



PERFECTION IAS

f /Perfection IAS Perfection IAS(Official) www.perfectionias.com

NEW BATCHES FOR BPSC

STARTING FROM 13th JULY 2022

9155090871/72/73

HINDI MEDIUM
Time: 11:30 AM- 02:30 PM

ENGLISH MEDIUM
Time: 01:00 PM- 04:00 PM

IN BRIEF



J&K journalist stopped from flying abroad
 NEW DELHI
 A Pulitzer-winning photojournalist from J&K, Sanna Irshad Mattoo, was stopped from flying to Paris at the Indira Gandhi International airport on Saturday.
NEWS • PAGE 6

2015 sacrilege cases: SIT blames Dera Sacha Sauda
 CHANDIGARH
 A Special Investigation Team of the Punjab police, probing the three sacrilege cases of 2015 in Bargari village in Faridkot district, has indicted the Sirda-based Dera Sacha Sauda for the incidents.
STATES • PAGE 3

MAGAZINE • 8 PAGES
CLASSIFIEDS • PAGE 4

After Udaipur case, NIA to take up probe into Amravati killing

Police arrest seven persons, obtain CCTV footage

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
 NEW DELHI

The Union Home Ministry on Saturday handed over the probe into the June 21 killing of a pharmacist at Amravati in Maharashtra to the National Investigation Agency (NIA), amid indications that he was killed over a social media post in support of suspended Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) spokesperson Nupur Sharma.

The Ministry, in a tweet, said it had "handed over the investigation of the case relating to the barbaric killing of Shri Umesh Kolhe in Am-



Under scanner: Two of those arrested in connection with the killing in Amravati on Saturday. • SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

ravati in Maharashtra on 21st June to NIA". "The conspiracy behind the killing, involvement of organisations and international linkages would be thoroughly investigated," the Ministry added.

The local police have arrested seven persons, in-

cluding alleged mastermind Irfan Khan, and seized CCTV footage of the incident.

The other accused in the case have been identified as Muddsir Ahamed, 22, Shahrugh Pathan, 25, Abdul Thoufik, 24, Shoaib Khan, 22, Atib Rashid, 22, and Yousuf

Khan Bahadur, 44.

Arti Singh, Commissioner of Police, Amravati City, said Irfan ran an ambulance service and an NGO for the underprivileged members of the Muslim community. She said Kolhe was killed for forwarding a message in support of Ms. Sharma. "He forwarded the post in a WhatsApp group which had one of the accused as a member. The accused forwarded the message to [Irfan] Khan who hatched the entire conspiracy to kill Kolhe to avenge the insult to the Prophet," Ms. Singh said.

The officer said the police were never treating the case as that of a robbery attempt.

CONTINUED ON • PAGE 6

Denied bail, Zubair sent to judicial custody for 14 days

Police update media about order before court ruling

ABHINAV LAKSHMAN
 NEW DELHI

A Delhi court on Saturday denied bail to Alt News co-founder Mohammed Zubair and remanded the journalist in judicial custody for 14 days, noting the probe was in "the initial stage", considering the "overall facts and circumstances of the case" and given the "nature and gravity of offences".

Chief Metropolitan Magistrate Snigdha Sarvaria of the Patiala House court here pronounced the order around 7 p.m., almost five hours after the Special Cell (IFSO) DCP K.P.S. Malhotra told the media in a "broadcast" message that Mr. Zubair had been remanded in



No respite: Mohammed Zubair being taken to jail from the Patiala House courts in New Delhi on Saturday. • PTI

judicial custody for 14 days.

The statement from the police had prompted Mr. Zubair's counsel, advocate Souvik Banerjee, to lash out at the police: "It speaks of the status of rule of law in our country today... How KPS Malhotra knows what the or-

der is, is beyond me." Soon after Mr. Banerjee's statement, Mr. Malhotra said he had "misheard the IO" and "inadvertently" sent the message to the press.

CONTINUED ON • PAGE 6
MORE REPORTS • PAGES 3 & 6

AAP's claims of creating 10 lakh jobs misleading

Only 12,588 people got jobs via portal

NIKHIL M. BABU
 NEW DELHI

National convener of the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) and Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal and other party leaders have been claiming for the past several months that their government has provided 10 lakh jobs in the private sector to Delhiites through its Rozgar Bazaar portal.

But only 12,588 people had actually secured jobs through the portal till May 1, according to official data accessed by *The Hindu*. This figure of 12,588 is also an estimate of the government's as it's based solely on phone calls with people who posted the job openings, without cross-checking with people who actually got the jobs.

The Delhi government doesn't have names or any other details of people who actually got jobs, multiple sources privy to the information confirmed.

"The portal was not a huge success and there was no mechanism to actually find out how many people got jobs, or their details. It worked with a very small team," a source told *The Hindu*. Despite multiple attempts, the Delhi government refused to comment on this.

The AAP government's claims on the "10 lakh jobs"



Arvind Kejriwal

have varied over the last 20 months, depending on who made the claim and where it was made.

In an interview with *The Hindu* in March, when asked about it, Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia reiterated that 10 lakh people actually got jobs through the portal and it was not that 10 lakh openings were posted on the portal.

But as per the data, only 76,646 candidates were "screened" by people who posted the jobs and 12,588 were the "candidates selected" from its inception in July 2020 till May 1. The government has never made this detailed data public.

Santosh Kumar Mehrotra, former Professor and Chair of the Centre for Labour Studies at Jawaharlal Nehru University, said the actual number of people who got jobs through the portal could be even lesser than 12,588.

CONTINUED ON • PAGE 6

Opposition working against nation, says BJP

NISTULA HEBBAR
 HYDERABAD

BJP president J.P. Nadda on Saturday set the tone for the two-day national executive meet of the party in Hyderabad by taking on the Opposition parties which, he said, had "for the purpose of opposing Prime Minister Narendra Modi begun oppos-

ing the nation". Mr. Nadda said this on a day Chief Minister K. Chandrababhan Rao skipped, for the third time, receiving Mr. Modi at the airport, which, the BJP said, was a violation of "constitutional propriety and federal protocol".

CONTINUED ON • PAGE 6

Apologise for 'doctored' video of Rahul: Cong.

Jairam Ramesh alleges that Udaipur killer Riyaz Attari was a BJP worker

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
 NEW DELHI

Apologise for sharing a doctored video of Rahul Gandhi or face legal action, Congress general secretary in charge of communications, Jairam Ramesh, said in a letter to Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) president J.P. Nadda on July 2 and mentioned former Un-

ion Minister and Lok Sabha member Rajyavardhan Rathore as "someone who has persisted with spreading the fake video".

Twitter too flagged a video shared by Mr. Rathore as "out of context".

In the video, the BJP leader claimed that Mr. Gandhi had referred to the Udaipur

killers as "youngsters".

Hitting back, the Congress accused that one of the Udaipur killers, Riyaz Attari, was a BJP worker and questioned if a probe by NIA was ordered to suppress this aspect. The BJP, however, denied any links to the Udaipur killers.

"I am appalled to note

that your party colleagues have been sharing mischievous reportage that occurred on *Zee News* yesterday [July 1, 2022]. The original video was Shri. Rahul Gandhi's comment on the SFI violence on his Wayanad office," Mr. Ramesh wrote to Nadda.

CONTINUED ON • PAGE 6

A Himalayan experience



The 18th edition of the Royal Enfield Himalayan Odyssey being flagged off from India Gate in New Delhi on Saturday. This year, 70 riders, embarking on a journey to Umling La, the highest motorable pass in the world, will cover a distance of over 2,700 kms in 18 days on their motorcycles. • R.V. MOORTHY

Teesta, Sreekumar sent to judicial custody

'Police did not seek further remand'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
 AHMEDABAD

A court here on Saturday sent activist Teesta Setalvad and former Director-General of Police R.B. Sreekumar, arrested for alleged fabrication of evidence in the 2002 Gujarat riots cases, to 14-day judicial custody.

The two were produced before Metropolitan Magistrate S.P. Patel after their police custody ended. The police did not seek their further remand, said special public prosecutor Amit Patel. Ms. Setalvad and Mr. Sreekumar were arrested over an FIR registered last Saturday by the Ahmedabad Police Crime Branch.

"The investigation officer did not ask for further custody and they were sent in

judicial custody," Mr. Patel said. Mr. Sreekumar was arrested last Saturday and Ms. Setalvad the next day after being picked up by the Gujarat ATS from Mumbai.

Former IPS officer Sanjiv Bhatt, who is serving life sentence in a custodial death case in a jail in Banaskantha district, is also accused in the case. He will be brought to Ahmedabad on transfer warrant, police sources said.

The crime branch registered the FIR against them a day after the Supreme Court dismissed a petition challenging the clean chit given by a Special Investigation Team to then Chief Minister Narendra Modi and others in the 2002 post-Godhra riots cases.

Transgender status grounds Adam Harry's dream to be a pilot

Private-pilot licence holder working as a delivery person; DGCA says cross sex hormone therapy renders him unfit to fly; activist says there is no scientific basis for it

JAGRITI CHANDRA
 NEW DELHI

In 2019, Adam Harry shot to fame as the country's first transgender trainee pilot, set to receive support from the Kerala Government to become a commercial pilot. Two years later, he is a delivery person for Zomato because the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) says he is unfit to fly as long as he is on hormone therapy.

The 23-year-old, a private-pilot licence (PPL) holder from South Africa, secured admission to the Rajiv Gandhi Academy for Aviation Technology in Thiruvananthapuram in January 2020 under the Kerala Govern-



Clipped wings: Adam Harry says he is not willing to sacrifice his identity for his profession. • SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

ment's welfare fund for transgender people. A PPL allows its holder to fly an aeroplane as a hobbyist, whereas a commercial pilot can make a career in flying.

Mr. Harry joined the institute and was soon required to undergo the Class 2 medical test to secure a student pilot's license. Mr. Harry was assigned female at birth. He

identified himself as a trans man before the officials and displayed male physiological characteristics such as a beard and a male voice, yet he had no choice but to submit his application as a female because the DGCA's medical examination form doesn't include options for non-binary genders.

SPECIAL

Following an extensive evaluation, which included a psychometric test that's not normally required, the DGCA declared him "temporary unfit" on the grounds of gender dysphoria (unease due to mismatch between

sex assigned at birth and a person's gender identity), and because he is undergoing "cross sex hormone therapy". He was advised to complete his treatment and undertake a medical review. The medical examination was far from pleasant.

"The officials were transphobic and asked very personal questions about my physicality and how would I marry someone. They were bullying me to undress, even when I asked for a female assistant," Mr. Harry said.

Five months later, when he received a medical clearance, Mr. Harry says it was granted because he was "coerced" into stopping his

therapy as the DGCA says that as long as he is on medication, he will not be declared fit to fly. However, since his masculinising hormone therapy is a life-long treatment, the DGCA's current stand forbids him from ever becoming a pilot in India.

"I have been advised by my doctor not to break my transition therapy. And I can't sacrifice my identity for my profession. I want to be able to fly as who I am," Mr. Harry told *The Hindu*.

"The DGCA is missing any medical or scientific link between being on testosterone lifelong and flying an aeroplane. If they establish a con-

nection, they should ban cis men from flying since they produce the same chemical endogenously," trans-rights activist and Associate Professor of Biology at Ashoka University, Bittu Kaveri Rajaram, said.

When the DGCA was asked why hormone therapy is a ground for denying medical clearance, a senior official said that though the candidate was informed of the reasons, the details could not be shared with the media "as per medical ethics".

The United States aviation regulator, the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), allows a person with gender dysphoria who has under-

gone a gender reassignment surgery or hormone replacement therapy subject to certain rules that have to be followed.

The FAA also allows a pilot to undergo a gender transition while still flying without being grounded.

In India, the landmark Supreme Court judgment in National Legal Services Authority (NALSA) v Union of India recognised that third gender persons were entitled to fundamental rights under the Constitution.

It held that no third gender persons should be subjected to any medical examination which would invade their right to privacy.

'Crores spent, no change to landfills'

Heaps of garbage scattered all over, says AAP leader; it's dirty politics, retorts BJP

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

The height of the landfills in Delhi has not reduced even by an inch, said the Aam Aadmi Party on Saturday while attacking erstwhile North, South and East Delhi Municipal Corporations, governed by the BJP, for "spending thousands of crores of rupees in the name of clearing the garbage mounds".

AAP legislator Durgesh Pathak appealed to Lieutenant-Governor Vinai Kumar Saxena to conduct the MCD elections immediately, claiming that only "AAP can bring freedom from BJP's garbage mountains".

"The L-G admitted that



A garbage mound at Ghazipur landfill site. ■ FILE PHOTO

right now the city is surrounded by piles of trash because of the BJP's failures. Today, from whichever side you enter Delhi, you are welcomed by heaps of garbage that are scattered all over the city," Mr. Pathak said.

Reacting to Mr. Pathak's statement, Delhi BJP spokesperson Praveen Shankar Kapoor said, "It is shameful that the AAP legislator is playing dirty politics against the MCD in the name of garbage mounds when the Delhi government itself has made no efforts to flatten them." Mr. Kapoor challenged Mr. Pathak to tell Delhi what financial or technical contribution the Arvind Kejriwal government made to the erstwhile municipal corporations for clearing of landfill sites in the last seven years.

He said it was due to the MCD's efforts that the height of the mounds did not increase even by an inch in the

last three years. In fact, the height of the piles had reduced at both Bhalaswa and Ghazipur sites, he added.

'Some mounds reduced'

The MCD, meanwhile, said it has managed to reduce the height of the mounds at some locations and is "committed to flatten the garbage piles at the three landfill sites in the next two to three years". The civic body said 25 lakh tonnes of legacy waste has been processed at the Bhalaswa landfill, while 11 lakh tonnes of waste has been processed at Ghazipur. At Okhla landfill, the MCD said it has managed to reduce the height of some mounds by 15 to 30 metres.

Will take action against officials if waterlogging recurs, warns L-G

He expresses displeasure over poor drainage at Minto Bridge

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Strict action will be taken against government officials if waterlogging recurs at locations prone to it, Lieutenant-Governor Vinai Kumar Saxena said on Saturday.

The L-G's comments came while he was inspecting waterlogging-prone sites in the Capital, including the Indraprastha-WHO building stretch, the railway underpass at Pul Prahladpur and Minto Bridge.

Mr. Saxena reviewed long-term solutions adopted at each of these sites to prevent

waterlogging and flooding. Any negligence in this regard, the L-G was quoted as having said, will be viewed seriously and action will be taken against erring officials.

"While the L-G appreciated the work done at Indraprastha and Pul Prahladpur, he expressed displeasure at the water drainage system at Minto Bridge, the worst waterlogging sites in the Capital," Raj Niwas said.

"Mr. Saxena flagged technical flaws in the drainage system developed at the site and warned that the engineers concerned will be

held responsible in case of waterlogging at the site," Raj Niwas added.

The L-G was informed that a new underground pipeline had been installed to drain rainwater from Minto Bridge to Bhavbhuti Marg towards New Delhi railway station.

The L-G also expressed displeasure over the garbage dumped in the sump at Minto Bridge and issued instructions to remove debris and sludge at Minto Bridge, Indraprastha and Pul Prahladpur in three to four days, the statement added.

BJP slams AAP for two-day House session

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The BJP on Saturday accused the Aam Aadmi Party-led Delhi government of trying to avoid discussing issues of public interest by curtailing the Assembly session.

The Assembly is scheduled to meet for a two-day session from Monday.

Leader of the Opposition in the Assembly Ramvir Singh Bidhuri questioned the rationale behind convening short sessions which, he alleged, was in contravention of procedural norms and "inadequate" to discuss issues.

EASTERN RAILWAY
Open Tender Notice No.: 17-SDSTE-ASN-2022-23, Dated 01.07.2022. e-Tender is invited by Sr. Divisional Signal & Telecom Engineer, Eastern Railway, Asansol for the following Work: Name of Work / Location: Asansol Division, Augmentation of TIB/CIB display System at JSME station over Asansol Division. Tender Value: Rs. 1,50,44,849.91. Earnest Money: Rs. 2,25,200/-. Date and Time of Closing of Tender: 25.07.2022 at 15.00hrs. Completion period of the work: 06 months from the date of issue of LOA. Website Particulars: <http://www.irps.gov.in>. Manual offers are not allowed against this tender and any such manual offer received shall be ignored. The tenderer/bidders must have Class-III Digital Signature Certificate and must be registered on IREPS portal. Only registered tenderers/bidders can participate in e-Tendering. (ASN-52/2022-23) Tender Notice are also available at website: www.indianrailways.gov.in or www.irps.gov.in. Follow us at: @EasternRailway Eastern Railway Headquarter

NORTH WESTERN RAILWAY
ई-निविदा आमन्त्रण सूचना मुख्य कारखाना प्रबंधक, (सिविल इंजीनियरिंग) कार्यशाळा, उत्तर पश्चिम रेलवे, जोधपुर द्वारा भारत के राष्ट्रपति के लिये एवं उनकी ओर से ई-निविदा के माध्यम से प्रचलित नियमों के अन्तर्गत निम्नलिखित प्रपत्रों में निविदा निम्न कार्यों के लिए क्रमानुसार आमंत्रित की जाती है- ई-निविदा सूचना सं. 2022-23 : WS-03 OF 2022-23, कार्य का नाम व स्थान : Zone Contract, Zone-1 (Workshop) for day to day repairs and maintenance work in Workshop, Jodhpur in the section of SSE/WWS/JU under XEN/WS/JU for year 2022-23 & 2023-24, अनुमानित लागत रुपये : Rs. 3,90,49,367.96, बयान की राशि रुपये : Rs. 3,45,300.00, निविदा सूचना संख्या WS-03 OF 2022-23 तक निविदा प्रस्तुत करने की तिथि 25.07.2022 को 15.00 बजे तक है। वेबसाइट को विवरण जहाँ पर ई-निविदा देखी व नसी जा सकती है : www.irps.gov.in 475-SN/22 Follow us at: @NWRailways NWRailways

TO ADVERTISE PLEASE CONTACT
Mr. N SELVA KUMAR
PH: 9820350726
selvakumar.n@thehindu.co.in
THE HINDU
India's National Newspaper

NORTH WESTERN RAILWAY
Open Tender Notice Following e-tenders are invited by DRM (Mech), (Elec), (Engg.) & (S&T) NWR/Ajmer at 15.00 Hrs. on the mentioned date. Tender No.: M-01-AII-2022-Re Tender. Name of work: Comprehensive Annual Maintenance contract of Automatic Axle Box temperature recording system (HABD) installed at Md Yard (UP line), MJ (UP line) & MJ (Dn Line) for 03 years. Approximate Cost: Rs. 12.98, 238.84. Earnest Money: Rs. 8,000.00. Tender Closing Date: 11.07.2022, Tender No.: M-04-CW-AII-2022, Name of work: Provision of Quick waterfiring Arrangement system on all platforms at Abu Road Station. Approximate Cost: Rs. 1,163,545.49. Earnest Money: Rs. 2,05,800.00. Tender Closing Date: 13.07.2022, Tender No.: DRM-Elect-33-2022-23, Name of work: All DIV :- Provision of web based pump automation (Monitoring & control) system at Railway Hospital Area & at various important locations over Ajmer division. Approximate Cost: Rs. 2,42,31,083.00. Earnest Money: Rs. 2,71,200.00. Tender Closing Date: 12.07.2022, Tender No.: DRM-Elect-34-2022-23, Name of work: Outsourcing of Escorting activity including trip maintenance activities of Tr. No. 12987/88 Ajmer-Sealdah Superfast Exp. At coaching depot Madar & Tr. No. 19615/16 Udaipur city - Kamakhya kavrigur Exp. At coaching depot, Udaipur over Ajmer division for the period of one year. Approximate Cost: Rs. 1,75,46,013.43. Earnest Money: Rs. 2,37,700.00. Cost of Tender Form: Rs. 95,400.00. Tender Closing Date: 18.07.2022, Tender No.: 91/2022, Name of work: Ajmer Division: Provision of 2 Nos. Lifts at Ajmer station (2 Nos. at Platform No. 1 & Platform No. 4/5, both at DOZ side). Approximate Cost: Rs. 47,69,804.06. Earnest Money: Rs. 95,400.00. Tender Closing Date: 18.07.2022, Tender No.: 91/2022, Name of work: Ajmer Division - Engineering Works in connection with Provision of 2 Nos. Lifts at Abu Road Station (02 Nos - Platform No. 1 & Platform No. 2/3 both at Ajmer end). Approximate Cost: Rs. 50,90,505.86. Earnest Money: Rs. 1,01,800.00. Tender Closing Date: 15.07.2022, Tender No.: DRM-S&T-06-2022-23, Name of work: Provision of Augmentation of existing CCTV Video Surveillance System at Ajmer Station of Ajmer Division, North Western Railway. Approximate Cost: Rs. 1,72,28,131.87. Earnest Money: Rs. 2,36,100.00. Tender Closing Date: 18.07.2022, Tender No.: DRM-S&T-07-2022-23, Name of work: Ajmer Division - Ajmer - Chittorgarh (Section) - TTR-57 Sets (TWS + CMSC) Over Ajmer Division. Approximate Cost: Rs. 71,06,012.52. Earnest Money: Rs. 1,42,100.00. Tender Closing Date: 18.07.2022. The detailed information of the above tender is available on website www.irps.gov.in and Tender Notice Board of DRM/Office, NWR/Ajmer. 470-SN/22 Follow us at: @NWRailways NWRailways

400 guards at Safdarjung Hospital sacked by contract agency

SAMRIDHI TEWARI
NEW DELHI

When Dashrath Ram, 60, a security guard working at the Safdarjung Hospital for over 22 years, was sacked on Friday. Mr. Ram, who earned around ₹21,000 a month, said his savings were too little to feed his family of 11 and run the household even for a month.

The 60-year-old isn't the only one staring at this un-

certainty. According to Delhi Aspatal Theka Karamchhari Union (Hospital contract workers' union), around 400 security guards working at the hospital for several years have been sacked by the contract agency in the name of "contract renewal".

A source at Safdarjung Hospital said around 300-400 security guards were sacked, but the hospital administration did not give any

official confirmation. No response was received from the contract agency too on the union's allegation of "mass termination".

'Without notice'

In a letter to the Medical Superintendent of Safdarjung Hospital and the Union Ministry of Health, the union said all the contract workers were paid minimum wages irrespective of their con-

tracts, according to Mr. Animesh Das, president, Delhi Committee, Indian Federation of Trade Unions. Mr. Das said the guards were removed in an "arbitrary way and without any notice".

However, Ramesh Singh, 57, another security guard who lost his job, said he got a termination notice on June 14. Mr. Singh, who had been working at the hospital for 12 years, said he was worried

because the responsibility of running his five-member family had now fallen on his working son.

Another security guard, Inderjeet Paswan, 42, said he did not receive any termination notice or phone call. He said he earned around ₹22,000 and was the sole breadwinner of his family of eight. Mr. Paswan said he came to Delhi from Bihar with his family in 2011.

SEARCH FOR MISSING PERSON

General public is here by informed that this person namely Karan Trahan S/o Devender Trahan R/o 4279/61, Regarpura, Karol Bagh, Delhi Age : 21 years, Height : 5'9", Face : Round, Complexion : Fair, Build : Medium, wearing blue colour jeans pant & shirt and brown colour shoes in feet, has been missing since 11.02.2014 from the area of P.S. Karol Bagh, Delhi. In this regard FIR No. 385/15 u/s 365 IPC has been registered at P.S. Karol Bagh, Delhi.

Any person having any information or clue about this missing person may kindly inform to the following:-

E-mail: ci@cbi.gov.in SHO : P.S. Karol Bagh, Delhi
24368639@cbi.nic.in Ph. : 011-25726870, 08750870430
Fax: 24368639, 08750870430
Tel.: 24368638/24368641

उत्तराखण्ड पावर कारपोरेशन लिमिटेड
कार्यालय अडीलक्ष अभियन्ता, विद्युत विभाग मन्डन, विजली भवन, बाजपुर रोड कारीपुर।
दूरभाष 05947-276520 कार्यालय अडीलक्ष संख्या U40109UR2001ISGC025867
Email: ksp@rediffmail.com Website: www.upcl.org

क्र. सं.	ई-निविदा संख्या	सामग्री/कार्य का नाम	निविदा प्रपत्र का मूल्य (रु.)	व्यक्तिगत राशि (रु.)	कार्य की अनुमानित लागत (रु.)	ई-निविदा प्रपत्र आमंत्रित करने की तिथि एवं समय	ई-निविदा प्रपत्र आमंत्रित करने की तिथि एवं समय
1.	04/2022-23	विद्युत वितरण खण्ड बाजपुर के अन्तर्गत 33/11 कोठीवी विद्युत उपसंस्थान बरहेगी के संचालन एवं अनुसंधान सम्बन्धित कार्य।	2,360/-	75,000/-	26,00,000/-	18.07.2022 (11:00 बजे तक)	19.07.2022 (12:00 बजे)
2.	05/2022-23	विद्युत वितरण खण्ड बाजपुर के अन्तर्गत 33/11 कोठीवी विद्युत उपसंस्थान इट्टावा के संचालन एवं अनुसंधान सम्बन्धित कार्य।	2,360/-	75,000/-	26,00,000/-	18.07.2022 (11:00 बजे तक)	19.07.2022 (13:00 बजे)
3.	06/2022-23	विद्युत वितरण खण्ड बाजपुर के अन्तर्गत 33/11 कोठीवी विद्युत उपसंस्थानों की राशी में अनुसंधान सम्बन्धित कार्य।	2,360/-	75,000/-	27,25,000/-	18.07.2022 (11:00 बजे तक)	19.07.2022 (14:00 बजे)

निविदा से सम्बन्धित समस्त विवरण वेब साइट www.uktenders.gov.in पर अवलोकित किया जा सकता है।
विद्युत विभाग के 24x7 ऑनलाइन मुद्राणन हेतु www.upcl.org पर जायें **अधीक्षण अभियन्ता**
संख्या: 1416 (विद्युत/सं)/र/वि/नं.02.07.2022 संपर्क: हित में निजली बचारी **Customer Toll Free No.18004190405**

HOUSING & URBAN DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT
J & K LAKE CONSERVATION & MANAGEMENT AUTHORITY SRINAGAR

Head Office, Vice Chairman, J & K Lake Conservation and Management Authority, Fax: +91-194-2451025, Phone: +91-194-2451073

Implementing Agency Executive Engineer, Lake Division 2nd STF Naseem Bagh Hazratbal Srinagar 190006 email: xenlakediv2nd@gmail.com

Fresh NIT No.14 of 2022-23 REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP)

For and on behalf of Lt Governor of Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir, e-bids in double cover system on item rate basis are invited for selection of consultant for Formulation of a Local Area Plan (LAP) for the area adjoining proposed Western Foreshore Road along western side of Dal Lake from Saika kadal Bridge to Mamta Hotel Kohn Khan, Dalgate Srinagar, Jand K. In this regard, the consultants are requested to express their interest in providing the end-to-end professional services required for the formulation of the LAP as per the given formats which should be uploaded on the J&K e-Procurement web-portal <http://www.jktenders.gov.in>, as per the tendering schedule given in the tender document.

Online bidding schedule:

1	Date of Publication	30.06.2022
2	Start date of downloading of bid documents	01.07.2022
3	Period of clarifications	02.07.2022
4	Last Date & Time for submission of Proposal	16.07.2022: 4.00 P.M.
5	Date and time of Opening of Technical Proposal	18.07.2022 2.P.M or any other date fixed by LCMA
6	Date and time of Opening of Financial	To be intimated to the Technical Qualified Bidder
7	Non-refundable Bid Document Fees	Rs.5000/- (Rupees Five Thousand Only), non-transferable / Non-refundable to be deposited into account no: CDG/01850102000003 (IFSC code: JAKASATHOO) JK Bank Upper Satlu through E-challan/treasury receipt/pay in slip. However the bidders who have participated in the bidding in pursuance of the previous EOI shall not be required to deposit fee afresh. The proof of previously deposited fee has to be uploaded with the bid.
8	Date and Time of Prebid meeting	2.00 P.M. on 07/07/2022 in the Office of the Vice Chairman, LCMA through video conference, Miskeen Bagh, Srinagar-190018

1. The NIT Consisting of qualifying information, eligibility criteria, specifications, bill of quantities (B.O.Q), set of terms and conditions of contract and other details can be seen/downloaded from the Departmental website www.jktenders.gov.in upto said bidding schedule.

2. The bids shall be deposited in electronic format on the departmental website www.jktenders.gov.in upto said bidding schedule.

3. The complete bidding process will be on line.

For and on behalf Of the Governor of Jammu & Kashmir UT
NO. - No. - LD-III/1668-1695
Date: 30.06.2022
DIPK-NB-2116/22

Sd/-
Executive Engineer,
Lake Division 2nd JKLCA

Online Tender GOVT. OF GUJARAT (R&B) DEPARTMENT Tender Notice No.08 of 2022-23

In the name and on behalf of Governor of Gujarat State the Executive Engineer, Chhotaudepur (R&B) Division, Chhotaudepur (Phone No: 02669-233862) invites online from registered contractors for 1(One) work of Bridge, 1(one) work of Building and 1 (one) work of Total 3 (three) work tenders (Esti. cost of Rs.49.46 lakh to Rs. 700.00 Lakh) in form B-1 & B-2

The Bid documents will be available for the above works up to dt.14/07/2022 up to 12:00 Hrs. on Website <https://rnb.nprocure.com>. Last date of Online Submission of bid are as above up to Dt14/07/2022 up to 18:00 hrs.

For further particulars please visit above website and website of Gujarat Govt. www.statetenders.quiarat.gov.in Or contact this office during office hours. Any Changes/modifications will be seen online.

INF-VAD-463(22-23)

GOVT. OF NCT OF DELHI OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER OF INDUSTRIES UDYOG SADAN, PLOT NO. 419, F.I.E. PATPARGANJ, DELHI - 110092 STATE AWARD FOR HANDICRAFT ARTISANS FOR THE YEAR - 2021

Applications are invited for the State Award for the year 2021 from outstanding Handicraft Artisans residing in the National Capital Territory of Delhi, since last five years. Applications are to be made in the prescribed form which can be downloaded from the website: www.industries.delhigovt.nic.in. The same is also available in Handloom & Handicraft branch of Department of Industries, Govt. of N.C.T. of Delhi, 4th floor, Udyog Sadan, Plot No. 419, FIE, Patparganj, Delhi - 110092 on all working days between 10.00 a.m. to 4.00 p.m.

Applications complete in all respect along with the two items / samples of Craft items with their photo graph, a self declaration and proof of residence in Delhi since five years of the applicant should be submitted on or before 28.07.2022 at Department of Industries, Govt. of N.C.T. of Delhi, 4th floor, Udyog Sadan, Plot No. 419, FIE, Patparganj, Delhi - 110092. Applications received after the due date shall not be entertained.

DIP/Shabdarth/0176/22-23 Dy. Commissioner (H/H)

Branded T-SHIRT SALE upto 60% off
Introducing huge range of **Shorts & Lowers**
By Economy Sales: 9212758425 **OPEN 7 DAYS**

ARROW ColorPlus SMART CASUALS PARK AVENUE raymond

- PUNCHKUAN ROAD, Garwal Bhawan, (Near Jhandewalan, Gole Chkr.)
- WAZIRPUR A-5, Near Richi Rich Banquet (Opp. Shalimar Bagh)
- JANAKPURI B-1/2, Main Najafgarh Road, Opp. Metro Pillar 543
- NOIDA, Nirula's Sec-2, Near Metro Station, Sec-15, Noida, UP
- LAJPAT NAGAR, 49, Main Ring Road, Adj. Haldi Ram, Near Moolchand Crossing

Chief Engineer, Uttarakhand Rural Roads Development Agency, First Floor, Directorate of Panchayatiraj, Opp-IT Park, Sahastradhara Road, Dehradun
Ref. No.: 823/11-02(xix)-2/ITCO/URRDA/22 Date: 02.07.2022
PRADHAN MANTRI GRAM SADAK YOJANA (PMGSY) e-Procurement Notice-07/2022-23

The Chief Engineer, URRDA on behalf of Governor of Uttarakhand invites the item rate bids in electronic tendering system for construction of Bridges under Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana in the Districts of Pauri & Pithoragarh for 02 number of Packages with estimated cost totaling to **Rs. 4.74 Crore** including their maintenance for five years from the eligible contractors registered with PWD/CPWD or equivalent.

Date of release of Invitation for Bids through e-procurement: 05-07-2022.

Availability of Bid Documents and mode of submission: The bid documents are available online and should be submitted online in www.pmgstyendersuk.gov.in. The bidder would be required to register in the web-site which is free of cost. For submission of the bids, the bidder is required to have Digital Signature Certificate (DSC) from one of the authorized Certifying Authorities.

The bidders are required to submit original affidavit regarding correctness of information furnished with bid document as per provisions of Clause 4.4 B (ii) of ITB with **CONCERNED CIRCLE OFFICES**, mentioned in **SBD/MBD only up to or before the time and date of the submission of the Bids (for World Bank funded works) and on a date not later than three working days after the opening of technical qualification part of the bid (for Regular PMGSY Works)**, either by registered post or by hand, failing which the bids shall be declared non-responsive. No physical documents will be accepted after the closing date and time of submission of bids.

Last Date/Time for receipt of bids through e-procurement 11-07-2022 01:00 PM.
For further details please log on to www.pmgstyendersuk.gov.in

Chief Engineer, URRDA, Dehradun.
* Non Registered bidders may submit bids, however, the successful bidders must get registered in appropriate class with appropriate authorities before signing the contract.
Note: For e-Procurement for any sort of queries 0135-2608125 number may be contacted 10:00 AM to 05:00 PM.

उत्तर प्रदेश संस्कृत संस्थानम्
(भाषा विभाग उत्तर प्रदेश शासनाधीन स्वायत्तशासी संस्था)
इंदिरा भवन, 5वाँ तल, लखनऊ फोन : 0522-2977745

श्रीय रजिस्ट्रेशन करें
लखनऊ (मुख्य केन्द्र)
ऑनलाइन/ऑफलाइन के माध्यम से संस्कृत साहित्य के साथ IAS/PCS की तैयारी का सुनहरा अवसर

श्री कोचिंग के साथ स्कॉलरशिप
महत्त्वपूर्ण तिथि
निःशुल्क रजिस्ट्रेशन प्रारम्भ : 01 जुलाई से 15 अगस्त-2022 तक
सत्र प्रारम्भ : अक्टूबर-2022

IAS/PCS
सत्र 2022-23 की परीक्षा हेतु

संस्कृत साहित्य के साथ पढ़े सामान्य अध्ययन दिल्ली, लखनऊ के सर्वश्रेष्ठ विशेषज्ञों द्वारा

सिविल सेवा प्रवेश परीक्षा सत्र 2022-23 के लिए उत्तर प्रदेश संस्कृत संस्थानम् की वेबसाइट <http://upsanskritsansthanam.in> पर जाकर निःशुल्क रजिस्ट्रेशन करें अथवा <http://upscivil.in> लिंक पर भी जाकर रजिस्ट्रेशन कर सकते हैं।

पात्रता : ● आवेदन प्राप्त किये जाने की अंतिम तिथि तक विधि द्वारा स्थापित किसी मान्यता प्राप्त विश्वविद्यालय की स्नातक डिग्री या समकक्ष अर्हता।

- आयु सीमा : 21 से 35 वर्ष
- कोचिंग हेतु अभ्यर्थियों का चयन प्रदेश परीक्षा एवं साक्षात्कार के आधार पर किया जायेगा।
- प्रवेश परीक्षा का विषय : सामान्य अध्ययन एवं संस्कृत सामान्य व्याकरण की होगी।
- प्रवेश परीक्षा लखनऊ में आयोजित होगी।

नोट : इस कोचिंग से पूर्व के सत्रों में प्रशिक्षण प्राप्त कर चुके विद्यार्थी प्राप्त नहीं होंगे।
कोचिंग कार्यक्रम की प्रमुख विशेषताएं

- सामान्य अध्ययन एवं संस्कृत साहित्य के देश के सबसे अनुभवी विशेषज्ञों द्वारा कोचिंग।
- ऑनलाइन/ऑफलाइन एवं विडियो लेक्चर के माध्यम से कक्षाएं।
- संस्कृत, सामान्य अध्ययन एवं सामाजिकी की द्विभाषीय पाठ्य सामग्री।
- बहुस्तरीय कक्षा टेस्ट एवं टेस्ट सीरीज तथा सामाजिकी की साप्ताहिक कक्षाएं।
- अत्याधुनिक डिजिटल पुस्तकालय।

अधिक जानकारी के लिए सम्पर्क करें +91-9936469208/+91-6390006920,0522-4330139

अध्यक्ष डॉ. वाचस्पति मिश्र निदेशक पवन कुमार (IAS)

Government of Jammu & Kashmir DIRECTORATE OF FLORICULTURE SRINAGAR KASHMIR
Tel-0194-2474234 Fax -2482032 email: kashfori@rediffmail.com

Subject :- Extension No.01

In view of poor response, the last date for submission of bids invited vide this office e-Tender Notice No.13 of 2022 dated.07.06.2022 for Outsourcing of Entry ticketing system of Iqbal Park, Srinagar is hereby extended as per the details given below:-

1.	Period of downloading of bidding document	01.07.2022 from 01.00 PM to 14.07.2022 up to 02:00 PM
2.	Bid submission Start Date	01.07.2022 from 02:00 PM
3.	Bid submission End Date	14.07.2022 up to 02:00 PM
4.	Date & time of Opening of Tenders (Online)	16.07.2022 at 02:00 PM

Other terms and conditions shall remain same as laid down in the aforesaid Tender Notice.

By Order Sd/-
Accounts Officer (Member Secretary)
DIPK-5313/22

Government of Jammu & Kashmir DIRECTORATE OF FLORICULTURE SRINAGAR KASHMIR
Tel-0194-2474234 Fax -2482032 email: kashfori@rediffmail.com

Subject :- Extension No.01

In view of no response, the last date for submission of bids invited vide this office e-Tender Notice No.14 of 2022 dated.07.06.2022 for Outsourcing of entry Ticketing system of Rani Bagh Park, Anantnag is hereby extended as per the details given below:-

1.	Period of downloading of bidding document	01.07.2022 from 01.00 PM to 14.07.2022 up to 02:00 PM
2.	Bid submission Start Date	01.07.2022 from 02:00 PM
3.	Bid submission End Date	14.07.2022 up to 02:00 PM
4.	Date & time of Opening of Tenders (Online)	16.07.2022 at 02:00 PM

Other terms and conditions shall remain same as laid down in the aforesaid Tender Notice.

By Order Sd/-
Accounts Officer (Member Secretary)
DIPK-5301/22

Timings
DELHI

SUNDAY, JUL. 03	RISE 05:28	SET 19:24
	RISE 08:55	SET 22:33
MONDAY, JUL. 04	RISE 05:29	SET 19:24
	RISE 09:51	SET 23:04
TUESDAY, JUL. 05	RISE 05:29	SET 19:23
	RISE 10:46	SET 23:35

Delhi Weather

	max	min
Delhi City	34	26
Safdarjang	34	26
Palam	34	27

Delhi Palam Today
35°C The weather will be mostly dry. Day will be warm and humid. Night will be comfortable.

Delhi Palam Tomorrow
35°C A mostly dry weather to continue. Day will be warm and humid. Night will be comfortable. Chances of light rain and thundershower.

© Copyright SkyMet Weather 2019
All rights reserved.

THE HINDU
DISCLAIMER: Readers are requested to verify and make appropriate enquiries to satisfy themselves about the veracity of an advertisement before responding to any published in this newspaper. THG PUBLISHING PVT. LTD., the Publisher & Owner of this newspaper, does not vouch for the authenticity of any advertisement or advertiser or for any of the advertiser's products and/or services. In no event can the Owner, Publisher, Printer, Editor, Director/s, Employees of this newspaper/company be held responsible/liable in any manner whatsoever for any claims and/or damages for advertisements in this newspaper.

Nuh trucks break rules, ply without registration number plates

Accidents have increased in the area; police have issued 754 challans to vehicles without registration number plates till June 30 this year

ASHOK KUMAR GURUGRAM
Jai Prakash Jain, a Gurugram-based advocate, was on way to his hometown in Nuh's Ferozepur Jhirka in his chauffeur-driven Sports Utility Vehicle on June 26 morning when a rashly driven dumper truck hit his vehicle on the right.

Mr. Jain intercepted the offending vehicle with the help of the Police Control Room vehicle after a brief chase. But to his surprise, the dumper truck did not have a registration number plate in the rear and the number in the front was deliberately erased.

The advocate alleged that a majority of the dumper trucks plying on the National Highway 248-A running through Nuh either did not have a registered number plate or the registration number was deliberately painted black to avoid iden-

tification in case of any traffic violation and accident.

"The fact that these vehicles pass through various police posts in Nuh hints at collusion between them and the police. Who will pay compensation to the victims injured or killed in an accident involving these trucks without registration number plates?" asked Mr. Jain.

Though Mr. Jain and his driver Satish were lucky to have escaped unhurt, Abdul Gaffar, an accountant at Alafia Hospital in Nuh's Mandikhera, sustained head and leg injuries in a similar accident on June 23.

Mr. Gaffar was on his way to Badkali Chowk on a motorcycle when a dumper truck hit him near the traffic police station and sped away. "The police team carrying out routine vehicle check near the spot gave a chase to the truck, but it escaped," said the 32-year-old.



Ghost rider: A dumper truck whose registration number has deliberately been painted black to avoid identity and evade traffic violation cases. ■SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Mr. Gaffar, a resident of Nuh's Santhawari village said dumper trucks plying on National Highway NH 248-A without registration number plates was a common sight.

And some of the truck

drivers had grease smeared on the number plate. Most of these trucks were involved in transportation of construction material, such as stones, from the mining sites in Nuh and Rajasthan.

Mewat RTI Manch con-

venor Rajuddin Meo said the traffic volume on the road had gone up several times, but the road was not widened to accommodate it leading to accidents.

He said the overloaded, speeding dumper trucks

The fact that these vehicles pass through various police posts in Nuh hints at collusion between them and the police

JAI PRAKASH JAIN
Gurugram-based advocate

plying without registration number plates had made the things worse. "It seems as if they have no fear of law," said Mr. Meo.

Varun Singla, Superintendent of Police, Nuh, claimed the local police had curbed the menace of overloaded dumper trucks without registration number plates to a large extent over the past eight months.

"Contrary to the general perception, not all accidents are caused by these dumper trucks. But the police have cracked down on them heavily. We not just issue chal-

lans to these trucks for violation of the Motor Vehicles Act, but also inform the Regional Transport Office and the Mining department officials for any legal action required on their part as well," said Mr. Singla.

The Nuh police have issued 754 challans to vehicles without registration number plates till June 30 this year compared with 811 challans last year.

Similarly, 2,388 vehicles have been challaned for plying without High Security Registration Number Plate this year so far compared with 3,752 last year.

"The number of vehicles challaned for the two violations during the first six months this year is almost at par with the figures for the entire last year. It shows the strict enforcement of the law and crackdown on such vehicles," said Mr. Singla.

Standing up in support



During a protest rally of Jamaat-e-Islami Hind in solidarity with Teesta Setalvad and other human rights activists who have been arrested, in Kolkata on Saturday. ■PTI

Benito Juarez underpass opened, will cut travel time

It will decongest roads, curb vehicular pollution: Sisodia

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI

The commute time between Gurugram and Delhi is expected to get shorter for lakhs of drivers, with the opening on Saturday of the Benito Juarez Marg underpass after missing eight deadlines.

Built at a cost of ₹143.78 crore, the 1.2 km two-lane underpass was inaugurated by Public Works Department Minister Manish Sisodia.

The underpass, Mr. Sisodia said, was an important step towards decongesting city roads and tackling vehicular pollution and would positively impact two to three lakh commuters.

The government said it is the first Y-shaped underpass in Delhi, which will allow commuters from both sides, adding that vehicular footfall at the Dhaula Kuan inter-



The newly inaugurated Benito Juarez Underpass near Moti Bagh in Delhi on Saturday. ■R.V. MOORTHY

section will reduce by 25%.

"Dhaula Kuan, the road leading to the airport and Sardar Patel Marg witnesses heavy traffic during morning and evening peak hours and this underpass project was aimed at solving this problem. Lakhs of commuters moving between Gurugram and Delhi will benefit from this everyday," he added.

The government asid

commuters taking the route daily are expected to register a reduction in fuel consumption in the range of ₹1,000 to ₹5,000. The new underpass is replete with wall paintings, a road hump design to prevent water logging and LED lights. A 670-metre skywalk connecting two sides of the underpass on San Martin road and Benito Juarez route has also come up.

READ MORE IN-DEPTH CONTENT AT THE HINDU'S WEBSITE
www.thehindu.com

Spotlight
Long form articles from our regional editions

■ Raja Serfoji, Renaissance man of Thanjavur
bit.ly/3P1gV1U

Online exclusives
Video

■ 'There aren't enough stories about us,' says filmmaker Onir
bit.ly/3a9svJP

Podcast
■ Shyam Saran on understanding the relationship between India and China
bit.ly/3AD69vd

Data
■ India's imports from Russia soar amid sanctions
bit.ly/3y7a7Js

■ You can use your smartphone's inbuilt features to access these articles. If it's an Android phone, use Google Lens to read and tap the url to access the article. If it's an iPhone, use Live Text to do the same.

Court accepts CBI's report in fraud case

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA MUMBAI

A special CBI court here has accepted a closure report filed by the Central Bureau of Investigation in a case of alleged fraud against Pushpak Bullions Private Limited and some bank officials, even as the Enforcement Directorate opposed it.

The ED, probing a related case, had attached the properties of a firm controlled by Shridhar Patankar, brother-in-law of former Maharashtra CM Uddhav Thackeray.

Road to be renamed after Kargil martyr

STAFF REPORTER GHAZIABAD

Ahead of the Kargil Vijay Diwas, the Ghaziabad Municipal Corporation has approved renaming the road connecting NH-9 and NH-58 after Kargil martyr and Param Vir Chakra recipient Captain Manoj Kumar Pandey.

Ghaziabad Mayor Asha Sharma said that the link road will now be called Shaheed Capt. Manoj Pandey Marg. Belonging to the Gorkha Rifles, Capt. Pandey laid down his life on the night of July 2/3 1999 when his platoon came under heavy enemy fire in Khalubar (Kargil).

2015 sacrilege cases: SIT blames Dera Sacha Sauda

Punjab CM hands over the report to Sikh leaders

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT CHANDIGARH

The Special Investigation Team (SIT) of the Punjab police has indicted the Sirsa-based Dera Sacha Sauda for the three incidents of desecration and sacrilege in 2015 in Bargari village in Faridkot district.

Widespread protests had been witnessed in Punjab at that time and since then it became a key political issue in the 2017 and 2022 Assembly elections.

Three cases

In the first case, some unknown persons had stolen the holy Shri Guru Granth Sahib from the Gurdwara of Burj Jawahar Singh Wala, thereby outraging the religious sentiments of the Sikh community. Three months later, two posters containing derogatory language against the Sikh religion, Sikh preachers and Guru Granth Sahib were found pasted at the Burj Jawahar Singh Wala village. In the third case, unknown persons had strewn the pages of Guru Granth Sahib outside the Bargari Gurdwara as well as in the streets around the village.

State Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann on Saturday handed over the 467-page report of the SIT to Sikh leaders, including Chamkaur Singh and Major Singh Pandori here, said officials.

The SIT pointed out that the motive behind these three cases is having direct link with Dera Sacha Sauda, Sirsa, and the accused persons who are involved in these cases are followers of the said Dera.

"It is evident from material evidence collected by the SIT of the Punjab police that the accused per-



A delegation of Sikh leaders after submitting a memorandum to the Punjab Governor over sacrilege cases. ■FILE PHOTO

sons who were apprehended in these cases were having direct nexus with the management of the Dera. The motive behind the incidents was also having link with the movie MSG-2 and the accused persons were also connected with the release/non-release of the said movie. The closure report of the CBI also corroborates the fact that accused Mohinder Pal alias Bittu (later killed in Nabha jail by inmates) and his companions were upset due to the non-release of the movie due to which accused Mohinder Pal organised three days' dharna (sit-in) at Moga. Mohinder Pal along with other accused, namely Sukhjinder Singh alias Sunny and Ranjit alias Bhola, remained active for the release of the movie. So, from the above-mentioned facts, which were also observed by the CBI in its closure report, are relevant and the incidents in these three cases also revolve around the above-mentioned event. So, it is clear that the accused persons were agitated and actively involved in the affairs of the release and non-release of the movie," said the report.

'Alt News parent firm got ₹2 lakh from foreign nations'

Most of the Twitter users supporting Zubair were from Middle East countries: police

STAFF REPORTER NEW DELHI

The Delhi police on Saturday said Pravda Media Foundation, under which the fact-checking website Alt News operates, received over ₹2 lakh from various transactions in which either the phone numbers or the IP addresses belonged to foreign countries.

Objectionable tweet

The police on Saturday had produced Mohammed Zubair, the co-founder of Alt News, before a court here over a case related to an "objectionable" tweet that he had posted in 2018. Mr. Zu-

bair has been sent to 14-day judicial custody and his bail plea has been dismissed.

According to a statement by the Delhi police, from the analysis of a response received from payment gateway Razorpay, the transactions received had either an international phone number or the IP address belonged to foreign cities or countries, including Bangkok, Western Australia, Manama, North Holland, Singapore, Victoria, New York, Englund, Riyadh Region, Sharjah, Stockholm, Abu Dhabi, Washington, Kansas, New Jersey, Ontario, California, Texas, Lower Saxony, Bern, Dubai and

Scotland.

The statement further said a total of ₹2,31,933 was received by Pravda Media Foundation.

It was also noticed that the Twitter handles that had supported Mr. Zubair after his arrest were mostly of users from Middle Eastern countries like the UAE, Bahrain, Kuwait and Pakistan, the police added.

No response

The Hindu reached out to Alt News co-founder Pratik Sinha regarding the claims by the Delhi police but no response was received till the time this report was published.

The Delhi police had arrested Mr. Zubair in the case on June 27. New provisions have been added to the case - Section 120B (criminal conspiracy) and 201 (destruction of evidence) of the Indian Penal Code (IPC), along with Section 35 of the Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act.

Initially, Mr. Zubair was booked under Sections 153A (promoting enmity between different groups on grounds of religion, race, place of birth, language etc.) and 295A (deliberate and malicious act intended to outrage religious feelings) of the Indian Penal Code.

ADMISSIONS OPEN 2022
NICMAR HYDERABAD
Invites applications for

Two Year Full Time Post Graduate Programme in Advanced Construction Management (ACM)

One Year Full Time Post Graduate Programmes in (i) Quantity Surveying and Contract Management (QSCM) (ii) Health, Safety and Environment Management (HSEM) (iii) Logistics and Supply Chain Management (LSCM) (iv) Energy Management (EM)

www.nicmar.ac.in
Email: admission@nicmar.ac.in
Tel.: 020-66859166/270/271/333

Last Date for Submission of Application: July 20, 2022

BACK TO SCHOOL OFFER

AhaGuru
Video Courses
for IIT JEE + CBSE + NEET
by India's Best Teachers
Class 7 to 12
Starts @ ₹ 5,000/-
BUY NOW!

96001 00090
96001 00020

Scan the QR Code for Registration

THE HINDU CLASSIFIEDS

thehinduads.com

LIFE MADE SIMPLE

THE HINDU MATRIMONIAL

BRINGING PEOPLE TOGETHER

BRIDEGROOMS WANTED

INDEX OF MATRIMONIAL

BRIDEGROOMS WANTED

BRIDES WANTED

BRIDES & GROOMS WANTED

Classification common for Brides, Bridegrooms, Brides & Grooms

Assamese

Awadhi

Bengali

Bhojpuri

Bihari

Chhattisgarhi

English

Gujarati

Haryanvi

Hindi

Kannada

Kashmiri

Konkani

Malayalam

Manipuri

Marathi

Marwari

Nepali

Oriya

Parsi

Punjabi

Saurashtra

Sindhi

Tamil

Telugu

Tulu

Urdu

Advocate

Business

Defence

Doctor

Engineer

Finance/ Banking

Government/ Quasi-Govt.

IAS/ Allied Services

Information Technology

MBA/ CA/ ICWA

NRI

Cosmopolitan

Divorcee

Physically Challenged

MARRIAGE BUREAUS

WEDDING ARRANGEMENTS

DOCTOR, PURSUING MD, AIMS Delhi 28/160, Tamil, Hindu, Mudaliar, Makam, seeks suitable groom, Masters/PhD in any field. Contact parents 9880016674, 9449821952.

MATCH WANTED for Working Daughter, Post Graduate, Age 35 Height 5'4". Parents Naidus well settled. Contact: 9167617817

DOCTOR

SIMU PARENTS seeks Allopathic Doctor for daughter 30 yrs Slim/Fair MBBS, M.S., Mob: 8056198771

TAMIL VISWAKARMA Govt Doctor Bred (GM) 31/167 Fair Vishagam Seeks Doctor/Engineer/Govt. Officer Bridegroom Ct: 9445912341

HINDU SC-PR, 26yrs/5'6", Poosam, Kadagam, MBBS, Govt. Medical Officer, Parents Govt seeks MBBS/MD/MS, ongoing PG Groom preferably Govt. below 30 years. 94446 53597/ 97881 54437

SAIVA CHETTIAR MBBS/28/57 7inch/ Makaram/ Uthiradam TN govt employed/ undergoing PG seeks match pref. Doctor / Saiva Pillai/ mudaliyar/ chettiar contact: 9443695053

DOCTOR Girl Working in Govt hospital 5.1.born-July 1991, seeks groom from medical field pref MD/MS, Madurai/ or BC/MBC caste. Ct:7401529319

DOCTOR MD Chennai, Mudaliar, October 1992 born, 157cm, moolam 4 pathnam, seeking MD Doctors/PG engineers/IT/MS families, age 29-35. 9444075410

DOCTOR GIRL MD Anesthesiology 32/165 from affluent elite family of doctors, Working in top hospital Chennai. Fair beautiful good mannered and cultured. Father Doctor Kerala Nair, Engineer & Doctor groups with MDMS MCh DM from good family background from Kerala and Tamil Nadu preferable. Ct: 9840050381/ 9840985383

MUDALIAR GIRL pursuing DM 1989 born from well educated rich family seeks doctor groom with DM/MCh/MD/MS or civil servants/IT/ITANS/ NIT/ITIS from good family background in Tamilnadu.7010429191

FINANCE / BANKING

MANAGER BHARAMI 32 168cm WIDOW seeks Dr banking businessman from forward caste below 35 only 8300541899

HINDI

SC (INTERCASTE) 41/163, unmarried, fair, MBA in Public sector organization, working in Public sector organization @ Bangalore from a well of family. Delhi, seeks suitable alliance. Caste & language no bar. Contact: artifriends@gmail.com

IAS / ALLIED SERVICES

SEEKING ALLIANCE for Hindu, Nair girl (160/29/Ayilam/Kerala/IRS(IT) Officer from Civil service/PG Doctor/CA/Group A officer. Ph: 8921582088

MALAYALAM

CALICUT BASED Thiya girl, 26, Corporate Lawyer (Mumbai), LLB from National law school, parents Gazetted officers, Caste no bar. 9633046765.

NAIR GIRL 28/154 BE, Revathy, Chennai settled - employed (2-Dosham), seeks from Nair Family. 9500012855

SUITABLE Alliance sought for a 29years old Nair Girl working as Senior Associate in a MNC B'lore earning 17Lak PA. Horoscope compatibility not considered essential. Please send a WhatsApp message to 8870651177 for more details.

Inviting proposals from suitable Boys based in Australia for Nair Girl, 28 Yrs, Makiram, Height 165 cms, completed MBA from University of Melbourne and is now on Temporary Work Visa. Contact: 995351069.

Vanika Vaisya Girl 28/172 M.Tech, Civil service aspirant, well settled family in Trivandrum, both parents are Govt Officials, brother is in USA, Civil Servants and Doctors are preferred. 9447525378

NAIR GIRL @ Chennai 26/147 BE Chamyandir Cheva Dosam Seeks Grooms Nair/ Menon Family 9840944880/ 9447696424

MBA/CA/ICWA

TAMIL - AD 32yrs NIT/MBA(B/School) Manager HR @ SBI 14LPA + Otrs, Al-lownces etc. (CTC23pa)settled in Mumbai, seeks CNB - Hindu/Christian professionals P5B/Fin/SW/ Govt. WA 9444228582

NRI

SEEKING - PROTESTANT Christian, well educated, kind and open minded groom settled either in Canada or USA for my niece 29.165cms, studied and employed in Canada. She is from a reputed family in Kanyakumari district. Contact: kishoreonlinead@gmail.com and 773686119

SEEKING ALLIANCE from Canada / US for Toronto based Naidu girl, 31, Product & Digital Strategy Manager. Caste no bar. E. alliance4wives@gmail.com Whatsapp: +91 8148809055

WANTED USA Employed Groom for Venyakuia Kshatriya Girl, Fair, 28yrs, MBBS, M.S., IITEL, USA, either Business, Chennai. Contact: 9884071390

TAMIL

CHRISTIAN NADAR/HINDU Nadar Groom only for very affluent Christian Nadar PG girl, April 1992. nadarbride1992@gmail.com

SEEKING PROFESSIONAL Groom for a God fearing CSI Christian Nadar Bride. SWE Bangalore, 35 yrs/165 cm, 25 LPA. Contact: 94438 83665

CSI CHRISTIAN Nadar Girl Fair, Good Looking, 03-04-1986 born / 152cm / M.Sc M.Phil. working as Assistant Professor in a Reputed Women's College, Mount Road, Chennai. Both Parents Doctors (Private), Suitable Alliance, Employed/ Settled in Chennai/ With Clean Habits from Same Community. Contact: 9841182514

PROPOSAL INVITED from well to do Nadar Christian family for a girl, fair, beautiful, well to do, well educated, God fearing aged 32 working in a foreign Embassy as a Senior Manager in Chennai Contact: 9840129090.

RC NADAR 29 B.E. SWE 14 LPA, seeks RC Nadar B.E. Bride Groom with good job Contact:708469824

MUSLIM TAMIL 27 yrs fair studying MBBS at Chennai/ grooms below 26yrs.SMS 94447 21694

BERICHTIAR 27/163 slim fair BE Remarriage Ch seeks educated High Profile CNB Ct: Geetham 9884858014

CSI NADAR 30/171, M.Arch(Architect) Project Manager in Chennai seeks Suitable Groom. Ct: 9488522344.

CHRISTIAN (ECI) Age 26 B.TECH IT 168 CM. Seeks well Settled Family Caste No Bar. Ct: 8610115443

HINDU PR 29/167 BE, MS in US, employed in US H/W visa seeks suitable groom from US/UK/Canada or willing to settle in US/UK/Canada. Ct: 9945223333

SC, AD(KONGU) 30/151, BE (PSG-CBE) SBI, Hastham, upper middle class, own house, properties seeks suitable groom, cast no bar-CT: 9443702720

HINDU VELLALA Pillai 37 163 Visakam Fair MBA Working in Qatar Willing to Relocate to any Place seeks well qualified Professional Groom rasanani1948@gmail.com Ct: 81220 59734

PILLAI/MUDALIAR, 33, Good looking, MBBS, MD Final yr, Well Settled Family seeks Groom 35-35 years, Engineer/ Business/ Doctor. Ct: 9345855735

PILLAI/ MUDALIAR, 26 B.E Kettai working in Leading MNC Reputed Business Family Seeks Alliance for His Daughter Call 98400 93322

HINDU SOZHIYA Vellalar 28/157, Divorced Fair GIRL/E short lived requires educated Govt/Bank working groom unmarried or divorced. Ct: 63807 98748/94389 83733.

INTER CASTE Parents seek for daughter 27/156 SWE employed Chennai, from suitable Hindu groom, 90032 87101

HINDU NADAR Sister Girls, age 28 / 23, Ht 167/167cms, M.E. Asst Prof / B.E. (IT), Upper middle class. Seeks Upper middle class, equally qualified brother boys of age below 30 in job or business. Marriage both at a stage. Contact: 96285 15511

HINDUS/SC,AD, SIMMAMMAGAM(26/5'2") MCA, ITA @TCS, 6.40L/p.a. Same Caste Groom from Chennai. 9840365908

WIDOW 34YRS B.Tech, well settled good looking with 6yr old child. Needs life partner who is progressive and broad minded. Age below 40yrs caste no bar 80727 50829 / 98464 95374

GAVARA, 30/159cm, M.E., Divorcee seeking suitable alliance. Parents-Central Govt Saiva Vellalar/Vellalar/ Poor/ Middle/ affluent family.Ct: 9489352752

TAMIL

HINDU, VANIYA Chettiyar Widow (2 Female Child Age 10& 6) 34yrs,5.1 Feet, B.Com, Worked as Clerk in S. Rly, Chennai. Seeks any BC/MBC Groom from Chennai. 9444452870/ 9962997996

MUDALIAR AVITAM 26 155 B.E. fair Non-IT Bangalore 6.6 Lacs pa. seeks from Chennai/Bangalore 9840143908

MUDALIAR: 26/160, Fair & Beautiful, B.E. MBA (USA), Data Analyst, MNC, USA, Elite Family, Seeks Groom Abroad/India - 8925019776

VANIYA CHETTIYAR Aswini Mesam 28/163 MBBS, MD final year, Pulmonology, seeks Doctor/PS/IAS. Sub cast no. bar. Ct: sendhu94@gmail.com 8148895304

MUDALIAR 24/170 Pooram BA PGDIB Ch seeks Affluent Business Profile in Chennai Ct. Geetham 9884858014

HINDU NADAR BE/MBA 30/170cm 100000 Income Seeks Suitable Groom KA Raman Nadar 9380791999

ASST. PROF. Tuluva Vellal Mudalar Good looking Girl 34 Uthirathathi, Meenam, Ph.D(Physics), Family Seeks Alliance from First and Unmarried Bachelor Bridegroom Aged 34-36 Yrs, Employed, Caste no bar. Contact: After 7 PM, 7590245659

HASTHAM 34/154 fair MCA Upper midl Clas Seeks Mudaliar / pillai professionally Qualified Groom 8220757159

VELLALA, Pooram 36yrs Ht:163cm Weight 62kg, Scientist (PhD) Working in IISc Bangalore, Seeks Suitable groom. Contact: 9442485544

NADAR 29YRS, Uthradam, M.A., B.Ed., Remarriage seeks suitable Employed Groom preferably Hindu / Christian. Ct: 88256 51440

LOOKING FOR Bridegroom for the girl studying MS in US aged 23. End time message believer. Ct: 8939250457

27. FAIR, B.Tech, M. S. in US, working in Chennai, Affluent, seeks settledgroom CNB. 9489935653

MUDHALIYAR 25/M.B.S.S., Own school/ Colleges Chennai, (Caste no Bar) Rich family seeks Groom: 7305491610

29 /F /RC/ Teacher/ Dusky/ Seeks Well Settled Groom Caste No Bar Ph 9962524239

NAIDU, RICH 23-02-90 girl slim 165 cm Uthradam 4 magaram MBBS Dr. TN Govt Chennai seeks Dr. Govt class A officer, Business Groom, Any Naidu or any FC/BC (Tamil/Telugu) 9841743266.

HINDU SC (AD) 33/156, ME . Thiruvananthapuram, Working in Public Sector Bank in Chennai, Clerk 35K, Seeks Suitable Groom, Age 34 -37,Working in Groom or IT. Ct:9677510647 / 9790191307

GYNECOLOGIST MOTHER invites PG Doctor (clinical)/Civil Services/CA/Gr-1 below 32, with good family status and Professional flair/attitude for doctor daughter (S'Y/ 1995/Ashwini/Mesham/Govt). CNB (Vanniyar/Pillai preferred)

SIMMAM MAHAM Fair SC Hindu Tamil 23yrs 153cm MBA HDFC 2.5L PA Chennai.Seeks Educated Groom.Ct: 9962359900

HINDU MARAVAR(DEVAR) Never Married 09-01-86.165cm,60kg Working in USA IT Expt Seeks Below 39yr,1st Marriage Groom Work in USA/IT/Equal Professional,Same Caste,SubCaste 7845259152

HINDU Pillai 29/153 Pooram fair B.com MBA Coimbatore working MNC Seeks well educated groom. 9843090433

MUDALIAR 25, BE, MBA, 162, Good Looking, well Settled Family Seeks Alliance Ct. 8778514465 / 7200866346

HINDU VELLALAR Pillai / Mudaliar Barani Mesam 34/162 Govt. Doctor MD (Paed) seeks Suitable groom upto 38yrs Ct: 97912 16028

DOCTOR MD Chennai, Mudaliar, October 1992 born, 157cm, moolam 4 pathnam, seeking MD Doctors/PG engineers/IT/MS families, age 29-35. 9444075410

SIAMMAM MAHAM Fair SC Hindu Tamil 23yrs 153cm MBA HDFC 2.5L PA Chennai.Seeks Educated Groom.Ct: 9962359900

HINDU MARAVAR(DEVAR) Never Married 09-01-86.165cm,60kg Working in USA IT Expt Seeks Below 39yr,1st Marriage Groom Work in USA/IT/Equal Professional,Same Caste,SubCaste 7845259152

HINDU Pillai 29/153 Pooram fair B.com MBA Coimbatore working MNC Seeks well educated groom. 9843090433

MUDALIAR 25, BE, MBA, 162, Good Looking, well Settled Family Seeks Alliance Ct. 8778514465 / 7200866346

HINDU VELLALAR Pillai / Mudaliar Barani Mesam 34/162 Govt. Doctor MD (Paed) seeks Suitable groom upto 38yrs Ct: 97912 16028

DOCTOR MD Chennai, Mudaliar, October 1992 born, 157cm, moolam 4 pathnam, seeking MD Doctors/PG engineers/IT/MS families, age 29-35. 9444075410

SIAMMAM MAHAM Fair SC Hindu Tamil 23yrs 153cm MBA HDFC 2.5L PA Chennai.Seeks Educated Groom.Ct: 9962359900

HINDU MARAVAR(DEVAR) Never Married 09-01-86.165cm,60kg Working in USA IT Expt Seeks Below 39yr,1st Marriage Groom Work in USA/IT/Equal Professional,Same Caste,SubCaste 7845259152

HINDU Pillai 29/153 Pooram fair B.com MBA Coimbatore working MNC Seeks well educated groom. 9843090433

MUDALIAR 25, BE, MBA, 162, Good Looking, well Settled Family Seeks Alliance Ct. 8778514465 / 7200866346

HINDU VELLALAR Pillai / Mudaliar Barani Mesam 34/162 Govt. Doctor MD (Paed) seeks Suitable groom upto 38yrs Ct: 97912 16028

DOCTOR MD Chennai, Mudaliar, October 1992 born, 157cm, moolam 4 pathnam, seeking MD Doctors/PG engineers/IT/MS families, age 29-35. 9444075410

SIAMMAM MAHAM Fair SC Hindu Tamil 23yrs 153cm MBA HDFC 2.5L PA Chennai.Seeks Educated Groom.Ct: 9962359900

HINDU MARAVAR(DEVAR) Never Married 09-01-86.165cm,60kg Working in USA IT Expt Seeks Below 39yr,1st Marriage Groom Work in USA/IT/Equal Professional,Same Caste,SubCaste 7845259152

HINDU Pillai 29/153 Pooram fair B.com MBA Coimbatore working MNC Seeks well educated groom. 9843090433

MUDALIAR 25, BE, MBA, 162, Good Looking, well Settled Family Seeks Alliance Ct. 8778514465 / 7200866346

HINDU VELLALAR Pillai / Mudaliar Barani Mesam 34/162 Govt. Doctor MD (Paed) seeks Suitable groom upto 38yrs Ct: 97912 16028

DOCTOR MD Chennai, Mudaliar, October 1992 born, 157cm, moolam 4 pathnam, seeking MD Doctors/PG engineers/IT/MS families, age 29-35. 9444075410

SIAMMAM MAHAM Fair SC Hindu Tamil 23yrs 153cm MBA HDFC 2.5L PA Chennai.Seeks Educated Groom.Ct: 9962359900

HINDU MARAVAR(DEVAR) Never Married 09-01-86.165cm,60kg Working in USA IT Expt Seeks Below 39yr,1st Marriage Groom Work in USA/IT/Equal Professional,Same Caste,SubCaste 7845259152

HINDU Pillai 29/153 Pooram fair B.com MBA Coimbatore working MNC Seeks well educated groom. 9843090433

MUDALIAR 25, BE, MBA, 162, Good Looking, well Settled Family Seeks Alliance Ct. 8778514465 / 7200866346

HINDU VELLALAR Pillai / Mudaliar Barani Mesam 34/162 Govt. Doctor MD (Paed) seeks Suitable groom upto 38yrs Ct: 97912 16028

DOCTOR MD Chennai, Mudaliar, October 1992 born, 157cm, moolam 4 pathnam, seeking MD Doctors/PG engineers/IT/MS families, age 29-35. 9444075410

SIAMMAM MAHAM Fair SC Hindu Tamil 23yrs 153cm MBA HDFC 2.5L PA Chennai.Seeks Educated Groom.Ct: 9962359900

HINDU MARAVAR(DEVAR) Never Married 09-01-86.165cm,60kg Working in USA IT Expt Seeks Below 39yr,1st Marriage Groom Work in USA/IT/Equal Professional,Same Caste,SubCaste 7845259152

HINDU Pillai 29/153 Pooram fair B.com MBA Coimbatore working MNC Seeks well educated groom. 9843090433

MUDALIAR 25, BE, MBA, 162, Good Looking, well Settled Family Seeks Alliance Ct. 8778514465 / 7200866346

HINDU VELLALAR Pillai / Mudaliar Barani Mesam 34/162 Govt. Doctor MD (Paed) seeks Suitable groom upto 38yrs Ct: 97912 16028

DOCTOR MD Chennai, Mudaliar, October 1992 born, 157cm, moolam 4 pathnam, seeking MD Doctors/PG engineers/IT/MS families, age 29-35. 9444075410

SIAMMAM MAHAM Fair SC Hindu Tamil 23yrs 153cm MBA HDFC 2.5L PA Chennai.Seeks Educated Groom.Ct: 9962359900

HINDU MARAVAR(DEVAR) Never Married 09-01-86.165cm,60kg Working in USA IT Expt Seeks Below 39yr,1st Marriage Groom Work in USA/IT/Equal Professional,Same Caste,SubCaste 7845259152

HINDU Pillai 29/153 Pooram fair B.com MBA Coimbatore working MNC Seeks well educated groom. 9843090433

MUDALIAR 25, BE, MBA, 162, Good Looking, well Settled Family Seeks Alliance Ct. 8778514465 / 7200866346

HINDU VELLALAR Pillai / Mudaliar Barani Mesam 34/162 Govt. Doctor MD (Paed) seeks Suitable groom upto 38yrs Ct: 97912 16028

DOCTOR MD Chennai, Mudaliar, October 1992 born, 157cm, moolam 4 pathnam, seeking MD Doctors/PG engineers/IT/MS families, age 29-35. 9444075410

SIAMMAM MAHAM Fair SC Hindu Tamil 23yrs 153cm MBA HDFC 2.5L PA Chennai.Seeks Educated Groom.Ct: 9962359900

HINDU MARAVAR(DEVAR) Never Married 09-01-86.165cm,60kg Working in USA IT Expt Seeks Below 39yr,1st Marriage Groom Work in USA/IT/Equal Professional,Same Caste,SubCaste 7845259152

HINDU Pillai 29/153 Pooram fair B.com MBA Coimbatore working MNC Seeks well educated groom. 9843090433

MUDALIAR 25, BE, MBA, 162, Good Looking, well Settled Family Seeks Alliance Ct. 8778514465 / 7200866346

HINDU VELLALAR Pillai / Mudaliar Barani Mesam 34/162 Govt. Doctor MD (Paed) seeks Suitable groom upto 38yrs Ct: 97912 16028

DOCTOR MD Chennai, Mudaliar, October 1992 born, 157cm, moolam 4 pathnam, seeking MD Doctors/PG engineers/IT/MS families, age 29-35. 9444075410

SIAMMAM MAHAM Fair SC Hindu Tamil 23yrs 153cm MBA HDFC 2.5L PA Chennai.Seeks Educated Groom.Ct: 9962359900

HINDU MARAVAR(DEVAR) Never Married 09-01-86.16

IN BRIEF



Naidu bats for Alluri Sitharama Raju's statue

VIJAYAWADA
TDP chief N. Chandrababu Naidu asked the Centre to install a statue of freedom fighter Alluri Sitharama Raju on Parliament premises. He said it was a matter of pride that the leader from Andhra Pradesh was recognised as part of the celebration of 75 years of Independence.

Planter dies in elephant attack in Karnataka

HASSAN
A planter was trampled to death by an elephant in Sakleshpur taluk of Hassan district in Karnataka on Saturday. Krishna Gowda, 67, had been to his farm when he encountered an elephant. The incident occurred when the Forest Department is engaged in an operation to fix radio-collars on elephants.

'Let BJP topple us, we will topple them'

Telangana CM says bringing down the BJP government will save people from hate and divisive rule

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD

Telangana Rashtra Samithi (TRS) president and Telangana Chief Minister K. Chandrasekhar Rao has appealed to the electors of the Presidential election, scheduled to be held on July 18, to vote as per their conscience after weighing the two candidates in the fray, and not based on their political affiliation.

Referring to the comments of "a Union Minister from Hyderabad", Mr. Rao said that the former had said that BJP could topple the government in Telangana as they did it in Maharashtra earlier this week.

"We are waiting for it, so that we can become free and topple their (BJP) government in Delhi so that people are saved from the hate and divisive rule," Mr. Rao said.

The Chief Minister pointed out that the BJP had 'toppled governments in nine

States in its eight-year rule'.

"Prime Minister Narendra Modi has failed on all counts and height of all is his decisions during the first wave of COVID-19 pandemic when millions of people were forced to walk back to their native places hundreds of kilometres away with the sudden imposition of lockdown. The credit of washing away of hundreds of bodies of COVID-19 victims will also go to Mr. Modi," the Chief Minister said.

"Whatever is happening and what is being done in the country is wrong. There is a gross misuse of constitutional bodies and enforcement agencies by the present Union government. The BJP-led NDA government is killing democracy and federal structures in the country," said Mr. Rao.

Addressing a meeting of TRS MPs, MLAs, MLCs, its State executive committee



Warm welcome: Telangana CM K. Chandrasekhar Rao greeting Yashwant Sinha in Hyderabad on Saturday. *G. RAMAKRISHNA

members and other senior leaders of the party convened in support of Yashwant Sinha, the candidate fielded by the Opposition, here on Saturday, Mr. Rao said Mr. Sinha's candidature outweighs that of his rival's as he was a towering personality.

"He (Mr. Sinha) is an hon-

est politician and an able administrator who handled the key portfolios of Finance and External Affairs in the Union Cabinet in the A.B. Vajpayee government," Mr. Rao said.

In an appeal to all Parliamentarians in the country, the TRS chief said that there was a democratic practice in the country of voting as per

AIMIM extends support to Yashwant Sinha

HYDERABAD
A delegation of the All India Majlis-e-Ittehadul Muslimeen (AIMIM) legislators on Saturday met the Opposition's Presidential candidate Yashwant Sinha and expressed their support for him, ahead of the election slated for July 18. Four MLAs — Ahmed Balala, Kausar Mohiuddin, Mumtaz Khan and Moazzam Khan — met Mr. Sinha. On June 27, AIMIM chief Asaduddin Owaisi announced that his party would support Mr. Sinha.

conscience on some occasions and it was done during the Presidential election, when V.V. Giri contested it and there was such a need again now.

He said Mr. Sinha victory in the election would boost the country's image and change the fortunes of the poor.



Edappadi K. Palaniswami meeting Droupadi Murmu in Chennai on Saturday *S.R. RAGHUNATHAN

EPS, OPS meet Murmu separately in Chennai

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT CHENNAI

Droupadi Murmu, the National Democratic Alliance candidate in the Presidential election, on Saturday met leaders of the allies in Tamil Nadu and sought their support.

Amid the friction over the party's leadership, AIADMK leaders Edappadi K. Palaniswami and O. Panneerselvam met her separately and extended their support.

When Mr. Palaniswami and his supporters were present on the stage, Mr. Panneerselvam and his supporters stayed away.

Speaking at an event organised at a private hotel in Chennai, Ms. Murmu expressed happiness in visiting Tamil Nadu, which she said has historic significance. She requested the leaders to consider her as a sister and support her.

"The AIADMK welcomes you to Tamil Nadu on your election campaign, and we are really proud to receive you as the Presidential candidate of the NDA," said Mr. Palaniswami, the Leader of the Opposition in the Assembly.

On behalf of his party, he thanked Prime Minister Narendra Modi for announcing Ms. Murmu, hailing from the Scheduled Tribe, as the Presidential candidate. He assured Ms. Murmu that all

AIADMK MPs and MLAs would wholeheartedly support her for her "Himalayan victory".

After Mr. Palaniswami left, Mr. Panneerselvam came to the stage and extended his support. "On behalf of the AIADMK, I, as the coordinator of the party, welcome you to this illustrious State of Tamil Nadu," he said.

"By electing you as the President of India, it will be for the first time that a woman from the Scheduled Tribe would be getting a chance to occupy the highest position of India. It shows the vision of Prime Minister Narendra Modi towards the empowerment of women and downtrodden," he said, assuring her of the AIADMK's support.

After his meeting with Ms. Murmu, PMK president Anbumani Ramadoss told reporters that leaving politics aside, all parties should back her. Tamil Maanila Congress president G.K. Vasana, Premlatha Vijayakanth of the DMDK, K. Krishnasamy of the Puthiya Thamizhagam, and A.C. Shanmugam of the New Justice Party, among others, participated at the meeting. Puducherry Chief Minister N. Rangasamy on Saturday expressed happiness over the NDA selecting Ms. Murmu as the Presidential candidate.

P.C. George held in sexual assault case

The former Kerala MLA was later released on bail

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

The Kerala Police on Saturday arrested Kerala Janapaksham (Secular) leader P.C. George on the charge of behaving in a sexually inappropriate manner towards a woman named as prime accused in the politically stormy solar investment fraud case.

The police booked him on the charge of outraging the modesty of the woman under Sections 354 and 354 (A) of the IPC. A magistrate court released Mr. George on conditional bail.

High drama and alleged



Kerala Janapaksham (Secular) leader P.C. George being arrested by the police on Saturday. *SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

vindictive politics marked Mr. George's arrest. He alleged the case was "false, fabricated and orchestrated by Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan." He warned Mr. Vijayan to brace for a "decent" payback.

Mr. George said the complainant had been the Communist Party of India (Marxist)'s [CPI(M)] cat's paw for years. The party had used her questionable statement to ensnare a galaxy of Congress leaders.

Mr. George said the woman had asked him to testify in her favour. "I demurred and earned her ire," he said.

The arrest occurred at the Government Guest House, Thycaud. While being escorted to the police vehicle, Mr. George allegedly identified the complainant, drawing questions from a woman journalist about the "impropriety of the statement." Mr. George reportedly retorted whether he should name the woman journalist instead.

Other journalists protested against the remark, resulting in a heated back-and-forth. The Kerala Union of Working Journalists filed a complaint against Mr. George. Several Ministers too condemned Mr. George's statement.

Textbook row: schools to get corrigendum copy

Karnataka students will not get a copy

JAYANTH R. BENGALURU

While the Karnataka government has agreed to carry out eight corrections in school textbooks after strong criticism over revisions carried out as per the recommendations of the Rohith Chakrathirtha-led committee, it has now emerged that the students will not get a copy of the corrigendum booklet.

Instead, one copy per school will be given and it is up to the school authorities and teachers to ensure that each student carries out the corrections in his or her copy of the textbook.

Booklets with eight corrections in the Class I to Class X Kannada and Social Science textbooks are being printed. The Karnataka Text Book Society (KTBS) is planning to distribute them to all government, aided, and private State syllabus schools across the State soon.

The State government had issued a notification making eight corrections on June 24.

The notification was issued after objections were raised by members of the public, people's representatives, and seers of various communities.

'CPI(M) and BJP have an understanding'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT KOZHIKODE

Endorsing the repeated allegation of Congress leaders in Kerala, Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Saturday accused the Communist Party of India (Marxist) [CPI(M)] of colluding with the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP).

Speaking at a public meeting at Wandoor in Malappuram district, Mr. Gandhi argued that the BJP government at the Centre, which had the Enforcement Directorate, the Central Bureau of Investigation and other Central agencies under its control, was not questioning Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan.

"This is because there is an understanding between the BJP and the CPI(M). The BJP is happy with the CPI(M). It does not like the Congress and the UDF," Mr. Gandhi said.

Solar power



Good yield: Salt production in Tamil Nadu has increased due to continued dry weather. A worker seen at a salt pan near Devipattinam in Ramanathapuram district on Saturday. *L. BALACHANDAR

Water discharged from Kodagu's Harangi dam due to heavy rain

People living on the banks asked to move to safer places

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT MYSURU

Water from the Harangi dam near Kushalnagar in Karnataka's Kodagu was released into the river through the four crest gates on Saturday following an increase in the inflow into the dam due to heavy rains in its catchment area.

About 1,200 cusecs was discharged into the river after opening all four gates of the dam. A flood alert was issued on Friday after the inflow went up in view of heavy downpour in the catchment area. The dam engineers are expected to increase the outflow based on the extent of inflow and therefore the people living on the banks of Cauvery have been asked to move to safer places as a precautionary measure.



Gushing out: Water being discharged from the Harangi dam near Kushalnagar on Saturday. *SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Speaking to reporters, Madikeri MLA Appachu Rangan said, "All precautions have been taken so that surplus water discharged into the river from the dam will not cause any harm to the people."

Mr. Rangan said Kodagu has been experiencing good rains since last one week.

The MLA sought a special

package for Kodagu as its roads, power supply network, bridges and other infrastructure facilities are getting damaged in rains almost every year.

When reporters asked what steps have been taken to prevent floods in Kushalnagar, the MLA said all precautions are in place and the engineers are on alert.

After a dull June, Kerala to witness subdued rain in July too

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

After a disappointing June which witnessed a 48% drop in monthly rainfall in Kerala, the State appears to be starting at a bleak July as well with the monthly forecast issued by the India Meteorological Department (IMD) for July indicating below normal rainfall in some parts of the southern peninsula.

A senior scientist attached to the IMD said on Saturday that, like in the previous year, the State is likely to receive below normal rainfall in July. In the last three consecutive years, the State received deficient rainfall in the months of June and July.

The absence of rain-bring-



Time to rejoice: A file photo of two children enjoying the rain at Kozhikode Beach. *K. RAGESH

ing cyclonic systems such as low pressure or depressions in the Bay of Bengal and the Arabian Sea is one of the main reasons for the low precipitation. Normally, an average of three cyclonic

systems used to form by this time every year.

However, despite Cyclone Asani, no major systems have formed this year, both in the Bay of Bengal and the Arabian Sea.

Saving Chenkuringi from climate change

The tree was once abundant in the hills on the southern parts of the Aryankavu Pass in Kerala

NAVAMY SUDHISH KOLLAM

The Shendurney Wildlife Sanctuary derives its name Chenkuringi (*Gluta travancorica*), a species endemic to the Agasthyamala Biosphere Reserve. Belonging to the Anacardiaceae family, the tree was once abundant in the hills on the southern parts of the Aryankavu Pass in Kerala's Kollam district, but its presence has been fast receding from the area over the years.

"*Gluta travancorica* is very susceptible to climate change and the present condition of the species is quite bad with low regeneration performance," says P.A. Jose, Principal Scientist, Sustainable Forest Management Division, Kerala Forest Research

Institute (KFRI).

Though there are seemingly enough number of the tree, most are not productive, generating a negative trend in its population. "The majority of the trees is old with poor flowering and fruiting rates. What we require now is an emergency restocking at the sanctuary since the present population is in a degrading state. At present, we have a few young generation trees, and if we plant some now, we will have flowering trees within the next 25 years," he says.

Though the flowering usually happens in January, of late, the species has reported a tendency to extend the process due to climate change. "It's an adaptation strategy to increase the



A Chenkuringi tree at the Shendurney Wildlife Sanctuary in Kerala's Kollam district. *C. SURESHKUMAR

chances of germination and maintain a minimum viable population," says Dr. Jose.

Though the tree is also

seen inside the shola forests near Ponnudi, effective pollination hardly takes place in the habitat. "The population in the habitat is facing inbreeding depression and we had earlier collected albino seedlings, an indication of endangerment," he adds.

Medicinal properties

According to officials, the tree was widely seen in places such as Pandimala, Vilakkumaram and Rosemala in the past. "It's reported to have medicinal properties and is used to lower blood pressure and treat arthritis. The heartwood is quite sturdy with deep red colour, and several trees were felled for wood during earlier days," says an official.

Since the conservation

measures in the past were not totally successful, the department is launching 'Save Chenkuringi', a campaign to be implemented in various areas coming under the Achencol forest division.

As part of the campaign, the department looks to plant thousands of saplings in the ghat sectors of Kollam and Pathanamthitta. The officials have identified 75 schools where Chenkuringi will be grown.

Apart from schools, saplings will be planted in public places, and the department has already cultivated thousands of seedlings. "The campaign will be officially launched next week and we are expecting a visible difference in the coming years," says the official.

FROM PAGE ONE

After Udaipur case, NIA takes up Amravati probe

Amravati MP Navneet Rana had alleged that the police were trying to suppress the case by making it appear as a robbery attempt and that it swung into action only after she wrote a letter to Union Home Minister Amit Shah.

However, Ms. Singh said, "The police never registered sections of robbery. His family told us that he never received any threat, we analysed his phone, didn't find any such message that he was being threatened with life." The officer said it was Irfan who planned and motivated the other accused to commit the crime.

The officer said the case was yet to be transferred to the NIA but the police had not found any international

links so far.

The Amravati case was reported a week before the Udaipur incident in which Kanhaiya Lal, a 40-year-old tailor, was beheaded by two persons on June 28. The killers filmed the act on a mobile phone and posted it on several WhatsApp groups.

Kanhaiya Lal had shared posts in support of Ms. Sharma, who had made offensive remarks against Prophet Muhammad during a television debate in May. The NIA is also probing the Udaipur case.

Kolhe, a veterinary pharmacist, was stabbed in the neck while he was returning from work on his scooter around 10.30 p.m. on June 21.

Denied bail, Zubair sent to judicial custody

Mr. Zubair moved a bail application in the case after the Delhi Police produced him in court on Saturday upon the expiry of their police custody. Senior Public Prosecutor Atul Srivastava, for the police, submitted they do not need his custody for the time being and hence sought 14 days judicial custody, saying they may need his police remand at a later stage.

This came a day after the police seized a laptop and a hard disk drive from Mr. Zubair's Bengaluru home.

Significantly, Advocate Vrinda Grover, appearing for Mr. Zubair, sought to put on record their "grave apprehension" that the devices may be tampered with by the police. She submitted before the court that the Delhi

Police Special Cell had travelled all the way to Bengaluru to seize his devices but did not take a technician with them, who could generate the hash value for the device.

On the criminal conspiracy section, Ms. Grover asked how the police could allege Mr. Zubair conspired with himself as he was the only accused in the case.

As for deletions from his phone, Ms. Grover submitted that the phone in question was not the one from which the tweet was made.

Moreover, Ms. Grover submitted that the phone that the police were looking for had been stolen in Bengaluru in March 2021 - a fact argued by her at the last remand hearing as well.

Apologise for 'doctored' video of Rahul: Cong.

"But it was deliberately and mischievously doctored to appear as if it was a comment on the heinous murder of Kanhaiya Lal in Udaipur," Mr. Ramesh wrote, adding that no other channel had shown this clip in the Udaipur context.

Mr. Ramesh mentioned other BJP leaders like MP Subrat Pathak and MLA Kamlesh Saini as people who shared the doctored video. But he accused Mr. Rathore of deliberately persisting with the fake news.

"Despite being cautioned by my party colleagues that the clip was maliciously false and misleading, Shri Rathore persisted with amplifying the same, first deleting

and then re-uploading the same. This leaves no doubt that his actions were deliberate and part of your party's strategy to defame the former INC president, to defame the Congress party and to further polarise an already sensitive, communal situation," Mr. Ramesh noted.

Mr. Gandhi didn't directly refer to the doctored video but his tweet was suggestive. "Propaganda and lies are the foundation of BJP-RSS. The whole nation knows that they seek to gain by stoking the fires of communal hatred. No matter how hard these traitors try to break the country, the Congress will work to unite India," he tweeted.

Opposition working against nation: BJP

Union Minister Smriti Irani, briefing the media on Mr. Nadda's closed-door address to the party's national executive, said he flagged the "obstruction and destruction" by the Opposition parties over every programme and policy of the government that was aimed at reforms and the welfare of people.

"In a bid to keep opposing Prime Minister Modi they have started opposing the nation. There are certain issues on which Opposition parties should put the interest of the country first," Ms. Irani said.

"Today when Naddaji spoke of the constructive politics of the BJP under the leadership of the Prime Minister, he reflected on the

destruction Opposition parties hope to thrust upon the people of our country. The Opposition, mostly family oriented, which emanates from corrupt practices, has time and again tried to ensure that policies and programmes of the Government of India that are dedicated to building a resilient, resurgent India are met with destruction and disruption," she quoted Mr. Nadda as saying.

Referring to Mr. Rao not receiving Mr. Modi upon his arrival in Hyderabad, Ms. Irani said, "KCR-ji has not only disrupted what has been constitutionally a federal protocol in our country, but has also broken *maryada* [propriety], politically, culturally and socially."

AAP's claim of creating 10 lakh jobs misleading

"The employer could be lying or even have fired someone after hiring. This has to be verified to get the actual data," he said. AAP has used the claim of providing "10 lakh jobs" on multiple occasions, ranging from election rallies to press conferences,

and the Budget speech to interviews, to project what the AAP terms as the "Kejriwal model of governance". The Delhi government used to conduct job fairs, and when the pandemic hit, it was not possible to hold them, so it was moved online.

Over 100 citizens demand immediate release of Zubair

'We apprehend that police may tamper with the seized material to implicate him'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Over 100 concerned citizens have demanded immediate release of Mohammed Zubair, the co-founder of Alt News, welcoming the Delhi High Court's notice to the city police seeking a response on a petition challenging the legality and propriety of his four-day police remand and the seizure of his digital devices.

Through an open letter, they said as a part of AltNews that ran a fact-checking website, it was Mr. Zubair's job to verify news from across the political spectrum on social media.

Being targeted

"We believe that Mr. Zubair is being targeted maliciously for performing the role which a media person is expected to perform, namely scrupulous fact checking as well as exposing fake news and political disinformation."

Among those who have endorsed the statement are writer and human rights activist Aakar Patel, independent journalist Ajit Sahi, Arjun Sheoran of the People's Union for Civil Liberties, Kavita Krishnan of the All India Progressive Women's Association,

It is ironic that on the same day as Mr. Zubair's arrest, India, along with G7 countries, signed the '2022 Resilient Democracies Statement', wherein the Indian government committed to 'guarding the freedom, independence and diversity of civil society actors' and 'protecting the freedom of expression and opinion online and offline'

OPEN LETTER

tion, Natasha Bhadwar of Karwan-e-Mohabbat and Dalit women's activist Priyanka.

They said his courageous work as a journalist upheld the highest standards of the media and his work burished India's global image as a democracy in which truth could be told to power.

They said Mr. Zubair's tweet, of a screenshot of a 1983 film, was simply a pretext for the police to seize his phone and laptop, which was illegal as they were irrelevant to the case.

"Apart from violating his fundamental right to privacy, his journalistic integrity and confidentiality of information and sources, we apprehend that the police may tamper with the seized material and build a false conspiracy to implicate him and other members of civil society, as was done with some of the Bhima Koregaon accused

by planting material on their laptops," they said.

"It is also suspicious that the account from which the complaint came was an anonymous Twitter handle @balajikijain by the name of Hanuman Bhakt. The account came into being on October 2021, had only one follower, and this complaint was his first tweet, although in court during Mr. Zubair's remand hearing on Tuesday, the police had submitted that the person running the Twitter account was 'not anonymous'," said the statement.

However, the signatories said, according to news reports the Delhi Police had written to Twitter in a bid to trace the complainant after using his tweet as material for a First Information Report (FIR) against Mr. Zubair.

"Apart from the above illegalities, after Mr. Zubair's arrest, his lawyers were not gi-

ven a copy of the FIR despite repeated requests. They were given a copy only after the police remand order late into the night of June 27. Mr. Zubair was taken around with policemen without name tags; these are all violations of the D.K. Basu guidelines of Arrest and Detention issued by the SC," they said.

"Perplexed" that remand was granted to the police for a "frivolous" case, the signatories said the Judicial Magistrate should have ensured that police officers did not arrest the accused unnecessarily. All the charges against Mr. Zubair should be dropped and the Delhi Police Commissioner should take stern action against errant officials. They raised the suspicion that he might be tortured in police custody.

"It is ironic that on the same day as Mr. Zubair's arrest, India, along with G7 countries, signed the '2022 Resilient Democracies Statement', wherein the Indian government committed to 'guarding the freedom, independence and diversity of civil society actors' and 'protecting the freedom of expression and opinion online and offline,'" said the statement.

J&K journalist stopped from flying abroad

Mystery over lookout circular

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

A Pulitzer-winning photo-journalist from Jammu and Kashmir was stopped from flying to Paris at the Indira Gandhi International (IGI) airport here on Saturday.

Sanna Irshad Mattoo said on Twitter that despite procuring a French visa, she was stopped from flying out of the country.

"I was scheduled to travel from Delhi to Paris today for a book launch and photography exhibition as one of 10 award winners of the Serendipity Arles grant 2020. Despite procuring a French visa, I was stopped at the immigration desk at Delhi airport," Ms. Mattoo said.

Ms. Mattoo from Srinagar is part of the Reuters team of journalists who won the Pulitzer Prize for Feature Photography, 2022, for their coverage of COVID-19 pandemic in India.

The Jammu and Kashmir police did not comment on the issue.

It was not known at whose request Ms. Mattoo was stopped from boarding an international flight.

Passengers are stopped by immigration authorities on the basis of lookout circulars (LOC). A person will not know if such a circular



Sanna Irshad Mattoo

exists against him or her till they have booked the tickets and reached the airport.

According to the existing guidelines, LOCs are initiated by many agencies including the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI), Enforcement Directorate (ED), Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI), Income Tax, State police and intelligence agencies among others, by an officer not below the rank of a District Magistrate or Superintendent of Police.

After the special status of Jammu and Kashmir under Article 370 of the Constitution was revoked by Parliament in August 2019, LOCs were opened against several politicians, human rights activists, journalists, and social activists to bar them from flying out of the country.

10% quota for Agniveers has to fit current rules

Physical norms differ for Army, CAPFs

VIJAYTA SINGH
NEW DELHI

In a bid to defuse the violent protest that emanated after the Agnipath scheme was announced, the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) said on June 18 that 10% of all vacancies in the Central Armed Police Forces (CAPFs) or the paramilitary will be reserved for the recruits under the scheme.

However, the new reservation promise that will have to fit horizontally alongside the existing caste-based quota and physical eligibility requirements in the CAPFs is proving to be a challenge for the Ministry.

While the minimum height requirement across all armed forces under the Agnipath scheme is 152.5 cm, the minimum height required for a general duty constable in a combat role in all CAPFs is 165 cm.

The armed forces do not recruit according to caste-based formula but enrolment in the CAPFs is done as per the existing reservation system and cannot exceed the 50% cap as fixed by the Supreme Court.

If new battalions in CAPFs are not raised, the recruitment can be done only against the existing vacan-



CAPF personnel at a railway station during the previous Lok Sabha polls. FILE PHOTO

cies arising out of retirement, death or any miscellaneous reason. "If a Scheduled Caste constable in CAPF has retired, the slot can be only filled by an SC Agniveer, else it might upset the overall quota," said a senior government official.

Another teething problem the Ministry is examining is the different height specifications in the armed forces.

While Army has notified a minimum requirement of 170 cm height for general category Agniveers, the Navy and Air Force's requirement is 157 cm and 152.5 cm respectively.

The CAPFs have also sought clarity from the MHA regarding the implementation of the 10% reservation.

Rajasthan CM Ashok Gehlot may face new challenges

Udaipur murder may impact 2023 Assembly poll prospects

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
JAIPUR

The political ramifications of the horrific murder of tailor Kanhaiya Lal in Udaipur have posed a major challenge to Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot ahead of the 2023 Assembly election. The ruling Congress seems to be in a predicament while trying to control the law and order situation in the aftermath of the June 28 incident.

A sharp increase in religious polarisation, witnessed during the protests against the killing in several towns across the State, is going to affect political prospects of Congress. The Opposition BJP's accusation of the Congress following an "appeasement policy" towards Muslims is likely to gain wide currency despite the party's efforts to rebut it.

The differences between the National Investigation Agency (NIA) and the State's investigating agencies during the initial probe of the crime may create more difficulties for the State government. While the State police was quick to assert that the two accused, who slit the throat of Kanhaiya Lal, had links with Pakistan's Dawat



Ashok Gehlot with the family of Kanhaiya Lal. PTI

e-Islami, the NIA cautioned against drawing any hasty conclusions.

The NIA on Saturday obtained the custody of two main accused, Riyaz Attari and Ghous Mohammed, as well as two other accused for 10 days from a special court in Jaipur. The two others, Asif Hussain and Mohsin Khan, were arrested on Thursday on charges of being involved in the plan to kill Kanhaiya Lal.

Communal polarisation While the BJP is expected to make an attempt to get the maximum benefit from polarisation, which will lead to consolidation of the voters of the majority community,

the Congress also faces the challenge of increasing influence of Bharatiya Tribal Party (BTP) in the Mewar region. The districts such as Pratapgarh, Dungarpur and Banswara, adjacent to Udaipur, have witnessed a sharp rise in the BTP's popularity.

In western Rajasthan's Marwar region, Nagaur MP Hanuman Beniwal's Rashtriya Loktantrik Party (RLP) is exploiting the unrest among the youths against the Centre's Agnipath scheme for strengthening its position in the Jat community. This will directly impact Mr. Gehlot, who has been contesting election from Jodhpur's Sardarpura constituency.

The Udaipur episode has come after a string of incidents of communal violence in the State in the past months. Following an undercurrent of communal tension, riots took place in Karauli on April 2 and clashes broke out in Mr. Gehlot's home turf of Jodhpur on May 2. Communal tension also gripped Bhillwara twice in May. The police launched a special drive for crackdown on the communal elements.

Judiciary answerable to 'Constitution'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEWS DELHI

In India, a party in power believes that every governmental action is entitled to judicial endorsement and the Opposition parties expect the judiciary to advance their political positions and causes, but the "judiciary is answerable to the Constitution and Constitution alone," Chief Justice of India N.V. Ramana said on Saturday.

He also expressed disappointment that even after 75 years of Independence people have not understood the roles and responsibilities assigned by the Constitution to each institution.

He added that this flawed thinking of all hues flourishes in the absence of proper understanding among people about the Constitution and the functioning of the democratic institutions.

Chief Justice Ramana said that to enforce checks and balances envisioned in the Constitution, "We need to spread awareness about the roles and responsibilities of individuals and institutions".

CJI Ramana said both India and the U.S. are known for their diversity which needs to be honoured

Slow pace of justice in Rajsamand hate killing case

A gruesome hate killing has come to the limelight again after five years following a similar murder of tailor Kanhaiya Lal

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
JAIPUR

Almost five years after the killing of a Muslim labourer and nearly four years after the present Congress government assumed office in Rajasthan, the trial of Shambhu Lal Regar, the accused, is still at the stage of recording evidence.

Mohammed Afrazul, 48, hailing from West Bengal, was hacked with an axe and burnt alive without any provocation in Rajasthan's Rajsamand town in 2017. The accused, Shambhu Lal Regar, had filmed the act and uploaded the video on social media.

The gruesome murder, which created a nationwide outrage, has come to the limelight after five years following the similar killing of tailor Kanhaiya Lal in Udaipur earlier this week.

Chief Minister Ashok Geh-

lot has expressed the hope that investigation in the Udaipur case will be conducted at a fast pace after the National Investigation Agency (NIA) takes over the probe. The NIA has obtained custody of the accused on Saturday.

Meanwhile, the Congress has dismissed the charge of "appeasement policy" being followed towards Muslims by the Rajasthan government, and pointed out that the people of a particular party had at the time taken out a rally in support of Mr. Regar of the Rajsamand hate killing case, climbed atop a court complex and hoisted their flag there after removing the tricolour.

Mr. Regar, 40, had filmed the act of killing Afrazul on December 6, 2017, with the help of his minor nephew. The video showed the labourer begging for his life.



Pursuit of justice: Civil rights activists during a protest in Jaipur in December 2017. FILE PHOTO

Later, Mr. Regar circulated two more videos with hate speeches from the Jodhpur Central Jail asking Hindus to unite against *Jihadis*.

Slow progress in trial

While Mr. Regar was lodged in the high-security Central Jail in Jodhpur as an under-trial prisoner, the trial against him was in progress in the Sessions Court in Raj-

samand. Jaidev Kachhawa, Public Prosecutor in Rajsamand district court, told *The Hindu* on Saturday that the trial was at the stage of recording of evidence and examination of witnesses.

Mr. Regar, a resident of Rajnagar, was seen claiming in the video clip that he had taken revenge for "love jihad" [cross-community relationships] and warned that

anyone challenging the Hindu would "meet the same fate". He attacked the victim, while asking the minorities to leave the country, and poured petrol over the semi-conscious man and threw a burning matchstick on him.

The half-charred body was identified as that of Afrazul, a native of Malda in West Bengal, who was working as an unskilled labourer in Rajsamand for the past 12 years. A father of three girls, he was planning to return home to arrange the wedding of his youngest daughter.

The then BJP government had promised stringent action against the assailant after his arrest and set up a special investigation team to probe the case, besides appointing a special public prosecutor. Mr. Kachhawa said the prosecution had filed a 413-page chargesheet in court and appended 68 pic-

es of evidence collected by the police. The court also rejected bail application of the accused.

The chargesheet claimed the "love jihad" claim was a cover used by Mr. Regar to hide his illicit relationship with a woman whom he called his "Hindu sister" in the video. He was angry that the woman was still in contact with a labourer from West Bengal called Ballu Sheikh, with whom she had reportedly eloped in 2010.

A Ram Navami procession in Jodhpur in 2018 included a tableau, in which a man bearing striking resemblance to Mr. Regar was seated on a throne-like chair with a pickaxe in his hand. He was dressed in clothes similar to those of Mr. Regar and an accompanying banner called upon the people to liberate the country from "love jihad".

BJP should have kept pact: Sena

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
MUMBAI

The Shiv Sena on Saturday said former Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis taking oath as Deputy Chief Minister was a "shocking climax" to the drama of creating political instability in the State, and questioned the BJP why it did not show a "big heart" by honouring the pact of rotational CM in 2019.

The Sena, in an editorial in its mouthpiece *Saamana*, said that Mr. Fadnavis becoming Deputy Chief Minister instead of Chief Minister is now being defended as an instance of his "big heart" and "adherence to the party's directives". "With the motive of creating political instability in Maharashtra, a drama was played out... The fast-paced developments have left even the Chanakayas and political pundits stunned as strokes and masterstrokes are being played," it said.

Embattled MVA fields Sena's Rajan Salvi as Speaker nominee

The BJP has put forward first-time MLA Rahul Narvekar as its candidate

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
PUNE

Shiv Sena MLA Rajan Salvi on Saturday filed his nomination as the candidate of the three-party Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) for the post of Maharashtra Legislative Assembly Speaker.

The long-pending election is slated for July 3.

On Friday, first-time Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) legislator Rahul Narvekar filed his nomination for the post.

While Mr. Narvekar represents Mumbai's Colaba Assembly constituency, Mr. Salvi is the MLA for the Rajapur constituency in Ratnagiri district.

He is one of a handful of Sena legislators still with the Uddhav Thackeray-led Sena camp after current Chief Minister Eknath Shinde's recent intra-party rebellion detached 40 of the total 55 Sena MLAs to form a sepa-



In the spotlight: Shiv Sena MLA Rajan Salvi. ■ FILE PHOTO

rate faction. Following the revolt and the subsequent collapse of the MVA government, Mr. Shinde, with support from the BJP, took oath as Chief Minister earlier this week, while BJP leader Devendra Fadnavis was sworn in as Deputy Chief Minister. The Shinde faction has staked claim to be the 'real Shiv Sena' given that they now have the majority

MLAs on their side and have appointed MLA Bharat Gogawale as their whip. The rebel faction is likely to issue a whip asking the Uddhav Thackeray group to vote for Mr. Narvekar, the BJP candidate. Similarly, the Thackeray group is likely to issue a whip to all rebel MLAs to vote for the MVA candidate given that Uddhav Thackeray is still the party chief.

The Speaker's post has been lying vacant since February 2021 when Congress leader Nana Patole resigned to become the Maharashtra Pradesh Congress Committee (MPCC) chief.

Asked why the Congress chose to nominate a Sena candidate in the election for the Speaker's post instead of giving one of their own, senior Congress leader Balasheeb Thorat said: "We [representatives of all three parties] sat together and decided the post ought to be given to a Sena candidate. We are firmly with Mr. Thackeray in this hour of crisis."

A special two-day Assembly session has been convened on July 3 and 4. While election for the Speaker's post will be held on Sunday, Mr. Shinde and Mr. Fadnavis are to face the floor test on Monday.

BJP's ploy is to wrest Mumbai Corporation from Sena: Raut

MP claims he scorned offer by rebel camp to join them

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
PUNE

The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) had made rebel Shiv Sena leader Eknath Shinde the Chief Minister of Maharashtra merely to wrest Mumbai from the Sena, Rajya Sabha member Sanjay Raut said on Saturday.

He further claimed that as the Sena MLAs, he too had received an offer to join the Shinde camp in Guwahati, but had refused to side with them. Mr. Raut said he chose not to go to Assam as he is a staunch follower of Sena leader Balasheeb Thackeray's ideals.

"BJP wants to destroy the Shiv Sena in Mumbai and Maharashtra, but it will not happen," said the MP, who is being quizzed by the Enforcement Directorate (ED) in an alleged scam pertaining to the redevelopment of Mumbai's Patra Chawl.

Mr. Raut said that the



Sanjay Raut

BJP's gambit to install Mr. Shinde as CM was solely to snare the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) from the Sena's control.

The cash-rich BMC, said to be the richest civic body in Asia, is the Shiv Sena's life-line and power base and the party's major resource centre in Maharashtra.

With the BJP under Devendra Fadnavis having scored a major coup by wrecking former CM Udd-

hav Thackeray's party and toppling the tripartite MVA, the saffron party is gunning for victory in the critical BMC election, which is due in a few months.

While the Sena has held absolute sway over the Mumbai civic body for two decades, the BJP, riding high on the 'Narendra Modi wave' in 2017, had rattled its former ally in the 2017 civic body poll, when it snared 82 of the total 227 seats, second only to the Sena's tally of 84 seats. The Sena's strength later increased to 97 with the support of some Independents and the defection of some corporators from the Raj Thackeray-led Maharashtra Navnirman Sena (MNS).

This has made the upcoming BMC poll in the context of the dramatically altered political equations in the State a matter of life-and-death for the Uddhav Thackeray group.

Uddhav camp tries to secure loyalty

Reports of affidavits surface

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
PUNE

Following Shiv Sena leader Eknath Shinde's massive intra-party rebellion which split the Uddhav Thackeray-led party right down the middle, rumblings of future revolts within the party, particularly of Sena MPs, have reportedly prompted Mr. Thackeray's camp to get their remaining flock to sign affidavits pledging loyalty.

While Sena MP Arvind Sawant and others loyal to Mr. Thackeray denied reports of MLAs being made to sign such affidavits, the rebel camp led by Chief Minister Shinde said the loyalty pledges were "an insult to democracy".

Mocking the affidavits, rebel MLA Deepak Kesarkar, the spokesperson of the Shinde faction on Saturday said there was no law binding MPs or MLAs to pledge loyalty a party.

He said that while the loyalty pledges taken on affidavits on ₹100 stamp paper would generate a lot of revenue for Maharashtra, they would have no legal standing.

"There is no such law in India... This is a democracy, not a dictatorship. Anyone who is a member of one political party is free to leave it and join another. You cannot tie someone down with an affidavit. This is an insult to democracy. Balasheeb Thackeray [late Sena founder] had tied everyone together with his love and with the *Shiv-bandhan* on our wrists - the thread of loyalty and Hindutva that ties us together. No one can take it off my wrist," said Mr. Kesarkar, speaking in Goa.

Chief Minister Shinde arrived at a hotel in Panaji early today morning and held a



DEEPAK KESARKAR
Maharashtra MLA

meeting with the rebel MLAs. The rebel MLAs arrived in Mumbai late evening in order to be present for the two-day special session of the Legislative Assembly on July 3 and 4.

Meanwhile, commenting on Mr. Shinde's expulsion from the party by Sena president Uddhav Thackeray, Mr. Kesarkar said that they (Shinde faction) would reply to Mr. Thackeray's letter in a legal manner.

"We have already said we will not directly answer any questions over statements made against us by Uddhavji. We still have the greatest respect for him. The letter that CM Shinde received yesterday has been written in the legal language and will be replied to in a legal manner," Mr. Kesarkar said.

With Mr. Shinde sworn in as Maharashtra Chief Minister and having the majority of the 55 Sena MLAs with him, the refrain from the Shinde camp is that the Thackeray faction, with barely 15 legislators, can no longer claim "ownership" of the party.

Corridor revamp



Almost ready: Construction work in full swing for the Central Vista redevelopment project near India Gate in New Delhi on Saturday. Central Vista Avenue is set to open in a few days. ■ R.V. MOORTHY

U.S. body on religious freedom 'biased': MEA

USCIRF had expressed 'concerns' over the treatment of minorities, activists

SUHASINI HAIDAR
NEW DELHI

The government on Saturday took aim once again at the U.S. Commission for International Religious Freedom (USCIRF) over comments expressing "concerns" over the treatment of minorities, human rights advocates and media, which follow its report this year downgrading India's ratings on religious freedom.

"USCIRF continues to misrepresent facts time and again in its statements and reports in pursuance of its motivated agenda. Such actions only serve to strengthen concerns about the credibility and objectivity of the organization," the Ministry of External Affairs spokesperson said, responding to a series of tweets posted on the USCIRF handle that criticised the Modi government.

The tweets included a comment by USCIRF Commissioner David Curry, who accused the government of "continued repression of critical voices - especially religious minorities and those reporting on and advocating for them", attaching a media report about the arrest of Gujarat activists Teesta Setalvad, R.B. Sreekumar and Sanjeev Bhatt.

Another comment by USCIRF Commissioner Stephen Schneck said that harassment of "human rights advocates, journalists, activists, and faith leaders in India is

not reflective of a country with a history of democracy".

The tweet included a report on the arrest of fact-checker and co-founder of Alt News Mohammed Zubair, who was denied bail again on Saturday in a case alleging that he had offended religious sentiments in a tweet he posted in 2018.

In its latest response, the MEA called the USCIRF comments "biased and inaccurate". The comments reflected a severe lack of understanding of India and its constitutional framework, its plurality and its democratic ethos, the MEA said.

The comments are the latest in a growing number of

critical comments in the U.S. over the issue. On July 1, the U.S. Ambassador for International Religious Freedom Rashad Hussain said he was worried about calls for "genocide" within India, and criticised what he called Union Home Minister Amit Shah's "dehumanising" reference to Bangladeshi immigrants as "termites". He, however, didn't name Mr. Shah.

"India now has a citizenship law that's on the books. We've had open calls for genocide in India. We've had attacks on churches. We have had a ban on the hijab. We've had demolitions of homes," Ambassador Hussain said at a conference in Washington DC.

New book explores Gandhi's role in Champaran satyagraha

The Mahatma refused to abide by convention, says scholar

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

A book titled *Gandhi and the Champaran Satyagraha: Select Readings*, which has been edited by Jadavpur University Vice-Chancellor Suranjana Das, was released on Saturday.

At the virtual book launch event, Prof. Das thanked the West Bengal government and the Netaji Institute for Asian Studies for sponsoring the research.

Speaking during a panel discussion, Faisal Devji, Professor of History in the University of Oxford, said the book would immediately be-

come an indispensable resource for those who wanted to look at Mahatma Gandhi's journey at its very beginning in India with respect to the Champaran satyagraha.

Prof. Devji said during the satyagraha, Mahatma Gandhi quite deliberately refused to abide by the inherited conventional standard categorisations of national politics that had existed till then. "I am, in particular, referring to the distinction between social reform on one hand and political freedom on the other, which also maps on to another distinc-

tion between moderates on the one hand and extremists on the other," he said.

As the Congress party was said to have been divided between moderates and extremists, "Gandhi being Gandhi, of course, refuses to abide by these tenets and these terms of debate and you already see this in Champaran. What he does in Champaran, in my view, is he explicitly refuses to engage in formal political manoeuvres and he achieves political ends as it were through their opposite, the social", Prof. Devji remarked.

SOUTHERN RAILWAY
(CONSTRUCTION ORGANISATION)
Ernakulam Junction

TENDER NOTICE NO.DCE-II-CNERS-OT-03-2022 DATED: 01.07.2022. Name of work: Doubling of Track between Kuruppanthara and Chingavanam - Proposed housekeeping of Construction Camp Office at Ernakulam Junction for a period of two years. **Tender Value:** Rs. 21.82 Lakhs. **Completion Period:** 24 months. **Date of Opening:** 25.07.2022 at 15.00 hrs.

TENDER NOTICE NO.DCE-II-CNERS-OT-04-2022 DATED: 02.07.2022. Name of work: Final Location Survey including preparation of Working Plan, Working Section, Yard Plans, Bridge Plans, Conducting soil investigations, Water way calculation, Detailed Estimate etc., for proposed doubling between Thuravur (Excd) & Ambalapuzha (Excd). **Tender Value:** Rs. 87.54 lakhs **Completion Period:** 6 months. **Date of Opening:** 05.08.2022 at 15.00 hrs.

Complete details & tender document will be available at www.ireps.gov.in.

Dy. Chief Engineer, (Construction), II, Ernakulam Jn.

Follow us on: twitter.com/GMSRailway

KERALA WATER AUTHORITY. e-Tender Notice
Tender No: 35/2022-23/KWA/PHC/D1/TVM & 12/2022-23/KWA/PHC/D1/TVM(RTL). (1) JIM - 2022-2024 - Varkala-600mm DI K9 Raw Water Pumping Main, 23MLD WTP, 12 Clear water Sump, substation building, and recycling unit Compound wall & Gate at WTP, Water Supply arrangements, Electrical & Mechanical items in WTP, PLC - SCADA Automation, Scour line extension, Well / Pump House. (2) KIFB: 9m well cum pump house 500mm DI K9 Raw water pumping main, 18 MLDWTP, Pumps, water supply & electrical items in WTP, clear water transmission mains, Clear water pumping main 0.65 L.Sump & Construction of 15.3L, 14L, 5.2L, 2.8L OHSRs & Road Restoration & electrical arrangements, landscaping, Anganwadi building, Clear water pump sets, Indoor Transformer, Transformer Room and allied works. EMD: Rs.5,00,000/- each Tender fee: Rs. 15,000/- each Last Date for submitting Tender: 25-07-2022 03:00:pm. Phone: 0471-2322303, Website: www.kwa.kerala.gov.in Superintending Engineer www.etenders.kerala.gov.in KWA-JB-GL-6-454-2022-23 PH Circle, Thiruvananthapuram

TNP&L TAMILNADU NEWSPRINT AND PAPERS LIMITED
Kagithapuram - 639 136, KARUR Dist. Tamil Nadu
Ph.: 04324 - 277001 (10 Lines)

NOTICE INVITING TENDER

Tender No.	Material Description	Due date
222313 002015	Imported Limestone for Soda recovery Plant	16.07.2022
222323 001196	Bleached Softwood Sulphate Pulp for Unit-II	14.07.2022
222323 001199	Bleached Chemi Thermo Mechanical Pulp - Softwood 70 for Unit-II	15.07.2022
222323 001200	Bleached Chemi Thermo Mechanical Pulp - Hardwood 70 for Unit-II	16.07.2022
222313 002065	Bleached Chemi Thermo Mechanical Pulp - Hardwood 80 for Unit-I & II	18.07.2022

Email: 222313002015-purchase.fuel@tnpl.co.in
222323001196-purchase.pulp@tnpl.co.in & 222313002065-purchase.pulp@tnpl.co.in

Contingent if any will be issued in TNP&L Website only. Detailed Terms & conditions, Tender fee, EMD, etc., are available in tender document at our websites: www.tnpl.com / www.tenders.tn.gov.in.

DIPR/3199/Tender/2022 TNP&L - Maker of bagasse based eco-friendly Paper
"செய்துள்ள கட்டுவது கட்டுவது அனைத்துமே, எந்தவகையிலும் பிடிந்து எந்தவிதும் படைப்பேயும்."

BJP passes resolution on welfare of the poor

Party cites govt.'s relief measures

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD

The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) national executive on Saturday lauded the changes made by the Modi government in military recruitment with the Agnipath scheme, and dismissed talk of a crisis in employment, countering that the government had made the highest-ever budgetary allocation for public spending during the COVID-19 pandemic.

A resolution on "gareeb kalyan" or welfare of the poor was passed at the BJP's national executive, which met in Hyderabad on Saturday, with Defence Minister Rajnath Singh moving the resolution which was seconded by Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal and further supported by Harya-

na Chief Minister M.L. Khat-

tar. Briefing the press on the resolution, Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan said that the Modi government had handled the economy well, keeping the welfare of the poor at the centre of its policies amid a global economic crisis due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

"The government through the Garib Kalyan Yojana has distributed free grains to 80 crore beneficiaries for 25 months, and has also, via *gati shakti* programme, made the highest announcement of public spending on infrastructure, which is part of job creation efforts," he said. "If there was an acute [jobs] crisis, then social harmony would have been hit," he added.

Condolences to kin of Kanhaiya, Moosewala

BJP national executive mourns them

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD

Udaipur tailor Kanhaiya Lal, who was allegedly killed by two men avenging an insult to Islam, and Punjabi singer and Congress party leader Sidhu Moosewala, who was shot dead recently, found a mention in a condolence message passed at the Bharatiya Janata Party's (BJP) national executive meeting here on Saturday, sources said.

The condolence message,

moved as a resolution by BJP general secretary Dilip Saikia, also mentioned several dignitaries and BJP leaders, and the Army personnel who died in a landslide in Manipur.

Days before his killing, Lal had told the local police that he had received threats over a social media post shared from his account, which apparently supported suspended BJP leader Nupur Sharma's remarks on Prophet Muhammed.

GREATER VISAKHAPATNAM MUNICIPAL CORPORATION
Tender Notice No.22/2022-23/SE-W/EE-II(Works)/DB, Dt:01-07-2022
Number of works :1 Work, Value of work : Rs.1,70,66,092.00
Tender Downloading Starting Date : 01-07-2022
Closing Date : 11-07-2022
Further details at <http://www.tender.apeprocurement.gov.in>
x/y/sd/xx
O/o the EE-II Cell No.99485 25297 Superintending Engineer(W-I)

KERALA WATER AUTHORITY e-Tender Notice
Tender No: SE/PHC/MPM29 to 31/2022-23. JIM Malappuram District, Providing Distribution, FHTCs and allied works to Mampad and Pallikad GPs - JIM Tiruprango, Mangalam, Vettom, Thalakkad, Purathur GPs construction and commissioning 37MLD WTP, Reservoirs, CWP and electro mechanical items and allied works. EMD: Rs. 500000. Tender fee: Rs. 15000. Last Date for submitting Tender: 26-07-2022 03:00:pm. Phone: 04972784871. Website: www.kwa.kerala.gov.in www.etenders.kerala.gov.in KWA-JB-GL-6-459-2022-23 Superintending Engineer, PH Circle, Malappuram

KARNATAKA POWER CORPORATION LIMITED
(SHARAVATHY HYDRO-ELECTRIC PROJECT)
CIN No: U85110KA1970SGC001919

CORRIGENDUM - 1

Please refer our tender No.: KPCL/2022-23/PS/WORK INDENT12520 Dated: 18.06.2022 was published in this daily on 22.06.2022 for the work of "Modification of existing CO2 fire extinguisher system of Unit No. 1 & 2 at Sharavathy Generating Station". Last date and time for receipt of tenders: 11.07.2022 upto 17.30 Hrs. Opening of Technical bid : 13.07.2022 after 10.00 Hrs. Opening of financial bid : 15.07.2022 after 10.00 Hrs. All other terms and conditions of e-Tender remain unaltered. Further details can be had from the Executive Engineer (Generator)Jog, SGS, KPCL, Jogfalls - 577 435, Sagar Tq, Shivamogga Dist., Karnataka, Mobile : 9449598804.

Three spies working for Pak. held in Rajasthan

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
JAIPUR

The intelligence wing of the Rajasthan police has arrested three persons from the border districts on charges of sending strategic and confidential information to their handlers in Pakistan. They were allegedly involved in an espionage racket managed by the neighbouring country's intelligence agencies.

Director-General of Police (Intelligence) Umesh Mishra said here on Saturday that the trio were held during an 'Operation Sarhad', undertaken between June 25 and 28, when 23 suspects from Sriganganagar, Hanumangarh and Churu districts were detained and interrogated by the CID-Intelligence officers.

Of the suspects who were questioned, the intelligence wing has arrested Abdul Sattar of Hanumangarh, Nitin Yadav of Suratgarh and Ram Singh of Barmer. All of them were getting regular payment of money for supplying information related to defence establishments to Pakistani intelligence agencies.

8 more bodies found, Manipur toll hits 29

Five of the bodies recovered are of Army personnel

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
IMPHAL

The death toll in the landslide at a railway construction site in Noney district of Manipur climbed to 29 on Saturday after eight bodies were recovered from under the debris, officials said.

Thirty-four people are still missing after the massive landslide hit the Tupul yard railway construction camp on the night of June 29. Inclement weather is affecting the search, officials said.

Five of the eight bodies recovered during the day are of Territorial Army personnel and one of an employee of a construction company. The two others are yet to be identified.

The defence personnel were there to provide security to the construction site.

"Eight bodies were found on Thursday and 13 yesterday," an official said. He said that altogether 34 people, including 14 employees of two construction companies, five villagers and three of the Railways, are still missing. Eighteen people were rescued from the site on Thurs-



Rescue operations under way for the third consecutive day after a massive landslide hit Noney district on Saturday. •PTI

day. The search started at 4 a.m. and rescue teams have been advised to proceed with caution. Rain since early Saturday morning has hampered the operations, the officials said.

Over 470 personnel, including those of the national and State disaster response forces, the State police, the Assam Rifles and local volunteers, have been deployed for the search.

Over 30 excavators are being used to clear the debris which blocked the Ijai river, forming a dam-like storage and threatening to flood the neighbourhood.

Earthmovers have been brought in to remove the de-

bris, and create a channel to allow the flow of water from there, officials said.

A defence spokesperson in Guwahati said, "Through-Wall Radar is being successfully used. A search-and-rescue dog is also being employed to assist." Such radars are used for the detection and location of static and moving targets, especially human beings, behind walls. The spokesperson said bodies of 14 defence personnel, including a junior commissioned officer, were sent to their hometowns. Full military honours were given to the deceased at Imphal before sending the bodies to their hometowns.

Northeast needs international routes

The land-locked southern part will do well with connectivity via Bangladesh

RAHUL KARMAKAR
GUWAHATI

Prolonged disruption of road and rail transport across a major part of Northeast India due to floods and landslides has renewed the demand for fast-tracking projects for connectivity with the rest of the country through Bangladesh.

The Barak Valley in southern Assam and the southern half of Manipur, Mizoram and Tripura are dependent on the arterial Luming-Badarpur railway line for transporting essentials from other parts of the country. The National Highway through Meghalaya shares some of the passenger and cargo load, while another through Dima Hasao in Assam has not quite been serviceable.

The 185-km railway line connecting Luming in Hojai district of central Assam and Badarpur in Karimganj district of southern Assam, much of it through the hill district of Dima Hasao, has been prone to landslides since the metre gauge track of 1899 vintage was realigned and converted to broad gauge in 2015. Badarpur is the junction from where the tracks branch out to Silchar (30 km away), Jiribam in Manipur, Bairabi in



Lifelines snapped: A road damaged in floods in Karimganj district on Friday. •PTI

Mizoram and Agartala in Tripura. The two highways have a similar problem, particularly during the monsoon months of June to September.

On May 14, rain-induced landslides and flash floods damaged the railway line in Dima Hasao at 56 locations. The highways either caved in or were blocked in many places, affecting road transport for days. These cut off Barak Valley, parts of Manipur, Mizoram and Tripura for weeks. Subimal Bhattacharjee, a Delhi-based cybersecurity expert from Silchar, said the landslide-prone railway and highways made the revival of old British-era routes through present-day Bangladesh important for at least five northeastern

States, including Meghalaya.

"The Maitri Bridge across the Feni river connects Saurab in Tripura and Ramgarh in Bangladesh, while efforts are on to take the railway line beyond Saurab. Another railway line connecting Agartala and Akhaura in Bangladesh is in the works," he said.

"These will improve Tripura's connectivity by leaps and bounds. But Mizoram, Manipur, Barak Valley, Dima Hasao and Meghalaya will be better served by the old British line through Mahisasan on the Assam-Bangladesh border with Badarpur becoming the communication hub," Mr. Bhattacharjee said.

Mahisasan in Karimganj district of the Barak Valley used to be connected to Chit-

tagong, via Kulaura.

"I am a strong proponent of connectivity, especially between Sylhet and our long-separated cousins in the Barak Valley. The Chittagong-Badarpur-Haflong railway line is one of the oldest set-up by the British to carry goods and traffic. We need to reconnect Kulaura with Mahisasan and beyond. This would be a win-win situation for both Assam and Bangladesh," Ishfaq Ilahi, a retired Air Commodore of Bangladesh Air Force specialising in international affairs, told *The Hindu*.

"I also visualise direct train between Sylhet and Silchar, just like the one we have between Kolkata and Khulna. I proposed the other day in a meeting with Indian High Commissioner here (Dhaka) to build a friendship bridge between Karimganj and Zakiganj (Bangladesh) across the Kushiara river, with immigration facilities on either side," he said.

Officials at the Northeast Frontier Railway said a 2.7-km line from Mahisasan to Zero Point is expected to be commissioned by December 2023. "Taking the track beyond into Bangladesh would then be a matter of time," a spokesperson said.

ED acts against Saravana Stores Gold Palace, Martin

It attaches assets in two different cases

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) has attached the properties of Saravana Stores (Gold Palace) Chennai and lottery scam accused Santiago Martin in separate cases.

In the first case, it attached the properties worth ₹234.75 crore in a money laundering case filed for defrauding Indian Bank.

The ED initiated an investigation under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act, 2002, based on an FIR (April 25, 2022) registered by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) and the Economic Offences Wing, Chennai. And the ED recorded the case in May 2022 under the PMLA.

According to details provided by the ED, it is alleged that late Pallakudurai, P. Sujatha and Y.P. Shiravan, partners of Saravana Stores (Gold Palace), with the criminal intention of cheating Indian Bank, T. Nagar branch, Chennai, had conspired with unknown public servants and others.

Balance sheet

Investigation revealed that Saravana Stores (Gold Palace) had applied for a loan and fabricated its balance

sheet and projected that the company was financially healthy.

Details provided by the ED highlighted that there was a huge mismatch between the sales reported by the firm and the credit entries. Turnover projections were not provided accurately when the loan was taken. The firm, in collusion with the property valuer, a few bank officials and some private persons, proposed to purchase assets at a price which was higher than the market value.

The investigation revealed that the accused persons overstated the inventory, transferred the assets without the knowledge of the bank, used the OCC limits to repay the term loan, misappropriated and diverted the funds for which it was not sanctioned, and committed other irregularities. Thus, the accused persons and the firm cheated the bank and caused it a wrongful loss.

"The accused company has generated proceeds of crime amounting to ₹240 crore out of criminal activities," the ED said. In the case of Santiago Martin, the ED attached movable and immovable properties worth ₹173.48 crore.

Restoring the Sun Temple's exquisite carvings

The work is likely to be completed within a month, said officials of Archaeological Survey of India

DAMINI NATH
NEW DELHI

Visitors to the Sun Temple in Konark, Odisha, will soon be able to see the newly carved stones on the northern side of the *jagmohan*, or the assembly hall, of the World Heritage Site. The restoration work is likely to be completed within a month, Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) officials said this week.

The pilot project started in 2019 with a study of the stones at the temple and an analysis of the historic drawings and photos from the 19th century onwards. The work on the site began in 2021, Arun Malik, ASI Superintendent Archaeologist (Bhubaneswar Circle), said. Local artisans are busy making the mouldings for the



Historical monument: A worker engaged in restoration work on the 13-century temple. •SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

section being restored. Khondalite stones were procured from the ancient quarry at Tapang, Mr. Malik said.

Starting in 1901, the British government had placed plain stones across the site and filled the *jagmohan* with sand to preserve the struc-

ture of the 13th century temple. The ASI carried out conservation works after the site was handed over to it in 1936. Mr. Malik said the temple that visitors see today remains standing due to the conservation efforts over the years. Over the years, till

1986, plain stones were placed in order to keep the temple's structure secure as the conservation policy, which was drafted in 1915, only allowed for additions to be made for structural reasons. In 2014, however, the ASI brought out a new conservation policy that allowed for restoration and recreation of destroyed elements of monuments as long as they were in keeping with the history and authenticity.

Architectural value

"Restoration may be undertaken on monuments with high architectural value and only in parts of a monument wherein there are missing geometric or floral patterns, or structural members of a monument which have been

damaged recently," according to the National Conservation Policy (2014).

Mr. Malik said the motifs for the pilot project were selected after researching old glass negatives of photos and the designs visible on the temple. He said the scaffolding around the northern side would be removed and the portion would be open to the public for a closer look within a month, though visitors have been able to see the ongoing work.

ASI spokesperson Vasant Swarnkar said the project would be assessed after completion before any decision is taken for further restoration work at the temple.

He said independent experts would also be invited to study it.

Lookout notice against Nupur issued

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
KOLKATA

The Kolkata Police on Saturday issued a lookout notice against suspended BJP spokesperson Nupur Sharma after she failed to turn up to the summons issued by at least two police stations in the city.

FIRs were registered first at Narkeldanga police station and then at Amherst Street Police station for her objectionable remarks on Prophet Muhammad.

The FIRs were registered on the basis of complaints filed by individuals. At least 10 complaints were filed against Ms. Sharma under different police stations in the jurisdiction of Kolkata Police.

India adds 540 species to faunal database

New species *Crociodura narcondamica* found in the Andaman and Nicobar islands

SHIV SAHAY SINGH
KOLKATA

India added 540 species to its faunal database in 2021 taking the total number of animal species to 1,03,258. The country also added 315 taxa to the Indian flora during 2021, taking the number of floral taxa in the country to 55,048.

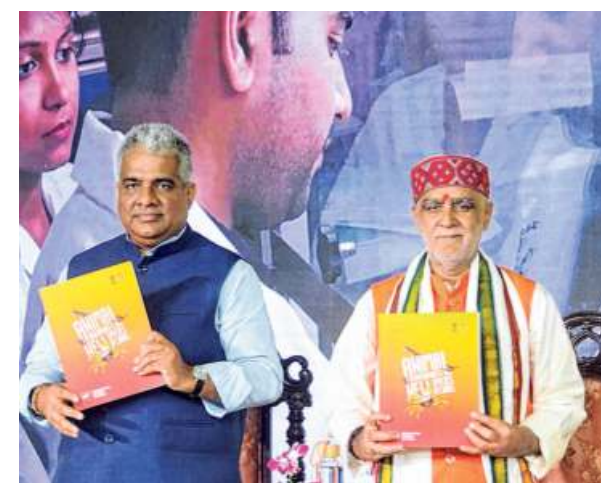
Of the 540 faunal species, 406 are new discoveries and 134 new records to India. Thirteen new genera were also discovered in 2021. Among the new species discovered is one species from mammal, 35 reptiles and 19 species of pisces.

The new mammal species discovered is *Crociodura narcondamica*, a white-toothed shrew, from Narcondam Island of the Andaman and Nicobar group of islands.

Among the reptiles discovered in 2021, notable is *Boiga whitakeri*, or Whitaker's cat snake, from the Western Ghats in Tamil Nadu.

The most number of new discoveries was from the faunal group Hymenoptera, an order of insects, comprising the sawflies, wasps, bees, and ants, in which 80 species, including one new genus, were discovered.

Dhriti Banerjee, Director, Zoological Survey of India (ZSI), which observed its 107th foundation day on July 1, said scientists from the ZSI had contributed to 68% of the animal discoveries in



Union Ministers Bhupendra Yadav and Ashwini Kumar Choubey during an event in Kolkata. •DEBASISH BHADURI

2021. She pointed out that during the COVID-19 pandemic, explorations were greatly hampered, but they have been renewed with full vigour now.

With 1.03 lakh species of fauna, India contributes to 6.1% of faunal diversity in the world.

The 315 taxa of flora added to India consist of 298 species and 17 intraspecific taxa as new to Indian flora. Of these, 204 taxa are new to science and 125 taxa are new distributional records from India. "Forty-three per cent novelties published in various national and international journals are of vascular plants; rest are non-vascular in nature. This volume records 135 angiosperms, four pteridophytes, 9 bryophytes, 28 lichens, 98

fungi, 29 algae and 12 microbes," a note from the Botanical Survey of India (BSI) said.

According to the BSI, regions such as the Western Ghats and the northeastern regions have contributed 28% of the total discoveries. In State-wise analysis, the most number of discoveries were made from Kerala with 51 taxa followed by Maharashtra and Arunachal Pradesh. In 2021, the floral discoveries include wild relatives of many potential horticultural, agricultural, medicinal, and ornamental plants such as begonia, impatiens (Balsams), legumes, zingibers and orchids.

The details of new discoveries and new records of fauna and flora were published by Bhupendra Yadav, Union Minister of

Environment, Forest and Climate Change, at the headquarters of the Zoological Survey of India (ZSI) in Kolkata on Friday.

Migration of species

Speaking on the occasion, Mr. Yadav said climate change was no distant reality and science had been very categorical on the issue. The Minister pointed out that as a consequence of climate change, a change in distributional pattern of vegetation, with species in high elevation ecosystem shifting to higher elevation had already been observed.

"Range shift and migration of animals is very much likely; the distribution of fauna needs to be monitored and periodically analysed as a priority study. Long-term studies on faunal elements of forests, aquatic, coastal and marine ecosystem are essential," Mr. Yadav said.

The Minister also pointed out that the geo-spatial data of the ZSI would be of great importance in developing adaptive spatial planning of conservation areas.

"Recent findings of ZSI will be useful in forest management and support the national action plan to combat climate change in India," Mr. Yadav said.

The Minister also pointed that the significance of taxonomists cannot be neglected but unfortunately the number of taxonomists was declining alarmingly.

Amarnath yatra curbs rile traders

Cut-off times, pickets affect tourism

PEERZADA ASHIQ
SRINAGAR

Unprecedented security restrictions imposed for the Amarnath yatra have allegedly dented the tourism sector and the movement of farm produce out of the Kashmir Valley, triggering protests from stakeholders on Saturday.

The Anantnag administration's decision to set a cut-off time of 2 p.m. for tourists to leave the most-frequented tourist spot of Pahalgam, and 12 p.m. for the nearby Aru Valley, has resulted in the cancellation of scheduled trekking groups.

"Around 2,000 trekkers have cancelled their plans in the Aru Valley. We have only managed to divert around 1,000 trekkers to other routes. Security restrictions have impacted adventure tourism in Pahalgam, which is a trekkers' paradise. I fail to understand why the Aru Valley, which is not connected to the yatra route, has been placed under restrictions," Rauf Trambo, adventure sports consultant with travel service provider Highland Journeys, told *The Hindu*.

Kashmir is in the middle of a tourism boom for the first time since 2019, when the Centre ended Jammu & Kashmir's special constitutional status. The stringent security measures coupled with cut-off times for the entry of tourists and yatis into the Valley, however, is cast-

ing a shadow on leisure tourism too.

"Kashmiris have welcomed yatis and tourists alike since ages. This year, the security arrangements have only compounded the problems and caused immense loss to the leisure and other tourism segments," Farooq Kuthoo, president, Travel Agents Association of Kashmir (TAAK), said.

Hundreds of pickets erected across the Valley have also slowed down the movement of tourists towards their destinations, including Gulmarg.

Scores of tourists heading for Srinagar from Kargil were stopped in Sonamarg for touching the Valley after the cut-off time on Friday.

"Many tourists missed their flights due to such halts. Many spent the night in their cars. Such bad memories for tourists will not go well for the future of the tourism industry," Mr. Kuthoo said.

The Travel Agents Association of Kashmir is mulling over not taking tourist bookings for the Valley for the next 40 days, till the yatra is over on August 11.

"Travel agents outside J&K have stopped promoting Kashmir till mid-August. It has brought down the tourist influx already. Preferential treatment to the Amarnath yatra is affecting tourism in Jammu and Kashmir," Mr. Khuthoo said.

SUDOKU

	2			6	1	7		
7		8						
	1		9					
2			1		4		9	8
5				9				4
4	3		5		8			2
					9		2	
						1		9
		7	6	4			5	

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★☆☆☆

Solution to yesterday's Sudoku

9	5	3	8	6	7	2	1	4
6	2	8	4	9	1	7	5	3
7	1	4	3	5	2	8	9	6
1	3	6	9	7	8	4	2	5
4	7	5	6	2	3	1	8	9
2	8	9	5	1	4	6	3	7
8	4	7	1	3	5	9	6	2
5	6	2	7	8	9	3	4	1
3	9	1	2	4	6	5	7	8

Explosions rock Ukraine's Mykolaiv

President Zelensky denounces Russian strikes as 'conscious, deliberately targeted terror'

REUTERS
SERHIIVKA

Powerful explosions rocked the Ukrainian city of Mykolaiv early on Saturday, the Mayor said, a day after authorities said at least 21 people were killed when Russian missiles struck an apartment building near the Black Sea port of Odessa.

Air raid sirens sounded across the Mykolaiv region, which borders the vital port of Odessa, before the blasts.

"There are powerful explosions in the city! Stay in shelters!" Mykolaiv Mayor Oleksandr Senkevich wrote on the Telegram messaging app.

It was not immediately known what caused the explosions. Reuters could not independently verify the report.

Explosions flattened part of an apartment building while residents slept on Friday, another in a series of what Ukraine says are Russian missile attacks aimed at



Sifting through rubble: Ukrainian rescue officials clearing debris at a damaged building in Serhiivka on Saturday. • AP

civilians.

In his nightly video address on Friday, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky denounced the strikes as "conscious, deliberately targeted Russian terror and not some sort of error or a coincidental missile strike."

Kremlin denies attacks Kyiv says Moscow has intensified its long-range missile attacks, hitting civilian tar-

gets far from the frontline. Russia says it has been aiming at military sites. Kremlin spokesperson Dmitry Peskov cited President Vladimir Putin's statements "that the Russian Armed Forces do not work with civilian targets".

A Russian missile earlier this week struck a crowded shopping mall in central Ukraine, killing at least 19 people.

Thousands of civilians have been killed since Russia invaded Ukraine on February 24 in what Moscow calls a "special operation" to root out nationalists. Ukraine and its Western allies say it is an unprovoked war of aggression.

Residents in the resort village of Serhiivka near Odessa helped workers pick through the rubble of the nine-storey apartment block, a section of which had been destroyed in Friday's early-morning strike.

"We came here to the site, assessed the situation together with emergency workers and locals, and together helped those who survived. And those who unfortunately died. We helped to carry them away," said Oleksandr Abramov, who lives nearby and had rushed to the scene when he heard the blast.

Serhiy Bratchuk, spokesman for the Odessa regional administration, said 21 peo-

ple had been confirmed killed, including a 12-year-old boy.

The region will observe a day of mourning on Saturday for those killed during the attack, Bratchuk said.

The strike on Serhiivka took place shortly after Russia pulled its troops off Snake Island, a strategically important outcrop about 140 km (85 miles) southeast of Odessa that it seized on the war's first day.

The chief of Ukraine's General Staff, Valeriy Zaluzhny, accused Russia of failing to abide by its assertions that it had left Snake Island as a "gesture of good will". On his Telegram messaging app channel, Mr. Zaluzhny said two Russian warplanes had taken off from a base in Crimea and bombed targets on the island on Friday evening.

He posted a video of what he said was the attack. Reuters could not confirm the authenticity of the video or the Russian action depicted.

Protesters storm Libyan Parliament, set it ablaze

Public anger over prolonged power cuts, political deadlock

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
TRIPOLI

Protesters stormed Libya's Parliament in the eastern city of Tobruk on Friday and set parts of it ablaze, venting their anger at deteriorating living conditions and months of political deadlock.

Black smoke billowed as men burned tyres and torched cars after one protester had smashed through the compound's gate with a bulldozer and others attacked the walls with construction tools, local media reported.

The building was empty, as Friday falls on the weekend in Libya.

Libya's House of Representatives has been based in Tobruk, more than 1,000 km east of capital Tripoli, since an east-west schism in 2014 that came three years after a mass popular revolu-



Angry reaction: Protesters outside the Libyan Parliament building in Tobruk on Saturday. • REUTERS

tion toppled dictator Muammar Gadhafi.

A separate legislature, formally known as the High Council of State, is based in Tripoli as the oil-rich North African country remains divided between rival administrations vying for control.

Libya, sweltering in summer heat, has endured days of power cuts – a situation

worsened by the blockade of key oil facilities amid the entrenched political rivalries.

"We want the lights to work," chanted protesters, some of whom were brandishing the green flags of the Gadhafi regime.

The Parliament condemned the "acts of vandalism and the burning" of its headquarters.

Pak. journalist assaulted after he called Generals 'property dealers'

Unknown persons stop car, attack him and flee from scene

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
LAHORE

A senior Pakistani journalist and political analyst has been assaulted by unidentified masked men, who also tore his clothes, as he left his office here in the Punjab province, a day after he termed Pakistan's powerful Army Generals "property dealers".

Ayaz Amir, 73, was returning home late Friday after recording his television show for Dunya News TV channel, where he works as a senior

analyst, when unknown persons stopped his car. The attackers then manhandled him and also tortured his driver before fleeing from the scene.

With bruises on his face, Mr. Amir said that the masked men not only "hit him and tore his clothes, they also took away his cellphone and wallet. They left when people started gathering on the busy road".

In a tweet later, Mr. Amir said those who attacked him did not care about his age.

"I have no personal enmity with anyone and I had no quarrel with anyone. Whoever attacked me didn't even care about my age," he said. "The only fault was that I speak the truth and I will continue to speak, God willing," he added.

On Thursday, during a speech at a seminar in Islamabad, Mr. Amir targeted the military establishment for its role in Pakistan's politics. The seminar was also attended by former PM Imran Khan.

Typhoon sinks ship off Hong Kong

Dozens of crew in danger after the vessel suffered damage and broke into two

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
HONG KONG

More than two dozen crew members are unaccounted for after their ship broke into two during a typhoon in the South China Sea on Saturday, with rescuers scrambling to find them, officials say.

An engineering vessel that was 160 nautical miles southwest of Hong Kong "suffered substantial damage and broke into two pieces" and the 30-member crew abandoned ship, according to the Hong Kong Government Flying Service.

Three people had been



Peril at sea: A view from a helicopter as it approaches a sinking ship in the South China Sea on Saturday. • AP

rescued as of 3 pm local time (0700 GMT) and were taken to hospital for treatment, authorities said.

Dramatic footage provided by Hong Kong authorities showed a person being airlifted onto a helicopter while

waves crashed over the deck of the semi-submerged ship below.

The three survivors said other crew members may have been swept away by waves before the first helicopter arrived, according to a government statement.

Typhoon Chaba earlier formed in the central part of the South China Sea and on Saturday afternoon made landfall in Guangdong province in southern China.

Rescuers in Hong Kong found the ship near Chaba's centre, where harsh weather conditions made the operation "more difficult".

Five killed in earthquake in southern Iran

REUTERS
DUBAI

At least five people were killed by a magnitude 6.1 earthquake in southern Iran early on Saturday, state media reported, with the area also hit by two later strong quakes of up to 6.3 magnitude.

"Five people have died in the earthquake ... and so far 12 are hospitalised," Mehrdad Hassanzadeh, head of emergency management in Hormozgan Province, said. "Rescue work is under way and we are providing tents as emergency housing."

Afghan clerics vow loyalty to Taliban

At meeting, the Islamist group makes no mention of the issue of girls' schooling

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
KABUL

Thousands of Afghan clerics pledged loyalty to the Taliban on Saturday, but ended a three-day meeting without recommendations on how the hardline Islamist group should govern the crisis-hit country.

The men-only gathering was called to rubber-stamp the Taliban's rule, and ahead of the meeting officials said criticism would be tolerated and they could also discuss thorny issues such as secondary school education for girls.

Media barred

Media were barred from the event, although speeches

were broadcast on state radio – including a rare appearance by the Taliban's reclusive supreme leader, Hibatullah Akhundzada.

Taliban officials presented the gathering as an opportunity for clerics to independently say how they wanted the country to be governed, but the meeting's final declaration was mostly a regurgitation of their own doctrine.

It called for allegiance to Akhundzada, loyalty to the Taliban, and the complete acceptance of sharia law as the basic principle of rule.

"By the grace of God, the Islamic system has come to rule in Afghanistan," the declaration read.

"We not only strongly

support it, but will also defend it. We consider this to be the national and religious duty of the entire nation."

Since returning to power in August, the Taliban's harsh interpretation of sharia law has imposed severe restrictions on Afghans – particularly women.

Secondary school girls have been barred from education and women dismissed from government jobs, forbidden from travelling alone, and ordered to dress in clothing that covers everything but their faces.

The Taliban have also outlawed playing non-religious music, banned human figures in advertising, ordered TV channels to stop showing

movies and soaps featuring uncovered women, and told men they should dress in traditional garb and grow their beards.

The final declaration made no mention of girls' schooling, but called on the government to pay "special attention" to modern education, as well as justice and the rights of minorities "in the light of Islamic law".

It said the new government had brought security to the nation – despite an attack on the meeting Thursday by two gunmen that was claimed by the Islamic State group, which has regularly carried out bomb blasts and ambushes since the Taliban's return.

China's Foreign Minister visits Myanmar for talks on Mekong

Rising number of hydro projects on the river raises concerns

ASSOCIATED PRESS
BANGKOK

China's top diplomat on Saturday arrived on his first visit to Myanmar since the military seized power last year to attend a regional meeting that the government said was a recognition of its legitimacy and opponents protested as a violation of peace efforts.

Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi will join counterparts from Myanmar, Laos, Thailand, Cambodia, and Vietnam in a meeting of the Lancang-Mekong Cooperation group in the central city of Bagan, a UNESCO World Heritage site.

The grouping is a Chinese-led initiative that includes the countries of the Mekong Delta, a potential source of regional tensions due to an increasing number of hydroelectric projects that are altering the flow and



Wang Yi

raising concerns of ecological damage. China has built 10 dams along the upper stretch of the Mekong, the part it calls the Lancang.

Military government spokesman Major General Zaw Min Tun told a news conference in the capital Naypyitaw on Friday that the attendance of the Foreign Ministers at the meeting was a recognition of Myanmar's sovereignty and its government.

He said the ministers will sign memorandums of understanding and contracts. He did not elaborate.

It's unclear whether Mr. Wang would meet Senior Gen. Min Aung Hlaing, the head of the military government.

Myanmar's military seized power from the elected government of Aung San Suu Kyi on February 1, 2021. It was quickly met by non-violent nationwide demonstrations and triggered armed resistance that some UN experts now characterize as civil war.

The Foreign Minister of Myanmar's shadow government, which opposes the ruling military council, protested the Bagan meeting, saying any such efforts in partnership with junta violate the will of the people and undermine community building.

Google to delete data on abortion visits

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
SAN FRANCISCO

Google announced on Friday it would delete users' location history when they visit abortion clinics, domestic violence shelters and other places where privacy is sought.

"If our systems identify that someone has visited one of these places, we will delete these entries from Location History soon after they visit," Jen Fitzpatrick, a senior vice-president at Google, wrote in a blog post. "This change will take effect in the coming weeks."

Other places from which Google will not store location data include fertility centres, addiction treatment facilities, and weight loss clinics.

This came a week after the U.S. Supreme Court overturned the right to abortion, leading a dozen States to ban or severely restrict the procedure.

THE HINDU GROUP

User name
00 : 56

HESITATING TO UNMUTE WHILE SPEAKING IN ENGLISH?

Introducing

An interactive **6 weeks course** to improve your accent, pronunciation and confidence in spoken English.

- **6 one-on-one Coach Calls:** On pronunciation, intonation, accent, followed by personalised feedback over 30 minutes
- **6 LIVE classes:** 1-hour each focusing on conversational language
- **131 short self-learning webisodes:** 17-hour online learning content covering various aspects of speaking
- **1 unit per week covering:** Introducing yourself (Week 1) | Everyday English (Week 2) | Being formal (Week 3) | Socialising (Week 4) | Everyday transactions (Week 5) | Avoiding common grammatical errors (Week 6)

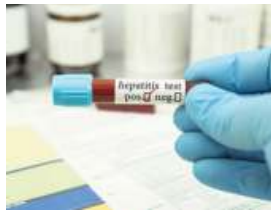
This one of a kind course would be available only once in 45 days.

Scan the QR code

Visit: bit.ly/BETTERENGLISH

A ND-NDE

SNAPSHOTS



Child hepatitis

The United Kingdom is seeing a rise in unexplained cases of hepatitis in children. Researchers have hypothesised a link to the coronavirus. Now, United States data cast doubt on that idea — the number of cases there has remained flat. The rise in U.K. cases may be connected to infections with adenoviruses.



Smell matters

People with similar body odours are more likely to instantly get along as friends. Researchers used human smellers and a smell-detecting 'electronic nose' to sniff the scents of 20 pairs of same-sex, non-romantic friends. Both found that friends smell more like each other than do random pairs.



Gene activity

Researchers are getting closer to their goal of revealing exactly where in a cell or tissue each gene is expressed. Spatial transcriptomics allows them to study gene expression in samples. The resulting 'atlases' of spatial information can tell which cells make up each tissue, how they are organised and how they communicate.



To the Moon

The National Aeronautics and Space Administration's (NASA) CAPSTONE spacecraft launched from New Zealand on June 28 should reach the Moon by November 13. CAPSTONE will study the lunar orbit where NASA plans to lodge a space station that will orbit the Moon in a stable path, making it easier for astronauts to reach more parts of the Moon.

New pathway to regulate nitrate absorption in plants

The micro-RNA-switch controls a gene that regulates nitrate absorption, root development, stress tolerance

SHUBASHREE DESIKAN

Researchers led by those from the National Centre of Biological Sciences, Tata Institute of Fundamental Research, Bengaluru (NCBS-TIFR), have found a new pathway that regulates nitrate absorption in plants.

The gene MADS27, which regulates nitrate absorption, root development and stress tolerance, is activated by the micro-RNA, miR444, therefore offers a way to control these properties of the plant.

The researchers studied this mechanism in both rice (monocot) and tobacco (dicot) plants. The research is published in *Journal of Experimental Botany*.

Nitrogen is one of the most important macronutrients needed for development of a plant. It is a part of chlorophyll, amino acids and nucleic acids, among others. It is mostly sourced from the soil where it is mainly absorbed in the form of nitrates and ammonium by the roots. Nitrates also play a role in controlling genome-wide gene expression that in turn

regulates root system architecture, flowering time, leaf development, etc.

Thus, while a lot of action takes place in the roots to absorb and convert nitrogen into useful nitrates, the absorbed nitrates in turn regulate plant development apart from being useful as a macronutrient.

Nitrate overuse

So, the presence of nitrates is important for the plant development and also for grain production. However, the overuse of nitrates in fertilizers, for instance, can lead to the dumping of nitrates in the soil which leads to accumulation of nitrates in water and soil. This accumulation adds to soil and water pollution and increased contribution to greenhouse gases.

To avoid this, there should be optimal use of nitrates. Also, since the whole process of nitrate absorption takes place in the roots, a well-developed root system is needed for this to take place optimally.

At one level, it is known

Controlling nitrate absorption in plants

A novel pathway has been found, which can use gene editing to achieve this objective



Approach: The researchers used rice and tobacco plants to study the mechanism. • SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

- Plants mainly absorb nitrogen from the soil in the form of nitrates and ammonium
- An important macronutrient, nitrogen is a part of chlorophyll, amino acids and nucleic acids

- There is a need to regulate and optimise nitrogen intake in plants, so that the excess is not dumped in soil and water
- The hormone auxin is responsible for well-developed roots across all plants, influencing nitrate absorption

ALTERNATE PATHWAY

- The regulatory micro-RNA switch - miR444 - is known to turn off at least five genes

called MADS box transcription factor genes

- A target gene of miR444 called MADS27, has a three-pronged effect: regulating nitrate absorption and root development, and stress tolerance

- Tinkering with MADS27 may help regulate nitrate absorption and engineer abiotic stress tolerance

that the hormone auxin is responsible for well-developed roots across all plants. A number of genes are known to help with auxin production, improved nitrate transport and assimilation in plants.

Regulatory switches

In addition to this route, several gene regulatory switches

that regulate nitrate absorption and root development, such as the micro-RNA, miR444, are known in monocot plants, such as rice.

"The micro-RNA 'miR444' is specific to monocots. When this is not made, its target, MADS27, is produced in higher abundance, and it improves biosynthesis and transport of the hormone

auxin, which is key for root development and its branching," says Dr. P.V. Shivaprasad, who led the researchers at National Centre for Biological Sciences, Tata Institute of Fundamental Research, Bengaluru (NCBS-TIFR).

This regulatory miR444 switch is known to turn off at least five genes called MADS

genes. The speciality of the MADS box transcription factors is that they function like switch boxes of their own. They bind to their favourite specific DNA sequences and they switch the neighbouring genes "on."

Three-pronged effect

The researchers have studied a target gene of miR444 called MADS27, a transcription factor which hasn't been studied well before.

"They have found that this transcription factor has a three-pronged effect on the plant.

First, it regulates nitrate absorption by switching "on" proteins involved in this process. Second, it leads to better development of the roots by regulating auxin hormone production and transport. Finally, and somewhat surprisingly to the researchers, it helps in the abiotic stress tolerance by keeping the main stress player proteins "on."

"This is a new finding with a three-pronged effect and it provides an alternate means of regulating and optimising

nitrate absorption," says Dr. Shivaprasad.

Dicot plants

Wanting to test this in dicot plants as well, the researchers carried out the study on tobacco plants as well. "We realised MADS27 works to improve three factors — nitrate absorption, root development and stress tolerance — with the help of RNA analysis and after finding to which part of the genome this transcription factor binds," explains Dr. Shivaprasad.

According to the researchers, the gene MADS27 appears to be an excellent candidate to modify, in order to develop nitrogen use efficiency, which is something that helps the plant absorb more nitrates, and to engineer abiotic stress tolerance.

"Tinkering MADS27 expression by genome editing is the next step, so that the modified plants are acceptable to use directly," he adds. The larger goal of this study is to understand how epigenetics plays a role in regulating expression of such important genes.

India's patent law safeguards under fire

The new recommendation reduces the period within which patent applications can be challenged to six months

LEENA MENGHANEY
ROSHAN JOSEPH

The price-lowering effect of competition and domestic manufacturing of medicines can transform how diseases get treated in resource-poor settings. Decisions made by Indian patent offices can negatively impact generic competition and supply worldwide, relying on the availability of affordable medicines made in India. Monopolies granted by patent offices on medical products keep prices high and block local manufacturers from supplying low-cost generic drugs.

In 2005, lawmakers from all political parties amended Indian patent law to ensure that the Indian patent office did not grant monopolies on old science or for compounds already in the public domain. The new law now prevents drug corporations from indulging in "evergreening", a common abusive patenting practice aimed at obtaining separate patent monopolies relating to the same medicine. And to bring this to the notice of the patent examiners, the amended patent law allowed any person to file a pre-grant opposition 'anytime' before

the patent office decides to grant or reject a patent application.

This week the *Economic Times* (LMI) reports that the Economic Advisory Council (EAC) to the Prime Minister recommended the period within which patent applications are open to challenge by the public be restricted to a mere six months from the date of its publication.

Since the Indian Patent Offices receive an average of 50,000 patent applications a year, examiners often miss critical information about the patent application under consideration. A recent study on pharmaceutical patent grants in India revealed that 7 out of 10 patents are granted in error by the Indian Patent Office. A robust pre-grant opposition system provides an additional administrative layer of scrutiny that prevents the grant of frivolous patents through third parties' participation in the review process.

Evergreening monopolies on medical products is a lucrative game for pharmaceutical corporations allowing them to charge high prices. And the Organisation of Pharmaceutical Producers of India (OPPI) — Big Pharma's association in India —



Avare: Evergreening monopolies on medical products is a lucrative game for pharmaceutical corporations. • GETTY IMAGES

has made several attempts to undermine this safeguard in the patent law and has renewed their efforts.

The commerce ministry, responsible for administering the patents act, is now under pressure to restrict pre-grant patent oppositions.

Pre-grant oppositions

In 2005, the first challenge to a pending patent claim on a medicine was filed by Cancer Patient Aid Association (CPAA) before the Indian patent office. CPAA highlighted that the Swiss corporation Novartis' patent application on Imatinib Mesylate (Gleevec), a life-saving anti-cancer drug, claims a salt form of old medicine, a common practice within the pharmaceutical industry, and should

not be considered patentable. The patent office subsequently rejected the patent, which was later upheld by the High Court and the Supreme Court. The pre-grant opposition by CPAA on the cancer drug protected the price reduction from over ₹14 lakh per patient per year from Novartis to less than ₹40,000 per patient per year from generic manufacturers.

In the last 17 years, generic manufacturers and people living with HIV, DR-TB, and viral hepatitis have also filed several patent oppositions to safeguard generic competition so that quality, affordable generics can be procured by health programmes. In 2006, PLHIV networks filed the first such opposition to a patent application by Glaxo

Group Limited (GSK) for Combivir on a fixed-dose combination of two AIDS drugs, zidovudine/lamivudine. GSK withdrew the patent application in India and several other countries after the patent opposition in India pointed out that the patent claims did not cover a new invention but simply the combination of two existing drugs.

Several such challenges before the patent office have successfully ensured the availability of affordable HIV medicines to millions living across the developing world. The 99% reduction in the prices of antiretrovirals following the generic competition, from \$10,000 per person per year down to less than \$100, has been a critical factor in the expansion of antiretroviral treatment to millions in low and middle-income countries.

Prescribing a timeline and cutting short the window period for pre-grant opposition makes it difficult to challenge frivolous patent applications on drugs and vaccines. The information in patent applications does not permit the public to rapidly identify the claimed medical product. The identification and further analysis are time-consuming

as several applications are pending on the same medicine, vaccine or technology. Reducing the opportunities for filing challenges to pending patent claims will not increase efficiency or reduce pendency. On the contrary, pre-grant oppositions provide information to the examiners that can help speed up the examination process and deny invalid patents.

The real challenge

The humanitarian medical organisation, Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF), has supported hundreds of pre-grant oppositions in India, working closely with patient groups to safeguard generic competition to increase access to affordable medicines from India.

In our experience, tackling the overwhelming number of evergreening patent claims on known drugs and technologies is the real challenge for the Indian patent office. The attempt to dilute the timeline on pre-grant opposition diverts from the real problem.

(Leena Menghaneay and Roshan Joseph are lawyers and work for Access Campaign at Médecins Sans Frontières.)

2°C temp. rise can damage Earth's species

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Global emissions are expected to cause the planet to continue heating rapidly over the next few decades, prompting the global average temperature to overshoot the Paris agreement's target, which aimed to limit warming to between 1.5°C and 2°C.

For the first time, scientists studied the consequences of allowing Earth's temperature to exceed these precautionary limits, then fall below them again. The results suggest that a temporary overshoot would cause waves of irreversible extinctions and lasting damage to tens of thousands of species. This is what the world can expect if humanity fails to make deep emission cuts this decade.

Just a few years of global temperatures above 2°C could transform the world's most important ecosystems. The consequences of this exposure could be irreversible and include the tropical forest turning into savanna. The world would lose a critical global carbon sink, leaving more planet-warming gases in the atmosphere.

Why India should support antibiotics development

India needs an investment mindset that can fund and sustain drug discovery and development

ABDUL GHAFUR
ANAND ANANDKUMAR

Antimicrobial resistance (AMR) is a looming public health crisis impacting every country globally with a disproportionate impact on lives and livelihood in low and middle-income countries. A recent report from the Global Research on AntiMicrobial resistance (GRAM) project found that in 2019, an estimated 4.95 million people suffered from at least one drug-resistant infection and AMR directly caused 1.27 million deaths.

AMR is one of India's major public health problems, directly contributing to about 30% of deaths due to neonatal sepsis across India. These are due to multidrug-resistant (MDR) hospital-acquired infections in many cases. Over 30% of the COVID-19 deaths in India could be attributed to our failure to treat the secondary bacterial infections caused by MDR pathogens with the appropriate antibiotics.

Irrational antibiotic use by the medical community, the general public and the farmers generate drug-resistant superbugs. Inadequate infec-

tion control measures in the hospitals and the sanitation issues in the community result in the dissemination of these superbugs.

To tackle the AMR crisis, we need robust investment in research and development of new antibiotics, rapid and affordable diagnostics, strengthening infection control and prevention practices, formulating and implementing antibiotic stewardship programmes across the country and ensuring equitable access to life-saving antibiotics. One such immediate intervention is a welcome move by the Government of India to pass legislation banning the use of streptomycin and tetracycline in agriculture and the growth promotional use of colistin in poultry farming.

With India's reputation as the pharmacy of the global South, with numerous global compliant manufacturing plants, it's time to expand our focus and investment in early R&D of life-saving antibiotics. We have the intellectual firepower and critical talent pool. However, we need robust investment from Government and private sector in specialised training cou-



Precarious: The market for antibiotics is broken and the drug pipeline is ultrathin. • GETTY IMAGES

pled with an investment mindset that can fund and sustain drug discovery and development.

Dry antibiotic pipeline

During the last decade, the success rate from Phase 1 to FDA approval for new antibacterial drugs was found to be 16.3% in comparison to the overall industry average of 7.9%. Despite this higher success rate, antibiotic development suffers from a lack of investment and quick market uptake of newly approved products. The exit of big pharma from antibiotic development coupled with a lack of investment from venture capitalists and the pau-

city of enabling regulatory and policy solutions to support the commercial viability of antibacterial agents has pushed AMR into a global health crisis.

Why is the market for antibiotics broken and the drug pipeline ultra thin? Unlike most new drugs, post-approval, new antibiotics are used sparingly (antibiotic stewardship practices) and reserved mainly for cases in which older antibiotics are ineffective. In addition, the reimbursement mechanisms in several countries discourage hospitals from using an expensive novel broad-spectrum antibacterial agent when a cheaper generic op-

tion is available. These unique challenges in the current treatment guidelines and archaic reimbursement models contribute to commercial failure and restricted or lack of access for patients in dire need of these life-saving agents.

Most major pharma companies have exited the AMR space because of the low return on investment (ROI). Surprisingly, around 80% of the antibiotics currently in the clinical pipeline are developed by small biotech companies. To reverse this trend, we need immediate solutions and sustainable mechanisms in the long term.

The push-pull model

Small companies are getting early-stage funding from public-private partnerships like CARB-X (the Combating Antibiotic Resistance Bacteria Biopharmaceutical Accelerator), which has provided more than \$360 million in funding for 92 antibacterial projects over the past five years. This funding is an example of the push model that has catalysed the creation of a robust pipeline of projects in early discovery.

The pull vector may come

from the "Pioneering Antimicrobial Subscriptions to End Upsurging Resistance" (PASTEUR) Act, if and when the U.S. government passes it. Companies that develop critically needed antibiotics for drug-resistant infections would receive a federal government contract ranging from \$750 million to \$3 billion spread over ten years.

To incentivise the creation of new treatments, the U.S. Congress enacted the Generating Antibiotic Incentives Now Act (GAIN Act) of 2012, which provides benefits to manufacturers of Qualified Infectious Disease Products (QIDPs) including five years of additional non-patent exclusivity.

In addition, the recent creation of the AMR Action Fund with a mandate to invest more than \$1 billion to address the current funding gaps in the development of new antibiotics will give a boost to late-stage molecules in clinical development.

(Abdul Ghafur is Coordinator, Chennai Declaration on AMR and Consultant in Infectious Diseases, Apollo Cancer Institute, Chennai. Anand Anandkumar is CEO, Bugworks, Bengaluru.)



Question Corner

Dogs' ancestry

What is the ancestry of dogs?

An international group of scientists, led by the Francis Crick Institute, have found that the ancestry of dogs can be traced to at least two populations of ancient wolves. Dogs are known to have originated from the gray wolf, with this domestication occurring during the Ice Age, at least 15,000 years ago. In a study (*Nature*), the researchers turned to ancient wolf genomes to further understand from where the first dogs evolved from wolves. They analysed 72 ancient wolf genomes, spanning the last 1,00,000 years, from Europe, Siberia and North America.

The remains came from previously excavated ancient wolves, with archaeologists from 16 different countries

contributing to the study. The remains included a full, perfectly preserved head from a Siberian wolf that lived 32,000 years ago. Nine different ancient DNA labs then collaborated on generating DNA sequence data from the wolves.

By analysing the genomes, the researchers found that both early and modern dogs are more genetically similar to ancient wolves in Asia than those in Europe, suggesting a domestication somewhere in the east.

However, they also found evidence that two separate populations of wolves contributed DNA to dogs. Early dogs from north-eastern Europe, Siberia and the Americas appear to have a single, shared origin from the eastern source. But early dogs from the Middle East, Africa and southern Europe appear to have some ancestry from another source related to wolves in the Middle East, in addition to the eastern source, says a release.

Readers may send their questions / answers to questioncorner@thehindu.co.in



In ruins: A powerful earthquake of magnitude 5.9 on the Richter scale struck a remote town in Afghanistan. •AP

Measuring quakes

What is at the heart of earthquakes? Can they be predicted? Is it possible to set up early warning systems?

SHUBASHREE DESIKAN

The story so far: Recently a powerful earthquake of magnitude 5.9 on the Richter scale struck a remote town in Afghanistan, killing over a thousand and injuring many more. According to the U.S. Federal Emergency Management Agency, a 5.9 on the Richter scale is roughly equivalent to 37 times the energy released by the atomic bomb dropped on Hiroshima. Experts are still trying to figure out the best early warning system to mitigate the damage caused by earthquakes.

How do earthquakes happen?

■ According to the theory of plate tectonics, the Earth's crust and upper mantle are made of large rigid plates that can move relative to one another. Slip on faults near the plate boundaries can result in earthquakes. The point inside the Earth where the earthquake rupture starts is called the focus or hypocentre. The point directly above it on the surface of the Earth is the epicentre.

What are seismic waves?

■ Any elastic material when subjected to stress, stretches in a proportional way, until the elastic limit is reached. When the elastic limit is crossed, it breaks. Similarly, the Earth also has an elastic limit and when the stress is higher than this limit, it breaks. Then there is a generation of heat, and energy is released. Since the material is elastic, the energy is released in the form of elastic waves. These propagate to a distance determined by the extent of the impact. These are known as seismic waves.

How are earthquakes measured?

■ Earthquakes are measured by seismographic networks, which are made of seismic stations, each of which measures the shaking of the ground beneath it. In India, the National Seismological Network does this

The most successful early warning systems are in Japan, according to experts. They have thousands of recording devices, which determine what sort of damage is expected. Sometimes, a tsunami warning is given out as a precautionary step

work. It has a history of about 120 years and its sensors can now detect an earthquake within five to ten minutes. According to Shyam S. Rai who is a Raja Ramanna Fellow and Professor Emeritus at the Indian Institute of Science Education and Research, Pune, the wave parameters are measured, not the total energy released. He explains that there is a relationship between the quantum of energy released and the

wave amplitude. The amplitude of the wave is a function of the time period of the wave. It is possible to convert the measured wave amplitude into the energy released for that earthquake. This is what seismologists call the magnitude of the earthquake.

What is the Richter magnitude scale?

■ This is a measure of the magnitude of an earthquake and was first defined by Charles F. Richter of the California Institute of Technology, U.S., in 1935. The magnitude of an earthquake is the logarithm of the amplitude of the waves measured by the seismographs. Richter scale magnitudes are expressed as a whole number and a decimal part, for example 6.3 or 5.2. Since it is a logarithmic scale, an increase of the whole number by one unit signifies a tenfold increase in the amplitude of the wave and a 31-times increase of the energy released.

How are zones designated?

■ Based on seismicity, intensity of earthquakes experienced, and geological and tectonic qualities of a region, countries are divided into several zones. In India, for example, there are four zones, designated Zone II-Zone V. Among these, Zone V is the most hazardous and Zone II the least hazardous.

Can you build early warning systems for earthquakes?

■ Since parameters of the earthquake are unknown, it is near impossible to predict an earthquake. The problem with earthquakes is that they are heavily dependent on the material property, which varies from place to place, says Professor Rai. If there are elastic waves propagating through a material, there are two kinds of waves – the primary wave which reaches first, and the second one called the secondary wave, which is more destructive. Suppose the primary wave is measured, and we have efficient computer systems, all the inputs and excellent data collection, then it can be said that a possible earthquake of this much magnitude and energy has occurred and this could lead to a ground amplitude which could be destructive. If it is known that the amount of energy released is extremely high, trains and power grids can be shut down and the damage minimised. "This has worked in some locations, but not on a large commercial basis," says Prof. Rai. "The most successful early warning systems are in Japan. They have several hundreds of thousands recording devices. Responses are sent to a central point where they estimate whether it is large enough to form a tsunami or some other hazard, and precautionary steps are taken," he points out.

How will G-7's development plan impact India?

What is the agritech and climate sustainability fund? Will India get adequate funds for infrastructure?

SUHASINI HAIDAR

The story so far: On June 26, the G-7 grouping of the world's "most industrialised nations" – Canada, France, Germany, Italy, the U.K., Japan and the U.S. along with the European Union (EU) – launched a U.S.-led \$600 billion Partnership for Global Infrastructure and Investment (PGII) at their summit in Germany's Schloss Elmau, where India was among five special invitees. The initiative was billed as a "values-driven, high-impact, and transparent infrastructure partnership to meet the enormous infrastructure needs of low- and middle-income countries and support the U.S. and its allies' economic and national security interests." Officials also made it clear that the PGII would offer a counter to China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) for projects worldwide that was formally launched five years ago.

What was India's response?

■ A day after U.S. President Joseph Biden made his PGII announcement, Foreign Secretary Vinay Kwatra said. "I think the [PGII]...is a separate G-7 initiative and to my recollection, unless there is some other input, I think it is not a G-7 outreach initiative," adding, "We will have to see the details of that for us to be able to speak specifically on its elements."

Why is the response significant?

■ To begin with, Mr. Kwatra's response indicates that India was not privy to PGII consultations, nor was the infrastructure plan part of the documents that were signed by India, Indonesia, South Africa, Senegal and Argentina, who were part of the "G-7 outreach" invitees to the summit. (The EU has participated in the G-7 since 1981 as a "nonenumerated" member). The distinction is interesting because just a month ago, at the Quad Summit in Tokyo, Prime Minister Narendra Modi had attended the launch of the U.S. led "Indo-Pacific Economic Initiative" (IPEF) with similarly sudden plans, and India had joined as an "initial" or founding partner country. It also came as a surprise that India hadn't endorsed the PGII plan given that the U.S. billed it as a rival to China's BRI, with much more sensitivity to sustainable debt burdens and environmental concerns. India has actively opposed the



New challenges: Leaders of the G7 and the European Union at the G7 Summit in Schloss Elmau, Germany on June 26. •AP

BRI because it had ignored these reasons and for its "violation of territorial integrity".

Is there any specific role for India?

■ According to U.S. officials, the PGII will have four key priorities on infrastructure: climate and energy security, digital connectivity, health and health security, and gender equality and equity, all of which are priority areas for New Delhi as well. The PGII "factsheet" released by the White House also includes a specific plan for investment in an Agritech and Climate sustainability fund that would "invest in companies that increase food security and promote both climate resilience and climate adaptation in India, as well as improve the profitability and agricultural productivity of smallholder farms." According to the documents, the India fund would target \$65 million by September 2022, and a target capitalisation of \$130 million in 2023. The U.S. government's International Development Finance Corporation (DFC) would mobilise \$30 million in private capital for the fund.

What could be some of the reasons for India's reticence on PGII?

■ The Ministry of External Affairs has not yet expanded on its initial response to the PGII, and it is quite possible, that once it has studied and verified its strategy, it will endorse it. One of the reasons for some scepticism in New Delhi is that the PGII is one of a number of U.S.-led economic initiatives announced globally and in the

Indo-Pacific, without much clarity on whether they would overlap, or run concurrently with each other. At the Quad Summit, Mr. Biden committed to a \$50 billion infrastructure fund over five years.

The PGII will have four key priorities on infrastructure: climate and energy security, digital connectivity, health and health security, and gender equality and equity

The PGII announcement for \$600 billion over five years also comes a year after the U.S. led a G-7 initiative to counter China's "strategic competition" and to narrow the roughly \$40 trillion "infrastructure gap" in the developing world.

Last year, the Biden administration also revived a Trump administration project for the "Blue Dot Network Initiative" to certify infrastructure projects but had stopped short of funding them. Another reason for the Indian reaction, say analysts, could be to show consistency, given India's earlier reaction to the BRI, when it was first announced by Xi Jinping in 2013, years before the formal launch in 2017. "When China first unveiled the BRI, India's initial response was also that this was a plan with geopolitical consequences that India had not been consulted on. India said it would have to study before responding. It is possible that the Modi government's cautiousness on PGII is about striking a similar balance," said Sanjaya Baru, author, policy analyst and Distinguished Fellow at the United Services Institution of India (USI).

What are the next steps for the GST regime?

Why have rates been hiked for some consumer items? When will the issue of compensation to States be decided?

VIKAS DHOOT

The story so far: The Goods and Services Tax (GST) Council, chaired by Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, met for the first time in 2022 for a marathon two-day meet this week, just ahead of GST's fifth birthday on July 1. The Council has okayed three ministerial groups' reports, one of which will lead to changes in the tax rates applicable on several items.

What are the goods and services whose rates have been increased?

■ Based on recommendations made by a Group of Ministers (GoM) led by Karnataka Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai, the GST Council has scrapped exemptions on several goods and services, done away with concessional rates granted for a few products, and altered tax rates up or down in other cases. Health care devices such as orthopaedic splints, intraocular lens, ostomy appliances, will now be taxed at 5% instead of 12%. The use of in-vitro fertilisation (IVF) services have been exempted, truck rentals for goods will be taxed at 12% (down from 18%) and the GST on ropeways has been lowered from 18% to 5%. However, stem cell preservation services will no longer be tax-free. Hospital room rents over ₹5,000 a day, excluding patients in intensive care units or ICUs, shall now be taxed at 5%. Tetra Pak, used for an increasing number of goods as an alternative to plastic packaging, will now be taxed at 18%, from 12% – which could nudge up costs of several consumer goods. The same 18% rate will apply to tar of all varieties so expect road building costs to rise as well. The Council also hiked rates on over 17 goods and services, where the final products had a lower tax rate than their inputs and led to an anomaly referred to as inverted duty



Anniversary special: Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman at the celebration of the 5th GST Day on July 1. •PTI

structures. Of these, as many as 10 items' GST rate has been raised to 18% from 5% or 12% prevalent till now, such as writing, drawing and printing ink, knives, forks, spoons, pencil sharpeners, machines for grading farm products as well as eggs and dairy items, LED lamps, solar water heaters and works contracts for building roads, railways, metro projects, and crematoria. Last but not the least, the GST levied on cut and polished diamonds has been raised from 0.25% to 1.5%.

Why does it matter?

■ The Reserve Bank of India expects India's inflation rate, which hit an eight-year high of 7.8% in April and remained over 7% in May, to average 6.7% in 2022-23. Ms. Sitharaman said the Council members were conscious of inflation concerns while approving the rate changes. It is too early to discern the possible impact of the new tax rates on the overall inflation experience and how much of it will be captured in the official data. With all these rate changes slated

to kick in from July 18, any impact can only be gauged when August consumer inflation numbers are released in the second week of September. Even then, with prices of several commodities, including crude oil, remaining elevated, distilling the effect of new GST rates on price rise may not be simple.

Moreover, the panel led by Mr. Bommai has been granted three more months to delve into its other mandate that could have a wider impact on consumers and businesses – rationalising the multiple GST rate slabs such as 5%, 12%, 18% and 28% and raising levies to bolster revenues that have fallen short of expectations. Part of the reason for dipping revenues, apart from a slowing economy in recent years, was the repeated reduction in several items' GST rates ahead of critical elections. However, officials concede that inflation worries do not make this an opportune time for carrying out broader rate hikes.

What lies ahead?

■ The Council will meet again in August to finalise the GST rates for online gaming, horse racing and casinos – a decision it put off this time for fresh stakeholder consultations. It may also kick off the process to form an appellate tribunal for resolving GST disputes, envisaged since its launch in July 2017. With over a dozen States urging the Centre to continue the GST compensation paid to them for the first five years of the GST regime as revenue flows have been hit by the pandemic, it is hoped that clarity comes through on this issue by the August meeting. Any extension of assured revenues to States could, however, translate into further pain for consumers and industry, who already have to fork out the GST Compensation Cess levied on products such as cars and soft drinks, till March 2026, instead of the June 2022 sunset promised earlier.

Is NATO stronger after Ukraine invasion?

Has Russia's war strengthened the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, a security alliance formed after WWII?

NARAYAN LAKSHMAN

The story so far: Leaders of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), a 30-country regional security coalition that emerged from the crucible of Cold War rivalry, met on June 29-30 in Madrid, Spain, even as Russia's war in Ukraine grinds on, with knock-on effects across the world in terms of supply chain disruptions, commodity price surges and broader inflationary pressures mounting fast. More than four months into the invasion of Ukrainian territory, which Russian President Vladimir Putin has called a "special military operation," at least two nations in the region, Sweden and Finland, are seeking rapid integration into NATO.

How strong was NATO before the war?

■ NATO appeared to be weakened during the administration of former U.S. President Donald Trump, who frequently threatened to exclude from the U.S.'s protective umbrella any member states that did not pay enough for that privilege. A further blow, and brickbats for botched management, came when U.S. President Joe Biden pulled his country's troops out of Afghanistan, a NATO military mission, more or less unilaterally. Meanwhile, Russia had steadily been upping the ante against NATO publicly, since the late 2000s, railing against NATO expansion, and since its annexation of Crimea in 2014, threatening further territorial expansion into Ukrainian territory.

What are the recent developments that have strengthened NATO?

■ Firstly, NATO allies other than the U.S. remained firmly committed to financing the organisation's military needs. Their combined defence investments have jumped by \$130 billion from 2014-19, in part driven by Russia's annexation of Crimea. Now, given the prolonged conflict in Ukraine, NATO has announced that it will increase its forces at "high readiness" from 40,000 to over 3,00,000 troops by mid-2023, a step that NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg described as "the biggest overhaul of our collective defence and deterrence since the Cold War."

Second, after decades of maintaining a position of neutrality, Finland and Sweden are set to join NATO possibly within a year, in a large part driven by the strategic insecurity they face as neighbours of Russia, and the precedent that Mr. Putin has set with his invasion of and alleged human rights violations and war crimes in Ukraine. While most NATO members are keen for Finland and Sweden to join the organisation, Turkey was the final holdout citing concerns over the two countries allegedly providing safe haven to a group that Istanbul considers a terrorist organisation. Nevertheless, after joint security negotiations in recent days, Turkey has also lent its support to Finland and Sweden joining NATO. The main point of such an expansion would be to tap into the military support that the two countries would provide to the alliance, the fact that Finland has a 1,340 km border with Russia and that both countries will, as required by

NATO, spend 2% of their GDP on defence.

How might NATO view a prolonged war in Ukraine?

■ Meeting with NATO leaders this past week, Mr. Biden said Americans ought to be ready to pay higher fuel prices for "as long as it takes, so Russia cannot in fact defeat Ukraine and move beyond Ukraine." Notwithstanding this apparent firmness of resolve to stay the course, NATO member states are presently hobbled by rising inflation, and high energy and food prices. Leaving aside the destabilising economic ripple effects of the war in Ukraine, leaders of the bloc, as well as international multilateral aid agencies, are waking up to the reality of having to meet the scorching demand for financing weaponry and critical supplies to Kyiv – Ukraine's government is spending a staggering \$5-6 billion per month. It is now clear that they will have to work hard to sell their involvement in this conflict to their respective citizenries.

What happens next?

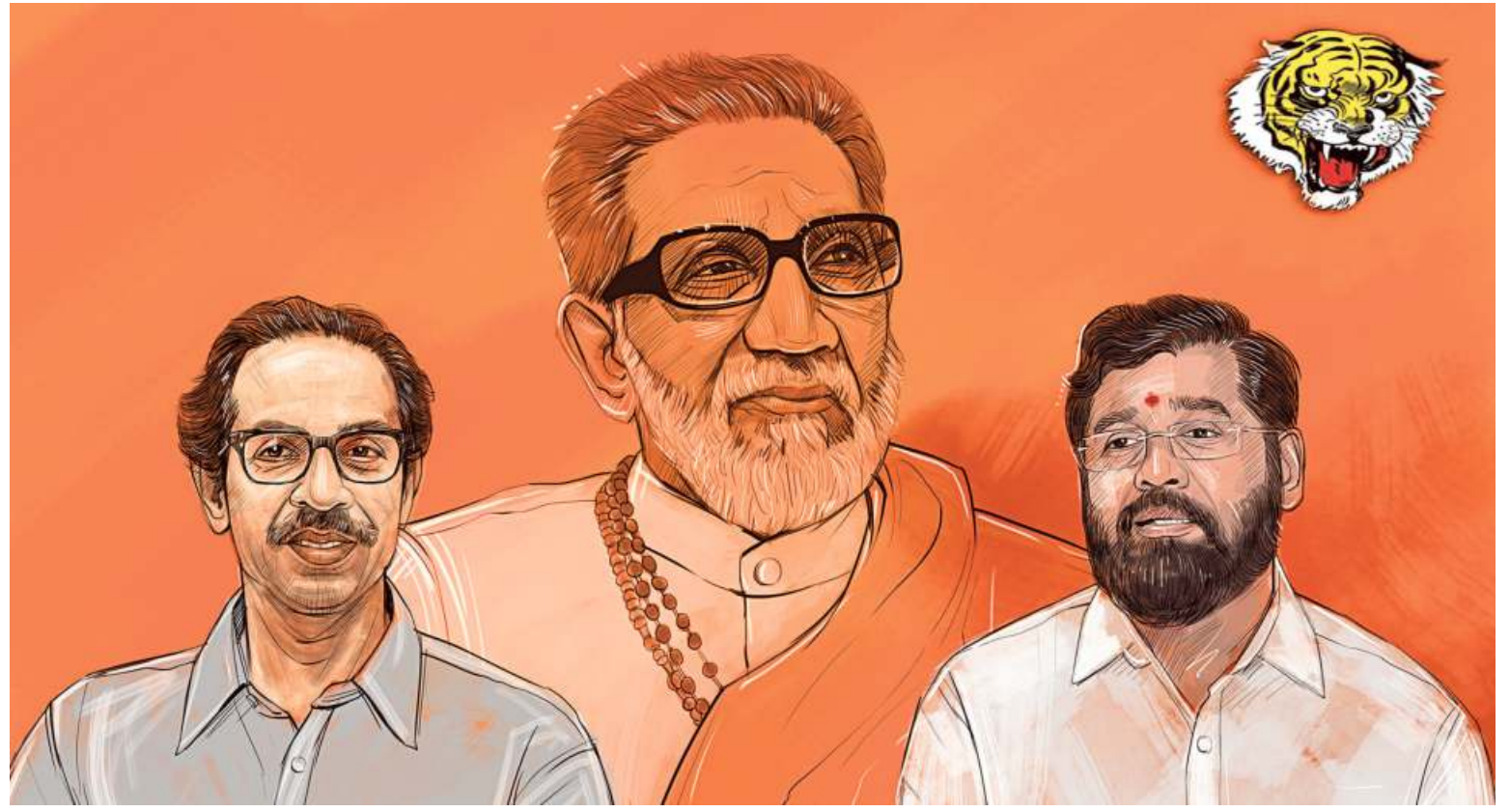
■ While NATO appears fortified and ready to face the strategic gauntlet thrown down by Russia, there is a real risk that the people of its member-nations are getting increasingly frustrated. There's unending economic pain and the leaders have pledged to meet the burgeoning demand for weapons and other military support required by Ukraine to hold on to its territories in the east.

SHIV SENA

The Maratha tiger in its labyrinth

With a revolt toppling his government, Uddhav Thackeray faces a legitimacy crisis as he struggles to retain his hold over the party rank and file

ILLUSTRATION: R. RAJESH



SHOUMJOIT BANERJEE

In the fall of 2012, an ailing Bal Thackeray, founder and patriarch of Maharashtra's then dominant right-wing party – the Shiv Sena (Army of Shivaji) – had appealed to his Shiv Sainiks to stand by his son Uddhav and grandson Aaditya Thackeray.

In Focus

- Founded in June 1966 with its avowed aim of safeguarding the welfare of the people of Maharashtra, the Shiv Sena built a social base on its 'sons of the soil' agenda
- The party, which initially fought elections in alliance with Congress factions, cut all ties with the party in the 1980s and emerged as the main Hindutva force in Maharashtra
- Cracks started appearing in the Sena-BJP alliance before the 2014 assembly elections, eventually leading to a split between the parties after the 2019 polls

In what would be his final address to his party workers, Bal Thackeray, in his pre-recorded speech at the party's annual Dussehra rally in Mumbai's Shivaji Park, called upon the Marathi manooos (Marathi-speaking sons-of-the-soil) to remain united and smash the Congress. The speech, three weeks before the 86-year-old Thackeray's death in November that year, also had an implied appeal to his estranged nephew, Maharashtra Navnirman Sena (MNS) chief Raj Thackeray, to join forces with the Shiv Sena.

A decade later, while the prospects of the Sena and the MNS uniting have completely evaporated, a bleaker question facing Mr. Uddhav and his son today is whether ordinary Sainiks will stand by them after the recent rebellion of 40 MLAs led by Eknath Shinde has rent the Shiv Sena asunder while toppling Mr. Uddhav from the Chief Minister's post.

In many ways, Mr. Shinde's revolt, which saw him installed as Maharashtra Chief Minister, aided and abetted by the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), is the culmination of a question that has haunted the Sena leadership since 2012 – the existence of their party without its authoritarian embodiment, Bal

Thackeray. That Mr. Shinde, the dour, laconic, erstwhile autorickshaw driver from Thane and a dyed-in-the-wool Shiv Sainik, would be the linchpin of the BJP and its State leader Devendra Fadnavis's 'master plan' to checkmate Mr. Uddhav and his tripartite Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) government exposed the chinks in the latter's armour.

One of the chief complaints of the rebel camp was Mr. Uddhav's "deference" to the NCP and the Congress. Yet, the Sena's alliance with the Congress in 2019 was hardly novel, given its past dalliance with the grand old party in the 1970s.

Strange alliances

In fact, the vicissitudes of the Sena – from Bal Thackeray's rise in the mid-1960s to Mr. Uddhav's acrimonious break with the BJP and fall from power – follow decades of murky twists and strange alliances. Founded in June 1966 with its avowed aim of safeguarding the welfare of the people of Maharashtra, the Shiv Sena tasted popular success almost immediately with its 'sons of the soil' agenda, with Bal Thackeray persuasively highlighting the plight of unemployed Marathi youth through the party's weekly *Marmik*.

Since the Sena's inception, Bal Thackeray skilfully blended the nativist appeal of the Marathi Manooos with Hindu nationalism, anchored in the persona of Chhatrapati Shivaji, the 17th century Maratha warrior king. But it also added a strong dose of social service in the mix, enabling its appeal not only among the ur-

ban sections but the slum areas as well.

With its iconic 'Tiger' logo and bow and arrow symbol, the Sena's first meeting in Dadar's Shivaji Park on June 19, 1966 became steeped in political legend, attracting a reported crowd of no less than 200,000 persons instead of the handful expected.

Soon, rioting against South Indian establishments became a matter of course. But it was in its covert role as a 'hatchet-man outfit' for the ruling Congress to crack down on the once-vibrant trade union movement in Mumbai that shot the Shiv Sena to notoriety. The relentless onslaught of the Shiv Sena's 'storm troops' against the Communists and socialists climaxed with the murder of Krishna Desai, a sitting MLA of the Communist Party of India (CPI) from Parel, in 1970. It marked the start of the Sena's transformation of the city's political landscape – from 'Red Bombay' to 'Saffron Mumbai'.

Having destroyed the trade unions, the party simultaneously began building a serious base among industrial workers through its own outfits – the Bharatiya Kamgar Sena, the Shramik Sena, Municipal Workers' Union, the BEST employees' Union,

among others.

From a non-political outfit, the party promptly transitioned to a political one, contesting the civic elections in Mumbai and Thane. In 1971, it fielded three candidates for the Lok Sabha in an alliance with the Congress (O), but failed to win any. Despite hardly being pro-Congress in temper, its support for the party for political gain continued in the form of approving Indira Gandhi's Emergency while allying with the Congress (I) and fielding candidates in 1978 Maharashtra Assembly election, where it again lost all seats.

It was only in the mid-to-late 1980s when Bal Thackeray subtly shifted the party's stance of 'Marathi manooos' to 'Hindutva', that the Sena cut its ties with the Congress.

Piggybacking on the BJP's Ayodhya agitation, the Sena's credentials as a hammer of 'Hindutva' were forged in the crucible of the Bombay riots of 1992-93, where the party was said to have orchestrated much of the violence that followed the demolition of the Babri Mosque in Ayodhya on December 6, 1992.

While the BJP made gains at the national level, in Maharashtra, Bal Thackeray's Shiv Sena was still the elder 'Hindutva' brother to whom BJP leaders like Gopinath Munde

and Pramod Mahajan deferred to. When the Sena first formed the government in Maharashtra with the BJP in 1995, Bal Thackeray preferred to remain the 'remote control' behind the throne, pushing his partyman Manohar Joshi as the Chief Minister. Out of power by the end of 1999, the turn of the century saw a marked decline in the Sena's political fortunes,

Since the Sena's inception, Bal Thackeray skilfully blended its nativist appeal with Hindu nationalist sentiment, anchored in the persona of Chhatrapati Shivaji

despite Bal Thackeray's iron hand still firmly controlling Mumbai city. While the party's resource and financial lifeline remained the cash-rich Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC), Mr. Thackeray's autocratic style, growing nepotism and corruption within the party brass saw a number of cracks within the party organisation.

On the other hand, Bal Thackeray's death in 2012

and the transfer of power within the party to Mr. Uddhav coincided with the ascendancy of Narendra Modi and the BJP at the Centre in 2014. The BJP's projection of Devendra Fadnavis in the State, a very different political operator than the Sena-deferring BJP leaders like Munde and Mahajan, was to bring momentous changes in relationships between the saffron allies.

Uneasy coalition

The first serious split between the Sena and the BJP came before the Assembly polls, after Mr. Uddhav severed ties with the latter reportedly over seat-sharing arrangements. However, the 2014 election results – which saw the BJP win 122 seats in the Maharashtra Assembly as opposed to the Sena's 63 – validated the 'Modi wave' sweeping the country.

Compulsions of power saw a forced patch-up between the BJP and the Sena under Mr. Fadnavis' Chief Ministership, but the friction stayed on. While the Sena and the BJP fought both general and Assembly elections in 2019 together, the resentment between the two finally came to a head over the CM's post, with Mr. Uddhav formally severing all ties with the BJP to go into the arms of

Sharad Pawar's NCP and the Congress. Mr. Pawar, the architect of the MVA, egged Mr. Uddhav to take the CM's post, while the NCP helped itself with prime portfolios. This stoked the ire of staunch Shiv Sainiks like Mr. Shinde.

Mr. Uddhav's projection of Aaditya as the face of the party and the forming of a Thackeray coterie of confidantes increasingly alienated Sena MLAs on the ground.

It was following the BJP's gains in the Rajya Sabha by-polls and Maharashtra Legislative Council elections last month (which saw the party have the support of 133 MLAs in the 288-member State Legislature) that the blow came when Mr. Shinde finally revolted.

Following the Shinde-Fadnavis coup, Mr. Uddhav faces a serious legitimacy crisis as he struggles to retain his hold over the party rank and file. The Uddhav camp claims there can be no Sena without the Thackerays. But cold electoral results have shown that Bal Thackeray's legacy scarcely mattered in the first Assembly election after his death (in 2014), when the Sena failed to secure a majority. With the MVA in tatters and Uddhav burning his bridges with the BJP, the question is, will that legacy matter now?

MOHAMMED ZUBAIR

The man who chased facts

The Alt News journalist was arrested over a tweet of an image from an old film

MAHESH LANGA

"They cannot file a complaint against me for writing a story because we have facts with us in our stories," Mohammed Zubair, the co-founder of fact-check website Alt News, said in an interview in October 2021. "They cannot attack us on the story that we've written, so they are looking to attack me for any other unrelated tweet." A Twitter sensation with over half-a-million followers, Mr. Zubair was both loved and loathed on the social networks. While many applaud the efforts by Alt News, the website he co-founded with Pratik Sinha, to debunk disinformation and misinformation campaigns, his critics, mainly those in the right-wing online ecosystem, have repeatedly targeted him.



On June 27, the 39-year-old journalist was arrested by the Delhi Police, based on a complaint from an anonymous Twitter handle that alleged that Mr. Zubair hurt religious sentiments over a tweet he sent out four years ago and that he should be prosecuted for the same. The tweet was of an image from a 40-year-old film. The FIR lodged by the Delhi Police, which works under the Union Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA), initially invoked Sections 153-A (promoting enmity between different groups) and 295-A (malicious acts, intended to outrage religious feelings) of the Indian Penal Code. Sub-

sequently, on July 2, additional charges, including criminal conspiracy and destruction of evidence, along with Section 35 of the FCRA, or the Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act, were applied.

Rise to prominence

A computer engineer-turned-journalist, Mr. Zubair, who had earlier worked with Nokia, joined hands with Mr. Sinha, also a former software engineer, to launch Alt News in 2017. Within no time, the website rose to prominence for its diligent work, at a time when fake news was being spread on digital platforms like wildfire. They have compiled a list of more than 40 fake news sources on various social media platforms, and repeatedly called out disinformation campaigns and fake reports. Recently, Mr. Sinha and Mr. Zubair were named by the Peace Research Institute of Oslo in its yearly shortlist for

the Nobel Peace Prize. This is not the first time Mr. Zubair is facing legal cases. In 2020, two FIRs were lodged against him – one in New Delhi and the other in Chhattisgarh – under the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act for alleged "online harassment and torture" of a minor girl. In June 2022, before his arrest by the Delhi Police, he was named in an FIR lodged in Uttar Pradesh for allegedly hurting religious sentiments by calling Hindu religious figures Mahant Bajrang Muni, Yati Narsinghanand and Swami Anand Swarup "hatemongers" on Twitter after their inflammatory speeches, openly calling for violence against Muslims. Angry with his work, right-wing elements have often called him an "Islamist" and a "jihadist", while demanding legal action against him and Alt News. His arrest came after he highlighted the controversial comments made by Nupur Sharma,

now suspended from the BJP, that caused international embarrassment to the government.

After the Nupur Sharma controversy, Mr. Zubair had told media that the threats against him and his family had increased and this time the threats looked "serious and real". Hashtags such as #ArrestZubair started trending on Twitter. A day after his arrest, Mr. Zubair gave a statement, saying he was being targeted for his "name and his profession". His lawyer Vrinda Grover, while arguing for his bail, submitted that "many had tweeted the same; the only difference between those handles and mine is my faith, my name and my profession".

The arrest has triggered sharp responses from both within and outside the country. Stephane Dujarric, a spokesman for the UN Secretary-General, said, while responding to Mr. Zubair's arrest, "it is very important that people be allowed to express themselves freely, journalists be allowed to express themselves freely and without the threat of any harassment".

Mr. Zubair is still in jail. But Mr. Sinha says the arrest would not have any impact on the journalism Alt News does. "We at @AltNews will continue to fight misinformation, disinformation and hate speech, and keep holding people and organisations accountable, and nothing can stop that," he tweeted on June 28.

SNAKE ISLAND

Battle for the Black Sea

Ukrainian troops have pushed the enemy farther away from Odessa's coast

STANLY JOHNY

On June 29, 1788, imperial Russian troops laid siege to Ozi, an Ottoman fortress on the northern Black Sea coast. On the same day, a Russian naval squadron, commanded by Admiral M.I. Voinovich, left Sevastopol in Crimea for Ozi. Their mission was to prevent any Turkish attack on the Crimean shores and also to offer support to the Russian ground troops at Ozi. But in the Black Sea waters, the Russians were encountered by a far superior Turkish squadron. After days of manoeuvring in the open sea, on July 14, near a small island in the north-west of the Black Sea, fighting broke out. After hours-long battle, the Russians inflicted deadly damage on the Turkish fleet and forced them to retreat.

The Battle of Fidonisi, named after the island which was called Fidonisi by the Greeks, was the first naval battle of the 1787-1792 Russo-Turkish War. While the Russian victory in the waters near Fidonisi did not have an immediate impact on the war, the defeat of the superior Ottoman Navy was a morale booster for the Russian troops. Five months later, Russian troops stormed Ozi, captured the town and renamed it as Ochakov, which is now home to Ukraine Navy's operational control centre.

Fidonisi is now called the Snake Island. On the first day of President Vladimir



Putin's invasion of Ukraine, Russia's Navy seized the island, which lies just 35 km off Ukraine's southwestern coast. For over four months, the Russians held the island under their control, while they made battlefield gains in Ukraine's eastern Donbas region. But on Thursday, faced with relentless Ukrainian attacks, Russia announced that it was exiting the island. For the Ukrainian troops which suffered back-to-back defeats in the Donbas and took heavy casualties in recent weeks, the ouster of the invading forces from the Snake Island (also called Zmiyni Island) is a rare battlefield victory.

Outsize role

The island covering just 0.17 square km (roughly the size of 20 football fields) has played an outsize role in most of the wars Russia fought in the Black Sea since the Battle of Fidonisi. It came under the control of Romania in 1877. In the First

World War, Russia, in an alliance with Romania, had operated a wireless station on the island, which was destroyed by Ottoman warships. During the Second World War, Romania, which had joined the Nazi invasion of the Soviet Union, allowed the Axis powers to establish a radio station on the island.

The Nazis and the Romanians had mined the waters around the island during the war to stop the Soviet submarines and vessels from getting closer. But in 1944, as the momentum of the war had clearly shifted in favour of the Soviet Union, Romanian troops were forced to exit the island. Four years later, as part of a frontier delimitation protocol signed between Romania and the Soviet Union, the Snake Island came under the rule of Moscow. It would stay so until Ukraine became an independent country in 1991, along with several other republics, as the Soviet Union collapsed.

There was a maritime border dispute between Ukraine and Romania in the waters around the Snake Island, which was resolved in 2009. At that time, Ukraine had said the island was home to some 100 people, including military personnel, scientists, their families and keepers of the lighthouse, which was built in 1842 by Russia's Black Sea Fleet and rebuilt several times thereafter. The largely rocky outcrop has only one village, Bile, which was founded in 2007. Ukraine wanted to build a settlement on the island, but it, once again, turned out to be the focus of Russia's battle to control the Black Sea.

The capture of the island on February 24 allowed Russia to tighten its naval blockade on Ukraine. But the defence of the island, which was in Ukraine's artillery range, became increasingly difficult after Russia lost its flagship *Moskva* on April 14. Ever since, Ukraine has stepped up attacks not just on the Russian forces defending the island, but also the supply ships. When the defence became increasingly costly, Russia finally decided to make a pull-back.

This doesn't mean that Ukrainian troops can take direct control of the island, because they might also come under fire from Russian warships. But Ukraine has clearly pushed the enemy farther away from Odessa, its 'pearl of the Black Sea', and taken a tactical victory, for now.

'Taxpayers facing issues accessing e-filing portal' 'Infosys dealing with irregular traffic'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

As taxpayers face issues in accessing the e-filing portal, the Income Tax department on Saturday said software provider Infosys was taking 'proactive measures' to deal with the 'irregular traffic' on the portal.

"It has been noticed that taxpayers are facing issues in accessing ITD e-filing portal. As informed by @Infosys, they have observed some irregular traffic on the portal for which proactive measures are being taken," the I-T department tweeted.

Bumpy start

The new e-filing portal www.incometax.gov.in, introduced on June 7, 2021, had a bumpy start with taxpayers and professionals reporting glitches and difficul-



ties in its functioning. Infosys was contracted in 2019 to develop the portal.

More recently, the portal faced snags on the first anniversary of its introduction and many users had complained that they were unable to log in into the portal, while some complained of malfunctioning of the search functionality.

The government had paid ₹164.5 crore to Infosys to build the new income tax e-filing portal.

India-EU to hold next round of FTA talks at Brussels in Sept.

Negotiators concluded first round of parleys on trade, investment on July 1

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

India and the European Union (EU) concluded the first round of talks for the proposed free trade agreement (FTA) on Friday and the next round of talks is scheduled at Brussels in September, the Ministry of Commerce and Industry said on Saturday.

India and the 27-nation bloc resumed negotiations on June 17, after a gap of more than eight years, on the proposed agreements on trade, investments and geographical indications (GI). The first round of talks, which began on June 27, concluded on July 1.

India's FTA negotiations were led by chief negotiator Nidhi Mani Tripathi, Joint Sec-



High stakes: The EU is a key trading partner, with bilateral trade in fiscal 2021-22 amounting to \$116.36 billion.

retary in the Department of Commerce and the EU was represented by its chief negotiator Christophe Kiener, the Ministry said in a statement.

The week-long negotiations were held in a hybrid

fashion - with some of the teams meeting in Delhi and the majority of officials joining virtually.

During the first round, 52 technical sessions covering 18 policy areas of FTA and seven sessions on investment

protection and GIs were held, it added.

India's bilateral trade with the EU amounted to \$116.36 billion in 2021-22.

Second-largest market

The EU is India's second-largest trading partner, after the U.S., and the second-largest destination for Indian exports, the Ministry said.

"The trade agreement with the EU would help India further expand and diversify its exports of goods and services, including securing the value chains," the Ministry said. "Both sides are aiming for the trade negotiations to be broad-based, balanced, and comprehensive, based on the principles of fairness and reciprocity," it added.

U.S. factory activity slows to 2-year low as economy cools

June ISM manufacturing index falls 3.1 points to 53.0

REUTERS
WASHINGTON

U.S. manufacturing activity slowed more than expected in June, with a measure of new orders contracting for the first time in two years, signs that the economy was cooling amid aggressive monetary policy tightening by the Federal Reserve.

The survey from the Institute for Supply Management (ISM) also showed a gauge of factory employment contracting for a second straight month, though an 'overwhelming majority' of firms indicated they were hiring.

The slowdown in manufacturing followed moderate consumer spending growth



in May along with weak housing starts and building permits, which left some economists anticipating that the economy contracted again in the second quarter following a slump in gross domestic product in the first three months. Another decline in GDP would not necessarily indicate a recession

unless the economy suffers deep job losses.

"This does not suggest that a recession is on the way yet, but growth conditions continue to decelerate broadly in response to Fed tightening and extended cost pressures for consumers and businesses," said Ben Ayers, a senior economist at Nationwide.

The ISM survey's index of national factory activity dropped to 53.0 last month, the lowest reading since June 2020, when the sector was rebounding from a COVID-19 slump. That followed a reading of 56.1 in May. The index would need to decline to 43.1 to signal a recession.

Swiss group Gurit opens composite unit

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI

Swiss firm Gurit Group has set up an advanced composite-solutions plant at Oragadam at an investment of ₹250 crore.

Gurit Wind Pvt. will provide direct employment to 300 people, the firm said.

"This facility will be home to all our Gurit wind-related activities like mould making, manufacturing solutions, extrusion of recycled PET, engineering and customising of core material kits as well as pultruded carbon profiles which will then be converted to spar caps for wind blades," said CEO Mitja Schulz. "Soon, this will be Gurit's biggest manufacturing plant on the planet."

Pearson keen to add digital learning platform in India

Company building hybrid solutions in test preparation: MD

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
MUMBAI

Pearson India, a unit of the U.K.-based learning company Pearson plc, plans to focus on building a digital and direct-to-consumer (DtC) portfolio to cater to learners, said Siddharth Banerjee, Managing Director, India & Asia.

"We are working with institutions and world-class authors to build rich, credible, and high-quality content (such as the Marketing Management 16e by Pearson) to provide learners with 21st century education, knowledge, and global perspective," he said.

The company was build-



Siddharth Banerjee

ing hybrid solutions in test preparation to offer quality resources, coupled with innovative digital platforms for an enhanced learning experience, Mr. Banerjee added.

The firm would also focus on English language learn-

Russia slashes tax on sunoil to spur exports

Levy cut to \$163.3/tonne from \$560.1

REUTERS

Sanctions-hit Russia has reduced its sunflower oil export tax sharply after changing the formula it uses for calculating it, to support shipments while its rouble currency hovers near multi-year highs, the Agriculture Ministry said.

The sunflower oil export tax is set at 8,408.7 roubles (\$163.3 at the current rate) per tonne for July, the Ministry said.

The tax for July was previously set at \$560.1 a tonne. The sharp reduction happened after the Russian government set the base price for the tax calculation on Friday at 82,500 roubles per tonne of sunflower oil instead of the previous \$1,000 a



tonne. The new July tax is based on an indicative price of \$1,800.2 a tonne, the Ministry said.

The rouble strengthened to seven-year highs this week, supported by capital controls, but is expected to depreciate in the longer term and lost almost 6% on Friday in Moscow trade. It closed at 51.50 to the dollar on the inter-bank market on Friday, stronger than the Moscow close of 54.50.

JSW One to set up 25 'Homes Studio' units

N. ANAND
CHENNAI

JSW One Homes, the home construction solutions arm of JSW One Platforms, plans to strengthen its retail network in the South and in Maharashtra by adding 25 'Homes Studio' facilities by March, according to CEO Gaurav Sachdeva.

"Currently, we are present in Coimbatore, Bengaluru and Chennai, and have two 'Homes Studio' in Tamil Nadu. We will be entering six more cities before the end of this fiscal," Mr. Sachdeva said.

The Homes Studio will serve as a full-service emporium for all home-construction needs for customers planning to build their own houses, he said.

IN BRIEF



Saha gets NOC from CAB

KOLKATA International cricketer Wriddhiman Saha on Saturday got a 'No Objection Certificate' from the Cricket Association of Bengal (CAB). This paved the way for the experienced wicketkeeper-batter to represent some other state association in the forthcoming domestic season. Saha refused to play for Bengal in the Ranji Trophy knockout stage after reports suggested that he was upset over some remarks made by a CAB official.



Abhay Singh wins his second PSA crown

SEREMBAN (MALAYSIA) Unseeded Abhay Singh bagged his second PSA title, defeating second seed Ivan Yuen of Malaysia 13-11, 6-11, 11-5, 4-11, 13-11 in the final of the Tuanku Muhriz Trophy international squash tournament, here on Saturday. Abhay had won his maiden title in the Archi Factory Open at Lorient (France) in May.

Maldini signs new 2-year deal with AC Milan

MILAN Paolo Maldini will stay on as AC Milan technical director after signing a new two-year contract on Friday. Maldini and sporting director Frederic Massara, who has also signed a two-year extension, took Milan from the doldrums to the top of the Italian game. Maldini played over 900 times for Milan. AFP

Sahaja outplays Yashina, enters final

Ankita, partnering Nugroho, bounces back after a slow start to win doubles title



Celebration time: Ankita and Nugroho, the doubles champions. ■ KAMESH SRINIVASAN

ITF WOMEN

KAMESH SRINIVASAN
GURUGRAM

Y. Sahaja was in explosive form as she outplayed fourth seed Ekaterina Yashina 6-0, 6-1 in the semifinals of the \$25,000 ITF women's tennis tournament at the Tennis Project, Baliawas, on Saturday.

The hopes of an all-Indian final vanished as second seed Ankita Raina was beaten 6-3, 6-4 by third seed Viktoria Morvayova of Slovakia.

Ankita fought back to be 4-2 in the second set, but did not have the energy to sustain her good game against an opponent who played at a high intensity.

She did, however, win the doubles title with Priska Madelyn Nugroho of Indone-

sia. The duo bounced back from a slow start to beat Japanese second seeds Momoko Kobori and Misaki Matsuda 3-6, 6-0, [10-6] in the final.

The results:

Semifinals: Y. Sahaja bt Ekaterina Yashina 6-0, 6-1; Viktoria Morvayova (Svk) bt Ankita Raina 6-3, 6-4.

Doubles: Final: Ankita Raina & Priska Madelyn Nugroho (Ina) bt Mokoko Kobori & Misaki Matsuda 3-6, 6-0, [10-6].

Semifinals: Ankita & Priska bt Rutuja Bhosale & Diana Marcinkevica (Lat) 6-0, 6-4; Momoko & Misaki bt Ishwari Matere & Ikumi Yamazaki (Jpn) 6-2, 6-2.

Quarterfinals: Ishwari & Ikumi bt Ekaterina Yashina (Rus) & Zeel Desai 4-6, 7-5, [10-8]; Momoko & Misaki bt Vaidehi Chaudhari & Mihika Yadav 6-3, 6-1.

RACING

Multifaceted primed to deliver

BENGALURU: Multifaceted, who has been well prepared, is expected to score in the Chief Minister's Cup (1,200m), the feature event of the races to be held here on Sunday (July 3). False rails (width about 9.5m from 1,600m to the winning post) will be in position.

1 BRAVE DANCER PLATE (1,400m), rated 00 to 25, 2-30 p.m.: 1. Baba Voss (1) Tousif K 61.5, 2. Handsome Rocky (8) Angad 61.5, 3. Luminary Star (7) Kiran Rai 61.5, 4. Super Kind (4) Salman K 60, 5. War Eagle (6) Arvind K 60, 6. Lightning Flame (3) A. Imran 58.5, 7. Osibisa (9) J.H. Arul 58.5, 8. Southernstocrat (2) Kirish B 58.5 and 9. Jai Vikram (5) Nayak 53.

LOSIBISA, 2. LIGHTNING FLAME, 3. HANDSOME ROCKY

2 ROYAL TERN PLATE (DIV. II), (1,200m), rated 00 to 45, 4-y-o & over, 3-00: 1. Ocean Dunes (1) K. Nazil 60, 2. Air Blast (3) P.S. Chouhan 58.5, 3. Gold Gray (5) Siddharaju 58.5, 4. Lady Supremes (8) Saddam H 56, 5. Lauterbrunnen (6) Angad 56, 6. Dark Vision (2) G. Vivek 55.5, 7. Favorito (4) Rayan 53, 8. Speed Seven (9) Likith 53, 9. Amazing Luck (10) Tousif K 52.5 and 10. Memorable Time (7) Vishal B 52.

1. AIR BLAST, 2. GOLD GRAY, 3. MAGIC (4) J.H. Arul 54, 7. Indian Pharaoh (5) Arvind K 54, 8. Bellagio (8) C.S. Jodha 52 and 9. Dear Lady (9) N.S. Parmar 50.

1. STAR GLORY, 2. GENERAL PATTON, 3. LORD VADER

6 JULY PLATE (1,600m), rated 20 to 45, 5-y-o & over, 5-00: 1. Southern Power (-) (-) 62.5, 2. Queen Regnant (6) Trevor 61, 3. Acaster (1) Srirath 57.5, 4. Lycurgus (7) J.H. Arul 57, 5. Ombudsman (3) Darshan 57, 6. Embosom (4) P.S. Chouhan 55, 7. Johnny Bravo (2) Nikhil N 55 and 8. Marco Polo (5) L.A. Rozario 53.

1. EMBOSOM, 2. QUEEN REGNANT

7 ROYAL TERN PLATE (DIV. I), (1,200m), rated 20 to 45, 4-y-o & over, 5-30: 1. Millbrook (5) Hasib A 62.5, 2. Divine Blessings (7) S. Saqlain 61, 3. Benediction (6) S. Shareef 60, 4. Chul Bul Rani (9) Salman K 60, 5. Aherne (4) T.S. Jodha 59, 6. Chisox (8) L.A. Rozario 58.5, 7. Extraordinary (3) Arvind K 58, 8. Armory (2) Rajesh K 57 and 9. Queen Of Sands (1) Chethan K 57.

1. AHERNE, 2. QUEEN OF SANDS, 3. EXTRAORDINARY

Day's best: MULTIFACETED

Double: ROYAL GLORY

- STAR GLORY

Jkt: 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7; Tr (i): 2, 3 and 4; (ii): 5, 6 and 7.

LAUTERBRUNNEN

3 PADDIWORK PLATE (1,400m), 3-y-o only, (Terms), 3-30: 1. Bruce Almighty (1) T.S. Jodha 56, 2. Rapidus (2) Akshay K 56, 3. Tignanello (7) Ashhad A 56, 4. Tycoonist (10) Suraj 56, 5. Worldly Wise (3) Ajinkya 56, 6. Angel Bliss (5) K. Nazil 54.5, 7. Daianne (4) Bhawani S 54.5, 8. Geographique (9) Zervan 54.5, 9. Indian Blues (6) S. Shareef 54.5, 10. Lady Godiva (8) N.S. Parmar 54.5 and 11. Royal Glory (11) Sandesh 54.5.

1. ROYAL GLORY, 2. RAPIDUS, 3. TYCOONIST

4 CHIEF MINISTER'S CUP (1,200m), 4-y-o & over, (Terms), 4-00: 1. Multifaceted (1) Trevor 60, 2. Ashwa Bravo (3) Suraj 57, 3. Corfe Castle (5) C.S. Jodha 55.5, 4. Enigma (7) P.S. Chouhan 54, 5. Augustus Caesar (2) Zervan 53.5, 6. Golden Oaks (4) Sandesh 52.5 and 7. Smashing Blue (6) Akshay K 51.

1. MULTIFACETED, 2. ASHWA BRAVO

5 FIRE HAVEN PLATE (1,200m), rated 40 to 65, 4-30: 1. Silver Dew (6) Kiran Rai 62.5, 2. Lord Vader (2) Bhawani S 59.5, 3. General Patton (3) Akshay K 59, 4. Garamond (1) P.S. Chouhan 56, 5. Star Glory (7) Suraj 56, 6. Devils

602 and 352. Favourite: Success.

Owner: Dr. A.C. Muthiah. Trainer: Vijay Singh.

6. LADY GIBRALTAR PLATE (1,400m), rated 20 to 45: **POLISHED GIRL** (Suraj) 1. La Reina (Sandesh) 2. Nikolina (Akshay K) 3 and Yukun (Srinath) 4, 4, 1-1/4 and 7-1/2, 1m, 26.64s, ₹17 (w), 10, 17 and 13 (p), SHP: 45, THP: 41, FP: 105, Q: 66, Trinella: 180 and 46, Exacta: 328 and 173. Favourite: Polished Girl. Owners: Mr. Daulat Chhabria, Mr. K. Kaliyaperumal, Mr. M. Ravi and Mr. R. Chellam. Trainer: Rajesh Narredu.

7 SUPERVITE PLATE (Div. D), (1,200m), rated 00 to 25: **DEBONAIR** (Md. Aljay) 1, Altair (Arvind K) 2, Port Of Beauty (S. Shareef) 3 and Red Lucifer (Salman K) 4. Not run: Emerald, Nk, 6-1/4 and 1/2, 1m, 6.94s, ₹91 (w), 26, 14 and 14 (p), SHP: 29, THP: 46, FP: 408, Q: 144, Trinella: 1,550 and 664, Exacta: 3,002 and 1,342. Favourite: Altair. Owner: Mr. Dayanand Kachuwhah. Trainer: Faraz Arshad.

Jackpot: ₹5,217 (six tkts.); Runner-up: 543 (72 tkts.); Treble (i): 706 (16 tkts.); (ii): 247 (82 tkts.).

Sonal clinches the title

TENNIS

SPORTS BUREAU
JHAJJAR

Sonal Patil defeated Tamanna Takoria 6-0, 6-1 in the final of the ₹1,00,000 AITA women's tennis tournament at the Joygaon Academy on Saturday.

Sonal, playing in her first women's tournament, had earlier in the day beaten Riya Sachdeva while Tamanna beat Medhavi Singh in the semifinals.

Wet weather

Wet weather had washed out play on the clay courts on the earlier two days.

The results:

Final: Sonal Patil bt Tamanna Takoria 6-0, 6-1.

Semifinals: Sonal bt Riya Sachdeva 6-4, 6-0; Tamanna bt Medhavi Singh 6-0, 6-2.



Victor and the vanquished: Sonal, the winner, and Tamanna, the runner-up. ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Balaji-Jeevan duo bows out

INDIANS ABROAD

SPORTS BUREAU

Top seeds Sriram Balaji and Jeevan Nedunchezhiyan were beaten 6-4, 1-6, [10-6] in the semifinals by USA's Keegan Smith and Evan Zhu in the \$53,120 Challenger tennis tournament in Cali, Colombia.

Other results (semifinals): **\$45,730 Challenger, Malaga:** Altug Celikbilek (Tur) & Dmitry Popko (Kaz) bt Victor Vlad Cornea (Rou) & Arjun Kadhe 6-7(2), 6-3, [10-8].

Daniel Cukierman (Isr) & Emilio Gomez (Ecu) bt Yuki Bhambri & Saketh Myneni 6-4, 6-4.

\$15,000 ITF, Monastir: Men: Doubles: Dong Bohua & Zhang Ze (Chn) bt Boris Butulija (Srb) & Niki Poonacha 6-2, 6-2. **Women:** Manon Leonard (Fra) bt Jennifer Luikham 6-1, 6-3.

Ballerina takes the honours in Juvenile Sprinters' Million

BENGALURU: United Racing & Bloodstock Breeders Limited's Ballerina (Suraj) won the Juvenile Sprinters' Million, the chief event of the races held here on Saturday (July 2).

The winner is trained by Prasad Raju.

1. SUPERVITE PLATE (Div. II), (1,200m), rated 00 to 25: **OZARK** (T.S. Jodha) 1, Beldona (Arvind K) 2, The Omega Man (Saddam H) 3 and Zhenaseeb (Darshan) 4. Not run: Baroness, 4-1/4, Lnk and 4, 1m, 15.56s, ₹34 (w), 12, 11 and 54 (p), SHP: 34, THP: 112, FP: 85, Q: 26, Trinella: 1,675 and 814, Exacta: 6,060 and 3,376. Favourite: Beldona. Owner: Mr. Syed Muheeb. Trainer: Rajendra Singh.

2. FANTABULOUS KING PLATE (1,200m), md. 3-y-o only (terms): **INYOUWELIEVE** (Trevor) 1, Tripitaka (P.S. Chouhan) 2, Stormwatch (Hindu S) 3 and Stormy Ocean (Ajinkya) 4. Lnk, 5 and 3/4, 1m, 14.80s, ₹17 (w), 11, 30 and 41 (p), SHP: 64, THP: 99, FP: 106, Q: 92, Trinella: 2,286 and 980, Exacta: 3,386 and 1,369. Favourite: Inyouwelve. Owners: Mr. Rajan Aggarwal & Mr. Gautam Aggarwal. Trainer: Prasanna Kumar.

3. NAWAB M ARSHAD ALI KHAN

MEMORIAL CUP (1,600m), rated 80 & above: **TAIMUR** (Bhawani S) 1, Sea Of Cortez (P.P. Dhebe) 2, Automatic (P.S. Chouhan) 3 and Truly Epic (Sandesh) 4, 2-1/4, 1/2 and 1-1/2, 1m, 40.13s, ₹26 (w), 12 and 65 (p), SHP: 115, THP: 41, FP: 685, Q: 417, Trinella: 4,001 and 536, Exacta: 4,858 and 1,487. Favourite: Taimur. Owner: Mr. M.A.M. Ramaswamy Chettiar of Chettinad Charitable Trust. Trainer: Karthik Ganapathy.

4. JUVENILE SPRINTERS' MILLION (1,200m), 3-y-o only (terms): **BALLERINA** (Suraj) 1, Artemis Ignacia (Akshay K) 2, O Hansini (Trevor) 3 and Amrelli (Sandesh) 4. Lnk, 2-1/4 and 3-1/4, 1m, 13.45s, ₹71 (w), 27 and 21 (p), SHP: 30, THP: 31, FP: 344, Q: 97, Trinella: 1,318 and 410, Exacta: 1,229 and 360. Favourite: Amrelli. Owner: United Racing & Bloodstock Breeders Ltd. Trainer: Prasad Raju.

5. AKHAL-TEKE PLATE (2,000m), rated 40 to 65: **SUCCESS** (Hindu S) 1, Siega Perous (Akshay K) 2, Pissarro (Trevor) 3 and Peluch (T.S. Jodha) 4, 10-1/2, 2 and 3/4, 2m 05.95s, ₹21 (w), 12, 15 and 13 (p), SHP: 33, THP: 44, FP: 66, Q: 50, Trinella: 123 and 56, Exacta:

62 and 352. Favourite: Success.

Owner: Dr. A.C. Muthiah. Trainer: Vijay Singh.

6. LADY GIBRALTAR PLATE (1,400m), rated 20 to 45: **POLISHED GIRL** (Suraj) 1, La Reina (Sandesh) 2, Nikolina (Akshay K) 3 and Yukun (Srinath) 4, 4, 1-1/4 and 7-1/2, 1m, 26.64s, ₹17 (w), 10, 17 and 13 (p), SHP: 45, THP: 41, FP: 105, Q: 66, Trinella: 180 and 46, Exacta: 328 and 173. Favourite: Polished Girl. Owners: Mr. Daulat Chhabria, Mr. K. Kaliyaperumal, Mr. M. Ravi and Mr. R. Chellam. Trainer: Rajesh Narredu.

7. SUPERVITE PLATE (Div. D), (1,200m), rated 00 to 25: **DEBONAIR** (Md. Aljay) 1, Altair (Arvind K) 2, Port Of Beauty (S. Shareef) 3 and Red Lucifer (Salman K) 4. Not run: Emerald, Nk, 6-1/4 and 1/2, 1m, 6.94s, ₹91 (w), 26, 14 and 14 (p), SHP: 29, THP: 46, FP: 408, Q: 144, Trinella: 1,550 and 664, Exacta: 3,002 and 1,342. Favourite: Altair. Owner: Mr. Dayanand Kachuwhah. Trainer: Faraz Arshad.

Jackpot: ₹5,217 (six tkts.); Runner-up: 543 (72 tkts.); Treble (i): 706 (16 tkts.); (ii): 247 (82 tkts.).

All-round Bumrah puts England on the back foot

The skipper sets a world record before rattling the hosts' top-order; Jadeja makes a majestic hundred as India posts 416

INDIA IN ENG

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA BIRMINGHAM
India skipper Jasprit Bumrah starred with both bat and ball even as England's Stuart Broad sent down the most expensive over in Test history (35 runs) at Edgbaston on Saturday.

India was dismissed for 416 in its first innings in the fifth and final Test of the series. Bumrah, who hit Broad for 29 runs in an over that also featured five wides and a no-ball he struck for six, led from the front in his primary role of strike bowler.

He took the first three

■ Bumrah's 31 not out is the highest by a debutant captain in Test history while batting at No. 10, bettering Bishan Singh Bedi's 30 against New Zealand in Christchurch (1976)

wickets to fall during an excellent spell of three for 35 in 11 overs as England slumped to 84 for five at stumps, still 332 runs behind.

India, resuming at 338 for seven, added 78 in 11.5 overs. Ravindra Jadeja, unbeaten on 83, completed the third century of his 60-Test career and his first overseas. He reached the landmark in style, cutting Potts to the boundary. Jadeja's 183-ball hundred contained 13 fours.

Anderson's five-for
Broad became the sixth bowler to take 550 wickets when he had Shami caught by



Standing tall: Jadeja, who revived the innings in the company of Pant, completed his third Test century. •GETTY IMAGES

Most runs in an over in Tests

Stuart Broad's 35-run over is the costliest in Tests, breaking the record of 28



28 Batter: Lara
Bowler: Robin Peterson
4 | 6 | 6 | 4 | 4 | 4

■ West Indies vs. South Africa, Johannesburg, 2003

28 Batter: Bailey
Bowler: Anderson
4 | 6 | 2 | 4 | 6 | 6

■ Australia vs. England, Perth, 2013

28 Batter: Maharaj
Bowler: Root
4 | 4 | 4 | 6 | 6 | 4b

■ South Africa vs. England, Port Elizabeth, 2020

35 Batter: Bumrah
Bowler: Broad
4 | 4wd | 6+nb | 4 | 4 | 4 | 6 | 1

■ India vs. England, Birmingham, 2022

■ Bumrah scored 29 of those 35, a wide went for four (five runs) and a no-ball that was hit for a six (seven runs)

SCOREBOARD

INDIA — 1ST INNINGS

Shubman Gill c Crawley b Anderson 17 (24b, 4x4), Cheteshwar Pujara c Crawley b Anderson 13 (46b, 2x4), Hanuma Vihari lbw b Potts 20 (53b, 1x4), Virat Kohli b Potts 11 (19b, 2x4), Rishabh Pant c Crawley b Root 146 (111b, 19x4, 4x6), Shreyas Iyer c Billings b Anderson 15 (11b, 3x4), Ravindra Jadeja b Anderson 104 (194b, 13x4), Shardul Thakur c Billings b Stokes 1 (72b), Mohammed Shami c Leach b Broad 16 (31b, 3x4), Jasprit Bumrah (not out) 31 (16b, 4x4, 2x6), Mohammed Siraj c Broad b Anderson 2 (6b), Extras (b-4, lb-17, nb-14, w-5): 40; Total (in 84.5 overs): 416.

FALL OF WICKETS

1-27 (Gill, 6.2 overs), 2-46 (Pujara, 17.6), 3-64 (Vihari, 22.2), 4-71 (Kohli, 24.2), 5-98 (Shreyas, 27.5), 6-320 (Pant, 66.2), 7-323 (Shardul, 67.6), 8-371 (Shami, 79.4), 9-375 (Jadeja, 82.2).

ENGLAND BOWLING

Anderson 21.5-4-60-5, Broad 18-3-89-1, Potts 20-1-105-2, Leach 9-0-71-0, Stokes 13-0-47-1, Root 3-0-23-1.

ENGLAND — 1ST INNINGS

Alex Lees b Bumrah 6 (9b, 1x4), Zak Crawley c Gill b Bumrah 9 (17b, 1x4), Ollie Pope c Shreyas b Bumrah 10 (18b, 2x4), Joe Root c Pant b Siraj 31 (67b, 4x4), Jonny Bairstow (batting) 12 (47b, 1x4), Jack Leach c Pant b Shami 0 (5b), Ben Stokes (batting) 0 (4b); Extras (b-8, lb-3, nb-5): 16; Total (for five wkts. in 27 overs): 84.

FALL OF WICKETS

1-16 (Lees, 2.6), 2-27 (Crawley, 4.1), 3-44 (Pope, 10.6), 4-78 (Root, 22.6), 5-83 (Leach, 25.3).

INDIA BOWLING

Bumrah 11-1-35-3, Shami 13-3-33-1, Siraj 3-2-5-1.

Tried to disturb bowlers mentally, says Pant



Dazzling duo | Pant and Jadeja are the only Indian batters to score Test centuries in 2022. A look at their overall century collection:

PANT: 114 vs. England, The Oval, 2018	■ Pant and Jadeja's 222-run stand for the sixth wicket is the highest for India against England, eclipsing the 204-run association between Pant and Rahul at The Oval in 2018
159 n.o. vs. Australia, Sydney, 2019	■ It is also the joint biggest for the sixth wicket for India in away Tests, equalling the partnership between Azharuddin and Tendulkar at Cape Town in 1997
101 vs. England, Ahmedabad, 2021	■ Pant's 89-ball century is the fastest by an Indian wicketkeeper, breaking Dhoni's 93-ball hundred against Pakistan in Faisalabad (2006)
100 n.o. vs. South Africa, Cape Town, 2022	
146 vs. England, Birmingham, 2022	
JADEJA: 100 n.o. vs. West Indies, Rajkot, 2018	
175 n.o. vs. Sri Lanka, Mohali, 2022	
104 vs. England, Birmingham, 2022	

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA BIRMINGHAM

Flamboyant wicketkeeper-batter Rishabh Pant said his plan was to "disturb the bowlers mentally."
"In English conditions, if a bowler pitches it up, it's important to disturb his rhythm," said the 24-year-old Pant.
"I don't try to play unidimensional... I try out various shots — sometimes I

step out, or play on the backfoot. I use the crease well. It's about disturbing the bowler mentally. It's not pre-planned, I just focus on what the bowler is trying to do.
"You can't be defensive or attacking with each ball. I play every ball on its merit. It's a good sign to show respect to a good ball. I'm not focusing much on defence, just focusing on my game."

LIVE TELECAST

Formula 2: Silverstone GP, SS Select 2 (SD & HD) & Hotstar, 2.30 p.m.
England vs India: 5th Test, day 3, Sony Six (SD & HD) & Sony LIV, 3 p.m.
Wimbledon: 55 Select 1 & Star Sports 1 (SD & HD) & Hotstar, 3.30 p.m. onwards; SS Select 2 (SD & HD) & Hotstar, 4 p.m. & 9.30 p.m.
Formula 1: British GP, SS Select 2 (SD & HD) & Hotstar, 7.30 p.m.
Women's Hockey World Cup: India v England, Star Sports 3 & Hotstar, 8 p.m.
West Indies vs Bangladesh: 2nd T20I, Fan-Code, 11 p.m.

Kalaivani storms into the final

SPORTS BUREAU

Promising boxer S. Kalaivani gave a fine performance to defeat Uzbekistan's Farzona Fozilova 5-0 and book a berth in the women's 48kg final at the Elorda Cup boxing tournament in Nur-Sultan, Kazakhstan, on Saturday.
Former World youth champion Jyoti Gulia (52kg) lost in the semifinals to take the bronze medal.
Important results (Indians unless specified):
Men: Quarterfinals: 48kg: Kuldeep Kumar bt Kairat Yernur (Kaz) 3-2; **71kg:** Yashpal lost to Aslanbek Shymbergenov (Kaz) 5-0.
Women: Semifinals: 48kg: S. Kalaivani bt Farzona Fozilova (Uzb) 5-0; **52kg:** Jyoti Gulia lost to Feruza Kazaroka (Uzb) 5-0; **63kg:** Neema lost to Anar Tursynbek (Kaz) 5-0; **81kg:** Babita Bisht lost to Zheng Lu (Chn) RSC.
Quarterfinals: 50kg: Savita lost to Namiki Tsukimi (Jpn) 5-0.

Sainz takes his first F1 pole

REUTERS SILVERSTONE

Ferrari's Carlos Sainz took the first pole position of his Formula One career in a wet qualifying for the British Grand Prix on Saturday, with Red Bull's championship leader Max Verstappen alongside him on the front row with teammate Charles Leclerc qualifying third.
Lewis Hamilton will start in fifth place for Mercedes on Sunday.

Mithali 'overwhelmed' by PM Modi's letter

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA NEW DELHI

Former Indian women's cricket team captain Mithali Raj on Saturday said she was overwhelmed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi's "thoughtfully worded acknowledgement" of her contribution to the sport.

The PM had in a letter extended his good wishes to the Indian batter after she announced her retirement from international cricket last month, saying the player has been an inspiration for many sportspersons.

"It's a matter of singular honour & pride when one receives such warm encouragement from our Hon'ble PM Shri @narendramodiji, who is a role model & inspiration for millions including me. I am overwhelmed by this thoughtfully worded



Mithali. •FILE PHOTO: NAGARA GOPAL

acknowledgment of my contribution to cricket," Mithali tweeted.

"I will treasure this forever. I feel inspired and encouraged for my next chapter and will strive hard to live up to the expectations of our Hon'ble PM in contributing towards the growth of Indian sports," she wrote on her Twitter handle.

India eyes revenge against Great Britain

The two teams come to grips for first time since the Olympic bronze match-up

WORLD CUP

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA AMSTERDAM

A rejuvenated India will seek revenge against Great Britain when the two sides open their Pool B campaign in the Women's Hockey World Cup here on Sunday.

India will look to settle scores against the side that shattered its bronze medal hopes at the Tokyo Olympics. India came tantalisingly close to claiming a maiden Olympic medal in Tokyo, only to lose 3-4 to England, which is playing as Great Britain here.

Upwardly mobile

The Indians are high on confidence after finishing a creditable third in their maiden FIH Pro League. India's best performance in the World Cup is a fourth place at the



Ready to roll: India will look to put its best foot forward when it takes on Great Britain on Sunday. •TWITTER@THEHOCKEYINDIA

inaugural edition in 1974.

India achieved its best-ever world ranking — sixth — in May and then gave some top teams a run for their money in the Pro League. India finished on the podium ahead of strong sides like Belgium, Australia and England. Experienced goalkeeper

Savita Punia has been brilliant as captain having taken over from Rani Rampal, who has been sidelined since the Tokyo Games due to injury.

Savita has been in stellar form, while she will have young and energetic back-up in Bichu Devi Kharibam. The backline will be un-

Swiatek's stunning run comes to an end

Loses to Cornet in straight sets; Garin upsets 29th seed Brooksby



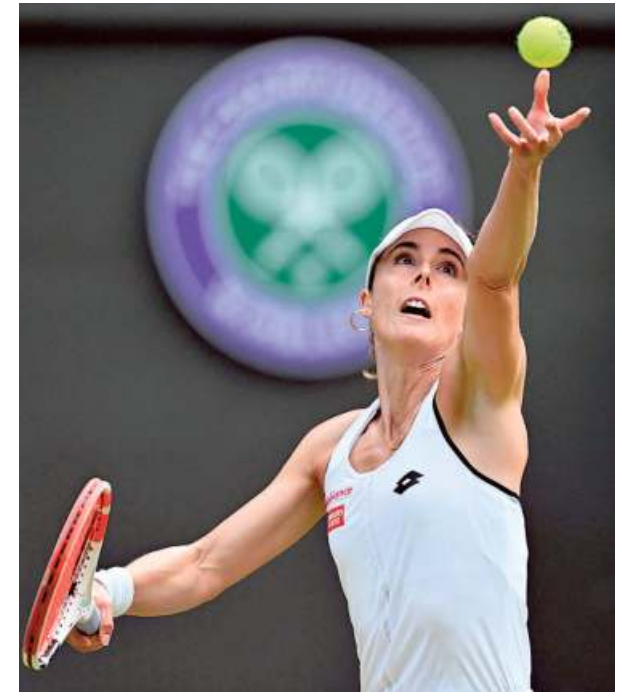
AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE LONDON

Top-ranked Iga Swiatek's 37-match winning streak ended with a straight-set loss to Alize Cornet in the third round at Wimbledon on Saturday.

Swiatek was coming off a title at the French Open but her game was filled with errors in the 4-6, 2-6 defeat against the 37th-ranked Cornet of France.

Swiatek made 33 unforced errors in the one hour 33 minute contest on the No. 1 Court. Cornet, in contrast, made only seven unforced errors.

Swiatek had been unbeaten since February and won her preceding six tournaments in a row.
This is not the first surprising result Cornet has come up with at the All England Club. The only other time she reached the fourth round



Giant slayer: Cornet reached the fourth round of Wimbledon for only the second time, the first in 2014. •AFP

was in 2014 when she eliminated Serena Williams.
Amanda Anisimova came from behind to beat 11th seed Coco Gauff 6-7(4), 6-2, 6-1 in an all-American clash on Centre Court.
Former champion Simona Halep advanced with a comfortable 6-4, 6-1 win over Po-

IMPORTANT RESULTS

Third round: Men: Garin (Chi) bt 29-Brooksby (USA) 6-2, 6-3, 1-6, 6-4; 19-De Minaur (Aus) bt Broady (GBr) 6-3, 6-4, 7-5; 21-van de Zandschulp (Ned) bt Gasquet (Fra) 7-5, 2-6, 7-6(7), 6-1; 11-Fritz (USA) bt Molcan (Svk) 6-4, 6-1, 7-6(3).
Women: Cornet (Fra) bt 1-Swiatek (Pol) 6-4, 6-2; Martic (Cro) bt 8-Pegula (USA) 6-2, 7-6(5); 4-Badosa (Esp) bt 25-Kvitova (Cze) 7-5, 7-6(4); Tomljanovic (Aus) bt 13-Krejciikova (Cze) 2-6, 6-4, 6-3; 20-Anisimova (USA) bt 11-Gauff (USA) 6-7(4), 6-2, 6-1; 16-Halep (Rou) bt Frech (Pol) 6-4, 6-1; 17-Rybakinina (Kaz) bt Zheng (Chn) 7-6(4), 7-5.

Fallen seeds

■ Men: 29-Brooksby
■ Women: 1-Swiatek; 8-Pegula; 11-Gauff; 13-Krejciikova; 25-Kvitova

quarterfinals.
11th-seeded Taylor Fritz of the United States advanced to the fourth round at Wimbledon for the first time after a 6-4, 6-1, 7-6(3) victory over Alex Molcan.
Fritz will next face qualifier Jason Kubler of Australia for a spot in the quarterfinals.

Jamie Murray played hard to get, says Venus

Brit calls the American a champion



Mix and match: Venus and Jamie Murray decided to combine forces at the last possible minute. •AFP

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE LONDON

Venus Williams made a winning return to Wimbledon on Friday when the 42-year-old American teamed with Britain's Jamie Murray in mixed doubles. Venus and Murray defeated Michael Venus and Alicja Rosolska 6-3, 6-7(3), 6-3 in the first round.

The pair said their decision to play was last-minute but Venus revealed she had wanted to partner the Briton for some time. "He played hard to get," she said. "I wanted to play with him

for ages but it was super last-minute."

A five-time singles champion at Wimbledon, Venus was runner-up in the mixed doubles at Wimbledon in 2006 with Bob Bryan.

Murray is a five-time Slam champion in the event, winning Wimbledon in 2007 and 2017 with Jelena Jankovic and Martina Hingis.
"I was supposed to play with Venus last year but I hurt my neck," said the 36-year-old. "I couldn't say no twice. It was amazing to be on the court with such a champion."

India beats Derby in warm-up

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA DERBY

Deepak Hooda hit a fine half-century to help India beat Derbyshire county by seven wickets in a T20 warm-up match here on Friday.

Hooda made 59 off 37 balls and shared 78 runs for the third wicket with Suryakumar Yadav (36 not out) as India chased down 151 with 20 balls to spare. Hooda's knock contained five fours and two sixes, while Suryakumar struck four boundaries and a six.

Earlier, Umran Malik and Arshdeep Singh grabbed two wickets apiece as India restricted Derbyshire to 150 for eight after opting to bowl.
The scores: Derbyshire 150/8 in 20 overs (Wayne Madsen 28, Hilton Cartwright 27) lost to India 151/3 in 16.4 overs (Sanju Samson 38, Deepak Hooda 59, Suryakumar Yadav 36 n.o.).

Jakobsen wins stage two



Fabio Jakobsen. •AFP

REUTERS NYBORG (DENMARK)

Dutchman Fabio Jakobsen claimed the second stage of the Tour de France, a 202.2-km flat ride from Roskilde to Nyborg, in a stunning sprint finish after edging out Wout van Aert and Mads Pedersen on Saturday.

Van Aert's push at the end meant that the Team Jumbo-Visma rider took the yellow jersey from fellow Belgian Yves Lampaert, who was involved in a late crash but recovered to remain second in the general classification.

Two-times defending champion Tadej Pogacar crossed the line three minutes behind after suffering a puncture but managed to retain third place.

Temple run

Glimpses of the rath yatra at the Jagannath temple in Ahmedabad, held after a two-year break

TEXT AND IMAGES BY VIJAY SONEJI

At 6.56 a.m. on July 1, under skies overcast with monsoon clouds, the Jagannath temple in Ahmedabad was packed to capacity. Gujarat Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel, along with the temple's head priest, swept the ground with golden brooms and cleared the path for Lord Jagannath's main chariot. Traditionally, the king of the state would have had the honour, but that tradition is now followed by the Chief Minister. The devotees soon pulled the chariot to start the 18-km procession in the Old City, through communally sensitive areas such as Jamalpur, Kalupur, Shahpur and Dariyapur before returning to the temple – the full-fledged event is taking place after two years of a pandemic-induced break.

More than 25,000 police and other security personnel kept vigil during the yatra. For the first time, the police used a helicopter and one motorised paraglider for aerial surveillance.

“This year, we celebrated the yatra with pomp and show with accompanying orchestra to give a glamorous touch to the function,” a city-based businessman Rauf Sheikh Bengali said. In tableaux, artists paid tributes to cricket legend Shane Warne and COVID care centres and exhibited themes of contemporary relevance.



First stop: Married women perform rituals near the Lord Jagannath Temple ahead of the rath yatra in Ahmedabad.



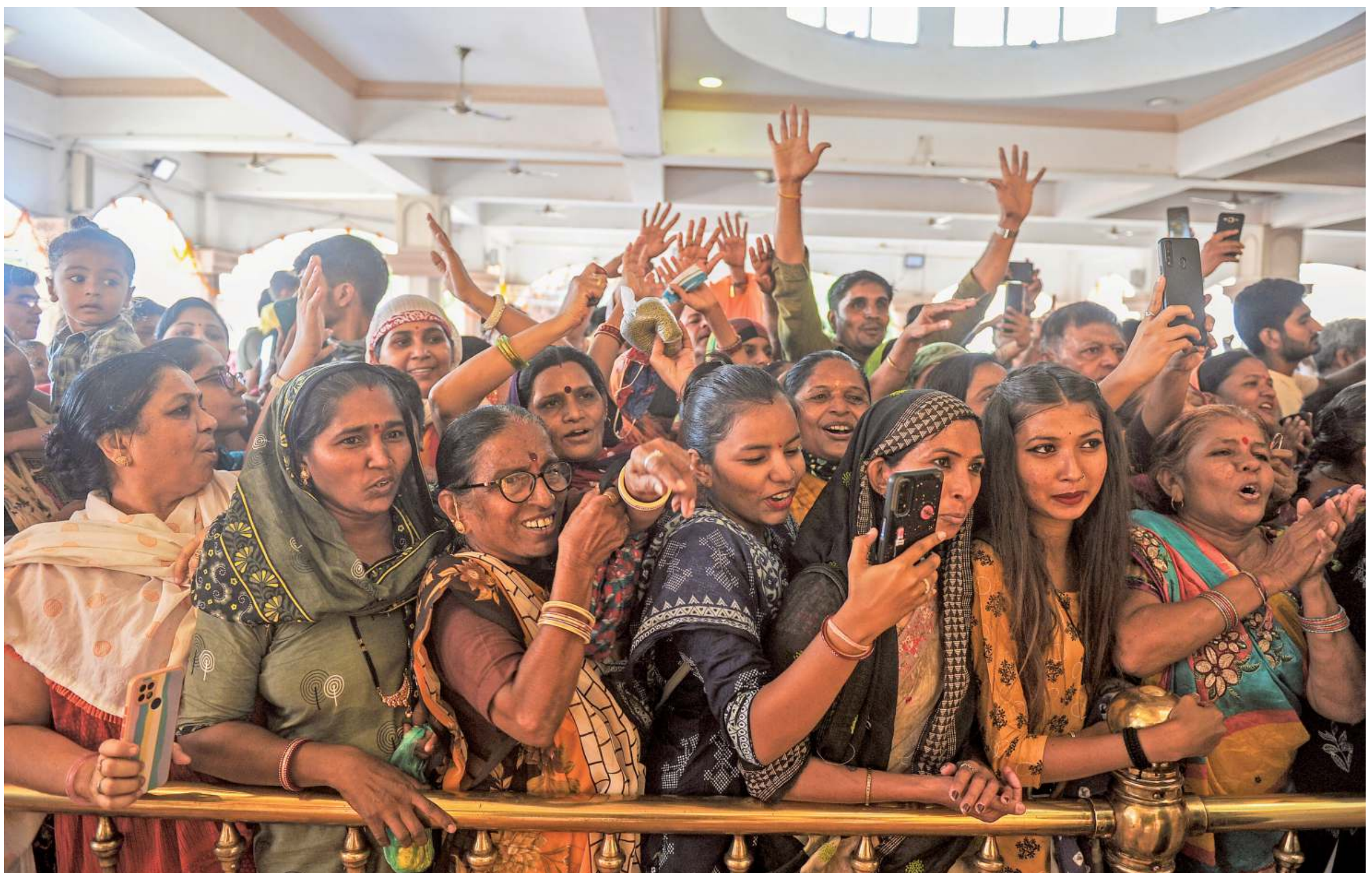
On a roll: An artist gives final touches to the main chariot.



Top view: A motorised paraglider takes off for aerial surveillance.



Safety first: Security personnel perform a rehearsal.



Fervour of faith: Devotees having darshan at the Jamalpur temple ahead of the yatra.



Festival of amity: Members of the Sufi Islamic Board and saints greet Shri Dilipdasji Maharaj, head priest of the Lord Jagannath Temple.



A breather: Policewomen taking a moment off from their duty.



Fragrance of unity: Muslims welcome with rose petals the yatra at the Jamalpur mosque.



Vantage point: People watch the yatra from a terrace.



Wide vista: The chariot on the temple premises.