirmed the interim government's commitment to ensure the peaceful coexistence of different communities in Bangladesh, including the minorities.

-PTI

QUOTE OF THE DAY



Mamata Banerjee, (West Bengal) CM

"CPI(M), BJP trying to organise Bangladesh-like protests to capture power in Bengal."

Boost for mineral-rich states

New Delhi: In a major victory for mineral-rich states, the Supreme Court on Wednesday allowed them to seek dues from April 1, 2005 on royalty and tax on mineral rights and mineral-bearing land from the Centre in a staggered period of 12 years.

A nine-judge Constitution bench headed by Chief Justice D.Y. Chandrachud said the argument for pro-

spective effect of July 25 is rejected.

Pronouncing the verdict on behalf of the bench, CJI Chandrachud said by a 8:1 majority, this court had on July 25 answered the questions referred to it and held that legislative power to tax mineral rights vests with states.

He said after the pronouncement of the July 25 verdict, the assessee

sought prospective effect of the decision and the matter was listed on July 31 to decide the effect of verdict.

The Centre has opposed the demand of states for refund of royalty levied on mines and minerals since 1989, saying it will impact the citizens and the PSUs will have to empty their coffers by Rs 70,000 crore according to initial estimates.

Three drown in Gandhinagar

Gandhinagar: Three persons, including a minor girl, drowned in the Sabarmati river in Gujarat's Gandhinagar city on Wednesday morning during the immersion of an idol after a religious programme, police said.

The incident took place near Sector-30 when a group of devotees from Ahmedabad went near the river in a procession to immerse the idol of Goddess Dasha Mata after a 10-day religious function, an official from Sector-21 police station said.

A 12-year-old girl, Poon-

am Prajapati, lost balance and fell into the river and started drowning. Some persons present there jumped into the water body to save her but they also started getting swept away, he said.

The girl and two other persons, identified as Ajay Vanzara (30) and Bharatiben Prajapati (34), drowned, the official said.

Fire brigade personnel reached the spot immediately and fished out the bodies which were handed over to the family members after due formalities, the police said.

First-ever phase-three clinical trial for dengue

New Delhi: The ICMR and Panacea Biotec have initiated the first-ever phase three clinical trial for developing a dengue vaccine in India, the Union Health Ministry said on Wednesday.

India's indigenous tetravalent dengue vaccine, DengiAll, has been developed by Panacea Biotec and the first participant in this trial was vaccinated on Wednesday at the Pandit Bhagwat Dayal Sharma Post Graduate Institute of Medical Sciences, Rohtak.

The phase three clinical trial will be conducted across 19 sites in 18 states and union territories, involving more than 10,335

healthy adult participants.

"The initiation of this phase three clinical trial for India's first indigenous dengue vaccine marks a critical advancement in our fight against dengue. It reflects our commitment to protecting our citizens from this pervasive disease and underscores India's capabilities in vaccine research and development," Union Health Minister J.P. Nadda said.

"Through this collaboration between ICMR and Panacea Biotec, we are not only taking a step towards ensuring the health and well-being of our people but also reinforcing our vision of Atmanirbhar



Bharat in the healthcare sector," he said. Currently, there is no antiviral treatment or licensed vaccine against dengue in India.

The development of an effective vaccine is complex due to the need to

achieve good efficacy for all four serotypes.

In India, all four serotypes of dengue virus are known to circulate or co-circulate in many regions, the ministry statement said.

NUMBERS

75-80
Approximate per cent of infections in India are asymptomatic

129
Countries reporting dengue viral disease by the end of 2023

30
India in top 30 countries with the highest incidence of the Dengue

Panacea Biotec, one of three Indian companies to receive the strain, is at the most advanced stage of development.

The company has worked extensively on these strains to develop a full-fledged vaccine formulation and holds a process patent for this work.

Phase one and two clinical trials of the Indian vaccine formulation were completed in 2018-19, yielding promising results, the statement said.

The trial, primarily funded by the ICMR with partial support from Panacea Biotec, is set to follow up with participants for two years.



SC denies interim bail to Arvind Kejriwal in excise case

New Delhi: The Supreme Court on Wednesday refused to grant interim bail to Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal in a corruption case filed by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) in the alleged excise policy scam and sought a response from the probe agency on his plea challenging his arrest.

As the hearing commenced before a bench of Justices Surya Kant and Ujjal Bhuyan, senior advocate Abhishek Singhvi, appearing for Kejriwal, submitted that he had got interim bail on three occasions in the money laundering case, also linked to the alleged scam, despite the stringent conditions laid down for grant of bail in cases under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA).

Singhvi cited the top court's interim bail orders passed on May 10 and July 12, as well as the regular bail granted by the trial court on June 20.

He informed the bench that the June 20 order of the trial court was stayed by the Delhi High Court on an "oral mention".

Singhvi argued when Kejriwal could secure bail despite the stringent conditions laid down under the PMLA, he cannot be denied regular bail in the CBI case since the Prevention of Corruption Act (PCA) does not have similar rigorous provisions like the anti-money laundering law.

"I hate to say so but I have said this everywhere. This particular arrest is what might be called insur-



ance arrest. You are having me interrogated on April 23 for nine hours, you do not have any further action till March 24 when the ED arrests me. I get three release orders and just on the cusp of the order, I am arrested in June," Singhvi said.

Referring to Kejriwal's health concerns, Singhvi requested for interim bail. He said an application seeking the relief has already been filed.

"We are not granting any interim bail," the top court told Singhvi.

The senior lawyer then requested for a "shortest date" and the bench posted the matter for hearing on August 23.

The Delhi High Court had on August 5 upheld the arrest of the chief minister as legal, and said there was no malice in the acts done by the CBI which was able to demonstrate how the AAP supremo could influence witnesses who could muster the courage to depose only after his arrest.

The high court had asked him to move the trial court for regular bail in the CBI case.

The high court had noted that the loop of evidence against the chief minister got closed after collection of relevant evidence following his arrest by the CBI and it cannot be said that it was without any justifiable reason or illegal.

It said Kejriwal is not an ordinary citizen but a distinguished recipient of the Magsaysay Award and the convener of the Aam Aadmi Party.

"The control and the influence which he has on the witnesses is prima facie borne out from the fact that these witnesses could muster the courage to be a witness only after the arrest of the petitioner, as highlighted by the special prosecutor.

"Also, it establishes that the loop of evidence against the petitioner got closed after collection of relevant evidence after his arrest. No malice whatsoever, can be gathered from the acts of the respondent (CBI)," the high court had said.

The high court had dismissed Kejriwal's plea challenging his arrest, saying it was only after suffi-

RS BYPOLL

Cong nominates Singhvi from Telangana
New Delhi: The Congress on Wednesday named Abhishek Manu Singhvi as its candidate for the ensuing Rajya Sabha bypoll in Telangana. The Election Commission had announced last week that elections to 12 Rajya Sabha seats in nine states will be held on September 3. Earlier this year, Singhvi had lost the Rajya Sabha election from Congress-ruled Himachal Pradesh. BJP nominee Harsh Mahajan had won the February 27 election through draw of lots after both candidates secured 34 votes each. However, Singhvi is likely to win the bypoll this time.

cient evidence was collected and sanction was obtained in April, 2024 that the agency proceeded with further probe against him.

It had noted that the links to the crime extended even to Punjab but material witnesses were not coming forward due to the influence exercised by Kejriwal by virtue of his position. It was only after he got arrested that the witnesses came forward to record their statements, the high court had said.

The chief minister, who was arrested by the ED on March 21, was granted bail by the trial court in the money laundering case on June 20. However, the trial court's order was stayed by the high court.



Nagpur Students with face and hands painted in the colours of the national flags pose on the eve of the Independence Day, in Nagpur, Wednesday, Aug. 14, 2024. (PTI Photo)

For first time, tricolour to be hoisted in 13 villages of Naxalite-hit Bastar

Raipur: Thirteen remote villages located in the Naxalite-hit Bastar region of Chhattisgarh will witness hoisting of the national flag for the first time on the Independence Day on Thursday, police said.

Setting up new camps of security forces in these villages in the last seven months has been paving the way for development of the respective areas, they said.

Tricolour will be hoisted in Nerlighth (Dantewada district), Panidobir (Kanker), Gundam, Putkel and Chhutvahi (Bijapur), Kasturmeta, Maspur, Irakbhathi and Mohndi (Narayanpur), Tekalgudem, Puvarti, Lakhapal and Pulanpad (Sukma) villages on Thurs-

day where such event was not held ever in the past, Inspector General of Police of Bastar Range Sundarraj P told PTI.

Security camps at these places were established after the Republic Day last year. All these newly-established camps have provided a new and vibrant identity to the region and its native population. The camps would act as a ray of hope for the young and old in building a peaceful and prosperous Bastar, he added.

The camps have been facilitating in taking the government welfare schemes to people, mainly tribals and also paved the way for the development of areas, he added.

Bastar division, comprising seven districts, has been struggling with the menace of Left Wing Extremism since over the past three decades.

Meanwhile, the state government has completed preparations in all the districts, including capital Raipur, to celebrate the Independence Day, a government public relations official here said.

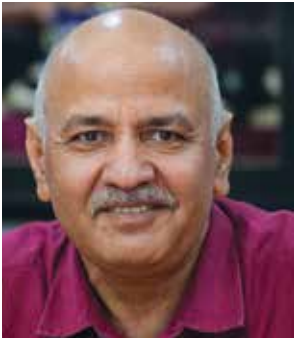
Chief Minister Vishnu Deo Sai will hoist the national flag in the morning at the Police Parade ground in Raipur and receive the guard of honour by different units of security personnel.

Deputy Chief Minister Arun Sao will hoist the national flag in Bilaspur.

Maoist camp busted in Odisha

Bhubaneswar: A gun battle between security forces and Maoists broke out in Odisha's Kandhamal district on Wednesday, resulting in the recovery of several explosive devices, police said. The confrontation took place after police launched an operation based on intelligence about Naxal activity in the Manik Saru hills, near the Kandhamal-Kalahandi border.

QUOTE OF THE DAY



Manish Sisodia,
AAP leader

"Post of governor has become burden on democracy, should be scrapped for smooth functioning of elected governments."

Four conferred Kirti Chakras

New Delhi: Colonel Manpreet Singh, who was killed in action while leading from the front in an anti-terror operation in Jammu Kashmir's Anantnag in September last year has been posthumously awarded the Kirti Chakra, the second-highest peacetime gallantry award.

Three other Army personnel - Rifleman Ravi Kumar (posthumous), Major Malla Rama Gopal Naidu, Deputy Superintendent of Jammu and Kashmir Police Himayun Muzzammil Bhat were also awarded Kirti Chakra.

On the eve of the Independence Day, President Droupadi Murmu approved a total of 103 Gallantry awards to the armed forces and Central Armed Police Forces personnel.

The gallantry awards included 18 Shaurya Chakras (four posthumous), one Bar to Sena Medal, 63 Sena Medals, 11 Nao Sena Medal and six Vayu Sena Medals.

SC rejects plea against NEET-SS

New Delhi: The Supreme Court on Wednesday dismissed a plea challenging a decision of the National Medical Commission (NMC) to not conduct NEET-Super Speciality examination this year.

A bench comprising Chief Justice D Y Chandra-

chud and justices J B Pardiwala and Manoj Misra termed the NMC's decision "fairly equitable" and refused to tinker with the exam calendar.

The top court on July 19 had issued a notice to the NMC on the plea filed by 13 doctors including Rahul

Balwan. The National Eligibility-cum-Entrance Test-Super Speciality (NEET-SS) can be taken by doctors having post-graduate degrees like MD, MS and DNB, or an equivalent qualification for admission to super-speciality courses.

Delhi tourist killed in Goa

Panaji: A 20-year-old visitor from Delhi was killed allegedly by three persons at the Baga beach in Goa when he resisted their robbery attempt, police said on Wednesday.

The incident took place on Sunday night and the three accused - Sahil Kumar, Noor Khan and Sunil Vishwakarma - were arrested on Tuesday.

The victim, identified as Harish Tanwar from Delhi, was sitting at a secluded place at the Baga beach in North Goa district when the three accused tried to rob his bag, an official from Calangute police station said.

"When he resisted, one of the accused stabbed him. The victim died on the spot during the scuffle," he said.

Odisha to bring tigers from Maharashtra, MP

Bhubaneswar: To bolster big cat population in Odisha, forest officials have begun the process of relocating five Royal Bengal Tigers from Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh, with the transfer scheduled to be completed in September.

According to Principal Chief Conservator of Forests (PCCF)-Wildlife, Susanta Nanda, three of these tigers will be released into the Debrigarh Wildlife Sanctuary in Sambalpur, while the remaining two will be introduced into the Similipal Tiger Reserve in Mayurbhanj.

"On our request, both Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh have given their consent for relocation of



their tigers to Odisha. They have also identified the tigers from core areas of their forests," Nanda told media persons on Wednesday.

Two teams of Odisha forest officials will visit the two states very soon, within a week, to see the tigers, he said.

In its latest tiger estimation conducted for the first time during 2023-24 in 47 forest divisions of Odisha, 30 tigers and eight cubs were found. Out of the 30 Royal Bengal Tigers, 27 were found in the Similipal

Tiger Reserve (STR), while Keonjhar territorial and Keonjhar wildlife, Paralakhemundi territorial, and Hirakud wildlife had one tiger each.

The PCCF also said that the Nandankanan Zoological Park is all set to welcome two giraffes by the end of this month.

The pair of giraffes will be brought to the zoo from Alipore Zoological Garden, Kolkata under the animal exchange programme, he said.

At present, one giraffe named 'Khushi' is in the Nandankanan zoo. The addition of two new giraffes will further enhance the animal population in the zoo, he added.

एकनाथ शिंदे मुख्यमंत्री, देवेंद्र फडणवीस उपमुख्यमंत्री, अजित पवार उपमुख्यमंत्री

बदलत्या ठाण्याची यशोगाथा

सगळो कडे जाणवतंय
माझं ठाणे बदलतंय...

ठाणे महानगरपालिका, ठाणे

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Zeeshan Ali resigns as Davis Cup coach

New Delhi: Zeeshan Ali on Wednesday announced that he has resigned from his position as coach of the Indian Davis Cup team, a month before the national team's next assignment against Sweden in Stockholm.

"I have resigned as the coach of the Davis Cup team," Zeeshan Ali told PTL.

Zeeshan, 54, had replaced Nandan Bal as coach of the team in 2013 ahead of the tie against South Korea in New Delhi.

"I've been coach of the Davis Cup team for 11 years now. To top it all, I was also the captain of the Davis Cup, the historic tie that we played against Pakistan in Pakistan earlier on this year. I don't think there is any such person from any country who has had the privilege and honor of doing all these three things," he said.

"There have been players who were captains, but



I don't think there has been a situation where the player was a coach and then the coach was also the captain of the team.

"So having done all these three things, I felt that I have already achieved whatever there was to achieve as far as Davis Cup was concerned. And frankly speaking, I have been thinking about this for quite some time now."

India will take on Sweden on hard indoor court in Stockholm from September 14-15.

New Delhi: A proud owner of two consecutive Olympic medals, Indian hockey star P.R. Sreejesh says the bronze claimed in Tokyo three years ago is closer to his heart than the one fetched in Paris as the former was like a mythical tale coming true after decades of merely hearing about it.

The 36-year-old goalkeeper, who bid adieu to his international career at the end of India's Paris campaign, was, in fact, a shade disappointed with the colour of the medal this time as he felt the team should have done better.

"Tokyo for sure because we won an Olympic medal after a long time. Earlier we used to hear what an Olympic medal means as hockey has a rich history of gold, silver and bronze medals. But it never came in our hands. So when we got it for the first time, that was a moment," Sreejesh told PTL.

India's hockey team had not won an Olympic medal in 41 years when it entered the Tokyo Games. It had won the gold medal in 1980 Moscow Olympics in absence of prominent competitors.

Sreejesh said India was competent to win gold in

Tokyo bronze holds more significance: Sreejesh



Paris. "We had that hope that we are going to be number one. I feel it is a big disappointment (not to get

a gold), it should have been a gold."

The Bronze in Paris was India's 13th Olympic medal

in hockey. It was also the first time since 1972 that the nation won back-to-back medals in hockey.

Coaching on mind
Sreejesh has decided to follow his favourite sportsman Rahul Dravid. Like

JERSEY RETIRES TOO

Hockey India has decided to retire number 16 jersey in senior team to honour P.R. Sreejesh. He played 336 international matches for India.

Dravid he too has expressed a desire to mentor the junior hockey players. He wants to start with the U-19 boys. "I want to become a coach. That was always my plan but now there is a question of when. After retirement, family comes first. I need to talk with them if they are OK with this. Now you have to listen to your wife a little bit," Sreejesh said.

His plans are clear. "I start this year, next in 2025, we have the junior World Cup and in another two years, the senior team will be playing the World Cup. So may be, by 2028, I can produce 20 or 40 players and by 2029, I can have 15-20 players into the senior team and by 2030 almost like 30-35 players in the senior side. In 2032, I will be ready for the chief coach's position," Sreejesh said.

Mumbai Marathon on January 19

Mumbai: The 20th edition of the Tata Mumbai Marathon will be held here on January 19, 2025. The registrations for all categories began on Wednesday.

The organisers announced that the registrations for amateurs category can be done from August 14 to November 30 or until all running spots are filled. The half marathon registrations will begin on August 23 and will remain open till September 13.

A few spots have been re-

served in the half marathon for Persons with Disability (PwD).

The Open 10K category will be reserved for charity but limited running places will be available for an online ballot. The Dream Run registrations will be open between November 5-25 while the Senior Citizen's Run registrations will be from August 27 to November 25. The Virtual Run registrations will remain open from August 14 to January 8.

"Was umpiring in world cup, unaware of daughter's death"

Aleem Dar came to know about the tragedy when a person consoled him after a match

Karachi: Pakistan's most capped umpire, Aleem Dar has shared the saddest moment of his life when the death of his seven-month old daughter was kept a secret from him by his wife and family members in the early stages of his international career in 2003.

The 56-year-old recounted on a Pakistani channel that his wife and his family didn't tell him about the death of his infant daughter

while he was umpiring in the 2003 World Cup.

"It was the start of my career as a ICC panel umpire and it was a very important assignment for my career and they knew if I came to know about my daughter's demise, I would return home immediately," Dar said on the show.

The highly-regarded Pakistani umpire said eventually when he learnt about his daughter's demise it



was the most sad moment of his life and he was hurt badly.

"I was kept in the dark for nearly a month after her passing away and I only came to know about it by chance in Johannesburg where a Pakistani man who belonged to my hometown Sialkot came to offer his condolences to me.

"It was a big shock to me at that time and I immediately informed the ICC and

returned home," Dar said.

The umpire said the moment he learnt about his daughter he called up his wife and she started crying over the phone.

"I came to know later that my father had strictly told the media friends to not print the story," he added.

Dar stood in 145 Tests, 231 ODIs and 72 T20 Internationals in a career spanning from 2000 to 2023.

Gautam Adani's 'Key to Key' Promise A Milestone in Slum Redevelopment

The Dharavi redevelopment project, spearheaded by Gautam Adani's Adani Group, is more than just a real estate venture; it's a bold statement on the potential of urban renewal and a blueprint for addressing the complex challenges of slum redevelopment. The promise of a "key to key" exchange, where existing residents are guaranteed new homes within a stipulated timeframe and without shifting the residents to temporary accommodation, marks a significant departure from the traditional, often fraught, processes associated with such projects.

Understanding the Dharavi Challenge

Before delving into the significance of Adani's promise, it's crucial to appreciate the magnitude of the Dharavi challenge. Often dubbed Asia's largest slum, Dharavi is a microcosm of urban India's complexities. It has more than 10 lakh residents from all major religions, regions and castes in India. It is not home to a diverse population, it's also a bustling economic hub. Dharavi hosts major industries such as leather, garments, pottery, recycling, and food production. However, Dharavi also stands as a stark symbol of inequality. The absence of basic infrastructure and civic amenities results in lower income, limited employment opportunities, and adverse effects on health, hygiene, and overall well-being. Redevelopment, therefore, is not merely about constructing new buildings but about transforming lives, preserving livelihoods, and creating a



sustainable, inclusive community.

The 'Key to Key' Revolution

Adani's pledge of a "key to key" exchange is a game-changer for several reasons:

- **Certainty and Security:** For residents, the most significant aspect is the assurance of a new home without the uncertainty that has plagued previous redevelopment attempts in the past. This eliminates the fear of displacement and the associated anxieties.
- **Speed and Efficiency:** The promise of a swift transition implies a highly efficient execution plan. This is crucial as delays in such projects often lead to escalating costs, social unrest, and loss of trust.
- **Focus on People:** By prioritizing the needs of residents, Adani is shifting the paradigm from profit-centric development to people-centric urban renewal. This approach is essential for

building trust and ensuring the project's long-term success.

- **Setting a New Standard:** If successfully implemented, the Dharavi project could become a benchmark for slum redevelopment across India and even globally. It could inspire similar initiatives and encourage private sector participation in addressing urban challenges.

Beyond Bricks and Mortar

While the physical transformation of Dharavi is undoubtedly significant, the project's impact extends far beyond. It has the potential to:

- **Revitalize the Economy:** A well-planned redevelopment will unlock the area's economic potential, creating jobs and boosting local businesses.
- **Unlock Hidden Value:** By transforming Dharavi into a modern, planned urban

space, the project will unlock its true economic potential. Improved infrastructure, better accessibility, and a more conducive business environment can attract larger investments.

- **Formalize the Informal Economy:** One of the key challenges in Dharavi is the informal nature of its economy. Redevelopment will provide an opportunity to formalize these businesses, providing them with formal banking and financial channels and improving working conditions.
- **Create Jobs:** The redevelopment process itself will generate employment opportunities, from construction to ancillary services. Moreover, a revitalized Dharavi is expected to attract new businesses, leading to job creation in various sectors.
- **Skill Development:** Adani is keenly focussed on upgrading the skills of the local workforce. Upskilling will be essential to take advantage of new economic opportunities.
- **Infrastructure:** Adani plans to create world-class infrastructure, including transportation, utilities, and communication, which is not only vital for the success of the project, but will also transform the face of Mumbai
- **Improve Quality of Life:** New housing, better infrastructure, and improved sanitation will dramatically enhance the lives of residents.
- **Address Social Issues:** By creating a more organized and inclusive community, the project will help address social issues such as crime, education,

and healthcare.

- **Promote Sustainable Development:** Incorporating green building practices and sustainable infrastructure will create a model for environmentally responsible urban development.
- **Social Inclusion:** Dharavi is a melting pot of cultures and communities. The redevelopment project can foster social harmony and inclusion by creating spaces that cater to the diverse needs of its residents.
- **Empowerment of Women:** Last but not least, by providing access to education, vocational training, and employment opportunities, the project can empower women and enhance their role in society.

Challenges and Opportunities

Of course, the road ahead is not without challenges. Issues like land acquisition, resettlement, and financing will require careful planning and execution. Furthermore, the impact of negative politics poses a significant obstacle to the timely completion of the ongoing survey. However, the potential rewards are immense. If successful, the Dharavi project could become a symbol of India's ability to address its urban challenges and create a more equitable and sustainable future.

Adani's "key to key" promise is a bold step in the right direction. It's a testament to the belief that even the most complex urban problems can be solved with vision, determination, and a genuine commitment to the people who call these places home.