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After NEET controversy, cancellation of UGC-NET exam disappoints pupils

Sanjay Kumar Amritsar, June 21: After the controversy around the conduct of NEET (UG) exam this year, the cancellation of the UGC-NET examination on June 20 by the National Testing Agency (NTA) has sent a wave of disappointment among the candidates, who sat for the test. The Education Ministry said that the examination was cancelled as the NTA had found errors of a technical nature and said that the integrity of the exam may have been compromised. The exam was conducted just a day before its cancellation on June 19. After the widespread criticism over the conduct of NEET, doubts have been raised over the way NTA chose to conduct the UGC-NET exam. "Post Covid, the UGC-NET was conducted in online mode, and there was never a question raised. Why did the NTA decide to conduct the exam in offline mode this year and immediately found errors or doubts of cheating? Also, the entire effort from the side of students and NTA has now gone waste since the exam was compromised," said Vriti Madaan, who gave the UGC-NET exam for the second time this year. Vriti said that she had high hopes this year as she had done well in the exam. "So much hard work and efforts go into preparing for the exam, so these incidents create a negative impact on students," she said. Vriti Madaan also said that now her PhD will be stuck for another few years. "Since the UGC has now made it mandatory to clear the UGC-NET for lectureship or PhD, the cancellation will further delay the completion of PhD and another academic year will go waste."

AAP Minister Atishi begins indefinite hunger strike for more water from Haryana

Simmi Kaur Babbar New Delhi, June 21: Delhi Water Minister Atishi on Friday began her indefinite hunger strike in south Delhi's Bhogal to press on her demand for more water from Haryana. Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal's wife Sunita Kejriwal, along with AAP MP Sanjay Singh and Delhi Minister Saurabh Bharadwaj, were present as Atishi began her fast. Sunita Kejriwal read out a message from the chief minister, who is currently lodged in Tihar jail, in which he expressed hope that Atishi's 'tapasya' would be successful. The chief minister said he was immensely pained by seeing on TV the plight of the people facing water shortage amid the ongoing intense heatwave, he said. "It's our culture to provide water to the thirsty. Delhi gets water from neighbouring states. We hoped support of neighbouring states in such intense heat. But, Haryana reduced Delhi's water share. "Although there are governments of different parties in the two states but is this time for politics over water," he said,

referring to the BJP that is in power in Haryana. Earlier, Atishi, accompanied by Sunita Kejriwal, Singh, Bharadwaj and other leaders paid tributes to Mahatma Gandhi at Rajghat before heading to Bhogal. There is such intense heat in Delhi and the water requirements of the people have increased. In such times, the people need more water, but there is a shortage. All the water in Delhi comes from its neighbouring states, Atishi said as she began her indefinite fast. She said her appeal to the Haryana government and a letter to Prime Minister Narendra Modi for help did not yield any result and Delhi was not getting adequate water. "I am left with no choice now but to start an indefinite hunger strike as I am unable to watch the plight of the men, women and children of Delhi. This indefinite Jal

Satyagrah will continue till Delhi people get water from Haryana," she said. Delhi gets 1005 MGD water which is supplied to people in the city. For the last two weeks, Haryana is giving 513 MGD instead of 613 MGD water to Delhi. More than 28 lakh people face shortage when Haryana stops 100 MGD of water, she

said. Haryana has further reduced the release of Delhi's share from 100 MGD to 120 MGD in the last two days, she claimed. In the morning, the minister said she would begin her indefinite hunger strike in Bhogal as, despite all efforts, the Haryana government was not releasing the full share of Delhi's water. "I will start 'Pani Satyagraha' from today... I will start an indefinite fast at Bhogal, Jangpura from 12 o'clock until the people of Delhi get their rightful share of water from Haryana," she said on X earlier in the day," she said on X. The minister has claimed that Haryana for the last two weeks was releasing 100 million gallons per day less water to Delhi against its share of 613 MGD, as a result, 28 lakh people in Delhi were affected. Delhi is facing an unprecedented heatwave as a result the water demand has increased.



India criticises Canadian parliament observing 'one-minute silence' in memory of Hardeep Nijjar

New Delhi, June 21: India on Friday was critical of the Canadian parliament observing "one-minute silence" in the memory of Khalistan extremist Hardeep Singh Nijjar, who was gunned down in Surrey, British Columbia, in June last year. "We naturally oppose any moves giving political space to extremism and advocacy of violence," External Affairs Ministry spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said. In an unusual move, the Canadian parliament observed "one-minute silence" two days ago in memory of Nijjar. The relations between the two countries came under severe strain following Trudeau's allegations in September last year of a "potential" involvement of Indian agents in Nijjar's killing. New Delhi rejected Trudeau's charges as "absurd". India has been maintaining that the main issue between the two countries is that of Canada giving space to pro-Khalistan elements operating from Canadian soil with impunity. Foreign Secretary Vinay Kwatra last week said India's main issue with Canada continues to be the political space that Ottawa provides to anti-India elements which advocate extremism and violence. India has repeatedly conveyed its "deep concerns" to Canada and New Delhi expects Ottawa to take strong action against those elements, he said. Nijjar, who was declared a terrorist by India, was shot dead outside a gurdwara in British Columbia on June 18 last year. The murder is being probed by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police.

YSRCP leader Mudragada Padmanabham changes name after failing to defeat Pawan Kalyan in Assembly poll

Amaravati, June 21: Senior YSRCP leader Mudragada Padmanabha Reddy, fulfilling his pledge made during the election campaign, after he failed to ensure the defeat of Janasena chief Pawan Kalyan in the recently concluded Assembly polls. The septuagenarian changed his name following the victory of Kalyan in Pithapuram Assembly constituency. In the run-up to the polls, the YSRCP leader had challenged that he would defeat Kalyan. "Nobody forced me to change my name. I have changed it on my own volition," Reddy said. However, he complained that the Janasena chief's fans and followers were allegedly abusing him. "The youth who love you (Kalyan) are incessantly dropping expletive messages. In my view this is not right. Rather than abusing, do one thing...eliminate us (all family members)," said Reddy. Reddy, a prominent Kapu community leader and former minister has campaigned for Kapu reservation.

No evidence against opposition leaders held by central agencies in Jharkhand and Delhi

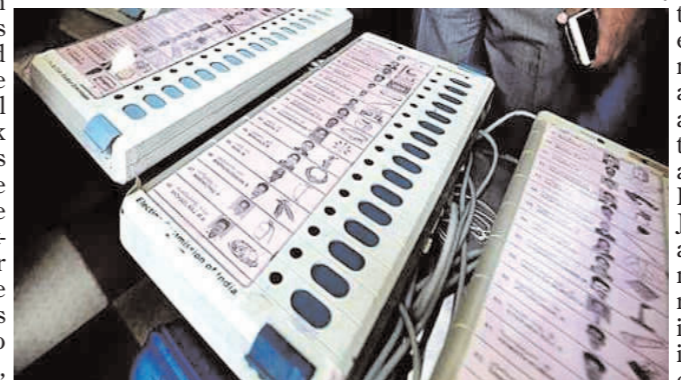
Mumbai, June 21: Shiv Sena (UBT) leader Sanjay Raut, on Friday, claimed that there was no evidence against opposition leaders arrested by the central agencies in Maharashtra, Delhi and Jharkhand, a remark coming a day after Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal was granted bail by a court. Talking to reporters here, Raut drew parallel to his own arrest by the Enforcement Directorate (ED) for alleged money laundering and that of other opposition leaders like Kejriwal, former Jharkhand chief minister Hemant Soren, former Maharashtra ministers Anil Deshmukh and Nawab Malik in different cases. "There is no evidence against (opposition) leaders in Maharashtra, Delhi and Jharkhand who were arrested by the central agencies," Raut said. The arrests in the alleged 'khichdi' and COVID-19 scams in the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation were also made due to political reasons, the Sena (UBT) MP claimed. He also alleged that Kejriwal's only crime was that his party defeated the BJP in 2015 and 2020 Delhi assembly polls. "This is why he was implicated in false cases," he said. Kejriwal was granted bail in a money laundering case stemming from the alleged excise policy scam on Thursday.

Election Commission to update voters' list in Jammu and Kashmir, Haryana, Jharkhand, Maharashtra

Navdeep Singh Sahni New Delhi, June 21: The Election Commission on Friday said it has initiated preparations for forthcoming assembly elections in Haryana, Maharashtra and Jharkhand with updation of electoral rolls in these states along with that in Jammu and Kashmir. July 1, 2024, will be the qualifying date for roll updation. For the just-held Lok Sabha polls, the voters' list was updated with January 1 as the qualifying date. Qualifying date helps establish number of voters on a given date in a state or in the country. The term of the existing legislative assemblies in the three states are going to end on November 3, November 26 and January 5, 2025, respectively and elections to these legislative assemblies are required to be conducted before the completion of their terms. Besides, assembly elections in

Jammu and Kashmir are also to be conducted for constituting a new house after delimitation of constituencies, the EC noted. Prime Minister Narendra Modi had said on Thursday that assembly elections would be held soon in Jammu and

emphasised the importance of enabling the people of Jammu and Kashmir to elect their representatives for the assembly. "Witnessing the huge participation of the people of Jammu and Kashmir in the recently concluded Lok Sabha elections, the Commission has also directed for the updation of electoral rolls in the UT with July 1, 2024 as the qualifying date," the poll authority said. In an indication that assembly polls in Jammu and Kashmir are imminent, the Election Commission had on June 7 said it has decided to accept applications seeking allotment of 'common symbols' from registered unrecognised parties in the Union Territory with immediate effect. An official had explained that under Para 10 B of the Election Symbols (Reservation & Allotment) Order, 1968, any registered unrecognised political party can apply for a 'common symbol' six months prior to the end of the term of a House.



Jammu and Kashmir Administration empowering youth with skills for Viksit Bharat: LG Manoj Sinha

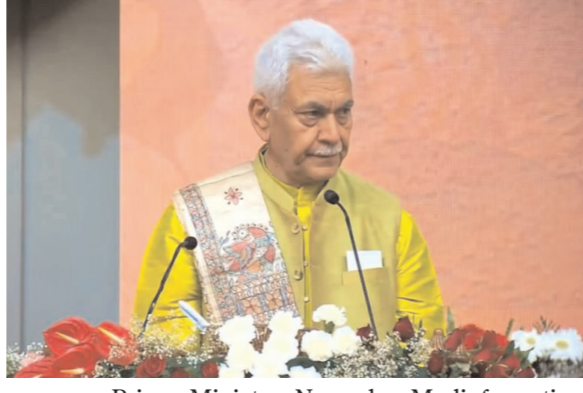
Tejinder Kaur Babbar Chandigarh, June 21: The Jammu and Kashmir Administration is empowering the youth of the UT with skills for Viksit Bharat, Lt Governor Manoj Sinha said while speaking at the 'Empowering Youth, Transforming J&K' programme in Srinagar addressed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi during his first visit to the Valley after becoming the Prime Minister for the third time. Addressing the gathering, Lt Governor Sinha said, "Under the guidance of the Prime Minister, the J&K Administration is empowering youth with skills for Viksit Bharat. "Today higher educational institutions and government agencies are providing them with

necessary resources, opportunities and support to realise their full potential and contribute to nation-building," LG Sinha said. "Grateful to

roadways, health and agriculture," he said. The LG said that in pursuit of building a bright and empowered future for the young generation, the J&K Administration had undertaken a series of ambitious initiatives focused on skill development, innovation, research and providing them all the necessary support to build start-ups. "In the past 4 years, multifaceted strategies have led to notable advancements in youth entrepreneurship. More than 40,000 youth have been employed in the government service over the past 4 years," LG Sinha said. "We are working with dedication to unlock the potential of our youth so that they can contribute towards inclusive growth and prosperity of Jammu and Kashmir," the LG said.

Left organisations, farmers want UAPA charges against Roy revoked

Amritsar, June 21: The members of Left organisations along with farmers staged a protest against the BJP-led NDA government at the Centre demanding withdrawal of UAPA charges against writer and activist Arundhati Roy and former professor Dr Sheikh Showkat Hussain. The protesters said that the Central government was trying to muzzle voices of dissent and that the cases against the two activists were politically motivated. Rattan Singh Randhawa, a farmer leader, said that the case against both the activists has been framed in connection with a seminar which was held 14 years ago. He added that Arundhati Roy has been charged for making a 'separatist' speech in the seminar. "It is interesting to note that in the last 14 years, nothing has happened for which the speech given by Roy could be held responsible," he added. Balkar Singh Dudala, another farmer leader, stated that earlier the BJP government had sent 16 intellectuals to jail on false charges in the Bhima-Koregaon case. The government is using draconian laws to silence all those who speak against it, he added. Dudala said student activists like Umar Khalid, Sharjeel Imam and others also have been behind the bars for many years. Dr Satnam Singh Ajnala said that Prof GN Saibaba was recently acquitted by the judiciary after he spent 10 years in jail under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act.



In India and across globe, people perform 'asanas' to mark Yoga Day: PM Modi

Naresh Malhotra New Delhi, June 21: Millions across India and the globe stretched, twisted and breathed in and out on the International Day of Yoga on Friday, with Prime Minister Narendra Modi leading the celebrations in the country from Kashmir. While the main event was held at the Sher-i-Kashmir International Convention Centre (SKICC) on the picturesque banks of the Dal Lake in Srinagar, people marked the day by performing 'asanas' in yoga sessions organised across the length and breadth of the country, with one also being held at sea on the aircraft carrier INS Vikramaditya. The world is looking at yoga as a powerful agent of global good, Prime Minister Modi said and described it as not just knowledge but also a science. "When people talk about yoga, most of them think it is a spiritual journey as if it is to find Allah, Ishwar or God...Leave aside the spiritual journey which can happen any time later. For now, you can focus on

personal development and yoga is part of that," he said while addressing a gathering at the SKICC on the 10th International Yoga Day. The prime minister's event was scheduled to be held in the open but early morning rain forced the event indoors. Unmindful of the rain, scores of students were amongst those who joined Modi in performing various 'asanas' on the occasion. They also requested him for selfies and he happily obliged. In Delhi, President Droupadi Murmu along with officials of the President's Secretariat performed yoga at the Rashtrapati Bhavan. "Yoga is a way to physical, mental and spiritual well-being. Let us resolve to adopt yoga as an integral part of our day-to-day living," the President said in a post on X and shared pictures of her doing yoga. This time the theme for the International Day of Yoga - celebrated to raise aware-

ness about yoga's physical, mental and spiritual benefits - was 'Yoga for Self and Society'. While in Rameswaram in Tamil Nadu, a group of people performed 'Jal Yoga' in the water, personnel from the armed and paramilitary forces did 'asanas' in the snow-capped mountains of Stachen and in the sand dunes of the Thar Desert in Rajasthan. The day was observed in all states with chief ministers, ministers and

governors participating in programmes. Union ministers, including Amit Shah, S Jaishankar and Rajnath Singh, were also part of yoga sessions organised in different cities or by their ministries. In ethnic violence-hit Manipur, Chief Minister N Biren Singh at an event asserted that his government would lay the path for betterment of society. Speaking at the state-level Yoga Day function in Imphal, Singh said the current situation in Manipur is a turning point for indigenous people and their future and if things are tackled wisely, a safe and secure future is guaranteed. Recognising its universal appeal, in December 2014, the UN proclaimed June 21 as the International Day of Yoga. The draft UN General Assembly resolution establishing the International Day of Yoga was proposed by India and endorsed by a record 175 member states.



India 3rd in growth of women researchers

New Delhi, June 21: India ranks third in the growth rate of women researchers, according to a report from scientific information disseminator Elsevier, which also underlined that gender equality in the domain remains "unacceptably far away" globally. At two per cent, India's yearly growth rate of women's share of active researchers over the last decade was the third highest, behind Egypt and the Netherlands only, the report titled 'Progress Towards Gender Equality in Research and Innovation - 2024 Review' said. Analysing inclusion and diversity across disciplines and geographies over 20 years, the report found that in India, women now make up 33 per cent of active researchers, compared to 22 per cent in Japan and 30 per cent in Egypt. India is now the world's third largest research producing country, it said. "India's rapid growth in women researchers highlights the ongoing gender equity efforts are truly encouraging," said Prof Sandeep Sancheti,

Vice President of Research Relations and Academic Affairs at Elsevier India. "While we have made significant headway in creating a more inclusive academic environment, challenges still remain," said Sancheti. Gender parity (40-60 per cent representation is defined as parity zone in the study) among researchers in health sciences was achieved in 2022, with women representing 41 per cent of all active researchers in India, according to the report. In life sciences, gender parity was achieved in 2021. As of 2022, women researchers in life sciences represented 43 per cent of the active ones, it said. The authors found that as of 2022, globally women researchers represented 41 per cent of those active, with a strong representation in health sciences. They added that while women have made gains in the last two decades, the progress has not been uniform across fields. For example, in physical sciences women made up only 33 per cent of the active researchers.



**Environmental film festival in Thiruvananthapuram on June 23**

**THIRUVANANTHAPURAM.** FILCA Film Society, in collaboration with Bharat Sevak Samaj, is set to host the Eco Terra Environmental Film Festival on Sunday. The event will showcase a curated collection of notable films focused on environmental themes, spanning international, national, and regional creations. The festival will include both feature films and documentaries.

The inaugural ceremony will be held at 10am at BSS Hall in Kowdiar, and renowned filmmaker Shaji N Karun will inaugurate the event. Supported by the Kerala State Film Development Corporation, the forest department, the lottery department, the International Film Festival of Kerala, and



various film societies, this festival aims to talk about the environment through the medium of cinema. Sanjayan Kumar IFS will honour the winners of environmental film competition. Sabu Shankar, B S Balachandran, B Radhakrishnan, J B Rajan, and Anilkumar P Y will also be present at the occasion. The festival will run until 9pm. Admission is free to the public. For more details, contact 8089036090 or visit their official website www.filca.in.

# Flotilla of books to welcome travellers in Kerala's Panavally

After the success of its pilot project, the department is all set to introduce floating libraries in its ferry boats operating in the Panavally-Poothotta and Ernakulam-Fort Kochi sections.



**KOCHI.** As the nation observed National Reading Day on June 19, the Kerala State Water Transport Department (KSWTD) is making a silent yet effective contribution to developing the reading habits of hundreds of commuters across the state by doubling its ferry boats as floating libraries.

"Who wouldn't like to flip a few pages of an interesting novel or story while enjoying the cool breeze of the backwaters? We're introducing more floating libraries in ferry services with limited stops and a sailing period of at least 20 minutes," M Sujith, Traffic Superintendent, Ernakulam region, told TNIE. After the success of its pilot project in the Muhamma-Kumarakom route, the department is all set to introduce 'Pusthakathoni' (floating libraries) in its ferry boats operating in Panavally-Poothotta and Ernakulam-Fort Kochi sections as well. "In the Panavally-Poothotta section, a 45-minute journey by boat, the Naduvathul Islam UP School has evinced interest in sponsoring and setting up a library on the ferry boat plying there. In Ernakulam, many have approached us, evincing interest. We hope to introduce the facility soon," the official said.

The 'floating libraries' were first introduced in two ferry boats (S-52 and S-55)

operating in the Muhamma-Kumarakom section. It all started when the A B Vilasam Higher Secondary School students in Muhamma, under the aegis of the National Service Scheme (NSS), proposed the idea of opening a mini-library on the boat jetty. SWT D Muhamma station master K S Shanavas then asked them why a floating library could not be set up on the boats itself, that could take the passengers to the world of literary wonders during the nearly 40-minute ride. "CMS College, Kottayam, then chipped in with interesting books and now the floating libraries in the two boats number over 250. The initiative turned out to be a big success, with many of the passengers devouring books of their choice during the boat journeys. Schoolchildren too were excited to find their choice of books among the collections," Sujith pointed out. The success prompted SWT D

to introduce the initiative in more boats. "A similar floating library was introduced in the boat operating in the Edathua-Chambakulam section a few months back. We got encouraging responses again and the same prompted us to introduce the floating libraries in more sections like Panavally," he added. "This is a very good initiative and they have a wonderful collection of books, including those by legendary authors like Vaikom Muhammad Basheer. It's really a great feeling to flip through a few pages amid the cool breeze from the backwater and the feeble sound of the boat moving along the water. But what I liked best was that the initiative brings books closer to ordinary people in regions that lack good library services," reflected Vijayan Karumandy, a native of Atholi, Kozhikode, after arriving at Muhamma in the boat 'S-55'

## Stop mindless pursuit of profit: Das to banks

**Mumbai.** RBI governor Shaktikanta Das has urged banks to avoid the "mindless pursuit of bottom line". He pointed out that some profit-driven business models may contain hidden vulnerabilities, emphasising that profitability should not come at the expense of managing these risks. Speaking on keeping the financial system resilient and crisis-immune at an event organised by the College of Supervisors, Das said that RBI's endeavour is to smell out a crisis before it builds into one and take advance action. "I cannot afford to say that we are able to smell out a crisis on every occasion, but we can do this on a best-effort basis," Das said. Das highlighted how RBI's actions to moderate credit growth in unsecured credit and lending to NBFCs had resulted in lending to these sectors slowing down. He said that the central bank has also started adopting unconventional measures, such as having an RBI executive director address the board of a regulated entity if it feels stress is building up. The governor's statement comes at a time when bank profits are at an all-time high, with the sector's collective bottom-line crossing Rs 4 lakh crore. Market expectations of sustained profit growth have driven the Nifty Bank Index to an all-time high.

The governor explained RBI's proactive approach against the backdrop of the global discussion on whether regulators were behind the curve during the recent banking crisis led by the Silicon Valley collapse in the US and Credit Suisse in Europe.

"In today's environment, which is characterised by turbulent global spillovers and uncertainties, it's important for the financial sector to form an adaptive and forward-looking approach to navigate amidst the emerging challenges," said Das. Das said that RBI will fine-tune the regulatory architecture and supervision reading to promote the long-term resilience and stability of the financial system. He added that stress in the financial system can arise from multiple sources — from internal factors such as deficiencies within a bank, financial entity, or an NBFC to external factors like climate-related issues, changes in business cycles, or misaligned monetary policies that do not reflect the economic conditions. A seemingly minor problem in the balance sheet or financial institution, which management might overlook, could escalate over time. Undetected fraud within these organisations can also build up to create significant stress. Technological failures or dependencies, such as IT system outages, can further contribute to financial instability. In the larger context, failures elsewhere can impact a financial entity, potentially leading to a crisis.

# No rains, no labourers, Anantpur ryot forced to put young sons to work

**ANANTAPUR.** The image of two young boys helping their father till a piece of land under the scorching sun in Anantapur district starkly reflects the sorry state of farmers in the region. After the death of his only ox, Boya Sarddanappa, a native of Nuthimadug village in Kamabadoor mandal, was forced to put his sons to work in his field for cultivating tomatoes. He could not hire help due to non-availability of labourers. Even if he could, paying them would have been burdensome considering that the drought last year significantly hampered the farmer's yield and profits. Over the past few years, the failure of crops, particularly groundnut, due to irregular rains has brought losses to farmers. Even when the harvest was good, the profit margin was insignificant. Rising labour costs and non-availability of farm hands have added to the woes of the farmers, more so small and marginal farmers. With rising input costs, farmers' debts have also surged.



Sarddanappa and his brothers own five acres of land. He sunk a borewell and with the little water he could get, he cultivated different crops only to suffer losses. With no other option, he was forced to take

debts to support his family. A few years ago, he met with an accident, following which he could not do heavy manual work. Hence, he had to depend on his family to help him in the field.

The farmer purchased two cows and an ox for dairy farming and farm work. Unfortunately, the ox and one cow died. He had to sell the other cow to clear his debts as money lenders had been pressuring him to pay back.

Expressing his helplessness, the farmer rued, "I don't have any other go, but to

depend on my sons. Farming is the only way I can support my family. A few years ago, my leg was fractured in an accident, leaving me incapable of doing heavy work." Farmer says hiring of agricultural workers gets expensive

Sardannappa's sons—Karthik and Rana Pratap—study inter second year and Class 9 respectively. They have been helping their father day and night to prepare the land for cultivating tomatoes this season.

Sardannappa explained that two quintals of groundnut, which he sowed last Kharif

season at a cost of Rs 70,000, only fetched him Rs 30,000. "In one acre, I cultivated tobacco with an investment of Rs 75,000, but I could only get Rs 38,000 for the yield. To support my family with dairy farming, I purchased two cows. One died and I had to sell the other to repay debts. My agriculture motor gets burnt every month due to the single-phase of power supply, further exacerbating my financial issues," Sarddanappa lamented

According to farmers, the cost of hiring help has increased abnormally in the last few years. Further, the number of people doing farm labour has also dropped significantly in Rayalaseema region in recent years

Earlier, a farm hand could be hired for anywhere between Rs 150 to Rs 400 per day. Now, a woman farm hand charges anywhere between Rs 300 to Rs 500 per day and a male worker demands Rs 800 to Rs 1,000 per day, the farmers in the region explained.

Unlike before, the agriculture labourers only prefer to work for limited hours as per their convenience. If farmers ask them to work a little longer, they might not show up the next day.

## Tomato prices on six-month high, 15 kg-crate sells for Rs 900 in Madurai

**MADURAI.** In what is being termed as the highest surge in the price of tomatoes in the last six months, a 15 kg-crate of tomatoes was sold for a whopping Rs 900 at the wholesale market in Madurai on Thursday. The skyrocketing prices are a result of unseasonal rain in the district. The streak of summer rain began in May and continues to hit production and supply of crops and vegetables in the district, among other areas. This has resulted in a dip in the arrival of vegetables in Madurai, rendering the region to rely on arrival from Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, and Maharashtra to meet daily demand. With the logistics cost, vegetable prices, especially that of tomatoes, have only surged in the past two months.

In April, the prices of tomatoes ranged between Rs 100 and Rs 150 for every 15 kg-crate (Rs 10/kg). When the input from local cultivators started dipping in

May, prices have started to surge in Madurai wholesale market. By mid-May, one crate of tomatoes cost Rs 500/kg (Rs 20 - Rs 50/kg). According to experts, local input went dry leaving the market to rely on other states in June. In the last few weeks, prices crossed Rs 800 for a crate, and hit Rs 900/crate (Rs 70/kg) on Thursday. N Chinnamayan, president of central market all traders federation, said, "Usually, about 20 lorries laden with tomatoes arrive at the market daily, but at present only six lorries are bringing supplies from other states. The prices are likely to remain high, with the showers affecting the transportation, till the next harvest season in July-August." On the flip side, Chinnamayan noted that the surge in prices has resulted in a dip in people purchasing tomatoes in massive quantities, thereby easing the demand.



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### The Congress won only eight out of the 17 Lok Sabha seats in Telangana, falling short of its goal of winning over 10 seats.

# Telangana Congress readies reasons for poor show in Lok Sabha elections

**HYDERABAD.** The Telangana Congress is getting ready to give its view on the party's underwhelming performance in the just concluded Lok Sabha elections to the fact-finding committee constituted by the All India Congress Committee (AICC).

The Congress won only eight out of the 17 Lok Sabha seats in Telangana, falling short of its goal of winning over 10 seats. The committee is set to visit the state to pinpoint the reasons behind the party's inability to achieve its target of seats in the state where it is in power.

Ahead of the committee's visit, functionaries of the Telangana Congress, including ministers, constituency in-charges, MLAs and secretaries are preparing to present their perspectives to the committee, based on information gathered from the ground. Sources said that several issues contributed to the party's lacklustre performance in constituencies like Nizamabad,



Medak, Chevella, Secunderabad, Adilabad, Karimnagar, Mahbubnagar and Malkajgiri. One of the major reasons for the "debacle" was picking parachute leaders as the party candidates, which reportedly contributed to the defeat in Chevella, Malkajgiri, Medak, Adilabad and Secunderabad Lok Sabha

constituencies. There is also dissatisfaction with selection of candidates for the Karimnagar, Chevella, Malkajgiri, Secunderabad and Adilabad Lok Sabha seats which allegedly led to some MLAs and candidates not cooperating effectively. In Mahbubnagar, Adilabad, Karimnagar, Nizamabad and Chevella constituencies, MLAs are said to have taken the Lok Sabha elections too lightly.

Advertisements Additionally, some ministers and Lok Sabha in-charges failed to focus adequately on the campaign, resulting in defeats. A section of the party believes that there were instances where leaders lobbied for tickets for their supporters who failed to emerge victorious.

State leaders are also pointing fingers at certain AICC secretaries and other key functionaries for failing to obtain accurate ground reports

while selecting candidates. A section of the party believes that these "ground reports" were influenced by ministerial pressure. In fact, this issue has been noted by AICC president Mallikarjun Kharge and general secretary KC Venugopal. Also, some MLAs and senior leaders believe that last-minute announcement of candidates affected the party's performance, causing the cadre to shift their loyalty to BJP nominees in cases where the Congress picks were perceived as weak. A section of the party believes that three Lok Sabha constituencies in particular were lost due to mistakes by the candidates themselves. In a constituency in south Telangana, a candidate's perceived neglect of a specific community led to his defeat. In another south Telangana segment, overconfidence and lack of support from veteran Congress leaders resulted in defeat. In north Telangana, activities of a minister and his close followers led to defeat even though the wind was blowing favourably towards the Congress.



NEWS BOX

Protected turtles seized from a pet shop in Greater Noida

Noida. The forest department seized dozens of endangered turtles from a pet shop at Jagat Farm, Greater Noida on Thursday. The seized turtles included five Black Indian Russell Neck turtles, two Red Indian Russell Neck turtles, two endangered Black Spotted Turtles, and three American Singapore turtles, said an official.

The raid took place based on the complaint lodged by Kaveri Rana Bhardwaj, an animal activist, on June 20. Included on the red list of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), the Black Spotted or Spotted Pond turtle is heavily smuggled — earlier for its meat, now as an exotic pet. This medium-sized freshwater turtle with a black shell with yellow streaks is native to South Asia.

We also published the following articles recently UPSC Prelims 2024: Noida-Greater Noida Metro to Start Early on June 16 Noida-Greater Noida Metro will start services at 6 am on Sunday for UPSC civil services (prelims) exam on June 16, adjusting from the usual 8 am start on the Aqua Line. 111016328

How Chennai's Rs 1,000-crore exotic pet industry operates Chennai has emerged as a hub for wildlife trafficking, particularly in the pet trade, with large markets and breeding farms contributing to a booming illegal exotic pet industry. Amul seeks return of ice cream tub from Noida customer for investigation after centipede complaint Amul responds to a complaint of a centipede in an ice cream tub in Noida, assuring quality and safety from production to sale. The brand emphasizes its commitment to customer satisfaction and product integrity

B'luru cops reach Noida, serve notice to YouTuber booked for Rahul remarks

Noida. Three cops from Karnataka Police arrived at the Sector 55 house of YouTuber Ajeet Bharti on Thursday and handed him a notice that asked him to appear at a Bengaluru police station in seven days in connection with his remarks on Congress leader Rahul Gandhi last week. In a post on X, Bharti said some cops from Noida also arrived at his house after a call from him and took away with them the three men who were in civies.

"Noida Police swung into action as soon as I informed them. A work that could have been done by an e-mail, three cops were sent to do that. @noidapolice sent as many as 5 officers and some constables to take them away. Thank you @Uppolice, @myogiadityanath, and Noida Police," Bharti posted. On June 15, a complaint was lodged against Bharti at High Grounds police station of Bengaluru by BK Bopanna, secretary of Congress's legal cell in the party-ruled Karnataka.

Bopanna referred to a recent video posted by Bharti on X, claiming that Congress leader Rahul was planning to rebuild the Babri Masjid at the site of the newly inaugurated Ram temple in Ayodhya. Bopanna alleged the video amounted to hate speech and could potentially hurt religious statements.

An FIR was registered against Bharti under sections 153A (promoting enmity between different groups on the grounds of religion, race, place of birth, residence, language, etc.) and 505 (2) (statements creating or promoting enmity, hatred, or ill-will between classes) of the IPC. The notice that was handed to the YouTuber at his Noida house referred to the complaint.

"...for the purpose of the investigation of the said case, you are hereby directed to appear before the undersigned investigation officer at 11.00 am at the High Grounds police station within 7 days of receipt of this notice," the notice said. Cops at Bengaluru's High Grounds police station ruled out any argument with their counterparts from Noida. "There was no tussle with Noida cops. Ajeet Bharti was causing trouble while accepting the notice. Noida police merely assisted us in this regard," inspector Bharath Basvaraj told TOI from Bengaluru. "We are not required to inform Noida police while serving a notice. This would have been done if we were to make an arrest," he added.

An officer from Sector 58 police station confirmed getting a call from Karnataka cops as well as Bharti. "A team reached Ajeet Bharti's house and the notice was handed over to him peacefully. There was no tussle. We reached the spot because Bharti claimed he was being threatened. They came to only serve him the notice, not arrest him," the officer added.

Snag in high-tension cable sparks 12-hr outages

Gurgaon. Residents of Ramprastha City in Sector 37 D faced a 12-hour power outage starting at 11pm on Wednesday due to a fault in a high-tension (HT) line. The blackout, which lasted until 11am on Thursday, was exacerbated when the society's backup diesel generators had to be stopped as they overheated within 45 minutes of the initial outage. Frustrated residents were left in near-total darkness, with only sporadic, rotational power supply provided to individual towers after an outcry. No adequate arrangements were made by the developer to mitigate the issue, residents alleged. The township, launched in 2008 and comprising multiple phases with three occupied societies (Atrium, Edge, and View), faced a similar issue earlier with a 21-hour outage in April. "At the time of possession in 2017, we were promised round-the-clock electricity, but the situation has only worsened over the years," said Saurabh Mittal, RWA general secretary of View. "We are struggling to get basic amenities, despite being charged heavily. A similar situation prevailed in April when there was no electricity for over 21 hours and they were out of diesel stock for the generator," he added. Ravi Kumar, a resident of Edge, said, "Last night's power outage left my family, including my elderly parents, without electricity for hours. Despite trying to contact the maintenance office, no one was available to answer my calls. The office was unstaffed, leaving us without support during a critical time. To make matters worse, the power backup system was not working, leaving us without electricity the whole night." Ashutosh Thakur, general secretary of Edge, highlighted the critical risks posed to those reliant on refrigerated medicines and the dangers for residents in high-rise buildings when elevators are out of service. "Over 1500 families living in the township have been grappling with various issues for years due to the negligent attitude of the developer's facility management. Despite paying Rs 30 per unit for backup power, the developer has failed to ensure a reliable supply.

Soon, 7-member Rera team to recover dues from realtors

Gurgaon. By next month, the Haryana real estate regulatory authority (HRERA) will have a team of seven members that will work exclusively to recover dues such as charges for delayed possession from developers. Pending dues by developers amount to Rs 750 crore in the city.

Officials said on Thursday that the authority has invited applications to hire specialised staff for the first time. The team will be headed by a revenue officer.

"We have already invited applications for the post of district revenue officer/tehsildar, judgment writer, stenographer, reader, record keeper and clerk. We hope to constitute the team by July 15," said HRERA chief Arun Kumar.

The power to execute recovery certificates was taken from HRERA and delegated to deputy commissioner of Gurgaon, who is also head of revenue department, two years ago. The deputy commissioner managed to recover Rs 150 crore of the pending Rs 900 crore amount. On May 15, Haryana govt empowered HRERA to once again execute recovery warrants r certificates issued by the regulator. In the last six years, since H-Rera came into

existence, more than 3,000 recovery certificates are pending for execution.

Recovery certificate is the amount that is to be paid by developers for delayed possession of property. Kumar said the regulator will try to improve its past record in collecting pending dues, though it could still take time as the team was being constituted. "If needed, the authority will also tie up with the police department and create a lock-up facility and vehicle for execution of the pending recovery certificates," he said on Thursday. We also published the following articles recently MP Shettar focuses on completion of long-pending projects in Bgavi Newly elected MP Jagadish Shettar focuses on completing long-pending development projects in Belagavi, including the Belagavi-Dharwad new railway line and projects initiated by former MP Suresh Angadi. 111045698

Stray Kids' track Back Door attains gold certification from the Recording Industry Association of America (RIAA) Stray Kids' hit song 'Back Door' was certified gold by RIAA, marking their fifth gold

certification, showcasing their dual role as creators and performers. 111034545 How Yoga enhances cancer treatment and recovery Each year, more than 18 million

people worldwide receive a cancer diagnosis. Modern lifestyle disorders, mental health problems, smoking, drinking, and other factors significantly contribute to the rise in cancer cases.

50% of Namo Bharat rapid rail corridor ready; trains from Sahibabad to Meerut South to run soon

GHAZIABAD. Trains on the country's first Namo Bharat (rapid rail) corridor will soon run from Sahibabad to Meerut South. The commissioner of metro rail safety (CMRS) has cleared the third section of the corridor - after Sahibabad-Duhai and Duhai-Modinagar North - for commercial operations. This 8km section from Modinagar North to Meerut South will increase the span of train operations to 42km, taking it above the 50% mark of the 80km Delhi-Meerut corridor, which has a completion date of mid-2025. "The section will cut the travel time from Sahibabad to Meerut South to nearly 30 minutes. State and central govts have been told that work on the



8km section has been completed. A decision on its inauguration is likely soon," an NCRTC official said. Meerut South will be the district's first station on the rapid rail corridor which will also have metro services.

2 trucks collide, driver (20) who dozed off dies

Noida. A 20-year-old man died after falling asleep while driving a milk truck, leading to a head-on collision with another speeding truck in Greater Noida's Dankaur area. The incident occurred around 5.30 am near a private hospital. The driver's helper who was also in the milk truck as well as the other truck's driver both sustained minor injuries. According to Munendra Singh, SHO, Dankaur, the deceased, Sunny Kumar, was a native of Dhamrawali in Bulandshahr. "On Thursday morning, we received information that two trucks, including a milk truck, collided head-on on Sikandrabad road under the jurisdiction of Dankaur police station," said SHO Singh. Upon receiving the emergency call, a police team hurried to the scene and

discovered that Kumar was stuck inside the damaged cabin of the milk truck. The SHO added, "With the help of locals, the injured man was rescued from the damaged cabin and rushed to a nearby private hospital, where he was declared dead." Both Kumar's helper and the driver of the other truck received treatment at the hospital. Police found during the investigation that Kumar had fallen asleep behind the wheel and collided with an oncoming truck. "Around 5.30am, when Kumar, who was driving the milk truck, fell asleep and collided head-on with the opposite speeding truck near a private hospital in Dankaur," said SHO Singh. We also published the following articles recently Four labourers killed in truck collision in UP's Ghaziabad Four

people died and 18 sustained injuries in a truck collision near Muradnagar, UP, involving Eicher Canter from Sonapat, Haryana. Victims identified. Injured individuals treated at local health center and referred to hospitals, with nine in critical condition sent to GTB Hospital, Delhi. 12 pilgrims injured as bus rams into truck in Chandauli 12 pilgrims from Jharkhand and West Bengal were injured in a bus-truck collision in UP while heading to Kedarnath. Survivors mentioned stopping in Gaya for dinner break before the accident. 12 pilgrims injured as bus rams into truck in Chandauli 12 pilgrims from Jharkhand and West Bengal were injured in a bus-truck collision in Chandauli district, UP, while on their way to Kedarnath shrine in Uttarakhand.

Builder's NOC must for buyers to pay lease rent YEIDA to take call at meet

Noida: Yamuna Expressway Industrial Development Authority (YEIDA) is likely to table a proposal at its next board meeting to make it mandatory for builders to bear all costs related to common area and not transfer the amount to homebuyers. Most group housing projects in YEIDA area are incomplete because the Authority needs to collect Rs 4,000 crore from developers in total. To facilitate the buyers, YEIDA has made a provision that allows them to pay lease rent and additional farmers' compensation directly to the Authority. But for this, the homebuyers need to get an NOC from builders. In Noida and Greater Noida, however, there is no provision for direct payments by homebuyers. Builder's NOC must for buyers to pay lease rent? YEIDA to take call at meet Officials said most buyers have not managed NOCs from their developers, many of whom have been demanding that customers pay for common area amenities and penal interest too, if any.

Sources in the Authority said the board would take a call on whether to do away with the provision of taking an NOC from the builder or initiate talks with realtors. The meeting is scheduled for later this month. A total of 37 agendas will be placed for discussion at the meeting. Among other issues, the board will consider extending the deadline for plot owners to complete construction by this year. Officials will also take a call on whether to partially cancel the lease deed of builders who did not opt for the govt's rehabilitation package for stalled projects in the state. YEIDA is also likely to make contractors responsible for executing a project liable for its maintenance too for five years. As of now, there is no mechanism to ensure proper maintenance of civil work by agencies that have constructed them. A plan to construct two ramps to Film City from "23km" on Yamuna Expressway will also be discussed. The project — to be built for Rs 20 crore — will provide direct connectivity to residential sectors 18 and 20 too. Various land allotment schemes, including those related to

Storms bring max temp below 40°C for the first time in 39 days

Gurgaon. Dust storms, thunderstorms, and a cloudy night brought down the maximum temperature to 39.8 degrees Celsius on Thursday, giving the city a brief respite from the heatwave. This was the first time in 39 days that the day temperature was less than 40 degrees Celsius. Before this, it was 39.7 degrees on May 12. The minimum temperature too dropped by 6.7 notches on Thursday. At 28.1 degrees Celsius, it was 3.1 notches below normal, compared to Wednesday's 34.8 degrees. The city is expected to witness high temperatures again in a week with the ains," an IMD official said. According to experts, the monsoon has been stagnant at the boundary of West Bengal and Assam since May 31. "Since no western disturbance was seen in north India during the past 20 days, hot weather conditions are continuing. Delhi-NCR is warmer because of very large concrete zones, where added heat is released from air conditioners, compared to surrounding rural areas which are greener and relatively cooler," Dr K J Ramesh, former IMD director general of meteorology, told TOI.

urbanisation, leading to the loss of green space. Concrete buildings and pavements are known to be heat absorbing, limiting cooling and creating urban heat islands and warmer nights. This, in turn, decreases the diurnal temperature range — the difference between daytime and nighttime temperatures," said Dr Anushya J, a research scientist at the Centre for Study of Science, Technology and Policy. The minimum temperature in Delhi dipped to 29.6 degrees Celsius, two notches above normal in contrast with 35.2 degrees on Wednesday. Base

temperatures were 35.2 degrees on Wednesday. Base

Offered herbal medicines, but not delivered; 11 arrested

Gurgaon. Operators at a call centre in Sector 18 were arrested for allegedly cheating people by selling them herbal sexual medicines online. The scam was busted on Thursday. A total of 11 people, including four women, were arrested from the call centre, cops said. On the instructions of their employers, the arrested accused allegedly posted advertisements for herbal sexual medicines online. When potential customers contacted the numbers given in these ads, the accused took orders from them and instructed them to deposit money into various bank accounts but never delivered the products. "The accused also deceived people by charging them GST, packing, and courier fees through QR codes and UPI IDs," an officer said. A preliminary probe revealed that the call centre was operational for around a year. They were paid a salary of Rs 15,000 monthly and also received a 5% share of the money swindled from victims, said an official. The police team seized seven mobile phones, SIM cards, and 2 CPUs. A case has been filed against the accused under IPC sections 420 (cheating) and 120 B (criminal conspiracy). We also published the following articles recently Racket selling 'herbal pills' via Google ads to boost sexual health busted Gurugram Police raided a fraudulent call center in Sector 18, apprehending 11 individuals for deceiving people with fake herbal remedies for sexual health improvement.

we also published the following articles recently Racket selling 'herbal pills' via Google ads to boost sexual health busted Gurugram Police raided a fraudulent call center in Sector 18, apprehending 11 individuals for deceiving people with fake herbal remedies for sexual health improvement.

Name Change I, RAGINEE SINGH wife of NO-15215689N Rank-NK Name-SHIVAJI SINGH R/O VILL-RAUNA KHURD, PO-BELA, TEH-VARANASI, DIST-VARANASI, UTTAR PRADESH-221101 have changed my name from RAGINEE SINGH to RAGINI SINGH for all future purposes vide affidavit dated 21/06/2024 before Notary Public, Delhi.

सर्वजनिक सूचना मी शबनम राना पत्नी आशरफ अहमद, निवासी अहमद 423, सुन्दर नगी दिल्ली-93 पोषण कमी ही कि मेरे प्यार में V5222198 में मेरा नाम शबनम शबनम (Shabnam) रानी है जबकि मेरा सही नाम शबनम राना (Shabnam Rana) है, यह दोनों एक ही महिला हैं कि मेरे ही नाम हैं।

Name Change I, Harshvardhan Maheshwari S/o Ravi Avtar Maheshwari R/o B-44, First floor, Ardee City, Sector-52, Gurgaon, Haryana-122003, Have Changed My Name to Harshvardhan Tolla For All Future Purpose

Name Change I, Parveen Kumar S/o Sh. Sahab Singh, R/o H.No-112, Mundhela Kalan, Delhi-110073, Praveen Kumar and Parveen Kumar Both are Same Person

NORTHERN RAILWAY INVITATION OF TENDERS THROUGH E-PROCUREMENT SYSTEM Tender Notice No. 26/2024-2025 Date: 21.06.2024 Principal Chief Materials Manager, Northern Railway, New Delhi-110001, for and on behalf of the President of India, invites e-tenders through e-procurement system for supply of the following items-

Name Change I, N-7781348A Rank-HAV Name-SUJEET KUMAR is legal father of KOMUDI presently residing at VPO-AJAIB, PS-MEHAM, DIST-ROHTAK, HARYANA-124111 have changed my minor daughter's name from KOMUDI to KAJUJUDI DALAL for all future purposes vide affidavit dated 21/06/2024 Before Executive Magistrate, Delhi.

Name Change I, Ritvi Verma W/o Sandeep Tak R/o 56, Ward No-06, Jai Dev Colony, Hally Mandi, Gurgaon, Haryana-122504, Have Changed My Name To Ritvi For All Future Purpose

Name Change I, RAVANAMMA M/o No. 14829561P Rank HAV/MT Name RAMESHBABU PAGIDI R/o VPO- CHOLLAVEEDU, TEH-RACHERLA, DIST-PRAKASAM (AP)-523372, have changed my name from RAVANAMMA to PAGIDI RAVANAMMA for all future purposes. Vide affidavit No. IN-DL05560886323163W dated 19.06.2024 Public Notary Delhi.

SEVERING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE NORTHERN RAILWAY E-TENDER NOTICE Dy. CSTE/C/CW/Northern Railway, DRM office, 4<sup>th</sup> floor, New Delhi for and on behalf of the President of India invites open e-tender under Single Packet system from experienced & established contractors having sufficient experience in similar nature of work and satisfying minimum eligibility criteria on the prescribed form for the following work:

PUBLIC NOTICE Information is given to general public at large that our client Mrs. Sharmila Sood w/o Mr. Vineet Sood is the owner of Freehold Residential Ground Floor having area measuring 1500 sq. ft. along with Basement no. 1 (Front), built on Plot no. 14, Block III, situated at Eros Garden Colony, Faridabad, Haryana-121009. By Virtue, Transfer Deed dated 13.04.2022 as Doc no. 350, Book No. 1, Vol No. 0/10 Page no. 87.5/28-30 SR-Badkhal, in the chain document below mentioned not available i.e. Probate Order of Deed of Will dated 17.05.2020 now our client is declaring that that any other Person does not have any right over the said property, and Same property sold too be Mr. Ajay Khatriyana and same has been finance by Piramal Capital & Housing Finance Ltd, Branch, Jhendarwala, Delhi. If any person is having objection right of claim against the said property, contact to undersigned along with supporting documents within 07 days from the date of publication of this notice and or the same to the undersigned if found by anyone. Thereafter no claim shall be entertained. [NAVEEN KUMAR VERMA] Advocate F-211, sector-3 Vaishali Ghaziabad Uttar Pradesh-201010, Contact at 095587432



NEWS BOX

### South Korea, US slam new Russia-North Korea treaty, say 'threat to regional peace'

Seoul South Korea's foreign minister Cho Tae-yul and U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken condemned the new treaty between Russia and North Korea as a serious threat to regional peace and stability, Seoul's foreign ministry said in a statement on Friday.

The two in a phone call on Thursday also discussed ways to respond to the pact, and agreed to closely monitor the situation, the foreign ministry said. Blinken said the United States supports South Korea's responses to the agreement, in which Moscow and Pyongyang said each country would provide immediate military assistance if either faces armed aggression. Cho said any cooperation to help strengthen North Korea's military capabilities is a clear violation of the U.N. Security Council resolutions,



according to the statement. The United States will consider various ways to respond to the threat to international peace and stability from Russia and North Korea, Blinken was quoted as saying by the ministry. South Korean National Security Adviser Chang Ho-jin said on Thursday that Seoul will review the possibility of supplying weapons to Ukraine in response to the landmark pact.

### Fifteen people shot during Juneteenth celebration in Oakland, California

OAKLAND, Calif. Fifteen people were shot after an illegal "sideshow" took over a peaceful Juneteenth celebration in Oakland, California, police said Thursday. Investigators are seeking multiple shooters — more than 50 shell casings were recovered at the scene — following the violence Wednesday night at Lake Merritt, but no arrests had been made by Thursday afternoon. About 20 vehicles — mostly all-terrain vehicles and dirt bikes — arrived around 8:15 p.m. Wednesday and started a sideshow on the north side of the lake as 5,000 people attended the Juneteenth event. Sideshows, also known as street takeovers, involve stunts like doughnuts, drifting and burnouts. Street takeovers often involve hundreds of spectators. Cars block access to an intersection, stopping traffic in all directions and making it harder for police to respond. It's become a widespread problem around the country, including Oakland and other cities across the US. Oakland Police Chief Floyd Mitchell on Thursday said one person walked across the hood of a sideshow vehicle. Multiple occupants got out and attacked the person, whose injuries required them to be hospitalized. Some of the people in the crowd also attacked police officers, Mitchell said during a news conference. A woman was taken into custody for assaulting an officer while the officer was giving first aid to a gunshot victim. Detectives are combing social media for leads to the shooters' identities, Mitchell said.

At least one gunshot victim was in critical condition. The victims' ages ranged from 20 to 30 years old. Other injuries included the loss of fingers and minor gunshot wounds. "The opportunity to celebrate with your family and friends should never be marred by gunfire," Mitchell said. June 19, or Juneteenth, marks the day in 1865 enslaved people in Galveston, Texas found out they had been freed — after the end of the Civil War, and two years after President Abraham Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation. Juneteenth was designated a federal holiday in 2021 and has become more universally recognized beyond Black America. Many people get the day off work or school, and there are a plethora of street festivals, fairs, concerts and other events.

### A Muslim mob in Pakistan torches a police station and lynches a man after accusing him of blasphemy

PESHAWAR, Pakistan. A Muslim mob in northwestern Pakistan on Thursday broke into a police station, snatched a man who was held there and then lynched him over allegations that he had desecrated Islam's holy book, the Quran. The attackers also torched the station in Madyan, a town in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province, and burned police vehicles parked there, according to local police official Rahim Ullah.

The slain man, Mohammad Ismail, was a tourist who was staying at a hotel in the town when some locals turned on him and accused him of blasphemy.

Ullah said police officers took the man to the station for his protection but the mob swelled and pursued them. The mob then attacked the station, snatched Ismail, beat him to death and then burned his body and left it on the road. Additional police forces have arrived in Madyan to bring the situation under control, Ullah said. It wasn't immediately known if any of the attackers were arrested. Attacks on people accused of blasphemy are common in this conservative Islamic nation where charges of blasphemy can carry the death sentence. International and national rights groups say blasphemy accusations have often been used to intimidate religious minorities and settle personal scores. Last month, a mob in Pakistan's eastern Punjab province attacked a Christian man, Nazir Masih, 72, after accusing him of desecrating pages of Quran. He later died at a hospital.

## Donald Sutherland, the towering actor whose career spanned 'M.A.S.H.' to 'Hunger Games,' dies at 88

NEW YORK. Donald Sutherland, the Canadian actor whose wry, arrestingly off-kilter screen presence spanned more than half a century of films from "M.A.S.H." to "The Hunger Games," has died. He was 88. Sutherland died Thursday in Miami after a long illness, according to a statement from Creative Artists Agency, which represented him.

Kiefer Sutherland said on X he believed his father was one of the most important actors in the history of film: "Never daunted by a role, good, bad or ugly. He loved what he did and did what he loved, and one can never ask for more than that."

The tall and gaunt Sutherland, who flashed a grin that could be sweet or diabolical, was known for offbeat characters like Hawkeye Pierce in Robert Altman's "M.A.S.H.," the hippie tank commander in "Kelly's Heroes" and the stoned professor in "Animal House." "Donald was a giant, not only physically but as a talent," Sutherland's "M.A.S.H." co-star Elliott Gould said in a statement to The Associated Press as many paid tribute. "He was also enormously kind and

generous." Before transitioning into a long career as a respected character actor, Sutherland epitomized the unpredictable, anti-establishment cinema of the 1970s. He never stopped working, appearing in nearly 200 films and series.

Over the decades, Sutherland showed his range in more buttoned-down — but still eccentric — roles in Robert Redford's "Ordinary People" and Oliver Stone's "JFK." More, recently, he starred in the "Hunger Games" films.

A memoir, "Made Up, But Still True," is due out in November. "I love to work. I passionately love to work," Sutherland told Charlie Rose in 1998. "I love to feel my hand fit into the glove of some other character. I feel a huge freedom — time stops for me. I'm not as crazy as I used to be, but I'm still a little crazy." Born in St. John, New Brunswick, Donald McNichol Sutherland was the son of a salesman and a mathematics teacher. Raised in Nova Scotia, he was a disc jockey with his own radio station at age 14. "When I was 13 or 14, I really thought everything I felt was wrong and dangerous, and that God was



going to kill me for it," Sutherland told The New York Times in 1981. "My father always said, 'Keep your mouth shut, Donnie, and maybe people will think you have character.'" Sutherland began as an engineering student at the University of Toronto but switched to English and started acting in school theatrical productions. While studying, he met Lois Hardwick, an aspiring actress. They married in 1959 but divorced seven years later. After graduating in 1956, Sutherland attended the London Academy of Music and Dramatic Art to study acting. He began appearing in West End plays and British television. After a move to Los

Angeles, a series of war films changed his trajectory. His breakthrough was "The Dirty Dozen" (1967), in which he played Vernon Pinkley, the officer-impersonating psychopath. 1970 saw the release of the World War II yarn "Kelly's Heroes" and "M.A.S.H.," a smash hit that catapulted Sutherland to stardom. "There is more challenge in character roles," Sutherland told The Washington Post in 1970. "There's longevity. A good character actor can show a different face in every film and not bore the public."

If Sutherland had had his way, Altman would have been fired from "M.A.S.H." He was unhappy with the director's unorthodox, improvisational style. But the film caught on beyond anyone's expectations. Sutherland identified with its anti-war message. Outspoken against the Vietnam War, he along with actress Jane Fonda and others founded the Free Theater Associates in 1971. Banned by the Army because of their political views, they performed in venues near military bases in Southeast Asia in 1973.

## Mob in Pakistan kills man, hangs his body for 'desecrating' Quran: Report

**A man was fatally attacked by an enraged mob following allegations of desecrating the holy Quran in the Swat district of Pakistan's Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The incident, which occurred on Thursday night in Madyan tehsil, also resulted in injuries to eight individuals amidst the ensuing chaos.**



Peshawar. A man was killed by an angry mob for allegedly desecrating the Holy Quran in the scenic Swat district of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa in northwest Pakistan and eight people were injured in the ensuing unrest, police said.

District Police Officer (DPO), Swat, Zahidullah said the man from Stalkot district of Punjab allegedly burnt some

pages of the Holy Quran in Madyan tehsil of Swat on Thursday night. The suspect was taken into custody and brought to Madyan police station. A mob gathered outside the police station and demanded that he be handed over. After the police refused to do so, the mob opened fire and the police retaliated. One person was seriously injured in the exchange of fire and was

transferred to the Madyan Hospital, the DPO said. The mob then set the police station on fire. Later, some people entered the police station, shot the suspect, dragged his body to Madyan Adda and hanged it there, Zahidullah said. Eight people were injured in the unrest triggered by the incident. Heavy police deployment has been made in Madyan and efforts are being made to bring the situation under control, he added.

Chief Minister KPK Ali Amin Gandapur has taken note of the desecration incident and sought a report from the provincial police chief. The CM directed the IGP to take emergency steps to control the situation and urged people to remain calm and peaceful.

## Navigating through darkness: Ukraine's emergency blackouts return after Russia pounds infrastructure

KYIV. During daytime, entire districts of Ukraine's capital are disconnected from the power grid to save energy. Traffic lights stop, choking traffic, accompanied by the constant rumble of generators installed outside cafes and shops. Ukraine, including Kyiv, is struggling to cope with a new wave of rolling blackouts after relentless Russian attacks took out half the country's power generation capacity.

Residents and businesses of Kyiv are adapting to the absence of electricity using generators, power banks, and flashlights and even recalculating their bathroom visits. Heavy damage inflicted to the country's power system has left millions feeling uncertain about Ukraine's ability to meet the national electricity demand after the warm weather months are over and the weather turns cold. "I light my apartment as our grandparents used to — with candles and small flashlights," said Rudoy, a 40-year-old insurance agent from Israel who relocated from Tel Aviv to Kyiv in 2023 after Russia

launched its full-scale invasion of Ukraine on Feb. 24, 2022. He said that he wanted a new life despite the war — to live side-by-side with old friends and reside in a milder climate — but he hadn't foreseen the inconveniences of living without power. Rudoy bought an apartment on the seventh floor of a newly built 25-story high rise with no gas system or water supply that's wholly dependent on electricity.

"I have to adjust my life to the blackout schedules, otherwise it is impossible to live normally — not even to use a toilet at times," Rudoy told The Associated Press. A friend in a nearby district typically has power when he doesn't, which makes his life easier. Work often gets done at a cafe that has a generator, but there's a catch. "Even if you find a free table at a cafe nearby, working generators are very noisy and spread diesel fumes," he said. "That's why not many cafes that operate during blackouts are actually good to work in." Ukraine is struggling to meet electricity demand as systematic

attacks on its power infrastructure have intensified since March, forcing utilities to ration household supplies over the last three months. The country's top officials repeatedly called on allied countries to provide more air defense systems to protect its power plants from Russian missiles and drones, but tangible damage had already been inflicted.

The blackouts in Kyiv are the worse since the early months of the war when Russian strikes on the country's power grid led to major winter-time blackouts that led to authorities setting up communal heating areas and hundreds of emergency points where residents could drink tea, recharge their phones and get help. As of today, due to missile and drone attacks, we have lost 9.2 gigawatt of electricity (generating capabilities)," Ukrainian Prime Minister Denys Shmyhal said in early June. Despite having the capacity to import 2.2 gigawatts of electricity from European countries, Ukraine is importing 1.

BEIJING: Nine people have died and six are missing after downpours caused historic flooding in rural parts of Guangdong province in southern China, while authorities warned Friday of more flooding ahead in other parts of the country.

Four people died and four are missing, in Meixian district in Guangdong's Meizhou city, state broadcaster CCTV reported Thursday night. Another five are dead in Jiaoling county, which is also in Meizhou.

The heaviest rains were from Sunday into Tuesday, toppling trees and collapsing homes. A road leading to Meixian district completely collapsed during the heavy rains. The Songyuan river, which winds through Meizhou, experienced its biggest recorded flood, according to CCTV.

The estimated direct economic loss is 3.65 billion yuan (\$502 million) in Jiaoling county, while in Meixian district, the loss is 1.06 billion yuan (\$146 million). Other parts of the country also face torrential rains and extreme weather in the next 24 hours, with the National Meteorological



Center issuing a warning for several provinces in the south and a few individual places in the north.

Henan and Anhui provinces in central China, as well as Jiangsu province on the coast and the southern province of Guizhou, all are expecting hail and strong thunderstorms, according to the forecast. Rainfall could be as high as 50 mm to 80 mm (1.9 to 3.14 inches) in one day in Henan, Anhui and Hubei provinces, the National Meteorological Center said.

Last week, it was southern Fujian and Guangxi provinces experienced landslides and flooding amid heavy rain. One student died in Guangxi after falling into a river swollen from the downpour.

## Israel-Hezbollah hostilities fan fears of widening Gaza war

**Hezbollah and Israeli forces have exchanged near-daily fire since Hamas's October 7 attack on southern Israel triggered the Gaza war, and the bellicose talk has escalated along with the strikes.**

BEIRUT. Israel and Hezbollah traded fresh cross-border fire, as fears of a regional conflict grew after Israel revealed it had approved plans for a Lebanon offensive and the Iran-backed militants vowed to blanket their foe in rockets. Hezbollah said it fired dozens of rockets into northern Israel Thursday in retaliation for a deadly air strike in south Lebanon that Israel said killed one of the group's operatives. Hezbollah also claimed several other attacks on Israeli troops and positions over the course of the day. The Israeli military said its jets had struck two weapons storage facilities and several other sites belonging to the group, and that it had fired artillery "to remove threats in multiple areas in southern Lebanon." Just before midnight, the army said it had "successfully intercepted a suspicious aerial target that crossed from Lebanon." And early Friday, Lebanese media reported fresh Israeli strikes in the country's south.

Experts are divided on the prospect of a wider war, almost nine months into Israel's campaign to eradicate Hezbollah's ally Hamas, the Palestinian militant group in the Gaza Strip.

Hezbollah and Israeli forces have exchanged near-daily fire since Hamas's October 7 attack on southern Israel triggered the Gaza war, and the bellicose talk has escalated along with the strikes. Israel's main military backer the United States has sought to discourage any expansion of hostilities along the border. In a meeting with visiting Israeli officials in Washington, Secretary of State Antony Blinken underscored "the importance of avoiding further escalation in Lebanon and reaching a diplomatic resolution that allows Israeli and Lebanese families to return to their homes", according to a statement. In a televised address on Wednesday, Hezbollah chief Hassan Nasrallah had warned "no place" in Israel would "be spared our rockets" if a wider war began. He also threatened nearby Cyprus if it opened its airports or bases to Israel "to target Lebanon". European Union member Cyprus houses two British bases, including an airbase, but they are in sovereign British territory and not controlled by the Cypriot government. On Thursday, Cyprus government spokesman Konstantinos

Letymbiotis dismissed as "totally groundless" any suggestion of possible involvement in a conflict related to Lebanon. Warplanes from the British airbase in Cyprus have, along with US



forces, attacked Yemen's Iran-backed Huthi rebels who have for months been targeting Red Sea shipping. On Thursday the US military said it had destroyed several Huthi drones, a day after its forces struck two rebel sites in Yemen.

**'Urgent' de-escalation**  
The October Hamas attack on Israel resulted in the deaths of 1,194 people, mostly civilians, according to an AFP tally based on Israeli official figures.

The militants also seized hostages, 116 of whom remain in Gaza although the army says 41 are dead. Israel's retaliatory

offensive in Gaza has killed at least 37,431 people, also mostly civilians, according to the health ministry in the Hamas-ruled territory. The latest toll on Thursday included at least 35 deaths over the previous day, the ministry said. The Huthis and Hezbollah both say they are acting in response to Israel's actions in Gaza. On Tuesday, Israel's military announced that "operational plans for an offensive in Lebanon were approved and validated". The same day, Hezbollah published a video showing drone footage it purportedly recorded over northern Israel, including parts of Haifa's city and port. US envoy Amos Hochstein on a trip to the region called for "urgent" de-escalation, while the UN special coordinator for Lebanon Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert said there was "no inevitability to conflict" as she visited UN peacekeepers in the country's south. The cross-border violence has killed at least 479 people in Lebanon, most of them fighters but also 93 civilians, according to an AFP tally. Israeli authorities say at least 15 soldiers and 11 civilians have been killed in the country's north. Weary residents of Beirut on Thursday downplayed the chances of war in Lebanon, which political deadlock has left essentially leaderless while a five-year economic meltdown continues.



**BTP uses AI drones to manage traffic**

**BENGALURU.** To equip drones with advanced sensors for monitoring traffic flow, detecting congestion, and providing real-time data to enhance traffic management, the Bangalore Traffic Police (BTP) in collaboration with Nitte Meenakshi Institute of Technology (NMIT) launched the AI Drone Swarm Initiative. A drone swarm typically consists of multiple drones working in coordination, communicating with each other, and sharing information to achieve a common objective. These drones can be the same type or different, ranging from small quadcopters to larger fixed-wing drones. The drones were developed by 40 engineering students from NMIT under the guidance of Dassault System Foundation, which aims to push the boundaries of knowledge, and inspire a passion for engineering and science among young students at schools and universities. Chief Guest MN Anucheth, Joint Commissioner of Police - Traffic, mentioned that these drones will enable the city traffic police to ticket vehicles for overspeeding on the airport road.



Discussing the technology's impact on traffic systems, the senior official added that the technology will serve as one of the input tools for the ASTraM application, a smart traffic engine which offers comprehensive insights into the road traffic scenario.

**A sorry tale of overnight orphans: Five below 15 years lose parents to illicit liquor in Kallakurichi**



**KALLAKURICHI.** Every street in Karunapuram village has the purple tent mounted, with the entire neighbourhood echoing the funeral laments of families, for over 19 people from the locality died on Tuesday and Wednesday. "My parents were quarrelling over something on Tuesday when my father drank the arrack from the packet. He left some in the pack and my mother in the heat of the moment, mistook it for omam (ajwain) water and drank it. They both fell sick within a few hours. We took them to Kallakurichi GH, but they died leaving the three of us orphaned," said S Kokila (16), the eldest daughter of R Suresh (37) and S. Vadivu (34), who died on Wednesday.

At least five children below the age of 15 have lost their parents in the village as on Thursday. Activists have demanded the government to take care of these children's accommodation and education, and to prohibit the sale of liquor and hooch. "My father drank hooch and my mother mistook it for water, leaving both of them dead. All I ask from the government is to provide us a house, take care of our educational expenses. Above all, shut down all Tasmac shops and stop hooch sales," says S Harish (15), Kokila's brother. Harish and Kokila, along with their 14-year-old brother Ravagan are left in the care of their grandmother Muniamma. Meanwhile, the first death in the tragedy, that of G Praveen Kumar

(25) has left his two sons, aged seven and five without a home, as his wife allegedly left the family four years ago. "Their mother left without a word while the father died after consuming hooch. I request help from the government so that they could survive," said Praveen's 65-year-old mother, who did not want to be named. A few metres away, S Tamilarasi (32), who works as a security guard at the Kallakurichi government medical college and hospital, had to rush her father into the critical care on Wednesday. "My father is a daily wage worker and he used to drink regularly. Out of habit, he consumed it early in the morning on Wednesday. We took him to Kallakurichi GH in an hour. We had to take him to Jipmer in Puducherry later, as his condition was critical. He was declared dead at 4 pm on Wednesday," she said. "He held my hands when closing his eyes for the last time. Since I work at the hospital, I see and handle dead bodies everyday but this was unlike anything that I ever had to deal with," said Tamilarasi. When the people were preparing to bid adieu, heavy rains lashed — a sign that villagers took as a universe's show of sympathy. As the sun set in Karunapuram, rain came to a halt and pyres were lit. A total of 19 bodies were cremated, and buried at different places along the banks of Gomuki river and 10 others in Siruvangur and Kottaimedu. "The hope is we don't have to stand for a bandobast for such an incident ever again," uttered a policewoman who was witnessing the funeral procession.

**Two men hacked to death with swords in Gomitpur**

**Ahmedabad.** A feud spawned from a fight last week led to two men — Amir Ansari and Tabrez Pathan — being murdered in Gomitpur on Wednesday night. The two warring groups had gathered on Wednesday to work out a compromise. The victims had allegedly gone to the meeting armed with swords. According to the FIR filed by Imtiaz Ansari, he and his friend Amir had an ongoing dispute with Kamil Maniyar from an earlier altercation. On Wednesday night, Imtiaz, Amir and Tabrez had gathered in Gomitpur. Amir got a call from Kamil, saying that his brother Sameer wanted to reach a compromise and called them to a certain spot. The complainant and his group met Sameer Maniyar, Kamil Maniyar, Sahil Maniyar and Shaqeel Maniyar. The meeting did not amount to anything and as they were about to leave, the matter got violent. As Amir and his friends tried to escape, Sameer and Sahil allegedly chased them down and attacked them with metal pipes. Sameer allegedly grabbed a sword from Amir and struck him several times. When Tabrez and Imtiaz tried to save Amir, Kamil allegedly grabbed Imtiaz's sword and stabbed Tabrez in the chest.

The complainant, Imtiaz, was also allegedly struck but managed to get away. When Imtiaz regained consciousness, he was in Civil Hospital, from where he filed a complaint of murder against Sameer, Kamil and Sahil from there.

Gomitpur police inspector J P Chaudhary said Sameer Maniyar has been arrested. He claims the killings were in self-defence, as Amir Ansari and the others had come prepared to kill them. She added that Amir Ansari was only recently released on bail by the high court.

We also published the following articles recently When Imtiaz Ali reacted to requests to make films like Jab We Met: 'This is not why I'mtiaz Ali, known for his unique narratives, has created timeless classics like Jab We Met, Rockstar, Tamasha, and Highway, with Jab We Met having a dedicated fan base even after 15 years

Ashwathy Ash-Sameer Ahamathu starrer 'Modhalum Kaadhulum' to go off-air soon! The popular Tamil serial 'Modhalum Kaadhulum' is concluding its journey, leaving behind cherished moments for viewers. Led by Ashwathy Ash and Sameer Ahamathu, the show has captivated audiences since April 2023. 111052423

From Gauahar Khan, Anushka Sen, Reem Sameer and others: TV celebs express their love and gratitude on Fathers Day 2024 Global celebration of Father's Day on June 16th honors fathers and father figures for their love and support. Celebrities share heartfelt tributes on social media, expressing gratitude and memories. Arti Singh, Tina Datta, Anushka, Rithvik, and Anita Hassanandani post touching messages. Gauahar celebrates her husband's role as a father

**Kallakurichi hooch tragedy: Ramadoss calls for resignation of CM Stalin, two ministers**

**VILLUPURAM.** PMK founder S Ramadoss on Thursday called for the resignation of Chief Minister M K Stalin and ministers Muthusamy and Velu, holding them responsible for the hooch tragedy deaths in Kallakurichi. He also sought the support of other parties to defeat the DMK in the Vikravandi by-election.

Speaking at a press conference in Thailapuram,



Ramadoss said, "The deaths show the failure of the state government and the police department. Last year, 30 people died in similar tragedies at Marakkanam of Villupuram and Madurantakam of Chengalpattu. The government should have awakened then and taken steps to prevent hooch sale." He added that the collector initially claimed hooch was not the reason for the deaths but then had to accept the truth after the death toll increased. "The government did not take necessary measures to control the sale of illicit liquor that is manufactured in Kalvarayan Hills round the clock. If the police

→ Ramadoss also called for the prohibition of liquor in the state and urged the government to announce it in the assembly session.

arrest anyone, Kallakurichi's minister-in-charge Velu and Rishivandhiyam MLA Vasantham Karthikeyan interfere and secure their release. The ruling party fully supports hooch sale and has strong connections with the sellers," he alleged. Ramadoss also called for the prohibition of liquor in the state and urged the government to announce it in the assembly session. Touching on other important issues, Ramadoss said, "I have met the CM and urged him to conduct a caste-based census but he claims only the central government can do that. The state government must pressure the centre by passing a resolution in the assembly session for the same. Tamil Nadu MPs must voice this in parliament and this way it can be achieved in a month."

"Ramadoss alleged that the state government is planning to stop the Magalir Urimai Thogai scheme for some beneficiaries by issuing new instructions to officials. We have formed working teams for the victory of our candidate in the Vikravandi by-election. Soon, alliance party leaders and I will campaign there. The DMK's defeat will start from this election, and for that, opposition parties must support our candidate in this by-poll," Ramadoss said.

**Varsities don't have Lokpals despite mandate**

**Ahmedabad.** Last year, the University Grants Commission (UGC) had directed all universities in the country to appoint Lokpals or ombudsmen and publish the details on their websites. A year later, four public universities — Saurashtra University, MS University, Gujarat Ayurveda University, and Swarnim Gujarat University — along with 108 state universities and over 47 private universities in Gujarat have not made appointments. Observing this, the UGC has reiterated its order for appointment of Lokpals.

Six private universities in the state have also not complied with the order. These are Anant National University, Gandhinagar University, Indus University, Karnavati University, Sarvajani University and KN University. Sources said that as varisities frequently face difficulties in resolving complaints, the UGC had mandated setting up of grievance redressal centres a year ago and appointment of a Lokpal six months ago. After the UGC's directive, the state's education department instructed 14 state universities to set up grievance redressal cells and appoint a nodal officer before the new academic session begins. Despite the implementation of a common act in the state, state universities have not adhered to the UGC's directive, sources said. We also published the following articles recently Ancient center of learning: Interesting facts about Nalanda university Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the new campus of Nalanda University in Rajgir, Bihar, emphasizing its advanced infrastructure and symbolic rebirth of an ancient center of learning. 'Nalanda University symbol of India's academic heritage', says PM Modi: Top quotes Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the new campus of Nalanda University in Bihar's Rajgir, emphasizing the historical and cultural significance of Nalanda.

Fire can't destroy knowledge: PM Modi at Nalanda university campus PM Modi inaugurated a new Nalanda University campus near the ancient ruins in Bihar's Rajgir.

**Common JVPD plots belong to 14 hsg societies, not Mhada: HC**

**Mumbai.** Bombay High Court has ruled that common plots (utilities and amenities) in Juhu Vile Parle Development (JVPD) vest with 14 housing societies, and not state housing authority Mhada. Justice Bharati Dangle's order early this week said Mhada has no right, title or interest in these plots after execution of the registered common plot conveyance along with individual plot conveyances was done in favour of the 14 societies. One of the societies had legally challenged Mhada's claim over these plots. JVPD today is an upscale neighbourhood and home to Bollywood producers, superstars, rich businessmen and professionals. The ready reckoner rate for a plot in this area is about Rs 1-1.5 lakh per square metre while the cost of a residential flat is approximately Rs 65,000 per square foot. Around 1950, govt of Bombay acquired about 223 acres for housing schemes in Juhu and Vile Parle on both banks of the Irla Nullah at the request of the Juhu Vile Parle Development Cooperative Housing Association Ltd. The plaintiffs, Vithalnagar CHS Ltd, Juhu Vile Parle Cooperative Housing Association Ltd, and others, said in 1951, govt issued an order for the development of the land, and handed over the execution of the scheme

to Bombay Housing Board (BHB). Subsequently, BHB entered into 10 separate building plot conveyances with the societies. Later, three more conveyances were executed in



1956. Upon execution of the conveyances, BHB conveyed, sold and transferred the plots constituting the JVPD housing scheme to the left bank of Irla Nullah absolutely to each co-owner society for consideration. The area was spread over six lakh square yards (123 acres) and the societies paid Rs 60 lakh to BHB. BHB, along with individual plots, had conveyed common plots which included 18 amenity plots, 16 utility plots, 40 feet internal roads, and canalization and creek of JVPD. Between 2010 and 2011, the 14

societies issued eight separate notices to BMC and Mhada to complete the acquisition of the plots reserved for various purposes such as a library, playground, municipal retail market, DP Road, garden, recreation ground, among others. Upon receipt of the purchase notices, acquisition proceedings were commenced by the additional district collector for the reserved common plots. In 2017, though, the acquisition proceedings were suspended as BMC and Mhada (formerly BHB) claimed the common plots belonged to Mhada and the co-owner societies were tenants. Subsequently, Vithalnagar CHS Ltd, one of the co-owners, first approached Bombay High Court to decide on the ownership of the common plots. The court in its order observed: "Since the corporation, without raising the challenge to the Deed of Conveyance and transfer of land in favour of societies by the Board, which act the Board indulged in with prior permission from the Government of Bombay. After the lapse of almost 64 years, it is not open for the corporation to adopt such a stand premised on its own reading of deeming of vesting of the open lands in its favour once the scheme was completed

**Oppn parties in Tamil Nadu slam 'lethargic response' to illegal sale of spurious liquor**

**CHENNAI.** Leaders of various political parties condemned the Kallakurichi tragedy and many of them have urged the closure of all Tasmac outlets besides taking stringent action to prevent recurrence of such incidents. BJP state president K Annamalai, CPI state secretary R Mutharasan, PMK founder S Ramadoss, CPM state secretary K Balakrishnan, DMDK general secretary Premalatha Vijayakant, VK Sasikala and others criticised the authorities for their 'lethargic response' to the illegal sale of spurious liquor. While Annamalai demanded a CBI inquiry into the tragedy and the resignation of Minister for Prohibition and Excise S Muthusamy, Balakrishnan called for arrest of district SP and the Collector holding them accountable for the incident. After visiting the victims in the hospital, Annamalai urged CM MK Stalin to visit Kallakurichi and listen to the grievances of the affected people. He criticised the state's prohibition policy and demanded the immediate closure of 1,000 Tasmac outlets. In a statement, Mutharasan described the incident an insupportable tragedy. He accused the district revenue department and police of tacitly supporting the sale of illicit liquor, which, according to locals, has been going on for years. Balakrishnan emphasised that action should not be limited to sellers but also include

all individuals involved in the business. VCK chief Thol Thirumavalavan expressed deep sorrow over the incident and said total prohibition is the only way to put an end to such tragic incidents. TMC(M) president GK Vasam, who visited the hospital, blamed the government for inefficient administration. Ramadoss on Thursday called for the resignation of the chief minister and ministers Muthusamy and Velu. He also sought the support of other parties to defeat the DMK in the Vikravandi by-election. Premalatha Vijayakant condemned government's '10 lakh compensation saying it could be misconstrued by people as an encouragement to take risk of consuming illicit liquor since their families would get '10 lakh if they died. Naam Tamilar Katchi leader Seeman criticised the government for its inaction in preventing illicit liquor sale. He said Stalin should show the same amount of interest shown in Vikravandi bypoll in addressing such serious issues. AMMK general secretary TTV Dhinakaran also demanded severe action against those responsible for the crime. Tamilaga Vettri Kazhagam president and actor Vijay visited the Kallakurichi hospital and met the victims undergoing treatment. Earlier, in a statement, Vijay accused the government of indifference in controlling the sale of illicit liquor.

**CB-CID launches probe into Kallakurichi hooch tragedy; PEW top brass moved**

**CHENNAI.** The CB-CID has started inquiry into the Kallakurichi hooch tragedy. An FIR booked by the district police has been transferred to the agency. In the case filed based on a complaint by S Dhinakaran, police have named K Govindharaj, his wife Vijaya and K Thamoohiran of Karunapuram village as accused under sections for culpable homicide not amounting to murder and TN prohibition Act. The three have been arrested. The FIR, citing the complainant, detailed how the hooch sold by the accused led to the death of his father Sekar and several others in Karunapuram. A senior police official said action

will be taken against jurisdictional officers. Meanwhile, the state moved out two top officers heading the Enforcement Bureau which is responsible for cracking down on illicit liquor in the state. Home Secretary P Amudha ordered the transfer of Mahesh Kumar Aggarwal IPS, ADGP heading the Enforcement Bureau (earlier known as Prohibition Enforcement Wing), to the office of the DGP/Head of the Police Force in Chennai. A Arun, ADGP Law and Order, will be heading the Enforcement Bureau in place of Aggarwal. The government also transferred G Gopi, DCP Kilpauk, as SP of the Enforcement Bureau and

shifted out incumbent SR Senthil Kumar, asking him to report to the DGP's office in Chennai. Sources said DGP Shankar Jwal sent out a directive to all district SPs to crackdown on any sale of loose alcohol and conduct intensive prohibition raids. District police officials have been told to ensure that leftover methanol in factories or industries be properly accounted for and destroyed and not given to anyone. The district police already have a Standard Operating Procedure and intelligence collection pn sale of illicit alcohol, which has been reiterated by the DGP, sources said.





## Need to shun the 'bad apple' theory

LAST year's crash involving three trains in Balasore, Odisha — which left 296 people dead and more than 1,000 injured — was attributed to human error. It was expected that this accident would make the Railways review its systems of operation and maintenance for enhancing safety, and specifically for minimising the possibility of accidents resulting from human error. That hope seems to have been belied. On the morning of June 17, a goods train hit the stationary Kanchenjunga Express in West Bengal's New Jalpaiguri, leaving 10 dead and around 40 injured. Among those killed were the driver of the goods train and the guard of the express train. This accident, too, is being blamed on human error. Even as the Commissioner of Railway Safety's statutory inquiry is in progress, we can try to piece together what happened from the information available in the public domain. It is now known that automatic signalling between Rangapani and Chatterhat stations failed at 5.50 am on June 17 due to lightning; this failure was communicated to the Signal Department at 6.05 am. As the snag was likely to be prolonged, the department, as per General and Subsidiary Rules, should have declared it as such, which would have changed the mode of working from the automatic block system to the absolute block system and perhaps avoided the accident. It is not known yet why this was not done. Consequently, the section continued to work as per automatic signal rules, which authorise drivers to pass defective signals. Since automatic territory rules were in force, the drivers were required to follow the protocol for moving at a speed not exceeding 15 kmph after stopping for a minute at every red signal. Six trains followed this protocol, including the Kanchenjunga Express, but the container goods train did not do so, which led to the mishap. If the goods train driver had followed this instruction, he would have avoided the collision. Clearly, the speed of the goods train was well above 15 kmph. Loco drivers' spokespersons are suggesting that the 'paper line clear' (a ticket issued to the loco pilot) may have been unnecessary as drivers are allowed to cross red signals, whether defective or not, at cautious speeds as the whole purpose of automatic signalling is to squeeze as many trains as close to each other as possible. According to them, the 'paper line clear', if given, would have implied a situation where the driver need not have followed the normal protocol and proceeded at a normal speed. Apparently, there is ambiguity in the working rules of the new system of signalling (the automatic system, opposed to the absolute block system which permits only one train between two stations). Inadequate understanding of these rules among different categories of staffers could also have been a factor.

Why is it so difficult to curb accidents attributable to human error? Despite the efforts of the Railways to bring in new technologies for reducing human intervention, like the indigenously developed automatic train protection system Kavach — which prevents an accident resulting from the human error of passing a signal 'at danger' — the proportion of accidents linked to human lapses continues to hover around 50 per cent. If Kavach had been installed on the section concerned, it would have prevented the collision but could not have stopped the driver from making a mistake. The reason why it is so difficult to eliminate human error is because this is not the basic cause of the failure but a symptom of a deeper problem plaguing the system. This is something that the Railways has yet to recognise. It looks at human error through the prism of the 'bad apple' theory — it believes that the system is basically safe but for those few unreliable people in it who should be identified and made an example of. Getting rid of these people does not remove the problem because it is systemic, and there are always others to step into the shoes of the 'bad apple'. To reduce accidents put down to human error, the railway top brass needs to recognise that identifying those responsible for the accident should not be the conclusion of the investigation but its starting point. The management should ask itself what factors led the employee to make the trade-off between safety and other goals. And how much of this could be the outcome of its own decisions. After all, all levels of the organisation have to negotiate multiple system goals, some of which may put undue pressure on those directly involved in running the train.

## Inequality, joblessness a drag on India's economic growth

It is the right time to recognise the gravity of problems such as unemployment, inequality of income and wealth, and environmental degradation.

CONSTRAINTS on India's growth trajectory are not allowing its economic potential to be fully realised. Consequently, the economy has been recording growth rates much below the potential rate for a period spanning more than a decade since 2011-12, excluding the Covid years (2020-21 and 2021-22).

In the first half of the 20th century, the gross domestic product (GDP) of India grew at a rate of around 1 per cent, which was matched by the growth rate of the population, keeping the per capita income constant and very low. For three decades (1950-51 to 1980-81), the GDP grew at an average annual rate of 3.5 per cent, while the population grew at an annual rate of 2 per cent or more, marking slow growth in the per capita income. But the 1980s observed a jump in the annual GDP growth rate from 3.5 per cent to 5.5 per cent, recording a period of accelerated growth rate. The 1990s brought a breakthrough in the form of economic reforms that unlocked the growth potential. The economy recorded a growth rate of 8 per cent or above for nearly eight years between 2003-04 and 2010-11.

The high growth trajectory prompted several economists to work out the potential growth rate of the economy. Dani Rodrik and Arvind Subramanian (2004) projected a potential growth rate of above 7 per cent up to 2025. Tushar Poddar and Eva Yi (2007) predicted a potential growth rate of above 8 per cent until 2020. C Rangarajan and DK Srivastava (2017) estimated it to be 8 per cent to 8.1 per cent up to 2029-30. These estimates indicate that the Indian economy has the potential to grow by around 8 per cent for the medium and the long period. But this potential growth rate could be achieved for only eight years between 2003 and 2010-11. Although the government claims that India can become a \$25-trillion economy by 2047, it seems to ignore the fact that the economy continues to perform below its potential level. This is why efforts have not been made to identify the reasons behind the trend. This needs to be understood so that India is able to march towards becoming a developed country. The post-2010-11 period has thrown enough statistical evidence about the constraints that the economy is facing in achieving the potential growth rate. The most formidable challenge is created by the burgeoning unemployment in the country. The recent periodic labour force surveys have brought out that the country had the highest unemployment rate in the last 40 years in 2022 at 6.4 per cent, excluding the Covid years. This is due to the fact

that country had jobless growth during 2003-04 and job-loss growth after 2012-13. The workforce being released from agriculture because of mechanisation is not being absorbed in industrial or service sectors. The quality of employment has also deteriorated with the replacement of regular jobs with contractual ones.

This has contributed to making the agrarian crisis serious, and, consequently, rural unrest in India has grown. Agriculture, which employs more than 44 per cent of the total workforce, is facing a crisis of survival for 84 per

cent of the peasants. Unfortunately, the country has no employment policy in place. The youth unemployment is alarming at 22.84 per cent at the country level, but in certain states like Punjab and Kerala, it was nearing 30 per cent in 2022. This is why the youth of this country are racing to immigrate, even to conflict zones like eastern Europe and West Asia. Without providing employment to youth, the country cannot take advantage of the demographic dividend of the young population.

Another constraint has been created by the fast-widening income and wealth inequality. Less than 1 per cent of the individuals are able to corner more than 40 per cent of the national income while 50 per cent of the population has just 13.1 per cent of income. The wealth distribution is even more skewed than income distribution. The 50 per cent low-income population has only 5.9 per cent share in the national wealth, while the top 1 per cent of the population has a 40.5 per cent share. The middle class,

which expanded very fast in the initial years of post-reforms period, has been facing a squeeze now under the fast-rising cost of private education and healthcare at corporate hospitals. The working poor are in a dire situation and deprived of quality education and affordable healthcare. The government's commitment to providing free food to 80 crore people is indicative of the alarming state of economic affairs. This is going to create a crisis of underconsumption and inadequacy of demand that may push the economy towards a slowdown.

The fiscal and monetary policy has contributed to widening gaps in income and wealth distribution. The major burden of taxation falls on common people via the GST, while corporate income taxes have been lowered from 35 per cent to 25 per cent. Business companies have been given huge subsidies in the name of incentives. When corporates are not willing to share their prosperity even with their employees, how can one expect them to share it with common people, as borne out by a lack of adherence to the corporate social responsibility norms? A crude depiction of this was observed in the Covid period, when companies refused to pay their workers during the lockdown. And they were forced to trek hundreds of kilometres to their villages in UP and Bihar. Several among them died on the way back home.

Along with burgeoning unemployment and widening income and wealth inequality, the problems related to climate change have been fast emerging on the scene. Unseasonal rainfalls and floods have been common. This is accompanied by a rise in the temperature amid a heatwave with an acute shortage of water, both for drinking and irrigation. No one is serious enough to prepare a roadmap to deal with pollution and water scarcity. This can create a crisis with ramifications for agriculture production activities in the severely affected areas. It is the right time to recognise the gravity of problems such as unemployment (especially among the youth), inequality of income and wealth, and environmental degradation. The lack of proper attention to these issues would result in major constraints on the growth of the economy, and the projected targets would prove to be a mere mirage for the country.



## The Nijjar factor

### Canada pursuing a perilous course

THE Hardeep Singh Nijjar case continues to define and undermine India-Canada relations, with the Canadian Parliament marking the first anniversary of his murder with a moment of silence in the House of Commons on Tuesday. The bilateral relationship has been in freefall ever since Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau dropped a bombshell in September last year, claiming that the alleged role of Indian government agents in the Nijjar case was being probed. The radical Sikh leader, who had been designated a terrorist by India's National Investigation Agency, was shot dead outside a gurdwara in Surrey, British Columbia, on June 18 last year. New Delhi has been pressing Ottawa to furnish concrete evidence of an 'Indian hand', even as the Canadian police have arrested four Indian nationals in connection with the killing. In a sharp response to the commemoration of Nijjar's death, India's Consulate General in Vancouver



evoked memories of the June 23, 1985, Kanishka bombing, while asserting that India stood at the forefront of countering the menace of terrorism and was working

closely with all nations to tackle this global threat. The message to Canada was crystal clear: don't give pro-Khalistan elements a platform to target India.

After his recent meeting with Prime Minister Narendra Modi in Italy, Trudeau said that there was an 'alignment' between the two nations on several 'big issues' and he saw an opportunity to engage with the new Indian government. This was seen as a significant step forward. However, the Canadian PM has taken two steps backwards by letting domestic political considerations worsen his country's relationship with an old ally. This is a perilous course being pursued by the Canadian government. The relentless appeasement of radicals will not only do irreparable damage to India-Canada ties but also put a question mark over the Maple Country's commitment to fighting terrorism and extremism.

## The misplaced fixation with Israeli belligerence

India must separate the wheat from the chaff and seek guidance from its own winning ways of ending societal disaffection.

FOR many hawks in India, extreme right-wing Israel has been the role model of a decisive and aspirational religio-nationalist state. For them, the simplistic framework of 'my enemy's enemy is my friend' works subliminally in the spirit of majoritarianism.

Founding fathers of the 'Idea of India' were deeply sympathetic to the suffering of Jews but were simultaneously opposed to the forcible usurpation of Arab lands, especially as Arabs were not responsible for Jewish woes. Mahatma Gandhi had said, "Palestine belongs to the Arab in the same sense that England belongs to the English or France to the French. It is wrong and inhuman to impose Jews on the Arabs. What is going on in Palestine today cannot be justified by any moral code of conduct." Even foundationally, India was partitioned between a nation based on religion (Pakistan) and the other based on secularism and inclusivity; hence, India could not make common cause with yet another nation created in the name of religion (Israel). Zionism's aggressive ethno-nationalism fascinated the Hindu Mahasabha, as both sides possibly perceived a common enemy in the largest minority denomination. This fascination overrode the inherent contradiction of many Hindutva ideologues valourising Hitler's Nazis, a pathological anathema to Jews or any right-thinking individual. But today, when the legacy of the Mahatma itself is getting contested in India and the alternative persuasion is dominating, the reverence for the 'Israeli way' is understandable. This captivation extends to the Israeli handling of the insurgency in Palestine. There is a perceived 'emulation worthiness' of the 'Israeli way' when contextualised to any societal strife or disaffection in the Indian context. Hotspots such as Manipur and Jammu & Kashmir seemingly need to be handled with Israeli methods (a euphemism for the 'scorched earth' approach). However, history is instructive — the Israeli style has been an unparalleled disaster in handling societal discontent. Only countries like India (in states like Mizoram and Punjab) or the UK

(in Ireland) were able to end secessionist movements with means that were decidedly 'un-Israeli' in approach. India and the UK had deployed militaristic steel in the conflict region but had in parallel invested in the spirit of political accommodation and inclusivity, allaying concerns of disgruntled citizens. These countries had signed accords (Punjab Accord, 1985; Mizoram Peace Accord, 1986; Good Friday Agreement, 1998) and patiently agreed to honour genuine grievances. It wasn't an immediate return to normalcy, but the sincerity of outreach, socio-economic redressal and persistent engagement (despite many violent disruptions and missteps) finally won the day for India and the UK.

The Palestine-Israeli violence has been continuing for decades. On October 7 last year, Hamas carried out a brutal terror attack, killing over 1,400 Israelis, and then the Israelis retaliated disproportionately by butchering over 36,000 Palestinians in the Gaza Strip. The Palestinian death count is increasing by the day. Beyond the unending blame game, the truth is that Israel has failed to guarantee security and peace despite its fabled 'Israeli way' — both sides have not been more polarised, hate-filled and vengeful in 78 years.

Perception of the hyper-muscular Israeli methods is flawed, as Israeli history has witnessed many ideological differences. The principal Israeli party (Labour) once ruled the roost, with all Prime Ministers

till 1977 owing allegiance to its movement, albeit under different names. Labour is predicated on an approach based on Israel-Palestine peace talks, pragmatism in foreign policy, welfare statism, and even relative

signed during the rule of Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin of the Labour Party. Rabin was later assassinated by a radicalised Jew. The dovish Rabin was formerly a decorated General of the Israeli Defence Forces (IDF), which had won wars and conducted daring operations, yet he represented a moderate, restorative and statesmanlike face of Israeli politics.

The principal Opposition leader now is Benny Gantz, yet another retired General of the IDF and no longer part of the National Unity Government (formed after the October 7 attack). He, too, personally and politically, eschews and disavows the failed 'Israeli way' of Netanyahu. Though Israel is still in the war mode and angry at the Hamas attack, there is a huge groundswell about the failed policies and consequences of Netanyahu's counterproductive belligerence that created a tinderbox-like situation and led to endless bloodshed. Israel was at its most peaceful (relatively speaking) after the signing of the Oslo Accords.

Seeds of the Israeli template were sown by the hawkish and warmongering Prime Minister Ariel Sharon, initially from Likud (he later formed the Kadima party), who earned notoriety as the 'Butcher of Beirut'. The Human Rights Watch recognises him as a war criminal; Netanyahu has only worsened that construct of 'muscular' politics that seems very impressive in the beginning but comes at a very heavy price in the long run. India must separate the wheat from the chaff and seek guidance from its own winning ways of ending societal disaffection, as opposed to getting galvanised by failed and vacuous muscularity of the 'Israeli way', as there is no bravery, morality or constitutionality involved in it.



moderation — whereas the ruling Likud party is aggressive to the point of being predatory, proudly anti-peace, against a two-state solution and exclusivist/majoritarian in instinct. PM Benjamin Netanyahu personifies Likud and the 'Israeli way' phenomenon by insisting that Israel is "not a state of all its citizens", implicitly denying dignity to native Arab Palestinians, with whom the Oslo Peace Agreements were signed in 1993 and 1995. The agreements were





# Make a statement with your Sofa

Style or trends can be thought of later when it comes to sofas, rather comfort and personality are priorities. Modern settee, sofa, lounges can give you that special 'my space' in any room with a decor that is stylish but impersonal. These usually are furniture that are functional — a lounge in front of the television set, a recliner in front of your bookcase to sit down and read, a settee for knitting, an armchair to take a quick nap on, or a comfortable sofa for your guests to sit. The latest design trends for living room furniture have to offer many traditional and contemporary sofa designs and myriad options of using colours, textures and designs to enhance the feel of a room.

**A comfortable two-seater sofa can double up as a space to take a nap on or watch your favourite show on TV**  
**Bright upholstery works** Choose bright upholstery to jazz up your otherwise simple and minimalist decor.  
**Paisley shaped settees** Take paisley to another level with a bright settee. There are some available that are in the shape of a paisley too. Try different shapes.  
**Stylish recliners** Single recliners can add personality to your decor  
**Lounge on your L-shaped sofa** An L-shaped sofa is not just comfortable but can also work as a lounge

**Two-seaters are cosier**

## How green is your home?



What story can the dust collected from your house tell? These organisms can indicate not just the geographical location of your residence, but also the proportion of male and female members in the house, and can also reveal if you have a pet, says a new study. The new findings highlight the impressive amount of microbial diversity in the average household. "Every day, we are surrounded by a vast array of organisms in our homes, most of which we cannot

see," said co-author of the study Noah Fierer, associate professor at the University of Colorado Boulder in the US. "We live in a microbial zoo, and this study was an attempt to catalog that diversity," Fierer said. The study examined roughly 1,200 homes across the US. On average, each home contains more than 5,000 different species of bacteria and around 2,000 species of fungi. Fungal communities tend to be more predictive of a home's location while bacterial communities provide clues about the identity of its residents. "Geography is the best predictor of fungi in your home," Fierer noted. When it comes to bacteria, however, where you live may be less important than whom you live with. From the dust samples, researchers could confidently predict which homes had pets such as cats or dogs and, to a slightly lesser extent, the gender ratio of the residents.

## Tips to buy rustic Furniture

The latest design trends for living room furniture have to offer many traditional and contemporary sofa designs and myriad options of using colours, textures and designs to enhance the feel of a room. Here are a few ideas

If you are the one who likes rugged and country-side look in a house, doing up your pad with rustic furniture is your best bet. It makes your house look unique and interesting. Here are a few options —

- For your living room** Instead of having a sofa in your living area, opt for light-weight wooden arm-rests. To add comfort, you can add a few cushions. To jazz up the look, you can also paint the chairs in quirky colours.
- For your bedroom** Choose a teak wood bed, instead of rot iron one. For the country-side charm, you can also have a piece of log placed in the room, near the bed to make your bedroom look interesting.
- For your balcony** A few wooden chairs in the balcony along with an unpolished table looks great. To complete the look, you can have a wooden or a cane swing chair placed near the chairs.



**If mirrors fascinate you more than anything, here's how using mirrors differently can make your home look playful and classy at the same time.**

## How to decorate your home with Mirrors

**Mirrors as art work** Mirrors are not always a utility or random piece of decor that is just only used in wardrobes or dressing tables. Mirrors can be creatively used as artwork at home to lend an artistic look. You can either have a collection of small or different-sized mirrors, hung haphazardly to create an artsy look on the wall. You can also use a single statement mirror on a highlighted wall to add to its charm.

**Brighten your living room with a mirror wall** Since, space crunch is something we all face while living in a city like Mumbai, ideas that make the home look spacious are always welcome. Living rooms make for a great place for installing a super-large mirror; especially mirror walls. Use one wall in your living room to install a simple wooden frame mirror, to open up the space with the entire reflection of the room. Make sure you use a wall near the window, so that it also reflects enough sunlight to make your home look bigger and brighter.

**A mirror cabinet for a bigger looking kitchen**



Using a mirror instead of tiles for your kitchen wall against the sink or the platform will help open up a small area. You can also use mirrors as a sliding door for your cabinets so that they do not look like one. Especially if you have an open kitchen, this mirror will help you talk to people in the living area without facing them as well as increase the brightness of the space.

**Create optical illusion in the hallway**

If you always thought a hallway is something you just quickly pass by, you got to think again. Adding mirrors to the space will open up the area so that you don't feel confined within it. If you creatively place them, they can also serve as hallway utilities, like the ones here. Drawers and cabinets with mirror doors in the hallway can make the home look lively and colourful, as they would reflect everything around it. No to mention, you can always stop by to have a good look at yourself while passing.

**A statement mirror at the dining area** Now, you would ask why do we need a mirror in the dining area? We say, why not? As mentioned before, mirrors are not just an utility, its a style statement. Using a statement mirror with a beautifully carved wooden or metal with filigree worked frame on one of the walls of your dining space, will add to the motif of the room without taking away from the more interesting things, like food. Although an attention-getter, the mirror will only enhance the look of your enclosed dining area.



# Bhagwant Mann orders transfer of 10,000 cops over nexus with drug peddlers

**Chief Minister Mann said that the transfers were made because several police personnel were part of the drug pedlar nexus.**

New Delhi. Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann has ordered the transfer of at least 10,000 police personnel in an unprecedented move to crack down on the drug menace in the state. Chief Minister Mann said that the transfers were made because several police personnel were part of the drug pedlar nexus. He said that because of the nexus, many of the accused have been let off the hook, and the complaints against them had been ignored for many years. "Many of the Moharrir head constables (MHC), station house officers (SHO), and constables have been stationed at the same police station for many years and have formed a nexus with the drug smugglers there. They manipulate the procedures to save the accused. I have asked the Director General of Police (DGP) to immediately order mass transfers," Bhagwant Mann said. Major rejig within the police department left the cops fuming. Speaking with India Today, former Punjab DGP (Prisons) Shashi Kant said that the state government's decision can backfire as merely transferring the cops will

not solve the reigning drug menace in the state. While there is no denying the fact that there are black sheep within the police force, all cops are not corrupt. Similar action was required in the jails, which have become dens of drugs. The government should have first identified the tainted cops before ordering the transfers," Shashi Kant said. While confirming the transfer orders, Deputy Inspector General (DIG) Border Range Rakesh Kaushal said that linking the transfers with the drug problem is wrong. "The decision to order transfers was made in 2020 but was delayed and is now being implemented. These transfers are administrative and not related to the alleged involvement of cops in drug smuggling," said Rakesh Kaushal. Meanwhile, Punjab DGP Gaurav Yadav has said that the police seized the properties owned by drug smugglers worth Rs 200 crore in the last two years. Apart from identifying the 750 hotspots, DGP Gaurav said that the State



Task Force (STF) and the intelligence wing have prepared a list of 9,000 street-level pedlars.

## DRUG SMUGGLING NETWORK EXPANDS, HIKE IN DEATH RELATED TO DRUG OVERDOSE

Despite the Punjab Police's claims of taking strict action against drug smuggling, criminals have expanded their networks. Using drones and sea routes, smugglers are increasing drug supplies within the state. Addressing the media, Bhagwant Mann

stated that drugs were coming from Gujarat, which is under investigation. In 2023, the BSF and Punjab Police downed or recovered 107 drones used for drug transport. Drug seizures in Punjab have increased fivefold over the past seven years, from 179 kg in 2017 to 1,346 kg in 2023.

Officials stated that rising drug costs and seizures have led to a demand for cheaper, deadly, and spurious drugs. Over 280 drug addicts have died in the past three years, with 14 deaths in the past fortnight alone. An affidavit submitted by the Punjab Police to the Punjab and Haryana High Court states that drug overdoses claimed 159 lives in 2022-23, 71 in 2021-22, and 36 in 2020-21. Bathinda and Taran-Taran are the worst affected, with 38 and 30 deaths due to drug overdoses, respectively. Ferozepur reported 19 deaths, Amritsar 17, and Ludhiana 14. Other areas, including Batala, Hoshiarpur, Kapurthala, and Khanna, also reported multiple deaths due to drug overdoses.

## Youth Congress protests outside Education Minister's residence over NEET 'paper leak'

New Delhi: The Youth Congress on Thursday protested outside Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan's residence in New Delhi, citing discrepancies in the conduct of NEET and NET examinations. They demanded the examinations be cancelled promptly to ensure justice for the lakhs of students affected. Youth Congress National President Srinivas BV alleged that the exam "scam" not only cheats students but also betrays the country's future. He accused Pradhan of misleading the nation despite knowing that the NEET paper was not leaked. "Dharmendra Pradhan should not only resign but also face rigorous questioning. There is no exam in the country without rigging. Students are expressing their frustrations on social media - 'Once again, government leakage'," he stated. Youth Congress National Secretary Mohammed Shahid echoed concerns about "paper leaks, rigging, and corruption becoming commonplace in exams like NEET", questioning the National Testing Agency's integrity. The Indian Youth Congress urged the central government to promptly review exam-related issues, resolve complaints, initiate Supreme Court-supervised investigations, and ensure justice for students.

During the protest, Delhi Police detained numerous Youth Congress workers. Meanwhile, Minister Pradhan admitted the UGC-NET paper leak as an "institutional failure" of the NTA, announcing a high-level committee to recommend reforms. He reassured addressing concerns of deserving NEET candidates who succeeded through hard work. The Union Minister added, isolated incidents of malpractices should not affect lakhs of students who cleared the examination rightfully. At a press conference here, Pradhan also appealed to the opposition parties not to politicise the issue and said strict action would be taken against those found guilty, including "top" officials of the NTA.

## Dead Rat Found In Sambar At Popular Ahmedabad Restaurant, Video Goes Viral

New Delhi: India's real-life culinary nightmare, after featuring a human finger and a centipede inside ice cream, continued with the discovery of a dead rat in a bowl of sambar in one of Ahmedabad's popular eateries. This shocking incident at Devi Dosa restaurant in Nikol follows closely on the heels of other recent distressing discoveries, including a live cobra found inside an Amazon package in Bengaluru. The latest incident unfolded when a customer at Ahmedabad's Devi Dosa food joint reported finding a dead rat in their sambar. The customer informed the Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation (AMC) and in response, the Health Department issued a



notice to the restaurant's owner citing severe health and hygiene violations.

Speaking to ANI, Bhavin Joshi, Food Safety Officer at the AMC, issued a stern appeal: "I appeal to all the business operators of Ahmedabad Corporation to be very careful with the food they serve to the customers so that such incidents can be avoided." The video of the customer showing the dead rat swimming in the sambar has gone viral on the internet, earning a lot of views. "Please I request food and drug department don't take money under the table and don't approve such hotels," a person commented on social media.

## NEET row: Accused Amit Anand with Bihar Deputy Chief Minister, RJD shares pic

New Delhi: A day after Bihar Deputy Chief Minister Vijay Kumar Sinha claimed that the arrested prime suspect in the NEET "paper leak" is linked to officials associated with RJD leader Tejashwi Yadav, the party hit back with a photo of another accused, Amit Anand, with Deputy Chief Minister Samrat Choudhary. In an X post, the party said the minister was being felicitated by the accused, but has deleted all his photos with him. The main accused in the NEET exam paper leak scam with the Deputy Chief Minister of Bihar, RJD tweeted. "The so called powerful minister who was felicitated by the accused has deleted all his photos with him from his social media handles, but don't worry, we have them all." "Send this to your worried counterparts the other Deputy Chief Minister," the party added.



Addressing a press conference on Thursday, Sinha claimed that the official was in constant touch with Sikander Prasad Yadav, the arrested prime accused in the case. "The official associated with Yadav used to arrange accommodation for Sikandar at guest houses in Patna and other places. I have details of messages which the official had sent to the persons concerned for arranging accommodation for Sikandar," the Deputy Chief Minister said. Sinha claimed he has the mobile number

from which those messages were sent. He said, "It needs to be thoroughly probed. Why is the RJD leader (Tejashwi Prasad) maintaining a stoic silence on this?"

Reacting to Sinha's allegations, the RJD termed it as a "bundle of lies" and said the BJP leader is simply trying to divert the attention of 25 lakh NEET aspirants from their core demand to cancel the exam held on May 5. NEET-UG 2024, conducted by the National Testing Agency (NTA), took place at 4,750 centres in 571 cities in which more than 24 lakh candidates appeared. The results were declared on June 4. However, immediately after the results were announced, students raised allegations of irregularities when 67 students achieved top scores, amidst claims of question paper leaks in Bihar.

## Centre says ample wheat stock available amid price surge, weighs intervention

New Delhi: Amid the rising wheat prices, the Centre stated on Thursday that it has sufficient wheat stocks to intervene in the market to ensure the stability of consumers in the country. A meeting of the committee of ministers was held on Thursday under the chairmanship of Union Minister of Home Affairs and Cooperation Amit Shah. After the meeting, Amit Shah directed officials to keep a close watch on the prices of wheat and ensure to undertake suitable policy interventions. According to the official data, wheat prices have spiked by up to Rs 2 per kilogram from a year ago,



news agency PTI reported. As of June 20, the average retail price of wheat was Rs 30.99 per kg, an increase from Rs 28.95 per kg compared to last year. Similarly, the price of wheat flour rose to Rs 36.13 per kg from Rs 34.29 per kg last year, according to the data PTI reported.

Meanwhile, the centre assured that the government has procured more wheat for the central pool than last year.

By June 18, Centre had procured around 266 lakh metric tons (LMT) of wheat in the 2024-25 rabi marketing year, which began on April 1, slightly higher than 262 LMT in the last year.

"After meeting the requirement for PDS and other welfare schemes, which is approximately 184 LMT, sufficient stock of wheat is available to undertake market interventions as and when required," the Centre said.

## After 6-Year-Old's Rape, Murder, Mob Targets Cops To Get Hands On Accused

New Delhi: Six policemen were injured - disturbing videos showed one cop with a blood-stained uniform and a bloody handkerchief wrapped around his head - in Maharashtra's Jalgaon after a mob bent on extracting vigilante justice laid siege to a police station late Thursday night.

The protests followed the rape and murder of a minor girl last week. The cops had arrested the accused and brought him to the Jamner Police Station, after which a restive crowd gathered and began demanding the accused be handed over to them. By 10 pm the crowd turned violent, throwing stones and setting a two-wheeler on fire. Videos seen by NDTV show the aftermath of the clash - a charred motorcycle and debris on the road. Sources said the



police managed to disperse the mob with difficulty. The injured cops were admitted to a district hospital. "15 people were detained for stone-pelting and the accused is urged not to take the law into their hands... the public will get the harshest punishment," District Superintendent of Police Maheshwar Reddy, the trigger for last night's violence was the rape and murder of a six-year-old girl in Jamner, allegedly by a 35-year-old man - Subhash Imaji Bhil - who had been on the run till his arrest Thursday. Bhil had been hiding in Bhusawal, a small town approximately 30 km away. On being told of his hideout, local cops quickly reached the spot and arrested him, but a large crowd gathered then too. Fortunately there was no violence at that time. Mr Reddy had visited the spot then too and appealed for calm.

After the Jamner clash, however, a large number of security personnel have been deployed in the area and there is, for now, peace. The suspect will be produced in court later today.

## Rise In Nighttime Warming Impacting Sleep Quality, Health In India: Report

New Delhi: With Mumbai seeing the highest changes in the nighttime temperatures, India continues to suffer a severe heatwave, a new analysis on Friday showed climate change added nearly 50 to 80 nights each year where the temperature exceeded 25 degrees Celsius, with serious impacts on sleep and health.

Climate change is leading to a rise in nighttime warming, which is impacting sleep quality and human health in India and across the globe, said the analysis by Climate Central and Climate Trends. Nighttime temperatures have increased even more rapidly than daytime temperatures as the world heats up due to climate change, primarily caused by burning fossil fuels like coal, oil, and gas. As one of the countries most vulnerable to the impacts of the climate crisis, India has experienced a significant rise in minimum nighttime temperatures over the last decade due to climate change. The national capital on June 18 experienced

its warmest night in at least 12 years, with the mercury touching 35.2 degrees Celsius, says the India Meteorological Department. This is the city's highest minimum temperature since 1969.

The analysis shows that nearly 50 to 80 days each year were added above this threshold by climate change in cities across Kerala, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, Punjab, Jammu and Kashmir, and Andhra Pradesh between 2018 and 2023. Among the metro cities, Mumbai has seen the highest changes in the nighttime temperatures, with the city experiencing an additional 65 days of warmer nights due to global warming. West Bengal and Assam are the regions that have been most impacted, with cities like Jalpaiguri, Guwahati, Silchar, Dibrugarh and Siliguri experiencing between 80 and 86 additional days each year above the 25 degrees threshold due to climate change, on average. Several cities saw between 15 and 50 additional days where the



minimum temperatures exceeded 25 degrees due to the influence of climate change, including Jaipur, with an additional 19 hot nights attributable to climate change. Meanwhile, in both observations and in the counterfactual climate, the nighttime summer temperatures across India often exceed 20 degrees over the entire summer period. The cities that had the largest number of days where the minimum temperature exceeded 20 degrees due to climate change are Gangtok, Darjeeling, Shimla, and Mysore, with an average of

54, 31, 30, and 26 days added by climate change, respectively. Higher nighttime temperatures can cause physiological discomfort and impact human health by preventing body temperature from cooling off during the night, increasing mortality risks. There is also a growing body of evidence that as nighttime temperatures rise, it is adversely affecting the quality and length of sleep.

Poor sleep adversely affects physical and mental health, cognitive functioning and even life expectancy. Hot nights can have disproportionate impacts on vulnerable groups, including the elderly and people, who do not have access to proper cooling mechanisms. These findings come during a week that saw new records for nighttime heat in several Indian cities. On June 19, Delhi shattered the all-time high minimum temperature record, with the mercury reaching 35.2 degrees overnight.



# Simple cleaning Techniques that never go wrong

Want to be a domestic goddess but having trouble getting that elusive crown? Not every woman is blessed with the natural gift of having amazing housekeeping skills.



to keep your furniture clean and use the polish sparingly for special occasions. Whether you're the most careful person in your family or not, everyone spills things. Even the smallest and most innocuous things can cause ghastly stains on your lovely upholstery, carpets or clothes. Instead

But that doesn't mean you can't learn. Start by learning basic things, cleaners, detergents, powders, etc. And make sure you don't make these mistakes:

If you have wooden flooring in any part of the house, make sure that you don't ever clean it with water. Mopping a wooden floor with water will be its death knell, it will damage the wooden flooring in no time. Use a slightly damp cloth to clean it instead. The idea is to minimize the use of water as much as you can. The same goes for laminated floors as well.

While polishing your wooden furniture, don't go overboard with the polish. While it might make the furniture look shiny and new, it can also make smears look more noticeable, which is the last thing you want. Instead, just use a clean cloth every other day



reaching out for some water and scrubbing the stain with your fingers, use a tissue paper or a dry towel to blot out the stain. Keep the stained item in a bucket of water and detergent and try the blotting technique again.

Thanks to the omnipresent dust and pollution in Mumbai, windows get dirty very quickly. But the trick is to clean your windows after the sun has set or before the sun rays hit your windows. This is because the harsh rays of the sun can cause the cleaning liquid to make streaks across the glass, just the thing you don't want.

## How to make flower-pot people

Get the kids involved in gardening this season. Mrs Pott is easy to make, and her edible hair makes this the perfect craft project to get little ones interested in gardening.

**YOU WILL NEED:**

- Glue
- Brown twine
- One large and one small terracotta pot
- Buttons
- Googly eyes
- Red paint and brush
- Gems
- Ribbon
- Card
- Papier mache paper

To make the arms, glue twine onto the base of the small pot. Thread two large buttons on the ends of the twine and secure with a knot. Turn the large pot upside down and glue



the smaller one on top (right-side up) to form a head and body.

Attach googly eyes with glue, and paint on a little smile.

Stick gems down the front of the large pot to create buttons on a jacket, and glue ribbon around the base. Now to create her lovely floral wellies. Draw a pair of boots onto card and cover them with glue. Attach twine to each boot, then cover with papier mache paper. Glue the twine to the inside edge of the large pot.

Finally, plant cress or anything else you like into the top pot to create hair, then find her a nice sunny indoor or outdoor spot so she can grow.

## DIY ways to brighten up your garden furniture

Love sitting in your garden but feel your chairs are in need of a face-lift? Try this simple, yet effective DIY idea. Are your outdoor chairs looking a little shabby? Follow this easy guide to make your garden the envy of all your neighbours...



**YOU WILL NEED:**

- Garden furniture
- Newspaper/dust sheets
- Sandpaper
- Masking tape
- 2 cans of all-surfaces spray paint

Move your furniture to a well-ventilated area and place it on top of a large dust sheet or some old newspapers. You may want to cover the surrounding area with additional dust sheets newspaper to protect it from spray mist. Make sure the surfaces that will be painted are free from loose paint, rust, wax, oil and grease, and lightly sand down furniture that's been previously painted.

Cover any areas you don't want painted with masking tape - like the metal legs on this rattan chair. Using your selected colour (we chose bright orange), hold the can approximately 30cm from the surface of the furniture and spray in a steady back-and-forth motion, slightly overlapping with each stroke. For best results, apply several light coats a few minutes apart. Once completely dry, they're ready to use.

Every person has a specific style of kitchen which reflects their personality. Whether it is the typical urban kitchen or the old world charm of the cottage style kitchen, everybody has a preferred style that goes with their personality.

# Kitchen style to match your Personality

Says interior designer Bindya Chhabria, "A home decor expert can only work on the walls of the kitchen. It is the owner of the kitchen who can make it look warm and inviting."

**TRADITIONAL STYLE KITCHEN**

Bright and sparkling -that's how a traditional kitchen looks like. Warm neutral colours with structured cabinets door and furniture speak about your approachable and straight forward personality. There is an antique touch to this kitchen. Traditional kitchens are spacious with a lot of cross ventilation. In this kitchen, everything is organised. There is absolutely no scope for any kind of mess.

**COTTAGE STYLE KITCHEN**

Cottage style kitchens have a charm of their own. They are built for comfort with features that help you through the rou tine life, and also bring in a fresh whiff of air. There is an element of warmth in this style of kitchen, and retains its old world charm. Artist Radha Sardesai says, "I love inviting people home for informal lunches and dinners and serving simple home-cooked food.

So, I wanted my kitchen to



The urban kitchen is functional and at the same time, versatile. The stainless steel sink and utilitarian stools lend sophistication to the place. The kitchen has the best of fits and all possible electrical gadgets to give a chic look. The furniture is unique and often mismatched. There is a touch of affluence in this type of kitchen. Amisha Puri, a businesswoman, says, "My husband and I travel a lot. Since we have friends from all over the world visiting us, we wanted to keep our kitchen very urban; it looks uber cool and food can be cooked fast."

**MEDITERRANEAN STYLE KITCHEN**

The characteristic of a Mediterranean style kitchen is essentially its colours. When it comes to accessories and decor, you will have plenty of options that radiate a relaxed look. Appliances in the kitchen, like coffee maker, mixer and toaster, are in a wide range of colours. Malini Singh, a teacher, says, "My husband and I love all things bright. Everything, including the cookware and the cutlery in our kitchen, is in bright colours." Furnitures are often constructed from quality hardwood. The coloured chairs, tables and stools are a typical characteristic of this style of kitchen.

have a simple earthen look with brick walls. I have deco rated it with pots and pans to add that rustic look to it."

**URBAN STYLE KITCHEN**



# Using colour psychology for Your home

Most of the time, when we think of interior decoration, we only have the aesthetics in mind and so, whatever — according to our sensibilities — looks the most appealing to us, goes into the decor scheme.

But psychologists, vastu consultants, feng shui experts and colour therapists say that the colours you are using in your house could have a profound effect on your emotional state. Colours could actually be used like a tool to leverage one's behaviours and emotions.

**Colours schemes that work best**

Dr Snehal Deshpande, vastu and feng shui professional consultant states, "The year 2004 was a year when a lot of energy changes happened. So people who have homes made that year of after, should follow a certain theme. Even if you have done a renovation after 2004, including changing the floor of the house etc., you should follow this — use a light coloured theme in the entire house." Senhal suggests, "Off-whites, a touch of pink or peach should be used extensively. You could also opt for metallic colours like gold and silver." If one feels angry and irritated most of the time they

should opt for whites and gold to experience peace of mind.

**Colours can clam you down**

Seema Hingorany, clinical psychologist says, "I have had depression patients who have changed their house colours and reported to have felt much better. Subtle colours have a deep impact on the psyche and they play an important role in helping to calm you down

completely."

**What you need to avoid**

Dark heavy colours like dark pink, dark violet, dark peach, dark green provokes the fire element in the house and hence should be avoided. Painting your walls only with browns should be avoided.

Try these remedies

\* There are some homes that have a lot of fire experiences like bursting or breaking of bulbs, pressure cooker bursts etc., they should use a combination of browns and dark blues to calm down the fire element.

\* If there are too many disputes and fights in the house you must a bunch of have fresh or artificial pink flowers. You could also use violet flowers or a combination of pink and violet flowers.

\* If you feel irritable and angry in rooms that have very bright colours you could switch to light coloured rooms. Paint the walls in light shades of whites.





## Flipkart Minutes, 15-Minute Delivery Vertical Entering Market: Reports

**New Delhi:** The quick commerce market in India that is currently dominated by Zomato-owned Blinkit, Zepto, and Swiggy owned Instamart will most likely have a new entrant -- Flipkart Minutes -- as per media reports.

An exclusive report filed by Business Today has said that Walmart-owned Flipkart is eyeing the quick commerce market with its upcoming vertical Flipkart Minutes that will deliver goods in 15-minutes. BT, quoting sources said that Flipkart Minutes could be launched as early as middle of July.

Flipkart had in 2020 announced the launch of its hyperlocal delivery service 'Flipkart Quick' enabling



customers to receive grocery, fresh vegetables, meat and mobile phones in 90 minutes. In a bid to compete against Amazon Fresh and Dunzo, Flipkart Quick was to debut in select locations in Bengaluru. However, the attempt did not take off as planned.

In related news, ASK Private Wealth Hurun India Future Unicorn Index 2024 was released yesterday that said that 25 future Unicorns, 5 Gazelles, and 20 Cheetahs dropped out of the index list. Zepto, Porter, and Incred Finance achieved unicorn status, while Dunzo among 17 others made exits of future Unicorns Index.

## Credit Card Bill Payments Via Cred, BillDesk, PhonePe To Be Stopped After June 30, If...

**NEW DELHI:** PhonePe, Cred, BillDesk and Infibeam Avenues are some of the major fintechs that will be affected after the RBI's latest regulation requiring credit card bill payments to be routed through a centralised billing network comes into force from July 1, according to an Economic Times report. The Reserve Bank of India earlier directed that all credit card payments must be processed through the Bharat Bill Payment System (BBPS) after June 30. So far, HDFC Bank, ICICI Bank and Axis Bank have not activated BBPS. These banks have issued a combined over 5 crore credit cards to customers. As these lenders have not yet complied with the directions, fintechs like PhonePe and Cred, which are already members of BBPS, will also not be able to process payments on credit card dues for them after June 30. So, lenders need to comply with the RBI norms till June 30 for these fintech to operate seamlessly.

"The payments industry has sought extension of the deadline by 90 days," the chief of a major payments firm quoted by Economic Times as saying. Currently, according to the ET report, only eight banks have activated bill payments on BBPS, as against a total of 34 banks that are allowed to issue credit cards. The lenders who have activated BBPS include SBI Card, BoB Card, IndusInd Bank, Federal Bank, and Kotak Mahindra Bank.

### Why Has RBI Mandated Centralised Payment of Credit Cards?

Industry players said that it aims to provide the RBI with better visibility on payment trends, apart from allowing the central bank to track and resolve fraudulent transactions.

## OpenAI Founder Sutskever Sets Up New AI Company Devoted to 'Safe Superintelligence'

**NEW DELHI:** Ilya Sutskever, one of the founders of OpenAI who was involved in a failed effort to push out CEO Sam Altman, said he's starting a safety-focused artificial intelligence company. Sutskever, a respected AI researcher who left the ChatGPT maker last month, said in a social media post on Wednesday that he's created Safe Superintelligence Inc. with two co-founders. The company's only goal and focus is safely developing "superintelligence" -- a reference to AI systems that are smarter than humans. The company vowed not to be distracted by "management overhead or product cycles", and under its business model, work on safety and security would be "insulated from short-term commercial pressures". Sutskever and his co-founders Daniel Gross and Daniel Levy said in a prepared statement. The three said Safe Superintelligence is an American company with roots in Palo Alto, California, and Tel Aviv, "where we have deep roots and the ability to recruit top technical talent".

Sutskever was part of a group that made an unsuccessful attempt last year to oust Altman. The boardroom shakeup, which Sutskever later said he regretted, also led to a period of internal turmoil centred on whether leaders at OpenAI were prioritising business opportunities over AI safety. At OpenAI, Sutskever jointly led a team focused on safely developing better-than-human AI known as artificial general intelligence, or AGI. When he left OpenAI, he said that he had plans for a "very personally meaningful" project, but offered no details.

Days after his departure, his team co-leader Jan Leike also resigned and levelled criticism at OpenAI for letting safety "take a backseat to shiny products". OpenAI later announced the formation of a safety and security committee, but it's been filled mainly with company insiders.

# GST dilemma: The burden of related party transactions

**New Delhi:** The Goods and Services Tax (GST) marks a pivotal transformation in the landscape of taxation, fundamentally altering the way taxes are assessed and collected. Enacted to establish a unified tax regime, GST consolidates a multitude of indirect taxes into a cohesive framework. Delving into its intricacies, particularly concerning Related Party Transactions, holds paramount importance for businesses endeavouring to navigate the realms of regulatory compliance and financial prudence effectively.

**GST Implementation & Objectives:** Introduced in India in July 2017, GST amalgamates an array of levies such as Value Added Tax (VAT), Service Tax, and Excise Duty into a singular tax structure. This sweeping reform aimed at eradicating the cascading effect of multiple taxes, fostering the creation of a more integrated and harmonized national market. For businesses, this monumental shift necessitated a comprehensive restructuring of their tax reporting and compliance apparatus, ushering in a new era of fiscal governance. **Definition and Scope of Related Party Transactions:** Related persons are defined

u/s 2(84) of the GST Act which states that persons shall be deemed to be related if they fall under any of the categories below: Officer or director of one business is the officer/director of another business. Businesses legally recognized as partners.

An employer and an employee. Any person who holds at least 25% of shares in another company, either directly or indirectly. One of them controls the other directly or indirectly. They are under common control or management. The entities together control another entity. The promoters or managerial persons are members of the same family. Persons include a legal person who can be individuals, HUF, a company, a firm, an LLP, a cooperative society, a body of individuals, a local authority, a government, or an artificial juridical person. It also includes entities incorporated outside India. Persons who are associated with one another's business or are a sole agent or sole distributor or sole concessionaire shall be deemed to be related.

**Taxation of Related Party Transactions:** In the realm of Related Party Transactions within the ambit of GST, precision is paramount. In accordance with GST

regulations, a Related Party Transaction encompasses any exchange of goods or services between affiliated entities, encompassing entities subject to common control or those where familial ties influence management or ownership. The



**taxation of Related Party Transactions under GST** is contingent upon the nature of the transaction and the relational dynamics between the involved entities.

### Valuation & Documentation Challenges:

The GST implications concerning Related Party Transactions predominantly revolve around the valuation and documentation of these transactions. It is imperative that such transactions are valued at an 'Arm's Length Price' -- a price

reflective of what would be charged to an independent, unrelated entity under comparable circumstances. This framework ensures the equitable and market-driven valuation of transactions, thereby mitigating the risk of tax evasion through manipulative transfer pricing practices. Even in the absence of tangible consideration, Schedule I of the GST Law mandates their taxation based on the open market value. This concept, while theoretically sound, introduces practical complexities. Determining the open market value for related party transactions is no simple feat. Subjectivity and potential disputes cloud the process.

### Administrative Challenges for Businesses:

The imposition of GST on related party transactions introduces considerable administrative challenges for businesses. Key points include: **Meticulous Tracking and Documentation:** Companies must diligently monitor and record all intra-group transactions to comply with GST regulations. This involves maintaining detailed records of transaction values, parties involved, and the nature of each transaction.

## THESE Paytm Wallets To Be Closed From 20 July 2024 -- Check Important Notice By Paytm Payments Bank

**New Delhi:** Paytm Payments Bank has said that certain types of wallets will be closed with effect from 20th July. In a notice on its website, Paytm Payments Bank has announced the dates for Closure of inactive Paytm Payments Bank wallets with nil balance.

Please note that all wallets which do not have any transactions for the last 1 year or more and have nil balance, shall be closed w.e.f. July 20th, 2024. Communication will be sent to all impacted users and users will be given 30 days' notice period, before closing their wallet," said the PPBL notice.

Notably, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) had in March issued a directive restricting Paytm Payments Bank Account/Wallet from accepting new

deposits or allowing credit transactions after March 15, 2024. Customers have been barred to deposit or add money to your Paytm Payments Bank



Account/Wallet after March 15, 2024. However, there is no restriction on withdrawal of money from your existing balance even after March 15, 2024.

Interest, cashbacks, sweep-ins from

partner banks, or refunds are permitted to be credited. Withdrawal/debit mandates through automatic UPI mandates, NACH mandates, EMIs, will also continue to get executed till there is balance available in your account.

The directive does not impact your existing balances in Account or Wallet and your money is safe with your Bank," says PPBL in its FAQs section.

### How to close Paytm Wallet?

You can close the Paytm Payments Bank Wallet (Minimum KYC/Full-KYC) by following the below mentioned steps: Go to the Paytm Payments Bank Wallet section on the Paytm App. Click on "Need help with non-order related queries." Click on "I want to close my Wallet".

Your Wallet will be closed within 2 working days.

## Why Are Most Indian Millionaires Choosing UAE To Migrate? Explained

**NEW DELHI:** New Delhi: 4,300 millionaires projected to leave the country in 2024 -- compared to 5,100 last year, the Henley Private Wealth Migration Report 2024, has said. The report by the international investment migration advisory firm said that China is again on track to be the biggest millionaire loser globally, with an anticipated net exit of 15,200 HNWIs this year (compared to 13,800 in 2023).

India on the other hand has stemmed its wealth exodus, dropping down to 3rd place after the UK with just 4,300 millionaires projected to leave the country in 2024 (compared to 5,100 last year).

South Korea's HNWI flight is expected to rise with a forecast loss of 1,200 millionaires (compared to 800 in 2023)

while the tsunami of millionaires that fled Russia following the outbreak of the Ukraine war appears to be abating with only 1,000 projected to relocate



this year (compared to 8,500 in 2022 and 2,800 in 2023), the report added.

### Why Are Most Indian Millionaires Choosing UAE To Migrate?

The Henley & Partners report says that

UAE remains the world's number one destination for migrating millionaires. It said that UAE is poised to welcome a record net inflow of 6,700 this year alone. Among the reasons why UAE is the most preferred destination are the country's zero income tax, golden visas, luxury lifestyle, and strategic location.

Sunita Singh-Dalal, Partner leading the Private Wealth & Family Offices at Hourani in Dubai points out in the report, "the evolution and development of the UAE's wealth management ecosystem is unprecedented. In less than 5 years, the UAE has introduced a robust regulatory framework that provides the wealthy with a range of innovative solutions to protect, preserve and enhance their wealth."

# Pre-budget meet: Fin sector seeks stable tax policy on capital gains, sec transactions

**The suggestions included widening market access, providing tax incentives, and boosting fund allocations for NBFCs.**

**NEW DELHI:** Financial industry leaders, in the second pre-budget meet held on Thursday, sought for stable and long-term tax policies on capital gains tax, shares transactions, and clarity on GST. The suggestions included widening market access, providing tax incentives, and boosting fund allocations for NBFCs. Discussions touched on GST implications for loans and service charges, as well as strategies to maintain



capital within the country, particularly in relation to GIFT City. Arun Kohli, MD and country head of Morgan Stanley India, emphasised the importance of stable and long-term tax policies. Experts also shared insights on capital gains tax and taxes related to the purchase and sale of shares. George Alexander Muthoot,

MD of Muthoot Group, highlighted the need for widening the market and providing tax incentives to companies. Raman Agarwal, FIDC director, suggested increasing funds allocation from SIDBI and NABARD to refinance NBFCs, considering the rise in NBFC loans and concerns raised by the

RBI regarding excessive bank dependency. NBFCs are seeking clarity on GST for loans and service charges, he said.

Meanwhile, asset management companies discussed issues concerning GIFT City and strategies to retain capital within the country. In another meeting, Vivek Jalan, Chairman of National Fiscal Affairs and Taxation Committee, Bengal Chamber of Commerce and Industry, suggested that the expenditure on scientific research should be incentivised so that Indian corporate spend more on R&D expenditure to manufacture indigenous products.

To streamline the reconciliation process under income tax, he proposed to link PAN and TAN, akin to the PAN-Aadhaar linkage. He also requested to remove the requirement for payers to issue TDS/TCS certificates and consider prescribing Form 26AS (generated through secure safeguards). He also proposed to cover the cases of excess payment of custom duty, resulting in refund to the importers under faceless e-assessment.



NEWS BOX

**Shan Masood remains not out despite hit wicket and run out in same delivery**

New Delhi. Pakistan and Yorkshire batter Shan Masood survived a hit wicket and a run out in Yorkshire's match vs Lancashire in the Vitality Blast. The incident happened due to a unique law in the MCC's cricket rulebook. The league posted the video of the incident on Twitter which left the fans in splits on Friday, 21 June.

Batting in the 15th over of the match, Masood hit his wicket while trying to scoop the ball. However, as the bowler bowled a no-ball, Masood was deemed not out. The batter got out of his crease as Joe Root called for a run. Masood reluctantly came out of his crease but gave up after taking a couple of steps. Masood was run out and that left the opposition cheering as the batter was looking in good touch.

However, to everyone's surprise, the umpires deemed Masood not out, and here's how it happened. But before we explain the law, here's the full video of the incident. The umpire deemed Masood not out on two counts. First, the hit wicket was ruled out since the bowler had bowled a no-ball. The run-out was ruled out as the umpire believed that Masood was not trying to steal a run and had thought to



himself that he was hit wicket. An umpire shall intervene if satisfied that a batter, not having been given out, has left the wicket under a misapprehension of being out. The umpire intervening shall call and signal Dead ball to prevent any further action by the fielding side and shall recall the batter.

Speaking after the match, Masood revealed that he was slightly dazed during the whole incident after being hit on the grill. Masood thanked the umpires and the opposition players for moving on quickly from the incident. "I mean, from my end, I tried to play shot and the ball hit my grill. And for me, it was like I stood my ground like wanting, wanting treatment. And I was confused. Rooty (Joe Root) was running, and then eventually I ran. So for me, it was more about being hit. Is it a dead ball? Do we get the physio on? And I just yeah, that was my recollection of it," Masood said.

**AUS vs BAN: Najimul Shanto unsure of reason behind Bangladesh's batting struggles**

New Delhi. Bangladesh captain Najimul Shanto has said he is unsure of the reason behind his side's batting struggles during the T20 World Cup 2024 after the hammering at the hands of Australia on June 21, Friday. Bangladesh's batting order has failed to fire in most of the matches till now as the bowlers have had to step in to save the day. On a good track in Antigua, Bangladesh managed to score just 140 runs in the end.

Shanto hit 41 and Towhid Hridoy scored 40 on the day, but the rest of the batting lineup failed to perform well and Australia ended up winning the match by 28 runs in the end via DLS method. Speaking at the press conference, Shanto said it is difficult to understand why Bangladesh haven't been able to play freely. The skipper said that his players have the freedom to play their natural game, but he is unsure as to why it isn't happening. "It is difficult to say why we are not able to play. I think everyone has the capability, people have played well in different places in the past. But I do not have an answer to why this is not happening.



Everyone has the freedom to play their natural game and they will try to play as they want, but somehow it is not happening," said Shanto.

**Should have targeted 160 to 170**

Shanto said that while the conditions do make a very big difference, today's track was a flat one, and they didn't bat well in the end. Shanto said they should have targeted a score of 160 to 170. "Yes, obviously I think condition is very big difference because last match there was a lot of spin and also seam but today looks flat wicket a very good wicket to bat and I think we didn't bat well so I think that is the big difference - probably we should have target 160 to 170," said Shanto.

**Lionel Messi creates history as Argentina beat Canada 2-0 in Copa America opener**

← Rabada said the belief is there in the squad

← South Africa have found the knockout matches to be a stumbling block

← South Africa will next face England in their second Super 8 clash on June 21



New Delhi. Defending Copa America champions Argentina beat Canada 2-0 in the opening match of the tournament in Atlanta on Thursday with forwards Julian Alvarez and Lautaro Martinez scoring second-half goals to seal the Group A victory.

Alvarez broke the deadlock in the 49th minute with Martinez ensuring victory two minutes from time. Lionel Messi marked his record 35th match in his seventh Copa

America tournament, surpassing Chilean goalkeeper Sergio Livingstone's record of 34 appearances between 1942 and 1953. We knew it was going to be a tough game. We knew that Canada was going to be a hard team to go against," Messi told Fox via a translator. "They were physical, very physical. In the first half, there was

little space. It was intense, physically intense and strong and then in the second half we were able to progress and get better." Canada gave Argentina a run for their money in the first half and nearly found a breakthrough just before halftime. Cyle Larin's cross into the box found Stephen Eustaquio, whose header was

saved by Emiliano Martinez. Alphonso Davies' subsequent shot soared over the bar. Argentina seized control in the second half after a challenging first 45 minutes. The breakthrough came when Messi's pass led Alexis Mac Allister into the box.

The midfielder collided with oncoming Canadian goalkeeper Maxime Crepeau, allowing the ball to slip free for Alvarez to end his 13-match international goal drought. Alvarez's last goals came during the 2022 World Cup semi-finals against Croatia. Messi came close to finding the back of the net in the 65th minute but his shot was saved by Crepeau and his rebound effort was headed away by defender Derek Cornelius. He had another chance in the 80th minute but his shot rolled just wide. Messi then set up substitute Martinez for Argentina's second. Serie A's top goalscorer squeezing his shot under Crepeau. "We've been in that situation before in the World Cup and we know that we have to bounce back in the second game," Canada's Eustaquio told TSN. Chile and Peru, the other teams in Group A, play their opener on Friday in Arlington, Texas. In the group's next set of fixtures on Tuesday, Argentina face Chile while Canada take on Peru.

**AUS vs BAN, Super 8: Mitchell Marsh enjoying leading strong group in T20 World Cup 2024**

New Delhi. Australia captain Mitchell Marsh is loving leading Australia in the T20 World Cup 2024. Speaking after Australia's convincing win against Bangladesh in their first Super 8 fixture on Friday, 21 June, Marsh said that Australia are a great team to lead and it helps that the side has a lot of experience in its run

Australia hammered Bangladesh by 28 runs (DLS) in Antigua. First, Mitchell Marsh's team restricted Bangladesh to a below-par 140-run total, with Pat Cummins picking up his first ever T20I hat-trick. Coming into bat, David Warner and Travis Head bullied Bangladesh into submission, hitting 59 runs from the first six overs of the game, after which rain played hide and seek. Australia came out to bat once again and were 100/2 in 11.2 overs when the match was called off. "It was an exciting bowling performance with everyone chipping in.



This is a very good playing XI, we spoke before the start to have the team to take us deep into the tournament and have a team based on the conditions and it's going well.

I'm loving it (on captaincy), great team to lead, great group filled with experience, the support staff have been excellent and the families are here as well. Have another game tomorrow and we're looking forward to it," Mitchell Marsh said in the post match presentation ceremony.

T20 World Cup 2024, Super 8: AUS vs BAN: Highlights

Australia will face Afghanistan and India in their next two games in the Super 8 stage. The side have dominated their fixtures so far. They beat England comprehensively in their group stage competition and would hope to continue their terrific run in the tournament. On a personal front, Marsh is yet to bowl a single over in the T20 World Cup 2024 due to a hamstring injury. Marsh was expected to bowl against Bangladesh but decided to stay away.

**AUS vs BAN: Hat-trick hero Pat Cummins says he was unaware about feat at first**

New Delhi. Australia's hat-trick hero Pat Cummins claimed that he had no idea he had achieved the feat against Bangladesh in Antigua on June 21, Friday before it was shown on the big screen. Cummins, who came back into the lineup after a rest, was in fine form as he became the second Aussie bowler to pick up a hat-trick in T20 World Cups after the legendary Brett Lee. Cummins picked up the wickets of Mahmudullah and Mahedi Hasan in the 18th over, before getting the hat-trick in the first ball of the final over of the Bangladesh innings. Cummins' hat-trick helped Australia restrict Bangladesh to 140 runs. David Warner's 53 would then help Australia secure the win in the match that was affected by rain before being called off in the end as the Aussies secured a 28-run win via DLS method. Cummins, at the post-match



presentation, said he was happy to get the wicket of Hridoy, who was well-set, and restrict Bangladesh's total to just 140.

"I had no idea (on the hat-trick), then saw when it came up on the screen. Set batter in, playing the innings, you never know how it'll go about, so that was a big wicket (on Hridoy's wicket) and happy to have restricted them," said Cummins. Polished performance

Cummins opened up about the bench strength of the side as they have Nathan Ellis and Ashton Agar waiting in the wings. The pacer said it was a fairly polished performance from the side in the game against Bangladesh and their main goal was to secure the win. Cummins was happy they also got a boost in the run-rate and hopes to keep the momentum going in the Super 8. Agar and Ellis have been on the bench for us, that shows the depth we have in the bowling unit. Fairly polished performance, the goal was to win and we did well with the run-rate, we'll need to continue with the momentum going ahead in the Super 8s," said Cummins. The win helped Australia go top of Group 1 over India on net run-rate and they will face Afghanistan next on June 22.

**Virat Kohli in splits seeing shocked Axar Patel after best fielder nomination**

New Delhi. Virat Kohli was unable to control his laughter when he saw Axar Patel get shocked seeing himself being nominated for the best fielder award after the India vs Afghanistan game on June 20, Thursday. India put out another fine performance in all three departments of the game as they defeated Afghanistan by 47 runs to secure the win in the end.

Once again, the best fielder award tradition continued after the game as fielding coach T Dilip was proud of the performance of the players. The fielding coach lauded the situational awareness from the side during the game as they got off to the perfect start in the Super 8 stages. Dilip went on to reveal the nominees for the award, with Arshdeep Singh being the first contender. Ravindra Jadeja was the second contender for the award before Dilip moved on to Axar. The all-rounder was in shock hearing his name and the expression on his face would leave Kohli laughing. Axar had taken the catch to dismiss the

dangerous Azmatullah Omarzai. The final contender for the award was Rishabh Pant, who took a total of 3 catches during the game. In the end, the award went to Jadeja



and it was presented by the India coach. How did the India vs Afghanistan match unfold?

India chose to bat first after winning the toss. The innings began on a shaky note as they lost Rohit Sharma early. However, Virat

Kohli and Rishabh Pant managed to build a promising partnership before both were dismissed in quick succession. Suryakumar Yadav then took charge, stabilizing the innings and finding an excellent partner in Hardik Pandya.

Suryakumar's impressive knock of 53 runs, combined with Hardik's valuable 32, helped India post a competitive total of 181 runs in their allotted 20 overs. The pair added 60 crucial runs together, ensuring India had a solid score to defend.

Afghanistan's chase started poorly, as Jasprit Bumrah and the Indian bowlers struck early, reducing them to 23 for 3. Gulbadin Naib and Azmatullah Omarzai attempted to revive the innings, but Bumrah's exceptional bowling, yielding figures of 3 for 7 in 4 overs, and Arshdeep Singh's equally impressive 3-wicket haul, ensured India's dominance. Afghanistan ultimately fell short, with India securing a comprehensive 47-run victory.

**Do you want Rashid Khan here? Trott's cheeky response to too many questions on spinner**

← Rashid Khan picked up 3 wickets against India

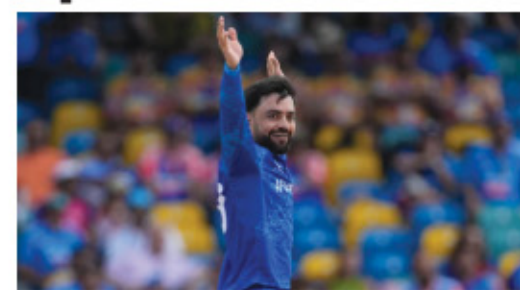
← Trott hailed Rashid as an inspiration for youngsters

← Trott has no issues with Rashid bowling himself out in the 14th over

Afghanistan coach Jonathan Trott had a cheeky answer to a reporter during the press conference as there were too many questions about Rashid Khan after the loss to India. The Afghan skipper once again stepped up for his side as he picked up 3 wickets for just 26 runs in his 4 overs against India and was the pick of the bowlers. Rashid's effort went in vain in the end as India won the match by 47 runs. During the press conference, a lot of the questions were about Rashid and why he decided to bowl himself out by the 14th over.

While Trott answered most of them, the Afghanistan coach had a smile on his face when another reporter posed a question on the star spinner. Trott joked if everyone wanted Rashid to be there at the press conference instead of him as he shared the light moment with them. "Do you want Rashid to do the press conference?" said Trott. The reporter went on to ask what made Rashid a special player and Trott said that the star spinner is always looking to grow as a player and is a great example for youngsters across the globe.

"I think with all great players, that's a lot of the time it's what they do off the field that's not in front of the cameras and the way they conduct themselves. And obviously, Rash is sitting here and he won't mind me saying, but setting high standards for themselves that take others with them and inspire other people. And work ethic, desire, ability to listen and learn, and always wanting to grow and discover, try new deliveries, and push



the boundaries on your own game." "Sometimes I think as players, and at times I was maybe like this, as a player, you try and hold on to what you have and you don't want to grow as a player, you try and protect what you've got. I wish I had pushed myself with regards to testing my game and pushing the boundaries on what I could achieve as a player. I think Rashid sets a great example for that for all younger players, not only in Afghanistan but around the world and in

India and the IPL and across the globe so yeah that's all I can say really and he bowls pretty well as well," said Trott. Trott also said he had no issue with Rashid bowled out early and he felt the rest of the 16 overs weren't good enough in the end. "Look, I think when the captain decides when he bowls, I don't have a problem with the way Rashid finished and when he did. If he had taken another wicket or if he had got Pandya out last ball, we would be sitting here saying it's a masterstroke. So, I think hindsight is a fantastic thing. I don't think Rashid finishing the game or finishing his bowling in the 14th over is the problem why we lost the game. No, I'm just saying, I'm saying it's not the reason why Rashid finished in the 14th. There's other 16 overs where people have got to bowl better. So, I've absolutely no qualms and yeah, that's my answer," said Trott.

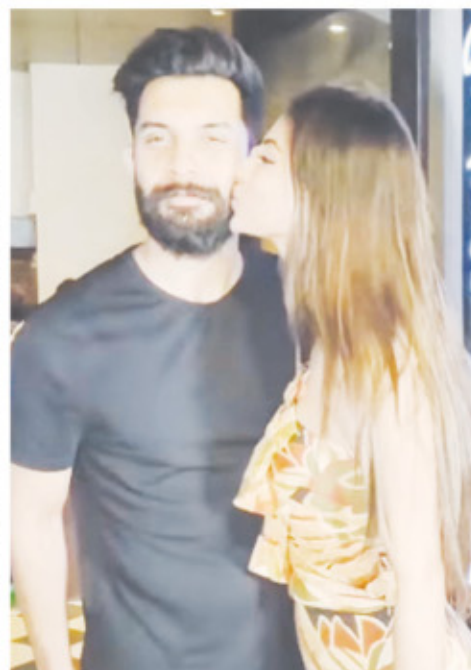


**Mouni Roy** left her fans gasping for breath with her latest fashion choices.

# Mouni Roy

**Looks Sizzling In A Tube Top As She Steps Out For Date Night, Hot Video Goes Viral**

Mouni Roy needs no introduction. She has become one of the highest-paid Hindi television actresses after appearing in the supernatural thriller series Naagin and its sequel, Naagin. Apart from her outstanding acting skills, she is also known as a fashion icon. She never misses a single chance to embrace her distinctive sense of style and surprise her fans. Not only that, even the paps' social feeds are often peppered with candid pictures and moments. Maintaining that trajectory, Mouni Roy set the internet on fire once again after they dropped a sizzling video of the actress with her husband. Mouni Roy recently stepped out for a date night with her husband, Suraj Nambiar. She looked ravishing as she flaunted her curves in a white tube-style top and black pants. Watch here: Mouni Roy has come a long way ever since she made her television debut with Ekta Kapoor's Kyunki Saas Bhi Kabhi Bahu Thi. She became a popular name after she starred in Naagin. Mouni made her Bollywood debut with Akshay Kumar's Gold in 2018. Last year, Mouni was seen in Ayan Mukerji's magnum opus, Brahmastra. Recently, she was also seen in a music video titled 'Dotara' along with Jubin Nautiyal. Mouni Roy was also seen in the web-series Sultan of Delhi. She was last seen in Emraan Hashmi-starrer Showtime. In a recent interview, Mouni shared that it is projects like Sultan of Delhi and Brahmastra which changed people's perception of her as an actor. "Brahmastra was absolutely different. When you see Gold, RAW and Made In China, I had played very Indianised characters. Maybe after Naagin and Sati, people could only see me as a 'saree-clad Indian character'. So, for Milan sir to think of me as this cabaret dancer Nayantara, at a time when Brahmastra had not even released. I think it is an exciting time to be an actor where makers can visualise you in different roles. Such great parts are being written. I really feel fortunate to be offered these parts and be able to play them on screen," she told Indian Express.



**Shahid Kapoor's Wife Mira Rajput Has This To Say About Her 'Puppy' Comment**



Shahid Kapoor's wife Mira Rajput recently embarked on her entrepreneurial journey and launched a skincare brand named Akind. Well, this is not the only reason she is grabbing headlines for. Back in 2017, Mira had questioned working mothers for not spending time with their babies and leaving them at home for work. She had even compared babies with 'puppies' in a statement. Now, the content creator has reacted to her past comment in an interview with Film Champion. Mira Rajput clarified her stance about the misconceptions people have regarding her statement. She even expressed "regret" over her past comments. Mira said that she felt being "pushed into a corner" for taking a "conventional, conservative approach" during her pregnancy. Calling this line of thought "unfair," the entrepreneur added that she wanted to give time to her children. Mira Rajput shared, "While I was pushed in that corner for seeming very regressive, I think I probably acted out by saying things... I don't think I agree with them right now. I think I have come a long way from that." Mira Rajput added that she now understands why her comments didn't go down well with the audience. "I can understand why it wasn't taken well. I think I was in a vulnerable, emotional space. I think I was just trying to defend myself that my choices are also valid," added the star wife. Mira Rajput was trying to advocate for equal recognition of mothers and fathers who stay at home when she made the viral comment. The popular influencer said that her daughter Misha was not a puppy whom she could leave at home for work and called out women for prioritising their work. The comment did not go down well, receiving flak from audiences. In the same interaction, Mira Rajput also came in support of Hrithik Roshan's beau Saba Azad. FYI: Saba recently criticised the "patriarchal mindset". The actress revealed that she missed out on various voice-over job opportunities because of her relationship with Hrithik. Supporting Saba Azad, Mira Rajput said that one's identity shouldn't be solely based on their associations.

**Singer Eshani On Darshan's Arrest: 'Must Face Punishment If Wrong'**



Popular actor Darshan was recently arrested in connection with the Renuka Swamy murder case. The actor along with 17 other people was arrested on June 11. The court ordered 9 days of judicial custody which ends today, June 20. Since the actor's arrest, several stars from the film industry reacted to the development. Bigg Boss Kannada 10 fame singer Eshani Shekar posted a message along with some pictures with Darshan on her Instagram handle. In the post, Eshani mentioned that everyone should abide by the law and if the actor has done anything wrong he should be punished accordingly. She wrote, "This is truly shocking news! It is very hard to believe that Darshan Sir, whom I saw as a brother, is involved in such an act. Although his actions seemed right as he tried to save the dignity of a woman, taking the law into one's own hands is not at all acceptable under the Constitution of India. If Darshan Sir has done wrong, he must face the punishment, but spreading baseless rumours and tarnishing his image until then is not right," when translated to English. 33-year-old Renuka Swamy, who was reportedly an autorickshaw driver, was allegedly kidnapped from the Chitradurga district of Karnataka on June 8. He reportedly sent some derogatory messages to actress Pavithra Gowda. According to the statement by the Police department, Renuka Swamy blamed the actress for souring Darshan's relationship with his wife. This allegedly angered the actor, who then reportedly hired some members of one of his fan clubs to kidnap the man. The gang allegedly kidnapped and murdered him as per the instructions of Darshan. His dead body was later found on June 9 near a flyover in Bengaluru. In another development, the Kannada Bigg Boss winner Pratham recently filed a comment after receiving death threats from Darshan's fans. He reportedly made certain comments that angered some fans of Darshan.

# Swara Bhasker

**Says Producers Think She's 'Untouchable': 'My Twitter Account Cost Me My Career'**

Actress Swara Bhasker's performance was appreciated in films like Tanu Weds Manu, Raanjhanaa and Anarkali of Aarah among others. However, despite much critical acclaim, the actress did not appear in many mainstream movies. Known for never mincing her words, Swara recently said that voicing her opinions on social media cost her her career. Speaking to Connect Cine, Swara said, "If there was anything in the world that was most expensive for me, it was my Twitter account because it cost me my career, in a sense... For a lot of producers, I am untouchable in the industry and these are not my words, these are the words of my well-wishers, producer, director friends who have called me up and told me that we wanted to cast you but the studio heard your name and said no."



Swara said that casting directors are asked to look for "an actress like Swara Bhasker" but wouldn't cast her. She said, "They are like 'no, controversies happen'. I don't know what is the fear but there is a fear." There are a lot of people who keep saying that 'You have done the wrong thing, you destroyed your career, why did you do this? It was very foolish of you', including often your own team. People who love you, and they are coming from a place of concern. They are your well-wishers so they are feeling bad looking at you. Like my brother, he is my biggest supporter and he gets the most angry too that an actor of your calibre shot herself in the foot," she said. In the same conversation, Swara also said that it was a conscious decision for her to make her opinions heard. She said, "I don't want to act like I am a victim. I chose this path. I decided that I will be vocal and put forth my opinion on issues. I could've chosen to stay silent. There was no need for me to write an open letter, expressing my discontent on the Johar scene in Padmaavat. Mujhe koi zarurat nahin thi (There was no need for me to do it)."



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