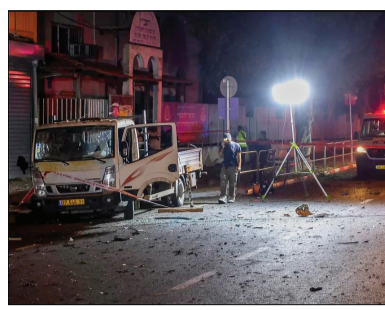




3
'BJP, JDS ATTEMPTING TO DESTABILISE KARNATAKA GOVERNMENT': VENUGOPAL



11
'THIS WAS A TERROR ATTACK': ISRAEL ON TEL AVIV EXPLOSION



16
PCI CHIEF HAILS GROWING SUPPORT FOR PARA-ATHLETES AHEAD OF PARALYMPICS

J&K: Freebies galore in NC poll manifesto

AJAY JANDYAL
SRINAGAR

National Conference (NC) vice-president Omar Abdullah rolled out his party's comprehensive poll manifesto for the 2024 elections on Monday, emphasizing a strong commitment to restoring Jammu and Kashmir's political and legal status and pledging significant welfare measures.

Addressing a press conference in Srinagar, Abdullah

outlined the party's key promises, including the fight for the restoration of J&K's political and legal status. He also pledged 200 units of free electricity to residents if the NC came to power. "We are committed to ensuring the rights of the people of J&K and will remind the Supreme Court about the Government of India's promise to restore statehood to J&K. Should there be any delay, we will approach the SC," Abdullah stated.

ELECTION PROMISES

Restoration of Article 370, 35-A and statehood
Redrawing the Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation Act, 2019
Return and rehabilitation of Kashmiri Pandits
Free power up to 200 units
Rs 5,000 to women belonging to the EWS
Free education up to the university level

The manifesto also outlines a comprehensive job creation strategy, including the Jammu and Kashmir Youth Employment Generation Act, which aims to generate sustainable employment opportunities. Abdullah promised to fill all vacancies in government departments within six months and ensure free job applications for all examinations.

Addressing the ongoing

WEST BENGAL GUV LIKELY TO MEET PRESIDENT TODAY

CBI, meanwhile, grills former principal of the medical college, where a junior doctor was murdered after rape, for the fourth day on Monday

SUPROTIM MUKHERJEE
KOLKATA

Protests against the brutal rape and murder of a 31-year-old medical student continued across West Bengal even as West Bengal Governor C V Ananda Bose on Monday said "democracy is declining" in West Bengal. Amidst the ongoing protests in West Bengal, Governor Bose is likely to meet President Draupadi Murmu on Tuesday, Raj Bhavan sources said.

Governor Bose made the comments while meeting a delegation, including doctors and others at a Raksha Bandhan event and expressed his anguish at what transpired at RG Kar Hospital as well as the "botched administrative and law enforcement steps".

Meeting a delegation that expressed solidarity with those protesting the rape and murder at R G Kar Medical College and Hospital, Bose said "democracy is declining".

At the ceremony, he met people from all strata of society, mostly women and transgender people.

"In West Bengal, democracy is declining... This cannot continue. Today, we must vow to protect our daughters and sisters... Our society should be one where women feel safe and content... Now is the time for all men to correct our mistakes," Bose said during the

meeting. "The delegates expressed solidarity with the medical professionals and the protesting masses across the State and the country," read a statement by the Raj Bha-

clearly failed to measure up to the occasion," the statement added.

It read that the people he met insisted on taking the investigations "on the right track" to ensure women's

Indian cricketer Harbhajan Singh shared a letter on X urging West Bengal's Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee and Governor Bose to take immediate action.

"With deep anguish over

nor had posted on X: "HG's (Honourable Governor's) swift action on the letter from Shri Harbhajan Singh expressing his anguish over the tragic incident at R.G. Kar Medical College. HG has called an emergency meeting of a cross-section of Bengal society to apprise them of the action taken in the matter and to take stock of their opinions in this regard."

Meanwhile, CBI officers for the fourth consecutive day on Monday questioned the former principal of R.G. Kar Medical College, Sandip Ghosh in connection with their probe into the rape and murder of the woman doctor. "Dr. Ghosh reached the CBI's city office at CGO Complex on Monday morning," an official said.

In another development, Kolkata Police said: "One person was arrested in Kolkata for allegedly disclosing the identity of the doctor on social media, and for issuing threats to Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee."

Police sources said a second-year B.Com student has been arrested by Kolkata Police over allegations of sharing a "provocative social media post" against Mamata Banerjee.

As per the police, the student has been accused of inciting hatred and encouraging criminal activity by allegedly "encouraging" people to assassinate the CM.

P4



Junior doctors and other medical staff stage a protest against the alleged sexual assault and murder of a postgraduate trainee doctor at RG Kar Hospital, in Kolkata on Monday. ANI

One person was arrested in Kolkata for allegedly disclosing the identity of the doctor on social media, and for issuing threats to CM Mamata Banerjee

wan, adding that the Governor briefed the delegates on steps he has taken, including his field visit to the hospital and monitoring the situation.

"The delegation expressed their anguish at what had transpired at the RG Kar Medical College and the subsequent botched administrative and law enforcement steps that have

dignity, safety, and security, particularly that of medical professionals.

Governor Bose had announced on Sunday night that he called for an emergency meeting with various sections of people in West Bengal to discuss the case and gather opinions on the Government's response.

His decision came after Rajya Sabha MP and former

the delay in justice for the Kolkata rape and murder victim, an incident that has shaken the conscience of all of us, I have penned a heartfelt plea to the Hon'ble Chief Minister of West Bengal, Ms. @MamataOfficial Ji, and Hon'ble @Bengal-Governor, urging them to act swiftly and decisively," Singh wrote on X.

In response, the Govern-

CRPF inspector killed in Udhampur terror attack

AJAY JANDYAL
JAMMU

A CRPF inspector was martyred on Monday during a terrorist ambush targeting an area domination patrol party of the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) and local police at Chill, Dudu, in Udhampur district.

Initial reports indicate that the encounter erupted when joint security forces were conducting routine patrols in the area. The terrorists, who had been lying in wait, ambushed the forces, resulting in the tragic loss of the CRPF Inspector. The operation to neutralise the attackers is ongoing at the time of going to press, with security forces launching a



Representational file image. ANI

massive cordon and search operation in the region.

The Udhampur Police, through an official statement on X, stated: "An information received through reliable sources during routine patrolling of CRPF 187 Battalion in Cheel Areas of Ramnagar District Udhampur. Unfortunately, 30/40

rounds of firing occurred on the patrolling party of CRPF 187 Battalion, in which one inspector, Sh. Kuldeep Raj, was killed on the spot."

This attack follows an incident in the Basantgarh area of Udhampur just days ago, where terrorists engaged security forces in a gunfight

P4

Sidda gets breather in land 'scam'

TDG NETWORK
BENGALURU

The Karnataka High Court on Monday asked the trial court concerned not to take any precipitative action against Chief Minister Siddaramaiah based on the Governor's sanction in MUDA 'scam' till the next date of hearing before the High Court.

A bench of Justice M Nagaprasanna posted the plea for hearing on August 29 which was filed by Siddaramaiah challenging the sanction for his prosecution by Governor Thawar Chand Gehlot in the alleged Mysuru



Urban Development Authority (MUDA) land allotment scam.

While hearing Chief Minister's plea, the High Court said trial shall not take any precipitative action based on the Governor's sanction against Siddaramaiah in

P4

Singhvi files papers for RS bypoll from Telangana

TDG NETWORK
HYDERABAD

Congress leader Abhishek Manu Singhvi filed his nomination on Monday for the Rajya Sabha bypoll from Telangana.

Telangana Chief Minister Revanth Reddy, Deputy CM Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka, AICC incharge for Telangana Deepa Dasmunsi, Ministers, MLAs, MLCs, MPs and others were also present.



Earlier, a Congress Legislative Party (CLP) meeting was held at the Sheraton Hotel in Hyderabad on Sunday.

The main agenda of the meeting was to introduce Abhishek Manu Singhvi to the MLAs and Congress party leaders.

On August 14, the Congress nominated Abhishek Singhvi as its candidate for the upcoming Rajya Sabha bypoll in Telangana.

P4

PM Modi to visit Ukraine on Zelenskyy's invite

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will be visiting Ukraine on August 23 on the invitation of Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, the Ministry of External Affairs said on Monday.

This will be the first by an Indian PM to the war-hit country since the two nations established diplomatic ties around 30 years ago.

Reiterating India's stance on the Russia-Ukraine con-



flict that began on February 24, 2022, the MEA said that only dialogue and diplomacy can lead to a lasting resolution of the conflict.

"PM Narendra Modi will

undertake an official visit to Ukraine later this week on Friday, August 23, on the invitation of Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy," MEA Secretary (West) Tanmaya Lal said at the special briefing on Monday.

"This is also a landmark and a historic visit since this will be the first time an Indian PM will be visiting Ukraine in more than 30 years since we established our diplomatic relations.

P4

Panel formation to manage gurdwaras in Haryana in limbo as MCC is in force

NEERAJ MOHAN
CHANDIGARH

The appointment of 41 members to the ad-hoc committee of the Haryana Sikh Gurdwara Management Committee (HSGMC) remains in a state of uncertainty, with the process stalled due to the lack of an official oath-taking ceremony. The newly appointed members, eager to assume their responsibilities, are awaiting government orders to formalise their roles and form an executive



committee to oversee the management of Haryana's gurdwaras.

On August 14, the BJP-led Haryana government released the list of 41 nominated members through a

gazette notification issued by the Home Department. This new committee is tasked with overseeing and supervising the assets of gurdwaras across the state. The notification, grounded

in the powers conferred by sub-section (8) of section 16 of the Haryana Sikh Gurdwara (Management) Act, 2014, and the Haryana Sikh Gurdwaras (Management) Amendment Act, 2022, also nullified any previously constituted committees under these provisions.

Despite the issuance of this notification, the procedural next steps, including the oath-taking ceremony, are yet to be completed. The members are required to

P4

J&K: WOMEN TIE RAKHI TO ARMY PERSONNEL ALONG LOC IN URI

TDG NETWORK
BARAMULLA

Celebrating the festival of Raksha Bandhan, women tied Rakhi to Indian army personnel in Soni Village along Line of Control (LoC) in the Uri sector of Jammu and Kashmir on Monday.

Women called the soldiers their brothers and showed gratitude towards them for protecting the borders. In return, the soldiers pledge to protect and safeguard the residents from any harm.

Seerat Bano, a local woman, said, "We sisters have tied Rakhi to our brother for protecting us across the borders."

Raksha Bandhan is a traditional Hindu festival dedicated to the love and bond between brothers and sisters. On this day, sisters tie Rakhi around their brother's wrists.



In return, brothers offer gifts as a symbol of love and care for their sisters.

Nazir Ahmad, another local villager highlighted the significance of the Raksha Bandhan and described it as a festival of peace and harmony.

"This festival gives the message of peace and brotherhood. We live on the border and we stand by our Indian army who protect us. This festival represents the same brotherhood," he said.

Earlier on August 17, schoolgirls near the Akhnour

border in Jammu and Kashmir celebrated Rakshabandan by tying Rakhi to army personnel.

The Hindu festival was celebrated with joy as school girls tied Rakhi, applied Tilak and offered sweets to the army personnel.

Earlier today PM Narendra Modi also wished the country on the occasion, "Best wishes to all countrymen on the occasion of Rakshabandan, a festival symbolizing the immense love between brother and sister. May this holy festival bring new sweetness in the relationships of all of you and happiness, prosperity and good fortune in life."

Rakhi symbolizes a sense of protection. On Raksha Bandhan, the brothers promise to protect their sisters from harm of any kind.

Raksha Bandhan is a festival deeply rooted in Indian Culture and has been celebrated for centuries. Incidents of sisters tying rakhi around their brothers' wrists for protection are mentioned in Hindu religious texts.

Former Army chief General Padmanabhan dies at 83

TDG NETWORK
CHENNAI

Former Indian Army Chief General Sundararajan Padmanabhan passed away in Chennai, the Indian Army said on Monday.

Commissioned into the Regiment of Artillery, General Sundararajan Padmanabhan assumed charge of the Indian Army, as the 20th Chief of Army Staff, on September 30, 2000.

Born in Trivandrum, Kerala on December 5, 1940, he is an alumnus of the prestigious Rashtriya Indian Military College (RIMC), Dehra Dun and the National Defence Academy (NDA), Khadakwasla in Pune. He was commissioned into the Regiment of Artillery after graduating from the Indian Military Academy (IMA) on December 13, 1959.

His illustrious career included several prestigious



Artillery in Deolali, was a Brigade Major of an infantry brigade on its raising and served as Colonel General Staff of a Mountain Division from January 1983 to May 1985, where he was awarded the Vishisht Seva Medal (VSM). He has also spent two tenures as an Instructor at the IMA.

Within army circles, he is affectionately known as Paddy. He commanded an Independent Artillery Brigade and a Mountain Brigade before attending the prestigious NDC course at Delhi. He commanded an Infantry Brigade from December 1988 to February 1991 at Ranchi, Bihar and Punjab and was then appointed as the General Officer Commanding of an Infantry Division in Punjab from March 1991 to August 1992.

He served as Chief of Staff, 3 Corps from September 1992 to June 1993.

command, staff and instructional postings, besides having participated in numerous operations. He was a graduate of the Defence Services Staff College (DSSC) at Wellington in 1973 and the National Defence College (NDC) at New Delhi.

He commanded an Independent Light Battery from August 1975 to July 1976 and later on commanded the Gazala Mountain Regiment from September 1977 to March 1980. This mountain regiment is one of the oldest artillery regiments of the Indian Army and has participated in several wars.

He served as Instructor Gunnery at the School of

Dushyant Chautala accuses Congress of aligning with BJP ahead of RS election

NEERAJ MOHAN
CHANDIGARH

The ongoing political tussle in Haryana has intensified as Jannayak Janata Party (JJP) leader and former Deputy Chief Minister Dushyant Chautala has once again accused former Chief Minister and senior Congress leader Bhupinder Singh Hooda of colluding with the BJP ahead of the crucial Rajya Sabha by-election.

The election, necessitated by Congress leader Deepender Singh Hooda's move to the Lok Sabha, is set for September 3, with the deadline for nominations looming on August 21.

Dushyant Chautala, in a pointed attack, questioned Hooda's decision not to field a Congress candidate for the Rajya Sabha seat. "The final date for filing nominations for the Haryana Rajya Sabha



by-election is August 21. Now even 4-5 of our MLAs (who deserted JJP) have become Congressmen. The Congress candidate is now close to winning the election. If Bhupinder Hooda doesn't have a secret understanding with the BJP, then he should field a candidate in the Rajya Sabha election. We have already promised to vote against the BJP," Chautala posted on X (formerly Twitter).

He further intensified his criticism with a Hindi verse, "Jail Ke Dar Se Bar-Bar Bikta

Rahe, Udhar Ka Ho Aur Idhar Ka Dikhta Rahe" (For fear of jail, he keeps selling himself repeatedly; he belongs to one side but appears to be on the other).

The Rajya Sabha election was necessitated by the vacancy created after Congress leader Deepender Singh Hooda moved to the Lok Sabha. The BJP, aware of the implications this election may have on the forthcoming state assembly elections likely to be held in October, is carefully weighing its op-

portunities, considering both caste dynamics and electoral impact.

Bhupinder Singh Hooda has publicly stated on multiple occasions that the Congress would not field a candidate due to the party's insufficient numbers to guarantee a victory. Hooda had previously indicated that the party might reconsider if JJP's 10 MLAs assured their votes for the Congress candidate.

The political landscape in Haryana has witnessed a significant shift with the announcement of the assembly election schedule. Seven MLAs from the JJP-former alliance partner of the BJP, have defected, many expressing intentions to join Congress. This development has sparked concerns within Congress regarding cross-voting, especially as the

party's strength in the assembly has dwindled from the 31 seats it secured in the 2019 elections. The recent defection of Congress MLA Kiran Choudhary to the BJP has further compounded these worries.

Despite Dushyant Chautala's allegations, both Bhupinder Singh Hooda and the Congress have maintained a strategic silence, refraining from responding to the charges. However, political observers suggest that Congress's hesitation to field a candidate might stem from the fear of internal defections and cross-voting, potentially weakening their position even further. As the Rajya Sabha election draws near, all eyes remain on the unfolding political drama in Haryana, with the outcome likely to set the tone for the upcoming assembly elections.

Winnability tops Congress agenda in Haryana as screening committee gears up for assembly polls

NEERAJ MOHAN
CHANDIGARH

"Winnability" emerging as the key criterion for selecting candidates as the Congress party begins preparation for the upcoming Haryana Assembly elections.

This decision was the primary outcome of the Congress' screening committee meeting held in Delhi on Monday, attended by top party leaders, including Congress President Mallikarjun Kharge, Rahul Gandhi, Priyanka Gandhi, and KC Venugopal.

During the meeting, leaders from Haryana and other poll-bound states, including Jammu and Kashmir, engaged in extensive discussions to strategize for the elections. Party sources revealed that a four-member

screening committee, under the leadership of Haryana state Congress Incharge Deepak Babariya, is expected to meet again in the next three to four days to narrow down the list of potential candidates.

The Congress is currently conducting three separate surveys to finalize its candidates, with the first survey already completed. "The next two surveys, including one spearheaded by a team close to Rahul Gandhi, are in progress," disclosed a senior party leader who requested anonymity. The party plans to submit at least three potential names from each constituency to the screening committee, ensuring a thorough selection process.

In a significant development, the committee has reportedly decided to avoid

fielding candidates who lost in the 2014 and 2019 assembly elections. Instead, the party is leaning towards selecting prominent figures from Haryana who actively participated in the 2020-21 farmers' agitation and protests against paper leaks and unemployment.

After the meeting, Deepak Babariya told the media, expressing confidence in the growing popularity of the Congress in Haryana. He attributed this surge to the overwhelming response received by Deepender Hooda's "Haryana Mange Hisab Yatra" across the state. Babariya also emphasized that the final selection of candidates would be based on a comprehensive evaluation of their strengths and weaknesses. If necessary, a ground-level survey will be

conducted to assess the potential of specific candidates.

The Congress has received an impressive 2,556 applications from aspirants vying for tickets across Haryana's 90 assembly seats. The scrutiny of these applications is currently underway, with male applicants submitting 2,140 applications compared to 416 from women. The constituencies reserved for Scheduled Castes (SC) have witnessed particularly high engagement, with Nilokheri leading with 88 applications, followed by Julana with 86 and Bhawani Khera (SC) with 78. Other notable constituencies, such as Badhra, Ukalana (SC), and Shahbad (SC), have each seen over 50 applications. However, the party's internal discord in Haryana remains a significant challenge.

'BJP brought Haryana to the top in unemployment, crime, corruption'

TDG NETWORK
AMBALA

With political tensions escalating following the announcement of assembly poll dates in Haryana, Congress MP Deepender Singh Hooda criticised the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), accusing the party of derailing the state's development and placing Haryana at the top of the country in terms of unemployment, drug addiction, crime, and corruption.

Addressing Congress' "Haryana Mange Hisaab" rally at Ambala Cantonment on Sunday, the Rohtak MP tar-

getted the current Haryana government and Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini, asserting that the BJP had made numerous announcements but had failed to implement any of them.

Hooda further criticised the BJP, claiming that "these announcements are either false and cannot be implemented, or the party never intended to implement these schemes."

Discussing preparations for the upcoming state elections, Hooda said, "In the last few days, I have visited about 50 assembly constituencies, and the over-

whelming sentiment is clear: the BJP government is on its way out, and the Congress government is coming in."

Commenting on the law and order situation in Haryana, Hooda pointed out that, according to a report released by the Government of India, Haryana currently has the highest crime rate in the country.

Earlier, on Saturday, Congress MP Randeep Surjewala accused the BJP-led Haryana government of deceiving the state's people ahead of the assembly polls in October.

President Murmu urges people to ensure safety of women on Raksha Bandhan

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

As the nation celebrates Raksha Bandhan on Monday, President Droupadi Murmu extended greetings on the festival that celebrates the bond between siblings.

President Murmu said the festival instills a feeling of affection and respect towards all sisters and daughters.

In a post on X, President Droupadi Murmu said, "On the auspicious occasion of Raksha Bandhan, I extend my heartfelt greetings and best wishes to all the countrymen. This festival, based on the feeling of love and mutual trust between brothers and sisters, instills a feeling of affection and respect towards all sisters and daughters."

She also urged the citizens to take a pledge to ensure the safety and respect of women in society.

"I would like that on this festival day, all the countrymen to take a pledge to ensure the safety and respect of women in our society," the post further



reads.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi greeted people on the occasion of Raksha Bandhan and prayed for everyone's happiness and prosperity.

"Best wishes to all countrymen on the occasion of Raksha Bandhan, a festival symbolizing the immense love between brother and sister. May this holy festival bring new sweetness in the relationships of all of you and happiness, prosperity and good fortune in life," PM Modi posted on X.

Union Home Minister Amit Shah also extended wishes and prayed for

everyone's happiness and prosperity.

"Heartiest greetings to all the countrymen on the festival of 'Raksha Bandhan'. On this festival of unbreakable love and affection between brothers and sisters, I pray for everyone's happiness and prosperity," Shah posted on X.

Raksha Bandhan, commonly known as Rakhi, will be celebrated on Monday, August 19 this year. It is a traditional Hindu festival dedicated to the love and bond between brothers and sisters. On this day, sisters tie a rakhi around their brothers' wrists. In return, brothers offer gifts as a symbol of love and care for their sisters.

Rakhi symbolises a sense of protection. On Raksha Bandhan, the brothers promise to protect their sisters from harm of any kind.

Raksha Bandhan is a festival deeply rooted in Indian Culture and has been celebrated for centuries. Incidents of sisters tying rakhi around their brothers' wrists for protection are mentioned in Hindu religious texts.

IMD predicts heavy rain in 6 dists of Himachal over next 12 hours

TDG NETWORK
SHIMLA

The India Meteorological Department (IMD) in Shimla has issued a heavy rain alert for six districts in Himachal Pradesh.

The alert predicts medium-intensity rainfall over the next 12 hours, primarily affecting the districts of Bilaspur, Chamba, Hamirpur, Kangra, Kullu, and Mandi.

Earlier, a cloudburst fol-

lowed by severe flooding and rainfall struck the Damrali Nallah area in the Taklech sub-tehsil of the Rampur sub-division of Himachal Pradesh late at night on August 16, causing significant disruption in the area.

A cloudburst and subsequent flood caused the breakage of approximately 30 metres of road and damaged nearby mobile towers. No loss of life or significant property damage was re-

ported. The incident resulted in the breakage of nearly 30 metres of road in the area, along with sustainable damages to nearby mobile towers. Fortunately, no loss of life or other property was reported by the officials.

Upon receiving the information, Shimla Sub-Divisional Magistrate Nishant Tomar and Deputy Superintendent of Police Naresh Sharma rushed to the spot

to assess the situation.

In another incident, the road near Nigulsari Sliding Point on Shimla-Kinnaur Highway (NH-5) in Khas completely caved in, due to which traffic activities were halted in that area.

Meanwhile, the India Meteorological Department (IMD) issued an orange alert on August 18 for multiple states across India, including West Bengal, Nagaland, Mizoram, and Tripura.

'BJP, JDS ATTEMPTING TO DESTABILISE KARNATAKA GOVERNMENT': VENUGOPAL

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Following sanction by Karnataka governor to prosecute Chief Minister Siddaramaiah in connection with the Mysuru Urban Development Authority (MUDA) land scam case, Congress leader KC Venugopal alleged that it was an attempt by the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and Janata Dal (Secular) (JDS) to destabilise the state government.

Venugopal said, "It is a clear conspiracy by BJP and JD(S) to destabilise the Siddaramaiah govt, which is the most popular government in Karnataka. The government is addressing the concerns of the common people."

"Their target is clear (BJP-JDS) to tarnish the image of Siddaramaiah, congress party is standing with Sid-



daramaiah. Congress will fight with this issue legally and politically," he said.

He further stated this move as unfortunate adding "What is happening in Karnataka is unfortunate."

Earlier today, Karnataka BJP leaders held a protest demanding the resignation of Chief Minister Siddaramaiah over his alleged connection with MUDA land scam case. "Today we are demanding the resignation of CM Sid-

daramaiah. He has looted the poor people that's why we are protesting against him and the entire Congress government...This government is ATM for the Congress high command," Karnataka Assembly Leader of Opposition R Ashok said.

BJP leader CT Ravi said that the BJP is protesting against the Karnataka government and against Siddaramaiah.

"There are allegations of corruption against CM Sid-

daramaiah. MUDA scam has happened everyone knows about it...The Governor has given an order according to the Constitution of India. We are here to remind Congress about what they said when they were in opposition. The position of Governor is a constitutional position. So, protesting against his order is wrong," Ravi said.

Earlier today, the Karnataka Chief Minister moved High Court challenging the order issued by Governor Thaawarchand Gehlot to prosecute him in the alleged Mysuru Urban Development Authority (MUDA) land scam case.

Siddaramaiah filed a writ petition requesting for cancellation of permission given to the prosecution. Justice Hemant Chandangoudar's single-judge bench is scheduled to hear the plea today.

"Despite all the factual matters being brought to the notice of the Governor, he has proceeded to grant sanction on 16.08.2024, which was communicated to the Chief Secretary on 17.08.2024. The Petitioner submits that the sanction order was issued without due application of mind, in violation of statutory mandates, and contrary to constitutional principles, including the advice of the Council of Ministers, which is binding under Article 163 of the Constitution of India. The Governor's decision is legally unsustainable, procedurally flawed, and motivated by extraneous considerations, and thus the Petitioner has preferred this Writ Petition seeking to quash the impugned order dated 16.08.2024 amongst other reliefs," he said in a writ.

Bihar CM Nitish Kumar celebrates Raksha Bandhan, ties rakhi to tree

TDG NETWORK
PATNA

Bihar Chief Minister and Janata Dal (United) supremo Nitish Kumar on Monday celebrated Raksha Bandhan by tying rakhi around a tree in Patna.

Doing so, the chief minister emphasised the importance of protecting the environment and celebrated the 'Bihar Vraksh Suraksha Diwas.'

In a post on social media platform 'X', the Bihar CM said that Raksha Bandhan is a festival of love and affection and shared his wishes with people.

"Raksha Bandhan is a festival of love and affection between brothers and sisters. Hearty congratulations and best wishes to the people of the state and the country on the occasion of Raksha Bandhan." Nitish Kumar posted on X. Prime Minister Naren-



dra Modi also celebrated Raksha Bandhan with the school girls tying rakhis on his wrist in the national capital on Monday.

In the video, school girls were seen tying the 'Rakhi' to PM Modi, on the festival of 'Raksha Bandhan'.

PM also greeted people on the occasion of Raksha Bandhan and prayed for everyone's happiness and prosperity.

"Best wishes to all countrymen on the occasion of Raksha Bandhan, a festival symbolizing the immense love between brother and

sister. May this holy festival bring new sweetness in the relationships of all of you and happiness, prosperity and good fortune in life," PM Modi posted on X.

Raksha Bandhan is a traditional Hindu festival dedicated to the love and bond between brothers and sisters. On this day, sisters tie Rakhi around their brothers' wrists. In return, brothers offer gifts as a symbol of love and care for their sisters.

Raksha Bandhan is a festival deeply rooted in Indian Culture and has been celebrated for centuries.

'Sisters should be empowered socially, economically'

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Union Agriculture and Rural Development Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan on Monday extended greetings on the occasion of Raksha Bandhan and mentioned Prime Minister Narendra Modi's 'sankalp' of making the women of the country socially and economically empowered.

"My Ladli Behno, I extend the greeting to all my sisters on the occasion of Raksha Bandhan. Our sisters should be empowered socially, economically and politically, this is the 'sankalp' (resolution) of PM Modi. And we will fulfil the 'sankalp' of PM Modi," Chouhan said in a self-made video.

Earlier today, Prime Minister Narendra Modi greeted people on the occasion of Raksha Bandhan and prayed



for everyone's happiness and prosperity.

"Best wishes to all countrymen on the occasion of Raksha Bandhan, a festival symbolizing the immense love between brother and sister. May this holy festival bring new sweetness in the relationships of all of you and happiness, prosperity and good fortune in life," PM Modi posted on X.

Union Home Minister Amit Shah also extended wishes

and prayed for everyone's happiness and prosperity.

"Heartiest greetings to all the countrymen on the festival of 'Raksha Bandhan'. On this festival of unbreakable love and affection between brothers and sisters, I pray for everyone's happiness and prosperity," Shah posted on X.

Union Health Minister and BJP chief JP Nadda greeted people and prayed that the Raksha Bandhan fills everyone's life with hap-

piness and good fortune.

"I extend my heartfelt greetings and best wishes to all my countrymen on the sacred festival of Raksha Bandhan, the unbreakable love and trust between brother and sister. I pray to God that this festival of our sacred culture may fill everyone's life with happiness, good fortune and prosperity," Nadda posted on X.

Raksha Bandhan, commonly known as Rakhi, is celebrated on Monday (today). It is a traditional Hindu festival dedicated to the love and bond between brothers and sisters.

On this day, sisters tie a rakhi around their brothers' wrists. In return, brothers offer gifts as a symbol of love and care for their sisters.

Raksha Bandhan is a festival deeply rooted in Indian Culture and has been celebrated for centuries.

Next phase of Odisha budget session to resume from today

TDG NETWORK
BHUBANESWAR

Odisha Assembly Speaker Surama Padhi announced on Monday that the second phase of the Odisha budget will resume on August 20 and run until September 13, focussing primarily on the demands and discussion over the budget.

"The budget session of Odisha will continue from tomorrow, August 20, to September 13. The main subject will be demand and discussion over the budget. Out of 147, 84 MLAs are new. They have just started their career. Many of the MLAs have experience. In the orientation programme of the Legislative Assembly, the opposition was absent but the central parliament-

ary affairs minister, Kiren Rijju, explained the parliamentary tradition and said good things about Odisha," Surama Padhi told ANI.

Odisha Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi, who also holds the finance portfolio, presented the Rs 2.65 lakh crore budget for the 2024-25 fiscal on July 25, 2024.

The budget for the current fiscal year exceeded the budgetary forecast of Rs 2.30 lakh crore for the fiscal year 2023-24 by almost 15 per cent.

Manjhi proposed spending Rs 33,919 crore on agriculture, which is around 36 per cent higher than what was allotted the year before.

He stated that of the overall budget estimates, the programme spending was estimated to be Rs 1.55 lakh

crore, the administrative expenditure to be Rs 97,725 crore, and the disaster risk management funds to be expended at Rs 3,900 crore.

However, the BJP had termed the budget a historic and people-orientated one that would help in the development of Odisha.

After Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi-led BJP government presented its first state budget, former Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik mocked it as 'Name Changer' and said that this budget saw 80 per cent of his schemes being repeated.

In a post X, Patnaik congratulated the new government of Odisha on presenting its first budget and mocked it, saying, Special congratulations for repeating more than 80 per cent of

the schemes implemented by our government. More than 80 per cent of your budget allocation flows towards the schemes formulated by the BJD Government."

He also mentioned that the BJP government has changed the names of 45 schemes. "BJP formed Government by promising people that they will bring 'PARIBARTAN'. After going through the budget documents, I see 'PARIBARTAN' or 'CHANGE'. This Government has changed the names of 45 schemes. BJP said their government will be a GAME CHANGER but unfortunately has ended up being a 'NAME CHANGER'," he added.

"This budget saw 80 per cent of our schemes being repeated.

'Whatever is happening in Kolkata shouldn't happen': Arun Govil

TDG NETWORK
PATNA

Amid the protests over the rape-murder of a trainee doctor at Kolkata's RG Kar Hospital, BJP MP Arun Govil said that many things are happening in Kolkata and whatever is happening there should not happen.

Speaking to reporters, Arun Govil says, "So many things are happening in Kolkata right now. Whatever is happening there right now shouldn't happen...it has become a very weird atmosphere..."

When asked about Mamata Banerjee's statement on 'Ram-Bam', he said, "Mamata Banerjee is a free woman in a free country so she can speak anything of her choice"

Earlier, Banerjee alleged that the Left was in connivance with the Ram (the Bharatiya Janata party) to create unrest in West Bengal.

"Left and Ram want to cre-



ate unrest in Bengal and they both have come together to do this," She said while referring to the vandalism at RG Kar Hospital in Kolkata.

Meanwhile, doctors and locals from Mumbai on Monday held a protest at Azad Maidan amid the ongoing protest over the rape-murder of a trainee doctor at Kolkata's RG Kar Hospital.

One of the protesting doctors urged the government to ensure that every organisation has a safety audit.

"We request the government that every organisation should have safety audit...What is the point if we

are not safe even after more than 70 years of independence? Doctors always first think of the patients and not their safety.

The workplace has to be safe for us," Dr Prerna Gomes from Jaslok Hospital told ANI.

Earlier on Sunday, West Bengal Governor's office alerted medical colleges in the State to beef up security and ensure that women doctors and paramedics are provided with adequate protection.

"Today Raj Bhavan contacted Medical Colleges in the State and alerted them to beef up security and ensure that women doctors and paramedics are provided adequate protection," Raj Bhavan Media Cell said in a post on X. Earlier, the CBI team investigating the case conducted 3D laser mapping of the emergency ward at RG Kar Medical College and Hospital.

Earlier, on August 9, a postgraduate trainee doctor was allegedly raped

Mumbai doctors protest at Azad Maidan over Kolkata rape-murder

TDG NETWORK
MUMBAI

Doctors and locals from Mumbai on Monday held a protest at Azad Maidan amid the ongoing protest over the rape-murder of a trainee doctor at Kolkata's RG Kar Hospital.

One of the protesting doctors urged the government to ensure that every organisation has a safety audit.

"We request the government that every organisation should have safety audit...What is the point if we are not safe even after more than 70 years of independence?"

Doctors always first think of the patients and not their safety. The workplace has to be safe for us," Dr Prerna Gomes from Jaslok Hospital told ANI.

Earlier, on August 9, a postgraduate trainee doctor was allegedly raped



and murdered while on duty at RG Kar Medical College in Kolkata, sparking nationwide strikes and protests by the medical community.

The West Bengal Governor's office on Sunday alerted medical colleges in the State to beef up security and ensure that women doctors and paramedics are provided with adequate protection.

"Today Raj Bhavan contacted Medical Colleges in the State and alerted them to beef up security and ensure that women doc-

tors and paramedics are provided adequate protection," Raj Bhavan Media Cell said in a post on X.

Earlier, the CBI team investigating the case conducted 3D laser mapping of the emergency ward at RG Kar Medical College and Hospital.

The Supreme Court has taken suo motu cognizance of the case. A bench led by Chief Justice of India DY Chandrachud, along with Justices JB Pardiwala and Manoj Misra, will hear the case on August 20.

'Pak-published books used in govt-funded madrassas in Bihar'

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR) chairman Priyank Kanoongo on Sunday raised concerns over the "radical curriculum" and use of "Pakistan-published books" allegedly in government-funded madrassas in Bihar.

In a post on X, Kanoongo said that certain books like "Talimul Islam," are being used in these institutions in which non-Islamic individuals are called "Kafirs"

"In Bihar, Talimul Islam and other similar books are being taught in the government-funded Madrasas. In this book, non-Islamics are declared as Kafirs," Kanoongo posted on X.

The NCPCR chairman expressed alarm over the reported enrollment of Hindu children in these madrasas, accusing the Bihar govern-

ment of withholding official data on the number of such students.

"It has been reported that Hindu children are also being admitted in these madrasas but the Bihar government is not giving official information on the number ratio. On the question of transferring Hindu children from Madrasas to schools, the Bihar Madrasa Board said that the curriculum of Madrasas has been prepared by UNICEF India," he added.

He condemned this involvement, calling it the "height of appeasement" by both UNICEF and the Madrasa Board. "This is the height of appeasement by UNICEF and the Madrasa Board. It is not UNICEF's job to create a radical curriculum using money received as donations and grants from governments in the name of child protection.

Sudarsan Pattnaik crafts Lord Shiva on rakhi sand sculpture at Puri beach

TDG NETWORK
PURI (ODISHA)

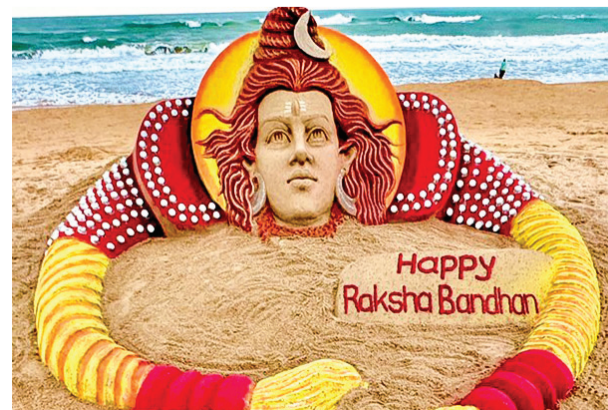
On the occasion of Raksha Bandhan, sand artist Sudarsan Pattnaik on Monday marked the occasion by making beautiful sand art on the beach of Odisha's Puri. He crafted a sand idol of Lord Shiva as today also marks the last Monday of the auspicious Sawan month.

Sudarsan Pattnaik shared

the craft on X and wished for Lord Shiva's blessings on every brother and sister on this festival.

"On the occasion of Raksha Bandhan and last Monday of the holy month of 'Sawan'. May Lord Shiva bless all brothers and sisters. My SandArt at Puri beach in Odisha," Sudarsan Pattnaik posted on X.

Pattnaik is also a Padma Shri awardee, India's 4th



Pattnaik is also a Padma Shri awardee, India's 4th highest civilian award. He runs a sand art school at Puri Beach in Odisha.

So far, Padma-awardee artist Sudarsan Pattnaik has participated in more than 65 international sand art competitions and festivals around the world and has won many accolades for the country. He always tries to spread awareness through his sand art. The Odisha sand artist has cre-

ated awareness through his art on many social issues such as HIV, AIDS, global warming, stopping terrorism, beating plastic pollution, COVID-19, and saving the environment, among others.

Raksha Bandhan, commonly known as Rakhi, will be celebrated on Monday (today). It is a traditional Hindu festival dedicated to the love and bond between brothers

and sisters. On this day, sisters tie a rakhi around their brothers' wrists. In return, brothers offer gifts as a symbol of love and care for their sisters.

Raksha Bandhan is a festival deeply rooted in Indian Culture and has been celebrated for centuries. Incidents of sisters tying rakhi around their brothers' wrists for protection are mentioned in Hindu religious texts.

Damning Hema Committee report on Malayalam film industry is out

Gives shocking details about exploitation of women, including casting couch

TDG NETWORK
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

The Kerala government has made public the Justice K Hema Committee report on the working conditions of women in the Malayalam film industry. However, 63 pages of the initial 295-page report have been redacted before its release under the RTI Act.

The report, based on testimonies from 51 industry professionals, reveals shocking details about the

exploitation of women, including the existence of casting couches and poor working conditions.

It states that harassment begins at the outset, with women being asked to make "adjustments" and "compromises" - euphemisms for sexual favors - to secure roles.

"According to women in cinema, harassment starts from the very inception. It is revealed from the statements of various witnesses who were examined before the committee that the production controller or whoever gives an offer for a role in cinema first approaches the woman/girl or if it is the other way and a woman approaches any person in cinema seeking a chance in cinema, she is told that she has to make "adjustments"

and "compromise" to take her in cinema. "Compromise" and "adjustment" are two terms which are very familiar among women in the Malayalam film industry and by doing so, they are asked to make themselves available for sex on demand," the report said.

The Committee also found that women are denied basic human rights, such as access to toilets and changing rooms, even on sets. Women often have to find secluded spots to change or use the bathroom during outdoor shoots, with no access to water or basic facilities.

"Almost all the women who were examined before the Committee stated that there is no toilet facility or changing room on the set, especially while

shooting is done in many outdoor locations, which will be in remote places.

"What is being done now is, the women themselves will find some space in a nearby interior place, like a forest or behind bushes or a fat tree, to pass urine while on an outdoor shoot. At times, some cloth is being held by one or two persons to help the other change dress or to pass urine. No water will also be available at the site," the reporters said.

The Hema Committee was formed in response to a 2017 sexual assault case involving an actor and submitted its report to the Chief Minister on December 31, 2019. The report's findings highlight the need for urgent reforms to protect women in the Malayalam film industry.

THREE OUT OF FOUR CONGRESS MLAs IN MEGHALAYA JOIN NPP

AGENCIES
SHILLONG

Three Congress Members of the Legislative Assembly (MLAs) on Monday joined the National People's Party (NPP) in the presence of Meghalaya Chief Minister Conrad K Sangma.

In a post on X, CM Sangma said that their induction is a testament to faith in the NDA government's vision.

"Overjoyed to welcome 3 MLAs from Congress to NPP. Their induction is a testament to faith in our government's vision. With this merger, we now have 31 members in the 60-seat Meghalaya Legislative Assembly, securing a full majority! Cheers to our supporters & well-wishers!" Sangma said.

In the 60-seat assembly of Meghalaya, the NDA has

Opposition's I.N.D.I.A bloc has 13 MLAs with TMC having five, Congress now has only one and Voice of the People Party having four.

46 MLAs with NPP having 31 (after induction of three Congress MLAs), BJP having two, United Democratic Party- 12 and Hill State People's Democratic Party (HDPDP) having two.

Two independent candidates also support the NDA alliance.

Opposition's I.N.D.I.A bloc has 13 MLAs with TMC having five, Congress now has only one and Voice of the People Party having four.

Meanwhile, Meghalaya Chief Minister Conrad K

Sangma announced on Thursday that the government will appoint locals as 'tourist assistants' in a phased manner. These semi-uniformed personnel will serve as tour guides, provide security, and offer information to tourists.

"The goal is to make tourists feel safe and ensure they receive accurate information," he said while addressing a consultation with tourism stakeholders at the State Convention Centre in Shillong. This initiative will also create job opportunities for local youths.

The Chief Minister highlighted the recent law and order issues that affected tourism, emphasising the need for collective action. "We must work together to condemn such incidents and promote a positive environment for tourism," he stated.

'Allow print media to carry adds during MCC'

AGENCIES
SRINAGAR

Senior CPI(M) leader M Y Tarigami Monday sought an exception from the Election Commission and allow print media to carry advertisements during the operation of the Model Code of Conduct (MCC) in view of the "financial challenges" faced by the industry in the region.

"I write to draw your kind attention to the challenges faced by the print media fraternity. With the MCC in place, advertisements related to development have been suspended from the date of announcement of polls, until the completion of elections," Tarigami said in a letter to CEC Rajiv Kumar.

CRPF inspector killed

CONTINUED FROM P1

before managing to escape. The recent surge in militant activity has heightened security concerns in the region, known for its challenging terrain and history of sporadic violence.

In response to the attack, additional troops have been deployed to reinforce the cordon and search operations, ensuring the terrorists do not escape. The Union government is closely monitoring the situation as the operation continues. Local authorities have urged residents to remain indoors until the situation is fully under control.

BJP lambasts Mamata, demands her resignation

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) on Monday launched no-hold-barred attacks on West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee and alleged that TMC supremo has destroyed the "crucial evidence" in the sexual assault and murder of a woman trainee PG doctor at RG Kar Medical College and Hospital.

BJP spokesperson Gaurav Bhatia, holding a press conference here today termed Mamata as the "destroyer".

He said, "Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee also holds portfolios of the Home Ministry and Health Ministry. Today all the people, women are angry and the public demands Mamata's resignation. Mamata has become a destroyer."

"We want justice and the Chief Minister of West Bengal should resign. By her misdeeds, West Bengal CM has destroyed the dignity of a woman, a doctor who was serving society. She is the destroyer of the rule of law and evidence in this heinous crime which is vital to en-



sure that the accused get the punishment that they deserve. As per the new criminal law, Bharatiya Nyay Sanhita, the death penalty is the punishment prescribed.

Why is Mamata hell-bent to destroy the evidence which is crucial in the case?" Bhatia said.

The BJP spokesperson also said out that CM Mamata

Banerjee rewarded former principal of RG Kar Medical College and Hospital instead of taking action against him for the murder and rape of the trainee doctor.

"He who earlier was the principal of that hospital, it was his responsibility to protect all the doctors there, no action was taken but he was rewarded. Mamata destroys the identity of a woman and the provisions of the Constitution which she had sworn to follow," Bhatia added.

On August 9, a postgraduate trainee doctor was alleg-

edly raped and murdered on duty at RG Kar Medical College in Kolkata, which led to nationwide strikes and civil societies and doctors across States protested against the incident and demanded severe punishment to the accused persons and sought safety and security for themselves. The Kolkata Police arrested a civic volunteer the next day in this connection.

Calcutta High Court directed the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) to take over the investigation, after expressing a lack of satisfac-

tion with the Kolkata Police.

The investigation into the case is progressing, with the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) employing advanced techniques such as 3D laser mapping of the emergency ward where the crime took place. Additionally, the CBI has conducted psychological evaluations of the primary suspect.

Meanwhile, the Supreme Court of India has also taken note of the case, with Chief Justice DY Chandrachud leading a bench that will hear the matter on August 20.

Freebies galore in NC poll manifesto

CONTINUED FROM P1

electricity and water crises, Abdullah promised 200 units of free electricity, a one-time settlement for pending electricity bills, and free drinking water for every household. He also pledged to strengthen the PDS, increase rice allocation, and review the distribution of kerosene and sugar.

In education, the NC aims to make higher education more accessible, establish new higher education institutions, and modernize school infrastructure. The party plans to introduce smart class-rooms, CCTV surveillance in schools, and ensure that local examinations are conducted by credible agencies.

For agriculture and horticulture, the manifesto includes measures to protect domestic apple farmers, promote saffron production, and exempt horticulture products from GST. Additionally, the NC plans to expand and modernize Srinagar and Jammu cities, address urban congestion, and improve public transport and infrastructure.

Abdullah called on the

people of J&K to support the NC, hoping for a chance to serve them for the next five years. With the elections set to begin in three phases from September 18 and vote counting scheduled for October 4, the National Conference is positioning itself as a strong contender with a focus on both political restoration and comprehensive development.

The first guarantee of the NC's manifesto envisage the restoration of political and legal status of the Union Territory and said that the party would strive to restore Article 370-35A and statehood prior to August 5, 2019.

"It also mentioned that in the interim period, the party will endeavour to redraw the Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation Act, 2019 and the Transaction of Business of the Government of Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir Rules, 2019. The party has also said that in the first assembly session, they will bring a resolution against the Centre's decision to strip the region of its statehood and special status," the manifesto said.

The second guarantee in-

cludes several promises, including the release of political prisoners, re-turn and rehabilitation of Kashmiri Pandits, simplified job verification process, ease of passport verification, and end to unjust terminations and unnecessary harassment to people on highways will be stopped.

The third guarantee will be a comprehensive job package for youth.

Speaking on it, Omar Abdullah said, "We all know the unemployment condition in J&K. After August 5, 2019, there was talk of reducing unemployment but it only increased. There was fraud in the recruitment process and the youths did not get the job. We are making comprehensive promises to the youths and going to address the unemployment issue." The party has promised to give free electricity up to 200 units. Omar said, "We will also address the issue of water and electricity and will give electricity free upto 200 units.

Some will promise more but that's not beneficial because they are not going to be in power in the future."

With agency inputs

PM Modi to visit Ukraine

CONTINUED FROM P1

This visit will build upon the recent high-level interactions between the leaders," he added.

The MEA emphasised that India has "substantive and independent ties" with Russia and Ukraine and these partnerships with the two nations "stand on their own."

Notably, PM Modi also visited Russia last month, which was his first official trip to a nation after assuming office for the third term.

MEA Secretary said India is ready to provide all possible support and contribution for finding a peaceful solution to the conflict.

"India has maintained a very clear and consistent position that only diplomacy and dialogue can resolve this conflict, which can lead to enduring peace...lasting peace can only be achieved by options that are acceptable to both the parties. On our part, India continues to engage with all stakeholders. Prime Minister Modi has had conversations with leaders of both Russia and Ukraine...India is ready to provide all possible support and contribution to find peaceful solution to this complex issue," MEA Secretary Tanmaya Lal said.

"India has substantive and independent ties with both Russia and Ukraine and these partnerships, they stand on their own. This is not a zero-sum game. The

PM had also travelled to Russia. Many ideas were discussed. The PM has also met President Zelenskyy on a couple of occasions in the last one year or so and they will now be meeting again in Ukraine...these are independent ties. The ongoing conflict will form part of the discussions," he added.

Being asked about India's humanitarian support to war-hit Ukraine since the start of the conflict, the MEA informed that 16 packages and 135 tons of material have been delivered so far.

"16 packages have so far been delivered (to Ukraine) ranging from medicines to power generators and medical equipment. I think 135 tons of material has been supplied so far and further initiatives are being explored," the MEA Secy further said.

The official website of Ukraine President also confirmed PM Modi's visit on National Flag Day of Ukraine, August 23. Both sides will discuss bilateral and multilateral cooperation and multiple agreements will also be signed between India and Ukraine.

"On August 23, the National Flag Day of Ukraine, Prime Minister of India Narendra Modi will pay an official visit to Ukraine. This is the first visit of an Indian Prime Minister to Ukraine in the history of our bilateral relations," the presidential office said in a statement.

Panel formation to manage gurdwaras

CONTINUED FROM P1

take their oath of office at Gurdwara Patshahi Chevvin in Kurukshetra, considered the headquarters of the HSGMC. However, the process has hit a roadblock, as the oath ceremony could not be conducted by the Kurukshetra Deputy Commissioner before the implementation of Model Code of Conduct.

Newly-appointed member Baljit Singh Daduwal, who has previously served as the president of the HSGMC, expressed his concern over the delay. "Even though the notification regarding our appointment was issued on August 14, the subsequent procedures, including the oath ceremony, have not been completed yet," he said.

In an effort to expedite the process, several newly-inducted members met with Haryana Chief Minister Nayab Saini, urging him to facilitate their appointment by administering the oath of office through the Hary-

ana Governor. However, the Chief Minister reportedly conveyed his inability to proceed due to the enforcement of the Model Code of Conduct, which restricts certain government actions during the election period.

The composition of the new ad-hoc committee marks a significant shift in leadership, with several former members, including ex-president Bupinder Singh Assandh, ex-vice president Didar Singh Nalvi, ex-general secretary Rannik Singh Mann, and ex-executive member Winner Singh, being excluded. However, some members from the previous panel, such as Baljit Singh Daduwal, Sudarshan Singh Sehgal, Ravinder Kaur Ajrana, Jagvir Singh Mangleana, Baba Gurmeet Singh Tirlokewala, and Sukhwinder Singh Mandebbar, have been retained.

The delay in the oath-taking ceremony has not only stalled the formation of the executive committee but also

sparked controversy within the Sikh community. Former panel chief Didar Singh Nalvi criticized the government for misleading the public and argued that the formation of the committee cannot be completed without following proper procedures. "Now, there is no need to challenge the appointment of the members in court as their appointment has already hit a hurdle," Nalvi remarked.

Dissent within the Sikh community has further complicated the situation. Many members are calling for the government to conduct elections for the HSGMC, in accordance with the Haryana Sikh Gurdwaras (Management) Amendment Act, 2022. Baba Mehar Singh, a prominent figure from Gurdwara Nabiabad in Karnal district, who was initially nominated as a member of the ad-hoc committee, has publicly disassociated himself from the government-nominated panel.

Singhvi files papers for RS bypoll

CONTINUED FROM P1

In an AICC press release, Congress General Secretary KC Venugopal said Congress President Mallikarjun Kharge approved the candidature of Abhishek Manu Singhvi as Congress candidate to contest the ensuing bye-elections to the Council of States from Telangana," Venugopal stated.

Earlier in February this year, Abhishek Manu Singhvi lost the Rajya Sabha elections in Himachal Pradesh. The Election Commission of India announced the

schedule for the bye-election to the vacant Rajya Sabha seat in Telangana and said the polling for this seat will be held on September 3.

The bye-election to the vacant seat was necessitated by the resignation of former BRS MP Keshava Rao, who joined the Congress recently. BRS MP Keshava Rao tendered his resignation from RS membership on July 4.

Well-known doctors to the police headquarters alleging that they had revealed the name of the victim in public. Both doctors denied the charges.

Well-known cardiac surgeon Dr Kunal Sarkar, who was accused of revealing the victim's identity, de-

nied the allegation. "I have never revealed the name or identity of the victim. I have questions about this case like everyone else. Maybe they don't want people to share views on this case and it is an attempt to stop people from sharing their anguish," Sarkar said.

Sidda gets breather

CONTINUED FROM P1

the MUDA case, as the High Court is hearing the matter.

The High Court said proceedings before trial court shall be deferred till the next date of hearing before the High Court.

In its order, the bench stated, "It was argued that the proceedings before the trial court are up for orders on whether a sanction should be granted to prosecute the Chief Minister. Any order permitting action to proceed further against the Chief Minister, would frustrate the proceedings before this

court. Since the proceedings are pending before this court, the trial court shall defer its proceedings till the next date of hearing. There shall be no precipitative action qua these complaints."

Senior advocate Abhishek Manu Singhvi, appearing for Siddaramaiah, argued that Governor didn't give a single reason on merits why the sanction ought to be given for prosecution of Chief Minister.

Singhvi said that the Governor is bound by a Cabinet decision in such cases, however, he issued sanction in a short two-page order with-

out considering the merits of the case.

Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, representing the Karnataka Governor submitted that in such cases there only needs to be an apprehension or suspicion of reasonable bias by the Cabinet in favour of the minister against whom sanction is sought.

Earlier, a complaint was filed by social activist Snehamayi Krishna against Karnataka CM Siddaramaiah and nine others for allegedly forging documents to claim compensation from the Mysuru Urban Development Authority.

West Bengal Gov likely to meet President today

CONTINUED FROM P1

Police said they received a complaint that the student uploaded three Instagram stories related to the rape and murder case at R G Kar Medical College and Hospital, allegedly disclosing the victim's name and identity.

"The accused person also shared two stories against the CM of West Bengal containing offensive comments and threats to her life," claimed Kolkata police officials. An investigation into the case is in progress, they said. The student has been booked under BNS sections

351 (2), 353(1), and 352, dealing with an intentional insult with intent to provoke breach of peace, and sections 72 and 79 which deal with words, gestures and acts intended to insult the modesty of a woman.

During the day, the Kolkata Police summoned two

MAYOR PLAYING 'POLITICS' OVER GARBAGE DISPOSAL ISSUE: MCD COMMISSIONER

According to an official, the extended contract period of the garbage disposal concessionaire in the Central Delhi zone ended on July 25.

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

A day after Mayor Shelly Oberoi pulled up MCD commissioner Ashwani Kumar over the "worsening condition" of garbage disposal in the city, he hit back and accused her of playing "politics" over the issue.

Kumar further alleged that the delay in forming the standing committee, the highest decision-making body of the Municipal Corporation of Delhi, has further resulted in many other projects being put on hold.

"The mayor is just playing politics. They have done nothing to secure the corporation's financial dues from the Delhi government, leaving the MCD in deep financial distress," Kumar said.

Oberoi on Sunday slammed the MCD commissioner over the "worsening condition" of garbage disposal in the entire Delhi, especially in West



Zone and Central Zone and directed him to ensure better collection and clearance of waste.

For the past few days, garbage collection in these areas has been irregular, resulting in an accumulation of waste on streets and bins, she said in her letter.

The stench from decomposing waste is unbearable, Oberoi said.

Oberoi said she has brought this to the commissioner's notice many

times but no progress has been made.

In the letter, she directed Kumar to accompany her for daily inspections from August 20 to September 2 to the 12 zones of the MCD to ensure proper cleanliness and sanitation.

"Garbage collection and disposal will be the personal responsibility of the MCD commissioner, who will be held responsible for any unsanitary conditions in any part of

the city," Oberoi said.

According to an official, the extended contract period of the garbage disposal concessionaire in the Central Delhi zone ended on July 25. In the West Delhi zone, the civic body is facing payment-related issues with the hired agency.

Proposals with expenditure of Rs 5 crore and above require the standing committee's approval, which has been pending for around 1.5 years.

Delhi-based women refugees from Pakistan tie 'Rakhi' to minister Goyal

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Delhi-based women refugees from Pakistan tied Rakhi to Union Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal on the occasion of Raksha Bandhan here today, a statement released on Monday said.

As per the statement from the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Union Minister Piyush Goyal also celebrated Raksha Bandhan with Sadhvi Rithambara and Brahmakumari sisters.

Speaking on the occasion, Goyal said that the Citizenship Act would provide safety and security to the migrants who have been given nationality under the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA).

"The Citizenship (Amendment) Act has provided respect and safety that is your right," he said, adding "This is one of the best Raksha Bandhan celebrations of my life".

He said that due to the strong will of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, all these sisters have been able to get Indian citizen-



As per the statement from the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Union Minister Piyush Goyal also celebrated Raksha Bandhan with Sadhvi Rithambara and Brahmakumari sisters.

ship under CAA, as per the statement.

"Today on the occasion of Rakshabandhan, I got the chance to get Rakhi tied by my sisters. I am very happy that due to the strong will of the PM Narendra Modi all these sisters have been able to get Indian citizenship under CAA," the Minister posted on X.

Earlier, Prime Minister Narendra Modi celebrated Raksha Bandhan with school girls tying rakhis on his wrist in the national

capital on Monday.

PM Modi greeted people on the occasion of Raksha Bandhan and prayed for everyone's happiness and prosperity.

"Best wishes to all countrymen on the occasion of Raksha Bandhan, a festival symbolizing the immense love between brother and sister. May this holy festival bring new sweetness in the relationships of all of you and happiness, prosperity and good fortune in life," PM Modi posted

on X.

President Droupadi Murmu also extended greetings on the festival that celebrates the bond between siblings.

In a post on X, President Droupadi Murmu said, "On the auspicious occasion of Raksha Bandhan, I extend my heartfelt greetings and best wishes to all the countrymen. This festival, based on the feeling of love and mutual trust between brothers and sisters, instils a feeling of affection and respect towards all sisters and daughters."

She also urged the citizens to take a pledge to ensure the safety and respect of women in society.

"I would like that on this festival day, all the countrymen to take a pledge to ensure the safety and respect of women in our society," the post further read.

Raksha Bandhan is a festival deeply rooted in Indian Culture and has been celebrated for centuries. Incidents of sisters tying rakhi around their brothers' wrists for protection are mentioned in Hindu religious texts.

'People are praying that Kejriwal comes out soon'

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Former Delhi Deputy Chief Minister and AAP leader Manish Sisodia said that the people of Delhi are praying for Delhi CM and Satyendar Jain to come out of the jail.

"The people of Delhi are loving me, respecting me and saying that when I was in jail for 17 months, they missed me a lot...Now people are praying that Kejriwal comes out as soon as possible, Satyendar Jain comes out as soon as possible..." said Sisodia.

"Arvind Kejriwal is famous in the whole country for building schools. He is the only CM who made the electricity bill zero for the people. He started free treatment in government hospitals...He made travel in DTC buses free for women. He has been CM for 10 years and he did what BJP CMs were not

Earlier on Saturday, Sisodia offered prayers at Kalkaji Temple after he was released on bail by the Supreme Court in the Delhi Excise Policy case.

able to do in their tenure of 10 years...That's why they (BJP) have put him in jail...I have complete faith that Arvind Kejriwal will be out of jail soon," he added.

Earlier on Saturday, Sisodia offered prayers at Kalkaji Temple after he was released on bail by the Supreme Court in the Delhi Excise Policy case.

Sisodia was released from Tihar Jail on August 9 after the Supreme Court granted

him bail in connection with the Delhi excise policy case.

The order was delivered by a judge bench of BR Gavai and KV Viswanathan. The court also imposed various conditions including surrendering the passport and not influencing witnesses.

In February 2023, Sisodia was arrested by the CBI for alleged irregularities in the framing and implementation of now-scrapped Delhi's new excise policy.

The policy was withdrawn amid allegations of foul play by the opposition.

According to the CBI, Sisodia had played the most vital role in the criminal conspiracy and he had been deeply involved in the formulation as well as the implementation of the said policy. (ANI) February 26 last year and was granted bail by the apex court on August 9.

RDA at AIIMS Delhi to provide elective OPDs to patients outside Nirman Bhawan

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

The Resident Doctors Association (RDA) at the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) will be providing elective OPD services in front of Nirman Bhawan from 11 am on August 19 in continuation of their strike against a postgraduate trainee doctor at RG Kar Medical College and Hospital in Kolkata.

In a press statement released on Sunday, RDA AIIMS stated, "Resident doctors will be available for providing elective OPD services of around 36 specialities (including medicine, surgery, Obs&Gynae, paediatrics, ophthalmology, Orthopedics and others) to patients outside Nirman Bhawan. Emergency services will continue as before at our hospitals."

This decision came after a discussion with the Action Committee for Central Protection Act and the general body of RDA AIIMS, where "it was unanimously decided to continue the strike, as

our demands remain unaddressed. This includes halting academic activities, elective OPDs, ward, and OT services, while maintaining emergency services, ICUs, emergency procedures and emergency OT."

The release further stated that this was done to "provide the patient care services in the nation's interest and as per our Hippocratic oath" and "to highlight the lack of security of healthcare professionals nationwide."

They further urged "the government to accept our plea for an urgent central ordinance for the safety and security of healthcare workers and institutes" and requested the authorities "to allow for the same and provide the necessary arrangements for the elective outpatient services outside Nirman Bhawan."

Earlier, on August 9, a postgraduate trainee doctor was allegedly raped and murdered while on duty at RG Kar Medical College in Kolkata, sparking nationwide strikes and protests by the medical community.

Northern Railway doctors protest outside Nirman Bhawan



TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

A group of resident doctors from Northern Railway Central Hospital staged a protest outside Nirman Bhawan in Delhi on Monday, demanding justice for a trainee doctor who was allegedly raped and murdered at RG Kar Medical College in Kolkata.

The protesters chanted slogans and displayed banners as they sought accountability for the crime.

Doctors from Maulana Azad Medical College also joined the protest at Nirman Bhawan.

In North Bengal, a torchlight rally named "Loud and

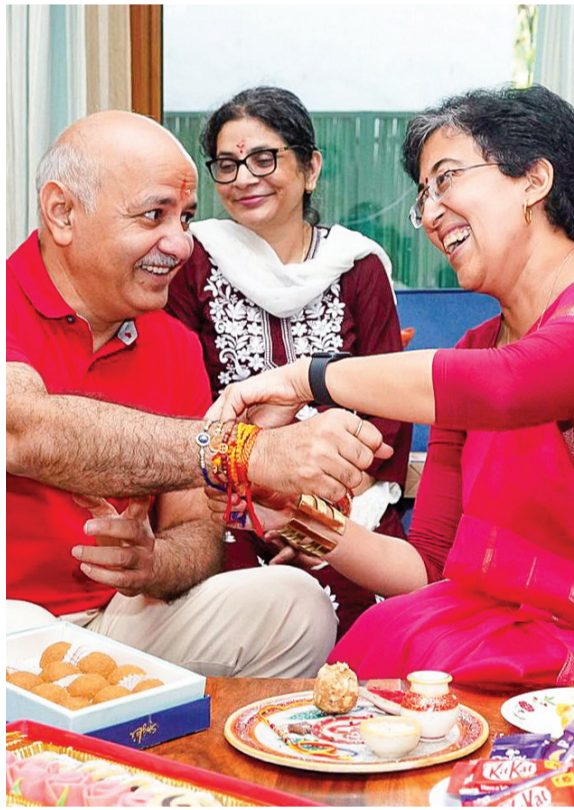
KOLKATA RAPE-MURDER CASE

Doctors from Maulana Azad Medical College also joined the protest at Nirman Bhawan.

Clear" was held in Siliguri to condemn the incident. Organized by a women's voluntary group, the 'Mashal Juloos' protest emphasized the need for justice and safety for women.

Similarly, in Mumbai, doctors staged a protest at Azad Maidan, urging the government to ensure that every organisation has a safety audit. "We request the gov-

FESTIVE BOND



Delhi Minister Atishi ties Rakhi to the Delhi Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia on the occasion of the Raksha Bandhan celebration, in New Delhi. ANI



BJP MP Bansuri Swaraj ties Rakhi to Delhi BJP president Virendra Sachdeva at Delhi. ANI

Two JNU students fall ill during hunger strike, refuse treatment

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Two Jawaharlal Nehru University students participating in an ongoing indefinite hunger strike on the campus were admitted to AIIMS on Monday after falling ill but they refused treatment to continue their protest, officials said. The Health Centre of the Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) referred the students to All India Institute Of Medical Sciences (AIIMS), Delhi after their health deteriorated due to the hunger strike.

The strike entered its eighth day on Monday with students protesting against purported unresponsive attitude of the administration over their charter of demands since August 11.

Students celebrate Raksha Bandhan at Jama Masjid

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Several students from the Delhi University celebrated Raksha Bandhan by tying rakhi to passersby, including Muslim men, women and children at Old Delhi's Jama Masjid on Monday.

The event 'Saampradaayik Sauhard ki Rakhi Baandho' was organised by the members of the Krantikari Yuva Sangathan, a Delhi University students' body representing the working class and marginalised sections.

The students tied rakhi to burqa-clad women and men wearing the traditional skullcap to spread the message of communal harmony.

The festival of Raksha Bandhan celebrates the brother-sister relationship and falls on the last day of the holy Hindu month of Sawan. Rakshabandhan, a traditional Hindu festival, symbolizes the bond of love and protection between brothers and sisters. It plays a significant role in promoting harmony in India by transcending cultural, religious, and regional differences. The fes-

The students tied rakhi to burqa-clad women and men wearing the traditional skullcap to spread the message of communal harmony.

tival fosters unity by encouraging siblings to renew their commitment to protect and support each other, irrespective of their backgrounds.

In many parts of India, Rakshabandhan is celebrated not just among biological siblings but also between friends and neighbors, further enhancing communal harmony and social cohesion.

Rakshabandhan's impact on social harmony in India is deeply rooted in its cultural and symbolic significance. The festival is traditionally celebrated with a sister tying a protective thread, called a rakhi, around her brother's wrist, symbolizing her prayers for his well-being and his vow to protect her in return. However, the festival has evolved to include broader meanings and practices that contribute to societal unity.

It is not limited to any one religion. People from various

communities, including Hindus, Sikhs, Jains, and even some Muslims, celebrate this festival. This inclusivity promotes understanding and respect among different religious groups, fostering a sense of shared identity.

In a diverse and multi-generational society like India, where extended families often live together or remain closely connected, Rakshabandhan reinforces family bonds.

It reminds individuals of their responsibilities towards their family members, thereby maintaining harmony within families and, by extension, the larger community.

Rakshabandhan is more than just a familial celebration; it's a festival that underscores the values of protection, mutual respect, and unity, all of which are crucial for maintaining harmony in a diverse country like India.

SURVEY ON RAKSHA BANDHAN

53% OF THOSE SURVEYED BELIEVE SISTERS' AND DAUGHTERS' SAFETY IS ENSURED IN THE COUNTRY

On Raksha Bandhan, the festival celebrated the brother-sister bond with the tying of sacred threads and a focus on pressing issues such as environmental conservation,

social equity, and women's safety. Prime Minister Narendra Modi marked the occasion at his residence, where schoolchildren tied rakhis on his wrist. He extended

wishes for prosperity and good fortune, emphasizing the "auspicious" nature of the day.

In Kolkata, the festival took on a significant political dimension

due to ongoing protests over the alleged rape and murder of a trainee woman doctor at a state-run medical college. Protesters tied rakhis with messages demanding "jus-

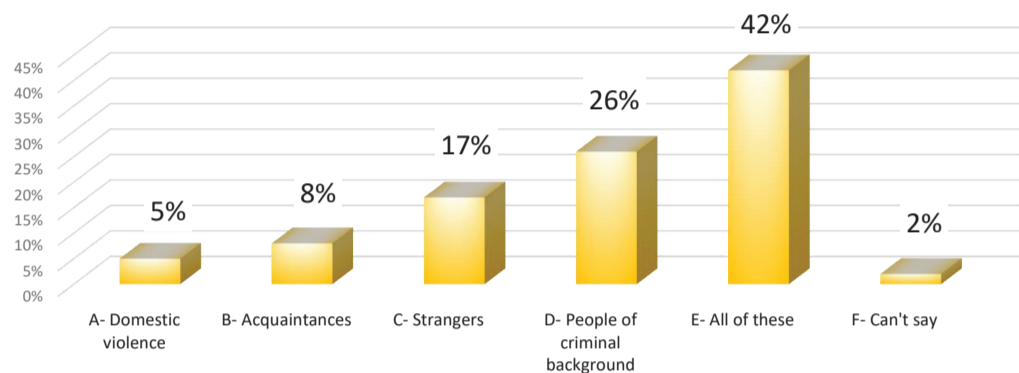
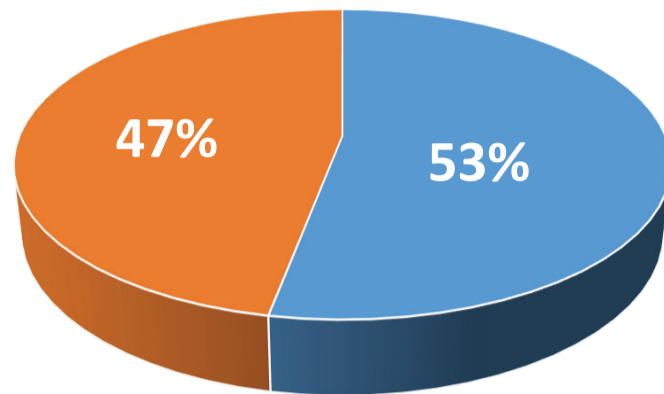
tice," and Kolkata Police personnel also participated in the gesture by tying rakhis to junior doctors who were part of the protests.

West Bengal Governor CV Anan-

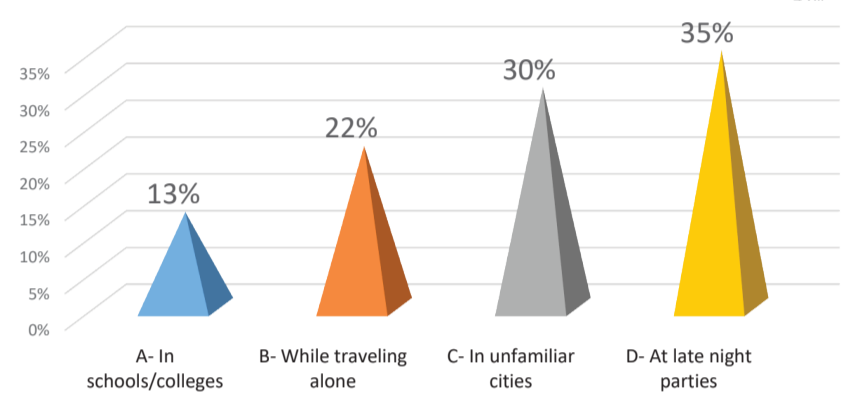
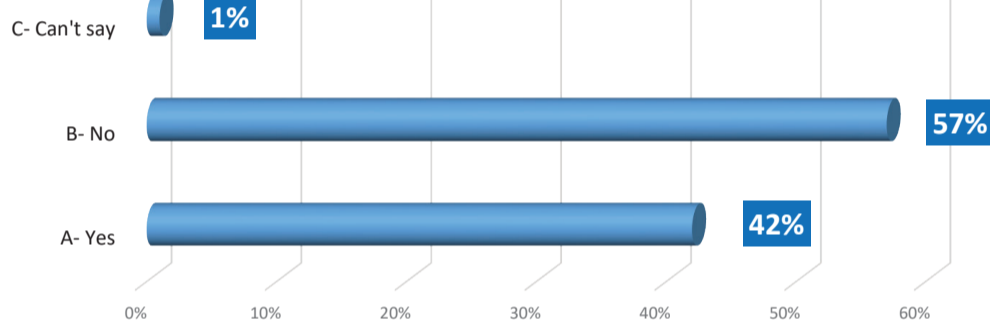
da took part in a Raksha Bandhan event at Raj Bhavan, where women doctors, LGBTQ community representatives, and others tied rakhis around his wrists.

Q1. ▶
Do you feel that the safety of sisters and daughters is guaranteed in the country?

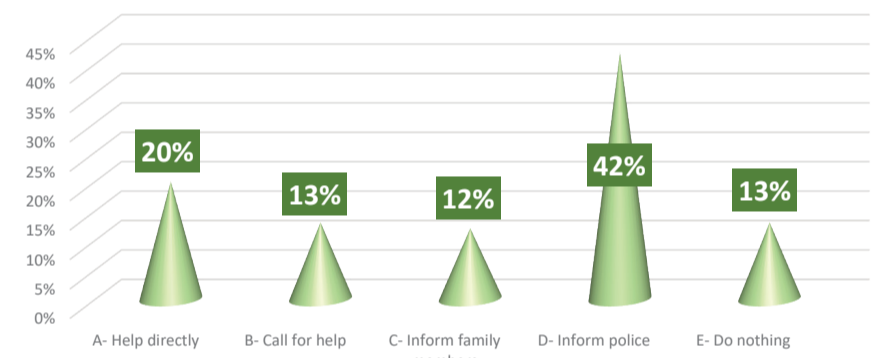
● A. YES
● B. NO



Q3. ▶
Do women feel safe at dark places?



Q5. ▶
If you are present during an incident with a woman, what will you do?



MALE

33%

THE DAILY GUARDIAN SURVEY

FEMALE

67%

CITY

LG CALLS FOR ROUTINE CIVIC INSPECTIONS AFTER MONSOON INFRASTRUCTURE FAILURES

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Delhi LG VK Saxena on Monday expressed concern about the collapse of civic infrastructure during the monsoon and said that an institutionalised mechanism should be put in place for scheduled inspections of facilities by senior officers.

Principal Secretary of Delhi LG wrote to Chief Secretary Naresh Kumar that "All HODS/ Secretaries/Principal Secretaries/Additional Chief Secretaries shall draw up a schedule of field inspections. The inspection note of Principal Secretary/ Secretary of the department shall be submitted to Chief Secretary with copy endorsed to LG Secretariat and the Minister In-charge."

"The frequency of inspections by Secretary of the concerned Department/ agency should be fortnightly, HoD of the concerned Department/ agency weekly and Principal secretary fortnightly."

"All the District Magistrates should interact with Resident Welfare Associations in their jurisdictions once in a month to find out the issues faced and resolve it by taking up with concerned departments."

The rising concern follows a recent incident in the



national capital, where the basement of a coaching institute in Delhi's Old Rajendra Nagar area was flooded after heavy rainfall hit the city.

Earlier, the Delhi High Court ordered officials to visit the affected areas to ensure change.

The court ordered that an affidavit detailing the actions taken be submitted by Thursday. It also mandated that all relevant files be produced before the court and that the MCD Director must be present. Additionally, Delhi Police should be added as a respondent in the case.

The court listed the Rajendra Nagar incident matter for Friday and remarked, "All these constructions are only coming up in connivance with the system. You have to fix responsibility."

The court's view is that the problematic constructions are a result of systemic issues and emphasizes the need to identify and hold accountable those responsible.

During the hearing, the Court indicated issuing orders to identify and assign accountability for the infrastructural failures and to ensure that the issue is addressed through a formal statutory process.

During the hearing of a Public Interest Litigation concerning the Rajendra Nagar incident, the Delhi High Court criticized the Delhi Government, the MCD, and other civic authorities. The court questioned why century-old infrastructure had not been upgraded, despite the liberalization of bylaws.

Court allows accused to travel to London, upholds right to parenthood

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

In a notable ruling, the Saket District Court has granted an accused individual permission to travel to the United Kingdom to visit his wife for procreation, underscoring the recognition of procreation as a fundamental right under Article 21 of the Constitution of India.

The Special Judge, NDPS Court, affirmed that while

incarceration limits personal liberty for the safety and order of the state, it does not wholly negate an individual's fundamental rights, including the right to parenthood.

The court's decision was based on a plea by the accused, represented by Advocates Aditi Drall and Ravi Drall, who argued that visiting his wife for procreation fell within his fundamental right to life and personal liberties.

While taking to the media, Lawyers said the court has considered various factors, including the proof of marriage, the wife's residency and employment status, and the specific circumstances of the case, before granting permission.

The court required the accused to post a bond of Rs 5 lakh as a condition for travel, balancing the right to procreation with security considerations.

7-year-old boy found dead in drain

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

The body of a seven year old boy was recovered from a drain outside his residence in northwest Delhi's Ashok Vihar area.

Prince was playing near his house on Sunday afternoon when he went missing.

Deputy Commissioner of Police (northwest) Jitendra Meena said a search was conducted soon after the missing complaint was received on Sunday. While the search was on, someone informed the police that Prince was seen playing near a drain which was not covered.

The body was recovered from the drain the same evening, DCP Meena said, the body has been handed over to his family after the post-mortem examination and



further probe is underway.

The Delhi BJP however targeted the AAP over the death and claimed that it is the result of the negligence on the part of the Arvind Kejriwal government.

BJP chief Virendra Sachdeva said, be it the master at excuses minister Atishi and sultan on bail Manish Sisodia are accountable for the accidental deaths due to waterlogging and drowning in drains. It would have been better if instead of doing political promotional tours, Mr Sisodia had inspected the sunken roads and waterlogged areas and ensured proper maintenance.

The drain in which the

boy drowned belongs to D.S.I.D.C. and its maintenance is the responsibility of the MCD. Both agencies have been negligent in ensuring public safety, BJP leader said.

Mr Sachdeva stated that due to the inaction of the Arvind Kejriwal government and the lack of planning to address waterlogging, there has been an unexpectedly high number of accidents involving drowning in waterlogged and overflowing drains during this year's monsoon in Delhi.

Whether it is Atishi, Mayor Shelly Oberoi, or recently bailed Mr Sisodia, they are quick to comment on every issue in the country except the growing accidents in Delhi due to administrative negligence. Instead, they either remain silent or try to mislead the people of Delhi with false statements.

Moser Baer Case: Court discharges Nitin Bhatnagar

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

The Rouse Avenue Court has ordered to discharge Nitin Bhatnagar, a Maltese Citizen arrested in connection with his alleged involvement in the offence of money laundering in a case of M/s Moser Baer India Ltd. and others and said, "In this case, no suspicion arises that the accused might have committed the offence for which the Supplementary Chargesheet has been filed against him".

The Special Judge Sanjeev Aggarwal in an order passed on Saturday asserted, "It cannot be said that accused may have committed the offence i.e. to say the matter should go to the trial. That is to say, prosecution has failed to make out a prima facie case for framing of charges qua this accused, for which he was being prosecuted by filing the prosecution complaint. If there is no suspicion, then why should the accused go through rigours of trial all the way."

When there is no iota of legally admissible evidence against him to go for trial, doing so would be itself violative of Article 21 of the Constitution of India, as the same cannot be said to be the procedure established by law. When two views are possible, one which gives rise to some suspicion as distinguished

from grave suspicion, the accused will be liable to be discharged, added the court.

During arguments, appearing for Bhatnagar, Senior Advocate Vikas Pahwa submitted that the accused argued that the standard of proof for deciding the bail application of an accused u/S. 45 of PMLA is different from the standard of proof required for framing of charge, as the yardstick for framing of charge would be on the higher side than the order on the bail, which is to be decided on broad probabilities, both are close to each other.

Along with Senior Advocate Vikas Pahwa, Advocate Ashish Hira appeared for Nitin Bhatnagar.

The court in its order also noted that the present accused has not been named in the predicate offence/ FIR lodged by the CBI as mentioned in the 3rd supplementary prosecution complaint. All the corporate entities i.e. with regard to the Pristine River

Investment Ltd. and IPF Real Estate were admittedly incorporated as per the relevant laws prevailing in the said countries. The accused was only working as a relationship manager in the Bank of Singapore and he was not controlling any of the corporate entities involved in any of the above-mentioned transactions.

'REGIONAL RURAL BANKS TO FOCUS ON BUSINESS PERFORMANCE, UPGRADING DIGITAL SERVICES'

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Union Minister for Finance Nirmala Sitharaman chaired a review meeting of Regional Rural Banks (RRBs) in the national capital on Monday. According to a Ministry of Finance release, the meeting, with all 43 present regional rural banks, focused on business performance, upgrading digital technology services, and fostering business growth in MSME clusters. Given the crucial role of RRBs in supporting the rural economy, the Union Finance Minister urged RRBs - with the active support of their Sponsor Banks - to also put greater thrust on the clear identification of beneficiaries while sanctioning loans under various schemes such as PM Vishwakarma and PM Surya Ghar Muft Bijli Yojana. RRBs were also directed to increase their share in ground-level agriculture credit disbursement.

Finance Minister



During a presentation in the review meeting, Sitharaman has appreciated the RRBs for the improvement in their financial performance and technology upgrades ever since the regular review was initiated in 2022 and has also urged the rural banks to continue the momentum in the future. RRBs have recorded the highest-ever consolidated net profit of Rs 7,571 crore in 2023-24. The Gross Non-Performing Assets (GNPA)

ratio of 6.1 per cent is the lowest in the previous 10 years. During the review meeting, the Union Finance Minister underlined that all RRBs must have their own up-to-date technology stack to stay relevant and noted that digital banking services like mobile banking will be a boon for regions with relatively challenging physical connectivity (like North Eastern states and hilly regions). The Sponsor Banks have a significant role in these en-

deavours by providing technical assistance, sharing best practices, and ensuring that RRBs have access to the resources they need to succeed. The Union Finance Minister emphasised active outreach by the RRB branches located in MSME clusters to ensure credit to small and micro enterprises in areas like textile, handicrafts, wooden furniture, clay pots, jute handicrafts, leather, food processing, dairy farming, packing materi-

als etc. that hold immense potential for increasing the loan portfolio for RRBs. Sitharaman exhorted all the RRBs to devise suitable MSME products aligning with their cluster activities and leverage personal and local connect to increase banking penetration. SIDBI was directed to assist RRBs in exploring co-lending/risk-sharing models and extending refinance for the MSME portfolio. Sitharaman also asked Sponsor Banks and RRBs to recognise the challenges that lie ahead and to continue focusing on maintaining asset quality, expanding digital services, and ensuring robust corporate governance. Today's meeting was also attended by the Secretary-Designate, Department of Financial Services (DFS), Additional Secretary, other senior officials from the DFS, representatives of RBI, SIDBI, NABARD, Chairpersons of RRBs and CEOs of sponsor banks.

Fitch says Indian mining companies face margin risk after SC ruling

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Operating costs of Indian mining companies are likely to rise significantly if states impose additional mining taxes, as allowed by the Supreme Court in a recent judgment, said Fitch Ratings. On August 14, the Supreme Court ruled that mineral-rich states can collect past dues on royalty and taxes on mines and mineral-bearing land from April 1, 2005, from both the Centre and mining lease holders. A nine-judge Constitution bench directed that the past dues be paid in a staggered manner over the next 12 years, starting from April 1, 2026. "We see increased risks from

a sustained weakening of the companies' EBITDA margins due to the prospective levies," the rating agency said in a note on Monday. At the same time, Fitch expects limited financial impact from the payment of past dues, as the court has provided a long timeframe of 12 years for the payment of such dues, starting from the financial year 2026-27. "We believe the steel and mining sector companies are more at risk from state-imposed taxes than sectors such as power and cement," Fitch said. Metal and mining companies have limited ability to pass on the potential increase in operating costs, as their products track global prices. "We believe additional state

taxes on coal will lead to an increase in electricity prices, as fuel cost changes are passed through to consumers under the power purchase agreements of most of the domestic coal-based power plants, and more than two-thirds of India's power generation remains coal-based." The higher prices should quicken the pace of investments and growth in renewable power generation, Fitch argued. "We think that the impact of the court ruling will become gradually clearer in the next few quarters. A key unknown is whether individual states will raise demands for past dues or impose additional taxes," Fitch said.



Vladivostok to host 4-day Eastern Economic Forum starting Sep 3

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Vladivostok in Russia will host a four-day Eastern Economic Forum starting September 3, which will be organised by the Roscongress Foundation.

The Roscongress Foundation - established in 2007, a socially oriented non-financial development institution, the largest organiser of all-Russian, international, congress, exhibition, business, social, youth, sports and cultural events, was established by decree of President Vladimir Putin in 2015 to support the economic development of Rus-



sia's Far East and to expand international cooperation in the Asia-Pacific region.

The Eastern Economic Forum will be visited by an official delegation from India, which will include government representatives.

A Russia-India business dialogue is planned with the participation of entrepreneurs from the two countries.

The Eastern Economic Forum is a key international platform for establishing

A Russia-India business dialogue is planned with the participation of entrepreneurs from the two countries.

and strengthening ties with the Russian and global investment communities, and for a comprehensive expert evaluation of the economic potential of the Russian Far East, the investment opportunities it offers, and business conditions within advanced special economic

zones. In 2023, more than 7,000 participants and media representatives from 62 countries and territories, including Russia, took part in the Forum. Among them were approximately 2,400 business representatives.

According to the Forum's website, the largest delegations were sent by China, India, Myanmar, the Philippines, Laos, and Mongolia.

The Forum featured over 100 sessions in the main business programme dedicated to the most pressing topics on the international and regional agenda. More than 700 speakers and moderators participated.

Govt to release long-awaited draft rules under DPDP Act: Vaishnaw

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

The government is set to release long-awaited draft rules for the Digital Personal Data Protection (DPDP) Act within a month, Union Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw announced on Monday.

The minister said the government has first worked on digital implementation of the Act and framed rules accordingly.

"We have first worked on the digital implementation of the Act and framed the rules accordingly. The framework is ready, and the draft rules for consultation are expected to be released within a month," Vaishnaw told reporters.

The minister also noted that the final draft of the rules was reviewed last week.

"It is expected to be in the public domain within a month for consultation," he added.

The DPDP Act, which received presidential assent on August 12 last year, is yet to be fully implemented due to pending notification of the rules.

The digital platform for the Data Protection Board is being built parallelly within MeitY and it will be created by National Information Centre and/or Digital India Corporation.

The minister said that the digital platform is also in advanced stages.

Weak retail sales a cause of concern, flags industry body RAI

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Weak retail sales across the country are a cause of concern and need immediate strategic interventions, said industry body Retailers Association of India (RAI).

"The retail sector in India is facing challenges as businesses are yet to witness real growth compared to the previous year. Most of the retailers are stating that they have negative growth on a like-for-like basis, which is a cause for concern. This underlines the need for strategic interventions to boost consumer demand and drive sustainable growth across the industry," said

Kumar Rajagopalan, CEO of the Retailers Association of India (RAI).

The retail business sales in the country are yet to witness double-digit growth, the industry body said on Monday, as it released its 53rd Retail Business Survey.

The association compared region-wise retail sales growth between July 2023 to 2024.

The pan-India retail sales growth was recorded at a modest rate of 2 per cent in July 2024 over the corresponding period in the previous year.

The association highlighted in its 53rd Retail Business Survey that retail sales growth in the East and

north region of the country stood at 1 per cent. Interestingly, the west region took the lead, growing at a rate of 3 per cent leaving behind the Pan-India retail sales growth of 2 per cent.

"RAI calls for the implementation of strategies to invigorate consumer demand and foster the long-term development of the retail industry by all its stakeholders," the association said in a statement.

Retailers Association of India (RAI) claims represent a unified voice of Indian retailers. RAI works with all the stakeholders for creating the right environment for the growth of the modern retail industry in India.

RBI says demand conditions in economy are gathering momentum

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

The demand conditions in the economy are gathering momentum after some slack in the first quarter of 2024-25, the Reserve Bank of India said in its monthly bulletin of August 2024. As per the apex bank, signs of revival in rural consumption are visible as the growing income has started driving volume growth in fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) which reflects strengthening fundamentals. It further added that rural saving is also on the rise, as evidenced by the rising num-



ber and outstanding amounts of savings bank accounts. The RBI said that the receding of inflation pressures has pushed rural spending, driving a catchup with urban consumption volumes.

The Consumer Price Index (CPI) inflation dropped to 3.54 per cent in July 2024, its lowest in nearly five years. "Reflecting these forces of turnaround, FMCG companies are starting to see green

shoots of revival, portending a seismic shift in their markets as price stability sets in and expectations of a better monsoon as well as higher budgetary allocations for the rural economy push up volume growth," the top bank stated in its monthly bulletin. The RBI further mentioned that the signs of revival will stimulate the participation of the private sector in total investment. Overall business sentiment has also shown an improvement, as reflected in the rising business confidence index of the National Council of Applied Economic Research (NCAER), with an increase in the share of

polled firms expecting overall economic conditions to improve in the next six months. As per the high-frequency indicators, the demand conditions remained firm in July 2024, with e-way bills recording a growth of 19.2 per cent YoY. The toll collections increased by 9.4 per cent YoY in July 2024. The automobile sales recorded a growth of 9.5 per cent YoY in July 2024, led by two-wheeler segment. Domestic tractor sales registered a modest rise in July, while the vehicle registrations recorded robust double-digit growth, driven by both transport and non-transport segments.

India-Australia RISE Accelerator invites startups in climate-smart agritech

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

NITI Aayog's Atal Innovation Mission (AIM) in partnership with the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO), an arm of the Australian government, has invited applications from startups and MSMEs for the Climate Smart Agritech cohort under the Rapid Innovation and Startup Expansion (RISE) Accelerator program. This program is designed to support businesses aiming for international expansion between the two

countries, NITI Aayog said in a statement on Monday. Startups working in India and Australia will be eligible to receive benefits under the accelerator program. The cohort will provide support to startups and MSMEs working with technologies and solutions that enhance agricultural productivity and resilience. The program will focus on startups and MSMEs that provide solutions to farmers' needs, priorities, and on-farm practices. Over the course of the nine months of the accelerator program, the selected

STARTUP CORNER



start-ups and MSMEs will benefit from a blend of self-paced online learning and in-person sessions, including immersion weeks in



both India and Australia. These sessions will offer deep market insights, one-on-one coaching, and mentorship from subject matter experts and industry pro-

fessionals. The program is designed to facilitate connections with potential partners and customers, boosting the chances of success in new markets.

The program will also involve field trials and a technology pilot in the latter half.

Applications for the RISE Accelerator close

on 15 September 2024. There is no charge for startups and SMEs to participate in the program, and there are several opportunities to travel between Australia and India. Selected startups and SMEs may also be eligible for up to Rs 45 lakhs in non-equity grants, as per NITI Aayog's statement. The RISE Accelerator program was launched in 2023. It has been instrumental in supporting startups and MSMEs in validating, adapting, and piloting their technologies for new markets. With the introduction of the Climate Smart Agritech co-

hort, the focus is now on agritech startups and MSMEs with solutions that enhance agricultural productivity and resilience in the face of growing environmental challenges, NITI Aayog said. Tamara Ogilvie, Program Director, CSIRO said, "India and Australia share common agricultural challenges, but the scale and diversity of our farming operations are unique. This cohort will enable participants to achieve product-market fit in diverse markets, and rapidly scale their solutions to meet global demands."

WILL SISTERS HELP THEM SAIL THROUGH IN MAHA?

With the entire country and the world keenly watching J&K elections, will the Valley's messenger of peace emerge from the ballot?

OPINION

DR VIJAY DARDA



Not only me but every person and political party in Maharashtra was hopeful that Assembly elections in Maharashtra and Haryana would be held before Diwali. This hope stemmed from the fact that elections in both the states were held together in 2009, 2014 and 2019. This time, the Election Commission felt that due to excessive rainfall and floods in some parts of Maharashtra, the situation was not ideal and people should also have a chance to celebrate. Therefore, while Assembly elections in Jammu and Kashmir were announced along with Haryana, Maharashtra was left out.

The Maharashtra Assem-

bly's term ends on November 26 and that of Haryana on November 3. Whenever this gap is small in different states, the Election Commission usually tries to hold Assembly elections together. This was the case in the last three elections. With the Election Commission's different approach this time, it is natural that opposition parties will raise questions. They will ask why the last three Assembly elections were held in similar conditions and what is different this time. Festivals are there in Haryana too! The Election Commission is raising the issue of security concerns for holding simultaneous elections in some states, while the Prime Minister talks about one nation, one election. In this background, the opposition parties view all these developments with scepticism.

The most serious accusation from the opposition parties is over the Ladki Bahin scheme. Originally conceived by Assam chief minister Himanta Biswa Sarma, the scheme was implemented in Madhya

Pradesh by Shivraj Singh Chouhan and the BJP benefitted from it too. While the BJP faced setbacks in the last Lok Sabha elections across the country, it remained formidable in Madhya Pradesh. In Maharashtra, the Maha Vikas Aghadi won 31 out of 48 seats, leaving only 17 for the NDA. The poll results show that Maha Vikas Aghadi led in 154 out of 288 Assembly seats, with Congress leading in 63, Shiv Sena (UBT) in 57 and NCP (Sharad Pawar) in 34. The NDA led in 127 Assembly seats, with BJP leading in 80, Shiv Sena (Shinde) in 37 and Ajit Pawar's NCP in 6. However, I believe there is a significant difference between Lok Sabha and Assembly elections. Voters' moods and perspectives are quite different, as evidenced by many examples.

Interestingly, in the last three Assembly elections held in Maharashtra and Haryana right after the Lok Sabha elections, the party in power at the Centre benefitted the most. This time, the NDA is in power, but the BJP does not have a majority on its own. So, it's natural to question what will happen in Maharashtra this time. Nonetheless, the BJP has adopted the Madhya Pradesh model and implemented the Ladki Bahin scheme in Maharashtra as well. The last date for submitting applications is August 31. However, by August



Will the Ladki Bahin scheme benefit the ruling dispensation in Maharashtra as it did in Madhya Pradesh?

14, 1.62 crore women had registered themselves under this scheme. Of them, 80 lakh women have received Rs 3,000 (Rs 1,500 per month for two months) in their accounts. The opposition parties believe that a slight delay in elections might give the government a chance to transfer funds to all eligible women's accounts. However, the real question is whether the NDA will truly benefit from this. The Central government was providing free rations to around 80 crore people nationwide, but did the BJP benefit in elections? Thus, the impact of the Ladki Bahin scheme in Maha-

raashtra remains to be seen.

Now, let's talk about Jammu and Kashmir. There have been no Assembly elections there since 2014. The last elections included 87 seats, with 4 from Ladakh, Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh are both Union Territories now. The difference is that Jammu and Kashmir has a Legislative Assembly with 90 seats. Due to delimitation, the Jammu region gained 6 seats while only 1 additional seat was given to the Valley. The governor will nominate five members.

Since the abrogation of Article 370 in 2019, much has changed in Jammu and

Kashmir. The region has seen a new dawn and the speed of development has enraged our neighbour Pakistan, which has stepped up terrorist activities there. While we are selectively targeting terrorists, many of our military officers and soldiers have also been martyred. According to former Jammu and Kashmir DGP S P Vaid, 600 Pakistani commandos have infiltrated into Kashmir. Our Army will deal with them. The real issue is how the people of the Valley handle the terrorists. This is undoubtedly a golden opportunity to bring forth a messenger of peace from the electoral process for the people of Jammu and Kashmir.

The author is the chairman, Editorial Board of Lokmat Media and former member of Rajya Sabha.

PERSPECTIVE NIKHIL GUPTA CASE

THE U.S. IS SEEKING COMPLIANCE FROM INDIA

In an extraordinary interview to *The Daily Guardian's* sister newspaper, *The Sunday Guardian*, Nikhil Gupta, the man who is at the centre of the alleged assassination attempt on Khalistani terrorist Gurbatwant Singh Pannun on American soil, spoke of his innocence and how attempts were being made to frame him in the case. According to the United States, Nikhil Gupta was taking instructions from an Indian government employee to hire a hitman to assassinate Pannun, who is a dual citizen of Canada and the US. The Indian government has denied the claim. It has said that assassinating enemies is not its policy. There is no reason to believe anything otherwise. It's almost a year since Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau stood up in Parliament and said that he had "credible" evidence that India was involved in the assassination of Hardeep Singh Nijjar—another Khalistani terrorist, whom the West describes as an activist. Till date Canada has not provided a shred of "credible" evidence to the Indian government to connect it to Nijjar's assassination. It recently arrested three Indian nationals, but from all accounts, it seems that all three were connected with Khalistani gangs that function with impunity in Canada. If this is true, it will validate India's contention right from the beginning that Nijjar's assassination resulted from a local gang warfare. It seems the sole "evidence" that Trudeau was relying on is the US investigators' claim that the Indian government was involved in the so-called murder attempt on Pannun. But Nikhil Gupta has denied this outright and has also made the damning allegation that he was under pressure from US investigating authorities to confess to a crime that he never committed. This was the fear all along, that once Gupta's trial starts next month, he would have been given a deal for a lenient sentence in return for implicating the Indian government in the supposed assassination that the FBI undercover agents have unearthed. That Gupta has not fallen into the trap and has made public what the US authorities have been up to, is courageous.

At a time when the focus should be on economic recovery post Covid, why isn't the West striving for peace between Russia and Ukraine? Instead it's arming Volodymyr Zelenskyy to keep him fighting an endless war in an attempt to topple Vladimir Putin.

The obvious question here is why the US would push to the edge its relations with a strategic partner for a terrorist—Pannun. One of the reasons could be that the US is unhappy with India's independent stand on Ukraine and seeks compliance. It wants India to toe the Western line on the Russia-Ukraine war and sacrifice its relations with Russia. US ambassador to India, Eric Garcetti recently snapped that there was no scope for strategic autonomy—which India practises—in the time of war, implying that India would have to choose a side. But why should India abandon its policy for a war that is taking place continents away? It's not India's war. In fact, the Global South as a whole harbours similar views. At a time when the focus should be on economic recovery post Covid, why isn't the West striving for peace between Russia and Ukraine? Instead it's arming Volodymyr Zelenskyy to keep him fighting an endless war in an attempt to topple Vladimir Putin.

India is clear that it has nothing to do with either the Nijjar assassination, or with the so-called murder attempt on Pannun. In spite of that India is being accused of committing "transnational oppression", when that is exactly what the US or Israel does—and proudly so. The US has carried out innumerable transnational killings. Benjamin Netanyahu of Israel is being celebrated as a hero by a large section in the West because of the transnational killings that Israel under him has carried out, thus pushing West Asia towards possible war. The hypocrisy involved is astounding. To quote from George Orwell's *"Animal Farm"*, "All animals are equal, but some animals are more equal than others."

What should also concern Indians is the treatment that Gupta claims is being meted out to him. He has been incarcerated in one of the most unsafe prisons in the US, the MDC Brooklyn. Gupta describes it as a slaughterhouse, where knife attacks are common. He says he was assaulted a few days ago, and that he was tortured when he was in the Czech Republic prior to this. And to think that the West lectures India on prison conditions in this country—an excuse that felons like Vijay Malloy and others use to stop their extradition to India.

The bottom line is that this case is political. Those in the West who pretend that this is about the human rights of a terrorist who threatens India with death and destruction and gets away with it in the name of freedom of speech, should be called out for their double standards. Meanwhile, Nikhil Gupta should not be allowed to fall victim to malign statecraft.

JOYEETA BASU

When Mehmood wanted to cast Rajiv Gandhi

OPINION

RASHEED KIDWAI



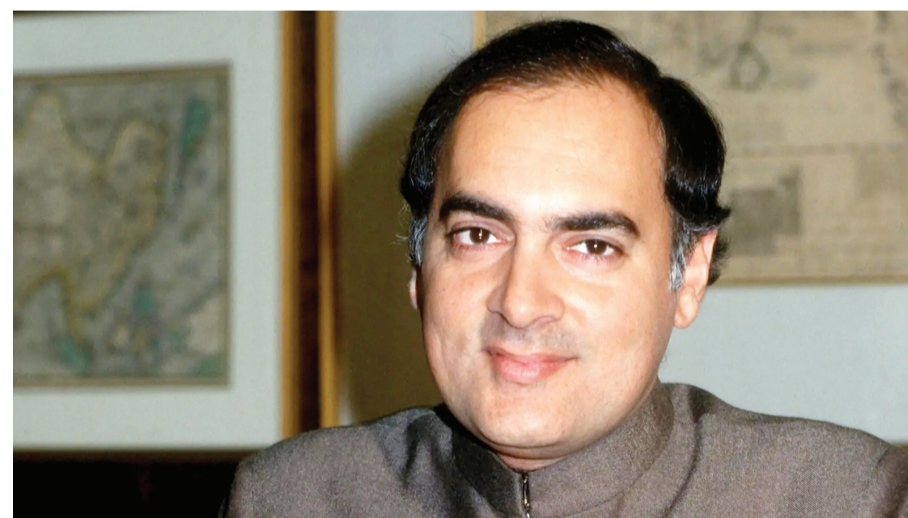
Rajiv Gandhi's birth had drawn Jawaharlal Nehru's attention towards the need for a "competent" pandit to draw his grandson's horoscope.

Rajiv was born on August 20, 1944 at Bombay (now Mumbai). His grandfather Jawaharlal Nehru was in Ahmadnagar Jail busy finishing *The Discovery of India* manuscript. Nehru had reportedly been mulling over Rajiv's name for a few months. He even wrote to his sister Krishna Hatheesing to get a proper horoscope to be drawn up by a "competent" person for the baby. By mid September 1944, Nehru wrote to sister Vijay Lakshmi Pandit that if the family did not decide soon, "we shall have to call [him],...the Nameless or the one with in-

numerable names." Finally he was named as Rajiv after his grandmother, as Kamala and Rajiv were both names of the lotus flower.

Indira had moved to Bombay in March to live with her aunt Krishna as her husband Feroze and father were in prison. Dr V N Shirodkar of Cumballa Hill Hospital was a well known gynaecologist who had helped with the delivery. At about 5 am on August 20, 1944, Indira developed labour pain. Krishna Hatheesing wrote in a book titled, "Dear to Behold - An Intimate Portrait of Indira Gandhi", how her niece was nervous and afraid.

When Nehru got the news of grandson, he wrote, "...The Birth of a new member of the family always makes one feel reminiscent and remember one's childhood days and other births.... Nature goes on repeating itself, there is no end of its infinite variety and every spring is a resurrection, every new birth a new beginning, especially when that new born is intimately connected with us, it becomes a revival of ourselves and our old hopes centre round it."



Nehru finally got to see his grandson in May 1945 when Germany had surrendered to the Allies forces on May 7 and in India, all political prisoners, including Nehru were released. This was the time Indira had devoted herself fully to look after Rajiv while Feroze Gandhi had started selling insurance. In November 1946, Feroze Gandhi joined the National Herald Newspaper in Lucknow, as managing editor.

Indira was a tender mother. Perhaps she was mindful of her own loneliness as a child, she supervised Rajiv-Sanjay's meals, played with her and took them to a film if it was suitable for children. She also utilized services of a Danish governess Anna who had been secretary to scientist Jagdish Chandra Bose. Anna was a strict disciplinarian who believed in giving Rajiv and Sanjay cold showers, sunbathing, exercises and a diet essentially of vegetables and yogurt.

When Rajiv was two year old, he met Amitabh Bachchan who was barely four at Allahabad. In an interview, Amitabh had called his first meeting with Rajiv, "There was this fancy dress party on Bank Road (the Bachchans' residence in Allahabad). Rajiv Gandhi was two years old and had been dressed up as a freedom fighter. Ma says he messed up his pants. We were all such tiny kids then, absorbed in our little games, that it didn't seem such a big deal that Pandit Nehru's grandson was in our midst."

In another biography, Amitabh had traced the Gandhi-Bachchan family ties and said: 'Rajiv and Sanjay studied in Doon School, Ajitabh and I were in Nainital... But our holidays fell around the same months. We'd hangout and swim every day at the pool of Rashtrapati Bhawan. The friendship continued. After schooling, Rajiv went off to Cambridge. Whenever he would be back home, we'd

get together and exchange notes... When he started flying, I'd go with him to provide ballast at the Flying Club of Delhi. I'd glide there for hours... Panditji died. Mrs Gandhi became PM and the family moved to I Safdarjung Road, which was close to our home at 13 Willingdon Crescent. Rajiv, Sanjay, Ajitabh and I formed a closely knit group of friends.'

By Amitabh's own admission, it was Rajiv and Sanjay who exposed him to avant-garde cinema at a young age through the European films that were specially screened for the Gandhi family at Rashtrapati Bhawan. 'Rajiv and Sanjay Gandhi and I would attend screenings of *The Cranes Are Flying* and Czech, Polish and Russian films, which often packed in an anti-war message,' Amitabh recalled.

When Amitabh was struggling to get a foothold in the Hindi film industry, comedy king Mehmood was his pa-

tron and there were many lighter moments. Mehmood's brother, Anwar Ali, shared a flat with Amitabh and his sister, Zubaida, was also a close friend of the budding actor. In *Mehmood: A Man of Many Moods*, author Hanif Zaveri has reminisced, 'Just before the release of Bombay to Goa, Amitabh had brought a very fair young friend to Mumbai. The friend had accompanied him from Delhi. Mehmood was on a high after taking Calmpose tablets, a drug to which he was addicted. Anwar introduced the young man to Mehmood, but in his state, he was unable to understand what was said. Mehmood took out five thousand rupees and handed it over to Anwar to give to Amitabh's friend. A puzzled Anwar asked what the money was for. Mehmood said the young fellow was fairer and smarter than Amitabh. He could become an international star. The money was the signing amount for taking the young man in Mehmood's next project.'

Anwar then had to reintroduce Amitabh's friend to Mehmood, stressing that he was Rajiv, son of the prime minister, Indira Gandhi. Mehmood quietly took the money back. Both Amitabh and Rajiv had a good laugh. Many years later, when Rajiv became prime minister, Amitabh acknowledged Mehmood's good judgement, saying that Rajiv was indeed an international star, but in the political arena, not on the silver screen.

TELANGANA TO EMERGE AS INDIA'S 'SPORTS HUB' SOON, SAYS CM

AGENCIES
HYDERABAD

Telangana Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy strongly hoped that the youngest state of Telangana would emerge as the hub of sports activity in the country soon, according to official press statement.

The Chief Minister ordered the officials to take all necessary measures to promote Telangana as a destination for sports and games in the country.

In a high-level meeting with officials at the Secretariat today (Monday), the CM discussed the government's proposal to establish a world-class sports university. The officials made some suggestions on the establishment of the Young India Sports University in Fourth City, Official press release stated.

CM Revanth Reddy asserted that every sport should be given priority in Young India Sports University and bring all sports and games training institutions under the purview of the proposed sports university, it stated.

The CM asked the officials to find out which sports are suitable for the country as well as the geographical conditions and physical structure of people in Telangana.



Those who are enthusiastic about pursuing sports as their lifelong career will be identified and encouraged in those particular areas.

The Chief Minister wanted Hyderabad, which hosted the Afro-Asian Games and Commonwealth Games decades ago, to be promoted as a venue for the Olympics in the future.

Apart from conducting the Olympics in Hyderabad, the Chief Minister made it clear that the selected sportspersons will be trained by experts in the Sports University and ensure that all the trained sportspersons win medals in every sport.

CM Revanth Reddy directed the authorities to bring all the sports departments of all universities, government-run sports schools, academies and sports training institutes under the ambit of Sports University.

The CM suggested giving priority to shooting, wrestling, boxing, archery, javelin Throw and hockey, in which the Indian athletes will perform and win medals through rigorous training at the sports university.

All the facilities, including diet, that are required for training in the respective sports will be provided on par with international standards to the sportspeople at the university.

The Chief Minister also suggested that the teachers identify the students who possess skills in the particular sport activity at an early age.

Sports schools will be established in every Lok Sabha constituency to train the identified students. Though sports activity is being given top priority, the proposed sports schools will also provide regular education to the

students.

The selected students will be offered training in their favourite sport, depending on their talent, by providing accommodation at the Sports University.

The CM directed the authorities to promote the Sports University of Hyderabad as the main hub of the country's sports sector and to take all necessary steps in this direction.

The officials have been asked to conduct a comprehensive study on the details of the athletes of the countries who won medals in the recent Olympics, their hard work to win the medals, efforts put in by the countries to encourage the athletes and training provided to them.

As the government already named Young India to the Skill University and the Sports University, the CM announced that the integrated schools that are being set up across the state will also be named Young India.

The Chief Minister wished the Telangana state would become a brand for Young India and ordered the officials to envisage plans to promote Telangana as the strong state of producing highly skilled sports persons in the country.

Chirag Paswan urges youth to take resolution to ensure women's safety

AGENCIES
PATNA

On the occasion of Raksha Bandhan, Union Minister Chirag Paswan on Monday urged the youth to take the resolution to ensure the safety of every woman in the country so that heinous crimes against them do not take place.

Paswan also condemned the regressive mentality that leads to crime against women like the 2012 Delhi gangrape case and more recently in West Bengal where on August 9, a postgraduate trainee doctor was allegedly raped and murdered at the R G Kar Medical College and Hospital in Kolkata.

Chirag was seen enjoying the festival of Raksha Bandhan along with her sisters in Bihar.

"On the occasion of Raksha Bandhan, every youth should resolve to ensure the safety of every woman in the country. There is a need to change the mentality due to which heinous crimes like the Nirbhaya incident are taking place in the country. Everyone should resolve so that these kinds of incidents never take place in the country," said Paswan while speaking to ANI.

When asked about the statement of West Bengal



On the occasion of Raksha Bandhan, Union Minister Chirag Paswan on Monday urged the youth to take the resolution to ensure the safety of every woman in the country so that heinous crimes against them do not take place.

Governor CV Ananda Bose claiming that democracy was degenerating in West Bengal.

Chirag said, "It is worrying if the Governor is making these kinds of statements for a state whose Chief Minister is a woman... There is no

place for these kinds of incidents in the country. Proper action should be taken and strict punishment should be given to those responsible so that these kinds of incidents don't happen again..."

"Along with this, it's a social responsibility as well.

This time Prime Minister Narendra Modi also made the same statement from Red Fort as well that everyone needs to take collective responsibility. We as law-makers need to take this responsibility, administrative people responsible for the implementation of law and order at the ground level also need to take responsibility and every citizen of society as well," added the Union Minister.

On Sunday as well Paswan slammed West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee for taking out the protest against her government and said that it shows the TMC government's weakness in West Bengal.

Kerala Bank 'deducted EMIs' from Wayanad Survivors' Relief

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI

Kerala Gramin Bank's deduction of loan EMIs from the relief aid of Wayanad landslide survivors has sparked outrage. The move, labeled as "cruel," is under scrutiny as the government intervenes.

Wayanad, August 19 - Kerala Gramin Bank has come under fire for deducting loan EMIs from the emergency relief funds provided by the state government to survivors of the devastating Wayanad landslides that occurred on July 30. The disaster claimed over 230 lives and left over 100 missing, leaving the affected families in dire need of financial support.

The Kerala government had announced an emergency relief package of Rs 10,000 for each affected family. However, many survivors were shocked to find that the Kerala Gramin Bank had deducted loan EMIs of up to Rs 5,000 from this relief amount as soon as it



Kerala Gramin Bank's deduction of loan EMIs from the relief aid of Wayanad landslide survivors has sparked outrage. The move, labeled as "cruel," is under scrutiny as the government intervenes.

was deposited into their accounts. For instance, Mini Mol, who had taken a loan of Rs 50,000 for constructing a house, saw Rs 3,000 deducted from her relief aid.

Rajesh, a dairy farmer who lost his house and cattle in the landslide, was another victim of this deduction. "I planned to use the relief money as an advance for a rental house, but the bank took Rs 3,400 as EMI," he

said, highlighting the severity of the situation for those already struggling to rebuild their lives.

The move by the bank has drawn sharp criticism from various quarters, including Kerala's cooperatives minister, VN Vasavan, who termed it "cruel." He expressed his disappointment that the bank did not act with compassion in these exceptional circumstances. "Even if the

state-level bankers' committee (SLBC) had not issued a formal directive, the branch manager could have made a humanitarian decision," Vasavan stated, promising to take up the issue with the SLBC.

KS Pradeep, general manager of SLBC, clarified that the deductions were made due to standing instructions in the accounts before the disaster struck. Despite this, the Wayanad deputy collector, who is also the CEO of the district disaster management authority, has ordered the Kerala Gramin Bank to return the money deducted from the relief funds.

The deduction of EMIs from the relief aid intended for Wayanad landslide survivors has sparked widespread outrage, with many calling for greater sensitivity in handling such cases. The government's intervention highlights the need for a more compassionate approach in disaster management, ensuring that survivors receive the full support they deserve in times of

'I stand with working women', says Piyush Goyal slams Bengal govt for doctor's rape

TDS NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Union Minister Piyush Goyal strongly condemned the recent incident of a trainee doctor's alleged sexual assault and murder in Kolkata, West Bengal.

"I strongly stand with all the women and our daughters who are working, and I am sure that in the future, this nation will not tolerate any such incidents," Goyal asserted.

Goyal emphasized the need for a collective awakening to prevent such heinous crimes.

"It is very unfortunate... what has happened in West Bengal and I am sure that this will awaken the spirit and the conscience of the nation. It's really a dastardly act and every single day we wake up to more details that are dastardly, added the Union Minister.

The incident has sparked nationwide protests and strikes by the medical community, with the Kolkata



Union Minister Piyush Goyal strongly condemned the recent incident of a trainee doctor's alleged sexual assault and murder in Kolkata, West Bengal.

police imposing Section 163 of the BNS around RG Kar Medical College and Hospital to maintain law and order.

He expressed his outrage during a Raksha Bandhan celebration with Pakistani Hindu migrants who received Indian citizenship un-

der the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA).

The celebration, attended by women migrants from Pakistan, was a moment of solace and hope. Sadhvi Rithambara, a spiritual leader, tied a Rakhi to Goyal, who expressed his gratitude and commitment

to working honestly and diligently.

The minister, visibly moved, expressed his gratitude, saying, "Today I am blessed that our sister Sadhvi Rithambara is amongst us. She has blessed me by tying a Rakhi. She has actually given me such a protective thread through which I can do my work well and honestly. In a way, this Rakhi was very special..."

Centre released commemorative coin for DMK patriarch Karunanidhi because of his service to TN: Annamalai

AGENCIES
CHENNAI (TAMIL NADU)

Tamil Nadu BJP President K Annamalai said on Monday that the Union government released a commemorative coin to mark the birth centenary of former five-time Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu Kalamannan Karunanidhi because of his service to the state.

"For his (Karunanidhi) service to the state, our Prime Minister Narendra Modi and cabinet have sanctioned the request of the Tamil Nadu state government to release a Rs 100 commemorative coin in 2024. We have to understand that there are places for doing politics and places for not doing politics," Annamalai told ANI.

After releasing the commemorative coin in Chennai on Sunday, Union Defence



Minister Rajnath Singh termed M Karunanidhi as one of the most revered leaders of the country, a titan of Indian politics, an able administrator, an advocate for social justice, and a cultural stalwart. Tamil Nadu Chief Minister MK Stalin and Union MoS L Murugan along with other leaders and officials were also present at

the event.

Addressing the event with Vadakkam, Rajnath Singh said, "It is a great honour and deep respect to celebrate the birth centenary of one of the most revered leaders of our country, Kalamannan M Karunanidhi. I pay my homage to the Kalaignar on his special occasion, a man whose influence was far extended than

the borders of the Tamil Nadu and Karunanidhi was a titan of Indian politics. A cultural stalwart and relentless advocate of the social justice." Rajnath Singh described Kalamannan Karunanidhi as a leader whose role in national governance and advocacy for democratic principles have left an indelible mark on Indian democracy. He added that the inclusive nature of Indian identity is reflected in Thiru Karunanidhi's policies, which focussed on providing access to quality education for the marginalised and ensuring that women and children received the support they needed to thrive.

Tamil Nadu Chief Minister MK Stalin on Sunday thanked Prime Minister Narendra Modi for his wishes and support for the grand success of the centenary commemorative coin release ceremony in honour of former Tamil Nadu CM M Karunanidhi.

"I wholeheartedly thank Prime Minister Thiru. Narendra Modi avl. for his kind wishes and support for the grand success of the Muthamizh Arignar Kalamannan Centenary Commemorative Coin release ceremony," MK Stalin posted on X.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi wrote a letter and hailed the late DMK President and former Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu, M Karunanidhi, as a "towering figure" in Indian politics, literature and society.

"Thiru Karunanidhi ji was a towering figure in Indian politics, literature and society. He was always passionate about the development of Tamil Nadu as well as the nation's progress."

AGENCIES
CHENNAI

Tamil Nadu Health Minister Ma Subramanian on Monday said that the state does not need the National Eligibility-cum-Entrance Test (NEET) and that some other states have a similar viewpoint about the medical entrance exam.

"Counselling for medical college will start from August 21. We don't need the NEET exam. We are working on it. The government is taking all steps against the NEET," Subramanian told reporters.

"Not only Tamil Nadu but many other states have joined to oppose the NEET exam. Yesterday too, our minister, Durai Murugan started his speech opposing the NEET exam," he added.

DMK-led Tamil Nadu government is opposed to



Party leaders have said that either NEET exam should be abolished or assent should be given to Tamil Nadu's NEET exemption Bill that aims to exclude the state from the medical entrance exam.

NEET. Party leaders have said that either NEET exam should be abolished or assent should be given to Tamil

Nadu's NEET exemption Bill that aims to exclude the state from the medical entrance exam.

KERALA HIGH COURT ASKS SBI TO RELEASE TITLE DEEDS: OTS BENEFIT CANNOT BE DENIED AFTER ACCEPTING DELAYED INSTALLMENT

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

The Kerala High Court in the case *Sham P S v State Bank of India* observed and has directed the State Bank of India to release the title deeds of a residential property mortgaged by a petitioner on payment of outstanding debts under the One Time Settlement, OTS Scheme.

The Bank in the case did not confer the benefit of the One Time Settlement, OTS Scheme to the petitioner, citing a delay in payment of the second instalment within the stipulated time.

The bench headed by Justice Dinesh Kumar Singh in the case observed that the Bank did not raise an objection wherein it is stated that the petitioner delayed the payments of the second instalment or that the OTS Scheme had lapsed.

The court in the case ob-



served that the Bank accepted the second instalment paid by the petitioner under the OTS Scheme, even if it was made with some delay.

The court stated that once the petitioner has deposited the amount and the bank has accepted, it would not be proper for the Bank to say that the petitioner did not comply with the terms and conditions of the two OTS schemes in not making the payment of the second instalment on time. The Bank in the case should not have accepted the amount and addressed a communication to the petitioner saying

that since the petitioner did not comply with the terms of the two settlement schemes, the settlement schemes were withdrawn, and the petitioner should pay the entire outstanding amount. In the absence of such communication and after accepting the amount paid by the petitioner in terms of the settlement scheme, though with some delay in making payment of the second instalment, the entire payment was made within the outer limit as per the settlement scheme, the said court finds the stand of the Bank untenable.

In the present case, the petitioner is the proprietor of the firm who availed two loan facilities of rupees 25 lakhs and 10 lakhs for running his textile shop. The loan was being availed by the petitioner from the State Bank of India by mortgaging the title deeds of his residential property. The petitioner who incurred losses due

to Pandemics defaulted on loan payments leading to the initiation of SARFAESI proceedings against him.

Further, the bank provided the petitioner with an opportunity to settle his loan accounts by paying the outstanding debts under the Rinn Samadhan 2021-22 Scheme and the SBI One Time Settlement Scheme 2021, within a specified time frame.

The petitioner in the plea argued that he had paid the entire amount within the outer time limit as per the OTS scheme and that he was entitled for the release of his title deeds.

Therefore, the bank in the case admitted that the petitioner paid the entire amount within the outer limit of making payment under the OTS Scheme.

It has also been stated that the petitioner defaulted in remitting the second instalment within the time frame.

The court in the case noted that the Bank accepted the payments made by the petitioner under the OTS Scheme for settling his liabilities. It noted that the Bank accepted the delayed second instalment paid by the petitioner without objection. Thus, the court noted that the entire outstanding amount was paid under the OTS Scheme.

The court directed the petitioner to pay interest on the delayed payment of the second instalment to the Bank.

The court in the case allowed the petition and directed the Bank to release the title deeds of the petitioner's residential property on payment of the interest for delayed payment.

The counsel, Advocates V.K. Peermohamed Khan, Girish Kumar V.C., Asna M.B. appeared for the Petitioner.

The counsel, Advocate Jawahar Jose represented the Respondents.

Supreme Court Takes Suo Motu Case Over RG Kar Hospital Doctor's Rape And Murder, Hearing On August 20, 2024

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court in the case *In Re : Alleged Rape and Murder of Trainee Doctor in RG Kar Medical College Hospital, Kolkata* and related issues observed and has taken suo motu cognisance of the rape and murder of a doctor in RG Kar Hospital in Kolkata.

The bench comprising of Chief Justice of India DY Chandrachud, Justice JB Pardiwala and Justice Manoj Misra will hear the present matter.

The case is titled 'In Re: Alleged Rape and Murder of Trainee Doctor in RG Kar Medical College Hospital, Kolkata and related issues.'

The present matter was registered at 01:03 PM on August 18, 2024.

The body of the post-graduate trainee doctor was found in the R.G. Kar Hospital's seminar room on Au-

gust 09, 2024.

The Kolkata Police arrested a civic volunteer the next day in this connection.

On August 13, 2024, the Calcutta High Court in the case observed and has directed the Central Bureau of Investigation, CBI to take over the investigation, after expressing lack of satisfaction with the Kolkata Police.

The High Court in the case passed the order acting on petitions filed by one of the parents of the victim and certain other individuals.

The High Court bench comprising of Chief Justice TS Sivagnanam and Justice Hiranmay Bhattacharya stated that the parents of the victim have an apprehension that if the investigation is allowed to continue in this manner, it will derail. Thus, they pray for extraordinary relief and one more disturbing aspect is that a case of unnatural death was regis-

tered. The High Court in the case pulled up the West Bengal machinery for the acts of vandalism at the RG Kar hospital during protests on August 14.

It is also submitted before the court that such cases are registered when there is no complaint. When the deceased was a doctor in the same hospital, it is surprising why the principal did not lodge a complaint. There has been no significant progress in the investigation. The administration was not with the victim or her family. The principal has not even given a statement. Without significant progress in the investigation, we would be well justified in accepting the prayers by the victim's parents that evidence would be destroyed. Therefore, we transfer the investigation to the Central Bureau of Investigation, CBI to do justice between parties and to inspire public confidence.

The High Court in the case pulled up the West Bengal machinery for the acts of vandalism at the RG Kar hospital during protests on August 14.

Kerala High Court Declines Actor Ranjini's Third Party Appeal, Allows Her To File Fresh Writ Petition: Hema Commission Report

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

The Kerala High Court in the case *Sasha Selvaraj @ Renjini v State of Kerala and Others* observed and has dismissed the writ appeal filed by actor Ranjini challenging the decision of a single bench

of the Court, wherein the court allowed the publication of Justice Hema Committee Report on the conditions faced by women in the Malayalam film industry.

The court in the case noted that Ranjini was not a party to the writ petition filed by Producer Sajimon Parayil,

in the impugned judgement was delivered.

The Division bench comprising of Justice A Muhammed Musatque and Justice S Manu in the case observed and has allowed her to file a fresh writ petition raising her grievances.

The court stated that it will

direct the registry to number the writ petition, if it is being filed today to place it before the Single Judge.

The court stated that the learned single judge had no occasion to consider the individual rights of the appellant and the remedy in such matters is for the appellant

to approach the single judge challenging the actions which according to the appellant affect her individual right of privacy. With liberty as above, the appeal stands dismissed.

Adding to it, the court stated that it will hear the writ appeal filed by Producer,

Sajimon Parayil challenging the order of the single judge.

The court stated that the judgment of the single judge is a judgment in personam and not a judgment in rem.

The court noted that the appellant is a third party in the writ appeal and the right remedy for her is to ap-

proach the single judge with a writ petition.

In the present case, she has filed the writ appeal wherein it alleged the violation of her right to privacy since she gave statements to the Committee under a promise of confidentiality. It has been that she had a legitimate

expectation of being heard before a decision was taken to publish the report.

The appeal is moved by Advocates Renjith B. Marar, Lakshmi N. Kaimal, P. Rajkumar, Keshavraj Nair, Arun Poomulli, Anand Ramesh, Abhiram S. Abhijith Sreekumar, Gaadha Suresh.

Karnataka High Court: Not Wearing Protective Headgear By Motorcyclist Cannot Negate Right To Compensation

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

The Karnataka High Court in the case *Sadat Ali Khan AND Noor Ahmed Sayyed & ANR* observed and has clarified that failure to wear protective headgear as required by Section 129(a) of the Motor Vehicles Act, though constitutes a contributory negligence, will not drastically affect the compensation which is being awarded to a claimant who has suffered.

The Division bench comprising of Justice K Somashekhar and Justice Dr Chillakur Sumalatha in the case was deciding an appeal filed by Sadath Ali Khan wherein it seeks enhancement of compensation awarded by the Motor Accident Claim Tribunal.

The Tribunal in the case had awarded an amount of Rs 5,61,600 as compensation and in doing so considered that the

claimant was found travelling without wearing a helmet and thereby violated the Notification which is issued by the Transport Authority under the provisions of Motor Vehicles Rules.

The court in the case stated that if a rider does not wear protective headgear as mandated, it could be argued that they contributed to the severity of their injuries. However, not wearing protective headgear does not negate the right to compensation.

Further, the court stated that the principle of 'just compensation' requires that while contributory negligence can be a factor in determining the amount of compensation, it should not result in an unjust reduction and compensation must be fair and reasonable, reflecting the actual losses and the nature of injuries sustained.

It has also been expressed

by the said court that the principle of just compensation necessitates that courts award damages that are fair and equitable, considering all circumstances without unduly penalising the claimant for not wearing a helmet. Thus, the primary focus remains on ensuring that the victims to receive adequate compensation for their injuries and losses.

It has also been claimed by Khan that he was a Manufacturer of Wooden Toys and earning a sum from an amount of Rs.35,000 per month. Due to the said accident, he had lost his monthly income.

Khan had spent an amount of Rs.10 Lakhs towards his medical treatment and other incidental expenses thus Khan had sought that the compensation be increased.

The bench while interfering with the order of the tribunal noted that under Section 129(a), the offence of not

wearing protective headgear attracts a fine of Rs.1,000/- or suspension of the driving licence for three months. Thus, given this relatively minor penalty, reducing the insurance claim amount by 10% to 15% due to the non-wearing of protective headgear is unjust.

The court while considering the facts and circumstances of the case observed and has modified the tribunal order and enhanced the compensation to Rs.6,80,200.

It has been stated that 'The Motor Vehicles Act is a beneficial legislation. Keeping in view of the scope of Section 129 of the Act and in a given peculiar facts and circumstances of the case, the entire liability shall be fastened on respondent No.2-insurance company.'

The counsel, Advocate Raju S for appeared for the Appellant. The counsel, Advocate B. Pradeep represented for R2.

Bombay High Court: Income Declaration Scheme 2016, Assessee Deposited Amount, Dept. Claim Erroneous

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

The Bombay High Court in the case *Arihant Developers Versus Principal Commissioner of Income Tax* observed and has directed the department to issue certificates as the assessee deposited all amounts under the Income Declaration Scheme, 2016, IDS.

The bench comprising of Justice G. S. Kulkarni and Justice Somasekhar Sundaresan in the case observed that the petitioner or assessee in fact complied with all the requirements under the Income Declaration Scheme, IDS, and the appropriate amount of tax deposited is sufficient in order to accept the case of the petitioner.

Therefore, the court stated that assessment order cannot be held to be legal and it would

be required to be quashed and set aside on the department's own, showing that the petitioner had deposited all the amounts under the IDS. The petitioner had become entitled to the benefit under a scheme.

In the present case, the petitioner or assessee sought a direction for the department to act in furtherance of the declaration made by the petitioner under IDS and issue the appropriate Form 4 Certificate of Declaration.

The petitioner in the plea submitted before the court that the entire basis for the assessing officer to issue the notice and pass the assessment order was that the petitioner had not deposited the tax amounts that would be liable to be deposited.

The petitioner in the case petitioner had made a declaration in Form 1 under the Income

Declaration Scheme, 2016, IDS, which came into effect on June 1, 2016.

The petitioner in the plea contended that the entire basis for the assessing officer to proceed on the assumption that the petitioner had not deposited the tax was incorrect.

Further, the petitioner had deposited a tax amount on November 30, 2016, March 30, 2017, and September 30, 2017. There was no such question of any mismatch and/or such payments not being taken into consideration while issuing the notice, as well as the passing of the reassessment order as stated under Section 147, read with Section 144 and Section 144B.

On the other hand, the department admitted that as per the details of the challans furnished by the assessee, the seven payments were being

made by the petitioner, totaling an amount of Rs. 1,48,50,000 towards the liability against the declaration made under the IDS.

The court in the case held that the basis on which the assessing officer had concluded that the petitioner had not complied with the terms and conditions of the IDS and had not deposited the tax was certainly erroneous.

The court while considering the facts and circumstances of the case observed and has allowed petition and directed the department to issue an appropriate certificate of the deposit of tax under IDS to the petitioner within a period of four weeks.

The counsel, Sanket S. Bora appeared for the Appellant.

The counsel, Suresh Kumar represented the Respondent.

Rajasthan High Court: Doctrine Of proportionality In Service Matters Not Applicable When Employment Itself Is Based On Fraud

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

The Rajasthan High Court in the case *Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited & Anr. v Gyan Chand* observed and has affirmed that the doctrine of proportionality in service matters cannot be invoked with regards to an employee whose basis of attaining employment was fraudulent.

The court in the case observed and has held that the High Court's scope of interference with the decision of disciplinary authority's on the quantum of penalty in service matters is minimal.

The Division bench comprising of Justice Pushpen-

dra Singh Bhati and Justice Rajendra Prakash Soni in the case was hearing the present matter.

The bench in the case stated that the doctrine of proportionality could not be invoked to favour an employee who attained employment which is based on a forged document.

The court also case stated that in such cases, no length of tenure could create any sympathy in the minds of the Court to reduce the penalty which is imposed by the disciplinary authority.

Further, the court stated that the doctrine of proportionality has been invoked time and again in cases where the long tenure cre-



ates harsh conditions for the employees but at the same time the said court is constrained to note that the doctrine of proportionality cannot be invoked in cases where the root of the

employment itself is based upon a forged document. Thus, the very eligibility of the person is at stake since the employee has obtained such employment by fraud, and therefore, no amount

of long tenure can create any sympathy in the minds of the said Court.

BACKGROUND OF THE CASE:

The court in the case was hearing an appeal filed by Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited, BPCL represented by Mr. Nishant Bora, against the order of a single judge of the Court.

The court was hearing the writ petition filed by the employee of BPC. The employee was being appointed as a watchman in the year 1987 but was served with a charge sheet in 2002 wherein alleging submission of a forged transfer certificate at the time of appointment and the enquiry against the

employee culminated in the employee being found guilty following which he was dismissed after 17 years of service, in the year 2003.

A writ petition was filed by him against the dismissal order.

The single bench in the case observed and has upheld the findings of the enquiry report but applying the doctrine of proportionality remanded back the matter to BPCL for reconsideration on quantum of penalty in light of 17 years of service of the employee. This special appeal was filed by BPCL against this order of the single judge.

The court also referred to the Supreme Court decision in the case *Indian Oil*

Corporation Ltd. v. Rajendra D. Harmalkar which gave observations on the question of judicial review and interference of courts in the matters of disciplinary proceedings.

The court in the case observed and has stated that the relationship between an employer and employee was based on trust and mutual respect and when such employment had been sought which being on the basis of certain forged documents or misrepresentations, the very foundation of that relationship gets deteriorated.

Further, the Court observed that the doctrine of proportionality could not be applied in the present case since there was no

benefit of doubt that could be assigned to the employee. Hence, the length of service of the petitioner could not warrant any lenient view of the Court.

The court stated that the doctrine of proportionality can be invoked when there are multiple steps or gradings through which we may see the bracket of the parameter of the legality, and thus, it has to operate within the realms of law where the quantum of punishment can be reduced in accordance with law, while keeping into due consideration certain relevant factors, including the factual matrix of the case and the length of service.

Accordingly, the court allowed the appeal.

'THIS WAS A TERROR ATTACK': ISRAEL ON TEL AVIV EXPLOSION

AGENCIES
TEL AVIV

Israeli police and Shin Bet, Israel's domestic security agency have declared Tel Aviv's explosion on Sunday evening as "terror attack". The blast occurred on HaLehi Street, sending shockwaves through the city, which has been on high alert due to escalating tensions in the region, reported CNN.

The explosion killed one person and injured another. The blast occurred on HaLehi Street, sending shockwaves through the city, which has been on high alert due to escalating tensions in the region.

"This was a terror attack involving the explosion of a powerful explosive," the Israel Police Spokesperson's Unit and the Shin Bet Spokesperson's Unit said in a joint statement Monday.

The deceased, whose identity has not been disclosed, is believed to have been carrying the explosive material. According to District Com-



mander Peretz Amar, the explosive was likely hidden in a backpack, making it unclear whether the individual intended to use the device or if it detonated prematurely.

The injured person, a passerby on an electric scooter, was taken to the hospital with shrapnel wounds to the lower body.

"As a result of the explosion, a passerby was moderately injured (according to medical sources) and was transported to receive medical treatment," it added.

This incident has height-

ened fears across Tel Aviv, a city already grappling with the aftermath of recent violence in the region. The explosion adds to the ongoing strain of rocket attacks from Gaza and clashes in the West Bank, which have left both civilians and security personnel on edge.

In just the past week, there have been several attacks in Israel, including a car bombing in Jerusalem that injured multiple people and a fatal hammer attack on an Israeli security guard in the West Bank, as per the report

by CNN. Authorities are exploring all possible motives behind this explosion, including whether it is linked to the broader regional conflict. Amar emphasised that it is "too early to say" if the blast was a terrorist attack, but the timing and location have raised significant concerns.

The explosion coincides with a period of intense security scrutiny in Israel, especially with ongoing military operations in Gaza and increased violence in the West Bank.

Israel President Herzog meets with US Secretary Blinken

AGENCIES
TEL AVIV

United States Secretary of State Antony Blinken who is in Tel Aviv, in a fresh push for an Israel-Hamas ceasefire, called on Israel President Issac Herzog on Monday.

At the start of his meeting with Blinken, the Israeli President was cited by the Times of Israel as blaming Hamas for failure to reach a hostage deal stating that "people have to understand it starts with a refusal of Hamas to move forward."

According to the Israeli publication, Herzog thanked US President Joe Biden for "showing and projecting power" in the region amidst threats by Iran.

He also thanked the US, Egypt and Qatar for acting as mediators on a ceasefire proposal and expressed hope "that we can move forward in the negotiations".

"There is no greater humanitarian objective, and there's no greater humanitarian cause than bringing back our hostages home as they should have returned



At the start of his meeting with Blinken, the Israeli President was cited by the Times of Israel as blaming Hamas for failure to reach a hostage deal stating that "people have to understand it starts with a refusal of Hamas to move forward."

long ago," Herzog said as cited by the Times of Israel.

Meanwhile, Blinken has said that is "a decisive moment" in the war.

"This is a decisive moment -- probably the best, maybe the last, opportunity to get the hostages home, to get a

ceasefire and to put everyone on a better path to enduring peace and security," Blinken said.

According to Washington Post which cited diplomats speaking on condition of anonymity, key sticking points in the proposed ceasefire

have been Israel's insistence on maintaining a military presence along the Philadelphi Corridor between Egypt and Gaza and the establishment of checkpoints to inspect Palestinians seeking to return to their homes in northern Gaza. There are also unresolved issues related to the roster of Palestinian detainees Israel will agree to release, the US publication said.

State Department spokesman Vedant Patel said that Blinken during his Israel visit will push hard for a conclusion of the deal, which "would achieve a cease-fire in Gaza, secure the release of all hostages, ensure humanitarian assistance is distributed throughout Gaza, and create the conditions for broader regional stability."

This visit marks Blinken's ninth visit to Tel Aviv since the war between Israel and Hamas started. The US Secretary of State is set to meet other Israeli leaders, including Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, as the White House indicates that a deal is ready to be closed.

Chinese women dismisses its 'pro-birth agenda'

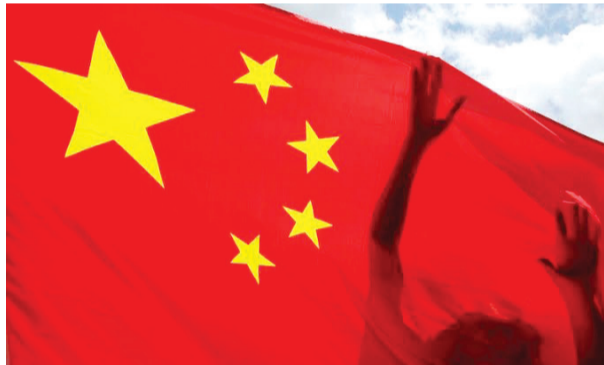
AGENCIES
BEIJING

Amid China's ongoing demographic crisis, the new 'pro-birth agenda' set up by the Communist Party does not go along well with the country's women, who have faced the horrors of Beijing's 'one-child rule' previously.

Beijing has been launching nationwide programs to promote a "pro-birth culture" since the country's three-child policy was implemented in 2021. This is because China's population is shrinking at an alarming rate.

The slogans and posters that originally cautioned against having more than one kid have been replaced with ones that promote having more babies.

A flurry of policy incentives, including cash giveaways, real estate subsi-



dies, and the extension of maternity leave, have been implemented by local governments. However, nothing seems to work, as the women in China, now, are not interested in having children.

One such case, which highlights the negative impacts of child policies in China, is that of Fang. Since her pre-school days, she was officially registered as the daughter of her eldest uncle. This happened, as her parents tried to conceal their second pregnancy, in

order to avoid harsh penalties, including the loss of a job. At that time, China's controversial rule of 'one-child' was in enforcement from 1980-2015.

"I really had no idea which parents I was supposed to name," Fang told CNN years later, using a pseudonym for privacy reasons.

Since then, to avert an impending demographic crisis, Beijing has gradually raised the birth quotas from one to two children, then to three in 2021.

Thailand's new PM Paetongtarn Shinawatra thanks Indian PM

AGENCIES
BANGKOK

Expressing gratitude to Prime Minister Narendra Modi for his congratulatory wishes, Thailand's newly sworn-in Prime Minister Paetongtarn Shinawatra said that she is looking forward to strengthening Thailand-India ties further.

Sharing a post on X, Shinawatra wrote, "Thank you PM @narendramodi for your warm congratulatory message. I look forward to working closely with you to further strengthen our bilateral relations, especially in the areas of trade and investment, culture, people-to-people contact, and tourism, in particular, to increase air travel between both countries."

"I am confident that we can build upon our existing ties and explore untapped potentials to create even



greater opportunities for our two countries, peoples and beyond," she added.

On Sunday, Thailand's King Maha Vajiralongkorn formally endorsed Paetongtarn Shinawatra as the country's next prime minister.

Prime Minister Modi extended congratulations to Paetongtarn Shinawatra on her election as the Prime Minister of Thailand and expressed his best wishes for a successful tenure on August 18.

Philippines, Chinese vessels 'collide' in South China Sea

AGENCIES
MANILA

The Philippines said on Monday that one of its coast guard vessels was rammed and another subjected to "aggressive manoeuvres" by Chinese coast guard ships in the West Philippine Sea, local media reported.

National Security Council Jonathan Malaya spokesperson was cited by the Philippine Inquirer as stating that the Philippine Coast Guard (PCG) ships BRP Cape Engano and BRP Bacagay had an encounter with the Chinese Coast Guard at Escoda (Sabina) Shoal on Monday morning. The official stated that the Philippine ships were en route to deliver supplies to Lawak and Patag islands at approximately 3:24 am when they were "subjected to aggressive manoeuvres" by a Chinese Coast Guard ship. Malaya as cited in the Philippine media outlet said



"Despite these incidents, both Philippine Coast Guard vessels remain committed to, and shall proceed with, their mission of delivering essential supplies stationed to personnel in Lawak and Patag islands."

China, however, said the Philippine coast guard ship ignored repeated warnings from the Chinese side and intentionally sailed dangerously toward a Chinese coast guard vessel on maritime enforcement duty.

Xinhua citing the Chinese Coast Guard reported that a Philippine coast guard

ship caused a scrape with a Chinese vessel early Monday morning in waters near Xianbin Jiao and later it intruded into the waters of Ren'ai Jiao. "Around 6 a.m., the Philippine coast guard ship, defying warnings from the Chinese side and disregarding route control, intruded into the waters of Ren'ai Jiao," Xinhua reported citing a Chinese Coast Guard spokesperson.

The Escoda or the Sabina Shoal is in the Spratly Islands, which are claimed by China, the Philippines, Taiwan and Vietnam.

Imran Khan's alleged ties with ex-ISI chief uncovered in probe

AGENCIES
ISLAMABAD

New details have emerged in an ongoing probe into the relationship between Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) founder Imran Khan and former ISI Director-General Lieutenant General (ret) Faiz Hameed, as reported by The Express Tribune.

According to sources cited by The Express Tribune, General Hameed maintained contact with Imran Khan through his wife, Bushra



Bibi. Hameed allegedly provided information to Bushra Bibi in advance, which she would then convey to Imran

Khan, presenting it as divine inspiration.

When this information later proved to be accurate, it reportedly reinforced the PTI founder's belief in Bushra Bibi's spiritual abilities, while in reality, it was Hameed who had shared the information.

The probe took an unexpected turn after the former ISI chief's arrest when an iPhone discovered in Chakwal reportedly unveiled details of his relationship with Imran Khan. According to

sources, Bushra Bibi's patience is reportedly wearing thin, The Express Tribune noted.

There are indications that Imran Khan's wife might be considering cooperating with authorities, potentially testifying in exchange for immunity and distancing herself and her close associate, Farah Gogi, from the ongoing controversies.

Meanwhile, on Saturday, Imran Khan stated that he does not feel intimidated by the arrest of General Faiz

Hameed, as reported by The Express Tribune.

Speaking informally with reporters in Adiala Jail, Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) founder Imran Khan said that he would not have called for a judicial commission if he were afraid.

On August 12, Pakistan's military announced that General Hameed had been arrested due to "multiple instances of violation" of the Army Act following his retirement in December 2022, according to Geo News.

Janai Purnima: Nepal observes festival of threads at Bagmati River

AGENCIES
KATHMANDU

Hundreds of devotees gathered on the embankment of the Bagmati River beside Pashupatinath Temple in Kathmandu to change 'Janai' and tie 'Rakshyabandhan' on the wrists of devotees to mark the festival of Janai Purnima on Monday.

The festival of Janai Purnima is observed annually on

Shrawan Shukla Purnima. This year, it coincides with the Janai Purnima and Rishi Tarpani festivals. Celebrated nationwide, these events feature the wearing of the Janai (sacred thread) and Raakhi (Rakshabandhan).

Hundreds of adherents of Vedic Sanatan Dharma thronged the Bagmati embankment taking dips and tying the Rakshasutra (sacred thread) with the guid-

ance of their Guru.

Brahmin priests, adhering to the Vedic traditions, performed chants and penance, and worshipped while tying the Rakshasutra on the right wrist of the devotee. It is a widely held belief that wearing the Janai and Rakshasutra, with proper chants and blessings by priests protects devotees from negative influences.

Taiwan ramps up efforts to stop Chinese fishing boats

AGENCIES
TAIPEI

Taiwan's Coast Guard Administration (CGA) officials said on Sunday that they are boosting efforts to stop Chinese fishing boats from operating across borders, noting that only sporadic violations have been reported so far, Central News Agency (CNA reported).

In a press release, Taiwan's Coast Guard Administration's Kinmen-Matsu-Penghu Branch said that as of noon Sunday, only the outlying Matsu and Kinmen islands had reported some cross-border Chinese fishing activities.



Taiwan's CGA said that all illegal fishing vessels have been expelled and added that there were no violations despite concerns following China's three and a half-month fishing moratorium concluded on August 16, according to CNA report.

In response to potential offences, the CGA said it had deployed one ship, 19 boats, 29 vehicles, 74 motorcycles

and 301 personnel over the past two days.

Taiwan's CGA rejected media reports that claimed that Chinese fishing boats were using fake automatic tracking systems (AIS) to appear as Taiwanese vessels, Central News Agency (CNA) reported.

Citing a marine patrol operation on the afternoon of August 17, the CGA said that they identified about 20 Chinese fishing boats approximately 20 nautical miles outside the restricted waters around Penghu County, where no Taiwanese vessels or related AIS signals were detected.

Earlier on July 11, Taiwan's Coast Guard Administration (CGA) shadowed four China Coast Guard vessels that entered Taiwan-controlled waters around offshore Kinmen County on Thursday, Central News Agency (CNA) reported.

In a statement, the CGA said that four Chinese vessels approached the outer boundary of "restricted" waters around Kinmen and intruded into Taiwan-controlled waters at 7 am (local time) from four different points to the east and south-east of Liaoluo Bay, the south of Zhaishan, and the south of Fengzui.

Baloch doctors reject contract-based jobs offered by Pak

AGENCIES
QUETTA

The Balochistan province of Pakistan has long struggled with a lack of job opportunities and persistent issues in its health sector. On Sunday, the Young Doctors Association (YDA) condemned the government's decision to appoint health department staff on a contract basis and threatened a sit-in unless the decision was reversed, Dawn reported.

YDA President Dr Kaleemullah pointed out that the contracts for ad hoc doctors had expired, yet over



150 ad hoc doctors in the province remain unpaid.

He criticized the government for what he described as the "exploitation of health department employees," asserting that it demonstrated the incompetence of the Pakistani government. He emphasized that permanent employment should be a

fundamental right for doctors, and if the government failed to address this issue, doctors were prepared to take any necessary measures to secure their rights.

Dr Kaleemullah also accused the government of failing to provide essential medicines, equipment, and other basic facilities, and of not addressing the concerns of doctors and patients, as reported by Dawn.

A World Health Organization (WHO) report has exposed severe shortcomings in Balochistan's healthcare infrastructure.

THE GREAT WEEK



A girl enters a giant sculpture during the annual festival of Aste Nagusia or "the Great Week". The festival commences on the first Saturday after the feast of the Assumption of Our Lady in Bilbao, Spain. Source: Javier Zorrilla

MINDY, KERRY TAPPED AS HOSTS FOR DEMOCRATIC NATIONAL CONVENTION

AGENCIES
WASHINGTON

As the Democratic National Convention is set to kick off in Chicago on Monday, several prominent figures, including comedian-actress Mindy Kaling, actor Kerry Washington, Ana Navarro, and Tony Goldwyn, have been confirmed as hosts for the convention, The Hill reported, citing officials.

According to organizers who spoke with The Hill on Sunday, each celebrity will host one night of the four-day convention in Chicago and help guide viewers through the programs both in the event hall and on television.

Goldwyn is scheduled to



host on Monday night, followed by Navarro on Tuesday, Kaling on Wednesday, and Washington on Thursday. The entertainment hosts' selections were initially reported by CNN. According to the organizers, each figure was chosen because of their prior endorsement of Democratic Party candidates. Goldwyn, who was also featured in the ABC drama "Scandal" as the

2020 presidential run. In 2019, Kaling appeared on Harris's YouTube channel where the two cooked masala dosa and discussed their Indian heritage, according to The Hill. Navarro, a Republican strategist and co-host of ABC's "The View," has increasingly supported the Democratic Party in recent years, especially since former President Trump's entrance into politics. The Hill reported citing US-based online news site, Deadline.

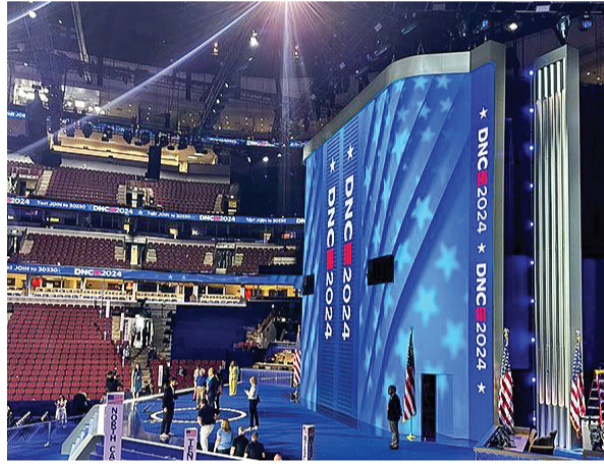
Meanwhile, Kerry Washington, the former "Scandal" star, is the founder of the political activism organisation, 'Influence Change', which is focused on celebrities promoting civil activism and opened the third night of the DNC in 2020.

Biden, Obama, Bill and Hillary Clinton to be key speakers at DNC

AGENCIES
CHICAGO

The Democratic National Convention (DNC) will kick off Monday in Chicago, one month after Republicans held their convention in Milwaukee. U.S. President Joe Biden will speak on day one of the convention during prime time, as he passes the torch to Vice President Kamala Harris.

Nearly 50,000 visitors are expected to attend the convention, including approximately 4,000 delegates. The theme of the convention is "For the People, For Our Future." While the official schedule has not yet been released, Democratic National Convention officials



have confirmed that President Biden and First Lady Jill Biden will speak on Monday.

The theme for Monday will be "For the People," with speakers expected to pay tribute to Biden, according to DNC officials. Former U.S. President Barack Obama is scheduled to speak on Tuesday, which will focus on the theme "A Bold Vision for the Future."

On Wednesday, under the theme "A Fight for Free-

dom," former President Bill Clinton and Speaker Emerita Nancy Pelosi of California will address the convention, according to a source familiar with the schedule. Second Gentleman Doug Emhoff, Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer, and House Minority Leader Hakeem Jeffries are also expected to speak this week, DNC officials said.

Mike Waltz, Kamala Harris's running mate, is expected to take the stage on Wednesday to officially accept the vice-presidential nomination. Harris will formally accept the presidential nomination during her speech on Thursday, a night dedicated to the theme "For the Future."

India Day Parade held in New York, showcases carnival float featuring Ram Mandir

AGENCIES
NEW YORK

People in large numbers participated in the India Day Parade held in New York, US. A carnival float featuring Ram Mandir was also part of the parade. Patriotic songs were played as the people participated in the India Day Parade. People carried Indian flags and were seen playing dhols and dancing as they participated in the parade.

Religious songs were played as the float moved on the roads during the carnival. The float, made of wood, largely depicts the Ram Mandir -- a grand pink sandstone temple built for Lord Ram in the city of Ayodhya. The whole structure of Ram



Temple, which was made of wood, was decorated with flowers.

The 18-foot long, nine-foot wide and eight-foot height float has largely been carved out in India and has been shipped by air cargo to participate in the parade.

The Ram Lalla idol was unveiled at the Pran Pratishtha ceremony after the hour-long rituals in the presence of Prime Minister Narendra Modi who led the ceremony on January 22 in Uttar

Pradesh's Ayodhya.

The parade marched down Madison Avenue from East 38th Street to East 27th Street in the city. In addition to the parade, there was also a festival with a stage for cultural performances and over 45 booths and food vendors.

According to the Federation of Indian Associations, the parade featured more than 40 floats, over 50 marching groups and over 30 marching bands, along with celebrities and dignitaries. Bollywood actress Sonakshi Sinha was the grand marshal, and the guests of honour included Indian actor Pankaj Tripathi and Member of Parliament Manoj Tiwari.

China's Taiwan stance tied to US ambiguity: Uyghur leader

AGENCIES
EDMONTON

The international community has largely reacted with concern to China's assertive policies towards Taiwan. Many nations view China's military threats and aggressive rhetoric as destabilizing for regional and global security.

Sharing a post on X recently, the former President of the East Turkistan Government in Exile, Ghulam Osman Yaghma, argued that China's growing asser-



tiveness towards Taiwan is driven by the US reluctance to confront Beijing directly, compounded by the Western focus on other conflicts.

China leverages the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) to advance its strategic goals, particularly as Central Asia and Russia become increasingly entangled in its framework.

"Is There a Way to Halt China's Advancements on Taiwan? China is increasingly assertive regarding Taiwan, exerting pressure at levels previously unseen. This growing aggression stems from a calculated understanding: the United States is deeply reluctant to engage in a direct conflict

with China," he wrote on X. "This emboldens Beijing, especially in the current global context where Western powers are focused on the Russia-Ukraine war, and the potential of the conflict in Gaza escalating to a larger conflict in the Middle East. These dynamics undoubtedly present China with a unique window of opportunity to make aggressive moves on the Taiwan issue," he added.

Yaghma further suggested that to counter Beijing's ambitions, the US could

exploit China's vulnerability in East Turkistan by negotiating with Mongolia to establish a military base near the region. Such a move would not only pressure China to reassess its Taiwan strategy but also bolster Mongolia's security against Chinese and Russian influences. This approach would help the US achieve several strategic goals simultaneously, including easing pressure on Taiwan, strengthening Mongolia, and containing China and Russia.

Macron hoping new round of talks can break French government deadlock

AGENCIES
PARIS

Emmanuel Macron is to meet French party and parliamentary leaders this week for negotiations to break the political deadlock over who should form a new government.

France has been led by a caretaker administration since the July general election failed to leave any party with a working majority in the national assembly.

After Macron's centrist government resigned, the Olympics offered the president a brief window to put domestic politics on hold for what he called a "truce", but more than a week after the Games closed, critics have accused him of playing for time.

He will hold what presidential aides have described as "a series of exchanges" on Friday to end the stalemate.

"The appointment of a prime minister will follow on from these consultations



and their conclusions," the Élysée Palace said, adding that the French people had "expressed a wish for change and broad unity". It said the president hoped "to continue to move towards the constitution of the broadest and most stable majority possible in the service of the country".

The New Popular Front (NFP) centrist and leftwing alliance saw off the threat of the far-right National Rally (RN) in the second round of the July legislative election, which left the lower house

of parliament divided into three roughly equal blocks.

NFP has put forward Lucie Castets, a 37-year-old economist and director of financial affairs at Paris City Hall, as its choice for prime minister. Macron, who as president has the right to appoint a government leader, has agreed she should be present for the discussions but has already ruled her out for the post.

"The question is not a name. The question is what majority can emerge in the assembly," he said.

Britons and Americans missing after yacht sinks off Sicily

AGENCIES
LONDON

Four Britons, two Americans and a Canadian person are missing after a superyacht with 22 people onboard sank off the coast of Sicily during bad weather.

Fifteen people were rescued from the 56-metre sailing boat Bayesian by coastguard patrol boats and



firefighters, including a one-year-old child.

One body was found near the wreck, but six others were unaccounted for, said Luca Cari, a spokesperson for the Italian fire rescue service.

A spokesperson for the UK Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) said: "We are in contact with the local authorities following an incident in Sicily, and stand ready to provide consular support to British nationals affected."

The Italian coastguard said in a statement: "This morning at about 5.00am, following a violent storm, a 56-me-

tre yacht called Bayesian flying the British flag sank near Porticello." The boat had a crew of 10 people and 12 passengers, it added.

Rescue divers are trying to reach the hull, which sank to approximately 49 metres. The public prosecutor's office in Termini Imerese is investigating the incident.

Eight of those rescued, including the one-year-old,

were transferred to local hospitals and were all in a stable condition. Doctors from Di Cristina hospital in Palermo reported that the mother of the child "kept her daughter afloat with all my strength, with her arms outstretched upwards to prevent her from drowning." "It was all dark," the woman, a British citizen named Charlotte, told the doctors.

Kursk incursion aimed at creating buffer zone to protect Ukraine

AGENCIES
KYIV

Volodymyr Zelenskyy has said Ukraine's military incursion into Russia's Kursk region aims to create a buffer zone to prevent further attacks by Moscow across the border.

It marked the first time the Ukrainian president had clearly stated the aim of the operation, which was launched on 6 August. Previously, he had suggested it aimed to protect communities in the bordering Sumy region from constant shell-



ing.

In his nightly address on Sunday, Zelenskyy said: "It is now our primary task in defensive operations overall to destroy as much Russian

war potential as possible and conduct maximum counter-offensive actions. This includes creating a buffer zone on the aggressor's territory -- our operation in the

Volodymyr Zelenskyy has said Ukraine's military incursion into Russia's Kursk region aims to create a buffer zone to prevent further attacks by Moscow across the border.

Kursk region."

Kyiv had previously said little about the goals of its push into Russia with tanks and other armoured vehicles, the largest attack on the country since the second world war, which took the Kremlin by surprise and led to scores of villages and

hundreds of prisoners falling into Ukrainian hands.

The Ukrainians drove deep into the region in several directions, facing little resistance and sowing chaos and panic as tens of thousands of civilians fled.

Ukraine's commander in chief, Gen Oleksandr

Syrskiy, claimed last week that his forces had advanced across 1,000 sq km (386 sq miles) of the region, although it was not possible to independently verify how much territory Ukrainian forces effectively control.

The Institute for the Study of War has "observed claims" that Ukraine's operation in Kursk advanced through 800 sq km over its initial six days. The incursion "attacked largely unprepared, unequipped and unmanned Russian defensive positions along the border", the US think-

tank said in its daily report on the conflict. Ukraine had continued to make rapid advances in Kursk "following the deployment of Russian reinforcements to the area", it added.

On Sunday, Ukraine said it had struck a second key bridge in the Kursk region, seeking to disrupt Moscow's supply routes. "Minus one more bridge," the Ukrainian air force commander, Mykola Oleshchuk, said on Telegram, publishing an aerial video of a blast tearing through a bridge near the Russian

town of Zvannoye.

"The air force aviation continues to deprive the enemy of logistical capabilities with precision airstrikes," he said.

On Friday, Ukraine announced it had destroyed a separate bridge in the neighbouring town of Glushkovo.

Ukraine has also captured more than 150 Russian prisoners of war on some days in the military operation in Kursk, according to Oleksii Drozdenko, the head of the military administration in the Ukrainian city of Sumy.

BHUMI PEDNEKAR BLESSES SISTER SAMIKSHA AS SHE TIES RAKHI ON HER WRIST



TDG NETWORK
MUMBAI

Who said Raksha Bandhan is only about brothers protecting sisters? The meaning of the festival has changed over the years and people celebrate the occasion in their own different ways.

Actor Bhumi Pednekar and her sister Samiksha celebrate Raksha Bandhan by tying rakhi (sacred thread) on each other's wrists.

As it's Raksha Bandhan today, Bhumi took to Instagram and penned a short yet beautiful note for her sibling.

"Love you @samiksha pednekar (Red heart emoji). To us just being there for each other (infinity emoji)*HappyRak shabandhan," she captioned the post. Bhumi also dropped a few

pictures with Samiksha. In the first image, Samiksha can be seen tying rakhi on Bhumi's wrist. The other image shows Bhumi holding baby Samiksha in her arms.

In one of the previous interviews with ANI, the 'Dum Laga Ke Haisha' star opened up about how she marks the festival with her younger sister Samiksha every year.

"Raksha Bandhan stands for protecting your loved ones. I don't believe in the concept that only brothers and sisters can celebrate the festival. I don't believe in it at all. I tie rakhi on my sister and my mother's wrists and then they tie me a rakhi. We celebrate the festival with full joy back at home. Raksha Bandhan is about appreciating people you love," she said.

PRIYANKA SHARES PICS OF DAUGHTER ENJOYING A PLAYDATE WITH PREITY ZINTA'S KIDS



TDG NETWORK
LOS ANGELES

Priyanka Chopra, who often shares moments from her personal and professional life with her fans, has once again left them delighted by posting adorable pictures of her daughter Maltie.

This time, the little one was seen enjoying a sunny weekend with friends, including Preity Zinta's twins, Jai and Gia. Taking to her Instagram Stories, Priyanka shared a cute picture of baby Maltie playing outdoors in Los Angeles. The picture showed the children having a great time together under the bright sun.

In the picture, Maltie is joined by a couple of her friends, two of whom are

Preity Zinta's kids, Jai and Gia Zinta Goodenough.

Preity too took to her Instagram Stories to repost the pictures.

Meanwhile, on the work front, the actress recently wrapped the shooting of her upcoming film 'The Bluff' and shared a glimpse of the wrap-up featuring her family including Nick Jonas, Malti Marie and her mother Madhu Chopra and the cast of the film.

'The Bluff' which is directed by Frank E Flowers also features actor Karl Urban. 'The Bluff' is set in the 19th-century Caribbean and follows the story of a former female pirate, played by Priyanka, who must protect her family when the sins of her past catch up to her.

APARSHAKTI KHURANA'S FILM 'BERLIN' TO BE OUT ON OTT

TDG NETWORK
MUMBAI

Actor Aparshakti Khurana, who is basking in the success of 'Stree 2', is now all set to come up with his new film 'Berlin'. Directed by Atul Sabharwal, 'Berlin' also features, Ishwak Singh, Rahul Bose, Anupriya Goenka, and Kabir Bedi. The film will be out on ZEE5 soon.

As per the information shared by the team of ZEE5, 'Berlin' "takes viewers into the icy winters of 1990s in Delhi, where a silent storm of espionage is brewing."

"The story revolves around three main characters whose lives are about to collide in unexpected ways. Ishwak Singh will be seen in an unusual yet challenging role - a deaf-mute young man accused of being a foreign spy. Aparshakti Khurana, stepping out of his comfort zone, will be seen as a sign language expert tasked with unlocking the secrets hidden in silence. Anupriya Goenka adds fuel to the fire as an enigmatic agent, her true loyalties shrouded in mystery." Rahul Bose will be seen as



an intelligence officer, "fighting not just external threats but also the shadows within his agency." On what the audience can expect from the film, Manish Kalra, Chief Business Officer at ZEE5, expressed, "We are excited to introduce 'Berlin' to our platform, aligning with our strategy of curating quality content that resonates with diverse audience segments. This movie is an addition to ZEE5's extensive library, reflecting our ongoing commitment to delivering compelling narratives that push the boundaries of storytelling. 'Berlin,' with its stellar cast, complex plot and a first-of-its-kind narrative with the backdrop of 1990s Delhi, has garnered critical acclaim at international film festivals.

PICTURE PERFECT

Raksha Bandhan, a day dedicated to honouring the enduring bonds between siblings, is being celebrated across the nation on Monday. To mark this day, the famous Indian film star Suniel Shetty dropped an adorable picture with his sisters Sujata and Sunita. He can be seen standing between his sisters.

(Source: ANI)



IIFA 2024: RANBIR KAPOOR, RANVEER SINGH LEAD BEST ACTOR NOMINATIONS

TDG NETWORK
MUMBAI

The International Indian Film Academy (IIFA) has announced the nominees for this year's awards, and the competition is fierce.

On Monday, August 19, IIFA revealed that 'Animal', starring Ranbir Kapoor, is leading the pack with 11 nominations. Close behind is 'Rocky Aur Rani Kii Prem Kahaani', featuring Ranveer Singh and Alia Bhatt, with 10 nominations. Shah Rukh Khan's action-packed blockbusters, 'Jawan' and 'Pathaan', have each secured seven nominations in the Popular Category, reflecting their massive success at the box office and among fans.

Meanwhile, Vikrant Massey's film '12th Fail' also made a strong showing, earning five nominations.

Here's The Complete List Of IIFA 2024 Nominations in the Popular Category:



- Best Picture
1. Vidhu Vinod Chopra- '12th Fail'
 2. Bhushan Kumar, Krishan Kumar, Pranay Reddy Vanga- 'Animal'
 3. Hiroo Yash Johar, Karan Johar, Apoorva Mehta- 'Rocky Aur Rani Kii Prem Kahaani'
 4. Gauri Khan- 'Jawan'
 5. Sajid Nadiadwala, Shaheen Mantri Kedia, Kishor Arora- 'Satyaprem Ki Katha'
 6. Ronnie Screwvala- 'Sam

- Bahadur' Direction
1. Vidhu Vinod Chopra- '12th Fail'
 2. Sandeep Reddy Vanga- 'Animal'
 3. Karan Johar- 'Rocky Aur Rani Kii Prem Kahaani'
 4. Atlee- 'Jawan'
 5. Siddharth Anand- 'Pathaan'
 6. Amit Rai- 'OMG 2'
- Performance in a Leading Role (Female)
1. Rani Mukerji- 'Mrs.

- Chatterjee vs Norway'
2. Alia Bhatt- 'Rocky Aur Rani Kii Prem Kahaani'
 3. Deepika Padukone- 'Pathaan'
 4. Kiara Advani- 'Satyaprem Ki Katha'
 5. Taapsee Pannu- 'Dunki'
- Performance in a Supporting Role (Male)
1. Vikrant Massey- '12th Fail'

2. Ranbir Kapoor- 'Animal'
 3. Ranveer Singh- 'Rocky Aur Rani Kii Prem Kahaani'
 4. Shah Rukh Khan- 'Jawan'
 5. Vicky Kaushal- 'Sam Bahadur'
 6. Sunny Deol- 'Gadar 2'
- Performance in a Supporting Role (Female)
1. Tripti Dimri- 'Animal'
 2. Geeta Aggarwal Sharma- '12th Fail'
 3. Sanya Malhotra- 'Sam Bahadur'
 4. Jaya Bachchan- 'Rocky Aur Rani Kii Prem Kahaani'
 5. Shabana Azmi- 'Rocky Aur Rani Kii Prem Kahaani'

'Stree 2' leads Box Office earnings ahead of 'Khel Khel Mein', Vedaa

TDG NETWORK
MUMBAI

Last week, Bollywood saw the release of three major films, but it was 'Stree 2' that quickly took the lead at the Box Office, with 'Khel Khel Mein' and 'Vedaa' struggling to keep up.

The Shradhdha Kapoor and Rajkumar Rao-starrer, which faced a Box Office clash with 'Khel Khel Mein' and 'Vedaa' on August 15, has quickly become the top choice for moviegoers, surpassing the other two by a huge margin.

On its first Sunday, the horror-comedy sequel earned an impressive Rs. 58.20 crore, bringing its total collection to Rs. 204 crore in just four days.

This massive success has left trade analysts stunned. Taran Adarsh described



the film's performance as a "storm" or "tsunami" that has swept away everything in its path.

"Call it a STORM or a TSUNAMI or a TY-PHOON... #Stree2 records a SENSATIONAL extended weekend... The two major #Hindi films that released

alongside it [#KhelKhelMein, #Vedaa] were severely impacted by the #Stree2 wave. #Stree2 has hit a DOUBLE CENTURY [Rs 200 cr NBOC] in just 4 days, a feat accomplished by only a select few #Hindi biggies in the past... A HISTORIC feat for a mid-sized

film. #Stree2 hit the ball out of the stadium on Day 4 [Sun], creating HAVOC by surpassing its Day 1 [Thu] numbers [#IndependenceDay]... It only goes to prove once again that a well-made desi entertainer will always be embraced by the audiences.

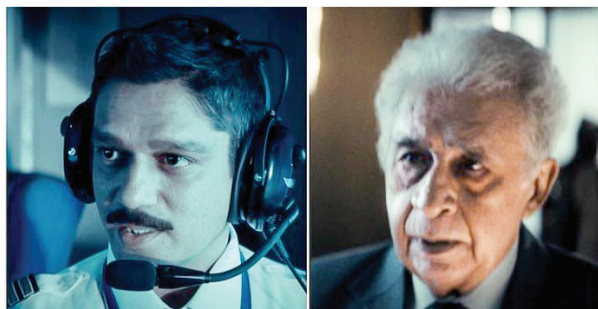
TRAILER OF VIJAY VARMA'S 'IC 814: THE KANDAHAR HIJACK' OUT NOW

TDG NETWORK
MUMBAI

The trailer of Vijay Varma-starrer series 'IC 814: The Kandahar Hijack' is now out for the audience.

Vijay is seen as a pilot in the film.

As per the makers, the "six-episode series thrusts you into the nerve-wracking reality faced by passengers and crew trapped at 30,000 feet. With every moment steeped in tension, the series follows a relentless team in India racing against time, deciphering the hijackers' ominous demands, and fighting against the odds to ensure



the safe return of everyone on board."

IC-814 was hijacked by five terrorists on December 24, 1999, 40 minutes after it took off from Kathmandu. The aircraft carrying about 180 passengers remained hostage for seven days and flew from Kathmandu to Amrit-

sar and then to Lahore. It was re-fuelled in Lahore and left for Dubai. From Dubai, it went to Taliban-controlled Kandahar, where all the passengers were released on December 31, 2000.

It is adapted from the book "Flight Into Fear" by Captain Devi Sharan and Srinjoy

BRAIN PICKING

I have huge respect for women who go out of their homes and have the courage to make their own destiny



-SHILPA SHETTY
(Indian actress)

VICKY KAUSHAL ROARS IN 'CHHAAVA' TEASER



TDG NETWORK
MUMBAI

The wait is finally over! The makers of Vicky Kaushal and Rashmika Mandanna-starrer 'Chhaava' on Monday unveiled the teaser of the film.

Vicky's fierce appearance as Chhatrapati Sambhaji Maharaj, the son of Indian warrior-king Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj, in the teaser undoubtedly left the audience on the edge of their seat.

In the clip, Vicky is seen riding a horse, dressed in battle armor. We can also see him fighting a sea of enemies single-handedly and emerging as a warrior.

A powerful voiceover resonated in the background. Vicky said, "Chhatrapati Shivaji ko sher kehte hain, aur sher ke bacche ko Chhaava."

Laxman Utekar directed the historical drama 'Chhaava'.

In May 2024, Vicky, after finishing shooting for the film, took to Instagram and penned down a note filled with gratitude.

He wrote, "The incredibly passionate and dramatic journey of filming Chhaava couldn't have ended without some drama. The rain Gods put up a show today, immediately after we rolled our final shot."

"There's so much I wish to say, there's so little I'm able to convey about this journey right now... maybe in a few days when it all sinks in. All I can say now with a heart full of gratitude, love, and contentment is that... IT'S A WRAP!!!" he added. Earlier, after wrapping up the film shoot, Rashmika took to Instagram and gave a shout-out to the team.

SANJU BABA WISHED HIS SISTERS PRIYA, NAMRATA ON RAKSHA BANDHAN



TDG NETWORK
MUMBAI

On the occasion of Raksha Bandhan on Monday, actor Sanjay Dutt extended warm greetings to his sisters Priya Dutt and Namrata Dutt.

He took to Instagram and penned a heartfelt note in which he thanked the duo for being his constant support. "Having you both by my side fills me with so much happiness. Thank you for being my constant support, Priya and Anju. Love you both immensely! (red heart emoji) Wishing you a Happy Raksha Bandhan @priyadutt @namrata22," Dutt captioned the post. He also shared adorable pictures with Priya and Namrata.

Sanjay, Priya and Namrata are children of late legendary actors Sunil Dutt and Nargis.

The couple married on

March 11, 1958. Speaking of Sanjay Dutt's work projects, he was recently seen in movie 'Ghughuchi', in which he starred alongside Raveena Tandon, Parth Samthaan, and Khushalii Kumar.

His film 'Double iSmart' was also released a few days ago. It is a sequel to the 2019 blockbuster 'iSmart Shankar'.

In the coming months, he will be seen in multi-starrer 'Welcome 3'. On his birthday last year, Akshay Kumar shared the film's promo on social media and wrote, "Khud ko aur aap sab ko ek birthday gift diya hai aaj (I have given a gift to you and myself on my birthday today). If you like it and say thanks, I'd say Welcome(3) #WelcomeToTheJungle. In cinemas, Christmas - 20th December, 2024. #Welcome3. Produced by #JyotiDeshpande.

FEAR NOT!! IT'S JUST A LASIK SURGERY



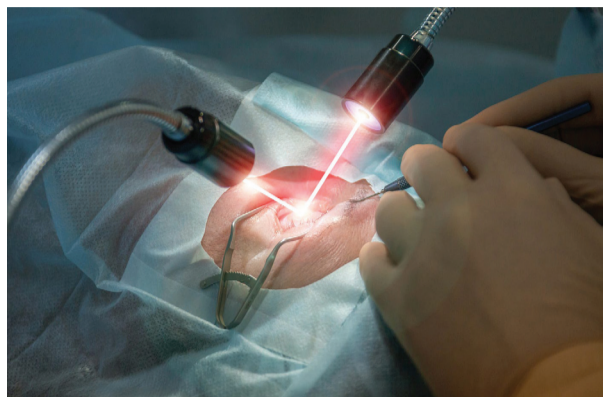
DR MICKEY

A popular child actor turned eye surgeon, Dr Mickey is a distinguished Ophthalmologist, specializing in Refractive cataract and Lasik surgeries, he holds many degrees such as MBBS, MS (Ophthalmology), FICO (London), and MRCS (Edinburgh). He shares insights on LASIK surgery and assures it is a safe and quick procedure.

I am an Ophthalmologist and have reversed my own -8 powered spectacles with LASIK and am leading a glass free life today. I can personally attest to its transformative power. The constant dependency on spectacles was not only inconvenient but also limited my activities and lifestyle. Setting myself as an example I could recommend, convince and perform LASIK for many of my friends and family members apart from my regular patients. But when I decided to undergo LASIK, I was both excited and anxious, harboring many common fears that my patients express today.

Before I shed light on the fears, let's understand the basics.

UNDERSTANDING



VISION NUMBERS:

● Why and how do we get a number?

● The human body is made in proportion. If the length of your eyeball increases disproportionately to your height, you may have difficulty seeing far-sighted objects.

● The eyeball becomes slightly elongated towards the back, which is not visible to the naked eye. Glasses help correct this, allowing clear vision.

● Typically, distance vision numbers increase until the age of 21, as maximum height is usually reached by then.

● LASIK Surgery: Where is it Performed?

● Eye Structure and LASIK: The eyeball is approximately 2.5 cm in length from front to back.

● LASIK is performed on the front 0.004% of the eye surface (about the size of a single hair strand).

● No cuts are made inside the eyeball; LASIK is done on a surface you regularly touch (e.g., placing contact lenses).

COMMON FEARS ABOUT LASIK SURGERY: DE-



BUNKED

1.Pain:

● Fear: LASIK might be painful.

● Reality: Advanced numbing drops are used, making the procedure painless.

2.MOVEMENT OR BLINKING DURING SURGERY:

● Fear: You may move or close your eyes during the procedure.

● Reality: Tiny, painless clips hold your eyes in place, preventing movement or closure.

3.LOSS OF EYESIGHT:

● Fear: LASIK might cause blindness.

● Reality: No documented cases link LASIK to blindness. Studies and international councils confirm LASIK does not cause blindness. The risk of losing eyesight from contact

lens-related infections is higher than from LASIK.

4.POST-SURGERY RESTRICTIONS:

● Fear: You'll need to wear black sunglasses, stay in a dark room, and avoid screens for a month.

● Reality: Modern LASIK procedures are quick, with most activities resuming within 48 hours. Screen usage does not harm your eyes before or after LASIK.

5.COST:

● Fear: LASIK is expensive.

● Reality: While LASIK has a higher upfront cost, it is cheaper than the cumulative cost of glasses and contact lenses over a lifetime. The improvement in lifestyle and quality of life makes LASIK worth the investment.

FINAL THOUGHTS:

● Procedure Efficiency:

● LASIK is an extensively researched procedure performed on millions of eyes globally.

● Each eye takes about 5-10 minutes, with a 30-minute observation period afterward.

CONSULTATION ADVICE:

● Avoid basing your decision on rumors or unqualified opinions.

Always seek a detailed pre-LASIK evaluation and discuss with a credible LASIK surgeon.

● Avoid forming opinions based on information from Google or social media alone.

KIDNEY TRANSPLANT V/S DIALYSIS



DR. SUMIT SHARMA

VERSUS DIALYSIS: UNDERSTANDING THE DIFFERENCES

To understand the difference between a kidney transplant and dialysis, it is important to first understand them individually.

Just like kidneys filter out waste and excess water from your blood, dialysis is an artificial procedure that performs the same function using filtering machines or equipment. It is also called renal replacement therapy. It prevents the waste products in the blood from reaching hazardous levels. It can be hemodialysis or peritoneal dialysis, intermittent or continuous, depending upon

A patient with end-stage kidney failure must choose between lifelong hemodialysis or a kidney transplant. Making the right choice involves considering many biological and social factors.

Healthy kidneys filter out toxic waste from the body. When they are damaged or fail to function optimally, waste can start to build up in the body, which can affect the functioning of other organs as well. Kidney failure can be acute or chronic. However, in both cases, it requires immediate medical intervention.

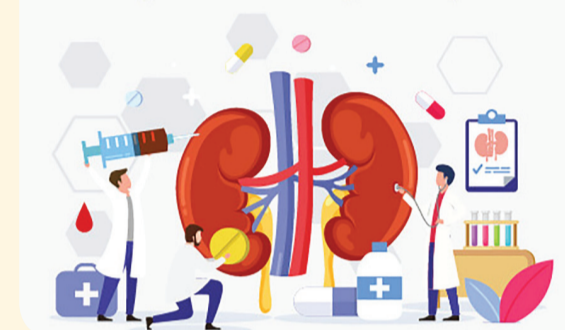
Sometimes a person with early kidney damage remains unaware of their condition, which can often lead to delayed diagnosis and treatment. If the disease goes unchecked, it can progress and lead to irreversible damage to the kidneys.

Treatment for end-stage renal disease or failure is usually dialysis or a kidney transplant. While both have their pros and cons, studies have shown better clinical outcomes with a kidney transplant as opposed to dialysis.

In this article, we will understand the difference between the two treatments and which one might be a better choice under specific conditions.

KIDNEY TRANSPLANT

Dialysis vs. Kidney Transplant



the type opted for by the patient or prescribed by the doctor. Hemodialysis is usually done up to three times a week. In this procedure, a person's blood is circulated outside the body through a filtering machine, and the filtered blood is returned to the body using a flexible tube called a catheter. This 3 to 5-hour process may take place in a hospital, dialysis center, or even at home under the guidance of experts.

In peritoneal dialysis, filtration happens through diffusion. The tiny blood vessels

inside the lining of the abdomen filter blood with the aid of a dialysis solution, which is instilled through a small surgically placed tube in the abdomen.

For some people, peritoneal dialysis gives a greater sense of freedom. However, it is fraught with a higher chance of infection if strict antisepsis is not maintained.

Kidney transplant involves the surgical placement of a healthy kidney from a donor into the recipient's body. The patient can survive with just one healthy transplanted kidney, which compensates for the two damaged kidneys.

WHICH ONE IS BETTER?

This depends on many factors. Pre-existing comorbidities, age, availability of a donor, and economic concerns play pivotal roles in making a decision. Both treatment options can be appropriate for specific conditions. Dialysis can be a suitable treatment option for those of advanced age, poor performance status, and limited life expectancy.

Dialysis is more economical than a kidney transplant initially, but in the long run, it can cost more than a transplant. More-

over, dialysis can make a person more dependent on day-to-day medical intervention, which can be taxing for the patient. It restricts them from traveling.

Patients can develop infections in the dialysis catheter, or in rare cases, a blood clot. Dialysis also interferes with fertility. Women who are on dialysis might find it difficult to get pregnant due to the higher levels of waste products to process. The average life span of a patient on dialysis is 5 years. Due to these risks and complications, most patients on dialysis have a poor quality of life and an average survival of 5 years after commencing dialysis.

A kidney transplant, on the other hand, can be initially expensive, but it significantly improves a patient's quality of life. It can make a person less dependent on day-to-day care, give them more freedom or autonomy, and allow them to lead a more productive life with fewer restrictions.

Studies have shown that a kidney transplant is a better treatment option in terms of increasing life expectancy and improving quality of life. After a kidney transplant, the patient needs to be on immunosuppressant drugs for life to avoid transplant kidney rejection. The donor must be a willing, fit person who is related to the recipient.

Both treatment options can be recommended for patients with kidney failure, depending on their health condition and other related factors.

The author is the Director & Head of Department of Urology, Robotics & Renal Transplant at SHALBY Sanar International Hospitals, Gurugram.

BOOST YOUR HAIR HEALTH WITH ESSENTIAL NUTRIENTS



FOOD IS MEDICINE

DR ANISH DESAI

Hair loss is a common concern that affects people of all ages. While genetics, stress, and medical conditions are well-known factors, the role of vitamins and minerals in maintaining healthy hair is often overlooked. Here, we delve into how supplementing your diet with the right vitamins and minerals can promote hair growth and prevent hair loss.

Vitamin A is essential for cell growth and differentiation, including the cells in the hair follicle. It helps in sebum production, which keeps the scalp moisturized and hair healthy. However, excessive vitamin A can lead to hair loss. To maintain healthy hair, it is crucial to balance vitamin A intake, preferably through a diet rich in



beta-carotene (found in carrots, sweet potatoes, and spinach) rather than excessive supplementation.

Vitamin B, particularly biotin (B7), are often associated with hair health. Biotin is a cofactor for enzymes involved in fatty acid metabolism, which is vital for hair structure. While biotin deficiency is rare, ensuring adequate intake through diet (eggs, nuts, and whole grains) can support hair growth.

Vitamin C is a powerful antioxidant that helps protect hair from oxidative stress caused by free radicals. It also aids in collagen synthesis, a crucial component of hair structure, and improves iron absorption, which is vital for hair growth. Includ-

ing vitamin C-rich foods like citrus fruits, strawberries, and bell peppers in your diet can bolster your hair health.

Vitamin D plays a role in the hair follicle cycle, and its deficiency can disrupt the normal hair growth process. Sun exposure is a natural source of vitamin D, but supplements can help maintain adequate levels, especially in individuals with limited sun exposure or absorption issues.

Iron deficiency is a well-known cause of hair loss, particularly in women. Iron helps red blood cells carry oxygen to hair follicles, essential for their growth and repair. Foods rich in iron include red meat, beans, and fortified cereals. Pairing iron-rich foods with vitamin C can enhance absorption.

Zinc deficiency can lead to hair loss and scalp issues. While zinc supplements are available, excessive intake can interfere with other minerals and cause toxicity. It's best to obtain zinc through a balanced diet that includes meat, shellfish, legumes, and seeds. Maintaining a well-balanced diet rich in these essential vitamins and minerals can support hair health and prevent hair loss. While supplements can help address deficiencies, it's important to avoid excessive intake and consult with a healthcare provider before starting any new supplement regimen. By understanding the role of micronutrients in hair growth, you can take proactive steps to maintain a healthy, vibrant mane.

72-YEAR-OLD WOMAN IMPACTS FIVE LIVES WITH ORGAN & TISSUE DONATION

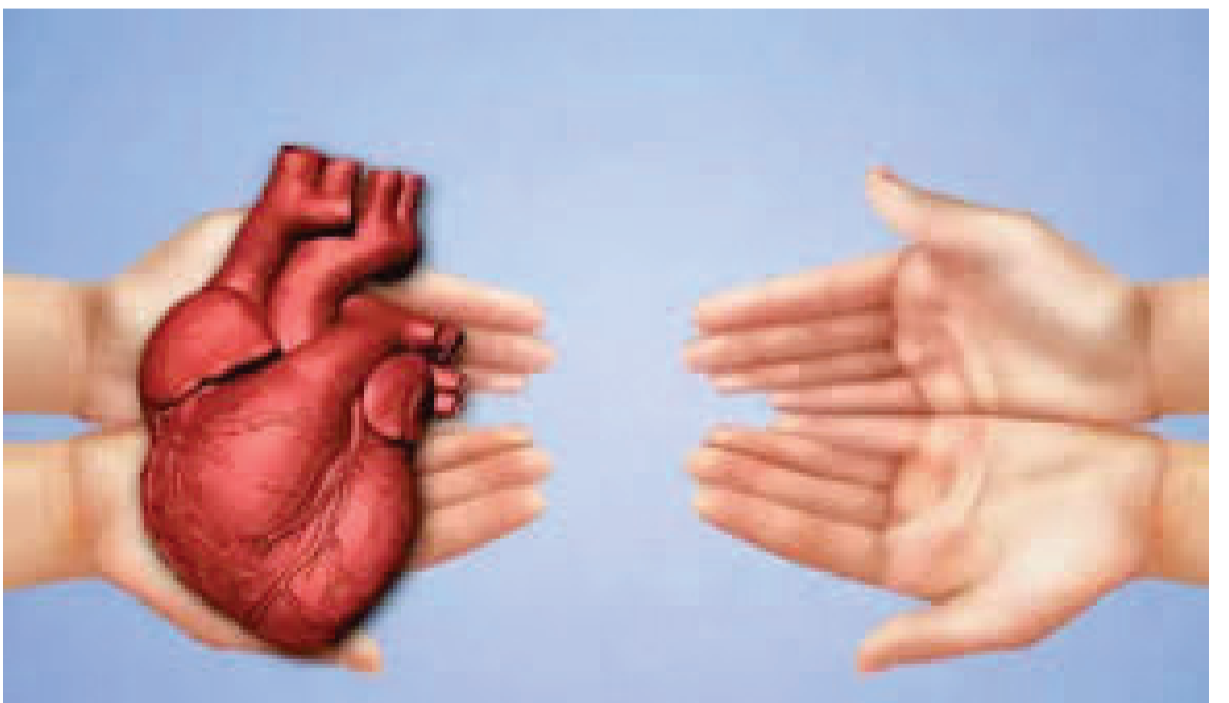
TDG NETWORK

On the morning of 15th August, 72-year-old Ms. Kavita Rajkumar Goel, was found unconscious in her house. Her family immediately rushed her to HCMCT Manipal Hospital, Dwarka. Ms. Kavita was resuscitated and placed on the ventilator. An urgent CT scan of head revealed massive brain hemorrhage. Despite the best efforts of the medical team, her condition deteriorated rapidly and she was declared brain dead.

The family was counseled for organ donation and post their approval both the kidneys, corneas, and skin were donated. Heart and lungs could not be donated in view of her age and the liver was medically unsuitable for transplantation. Her kidneys were allocated by NOTTO (National Organ and Tissue Transplant Organization). One kidney was transplanted into a 52-year-old female at HCMCT Manipal Hospital Dwarka, while the other kidney was transplanted in a 63-year-old male at Artemis Hospital. Ms. Goel's corneas and skin were also donated, offering hope and healing to multiple recipients.

Dr. Shrikanth Srinivasan, Chairman, Manipal Institute of Critical Care Medicine, HCMCT Manipal Hospital, Dwarka said, "After stabilization of her condition an urgent CT scan was done which revealed that she has suffered from a massive brain hemorrhage. Despite intensive treatment under the care of Neurosurgery and Critical Care teams, she could not recover and was declared brain dead on 16th August 2024 at 10:10 pm."

Dr (Col) Avnish Seth VSM, Chairman, Manipal Institute of Gastroenterology & Hepato-Biliary-Pancreatic Sciences, HCMCT Manipal Hospital, Dwarka and Head Manipal Organ Sharing & Transplant (MOST) said, "The team worked closely with the patient's family, providing them with the required information and support so that they could make an informed decision.



The family was very keen to donate all her organs. However, based on the age and fitness of organs, only kidneys could be retrieved. Corneas and skin were also retrieved by eye and skin banks."

Ms Viji Varghese, Director, HCMCT Manipal Hospital, Dwarka said, "The family's decision to donate organs made a difference in the lives of others. The legacy of the donor will live on through the lives she has saved. Donating one's organs is a gift of life, it is an opportunity to give someone else a second chance in life. We strongly encourage everyone to think about organ donation and to register as an organ donor. We can save lives if we work together."

There is a wide gap between patients who need transplants and the organs that are available in India. 1.8 lakh people suffer from kidney failure every year, however, only 13,426 kidney transplants are done in 2023. An estimated 25,000 to 30,000 liver transplants are needed annually in India but only 4491 were performed in 2023. Similarly, of several thousand who suffer from heart failure, only 221 got a heart

transplant. In the case of Corneas, about 25,000 transplants are done every year against a requirement of 1 lakh. The noble act of organ donation highlights the pressing need for organ donations in India, as there is a significant disparity between patients awaiting transplants and the availability of organs. Increasing awareness and participation in organ donation can bridge this gap and offer hope to countless lives in need.

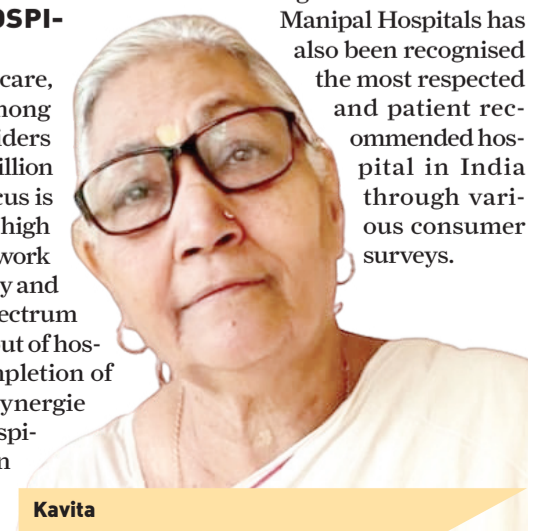
ABOUT MANIPAL HOSPITALS

As a pioneer in healthcare, Manipal Hospitals is among the top healthcare providers in India serving over 7 million patients annually. Its focus is to develop an affordable, high quality healthcare framework through its multispecialty and tertiary care delivery spectrum and further extend it to out of hospital care. With the completion of acquisition of Medica Synergie hospitals and AMRI Hospitals Limited (acquired in Sept 2023), the integrated network today has a

pan-India footprint of 37 hospitals across 19 cities with 10,500+ beds, and a talented pool of 5,600+ doctors and an employee strength of over 18,600.

Manipal Hospitals provides comprehensive curative and preventive care for a multitude of patients from around the globe. Manipal Hospitals is NABH, AAHRPP accredited and most of the hospitals in its network are NABL, ER, Blood Bank accredited and recognized for Nursing Excellence.

Manipal Hospitals has also been recognised the most respected and patient recommended hospital in India through various consumer surveys.



Kavita

DIVINE KIRTAN BY WORLD-FAMOUS KIRTANIYA SACHCHINDAN GAUR PRABHU AT ISKCON DWARKA

TDG NETWORK

A three-day Mahamahotsava is being organized at ISKCON Dwarka on the occasion of Krishna Janmashtami. On August 25th at 6 PM, a special program will be presented on the small screen by the participating artists of the popular show Superstar Season-3: Pihu Sharma, Kuhu Sharma, and Khushi Nagar. Both Pihu and Kuhu are sisters from Delhi, while Khushi hails from Uttar Pradesh. These artists are immensely popular not only in Delhi NCR but across the country, with people of all ages eager to listen to the songs sung by them. On this occasion of Janmashtami, their performance promises to be a thrilling experience for the people of the city. A day before Janmashtami, you can also enjoy this Krishna-Kirtan evening with your family.

On August 26th at 6 PM, world-renowned Kirtaniya Satchinandan Gour Prabhu, along with his team, will present a Kirtan. It is believed that



- Krishna Kirtan Program by Superstar Season-3 Participants Pihu, Kuhu, and Khushi on 25th August
- Children Dressing as Kanha Can Enjoy Swings at the Selfie Points

when they perform Kirtan, there is a shower of nectar. Lord Krishna's grace begins to pour, and no one can resist dancing to his Harinam Kirtan, from children to the elderly. Before an audience of four to five lakh devotees, Satchinandan Gour Prabhu will present unforgettable Kirtans. His singing is not only enjoyable to listen to but also a transformative experience. His Kirtans are famous for invoking Krishna's grace on the path of spiritual progress.

When they perform, a divine resonance in their voice provides devotees with the experience of Krishna's presence, making them dance with joy, completely immersed in ecstasy. If you too want to experience the spiritual sweetness of Krishna's divine love, join ISKCON Dwarka to participate in the Kirtan. Dance in devotion and enjoy the Harinam. Also, visit the book center to receive divine books of Krishna as a spiritual gift.

Apart from this, 15 types of laddus and pedas in the form of prasad for the devotees will be the special attraction of Janmashtami. On August 27th, Srila Prabhupada's teachings will be remembered and discussed, and the Bhagavad Gita, the true prasad of Lord Krishna, will be distributed to the devotees.

'IT'S NOT ME'

MYSTIC MUSING

RAJESSH M. IYER



The night was enchanting. However, the only thing on the minds of Mullah Nasruddin and his two friends—the barber and the village bumpkin—was sleep. They were worn to the bone after an exhaustive journey. But since they were passing through a secluded place, Nasruddin suggested that they take turns to keep vigil. The other two agreed. After a lot of deliberation, they decided upon the barber as the first one to stay awake, followed by Nasruddin.

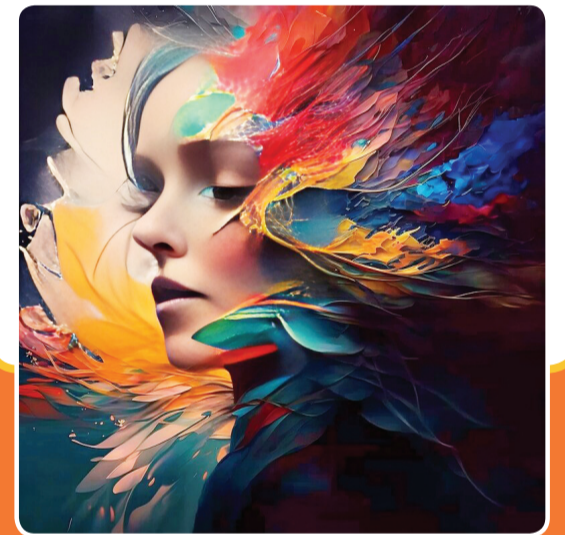
The exhaustion was evident as Nasruddin and the bald man fell asleep immediately. As for the barber, he found it extremely difficult to stay awake. However, there was no choice. As he sat leaning against a tree, he found himself repeatedly dozing. Then he realised that he never felt sleepy while working. But there was a catch. His experience was limited to cutting hair and shaving beards. How could he work in the middle of wilderness with no humans in sight, barring the two sleeping fellow travellers? He thought, 'How about cutting their hair?' The choice among the two was rather simple since the village bumpkin was bald.

It didn't take the barber long to cut Nasruddin's hair. Since he still had an hour to go, he took out the razor and even shaved Nasruddin's head.

When the hour elapsed, the barber shook Nasruddin, who, true to his habit, swept his hand over his head. However, finding no hair to ruffle as he usually did, Nasruddin looked angrily at the barber. 'You've woken up the wrong person. I'm the bald traveller. You need to wake him up,' he said and went back to sleep.

While guffawing at Nasruddin's outlandishness, do we realise that we are no different from him? Our external form is what is known to not only others but to us as well. There are layers and layers of us beneath our exterior that we aren't familiar with. Most people identify themselves only through their body, looks, habits, mannerisms and thoughts that exist on the periphery of their minds. Sadly, only a fraction of humans manage to dig deep and unearth their true selves.

Like the Upanishadic seers who said, 'neti neti' (not this, not this) to everything till they found their true selves, we must also learn to say, 'It's not me,' to all these erroneous signs. Let's make a pledge to delve deeper into ourselves and find our true selves.



Most people identify themselves only through their body, looks, habits, mannerisms and thoughts that exist on the periphery of their minds. Let's make a pledge to delve deeper into ourselves and find our true selves.

GURUDEV ENLIGHTENS ON CALMING THE MIND

PRARTHNA SARAN

This was a question and answer session with Gurudev, Swami Chinmayanandaji, on the 16/05/1984, in Siddhabari as he sat informally outside the old Satsang hall in the evenings. We all gathered around him to ask him for guidance on how to calm the mind.

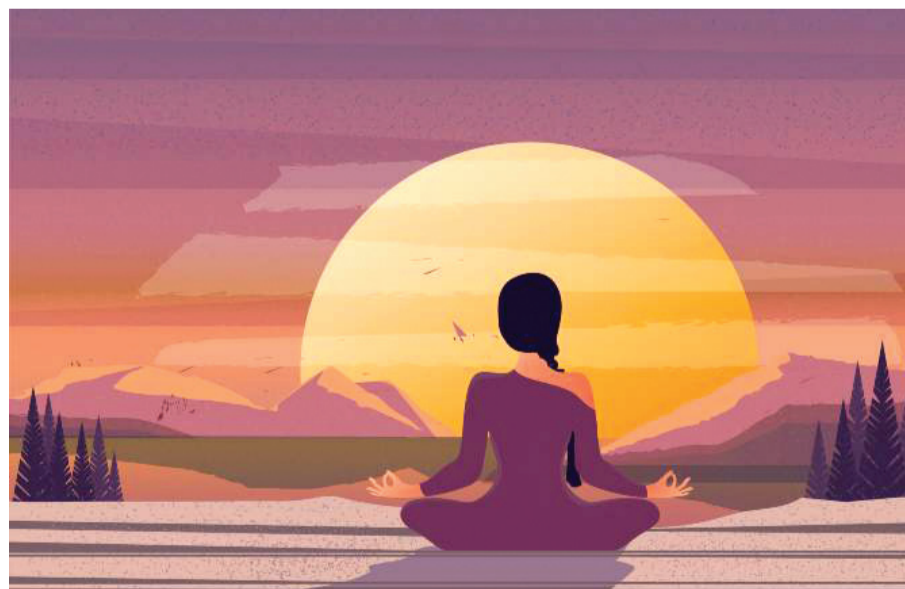
These are excerpts from my notes. Fortunate to still have them! I produce them as I wrote them then.

Swamiji began answering in his characteristic humorous style. He began, "Never ask a sanyasi what he thinks of this and that, you are giving him a full chit to bluff you! Ask only "What does the Shastra say?"

Q. Swamiji, what is the mind?
Ans. Mind is thought flow. What you are, depends on the quality of this thought flow, because thoughts crystallise as desires and desires finally manifest as actions. As you think so you become. There are ways of controlling the mind and gaining com-

plete mastery over it. The thoughts should be trained to be pure. We should also control the quantity of thoughts. Thoughts rushing one upon another is a mind agitated. Calm down the thought flow, let it flow gently. Lastly, dam the flow. Learn to hold or release the thoughts according to your will. The three ways of controlling the mind are: 1) Quality, 2.) Quantity, 3). Damming it. The equipment is the same, but just the quality of thoughts makes one a saint or a first rate rascal, a noble or a bad man. so, control the mind. Don't let it make you dance. Let it dance to your tune.

Q. How does one calm the mind?
Ans. Don't try to quieten the mind with the mind. The controller must be different from the controlled. Hence the importance of an Idol. Humble yourself, surrender to Him and ask for His help to control your mind. It will become quiet. This is the importance of the Ishta, (personalised God).



Another tip to quieten the mind is to narrow its field of activity. The more you let it roam extrovertedly the more restless and jumpy it will become. So narrow its field of occupations.

The physical body should be absolutely still for a long time. Train it to sit erect with the legs and seat firmly on the ground, without moving even a centimetre, for quite sometime. Physical movement does not al-

low the mind to become calm. Just as in water, a clear reflection is not possible if the water has waves. It has to be completely placid.

The mind can quieten down with total surrender to the Lord. You are your own enemy. You have tied yourself in chains of attachment and then you say that you are shackled! Disengage yourself from all the worldly things of OET (Objects Emotions

Thoughts) and just pray to Him. Let the 'divine potential' in you be tapped. We all have it, that is our true nature. Relax your facial and head muscles. The more you climb in His lap and near Him, the happier and calmer will be your mind. Some people learn to quieten the mind and go into a stupor, a kind of a hibernation. No, then you will not progress. The mind has to be quiet but the intellect has

to be highly purified, alert and vigilant, then the divine joy will tumble out of you. It will unfold to you. It is not a passive experience but a positive one.

Another technique to quieten the mind while meditating is to do japa louder and louder (mentally). May be as loud as you can. That will arrest the mind from wandering.

The sign of an impure mind is likes and dislikes. The less you react to likes and dislikes, the more pure the mind. True meditation is a state of bliss. If you are ever cheerful and smiling you are in constant meditation.

Q. Swamiji there is a lot of struggle in meditation?

Ans. In the earlier stages a seeker finds it very difficult to disengage the mind from the OET (objects, emotions, thoughts) and pull it inwards. This is because of trillions of years of habits that were extroverted. For example, when a rocket is launched it requires the maximum amount of en-

ergy to pull away from the earth's gravity in the beginning. When it is out of the earth's gravity the flight is much easier. Once it enters the moon's circle of gravity it has to make no effort to go forward, it is pulled by the moon itself. Thus the mind has to make a Herculean effort to disengage from the OET. When you progress in sadhana it gradually becomes effortless, and once you reach Poorna Sattva (Total quietude of the mind) the pure consciousness or Brahman sucks you in. The effort of the mind is not needed.

Q. Do we need to give up all desires? Please could you explain 'sarva Sankalpa paritayaja'?

Ans. Any desire born of Sankalpa has to be abandoned. Those that are natural in you, you will not be conscious of, e.g. Anger. A man who is short tempered will not realise it, it will come naturally to him. Similarly love for singing or dancing etc. that is why

we say "she is a born singer, or born dancer." But any desire that is within the purview of recognition, destroy it immediately. Any desire that causes even the least amount of agitation, destroy it. If the desire is too overwhelming and has to be exhausted, then surrender to the Lord and exhaust it with the mind always established in "Thy will be done, free me from this shackle that I have accrued over past lives." Come out of it as a man after a bath, not go deeper into it.

Q. Swamiji, what determines thought quality?

Ans. Thought belongs to the world of matter, but subtle matter. (tan matra). When it is vitalised by Prana it becomes the thought flow: the mind. Anything that moves has direction. So also when thoughts move they move in the direction of your tendencies, whether you like it or not.

The author is the President Chinmaya Mission Delhi.

PCI CHIEF HAILS GROWING SUPPORT FOR PARA-ATHLETES AHEAD OF PARALYMPICS

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Paralympic Committee of India (PCI) president Devendra Jhajharia said that the support given to para-athletes in recent times with many corporates stepping in to assist the players has given a huge boost to the morale of the athletes.

India is set to field its largest-ever contingent for the Paralympics, with 84 athletes competing in 12 sports, including archery, athletics, badminton, canoeing, cycling, blind judo, powerlifting, rowing, shooting, swimming, table tennis, and taekwondo.

The games commence on August 28 and promise to showcase the exceptional talents and dedication of India's para-athletes. The PCI chief expressed his appreciation for the increasing support for para-athletes during the send-off



ceremony.

"I would like to thank the Government of India, sponsors and the corporates who have come together to support our athletes. Shrachi Group is supporting our para-athletes and I want to continue working together with them as we

aspire to strengthen para-sports," Jhajharia said.

Shrachi Group and Shrachi Sports have reaffirmed their commitment to supporting para-athletes through a partnership with the Paralympic Committee of India (PCI). Earlier this year, Shrachi Group and

Shrachi Sports entered into a three-year agreement with the PCI, aimed at bolstering India's efforts in the upcoming Paris Paralympics.

"Shrachi Sports idea is to enable the youth (kids too) of the country who normally do not get the platform to showcase their talent or even to get trained. As far as the Paralympics is concerned, we thought that awareness of the para-sports is very less in the country when compared to Olympics sports," said Shrachi Group Executive Director Poonam Tharar. "Our vision is to give support to the para-athletes which they deserve. Shrachi Sports wanted to make sure that the message reaches the masses, para athletes get the required support. We are very much geared and we have a brilliant team and for us sky is the limit," she added.

No goal for Mbappe in debut as Real Madrid draw 1-1 at Mallorca

TDG NETWORK
MADRID

Defending champion Real Madrid couldn't manage more than a 1-1 draw at Mallorca in Kylian Mbappé's first Spanish league match on Sunday.

In his second game with Madrid after debuting mid-week, Mbappé failed to break through. The France great had scored in Madrid's 2-0 win against Atalanta in the UEFA Super Cup on Wednesday.

Madrid coach Carlo Ancelotti started with the same squad that beat Atalanta, with Rodrygo, Vinicius Junior and Mbappé in attack.

Rodrygo put Madrid ahead against Mallorca 13 minutes into the match, but the hosts equalized with Vedat Muriqi's goal in the 53rd.

Madrid defender Ferland Mendy was sent off deep into second-half stoppage time for a hard foul on Muriqi.

Rafael Nadal, who is from



the island of Mallorca, was among those watching the match at the Son Moix Stadium.

Sociedad stunned at home Real Sociedad, which finished sixth last season, was upset 2-1 at home by Rayo Vallecano, which fought to avoid relegation in the last campaign.

Jorge de Frutos and Sergio Camello scored second-half goals to put Rayo in front, while Sociedad only found the net with Martín Zubimendi's goal deep into stoppage time.

On Saturday, Robert Lewandowski scored twice to give Barcelona a 2-1 win at Valencia in coach Hansi Flick's Spanish league debut.

Cummins sets sights on Olympics after successful record as Aussie captain

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Australian cricket captain Pat Cummins has expressed his enthusiasm over the possibility of competing in the Olympics, with the game approved for inclusion in the 2028 Los Angeles Olympics.

Having led Australia to victory in the ODI World Cup, and the World Test Championship and having been part of the T20 World Cup winning team in 2021, Cummins now envisions the chance to add an Olympic gold medal to his enviable resume.

In a recent video, posted by ESPNcricinfo, Cummins revealed that the prospect of Olympic participation has become an exciting prospect for him and his teammates.

"That will be awesome," he remarked. "After seeing Paris over the last few weeks, we have started to get pretty excited about potentially going. It had not really ever been on any of our radars."



The 2028 Olympics in Los Angeles could become another milestone in Cummins' illustrious career.

"It's four years away. Anything can happen, so you never quite know, but that would be awesome, to represent Australia in the middle of an Olympics. It will be

Indian para archers looking for multiple medals in Paris

RUPINDER SINGH
NEW DELHI

Para archery made its debut for India at the 2016 Rio Paralympics. Pooja was the sole archer competing in the individual recurve women's ST category. She failed to finish on the podium.

At the Tokyo Paralympics in 2020, Pooja had Harvinder Singh and Rakesh Kumar as her teammates. The Tokyo Paralympics gave the para archers their first medal when Harvinder Singh won a bronze in the men's singles recurve event in the ST category.

The emergence of 16-year-old armless archer Sheetal Devi at the 2022 Asian Games in Hangzhou was the turning point for India's para archers. Sheetal Devi was born with a rare medical condition called phocomelia which made



Harvinder Singh (left) and Sheetal Devi

The Tokyo Paralympics gave the para archers their first medal when Harvinder Singh won a bronze in the men's singles recurve event in the ST category.

her the first international woman para archer without upper limbs. Sheetal Devi and Rakesh Kumar were both trained in Katra by coach Kuldeep and Abhilasha.

At the Asian Games in Hangzhou, Sheetal Devi was a sensation as she

claimed 2 gold medals and 1 silver medal. India was now on its way to become a strong contender in the para archery events at the world level. Sheetal won her 2 golds in the women's individual compound and in the mixed team com-

-pound event with Rakesh Kumar as her teammate.

She secured a silver with Sarita in the women's doubles compound event. Sarita also performed creditably in the Asian Games claiming a bronze in the individual women's compound event.

India will be represented at Paris by 6 archers -- 3 men and 3 women -- Sheetal Devi, Rakesh Kumar, Harvinder Singh, Shyam Sundar, Swami Pooja and Sarita.

With their consistent performances in the 2024 world ranking series, India hopes to win a minimum of 4 medals through Sheetal Devi, Harvinder Singh, Rakesh Kumar and Sarita contributing to them in the men's recurve, women's compound, mixed doubles compound as the major medal winning prospects.

India skipper Harmanpreet among superstars confirmed for WBBL draft

TDG NETWORK
MELBOURNE

Indian skipper Harmanpreet Kaur, and England stars Sophie Ecclestone and Heather Knight were among the superstars announced to be part of the first batch of nominees for the upcoming Big Bash League (BBL) overseas drafts.

The league confirmed on Monday the first 10 men's and women's nominees for the overseas drafts to be held this year.

Ecclestone, the top-ranked ODI and T20I bowler in the world, will be one of the most sought-after stars, though she is eligible to be retained by her franchise Sydney Sixers.

But having secured services of New Zealand all-rounder Amelia Kerr during the pre-draft signing and loaded by more than enough star power, the Australian trio of Ellyse Perry, Alyssa Healy and

Ashleigh Gardner, Sixers might struggle to fit Ecclestone into their salary cap at the first-round Platinum price, as per cricket.com.au.

Shabnim Ismail (Hobart Hurricanes), Danni Wyatt (Perth Scorchers), Laura Wolvaardt (Adelaide Strikers), Alice Capsey (Melbourne Stars), Heather Knight (Sydney Thunder), Harmanpreet Kaur (Melbourne Renegades) and Suzie Bates (Sydney Sixers) are also eligible to be retained by the teams they are signed to.

The nominations for the drafts are now closed, with over 500 men's and women's players having thrown their names for it.

Twelve cricketing superstars have already confirmed their club commitments for Women's Big Bash League season 10 and Big Bash League season 14 through new multi-year, pre-draft contracts.

Cincinnati Open: Sinner seals title clash with Tiafoe, defeats Zverev

TDG NETWORK
CINCINNATI (US)

World number one tennis star Jannik Sinner marched into the final of the Cincinnati Open, defeating Alexander Zverev in a hard-fought semifinal on Sunday.

Despite some limping and the player favouring his hip, which has plagued him as of late, Sinner produced some stunning shots to beat the 2021 champion 7-6(9), 5-7, 7-6(4) in three hours and seven minutes.



"Sometimes you have to play a bit with the gut feeling. And I think this today was, my strength," Sinner said in his on-court interview as quoted by ATP.

"There were some up and downs, which can happen, especially when you play for more than three hours. It was a good match, I think for both of us. He served

very, very well, so I can be very proud," he added.

Sinner lost the second set and showed some discomfort in his hip and it seemed that Zverev was in a fine position to secure a win. But instead, the world's number one tennis player produced some incredible shots and narrowed his head-to-head deficit against Zverev to 2-4.

"It means a lot to me. It is a very different moment, what I am going through, so I am very happy about this result.

Knight confident of teammates' form ahead of ICC Women's T20 World Cup

TDG NETWORK
LONDON

England captain Heather Knight is confident that several of her international teammates will head into October's ICC Women's T20 World Cup in top form, thanks to their impressive performances in the recent Hundred tournament.

As England's domestic T20 tournament concluded over the weekend, it was no surprise to see international stars shine, particularly as Knight's London Spirit team edged out Welsh Fire in a closely

contested final at Lord's. Spinner Sarah Glenn was a standout performer, claiming the second-highest number of wickets in the tournament with 12, solidifying her spot in England's squad for the upcoming T20 World Cup. Meanwhile, star all-rounder Nat Sciver-Brunt, along with Danni Wyatt, Alice Capsey, and captain Heather Knight, all ranked among the top five run-scorers. This strong showing boosts England's prospects for this year's T20 showcase, giving Knight confidence in their pursuit of a

second T20 World Cup title. "I'm really pleased," Heather Knight said as quoted by ESPNcricinfo.

"It's great to see the rest of the girls contributing and I'm very excited to meet up again in a couple of weeks," she said. "Nat [Sciver-Brunt] has been unbelievable. She's barely got out and the way she's played has been awesome. It's really pleasing going into a World Cup," Knight noted. "I haven't probably had the best few Hundreds, so I was really desperate to do well this year. I was really pleased to

contribute...I felt quite fresh and really wanted to show what form I'm in," she added. All-rounder Danielle Gibson is a potential contender for England's T20 World Cup squad, having caught the attention of captain Heather Knight with her standout performances during The Hundred.

Gibson, who played a key role in London Spirit's championship run, claimed eight wickets and further proved her worth by scoring a crucial 22 runs off just nine balls in the final.

'Hard to fathom playing T20 WC in Bangladesh'

TDG NETWORK
MELBOURNE

Australian skipper Alyssa Healy said that it is "hard to fathom" playing the ICC T20 World Cup in Bangladesh, as the country continues to deal with consequences and crises after the violence which led to several deaths and ousting of the government.

The tournament is set to take place from October 3 to 20 this year. The International Cricket Council (ICC) is expected to decide on an alternative venue for the tournament, with the UAE being considered as a favourite. The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) recently declined a request for the tournament to be hosted in India. Other names being considered among options are Sri Lanka and Zimbabwe.

Speaking as quoted by ESPNcricinfo, Healy said that she finds it hard to see a cricket tournament going on and "taking resources away from a country that is struggling".



Australia will be naming its squad next Monday. They had defeated South Africa in their territory in the final by 19 runs to secure their sixth title.

"I find it hard to see a cricket event going on over there at the moment and taking resources away from a country that is struggling. They are needing everyone they can get in there helping people

that are dying," said Healy. "I would find it hard to fathom playing there at the moment, as a human being, I feel like it might be the wrong thing to do. But I will leave it to the ICC to work out," she added.

Speaking on Sunday, all-rounder Sophie Molineux also said that players are being kept in the loop regarding the hosting of the competition.

"We have been [in] chats with Cricket Australia and they are doing a lot of work with the ICC, and we have got full faith that they will come up with the right decision for everyone," said Sophie.

Australia will be naming its squad next Monday. They had defeated South Africa in their territory in the final by 19 runs to secure their sixth title.

Recently, Bangladesh witnessed several incidents of violence and chaos, especially targeting minorities, including Hindus after Sheikh Hasina was forced to resign and flee Bangladesh after student protests turned into a massive anti-government movement. She arrived in India on August 5 at a short notice.

An interim government in Bangladesh, led by Nobel Peace laureate Muhammad Yunus, 84, was sworn in on August 8.