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Signatures Don't Lie: How Gandhis Find Themselves Vulnerable in National Herald Case



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UK Prime Minister Race: Rishi Sunak Wins Fourth Round Leadership Contest Vote

The former chancellor received 118 votes in the fourth round of voting by his party colleagues, as Kemi Badenoch became the latest candidate to be out of the running



(SAI Bureau) London: Rishi Sunak topped another round of voting on Tuesday to edge even closer to his place as one of two candidates who will go head-to-head to be elected the new Conservative Party leader and British Prime Minister, as Kemi Badenoch became the latest candidate to be out

of the running. The former chancellor received 118 votes in the fourth round of voting by his party colleagues, just shy of the 120-mark or one-third of Conservative Party MPs needed to confirm his place as one of the final contenders in the race to replace Boris Johnson. The 42-year-old leader increased his tally from Monday's 115, while Trade Minister Penny Mordaunt got 92 votes and Foreign Secretary Liz Truss 86 votes, leaving the race to clinch second place still open. Though Mordaunt holds on to her position with 10 more votes than Monday, Truss in third place has picked up the most votes since her last tally of 71.

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Weddings in War

Ukraine Couples Send 'Defiant Message' by Getting Married Amid Bombshells



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Partha Chatterjee SSC Scam:

'BANK of Mamata Banerjee, where STOLEN...', Congress MP ATTACKS Bengal CM



(SAI Bureau) Bank of Mamata, where stolen goods are kept'. Congress MP Adhir Chowdhury made such explosive comments after recovering the money from Arpita Mukherjee's Belgharia flat. He Claimed, 'The day the first money was recovered, we said it was the tip of the iceberg.

(Contd. on page 31)

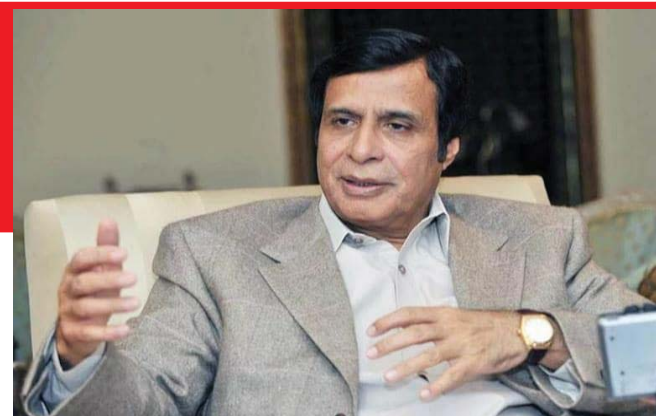
Parvez Elahi sworn in as Pak Punjab's new CM amid high political drama

Chaudhry Parvez Elahi took oath as the chief minister of Pakistan's Punjab on Wednesday

(SAI Bureau) Chaudhry Parvez Elahi took oath as the chief minister of Pakistan's Punjab on Wednesday, hours after the Supreme Court dealt a big blow to Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif-led coalition by

striking down the deputy speaker's ruling and named the PML-Q leader as the new executive head of the country's most crucial political province.

(Contd. on page 30)



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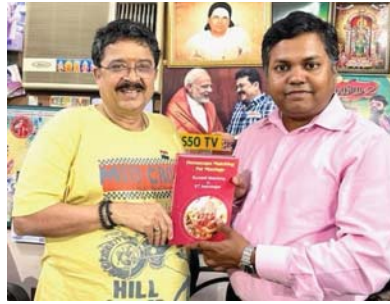
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California based Software Engineer releases Astrology Book in Chennai

(SAI Bureau) Former Mylapore MLA and veteran stage and movie actor S Ve Shekher released the first copy of the book "Horoscope Matching for Marriage: KT Astro Kundali Matching" written by California-based Kathir Subbiah, aka KT Astrologer. He is a writer, author, Vedic astrologer, trader, and computer programmer based in California. He graduated with a master's degree in Software Systems from BITS, Pilani. He currently works as a Software Developer at Microsoft Corporation. He learned Vedic astrology thoroughly for over two decades by conducting research, creating case studies, going over analytics, analyzing patterns and real-life events. His moment of fame came

in November 2016 after predicting Donald Trump's victory in the US Presidential election. He predicted the outcome a year in advance in December 2015. He also predicted the March 9, 2020 crash with that exact date a month in advance on February 7, 2020. He has since appeared in Vanakkam Tamizha live morning talk show on Sun TV Tamil. He has been writing monthly predictions based on gochar aspects since 2012. They are all available on his website in six languages: English, Hindi, Tamil, Telugu, Kannada and Malayalam



on his website <https://www.ktastro.com>. He has been writing monthly predictions in a Marathi magazine, Grahasanket from 2016. The book is a must for all those who are seeking lifetime happiness in matrimony. The book delves into critical pointers of what can lead to a marriage made in heaven. KT Astrologer highlights planetary combinations to be mindful of when Vedic charts of two individuals are to be matched. The book "Horoscope Matching for Marriage: Kundali Matching by KT Astrologer" was

launched May 28 at Fremont Hindu Temple, Fremont, California. A rare gem on Vedic Astrology, this book is intended to teach the basics of astrology. It focuses on how to match kundali and what to expect from your marital life and relationships. The salient points of the book are importance of doing lagna and mahadasha compatibility, the basics and illustrious history of Vedic astrology and the important dosha and yoga - Manglik Dosha, Nadi Dosha, Rajju Dosha, Sarpa Dosha, Sayana Dosha, Pitru Dosha, Putra Dosha, Parivarthana Yoga, Dharma Karmathipathi Yoga, Gaja Kesari Yoga, Viparita Raja Yoga, Neecha etc.

Believe it or not: This Indian man made a plane during lockdown and flew family to Europe



(SAI Bureau) Everyone loves to built a four-seater aircraft for travel, right? But have you family vacations. London-based thought about making your own Ashok Aliseril Thamarakshan, a aeroplane to fulfil your native of Alappuzha in the aspirations? Ashok Aliseril Southern Indian State of Kerala, Thamarakshan, a native of the has successfully constructed a Southern Indian State of Kerala, four-seater aeroplane in a project

that took close to 18 months to complete.

Now, Thamarakshan and his wife fly around the UK and Europe in their home-built aircraft, along with their two daughters. They have travelled to a number of nations aboard their single-engine Sling TSi, which Thamarakshan has dubbed "G-Diya" in honour of his younger daughter Diya.

The son of MLA A V Thamarakshan, Ashok Aliseril Thamarakshan, relocated to the UK in 2006 to pursue his master's degree after earning

his BTech from Palakkad Engineering College.

The plan was to have a private plane crash while Covid-19 was under lockdown. The family spent Rs 14 million and 1500 hours in 18 months to finish their project, according to a story in The Sun.

In his conversation with The Sun, Ashok discussed his experience and added, "It's much more exciting than getting a new gadget. We started saving money during the first shutdown because we had always wanted our own plane. Since we had

been saving a lot of money in the beginning, we decided to try it out."

After receiving my pilot's licence in 2018, I initially used to charter modest two-seater aircraft for excursions, he said, adding that as his family increased, two-seater aircraft became obsolete. Since four-seater planes are uncommon and difficult to find, Thamarakshan came up with the idea of building one himself after realising he would need one if he wanted to take his family with him on his trips.

Amarnath Yatra in Long Island, NY

Monday August 1st, 2022, At Asamai Hindu Temple, Hicksville, NY

(SAI Bureau) Asamai Hindu Temple located at 80 Barclay Ave. Hicksville, NY is please to invite you on their 17th Annual Sawan ke vrat celebration on Monday August 1st, 2022 at 6pm to 8pm with Shiv puja, abhishekam on ice shivling followed by Shiv Sthotams, Tandavs, Bhajan, Arti and langar. You will experience like Amarnath Ice Shivling with lights show. The shiv puja will start sharp at 6pm. Pujan Thalies will be available at the Mandir. Please reserve your name with Pandit Gokhul/Madan/Mani jee at 516- 433-4388.

ASA MAI HINDU TEMPLE
invites you & your family to a
AMARNATH YATRA
Aug 1, 2022 6-8pm
Abhishekam on Ice Shivling
Saawan Ka Mahina
Saawan Ka Mahina Monday's
July 18, 25 Aug 1, 8 2022
6pm-8pm
Puja Thaali will be available
Guru Purnima July 13 Wednesday 6-8pm
To Participate in Shiv Puja contact Pundit Ji
Asa Mai Hindu Temple & Community Center
80E Barclay Street, Hicksville, NY
516 433 4388
Followed by Arti & Prasad
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Indian-Origin US Man Gets 4 Years In Jail For \$2 Milion Fraud Covid Scheme

Guaravjit 'Raj' Singh engaged in a scheme to cheat and personally benefit by fraudulently inducing 10 victims to send him over USD 2 million to obtain personal protective equipment (PPE) and then stealing the money and not providing the PPE to the victims as promised

(SAI Bureau) A 27-year-old Indian-origin man has been sentenced to nearly four years in prison for orchestrating a USD 2 million scheme that cheated victims by making false promises to them in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic. Guaravjit 'Raj' Singh of Montgomery, New Jersey, previously pleaded guilty before US District Court Judge Peter Sheridan to an information charging him with one count of wire fraud. The judge imposed the 46-month sentence on Wednesday in Trenton

federal court, US Attorney Philip Sellinger said on Thursday. According to documents filed in the case and statements made in court, from May 2020, in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, Mr Singh engaged in a scheme to cheat and personally benefit by fraudulently inducing 10 victims to send him over USD 2 million to obtain personal

protective equipment (PPE) and then stealing the money and not providing the PPE to the victims as promised. Mr Singh



induced victims to enter into an agreement pursuant to which he would be paid approximately USD 7.1 million for approximately 1.5 million medical gowns, which ultimately were to be sourced to the city of New York amid the COVID-19 pandemic. The victims wired Mr Singh USD 712,500, representing a 10 per cent initial deposit for the medical gowns.

Several Indian-Origin Persons Charged In Insider Trading Cases In US

The SEC alleges that these persons traded ahead of two corporate acquisition announcements by Lumentum and generated more than USD 5.2 million in illicit profits



share of the proceeds.

The SEC's enforcement actions were filed in federal district court in Manhattan, and in each case the US Attorney's Office for the Southern District of New York on Monday announced parallel criminal charges.

"If everyday investors think that the market is rigged at their expense in favour of insiders who abuse their positions, they are not going to invest their hard earned money in the markets," said Gurbir S Grewal, Director of the SEC's Enforcement Division.

"But as today's actions show, we stand ready to leverage all of our expertise and tools to root out misconduct and to hold bad actors accountable no matter the industry or profession.

That's what's required to restore investor trust and confidence." The SEC's complaints charge all nine defendants with violating the antifraud provisions of the securities laws and seek permanent injunctive relief, disgorgement with prejudgment interest, and civil penalties. In all three cases, the SEC's investigation is ongoing.

In the case involving Bhardwaj, the SEC's complaint alleges that, through his work at Lumentum, Bhardwaj learned material nonpublic information about the company's plans to first acquire Coherent and later acquire NeoPhotonics Corporation.

Based on this information, Bhardwaj allegedly purchased Coherent securities ahead of the January 2021 announcement of Lumentum's agreement to acquire Coherent and tipped his friend Patel, with the understanding that Patel would later share some of his ill-gotten gains.

The SEC further alleges that, during October 2021, Bhardwaj shared the information about Lumentum's planned acquisition of NeoPhotonics with his friends Kakker, Saeedi, and Chitor, who then amassed large positions of NeoPhotonics based on Bhardwaj's tips. After the November 2021 announcement of the NeoPhotonics acquisition, Chitor indirectly transferred funds to Bhardwaj's relative in India, as instructed by Bhardwaj.

The SEC's complaint alleges that "following the NeoPhotonics announcement, in late 2021, Bhardwaj asked Chitor to send money to a relative of Bhardwaj who lived in India." Chitor agreed and directed two individuals he knew who had accounts in India to send to the relative Indian rupees in the amount equivalent to tens of thousands of US dollars. Chitor had the rupees transferred to the relative to compensate Bhardwaj for the material nonpublic information Bhardwaj had provided to Chitor about the NeoPhotonics Announcement.

In addition to the relief described above, the SEC's complaint seeks disgorgement of illicit profits with prejudgment interest from relief defendants Gauri Salwan, 45, who is Bhardwaj's wife, the Kakker Family Trust which is a personal and testamentary trust governed by the state of California and Kakker and his wife are the trustees, Janya Saeedi, 54, who is the wife of Saeedi and All US Tacos Inc, whose sole directors are Saeedi and Janya Saeedi.

(SAI Bureau) Several Indian-origin persons have been charged with insider trading on Monday in three separate alleged schemes in which they made more than five million dollars in illegal profits.

Amit Bhardwaj, 49, the former chief information security officer of Lumentum Holdings and his friends Dhirenkumar Patel, 50, Srinivasa Kakker, 47, Abbas Saeedi, 47, and Ramesh Chitor, 45, have been charged by the Securities and Exchange Commission. The SEC alleges that these persons, all residing in California, traded ahead of two corporate acquisition announcements by Lumentum and generated more than USD

5.2 million in illicit profits.

In another action, the SEC alleges insider trading by investment banker Brijesh Goel, 37 and his friend Akshay Niranjani, 33, both of New York, who was a foreign exchange trader at a large financial institution.

The SEC alleges that the two men, close friends from business school, made more than USD 275,000 from illegally trading ahead of four acquisition announcements in 2017 that Goel learned about through his employment. The complaint further alleges Niranjani purchased call options on the target companies and later wired Goel USD 85,000 for Goel's

Indian Woman, 28, Added To FBI's "Missing Persons" List After 3 Years

Mayushi Bhagat came to the United States in 2016 on an F1 Student Visa and was enrolled at the University of New Hampshire

(SAI Bureau) The Federal Bureau of Investigation has added a 28-year-old Indian woman, who has been missing from New Jersey for the last three years, to its list of "Missing Persons" and is asking for assistance from the public on her whereabouts. Mayushi Bhagat was last seen in the evening hours of April 29, 2019, leaving her apartment in Jersey City, New Jersey. She was last seen wearing colorful pajama pants and a black T-shirt. Ms Bhagat was reported missing by her family on May 1, 2019. She is described as 5 feet 10 inches tall, medium build with black hair and brown eyes. Ms Bhagat came to the United States in 2016 on an F1 Student Visa. She was enrolled at the University of New Hampshire and then the New York Institute of



Technology (NYIT), according to information released by the FBI. FBI's Newark Division on Wednesday added Ms Bhagat to the list of "Missing Persons" on its webpage, FBI Special Agent in Charge James Dennehy said.

Ms Bhagat speaks English, Hindi, and Urdu and has friends in the South Plainfield, New Jersey, area. The FBI said any person with information about Ms Bhagat

should contact the local FBI office or the nearest American Embassy or Consulate. The FBI has put Ms Bhagat's 'Missing Person' poster on its website under the "Most Wanted" list of "Kidnappings/Missing Persons."

Sri Lanka Crisis: Indian Man Injured In Night Assault Near Colombo

(By Staff Reporter) An Indian national in Sri Lanka sustained grievous injuries in an unprovoked assault, the Indian High Commission in Colombo said on Tuesday as it urged Indians to remain aware of the latest developments in the island nation and plan their movements and activities accordingly. Sri Lanka is witnessing a public unrest due to the unprecedented economic crisis followed by a political turmoil in the country. Acting President Ranil Wickremesinghe on Monday imposed an emergency ahead of the key election today to pick a new President. The Indian High Commission in a tweet said the relations between the people of India and Sri Lanka have always been cordial and friendly.

"In the current situation, #Indian nationals in #SriLanka are requested to remain aware of latest developments and accordingly plan their movements and activities. You may contact us when required," it said. In

another tweet, the High Commission said its officials in the morning met "Vivek Varma, an Indian national and Director of Indian Visa Centre, who sustained grievous injuries in an unprovoked assault last night near Colombo".

Ranil Wickremesinghe, who was sworn-in as the acting President of Sri Lanka on Friday after former President Gotabaya Rajapaksa fled to the Maldives and then to Singapore from where he resigned in the face of public revolt against his government's mishandling of the country's economy, imposed the emergency as protests demanding his resignation continued in most parts of the country.

President Wickremesinghe, who is contesting the election, has defended imposing emergency, saying it was required in Sri Lanka in the interests of public security, the protection of public order and the maintenance of supplies and services essential to the life of the community.

'Not a day for such comments': Himachal CM on Mehbooba Mufti's remarks on former president

On former Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Mehbooba Mufti's recent remarks on former President Ram Nath Kovind, Himachal Chief Minister Jai Ram Thakur said it was not a day for such comments

(News Agency) 'Not a day for such comments': Himachal CM on Mehbooba Mufti's remarks on former president

On former Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Mehbooba Mufti's recent remarks on former President Ram Nath Kovind, Himachal Chief Minister Jai Ram Thakur said it was not a day for such comments. Congratulating President Droupadi Murmu on assuming office, Thakur said, "What Mufti did was wrong. This is not a day for such comments. She should have congratulated Droupadi Murmu instead of speaking like that. And I oppose a mindset like that." Just before Droupadi Murmu was sworn in as the President of India on Monday, Mufti took to Twitter to slam the former President, Ram Nath Kovind. She wrote, "The outgoing President leaves behind a legacy where the Indian Constitution was trampled upon umpteenth times. Be it scrapping of Article 370, CAA or the unabashed targeting of minorities & Dalits, he fulfilled BJP's political agenda all at the cost of the Indian Constitution." Referring to West Bengal minister Partha Chatterjee's arrest in connection with the teacher job scam, he said, "Agencies are there to look into corruption. Should they not act? And if there are heaps of money in crores, why should there not be action?" On Delhi CM Arvind Kejriwal's Himachal Pradesh visit to administer the oath to 5,000 Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) workers on Monday, Thakur said, "Kejriwal can go to Himachal. His true face has been unmasked by Delhi's new excise policy. In AAP-ruled Punjab, people get killed. A minister has been sacked. "The party is not good for our Dev Bhoomi," he said. Referring to Khalistan's threat, he said, "Himachal Pradesh saw an incident outside the Vidhan Sabha and we picked up people from Punjab and put them behind bars. But the Punjab government has not been able to do it. Punjab should do it and learn from the Himachal government."

In Supreme Court's bail order for Alt News co-founder, a caution for police

When the power to arrest is exercised without application of mind and without due regard to the law, it amounts to an abuse of power, the Supreme Court said



(SAI Bureau) The Supreme Court cautioned the police to use the power of arrest sparingly when it granted interim bail to Alt News's co-founder Mohammed Zubair last week. Without the caution, it would amount to an abuse of power, the court said. The order by a three-judge bench headed by Justice DY Chandrachud which was delivered last week was uploaded on Monday. "Police officers have a duty to apply their mind to the case before them and ensure that the condition(s) in Section 41 are met before they conduct an arrest." Citing the Arnesh Kumar judgement, which states the guidelines issued for the use of power of arrest by the police, the judges said, "Arrest is not meant to be and must not be used as a punitive tool because it results in one of the gravest possible consequences emanating from criminal law: the loss of personal liberty," the order reads, adding that when the power to arrest is exercised without application of mind and without due regard to the law, it amounts to an abuse of power. Expressing concern over the number of cases slapped against Zubair, the bench said, "He was trapped in a vicious cycle of the criminal process where the process has itself become the punishment." "Certain dormant FIRs from 2021 were activated as certain new FIRs were registered,

thereby compounding the difficulties faced by Zubair," the 21-page order stated. It went on to state that, "The machinery of criminal justice has been relentlessly employed against the petitioner. Despite the fact that the same tweets allegedly gave rise to similar offences in the diverse FIRs mentioned above, the petitioner was subjected to multiple investigations across the country." Justifying its reasons while clubbing the cases, the bench said, "Consequently, he would be required to hire multiple advocates across districts, file multiple applications for bail, travel to multiple districts spanning two states for the purposes of investigation, and defend himself before multiple courts, all with respect to substantially the same alleged cause of action." The court also said that individuals must not be punished solely on the basis of allegations, and without a fair trial, and the criminal law and its processes ought not to be instrumentalized as a tool of harassment. The top court also gave a word of advice to the lower courts and said, "The courts, while imposing bail conditions, must balance the liberty of the accused and the necessity of a fair trial. While doing so, conditions that would result in the deprivation of rights and liberties must be eschewed."

CBI chargesheet against Pune-based businessman in Yes Bank-DHFL case

(News Agency) The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) has alleged, adding that Bhosale and his firms received around Rs 68 crore as consultancy charges without providing any services, officials said. The Yes Bank-DHFL scam. The federal probe agency has also named Satyan Tandon and six other firms in the chargesheet filed before a special CBI court in Mumbai. Over Rs 4,700 crore was misappropriated through various builders, including Bhosale's firms, the agency

has alleged, adding that Bhosale and his firms received around Rs 68 crore as consultancy charges without providing any services, officials said. The Yes Bank-DHFL began around April, 2018 when Yes Bank invested Rs 3,700 crore in scam-hit DHFL, the CBI FIR reads. Wadhawan in return allegedly paid a kickback of Rs 600 crore to Rana Kapoor and his family in the form of a loan to a company that is held by Kapoor's three daughters, it said.

10 die after consuming poisonous country liquor in Gujarat's Botad



(SAI Bureau) Ten people have died, and four others are in serious condition due to consuming illegal country liquor in Gujarat's Botad As many as 10 people have died, and four others are in serious condition due to consuming illegal country liquor in Rojid village in Botad district of Gujarat. Several people have been admitted to different hospitals. Six people are admitted to Bhavnagar Hospital, whereas three people are in Ahmedabad Hospital. Ten people accused of being involved in the illegal trade of alcohol have been detained by the police. However, all the chemical materials have been seized by the police. A Special Investigation Team (SIT) was formed to investigate Botad's hooch tragedy. The team is investigating the case from different angles.

From sansad to streets: Congress gears up for protest ahead of Sonia Gandhi's ED appearance

Congress leaders and workers are set to hold protests across the nation on July 26 when party chief Sonia Gandhi will appear before the ED again

(By Staff Reporter) The Congress is gearing up for a 'Sansad to Sadak' protest ahead of party chief Sonia Gandhi's appearance before the Enforcement Directorate (ED) again in the National Herald case. All Congress Lok Sabha MPs will meet at the party office in Parliament House on Tuesday morning. This will be followed by a protest by Congress MPs from both houses - Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha - near the Gandhi statue in Parliament House. According to sources, the principal Opposition party's MPs will also be moving adjournment motion notices under Rule 267 in both houses of Parliament. Congress MPs will demand discussion on alleged misuse of central agencies by the Union government to target Opposition leaders. "The further plan of action will be decided after seeing how the situation develops in the Parliament," said a senior Congress MP from Rajya Sabha. Meanwhile, other senior leaders, general secretaries, in-charges and workers will gather at AICC headquarters at 24 Akbar Road. Congress President Sonia Gandhi is expected to leave for ED office around 11 am. As per sources, Congress had planned a



sit-in protest at Rajghat - Mahatma Gandhi's samdhi- in Delhi. However, the permission was denied by the authorities, following which an "urgent" meeting of AICC general secretaries/in-charges and MPs was called on Monday evening at party headquarters. Several top leaders were present at the two-hour-long meeting. The Congress will also hold a nationwide protest on July 26. AICC general secretary KC Venugopal has written a letter to all Pradesh Committees' Presidents in which he stated, "The entire country is witnessing the targetted political vendetta against Congress President Sonia Gandhi by the BJP government to distract focus away from its failures of governance. All Congress leaders and workers have stood in solidarity in large numbers against blatant misuse of agencies by the dictatorial regime." All PCCs and DCCs have been asked to protest at both state and district level across the country. In state capitals, Congress will protest near the Gandhi statue or any other place of historic importance "till Congress President isn't relieved from ED office", Venugopal said further in his letter to state chiefs.

India Lost 329 Tigers In 3 Years, Including 29 Due To Poaching: Centre

According to data presented by Union Minister of State for Environment Ashwini Kumar Choubey in Lok Sabha on Monday, 96 tigers died in 2019, 106 in 2020 and 127 in 2021

(News Agency) India lost 329 tigers in the last three years due to poaching, natural and unnatural causes, the government has said. As many as 307 elephants have died in this period due to poaching, electrocution, poisoning and train accidents, it added.



According to data presented by Union Minister of State for Environment Ashwini Kumar Choubey in Lok Sabha on Monday, 96 tigers died in 2019, 106 in 2020 and 127 in 2021. The minister said 68 tiger deaths were attributed to natural causes, five to unnatural causes, 29 to poaching and 30 to 'seizure'. A total of 197 tiger deaths are under scrutiny, he added. However, the number of poaching cases has reduced over the years -- from 17 in 2019 to four in 2021, the data showed. According to the data presented by the minister, 125 people have been killed in "tiger attacks" in this period, including 61 in Maharashtra and 25 in Uttar Pradesh. The government said 222 elephants have died due to electrocution in the last three years, with Odisha, Tamil Nadu and Assam reporting 41, 34 and 33 such deaths, respectively. Forty-five elephants have died in train accidents. Odisha and West Bengal logged 12 and 11 such fatalities respectively. The data showed 29 elephants have died due to poaching, including 12 in Meghalaya and seven in Odisha, while 11 elephants have died due to poisoning, including nine in Assam during the period.



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Navy takes delivery of India's 1st indigenous aircraft carrier 'Vikrant'

The Indian Navy created maritime history by taking delivery of the indigenous aircraft carrier Vikrant from her builder

Indian Navy has created maritime history on Thursday, July 28, by taking delivery of the prestigious indigenous aircraft carrier (AC) Vikrant from her builder Cochin Shipyard Limited (CSL), Kochi. Designed by Indian Navy's in-house Directorate of Naval Design (DND) and built by CSL, a public sector shipyard under Ministry of Shipping (MoS), the carrier is christened after her illustrious predecessor, India's first aircraft carrier which played a vital role in the 1971 war. Coinciding with the celebrations to commemorate 75th anniversary of India's independence 'Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav', the reincarnation of Vikrant is a true testimony to the country's zeal and fervour in pursuing capability build up towards enhanced maritime security.

The 262 metre long carrier has a full

displacement of close to 45,000 tonnes which is much larger and advanced than her predecessor. The ship is powered by four gas turbines totaling 88 MW power and has a maximum speed of 28 knots. Built at an overall cost of close to Rs. 20,000 crores, the project has been progressed in three phases of contract between MoD and CSL, concluded in May 2007, Dec 2014 and Oct 2019 respectively. The ship's keel was laid in Feb 2009, followed by launching in Aug 2013.

With an overall indigenous content of 76 per cent, IAC is a perfect example of aatmanirbhar Bharat and provides thrust to Government's 'Make in India' initiative. With the delivery of Vikrant, India has joined a select group of nations having the niche capability to indigenously design

and build an aircraft carrier.

Vikrant has been built with high degree of automation for machinery operation, ship navigation and survivability, and has been designed to accommodate an assortment of fixed wing and rotary aircraft. The ship would be capable of operating air wing consisting of 30 aircraft comprising of MIG-29K fighter jets, Kamov-31, MH-60R multi-role helicopters, in addition to indigenously manufactured Advanced Light Helicopters (ALH) and Light Combat Aircraft (LCA) (Navy). Using a novel aircraft-operation mode known as STOBAR (Short Take- Off but Arrested Landing), the IAC is equipped with a ski-jump for launching aircraft, and a set of 'arrestor wires' for their recovery onboard. The ship has large number of indigenous equipment and machinery, involving major

industrial houses in the country- BEL, BHEL, GRSE, Keltron, Kirloskar, Larsen & Toubro, Wartsila India etc. as well as over 100 MSMEs.

The indigenisation efforts has also led to development of ancillary industries, besides generation of employment opportunities and bolstering plough back effect on economy, both locally as well as pan-India. A major spin-off of this is the development and production of indigenous warship grade steel for the ship through a partnership between Navy, DRDO and Steel Authority of India (SAIL), which has enabled the country to become self-sufficient with respect to warship steel. Today all the warships being built in the country are being manufactured using indigenous steel.

Madras HC Orders State Govt to Not Plant Eucalyptus Trees Anymore in Tamil Nadu



(News Agency) The Tamil Nadu government has been told by the Madras High Court not to plant any more eucalyptus trees in the state.

Cases related to the removal of invasive trees encroaching on Tamil Nadu forest reserves came up for hearing on July 25 on the bench of Justices Sathish Kumar and Bharatha Chakravarthy. The state government submitted a report about the removal of invasive species of trees from Tamil Nadu's forested areas. It was said there that district-level committees had been constituted in order to eradicate all invasive trees from Tamil Nadu's forested areas within the next 10 years. Additionally, it is said that the National Bank for Rural Development (NABARD) and the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) will provide funding for the tree clearance project.

The judges who reviewed the report expressed their disappointment that the Tamil Nadu government was not

acting constructively as it only submitted reports about the preservation of forests. The judges further stated that they could not wait for 10 years for this and suggested that if the task of removing invasive trees was given to the private sector, it could be completed more quickly. Further, the court questioned the Tamil Nadu government's decision to remove invasive species of plants in the state, while also ordering it to stop planting eucalyptus trees, adjourning the hearing to August 16.

In a similar case, after a court case by farmers' associations and volunteers demanding the removal of juliflora trees, the judges ordered their destruction. However, the juliflora trees have not been systematically removed by the state government so far. Demands have been raised towards the government to take appropriate action to completely eradicate juliflora trees and promote thriving agriculture.

No official estimate of exact money deposited by Indian citizens, companies in Swiss banks: Nirmala Sitharaman

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said there is no official estimate on the exact amount of money deposited by Indian citizens, companies in Swiss banks

(SAI Bureau) There is no official estimate of the exact amount of money deposited by Indian citizens and companies in Swiss banks, Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said in a written reply to a question in the Lok Sabha on Monday. On questions on money deposited in Swiss banks by Indians, Sitharaman said: "There is no official estimate of amount of money deposited by Indian citizens and companies in Swiss banks". However, she said certain recent media reports

have stated that funds of Indians in Swiss banks have risen in 2021 as compared to 2020.



These media reports have also mentioned that these deposits do not indicate the quantum of the alleged black money held by Indians in Switzerland. The minister said the Swiss authorities had conveyed that the Swiss National Bank (SNB) annual banking statistics should not be used for analysing deposits held in Switzerland by residents of India.

Partha Chatterjee, aide Arpita sent to ED custody till Aug 3



(News Agency) The court ordered ED custody for West Bengal minister Partha Chatterjee and his close aide Arpita Mukherjee till August 3. The court also gave orders to

(SSC) scam in West Bengal on Saturday. The ED unearthed many disproportionate assets of Partha Chatterjee since his arrest, of which were three flats in West Bengal's Diamond City. One of these fully air-conditioned flats of the minister, known as a dog lover, belongs to the dogs. The arrest of Partha Chatterjee followed Rs 21 crore in cash and jewellery worth above Rs 1 crore being recovered from the Kolkata residence of Arpita Mukherjee, a close aide of the former education minister.

Congress calls suspension of MPs 'blot on democracy', slams govt

The Congress has described the suspension of its four Lok Sabha MPs for the rest of the Monsoon session for disrupting proceedings as a "blot on democracy"



(News Agency) The Congress on Monday described as a "blot on democracy" the suspension of its four MPs for the rest of the Monsoon session for disrupting proceedings in Lok Sabha, alleging the government was trying to "intimidate" the party but it would not be cowed down. Four Congress MPs -- Manickam Tagore, TN Prathapan, Jothimani, and Ramya Haridas -- were suspended from Lok Sabha for the rest of the session for displaying placards and disrupting proceedings despite a warning by Speaker Om Birla. Congress' leader in Lok Sabha Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury said the government wants to "throttle" the voice of the Opposition by resorting to "tactics of intimidation". "Our demands are very simple. Since day one and before the commencement of the House at the all-party meeting in the presence of Rajnath Singh, the entire Opposition had been in one voice to call for discussion on price rise," he said. The price rise issue needs to be discussed forthwith because everybody has been a victim of this, Chowdhury said.

"But the government on one pretext or another is shying away from having a discussion on price rise. So finding no alternative in Parliament, where it is our duty to raise the issues of the common people, we were shouting that this issue should be discussed," he said. "This government has resorted to a brutal measure by suspending our MPs only to throttle the voice of the Opposition. It is an anathema to the democratic ethos of our country. Day in and day out, the rights of the people, the institution of democracy is being trampled upon," he

said. The suspended MPs staged a protest at the Gandhi Statue inside the Parliament premises. Speaking to reporters along with the four suspended MPs, Congress' Deputy Leader in Lok Sabha Gaurav Gogoi said, "The government is trying to intimidate us by suspending our MPs. What was their fault? They were trying to raise the issues which matter to people." The Congress party will not be cowed down like this, he asserted. "The MPs were holding placards raising the issues of rise in prices of gas cylinders, and imposition of GST on items such as flour and buttermilk. We moved an adjournment motion demanding a discussion on these issues, but no discussion was held," he said. Tagore alleged the government "only hears the voice of the fourth-richest man in the

world and not the common man". Tagore was apparently referring to industrialist Gautam Adani, who, according to Forbes' Real-Time Billionaires list, recently surpassed Bill Gates to become the world's fourth richest man with an estimated wealth of USD 116 billion.

The Congress has been demanding a discussion on price rise, giving notices for adjournment motion but the government has shown "complete arrogance", the Congress' whip in Lok Sabha said. "Today, when a tribal woman has taken oath as president, a Dalit woman (Ramya Haridas) has been suspended from Lok Sabha," he said. He said the BJP only wants Parliament to cheer its leaders and its victory. "We were trying to show placards in the House and place them in the camera angles. They say placards are not allowed in Parliament... what is allowed is only cheering for Modi ji," he said. Asked about the suspension at a press conference at the AICC headquarters here, party spokesperson Shaktisinh Gohil said there is a tradition in Parliament that suspension is done only in exceptional and

rarest of the rare circumstances when the member is unruly and there is no other option.

"When Sukh Ram ji was our minister, the BJP had not allowed Parliament to function for 17 days alleging corruption against him. Sukh Ram ji had resigned and we had also allowed debate. There was no suspension," Gohil said. "It is a tradition of Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha that the member comes to the well of the House, it gets adjourned, there is a dialogue, a middle path is found and work goes on. Suspension is not the way and in the past, suspension has not happened in this manner," he said. Gohil pointed out that the Speaker or the Chairman has the right to name members, ask them to go out or adjourn the House, hold dialogue and find a way. "Never has the Parliament been run by suspending Opposition members, by just having their way. This kind of way of running the House, what Hitler had done, are we going in that direction where Parliament will be run without the Opposition," Gohil said. Inflation is an important issue and the Opposition wanted a discussion on it, he said, adding if "you don't

agree to it, we are left with no option but to shout, go to the well. What else would we do?" He said when the BJP was in Opposition it had done the same thing repeatedly, and argued that stalling the House is a tactic of the Opposition which is in public interest and running of the House is the job of the party in power.

"Suspension instead of dialogue is a blot on democracy," he said. The first week of Monsoon session was washed out with Opposition protesting over a host of issues. After the proceedings were stalled on Monday too by protesting Opposition members, the Chair named Congress MPs Manickam Tagore, TN Prathapan, Jothimani and Ramya Haridas. When a member is named, he or she has to immediately withdraw from the chamber of the House. Parliamentary Affairs Minister Pralhad Joshi then moved a resolution to suspend the four MPs for the rest of the session. Joshi said that these MPs had shown "utter disregard" for the authority of the Chair and a "serious note of their misconduct" had been taken by the House.

Krishna Janmabhoomi-Shahi Idgah Masjid case: Mathura court accepts revision plea

Mathura court has accepted a revision plea in the Krishna Janmabhoomi-Shahi Idgah Mosque case

(SAI Bureau) Hearing on maintainability of a plea seeking a survey of Shahi Idgah mosque could not take place on Monday as the court of additional district judge accepted a revision application of petitioners and asked the lower court to submit records related to the suit.

"Additional District Judge (7th) Sanjay Chaudhary (in-charge district judge for appeal and revision) has fixed the next hearing for August 11," advocate Rajendra Maheshwari, counsel-cum-petitioner in the suit, said.

During a hearing in the court of civil judge (senior division) Jyoti Singh on July 18, both sides pleaded to take their arguments first for discussion.

Apprehending disfigurement or removal of temple signs claimed to be present in the mosque, the petitioners wanted the court to take their plea first and order for a survey of Shahi Idgah Masjid.

In support of their plea, they also presented

an order of the revision court dated May 26, 2022. However, the defendants pleaded to take maintainability of the suit first.

After the hearing on July 21, the civil judge (senior division) had ordered to hear maintainability of the suit first in the next hearing set for July 25.

The petitioners' counsel Maheshwari on Monday again moved an application in the revision court challenging the order of the civil judge (senior division) passed on July 21.

The court of the ADJ not only accepted the revision application, but also asked the lower court to submit the records related to the case, Maheshwari said.

The lower court is hearing a bunch of suits for the removal of Shahi Idgah Masjid from near the Krishna Janmabhoomi temple in the Katra Keshav Dev Temple complex and subsequent interim applications for appointing a court commissioner to survey the mosque.

The petitioners have sought the mosque's survey, claiming the existence of several signs of temples, like those of "om, swastika and lotus" inside it besides its alleged "Hindu architecture". The pleas have been filed by deity Thakur Keshav Dev Ji Maharaj virajman (in-situ) in its capacity as a juristic person, represented by advocates Mahendra Pratap Singh and Rajendra Maheshwari as its "next friend", among others. The other petitioners included United Hindu Front founder Jai Bhagwan Goyal, a Delhi resident, and Vrindavan's Dharm Raksha Sangh president Saurabh Gaur. The petitioners have also challenged the compromise made between authorities of Sri Krishna Janmasthan Seva Sansthan and Shahi Idgah mosque in 1968. The defendants in the suit are Intezamia Committee Shahi Idgah Masjid and UP Sunni Central Waqf Board, among others.

How Centre tweaked Flag Code to ensure 'Har Ghar Tiranga' campaign's success

PM Modi had issued a call for Har Ghar Tiranga campaign to encourage people to bring the tricolour home and hoist it to mark the 75th year of India's independence. Here are the measures taken by the Centre to ensure the campaign's success



tricolour, the Centre on December 30, 2021 changed the Flag Code of India 2002 that governs the use, display and hoisting of the national flag in the country. The amendment allowed machine-made and polyester flags to be used for the national flag. In the notification, the government had replaced paragraph 1.2 of Part I of the Flag Code with "The National Flag shall be made of hand-spun and handwoven or machine-made, cotton/ polyester/ wool/ silk khadi bunting." A senior official in the Ministry of Culture said, "Khadi flag makers do not have the capacity to meet the huge demand for the flags. The entry of polyester material flags would ease the situation. This wouldn't become an opportunity for Chinese manufactures as India is an exporter of polyester and domestic manufacturers would be in a position to supply the required numbers." Union home secretary Ajay Bhalla had earlier written a letter to secretaries of all central ministries and departments that included salient features of the Flag Code, including the changes made on

30 December, 2021 and FAQs about the making and display of the national flag.

The Flag Code of India was further amended through an order issued on July 20, 2022, tweaking the clause (xi) of paragraph 2.2 of Part-II of the Flag Code of India, 2002 to say that "where the Flag is displayed in open or displayed on the house of a member of public, it may be flown day and night". With these amendments, a member of the public, a private organisation or an educational institution is allowed to hoist the flag on all days and occasions, ceremonial or otherwise, consistent with dignity and honour of the national flag. Earlier, machine-made and polyester flags were not allowed and it could be displayed from sunrise to sunset irrespective of weather conditions. A top official in the Ministry of Culture said, "We expect nearly 20 crore of the 26 crore households in the country to become part of the campaign, knowing that some in remote areas may not be in a position to do that." Interestingly, since use and upkeep of the

national flag is governed by laws, the department of culture is likely to issue a SOP for mass collection and recycling of flags which people may want to give up after August 15. A FAQ is likely to be issued detailing what people can do. The government is providing a lot of elbow room to the members of the public by softening the clauses of the Flag Code to ensure that hoisting the tricolour between August 13-15 doesn't become a tedious exercise or invite legal troubles for the participating households. The Indian national flag is governed by the Flag Code of India, 2002 and the Prevention of Insults to National Honour Act, 1971 and people "found insulting the national flag" can face a prison term of up to three years and a fine for a first offence. With the amendments, members of the public, educational institutions, organisations, companies and others have to follow the rule of lowering the flag at dusk only if there is a hoisting in the morning. Otherwise, the national tricolour of any size (but adhering to the 3:2 ratio) can be kept up at all times.

(News Agency) Unfazed by the Opposition's attacks, the government has intensified efforts to get more people to join its 'Har Ghar Tiranga' campaign (hoisting of flag in every home) from August 13 to 15 to mark Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav. Sources in the government said that starting from August 1, around 500-750 top celebrities from different fields will start posting on social media platforms about their participation in the campaign and urge people to join in. Between August 13-15, these celebrities would post their pictures with a flag. Prime Minister Narendra Modi had issued a call for Har Ghar Tiranga campaign under the aegis of Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav to encourage people to bring the tricolour home and hoist it to mark the 75th year of India's independence. The Union Ministry of Culture is coordinating the campaign with state governments and a slew of agencies to ensure that in the 75th year of independence, the "hoisting of flag by targeted 20 crore households becomes symbolic of not only an act of personal connection to the Tiranga but also an embodiment of commitment to nation-building". To meet the unprecedented demand for the

Gujarat hooch tragedy: How small 'potli' of spurious liquor worth Rs 40 killed 37

Police investigation revealed that bootleggers sold hooch made with highly poisonous methyl alcohol to the locals in Botad district. The country-made liquor was sold in small plastic bags and a single 'potli' costs Rs 40

(SAI Bureau) The death toll in the Gujarat hooch tragedy climbed to 37, as more people succumbed after consuming spurious liquor in Botad district. Around 70 others remained hospitalised, of whom some are in critical condition. Police investigation revealed that bootleggers sold hooch made with highly poisonous methyl alcohol to the locals in Rojid village and nearby areas. The country-made liquor was sold in small plastic bags and a single pouch costs Rs 40. Locally known as 'potli', these pouches of hooch worth a mere Rs 40 have killed 37 people in Botad, with many others fighting for their life. According to police officials, small-time bootleggers in Botad made hooch by mixing methyl alcohol with water, then sold it to the locals in potlis for 40 bucks each. An officer said, "Such potlis are sold for anywhere between Rs 25 to Rs 50. These potlis were sold at Rs 40 each. Potlis are basically small plastic

packets, like the ones sold during Holi. Many of these people died after consuming a single potli." Police have registered three FIRs against 24 main culprits under sections 302 (murder), 328 (causing hurt by poison) and 120-B (criminal conspiracy) of the Indian Penal Code. Fourteen persons have been arrested so far. "Forensic analysis has established that the victims had consumed methyl alcohol. We have booked 14 persons on the charges of murder and other offences and already detained the majority of the accused for further investigation," Gujarat Director General of Police Ashish Bhatia told reporters on Tuesday.

The Gujarat Home Department has

formed a three-member committee, headed by senior IPS officer Subhash Trivedi, to conduct a detailed inquiry into the incident and submit a report within three days.

SUSPECTED DEATH RELATED TO



HOOCH IN AKRU

Meanwhile, the body of a 25-year-old man, Bhavesh Chavda, was buried without post mortem. The team from the Forensic Science Laboratory arrived at

Akru village where Chavda lived to exhume the body. It is suspected that he, too, died after consuming spurious liquor.

Police officials said on Sunday, Chavda started feeling dizzy, and experiencing blurry vision, stomach pain, headache and vomiting. Later, his condition deteriorated. He was rushed to a local government hospital but he died on the way. Family members and doctors assumed he may have died due to some shock, attack or natural causes.

Chavda's body was taken home and buried with proper rituals. However, later, the hooch tragedy came to light and many were found with similar symptoms. On Tuesday evening, the police and FSL team arrived at Akru village and started the process of exhumation. The deceased's post mortem will be done after exhuming the body.

Section 144 imposed in Karnataka's Puttur after protest erupts over BJP worker's murder

Section 144 was imposed in the Puttur area and security was tightened as protests erupted after a BJP Yuva Morcha worker was hacked to death in Karnataka's Dakshina Kannada district on Tuesday

(SAI Bureau) Section 144 was imposed in the Puttur area and security was tightened as protests erupted after a BJP Yuva Morcha worker, Praveen Nettaru, was hacked to death with lethal weapons by unidentified people on a bike in Karnataka's Dakshina Kannada district late on Tuesday evening. Security forces were deployed in Bellare village of the Dakshina Kannada district in the wake of this incident. Additional police forces have also been dispatched from Mangalore and Udupi to ensure law and order. Karnataka Chief

Minister Basavaraj Bommai on Wednesday assured that the culprits involved in the "heinous act" will be arrested soon and be punished as per law. Meanwhile, five special police teams have been formed to nab the accused. "Five special police teams have been formed to trace the accused. Out of the five, three teams have been sent to Kerala and Madikeri and Hassan in Karnataka respectively," District Superintendent of Police Rushikesh Sonanay informed India Today.

KARNATAKA CM CONDOLES



DEATH

Karnataka Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai expressed grief over the killing of the BJP youth worker and assured that the accused would be arrested and punished soon. Taking to Twitter, Bommai said, "I condemn the barbaric killing of party activist Praveen Nettaru from Sullia, Dakshina Kannada. The perpetrators of such a heinous act will be arrested soon and punished under the law. May Praveen's soul rest in peace."

SIDDARAMAIAH CONDEMNS MURDER

Leader of the Opposition of the Karnataka Legislative Assembly

Siddaramaiah also condemned the murder of the BJP leader.

SEARCHING FOR EVIDENCE

Police said that they were still looking for evidence. "Only in the media have we seen information on the Kerala bike number plate. We haven't found any evidence. It is too soon to attribute anything. We have tightened security along the borders. All angles are being probed. Locals claim the murder was in retaliation for the murder of a Muslim youth, Masood, in the Bellare area," Mangalore Superintendent of police said.

PROCESSION BEGINS

The body of BJP Yuva Morcha

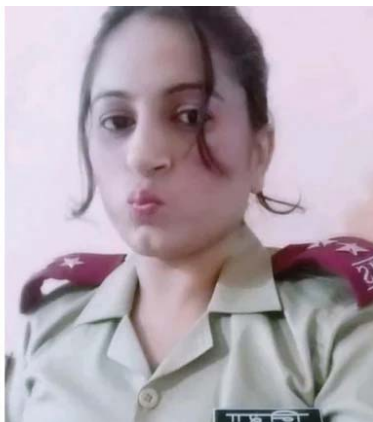
worker, Praveen Nettaru, was taken to his residence in Sullia in Dakshina Kannada district. BJP workers and members of different Hindu organisations were present at the procession.

CALLS FOR BANDH

The Vishva Hindu Parishad (VHP) has given a Bandh call in Kadaba, Sullia and Puttur Taluks of the district on Wednesday against the killing. Several right-wing groups have accused the Popular Front of India (PFI) and Social Democratic Party of India (SDPI) for the murder. Two private educational institutions in Puttur have also declared a holiday to condemn the killing.

Army jawan falls for honeytrap by Pak agents, leaks info

Caught in a honeytrap, an Indian Army personnel leaked information to Pakistani women agents



(SAI Bureau) Indian Army jawan Shantimay Rana, 24, was arrested for allegedly leaking military information to Pakistan. He was allegedly honeytrapped by a Pakistani woman for leaking information related to the Indian Army. The jawan was arrested after registering a case under the Official Secrets Act, 1923. Shantimay Rana is a resident of the village Kanchanpur in Bagunda district of West Bengal. He was posted in the Artery Unit in Jaipur.

Director General of Intelligence Wing of Rajasthan Police Umesh Mishra said, "Pakistani agents Gurnaur Kaur alias Ankita and Nisha had contacted the jawan through social media." The Intelligence Wing further said that later two women had taken Rana's number. Both of them used to talk to Rana on WhatsApp. Both first won the trust of Rana and

then she started taking intelligence information from him. In return, some money was also transferred to Rana's account.

HOW RANA WAS TRAPPED

Rana said that he has been serving in the Indian Army since March 2018 and was in touch with the female Pakistani agent through WhatsApp chat, video and audio messages for a long time. The woman had described herself as a resident of Shahjahanpur (Uttar Pradesh). The woman told Rana that she worked there in the Military Engineering Services. The other woman had given her name as Nisha. She had said that she works in the Military Nursing Service. The woman had asked for confidential documents, photographs, videos of maneuvers from Rana. In his greed, Rana had also sent secret documents of his regiment and videos of the exercises.

Patient with monkeypox symptoms admitted to Delhi's LNJP hospital, reports awaited

A person with similar symptoms to monkeypox was admitted to LNJP hospital Delhi

(News Agency) One more suspected patient of monkeypox was admitted to Lok Nayak Jai Prakash Narayan Hospital (LNJP) hospital Delhi on Tuesday evening. The patient has lesions on the skin and a high fever similar to the symptoms for this virus. Sample reports are awaited. Till now, India has reported four confirmed cases of monkeypox virus, with one from Delhi and three from Kerala. The first case of monkeypox in Delhi was reported three days ago (July 24) in a patient with no history of foreign travel. The patient was also admitted to the city's Lok Nayak Jai Prakash Hospital. The 34-year-old patient had recently attended a stag party in Himachal Pradesh's Manali. He was admitted to the hospital with a fever and skin lesions. In the wake of the first case of monkeypox being reported in the



national capital, the Delhi government has made Lok Nayak Jai Prakash (LNJP) Hospital the nodal centre for management of the rare viral infection and has started training doctors there. With the increase in monkeypox cases, several state governments have taken cognizance of the matter and has taken preventive measures. According to sources in the health ministry, surveillance will be increased for

people coming in from countries where monkeypox has become prevalent. The Uttar Pradesh government on Tuesday ordered the administration to reserve beds for monkeypox in Covid-designated hospitals across the state. Although no monkeypox case has been reported in the state so far. The WHO declared monkeypox a global public health emergency of international concern on July 23.

Opposition uproar in Rajya Sabha as its 19 more MPs suspended

Rajya Sabha on Tuesday saw uproar by the Opposition after the suspension of its 19 members for the entire week for repeatedly disrupting proceedings, with the penalised MPs refusing to leave the House



(News Agency) There were four adjournments till 3:40 pm as the Opposition refused to relent, and later the House was adjourned for the day, without transacting much business. The opposition MPs, who have been stalling the proceedings since the start of the Monsoon session on July 18 to press for immediate discussion on price rise and the levy of the GST on daily essentials, were suspended as they did not heed Deputy Chairman Harivansh's repeated pleas to leave the well of the House and go back to their seats.

Four Congress MPs - Manickam Tagore, TN Prathapan, Jothimani and Ramya Haridas - had been suspended on Monday for disrupting proceedings, deepening the standoff between the Opposition and the government, which is maintaining that it is ready to hold the discussion once Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman recovers from COVID-19. On Tuesday, Minister of State for Parliamentary Affairs

V Muraleedharan moved a motion to suspend 10 MPs from the sitting of the House for the remainder of the week for their "misconduct" by showing "utter disregard to the House and authority of the chair". But when Harivansh put the motion to vote, he read out the names of 19 members.

The motion was carried by a voice vote. When some opposition MPs demanded a division of votes, the chair said he would do so if the members returned to their seats and the House was brought to order.

With the MPs refusing to budge, he said it seems they are not interested in the division and declared that the motion has been adopted. The suspended MPs refused to leave, squatting on the floor of the House, leading to three adjournments -- first for 15 minutes by Harivansh, then for an hour and finally, for the day by Bhubaneswar Kalita, who was in the chair. While seven of the suspended MPs

belonged to the Trinamool Congress (TMC), six were from the DMK, three from the Telangana Rashtra Samithi (TRS), two from the Communist Party of India (Marxist) and one from the Communist Party of India (CPI).

Sushmita Dev, Mausam Noor, Shanta Chhetri, Dola Sen, Santanu Sen, Abir Ranjan Biswas and Nadimul Haque of the TMC were suspended.

DMK's M Mohamed Abdulla, Kanimozhi NVN Somu, M Shanmugam, S Kalyanasundaram, R Girirajan and N R Elango were also suspended.

B Lingaiah Yadav, Ravichandra Vaddiraju and Damodar Rao Divakonda (TRS), V Sivadasan and A A Rahim (CPI-M) and Santhosh Kumar (CPI) were the other MPs who were suspended.

Earlier in the day, while the proceedings were adjourned during the Zero Hour without a single issue being taken up, Harivansh conducted the Question Hour in the midst of slogan-shouting by the

opposition MPs from the Well.

This is the highest number of MPs suspended in one go. Earlier, 12 opposition members were suspended in November last year, as some of them had climbed on the table, flung papers and damaged property. As the proceedings of the Rajya Sabha resumed after the suspension of nineteen MPs, opposition members continued shouting slogans from the well ignoring the pleas of Bhubaneswar Kalita, who was in the chair. Kalita took the names of all nineteen suspended members and asked them again to go out of the House and others to return to their respective seats. "I request the suspended members to withdraw from the House, and whose names are not announced they should go to their seats and allow the house to function," he said. Kalita said that rules were followed in the suspension of the members. However, the members, who had trooped to the well of the House, kept shouting slogans.

No Kashmiri Pandit Working Under PM Package Has Resigned in Wake of Killings: Home Ministry

(SAI Bureau) No Kashmiri Pandit working under the Prime Minister's Development Package (PMDP) has resigned recently in protest of killings of Kashmiri Pandits in the Valley, according to the Home Ministry's reply in Parliament on Tuesday.

The ministry said several steps have been taken to ensure the safety of Kashmiri Pandits.

"As per information provided by the Government of Jammu and Kashmir, no Kashmiri Pandit working under the Prime Minister's Development Package has resigned recently in protest of the killing of a Kashmiri Pandit in Kashmir Valley," an official from the Centre told News18.

"The Government has taken several measures to ensure safety of

Kashmiri Pandits in the Valley. These include a robust security and intelligence grid, day-and-night area domination, proactive operations against terrorists, round-the-clock checking at nakas, patrolling in areas where Kashmiri Pandits reside and deployment of security forces at strategic points to thwart any terrorist attack," the Ministry Home Affairs told Parliament. The Ministry said that under the PMDP, 5,502 Kashmiri migrants have been provided government jobs. The government has also approved construction of 6,000 transit accommodations for Kashmiri migrant employees engaged/to be engaged in different departments of the Government of Jammu and

Kashmir in the Valley.

In another reply, the Government said there has been a substantial decline in terrorist attacks from 417 in 2018 to 229 in 2021. However, there have been a few attacks on people belonging to minority communities and migrant workers by terrorists sponsored from across the border.

"As per the information provided by the Government of Jammu and Kashmir, 28 migrant workers have been killed since 2017, of which 2 belonged to Maharashtra, 1 to Jharkhand, and 7 to Bihar," the MHA said. The Ministry also said that ex-gratia relief/compensation was granted as per rules to the next of kin of any person killed by terrorists. An ex-gratia of Rs 1 lakh is paid to the kin of civilians

killed in militancy-related violence under the existing scheme of Government of Jammu and Kashmir. In addition, Rs 5 lakh is given under the 'Central Scheme for Assistance to Civilian Victims/Family of Victims of Terrorist /Communal/ LWE Violence and Cross Border Firing and Mine/IED Blasts on Indian Territory'. The Ministry also said that a new Central Sector Scheme has been notified on 19/02/2021 for the industrial development of Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir, with an outlay of Rs 28,400 crore. "Jammu and Kashmir has received investment applications of more than Rs 54,000 crore, of which projects worth more than Rs 36,000 crore have been allotted industrial land," MA said.

2 BSF Personnel Killed in Congo in Anti-UN Protests; India Says Culprits Must be Held Accountable

(SAI Bureau) Two BSF personnel, who were a part of the UN peacekeeping mission known by its French acronym MONUSCO, were on Tuesday killed in anti-UN protests in the eastern DR Congo town of Butembo. Violent protests in the troubled region erupted on Monday, driven by accusations that MONUSCO was failing to act against armed groups. Reinforcements of the UN Force (Army component) are on their way and unable to reveal details of personnel before intimating their next of kin. Taking to Twitter, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar expressed grief over the deaths of two Indian peacekeepers of the Border Security Force and said perpetrators of these attacks must be held accountable and brought to justice. "Deeply grieved at the loss of lives of two valiant Indian peacekeepers of the BSF in the Democratic Republic of Congo. They were part of the MONUSCO. The perpetrators of these outrageous attacks must be held accountable and brought to justice. Deepest condolences to the bereaved families," he said. As per reports received, locals had given a call for demonstration against MONUSCO throughout DR Congo. On Monday, the situation turned violent in Goma (about 350 km south of Beni and a big MONUSCO base) with looting and setting the United Nations buildings on fire. Both Beni and Butembo, where two BSF platoons were deployed on detachment since June 2, were on high alert. However, the situation in Butembo city turned violent on Tuesday as the camp of Morocco Rapid Deployment Battalion, where BSF platoons were stationed, got surrounded by demonstrators. Troops of Congolese Police and

Congolese Army tried to control the crowd of over 500 people amid stones pelting. To contain the situation, the troops fired in air but protestors managed to breach the perimeter wall at three different places. There were reports that armed rebels had infiltrated the demonstrators. The second attack was more fierce and was accompanied by fire from small arms. Moroccan and Indian troops fired in self defence. Demonstrators have accused the peacekeeping forces of failing to protect civilians amid rising violence in Congo's eastern region and are calling for the UN forces, present in Congo for years, to leave. Protesters blamed shots fired by the peacekeepers for the deaths. DR Congo government spokesman Patrick Muyaya said in a tweet, "The government has instructed the security forces to take all measures to ensure a return to calm and the normal resumption of activities in Goma." He also reiterated that steps are already being taken for the peacekeeping forces to be withdrawn. Meanwhile, Deputy Spokesperson for UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres, Farhan Haq, said at



the daily press briefing today Congo's Kasai Central and Tanganyika regions. The mission has more than 16,000 uniformed personnel in Congo, according to the UN. The protests are taking place as fighting has escalated between Congolese troops and the M23 rebels, forcing nearly 200,000 people to flee their homes. The M23 forces have shown increased firepower and defense capabilities, according to a report by Human Rights Watch. Congo's east is home to myriad rebel groups and the region's security has worsened despite a year of emergency operations by a joint force of the armies of Congo and Uganda. Civilians in the east have also had to deal with violence from jihadi rebels linked to the Islamic State group.

Digital payment revolution in India and its global ambition

(News Agency) Six years ago, in April 2016, a product was launched by the National Payment Corporation of India (NPCI) called Unified Payment Interface (UPI). At that time, nobody had thought that this made in India product would bring a revolution in the fintech market in India. UPI recorded the highest single-month transaction in May 2022. According to data released by the NPCI, UPI processed more than Rs 10 lakh crore worth of transactions in May alone by processing nearly 6 billion payments.

Today, apps like Phonepe, Paytm, Google Pay, and others have become a crucial part of everyone's lives. But when UPI was launched initially, experts, including banks, were suspicious of its acceptance in a market like India. The reasons were less financial inclusiveness and low financial literacy. However, India has proved all experts wrong. Today it is considered a highly innovative product in the world's payment market. In 2019,

Google wrote a letter to "FedNow"—an interbank real-time gross settlement service (RTGS)—detailing the successful example of UPI based digital payment and suggesting that they can learn from innovations like these. The global ambition of UPI is also on the right track. UPI has gained acceptance in Singapore (March 2020), Bhutan (July 2021), UAE & Nepal (Feb 2022). On June 17, 2022, the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) announced that UPI and Rupay cards (Indian payment cards) will soon be accepted in France. NPCI has already signed an MOU with Lyra, a France-based payment service provider. According to sources, NPCI is also eyeing other Asian markets like Malaysia, Thailand, and Vietnam. Without a doubt, UPI has the potential to be the first made in India product to cause a stir in the payment market. This will give great confidence to the Indian government, which is trying very hard to project India as a manufacturing and innovative hub.

Day 1 of India's 5G spectrum auction sees bidding worth \$18.2 billion, exceeds govt estimates

(News Agency) The first day of India's biggest spectrum auction for 72 GHz (gigahertz) airwaves ended with four major telecom firms committing a total of Rs 1.45 trillion (\$18.2 billion) for 5G airwaves.

Telecom minister Ashwini Vaishnaw on Tuesday said the bid amount exceeded the government's estimates and added that the auction saw healthy participation between Mukesh Ambani-led Reliance Jio, Sunil



Mittal's Airtel, Vodafone-Idea, and a unit of Gautam Adani's flagship Adani Enterprises. The previous high was Rs 1.09 trillion that the government received in 2015 when it auctioned 4G airwaves and other bands.

In the first-day auction, the operators have committed to buy 48.3 GHz out of the total 72 GHz spectrum available. Several frequency bands were put up for auction, ranging from low (600 MHz, 700 MHz, 800 MHz, 900 MHz, 1800

MHz, 2100 MHz, 2300 MHz), mid (3300 MHz), to high (26 GHz). Among them, the 5G bands 3300 MHz and 26 GHz bands attracted strong bids. Two bands – 600 MHz and 2,300 MHz –

saw zero bids. Four rounds of bidding took place with the first round starting at 10 am and the last ending at 6 pm on Tuesday. The fifth round of the auction will begin on Wednesday. According to PTI news agency, the

number of days the 5G spectrum auction stretches to will depend on the actual demand for radiowaves and the strategy of individual bidders, although the broad industry consensus is that it may last up to two days. Minister Vaishnaw said the government is expecting to allocate the spectrum in record time so that the 5G services rollout in some Indian cities by September or October. He said that the target is to allocate the spectrum by August 14.

Hyderabad Gang-Rape: Four Accused, All Minors, Get Bail

Hyderabad Gangrape: All four accused, including the son of a legislator, have been released from a juvenile home where they had been kept after their detention

(News Agency) Four minors accused have been released on bail in the Hyderabad gangrape case, which had set off outrage and political clashes in Telangana a month ago. All four accused have been released from a juvenile home where they had been detained since the first week of June, officials said. Bail was granted by the Juvenile Justice Board. The four accused released on bail have been directed to cooperate with investigating officers, and record their attendance before the District

Probation Officer on the first Monday of every month. A fifth minor detained in the case will continue to remain in the juvenile home since he has approached the Telangana High court for bail, officials added. Saduddin Mallik, the only adult accused in the case, remains in jail. Six people were arrested for the alleged gangrape of a 17-year-old girl in a car in Hyderabad's Jubilee Hills area on May 28. The minor accused are students of Class 11 and 12 and belong to "politically

influential" families. The girl was allegedly gang-raped after she got into a car with five young men after a party in a popular pub. One juvenile was allegedly seen in videos misbehaving with the girl, but was not involved in rape, police had said. The boys had offered to drop her home. Instead, they went to a pastry and coffee shop, where they changed into an Innova. The boys parked the car and allegedly took turns raping her while the others stood guard outside.

The police initially registered a case of "outraging modesty" based on the girl's father's complaint. It was changed to a rape case later. The BJP and Congress had accused the K Chandrashekar Rao-led Telangana government of trying to shield the accused. The National Commission for Women (NCW) too had sought a detailed report from the police on the steps taken to ensure the safety and security of girls and women in the state.

For Sonia Gandhi, 100 Questions, 12 Hours; No New Summons

Sonia Gandhi was questioned by the Enforcement Directorate on money laundering allegations linked to the National Herald case



again. On Tuesday, Sonia Gandhi was questioned for six hours. Enforcement Directorate officials said she was "quick" in answering questions.

Her son and Congress MP Rahul Gandhi's questioning took place over five days and he was asked around 150 questions. Mrs Gandhi was reportedly asked questions on her involvement with the National Herald newspaper and the Young Indian Pvt Ltd. The Enforcement Directorate will match her statement with that of Rahul Gandhi as both are majority stakeholders in Young Indian, officials said. The Gandhis are

being investigated in what is called the "National Herald case" involving the Young Indian's takeover of Associated Journals Limited (AJL), the company that runs the National Herald newspaper founded by India's first Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru. The Enforcement Directorate says the Young Indian also took over ? 800 crore in assets of AJL. According to the Income Tax department, this should be considered an asset of the shareholders of Young Indian -- Sonia Gandhi and Rahul Gandhi - for which they should pay tax. Denying any wrongdoing, the Congress asserts that the Young

Indian is a "not-for-profit" company and so, there can be no question of money laundering. On all three days of questioning, the Congress president went to the probe agency's office with daughter Priyanka Gandhi Vadra, who was present with her medicines. Medical staff were also kept on standby. On each day of the Gandhis' questioning in Delhi, the Congress has carried out massive street protests and has clashed with the police, undeterred by heavy security. Congress leaders and workers clashed with the police today too.

(SAI Bureau) Congress president Sonia Gandhi's questioning by the Enforcement Directorate on money laundering allegations linked to the National Herald case ended today. She was

asked over 100 questions in 12 hours spread over three days. Sonia Gandhi, 75, spent three hours with the probe agency on the third day of questioning today. She has not been summoned

Madhya Pradesh Man Receives Rs 3,419 Crore Electricity Bill, Hospitalised

The Madhya Pradesh government-run power company blamed "human error" and issued a corrected bill of rs.1,300

(SAI Bureau) : Priyanka Gupta, a resident of Gwalior in Madhya Pradesh, was in for a rude shock when she received a power bill of a whopping ? 3,419 crore due to which her father-in-law fell ill. The Madhya Pradesh government-run power company blamed "human error" and issued a corrected bill of ?



1,300, much to the relief of the worried Gupta family, who are residents of Shiv Vihar Colony in the city. Ms Gupta's husband Sanjeev Kankane said his father fell ill after seeing the huge figure on the electricity bill for the domestic consumption for July. The bill, released on July 20, was cross-verified through the portal of the Madhya Pradesh Madhya Kshetra

Vidyut Vitran Company (MPMKVVC) but was found to be correct, he claimed. The bill was later corrected by the state power company, said Mr Kankane. MPMKVVC general manager Nitin Manglik blamed human error for the huge power bill and said action has been taken against the employees concerned. "An employee entered the consumer number in place of the units consumed in the software, resulting in the bill with a higher amount. The corrected bill of ? 1,300 has been issued to the power consumer," he said. MP Energy Minister Pradyuman Singh Tomar told reporters that the error has been rectified and action is being taken against the employee concerned.

Money recovered from my place belongs to Partha Chatterjee: Arpita tells ED

ED has found another Rs 28 crore in cash, over 5 kg gold and several documents at the second apartment of Arpita Mukherjee, a close aide of arrested Bengal minister Partha Chatterjee

(News Agency) Arpita Mukherjee, a close aide of arrested Bengal minister Partha Chatterjee, Thursday told the Enforcement Directorate (ED) that the money recovered from her second flat belongs to Chatterjee. Her statement comes on the day the probe agency recovered another Rs 28 crore in cash and over 5 kg of gold from her second apartment, days

after recovering Rs 21 crore from her first flat. Officials, who took 10 hours to count the money, said a huge amount of money was recovered from the toilet. ED sources said, "Arpita has confessed that the recovered amount belongs to Partha Chatterjee and her flat was used to keep his money." She also said she had no idea that such a huge amount

was there in that flat and added that Partha used to visit the flat and he only knew about it. The ED also said that earlier Arpita did not inform that her second flat also had cash. "But when we raided the apartment after getting the property details, we found cash in crores and gold worth 5 kg." The recovered Rs 27.9 crore includes



notes of Rs 2,000 and Rs 500 denominations, neatly packed in bundles of 50 lakh each for Rs 2,000 notes and Rs 20 lakh each for Rs 500 notes. Also, gold and jewellery worth Rs 4.31 crore include 3 gold bricks of 1 kg each, 6 Kangan (bangles) of 500 grams each, and a gold pen.

Saving Mother Nature from ourselves

A global biodiversity crisis stares us squarely in the face. Biodiversity, globally, finds itself under an ever-increasing all-round threat as man's relentless predatory exploitation of natural resources continues unchecked. Driven by wasteful, unbounded greed, man's plunder of land and marine resources has led to a situation where about 25 per cent of species face the threat of extinction.

The World Nature Conservation Day, celebrated on July 28, seeks to highlight the need to work for a healthy planet by preserving our environment and protecting our natural resources. The time to address the factors that cause biodiversity loss is now. If mankind has to survive, we have to recognise the role protection and conservation play in attempting to maintain the pristine nature of biodiverse ecosystems. Conservation is our only hope for the future of the planet, as also for that

of succeeding generations, because it also contributes to sustainable livelihoods, climate change mitigation, food

and water security and reduces the threat of natural disasters. The idea of conservation encompasses various facets of nature including flora and fauna, energy resources, soil, water and air. In this context, it is essential to underscore the critical nature of protected areas and other effective area-based conservation measures as key drivers of biodiversity conservation.

Conservation and ecological balance form the cornerstone of the cosmic vision of Indian civilisation. The Vedas, Upanishads, itihāsas and purāṇas teach us the worship of the divine in the elements — in rivers, mountains, lakes, animals, birds, flora, as also stars and planets. Our scriptures are replete with references to the manifestation of prana or shakti in all forms of matter. This is seen in our daily practices — be it the worship of fire, water and air as agni, jal and vayu, the sun as Surya deva, earth as Bhū devi, the Himalayas as the abode of the gods and rishis, the Ganga, Yamuna and all other rivers, the Tulsi plant and peepul tree, the cow as gau mata, the elephant as associated with Vinayaka — bowing to mother nature is an expression of our gratitude to her for her bountiful blessings. The Prithvi Sukta in Atharva Veda serves to remind us of our relationship with nature: mata bhumiḥ putroham prithivīyah (The earth is my mother and I am her son).

With the passage of time, we have begun to forget some of the essential lessons our ancestors taught us about nature being a life-giver and not a hostile force to be conquered. The mindless exploitation and destruction of our natural resources has only unleashed nature's fury in the form of disasters like floods, landslides and earthquakes upon us. As a nation, we only have to go back to our roots and strive proactively in order to achieve the targets of the post-2020 of the UN's Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF) and realise the 2050 vision of "living in harmony with nature". Climate change has often

been referred to as the defining issue of our time which has brought about irreversible changes in ecosystems. Caused by human actions, climate change has brought us close to the Lakshman Rekha of ecological balance, which we cannot afford to cross. It, therefore, calls for decisive action on many facets relating to energy, industry, land, transport and urban planning. Sudden changes in weather patterns causing heat waves, ocean warming, diminishing amounts of snow and ice, melting glaciers, forest fires and floods — an ever-increasing range of resultant factors threaten livelihoods and food production worldwide. Global climate efforts to build partnerships to make the transition to low-emission economies and meet the goals and targets set by Kyoto Protocol and the Paris Agreement have to be intensified if the human race has to survive.

Statistics put the loss of the earth's original forest cover at as high as 45 per cent over the last 8,000 years, most of it alarmingly enough, during the past century. Apart from climate change,

the conversion of forests to agricultural land, overgrazing, poor forest management, invasive infrastructure development including the ill-planned expansion of urban settlements, mining and oil exploitation, anthropogenic forest fires and pollution, have impacted forest biological diversity. The Food and Agriculture Organisation recently estimated that about 13 million hectares of the world's forests are lost due to deforestation each year. Aggressive measures for conservation of forest biodiversity alone can help save one of the most biologically rich terrestrial systems providing balance and harmony to the ecosystem. The saying, vruksho rakshati rakshitah (protect trees and they will protect you), should be our guiding mantra.

As a member of the High Ambition Coalition for Nature and People initiated at the "One Planet Summit" in Paris in January 2021, India is committed to work proactively to protect at least 30 per cent of our lands, waters and oceans, and adhere to its commitment of 30x30 by 2030. The recent launch of the 75-day-long awareness campaign, "Swachh Sagar, Surakshit Sagar", covering 75 beaches across the country, is a reflection of India's commitment to the cause of conservation and clean-up. The government has banned the manufacture, import, stocking, distribution, sale and use of identified single-use plastic items with low utility and high littering potential from July 1, 2022.

In their joint report, the UN Environment Programme (UNEP), the World Economic Forum (WEF) and the Economics for Land Degradation Initiative have rightly urged the G-20 nations to step up to their roles as powerful leaders against climate change. Globally, the mainstreaming of conservation and the need to address and achieve climate targets and sustainable development outcomes should be integrated into national policies and decision-making frameworks at the local levels. Only then can we hope to reverse, to some extent, the harm we have caused to mother nature.

Indian President Election: Draupadi Murmu manages priceless victory over opposition

By Susmita Ghosh

Draupadi Murmu with a much-anticipated victory creates history as the 15th President and the first tribal President of India. She is also the second woman in the post, as well as the youngest President of India. Besides, she is the first President of India, who was born after the independence of the country. After the swearing-in ceremony set on July 25, the life of President-elect Draupadi Murmu will evolve drastically. Her path outside the limelight will

Draupadi Murmu received warm welcome across state capitals and a number of opposition parties, who earlier expressed interest in Yashwant Sinha as their choice, shifted their allegiance to her in the end

change forever and for the better, along with a burden of glorious purpose. The unassuming politician who started her political career as a councillor in the state of Odisha will sit in the most prestigious chair in India. Even though Murmu was the NDA-backed presidential candidate, her journey to the hot seat was not an easy one. Her contestation was quite tough as it was against the veteran politician. Yashwant Sinha. Against such a candidate with a star-studded political career, Draupadi Murmu's political journey is not eye-catching. However, the former Jharkhand governor, Draupadi gained gradual support among various arenas who supported her unconditionally in her campaign. At the conclusion, even before the counting was over, it was a landslide victory for Murmu over Yashwant Sinha. Even the unified front of opposition failed against the unifying political move of the ruling party. At the age of 64, Draupadi will take over the Presidential seat from Ram Nath Kovind. However, her personal life is filled with tragedies as she lost close and dear members of her family in a short period of time, from 2009 to 2015. While she keeps a low profile in both her personal and political life, Draupadi is deeply spiritual and practices the meditation techniques of the Bramha Kumari movement. Draupadi's stance on staying out of the political humdrum did not change even after she was NDA's Presidential nominee officially. She did not

make any public statement since she was officially unveiled as the candidate on June 21 but made way with her campaign throughout the country. She received warm welcome across state capitals, and a number of opposition parties, who earlier expressed interest in Yashwant Sinha as their choice, shifted their allegiance to her in the end. The most noteworthy names in the list are, of course, Shiv Sena, BJD, YSR Congress and so on. As she lets her work speak for her, like her whole political

career, she proves time and time again that action is more precious than words. Yashwant Sinha had a long and vibrant track record when he was in BJP. From the national spokesperson of the party to Lok Sabha member as a BJP candidate thrice, the party has given him much. Moreover, he was appointed finance minister in March 1998, and the minister for External Affairs in July 2002. However, he left the party in 2018 stating that "democracy in India is in great danger". Yashwant Sinha was often criticized for leaving the party that offered him an illustrious career. His over-achieving ambition is what led him to go to a direct clash with NDA as their opposing Presidential candidate. As the lawmakers have put their trust in the NDA Presidential candidate, even from the opposition, it reflects the overall emotion of the Indian population that their trust lies with the central ruling party. Even though the opposition came together with Yashwant Sinha, their efforts were futile in the end, which does not bode well for their future in the upcoming elections in the country. The future looks bright for India, as it shows the society is ready for change, that too, for the better. Here, anyone, belonging to any background and class can dream of shooting up for the stars. Also, this development has the potential for the decisive upbringing of the downtrodden and backward class in India. In her political career, Draupadi Murmu was a tireless and selfless organizer. If she can continue her work with a similar zeal, India's future is in safe hands, undoubtedly.

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Twitter urges shareholders to vote on Musk buyout bid on Sept 13

The firm is locked in a legal battle with the mercurial Tesla boss over his effort to walk away from the deal inked in April this year, and a trial is to begin in October



Twitter on Tuesday urged shareholders to endorse the \$44 billion deal Elon Musk made to buy the online podium, setting a vote on the merger for September 13. The firm is locked in a legal battle with the mercurial Tesla boss over his effort to walk away from the agreement, and a judge has called for a trial to begin in

October. "Twitter believes that Mr. Musk's purported termination is invalid and wrongful, and the merger agreement remains in effect," chief executive Parag Agrawal and board chairman Bret Taylor said in a copy of a letter to investors filed with the US Securities and Exchange Commission. "Your vote at the special meeting is critical to our ability to complete the merger." Twitter shareholders were assured that they will be able to attend the meeting online, and vote remotely. Twitter's board unanimously recommended that shareholders vote in favor of Musk buying the company for \$54.20 per share under the terms

of a deal inked in April. We are committed to closing the merger on the price and terms agreed upon with Mr. Musk," Tuesday's letter said. Twitter shares ended the formal trading day Tuesday at \$39.34. The company last week blamed disappointing quarterly earnings results on "headwinds," including uncertainty imposed on the company by Musk's chaotic buyout bid. The social giant reported that the number of "monetizable" daily active users — those who can be shown advertising — increased by 8.8 million to 237.8 million. Twitter's results covered the period ending in

June, and so don't include Musk's move in July to try to "terminate" the deal on the argument that the platform was not forthcoming about its tally of fake accounts. The social media network has countered by saying Musk already agreed to the deal and can't back out now. A court in the eastern US state of Delaware agreed to a fast-track trial on whether to force the billionaire to complete the buyout. Billions of dollars are at stake, but so is the future of Twitter, which Musk has said should allow any legal speech — an absolutist position that has sparked fears the network could be used to incite violence.

Karnataka: A state of exclusion

Janaki Nair writes: Divisive politics drowns out clamour against corruption, criminality in Karnataka

The BJP in Karnataka is leaving no stone unturned in achieving the permanent abjection of Muslims in this once composite state. A determined march towards realising Hindu Rashtra in the shortest possible time, and delivering the South (more "legitimately" and respectably than in 2018) to the BJP in 2023 has begun. The Bajrang Dal, Hindu Janajagruti Samiti, and Sri Rama Sene, despite minor quibbles with the ruling party, are joined by ordinary Kannadigas to enable this rapid political, social and economic disenfranchisement. An ever-lengthening list of accusations against Muslims finds a credulous and receptive audience — for alleged depredations in the past (building mosques on the site of temples), for plans for the future (the community's devious demographic design) or for merely existing.

After months of attacks — via the threat of violence, actual violence, or through multiple court cases and government orders on hijab, halal, azaan, and Muslim commerce at Hindu jatras — comes the latest mode by which Muslim abjection is ensured. In February, Harsha Hindu, a member of the Bajrang Dal was murdered in Shivamogga. Initially, the police stated that the murder was a "localised crime stemming from

long-standing communal rivalry" and cited his criminal record — five cases of assault and attempt to murder with communal overtones, including participation in a mob attack on Shivamogga's Muslim traders in December 2020. But soon, the police — instead of investigating the murder — managed to find a larger Islamic conspiracy. Chief Minister B Bommai presented the family with a cheque of Rs 25 lakh from state funds. Similarly, in April, the death of a young man, Chandru, in a road rage case was given communal overtones by the political leadership, despite police assertions to the contrary. Karnataka, it seems, has now gone beyond the assertion that a Hindu can do no wrong to the conviction that a Muslim can do no right — even in representations. The play — Jotegiruvana Chandira, or The Moon Will be With Us — loosely derived by Jayanth Kaikini from the Fiddler on the Roof, had been performed for the past one-and-a-half decades without incident. It became "unbearable" to a small group of Bajrang Dal activists of Sorab taluk, Shivamogga District on July 3. They terminated the performance because it portrayed Muslims in a good light. The police, who were at first unaware of the reasons for the disruption,

nevertheless upheld it, even giving the Dal time to think up other equally illegal "reasons" for stopping the performance. That it portrayed an inter-faith alliance? Or that no play foregrounding Muslims can be performed in a Lingayat-owned hall? How does it matter since we have heard nothing since?

Even more surprising was the uncomplaining acquiescence of the audience to this abrupt end to their entertainment. For some time now, despite a small, spirited and vociferous push back by some Kannadigas, there has been widespread acceptance of, and even active agreement with, the stand of the Hindu Right. The "nuisance" posed by azaan, the unacceptability of the "cruelty" of halal, the unfairness of Muslim stalls at Hindu festivals, (or indeed of any kind of successful Muslim business, WIPRO exempted), and the necessary redressal of unfair "weightage" given to Jainism, Buddhism and Muslim rule in Karnataka textbooks appear now to be a vocalised common sense of large section of Hindus.

Scrubbing public memory clean of Karnataka's syncretic traditions, whether in practice (as is being attempted through claims to the paduka puja at Bababudangiri, or in ending "salam mangalarathi" in the



name of Tipu at Kollur Mookambika) or in textbook representations, has been made easy.

Hindu claims to tolerance, a commitment to gender equality, and other noble virtues are also gathering force. In March, to buttress the righteousness of its decision on the hijab ban, the Karnataka High Court quoted at length B R Ambedkar's lament about the deplorable fate of the veiled Muslim. Thus, patriarchy is made coterminous with one religion, while the majority shoves its own foundational inequalities behind Ambedkar's shoulders. The sustainable communalism of the Hindu Right drowns out the allegations of corruption and depredation involving leading political lights. We hear no more, for instance of "Sriki" or Srikrishna, the young mastermind behind the massive crypto-currency scam, after he was arrested and released on bail

within days. Minister K S Eshwarappa has now been cleared of culpability for the suicide of one unpaid PWD contractor, despite his suicide note and contractors' anger about the unbearable burden of the 40 per cent bribe allegedly demanded by the state's ruling party. Daily denials are issued about the industrial-scale rigging of the examination to recruit 545 police sub-inspectors.

Far better and more rewarding to keep the anti-Muslim pot boiling. Easier, too, to announce Karnataka's triumphant entry into the Brave New Hindu Rashtra with government support (Rs 5,000) for pilgrimage to Kasi. The "secularism" that the government is quick to invoke in withdrawing Muslim privileges (hijab in classrooms, or haj subsidies) is a customised weapon to ensure the permanent abjection of Karnataka's Muslims.

The need of the hour: ASHA for elderly

India's ingenuity in leveraging community resources to address her complex problems presents a unique opportunity to make her a country which offers a hopeful future for both her elderly and her young people

The recently published United Nations' "World Population Prospects" has attracted much media attention because of its projection that India will surpass China as the world's most populous country next year, much sooner than originally expected. Amongst the many important perspectives which have been discussed are concerns about how the phase of jobless growth we are currently witnessing threatens to squander the country's unique demographic dividend. The report has, once again, shone the spotlight on the importance of investing in women's education and reproductive rights, rather than coercive population control policies. Indeed, the continuing growth of the population in the coming decades is now largely driven by increasing life expectancy, rather than babies being born.

I can see the impact of increasing life expectancy from very close quarters: My father is now 89 years old, an age which would have been inconceivable at the time of our Independence when life expectancy was around 30 years. Certainly, in the highly privileged social class to which my family



belongs, such an advanced age is no longer exceptional. Indeed, as India celebrates her own coming of age, turning 75 this year, the population projections suggest that the country is already home to 30 million persons who are 75 or older. I will reach this milestone in 2039. By that time, the World Population Prospects estimates there will be nearly 100 million persons older than 75 in India. This is a staggering number of people who are no longer in the workforce and who are at a much greater risk to be living with and dying from a chronic, often disabling, health condition.

Mercifully though, neither of my parents was afflicted by dementia. No illness can be more devastating for the person, and their families, than dementia, a condition

associated with ageing and resulting from progressive degeneration of the brain. Dementia poses an enormous burden of care as one gradually loses the ability to care for oneself and to think, plan and behave in a rational way. A recent paper which synthesised 20 epidemiological studies, including nearly 90,000 individuals from India, reported that about 8 per cent of the population over 75 was afflicted by this condition. One estimate from the reputed Alzheimer's Association suggests that the country is already home to 4 million people with dementia; this number will grow dramatically in the future as the population ages. The final, most difficult, stage of dementia, by which time the person will need round-the-clock care for even the simplest activities of daily living, can

linger for up to three years. Where once our multi-generational families could be relied upon for care-giving (of course, this was typically done by the women in the family), the population transition has been accompanied by dramatic changes in the family structure and an increasing proportion of the elderly will live only with their elderly spouse or alone.

There is a solution which is in plain sight. One of India's singular contributions to population health has been its deployment of frontline workers to deliver promotive and preventive healthcare. India's celebrated Accredited Social Health Activists (ASHAs) have been singularly responsible not only for the dramatic reductions in maternal and infant mortality contributing to our increased life expectancy, but

also to achieving our impressive Covid vaccination coverage. They were deservedly awarded the WHO Director-General's Global Health Leaders Award in May for their outstanding contribution towards protecting and promoting health. The ASHA program is a template for building a community-based workforce, anchored in the large and growing network of government Health and Wellness Centres across the country, to support the diverse health and social care needs for elders. As the population projections show, India is rich with human resources who are young and looking for work and we could simultaneously address two population challenges by empowering working-age adults who are jobless in the service of elders. What elders need, most of all, is a caring and compassionate person, with the requisite skills, to accompany them on the last journey of their lives. India's ingenuity in leveraging community resources to address her complex problems presents a unique opportunity to make her a country which offers a hopeful future for both her elderly and her young people.

Leaders should also bear responsibility for administrative lapses

We must remember what then Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee was trying to remind the nation of when he mentioned 'raj dharma' and, more importantly, to whom. We must remember that the world's opinion matters in these globalised times

I don't consider it prudent to debate issues with highly polarised dimensions because one can't expect any fruitful outcome from such an exercise. Yet, I am constrained to give a rejoinder to certain presumptions arrived at in an article by Abhinav Kumar ('An inconvenient truth', IE, July 14), a senior member of the Indian Police Service, in which I also had the opportunity to spend more than three decades of my life. I feel it necessary because if the sweeping generalisations, through which Kumar tries to give us his understanding about certain very serious issues of governance or the lack thereof, are not rebutted, they may create incorrect impressions. It is all the more necessary to give a rejoinder



as the author reminds us of his identity as an IPS officer by referring to "our own Rajendra Kumar" but very conveniently forgetting Sanjiv Bhatt and R B Sreekumar, two outstanding members of the service who are in jail because they had the courage to stand up against the rulers of the day.

Kumar feels that big administrative lapses are more

systemic failures and any attempt to point fingers at the person in the driver's seat is to "place too much faith in the ability of two or three individuals". He has given three examples, which are significant occasions of the total collapse of the law and order machinery in this country. His arguments make it clear from the very beginning that he is concerned

about Teesta Setalvad getting so much attention after her arrest and the "ignorant" trying to paint the then Gujarat leadership as being responsible for what happened during the 2002 communal riots in the state. Anybody who has even a little knowledge of the system of governance in India knows that it is always top driven. A few glaring examples of

commission and omission may be taken from the article itself. One could wonder what the fate of the Babri mosque in Ayodhya would have been if there had been no Narasimha Rao at the helm of affairs in New Delhi on December 6, 1992? Could the structure have been demolished in the presence of a huge contingent of armed policemen? Similarly, would the violence against Sikhs after Indira Gandhi's assassination have been possible if the government of the day had decided to intervene effectively? One can scan the newspapers of the first week of November 1984 and it is clear that the violence took place only in states that had Congress governments.

(Contd. on page 29)

Monkeypox outbreak: It's time to act, not panic

It's a self-limiting disease. But the recent outbreak along with the Covid pandemic should make us think about how best to check zoonotic diseases



suggests that sexual or intimate contact are the most common modes of transmission. It can also be spread by sharing a bed, towel, or unwashed clothes. It's also worth noting that monkeypox does not spread from person to person through everyday activities like walking next to or having a casual conversation with an infected person. Because symptoms usually appear 5-21 days after exposure, people with rashes, sores in the mouth, rash, eye irritation or redness, or swollen lymph nodes should be monitored. What begins as a rash progresses through several stages, including macule, papule, or vesicle, pustule, and crust.

When symptoms appear, it is critical to isolate the infected from other people and pets, cover their lesions, and contact the nearest healthcare provider, preferably by phone if possible. It is also critical to avoid close physical contact with others until instructed to do

so by our healthcare provider. Because most people know the importance of isolation and quarantine during Covid outbreaks, it is preferable to use home isolation whenever possible. In addition to the precautions taken during Covid-19 (mask, washing, and distance), people should avoid contact with sick or dead wild animals and thoroughly cook animal meat. Priority should be given to educating grassroots workers about symptoms, specimen collection, disease detection, acquiring sample collection equipment, and maintaining cold storage of specimens. Public awareness of disease transmission should be prioritised to reduce the stigma associated with the diagnosis. Increased surveillance and detection of monkeypox cases are critical for controlling the disease's spread and understanding the changing epidemiology of this resurging disease. Most people will recover

completely. Preventive health measures, such as avoiding infected animal or human contact and practising good hand hygiene, are the best option. Monkeypox is mostly treated by managing symptoms and preventing complications if it is diagnosed. In the minor proportion who are immunocompromised, complications can occur; pulmonary failure was the most common complication with a high mortality rate. In the US, pre-exposure vaccination with JYNNEOS® is available to healthcare workers and lab workers exposed to this group of poxviruses. The smallpox vaccine is 85 percent effective against the disease. Another vaccine, ACAM2000, is a live vaccinia virus vaccine that is otherwise recommended for smallpox immunisation and can also be used for high-risk individuals during monkeypox outbreaks.

(Contd. on page 29)

What is behind the heat waves affecting the United States?

Climate change caused by the burning of fossil fuels is a global phenomenon that is certainly playing a role in what the United States is experiencing

Virtually all the contiguous United States experienced above normal temperatures in the past week, with more dangerously hot weather forecast. The US heat wave followed record heat that killed hundreds if not thousands of people and sparked wildfires in Europe.

WHAT IS A HEAT WAVE?

A heat wave has no single scientific definition. Depending on the climate of a region, it can be determined by a certain number of days above a specific temperature or percentile of the norm.

ARCTIC WARMING AND JET STREAM MIGRATION

The Arctic is warming three to four times faster than the globe as a whole, meaning there is ever less difference between northern temperatures and those closer to the equator.

That is resulting in swings in the North Atlantic jet stream, which in turn leads to extreme weather events like heat waves and floods, according to Jennifer Francis, senior scientist at the Woodwell Climate Research Center.



HEAT DOMES

Warmer oceans contribute to heat domes, which trap heat over large geographical areas. This weekend the heat dome is stretching from the southern plains of the Oklahoma/Arkansas area all the way to the eastern seaboard, according to the U.S. Weather Prediction Center.

Scientists have found the main cause of heat domes is a strong change in ocean

temperatures from west to east in the tropical Pacific Ocean during the preceding winter.

As prevailing winds move the hot air east, the northern shifts of the jet stream trap the air and move it toward land, where it sinks, resulting in heat waves," the U.S. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration says on its website.

EL NIÑO AND LA NIÑA

Every few years, the climate patterns

known as El Niño and, less frequently, La Niña occur. El Niño brings warm water from the equatorial Pacific Ocean up to the western coast of North America, and La Niña brings colder water.

At present, La Niña is in effect. Because summer temperatures trend lower during La Niña, climate scientists are concerned about what a serious heat wave would look like during the next El Niño, when even hotter summer weather could be expected.

HUMAN-INFLUENCED CLIMATE CHANGE

Climate change caused by the burning of fossil fuels is a global phenomenon that is certainly playing a role in what the United States is experiencing, scientists say.

"Climate change is making extreme and unprecedented heat events both more intense and more common, pretty much universally throughout the world," said Daniel Swain, climate scientist at UCLA.

(Contd. on page 29)

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How BMC is creating a 3D digital map of Mumbai city

Mumbai's map will be uploaded on to a private cloud by the civic body, which can then be used for infrastructure and development planning



The Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) has started the process of creating a three-dimensional digital model of Mumbai city after trying the project on pilot basis for South Mumbai's Worli area in September last year. What is 3D mapping, and why is the BMC undertaking the project?

What is 3D mapping?

The process of 3D mapping will create a digital map of Mumbai's buildings, roads, bridges, underpasses, water bodies, modes of transport, traffic islands apart from its open spaces, civic amenities and slums. This map will have a 360-degree panoramic street view.

This is the first time the project is being done pan-Mumbai. In September 2021, BMC completed 3D mapping of the Worli area, largely covered under the G/South administrative ward of the civic body.

How much area will the map project cover?

While Mumbai city is approximately 480 sq km, the project will be undertaken for an area of approximately 500 sq km, considering buffer space required while using mapping tools.

The civic body has invited a request for proposal (RFP) for the project, welcoming ideas from consultants and experts to refine the scope of the project. It will then appoint a third party as a contractor to carry out the project with a timeline of 18 months. As part

of the project, BMC will also map changes in the city year-on-year for the next three years once the project is live.

How will it help?

Highlighting the uses of the project, BMC in its request for proposal has said, "While the

world we live in is 3-dimensional in nature, planning and development activities encompassing urban governance, city infrastructure upgrades are still being carried out on 2D maps. To meet the demands of cities in the 21st

century, it is imperative that urban governments can visualise cities in 3D for comprehensive 360-degree views, undertake simulations and conduct detailed analysis on the data, all of which is inefficient and close to impossible on archaic 2D maps."

The 3D map will be uploaded on to a private cloud by the civic body, which can then be used by the administration for infrastructure and development planning, disaster management and response mobilisation, and environment analysis. Change detection can be used for finding unauthorised development. Since it is a 'digital twin' of Mumbai city, created in real time, it will enable simulations for gauging impact areas of projects, disasters, and urban governance interventions.

The BMC will also run simulations for scenarios such as disaster management, work of the Mumbai fire brigade, planning on existing roads and bridges, estimation and collection of property tax, development planning, and encroachment detection.

What tools will be used for the project?

Surveys which will create the map include aerial photogrammetry, which enables mapping of distances and measurements between objects; Light Detection and Ranging (LiDAR) survey; and change detection with the help of geospatial technology, which includes use of geographic information system (GIS), remote sensing (RS) and global positioning system (GPS).

Microsoft's earnings suffer as computer sales decline

The US technology giant, Microsoft on Tuesday said that its earnings for the recent quarter fell short of expectations as the sales of personal computers suffered due to low demand and supply delays from China. The tech firm beat market expectations with a \$16.7 billion profit on \$51.9 billion in revenue but fell short of the same quarter year earlier. As per the firm its sales were harmed by the high US currency which made its products more expensive in overseas markets. Prior to a pandemic, the personal computer market had been steadily declining as more people switched to smartphones and tablets, AFP reported.

Dan Ives, a Wedbush analyst in a note to investors said that the decline in earnings was mostly caused due to fluctuating currency exchange rates and the closure of personal computer manufacturing in China. Ives states, "The most important core business; cloud and commercial bookings were relatively rock solid despite fears." He further added, "The core DNA of the Microsoft growth story is cloud and core Azure growth which was healthy this quarter and appears to have momentum into 2023 despite economic headwinds." Chief financial officer at the firm Amy Hood said, "In a dynamic environment we saw strong demand, took share, and increased customer commitment to our cloud platform."



However, the earnings report stated that the firm lost \$300 million in income that would have been generated from Windows operating systems purchased to power the machines due to production shut-in in China and declining demand. Furthermore, after the pandemic, the prevalence of online commerce, employment, socialising, and entertainment has rekindled demand for desktop computers but isn't sure when will this trend continue.

Ad revenue of the company at news, search and LinkedIn suffered due to reduced marketing expenditure. The firm also logged \$126 million in operating costs connected to stopping operations in Russia amid the Ukraine crisis. However, the company's CEO Satya Nadella said, "We see real opportunity to help every customer in every industry use digital technology to overcome today's challenges and emerge stronger."

How do we know when a recession has begun?

What's going on with the US economy, which is sending frustratingly mixed signals? Here are some answers to your questions



By one common definition, the U.S. economy is on the cusp of a recession. Yet that definition isn't the one that counts.

On Thursday, when the government estimates the gross domestic product for the April-June period, some economists think it may show that the economy shrank for a second straight quarter. That would meet a longstanding assumption for when a recession has begun.

But economists say that wouldn't mean that a recession had started. During those same six months when the economy might have contracted, businesses and other employers added a prodigious 2.7 million jobs — more than were gained in most entire years before the pandemic. Wages are also rising at a healthy pace, with many employers still struggling to attract and retain enough workers. The job market's strength is a key reason why the Federal Reserve is expected to announce another hefty hike in its short-term interest rate on Wednesday, one day before the GDP report. Several Fed officials have cited the healthy job growth as evidence that the economy should be able to withstand higher rates and avoid a downturn. Many economists, though, are dubious of that assertion. The Fed is also trying to combat raging inflation, which reached a 9.1% annual rate in June, the worst mark in nearly 41 years. Rapid price increases, particularly for such essentials as food, gas and rent, have eroded Americans' incomes and led to much gloomier views of the economy

among consumers.

The definition of recession that is most widely accepted is the one determined by the blandly named National Bureau of Economic Research, a nonprofit group of economists whose Business Cycle Dating Committee defines a recession as "a significant decline in economic activity that is spread across the economy and lasts more than a few months." The committee assesses a wide range of factors before publicly declaring the death of an economic expansion — and it often does so well after the fact.

So if we're not in a recession, what's going on with the economy, which is sending frustratingly mixed signals? Here are some answers to those and other questions:

Is the economy shrinking — or not?

It did in the first three months of the year, when GDP contracted 1.6% at an annual rate. Economists have forecast that on Thursday, the government will estimate that the economy managed to grow at an annual rate of just below 1% in the April-June quarter, according to data provider FactSet. If accurate, that forecast would indicate that the economy isn't technically in recession by any definition. Even if growth does go negative for a second straight quarter, Fed officials and Biden administration economists point to a lesser-known measure called "gross domestic income."

GDP calculates the value of

the nation's output of goods and services by adding up spending by consumers, businesses and governments. By contrast, GDI, as the name implies, seeks to measure the same thing by assessing incomes.

Over time, the two measures should track each other. But they often diverge in the short run. In the first quarter, GDI grew 1.8% — much better than the 1.6% decline in GDP.

As part of its judgment of whether an economy is in recession, the NBER considers an average of the two measures. In the first quarter, the average was 0.2%, suggesting that the economy expanded slightly.

That else does the NBER monitor?

The NBER studies many other data points in determining recessions, including measures of income, employment, inflation-adjusted spending, retail sales and factory output. It puts greater weight on jobs and a gauge of inflation-adjusted income that excludes government support payments such as Social Security.

That gauge covers combined income from all workers, so it rises when the unemployed find a job or when existing workers receive a pay raise. The measure increased slightly in April and May after a flat reading in the first quarter of this year.

But don't a lot of people think a recession is coming?

Yes, because many people now feel more financially burdened.

With wage gains trailing inflation for most people, higher prices for such essentials as gas, food, and rent have eroded Americans' spending power.

On Monday, Walmart reported that higher gas and food costs have forced its shoppers to reduce their purchases of discretionary spending such as new clothing, a clear sign that consumer spending, a key driver of the economy, is weakening. The nation's largest retailer, Walmart reduced its profit outlook and

said it will have to discount more items like furniture and electronics.

And the Fed's rate hikes have caused average mortgage rates to double from a year ago, to 5.5%, causing a sharp fall in home sales and construction.

Higher rates will also likely weigh on businesses' willingness to invest in new buildings, machinery and other equipment. If companies reduce spending and investment, they'll also start to slow hiring. Rising caution among companies about spending freely could lead eventually to layoffs. If the economy were to lose jobs and the public were to grow more fearful, consumers would further reduce spending.

The Fed's rapid rate hikes have raised the likelihood of recession in the next two years to nearly 50%, Goldman Sachs economists have said. And Bank of America economists now forecast a "mild" recession later this year.

What are some signs of an impending recession?

The clearest signal that a recession is under way, economists say, would be a steady rise in job losses and a surge in unemployment. In the past, an increase in the unemployment rate of three-tenths of a percentage point, on average over the previous three months, has meant that a recession will soon follow.

Many economists monitor the number of people who seek unemployment benefits each week, which indicates whether layoffs are worsening. Last week, applications for jobless aid rose to 251,000, the highest level in eight months. While that is a potentially concerning sign, that is still a low level historically.

Any other signals to watch for?

Many economists also monitor changes in the interest payments, or yields, on different bonds for a recession signal known as an "inverted yield curve." This occurs when the yield on the 10-year Treasury

falls below the yield on a short-term Treasury, such as the 3-month T-bill. That is unusual. Normally, longer-term bonds pay investors a richer yield in exchange for tying up their money for a longer period.

Inverted yield curves generally mean that investors foresee a recession that will compel the Fed to slash rates. Inverted curves often predate recessions. Still, it can take 18 to 24 months for a downturn to arrive after the yield curve inverts.

For the past two weeks, the yield on the two-year Treasury has exceeded the 10-year yield, suggesting that markets expect a recession soon. Many analysts say, though, that comparing the 3-month yield to the 10-year has a better recession-forecasting track record. Those rates are not inverted now.

Will the Fed keep raising rates even as the economy slows?

The economy's flashing signals — slowing growth with strong hiring — have put the Fed in a tough spot. Jerome Powell is aiming for a "soft landing," in which the economy weakens enough to slow hiring and wage growth without causing a recession and brings inflation back to the Fed's 2% target.

But Powell has acknowledged that such an outcome has grown more difficult to achieve. Russia's invasion of Ukraine and China's COVID-19 lockdowns have driven up prices for energy food, and many manufactured parts in the U.S.

Powell has also indicated that if necessary, the Fed will keep raising rates even amid a weak economy if that's what's needed to tame inflation.

"Is there a risk that we would go too far?" Powell asked last month. "Certainly there's a risk, but I wouldn't agree that's the biggest risk to the economy. The biggest mistake to make...would be to fail to restore price stability."

Bangladesh Hindu outfits stage nationwide protests over constant attack on minorities

Protests are being held across Bangladesh against the attack on the Hindu community and the rape of Hindu women across the country

(By Staff Reporter) Organisations across Bangladesh held protests against the attack on the Hindu community in the country. A protest march was held in Chittagong on Friday against the attack on the Hindu community and the ongoing killing of Hindu teachers and rape of Hindu women in Bangladesh, reported local media.

Hindu Sangbad, a Bangladesh news agency wrote on Twitter, "Demonstrations by various Hindu organizations in Shahbagh and across the country were also held peacefully in protest against the barbaric radical Jihadi attack on Hindus in Narail Sahapara." Earlier, Bangladesh Home

Minister Asaduzzaman Khan said the government will ensure strict action against people who disturb communal harmony in the country.

The Bangladesh National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) also directed the Home Ministry to probe into the attacks and determine whether there was negligence in preventing them. The NHRC also said that the violence in a "secular country" is not acceptable under any circumstances.

According to ANI, the human rights body's remarks came after reports of Hindu minorities being attacked in Bangladesh came to light amid rumours of alleged

Facebook posts slandering Islam. Homes of Hindu minorities were set on fire on July 15 in the Sahapara area of Lohagara, Narail. The mobs started setting houses on fire after Friday prayers, saying that an 18-year-old man from the neighbourhood hurt their religious feelings on Facebook. According to locals, the post was made by Akash Saha, an 18-year-old college student in the village. They gathered after Friday prayers and protested in front of the student's house, demanding his arrest. The mob spread to neighbouring homes of Hindu minorities after it found out that the boy was missing. One of the victims whose house was burned down told the



Daily Star, "After one group looted all our valuables, another group came and found our door open. As there was nothing left to loot, they set our home on fire." "I don't know how long this threat of violence will haunt us. Who will give us justice? Who will give us security? If I were in the house while they set it on fire, I would have died. God saved me. But is

this any way to survive? All I have now is the sari on my body," she added.

The police detained Akash's father, Ashoke Saha on Friday to "bring the situation under control", while they prepared to file a case under the Digital Security Act against Akash. So far, none of the attackers has been arrested yet, reported the Daily Star.

Pakistan government coalition leaders criticise judiciary over handling of Punjab CM re-election case

Top leaders of Pakistan's ruling coalition government expressed distrust in the Supreme Court's handling of a case related to the election of the chief minister in Punjab province

(By Staff Reporter) Top leaders of Pakistan's ruling coalition on Monday expressed distrust in the Supreme Court's handling of a case related to the election of the chief minister in Punjab province, saying "bench-fixing" is a crime similar to "match-fixing," and urged it to avoid constituting a "specific bench" for taking one-sided decisions.

The coalition government leaders, including the Pakistan Muslim League (Nawaz) Vice President Maryam Nawaz, Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari, JUI-F chief Maulana Fazl ur Rehman and Interior Minister Rana Sanaullah addressed a joint press conference ahead of the significant Supreme Court hearing on Hamza Shehbaz's re-election as the chief minister of Punjab province. "Institutions are insulted from within, not outside. One wrong decision blows up an entire case. Criticism isn't needed where the right decisions are taken," Maryam, the daughter of former Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif and PML-N supremo, said.

The PML-N vice president pointed out that there were many respected judges appointed to the apex court and questioned why

they were not involved in hearing the PML-N's cases.

"One or two judges, who have always been anti-PML-N and anti-government, are repeatedly included in the bench," she said, adding that "bench-fixing is a crime just like match-fixing". The PML-N leader asked for the Supreme Court to take suo motu notice of this issue. Hamza, the son of Pakistan Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, on Saturday took oath as the Chief Minister of the Punjab province after he was re-elected to the post by just three votes amidst high drama when Deputy Speaker Dost Muhammad Mazari rejected 10 crucial votes of his rival candidate Chaudhry Parvez Elahi.

In the 368-member Punjab Assembly, Hamza's Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) received 179 votes, while Elahi's party garnered 176 votes.

Elahi, who was also backed by former premier Imran Khan's Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) party, later moved the Supreme Court, which allowed Hamza to remain as the "trustee" Punjab province Chief Minister till the hearing resumes on Monday but barred him from using his powers

for "political gains" during this period.

Maryam said that ever since Hamza became the chief minister, PTI leaders have been repeatedly approaching the apex court — and this time, they jumped over the walls of the top court.

"Have you ever heard of a trustee

chief minister?" she asked. The firebrand leader said that since Hamza was elected chief minister of Punjab, he was not allowed to work.

"He goes from Parliament to court, and back and forth. What justice is this?" She said that "our justice system is such that when a petition is filed, the people

already know what bench will be constituted and the decision that will be given."

Referring to the PTI's petition against the chief minister's July 22 election, Maryam said that the apex court's doors were opened late at night and the registrar gave "sufficient time" to the party to draft its appeal.

China's population expected to start to shrink before 2025

According to a report by state-backed Global Times, China's population has slowed significantly and is expected to start to shrink ahead of 2025

(SAI Bureau) China's population has slowed significantly and is expected to start to shrink ahead of 2025, the state-backed Global Times reported, citing a senior health official. Birth data released late on Sunday showed that the number of new births in 2021 was the lowest in decades in several provinces.

The number of births in central Hunan province fell below 500,000 for the first time in nearly 60 years, the Global Times said. Only China's southern Guangdong province has had more than 1 million new births, it said.

China is battling to reverse a rapid shrinkage in natural population growth as many young people opt



not to have children due to factors including high cost and work pressure. China's population is expected to start to shrink in 2021-2025, the Global Times said, citing Yang Wenzhuang, head of population and family affairs at

the National Health Commission. A change in China's laws last year to allow women to have three children has not helped, with many women saying the change comes too late and they have insufficient job security and gender equality.

China warns of 'forceful measures' if US House Speaker Pelosi visits Taiwan

The warning came after the Financial Times reported on Saturday that US House of Representatives Speaker Nancy Pelosi might visit Taiwan next month

(SAI Bureau) China's government warned on Tuesday that it would take "forceful measures" if US House of Representatives Speaker Nancy Pelosi visited Taiwan, after the Financial Times said she would go to the Chinese-claimed island next month. Pelosi and her delegation will also visit Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia and Singapore, and spend time in Hawaii at the headquarters of US Indo-Pacific command, the London newspaper added, citing people familiar with the matter. Taiwan's Foreign Ministry said it has "not received relevant information" about any visit. Asked about the report, Drew Hammill, Pelosi's deputy chief of staff, said, "We do not confirm or deny international travel in advance due to longstanding security protocols." The Democratic leader's visit to Taiwan had been postponed from April, after she tested positive for COVID-19. At the time, China said such a visit would severely affect Chinese-US relations. Speaking in Beijing, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Zhao Lijian said any visit by Pelosi would "seriously undermine China's sovereignty and territorial

integrity". "If the US side obstinately clings to this course, China will definitely take resolute and forceful measures to firmly defend its national sovereignty and territorial integrity," he said. "The United States must be fully responsible for all the consequences caused by this." US State Department spokesperson Ned Price, asked about China's reaction, said: "I believe the foreign ministry was weighing in on a hypothetical. That is something that I will hesitate doing here". Taiwan faces mounting pressure from China, which considers the democratically governed island its own territory. The issue is a constant irritant in ties between Beijing and Washington. Taiwan, however, has been heartened by continued support offered by US President Joe Biden's administration, which has repeatedly



spoken of its "rock-solid" commitment to the island. Pelosi, a long-time critic of China, held an online meeting with Taiwanese Vice President William Lai in January as he wrapped up a visit to the United States and Honduras. The White House had expressed concern about the Pelosi trip, the Financial Times said, citing three people familiar with the situation. There were divisions in the Democratic US administration over whether Pelosi should visit Taiwan, the FT quoted two sources as saying. Some officials believed it had been easier to justify a visit in April, as that was just after the start of Russia's invasion of Ukraine, it added. A spokesperson for the US National Security Council would not comment on "travel that the Speaker's office itself has

not announced," and reiterated that the United States remains committed to its One China policy. Separately, the US Navy's 7th Fleet said the Arleigh Burke-class destroyer USS Benfold conducted a routine Taiwan Strait transit on Tuesday, "through international waters in accordance with international law." "The ship transited through a corridor in the Strait that is beyond the territorial sea of any coastal state," it said in a statement. The United States has been carrying out such voyages through the stretch of water separating Taiwan and China about once a month. This has angered Beijing, which views them as a sign of support for the island. This month, China sent fighters across the Taiwan Strait's median line, an action Taiwan described as a provocation. The incident came during a visit to Taipei by Senator Rick Scott, a Republican member of the US Senate Armed Services Committee. On Monday, China asked the United States to immediately cancel a potential sale of military technical assistance to Taiwan worth an estimated \$108 million.

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Myanmar junta executes four democracy activists, sparks widespread condemnation

Myanmar's ruling military executed four democracy activists accused of aiding "terror acts". The European Union, Australia, Canada, Japan, New Zealand, Norway, South Korea, Britain and the US condemned the act



banner down on a street in Yangon that read "We will never be frightened" before turning to run.

'HIDING BODIES AWAY'

The executions were the first carried out among some 117 death sentences handed down by military-run courts since the coup, according to the Assistance Association for Political Prisoners (AAPP), which has been tracking arrests, killings and court verdicts in Myanmar.

Families of the executed men were denied the opportunity to retrieve their loved ones' bodies, said Thazin Nyunt Aung, wife of Phyo Zeyar Thaw, comparing it to murderers covering up their crimes.

"This is killing and hiding bodies away," she told Reuters. "They disrespected both Myanmar people and the international community."

Nilar Thein, wife of Kyaw Min Yu, said she would hold no funeral without a body.

"We all have to be brave, determined and strong," she posted on Facebook. The men were held in Yangon's Insein prison, where families visited last Friday, according to a person with knowledge of the events, who said prison officials allowed only one relative to speak to the detainees via video call.

"I asked then 'why didn't you tell me or my son that it was our last meeting?'" Khin Win May, the mother of Phyo Zeyar Thaw, told BBC Burmese. The junta made no mention of the executions on its nightly television news bulletin on Monday.

Its spokesperson last month defended the death sentences as justified, and used in many countries.

'HEINOUS EXECUTION'

The White House condemned the "heinous execution of pro-democracy activists and elected leaders." U.S. State Department spokesperson Ned Price said

Washington was considering further measures in response to the junta, adding that "all options" were on the table, when asked specifically on potential sanctions on the country's gas sector.

Price urged countries to ban sales of military equipment to Myanmar, not do anything that could lend the junta any international credibility.

U.S. Senate Foreign Relations Committee Chairman Bob Menendez in a statement urged President Joe Biden to impose sanctions on Myanmar Oil and Gas Enterprise, among others. Senate Republican leader Mitch McConnell, who has long had close ties to Suu Kyi, called on Myanmar's neighbours to respond. "If they will not step up and impose meaningful costs on the junta the Biden administration should use authorities already given to it by Congress to sanction Burma's energy sector," he said.

(SAI Bureau) Myanmar's ruling military announced on Monday it had executed four democracy activists accused of aiding "terror acts", sparking widespread condemnation of the country's first executions in decades. Sentenced to death in secretive trials in January and April, the men were accused of helping a civilian resistance movement that has fought the military since last year's coup and bloody crackdown on nationwide protests.

Among those executed were democracy campaigner Kyaw Min Yu, better known as Jimmy, and former lawmaker and hip-hop artist Phyo Zeyar Thaw, an ally of ousted leader Aung San Suu Kyi. The two others executed were Hla Myo Aung and Aung Thura Zaw.

State media said "the punishment has been conducted", but did not say when, or by what method. Previous executions in Myanmar have been by hanging.

The shadow National Unity Government (NUG), which is leading efforts to undermine the junta's attempts to rule Myanmar, said it was time for an international response.

"The global community must punish their cruelty," said Kyaw Zaw, a spokesperson for the NUG president's office. Myanmar has been in chaos since the Feb. 1, 2021 coup, with the military, which has ruled the former British colony for five of the past six decades, engaged in battles on multiple fronts with newly formed militia groups. United Nations human rights chief Michelle Bachelet called the executions a "cruel and regressive step."

U.N. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres strongly condemned the executions and called again for the release of all arbitrarily detained prisoners, including Suu Kyi. In a joint statement, the

European Union, Australia, Canada, Japan, New Zealand, Norway, South Korea, Britain and the United States described the executions as "reprehensible acts of violence that further exemplify the regime's disregard for human rights and the rule of law."

Amnesty International's death penalty adviser, Chiara Sangiorgio, said the executions were "an enormous setback" and that the junta is "not going to stop there."

Human Rights Watch acting Asia director Elaine Pearson said it was "an act of utter cruelty" that "aims to chill the anti-coup protest movement." One video showed several masked protesters chanting and carrying a large

China has infiltrated the US Federal Reserve for over a decade: GOP lawmakers allege in report

(By Staff Reporter) The United States of America is struggling with the sophisticated level of infiltration by China in its myriad systems. From military to tech to finance, China has spread its United Front army everywhere.

According to a report prepared by the Republican staff of the Senate Homeland Security Committee, it has been revealed that the Federal Reserve does not have a system or the adequate resources to counter China, seeking to gather classified, inside information about USA's

monetary policy and economy. The report revealed that China's efforts to infiltrate the US central bank had been ongoing for a decade at least.

The report came out on Tuesday and the central bank promptly discarded the findings. However, what's peculiar is that the major legwork for the report was done by the Federal Reserve itself in 2015.

In 2015, the Federal Reserve had run a counterintelligence operation and found 13 moles or 'persons of interest', whose

relations with the Chinese government raised suspicions.

One of the former Fed employees highlighted in the report and identified



as "Z" had questionable ties to a talent recruitment program in China. It is worth noting that China runs a '1000 talents programme', started in 2008 that attempts to steal Intellectual Property (IP) and other advanced technologies from foreign nations by poaching their experts.

The report by the GOP lawmakers merely builds upon the Federal Reserve report. By disputing the new findings, the central bank is contradicting itself and its findings from seven years ago.

How does China infiltrate a country?

Nazi Germany under Adolf Hitler employed the subtle art of propaganda and deception to convince the masses

to conduct the genocide of fellow human beings. Hitler knew the power of propaganda and thus wrote two chapters about it in 'Mein Kampf'. In the present-day world, no one comes closer to beating China in this game. By using an intricate network of spies, individuals and coalitions, China has been able to raise an army which in popular parlance

is called the 'United Front'. The United Front has been described by Chinese President Xi Jinping as his secret 'magic weapon'. The operations of most of the members in the United Front are covert and spread beyond the middle kingdom. The think tanks, schools, media organisations and every other conceivable civil system are compromised by these workers. They tap individuals like former fed employee 'Z' and shower them with gifts and make them a pawn in the long game.

Sri Lanka Ex President Not In Hiding, Expected To Return: Cabinet Spokesman

Gotabaya Rajapaksa, 73, fled Sri Lanka after the July 9 uprising when people broke into the President's House after months of public protests against him for mishandling the country's worst economic crisis since 1948

he does not believe the former president fled the country, and is in hiding.

He, however, did not offer any other details of Gotabaya Rajapaksa's possible return. Singapore has granted a 14-day short-term visit pass to the former president as he entered the country on a "private visit" on July 14. A spokesman of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Singapore earlier said that Gotabaya Rajapaksa has not asked for asylum and neither has he been granted any asylum. Singapore's Immigration and Checkpoints Authority (ICA) has said that visitors from Sri Lanka who enter Singapore for social visits will generally be issued with a short-term visit pass (STVP) with a duration of up to 30 days. Those who

need to extend their stay in Singapore have to apply online for an extension of their STVP. Applications will be assessed on a case-by-case basis, said the ICA. Meanwhile, commenting on the request made to the Singapore Attorney General to detain the Former Sri Lankan President, the Cabinet Spokesperson said that if there is a situation, the responsible officials in the country will take steps to ensure no harm is done to the former president, the Daily Mirror newspaper quoted Randula Gunawardena as saying. Lawyers from South Africa-based International Truth and Justice Project (ITJP) have submitted a criminal complaint to the Attorney General of Singapore requesting

the immediate arrest of Rajapaksa for war crimes. Gotabaya Rajapaksa served as the defence secretary during his elder brother Mahinda Rajapaksa's tenure as president from 2005 to 2014. Though dubbed as the "war hero", his role in ending the conflict with the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) with the death of its supremo Velupillai Prabhakaran in 2009 is quite divisive as he stands accused of violating human rights, a charge he vehemently denies. The case was withdrawn when he was elected President in 2019 and acquired immunity from prosecution as the head of state. That immunity no longer applies now he has resigned from office. This is believed to be the first criminal complaint against him.

(By Staff Reporter) : Sri Lanka's former president Gotabaya Rajapaksa is not in hiding and is expected to return to the country from Singapore, Cabinet spokesman Bandula Gunawardena said on Tuesday. Gotabaya Rajapaksa, 73, fled Sri Lanka after the July 9 uprising when people broke into the President's House after months of public protests against him for mishandling the country's worst economic crisis since 1948. He first fled to the Maldives on July 13 and from there he proceeded to Singapore the next day. When asked about Gotabaya Rajapaksa at a weekly cabinet media briefing, cabinet Spokesman Randula Gunawardena told reporters that the former president was not in hiding and he is expected to return from Singapore. Randula Gunawardena, who is also the Minister for Transport and Highways and Mass Media, said

Strict restrictions in place at Chinese city of Wuhan amid rise in Covid cases



The Chinese city of Wuhan has gained notoriety worldwide for being 'ground zero' of the COVID-19 pandemic. While the situation was extremely critical at the start, the region was able to bring down the cases over time. However, in the recent past, Wuhan has seen a steady rise in cases once again and the authorities have decided to close down businesses and public transport in order to stop the infection from spreading. As part of the "Covid zero" policy adopted by China, the city will be undergoing mass testing before a decision is taken over whether a total lockdown is required. In the recent past, China has been quite strict when it comes to dealing with places showing rise in Covid numbers. Earlier, Shanghai and parts of Beijing went through hard measures as lockdown resulted in food shortages and unhygienic living conditions for the citizens of the city. While a lockdown has not been declared in Wuhan as of now and the measures are mainly restricted to certain districts of the region, but it will still affect around a million people. In Jiangxia, the authorities found four cases after a long time as two were found in regular testing and two were believed to have been infected due to close proximity. This was a strong deviation from the trend that saw China maintain zero cases in most places around Wuhan.

Pakistan uses boats, helicopters to evacuate flood victims

In a statement, Pakistan's military said the previous day that troops were assisting local authorities in Baluchistan to evacuate people from flood-affected areas

(By Staff Reporter) Rescuers backed by troops used boats and helicopters Wednesday to evacuate hundreds of marooned people from the country's southwest, where floods triggered by monsoon rains have killed 104 people.

Since June 14, the downpours have damaged bridges, roads and about 4,000 homes in Baluchistan province, according to the National Disaster Management Authority.

It said 337 people have died in rain-related incidents across impoverished Pakistan.

Akram Bugti, a rescue official, said hundreds of people were stranded just in

Lasbella, a district in Baluchistan province, after floodwater inundated several villages. He said the Baluchistan government is providing food, tents and other essential items to flood-affected people. In a statement, Pakistan's military said the previous day that troops were assisting local authorities in Baluchistan to evacuate people from flood-affected areas.

It said the military had set up medical camps in

deluged areas, where the World Health Organization this week launched an anti-cholera vaccination campaign to prevent the spread of the water-borne disease.

Cholera has caused 28 deaths and sickened



thousands of people in Baluchistan in recent months.

The disease is endemic and seasonal in Pakistan, where many people don't have access to clean drinking water. Health officials said the anti-cholera vaccination campaign began on July 25 and will continue until Friday.

The monsoon season runs from July through September in Pakistan

US Says Russia's Exit From International Space Station "Unfortunate"

The valuable professional collaboration our space agencies have had over the years, and especially in light of our renewed agreement on space-flight cooperation," State Department spokesman Ned Price said



(SAI Bureau) The United States Space Station after 2024 and on Tuesday voiced regret over Russia's announcement that it would exit the International Space Station after 2024 and said it was taken by surprise. "It's an unfortunate development given the critical scientific work

performed at the ISS, the valuable professional collaboration our space agencies have had over the years, and especially in light of our renewed agreement on space-flight cooperation," State Department spokesman Ned Price said. "I understand that we were taken by surprise by the public statement," he told reporters. NASA's director of the ISS, Robyn Gatens, earlier said that the US space agency had not "received any official word from the partner as to the news today." NASA itself plans to retire the ISS — a symbol of post-Cold War unity — after 2030 as it

transitions to working with our partners, but the decision to leave this station after 2024 has been made," Borisov told Russian President Vladimir Putin. "I think that by this time we will start putting together a Russian orbital station," Borisov added, calling it the space program's main "priority." "Good," Putin replied in comments released by the Kremlin. Until now, space exploration was one of the few areas where cooperation between Russia and the United States and its allies had not been wrecked by tensions over Ukraine and elsewhere.

our partners, but the decision to leave this station after 2024 has been made," Borisov told Russian President Vladimir Putin. "I think that by this time we will start putting together a Russian orbital station," Borisov added, calling it the space program's main "priority." "Good," Putin replied in comments released by the Kremlin. Until now, space exploration was one of the few areas where cooperation between Russia and the United States and its allies had not been wrecked by tensions over Ukraine and elsewhere.

Cops shoot at woman, arrest her for opening fire at Dallas airport in US

A 37-year-old woman fired several gunshots inside of Dallas' Love Field Airport in the US state of Texas on Monday, before an officer shot and wounded her. She was placed under arrest

(News Agency) A 37-year-old woman fired several gunshots, apparently at the ceiling, inside of Dallas' Love Field Airport on Monday before an officer shot and wounded her, authorities said. The woman was dropped off at the airport at about 11 am, walked inside near the ticketing counters and entered a bathroom, Dallas police Chief Eddie Garcia said at a news conference. She emerged wearing a hooded sweatshirt or some other clothing that she hadn't arrived in, pulled a gun and fired several shots, apparently at the ceiling, he said. "At this point, we don't know where exactly the individual was aiming," Garcia

said. An officer nearby shot the woman in her "lower extremities," wounding her and enabling her to be taken into custody, Garcia said. She was taken to a local hospital for treatment. "No other individuals were injured in this event other than the suspect," Garcia said.

Police later identified the woman as Portia Odufuwa, 37, and did not speculate as to her motive. We wanted to ensure that our community knows that this is not an active situation," the chief said. Karen Warner told The Dallas Morning News that she was checking in for her flight when she heard a loud argument about 20 feet (6 meters) behind her, followed by

a gunshot. Then she started running. "I heard about 10 more shots while I was running away," said Warner, who couldn't discern what the argument was about. Love Field, which is one of the Dallas-Fort Worth area's two major airports, suspended airport operations after the shooting but said at around 3:45 pm that they had resumed. The Federal Aviation Administration held up flights for a couple of hours while police investigated, but flights were cleared to resume around mid-afternoon. A spokesman for Southwest Airlines, which uses Love Field as a hub, said the airline cancelled most of its flights that were scheduled



to depart or arrive at Love Field before 6 pm CDT. Southwest cancelled 85 flights at Love Field on Monday, according to the flight tracking website FlightAware. The shooting wasn't the first violent incident at the airport. In 2016, a police

officer shot and wounded a man outside of Love Field after police said he advanced toward the officer with large landscaping rocks in his hands after battering his ex-girlfriend's car with a traffic cone and rocks as she dropped him off at the airport.

US accuses China of increased 'provocations' in South China Sea

(News Agency) The US on Tuesday (July 26) held China responsible for increased "provocations" in South China Sea against rival claimants. "There is a clear and upward trend of PRC provocations against South China Sea claimants and other states lawfully operating in the region," Jung Pak, deputy assistant secretary for East Asia at the State Department, told a US think tank event, referring to the People's Republic of China. China claims the entirety of South China Sea citing ancient claims. It is often at odds with smaller countries in the region over the issue.

Jung Pak said that China's aircrafts had increasingly carried out unsafe intercepts of Australian aircraft in

international airspace above South China Sea. She also stated that China had also challenged marine research and exploration activities within Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) of the Philippines. US President Joe Biden is anticipated to speak with his Chinese counterpart Xi Jinping this week. It is expected that the conversation will focus on ways prevent the growing US-China strategic rivalry. Jung Pak's also came ahead of meetings of Southeast Asian foreign ministers and partners, including the United States, next week in Cambodia. Pak said Washington had a "very complicated relationship with Beijing" was not trying to counter everything it was doing in Southeast Asia and the rest of the developing world.



Trump Again Hints At 2024 Presidential Run, Repeats False Election Claims

The 76-year-old Donald Trump stopped short of declaring his candidacy, but laid out what he believed should be the priorities for the "next Republican president"



(SAI Bureau) Donald Trump returned to Washington on Tuesday for the first time since leaving the White House 18 months ago, delivering a fiery speech sprinkled with strong hints he may run for president again in 2024.

The 76-year-old Trump stopped short of declaring his candidacy, but laid out what he believed should be the priorities for the "next Republican president." "I

always say I ran the first time and I won, then I ran a second time and I did much better," Trump said. "We may just have to do it again. We have to straighten out our country. "I look forward to laying out many more details in the weeks and months to come." Several hours before Trump took the stage at the right-wing America First Policy Institute, his former vice president, Mike Pence, who is also considering a White House run in 2024, addressed a different conservative audience in Washington.

Speaking at the Young America's Foundation conference, Pence said Americans must look to the future not the past and played down differences with Trump. "Elections are about the future," Pence said. "I came today not to look backwards but to look forward. "I don't know that the president and I differ on issues," he said. "But we may differ on focus." Trump's 90-minute address to the conservative America First Policy Institute echoed many of the themes of his victorious 2016 campaign,

including illegal immigration and crime. Trump repeated his false claims that he won the 2020 election and denounced the House committee investigation into the January 6 attack on the US Capitol by his supporters as the work of "political hacks and thugs." "If I renounced my beliefs, if I agreed to stay silent, if I stayed at home and just took it easy, the persecution of Donald Trump would stop immediately," he said. "But that's not what I will do. I can't do that. "They really want to damage me so I can no longer go back to work for you," he said.

"And I don't think that's going to happen," he added, prompting chants from the crowd of "Four more years!" - 'Cesspool of crime' - Trump lashed out repeatedly at Democratic President Joe Biden, blaming him for the country's ills. "We are a nation in decline," he said. "We are a failing nation." "Inflation is the highest in 49 years," Trump said "Gas prices have reached the highest in the history of our country." He accused Biden of

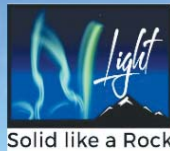
allowing an "invasion" by millions of migrants crossing the southern border.

"Other countries very happily send all of their criminals now through our open border into the United States," he said. "The next Republican president must immediately implement every aspect of the Trump agenda that achieved the most secure border in history," he said. Trump said the United States "is now a cesspool of crime." "We have blood, death and suffering on a scale once unthinkable," he said. "Democrat-run cities are setting all-time murder records." He accused Biden of having "surrendered in Afghanistan," and allowing Russia to invade Ukraine. "It would never ever, ever have happened if I was your commander-in-chief," he said. Since taking his last Air Force One flight from Washington to Florida on January 20 last year, Trump has remained the country's most polarizing figure, continuing his unprecedented campaign to sow doubts about his 2020 election loss to Biden.

For weeks, Washington has been riveted by hearings in Congress about the January 6 storming of the Capitol by a Trump mob and his attempts to overturn the election.

With Biden's approval rating currently below 40 percent and Democrats forecasted to lose control of Congress in November midterm elections, Trump is apparently bullish that he could ride the Republican wave all the way to the White House in 2024. On the Democratic side, fury at Trump is also providing energy in the run-up to the midterms. The House committee hearings have laid out evidence that Trump oversaw nothing less than an attempt to break US democracy, first through trying to rig electoral procedures behind the scenes and finally in encouraging a mob to attack legislators certifying his loss. Facing chatter that at 79 he is too old to be thinking about seeking a second term in 2024, Biden says the specter of another Trump candidacy is one of his main motivations for running again.

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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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New York Asks WHO To Rename "Monkeypox" Because...

New York has seen more cases of the disease than any other city in the United States, with 1,092 infections detected so far

(News Agency) : New York City asked the World Health Organization (WHO) on Tuesday to rename the monkeypox virus to avoid stigmatizing patients who might then hold off on seeking care. New York has seen more cases of the disease, which the WHO declared a global health emergency over the weekend, than any other city in the United States, with 1,092 infections detected so far. "We have a growing concern for the potentially devastating and stigmatizing effects that the messaging around the 'monkeypox' virus can have on... already vulnerable communities," New York City public health commissioner Ashwin Vasan said in a letter to WHO chief Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus dated Tuesday. The WHO had floated the idea of changing the name of the virus, which is related to the eradicated smallpox virus, during a press conference last month, a proposal Vasan mentioned in his letter. Vasan referenced the "painful and racist history within which terminology like (monkeypox) is rooted for communities of color." He

pointed to the fact that monkeypox did not actually originate in primates, as the name might suggest, and recalled the negative effects of misinformation during the early days of the HIV epidemic and the racism faced by Asian communities that was exacerbated by former president Donald Trump calling Covid-19

the "China virus." "Continuing to use the term 'monkeypox' to describe the current outbreak may reignite these traumatic feelings of racism and stigma -- particularly for Black people and other people of color, as well as members of the LGBTQIA+ communities, and it is possible that they may avoid engaging in vital health care services

because of it," Vasan said. Anyone is susceptible to contracting monkeypox, which has long been endemic in Central and Western Africa, but so far its spread in Europe and the United States has been mostly concentrated among men who have sex with other men. The first symptoms can include a fever and fatigue,

followed a few days later by a rash that can turn into painful, fluid-filled skin lesions, which may last for a few weeks before turning into scabs that then fall off. No deaths have been reported so far in Europe or the United States. More than 16,000 confirmed cases have been recorded in 75 countries so far this year, the WHO said on Monday.

Biden offers deal to Russia for release of its two citizens held by Moscow

(News Agency) US President Joe Biden's administration has offered Russia a deal to secure the release of its two citizens held by Moscow. Citing people close to the matter, CNN reported that in order to bring home Brittney Griner and Paul Whelan, Russian arms trafficker Viktor Bout has been offered in exchange. It quoted a senior administration official as saying, "We communicated a substantial offer that we believe could be successful based on a history of conversations with the Russians." For the first time since Russia's invasion of Ukraine, US Secretary of State Antony Blinken will speak with his Kremlin

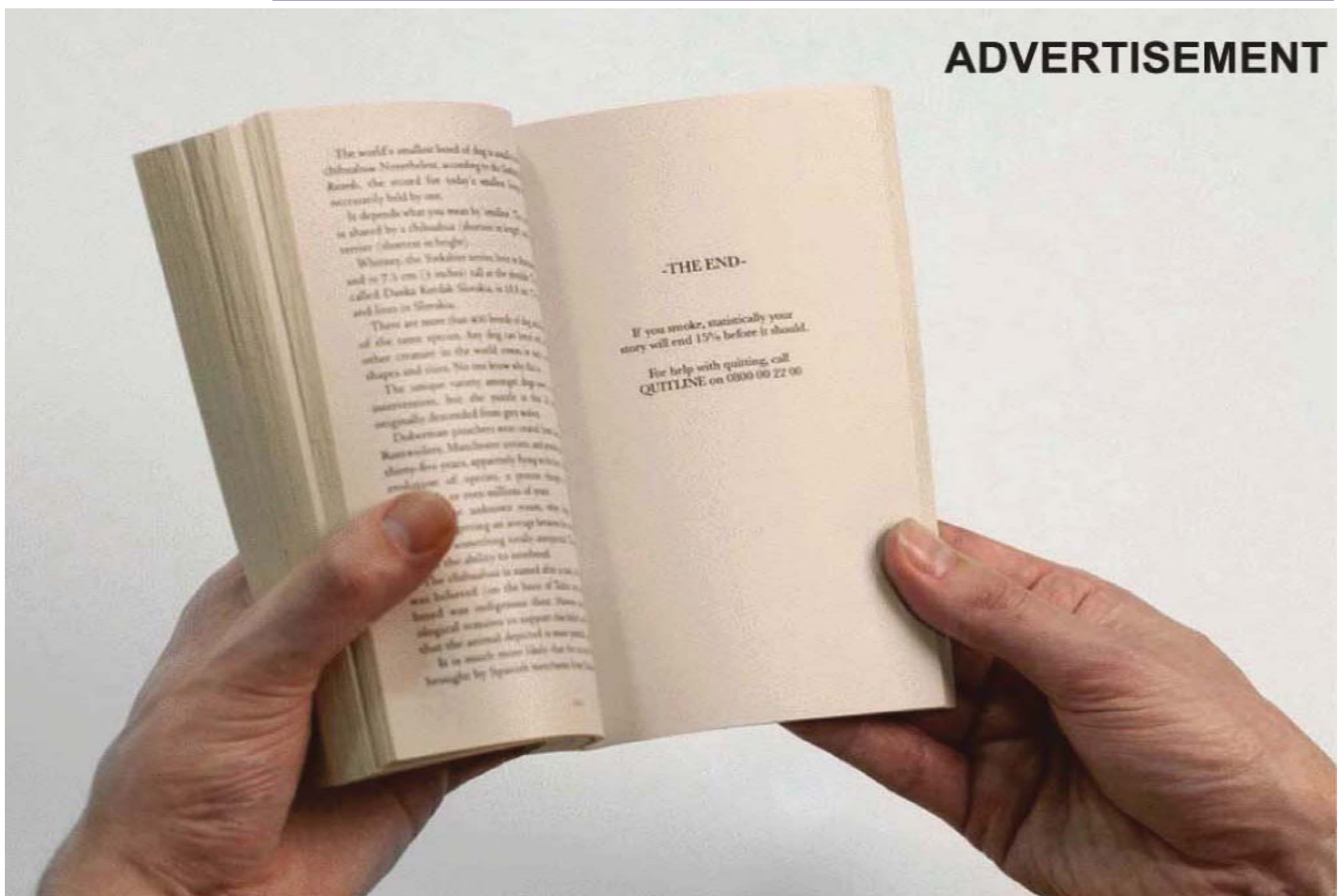
counterpart. Blinken told reporters that a



along with a grain deal to avoid a food crisis.

Reflecting the mounting pressure on the administration over Griner and Whelan, the public acknowledgment of the offer comes at a time when the US has otherwise shunned Russia. While WNBA star Griner was jailed in Moscow for drug possession, Whelan has been held by Russia for alleged espionage since 2018. Claiming concerns that they only incentivise countries to detain Americans so they can be used as bargaining chips, the US government has long resisted prisoner swaps.

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Signatures Don't Lie: How Gandhis Find Themselves Vulnerable in National Herald Case

(By Staff Reporter) This is a season of previous alleged wrong-doings coming home to roost for many prominent persons in the Opposition. At least three political parties are in focus, as it happens, simultaneously.

Parliament and the streets of India are disrupted with cries that allege misuse of government agencies such as the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) and the Enforcement Directorate (ED).

The images of sloganeering, scuffling with the police, barriers overturned, arson, purple prose from friendly journalists on websites and print media, indignant pro-Opposition panelists and spokespersons on prime-time debates, fill our TV screens. This is on all the news channels.

It looks like a tough moment of reckoning in all three political parties, though how the judiciary will view the charges and the evidence presented in due course is anybody's guess. It is a hot, humid, monsoon season of exposure, embarrassment, and political damage for some. The Congress is busy trying to deflect attention and play victim. It calls its political stir on the streets a Satyagraha, invokes Mahatma Gandhi and the freedom movement. It sits on the road outside the All India Congress Committee (AICC) HQ, courting arrest. In the states, it gheraos the offices of the ED and menaces its officials. The convenor of the Aam Aadmi Party and Delhi's Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal calls the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) 'Savarkar Ke Aulad' with accompanying sneer. He dares the government to find any wrongdoing in an alleged liquor scam presided over by his Education and Deputy Chief Minister. This, after his Health Minister has recently been detained for alleged money laundering, and other prominent MLAs for instigating riots, grabbing property, etc.

Mamata Banerjee in Kolkata avers she has zero tolerance for corruption even as one of her former senior-most ministers is hauled away for questioning after more than Rs 20 crore in cash plus gold worth Rs 70 lakh is found by the ED in the flat of his close associate. The discovery of a series of shell companies associated with the former minister suggest the scam is about to get very much bigger.

Her nephew and heir apparent in the TMC is also under the CBI/ED scanner for money laundering in a coal scam, along with his wife. Here too, in an attempt to obstruct, the investigating officers were gheraoed in Kolkata. The Congress, the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP), the Trinamool Congress (TMC), members of which are all under investigation, have promptly accused

the Government of India of political vendetta.

It is the end of democracy, they scream. Our members are being expelled from Parliament for protesting trumped up corruption charges. Why don't you debate all this, asks the media. But why spoil a perfectly good uproar, the Opposition must be thinking. Perhaps we can extract

It looks like a tough moment of reckoning in all three political parties, though how the judiciary will view the charges and the evidence presented in due course is anybody's guess. It is a hot, humid, monsoon season of exposure, embarrassment, and political damage for some

some political sympathy from the electorate.

We are not afraid, says its leadership, looking angry, cornered, and truth be told, very afraid. It is a crackdown by the brute majority in the house.

To the viewing public, it is as if a number of sizeable bandicoots have simultaneously been ensnared in traps, screeching for dear life. The underlying theme is how dare the Modi government catch us at all for questioning.

The latest Congress leadership scam in the eye of the lens however is so blatantly and carelessly executed, that it is representative of an imperial attitude. One that says we own this country, let alone a few buildings, and there is no power on earth that can dare to point a finger at us. And that we will always be in power, as we have been for more than five decades already. When we were not in government, we still controlled the government of the day. Today, you may have the government and most of the states, but we still own the ecosystem. Nothing can happen in this country without our consent.

To illustrate this attitude further, the top leaders, rank and file of the Congress protest noisily whenever the Gandhis are called in for questioning. The protests are in violation of Section 144 imposed, which seeks to prevent a gathering of more than four people on the streets and public spaces it covers. Teargas, water cannons, and mass arrests in busloads have had to be resorted to by the government to impose its will, even as the Congress hordes have chosen to ignore the law. Not only have the mother-son duo of Sonia Gandhi and Rahul Gandhi, at the helm of the Congress, allegedly usurped the property of the National Herald newspaper, but have been enjoying control over the commercial rent on them for several years already.

The properties were built on land leased to National Herald decades ago by various Congress central and state governments at highly concessional rates. Others have been purchased since, ostensibly to support publishing, but actually as commercial properties to earn more rent. In a sleight-of-hand set of actions, in 2010, Sonia Gandhi and Rahul Gandhi became

owners of the shares in the company (Young Indian), that has beneficial ownership of all National Herald properties as of 2011. They own the shares 38 percent each, totalling to 76 percent between themselves. The balance shareholding is held by others drawn from the Congress, including Oscar Fernandes and Motilal Vora.

The properties involved are worth between Rs 2,000 crore and Rs 5,000 crore, according to varied estimates. Young Indian is a 'Section 25 not-for-profit company' with an initial corpus of just Rs 5 lakh. It is tax exempt provided it does not pursue commercial activity and puts its profit, if any, towards charitable purposes. It cannot even pay dividends. However, the commercial rent exacted at market rates on them, from properties in Delhi, Mumbai, Panchkula, Lucknow, Patna, Indore, etc, has run into hundreds of crores. This rent received, and allegedly transferred clandestinely to the Gandhis in turn, plus the takeover of AJL shares into Young Indian without paying stamp duty or taxes, has attracted an income tax bill running into about Rs 250 crore so far. All efforts at getting this demand squashed have failed. The present case is largely to do with Rs 1 crore obtained as a loan via an alleged cash transaction and fraudulent 'entry' obtained from a foreign exchange dealer-cum-hawala operator in Kolkata. This attracts the provisions of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA), the violation of which is a criminal act, unlike, for example, the tax evasion, which is classified as a civil offence.

This Rs 1 crore, the source of its funding being a mystery, was used by the Gandhi duo to take over 100 percent of the beneficial ownership of the shares in AJL which owned the National Herald and its assets. The

Gandhis ended up owning 76 percent of the thousands of crores of National Herald property, effectively for this payment of Rs 1 crore.

AJL also had a liability of Rs 90 crore on its books, built up over the years as the National Herald lay defunct from 2008. To clear this, the Congress allegedly infused a loan of Rs 90 crore into AJL, interest free. There is no evidence of this money actually coming into the books of AJL however, apart from a general entry. It was this Rs 90 crore that purportedly allowed it to convert AJL debt into equity so that it could be purchased by Young Indian subsequently in 2011.

This is problematic, even if true, as political parties are not allowed to give loans, and it is certainly unusual for a political party to clear the debt of a newspaper like this.

The net result was Young Indian, the new company formed, was able to take over the shares of AJL free of all liabilities. One of the other shareholders of both AJL and Young Indian was Motilal Vora, the now deceased Treasurer of the Congress.

Both Rahul Gandhi and Sonia Gandhi during their questioning by the ED have claimed to have no knowledge of the legal and financial transactions involved, because they were handled exclusively by the deceased Motilal Vora.

However, the signatures of both Sonia Gandhi and Rahul Gandhi appear prominently wherever the paperwork needed it. It is therefore not unreasonable to infer they knew what they were signing for.

Here the first order of batting is to do with the PMLA violation and the criminal charge it carries. Meanwhile, the lease on Herald House in New Delhi and the land in Panchkula have reportedly been revoked for violation of terms. It remains to be seen whether the judiciary accepts the defence that the Gandhi mother and son duo knew nothing about the whole thing, particularly the money laundering in this instance, because it was handled by Vora.

If it accepts this, then the Gandhis could go scot-free despite their signatures on every document and their beneficial ownership of the properties. The fraudulent acquisition process and use of the rent has a bearing, but the key thing is the Rs 1 crore obtained from the hawala operator in Kolkata. But all in all, the ED has revived the investigation after a long lull from 2015 when the Gandhis obtained bail in the matter. It seems to feel that it has a good case that will stick.

UK Prime Minister Race: Rishi Sunak Wins Fourth Round Leadership Contest Vote

From Page... 1 The elimination of former equalities minister Badenoch with 59 votes will now turn the focus on where her considerable support within the Tory members of Parliament will go, as those MPs are wooed by both Mordaunt and Truss to shore up their chances of grabbing that all-important second spot. The final two candidates will be known after a fifth round of voting on Wednesday, at the end of which the race will be taken over by the Conservative Party headquarters to organise hustings in different parts of the UK. The focus will then be on convincing the Tory party membership base, estimated at around 160,000 voters, to cast their ballots in favour of one of the two remaining candidates.

Those votes will be counted towards the end of August for

the winner to be announced by September 5, with the new incumbent at 10 Downing Street going on to address his or her first Prime Minister's Questions (PMQs) in the House of Commons on September 7.

It has been an intense few weeks for the Tory party since Boris Johnson resigned on July 7, following the resignation of Sunak and multiple other Cabinet ministers who said they had lost confidence in his leadership in the wake of a series of scandals at the heart of his government.

Johnson chaired his final Cabinet meeting as a caretaker Prime Minister this week and is expected to take his place as a backbench Tory MP when Parliament resumes under a new Tory leader in September.

What is behind the heat waves affecting the United States?

From Page... 16

"Heat waves are probably the most underestimated type of potential disaster because they routinely kill a lot of people. And we just don't hear about it because it doesn't kill them in, to put it bluntly, sufficiently dramatic ways. There aren't bodies on the street." Francis, of the Woodwell Center, said with climate change the world is seeing changing wind patterns and weather systems "in ways that make these heat waves, like we're seeing right now, more intense, more persistent, and cover areas that just aren't used to having heat waves." Alex Ruane, researcher at NASA's Goddard Institute for Space Studies, said as the world warms, "it takes less of a natural anomaly to push us into the extreme heat categories. Because we're closer to those thresholds, it's more likely that you'll get more than one heat wave at the same time. We're seeing this in the United States."

Monkeypox outbreak: It's time to act, not panic

From Page... 16

In addition, Tecovirimat, an antiviral drug used to treat smallpox, is recommended for monkeypox.

Despite mild illness and a low transmission rate, the WHO has declared monkeypox, a public health emergency of international concern (PHEIC) to contain the disease. The increase in monkeypox cases in a short span of time in many countries necessitated the declaration of PHEIC and additional research studies. It is unclear whether the recent sudden outbreaks in multiple countries result from genotypic mutations that alter virus transmissibility. SARS-CoV-2 and monkeypox virus co-infection can alter infectivity patterns, severity, management, and response to vaccination against either or both diseases. As a result, there is a need to improve diagnostic test efficiency. We also need to examine if a newer variant of concern (VOC) of SARS-CoV-2 can emerge due to their interaction. It's also unclear whether the Covid-19 pandemic is exacerbating the current monkeypox outbreaks.

Smallpox vaccination programmes have been discontinued for the past 50 years, resulting in a scarcity of effective vaccines. There are approved drugs and vaccines, but they are not widely available to scale up controlling monkeypox. This is not the last such difficulty we will face, as the world is still witnessing more such public health crises. Zoonotic diseases are caused by various factors, including unchecked deforestation, climate coupled with a failure to prioritise public health, poverty, and climate change. Instead, a robust plan for pandemic preparedness should be accelerated, guided by a single health agenda. Never before in history have three infectious diseases (poliomyelitis, Covid-19, and Monkeypox) been declared PHEIC at the same time. Regrettably, this will not be the last time. There will almost certainly be more of these occurrences in the future. The world is yet to recognise emerging and re-emerging infectious diseases as a genuine threat. The immediate priority

is to strengthen the surveillance infrastructure, including hiring public health professionals and field workers who can participate in outbreak detection and response during many future PHEICs. Mechanisms for initiating contact tracing, quarantining exposed people, and isolating infected people should be institutionalised. Without prioritising public health strengthening, the threat of new and re-emerging infectious diseases, as well as the enormous social and economic challenges that accompany them, is real and grave.

Leaders should also bear responsibility for administrative lapses

From Page... 15

Luckily, in those days, nearly half of India was ruled by non-Congress parties and no major incidence of violence took place in those parts, thus making it clear that the chief executive of the state really mattered. The third example needs some detailed analysis because the whole argument is built to give the chief minister of Gujarat in 2002 the benefit of the doubt. Kumar tries to convince us that the administration watched as Muslims were brutalised for a week or so because of the "failures of systemic proportions involving hundreds if not thousands of individuals, who are both state and non-state actors." It is shocking to see a senior IPS officer who is supposed to

be the leader of the force denying the role of the leadership in a trying situation. A leader is the most decisive factor, both in times of war and peace. What happened in those dark times in Gujarat was certainly war. We must remember what then Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee was trying to remind the nation of when he mentioned "raj dharma" and, more importantly, to whom. We must remember that the world's opinion matters in these globalised times and the tremendous sympathy that Setalvad has received makes it very clear that our judicial pronouncements or the clean chit given by an SIT has not convinced everyone.

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

Parvez Elahi sworn in as Pak Punjab's new CM amid high political drama

In the widely anticipated judgement on a petition filed by Pakistan Muslim League-Quaid (PML-Q) leader Elahi, the apex court on Tuesday declared Deputy Speaker Dost Muhammad Mazari's controversial decision to reject 10 votes in the Punjab chief minister's election as "illegal". The three-member bench — comprising Chief Justice of Pakistan Umar Ata Bandial, Justice Ijazul Ahsan, and Justice Muneeb Akhtar — ruled that Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) backed candidate Elahi will be the new chief minister of Punjab, paving the way for a change in the country's most populous province and political heartland.

The apex court's verdict delivered a big blow to the Sharif-led coalition government as it saw Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) Hamza Shehbaz, son of the prime minister, lost his status of the "trustee" chief minister. The three-member bench ordered Punjab Governor Baligh ur Rehman to administer the oath to Elahi. However, Rehman refused to perform his duties. Following Governor Rehman's refusal, Elahi left for Islamabad late Tuesday night to take oath from President of Pakistan Arif Alvi as per the Supreme Court's order. Alvi administered the oath to Elahi, 76, at the Aiwan-e-Sadar early Wednesday morning. President Alvi had sent a special aircraft to bring Elahi to Islamabad for the oath-taking ceremony, Geo News reported.

Elahi, who lost the election held on Friday despite getting a majority vote, challenged the ruling of deputy speaker Mazari who handed victory to Hamza. Elahi was supported by ousted Prime Minister Imran Khan's Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) party. Elahi secured 186 votes against 179 votes of Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) candidate Hamza but lost after Deputy Speaker Mazari rejected 10 votes of his Pakistan Muslim League-

Quaid (PML-Q) lawmakers. Mazari refused to count the vote after PML-Q chief Chaudhry Shujaat Hussain through a letter directed his party lawmakers to vote for Hamza, son of Prime Minister Sharif and PML-N president. The Supreme Court, in an 11-page short order, said: "We find that the understanding and implementation of the said short judgment as well as the provisions of Article 63A(1)(b) of the Constitution by the Deputy Speaker, Provincial Assembly of Punjab, Lahore was patently incorrect and erroneous and cannot be sustained." It added that the act also "subverted" the governance of Punjab.

As a result, the ruling by the Deputy Speaker of Punjab Assembly is set aside and declared to be void, without lawful authority and of no legal effect, the apex court stated. In case the governor does not administer an oath to Elahi, President Alvi can do so instead, the court ruled in its short order. The court also declared all the appointments made by Hamza "illegal" and told the members of his cabinet to vacate their offices. Soon after the verdict was announced, a jubilant crowd carrying PTI flags present outside the Supreme Court on the Constitution Avenue as

well as a number of supporters on the premises burst into cheers and sloganeering.

Despite a heavy police contingent blocking the roads leading to the apex court building, a large number of supporters managed to reach the venue, and those who could not make it started celebrating at different police pickets on the way.

The Punjab province has been in turmoil since April which took a new turn on Friday when Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf supported candidate, Elahi, was not declared a winner. Welcoming the apex court's ruling, PTI chief Khan said, "I appreciate our SC judges for standing firm and upholding the Constitution & law, against all manner of threats & abuse." "I want to thank the people of Punjab for coming out in unprecedented numbers in bye-elections against rigging," the ousted prime minister tweeted.

A resurgent Khan and his PTI have not just snatched the PML-N's citadel in Lahore, they are also threatening to shake the very foundations of its weak power in Islamabad, the Dawn newspaper said in its editorial.

"It is only a matter of time before the coalition faces increased pressure from all corners, especially the PTI, for

early elections, which will be difficult for it to handle with a hostile administration in the largest province," it said.

"With Khan emerging as the most popular leader it will be hard for the establishment, judiciary, bureaucracy or business elite to write him off. That's what the verdict underlines," it said.

Confined to Islamabad with its coalition partners, the PML-N leadership has limited options to survive the remaining term of the present assemblies and no room for manoeuvre in Punjab, the report said. The only choice for it from here on is to forge a stronger alliance with the other parties — most of them already a part of the coalition — in the next elections and beyond to salvage its politics, it said.

Addressing a press conference soon after the verdict was announced, Information Minister Marriyum Aurangzeb lambasted it as a "judicial coup".

Jamiat Ulema-I-Islam Fazl (JUI-F) chief Maulana Fazlur Rehman at a press conference in Islamabad said that the government lawyers recommended a full bench but the court instead of reflecting and accepting the advice, rejected it.

JUI-F is a coalition partner in the Pakistan government

headed by Prime Minister Sharif's PML-N.

Pakistan's coalition government criticised the apex court's decision not to form a full bench and boycotted the court proceedings on Tuesday.

Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari, who is Pakistan Peoples Party chairman, had reaffirmed the boycott call, saying the demand for a full court was for the sake of the Constitution, democracy and the court's own integrity.

The security was tightened around the court building where a large number of police officials were deployed. Paramilitary Rangers, and Frontier Corps personnel were also present to help the police.

Punjab is Pakistan's second-largest province and any party ruling the key province controls the politics of the country. For the PML-N, losing Punjab means losing the Centre. Political pundits believe that the ruling coalition is now vulnerable.

Tuesday's outcome provides a "massive opportunity" to PTI chairman Khan to build further pressure on the rulers to call for fresh elections and also corner the PML-N in Punjab which is considered a stronghold of the Sharifs.



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Weddings in War : Ukraine Couples Send 'Defiant Message' by Getting Married Amid Bombshells

(SAI Bureau)She should have awoken to the sound of popping champagne corks on her wedding day, but Tetyana was instead startled out of bed by Russian rocket fire near her home in central Ukraine.

"At first I thought it was thunder. But the sky was clear, and I realised that it was shelling," the 31-year-old designer told AFP, recalling how she raced to the corridor outside her room in case of a direct hit.

Shocked at the destruction wreaked by the pre-dawn explosions but determined to go ahead with their nuptials, Tetyana and her fiancé Taras exchanged their vows on schedule, six hours later.

"Initially I thought we should cancel the wedding, but my fiancé told me we should go ahead.... The war doesn't have any right to ruin our plans," said Tetyana, who asked for the couple to be allowed to use assumed names.

"And we have the right to create our family and live our lives to the fullest."

The couple, who married in June in the industrial hub of Kremenchuk, 250 kilometres (155 miles) southeast of Kyiv, are part of a massive surge in weddings brought on by the war with Russia.

Her neighbour since the age of six, Taras proposed to Tetyana last year and they had originally envisaged a spring wedding.

"In May we realised that the war might last quite a long time. We decided not to postpone life until later because, as this war has shown us, later might never happen," Tetyana told AFP.

In the Poltava region where Tetyana and Taras tied the knot, there were 1,600 weddings in the first six weeks after Moscow's February 24 invasion — compared with 1,300 for the whole of 2020.

'The war goes on'

In the capital the uptick is even more pronounced, with 9,120 marriages registered in five months, a more than eight-fold increase on the 1,110 ceremonies that took place during the same period in 2021. A sunny recent Saturday in Kyiv saw more than 40 newlyweds embark on their lives together in one downtown register office.

"Getting married during the war is the bravest and hardest step you can take, because you never know what will happen next," said Vitaliy, 25, who was about to marry 22-year-old Anastasiya in full military uniform before heading to war. "I could leave for the front at any moment."

In Ukraine, would-be spouses have been taking advantage of a simplification in the red tape around marriage that allows them to wed on the spot, rather than having to



register first and come back after a long wait.

Vitaliy and Anastasiya, who did not give their surnames, have had vague notions of making their commitment official for three years — but only signed up the day before the happy occasion.

"The war goes on. It's better to do it now," the groom told AFP.

Vitaliy Charnykh has been conducting back-to-back ceremonies at the administrative building since early March, and sees his role as his own special contribution to the war effort.

"As a civil servant, I believe I can help my

country by supporting Ukrainians emotionally," the 21-year-old told AFP.

'Defiant message'

Unsure of what the future might bring and suddenly forced to focus on the things that matter, young lovers have historically proven unable to resist the urge to formalise blossoming romance in wartime.

At the height of World War II in 1942, the United States saw 1.8 million weddings in 12 months — an 83 percent increase from a decade earlier.

Charnykh said he had seen a particular upsurge in soldiers getting married.

"In such tough times, people don't really know what will happen tomorrow, so they are eager to marry as soon as possible," he said.

Daria Steniukova, a 31-year-old yoga teacher from Vinnytsia, 200 kilometres southwest of the capital, had been planning her wedding to 30-year-old Vitalii Zavalniuk for weeks but disaster struck with just one day to go. A Russian cruise missile devastated the city centre two weeks ago, killing 26 people, damaging the register office and destroying her apartment.

"We were shocked but determined to go through with it. It was out of the question to give up. My house was ruined, but not our life," she said.

They were forced to postpone the celebration with friends and family — no one in Vinnytsia was in the mood for partying — but they set their hearts on swapping vows that day in an alternative venue.

"None of the administrative centres had a single free slot. But we decided to go to one even though we were told that we had no chance," Steniukova told AFP. "We were ready to wait the whole day but then we got a result: we were married within three minutes of arriving." Topping an already astonishing wedding, they marked their union in an unusual but striking way — opting for a photo shoot in Steniukova's bombed flat. "It was a defiant message to the whole world — stressing how strong Ukrainians are. We are ready to get married even with rockets flying over our heads."

Partha Chatterjee SSC Scam: 'BANK of Mamata Banerjee, where STOLEN...', Congress MP ATTACKS Bengal CM

Adhir Chowdhury's comment directly targeted Trinamool supremo Mamata Banerjee. "You can't protect Partha Chatterjee, you can't leave him. Partha is your right hand. You know that ignoring him will lead to greater danger, so you can't go anywhere. Partha will expose more and more to save himself"

Our fears were proved true in Belgharia. Thieves only know how much money is spread in such places'. Adhir's comment on the situation in West Bengal, "Bengal has never seen this scene before. Explained that Bengal is not lagging behind, Bengal has made its own place by looting money." It's not the end here, on this day, Adhir's comment directly targeted Trinamool supremo Mamata Banerjee. "You can't protect Partha Chatterjee, you can't leave him. Partha is your right hand. You know that ignoring him will lead to greater danger, so you can't go anywhere. Partha will expose more and more to save himself." Another flat of Arpita Mukherjee, who is the 'Intimate Friend' of Partha Chatterjee, also found a mountain of money. After Tollyganj, this time in Belgharia, the ED conducted a search operation in Arpita's flat and recovered crores of rupees, jewelry and property documents. At the end, the money was taken in a truckload of trunks. Like Tollyganj in Belgharia also, bundles of Rs 2,000 and 500 notes were strewn

on the floor of the house. Until now, such scenes were usually seen in Bollywood films, but this time, reality beats the script! Real is overtaking Reel! In the investigation of corruption in the appointment of teachers, the ED is raiding every flat, and crores of rupees are being recovered! But, is it possible that this money belongs to Arpita alone? Who gave money to Arpita? Was Arpita's flat used as a place to hide money? According to ED sources, this flat also has many wardrobes in one room like the one in Tollyganj. When those wardrobes were opened, bundles of two thousand and five hundred rupee notes were arranged inside them. According to ED sources, not one or two wardrobes, all the wardrobes were full of cash! State-of-the-art machines are brought to count money. So that thousands of notes can be counted per minute. Skilled officers were brought from the bank to count the money! After that the truck was brought. All in all, exciting film around the campaign of ED once again!

How Europe plans to use less gas this winter amid Russian supply uncertainty

Moscow has slashed gas flows to Europe since the invasion in February and this week said it would cut them further, making it harder for EU states to fill their gas storage ahead of winter



European Union countries on Tuesday agreed to an emergency plan to use less gas, as they attempt to save fuel for a winter of uncertain Russian supplies. Before it invaded Ukraine, Russia was the 27-country EU's top gas supplier, providing 40% of its supply. Moscow has slashed gas flows to Europe since the invasion in February and this week said it would cut them further, making it harder for EU states to fill their gas storage ahead of winter. To attempt to get as much gas

into storage as possible and prepare for a possible full Russian cut-off, EU countries agreed on Tuesday to reduce their gas demand, albeit with a wide range of exemptions for countries and some industries. A look at what has been agreed: **Voluntary gas cuts** Energy ministers agreed that all EU countries should voluntarily cut gas use by 15% from August to March, compared with their average annual use during 2016-2021. The cuts could be made binding in a supply emergency, but only if a

reinforced majority of 15 EU countries agree to this. The European Commission can propose that the binding cuts are triggered if there is a risk of a severe gas storage in Europe, or if at least five countries ask for this.

Carve-outs, exemptions

The EU Commission, which drafts EU laws, had initially said every country should face the same binding 15% cut. A swathe of countries had opposed that plan, with Spain, Poland and Greece among the critics.

European governments eventually agreed to allow some countries to reduce or opt out of the binding targets. Countries such as Ireland and Malta that are not connected to other EU countries' gas networks would be exempted from the binding 15% gas cut, as would the Baltic countries, whose electricity grids are linked to Russia. States that over-achieve an EU target for

filling gas storage by August can request weaker targets — potentially softening the gas demand cuts for roughly a dozen countries, based on current storage levels. For example, Germany's storage is 66% full, versus its target to reach 45% of capacity by August 1. Those with a limited ability to send gas to other EU countries can also request a lower target, provided they export what they can. That could include Spain, which does not rely on Russian gas, and has said cutting its own demand would not help other countries since it lacks infrastructure capacity to share spare fuel. Countries can ask to adjust their target if they use gas as a feedstock in critical industries, such as energy-intensive steel-making.

Solidarity, savings

EU countries have faced a week of negotiations on the

emergency gas plan, which initially faced resistance from many EU countries whose reliance on Russian fuel varies significantly.

Some, like Greece, had said they did not need to curb gas since they could cope with a Russian cut-off. Poland, which had its gas supply cut by Russia in April, opposed the idea that one country's industry should use less gas to help other states facing shortages. In the end, only Hungary opposed the deal Tuesday, two EU officials told Reuters. EU country officials had mixed views on whether the agreement, with all its opt-outs, would ensure enough gas savings to get through the winter. Some, however, noted it was in countries' interests to save gas for winter, even without an EU requirement to do so. So far, EU countries have cut their gas use by just 5%, despite months of Russian supply cuts and surging prices.



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ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਨੌਜਵਾਨਾਂ ਨੇ ਵਿਦੇਸ਼ ਉਡਾਰੀ ਮਾਰਨ ਲਈ ਖਰਚੇ 27000 ਕਰੋੜ

ਓਰੀਜ਼ਲ: ਖਬਰ ਅਨੁਸਾਰ ਇਸ ਸਾਲ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਤੋਂ ਭੇਜੇ ਲੱਖ ਵਿਦਿਆਰਥੀ ਵਿਦੇਸ਼ ਯੂਨਿਵਰਸਿਟੀ ਜਾ ਚੁੱਕੇ ਹਨ। ਇਸ ਤੋਂ ਪਤਾ ਲੱਗਦਾ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਨੌਜਵਾਨਾਂ ਦੀ ਵਿਦੇਸ਼ ਯਾਤਰਾ ਵਿੱਚ ਖਰਚੇ 27,000 ਕਰੋੜ ਰੁਪਏ ਲੱਗ ਚੁੱਕੇ ਹਨ। ਇਸ ਤੋਂ ਪਤਾ ਲੱਗਦਾ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਨੌਜਵਾਨਾਂ ਦੀ ਵਿਦੇਸ਼ ਯਾਤਰਾ ਵਿੱਚ ਖਰਚੇ 27,000 ਕਰੋੜ ਰੁਪਏ ਲੱਗ ਚੁੱਕੇ ਹਨ।

ਇਸ ਸਾਲ 1.25 ਲੱਖ ਵਿਦਿਆਰਥੀ ਭੇਜੇ ਗਏ ਜਾਂ ਚੁੱਕੇ ਹਨ। ਇਸ ਤੋਂ ਪਤਾ ਲੱਗਦਾ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਨੌਜਵਾਨਾਂ ਦੀ ਵਿਦੇਸ਼ ਯਾਤਰਾ ਵਿੱਚ ਖਰਚੇ 27,000 ਕਰੋੜ ਰੁਪਏ ਲੱਗ ਚੁੱਕੇ ਹਨ। ਇਸ ਤੋਂ ਪਤਾ ਲੱਗਦਾ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਨੌਜਵਾਨਾਂ ਦੀ ਵਿਦੇਸ਼ ਯਾਤਰਾ ਵਿੱਚ ਖਰਚੇ 27,000 ਕਰੋੜ ਰੁਪਏ ਲੱਗ ਚੁੱਕੇ ਹਨ।

ਇਸ ਦੇ ਉਲਟ ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਨੌਜਵਾਨਾਂ ਵਿੱਚ ਅਜੇ ਵੀ ਪੜ੍ਹਾਈ ਪਾਠੀ ਦੇ ਦੋ ਵਿਧਾ ਹਨ। ਇੱਕ ਤਾਂ ਪੜ੍ਹਾਈ ਪਾਠੀ ਦੇ ਦੋ ਵਿਧਾ ਹਨ। ਇੱਕ ਤਾਂ ਪੜ੍ਹਾਈ ਪਾਠੀ ਦੇ ਦੋ ਵਿਧਾ ਹਨ।

ਕੁਝ ਵਿਦਿਆਰਥੀਆਂ ਅਜੇ ਵੀ ਪੜ੍ਹਾਈ ਪਾਠੀ ਦੇ ਦੋ ਵਿਧਾ ਹਨ। ਇੱਕ ਤਾਂ ਪੜ੍ਹਾਈ ਪਾਠੀ ਦੇ ਦੋ ਵਿਧਾ ਹਨ। ਇੱਕ ਤਾਂ ਪੜ੍ਹਾਈ ਪਾਠੀ ਦੇ ਦੋ ਵਿਧਾ ਹਨ।

ਇਹ ਤੱਥਾ ਖੁੱਲ੍ਹਦਾ ਲੱਗੇ ਕਿਹਾ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਜਾਂ ਅਜੇ ਵੀ ਪੜ੍ਹਾਈ ਪਾਠੀ ਦੇ ਦੋ ਵਿਧਾ ਹਨ। ਇੱਕ ਤਾਂ ਪੜ੍ਹਾਈ ਪਾਠੀ ਦੇ ਦੋ ਵਿਧਾ ਹਨ। ਇੱਕ ਤਾਂ ਪੜ੍ਹਾਈ ਪਾਠੀ ਦੇ ਦੋ ਵਿਧਾ ਹਨ।

ਨਵੇਂ ਵਿਦਿਆਰਥੀ 2019 ਵਿੱਚ ਭੇਜੇ ਗਏ ਹਨ। ਇਸ ਤੋਂ ਪਤਾ ਲੱਗਦਾ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਨੌਜਵਾਨਾਂ ਦੀ ਵਿਦੇਸ਼ ਯਾਤਰਾ ਵਿੱਚ ਖਰਚੇ 27,000 ਕਰੋੜ ਰੁਪਏ ਲੱਗ ਚੁੱਕੇ ਹਨ।

ਸੱਜਣ ਕੁਮਾਰ ਨੂੰ ਸਿੰਘਾਂ ਕੋਲੋਂ ਬਚਾ-ਬਚਾ ਕੇ ਰੱਖੇਗਾ ਜੇਲ੍ਹ ਪ੍ਰਸ਼ਾਸਨ

ਨਵੀਂ ਦਿੱਲੀ: ਇੱਥੇ ਨਾਜ਼ਕਰੀ ਵਿੱਚ ਸੱਜਣ ਕੁਮਾਰ ਨੂੰ ਸਿੰਘਾਂ ਕੋਲੋਂ ਬਚਾ-ਬਚਾ ਕੇ ਰੱਖੇਗਾ ਜੇਲ੍ਹ ਪ੍ਰਸ਼ਾਸਨ। ਇਸ ਤੋਂ ਪਤਾ ਲੱਗਦਾ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਨੌਜਵਾਨਾਂ ਦੀ ਵਿਦੇਸ਼ ਯਾਤਰਾ ਵਿੱਚ ਖਰਚੇ 27,000 ਕਰੋੜ ਰੁਪਏ ਲੱਗ ਚੁੱਕੇ ਹਨ।

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ਨਵੇਂ ਸਾਲ ਮੌਕੇ ਅਮਰੀਕੀ ਫੌਜ ਨੇ ਬੰਬ ਦਾ ਟਵੀਟ ਕਰਨ ਲਈ ਮੰਗੀ ਮੁਆਫ਼ੀ

ਫਿਲਾਡੇਲਫੀ: ਅਮਰੀਕੀ ਫੌਜ ਨੇ ਬੰਬ ਦਾ ਟਵੀਟ ਕਰਨ ਲਈ ਮੰਗੀ ਮੁਆਫ਼ੀ। ਇਸ ਤੋਂ ਪਤਾ ਲੱਗਦਾ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਨੌਜਵਾਨਾਂ ਦੀ ਵਿਦੇਸ਼ ਯਾਤਰਾ ਵਿੱਚ ਖਰਚੇ 27,000 ਕਰੋੜ ਰੁਪਏ ਲੱਗ ਚੁੱਕੇ ਹਨ।

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North Korea ready to use nukes against the United States: Kim Jong Un



armistice on July 27. As per a Reuters report, Kim said, the confrontation with the US presented a nuclear danger because it forced the North to complete an "urgent historical task" of bolstering its self-defence. "Our armed forces are thoroughly prepared to respond to any crisis, and our nation's nuclear war deterrence is also fully ready to mobilise its absolute strength faithfully, accurately and promptly to its mission," he said.

The declaration that Pyongyang has finished making preparations to conduct its first nuclear test since 2017 was already made by South Korean and American officials prior to

Jong Un's address. In the address, Kim said that 70 years after the war, Washington still engages in "dangerous, illegal hostile acts" with South Korea against the North and tries to "demonise" the nation to support its actions. "I once again make it clear that North Korea is fully ready for any military confrontation with the United States," Kim said.

The North has long accused the United States of double standards in military activities and of having a hostile foreign policy toward Pyongyang. They claim that this undermines efforts to restart negotiations designed to curtail the nation's nuclear and missile

programmes in exchange for the lifting of sanctions. The duplex act of the United States, which is misleading all the routine actions of our armed forces as 'provocation' and 'threat' while holding large-scale joint military exercises that seriously threaten our security, is literally a robbery," Kim said. "That is driving bilateral relations to the point where it is difficult to turn back, into a state of conflict."

If the test is conducted, North Korea is likely to face further penalties, including steps to limit its ability to conduct cyberattacks, the foreign minister of South Korea warned on Wednesday.

In the wake of indications North Korea may perform its first nuclear test since 2017, the nation's state media on Thursday reported that the leader Kim Jong Un has declared that his nation is prepared to mobilise its nuclear war deterrent and for any military conflict with the United States. According to the official KCNA news agency, Kim made the comments during a speech at a celebration to commemorate the 69th anniversary of the Korean War

Pope Francis Attends Lac Ste. Anne Pilgrimage, to Address Canada's Political Leaders in Quebec



Pope Francis will travel to Quebec City on Wednesday, where he will address Canada's political leaders after dedicating the first part of his journey to apologising for the abuse of indigenous children at Catholic-run schools. After two days in the western province of Alberta, during which he begged for forgiveness from the First Nations, Metis and Inuit people of Canada for abuse suffered over the span of a century, the 85-year-old pontiff will fly to Quebec City from Edmonton on Wednesday morning. He will go first to the Citadel of Quebec, where he will meet with Mary Simon, the first indigenous person to become Canada's governor general, and then with Prime Minister Justin Trudeau. He will then deliver a speech to officials, indigenous representatives and the diplomatic corps. Francis has been welcomed in Canada and his apology for the church's role in the residential school system has been hailed as historic, though many indigenous people who have spoken to AFP have warned there is more work to do. From the late 1800s to the 1990s,

Canada's government sent about 1,50,000 children into 139 residential schools run by the church, where they were cut off from their families, language and culture. Many were physically and sexually abused, and thousands are believed to have died of disease, malnutrition or neglect.

For some, the healing had already begun. Cindy Dearhead, a First Nations woman who was a student in one of the infamous schools, said she felt the pope's apology was "important". "It was a long time coming, but finally a pope himself is acknowledging 'yes, I'm sorry,'" she told AFP at Lac Ste. Anne in Alberta, one of the most important pilgrimage sites in North America, as the pope visited the lake on Tuesday.

But for many others, that healing may well depend on what comes next.

"I think the apology has always been one thing, part of a process of reconciliation. To me, the actions that need to come behind it are very important," said chief Peter Powder of the Mikisew Cree First Nations. On Thursday, Francis will visit the

National Shrine of Saint Anne de Beaupre, one of the main pilgrimage sites in North America, and preside over a mass. Later that day he will go to Notre Dame Cathedral in Quebec City to give a homily.

On Friday, he will travel to the Arctic archipelago of Nunavut, where he will visit

the town of Iqaluit for the last stop of his six-day visit.

Francis has been suffering from knee pain and often uses a wheelchair. On Tuesday, he appeared tired and frail as he visited the lake, where he called for healing and sprinkled water he had blessed on to the assembled faithful.

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The Reason Why Eknath Shinde's MLAs Are Now Spamming Him

Maharashtra has had a two-man cabinet for 26 days, or since June 30, when Eknath Shinde of the breakaway Shiv Sena took the oath of office alongside new partner Devendra Fadnavis of the BJP.

Eknath Shinde and Fadnavis teamed up to topple the Uddhav Thackeray-led Maha Vikas Aghadi government by pulling Sena legislators away from Thackeray.

The duo seemingly had it easy while bringing down the Thackeray government with a combination of investigative agency threats and ministry offers that sent Sena MLAs running to the BJP's arms. But the after-party was short-lived.

The problem? Literally a division of the spoils. In their haste to topple Uddhav Thackeray's government, Shinde and Fadnavis made

big promises to the defectors. Delivery is proving to be difficult, with an impatient "big brother" BJP demanding a bigger share of the goodies.

Fadnavis, who was Chief Minister in the last BJP-Shiv Sena government, was forced to swallow his pride and he reluctantly came on board as deputy to Shinde (who had earlier worked under him) after he was told by BJP president JP Nadda that it was not an offer he could refuse. Amit Shah, Union Home Minister, told Fadnavis that not joining the Shinde government could be a career limiting move for him, sources say. Shah advised Fadnavis to prove his generosity and give stability to the Shinde government, keeping his hopes alive with the assurance that politics is

never short of surprises.

The central BJP was worried about Fadnavis becoming a rival power centre in Mumbai. Fadnavis is now on board, but the sharing and caring is not happening, yet. As a consequence, India's second most industrialised state, Maharashtra, is virtually being run by two men. With no cabinet in place, a decision to cut trees in the Aarey forest in Mumbai for a controversial car shed project has been cleared. Thackeray had nixed the project saying it was environmentally untenable. The two-man cabinet has been making frequent trips (five at the last count) to Delhi to get Shah and Nadda to break the deadlock over portfolios, with little success so far.

Shinde is adamant about

controlling the "big" portfolios like the Public Works Department, Home and Finance. Fadnavis, settling for the number two spot, needs his flex - a meaty portfolio. The BJP is single largest in the Maharashtra assembly and sections of the party opposed to Shinde are already carping about zero accountability and zero power with the BJP. "Fadnavis koh toh lal batti mil gayi, hamara kya (Fadnavis has got his VVIP beacon but what about us)", a BJP MLA said to me. Fadnavis and Shinde are also spending hours with their legal eagles as the Uddhav Thackeray faction files cases in the Supreme Court challenging the legality of the new government. The Thackeray faction is fighting for the bow and arrow symbol of

the Shiv Sena. After enabling what appeared to be a bloodless coup, Shinde's MLAs are getting antsy, waiting for their rewards. A group of 40 defectors, including eight ministers, have all been promised a status upgrade. Shinde is now fielding daily calls from the MLAs who powered his coup. The Maharashtra assembly session is likely to start in August and both Shinde and Fadnavis would like to have a cabinet in place by then.

The all-important elections to the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC), the richest corporation in the country with an annual budget of ₹ 45,000 crore, is coming up. This will be the first electoral face-off between the Thackeray Sena and the Shinde Sena, and both sides will be pulling out all the stops.

Air pollution may increase possibility of Dementia

Air pollution is certainly not a good thing. Now, a finding by a UK government committee says that air pollution may raise the risk of Dementia, said The Guardian. The Committee on the Medical Effects of Air Pollutants advises British government on matters related to air pollution. The 291-page report says that air pollution may raise the risk of 'cognitive decline' and of 'developing dementia' in older people. As per experts, this may be due to air pollutants entering in body's circulatory system. This in turn may affect blood flow to the

brain. The authors said: "The epidemiological evidence reviewed fairly consistently reports associations between chronic exposure to air pollution and reduced global cognition and impairment in visuospatial abilities as well as cognitive decline and increased risk of dementia. Results are heterogeneous as regards to other cognitive domains such as executive function, attention, memory, language and mild cognitive impairment. The identified neuroimaging studies consistently report associations between exposure

to air pollution and white matter atrophy." As to the exact pollutant having such effect in humans, the reports says that various studies have various opinions. According to numbers available with UK's National Health Service (NHS), about 850,000 people in the UK suffer with dementia.



Our DNA came from space, says a scientific study



One of them fell to Earth in the year 1950. It fell near the town of Murray in Kentucky, USA. The second meteorite they studied fell in 1969 near Murchison in Australia's Victoria State. The third one fell in 2000 in Canada's British Columbia province. "There is still much to learn about the chemical steps that led to the origin of life on Earth — the first self-replicating system. This research certainly adds to the list of chemical compounds that would have been present in the early Earth's prebiotic (existing before the emergence of life) soup," Danny Glavin of NASA's Goddard Space Flight and co-author of the study told Reuters. The findings in this study have reinforced the argument that life's building blocks are extra-terrestrial in origin.

We are literally made of star stuff. Each atom and element in our bodies was forged in huge processes that make stars in the cosmos. We know this for sure. But there are still many opinions about the origin of life on Earth. Some scientists say that it originated on Earth, while others say that life was 'brought' to Earth by celestial bodies like meteorites and comets. Now, a study has

put forth an interesting argument that DNA, the very building blocks of life, originated in outer space. The study has been published in the journal Nature Communications. The researchers have found presence of nucleobases, compounds that form the DNA, in meteorites. The researchers examined material from three meteorites.

French satellite company Eutelsat nears deal to buy UK rival OneWeb

Eutelsat is poised to buy British rival OneWeb in a deal that could be announced as early as Monday, two sources close to the negotiations said on Sunday

French satellite company Eutelsat is poised to buy British rival OneWeb in a deal that could be announced as early as Monday, two sources close to the negotiations said on Sunday. The combination of the two companies would strengthen their position in the race to build a constellation of low-orbit satellites, challenging the likes of Elon

Musk's Starlink. The proposed takeover will leave the British government with a minority stake in the business it rescued from bankruptcy in partnership with India's Bharti Global in July 2020, one of the sources said. Eutelsat, OneWeb's second-biggest shareholder behind Bharti with a 23 per cent stake, declined to comment.

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'Global health emergency status does not imply more cases': Expert on monkeypox scare

With India reporting its fourth monkeypox case from Delhi, the government has ordered increased surveillance at airports, ports and other entry checkpoints. But this might not be much of a worry as experts said the global health emergency status did not imply a higher number of cases



said, "A public health emergency of international concern does not necessarily mean that the number of infections would be high. Take the example of polio, in which the number of cases is fewer, but it is also a public health emergency." Over 16,000 cases of monkeypox, a viral zoonosis (a virus transmitted to humans from animals), have been reported from about 75 countries across the globe. In India, there are four confirmed cases along with a few suspected cases.

"Monkeypox spreads through the respiratory route and via contact with an infected person. However, the spread through the respiratory route is nothing like

that of the Covid-19 infection. So, there is no need to panic," said Dr Kang, who is a professor in the department of gastrointestinal sciences at the Christian Medical College, Vellore, said. Referring to infections without foreign travel, Dr Kang said, "Unlike Covid-19, for monkeypox to spread, it requires very close contact with an infected person."

"One can contract the virus only if he or she comes very close in conversation with an infected person without wearing a mask," she said. The most common mode of transmission is skin-to-skin

contact, Dr Kang said. Three out of four cases in India have a foreign travel history. The 34-year-old fourth patient, however, had attended an event in Himachal Pradesh's Manali, where there might have been people with travel history, she said. "It is not necessary that all monkeypox infections will manifest into a full-blown disease. Some cases are mildly symptomatic, too," Dr Kang said.

Person-to-person transfers are taking place in many countries and the Delhi case is the first such case in India. "We need to exercise precaution and increase testing," she cautioned.

(News Agency) With India reporting its fourth monkeypox case from Delhi, the government has ordered increased surveillance at airports, ports, and other entry checkpoints. But as virologists said the global health emergency status did not imply a higher number of cases. Speaking to India Today, virologist Dr Gagandeep Kang

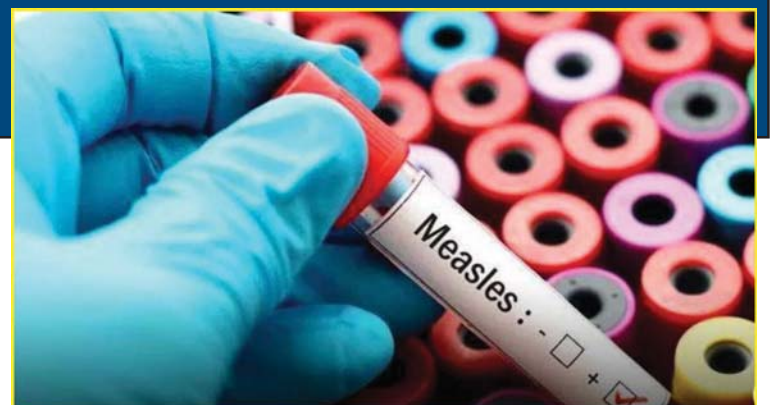
After 150 suspected measles cases, health department to ramp up immunisation in 52 villages in Nuh

Health department officials said that in the past month, at least 100 suspected cases of measles have been reported in Nawab Garh, Ghasera, Umri villages and their adjoining areas

(SAI Bureau) To contain the spread of measles after over 150 suspected cases were reported in the past three months, the health authorities in Nuh district have started a campaign to ramp up vaccination in 52 villages, which have a vaccination rate of over 20 per cent. Health department officials said that in the past month, at least 100 suspected cases of measles have been reported in Nawab Garh, Ghasera, Umri villages and their adjoining areas. In May, at least 47 suspected cases of measles

were reported in Ferozepur Jhirka and adjoining areas after a case was reported in Nagina block, prompting the health department to conduct screening and immunisation. A team from World Health Organisation (WHO) had also visited the district, following the outbreak. Dr Surender Yadav, chief medical officer, Nuh district, said, "In May, some suspected cases of measles were reported in Nagina and Marora, following which we screened children between nine months to 5 years age for fever and rash-related

symptoms and conducted the immunisation. Now with the recent outbreak in Nawab Garh and adjacent villages, we have identified 52 villages, which have a low vaccination rate (20-30 per cent). ASHA workers and health staff will visit these villages and conduct the immunisation and create awareness among people." He added, "The exact number of confirmed cases is still being diagnosed, but in the past three months, over 150 suspected cases of measles have been reported." Officials said



that the average full immunisation in the district was over 48 per cent and the authorities intend to ramp up immunisation in the 52 identified villages, which have a low immunisation rate, to a 'threshold immunity' level so the infection does not spread further.

Officials said that while the cause of the outbreak is being examined, lack of vaccination and movement of population across neighbouring states during the summer months has led to its spread across villages in the district.

Experts call for 'ring vaccination' against monkeypox as Centre says no plan yet

Unlike Covid-19, vaccination against monkeypox need not be a mass vaccination programme, experts said. There has to be targeted vaccination, recommended for those already exposed or at greater risk of getting the virus

(SAI Bureau) There is no plan yet to initiate a vaccination programme against monkeypox, a virus that has infected at least four people across the country, the Centre said. At this stage, the focus is on surveillance and it is unlikely that there would be a mass vaccination drive against monkeypox given its low fatality rate and also low transmissibility, an official told India Today TV.

VACCINE OPTIONS Second and third-

generation vaccines against smallpox are believed to be effective against monkeypox and these have never been produced in India. "There is no capacity in India to produce the second and third generation smallpox vaccines and therefore, it requires technology transfer and international collaboration before these vaccines can be produced in India," vaccinologist Dr Chandrakant Lahariya told India Today TV. **REVIVAL OF**

SMALLPOX VACCINATION PROGRAMME BEST BET?

Experts have called for a revival of the smallpox vaccination programme. Infectious diseases specialist Dr Ishwar Gilada said the smallpox vaccine is the best bet to prevent and treat monkeypox. "The mass vaccination programme for smallpox ended in India around 1979. Those who received smallpox vaccines have 85% protection against monkeypox

and the rest will be protected against the severity of the disease," Gilada said. "It is scientifically proven that different pox viruses provide cross protection against each other. It is against this background that smallpox vaccines are protective against monkeypox. Some of the observational studies have indicated that the effectiveness of smallpox vaccines against monkeypox could be around 85%."

Newly discovered rare deep-sea brine pools can help look for 'alien' life elsewhere in the universe

(SAI Bureau) Rare deep-sea brine pools found in the Red Sea can potentially provide insight into the beginnings of life on Earth. According to recent research, they may also provide information on long-term environmental changes in the area. Despite being rare and small in size, brine pools are an intense oasis of "macrofaunal and microbial" biodiversity in an otherwise sparsely populated bottom of the ocean. Talking to Live Science, Sam Purkis, professor and chair of the Department of Marine Geosciences at the University of Miami, and research lead author stated: "Our current understanding is that life originated on Earth in the deep sea, almost certainly in anoxic — without oxygen — conditions." He added that deep-sea brine pools are of great scientific interest because they



represent one of the most extreme inhabited environments on Earth. Despite being devoid of oxygen and hypersaline, they are teeming with a rich community of so-called 'extremophile' microbes. Studying this community, hence allows

a glimpse into the sort of conditions where life first appeared on our planet." As per the research published in the science journal Nature, these can also direct the hunt for life on "other water worlds" elsewhere in the universe. Brine

pools can also help with predicting floods and tsunamis due to the "exquisitely intact" sediments found there. The pools lack the typical creatures that inhabit and survive on the seabed, such as burrowing shrimp, worms, and mollusks, because the brine lacks oxygen. Typically, these creatures "bioturbate" or "churn up" the seafloor, upsetting the sediments that build up there, according to Purkis. "Not so with the brine pools. Here, any sedimentary layers that settle to the bed of the brine pool remain exquisitely intact." In addition to records of earthquakes and tsunami, the core samples that the researchers took from the newly discovered brine lakes "represent an unbroken record of past rainfall in the region, stretching back more than 1,000 years," said Purkis.

Ever heard about bio-weapons that use DNA to kill specific person? They are reality now



Although 23andMe has maintained time and time again that it does not sell its customers' private information, it is one of many DNA companies that have done so when asked by the police. As a member of the Senate Armed Services Committee, US Senator Joni Ernst of Iowa claimed that the US's adversaries may deploy such DNA bioweapons to attack food supply on a large scale. Ernst forewarned that specific animals relied upon by civilians, armies, or towns could be the

target of biological weapons, resulting in scarcity and food poverty and weakening populations. The Washington Examiner published an article earlier this week detailing how simple it would be to create bioweapons similar to those promoted by Crow using privately owned datasets. The article described how a target's DNA, or the DNA of a target's close relative, might be taken and utilised to create a biological weapon that could only be used

against that specific person. Technology like that could enable extremely targeted assassination programmes while simultaneously making it much more difficult to find murderers. By creating weapons that specifically target a certain type of farm animal or produce, similar technology may be used against US agriculture. That might cause starvation and bring down the US in the face of hostile actions from a rival like Russia or China.

(News Agency) A U.S. House Intelligence Committee member cautioned that bioweapons using a target's DNA to kill only that individual are being created. US Representative Jason Crow of Colorado spoke on Friday at the Aspen Security Forum and cautioned Americans not to be too careless about sharing their DNA with private firms due to the impending arrival of the new type of weapon. "You can target a biological weapon that will kill that person or take them off the battlefield or make them inoperable," Crow said. "You can take someone's DNA, you know, take their medical profile," he added.

Given the prevalence of DNA testing services, where customers voluntarily share their genetic mapping with companies

to learn more about their ancestry and health, the congressman said it is concerning that these weapons are being developed.

Bullet train to Mars? Such a research is indeed going on in Japan

(SAI Bureau) Can we form human colonies on Moon and Mars? We do have concept designs ready but travel to space is in itself an extremely expensive enterprise. Space agencies and billionaires like Elon Musk are working in this direction but if a Japanese concept is implemented perfectly, we can possibly hop on to a bullet train and travel to Moon or Mars. After all, it was Japanese who gave the world bullet trains.

Researchers from Japan's Kyoto University and Kajima Construction are planning to make artificial space environment with Earth-like atmosphere in specially made habitable zones on Moon and Mars. They also working on the

concept of bullet trains to travel there. For this, the transportation system called



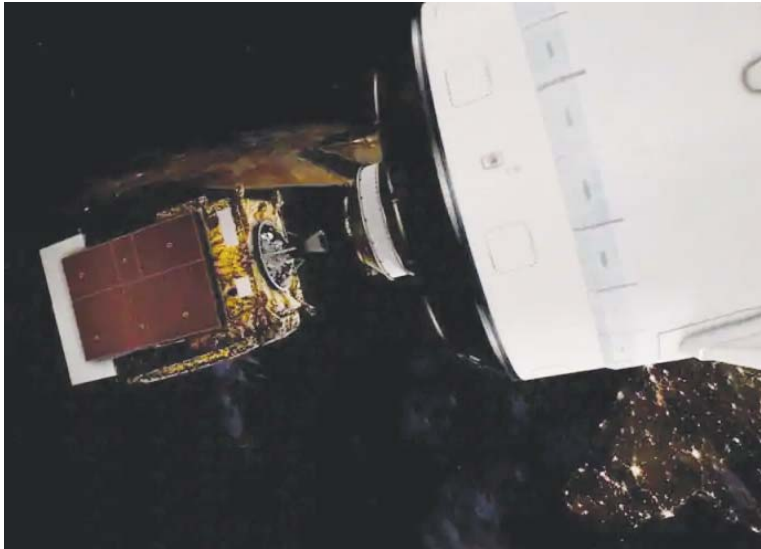
'Hexagon Space Track System' is in the works.

"There is no plan like this in other countries' space development plans. Our plan represents important technologies

crucial to ensuring human beings will be able to move to space in the future," said Yosuke Yamashiki, director of the SIC Human Spaceology Center of Kyoto University in a press conference earlier this month.

"As the idea of living in space becomes more realistic, the problem with the low gravity, which I intuitively became aware of when I was a child, is an issue we must overcome. We are committed to achieving the plan so it will be useful for human beings," said Takuya Ono, a project associate professor with the Center and a senior researcher at Kajima. Researchers said that the project is expected to be completed by 2050.

NASA looking to repurpose existing satellites to search for alien life in space



the first public hearing in almost 50 years and Dr Thomas Zurbuchen, of Nasa's Science Mission Directorate, has now hinted that NASA can actually take the help of existing satellites to find traces of alien life by getting "another view on strange aerial phenomena".

A similar emotion was expressed by Col Pam Melroy, the deputy administrator of NASA. According to The Telegraph, he said in a media interaction: "This team is going to be looking at questions like: 'do we have sensors that can see things, you know, take another look at the

evidence?' 'We have a ton of satellites looking down at the Earth, are any of them useful?'

"I mean, before you build a rover that's going to Mars, you ask yourself, 'What's the sensor I have to build to detect the most interesting thing?' So, they're going to really focus on that.

"How would you get the evidence that you need to be able to determine if it's an optical phenomenon or some other kind (of phenomena)?", he explained in the interaction. In the recent past, a number of experts have criticised NASA for deploying

their assets for what they thought was a "fringe" subject. However, Bill Nelson, a NASA administrator, said that it is a mission which is important to the agency and one of their "remits was to hunt for life outside of Earth".

"Remember that one of our missions is to reach out to see if there is life," he said according to The Telegraph. "That's why we're digging on Mars right now. 'Is there the possibility of life in something as big as the universe? Of course, there is the chance that in somewhere as big as that, conditions similar to Earth existed, and some other kind of life form developed."

(SAI Bureau) The search for alien life has been the driving force for a number of scientists over the years and it seems that NASA are all set to take a huge step to help them. The US space agency had earlier stated that they will be investigating UFO sightings across the country following

Satellite to find hidden reservoirs of freshwater from space

A joint satellite developed by the US and Europe will conduct a global freshwater survey to find hidden reservoirs of water



lead to major consequences for global agriculture and food production. "As Earth's water cycle intensifies, predicting future extreme events like floods and droughts requires monitoring both changes in water supply from the ocean and water demand and usage on land. SWOT's global look at all surface water on Earth

will give us exactly that," said Nadya Vinogradova Shiffer, SWOT's program scientist. The spacecraft will use a Ka-band Radar Interferometer (KaRIn), which bounces radar pulses off the water's surface and receives the return signal with two antennas at the same time. The radar will be able to gather

information along a roughly 120-kilometer-wide area of the planet at once. "The basic idea of SWOT dates back to the late 1990s, but turning that concept into reality all that engineering took a huge amount of time and effort," Pavelsky said. The SWOT mission is scheduled to launch in November from Vandenberg Space Force Base in California.

(News Agency) While the world is made of 75 per cent of water, only a limited fraction of it can be used and consumed in daily life. Limited information and in some cases no information about river systems active in the world could prove detrimental to a world already facing water crises.

To identify these hidden sources, the Surface Water and Ocean Topography (SWOT) satellite will map the planet. The satellite will provide a better understanding of Earth's water cycle, aid in better management of water resources, and expand knowledge of how climate change affects lakes, rivers, and reservoirs.

Developed jointly by Nasa and the French space agency Centre National d'Études Spatial (CNES), the mission will fill the enormous gap in data about sources of water on the planet.

WHAT IS SWOT MISSION?

The satellite will measure the height of water bodies on Earth's surface. It will also be equipped to see features like eddies less than

100 kilometers across in the ocean. Nasa said that SWOT will also measure more than 95 per cent of Earth's lakes larger than 15 acres and rivers wider than 330 feet across. The spacecraft, along with measuring the water height whether it be in a lake, river, or reservoir, will also measure its extent, or surface area. That crucial information will enable scientists to calculate how much water moves through freshwater bodies. "Current databases may have information on a couple of thousand lakes around the world. SWOT will push that number to between 2 million and 6 million," Tamlin Pavelsky, the Nasa freshwater science lead for SWOT said in a statement. Scientists have long speculated that climate change is accelerating Earth's water cycle. Warmer temperatures mean the atmosphere can hold more water (in the form of water vapor), which can cause rain storms to be stronger than a region might typically see. The change could

'First of its kind': Triple star system detected by astronomers in deep space



(News Agency) Imagine three stars orbiting each other in deep space with each of them being the size of at least 12 suns! That is the discovery that has become a popular topic among astronomers who are looking to use the information to understand the cosmos a bit better. The triple star system was described by experts as "something that is unlike anything that has been seen

before" and according to the research published in the Royal Astronomical Society's Monthly Notices, the researchers believe that there was a fourth star in the system, but it was most probably "eaten" by the other three stars. "As far as we know, it is the first of its kind ever detected. We know of many tertiary star systems (three-star systems), but they are typically significantly

less massive. The massive stars in this triple are very close together – it is a compact system," Alejandro Vigna-Gomez, one of the main authors of the study and postdoc at the Niels Bohr International Academy, said in a press statement. At first, the researchers thought that the system had two stars, but citizen scientists were able to track the third star using data from NASA's Transiting Exoplanet Survey Satellite (TESS) observatory. It is not common for triple star systems to exist in deep space with NASA putting the estimate within ten percent of the total star systems in the universe at this point. The first discovery of this kind was made in September 2021, but this system is larger than any prior discovery in this field.

Aadhaar Update: UIDAI Cancels 6 Lakh Fake Aadhaar Numbers; Check if Your Aadhaar Card is Real

(News Agency) The Unique Identification Authority of India has cancelled around 6 lakh Aadhaar numbers, the government has said. All these Aadhaar numbers were duplicate or fake, Minister of State in Electronics and Information Technology Rajeev Chandrasekhar informed the Parliament earlier last week during the proceedings of the Monsoon session. Fake Aadhaar cards and Aadhaar numbers are often used to commit serious crimes, and the UIDAI takes steps regularly to ban them.

Replying to a query during the Monsoon session of the Lok Sabha, the minister said that the authorities have taken steps to tackle with the issue of duplicate Aadhaar generation.

Chandrasekhar further noted that 'face' has been added as an additional feature to verify Aadhaar to address duplication, which has resulted in the cancellation of 598,999 Aadhaar numbers.

"The demographic matching mechanism has been further strengthened, biometric matching of all new enrollments is ensured and 'face' has been included as a new modality (in addition to fingerprint and iris) for de-duplication," he said.

Step 1: If you want to check whether the Aadhaar number you have in your possession is real or fake, go to the UIDAI's official website at . <https://resident.uidai.gov.in/offlineaadhaar>.

Step 2: After this, select the 'Aadhaar Verify' services option. you can also

directly go to the link <https://myaadhaar.uidai.gov.in/verifyAadhaar> to check Aadhaar authenticity.

Step 3: After this, enter the 12-digit Aadhaar number or 16-digit virtual ID to go forward. Step 4: When you are done entering the number, enter the security code displayed on the screen and request for a One Time Password or OTP. You can also choose to enter TOTP. Step 5: You will now usually receive the OTP on your registered mobile number for the given Aadhaar number or Virtual ID. Enter the OTP on the website. Step 6: This will redirect you to a new page where you can get a message that states if your Aadhaar number is valid or not.

Step 7: Along with the message, the

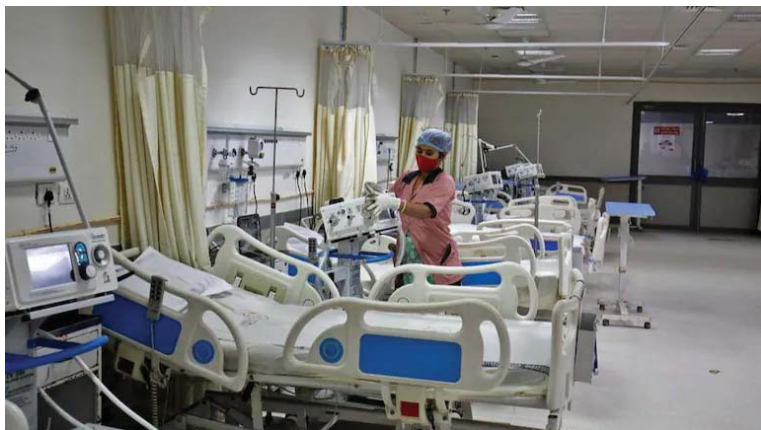
name, state, age, gender and other details will also be reflected on the screen for the concerned Aadhaar number. If all these details are displayed, the Aadhaar number you have with yourself is genuine.

Apart from this, one can scan the QR code printed on Aadhaar letter/eAadhaar/Aadhaar PVC Card to verify Aadhaar offline.

A fake Aadhaar can be used to commit crimes under the user's name and fraudsters often use this trick to do the same. This has also become easy as the 12 digit number has become an essential part of identity for every Indian citizen. The Aadhaar, with its growing significance, has become one of the most sought-after documents of identity.

Import of medical devices up by 41% in FY22

India imported medical devices worth Rs 63,200 crore in 2021-22, up 41 per cent from Rs 44,708 crore in 2020-21, as per a report by AiMeD



(SAI Bureau) The Commerce Ministry data analysed by the Association of Indian Medical Device Industry (AiMeD) has shown that the imports of medical devices are up by record 41 per cent at Rs 63,200 crore in 2021-22 from Rs 44,708 crore in 2020-21. Speaking on the rise in imports of medical devices, Rajiv Nath, forum coordinator, AiMeD, said, "NITI Aayog and the Department of Pharmaceuticals recognise that Indian manufacturers have a 12-15 per cent disability factor in manufacturing medical devices in India. We urge the government to neutralise this disability for reduction of medical devices imports in India as was in the case of consumer electronics, including mobile phones and even in the toy industry.

At present, the duty on Chinese

imports ranges mostly from zero to 10 per cent, but the bulk of the items are in the 7.5 per cent category and one item at 25 per cent.

AiMeD urged the government to expedite steps to end the 80 per cent import dependence and an ever-increasing import bill of over Rs 63,200 crore, expedite steps for patients' protection, stronger quality and safety regulations, price controls to make medical devices and quality treatment accessible and affordable and ethical indigenous manufacturing viable.

CHINA TOP IMPORT SOURCE FOR INDIA

Despite the government's efforts to slow imports from China, the neighbouring nation remained the top import source for India as imports from China grew 48 per cent from Rs 9,112 crore in 2020-

21 to Rs 13,538 crore in 2021-22. The medical device imports from the USA also increased steeply by 48 per cent to Rs 10,245 crore in 2021-22 from Rs 6,919 crore in 2020-21. The value of medical devices from China was nearly the same as the combined value of imports from Germany, Singapore, and the Netherlands in 2021-22.

RISING IMPORT AND ITS IMPACT ON DOMESTIC UNITS

AiMeD said India's rising medical devices imports has hurt small and medium units.

With the government's push to make India 'Aatmanirbhar' in medical device manufacturing, during the pandemic, several local units making masks, PPE kits, thermometers, and gloves mushroomed as there was very high demand. AiMeD said from 1,200 units, the numbers had gone up to 1,800 during the peak of the Covid-19 pandemic. Slowly, units started to shut down as imports from China kept on rising. Now, it is estimated that there are around 1,500 such units, and many more are on the verge of closing down. For the beleaguered domestic industry, capacity utilisation had dropped by the October-December quarter of 2021-22. From the

peak utilisation levels of 100 per cent, by November 2021, around 33 per cent, or one-third of India's medical devices making capacity, was estimated to be lying idle. This is even higher currently, as per AiMeD, an umbrella organisation of domestic medical device manufacturers. AiMeD's analysis shows India's top five medical device import sources - China, USA, Germany, Singapore and the Netherlands - together account for Rs 37,519 crore, or 68 per cent, of the total value of imports. AiMeD pointed out that among the six major categories of medical devices like Consumables, Disposables, Electronics and Equipments, Implants, IVD Reagent & Surgical Instruments that are imported, the growth has been the highest in the 'electronics and equipment' category.

India imported Rs 40,649 crore worth of medical devices that come under this category in 2021-22 against an import worth Rs 4,569 crore in 2016-17.

The import of surgical instruments went up to Rs 1,260 crore from Rs 243 crore during this period. The other categories of products fared like this: IVD

reagent (from Rs 361 crore in 2016-17 to Rs 6,564 crore in 2021-22), consumables (from Rs 5,249 crore in 2016-17 to Rs 8,488 crore in 2021-22), implants (from Rs 384 crore to Rs 3,155 crore) and disposables (from Rs 2,061 crore to Rs 3,084 crore).

AiMeD also analysed the top 50 medical device import items from China to identify the areas of greater dependence for India. A bulk of the imported medical devices from China (in value terms) fall in the 'other items' sub-sections under various major categories, it finds. AiMeD urged that the government should consider shifting from an 8 Digit HS Code to a 10 Digit HS Code as done by USA and Europe to give more granular data for enabling better analysis and policy making.

"The government needs to take policy decisions as done for Mobile Phone & Consumer Electronic Industry to give level playing field, if not a strategic advantage to domestic manufacturers, while safeguarding consumers or India will remain 80 per cent import dependent which is a high healthcare security risk," Rajiv Nath said.

Axis Bank Net Profit Surges 91% to Rs 4,125 Crore in Q1FY23, NII Up by 21%



quarter grew 17 per cent year-on-year to Rs 6,554 crore. Fee income of Axis Bank for the April to June quarter this fiscal jumped to Rs 3,575 crore, up by 34 per cent on a year-on-year basis. Retail fees grew by 43 per cent as compared to the same quarter last financial year, and constituted 66 per cent of Axis Bank's total fee income.

The lender further said that it made specific loan loss provisions of Rs 777 crore for the April to June quarter, against the Rs 602 crore provision made during the January to March quarter. The bank did not utilise its Covid-19 provisions during the quarter, it said in the filing with BSE. Overall, Axis Bank held cumulative provisions of Rs 11,830 crore during the first quarter of the financial year. "It is pertinent to note that this is over and above the NPA provisioning

included in our PCR calculations. These cumulative provisions translate to a standard asset coverage of 1.70 per cent as on 30th June, 2022. On an aggregated basis, our provision coverage ratio stands at 134 per cent of GNPA as on 30th June, 2022," it said. Axis Bank said its gross NPA and net NPA levels as on June 30, 2022 were 2.76 per cent and 0.64 per cent respectively as against 2.82 per cent and 0.73 per cent on March 31 2022. Gross slippages during the quarter were Rs 3,684 crore, compared to Rs 3,981 crore in Q4 FY22 and Rs 6,518 crore in Q1 FY22. Credit cost for the quarter was seen at 0.41 per cent, a plunge of 129 bps YoY.

Axis Bank issued 9.9 lakh credit cards to its customers during the April to June quarter, which is an incremental market share of 17 per cent in the last six months.

As of June 30, 2022, Axis Bank had a network of 4,759 domestic branches and extension counters situated in 2,702 centres compared to 4,600 domestic branches and extension counters situated in 2,628 centres during the year-ago quarter. The lender has 10,161 ATMs and 6,063 cash recyclers spread across the country as of June 30 this year. Commenting on the results, Axis Bank CEO and MD Amitabh Chaudhry said, "As an institution, we continue to make good progress despite the macroeconomic headwinds that pose a challenge at multiple levels, both domestically and to the larger global economy. We continue to strengthen our core, as we open up all doors of growth and development, keeping our priorities intact on building a nimble, smart and customer obsessed bank."

(News Agency) Axis Bank Q1 FY23 Results: Private lender Axis Bank on Monday, July 25, reported a net profit of Rs 4,125 crore for the quarter ended June 30, 2022, which is a leap of a whopping 91 per cent on a year-on-year basis from Rs 2,160 crore in Q1 FY22. The bank said that its net interest income (NII) grew 21 per cent to Rs 9,384 crore in June quarter, compared

to Rs 7,760 crore during the same quarter last year. On a quarterly basis, this was a rise of 6 per cent, Axis Bank said in a regulatory filing on Monday. The net interest margin, or NIM, came to be at 3.60 per cent, which is a jump of 14 bps from a year-ago quarter and 11 bps as compared to the previous quarter Q4 FY22. Axis Bank said its core operating profit for the June

PM Modi to Launch International Bullion Exchange on July 29

(SAI Bureau) Prime Minister Narendra Modi will launch the country's first international bullion exchange at Gujarat International Finance Tec-City (GIFT City) on Friday. He will also lay the foundation stone of the unified regulator International Financial Services Centres Authority's headquarters building.

GIFT City is India's maiden International Financial Services Centre (IFSC). The prime minister, during his visit, will



launch the India International Bullion Exchange (IIBX), which will facilitate efficient price discovery with the assurance of responsible sourcing and quality, apart from giving impetus to the financialisation of gold in India, according to a statement by IFSC Authority. "This shall empower India to gain its rightful place in the global bullion market and serve the global value chain with integrity and quality. This also re-enforces the commitment of the Government of India towards enabling India to be able to influence global bullion prices as a

principal consumer," the statement said. Also, the prime minister will launch NSE IFSC-SGX Connect. Under this system, all orders on Nifty derivatives placed by members of Singapore Exchange Limited (SGX) will be routed to and matched on the NSE-IFSC order matching and trading platform. The connect platform will deepen liquidity in derivative markets at GIFT-IFSC.

Brokers and dealers from India and across international jurisdictions are expected to participate in large numbers for trading derivatives through the connect. Several key announcements will also be made during the visit of the prime minister, the statement said. Chief Minister of Gujarat Bhupendra Patel, Union Minister of Home Affairs and Co-operation Amit Shah, Union Minister of Finance and Corporate Affairs Nirmala Sitharaman, Union Ministers of State for Finance Pankaj Chaudhary and Bhagwat Kishanrao Karad will be attending the events.

China Launches Digital Yuan: Here's All You Need to Know About the Currency

(SAI Bureau) While authorities have been encouraging people for massive adoption of digital currency, according to state media reports, a central bank official has stated that Beijing will adhere to strict privacy laws and safeguard individual information in using Digital Currency Electronic Payment (DC/EP) or e-CNY. When the digital currency was launched and China released the beta version of the digital yuan app for Android and iOS on local app stores earlier this year, it was anticipated that this move will give the Chinese government a broad array of new capabilities for keeping an eye on both its citizens and its economy. However, as reported recently, Mu Changchun, director-general of the central bank's Digital Currency Research Institute, said that the limited anonymity of the digital yuan is a critical component and it provides reasonable anonymous transactions. Additionally, he said that it maintains the demand for financial security by preventing and combating illicit actions such as money laundering, terrorist financing and tax evasion. China believes that e-CNY, issued by the People's Bank of China, will be a traceable alternative to banknotes and coins and can be used to buy anything. For example, Mu said that e-CNY can be used to acquire gold and exchange foreign

currencies just like cash and coins. It should be noted that with more e-CNY uses anticipated in the future, to increase transparency and the efficacy of governmental programmes, some towns provided free digital cash in May to stimulate consumption and aid companies hurt by pandemic restrictions.

CHINESE DIGITAL CURRENCY

When coins were the only form of currency, paper money was created in China over a thousand years ago. Now, with the boom in technological development, China is placing the digital yuan in a position for worldwide use and designing it to be independent of the international monetary order, where the US dollar has ruled since World War II. But according to analysts and economists, digitisation wouldn't be enough to make the yuan competitive with the dollar in bank-to-bank wire transactions. However, according to research conducted by Deutsche Bank, this digital currency is being introduced by the PBOC to achieve two distinct, but connected purposes. The first, the longer-term objective, is to develop a digital currency that can rival others like bitcoins, stablecoins and other central banks' digital currencies (CBDC) while preserving the yuan also known as renminbi as China's reserve currency.

'Gauri Khan doesn't like anything', says Alia Bhatt, shares her review of Darlings

Alia Bhatt has said Darlings co-producer Gauri Khan has liked the film which makes her very relieved as "she doesn't like anything". Darlings also marks Alia's debut in production



(SAI Bureau) Alia Bhatt has revealed the co-producer of her upcoming film Darlings, Gauri Khan has liked the movie and this is no less than a "big win" for her. Alia said Gauri rarely likes anything and when she did like Darlings, it made her feel relieved.

Alia unveiled the trailer of Darlings on Monday, along with co-star Shefali Shah, Vijay Varma and director Jasmeet K Reen, who makes her directorial debut with the film. Alia also marks her debut in production with Darlings that will release on Netflix on August 5. Talking about Gauri's reaction to Darlings, Alia told Bollywood Hungama in an interview, "I was very happy that Gauri loved it. I was like when Gauri likes my movies, I feel very grateful. It is a very rare thing. She doesn't like anything. Even though she is a

producer of the movie, the fact that she loved it, I feel so relieved. I said that also when they called me, even Shah Rukh agrees that if Gauri likes something, it's a big win." Darlings is a dark comedy set in Mumbai. It stars Shefali and Alia as a mother-daughter duo who kidnap Alia's husband, played by Vijay Varma, in order to teach him a lesson. Alia has co-produced the film through her banner Eternal Sunshine Productions, in collaboration with Shah Rukh Khan's Red Chillies Entertainment.

Talking at the Darlings trailer launch, Alia recalled Shah Rukh had told her that he generally doesn't co-produce films but made an "exception" for her. The duo had co-starred in Dear Zindagi, the 2016 coming-of-age drama film. "He (Shah Rukh Khan) said that we will have a lot of fun and enjoy shooting the film. He recently saw the film and in typical Darlings style, he messaged, 'Thanks you Darlings for doing this films'," she said according to PTI.

Shamita Shetty confirms break up with Raqesh Bapat: 'We are no longer together and have not been for a while'

Shamita Shetty took to social media on Tuesday evening to confirm that she and Raqesh Bapat had broken up, urging fans to keep showering them with love

(News Agency) Actor Shamita Shetty confirmed on Tuesday what rumour mills had been claiming for a while, that she and Raqesh Bapat have broken up. Shamita posted a note for her fans on Instagram Stories on Tuesday evening, saying that she and Raqesh 'are no longer together'. The two had met on Bigg Boss last year and began a relationship after coming close during their stint on the popular reality show. Shamita and Raqesh are to be seen in a music video together, which they had shot for in May. Referring to it and clearing the air about their relationship, Shamita wrote a note on Instagram Stories. "I think it's important to make this clear. Raqesh and I are

no longer together and have not been for a while, but this music video is for all the beautiful fans who have given us so much love n support," the note read. Shamita urged the fans to be positive and give them the same love as they have till now. "Do continue to shower us with your love as individuals too. Here's to positivity and newer horizons. A Love and gratitude to you all," her note concluded. Shamita and Raqesh Bapat began dating after meeting in Bigg Boss at the end of last year. Their bond on the show was appreciated by fans and they confirmed their relationship as the show ended a few months later. In March, Shamita had even travelled

to Pune to meet Raqesh's family there, fuelling speculations that they planned to tie the knot soon. However, soon, rumours of their break-up began doing the rounds. In May, Shamita had spoken about the pressure of being in a relationship that's always in the spotlight. "Unfortunately, my entire relationship has been out there because we were on a public platform for quite some time. We did create a certain amount of fan following, and our fans love to see us together. But yes, it's [the attention] tough. It puts a lot of pressure on two people in a relationship, because you feel like you are constantly explaining yourself," she told Media.



Anushka Sharma, Virat Kohli are all smiles as they pose with an Indian restaurant's chef in London

Anushka Sharma and Virat Kohli are currently in London. A chef from an Indian restaurant in London, shared a picture with them on Twitter

(News Agency) Actor Anushka Sharma and Virat Kohli have been vacationing in London. An Indian chef shared a picture of himself with the couple on Twitter from outside his restaurant, located in London. Before their London visit, Anushka and Virat were in Paris from where Anushka shared a couple of pictures on her Instagram. Sharing the picture on his Twitter handle, Bombay Bustle's chef Surendra Mohan wrote, "Happy & honoured to have had the wonderfully warm and pride of India @imVkohli and @AnushkaSharma dine with us @BombayBustle."

Anushka Sharma and Virat Kohli's picture comes a few hours before she shared a photo of her from Paris on Instagram. She captioned the picture, "Mere saamne wali khidki mein (In the window across mine)... Paris musings." A few days back, she shared photos of herself in a bathrobe, eating croissants. She captioned it, "When is Paris... eat many croissants." She had also shared pictures on her Instagram Stories and wrote, "Being very Parisian here... breakfast of

coffee and croissant was devoured." In the next picture, she added, "Sahi mein bohat sahi tha (It was actually very good)." In the end, Anushka shared a clip of a sunset and wrote, "Au revoir (Goodbye until we meet again) Paris." Anushka and Virat tied the knot in an intimate wedding ceremony



in Italy's Lake Como in December 2017. The couple became parents to Vamika in January last year. Earlier this month, Anushka announced the first schedule wrap of her upcoming sports biopic, Chakda Express. The film marks her comeback to acting after her last release Zero in 2018 with Shah Rukh Khan and Katrina Kaif. Directed by Prosit Roy, Chakda Express is based on the life of former Indian cricketer Jhulan Goswami. It will be released on Netflix. Anushka's brother Karnesh Sharma is producing the film under his home production company Clean Slate Filmz.

Twinkle Khanna introduces fans to niece Naomika, daughter of Rinke Khanna



Twinkle Khanna has shared a rare picture of her sister Rinke Khanna on her birthday. The picture also showed Rinke's daughter Naomika Saran

posing next to her in an off-shoulder dress. The mother-daughter duo smiled for the camera. Both of them also had flower crowns on their head with the help of a Snapchat filter. Sharing the picture, Twinkle wrote, "Happy birthday to you. May you always have Jimmy Choos. Happy birthday dear Rinke. Happy birthday to you." She further added in the caption, "Now imagine me singing this out loud and laugh at my voice and be happy little missy." Soon after

she shared the post, celebrities rushed to the comment section and extended warm wishes. "Happy happy birthday," wrote Bobby Deol. Tisca Chopra added, "Have a crackling good year darling Rinke." Stylist Ashley Rebello commented, "Happy birthday my dear Rinke, ur (You're) simply the best." Twinkle shares a close bond with Rinke. However, she rarely shares pictures with her. Much like Twinkle, Rinke was also part of the film industry. She made

her Bollywood debut in Pyaar Mein Kabhi Kabhi, alongside Dino Morea and Sanjay Suri. She was seen in several films such as Jhankaar Beats, Mujhe Kuch Kehna Hai and more. She last starred in Kareena Kapoor starrer-Chameli in 2004. Ever since then, she has not yet signed any project. Rinke tied the knot with businessman Samir Saran in 2003 and was blessed with a daughter Naomika.

(SAI Bureau) Actor-turned-author Twinkle Khanna shared a rare monochrome picture of her sister Rinke Khanna who turned a year older on Wednesday. She took to her Instagram handle and penned a birthday note for her as well. Twinkle is Rinke's elder sister, which makes her the youngest daughter of Rajesh Khanna and Dimple Kapadia. In the picture, Rinke Khanna donned a baggy top with her daughter Naomika

Russo Brothers pick Priyanka Chopra over Deepika Padukone as new Captain Marvel: 'We are good friends, huge fans'

Filmmaker duo Russo Brothers was asked to choose between Priyanka Chopra and Deepika Padukone as the new Captain Marvel in a candid chat

(News Agency) The Russo Brothers are friends with Priyanka Chopra and would not choose anyone, even Deepika Padukone, over her. The director duo are producing Priyanka's debut web show, Citadel. When they were recently asked to choose between Priyanka and Deepika for a new Captain Marvel, they chose the former without batting an eyelid. Priyanka's fan page on Instagram shared a video from the recent press conference of The Russo Brothers' film, The Gray Man, along with Dhanush, in

Mumbai. In a candid chat, when they were asked to choose between Priyanka and Deepika Padukone as the next Captain Marvel, they said, "We have to pick Priyanka. (We are) Huge fans, big fans. We are very good friends. We are working on a project. We are producing a show, Citadel."

The Russo Brothers have always praised Priyanka in their interview. Talking to Indianexpress.com about Priyanka, Joe Russo had said last year, "She's an incredible star. I mean I think she has been

amazing. We just had a table read of the show a couple of days ago and it was fantastic." Anthony Russo and Joe Russo directed a mid-credits scene in Captain Marvel, that had the titular character meeting Avengers. Brie Larson had played Captain Marvel in the 2019 film. Priyanka wrapped up the shoot of Citadel a few weeks ago. Talking to Collider about the show, she said in December last year, "There is nothing like Citadel on television, I think. It's extremely high scale, extremely finessed action, stunts, but at the



same time it's a drama and it has heart. So, I think there is really nothing like that on TV right now and that is one of the big reasons I really wanted to do it. Doing something for multiple episodes...you know it's a

commitment." Priyanka has Hollywood films Ending Things and It's All Coming Back in the pipeline. She will also be featuring in a Hindi film – Farhan Akhtar's Jee Le Zaraa, co-starring Katrina Kaif and Alia Bhatt.

Aditi Rao Hydari turns showstopper in Delhi, Malaika Arora had a feast hours before ramp walk, said 'I was hungry'

Malaika Arora and Aditi Rao Hydari walked the ramp at the Indian Couture Week in Mumbai on Wednesday. The two actors are regulars at fashion shows and again left a lasting impression on the ramp

(SAI Bureau) Actors Aditi Rao Hydari and Malaika Arora walked the ramp in Delhi on Wednesday. While Aditi turned a traditional bride in a lehenga and huge nose ring at the India Couture Week, Malaika was a complete contrast in an embellished sheer gown with a thigh-high slit and deep neckline. Aditi Rao Hydari walked the ramp for Anju Modi on day 4 of the India Couture Week. She sported an almost no makeup look as she appeared in a yellow lehenga with a green dupatta, paired with traditional jewellery.

Later, Malaika turned showstopper for designer duo Rohit Gandhi and Rahul Khanna. Aditi was last seen in Tamil film Hey Sinamika. She is currently filming for a Netflix show, reportedly titled Heeramandi. Malaika was earlier a judge on dance reality show, India's Best Dancer before it came to an end. Hours before walking the ramp, Malaika's business partner and yoga studio owner Sarvesh Shashi shared a video on his Instagram Stories, to make fun of how the dancer and fitness enthusiast was relishing one

dish after the other. He counted five dishes on her table after she was done eating. "Malaika is on a diet, just saying." She reacted to the video on her own Instagram Stories, saying, "Hahahaha... I was hungry #caughtintheact." A day before, Pushpa star Rashmika Mandanna had made her debut at the fashion show. She walked the ramp for Varun Bahl in a red lehenga. She had been shooting in the capital for her upcoming film, Animal, along with Ranbir Kapoor, Anil Kapoor and Suresh Oberoi.





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