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Making India a digital power

In eight years, PM Modi has made the country a technology hub, expanded opportunities



**Full Story
on Page 30**

Russian President Putin losing his eyesight, has 3 years to live

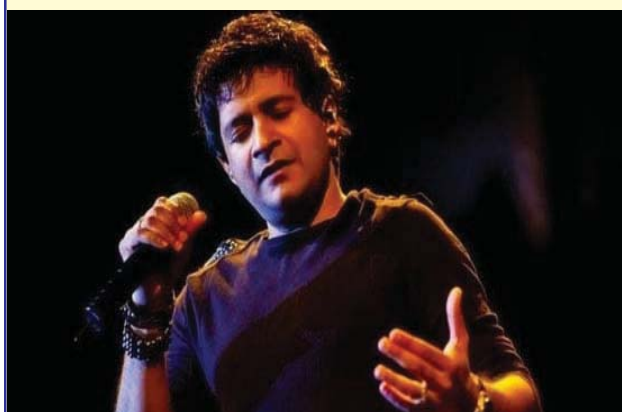
A Russian intelligence officer claimed that Putin has only three years to live as he has 'cancer', adding that the president is also losing his eyesight and suffering from headaches



(SAI Bureau) A Russian Independent reported. The Federal intelligence officer has claimed that President Vladimir Putin has been given just three years to live as he has a "severe form of rapidly progressing cancer", the Security Service (FSB) officer also alleged that the 69-year-old president is losing his eyesight and suffering from headaches. (Contd on page 31)

Singer KK dies

'Will remember him through his songs'- PM Modi leads nation in paying tributes



(News Agency) Bollywood singer Krishnakumar Kunnath – popularly known as KK – passed away on Tuesday night after performing at a concert in Kolkata, prompting a flood of tributes from fans including Prime Minister Narendra Modi. He was 53. KK fell ill while performing at Nazrul Manch in South Kolkata and had to be rushed to a hospital where doctors declared him dead on arrival. He is survived by his wife and children. (Contd. on page 31)

Joe Biden to meet Federal Reserve chairman as inflation bites US pocketbooks

Biden has been attempting to show he's maximizing efforts to curb the hottest inflation in 40 years heading into November midterms, in which Democrats' risk losing their slim congressional majorities

(SAI Bureau) President Joe Biden will hold a rare meeting Tuesday with Federal Reserve Chair Jay Powell that highlights White House efforts to shift responsibility for decades-high inflation to the central bank. It's Biden's third in-person session with Powell since taking office and recalls the stakes when Ronald Reagan met with then-Fed chief Paul Volcker almost four decades ago as he sought re-election amid galloping price pressure.

(Contd. on page 31)



What Pak PM Shehbaz Sharif and UK's Boris Johnson spoke about on Monday



PML-N leader Shehbaz Sharif took office in April this year after a no-confidence motion against former Pakistani Prime Minister Imran Khan

(News Agency) British Prime Minister Boris Johnson has spoken to his Pakistani counterpart Shehbaz Sharif for the first time since the latter's election last month to discuss a range of topics, including bilateral trade and the Russia-Ukraine conflict. (Contd on page 31)



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Two Indians among 21 new cardinals named by Pope Francis

Two Indian churchmen were among 21 who will be elevated by Pope Francis to the rank of cardinal in a ceremony at the Vatican in August, it was announced on Sunday



Consistory for the creation of new cardinals, the report said. He also said that he will meet from August 29 and 30 with all the cardinals to reflect on the new Apostolic Constitution Praedicate evangelium.

Eight of the newly named Cardinals are from Europe, six from Asia, two from Africa, one from North America, and four from Central and Latin America.

The College of Cardinals currently consists of 208 Cardinals, of whom 117 are electors and 91 are non-electors. As of 27 August, the number will grow to 229 Cardinals, of whom 131 will be

electors. Father Ferrao was born in Aldona village near Panaji on January 20, 1953 and began his religious studies in the Seminary of Our Lady in Saligao and then went to the Papal Seminary in Pune, a senior official from the Archbishop's Palace in Panaji, Goa said on Sunday.

He graduated in Philosophy and Theology and is fluent in Konkani, English, Portuguese, Italian, French and German, the official added. Fr Ferrao was ordained as a priest on October 28, 1979 and, on December 12, 2003, he was consecrated as

Archbishop of Goa and Daman by Pope John Paul II after the then Archbishop Rev Fr Raul Goncalves resigned. Archbishop Anthony Poola, 60, was born on November 15, 1961, in Poluru in Kurnool diocese. He was ordained priest on February 20, 1992 and was appointed bishop of Kurnool on February 8, 2008. He was installed on April 19, 2008. He is the chairman of the youth commission in Andhra Pradesh Bishops' Conference, Union of Catholic News reported. On November 19, 2020 Rev. Anthony Poola was appointed as the Archbishop of Hyderabad.

(News Agency) The two Cardinals from India are Archbishop Filipe Neri Antonio Sebastiao di Rosario Ferrao - Archbishop of Goa and Damao (India) and Archbishop Anthony

Poola - Archbishop di Hyderabad (India), the official Vatican News reported. At the conclusion of the Regina Coeli on Sunday, Pope Francis said that on August 27, he will hold a

Indian-Origin Doctor In Scotland Jailed For 12 Years For Sex Crimes

Krishna Singh, a 72-year-old general practitioner, had denied all charges during his trial last month at the High Court in Glasgow

(News Agency) An Indian-origin doctor based in Scotland was on Wednesday sentenced to 12 years of imprisonment after he was found guilty of sex offences against 47 female patients over 35 years.

Krishna Singh, a 72-year-old general practitioner (GP) from North Lanarkshire, was accused of kissing, groping, giving inappropriate examinations and making sleazy comments, charges that he had denied during his trial last month at the High Court in Glasgow.

"You undermined the standing of the medical profession and eroded the trust of the female

patients," Judge Lord Armstrong told Singh during a sentencing hearing.

The GP had insisted the patients were wrong and that some of the examinations were what he had been taught during medical training in India. But he went on to be found guilty of numerous sexual offences, which took place between 1983 and 2018. "Krishna Singh is now facing the consequences of his appalling and predatory behaviour," said Detective Inspector Stephen Morris, of the Specialist Crime Division at Police Scotland.

"Singh was a doctor, and in a position of trust, at the time he

carried out this sexual abuse. The victims have shown great courage in coming forward with vital information, making sure he was held accountable for his actions, and ultimately convicted," said Morris. "I hope this sentence provides a sense of closure for them and sends a clear message that all reports of sexual abuse, regardless of the passage of time, will be thoroughly investigated by Police Scotland and victims will be supported throughout," he said. Detectives from Police Scotland began an investigation into Singh after a woman came forward in 2018 to report him. He was



subsequently arrested and charged in April 2018. Singh was seen as a respected member of the community, even awarded the royal MBE honour for his contribution to medical services. The doctor went on to

be convicted of 54 charges against the victims, the crimes mainly consisting of multiple sexual and indecent assault. He was found not proven on nine other charges and not guilty on a further two.

Indian Among 2 Killed In Gas Cylinder Blast At UAE Restaurant

The Indian Embassy said it is in regular contact with the local authorities for early repatriation of the victim's body, according to the report

(News Agency) An Indian national and a Pakistani citizen were killed in a gas cylinder explosion at a restaurant in UAE's capital Abu Dhabi early this week that also left 120 others injured, including 106 Indians, according to a media report. The incident happened on Monday afternoon in a restaurant in Abu Dhabi in which a total of 120 people were injured. The two killed, included an Indian and a Pakistani, the Khaleej Times reported on Wednesday. "Two people -- an Indian and a Pakistani expat -- died and 120 people, including

106 Indians were injured in the gas explosion at a restaurant in UAE's capital Abu Dhabi," the report said. The Indian Embassy also confirmed that one of the dead was an Indian. "As per information provided by the UAE authorities, one Indian national is among those deceased and 106 Indian nationals suffered injuries," the report said, quoting a statement from the Indian Embassy. It said that it is in regular contact with the local authorities



for early repatriation of the dead bodies. The embassy is in regular contact with the local authorities for early repatriation of the mortal remains of the deceased and has

been assured of all support by the UAE authorities. Embassy officials have reached out to the family of the deceased and are extending every assistance in an expeditious manner." The embassy is also closely monitoring the condition of the injured admitted to hospitals in the emirate. Pakistan's Foreign Ministry has also confirmed the nationality of the second victim and said the official paperwork is being done. Indians and Pakistani make up much of the foreign workforce that powers the Emirates.



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UK's Indian-origin anti-terror police chief to seek explanation for missed promotion

Scotland Yard's Indian-origin Head of Counter-Terrorism Policing, Neil Basu is disappointed with the process for a new appointment has been handled and plans to seek an explanation from the UK Home Office



(News Agency) Scotland Yard's Indian-origin Head of Counter-Terrorism Policing, Neil Basu, said he is "disappointed" with the way the process for a new appointment which involved a promotion has been handled and plans to seek an explanation from the UK Home Office, a UK media report has claimed. Basu, a Metropolitan Police Assistant Commissioner and the country's senior-most

non-white officer, was in the running to lead the National Crime Agency (NCA) often referred to as the UK's version of the American Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI). According to 'The Sunday Times', Basu had been narrowed down as one of the final two candidates until Downing Street's preference for former Scotland Yard chief Lord Bernard Hogan-Howe emerged and applications were

reopened. "I am disappointed in the way the process has concluded and will not be applying again," Basu told the newspaper. "I will be seeking an explanation from the Home Office," the 53-year-old said. The newspaper said Basu is understood to be consulting lawyers and has served notice on the Home Office that he intends to lodge a formal complaint. Privately, he is reportedly furious to miss out on the GBP 223,000-a-year job and his supporters suspect it may be linked to his outspoken views on race. Last week, on the second anniversary of the murder of George Floyd in the US which triggered the worldwide Black Lives Matter movement, Basu wrote an article in which he said British policing had to accept that it is "institutionally racist" and also

called for positive discrimination to boost the number of black and Asian officers. If his candidacy for the NCA job had succeeded, Basu would have become the first person of South Asian heritage, born to an Indian father and Welsh mother, to lead a UK law enforcement organisation. The newspaper pointed out that any official complaint is likely to point out that delays to the recruitment process meant Basu missed the deadline to apply for the job of Met commissioner, as well as a senior leadership role at the College of Policing in England and Wales. The top job at the NCA, the UK's lead agency against organised crime, became vacant in October last year after Dame Lynne Owens stepped down as Director-General on medical grounds.

Lord Hogan-Howe had made it through to the final four candidates but his failure to reach the last two is believed to have prompted the British Prime Minister's office at 10 Downing to intervene in the recruitment process. He and Basu worked together when Boris Johnson was Mayor of London. Asked if he planned to rule himself out of the NCA race, Hogan-Howe said: "Out of respect to the process and to the candidates, I have no comment to make." Downing Street sources told 'The Sunday Times' that Prime Minister Boris Johnson had no formal role in the appointment process. "A fair and open recruitment campaign is underway to make the best possible appointment to this vital role," the Home Office was quoted as saying.

Meet The Indian-Origin UK Actor Part Of Queen Elizabeth's Bollywood Party

Ajay Chhabra and his Nutkhut performance company have been chosen to represent the Commonwealth theme from a South Asian perspective for a grand Platinum Jubilee Pageant on Sunday

(News Agency) A UK-based Indian-origin actor is all set with a special Bollywood-themed Wedding Party, complete with a six-metre-high four-tiered cake and a specially designed sari, to celebrate Queen Elizabeth II's Platinum Jubilee outside Buckingham Palace in London. Ajay Chhabra and his Nutkhut performance company have been chosen to represent the Commonwealth theme from a South Asian perspective for a grand Platinum Jubilee Pageant on Sunday - one of the many highlight events over the weekend marking the 96-year-old monarch's 70 years on the British throne.

The 51-year-old actor took inspiration from the royal wedding of the Queen with Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh, in 1947 for the centrepiece wedding cake, with each tier representing the Silver, Golden, Diamond and Platinum Jubilees of the monarch's reign.

"Seventy years ago, my mother, nine years old at the time, welcomed the Queen to Fiji; a 10,000-mile journey

resulted in her and three generations of women in my family making London their home," said Chhabra, a popular stage, television and radio actor and producer of Indian-Fijian heritage.

"Seventy years on, my daughter, now nine years old, will celebrate and participate in our section of the Pageant for Her Royal Highness. This intergenerational family story lives on," he said.

Created jointly with fellow Nutkhut Artistic

Director Simmy Gupta, the Wedding Party is designed as a celebration of the universal joy of families and communities uniting through the coming together of two people.

"Born in Wolverhampton and from a working class background, I am honoured to be invited to curate a section of the Platinum Jubilee Pageant, to celebrate the Queen's 70 years on the throne, it is

such a unique and rare opportunity," said Gupta.

"A decade ago, I was invited by the Royal Household to create a piece for the

Ballroom of Buckingham Palace - to now bring this celebration to the streets of London along with a diverse group of people, from all walks of life, this is a special moment in time. My grandmother would be proud," she said. The Wedding

Party will be performed in an elaborate Bollywood style, by 250 performers of all ages, from London, Birmingham, Leicester, Manchester, Southampton and Newcastle.

Nutkhut says the spirit of the Commonwealth will flow through its specially-designed Platinum Jubilee sari, a key feature of the performance and composed of sustainable organic fabric.



"I am delighted to be working with Simmy and Ajay from Nutkhut. Their connection with community and their artistic vision captures the essence of the Platinum Jubilee Pageant on the world's stage," said Pageant Master Adrian Evans.

The Platinum Jubilee Pageant, as part of the extended Bank Holiday Weekend in the UK starting on June 2, will take place on Sunday, June 5, providing an opportunity for communities to celebrate a historic milestone as the first British monarch celebrates 70 years of royal service.

The four days of celebrations will include public events and community activities, as well as moments of reflection on the past seven decades. The Wedding Party by Nutkhut will be a key feature in the Pageant, which will meander through the streets of Westminster, along The Mall to Buckingham Palace in the heart of London, telling the story of a record reign and the transformation of society over this period.

UK's New "High Potential" Visa And What It Means For Indian Students

(News Agency) Graduates from the world's top 50 non-UK universities, including Indian students, can now come and work in Britain through a new High Potential Individual (HPI) visa route launched in London on Monday. In a joint announcement, Indian-origin UK Cabinet ministers Rishi Sunak and Priti Patel said the new "exciting" category under the post-Brexit points-based system is aimed at attracting the "best and brightest" talent from around the world, regardless of nationality.

Successful applicants will be given a two-year work visa, with a three-year visa offered to those with a PhD, without the need for a specific job offer in hand. "This new visa offer means that the UK can continue to attract the best and brightest from across the globe," said Chancellor Rishi Sunak.

"The route means that the UK will grow as a leading international hub for innovation, creativity and entrepreneurship. We want the businesses of tomorrow to be built here today – which is why I call on students to take advantage of this incredible opportunity to forge their careers here,"

he said. "The UK is already home to some of the most ground-breaking start-ups, on the forefront of R&D and an incredibly diverse and exciting place to live – come and join in," added UK-born Sunak, himself an MBA from Stanford University in the US. Under the new route, the world's top graduates in subjects such as science, engineering and medical research will be encouraged to bring their skills to the UK after graduating from prestigious universities such as Harvard, Stanford and MIT. "I am proud to be launching this new and exciting route as part of our points-based immigration system which puts ability and talent first – not where someone comes from," said UK Home Secretary Priti Patel.

"This government is delivering for the British people by bringing in the high skills and talent our country and businesses need," she said. The top 50 list of universities has been identified from the rankings lists produced annually by 'QS', 'Times Higher Education' and the 'Academic Ranking of World Universities' and

covers universities from the US, Canada, Japan, Germany, Australia, Hong Kong, China, Singapore, France, Sweden and Switzerland. The new HPI visa route will cost around GBP 715 and have the option to bring in dependents or close family members. According to the UK Home Office, an applicant applying under this route must have funds of at least GBP 1,270 and to be eligible, an institution must be outside of the UK and must have featured in the top 50 of at least two of the three rankings for the year in which the applicant was awarded the qualification.

"Graduates from the listed universities are eligible for the High Potential Individual route scheme regardless of nationality," a Home Office spokesperson said. "Each of the eligible universities attracts students from across the globe to study. There are several other routes eligible for graduates from other universities including the Graduate, Skilled Worker and Global Talent route," the spokesperson

said.

The Home Office notes that the list of the top 50 Global Institutes has been identified from three of the world's most reliable university rankings lists, which are widely cited by the education system and used in immigration systems globally. "Using a combination of these lists provides independent validation for institutions and opens up the opportunity for new international universities to move up the ranks and join this list in the future," the spokesperson added.

The HPI visa is intended to attract an unlimited number of talented graduates at the early stages of their careers, who "demonstrate exceptional promise, providing a highly desirable and able pool of mobile talent from which UK employers can recruit".

Meanwhile, international students, including Indians, who are studying in the UK at any of the top universities are already eligible to stay for up to three years through the Graduate visa – popularly referred to as a post-study work visa – opened in July last year.



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Kanpur mayor vows to restore encroached temples, make them ready for worship

On Wednesday, Kanpur Mayor Pramila Pandey visited 10 ancient temples in Colonelganj. She vowed to repair the temples and make them ready for worship again

(News Agency) Kanpur Mayor Pramila Pandey visited 10 ancient temples in Colonelganj. The Kanpur mayor said that the places were in ruins and in a dilapidated condition. She tweeted, "Today I visited 10 ancient temples in Colonelganj...seeing the plight of the temples here brought tears to my eyes." At some places, houses were found in places where the temples were supposed to be. At one place, the Kanpur mayor discovered a hotel being run where the temple was earlier situated. When Pramila Pandey reached the ancient Shiva temple in Shivala area, the main door was found to be locked. The mayor herself broke the lock with a stone. The mayor was furious once she saw the inside of the temple. The idols were missing from the temple and instead of Shivling, an AC compressor was kept. The Kanpur mayor warned of strict action against those who occupied these temples and assured that the temples will be repaired and ready for worship again. Pramila Pandey has said that she will remove all these illegal buildings, reinstall the Idols of Hindu deities, and renovate all of these temples. Earlier, on May 28, she visited 7 such ancient temples in that area. The administration has sent notices to all those who have illegally encroached upon that land. The mayor has asked officials for list of about 124 temple which have been illegally encroached on.

ED questions two aides of Shiv Sena leader Anil Parab in money laundering case

ED has questioned two close aides of Maharashtra Transport Minister and Shiv Sena leader Anil Parab in connection with a money laundering case

(News Agency) The ED office in South Mumbai at around 11 am and was questioned till 5 pm on Monday and then allowed to go.

Sanjay Kadam who was questioned on Monday by ED officials is also a Shiv Sena worker from Andheri West, is in the business of Cable TV. His residence was also searched by ED officials on Thursday last week. Sanjay Kadam arrived at the ED office at around 11 am and left at around 3 pm after questioning. In the case under the Environment Protection Act sections filed against Parab by officials from Ministry of Environment Forest and Climate Change to a Magistrate in Dapoli, it came to light that in 2011 one Vibhas Sathe had purchased an acre land in Dapoli and then sold it to Parab in 2017 at price of Rs one crore. The sale deed for the sale only happened in 2019. Parab then constructed a resort on the land and then sold it to Sadanand Kadam for Rs 1.1 crores. The Income Tax department had conducted a search and it was revealed that Rs 6 crores were spent on the construction of the resort on Dapoli land but no books were maintained for that. Sources said that it was

suspected that Sadanand Kadam had spent the money from his cable business to construct the resort.

Former MP Kirit Somaiya had made several complaints to authorities regarding the illegal resort constructed by Parab at Dapoli.



India, Pakistan hold discussion under Indus Commission framework

The 118th meeting of the Pakistan-India Permanent Indus Commission will continue on Tuesday as well, according to the Pakistani High Commission



(News Agency) India and Pakistan on Monday held deliberations on issues relating to water sharing under the framework of the Indus Commission. The meeting in Delhi will continue on Tuesday as well, according to the Pakistani High Commission. A Pakistani delegation is in

Pakistan High Commission tweeted. Under the Indus Water Treaty (IWT) signed between India and Pakistan in 1960, all the waters of the eastern rivers -- Sutlej, Beas, and Ravi -- amounting to around 33 million acre feet (MAF) annually is allocated to India for unrestricted use. The waters of western rivers - Indus, Jhelum, and Chenab - amounting to around 135 MAF annually have been assigned largely to Pakistan. India is permitted to construct the run of the river plants on western rivers with limited storage as per criteria specified in the treaty. Under the provisions of Article VIII(5) of the Indus Waters Treaty, the Permanent Indus Commission is required to meet at least once a year.

Amarnath Shrine Board makes RFID tags mandatory for pilgrims

(News Agency) The Amarnath Shrine Board has made Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) tags, which help locate a person, compulsory for all the devotees taking the Amarnath pilgrimage this year. The RFID tags would help the authorities to track a pilgrim and know about his whereabouts in case they get lost during the journey. The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the shrine board, Nitishwar Kumar, asserted that the security of pilgrims is their top priority. "The RFID tags would help in tracking a pilgrim and to let know where the person is. RFID has lots of benefits and among them, the most important one is that it would find out if there are any unauthorised persons," said Kumar. The authorities also said that pilgrims can get RFID from airport and railway station. Even the local vendors would



be provided with these RFID tags. The authorities also appealed to all those taking the yatra this year to comply with the new rule of securing RFID tags. The authorities say it's for the security of the pilgrims. The Amarnath yatra will be starting on June 30 and will go on till August 11. The government expects at least 600,000 pilgrims to take part in this year's pilgrimage. Meanwhile, the

Jammu and Kashmir Police chief, Dilbag Singh, reviewed the security arrangements for the Amarnath pilgrimage on Friday and asked different agencies to maintain close coordination within their ranks and among themselves for conducting the pilgrimage peacefully. The director-general of police held a high-level meeting of officers from the police, army and central armed paramilitary forces (CAPF) at the police headquarters. Every year, hundreds and thousands of devotees undertake this pilgrimage to offer their prayers at the Amarnath cave shrine in Jammu and Kashmir. The shrine is considered to be one of the holiest temples in India. The main cave is situated at a height of 12,756 ft from sea level and remains covered with snow most of the year except for a short period of time in summer.

Renu Sharma, 'blackmailer' of Maha minister Dhananjay Munde, seeks bail from Mumbai court

Renu Sharma, who allegedly blackmailed Maharashtra minister Dhananjay Munde and extorted money from him, has filed bail application in a Mumbai court



definitely hamper the investigation."

WHAT IS THE CASE?

Sharma was arrested in April for extorting Rs 5 crore, a commercial shop, an expensive phone etc from Munde and while seeking the Indore resident's custody, Hiray had argued that the woman had no source of income but there were high transactions that reflected in her bank account. Sharma's bail plea elaborated on the allegation

levelled against her by stating that Munde is a married person and is residing with his wife and three children. However, he was in a 'live-in' relationship with her sister, Karuna Sharma, and had two children from her. The allegation against Sharma is elaborated in the bail plea stating that, allegedly, since 2019, there were disputes between Munde and her sister and after he won the 2019 election from Parali Constituency and became

minister, there was a sudden change in his behavior towards the Sharmas. It is alleged that Renu started demanding huge amounts from Munde and, if not paid, they would destroy his image in society. Sharma's sister had registered a case against Munde but had taken it back. It was alleged that Sharma threatened to register the case again while stating that the case was taken back only due to pressure from Munde.

(News Agency) A court in Mumbai has ordered the special public prosecutor Shishir Hiray to file a reply on behalf of the Mumbai Police on the bail application filed by Renu Sharma, the woman against whom a case was registered by the Maharashtra cabinet minister and NCP leader Dhananjay Munde. Sharma's bail application was earlier rejected by Magistrate Sudhir Bhajipale of the Esplanade Court while stating, "The allegations are serious in nature. Till now, the investigation is going on. In such circumstances, release of the accused at this stage will

SHARMA'S BAIL PLEA

Sharma stated that she is from a respectable family and has no criminal antecedents. Sharma alleged that Munde's complaint was a mere attempt to suppress his live-in-relationship acts committed by her and her sister. The bail plea added that there was an inordinate delay in filing the complaint by Munde and no reason was assigned for the delay. Sharma alleged that the complaint against her had been filed by Munde only due to the first case registered by her against him in January 2021. There are no phone recordings of her extorting money, perused by the prosecution, said Sharma, while alleging that the investigators should have issued a summon to her before picking her up from Indore and arresting her. The bail plea also stated that Sharma is suffering from depression and is on medication for sleeping. The court will now hear the bail arguments on June 8.

Widespread panic on social media forces India to withdraw Aadhaar card warning

(News Agency) After widespread panic on social media, India has withdrawn a warning about not to share photocopies of the Aadhaar card on the Sunday, media reports said. The national biometric identity card, which is called Aadhaar card, has a unique number linked to an individual's face, eyes and fingerprints scan. It has been envisaged to block theft and provide



the benefits of the India's welfare schemes to the beneficiary directly in the bank account. Two days after issuing, the warning was withdrawn by the press information bureau (PIB). The release about warning was published to apprise people that an edited Aadhaar card can be misused. It is being withdrawn "in view of the

possibility of misinterpretation", PIB said. The Aadhaar ecosystem provides adequate features to protect the identity and privacy of users. The

people are advised to exercise "normal prudence" in sharing it, the new statement said. "Unlicensed private entities like hotels or film halls are not permitted to collect or keep copies of Aadhaar card," it said earlier on Friday, while advising people not to share photocopies of their Aadhaar card with anyone as it could be misused. On social media, the press release and news articles on it went viral. The warning triggered an alarm. It also became one of the top 10 trending topics on Twitter in India on Sunday.

Jayant Singh files Rajya Sabha nomination, thanks Samajwadi Party for support

Jayant Singh filed his nomination for the Rajya Sabha elections and thanked the Samajwadi Party for backing him in the upcoming polls

(News Agency) The Rashtriya Lok Dal (RLD) President Jayant Singh Chaudhary on Monday filed his nomination for the Rajya Sabha elections as a joint candidate of RLD and Samajwadi Party in the presence of SP chief Akhilesh Yadav and others. SP candidate Javed Ali and SP supported independent candidate Kapil Sibal have already filed their nominations.

Speaking to India Today, the RLD chief said that it is a special day for him and thanked SP President and workers, with whose support and vote, he is set to go to Rajya Sabha. He added that, when he and Akhilesh work together, the fate of UP will change.

He vowed to raise important issues in Rajya Sabha and said the alliance with SP will be visible across the country, not just UP.

SP support for the RLD leader further strengthens the alliance prospects of two parties in future. It also sends out a signal



of mutual trust and understanding between RLD and SP in Uttar Pradesh. Akhilesh Yadav has not extended his support to former Congress leader Kapil Sibal, RLD chief Jayant Chaudhary and Javed Ali Khan.

Due to Mulayam Singh Yadav's deteriorating health and presence in UP, Akhilesh needed an effective advocate for

himself in Delhi. There should also be constant dialogue with other leaders for which Sibal would be suitable. On the other hand, Jayant Singh Chaudhary's party has reposed confidence in Sambhal's Javed Ali Khan. Along with this, the party has also tried to reach out to Muslim voters. In the sugarcane belt, which was affected by the farmers' movement, Jayant Singh as a

candidate will send a good message to the voters of RLD. Meanwhile, UP Deputy CM Brajesh Pathak said that BJP is going to field eight candidates in the Rajya Sabha polls.

"Jayant had already been with Akhilesh, so there is nothing new in the alliance. It will not have any effect on BJP in the 2024 elections," he said.

SP's alliance partner Suheldev

Bhartiya Samaj Party chief Om Prakash Rajbhar said along with Sibal and other partners, the Opposition will get strong and SP chief has fulfilled his promise of sending Jayant Singh Chaudhary to Rajya Sabha.

Political analyst Ratan Mani Lal stated that the sudden move by Akhilesh Yadav to retain his alliance partner from Western Uttar Pradesh is a long-term approach. The party will not be willing to lose Jayant and his support in the western belt as it has gained votes in recently concluded UP polls.

Earlier, SP had an alliance with the Congress in 2017, and with BSP in the 2019 Lok Sabha elections. Both alliances broke down following heavy defeats. For this reason, the SP wants to keep smaller parties tied together for the 2024 Lok Sabha elections and by fielding Jayant as an alliance partner and Sibal as an independent, it will strengthen the SP's political agenda and provide a diverse coalition against the BJP

Sidhu Moose Wala shot dead: Who are suspects Goldy Brar, Lawrence Bishnoi?

(By Staff Reporter) The Punjab Police on Sunday said that Canada-based gangster Goldy Brar and his aide Lawrence Bishnoi were responsible for the assassination of Indian-Punjabi rapper Sidhu Moose Wala. The police said that Moosewala's killing was a result of an inter-gang rivalry. Brar had posted on his Facebook account that his module in Punjab has killed Sidhu Moose Wala.

"Lawrence Bishnoi gang is involved in this murder. Lucky, member of the gang has taken responsibility from Canada," Punjab DGP VK Bhawra told the media.

Sidhu Moose Wala, whose real name is Shubhdeep Singh Sidhu, was killed in broad daylight in the Mansa district in Punjab inside his Mahindra SUV on Sunday.

According to reports, a gang of 8 fired 30 rounds at the singer's car of which 20 were aimed at Sidhu Moose Wala. Two other people travelling along with the Punjabi singer were also injured in the attack.

Police found bullets from three AK- 94 rifles at the crime site. Use of AK-94 is rare in Punjab. The singer was declared brought dead, while the two others are undergoing treatment. The killing came a day after the Punjab Police withdrew the security of 424 people, including Sidhu Moose Wala, after the ruling AAP government's directive.

Who are Goldy Brar and Lawrence Bishnoi?

Goldy Brar, whose real name is Satinder Singh, is a Canada-based gangster and is wanted in many criminal cases by the Indian authorities. Earlier this month, a Faridpur court had issued a non-bailable arrest warrant against Brar for killing the district Youth Congress president, Gurlal Singh Pehalwan. On May 1, Punjab Police Anti-Gangster Task Force (AGTF) arrested three close aides of jailed gangster Lawrence Bishnoi and Canada-based gangster Goldy Brar, from Bathinda. The close aides of Goldy Brar were planning to attack a well-known

businessman of the Malwa region to extort money from him. According to local media reports in Punjab, these criminals, on orders from Brar provided hideouts to absconding gangsters of the NCR region. Sidhu Moose Wala—a victim of

gang rivalry According to local media reports, the murder of Sidhu Moose Wala was revenge for the killing of Akali Dal leader Vicky Middukhera in Sector 70 Mohali on August 8 last year. Vicky was allegedly an informer of the Bishnoi gang and was on

the radar of other gangsters. Shaganpreet Singh, the manager of Sidhu Moose Wala, was named as an accused in the murder of Middukhera. He is absconding and the police have issued a lookout notice for him.

Don't embarrass leadership by seeking minister post for me: MK Stalin's son

Udhayanidhi Stalin's remarks come at a time when sources in the party are claiming that the 'sun' party's 'son' will soon be made a minister

(By Staff Reporter) The son of Tamil Nadu Chief Minister and DMK chief MK Stalin, Udhayanidhi Stalin, has urged party cadres not to embarrass the leadership by adopting a resolution seeking a ministerial post for him. This comes at a time when sources in the party are claiming



that the 'sun' party's 'son' will soon be made a minister. Several DMK district units have passed resolutions urging the leadership to make Udhayanidhi Stalin a minister. On Monday too, at a meeting in Trichy, a special resolution was

passed on the same matter. Reacting to this, Udhayanidhi Stalin released a statement requesting cadres not to do so. Udhayanidhi Stalin said that he's working for the betterment of the Chepauk constituency and in taking the party to the youth as the secretary of the party's youth wing. "I request you to not embarrass the party leadership by passing resolutions seeking a ministerial post for me. We all know that the party leadership knows when to take what decision," he said.

Delhi Health Minister Satyendar Jain arrested by ED in hawala Case

(By Staff Reporter) Enforcement Directorate officials have confirmed that they have arrested Delhi minister and AAP leader Satyendar Jain in a case connected to hawala transactions related to a Kolkata-based company, according to news agency. Jain is the minister of health, power, home, PWD, industries, urban development, flood, irrigation and water, in the Arvind Kejriwal-led Delhi government.

In April this year, the ED had attached properties worth ₹ 4.81 crore of the family and companies "beneficially owned and controlled" by Delhi minister Satyendar Jain in connection with a money-laundering probe.

The ED had earlier, issued a provisional order under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) for the

attachment of the assets.

The ED case of money laundering against the AAP minister stems from an August 2017 FIR by the CBI against him and others on charges of alleged possession of disproportionate assets. Kejriwal in February had said that he has learnt from sources the ED was going to arrest Satyendar Jain just before the Punjab assembly elections and accused the Centre of targeting the Aam Aadmi Party after realising the BJP "would lose" the polls.

The AAP won the Punjab assembly polls in March and has formed its government in the border state with Bhagwant Mann as the chief minister. In 2018, the ED had questioned the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) leader in connection with the

case. Reacting sharply to the arrest, Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia said Jain has been held in an eight-year-old "fake" case as he is the AAP's incharge for the Himachal Pradesh assembly elections and the BJP is afraid of losing the polls. "A

fake case has been going on against Satyendar Jain for eight years. He has been called by the ED several times so far. The ED had stopped calling him for some time because it did not find anything against him. Now it has again started because he is the

incharge of Himachal Pradesh elections," Sisodia said in a tweet in Hindi.

"The BJP is afraid of losing the elections and hence he was arrested to prevent him from going to Himachal. He will be released soon as he has been arrested in a fake case," Sisodia added.

Awantipora encounter: 2 terrorists who shot dead woman, govt employee killed, arms recovered

Two terrorists, who shot dead a woman and a government employee, have been killed in the Awantipora encounter so far

(By Staff Reporter) Two terrorists have been killed in the Awantipora encounter that broke out between security forces and militants in the Rajpora area of Awantipora in Jammu and Kashmir on Monday. Two AK-47 rifles have also been recovered, police said. The killed terrorists have been

identified as Shahid Rather of Tral and Umar Yousuf of Shopian, police said. The Kashmir Zone Police on Monday tweeted, "#AwantiporaEncounterUpdate: 02 #terrorists killed. #Incriminating materials including 02 AK 47 rifles recovered. Search going on. Further details shall follow." The Kashmir IGP said, "Besides other terror

crimes, Shahid had killed a woman, Mst Shakeela, of Aripal and a government employee, Javid Ahmed, of Lurgam Tral." The Kashmir Zone Police took to Twitter and wrote, "Killed #terrorists identified as Shahid Rather of #Tral & Umar Yousuf of #Shopian. Besides other #terror crimes, #terrorist Shahid was involved in killing of a woman Mst Shakeela of Aripal & a govt employee/peon Javid Ahmed of Lurgam Tral: IGP Kashmir." On Monday, the Kashmir Zone Police tweeted, "Encounter has started at Rajpora area of Awantipora. Police and security forces are on the job. Further details shall follow."



Two terrorists of Jaish outfit killed in Pulwama encounter



(By Staff Reporter) Two terrorists were killed in an encounter in South Kashmir's Pulwama district. Both the terrorists belonged to the Jaish-e-Mohammad outfit. They have been identified as Abid Shah and Saqib by Jammu and Kashmir Police and were involved in the killing of police constable Riyaz Ahmad. An operation that started yesterday was concluded today with the killing of two Jaish terrorists. Both the terrorists are locals. Arms and ammunition have been recovered from the encounter site as well. "We have killed two terrorists of the Jaish outfit." We had a tip off last night. The initial gunfight started last night, and we kept

the operation on hold for the night. With the first light, we started the operation again. Saqib and Abid Shah of Jaish were killed. They were involved in the killing of police constable Riyaz Ahmad. This is justice for him," said Vijay Kumar, IG Kashmir. Jammu and Kashmir Police say that 54 encounters have taken place this year in the Kashmir region. In these operations, 86 terrorists have been killed, with 26 being foreigners. Jammu and Kashmir police have arrested 44 active terrorists and 183 over-the-ground workers (OGW). This year's data suggests that 14 civilians and 16 security personnel have also lost their lives in terror attacks this year.

Congress' Milind Deora puts out cryptic tweet following Rajya Sabha snub

Deora put out a picture of light signage with the writing: You matter don't give up. But if one reads it horizontally, it says: You don't matter give up.

(By Staff Reporter) Congress leaders P Chidambaram, Jairam Ramesh, Vivek Tankha and Imran Pratapgarhi filed their nomination papers on Monday amid discontent within the party. Congress leader Milind Deora was one of the leaders who was denied a seat. He put out a cryptic tweet following the snub. Deora put out a picture of light signage with the writing: You matter don't give up. But if one reads it horizontally, it says: You don't matter give up. Soon after the announcement of the candidates, actress-turned-politician Nagma Morarji and the party's national spokesperson Pawan Khera had also made clear their disappointment over not being

nominated. Nagma raised questions over the candidature of minority cell head Imran Pratapgarhi, while Congress leader Acharya Pramod Krishnam said that suppression of talent is a "suicidal step" for the party. A total of 10 Congress leaders, including Ajay Maken, Randeep Surjewala, Mukul Wasnik and P Chidambaram have filed nominations for election to the upper house. Pramod Tiwari - a Brahmin face from UP, was made a candidate from Rajasthan. While, Imran Pratapgarhi, a minority face from UP, is a candidate from Maharashtra. Ranjeet Ranjan, who hails from Bihar, is the only woman candidate to be named. She will be contesting from Chattisgarh.



3 years of Jagan government in AP, what are the achievements of YSRC leadership

CM YS Jagan Mohan Reddy completed three years of governance in Andhra Pradesh on May 30. Here are the details of

(By Staff Reporter) The YSRC party under the leadership of YS Jagan Mohan Reddy completed three years of governance in Andhra Pradesh on May 30. In the last three years, YS Jagan Mohan Reddy has proved how social engineering can be a game changer and the merits of social inclusion pave the way for a healthy society. During this period, the chief minister also had to brave the pandemic and kept the wheels of the economy rolling without neglecting welfare activities.

Speaking on this occasion, the party national general secretary and Rajya Sabha MP Vijaya Sai Reddy said, "Our party came to power after ten years of hard work by all the members of YSRC. This is one such government that will continue to work towards the welfare of the people".

Fulfilling 95% of the pre-poll promises

One of the biggest factors in CM Jagan's government was to fulfill pre-poll promises made to the people and proved rightly so in

the last 36 months. Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy carried out the welfare agenda, balancing it with development initiatives and social justice in a transparent manner even as Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) redefined the economics of inclusiveness in the state.

The biggest, most effective and inclusive growth mechanism has been the DBT system, which has dusted away the middlemen, corruption and nepotism with money reaching the intended beneficiaries in full and on the dot. The state has so far disbursed about Rs 1.85 lakh crores under DBT and also non-DBT schemes like Dr YSR Aarogyasri, Jagananna Gorumuddha.

Social justice instilled confidence among the weaker sections

By emphasizing equal opportunity for all, CM Jagan has ensured that at least 70% of seats are given to SC/ST/BC and minority communities, giving utmost priority to the benefit of

the people of the AP. Social inclusion and women empowerment has been one of the major achievements which can be seen right from the formation of the cabinet.

Government continues to implement revolutionary administrative reforms

On Gandhi Jayanti - October 2, 2019, the government historically inaugurated the secretariat system. The village and ward secretariat system has brought in a sea change in decentralization of administration and the rural landscape is sculpted with every facility a village needs and Rythu Bharosa Kendras (RBKs) have won an international claim after being nominated for UN Award.

With over 2.8 lakh village and ward secretariat volunteer system, the village and ward secretariats play a major role in 26 districts across the state, established to bring governance to the village level. The old, sick and disabled were all in praise of the chief minister's concern, as



volunteers come calling to their doorstep on the first of every month to handover the pension, avoiding them the trouble of going to the disbursing office, braving the weather, standing in queues and coming to grips with the temperamental biometric system to accept the thumb impression.

Education, health care system, farmers' issue

Education, the health care system, hope of good returns among farmers, setting up of Rythu Bharosa Kendras, which won international acclaim, changing the rural landscape with a decentralized social delivery mechanism, ushering in gram swaraj in the form of village and ward secretaries, empowering women and marginalized sections of society economically, socially and politically are some of the sweeping reforms the chief minister had brought in during the past three years.

The government has spent around Rs. 40,000 cr under welfare schemes, benefitting all and giving priority to the weaker sections of society.

Industrial development

On the development front, the agenda was set with focus on attracting industries in various thrust sectors. The Davos Summit ended with encouraging results and signing MoUs with big ticket companies in green energy, skilling, port-based infrastructure, among others.

Women empowerment

YSR Cheyutha and YSR Asara benefitted lakhs of women financially to build their families. Amma Vodi, Vasati Deevana, Vidya Deevana too have seen funds flowing into mothers' bank accounts and 30 lakh house sites distributed among poor would be

registered in the name of the woman of the household.

Economic growth

On the economic front, to provide business opportunities for women, MoUs were signed by the Government with giant companies like Amul, Proctor and Gamble, ITC, Allana Group, Reliance, among others while banks were giving soft loans. For women's safety, the Disha App was brought alongside a fleet of patrol vehicles to improve the response time for women's safety.

Setting up schools

With the strong belief that education is the biggest asset we can pass on to the next generation, YS Jagan Mohan Reddy has taken up reforms on a large scale from refurbishing government schools under Nadu Nedu. Introduction of English as a medium of instruction along with jacking up CBSE affiliations and laying focus on skill development at higher education. He hogged the limelight when he stood at the serving side of the table during a programme and the school children were elated to see a CM serve them food.

Health schemes

In the health sector, AP Government continues to move towards the goal of revamping its health-care system to deliver accessible and responsive health-care services guided by the needs of patients, while achieving the best value for health care. Dr. YSR Aarogyasri is one such scheme that covers almost 95% of the population. The government has raised the income threshold and provided free medical care for 95% of the people, with the aim of ensuring treatment is accessible to the poor so that no one must suffer from illness.

J&K Police shot down Pakistani drone carrying magnetic bombs in Kathua

The J&K Police on Sunday shot down a Pakistani drone carrying magnetic bombs and grenades in Kathua district

(By Staff Reporter) As the terror threat looms large over this year's Amarnath Yatra, a drone was spotted near the India-Pakistan international border on Sunday morning. The

drone which came from Pakistan was shot down by J&K Police personnel in the Rajbagh area of Kathua district in Jammu and Kashmir. A payload of explosives was attached with the hexacopter (drone). Later, a bomb

disposal squad reached the spot and carried out the investigations. As many as seven magnetic/sticky bombs and an equal number of UBGL grenades were recovered from the drone.

Foiling the nefarious activities of Pakistan and terrorists, the alert J&K Police personnel averted a possible terror attack.

Speaking to India Today, SSP Kathua RC Kotwal said that the explosives/magnetic bombs could have been smuggled by Pakistan to disrupt the Amarnath Yatra. He said that the police are alert and are carrying out search operations near the border areas. He added

that the police have also launched an awareness campaign for the public where they are being told to remain alert and report any suspicious activity in their area. RC Kotwal

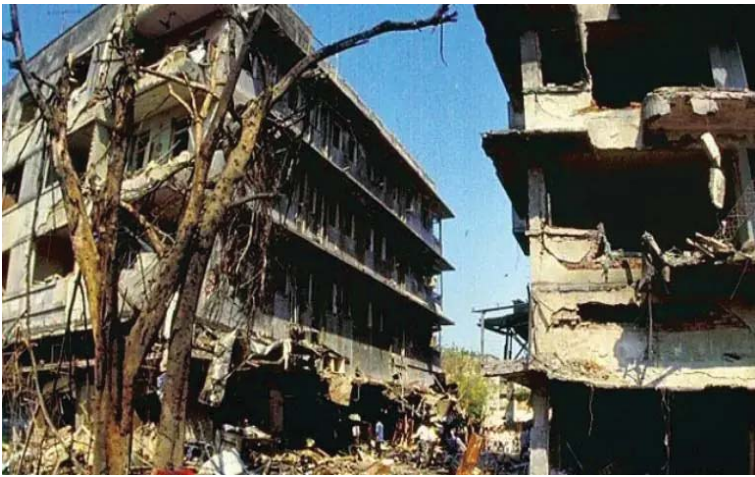
said that people and bus drivers have been told to check their vehicles before plying on roads as there is threat of sticky bombs being used by terrorists to disrupt peace. Earlier this month, a bus with pilgrims onboard caught fire near

the town of Katra. At least four people were killed and 22 others were injured. Later, a terror angle emerged in the case. Although investigations are still on, it is suspected that terrorists may have used a sticky bomb to carry out an attack on the bus. Since Amarnath Yatra is beginning on June 30, there are reports that terrorists may try to target the yatra by using sticky bombs. A series of high-level security related meetings have taken place in J&K in the last 3 weeks. A strategy is being developed to foil possible attempts by terrorists to disrupt the yatra.



4 accused sent to judicial custody by court in 1993 Mumbai serial blasts case

The four accused in the 1993 Mumbai serial blasts case were produced before a special CBI court on Monday and were sent to judicial custody till June 13



(By Staff Reporter) The 1993 blast accused Abu Bakar, Sayyed Qureshi, Mohammed Shoeb Qureshi and Mohammed Yusuf Ismail Shaikh have been sent to judicial custody till June 13 by a special CBI court in Mumbai. Special Public prosecutor Deepak Salvi

representing the CBI, had sought their custody for 14 more days. The agency said that the accused Abu Bakar, Sayed Qureshi Shoe Qureshi, Yusuf Bhatka alias Yusuf Bata were involved in the 1993 bomb blast case. It is alleged that, to achieve the object of said conspiracy, the

accused, towards the end of January, 1993 or beginning of February, 1993, participated in the conspiratorial meeting in Dubai which was headed by the prime absconding accused Dawood Ibrahim, absconding accused Mohd Atened Dossa and convicted accused late Mustafa Ahmed Dossa, on whose directions, accused Abu Bakar, Sayed Qureshi, Shoeb Qureshi, Yusuf Bhatka, proceeded to Pakistan for taking arms training to avenge demolition of Babri Masjid. According to the CBI, in pursuance of said meeting, the four accused went to Pakistan for training in the handling of arms and ammunition, throwing of hand grenades and making of bombs. They also told

the court that all the accused persons were absconding in the CBI case. In this case, the court had issued non-bailable warrants against them in 1997 and a red corner notice a year later and they were also declared proclaimed offenders. The CBI said that the four accused persons are required to be confronted with some of the facts revealed by some other witnesses who also took training with them to handle the arms, ammunition and explosives in Pakistan or otherwise were involved in the process, so that the truth may come out. They also said that the accused will have to be taken to some places to connect the dots in the further investigation.

The agency also said that the custody of persons is essential to unearth the deep-rooted conspiracy of these four accused persons. "They are terrorists and hardened criminals, whose terrorist acts caused loss to hundreds of lives and properties worth crores. These accused persons were absconding for the last 29 years," said CBI. While CBI sought the police custody remand of the four accused persons for 14 days so that an investigation to decipher their roles can be carried out, advocate Farhana Shah representing them opposed it. The four accused were first arrested by the Gujarat ATS, and they were then handed over to the CBI to be brought to Mumbai for the blast case.

Yes Bank-DHFL case: Avinash Bhosale to be kept at CBI guest house till Mumbai court passes order

A special court in Mumbai said that businessman Avinash Bhosale will be kept at the CBI guest house till it passes order



(By Staff Reporter) A special court in Mumbai has reserved its order on the remand plea of the CBI, which is seeking custody of sound businessman Avinash Bhosale. The court also heard the application filed by Bhosale's lawyer Vijay Aggarwal in which issues of illegal arrest were raised. In the meantime, Bhosale continues to stay at a five-star guest house of CBI officials. From 11.30 am to 5.40 in the evening, the court only heard this particular case in which arguments from both sides were advanced while Bhosale sat in the dock keenly listening. Aggarwal argued that the CBI would have to seek permission from the Maharashtra government to register a case against Bhosale and investigate

and they know they will not get the permission, so in the garb of investigating the Yes Bank-DHFL, Bhosale's custody is being sought. "The court will have to see their sinister design," harped Aggarwal. Additional Solicitor General Anil Singh, on the other hand, argued that what Bhosale is submitting is that "you (CBI) have not taken permission from court in Rana Kapoor's case for further investigation, so this investigation is illegal. But look at the order of Rana Kapoor where the court has asked for the completion of further investigation at the earliest". Elaborating further, Singh added, "In the application of Rana Kapoor, it was said that further investigation could not have been held as a

chargesheet was filed. However, the court had rejected the application, stating that charges are not framed against all accused, so further investigation can be carried out. There are 14 accused and now will all accused file the same application? Should they not have gone on to appeal if they are aggrieved?" Singh emphasised that the law does not

contemplate that any prior permission is required for future investigation. "We are at the stage of remand for the purpose of investigation. He cannot be given special preference. He is connected to Chhabaria who is in custody, so are we not supposed to investigate further?" asked Singh. Public Prosecutor JK Sharma also argued, "We do not have any personal enmity with

this fellow. It is only to bring out the truth in the case that we need custody and investigate further." The CBI had arrested Bhosale on Thursday evening and on Friday he was produced in court for further remand. However, looking at the application of the accused, the court decided that Bhosale should be put up at CBI guest house until the application is to be heard.

Delhi hailstorm aftermath: Central finial on Jama Masjid damaged

The middle dome finial of the iconic Jama Masjid was damaged after a hailstorm hit Delhi on Monday

(By Staff Reporter) The finial on the central dome of the Jama Masjid was damaged after Delhi witnessed the heavy downpour on Monday, said shahi imam Syed Ahmed Bukhari. He also informed that the falling stones had injured two-three people. "Middle dome finial broke into three parts, two fell down, one is still stuck, said Bukhari adding that if it will not be brought down and it falls, it'll damage the wall before it. He said he will write to the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) and will ask them to inspect the monument and commence repair work at the earliest to avert another tragedy. Heavy rains and hailstorm lashed national capital Delhi on May



30. The hailstorm damaged several cars, trees were uprooted, traffic came to halt and led to power outages in various parts of Delhi.

'No More Kidnapping, Extortion': Arunachal's Wancho Tribe Raises Banner of Protest against Insurgents



(By Staff Reporter) The Wanchos, inhabiting the insurgency-affected Longding district of Arunachal Pradesh, turned up in large numbers in the Longding and Kanubari towns on Monday to stage a massive protest rally against the alleged illegal

taxation and abduction being carried out by the NSCN K-YA group in the region.

Holding placards and banners inscribed with 'No Extortion', 'No Kidnapping', and 'No More Humiliation', the angry youth along with villagers shouted

slogans against the atrocities allegedly carried out by the insurgent outfit. The deep anguish against the group was evident from the emotionally charged atmosphere during the protest rallies.

Sources said that under sustained pressure from relentless successful operations by security forces against the insurgent groups in Longding district and the villagers' refusal to pay illegal house tax to the banned outfits, the NSCN K-YA and others adopted a new strategy recently. In order to evade the security forces, operatives of the proscribed groups are exploiting the neighbouring Mon district of Nagaland as a safe haven to orchestrate their illegal activities.

The insurgents deceitfully call the innocent villagers for discussions in border villages of Nagaland and forcibly detain them to demand ransom. On a few occasions, the armed insurgent groups sneaked in from the jungles of Nagaland and kidnapped the village authorities to demand ransom. Outraged by the activities being carried out by the militant groups, the Wancho Council, the apex tribal body of the Longding district, took a unanimous decision on May 24, 2022, to protest against the illegal activities. They appealed to the Tirap Changlang People's Forum to express solidarity with them on the same ground. The protests were an open expression and a united stand by civil society against the insurgent groups

operating in the region. It is an indication of the waning support base of insurgents in the Wancho region. The newfound courage of local villagers and their belief in the security forces and government administration will go a long way in restoring peace and normalcy in the insurgency-infested area of Arunachal Pradesh, say observers. Village headman Napho Nigam of Lauksim village in Arunachal's Longding district was abducted by five NSCN K-YA cadres on May 7. The alleged cadres were in combat dress with long-range weapons when kidnapping the person. The NSCN K-YA on May 10 finally freed Napho. Longding superintendent of police Vikram Harimohan Meena confirmed the safe release.

PM Modi calls up Agra villagers, congratulates them for solving their water problem

Prime Minister Narendra Modi, over a phone call, congratulated the residents of Agra's Kachora village for solving their water problem



(By Staff Reporter) Kunwar Singh and his brother Shyam Singh, residents of Kachora village in Agra's Achhnera block, were busy going about their daily routine when their phone rang on Sunday around 11:30 am. When they answered the phone, they were pleasantly shocked to hear PM Modi's voice on the other side of the line. During his conversation with the brothers, which lasted just over two minutes, the PM asked them about the drinking water pipeline laid by them in the village and said that he was proud of them. After that, PM Modi talked to Rekha Devi, a resident of the village, who told him that the villagers had to fetch potable water from afar before Shyam Singh Fauji and Kunwar Singh laid the water pipeline. Talking to India Today, Shyam Singh said that the PM's first question to him was

how he got the idea of laying a water pipeline to the village. Shyam told PM Modi that 22 years back, his mother was the village Pradhan. At that time, the villagers had to fetch water from very far away. After he retired from the Army, he used up his retirement money in 2018 to lay a water pipeline from his field to the village. When the PM asked if his family did not object to using up the retirement funds, Shyam Singh said that even his family had to fetch water from very far away, so nobody objected. Kunwar Singh's mother, Shrimati Devi, was elected the village pradhan in the year 2000. At that time, she had prepared a project to solve the potable water problem of the village, but she could not get the funds allocated for it. When her son Shyam Singh retired from the Army, his retirement funds helped in

making her dream a reality. Kunwar Singh told India Today that the pipeline was laid for a distance of 5 km, at a cost of Rs 31 lakh. The PM's call came as a pleasant surprise and the entire village felt proud of it.

Pooja, a housewife living in the village, said that now the entire country will know the name of Kachora village after the Prime Minister himself recognized the work done by Shyam Singh and his brother. This pipeline came

as a boon for the women of the village, as earlier, the duty to fetch water was of the women. Now, almost 1,200 houses in the village get water at their doorstep, which was a welcome change.

Monsoon expected in Telangana by June 5, reports Meteorological Centre

(By Staff Reporter) Meteorological Centre Hyderabad on Monday reported that Telangana is likely to experience isolated rainfall in the next five days. Meteorological Centre Hyderabad scientist Sravani stated that the monsoon is expected to reach Telangana on June 5.

"Monsoon expected in Telangana on June 5. Isolated rainfall will be there in the entire Telangana for next five days. No synoptic situation in the entire Telangana state. Mainly low-level strong Westerlies prevail over the state," Sravani stated. She added, "Rise in the temperature in the morning and thunderstorms and

thundershowers will be there in the evenings. Monsoon will progress on 5th or 6th June in Telangana. Till then the temperature will be between 32 to 40 degrees. Thunderstorms and thundershowers will be there in Hyderabad." The Northern Limit of Monsoon (NLM) continues to pass through Kannur, Palakkad and adjoining

areas. Conditions are favourable for further advance of Southwest monsoon into some parts of central Arabian Sea, remaining parts of Kerala, some more parts of Tamil Nadu, some parts of



Karnataka, and some more parts of south & Central Bay of Bengal, some parts of northeast Bay of Bengal and northeastern states during next 3-4 days. A trough runs from southeast Arabian Sea off north Kerala-Karnataka coast to Southwest Bay of Bengal across Kerala & Tamilnadu at 3.1 km above mean sea level.

Chaos reigns in Pakistan, the country needs financial bailout

By Susmita Ghosh

The tale of misery continues in Pakistan as the ongoing economic crisis deepens in the country. Moreover, an unprecedented disruptive political condition is adding fuel to the fire. In the face of a complete economic meltdown, a financial bailout from International Monetary Fund (IMF) seems to be the only way forward.

Pakistan's consumer price index is ascending steadily in recent years. The country may also run out of the foreign exchange reserve in less than two months in lieu of

significant external help.

An over-dependency on the Chinese debt has resulted in the country's present condition. Simultaneously,

the volatile political condition and a power-greedy opposition are leading the country to the edge.

The supporters of Imran Khan, the ex-prime minister of Pakistan who was removed from power in the middle of his term, have taken to the streets. Halfway the economic crisis, they are opposing the police and destroying the national property. Their demand is a national election within a week, which, in the present financial condition, will be nearly impossible burden on the country.

As Pakistan is running out of foreign reserves, the condition worsens. The central bank of Pakistan has about \$10 billion only, which will not last the expenses of even 2 months. The Pakistan officials met with IMF in Doha to look for a way out, with a proposed bailout of \$3 billion, which will be used to pay its creditors. However, IMF was reluctant to deal with the present fiscal deficit along with the government policies of subsidy.

In this condition, the Pakistan government announced that it will hike the fuel prices by 20 percent. The new prices, as per the minister Miftah Ismail, will be 179.86 rupees per litre for petrol while diesel will be 174.15 rupees per litre.

This development will unlock the

IMF bailout deal, which will release over \$900 million in initial funding, followed by further help. It came into being by the previous Prime Minister Imran Khan, who wanted to appease the citizens in the face of the double-digit inflation. As per IMF, it was a major and unsustainable deviation from their deal in 2019, hence they stopped the funding.

The present Pakistan government was also reluctant to remove the subsidies to gain support from the masses. As an election seems likely within 16 months in the

natural order, the decision to remove fuel subsidies will have political consequences. Still, the Pakistan government

had no solution except this step, for the IMF bailout in the present financial situation.

Just like the case of Sri Lanka, Pakistan is the second Asian country that is suffering from the Chinese debt trap, resulting in a poor financial state, seemingly no escape route in near future. Pakistan has a total debt of more than \$90 billion, of which China only owed more than \$25 billion.

The poor condition of Pakistan is causing enough worry to India and other neighbouring countries. While the ex-prime minister Imran Khan vows to return to power, the present PM Shahbaz Sharif emphasizes that the former is in no condition to force an election upon the country. However, there are other reasons for worry, as there are several major radical terrorist organizations in Pakistan that are capable to operate out of the country. Pakistan is a nuclear state and if the arsenal falls into the wrong hand during this haywire situation, it will be a major security concern for the whole south-east Asian sector. An economically stable Pakistan is much preferable to the neighbourhood than a country on the verge of collapse. Without the IMF bailout, there will be definitely no let-out clause for Pakistan to achieve relative stability in the country.

Alike Sri Lanka, Pakistan is the second Asian country, suffering from the Chinese debt trap, resulting in a poor financial state. Pakistan has a total debt of more than \$90 billion, of which China only owe more than \$25 billion

100 days of Russia-Ukraine war: How has India been affected

In the three months since the start of the Russia-Ukraine war, foreign portfolio investors (FPIs) pulled more than Rs. 1 lakh crore out of Indian markets — Rs. 50,000 crores more than the combined withdrawal of the previous nine months. The mood of FPIs has been sour for a variety of

reasons. Monetary tightening around the world due to spiralling inflation has been the major factor behind the pullout from all emerging markets, including India. However, the ferocity with which they have been selling Indian equities in the last three months has been unprecedented.

The FPI pullout has been one of the major contributory factors behind the steep slide in the rupee vis-à-vis the dollar. The rupee depreciated nearly four per cent, from 75.3 against a dollar on February 24 to 77.7 against a dollar by the end of May 31, according to the IMF. The weak rupee has put pressure on imports, especially oil imports that constitute the majority share. As the weakened rupee made imports expensive, the rise in crude prices only made things worse. Brent crude prices that were hovering around USD 80 a barrel at the start of 2022 shot up to as high as USD 128 a barrel following Russia's invasion. It stood at USD 122.8 a barrel on May 31, nearly three months after the war began, according to the NYSE.

The heat of the Russia-Ukraine war is now reaching commoners in India and around the world. "The war in Ukraine, in all its dimensions, is producing alarming cascading effects to a world economy already battered by Covid-19 and climate change, with particularly dramatic impacts on developing countries. The world's most

vulnerable people can not become collateral damage," said the UN Global Crisis Response Group on Food, Energy and Finance. The annual inflation rate in India rose to 7.8 per cent in April 2022, the highest since May 2014, as food inflation accelerated for the seventh straight month to 8.4 per cent.

Vanaspati oil price on May 31 was 26.6 per cent higher than the same day last year, wheat was 14.3 per cent higher, and mustard oil and sugar were 5.1 and 4.1 per cent higher than the corresponding day of the previous year. Meanwhile, it is not only in India where food prices and supply are under shock. As many as 45 countries are staring at serious food insecurity, and the eyeballs of many international organisations are glued in this direction.

"The World Food Programme renews its call to open Ukrainian ports on the Black Sea to allow for the export of food amid fears of global hunger and further crises," said the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, Ukraine.

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Rise of creator economy and why India needs a new skilling paradigm

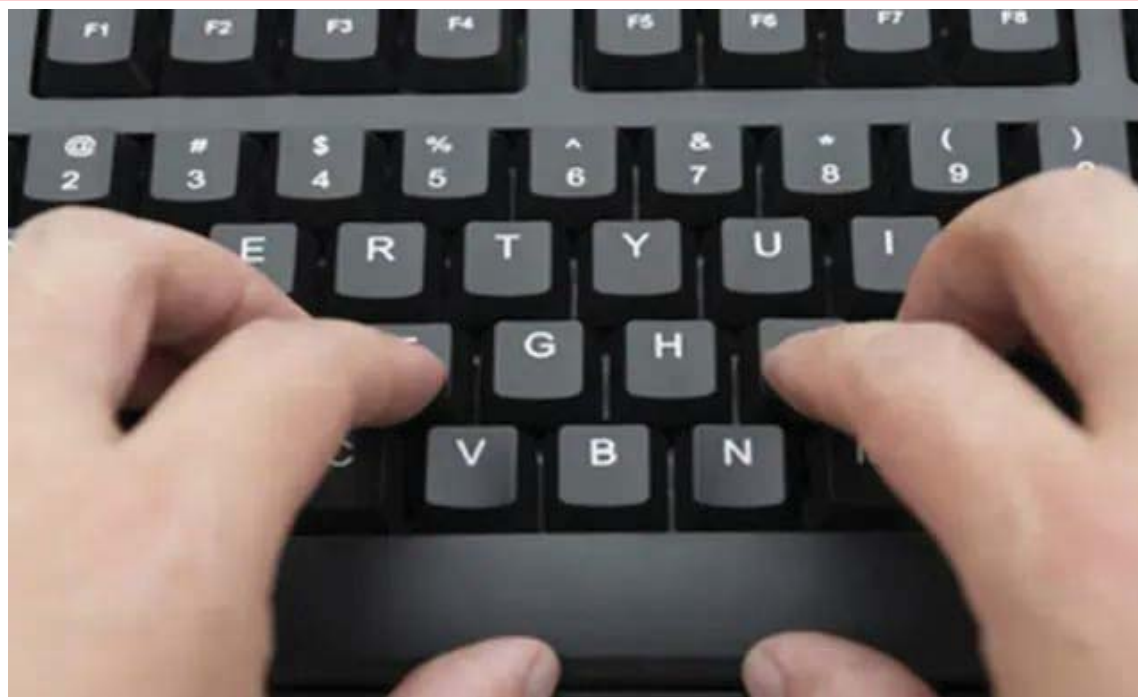
There is more to learn and explore when it comes to restructuring the current skilling revolution

Skill development is pivotal for leading the competitive world that is changing rapidly and moving fast. With the emergence of technologies like AI, Machine Learning and others, society and market industries are witnessing disruptions.

From users to managers, from a social media influencer to a product developer of a giant tech organisation, everyone is aligning their skills to meet the advancements for staying relevant.

There is more to learn and explore when it comes to restructuring the current skilling revolution. We are seeing how current tech and skilling are going hand-in-hand to bring a humane, artistic and creative space to flourish. Getting employment is one major force adhered to skilling, reskilling and upskilling, nevertheless, it is vital to take care and lift up the creative sides.

Restructuring the Indian skill sector with a new perspective As industrial revolution 4.0 is



approaching the market, there is a demand for the integration of technologies such as Meta, cloud computing, AI and machine learning into every operation. The essential hard skills might pass in the coming time. The future lies with creators, creativity and innovation.

The creative skills integrated with technologies will help people to

understand their needs and the industry's demands. Hence, the restructuring of skill learning and training is the way forward for growth and stability in the relevant industries. This is the opportunity to rebuild the skilling sector by resetting the education, job, and essential work and improving the quality of jobs.

Apart from improving the quality,

creative skill development will empower the youth and their skills to strive for more.

Skilling is must

In a world where a new app or tech titan emerges every day, skilling is necessary to stay relevant in the market. Skilling will enhance your current abilities and contribute to your working life. Companies have

recognised the importance of skill development, so finding work will be simple. If you have every tech-standardised talent in the market, you may be able to land high-paying positions. To grow ahead in the industry, your skilling will aid you. But, is there something missing? Many of our skill-building programmes allude to technical and software knowledge. We don't need programmes merely to keep high-paying employment or to retrain for any tech-standardised profession when we're talking about independent artists and creators. India is already in the process of reorganising the skilling industry by combining new-age technology and skills for everyone. Whether Gen-Z, millennials, or Gen-X, each generation must enter the system according to their skill set.

The essential aspect that we have yet to address is how to incorporate learning creative abilities in the skilling industry.

(Contd on page 29)

Rahul Gandhi's canards at Cambridge: The Yuvraj at it again

Rahul Gandhi's interaction at Cambridge was an underwhelming attempt at 'conversation', heavily departed from the factual, substantial and well-researched event it should have been

Fresh out of the Congress party's recently concluded 'Chintan Shivir' in Jaipur, Wayanad MP and former Congress president Rahul Gandhi was recently on the UK visit to engage in discussions revolving around India's stance and its image to mark the 75th year of its Independence. Besides the widely debated 'Ideas for India' conference in London which Rahul along with several Opposition leaders attended only to spew venom and project a negative image of India on foreign soil, Gandhi was also invited to the University of Cambridge to talk and interact with university members on the theme of 'India at 75'. This event was moderated by Professor Shruti Kapila, Associate Professor of Indian History and Global Political Thought at the university. While digging a little into the professor's political views easily indicated the potential inclination of the interaction, what followed, in reality, was a combination of political propaganda and the undermining of national integrity.

India is not a nation

From the very beginning of Rahul Gandhi's conversation with Professor Kapila, he kept asserting that India is not

a nation, but a 'union of states'. To corroborate his thoughts, he cited Article 1(1) of the Indian Constitution which declares: "India, that is Bharat, shall be a Union of States". Although this sentence is unquestionably a part of our Constitution, what seemed disturbing was his complete reluctance to acknowledge that the Constitution does not deny nationhood to India in any manner whatsoever. In fact, our Preamble establishes this point where it reads: "The objectives stated by the Preamble are to secure justice, liberty, equality to all citizens and promote fraternity to maintain the unity and integrity of the nation."

When questioned on this by one of the audience members, any proper reasoning behind his thoughts was found wanting. In a sincere attempt to gauge the logic behind such a staggering statement, we asked him a provocative question: "Mr Gandhi, are you ready to rename your party from Indian 'National' Congress to Indian 'Union' Congress?" To this, his instant response was that the former 'sounds nice' to him and hence there is 'no need for renaming'.

We were utterly perplexed by the

shallowness of his replies and were left with the impression that Rahul Gandhi probably does not think through these complex issues and despite facing similar problems with appropriate responses for decades, has steadfastly made no attempt for improvement. There was also a point in the discussion where he referred to India as a 'Voice' and a 'Conversation', meaningless abstractions that only reinforce the persona of this gentleman who once famously said: "Poverty is just a state of mind". These instances make me wonder where the Congress party's ship is heading next with this amateur captain at the helm.

Democratic process in India is under danger

Rahul Gandhi raked up the 'issue' of the Central government's control over media and social media platforms as well as that of the judiciary "not being independent anymore". He also tangentially touched upon the supposed 'unfairness' of the electoral process in India, an unsubstantiated accusation raised merely to defend the abysmal performance of his party in national and several state elections since 2013.

However, quite comically, could this be

the same unfairness that launched his party to power in Rajasthan, Chhattisgarh and Madhya Pradesh in 2018? Clearly, his party's stance against hard facts in several civilisational and social empowerment issues can hardly be justified by blaming the legal system in India. Moreover, he conveniently overlooked the handful of mainstream media and social media channels that are still under the active control of Congress and its increasingly left ecosystem.

Such complaints are largely unfounded since it is but natural for the ruling party to desire influence in multiple sectors, a power-play that the Congress had perfected in its extended decades-long rule! Fielding a question on whether the Gandhi family should relinquish its power to see Congress bounce back, he said: "It's for the party to decide". Such blatant deflection of responsibility by the de facto President speaks volumes about his unwillingness to take ownership and seems to foreshadow the rapid drowning of his party from the Indian electoral arena.

(Contd. on page 28)

Lessons From Ukraine War: Why Creation of Integrated Theatre Commands Needs to Be Expedited



rationalised political objectives, dynamic interaction and unpredictability.

The character of war is constantly in flux. However, multi-domain operations (MDO) and niche technology, which can be adopted by big or small nations and groups, is not only changing the character of war, but has overlapping influences on the nature of wars. Not surprisingly, the non-kinetic vertical, even in the ongoing Ukraine war, is gaining strategic importance (stronger focus on Information Influence Operations and PSYOPS), especially when nations are resorting to achieving their national objectives without crossing the adversary's threshold for war. The changing nature and character of confrontation and conflict demands Joint Integrated MD capabilities, even to prosecute the non-kinetic operations successfully.

REGIONAL SECURITY COMPLEX THEORY AND ZONES

India must fight its own battles. International Relations theory states that 'regional security zones' are fairly independent of globalisation and global political trends due to strong emotional, geographical and historical links. Security interdependence is normally patterned into regionally based clusters or security complexes. Only global powers (USA and to some extent China)

play a truly global game, and project their power onto far-flung regions. China dominates the regional security zones of Asia (more than USA). India is caught in the classic power play of global and regional security dynamics as it is not yet a great power. While it provides opportunities for India to emerge as a unique balancing power, it can only be accomplished by enhancing our comprehensive national power (CNP – external, internal and soft power), and addressing our challenges cohesively with 'all of nation integrated' approach.

The salient weaknesses, as observed by Kargil Review Committee and endorsed by GoM report in 2000-01 — current environment of hi-tech, multi-domain, short duration and limited wars (Ukraine war questions that premise), nuclear backdrop merits swift and dynamic responses. It requires calibrated management of the escalation ladder straddling across military and non-military verticals, for which the nation needs to prepare itself, within the constraints of resources and even more importantly, time.

My remarks: Jointness has become 'existential', with each service essentially operating in silos defined by its own threat perception and operational doctrine. Consequently, there is no other option, but ITCs.

GEO-STRATEGIC COMPULSIONS FOR

INTEGRATED THEATRE COMMANDS

India needs to project power in its areas of strategic interests, which is pretty much most of Asia. A theatre command is inherently suited to projecting power. A theatre command concept that is centered on defending against Pakistan and China alone is not visionary. As a country, we aspire to be a great power and have a say in global governance. None of that will come without the necessary military power: however, no aping; create an Indian model. Theatre commands are more about effective warfighting than the issue of optimisation in terms of costs and manpower. Continental power salience is logical, but a regional power needs equal focus on aerospace and maritime domains. It is, therefore, more a matter of how, in what form, and the timeframe to create ITCs, geographical or threat-based, with centralisation of critical and key resources with de-centralisation based on mission or time. We could address the low hanging fruit of fine-tuning existing Andaman & Nicobar and Strategic Forces command, as also build on Cyber, Space and Special Forces commands/divisions. ITCs should be based on existing commands and structures to ensure less turbulence.

It is a mad, bad world, to each his own. Since time immemorial, competition created politics, and politics created confrontation and conflict. The world today is in persistent engagement where cooperation, competition, confrontation and conflict are increasingly geo-political, multi-domain (MD), 24x7 and multi-lateral (global). All nations, even the superpower United States of America, are compelled to carry out constant strategic balancing. India is at war — hybrid and grey zone.

Defence forces personnel, especially officers, need to don the mantle of 'security professionals' and not just that of a kinetic warrior on the borders (LoC/LAC). Due to our training, experience and conditioning, the nation needs to co-opt the Armed Forces' leadership when it comes to all matters of national security. 'Integral and integrated' jointness are the key buzz words

when it comes to a nation and its armed forces' responses to any security challenges. This approach is critical to achieving desired outcomes in the future. One major takeaway from the ongoing Ukraine war is that creation of integrated theatre commands (ITC) needs expeditious implementation.

NATURE, CHARACTER OF WAR

Conflict is a recognisable trinity of government, military and the people, each with differing reactions to war. There is a widespread intellectual consensus that the nature of war, in essence, does not change. It is still driven by fear, honour, interest, survival, uncertainty, bellicose culture, domestic pressure, perceived injustice, reaction to incursion, ambition or opportunism, and error, misunderstanding or prejudice. It still consists of violence, enmity, passion, chance and friction,

Why Supreme Court's acknowledgement of sex work as a profession is welcome

It could help challenge the institutional barriers that prevent sex workers from accessing basic rights and equality

On May 19, the Supreme Court of India (SC) made headlines by giving directions for recognising prostitution as a profession and emphasising that sex workers, like any other professionals, are entitled to dignity and constitutional rights. Prostitution (or sex work), a taboo topic of discussion, was recently brought into drawing-room conversations by the Bollywood movie Gangubai Kathiawadi (directed by Sanjay Leela Bhansali and said to be based on the life of Gangubai Harjivandas, a much-celebrated

social activist of Kamatipura). The question that the film successfully raised was: Why isn't sex work seen as any other kind of work?

Interestingly, prostitution is not illegal in India, per se. According to the Indian Penal Code (IPC), however, several activities under prostitution are punishable by law — pimping, renting out property for running brothels, etc. In 1956, the Immoral Traffic (Prevention) Act emphasised that sex workers can practice their profession but any person

who makes an earning from prostitution is to be punished. This involves procuring, abducting or inducing a person for prostitution; a move significant enough to ensure trafficking for the sex trade was under check. Further, the Act states that to lawfully participate in prostitution, sex workers have to maintain a distance of at least 200 metres from any public place, preferably in an isolated area with no public institutions in sight. In other words, sex work is to be done in secrecy, away from the gaze of the larger,



'normal' society. This isolation works into othering sex workers, putting the legality of their profession in ambiguity. Indeed, a simple legal status for

prostitution wasn't enough to ensure sex workers are not pushed to the margins of society.

(Contd. on page 30)

Satyendar Jain true patriot, ED filed false case against him, alleges Arvind Kejriwal

Expressing confidence that Jain will be out from the case, he said that the jail term will strengthen Jain's courage and spirit. Defending Delhi Minister Satyendar Jain, Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on Tuesday said that the latter is the true patriot and the allegations against him are 'false'.

Addressing a press conference, the Delhi Chief Minister said, "Delhi Health Minister Satyendar Jain has been arrested by Enforcement Directorate. I have personally read all the papers and case filed against Satyendra Jain by ED and it is completely false. We have a very strict and honest government. We are hard-core patriots, can get beheaded but can never betray the country. His arrest is politically motivated."

Speaking about the recent arrest of Punjab Health Minister Vijay Singla on corruption charges, Kejriwal said, "Just a few days back we sent a minister from our Punjab to jail, we don't deal with souls. In 2015, I myself sacked my food minister and handed him over to the CBI. The whole world has not seen this level of honesty in politics." The Chief Minister further said that there is no truth in the case while adding that he would have taken strict action against him the matter has even per cent truth.

"I have read the entire paper of Satyendra Jain's case, I am a well-educated man, I have understanding of law too, the whole case of Satyendra Jain is fake. If there was even one percent truth in this matter, then I

would have taken strict action," he added.

Kejriwal said that Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) follows the path of Bhagat Singh. "How many raids did they get on me, nothing was found. In the end, Satyendra Jain will also be released from the jail. Our party follows the path of Bhagat Singh, Satyendar Jain is a patriot, honest and courageous person. This jail will strengthen his courage and spirit," he said. Expressing confidence that Jain will be out from the case, he said that the jail term will strengthen Jain's courage and spirit. "But I would like to say to his wife and children, sister-in-law, your husband, children, your father is very courageous. He has given the world a model of Mohalla Clinic, has given a

model of health, the country is proud of such a person, God is with him," he added.

Meanwhile, a local court in Delhi remanded Delhi Health and Home Minister Satyendar Jain to the Enforcement Directorate (ED) custody till June 9 in an alleged money laundering case. ED on Monday had arrested Satyendar Jain from his residence in connection with alleged hawala transactions related to a Kolkata-based company. The Rouse Avenue Court remanded Jain to ED custody till 9 June. Apart from Home and Health, Jain holds portfolios of Power, PWD, Industries, Urban Development, and Flood and Irrigation and Water in the Aam Aadmi Party-led Delhi government.

Hardik Patel to join BJP: How the party can benefit from the Patidar leader ahead of Gujarat Assembly polls

The BJP's induction of Hardik Patel is aimed at wooing back the Patidar community, an important voting block in Gujarat with a population of 1.5 crore and an influence in around 70 Assembly seats

The will-he won't-he finally ended on Tuesday with Hardik Patel confirming that he would join the BJP on 2 June. Patel, who joined the Congress in 2019, resigned from the party on 18 May in a scathing letter to party chief Sonia Gandhi which took the top party leadership to task for "being distracted on their mobile phones" and being focused on "chicken sandwiches" – which sent Twitter into a frenzy.

While Patel's looming induction into the BJP comes as big news, it's hardly surprising. Patel had in recent days effusively praised the BJP's decision-making and style of functioning.

For the saffron party, news of the Patidar leader joining could hardly have come at a better time – Gujarat will be heading to the polls later this year.

BJP's high hopes for Hardik
BJP sources told The Print it is hoped that Patel's induction would help counter the influence of Naresh Patel — a Rajkot-based industrialist said to wield enormous influence over Gujarat's Patidar community — in case he decides to join the Congress.

The BJP is also looking to woo the Patidars or Patels. With a population of 1.5 crore, they are said to exert influence in around 70 Assembly



seats and are an important group in Gujarat.

Gujarat has also witnessed a slew of CMs: Chimanbhai Patel, Keshubhai Patel, Babubhai Patel, Anandiben Patel and incumbent chief minister Bhupendra Patel.

"The BJP is a large parivar (family) and everyone is welcome to serve the nation. Patel has shown his mettle by leading protests for the rights of the Patidar community," a leader told The Print.

BJP leadership also views Patel as a potential bulwark against the AAP, which has its eyes on Gujarat.

Patel also seems to have friends in

high places.

The Times of India reported that Hardik's entry is being worked "at the party's highest level with an active nudge from top RSS brass" and that Hardik is seen as a potential leader. The report also noted that for the BJP, inducting Hardik makes perfect sense. With its aim of besting Madhavsingh Solanki's record of 149 seats in 1985, the party is gearing itself to make a major impact in Saurashtra and thwarting AAP's penetration, albeit largely at the cost of Congress.

Patel's ascent

Patel first came to prominence

during the Patidar agitation of 2015, which demanded that the community be included in the OBC category. Ahead of the 2017 Assembly polls, Patel drew huge crowds and had a great following among the Patidar youth.

While he did not take the political plunge, his presence provided Congress a fillip at the polls – the party managed its best-ever 77 seats compared to the BJP's 99 seats.

Observers credited Patel, Alpesh Thakore and Jignesh Mewani with the Congress' better than expected performance.

Hardik was rewarded with being inducted as the Gujarat Congress' working president but wasn't able to get along with the rest of the party leadership.

Nor could he stave off the onslaught by the Narendra Modi-powered BJP in the 2019 Lok Sabha polls.

Another brick in Congress' wall
For the Congress, which is already facing an uphill task in Gujarat, this could not have come at a worse time. The party is already facing outrage over its list of Rajya Sabha names with several leaders saying the candidates did not reflect the optics of the recently-held Chintan Shivir in Udaipur. Several high-profile leaders have also exited the party this year.

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Govt Powering Farmers Towards Golden Agri Sector

Under the leadership of our popular and visionary Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, the results of all-round efforts made by the Union Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare in the last eight years are being reflected in the society. Many innovative steps have been taken by the ministry in the form of initiatives, schemes and programs that are playing a major role in improving the conditions of farmers



amidst the challenges of the Covid-19 pandemic, India has easily supplied food grains to many countries. Even during the Russia-Ukraine crisis, India has emerged as a major supplier of food grains to the countries in need. Not only is the production of food grains in the country showing continuous increase at record level, but the export of agriculture is also increasing continuously, reaching almost Rs 4 lakh crore.

To improve the earnings of the farmers for better livelihood, the government has continuously increased the minimum support price for Kharif, Rabi and other commercial crops. In the year 2013-14, the minimum support price for paddy was Rs 1,310 per quintal. It has increased to Rs 1,940 per quintal. Similarly, in 2013-14, the MSP for wheat was Rs 1,400 per quintal and has now reached Rs 2,015 per quintal. During the Rabi marketing season in 2021-22, 433.44 lakh metric tonnes of wheat was procured by the government at MSP, which is the highest ever procurement. Punjab, Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, Uttarakhand, Gujarat, Himachal Pradesh and Jammu & Kashmir have seen the highest purchase of wheat so far. The figures show

that 49.19 lakh wheat-producing farmers got Rs 85,604.40 crore in MSP during the season. The payment has been made directly into their bank accounts in a transparent manner. Around 11.50 crore farmers have been given Rs 1.82 lakh crore under the Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Yojana. This scheme is one of the most comprehensive and important schemes of the central government, and is also a symbol of loyalty towards farmers with no middlemen involved.

In keeping with the government's serious approach towards soil health, Soil Health Cards have reached crores of farmers. This scheme has and is making farmers aware of effective and better agricultural production results to get better yields. The government, under the guidance of Prime Minister Modi, has made special provision for natural farming in this year's budget. In Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Jharkhand and West Bengal, an area of 5 km on either banks of the Ganga will be brought under natural farming. The government's plan to promote natural farming does not stop here. The government has constituted a committee from the Indian Council of Agricultural

Research (ICAR) to include materials related to natural farming in undergraduate and postgraduate teaching courses. Chemical-free natural farming is being supported by the ministry and ICAR.

Adhering to the contemporary nature of natural farming, ICAR has issued special guidelines to agricultural universities to include research and research subjects related to natural farming. Natural farming has the potential to increase the income of the farmers and is a symbol of the creative thinking of the central government towards better living. It is the dedication of the central government towards farmers that along with improving on their facilities, Rs 1 lakh crore has been allocated under the Agriculture Infrastructure Fund. The farmers are being served through important and comprehensive schemes like the Agricultural Infrastructure Fund and the government is conscious of providing basic facilities like godowns, custom hiring centres, primary processing units, sorting and grading units, and cold storages for them. The government is committed to provide the farmers a fair price for their products through these basic facilities. (Contd. on page 29)

The standard of living of farmers is getting better and agricultural assistance from Delhi is reaching them directly through bank accounts with complete transparency. The income of farmers has increased, their thinking towards accepting agriculture as a business has got a new direction.

All schemes, programs and activities of the government ensure that farmers take an interest in becoming agricultural entrepreneurs voluntarily. The budget allocation of the last eight years, the substantial increase in it and more farmer friendly agri-policies are a part of the government's positive thinking and strong will power. The allocation of agricultural budget in the current financial year is

around Rs 1.32 lakh crore, a reflection of the honest thinking of the central government for the welfare of farmers. The budget allocation for agriculture has increased by almost six times in the last eight years. The journey of development in the agriculture sector does not end here. Along with the allocation, the record production of food grains and horticultural crops is also proof of the budget allocation of the government being spent in the right direction. According to the Third Advance Estimates in the year 2021-22, production of food grains is estimated to be around 315 million tonnes, while the production of the horticulture sector is estimated at 334 million tonnes, the highest ever.

Truly, it is no small feat that

International Day for Protection of Children 2022: Find history and significance

A large number of children are engaged in paid or unpaid domestic work, often in dire conditions



International Day for Protection of Children is celebrated on 1 June every year. The day is marked to honour children globally for their right to survival, to develop, protection from harmful influences, and to

participate in family, cultural and social life. It is, however, observed only in a few countries across the globe.

A large number of children are engaged in paid or unpaid domestic work, often in

dire conditions. Many of them are vulnerable to exploitation as they work far away from their homes. This highlights the need to dedicate a day to raise awareness about their protection.

In 1954, the International Day for Protection of Children was established to also protect children's rights, end child labour and guarantee them the education they need. Arguably, this special day is also considered as one of the oldest international holidays of the world.

History and significance:

The International Day for Protection of Children was introduced in the year 1925 during the World Conference for the Protection of Children in Geneva.

The protection of children's rights has been listed in many international documents and resolutions around the world. It is also mentioned in the

Convention on the Rights of the Child adopted in 1989 and the UN General Assembly Declaration of the Rights of the Child adopted in 1959. These listed documents consider children to be one of the most vulnerable social groups in any society. The International Day for Protection of Children was celebrated in 1950 for the very first time. Then, on 20 November 1959, the United Nations General Assembly adopted its own Declaration of the Rights of the Child. They added ten new principles towards child safety in place of the original five, hence terming it - Universal Children's Day. In 1992, Armenia had approved the Convention on the Rights of the Children after which in 1996, the law was passed in the Armenian Parliament. This is why, this day is celebrated in almost all post-soviet countries.

Eight years, eight big shifts

The Modi government has set the stage to catapult India into the league of select nations that will lead the world in the 21st century.

In an essay written in 2012 for Foreign Policy, Daron Acemoglu and James A Robinson identified 10 reasons which they thought explains why countries fail and fall apart. Read a decade later, it offers a stark reminder of the period that we in India were before 2014 and how most of those 10 reasons applied to India as well. Specifically, the part of a “weak central government” and how such governments have calamitous consequences.

On May 30, Prime Minister Narendra Modi completes eight years in office. How do we assess his record? Or to put it differently, what are the changes in these past eight years as a consequence of a strong central government that Modi leads, which also offer a contrast to the pre-2014 period when we came perilously close to failing and falling?

First, restoring belief in “Constitutional democracy”. Think of the era before 2014 when we had given up on the central government. Violent crowds had become the place for policy formulation and framing of laws

and regulations. One of the greatest contributions of Modi has been to consign that phase to the dustbin and restore the confidence of people in elected governments.

Second, imbuing the spirit of “we can do it” in the country as a whole. From 42 unicorns in one year to vaccinating almost a billion people in less than a year to rescuing over 22,000 people from an active war zone, nothing seems beyond the reach of our people if we set our minds on it. Third, energising all parts of the country and all sections of the society to contribute to our national cause. There is no more the “tyranny of distance” for the Northeast. It is now an equal contributor in our economic growth. A state like Uttar Pradesh, besmirched in an earlier era as part of the BIMARU group, now sets national models of governance. From sports to technology, and from creative fields to sciences, all sections of society now routinely set new benchmarks.

Fourth, restoring a sense of security in our people. In 2008

alone, 308 Indians were brutally murdered by terrorists across cities in the country. Contrast this with the period between 2016-22 when there have been zero deaths outside Jammu and Kashmir, Punjab and the Northeast. Naxal terror has similarly been neutralised. On the external front, Pakistan has been taught a lesson inside its own territory. And unlike in 2013, when then defence minister pleaded helplessness against China, New India has shown its resolve both in Doklam and in Ladakh.

Fifth, the creation of a new brand India image that is confident in its assertion of an India First policy. From becoming a founding member of initiatives like the QUAD and the Indo-Pacific Economic Framework (IPEF) to leading the global agenda on climate change, to asserting its own national priorities in the Ukraine war to forging close ties with all countries in West Asia, India of 2022 is qualitatively different and in a better place than it has been at any time since Independence.

Sixth, the creation of a new Indian economic model which is part of the international consensus on free and open democracies but is different from the Western consensus. In the last eight years, Modi has been able to put in place a model that seamlessly fuses free market dynamics with welfare delivery. That this has been done at a billion plus scale and in a country of continental diversity makes it easily replicable. Contrast this with pre-2014 India when the country was part of the “fragile five”.

Seventh, the infusion of self-confidence in our people as a society. We now assert our unique cultural history or our national interest first policy without any preamble or apologia. We no longer get swayed by morality lectures from actors whose actions belie their preaching. From the badminton arena to policy debates in think tanks, from signing trade deals to reclaiming our civilisational sites, we are now confident to just go out and do our thing

without looking for approval from any superior certifying authority. Eighth, and perhaps the most important change in these past eight years has been the change in the mindset of us Indians as a society. As Prime Minister Modi himself put it, the attitude is now of “chalta hai nahin, badal sakta hai”. It is this “badal sakta hai” thinking that permeates the mindset of “how will this not happen” when faced with any seemingly improbable task that P V Sindhu so evocatively describes in her chapter in the recently released book Modi@20: Dreams Meet Delivery.

In a way, what Modi has been able to achieve in these past eight years is what he set out to do in 2014 when he used to talk of targets to be achieved by 2022. We are now in the 75th year of our Independence and as we enter Amrit Kaal and look ahead towards the next 25 years, these eight years of Modi have set the stage to catapult India into the league of select nations that will lead the world in the 21st century.

Latest GDP estimates indicate consumption and investment remain subdued

Slower global growth and high commodity prices pose challenges

Broadly in line with expectations, the Indian economy grew by 4.1 per cent in the fourth quarter (January-March) of the last financial year (2021-22), as per the latest data released by the National Statistical Office. For the full year, the economy is now estimated to have grown by 8.7 per cent, marginally lower than the earlier estimate of 8.9 per cent released at the end of February. However, the latest estimates imply that at the end of 2021-22, the economy is only 1.5 per cent higher than its pre-pandemic level, as both private consumption and investment — the two major drivers of growth — continue to be subdued. Gross value added by the entire economy rose by 3.9 per cent in the fourth quarter. This appears to have been propped up by agriculture and public administration, defence and other services. Excluding these, core value added grew at an even slower pace of 3.2 per cent. The disaggregated data also points to a mixed performance across sectors. Agricultural growth has been



estimated at 4.1 per cent in the fourth quarter. However, this is at odds with estimates of wheat and most rabi crops whose yields were hit by excess rains during December-January and the post mid-March heat wave. Within industry, manufacturing has actually contracted by 0.2 per cent in the quarter just ended. In fact, the sector's performance has dipped

sequentially — it has barely registered a rise in the second half of 2021-22. This is, perhaps, an outcome of margins coming under pressure. Within services too, performance has been varied. While trade, hotels, transport, and communication services have slowed down to 5.3 per cent in the fourth quarter, down from 6.3 per cent in the

previous quarter, the financial, real estate and professional services sector has maintained its trajectory — contact-intensive services did get affected by the third wave of the pandemic in the initial few weeks of the quarter. Worryingly, private consumption has continued to remain muted, growing by just under 2 per cent in the fourth quarter. And while gross fixed capital formation, which connotes investment activity in the economy, saw a marginal uptick in the quarter just ended, it has grown by under 4 per cent in the second half of last year. Leading economic indicators suggest the momentum of economic activity in the weeks and months thereafter has remained healthy. Growth is also likely to be aided by a low base effect. However, the recovery is neither broad-based nor fully entrenched. Moreover, the combination of slower global growth and higher commodity prices, especially crude oil, will act as headwinds.

Afghan-based Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan persistent threat to Pakistan: UNSC report

Pakistan faces a persistent security threat from the Afghanistan-based Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP), a United Nations Security Council report claimed, according to a media report



(By Staff Reporter) A United Nations Security Council report reminded about the persistent threat Pakistan's security faces from the Afghanistan-based Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) and warned that prospects of success of the ongoing peace process with the dreaded terror group were bleak, according to a media report. The annual report of the 1988 Taliban sanctions committee monitoring team noted TTP's linkages with the Afghan Taliban and explained how the group benefitted from the fall of the Ghani regime last year and touched upon its relations with other terrorist groups operating from Afghanistan.

The banned TTP, the report noted, had up to 4,000 fighters based in east and south-east areas along the Afghanistan-Pakistan border and made up the largest group of foreign fighters based there, according to Pakistan's Dawn newspaper. This was the team's first report for the committee since the Taliban takeover of Kabul in August last year.

The report's original focus was on the Taliban's internal politics, its finances, relations with Al-Qaeda, Daesh, and other terrorist groups, and the implementation of the UNSC sanctions. The report's launch coincided with the start of the third round of talks between the Pakistan government and TTP last Thursday.

The first round of talks, held in November last year, had yielded a month-long ceasefire that later broke down after TTP accused Islamabad of not fulfilling promises.

The TTP subsequently resumed attacks against Pakistani forces.

Statistics tabulated by the Pakistan Institute of Peace Studies reveal that this year, the militant group carried out nearly 46 attacks, mostly against law enforcement personnel, in which 79 people lost their lives.

On March 30, the TTP, emulating the Afghan Taliban's strategy during the US war in Afghanistan, announced a "Spring Offensive" against security forces here.

The peace process, which is being facilitated by Taliban Interior Minister Sirajuddin Haqqani, meanwhile, resumed

earlier this month after both sides took confidence-building measures.

The TTP militants have been fighting with the Pakistani security forces since 2008, when the outfit was set up, to press for the implementation of the Sharia laws in the country.

However, the group is being pressed by the Afghan Taliban for talks with the Pakistan government to end the conflict.

The TTP first announced a ceasefire on the occasion of Eid and later extended it after Pakistan released a couple of its (TTP) commanders, who were then on death row. The round, in which the Pakistani delegation was led by Peshawar Corps Commander Lt Gen Faiz Hamid, ended with both sides presenting their set of demands, the report said. TTP demanded the withdrawal of security forces from erstwhile tribal areas, annulment of the merger of FATA with Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa province,

withdrawal of cases against its fighters and their release, and introduction of Shariah-based 'Nizam-e-Adl' in Malakand Division. Although security forces here say that these demands are unacceptable and their acceptance would mean capitulation of the State, the government delegation still entered into the third round of talks. The top priority for the Pakistani government in the latest round is to secure an extension in the ceasefire, which is expiring on May 30. The Pakistani side has, however, maintained complete silence on the talks. The UN report has warned that "The group (TTP) is focused on a long-term campaign against the Pakistani state", which implies "that ceasefire deals have a limited chance of success". It is important to note that TTP, which has recently been reinvigorated through the return of 17 splinter groups into its fold, feels that

maintaining a hardline position in talks with the Pakistan government would help maintain unity in its ranks. Sirajuddin Haqqani, whose Haqqani Network is said to be independent of the grouping within the Afghan Taliban, has been "relied upon more than anyone else in the de facto administration" to act as an intermediary in this process, which highlights the influence that he holds over TTP and other Pashtun groups. The report observed that as compared to other foreign militant groups, TTP was the biggest beneficiary of last year's Taliban takeover and used this opportunity for conducting attacks and operations in Pakistan. "The TTP also continues to exist as a stand-alone force, rather than feeling pressure to merge its fighters into Afghan Taliban units, as is the prospect for most foreign terrorist fighters," it further added

Sri Lankan PM Wickremesinghe refers to India while advocating more powers to Parliament

Sri Lankan PM Wickremesinghe, in a televised statement on Sunday, made a special reference to India while advocating more powers to Parliament

(By Staff Reporter) Sri Lankan Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe on Sunday made a special reference to India while advocating strengthening of the existing laws to give more powers to Parliament. In his special televised statement on the current constitutional reforms, Wickremesinghe said there is a need to change the structure of Parliament and create a new system by combining the existing system of Parliament or the Westminster system and the system of State Councils.

"First of all, the existing laws need to be strengthened in order to give those powers to Parliament in the exercise of monetary powers. Following the example of countries such as the United Kingdom, New Zealand and India, we are proposing a stronger and more powerful law," he said while advocating the abolition of the Executive Presidency. Sri Lankan President

Gotabaya Rajapaksa, currently enjoying unfettered power, is facing growing demands for his resignation for his government's

unfettered powers to President Gotabaya Rajapaksa after abolishing the 19th Amendment that will strengthen

Parliament. According to the new proposed 21A, the President will be held accountable to the Parliament. The Cabinet of Ministers is also accountable to Parliament. The National Council is also accountable to Parliament. Fifteen Committees and Oversight Committees are accountable to Parliament. Sri Lanka is near bankruptcy and has severe shortages of



mishandling of the economy. The functioning of the Parliament has been paralysed due to the weakening of the Parliamentary powers by the 20th Amendment, Wickremesinghe said, while batting for the 21st Amendment to the Constitution. The 21st Amendment is expected to annul the 20A to the Constitution, which gives

medicines and cooking gas to toilet paper and matchsticks. For months, people have been forced to stay in long lines to buy the limited stocks. Sri Lanka's economic crisis has created political unrest with a protest occupying the entrance to the president's office demanding his resignation continuing for more than 50 days. Live TV

China to launch three astronauts to space station in June, Shenzhou-14 out on pad

China will launch three astronauts to its under-construction space station in June. The six-month mission is aimed at bringing Tiangong close to being fully ready for science

(By Staff Reporter) The China National Space Administration (CNSA) will launch the third crewed mission to the under-construction space station in June as it rolled the Shenzhou-14 spacecraft on the launchpad. The China Manned Space Engineering Office (CMSEO) rolled out the mission at the Jiuquan Satellite Launch Center in northwest China.

The Shenzhou-14 mission will carry three astronauts to the Tiangong space station on top of a Long March-2F carrier rocket on a six-month mission in zero gravity. Huang Weifen, the chief designer of the country's astronaut system in a media briefing said that crewed spacecraft will send three astronauts to the Tianhe core module of China's space station in June. Standing tall at 60

meters in height, the spaceship and rocket combo weighing 39 tonnes rolled out of the assembly test building and



approached the launch tower after traveling 1.5 kilometers. Completing the journey in over an hour, the spacecraft arrived at the pad in a healthy condition. "We have completed all the final assembly and tests including the propellant filling of the spacecraft. We

will conduct a large-scale system interface test on the rocket system and then proceed to a whole system drill

which marks the entry of the combo into the prelaunch status," CGTN quoted Zhang Fusheng, chief designer for the manned spacecraft system as saying. The mission is aimed at bringing China closer to the completion of the space station construction forming a T-shaped complex in the coming October. Beijing had

in May launched the Tianzhou-4 cargo spaceship that carried equipment and supplies for the astronauts headed to space. China is yet to announce the names of the three astronauts who will strap themselves on the Shenzhou-14 spacecraft on launch day. The latest

mission comes over a month after three Chinese astronauts returned to Earth after six months aboard their country's newest orbital station. The Shenzhou 13 space capsule landed in the Gobi desert in the northern region of Inner Mongolia. During the mission, astronaut Wang Yaping carried out the first spacewalk by a Chinese woman. Wang and crewmates Zhai Zhigang and Ye Guangfu beamed back physics lessons for high school students. China launched its first astronaut into space in 2003 and landed robot rovers on the moon in 2013 and on Mars last year. Officials have discussed a possible crewed mission to the moon. China was the third nation to launch an astronaut into space on its own after the former Soviet Union and the United States. Tiangong is China's third space station following predecessors launched in 2011 and 2016.

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Mahinda Rajapaksa's key ally named as suspect for attack on anti-government protesters

Former Sri Lankan Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa's key ally has been named as a suspect for the May 9 attack on anti-government protesters



Police had earlier recorded a statement from him. At least two of his parliamentary colleagues, state ministers are currently under custody. The backlash from the attack saw personal properties of over 70 parliamentarians of the ruling party facing arson attacks. Over 1,700 people have been arrested for the attacks. The President's Office on Wednesday said a special three-member probe panel headed by a retired judge has been appointed to investigate and report on all loss of life and property, including arson, robbery and murder, which took place in several areas of the island between March 31 and May 15.

Supreme Court Justice Tennakoon was accused of siding with the pro-government group who had attacked the protesters. Sri Lanka has been witnessing large-scale protests against the government's handling of the debt-ridden economy -- the worst-ever economic crisis in the country's history. The country of 22 million people is grappling with unprecedented economic turmoil since its independence from Britain in 1948. The crisis is caused in part by a lack of foreign currency, which has meant that the country cannot afford to pay for imports of staple foods and fuel, leading to acute shortages and very high prices.

(By Staff Reporter) A former Sri Lankan minister and a key ally of former prime minister Mahinda Rajapaksa was on Wednesday named a suspect in the deadly attack on anti-government protesters last month even as President Gotabaya Rajapaksa appointed a Commission of Inquiry to probe the recent violence in the country. At least 10 people, including a ruling party MP, were killed in the May 9 clashes triggered by a pro-government group attacking anti-

government protesters, who were demanding the resignation of President Gotabaya Rajapaksa over the country's worst economic crisis that led to acute shortages of staple food, fuel and power.

Johnston Fernando, a former senior minister who was seen making an inflammatory speech addressing the Mahinda Rajapaksa supporters before they went about attacking the unarmed protesters, has been named a suspect.

Taiwan scrambles planes after Chinese fighter jets enter air defence zone

(By Staff Reporter) Taiwan scrambled fighter jets in response to Chinese military aircraft entering its air defence zone (ADIZ), said Taiwan's defence ministry. It was the largest such incursion by Chinese fighter planes since January this year. Taiwan's fighter jets warned away 30 Chinese aircraft. ADIZ near Taiwan-controlled Pratas Islands was violated by Chinese military planes. China claims Taiwan to be its own territory. Taiwan has said that it wants peace with China but will defend itself if attacked. Taiwan has been complaining for past two years of repeated presence of Chinese fighter planes in ADIZ. Taiwan calls China's repeated nearby military activities "grey zone" warfare, designed to both wear out

Taiwan's forces by making them repeatedly scramble, and also to test Taiwan's responses. The latest Chinese incursion included 22 fighter planes and also electronic warfare, early warning and antisubmarine aircraft, the Taiwan ministry said. According to a map made available by the ministry, Chinese aircraft flew in an area northeast of the Pratas. Taiwan sent combat aircraft to warn away the Chinese aircraft, while missile systems were deployed to monitor them, the ministry said. It was the largest incursion since Taiwan reported 39 Chinese aircraft in its ADIZ on Jan. 23. There was no immediate comment from China, which has in the past said such moves were drills aimed at protecting the country's sovereignty.

Imran Khan's party urges UN to conduct probe into 'state excesses' during protest rally in Pak

(By Staff Reporter) Imran Khan's party urges UN to conduct probe into 'state excesses' during protest rally in Pak. Former Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan's party has asked the UN to conduct a probe into the "state excesses" during the protest rally that took place on May 25. Khan's supporters violently protested on May 25 in Islamabad to force the government to announce early elections and police had to resort to teargas and baton-charge to keep them under control. Shireen Mazari, a senior PTI leader and human rights minister in Khan's government, in a letter to UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Michelle Bachelet alleged that the government used force against protesters and also launched "politically motivated" cases against party leadership.

She demanded an "independent and impartial investigation into these state excesses and human rights violations".

Mazari also requested the UN official to "take urgent notice of the issues raised as they not only threatened democracy in Pakistan but also the lives of former prime minister Khan, his party leadership and intervene on these

with the government of Pakistan". She accused the government of committing "state excesses" against the PTI workers during the crackdown. She sought the UN intervention to end "harassment of the PTI" members and save them from "political" cases against them.

What is Indus Water Treaty signed between India, Pakistan?

(By Staff Reporter) As India and Pakistan meet for the annual meeting under the Indus Water Treaty in New Delhi, let us get acquainted with the agreement, which helps both nations to share the waters of the six rivers of the Indus basin. In 1960, India and Pakistan had signed the treaty after several years of negotiations. The Washington-based World Bank is also a signatory in it. This agreement has created a mechanism to build cooperation and information exchange between the two neighbours over the use of the rivers, which is known as the Permanent Indus Commission. As per the treaty, both the nations need to have Indus Commissioners. They also have to meet at least once a year. The meeting can be

organised, alternatively in India and Pakistan.

It may be listed among the most successful

times. According to the treaty, the water of the western rivers (Indus, Jhelum and Chenab) goes to Pakistan and the eastern rivers (Ravi, Beas and Sutlej) is allocated to India for unrestricted use. This agreement provides a framework to share water for various purposes, including irrigation and hydropower development. New Delhi can also generate hydroelectricity on the three western rivers in its territory with the help of river projects, which are subject to specific criteria for design. Under the treaty, Pakistan can also raise objections on the design of hydroelectric projects by India on these western rivers. In the past, several issues have been raised and resolved.



international treaties as it has withstood the test of time. Since the inception of the treaty, both nations have fought many wars and witnessed heightened tensions innumerable

Sri Lanka economic crisis: Kerala airport makes moolah as flights to Colombo make pit stop to refuel

Sri Lanka's economic crisis has turned into a boon for India as flights to Colombo are refuelling in Kerala's Thiruvananthapuram

(By Staff Reporter) Sri Lanka's unprecedented economic crisis is benefitting Kerala's Thiruvananthapuram international airport, it seems. As the financial crisis worsens, long-haul flights from Sri Lanka are being refuelled at Thiruvananthapuram international airport. SriLankan Airlines is now preferring the Thiruvananthapuram airport to refuel as it is the nearest international airport to Colombo. The Thiruvananthapuram airport, which is managed by Adani Airports, has a huge financial benefit from the fee paid for parking and landing the aircraft. In addition, the fuel tax will increase the revenue of the central and state governments. But when flights arrive to refuel, passengers are not allowed to



board. But airlines are allowed to change the cabin crew.

Long-haul flights fill up with more than 100 tons of fuel at a time. Recently, SriLankan Airlines flight, which was en route to Melbourne from Colombo,

Australia, landed in Thiruvananthapuram to refuel. Another flight from Colombo to Frankfurt, Germany had also refuelled from Thiruvananthapuram airport. It has already been informed that four more flights to Melbourne and Frankfurt on

June 1 and 2 will be refuelled from Thiruvananthapuram. Many international flights from Sri Lanka have been suspended due to severe fuel shortages but service to Melbourne and Frankfurt continues as it is profitable. SriLankan Airlines is attracted to Thiruvananthapuram due to its cheaper price of fuel and shorter distances than Chennai International Airport. Thiruvananthapuram airport is less than an hour away from Colombo airport. SriLankan Airlines are paying the same price for fuel as other airlines operating from Thiruvananthapuram. Currently, Bharat Petroleum and Indian Oil Corporation are distributing fuel to the Thiruvananthapuram International Airport.

On China Ties, Taliban Minister Muttuqi Says Action to be Based on 'Islamic Interest'

(By Staff Reporter) Afghanistan embassy is functional in China and vice-versa. We also have economic relations with China and it is progressing day by day. In order to make further progress in this respect, we would take into account national and Islamic interests and will take steps which would be beneficial for Afghanistan as well as the neighbouring countries in the region," Muttuqi said. "However, we will plan our action keeping in view our principles and national and Islamic interests," he added. According to media reports, China has locked up an estimated million or more members of Uyghur, Kazakh and other Muslim minorities in



China snatches employment opportunities of Nepali youth

(By Staff Reporter) The death of the three Chinese nationals in a loader accident in Nepal last month revealed that Beijing has been bringing its citizens to work, due to which people of Himalayan nation have been deprived of employment. According to Khabar Hub, the loader accident on the Kathmandu-Terai (Madhesh) Fast Track in the last week of April has revealed that a huge number of them are employed in the project while only a few Nepali technicians are employed in the project. Reports say that it has not been disclosed yet how many Chinese nationals have obtained a work permit in Nepal to work on the project. Moreover, the Nepal Army, the contractor of the national pride project, has not revealed how many foreign technicians have been given labour permits, Khabar Hub reported.

A large number of engineers are losing their jobs at home, workers are being forced to go abroad without getting jobs, and on the other hand, a large

number of Chinese citizens are being employed in projects of national pride in Nepal. The issue of insurance has come up after the death of a worker. As per the information received from the contractor regarding fast track insurance, Package 1 and Package 2 have not been insured yet.

The main reason for this is that the Chinese contractor has been insisting for nine months that the insurance should be in China under its reinsurance company. That is why insurance is being delayed, Khabar Hub said. Fast Track is a project being undertaken by the Nepal Army. Citing sources, Khabar Hub reported that the Chinese contractor is trying to get insurance from the private sector Nepal Insurance, Sanima Insurance, and Premier Insurance rather than from the Rastriya Beema Samiti. The contract was awarded in defiance of a letter from the Parliamentary Accounts Committee to the Ministry of Defense to cancel the contract.

what critics describe as a government has good relations campaign to obliterate their distinct cultural identities. China has denied all accusations of abuse in Xinjiang. Asked about equations with Russia during his interview to News18, Muttuqi said the Islamic Emirates "stands neutral" with regard to the war between Russia and Ukraine. "As far as Afghanistan-Russia relations are concerned, we have diplomatic and positive relations with Russia... The Embassy of Russia is functioning in Moscow. In addition, we have good economic relations and have plans to improve our trade in the future. At present, we can say that our new

government has good relations with the Central Asian countries and Russia." Asked about his government's current relations with the West following the withdrawal of international forces from Afghanistan last year, Muttuqi said Kabul wanted "normal relations" with them. "We held joint meetings with the European Union, European countries and the US in Qatar, Norway and other countries. Their ambassadors and representatives had visited Kabul as well. We want normal relations with them," he said. We want diplomatic as well as economic relations with all. We have made some headway in this regard and, Inshallah, more progress would be made," he added.

What is horse therapy that helps US veterans struggling with mental health?

To address the mental health issues faced by active military personnel and veterans, some organisations have started offering horse therapy or equine-assisted therapy. It involves the participants to engage in activities such as grooming, feeding, and leading a horse

(By Staff Reporter) Every 30 May is observed as Memorial Day in the United States, commemorating those who died while serving in the US Armed Forces. While those who survived have remained among the worst victims of mental health issues.

According to the Fox News, more veterans have died by suicide since the 9/11 attacks than in combat.

The report cites research from Brown University and Boston University. It found that more than 30,000 American active military personnel and veterans involved in post-9/11 wars are estimated to have died by suicide – a figure at least four times greater than the 7,000 service members who were killed in combat during that time.

From 2006 to 2021, the US Department of Veterans Affairs found that mental health needs increased by about 98 per cent. To address the mental health issues faced by active military personnel and veterans, some organisations have

started offering horse therapy or equine-assisted therapy.

What is horse therapy and how it helps with mental health According to Fox



News, in the small town of Jay Em, Wyoming, there's a program called Project Remount Corporation that pairs veterans or first responders with wild mustangs, a variety of horses.

Horse therapy involves a range of activities with horses to promote human physical and mental health. To use

horses in the therapeutic process, people are encouraged to engage in activities such as grooming, feeding, and leading a horse while being supervised by a mental health professional.

Operation Remount was started by Kelly Alexander and his wife, Karen. Alexander is a veteran who served over 20 years in the Army and Army National Guard. The program stemmed from his own experience with post-traumatic stress disorder, as well as multiple traumatic brain injuries.

According to the Wyoming Military Department's website, Alexander came across a program in Texas called Veterans and Mustangs through the Mustang Heritage Foundation.

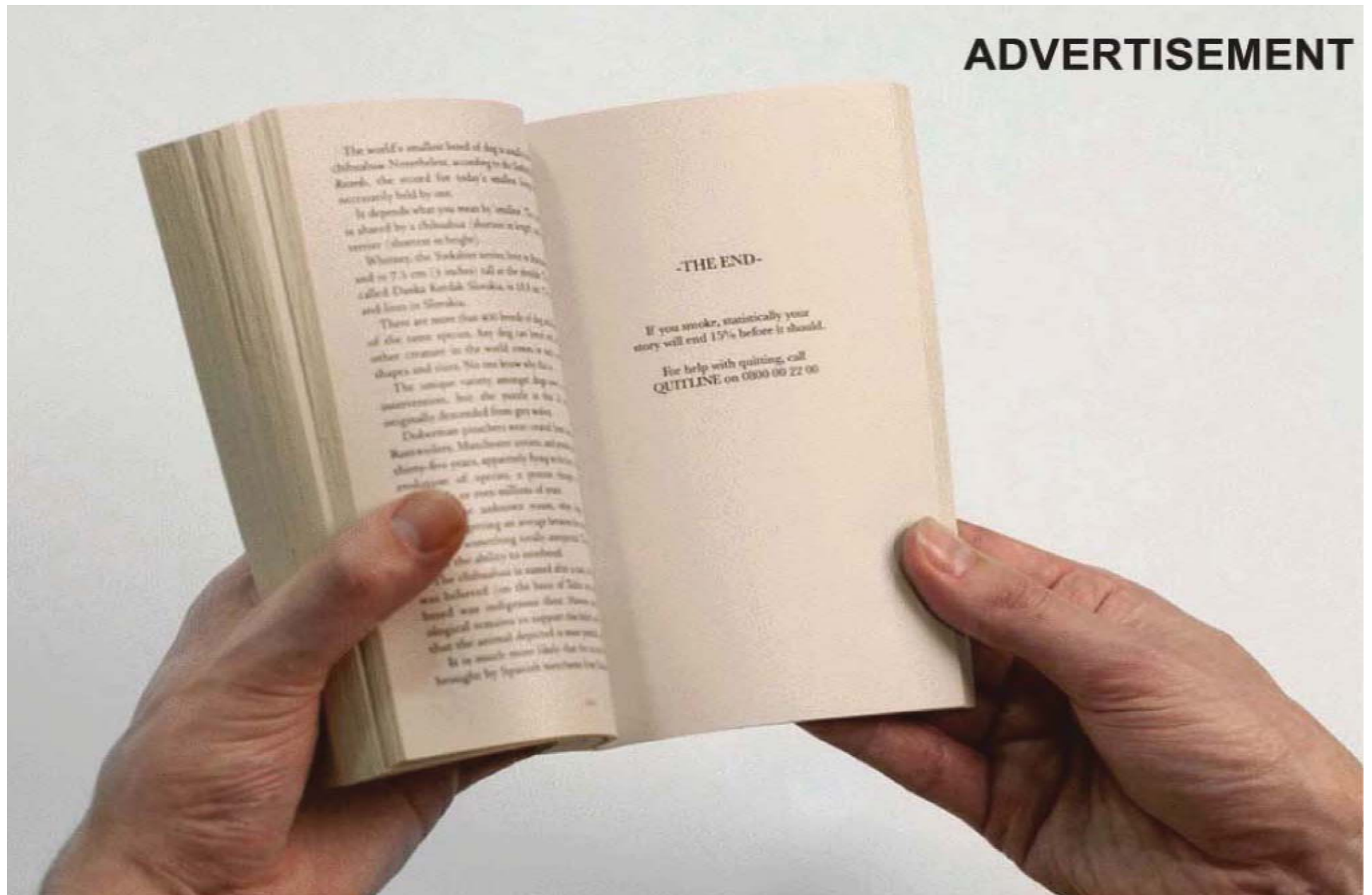
It was there that he found the tools needed to find the way back to his normal self.

He started Operation Remount with an aim to duplicate his experience and allow veterans who suffer from traumatic issues like PTSD to find their way back as he did. The six-week program pairs the participant with a wild mustang. The horses also have experienced trauma when they are pulled away from their herds and placed in overcrowded pens and immunized.

The shared experience between a participant and a horse helps in the healing process. They work to build a trusting and bonding relationship through one on one training.

According to Fox News, Operation Remount allows the veterans to keep the wild horse for themselves after they complete the six-week course. The Alexanders hope to have eight vets and first responders on the ranch next year, and to continue to grow.

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Funerals to Begin for Uvalde Victims as Biden Vows Action on Guns

Grieving families were to hold the first funerals Tuesday for Texas shooting victims one week after a school massacre left 19 children and two teachers dead, with President Joe Biden vowing to push for stricter US gun regulation



Biden told reporters Monday.

"I'm going to continue to push," he said, adding, "I think things have gotten so bad that everybody is getting more rational about it." A bipartisan group of US lawmakers worked through the Memorial Day weekend to pursue possible areas of compromise. They reportedly were focusing on laws to raise the age for gun purchases or to allow police to remove guns from people deemed at risk — but not on an outright ban on high-powered rifles like the weapon used Tuesday in Uvalde or the one used 10 days earlier in Buffalo, New York.

Uvalde's first funerals are set for Tuesday, with others scheduled through mid-June. The huge number of victims, many with horrific wounds, has left the town's two funeral homes turning to embalmers and morticians from across Texas for help. One anonymous donor has pledged \$175,000 to help cover funeral costs, Texas Governor Greg Abbott said.

'Rational action' The Uvalde

massacre — the deadliest school attack since 20 children and six staff were killed in Newtown, Connecticut in 2012 — came less than two weeks after 10 people died in the attack at a Buffalo grocery store by a young gunman targeting African Americans. While mass shootings draw anguished attention and spur momentary demands for change, most US gun violence passes with scant notice. The country's Memorial Day weekend — Monday is a national holiday — has been marked by yet more graphic violence. At least 132 gun deaths and 329 injuries were recorded nationwide from Saturday to Monday evening, according to the Gun Violence Archive website. Gun-control advocates hoped the shock over the Uvalde tragedy, coming even as people in Buffalo were burying victims of the attack there, might finally prompt politicians to act. A few key lawmakers, including a Democratic senator involved in the weekend talks in Washington, have expressed guarded optimism that

the group might make progress, even in the face of deep resistance from most Republicans and some rural-state Democrats. "There are more Republicans interested in talking about finding a path forward this time than I have seen since Sandy Hook," Senator Chris Murphy of Connecticut told TV interviewers Sunday, adding that bipartisan "serious negotiations" were underway. Biden said Monday he is deliberately "not negotiating with any of the Republicans yet." But, he added, "I know what happened when we had rational action before" on gun regulation. "It did significantly cut down mass murders." Mourners in Uvalde — a mostly Latino town of 15,000 — have echoed calls for change. "At the end of the day, if this child cannot even sip a glass of wine because he's too young, then guess what? He's too young to purchase a firearm," said Pamela Ellis, who traveled from Houston to pay her respects.

(By Staff Reporter) Mourners attended wakes in the town of Uvalde on Monday for some of the child victims gunned down by a local 18-year-old man who was then killed by police. At one funeral home — just across the street from Robb Elementary School where the shooting occurred — friends, family and strangers attended a closed-casket visitation for 10-year-old victim Amerie Jo Garza. Pictures of the young girl decorated the space. Esther Rubio, who described the

scene as "very somber," came from nearby San Antonio with her husband. "I don't know what else to say, because there's no words to describe (it)," she said.

Remembrances for another slain student, Maite Rodriguez, began just hours later. In Washington, Biden — who visited the small town about an hour's drive from the Mexico border earlier in the weekend — responded to desperate calls for weapons reform. "I've been pretty motivated all along" to act on guns,

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The first signs of global warming are now clearly visible. We urgently need to limit greenhouse gas emissions. Nothing and no-one will be spared from climate change. This warning is therefore to all people, all countries and, in particular, to the Belgian Council of Ministers who, on the weekend of March 20 and 21, will have to decide what action to take regarding essential measures linked to the Kyoto Protocol.

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US plans to test two big nuclear power systems in space by 2027

The Defense Innovation Unit (DIU) under the Department of Defense in the US has plans to test two big nuclear power systems in space by 2027

(SAI Bureau) With space access, stability, and power emerging as the next theatre of beyond Earth. The US control, countries across the world are testing new technologies to gain more and deploy nuclear power

Joe Biden says US will not send Ukraine rocket systems that can reach Russia



(SAI Bureau) Amid Russian forces' aggressive approach in eastern Ukraine, the United States President Joe Biden on Monday (May 30) said that he would not send rocket systems to Ukraine that can reach Russia. While speaking to reporters after arriving back at the White House after a weekend in Delaware, "Biden said, "We are not going to send to Ukraine rocket systems that can strike into Russia." "There's a constitution. I can't dictate this stuff. I can do the things I've done, and any executive action I can take I continue to take, but I can't outlaw a weapon, I can't change the background checks. I can't do that, and you know, my whole career I've been doing it," he added. In the east, the Russian forces have advanced closer to the centre of the eastern Ukrainian city of Severodonetsk. The city has been under bombardment for weeks. Lugansk governor Sergiy Gaiday said on Telegram: "The Russians are advancing into the middle of Severodonetsk. The fighting continues. The situation is very difficult." Importantly, Severodonetsk is the easternmost city still in

Ukrainian hands. It has been understood that capturing it would give Russia de-facto control over Lugansk, one of two eastern regions that make up the coveted Donbas.

Meanwhile, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky multiple times urged Western countries to supply advanced weapons to face Russia after it invaded Ukraine on the orders of Russian President Vladimir Putin in late February. Zelensky's advisor Mykhailo Podoliak tweeted recently: "If the West really wants Ukraine's victory, maybe it is time to give us long-range MLRS? It is hard to fight when you are attacked from a 70 km (43 miles) distance and have nothing to fight back with." Ukraine has received extensive US military aid but says it needs long-range rockets equivalent to what Moscow's forces use. Recently, the US announced another \$40 billion assistance package amid speculation it included such weapons. To counter Moscow, Kyiv has asked the US for mobile batteries for long-range rockets, the M270 MLRS and the M142 Himars. They can launch multiple rockets at the same time with a range of up to 187 miles.

systems in space by 2027. DIU, an organisation under the Department of Defence (DoD) is focused exclusively on fielding and scaling commercial technology across the US military at commercial speeds. The organisation is now working to speed up ground and flight testing for nuclear-powered prototypes: compact fusion and next-gen radioisotope concepts. The organisation has handed two Prototype Other Transaction (OT) contracts to Ultra Safe Nuclear and a second to Avalanche Energy to demonstrate the next generation of nuclear propulsion and power capability for spacecraft. These companies will test technologies that will give small spacecraft the ability to maneuver at will in the cis-lunar space and enable high-power payloads for space missions. "Advanced nuclear technologies will provide the speed, power, and responsiveness to maintain an operational advantage in space.

Nuclear tech has traditionally been government-developed and operated, but we have discovered a thriving ecosystem of commercial companies, including start-ups, innovating in space nuclear," US Air Force Major Ryan Weed, Program Manager for the Nuclear Advanced Propulsion and Power (NAPP) said in a statement.

WHAT NUCLEAR TECHNOLOGIES WILL DIU TEST IN SPACE?

The Ultra Safe Nuclear pilot will demonstrate a chargeable, encapsulated nuclear radioisotope battery (called EmberCore) for propulsion and power applications in space. It will be able to scale to 10x higher power levels, compared to plutonium systems, and provide more than 1 million kilowatt-hours (kWh) of energy in just a few kilograms of fuel. Meanwhile, Avalanche Energy has developed a device called an "Orbitron," which utilizes electrostatic fields to trap fusion

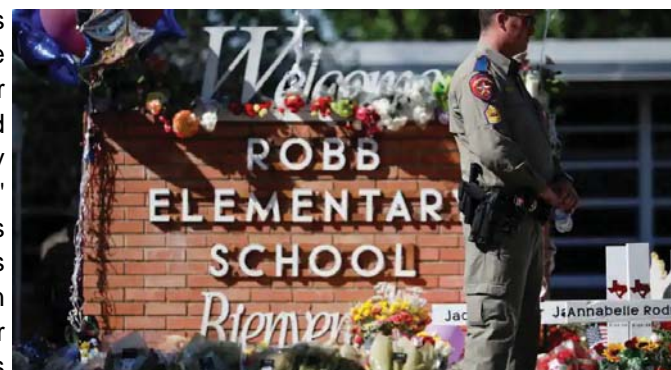
ions in conjunction with a magnetron electron confinement scheme to overcome charge density limits. The resulting fusion burn then produces the energetic particles that generate either heat or electricity, which can power a high-efficiency propulsion system. "Future missions will demand more maneuverability and electrical power to expand the capabilities of spacecraft, allowing for orbital changes, methods to control or facilitate de-orbiting, the transfer of materials between orbits, and solar shadow operations to name a few. DIU expects that its NAPP program will have a direct impact on how the U.S. employs space power," the organisation said in a statement. Apart from DIU, US' Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA) is also working on a project to design, develop and assemble a nuclear thermal rocket engine that could be ready by 2026. DARPA also aims to develop a nuclear thermal propulsion (NTP) system to be used in Earth-moon space.

Florida police arrest 10-year-old boy for alleged mass shooting threat after Texas massacre

(SAI Bureau) Daniel Issac Marquez, a student at Patriot Elementary School in Cape Coral, sent a message to his friend saying he bought four assault rifles and said "Get ready for water day," according to his arrest report. His threat was taken seriously after the nation's

Marceno told reporters.

"This student's behaviour is sickening, especially after the recent tragedy in Uvalde, Texas. Making sure our children are safe is paramount," he added. Anger has mounted over the decision by law enforcement



deadliest school shooting in a decade as federal officials announced they would review local law enforcement's slow response to the attack. Lee County Sheriff Carmine Marceno said Marquez's case is being handled by the Youth Services Criminal Investigations Division. "Right now is not the time to act like a little delinquent. It's not funny. This child made a fake threat, and now he's experiencing real consequences,"

agencies in Uvalde to allow the shooter to remain in a classroom for nearly an hour while officers waited in the hallway and children inside the room made panicked 911 calls for help. Police say the gunman, 18-year-old Salvador Ramos, entered the school on Tuesday with an AR-15 semi-automatic rifle after earlier shooting his grandmother, who survived. He shot dead 21 people including 19 students and two teachers,

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Rahul Gandhi's canards at Cambridge: The Yuvraj at it again

(Contd. from page 14)

Policy decisions

The former Congress president raised the issue of the sudden implementation of GST and emphasised that such policy decisions were not carried out by the BJP government with proper conversation. Here, Rahul Gandhi habitually failed to realise the existence of a due protocol, which in this case, is a GST Council where each decision to introduce new taxes or change existing tax brackets is taken after proper consultation with the finance ministers of all the states including those governed by Congress and other Opposition parties. He also criticised that Aadhaar, a concept pioneered by the previous UPA government, has now found supposed utility in undue governmental vigilance. It seems that Gandhi's advisors have willingly ignored

the reality of massive expansion of social welfare schemes around the country through the network of Jan Dhan, Aadhaar and Mobile (JAM).

While conceptualising an idea of great magnitude is relatively simple, executing it on a scale as large as the Indian subcontinent is fraught with immense challenges which the current government has undoubtedly dealt with in an exemplary manner. This has been reflected in successive public mandates post-2014. Therefore, it is time that the royally deluded 'Yuvraj' starts touching base with the reality if at all he intends to steer Congress into a possible winning position in the near future.

China question

Finally, Gandhi also commented on the aggressive expansionist attitude of China and how India should react to these developments. In an indirect manner, he

praised the China model which according to him is 'promising prosperity to smaller nations in Asia and Africa by investing in their economies and generating wealth'. On the contrary, he blamed the Western (and hence the Indian) model which he believes is fixated on defence cooperation without offering any alternative to the Chinese model.

Such advocacy, direct or indirect, is incredibly flawed and alarming as the current effects of Chinese dole in Sri Lanka and Pakistan show. It seemed very clear that Rahul Gandhi has a profound admiration for the Chinese model and one's mind cannot help but wander into the time when photographic evidence of his clandestine meeting with the Chinese envoy amid the Doklam standoff emerged in 2017. This is yet another indication of his complete detachment from the public mood in India that manifests itself in

successive electoral defeats for the Congress party. Did the 'Prince', in a bid to win back power, forget who his subjects are? To sum up, Rahul Gandhi's interaction at Cambridge was an underwhelming attempt at 'conversation', heavily departed from the factual, substantial and well-researched event it should have been. The jury is still out on whether his explosive notions are carefully curated to pander to a specific section of the audience or they are true as empty and worthless as they seem at face value. In either case, it is indeed dangerous to select such a representative to speak on the past, present and future of the world's largest democracy. Going forward, I urge the university to align better with its high standards and invite politicians that have a successful political track record to speak on complex issues over someone whose only claim to fame is being a 'Gandhi'.

Sweden Gate trends on internet. What is the debate and why has social media turned on Swedish people

Sweden, the European nation, found itself at the centre of a massive debate as a post on social media about Swedes 'not feeding their guests' kicked off a massive online debate. Here's what the Sweden Gate is about



The Nordic nation of Sweden is in the eye of a storm for not feeding their guests. Yes, you read that right. It was pointed out in a social media post that Swedes do not traditionally offer food to guests in some situations and that kicked off a massive debate online. The whole debate started off on Reddit when an innocuous question like, "What is the weirdest thing you had to do at someone else's house because of their culture/religion?"

One of the responses to the above question, which has since been taken down, read, "I remember going to my Swedish friend's house. And while we were playing in his room, his mom yelled that dinner was ready. And check this. He told me to WAIT in his room while they ate..."

WHAT'S THE CONTROVERSY

Many users ended up pointing out that it was somewhat offensive to not serve their guests. Some people believe that children should still be fed if they haven't eaten all day. While other users cited their own traditions as reasons to never leave a guest hungry in their own home.

There were several such responses in the thread, thus kicking off a debate over Swedish hospitality which then moved on to other topics. The whole debate is now being dubbed as #SwedenGate.

SUPPORT FOR SWEDEN

Coming to the defence of the Swedish people, many people said that Swedes don't serve food to guests, particularly to other children, so as to not mess up any meal plans they might have with their families. One user on Twitter said, "I grew up like this, and it was out of respect for the visiting child's parents who may have

planned dinner which would then get wasted. Also, sitting down to dinner as a family was an important part of the day, so you shouldn't mess with another's family's meal time."

As the debate quickly spread to other social media platforms, a Twitter user clarified, saying, "Swedes cook for the people they expect (family). Precise portions. We don't mind guests, just tell us in advance and we'll add one more. And in Sweden, it's understood, you don't eat at a friend's house unannounced. No

big deal here."

In the wake of 'Sweden Gate', an Instagram user 'LoverofGeography' created a map that allegedly highlights which European country is more likely to feed their guests.

Scandinavian countries such as Norway, Sweden, and Finland are categorised as "very unlikely to give you food". While the Mediterranean nations such as Italy, Spain, and Greece were deemed "almost always" likely to serve food to their guests.

VP Naidu arrives in Senegal on second leg of his three-nation tour

Vice President M Venkaiah Naidu on Wednesday arrived in Senegal on the second leg of his three-nation tour during which he would hold delegation-level talks with President Macky Sall, meet the President of the National Assembly Moustapha Niasse and other dignitaries. Vice President @MVenkaiahNaidu, accompanied by MoS @DrBharatippawar, MPs @SushilModi, @vijaypalbjp and @OPRavindhranath, & other delegation members, arrive to a warm welcome in Dakar, Senegal. The visit coincides with 60 years of establishment of Indi Senegal diplomatic relations," Ministry of External Affairs Spokesperson Arindam Bagchi

tweeted. Naidu arrived here from Gabon where he held wide-ranging talks with the Central African country's top leadership and business leaders and called for exploring bilateral cooperation in green energy, services, health and agriculture among other sectors. During his stay in Senegal till June 4, Naidu would hold delegation-level talks with President Sall, meet National Assembly President Niasse and other dignitaries. While Naidu's visit is the first by any Indian vice president to all three countries, it marks the first-ever high-level visit from India to Gabon and Senegal. The last leg of the tour will be the visit to Qatar from June 4 to June 7.

Govt Powering Farmers Towards Golden Agri Sector

(Contd. from page 18)

The government is also giving special promotion to the National Beekeeping and Honey Mission under the Atmanirbhar Bharat campaign. Similarly, through schemes like National Agriculture Market (e-NAM), Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana and agricultural mechanisation, the government is committed to providing maximum benefits to the farmers. Under the Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana, farmers are provided with security cover in the unfortunate event of natural calamities. To connect with more farmers, 'Meri Policy, Mere Haath' campaign was also launched. The

importance of the PM crop insurance scheme can be gauged from the fact that farmers have deposited approximately Rs 21,000 crore in premium, while they got Rs 1.15 lakh crore in claims against crop losses. The Kisan Rail Scheme is a very important concept for smooth transportation of agricultural produce. It facilitates the operation of special trains for the movement of perishable agricultural products, another great example of the government's commitment to the farmers. So far, around 2,500 trips have been made across the country on 175 routes. The Agriculture Ministry budget this year has given special emphasis on agriculture

start-ups and agri-entrepreneurship. Through its farmer friendly schemes, the Government of India will be capable of taking our agriculture sector to new heights in the future. There are many expectations and hopes in the agriculture sector. The government, under the leadership of our sensitive and skilled Prime Minister, understands this well and is moving forward in full force in that direction. At present, the government, along with the people, is celebrating 75 years of Independence or Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav all over the country. The Union Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare celebrated the 'Kisan Bhagidari,

Prathmikta Hamari' campaign with great enthusiasm from April 25 to April 30. During this campaign, all departments in the ministry, all institutions under it, including ICAR, and more than 700 Krishi Vigyan Kendras located across the country organised farmers' fairs, seminars and workshops. The events saw enthusiastic participation from central ministers, MPs and MLAs. When India completes 100 years of Independence, it can look back at the grand view of a golden agricultural sector. We are all moving towards building a self-reliant agricultural sector and a self-reliant India with this desire.

Rise of creator economy and why India needs a new skilling paradigm

(Contd. from page 14)

The changing phase of Skill India Mission

We have witnessed the efforts put in by the Indian government in the areas of skill development with the help of numerous schemes, programmes, training, and management structures. The prior focus of the Skill India Mission was on skilling those people who are still in the process of receiving and imbibing advanced technological changes.

Now, with the introduction of NEP (National Education Policy) 2020, the Indian Government is keen to address creative and artistic skilling. The NEP policy 2020 has become a conversation starter as it put the focus on creativity, innovation and 21st-century skills.

The creator economy has a bigger role to play in the Indian economy and nation-building. The rise of the creator economy is on its way and the demand for professionally skilled talent to take up new roles will increase in time.

The restructured Indian skill learning will identify the creative skills amongst youths in the field of dance, design, performing arts, filmmaking, fashion, etc.

Focusing on the creator economy

We've been ignoring abilities like dancing, drawing, singing, content production, and music for a long time. Now is the ideal moment and technological environment to concentrate on these skills.

These skills fuel the creator economy. Creative resources with economic, cultural, and social characteristics are the revolutionary force that is redefining the economy. The creator economy has the ability to promote good economic trends. Creators operate the creative economy through various digital platforms and channels including filmmaking, advertising, art, dance, fashion, design, music, research and development, gaming, and many more.

The COVID-19 pandemic's longevity has resulted in an exponential increase in creative digital content consumption and production.

With great tech, great content comes! This is not said by any relative of super-human.

With the help of social media channels, creators have unleashed their power of content creation. Apart from learning coding, computing and other hard software IT skills, hobby learning and creative arts have found their right place in the midst of economical change.

Keeping up with trends

Staying current with technology and trends can prevent skills from becoming stale and dry. The focus is on keeping up with technology allowing people to be up to date with the innovation and market demands. When we talk about market demands, it is again not limited to those who do jobs in the IT sector. The technology and trends have transcended the boundaries of the market and industries. From creators to trainers, everyone acknowledges how skills are quintessential to survive in the coming days where technology will play a vital part. Content creators who do their research every time to keep up with the upcoming trends, it will not be so hard for them to integrate their skills with the right technology at the moment.

In the 21st century where technology and the market are working closely alongside skilled people, it becomes quintessential for everyone to remain technologically advanced.

Reskilling and pushing creative economy - the next step

The World Economic Forum issued a statement addressing the skill sector in 2020, stating that the world is facing a reskilling emergency. More than 1 billion individuals must be reskilled by 2030.

The message to organisations, governments, and society was succinct and clear: they should collaborate to guarantee that people all across the world are not left behind. The internet has made it really easy for people to learn new skills in real-time. Creators are creating their spaces in the industry with the help of technologies and individual skills.

In the future years, the creator economy will grow in tandem with reskilling and upskilling. The spotlight is on influencers these days. These skilled producers began combining technologies such as AI, machine learning, IoT, and others to

create a platform for themselves.

The development of additional skills and new capabilities to move to a new role is important for an individual's growth.

The issue that arises here is, that we don't have the right resources and available options to provide holistic development across the globe. There is no uniform strategy to drive people together to go for the fusion of art, creativity, technology and skilling. Realisation of importance of holistic development Our youth have recognised the value of creative abilities. They've seen influencers, innovators, and artists who are well-known not just for their material, but also for their penchant

for combining new technology with their abilities. The next generation is eager to master new talents that will allow them to express themselves creatively. Parents, on the other hand, do not have time to make their children understand what they see. Many ed-tech platforms are based on the same old school curriculum, with the addition of technology. The solution is "Learning by Doing" When it comes to reorganising the Indian skill industry, "practical learning" is the ideal approach. As we can see from the NEP 2020 framework, the emphasis is on the practical and creative learning of many skills.

FBI TEN MOST WANTED FUGITIVE

BHADRESHKUMAR CHETANBHAI PATEL

Unlawful Flight to Avoid Prosecution - First Degree Murder, Second Degree Murder, First Degree Assault, Second Degree Assault, Dangerous Weapon with Intent to Injure



Photograph taken April 2015

DESCRIPTION

Alias: Bhadreshkumar C. Patel	Place of Birth: Kantrodi Ta Viramgam, Gujarat, India
Date(s) of Birth Used: May 15, 1990	Eyes: Brown
Hair: Brown	Weight: 165 pounds
Height: 5'9"	Occupation: Employee of donut shop
Sex: Male	
Nationality: Indian	

REWARD

The FBI is offering a reward of up to \$100,000 for information leading to the arrest of Bhadreshkumar Chetanbhai Patel.

REMARKS

Patel was last known to be in the Newark, New Jersey, area.

CAUTION

Bhadreshkumar Chetanbhai Patel is wanted for allegedly killing his wife by striking her multiple times with an object while they were both working at a donut shop in Hanover, Maryland, on April 12, 2015. A local arrest warrant was issued in the District Court of Maryland for Anne Arundel County on April 13, 2015, and Patel was charged with first degree murder, second degree murder, first degree assault, second degree assault, and dangerous weapon with intent to injure. A federal arrest warrant was issued in the United States District Court, District of Maryland, Baltimore, Maryland, on April 20, 2015, after Patel was charged with unlawful flight to avoid prosecution.

SHOULD BE CONSIDERED ARMED AND EXTREMELY DANGEROUS

If you have any information concerning this person, please contact your local FBI office or the nearest American Embassy or Consulate.

Field Office: Baltimore

Making India a digital power

In eight years, PM Modi has made the country a technology hub, expanded opportunities

(SAI Bureau) In 2014, a country tired of six decades of the Congress's politics of a dynasty, motley coalitions and corrupt governments, voted Narendra Modi to office as Prime Minister of India. He promised change and a new direction in governance. The last eight years have seen him steadily progressing towards building this New India. Before 2014, the India narrative was just about the country being a big market opportunity. This opportunity came with accepted caveats — governance dysfunction, corruption, nepotism, policy inconsistency, red tape and crony capitalism. This state of affairs was accepted as normal as far back as the 1980s when the then PM Rajiv Gandhi said that for every one rupee that leaves Delhi, only 15 paise reaches the citizens.

In pre-Modi India, a few politically connected families and groups cornered all the opportunities and capital. For instance, a Credit Suisse report, 'House of Debt', divulged that 98 per cent of the net worth of India's entire banking system was cornered by 10 influential families. Entrepreneurship and successful startups were rare exceptions. India was colloquially referred to as an elephant — big, slow-moving and unwieldy. Our revenues from tax collection remained low and our tax-GDP ratio was abysmal compared to other major developing economies. In 2014, citizens of India voted for change and gave a resounding mandate to Modi, who had worked his way up from a poor family to becoming the CM of Gujarat. In Gujarat, he had already demonstrated the contrast in his political and governance model with a focus on medium to long-term transformations rather than short-term populism with projects like the Sabarmati Riverfront development. He received another, stronger mandate in 2019 as well as in many state elections. PM Modi spent the first 3-4 years in office addressing the deep damage to the economy and institutions of governance and rebuilding the lost trust of citizens in

the government. He inherited a shattered economy. He steadily rebuilt the financial sector, investor confidence and trust in the government. He has transformed the work culture within the government, making public service a relentless crusade for change and prosperity.

There are several reforms and governance initiatives that have successfully steered India to its current strength. But his commitment to technology from very early on is a testament to PM Modi's vision and instincts about opportunities for India and Indians. The Digital India programme is one such example. Digital India was launched with three clear objectives: To transform citizens' lives, governance and democracy; expand the digital economy, create jobs and attract investments; and make India the leader in the realm of technology — a provider rather than a consumer of technology.

A report carding of Digital India's performance shows impressive progress. Every rupee released from Delhi reaches the bank accounts of beneficiaries without any delay or corruption. Thus far, the government has transferred more than Rs 17 lakh crore through DBT while saving Rs 2.2 lakh crore. Today, India has the world's fastest-growing and most vibrant startup ecosystem with close to 70,000 registered startups and around 100 unicorns, with a unicorn coming up every week. The growth trajectory of these startups was determined by their hard work, passion, ability to innovate and availability of capital — not by political connections or family background.

Thanks to the most significant reform in indirect taxation through the GST and tax compliance, India has registered its highest ever collections. Revenue increased from Rs 22 lakh crore in FY 21 to Rs 27 lakh crore in FY 22 — a whopping 22 per cent growth. This year alone, the Centre is investing over Rs 7.5 lakh crore in infrastructure building.

The Covid-19 pandemic was a litmus test for leaders across the globe. The global superpowers continue to grapple with third and fourth waves but India, under PM Modi, emerged as a resilient nation. It successfully delivered over 200-crore vaccination shots by pulling off the world's largest voluntary and technology-driven vaccination programme. India protected its small businesses and the poor — the latter continue to receive foodgrains under the world's largest distribution programme launched during the pandemic, the PM Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana (PMGKAY). And even as economies falter and stumble, PM Modi's policies have resulted in India being the fastest-growing major economy, attracting the highest ever FDIs (\$ 83.57 billion). India also set new records for goods (\$400 billion) and services (\$254 billion) exports.

Digital India played a significant role in India's response to the pandemic. It ensured that the government could reach people in remote parts of the country. Health, education and other essential services migrated swiftly to the online mode. It would not be an aberration to say that post-Covid, India emerged as a preeminent nation in the use of technology for governance.

Thanks to the relentless hard work and focus on the future of New India by PM Modi, India post-Covid has emerged as a trusted partner to the international community. The rapid digitalisation of the world along with a new focus on trust in the global supply chains for digital products and services presents tremendous opportunities for India and its youth. PM Modi has referred to the coming decade as New India's Techade. Young Indians and startups are presented with opportunities like never before as a result of the last eight years of dedicated work by the PM. It is now up to all of us to engage in a collective "sabka prayas" to realise New India's economic potential.

Why Supreme Court's acknowledgement of sex work as a profession is welcome

Presently, it is estimated that there are approximately 3 million sex workers in India, an overwhelming majority in the age group of 15-35.

There are around 15 countries in the world that have various degrees of regulations related to sex work, mostly legalising and ensuring safeguards for sex workers. Countries like New Zealand, Denmark, Germany and Greece have very progressive measures regarding sex work ensuring that the workers' health and financial situations are taken care of. Despite regulations and degrees of bans, it is imperative to identify that prostitution exists as a promising industry, especially in situations of poverty and social inequalities. In India, it is nowhere close to becoming extinct. The problem, however, is not in the work per se. It is in the way the work is perceived.

The major issues that sex workers in India face stem from the fact that despite not being illegal, the secretive nature of sex work presents an illusion of it being a crime. The police, legal system and legal personnel also contribute to sex workers being seen more as the perpetrators of crime than being at the receiving end of it. The possibilities of rape, violence and trauma that clients can cause to sex workers have been neglected. Moreover, since the work is seen as "immoral" or "dirty",

any disease caused by poor sexual hygiene and menstrual hygiene — most significantly HIV-AIDS and cervical cancer — does not receive proper medical attention. Additionally, due to a lack of ration cards or them not being recognised as valid, sex workers fail to avail any subsidised resources earmarked for the lower socio-economic sections. It is a vicious cycle of segregation, deprivation and, ultimately, marginalisation. Children born in brothels are not easily accepted into schools. Many of them do not get valid identification proofs to claim entitled state support. The progressive ladder of mobility which seems to be so easily available for everyone in our democratic society based on merit, is far from reality for the children of sex workers. Many continue working in the same profession as their mothers.

Legalising sex work, however, could change all of this. It could open up the doors to legal protection for sex workers against sexual harassment. According to the SC's directions, the police have to take the complaints of sex workers seriously. The callousness with which the police generally approach the complaints of sex workers as "normal occupational outcomes" would no longer be acceptable. Our country already has a law against harassment at the workplace recognising any

form of distress — physical, emotional, sexual — preventing a woman from doing her work as a punishable offence. With the latest directions from the SC, any sex worker who is a victim of sexual assault will be given all of the same services as any other survivor of sexual assault, including immediate medical attention. Moreover, being acknowledged as a profession could also help improve the poor condition of healthcare facilities and the resultant vulnerabilities that sex workers endure. In the near future, medical benefits and many other benefits that employed people in our country enjoy could also be a reality.

The directions of the SC constitute only the first step towards removing some of the limitations that sex workers have long faced. In a country like India, which is severely marred by poverty, destitution, hunger and inequalities, survival is the top priority. The morality/immorality of the nature of any work does not and should not count as a factor in constructing hierarchies amongst vocations. India as a democratic nation constitutionally enshrines justice, equality and liberty for every section of the society. Unfortunately, sex workers have been structurally kept outside the dimensions of "equal opportunities". It is time that such grave disregard for human rights and dignity comes to an end.

Singer KK dies 'Will remember him through his songs'- PM Modi leads nation in paying tributes

Known for his versatile singing, KK had recorded songs in Hindi, Tamil, Telugu, Kannada, Malayalam, Marathi and Bengali, among other languages. He is best known for popular Bollywood numbers such as 'Ankhon Mein Teri' from the movie Om Shanti Om, 'Zara Sa' (Jannat), 'Khuda Jaane' (Bachna Ae Hasino) and 'Tadap Tadap' (Hum Dil De Chuke Sanam).

PM Modi led the nation in paying tributes to the late singer. "Saddened by the untimely demise of noted singer Krishnakumar Kunnath popularly known as KK. His songs reflected a wide range

of emotions as struck a chord with people of all age groups. We will always remember him through his songs. Condolences to his family and fans. Om Shanti," he wrote on Twitter. Union home minister Amit Shah remembered the late singer for leaving "an indelible impression on the minds of countless music lovers" as he extended his condolences to the family.

"KK was a very talented and versatile singer. His untimely demise is very saddening and a huge loss to Indian music. With his gifted voice, he has left an indelible impression on the minds of

countless music lovers. My deepest condolences to his family and fans. Om Shanti Shanti," he said. Vice-President Venkaiah Naidu said KK's demise is a "huge loss to the world of music". "Anguished by the sudden demise of renowned singer, Shri Krishnakumar Kunnath. Known for his soulful voice and melodious singing Shri KK's demise is a huge loss to the world of music. Om Shanti!" he tweeted.

Union minister Anurag Thakur, in a tweet (loosely translated from Hindi), said: "Shri Krishnakumar Kunnath (KK) has made a different

place in the hearts of people with his excellent singing. The news of his sudden death is shocking. very sad... KK was a talented and influential singer, his passing is a great loss to the music world which is impossible to compensate." Congress leader Randeep Singh Surjewala also joined the nation in paying tributes to the singer: "The voice of versatility, of love, of yearning & longing, of melodious compositions, all in one is gone. A huge part of music as we know is gone. He is survived by his wife and children.

Joe Biden to meet Federal Reserve chairman as inflation bites US pocketbooks

Biden has been attempting to show he's maximizing efforts to curb the hottest inflation in 40 years heading into November midterms, in which Democrats' risk losing their slim congressional majorities.

The White House has increasingly sought to shift the burden for battling prices to the Fed in public comments, as polls show rising costs are voters' top concern. In an op-ed published Monday in the Wall Street Journal, Biden said the Fed has "a primary responsibility to control inflation."

Fed Independence

Modern presidents, with the exception of Donald Trump, have made a point of publicly declaring their commitment to Fed independence and kept any criticism or advice private. Trump broke with that tradition, regularly criticizing the central bank, arguing it should have been more aggressive in cutting interest rates, and at one point saying he was considering demoting Powell.

Biden sought to draw a contrast with Trump, writing in the op-ed that his predecessor "demeaned the Fed, and past presidents have sought to influence its decisions inappropriately during periods of elevated inflation. I won't do this." He renominated Powell for a second four-year term at the Fed's helm, restoring the tradition of keeping the chair that he inherited from the previous

administration in place. Powell was confirmed by the Senate earlier this month and was sworn into office last week.

Even so, White House economic adviser Brian Deese defended Tuesday's meeting, saying it was "standard practice for presidents and chairs of the Federal Reserve to meet from time to time to share views on the economy."

Biden will use his session to stress that he's giving the central bank "space to operate" independently to address the inflation crisis, Deese, who will attend the meeting along with Treasury Secretary and former Fed Chair Janet Yellen, said in an interview with Bloomberg Television Tuesday. The central bank answers to Congress, which has given it a dual mandate to pursue price stability and maximum employment, though presidents do get to select the Fed's seven governors including the chair and two vice chairs. As a result, White House officials usually try to avoid commenting on monetary policy. Trump flatly ignored past practice and regularly castigated Powell for raising interest rates, calling him "clueless" and asking if he was a "bigger enemy" than Chinese President Xi Jinping. At one point Trump even consulted advisers on whether he could fire Powell, who he'd promoted to chair. Powell stood his ground,

publicly confirming that he would not resign if asked to by the president but otherwise declining to comment on the barrage of often belittling criticism. **Top Priority**

Powell, who has been criticized for being too slow in confronting inflation, also calls it his top priority and has launched the most aggressive tightening campaigns in decades. Data released Friday showed the central bank's preferred gauge of price pressures, the personal consumption expenditures price index, rose by 6.3% last month from April 2021 -- more than three times the Fed's 2% target. Officials raised interest rates by a half-percentage point earlier this month and Powell signaled they plan to follow up with increases of the same size in June and July, even as they start shrinking their massive balance sheet. Financial markets have swung sharply as investors fret the Fed could trigger a recession in its efforts to tame prices. Officials -- who admit this will be a challenge -- are

aiming for a soft landing that cools demand by raising the cost of borrowing on everything from homes to autos, but doesn't push companies to lay off workers. The U.S. labor market is historically tight, with April's unemployment rate of 3.6% near a 50-year low and two job vacancies for every one person looking for work. That's pushing up wages and stoking inflation, alongside price rises caused by Covid-19 supply-chain tangles and the impact on energy and food costs of Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

In addition to inflation, Biden and Powell will discuss the state of the U.S. and global economy and the recent confirmation of Lael Brainard, Lisa Cook and Philip Jefferson to the Fed board, a White House official said. Biden has urged the Senate to also confirm Michael Barr as the Vice Chair for Supervision of the Federal Reserve, a key slot that oversees the banking industry.

What Pak PM Shehbaz Sharif and UK's Boris Johnson spoke about on Monday

Downing Street said the call between the leaders on Monday evening focussed on regional and international affairs, including the role of a new UK Trade Envoy to Pakistan -- Conservative member of Parliament Mark Eastwood -- appointed last year.

Johnson also thanked Pakistan for help in relocating Afghans to the UK after the Taliban takeover of Kabul. "Welcoming the United Kingdom and Pakistan's strong partnership over the past 75 years, the Prime Minister said the relationship is incarnated in the close ties between our people," a Downing Street spokesperson said in a readout of the call.

"They agreed to strengthen those ties further and boost trade and investment, with the Prime Minister highlighting the appointment of a new UK Trade Envoy to Pakistan to drive those efforts," the spokesperson said. The readout added: "On international affairs, Prime Minister Sharif recognised the UK's efforts to address the crisis in Ukraine, and the leaders agreed on the importance of ending the immense human suffering and

global economic instability caused by the invasion. "The Prime Minister thanked Pakistan for their help in relocating Afghans to the UK after the Taliban takeover of Kabul. The leaders welcomed ongoing cooperation and committed to work together to support a more peaceful and tolerant Afghanistan, noting the importance of ensuring girls can go to school." "Thank you Prime Minister. It was great speaking to you about a range of issues that define our excellent bilateral relations," Sharif tweeted. "My government is keen to further deepen ties with the UK through renewed cooperation in areas like trade, commerce, culture, investment & energy," the Pakistan prime minister wrote on Twitter. Sharif is said to have passed on his congratulations on Queen Elizabeth II's upcoming Platinum Jubilee celebrations this weekend. "The leaders looked forward to meeting in person in the near future," Downing Street said. PML-N leader Shehbaz Sharif took office in April this year after a no-confidence motion against former Pakistani Prime Minister Imran Khan.

Russian President Putin losing his eyesight, has 3 years to live

The FSB officer revealed the information about Putin's rapidly deteriorating health to the former Russian spy Boris Karpichkov, who is currently living in the UK, the Independent further reported. "We are told he is suffering from headaches and when he appears on TV he needs pieces of paper with everything written in huge letters to read what he's going to say," the Russian officer said.

"They are so big, each page can only hold a couple of sentences. His eyesight is seriously worsening," the spy said adding that Putin's limbs are "now also shaking uncontrollably". Speculations about the Russian President's health have been reported to originate with the popular Russian Telegram channel General SVR. The channel claimed that

Putin's doctors had warned him the surgery might incapacitate him for "a short time", and that during this period the president should briefly hand over the reins of power to an aide. Concerns about Putin's health also grew after former UK intelligence official Christopher Steele said Putin left meetings for medical treatment. Meanwhile, the Russian foreign minister, Sergey Lavrov, has denied rumours about Putin's rapidly deteriorating health. "I don't think that sane people can see in this person signs of some kind of illness or ailment," Lavrov told France's broadcaster TF1.

The Russia-Ukraine war has entered its fourth month now with Moscow continuing to step up its assault on Ukraine's Donbas region.

What is a unicorn, and what does it take to become one?

India has reached a landmark figure of 100 unicorns with a valuation of more than \$300 billion. What is a unicorn, and what does it take to become one?

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday (May 29) praised India's startup ecosystem as he highlighted that the country has reached a landmark figure of 100 unicorns with a valuation of more than \$300 billion. What is a unicorn, and what does it take to become one?

What is a unicorn startup?

Unicorns are privately held, venture-capital backed startups that have reached a value of \$1 billion. The valuation of unicorns is not expressly linked to their current financial performance, but largely based on their growth potential as perceived by investors and venture capitalists who have taken part in various funding rounds.

When was the term first used?

American venture capitalist Aileen Lee is credited with coining the term in 2013. It was used to emphasise the rarity of the emergence of such startups. In an article written for Techcrunch, "Welcome To The Unicorn Club: Learning from Billion-



Dollar Startups", Lee looked at US-based tech companies started since January 2003, to understand — "How likely is it for a startup to achieve a billion-dollar valuation?" She wrote: "We found 39 companies belong to what we call the 'Unicorn Club' (by our definition, US-based software companies started since 2003 and valued at over \$1 billion

by public or private market investors). That's about .07 percent of venture-backed consumer and enterprise software startups."

Are unicorns still a rarity?

From the time the term was first used, it has become more common for startups to bag the unicorn tag, but the \$1 billion valuation still gets industry attention, and is considered

an impressive achievement. According to PitchBook, a financial data and software company, a convergence of private and market funding is allowing more unicorns to emerge, faster.

What is India's unicorn record?

During his recent 'Mann Ki Baat' radio address, Prime Minister Modi said that a record 44 unicorns were established in India last year during the pandemic. "Not only that, 14 more unicorns were formed anew in three-four months this year. This means that even in this phase of the global pandemic, our startups have been creating wealth and value," he said.

According to Invest India, the government's National Investment Promotion and Facilitation Agency, "The year 2021, 2020, and 2019 saw the birth of the maximum number of Indian unicorns with 44, 11, and 7 unicorns coming each year, respectively." It adds that between 2015 and 2021, the country's startup ecosystem has seen a nine-time increase in the number of investors, and a seven-time increase in the total funding of startups.

"We are gradually transitioning from the age of unicorns to the age of decacorns. A decacorn is a company that has attained a valuation of more than USD10 billion. As of May 2022, 47 companies world over have achieved the decacorn status. India has four startups namely, Flipkart, BYJU's, Nykaa and Swiggy, added in the decacorn cohort," says Invest India on its website.

Belarus soon to hold military exercises near Ukraine border

Belarus' state news agency BelTA reported on Monday (May 30) that the country will soon conduct mobilisation exercise in Gomel region. This region borders Ukraine which is currently being invaded by Russia. Belarus and Russia are allies. Gomel region borders Russia as well.

On June 22-July 1, planned exercises with military commissariats - military administrative agencies - and armed forces will be conducted, BelTA reported, citing Andrey Krivosov, military commissar of the Gomel region. "Events of this kind are traditionally held to increase the combat and mobilization readiness of military commissariats, and improve military knowledge and practical skills of those liable for military service," BelTA quoted Krivosov as saying.

Krivosov said that between June 28 and July 16, military training will take place with those liable for military service for territorial defence formations.

A close ally of Russia, Belarus said in March that its armed forces were not taking part in what Moscow calls its "special operation" in Ukraine, but it did serve as a launchpad for Russia to send thousands of troops across the border on Feb. 24.

On May 26, Belarus leader Alexander Lukashenko ordered the creation of a new military command for the south of country

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China says it is India's largest trading partner, countering recent figures

The disparity in trade figures published by China and India is a result of different statistical measurement scales, China said

China on Tuesday said it remains India's largest trading partner, countering latest figures published by New Delhi, which said India did more trade with the US than with any other country last year. The Chinese foreign ministry said it is ready to take measures to advance normal trade with India.

India's commerce ministry recently published data that showed that the US had surpassed China to become India's top trading partner in 2021-22, reflecting strengthening economic ties between the two democracies. The Indian data showed that in 2021-22, bilateral trade between the US and India stood at \$119.42 billion as against \$80.51 billion in 2020-21.

The Chinese foreign ministry pointed out that at \$125.66 billion it had done more trade with India during the same period.

When asked to comment on the development, given China has been India's largest trading partner for several years, the Chinese foreign ministry said the disparity could be because of difference in calculating methods. "According to the statistics of Chinese competent authorities, bilateral trade volume between China and India stood at \$125.66 billion in

2021. On that basis, China remains India's largest trading partner, and the total trade volume topped \$100 billion for the first time (last year)," Zhao Lijian, Chinese foreign ministry spokesperson said at the regular ministry briefing on Tuesday.

"The disparity in trade figures published by China and India is a result of different statistical measurement scales," Zhao said.

Two way trade between India and China in 2021 stood at \$125.66 billion, up 43.3% from 2020 when bilateral trade was worth \$87.6 billion, data from China's General Administration of Customs (GAC) showed in January.

Trade deficit between the two countries – at \$69 billion – remained much in favour of China and a worry for India in 2021. Sino-India trade had gone up despite the worst chill in bilateral ties in decades because of the dragging border tension in eastern Ladakh.

One reason why Sino-India trade increased in 2021 was because Chinese companies saw an increase in demand from India for medical equipment in the first half of the year following a devastating second wave of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Zhao said China does not object to the development of normal trade relations between India and the US, and "is not that interested in the changes of the ranking in trade volume".

Zhao said China cares about "whether the Indian side has the will and takes real actions to create a fair, transparent, sustainable and sound environment for bilateral trade and investment, further expand mutually-beneficial cooperation between the two sides and deliver tangible benefits to the two countries and two peoples". Asked about the widening trade deficit with India, Zhao said that "China never seeks a trade surplus. We stand ready to take measures to advance normal trade with India."

Zhao was also asked whether the chill in ties was impacting trade between New Delhi and Beijing.

"At present, the border situation is stable in general. The two sides have been maintaining close communication through diplomatic and military channels," he said.

"China always believes that the boundary question doesn't represent the whole of China-India relations and we should put it in an appropriate

position in bilateral relations and under effective control and management," he said.

"We hope India will work with China to continuously enhance mutual trust, strengthen practical cooperation, and ensure that the bilateral relations will move forward along the right track, deliver more benefits to the two peoples and make greater contributions to the region and beyond." Responding to a separate question on New Delhi's decision to probe local units of Chinese companies, ZTE Corp and Vivo Mobile for alleged financial irregularities, Zhao said China always asks its companies to follow law and regulations of the country they are operating in.

"The Chinese government is closely following the situation. The Chinese government always asks Chinese companies to abide by laws and regulations when doing business overseas," Zhao said. "In the meantime, we firmly support Chinese companies in safeguarding their legal rights and interests. The Indian side should act in accordance with laws and regulations and provide a fair, just and non-discriminatory business environment for Chinese companies operating in India."

Study that tracked 25 vultures highlights their habitat threat

The vultures in the study, each of which were tagged with solar-powered GPS devices included 13 Indian vultures including two critically endangered red-headed vultures, 8 Himalayan Griffons and two Eurasian Griffons. A joint telemetry project conducted by the Panna Tiger Reserve (PTR) and Wild Institute of India (WII) on 25 vultures has found that Indian and red-headed vultures stayed in the Greater Panna landscape in areas that will find themselves submerged under the proposed Ken Betwa river linking project.

The vultures in the study, each of which were tagged with solar-powered GPS devices over the past two years included 13 Indian vultures including two critically endangered red-headed vultures, 8 Himalayan griffons and two Eurasian Griffons. "While Himalayan Griffons and Eurasian Griffons travelled to different parts including Pakistan and China, the Indian vultures, especially the red-headed vultures have caused us concern as they mostly stayed in the Greater Panna landscape, a part of which is going to be submerged in Ken-Betwa Link Project," said a scientist associated with the study. According to the proposed river linking project, 57.21 square kilometres of the Panna Tiger reserve is set to be submerged. Admitting that the loss of

habitat was a possibility, PTR field director UK Sharma, however, said, "The red-headed vulture lives on trees and moved very little. But it may also be true that the birds adopt new habitats and thus, after submergence, they will choose other areas as their habitat. Sharma said the results of the telemetry project began emerging in the first week of April.

"The Himalayan Griffons started their journey in the last month of March from the Panna Tiger Reserve. On April 27, we found that four vultures travelled around 2,250 km distance to reach the Tibetan region of China, Uyghur regions of China and the Karakoram range in Nepal. Later in 12 days, they travelled around 1,700 km to enter Kazakhstan. Their entire journey reveals that they follow green landscape which is close to water bodies and travelled around 100 km a day." The Eurasian Griffons started their journey from Panna Tiger Reserve in the first week of April and they moved towards the west. "We received their location in Pakistan almost 20 days after they started their journey. One vulture was found to be in the Lal Suhanra National Park of Bhawalpur in the third week of April. It returned within two weeks. It then went to Pakistan again in the second week of May.

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How To Grow Plants On The Moon - What A New Study Reveals

Growing Plants On The Moon: The lunar regolith is very different from terrestrial soils. For a start, it doesn't contain organic matter (worms, bacteria, decaying plant matter) that is characteristic of soil on Earth. Neither does it have an inherent water content



London: What do you need to make your garden grow? As well as plenty of sunshine alternating with gentle showers of rain – and busy bees and butterflies to pollinate the plants – you need good, rich soil to provide essential minerals. But imagine you had no rich soil, or showers of rain, or bees and butterflies. And the sunshine was either too harsh and direct or absent – causing freezing temperatures.

Could plants grow in such an environment – and, if so, which ones? This is the question that colonists on the Moon (and Mars) would have to tackle if (or when) human exploration of our planetary neighbours goes ahead. Now a new study, published in *Communications Biology*, has started to provide answers.

The researchers behind the study cultivated the fast-growing plant *Arabidopsis thaliana* in samples of lunar regolith (soil) brought back from three different places on the Moon by the Apollo astronauts.

Dry and barren soil

This is not the first time that attempts have been made to grow plants in lunar regolith though, but it is the first to demonstrate why they don't thrive. The lunar regolith is very different from terrestrial soils. For a start, it doesn't contain organic matter (worms, bacteria, decaying plant matter) that is characteristic of soil on Earth. Neither does it have an inherent water content.

But it is composed of the same minerals as terrestrial soils, so assuming that the lack of water, sunlight and air is ameliorated by cultivating plants inside a lunar habitat, then the regolith could have the potential to grow plants.

The research showed that this is indeed the case. Seeds of *A. thaliana*

germinated at the same rate in Apollo material as they did in the terrestrial soil. But while the plants in the terrestrial soil went on to develop root stocks and put out leaves, the Apollo seedlings were stunted and had poor root growth.

The main thrust of the research was to examine plants at the genetic level. This allowed the scientists to recognise which specific environmental factors evoked the strongest genetic responses to stress. They found that most of the stress reaction in all the Apollo seedlings came from salts, metal and oxygen that is highly reactive (the last two of which are not common in terrestrial soil) in the lunar samples. The three Apollo samples were affected to different extents, with the Apollo 11 samples being the slowest to grow. Given that the chemical and mineralogical composition of the three Apollo soils were fairly similar to each other, and to the terrestrial sample, the researchers suspected that nutrients weren't the only force at play.

The terrestrial soil, called JSC-1A, was not a regular soil. It was a mixture of minerals prepared specifically to simulate the lunar surface, and contained no organic matter.

The starting material was basalt, just as in lunar regolith. The terrestrial version also contained natural volcanic glass as an analogue for the "glassy agglutinates" – small mineral fragments mixed with melted glass – that are abundant in lunar regolith. The scientists recognised the agglutinates as one of the potential reasons for lack of growth by the seedlings in the Apollo soil compared to the terrestrial soil, and also for the difference in growth patterns between the three lunar samples. Agglutinates

are a common feature of the lunar surface. Ironically, they are formed by a process referred to as "lunar gardening". This is the way that the regolith changes, through bombardment of the Moon's surface by cosmic radiation, solar wind and minuscule meteorites, also known as space weathering.

Because there is no atmosphere to slow down the tiny meteorites hitting the surface, they impact at high velocity, causing melting and then quenching (rapid cooling) at the impact site.

Gradually, small aggregates of minerals build up, held together by glass. They also contain tiny particles of iron metal (nanophase iron) formed by the space weathering process.

It is this iron that is the biggest difference between the glassy agglutinates in the Apollo samples and the natural volcanic glass in the terrestrial sample. This was also the most probable cause of the metal-associated stress recognised in the plant's genetic profiles.

So the presence of agglutinates in the lunar substrates caused the

Apollo seedlings to struggle compared with the seedlings grown in JSC-1A, particularly the Apollo-11 ones. The abundance of agglutinates in a lunar regolith sample depends on the length of time that the material has been exposed on the surface, which is referred to as the "maturity" of a lunar soil.

Very mature soils have been on the surface for a long time. They are found in places where regolith has not been disturbed by more recent impact events that created craters, whereas immature soils (from below the surface) occur around fresh craters and on steep crater slopes.

The three Apollo samples had different maturities, with the Apollo 11 material being the most mature. It contained the most nanophase iron and exhibited the highest metal-associated stress markers in its genetic profile.

The importance of young soil

The study concludes that the more mature regolith was a less effective substrate for growing seedlings than the less mature soil. This is

an important conclusion, because it demonstrates that plants could be grown in lunar habitats using the regolith as a resource. But that the location of the habitat should be guided by the maturity of the soil.

And a last thought: it struck me that the findings could also apply to some of the impoverished regions of our world. I don't want to rehearse the old argument of "Why spend all this money on space research when it could be better spent on schools and hospitals?". That would be the subject of a different article.

But are there technology developments that arise from this research that could be applicable on Earth? Could what has been learned about stress-related genetic changes be used to develop more drought-resistant crops? Or plants that could tolerate higher levels of metals?

It would be a great achievement if making plants grow on the Moon was instrumental in helping gardens to grow greener on Earth. The Conversation



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Name change

**Vikramjeet, resident of 5 Stafford lane
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Mango prices likely to go up as weather plays spoilsport

Mango prices are also expected to soar this summer season due to low production, mango growers have claimed



Nadu, Uttar Pradesh, Karnataka, Bihar, Gujarat and West Bengal, but there is a special demand for Lucknowi Dussehri in the market. Lucknow, Pratapgarh, Hardoi, Saharanpur, Barabanki and Sitapur are known as the mango belt of Uttar Pradesh.

MANGO PRICES TO GO UP?

The prices of the pulpy fruit are also expected to soar this summer season due to low production, mango growers have claimed. "The production of mangoes in Uttar Pradesh ranged from 35 to 45 lakh metric tonnes every year, but this time production of 10-12 lakh metric tonnes is expected. Therefore, mango will be sold in the market at a very high price and people fond of mango will have to spend more money," Mango Growers Association of India President

Insram Ali told PTI.

HIGH TEMPERATURE

Unusually high temperatures during the flowering season in February and March this year have hit the mango crop, Ali said. A maximum temperature of 30 to 35 degrees Celsius is required during the flowering season but this year the temperature soared to 40 degrees Celsius in March itself, damaging the mango flowers, he added. Malihabad of Lucknow is the major centre of mango production and its Dussehri mango is famous all over the world for its flavour. Mohammad Naseem, a mango grower from Malihabad, said that he had never seen such a bad mango crop in his entire life. "Thousands of mango growers in Uttar Pradesh have suffered a setback due to the

destruction of the mango crop," he said.

WEATHER DENTS HOPES

According to meteorologists, the month of March was the hottest in the last 122 years while the month of April was the hottest in the last 50 years. Insram Ali said that the mangoes of UP are exported to many countries, including Saudi Arabia, the US, the UK and Germany. However, this year the state will not be able to meet the domestic demand itself. In a double whammy, mango exporters who could not send the fruit to overseas markets in the last two years due to the Covid-19-related restrictions would suffer losses this year also. "Exporters were hopeful that this time they will make good profits but the crop failure has dented their hopes," Ali added.

(SAI Bureau) Summer is synonymous with mangoes and there's probably no sweeter or magical reason to wait for a season which brings with it scorching heat and unbearable weather conditions. However, there is bad news for people who are fond of Lucknowi Dussehri and other varieties of mangoes. The production of the king of the fruits has been hit by around 70 per cent in the mango belt of Uttar Pradesh due to adverse weather conditions this year, as per a PTI report. India is the largest producer of mango in the world and accounts for around 50 per cent of the global mango output. Mangoes are grown in many states, including Andhra Pradesh, Tamil

ITR filing: Top 10 income tax saving investment options

Looking to save income tax but don't know which financial instruments to invest in? Don't worry, we have got you covered! Here's a list of investment options that can help you save taxes this year

(SAI Bureau) The income tax return (ITR) is an important exercise for taxpayers. While paying ITR, one always looks for avenues to save income taxes. There are a number of saving options where you can park your hard-earned money and get decent returns and, at the same time, you will get income tax benefits. Looking to save income tax but don't know which financial instruments to invest in? Don't worry, we have got you covered! Here's a list of investment options that can help you save taxes this year:

1. PPF

A government-backed investment plan, the Public Provident Fund (PPF), is primarily used for building a retirement fund. With PPF, you can claim a tax rebate of Rs 1.5 Lakh under Section 80C. PPF comes with a lock-in period of 15 years. However, you can draw out money from the PPF account or continue the scheme for an additional 5 years.

2. NPS

The National Pension System (NPS) is also a government-backed investment option that helps you build up a retirement fund. NPS can be availed by both private and public sector employees. The NPS scheme comes with a choice to invest in two different types of accounts - Tier 1 and Tier 2.

Tier 1 comes under Section 80CCD (1) and 80CCD(1B), whereas Tier 2 is a voluntary scheme. The minimum amount

that can be invested in Tier 1 is Rs 500, while the figure is Rs 1,000 for Tier 2.

3. LIFE INSURANCE

One of the primary ways to save tax is to invest in a Life Insurance scheme. With Life Insurance, you can claim tax rebate of upto Rs 1.5 Lakh under Section 80C. If you are looking to invest in Unit Linked Insurance Plan, the tax rebate limit increases to Rs 2.5 Lakh.

4. ELSS

The Equity Linked Saving Scheme (ELSS) comes with mutual funds that have a lock-in period of 3 years. ELSS helps you actively invest in the stock market and save taxes under Section 80C.

5. TAX SAVING FIXED DEPOSITS

With Tax saving Fixed Deposits, you can claim tax rebate of upto Rs 1.5 Lakh under Section 80C. The lock-in period for this scheme is 5 years with premature withdrawal not being an option.

6. SENIOR CITIZENS SAVINGS SCHEME

The Senior Citizen Savings Scheme was introduced as a regular income stream for people above the age of 60 years. The scheme comes with an interest rate of 7.4 per cent with premature withdrawal also being an option.

7. NATIONAL SAVING CERTIFICATE

The National Saving Certificate scheme is backed by the government of India. It has a tenure of 5 years. At the end of the investment tenure, all the money can be claimed by the investor and the entire



maturity amount gets re-invested into the scheme. You can claim a tax rebate of upto Rs 1.5 Lakh under Section 80C in the scheme.

8. SUKANYA SAMRIDHI YOJANA

The Sukanya Samridhi Yojana has been created to aid the girl child financially. With this scheme, you can claim a tax rebate of upto Rs 1.5 Lakh under Section 80C.

9. HEALTH INSURANCE

With the Health Insurance Premium, you can claim a tax rebate of upto Rs 25,000 for self, spouse, and your children under Section 80D. The limit goes up to Rs 50,000 if the premium is paid for senior

citizens.

10. HOME LOAN

Under the Home Loan scheme, you can claim tax rebate up to Rs 1.5 Lakh on the principal repayment under Section 80C. If the home loan is taken jointly by two people, both of them can apply for tax rebate. Additionally, you can claim a tax rebate of upto Rs 2 Lakh on interest under Section 24.

For first time home buyers, there's an additional tax rebate of Rs 50,000 available. However, the loan amount should be less than Rs 35 Lakh and the value of property less than Rs 50 Lakh.

Vegetable, Cooking Oil, Milk Price Hike: Will Inflation Go Up Further in Next Quarter?



(SAI Bureau) As input costs for companies are rising amid global uncertainties and high international commodity rates, prices of various products in India are also getting a hit, including vegetables, packed food items, milk and edible oils, thus stoking retail inflation that is hovering at over eight-year high levels. Economists expect inflation to rise further in the next quarter before easing. Indonesia recently lifted its export ban on palm oil, which has given a major respite to India. The ban

impact edible prices in India. However, now, Malaysia is banning the exports of chicken that will majorly affect Singapore (which sources a third of its supply from Malaysia), Thailand, Brunei, Japan and Hong Kong. The ban is the latest in a series of the Malaysian government's measures aimed at easing domestic prices as nations around the world battle rising food costs, partly driven by the war in Ukraine crimping food supplies. In April, the retail inflation, based on the Consumer Price Index

(CPI), soared to an eight-year high of 7.79 per cent, compared with 4.23 per cent in April 2021 and 6.97 per cent in March 2022. Inflation in the food basket rose to 8.38 per cent in April, from 7.68 per cent in the preceding month and 1.96 per cent in the year-ago month. Last week, tomatoes in Delhi were selling at Rs 60-80 per kg, while their prices were reaching up to Rs 100 in some parts of the country. The price of lemon was hovering at Rs 200-Rs 250 per kg in the national capital. Cauliflower was at Rs 120, potato at Rs 40, onion also at Rs 35-40, brinjal at up to 80 per kg, capsicum at Rs 100-Rs 130, spinach at Rs 60 per kg, and carrot at Rs 80. Milk prices have also increased recently, with Amul, Parag and Verka raising per-litre prices by up to Rs 2. Deloitte India Economist Rumki Majumdar said, "We have been highlighting the cost-push and demand-pull inflation dynamics and the risk of inflation spiralling up for a long time. India has been experiencing inflation for a while

now. Prices remaining elevated for too long can feed into inflation expectations further pushing up prices."

Majumdar added that price worries are the top concerns for policymakers and the recent measures suggest there is no time to lose. Fiscal and monetary measures are necessary to tame inflation but it may take a while for inflation to ease.

"We expect prices to be high for at least the next two quarters and ease in the latter half of FY2022-23. By then, investors would have factored in uncertainties around the geopolitical crisis, and energy prices will likely settle. Supply chain disruptions may continue but ease significantly over the next two quarters as China gradually lifts restrictions. Besides, demand too may slow down and the base effect will kick in. The only wild card would be the monsoon; a below-normal monsoon can pressure food prices, which will feed into the

overall inflation," Majumdar said. She also said there is more inflation coming and "we expect inflation to peak at around 9 per cent in the next quarter and then gradually ease. Prices will likely fall below 6 per cent in Q4 of the FY. This is assuming that the monsoon is normal and government interventions start showing effect". India Ratings and Research in its report said retail inflation after averaging 4.1 per cent during FY16-FY19 had crossed the RBI's upper tolerance band of 6 per cent for the first time in December 2019. Immediately after the economy fell in the grip of the first covid wave, resulting in the countrywide lockdown starting late March 2020 until May 2020. "However, despite the collapse of demand, the monthly retail inflation mostly remained in excess of 6 per cent till November 2020 because of supply-side disruption." The agency said it expects the retail inflation to increase till September 2022 and start declining gradually thereafter.

WEF 2022: What happened at World Economic Forum in Davos

The five-day congregation of the rich and powerful from across the world ended with many hoping for a better world where no one has to choose between free trade and freedom, or between protecting values or profits

(SAI Bureau) Global leaders came together at the World Economic Forum Annual Meeting 2022 in Switzerland's Davos to pledge to fight for freedom and values against a backdrop of deepening global frictions and fractures and a once-in-a-century pandemic. The five-day congregation of the rich and powerful from across the world ended on Thursday with many hoping for a better world where no one has to choose between free trade and freedom, or between protecting values or profits.

RUSSIA-UKRAINE WAR

The summit saw Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy saying "the words 'turning point' have become more than just a rhetorical figure of speech", and urging that "values must matter".

The war in Ukraine appeared to have deepened the resolve for commitment to action, while failure of global food, energy and health systems saw calls being made for new partnerships and collaborations.

CLIMATE

US Climate Envoy John Kerry unveiled a powerful USD 8.5 trillion market signal to commercialise zero-carbon technology as more than 50 companies joined the First Mover's Coalition which

aims to decarbonise heavy industry and transport. India also joined the coalition as a steering board member.

China's Special Envoy for Climate Change, Xie Zhenhua, announced his country's commitment to plant and conserve 70 billion trees by 2030, while significant commitments were made by Indian companies towards clean energy and water conservation.

'MARSHALL PLAN' FOR UKRAINE

The World Economic Forum (WEF) called for a 'Marshall Plan' for the reconstruction of Ukraine.

"In Davos, our solidarity is foremost with the people suffering from the atrocities of this war," said Klaus Schwab, the Forum's Founder and Executive Chairman.

The 'Special Dialogue on Ukraine' session brought together 70 global CEOs alongside the Prime Minister of Ukraine (who joined virtually), with the President of the European Commission, the Foreign Minister of Ukraine and the First Deputy Prime Minister of Ukraine at Davos in person, alongside other dignitaries.

CEOs offered concrete ways of how their companies can support the Ukraine government and its private sector in the



reconstruction of the country now, rather than waiting for the war to end.

The WEF offered its support in this endeavour, advancing discussions on new partnerships and market-driven solutions to enable a scaled up response to the humanitarian situation in Ukraine and other global crises.

GLOBAL FOOD CRISIS, CLIMATE CRISIS

The war in Ukraine has exacerbated food insecurity worldwide due to precarious supply chains, increased fertiliser prices and blocked grain exports, leaders said at the World Economic Forum Annual Meeting here on Tuesday and called for

resolving the global food crisis alongside the climate crisis.

BUSINESS

Renewable energy firm ReNew Power has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Karnataka government in the presence of Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai at the World Economic Forum meet in Davos, to invest Rs 50,000 crore in the state over the next seven years.

The Karnataka government also signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with Lulu International Group for an investment of Rs 2,000 crore in the presence of CM Bommai at the World Economic Forum (WEF).

Many companies have come forward to invest in Telangana with Lulu Group announcing to invest Rs 500 crore while Spain's Chemo Pharma announced to invest Rs 100 crore in their Hyderabad site expansion over next two years.

CRYPTOCURRENCY

IMF chief Kristalina Georgieva has cautioned against confusing crypto products with currencies and said anything not backed by a sovereign guarantee can be an asset class but not a currency, as she asserted that Bitcoin cannot be 'money' just because it has got 'coin' in its name.

5 Lifestyle hacks that could help lose weight, boost metabolism



faster.

Steps to follow to boost your metabolism to speed up weight loss:

1. HIGH-INTENSITY WORKOUT:

High-intensity exercise raises your metabolism and fat-burning for hours, not just for the time you exercise. Try a more rigorous gym class or incorporate short bursts of jogging into your normal stroll to reap the benefits. Other workouts you might attempt include HIIT, running, swimming, and cycling. A practice that alternates periods of high-intensity and low-intensity exercise can also help you improve your metabolism.

2. HYDRATE:

Water is required for proper

metabolism. According to one study, adding 1.5 litres of water to daily consumption lowered average weight and BMI in a sample of overweight women aged 18-23. Your metabolism may stall if you are even marginally dehydrated.

3. SMART SNACKING:

Maintaining metabolic balance is easier when you eat at regular intervals. A little meal or snack every 3 to 4 hours keeps your metabolism revved up, allowing you to burn more calories throughout the day. People who snack on a daily basis eat less during meals. Otherwise, a person's body may burn calories more slowly and store more fat cells if they consume a lot at once and then go for long periods

without eating.

4. DRINK GREEN TEA:

Though no studies have definitively established it, some evidence suggests that green tea extract aids in the promotion of metabolism and fat melting. It is unquestionably a better option than sugary juices, and it also contributes to your daily water intake.

5. WELL-RESTED BODY:

Sleep deprivation has been linked to a significant rise in the risk of obesity. The deleterious effects of sleep loss on metabolism may play a role in this. Sleep deprivation has also been associated with elevated blood sugar levels and insulin resistance, raising the risk of type 2 diabetes.

(SAI Bureau) The rate at which a person's body burns calories for energy is referred to as their metabolism. This is determined by a number of factors, including your age, gender, heredity, body fat, muscle mass, and degree of

activity. You will burn more calories both at rest and during activities if your metabolism is high. Here are some lifestyle adjustments that will rev up your fat-burning furnace and help you reach your weight-loss goals

Monkeypox won't turn into pandemic, but many unknown: WHO

While previous cases of monkeypox in central and western Africa have been relatively contained, it was not clear if people could spread monkeypox without symptoms or if the disease might be airborne

(SAI Bureau) The World Health Organization's top monkeypox expert said she doesn't expect the hundreds of cases reported to date to turn into another pandemic, but acknowledged there are still many unknowns about the disease, including how exactly it's spreading and whether the suspension of mass smallpox immunization decades ago may somehow be speeding its transmission. In a public session on Monday, WHO's Dr. Rosamund Lewis said it was critical to emphasize that the vast majority of cases being seen in dozens of countries globally are in gay, bisexual or men who have sex with men, so that scientists can further study the issue and for populations at risk to take precautions.

"It's very important to describe this because it appears to be an increase in a mode of transmission that may have been under-recognized in the past," said Lewis, WHO's technical lead on monkeypox. Still, she warned that anyone is at potential risk of the disease, regardless of their sexual orientation. Other experts have pointed out that



it may be accidental that the disease was first picked up in gay and bisexual men, saying it could quickly spill over into other groups if it is not curbed. Lewis said it's unknown whether monkeypox is being transmitted by sex or just the close contact between people engaging in sexual activity and described the threat to the general population as "low."

"It is not yet known whether this virus is exploiting a new mode of transmission, but what is clear is that it continues to exploit its well-known mode of

transmission, which is close, physical contact," Lewis said. Monkeypox is known to spread when there is close physical contact with an infected person or their clothing or bedsheets. She also warned that among the current cases, there is a higher proportion of people with fewer lesions that are more concentrated in the genital region and sometimes nearly impossible to see.

"You may have these lesions for two to four weeks (and) they may not be visible to others, but you may still be infectious," she

said. Last week, a top adviser to WHO said the outbreak in Europe, U.S., Israel, Australia and beyond was likely linked to sex at two recent raves in Spain and Belgium. That marks a significant departure from the disease's typical pattern of spread in central and western Africa, where people are mainly infected by animals like wild rodents and primates, and epidemics haven't spilled across borders. Most monkeypox patients experience only fever, body aches, chills and fatigue. People with more serious illness

may develop a rash and lesions on the face and hands that can spread to other parts of the body. No deaths have been reported in the current outbreak. WHO's Lewis also said that while previous cases of monkeypox in central and western Africa have been relatively contained, it was not clear if people could spread monkeypox without symptoms or if the disease might be airborne, like measles or COVID-19. Monkeypox is related to smallpox, but has milder symptoms. After smallpox was declared eradicated in 1980, countries suspended their mass immunization programs, a move that some experts believe may be helping monkeypox spread, since there is now little widespread immunity to related diseases; smallpox vaccines are also protective against monkeypox. Lewis said it would be "unfortunate" if monkeypox were able to "exploit the immunity gap" left by smallpox 40 years ago, saying that there was still a window of opportunity to close down the outbreak so that monkeypox would not become entrenched in new regions.

Can eating Litchis Kill ?

Here's what you should know to avoid getting sick

(News Agencies) Litchis are safe. But you're in trouble if you eat unripened litchis (the small, green ones) on an empty stomach.

Unripe litchi fruit contains the toxins hypoglycin A and methylenecyclopropyl-glycine (MCPG) that may cause vomiting if had excessively. It may cause fever and seizures serious enough to need hospitalisation in severely malnourished children.

Eating unripe lychees on an empty stomach has been linked with outbreaks of high fever followed by seizures and death

in young children from poor socio-economic backgrounds in rural Muzaffarpur in Bihar and other litchi-growing regions in India during the harvest season in May and June. In 2014, fever and convulsions killed 122 and hospitalised 390 children within three weeks (between May 26 and July 17) in Muzaffarpur. All the sick children had eaten litchis and gone to bed without eating an evening meal and developed high fever, seizures and convulsions followed by coma before daybreak.

On admission to hospital,

close to two in three (62%) had low blood glucose levels of less than 70 mg/dL, and traces of the toxins hypoglycin A and methylenecyclopropyl-glycine (MCPG) found in unripened litchis in urine specimens.

Hypoglycin A is a naturally-occurring amino acid found in the unripened litchi that causes severe vomiting (Jamaican vomiting sickness), while MCPG is a poisonous compound found in litchi seeds that cause a sudden drop in blood sugar, vomiting, altered mental status with lethargy, unconsciousness,



coma and death.

Giving children sugar to normalize their rapidly plummeting blood glucose levels helps them recover from illness,

recommends a study in The Lancet Global Health.

The take away? Eat ripened lychees but avoid the fruit when you're fasting.

Ways to use your favourite facial oil



(News Agencies) Girls who were once hesitant and apprehensive about applying oil to their face, have not just included the product to their skincare regime but feel its worth a try. To keep a nice balance of moisture and get

flawless skin naturally, facial oils work wonders, but you need to know how.

Neetu Prasher, Head of Training, Avon India, throws light on not just many qualities your little bottle of face oil comes packed

with, but five ways to use this product in your day-to-day life and look resplendent in no time.

* Brightening primer: Winter can make your skin look dull and lustreless, hence a primer is a must. It's imperative to choose the right base for an instant glow. A facial oil can be your new primer this season. Pump two-three drops of this product rich in vitamins A, C and E to your face as a primer and help your makeup stay in place all day.

* Massage mask: For more supple and radiant skin, it's best to massage your skin twice a month. Homemade face mask mixtures or facial sheet masks,

adding face oils only multiplies the effect. Add two drops to the mixture for a smoother, hydrated and firm skin. You can also smear the oil prior to using a sheet mask.

* Treatment: To help reduce fine lines and wrinkles or to even skin tone and reduce hyper-pigmentation, add a drop or two of your face oil to your moisturising regime. After cleansing and toning, nicely moisturise your skin and see magical results in a few days.

* Foundation or BB Cream: Add two drops of face oil to your foundation or BB cream for a smoother coverage. Oil helps re-

store skin and mixed with foundation, the antioxidants make the complexion brighter.

* Booster: Our skin absorbs all the essential nutrients when we are asleep is not a myth. Hence, teaming two-three drops of face oil with a night cream can twofold the results. Apply the mixture evenly on your face, dab a little under your eyes and see how well it works on those unwanted facial lines and wrinkles.

Adding a facial oil to your regular regimen of cleanser, toner, day cream and night cream enhances the results and boosts nourishment for your skin.

Why smoking synthetic weed may not be safe?

(News Agencies) : Smoking synthetic marijuana sold under names such as "K2" and "Spice", may not be a safe substitute to natural marijuana, but may lead to dangerous side-effects, including seizures, psychosis, dependence and death, researchers have warned.

The synthetic cannabinoids (SCBs) are man-made mind-altering chemicals that are either sprayed on dried, shredded plant material so they can be smoked (herbal incense) or sold as liquids to be vaporised and inhaled in e-cigarettes and other devices (liquid incense) and thus cause adverse health effects.

"The public sees anything with the marijuana label as potentially safe, but these synthetic compounds are not marijuana... you never know what they are and

they are not safe," said Paul L. Prather, a pharmacologist at the University of Arkansas.

The primary psychoactive compound in marijuana, delta-9-tetrahydrocannabinol (THC), activates two receptors CB1 — found in high abundance in the brain and central nervous system — and CB2, found primarily in the immune system.

In the study, published in the journal Trends in Pharmacological Sciences, the team found that although they activate the CB1 and CB2 receptors, the SCB compounds and other cannabinoids are otherwise chemically distinct from marijuana and often from each other.

As a result, they may be activating other cellular receptors in addition to CB1 and that these receptors could be responsible for some of the adverse health effects seen in the users.

The SCB compounds are

more potent than delta-9-THC, as "these are highly efficacious drugs. They tend to activate the CB1 receptor to a greater degree than we can ever get to with THC from marijuana," added William E. Fantegrossi, a behavioural pharmacologist at the University of Arkansas.

Another risk is that these are often sold as safe alternatives to marijuana that, because of their chemical structures, will not be discovered through standard drug screenings. Thus, users who purchase these drugs over the internet or elsewhere simply do not know what they are getting. "Not only does the amount of the active pharmacological agent change with different batches of drugs, made by different labs, but the active compound itself can change," Fantegrossi said.



Scientists detect new type of extremely reactive substance in the Earth's atmosphere



climate. Trioxides are compounds with three oxygen atoms attached to each other. As per the researchers from the University of Copenhagen, the trioxides are formed under atmospheric conditions. Trioxides are even more reactive than peroxides, which have two oxygen atoms attached. Scientists had predicted that trioxides were probably in the atmosphere as well. However, it was never proven until now. Professor Henrik Grum Kjærgaard of the University of Copenhagen in Denmark said,

"These compounds have always been around – we just didn't know about them." "But the fact that we now have evidence that the compounds are formed and live for a certain amount of time means that it is possible to study their effect ... and respond if they turn out to be dangerous," he said. "This is what we have now accomplished. The type of compounds we discovered are unique in their structure. And, because they are extremely oxidising, they most likely bring a host of effects that we have yet to uncover," he added. The study

published in the journal *Science* reported that direct observation of "ROOOH formation from several atmospherically relevant RO₂ radicals". The study added that kinetic analysis confirmed rapid RO₂ + OH reactions forming ROOOH, with rate coefficients close to the collision limit. As per the study, the atmospheric lifetime of ROOOH is estimated to be minutes to hours. "Hydrotrioxides represent a previously omitted substance class in the atmosphere, the impact of which needs to be examined," the study added.

(SAI Bureau) A new type of first time. Scientists have stated extremely reactive substance, that the substance can have organic hydrotrioxides effects that are still unknown. It (ROOOH), has been detected in could pose threat to human the Earth's atmosphere for the health, or even impact the global

New study claims Earth's iron-rich core may be rusting



(SAI Bureau) A new study has said that the Earth's core, which is composed of molten nickel and iron, is rusting. The study was published in the journal *Advancing Earth and Space Science*.

Rusting happens when iron is exposed to moist air or oxygenated water, leading to a chemical reaction that leaves a reddish residue and making strong iron weak. Since the core is situated 1,800 miles (2,900km) below the Earth's surface, it was assumed that the high-pressure environment and paucity of water-bearing minerals have protected the molten outer core from rust.

But recent experiments suggested that rust can form at high pressures and could plausibly be formed at locations where water-rich slabs of Earth's crust have sunk to the core-mantle boundary. In the experiment, the scientists created high-pressure conditions that would exist in Earth's core. Then they introduced moisture to iron in the form of a hydroxyl-bearing mineral. At the pressure of nearly a million atmospheres, scientists found that the

chemical reaction produced iron peroxide, bearing the same structure as pyrite. This indicates that rust formation could happen in the Earth's core as well.

"This rust could shed light on the deep-water cycle in the lower mantle and the enigmatic origins of ultralow-velocity zones (ULVZs)—small, thin regions atop Earth's fluid core that slow seismic waves significantly. It could also help answer questions about the Great Oxidation Event (GOE), which marked the beginning of Earth's oxygen-rich atmosphere some 2.5 billion to 2.3 billion years ago," a report in the *Advancing Earth and Space Science* journal said. But scientists are yet to identify the cause of the oxygenation event that may have triggered rusting. They will now have to prove their hypothesis after analysing fresh plumes of lava erupting from the volcanoes. "If the pieces of the puzzle all fall into place, then rusting of the core may, indeed, be a massive internal oxygen generator on Earth— and the next great atmospheric oxygenation event could be on its way," the report said.

Soviet probe launched to Venus in 1972 could soon crash on Earth

A Soviet probe launched to Venus in 1972 failed to go out of Earth's orbit. In the last 50 years, its orbit has fallen by over 7000 km, putting it on a course to crash on Earth

(SAI Bureau) Fifty years after it was launched to Venus by the Soviets, a probe could crash on Earth after failing to get out of the planet's orbit. The probe dubbed Kosmos 482, renamed after it failed post-launch, was a sister spacecraft of the Venera 8 mission launched to Earth's closest neighbour. According to a report by Marco Langbroek, a space situational awareness consultant, in *The Space Review*, the object 1972-023E, the Kosmos 482 Descent Craft that would have landed the mission on Venus, is in its final trajectory around Earth. Experts believe that the object set to crash is not just the lander but could include a substantially larger part of the original Venera bus.

Langbroek has modelled that the object could re-enter some three to four years from now around 2025/2026 and its re-entry into the Earth's atmosphere could be a surprise, since it has been designed to pass through Venus' thick atmosphere intact.

WHAT WAS THE VENUS MISSION?

Kosmos 482 was launched in 1972 from the Baikonur Cosmodrome in Kazakhstan just four days after Venera 8 took off on a mission to Venus. Astronomers speculate the mission was of a similar design as Venera 8. However, it failed after being stuck in a highly elliptical orbit around the Earth. The failure of the mission was attributed to the upper

stage of the mission that shut down prematurely due to a wrongly set timer. The upper stage was programmed to propel the mission out of Earth's orbit, setting it on a course to Venus. Following the launch, the probe separated into two, 1972-023A, the main bus, and 1972-023E, the Descent Craft that would have landed the mission on Venus.

"The separation was not necessarily the result of an explosion or otherwise violent breakup. The ostensible main bus, 1972-023A, re-entered on May 5, 1981, nine years after launch. The other object, the descent craft, 1972-023E, is the only object from this launch still in orbit today, and the main object of this study," Marco Langbroek writes in the report.

WHAT'S HAPPENING NOW?

In the last fifty years, the altitude of the Descent Craft, first catalogued in 1972, has come down by more than 7,700 kilometres. The astronomer said that as of May 1, 2022, the object is in a 198 x 1957-kilometer orbit.

Astronomers using the General Mission Analysis Tool (GMAT), an open-source NASA tool, have conducted nine simulations between early 2025 and late 2026. "Employing an uncertainty window of 20% of the simulation span, a realistic re-entry window runs from mid-2024 to mid-2027," Langbroek said.

This 390 million-year-old fish-like creature is revealed to be earliest ancestors of humans

(SAI Bureau) A 390 million-year-old fish-like creature with four limbs that was discovered in Scotland in the 1890s has been revealed to be the first ancestor of all four-limbed animals, including humans. This ancient creature was unearthed at a prehistoric graveyard in Caithness. A new research study has said that the creature, called *Palaeospondylus gunni*, could be the 'missing link' in the evolution of vertebrates. Notably, the researchers found an abundance of these fish-like creature from the Scotland prehistoric graveyard. Even though it was discovered over 130 years back, the scientists have been finding it difficult to place it on the evolutionary tree, as the *Palaeospondylus* was only about two inches (5 cm) long, making cranial reconstructions difficult.



But now, researchers from RIKEN Cluster for Pioneering Research in Japan uncovered evidence that the creature had a jaw and four limbs, reports DailyMail.com. The research put this creature at the

bottom of the family tree for vertebrates, including humans.

This ancient creature had a flat head, an eel-like body and lived on the bed of a deep freshwater loch, feeding on

leaves and other organic debris, says the study published in the journal *Nature*. And at that time, Scotland's landmass was placed south of the equator, where central Africa is today. It was arid

and "semi-hot", according to scientists. *Palaeospondylus* was the first vertebrate to make it their way out of water. Eventually, its fins grew into limbs and gave rise to mammals, birds and reptiles.

"*Palaeospondylus gunni*, from the Middle Devonian period, is one of the most enigmatic fossil vertebrates," lead author Professor Tatsuya Hirasawa, of Tokyo University in Japan, was quoted as saying by the *The Scotsman* newspaper. "Its phylogenetic position has remained unclear since its discovery in Scotland more than 130 years ago. Whether these features were evolutionarily lost or whether normal development froze half-way in fossils might never be known." "Nevertheless, this evolution might have facilitated the development of new features like limbs."

Fly on Mars with Ingenuity helicopter: Watch longest, fastest flight on Red Planet

The Ingenuity helicopter is preparing for its record 29th flight on Mars as it soars into the skies to scan the Martian terrain aiding in search of ancient microbial life



(SAI Bureau) The Ingenuity helicopter, which has now proved its capabilities beyond expectations on an alien planet, is preparing for its 29th flight on Mars. Before it soars into the skies above the Red Planet's surface again, the quadcopter has beamed a video of its longest, fastest flight on the alien world.

On April 8, the Ingenuity helicopter, then on its record-breaking 25th flight, had covered a record distance of 704 meters while flying at a speed of 5.5 meters per second.

"For our record-breaking flight, Ingenuity's downward-looking navigation camera provided us with a breathtaking sense of what it would feel like gliding 33 feet

above the surface of Mars at 12 miles per hour," Ingenuity team lead, Teddy Tzanetos, said in a statement. The black and white video was captured by the navigation camera on the

quadcopter, which begins after a second into the flight. After reaching an altitude of 10 meters, the helicopter heads southwest, accelerating to its maximum speed in less than three seconds. The spacecraft first flies over a group of sand ripples and then, about halfway through the video, several rock fields. The video of the 161.3-second flight was speeded up approximately five times, reducing it to less than 35 seconds. Nasa said that the navigation camera has been programmed to deactivate whenever the rotorcraft is within a meter of the surface. This helps ensure any dust kicked up

during takeoff and landing won't interfere with the navigation system as it tracks features on the ground. The latest video comes after mission controllers at JPL lost communication with Ingenuity after the helicopter entered a low-power state. Now that the rotorcraft is back in contact and getting adequate energy from its solar array to charge its six lithium-ion batteries, the team is looking forward to its next flight on Mars.

Completing over a year on the Martian surface, the quadcopter's mission has been extended. Nasa extended the

operation of the Ingenuity helicopter on Mars till September, where it will support the Perseverance rover, trundling on the surface, in its science operations trying to look for evidence of ancient microbial life in the inhospitable terrain.

Ingenuity will help determine which of two dry river channels Perseverance should take when it's time to climb to the top of the delta. data provided by the helicopter will help the Perseverance team assess potential science targets and help in imaging geologic features too far afield (or outside of the rover's traversable zone).

Archaeologists discover ancient Mayan city on construction site

Remains of marine life were also discovered in the area, suggesting the city's inhabitants complemented their agricultural-based diets by fishing along the nearby coast

(SAI Bureau) Archaeologists have uncovered the ruins of an ancient Mayan city filled with palaces, pyramids and plazas on a construction site of what will become an industrial park near Merida, on Mexico's Yucatan Peninsula. The site, called Xiol, has features of the Mayan Puuc style of architecture, archaeologists

said, which is common in the southern Yucatan Peninsula but rare near Merida. "We think more than 4,000 people lived around here," said Carlos Peraza, one of the archaeologists who led the excavation of the city, estimated to have been occupied from 600-900 A.D. "There were people from different social classes... priests,

scribes, who lived in these great palaces, and there were also the common people who lived in small buildings," Peraza said. Researchers also located nearby burial grounds of adults and children, who were interred with obsidian and flint tools, offerings and other belongings. Remains of marine life were also discovered

in the area, suggesting the city's inhabitants complemented their agricultural-based diets by fishing along the nearby coast. Xiol was discovered after construction began on an industrial park. That will still be built, though the archaeological remains will be preserved, according to the owners of the land.

Neetu Kapoor on Viral Bhayani's comment about Alia Bhatt-Ranbir Kapoor wedding: 'Will host special reception for him'

Neetu Kapoor on Monday spoke about Viral Bhayani's comment on Alia Bhatt and Ranbir Kapoor's wedding reception. Here's what she has said



(SAI Bureau) Actor Neetu Kapoor has reacted to paparazzo Viral Bhayani's remark that he was upset that actors Alia Bhatt and Ranbir Kapoor did not hold a reception after their wedding. In a new

interview, Neetu said that she doesn't like it when a person is upset, and added that she will 'host a special reception only for him'. Alia and Ranbir Kapoor married at the latter's Bandra house, Vastu, on April 14. After

their wedding, Alia and Ranbir came out of the wedding venue and posed for the photographers gathered outside their Mumbai home. The wedding festivities were attended by the couple's family and close friends. The pre-wedding festivities included a special pooja and a mehendi ceremony. In an interview with India Today, Neetu said, "Oh, I want to have a social reception for Viral. I don't like it when anyone is upset. I will host a special reception only for him and have him on stage also, but I don't want him to be unhappy. This was just a quick wedding and hence we couldn't do much. If it was left to me, I

would have done it with grandeur and called everyone." Earlier in May, speaking with Hindustan Times, Viral said in an interview, "I agree that they want to respect their elders, but they could have done the same at a five-star hotel. We would have got good pictures and everything would have been disciplined. Your net worth is ₹830 crores, what are you trying to prove by doing this." Ranbir and Alia Bhatt reportedly fell in love with each other on the sets of their upcoming film Brahmastra. They dated for several years before marrying each other in April. The couple opted for a wedding in Mumbai, and soon

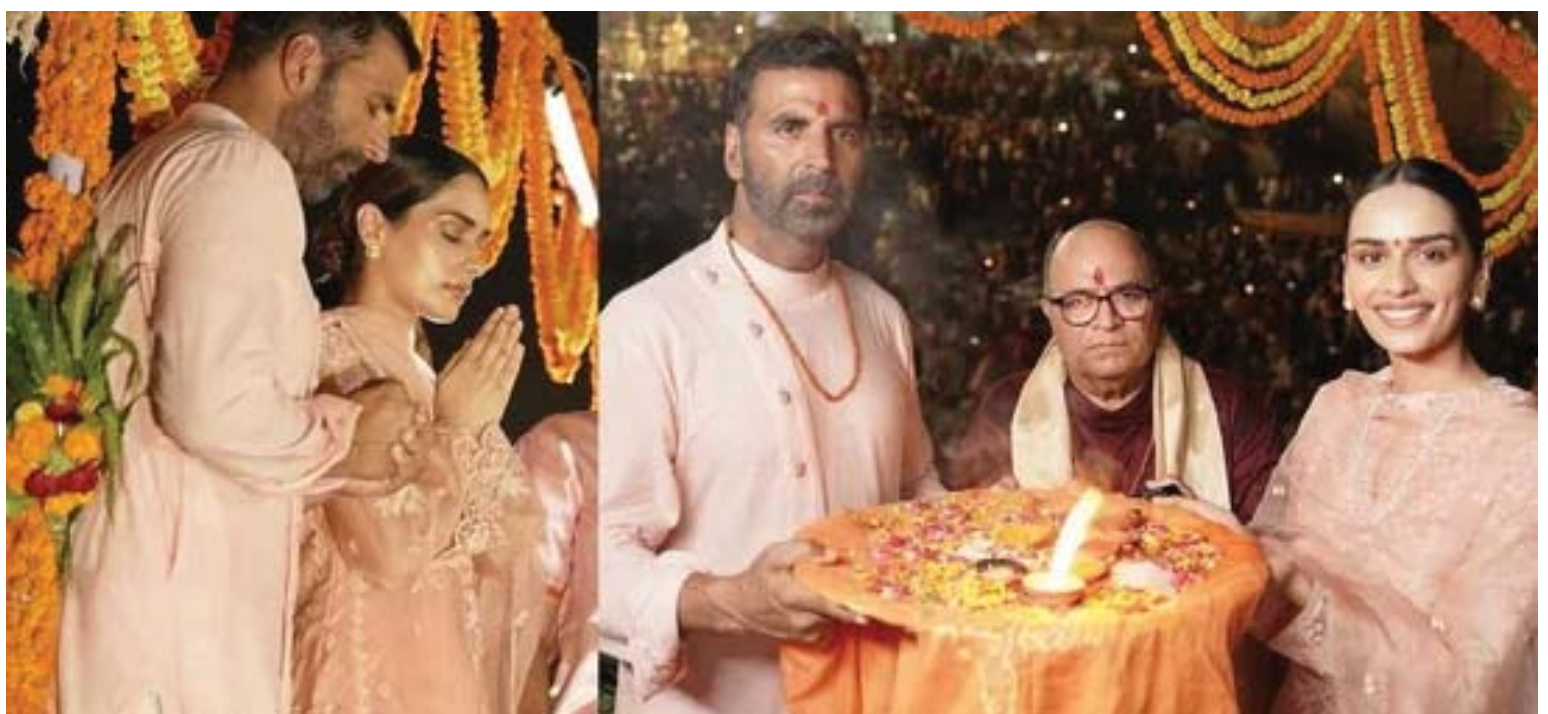
after were seen resuming work. Meanwhile, Alia was recently seen in RRR and Gangubai Kathiawadi. She also has numerous projects in the pipeline, including Ayan Mukerji's Brahmastra with Ranbir, Darlings in which she co-stars with Vijay Varma, and Karan Johar's Rocky Aur Rani Ki Prem Kahani, in which she co-stars with Ranveer Singh. She will star in the Netflix spy picture Heart of Stone starring Gal Gadot and Jamie Dornan. Alia also has Farhan Akhtar's Jee Le Zaraa with Priyanka Chopra and Katrina Kaif in the pipeline.

Akshay Kumar jumps into river Ganga to take a dip soon after performing puja with Manushi Chhillar

Ahead of the release of Samrat Prithviraj, Akshay Kumar and Manushi Chhillar performed a puja on the banks of river Ganga in Varanasi. They shared pictures from the puja on Instagram

(SAI Bureau) Varanasi has turned out to be the go-to destination for filmmakers and actors to promote their film or seek the blessings of Lord Shiva ahead of a film release. Days after Kartik Aaryan returned from Varanasi post the release of his film Bhool Bhulaiyaa 2, Akshay Kumar was spotted performing a pooja on the banks of river Ganga. The actor is currently promoting his film Samrat Prithviraj and was accompanied by co-star and former Miss World Manushi Chhillar in Varanasi

Taking to Instagram, Akshay Kumar shared a picture of himself wearing a pink kurta and holding a prayer plate in his hands with diyas and flowers in it. Akshay had a red tika on his forehead as well as he performed a puja on the banks of river Ganga. Manushi also shared pictures from the puja as she joined him in a pink



salwar-kurta. In one of her pictures, Manushi is seen praying, folding her hands, with her eyes closed. A huge crowd of people can be seen in the background in boats as well as on the ghats. In another picture, the Samrat Prithviraj actors held the prayer plate together with a priest

helping them with offering their prayers. Akshay also surprised everyone when he took a dip in the river in his kurta-pyjama. He simply joined his hands over his head and jumped into the river. Samrat Prithviraj is all set to hit theatres on June 3. Helmed by Chandraprakash Dwivedi,

the film is based on the life of legendary warrior Prithviraj Chauhan and his love for Princess Sanyogita. The film also stars Sonu Sood, Sanjay Dutt, Manav Vij, Ashutosh Rana and Sakshi Tanwar. The movie marks Manushi Chhillar's debut in Bollywood.

The film was earlier titled Prithviraj but has now been changed to Samrat Prithviraj. The new title was announced by Yash Raj Films on Friday following multiple discussions with the Shree Rajput Karni Sena that had objected to the earlier name on grounds that it was disrespectful.

Kartik Aaryan Rubbishes Report of Fee Hike Post Bhool Bhulaiyaa 2 Success: 'Promotion Huya Hai, Increment Nahi'



(SAI Bureau) Kartik Aaryan is in After delivering a hit with a very good phase in his career. Dhamaka, the actor appeared in

Anees Bazmee's horror comedy, Bhool Bhulaiyaa 2. The film was an instant hit, and managed to collect a whopping Rs. 100 crores in just 9 days. Post this phenomenal success, reports had been doing the rounds that the actor has hiked his fee. However, Kartik has rubbished such rumours, in his own signature style.

Taking to Twitter, the actor directly commented on the tweet that had the link to the news article reporting that he has had a fee hike. Adding some humour, he tweeted, "Promotion hua hai

life mein/ Increment nahi ??/ Baselessans lauded Kartik for quashing such rumors. One fan tweeted, "People makes false allegations, spread rumours.. I know you never react to them and they take your silence for granted. Finally you point this out. Log juth bhi itne conviction se bolte h ki sabko sach lagne lagta h.. Love you K.. You're doing great." Another tweet read, "Agar increment hua bhi h to isme galat kya h.... You did a fantastic job you deserve it..." The report had mentioned that Kartik Aaryan charged somewhere between

Rs.15-20 crore per movie. Post the success of Bhool Bhulaiyaa 2 at the box office, the actor had hiked his fee to Rs. 35-40 crore per movie. Kartik Aaryan, before Bhool Bhulaiyaa 2, was seen in Dhamaka, where he teamed up with Ram Madhvani and played the role of a journalist. The actor recently wrapped up the shoot of Shehzada, for which he would be reuniting with Kriti Sanon. The film is the remake of Allu Arjun starrer Ala Vaikunthapurramuloo. The actor also has Captain India, where he will be seen as a pilot, and Freddy in his kitty.

Nushratt Bharuccha performs Ghoomar with 6000 women, breaks world record

Nushratt Bharuccha, along with her Janhit Mein Jaari co-star Anud Singh, performed Ghoomar with 6000 women

(SAI Bureau) Nushratt Bharuccha, who will be next seen in Janhit Mein Jaari, broke a world record during the promotions of the film in Jaipur. The actor, along with her co-star Anud Singh, performed Ghoomar with 6000 women, creating a record for the maximum number of people doing the traditional dance form together. In pictures and videos shared by a paparazzo account, Nushratt and Anud were seen posing with the woman dressed in traditional clothes for the Ghoomar performance, and dancing with them. Anud also shared videos and pictures from the event on his Instagram account. Janhit Mein Jaari stars Nushratt as a young girl from Madhya Pradesh who sells condoms for a living despite societal resistance and decides to teach her family, in-laws, and society at large an important lesson. The film also stars Pavail Gulati, Annu Kapoor, and Paritosh Tripathi. It is scheduled to release in theatres on June 10. Nushratt had previously

taken to social media to talk about how she was getting trolled for endorsing condoms in the film. In a video shared on her Instagram account earlier this month, Nushratt showed a number of hateful comments she had received after she shared two posters from the film. She then said, "Bass yehi soch toh badalni hai. Koi baat nahi, aap ungli uthao aur mein aawaz uthaungi (This is the type of thinking I want to change. But no worries, you point fingers at me and I will raise my voice). She had earlier shared a poster of the film and written, "Sharam toh badtameezi se aani chahiye, suraksha rakhne mein nahi (One should be ashamed of their impolite behaviour than being safe). Yeh suchna hain #JanhitMeinJaari." After Janhit Mein Jaari, Nushratt has two films with Akshay Kumar--- Ram Setu and Selfiee. They wrapped up shooting for Ram Setu a few months ago, and are now working on Selfiee which also stars Emraan Hashmi and Diana Penty.



Sonali Bendre reacts to rumours of acting in Jr NTR's next project, calls it fake news: 'This is sansanikhez'

Sonali Bendre clarified that she will not feature in Koratala Siva's next project alongside Jr NTR. Here's what she has said

(SAI Bureau) Actor Sonali Bendre on Monday quashed rumours that she will be a part of Koratala Siva's next project featuring Jr NTR. In a new interview, Sonali called such reports 'fake news' or news that 'hasn't reached her' yet. She also spoke about her OTT debut series, The Broken News. Earlier in May, Jr NTR announced his new project with director Koratala Siva. On Instagram, Jr NTR unveiled the teaser of the film, which is written and directed by Koratala. Presented by Nandamuri Kalyanram, produced by Mikkilineni Sudhakar and Hari Krishna K under the banners Yuvasudha Arts and NTR Arts

respectively, the yet-to-be-titled film is scheduled to hit the floors soon.

In an interview with Koimoi, when asked about the upcoming film, Sonali said, "Who, me? No, I don't know, please tell me about it. I have no clue what you are talking

about. No listen, genuinely I am not. No I have no clue about this, so this is a fake news. Or if it is a news, it hasn't reached me yet. This is sansanikhez (thriller)." Speaking about her past projects and her OTT debut, Sonali said, "So now



the thing is when I did fiction it was matter of reading it once or twice and I remembered the lines. So now this came back to me and now suddenly post the treatment there is this brain fog and I can't remember it and that part intimidated me as I

how am I going to remember my lines. Till the time I realized how did you deal with your illness, how did you deal with the Covid situation. So I said if I could adapt to those things, I can adapt here." Sonali posted a trailer of her show on

Instagram, on May 27. In the web series, she plays the role of journalist Amina Qureshi of Awaaz Bharati. Actors Jaideep Ahlawat, Shriya Pilgaonkar, Indraneil Sengupta, Taaruk Raina, Aakash Khurana and Kiran Kumar are also a part of the show. The show follows the story of two rival Mumbai-based news channels - Awaaz Bharati, an independent, ethical news channel, and Josh 24/7 News, which offers sensationalist and invasive journalism. The Broken News, helmed by Vinay Waikul, will be out on Zee5. The original show Press was created and written by writer Mike Bartlett.

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