**MONEY 6** 

www.dailypioneer.com

**Established 1864** 

RANCHI, SUNDAY JUNE 9, 2024; PAGES 12 ₹3



Late City Vol.17 Issue 156

\*Air Surcharge Extra if Applicable

RNI Regn. No. JHAENG/2008/22930, REGD. No. RN-145/2012

# ALL EYES ON CABINET MAKER, HIS CREATION

RAJESH KUMAR NEW DELHI

head of the swearing in ceremony Minister-designate Narendra Modi for the third consecutive term, a high level meeting of BJP top brass held at the residence of Amit Shah to finalise the composition of new Cabinet in the Modi 3.0. BJP national president JP Nadda and national general secretary BL Santosh attended the meeting. Sources said the BJP is likely to

keep Home, Finance, External Affairs, Railways, Road and Transport, Law and Justice, Information Technology, and Education Ministries. The alliance partners are likely to get 12 to 15 Ministries. The NDA partners might not have some of their big demands met, despite speculations to the contrary. The

ID (U) has asked for Railways and is persistently pressing on it. The TDP has asked for Information Technology, which it is likely to

Telangana BJP may get four Ministries and JD (United) three seats each. Three of the four TDP leaders who may find a place in PM Modi's new Cabinet are - Ram Mohan Naidu, Harish Balayogi and Daggumalla Prasad. JD (U) has proposed the name of two senior leaders - Lalan Singh and Ram Nath Thakur. Lalan Singh was elected to the Lok Sabha from Bihar's Munger, while Ram Nath Thakur is a Rajya Sabha MP. Thakur is the son of Bharat Ratna receipient Karpoori Thakur.

The JD (U) and TDP both are interested in funds for the



Preparations underway for the swearing-in-ceremony of the new Government, at the Rashtrapati Bhayan in New Delh

development of Bihar and Andhra Pradesh respectively. The Tribal Affairs Ministry is likely to go with an NDA ally while the Ministry of Power may go with TDP or JD (U). From Shiv Sena Prataprao Jadhav name is being discussed. There is no indication yet on how many Ministers will be sworn in, though it is expected to be at least a 30-member strong Cabinet.

It is also being considered that in first round of Cabinet formation there would be one MP from

congratulating the Indian Prime Minister.

berth. As per sources, JD (S), LJP (Ram Vilas), HAM, Shiv Sena, NCP, RLD and Apna Dal (S) could have one Minister each. From JD(S) HD Kumaraswamy, Jayant Chaudhary of RLD, Chirag Paswan of LJP (Ram Vilas) and Anupriya Patel of Apnal Dal (S) may become Ministers. JD(S) is eyeing Agriculture Ministry.

Bihar BJP and JD (United) will get equal number of ministries in view of next year Assembly polls in the State. Telangana BJP may major allies to be given Cabinet get four ministries and Odisha can

get lion share of six to seven Ministries. Shah and Singh are seen within

the party as a certainty in the new Cabinet, former Chief Ministers who have won the Lok Sabha polls like Shivraj Singh Chouhan, Rajiv Pratap Rudy, Basavaraj Bommai, Manohar Lal Khattar and Sarbananda Sonowal are strong contenders for joining the Government BJP leadership had earlier met

their National Democratic Alliance partners discuss their cabinet berths on Friday. Nadda, Shah held discussion with JD(U) chief and Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar, TDP supremo N Chandrababu Naidu and Shiv Sena president Maharashtra Chief Minister Eknath Shinde. After discussing with allies, Nadda and Shah held discussions with senior BJP leader and outgoing Defense Minister Rajnath

**Press Information Bureau** 

- Media Centre

# **Leaders of seven** countries start arriving in Delhi



PIONEER NEWS SERVICE NEW DEI HI

 $B_{\text{Sheikh Hasina arrived in New}}^{\text{angladesh Prime Minister}}$ Delhi on Saturday afternoon to attend the swearing-in ceremony of Narendra Modi as Prime Minister on the evening of June

India on Friday formally announced that the leaders of seven countries from the neighbourhood and the Indian Ocean region will attend the ceremony

Sri Lankan President Ranil Wickremesinghe, his Maldivian counterpart Mohamed Muizzu, Bangladeshi Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and Nepalese Prime Minister Pushpa Kamal Dahal "Prachanda" will attend the ceremony, according to the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA). Modi is expected to hold separate meetings with the visiting leaders, it was learnt.



# CWC wants Rahul as LoP, he says let me sleep on it

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI

ongress Working Committee ○(CWC) on Saturday unanimously urged Rahul Gandhi to take on the mantle of the Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha to which he told the party's top brass that he will take a decision on it "very soon".

At a meeting of the CWC, the party's highest decision-making body, chaired by Congress chief Mallikarjun Kharge and attended by Sonia Gandhi, Rahul and Priyanka Gandhi Vadra, among others, the party's Lok Sabha polls showing was hailed but it was also decided that separate committees would be set up in States where the performance was not good or below expectations, to take corrective measures.

Kharge said the Lok Sabha poll mandate is a "decisive rejection" of the politics of divisiveness and hate, and stressed that the INDIA bloc must continue functioning cohesively both inside and outside Parliament. Two

resolutions were unanimously passed by the CWC, including one requesting Rahul to assume the position of the Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha.

Asked if had agreed to take on the position, Congress general secretary K C Venugopal said Rahul took note of the sentiments of the CWC members and told them that he would take a decision on it "very soon".

In the other resolution, the CWC congratulated the people for voting so powerfully to preserve democracy, protect the Constitution and enhance social and economic justice. "They have decisively rejected both the substance and style of governance over the past decade. The verdict of the people is not just a political loss but a personal and moral defeat for the Prime Minister who sought the mandate in his name and ran a campaign anchored in lies, hate, prejudice, divisiveness and extreme bigotry," the resolution alleged.



# **Sena's claim of UBT MPs** crossing over 'baseless'

TN RAGHUNATHA MUMBAI

The Opposition Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) on Saturday rubbished as "baseless" a claim by Shiv Sena MP and Chief Minister Eknath Shinde's confidant Naresh Mhaske that at least two Shiv Sena (UBT) MPs were likely to support the NDA Government of Prime Minister-elect Narendra Modi who will be sworn into office on Sunday.

Within hours after Mhaske went to town claiming that at least two MPs from the Uddhav Thackeray-led Sena "were in touch with his party" and may join the NDA, Shiv Sena (ÚBT)'s deputy leader Sushma Andhare mocked at the rival Sena MP saying: "Making such baseless claims does not augur well for the newly elected MP. If what he is saying is true, he should come out with the names of two MPs"

Terming Mhaske as an "accidental MP", Andhare said: "May be Mhaske does not still believe that he has become an MP. We cannot expect much from a person who has become an MP with  $\dots$ Such money power immature statements indicate his IQ levels. We don't give any importance to such

people". By making such claims, Mhaske is trying to please Chief Minister Shinde and get recommendation for Ministerial berth in the impending Modi Cabinet. 7 and Ajit Pawar NCP-1).

But, he should realise that there are already Ministerial aspirants like Prataprao Jadhav (Sena's newly elected Buldhana MP from constituency) whom Shinde will favour".

Earlier in the day, Mhaske had refused to name the two Lok Sabha members "who were in touch" with the party, citing the anti-defection law. "Four more Sena (UBT) MPs would soon join these two MPs. Together, they would join MV our party," Mhaske had said.

Leader of Opposition in the Maharashtra Assembly Vijay Wadettiwar of the Congress "Such ridiculous claims made by the ruling party leaders reflect their mindset of the ruling alliance. They have not understood the current political situation". 'The Maharashtra Assembly

elections are just a few months away. No MP will think of taking such steps at a politically crucial time like this. Mhaske should be aware of this. The MVA won the peoples' confidence and is fully united, so his comments are baseless," Wadettiwar said. In the recently concluded Lok

Opposition MVA won 31 seats (Congress 14 — which include the support it has received from one Independent MP, Shiv Sena (UBT) — 9, and NCP (Sharad Pawar) — 8), while the ruling MahaYuti bagged 17 seats (BJP — 9, Shinde Shiv Sena —

elections,

Sabha

#### PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

'Premature to wish Modi yet'

Dakistan has said it is "premature" for the country to congratulate

Prime Minister Narendra Modi for securing third consecutive

term since the formation of Government was going on in India.

These remarks by Pakistan's Foreign Office spokesperson Mumtaz

Zahra Baloch came on Friday two days ahead of Modi's swearing

in ceremony. "We do not have any comments on their electoral

process," Baloch said, adding that since the formation of

Government was going on in India, it is "premature" to talk about

mid allegations of inflation of marks in the NEET-UG medical entrance exam, the National Testing Agency (NTA) announced on Saturday that the Education Ministry has set up a four-member panel to review the grace marks awarded to more than

The NTA denied any irregularities and said the changes made in the NCERT textbooks and grace marks for losing time at the examination centres were some of the reasons behind the students scoring higher

"A high-powered committee has been set up to review the results of over 1,500 candidates. The fourmember panel headed by a former UPSC chairman will submit its recommendations within a week and the results of these candidates might be revised," NTA Director General Subodh Kumar Singh said at a Press conference on Saturday. The issue took a political turn with the AAP demanding a Supreme Court-monitored SIT probe into the alleged irregularities and the Congress alleging paper leaks, rigging and corruption have become an integral part of many examinations. The party also accused the BJP of cheating youngsters and playing with their futures. Indian Medical Association too has demanded as CBI probe on the allegations.

The Maharashtra Government has sought immediate cancellation of

last month's NEET exam, alleging that its results have caused injustice to the students from the state. Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M K Stalin said the trends from the latest NEET results have once again vindicated the DMK on its stand

opposing the exam and reiterated

that the entrance test goes against social justice and federalism. There have been calls from several quarters for a re-exam alleging that the grace marks awarded to make up for the loss of time at six exam centres have led to the inflation of marks and tampered with the chances of other candidates. These centres are from Meghalaya, Bahadurgarh Bahadurgarh in Haryana, Dantewada and Balodh in Harvana, Chhattisgarh, Surat in Gujarat and Chandigarh.

Singh denied any paper leak and irregularities in the exam and reiterated that the integrity of the crucial test had been compromised. He further said awarding of grace lakh candidates ha marks has not impacted the the exam this year.

qualifying criteria of the exam and the review of results of the affected candidates will not impact the

admission process.

According to experts, the mark inflation in NEET UG 2024 result is expected to make securing a spot in medical school this year more difficult. Some aspiring students have turned to online platforms to demand the cancellation of the results and a re-examination. Asked about whether the exam will be re-conducted for certain students, the NTA DG said, it will be decided depending upon the committee's recommendations.

The idea is to ensure that students who lost time or other students are not at any disadvantage," he said. The result of the medical entrance exam was announced on June 4. Sixty seven candidates had shared the first rank in the exam including six from the same centre in Harvana. A record more than 24 lakh candidates had registered for

The Congress in Kerala alleged that results have raised concerns about the authenticity of the national exam for medical courses, with many students casting doubt on the procedure. "The Modi government is directly responsible for this. For the candidates appearing in recruitment exams, then facing several irregularities, getting caught in the labyrinth of is playing with their futures. The BJP has cheated the youth of the country," Congress Chief Mallikarjun Kharge said in a social media post.

'We demand that a high-level investigation should be conducted under the supervision of the Supreme Court so that our talented students appearing in NEET and other exams get justice," he had added.

The NTA DG reiterated that the increase in cutoff reflects the competitive nature of examination and the higher performance standards achieved by the candidates this year. "The number of candidates who appeared in 2023 was 20,38,596 while the number of candidates who appeared in 2024 increased to 23.33,297. The increase in candidates naturally led to an increase in high scorers due to a larger pool of candidates," he said. Explaining the rationale behind the awarding of grace marks, Singh said, the process has been completed using a formula devised and adopted by the Supreme Court in a 2018 judgement.

#### **NEET grace marks fine but panel to review results: NTA** President, Modi condole death of doyen Ramoji Rao

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

President Droupadi Murmu and Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday condoled the demise of renowned media tycoon Ramoji Rao and said his contributions to the industry will be long remembered. Rao, revolutionised entertainment industry,

died at a hospital in Hyderabad early on Saturday. He was 88. "With the demise of Shri Ramoji Rao, India has lost a titan of the media and entertainment sector," President Murmu said

in a social media post. An innovative entrepreneur, Rao

pioneered a number of ventures, including the Eenadu newspaper, ETV news network and Ramoji Film City, President Murmu

death of noted media personality Ramoji Rao, describing him as a visionary who revolutionised Indian media. Rao's rich contributions have left an indelible mark on journalism and the world of films, Modi said in a social media post, adding that through his noteworthy efforts, he set new standards in innovation and excellence in the media and entertainment world.

#### said. "Honoured with Padma Vibhushan, he succeeded as his vision was essentially rooted in society. His contributions to this industry will be long remembered. My condolences to his family and well-wishers," she said. Prime Minister Modi expressed grief at the

# Nightbirds, hit the sack early for mental health, longevity

**ARCHANA JYOTI** ■ NEW DELHI

 $N_{\mathrm{was}}^{\mathrm{ight}}$  owls, take note: Grandma was right all along about the benefits of an early bedtime, irrespective of your chronotype (the natural inclination of your body to sleep at a certain time). A new study has upended the traditional belief that aligning sleep schedules with one's natural sleep preference, or chronotype, is the best approach for mental well-being. The research shows that staying up

late is linked to higher rates of mental health disorders, regardless of whether individuals are morning people or night owls. To safeguard mental health, researchers recommend turning off the lights by 1 a.m.

Conducted by Stanford Medicine, the study analysed nearly 74,000 adults and found that the timing of

sleep itself plays a critical role in mental health. Surprisingly, the findings highlight that early bedtimes offer significant benefits for everyone, across all chronotypes. Published in Psychiatry Research, the study's senior author, Jamie Zeitzer, a professor of psychiatry and behavioral sciences, remarked, "We found that alignment with your chronotype is not crucial here, and that really it's being up late that is not good for your mental health. The big unknown is why." Renske Lok, a postdoctoral scholar

in psychiatry and behavioural health, led the study, which presented unexpected results. Previous research by Zeitzer's team suggested that women with cancer who did not align their sleep with their chronotype had shorter lifespans. This led to an expectation that aligning sleep schedules with chronotype would be beneficial.

However, the new findings challenge this assumption. The researchers examined middle-aged and older adults in the United Kingdom,

gathering data on their sleep habits,

preferences. Participants wore

wearable accelerometers for a week

to track their sleep patterns, and their mental health status was assessed through health records, covering any mental or behavioural disorder listed in the International Classification of Diseases.

Among the 73,880 participants, 19,065 identified as morning types, 6,844 as evening types, and 47,979 fell somewhere in between. The results were revealing: both morning and evening types who stayed up late exhibited higher rates of mental disorders,

health including depression and anxiety. The study showed that night owls who adhered to their natural late schedules were 20 per cent to 40 per cent more likely to be diagnosed with a mental health disorder compared to those who adopted an early or intermediate sleep schedule. including their morning or evening

Likewise, evening types who went to

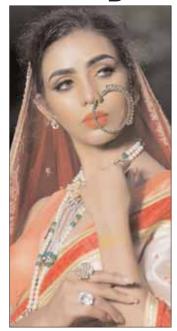
bed earlier fared better in terms of

mental health, while morning types who went to bed later suffered less severely.

The study also explored whether poor mental health led people to stay up late but found that late-night wakefulness itself was a significant risk factor for developing mental health issues. Harmful behaviours, such as suicidal thoughts, violent crimes, alcohol and drug use, and overeating, are more common at night, further exacerbating mental health risks. Strategies like getting morning

sunlight and maintaining a consistent early routine could help shift sleep patterns, though changing one's chronotype remains difficult. "Biologically speaking, it's very much like a rubber band-you take a day off and you snap back to where your body wants to be," Zeitzer explained.

# Reviving Tradition: How Indian Fashion Startups are Weaving Heritage into Modern Style



BY RACHNA TIWARI

As a fashion model who has walked runways across the country, I've witnessed a fascinating shift in the industry. Gone are the days of solely Western silhouettes dominating the scene. There's a rising appreciation for cultural expression, and Indian fashion is at the forefront of this movement. The revival of traditional Indian designs isn't iust about nostalgia; it's a modern reinterpretation for a global audience. This resurgence is being fueled in part by a new wave of fashion startups. These innovative companies are taking age-old techniques like Bandhani (tie-dye) and Chikankari (embroidery) and applying them to contemporary cuts. Imagine a power suit with a Benarasi silk lapel or a flowing

lehenga skirt crafted from light-

weight Ikkat fabric. This fusion

creates a unique aesthetic that resonates with millennials and Gen Z alike.

One shining example of this trend is the sustainable fashion brand "Econscious," which weaves organic cotton saris with Kantha embroidery, offering a beautiful and eco-friendly twist on a timeless classic. Similarly, "The Label Life" reimagines the Lehenga choli, offering separates like crop tops and lehenga skirts that can be styled for various occasions. These are just a few examples of the exciting possibilities that startups are bringing to Indian fashion. The impact of this movement goes beyond aesthetics. These startups are creating a sustainable ecosystem for traditional crafts. By working directly with artisans and providing fair wages, they ensure the survival of these age-old skills. This not only preserves India's cultural heritage

but also empowers local communities. Take, for instance, the startup "Ajrakhpur Remix," which collaborates with artisans in Gujarat to create hand-block printed kurtas and jackets. Their commitment to ethical production ensures the longevity of this unique art form while providing economic opportunities to the local community.

This movement is not without its challenges. Standardization of quality and ensuring a consistent supply chain are hurdles that some startups face. Additionally, educating consumers about the true value of handcrafted pieces versus massproduced fast fashion is crucial for long-term success. However, the potential is undeniable. Indian fashion is experiencing a renaissance, and startups are playing a pivotal role. By blending tradition with modern sensibilities, they are creating a new

wave of fashion that is both stylish and sustainable. "Suta" is a design house that centers on creating a range of attire with a blend of tradition and contemporaneity. They work closely with weavers across the country to create affordable ethnic wear. As a model, I'm proud to see the rich tapestry of Indian design woven back into the global fashion narrative. It's a movement driven by innovation, a celebration of heritage, and a commitment to empowering both artisans and consumers. With startups at the helm, Indian fashion is poised to take the world by storm, one beautifully crafted piece at a time. Looking ahead, the future of Indian fashion with startups at the forefront is brimming with possibilities. We can expect to see further innovation in textiles and manufacturing techniques. Technology can play a key role in this, with advance-

ments in areas like 3D printing allowing for the creation of unique embellishments and intricate designs. Additionally, there's immense potential for startups to leverage e-commerce platforms to reach a global audience, giving a platform to Indian artisans and designers who may not have had access to international markets before.

This revival of Indian fashion isn't just about trends; it's about cultural identity. When we wear a beautifully crafted kurta or a saree with a modern twist, we're not just making a fashion statement, we're celebrating our heritage. It's a way to connect with our roots and share the beauty of Indian design with the world. And that, I believe, is a story worth telling. In conclusion, the rise of Indian fashion startups marks a significant transformation in the global fashion industry. These startups

are not only preserving and promoting traditional crafts but also innovating and adapting them for modern tastes. This blend of tradition and innovation is creating a new, vibrant fashion landscape that honors cultural heritage while embracing contemporary aesthetics. The journey of Indian fashion is a testament to the power of creativity, sustainability, and the enduring appeal of cultural identity. As we look to the future, the possibilities are endless, and the world is watching with admiration and anticipation.

WITH A CAREER SPANNING TEN YEARS, THE WRITER HAS SOLIDIFIED HER EXPERTISE IN HR, ENTREPRENEURSHIP, AND INNOVATION ECOSYSTEM DEVELOPMENT. SHE IS A PRINT AND RAMP MODEL WHO WAS ALSO FEATURED IN VOGUE AND GLADRAGS MAGAZINES.

# Review meeting to expedite development works, officers asked to conduct field visits



PNS: JAMSHEDPUR

The review covered the latest progress of public welfare schemes across multiple sectors such as Rural Development, Panchayati Raj, ITDA, Social Welfare, Social Security, Agriculture, Animal Husbandry and Cooperation, Drinking Water and Sanitation, Mining, Revenue, Health, Education, Labour Planning and Skill Development, Urban Development, Roads, Tourism, and Art Culture and Sports. Discussions highlighted the achievements relative to previous targets and identified areas of deficiency, with directives issued to rectify issues promptly.

Mittal reiterated the need for adherence to State Government guidelines, stressing that development and public welfare works must proceed at the expected pace. He urged officers to conduct field visits to gather accurate insights and devise strategic plans accordingly. "The timeline for each scheme is fixed. In case of delays, report the extent and cause of delay to the Deputy Commissioner's office, he instructed, ensuring that on-ground implementation and quality of work would be thoroughly verified. Specific emphasis was placed on the effective execution of schemes related to drinking water, housing, health, education, community forest lease distribution, and comenhanced coordination among various departments to facilitate better implementation. He instructed district-level officers and all Block Development Officers (BDOs) and Circle Officers (COs) to conduct regular monitoring to promptly address any arising issues and ensure timely completion of schemes.

Particular attention was given to the implementation of schemes related to drinking water, housing, health, and education. Mittal also highlighted the need for effective action against illegal mining of minerals and stressed the importance of community forest lease distribution. He directed that there should be seamless coordination between various departments to ensure better implementation of these schemes.

The District Magistrate cum Deputy Commissioner called for regular monitoring by district-level officers, Block Development Officers (BDOs), and Circle Officers (COs). 'Regular monitoring is essential so that if any kind of problem arises, it can be resolved promptly, and the schemes can be completed in a timely manner," he stated.

The meeting also saw participation from Civil Surgeon Dr. Jujhar Majhi, ADM Law and Order Anant Kumar, ADM (SOR) Mahendra Kumar, Executive Magistrate David Balihar, District Panchayat Raj Officer Rinku Kumari, SDO Ghatshila, SDO Dhalbhum, District Education Officer, District Education Superintendent, and Executive Engineers from all technical departments.

Mittal's directives during the meeting underscore the administration's unwavering commitment to fostering development and enhancing the quality of life for residents through efficient and effective implementation of public welfare schemes. The emphasis on timely completion, quality assurance, strategic field visits, and inter-departmental coordination reflects a holistic approach towards sustainable development. The review meeting marked a significant step towards ensuring that the benefits of various schemes reach the intended beneficiaries promptly

#### NML HQ sponsors Project Affected Youths for Skill Development training at CIPET, Ranchi



PNS: RANCHI

Skill development plays an important part in selfreliance and empowerment. NTPC Mining Limited (NML), Ranchi has taken up the initiative under its CSR to sponsor 80 project affected youths including 25 girls from all coal mining projects & its vicinity located in the States of Jharkhand, Odisha, and Chhattisgarh for skill development in association with Central Institute Petrochemicals Engineering Technology (CIPET), Ranchi.

During the training, CIPET will provide job-oriented skill development training to the youths in two courses i.e Machine Operator – Plastic Processing & Machine Processing & Operator Injection Moulding. To encourage the rural students cum Project Affected Persons (PAPs) from NTPC Coal Mining projects, Rajnish Rastogi Chief General Manager (HR) on

June 5,2024 in the august presence of Pravin Bachhay. Joint Director & Head, CIPET Ranchi held an interaction with students enrolled for the skill development training on plastic technology courses for period of 6 months at CIPET.Ranchi.

During the interaction Rastogi took the feedback from the students regarding the experience on the educa tion and facilities provided at CIPET. Speaking to the students, Rastogi shared that CIPET is a reputed institute in the field of plastic engineering, which will provide a better opportunity to learn and develop skills and will facili-

tate employment.
At present 1st Batch of
Machine Operator – Plastic Processing course has started on March 20,2024 in which 40 students from NTPC Coa Mining Projects i.e Pakri Barwadih , Chatti Bariattu, Kerendari ,Badam,Banardih, Dulanga & Talaipalli coal projects taking part.

# BGH eases height parameter for contract workers' medical check-up

R SHARMA: BOKARO

Bokaro Steel Limited (BSL) is committed to the health and well-being of its employees and contract workers. In line with this commitment, BSL has initiated health check-ups for contract workers. If any health issues are detected during these check-ups, appropriate treatment recommendations are made, ultimately benefiting the work-

The medical check-ups will include basic parameters such as blood tests, blood pressure, weight, and BMI. In a significant move, BSL management has decided to ease the height parameter by 5 centimeters for the medical examination of all contract workers. This adjustment aims to benefit a larger number of contract workers by making it easier for them to meet the height

There is a deep connection between safety and health, and only healthy workers can slot for their medical check-

contribute to creating a safe work environment. Minor issues like near or farsightedness, which can be corrected with glasses, will not disqualify workers. These workers can get the appropriate corrective glasses and have their eyes rechecked at BGH a week later. After passing the eye test, they can proceed with safety training and obtain their gate passes.

BGH will conduct medical check-ups for 50 contract workers each working day. Workers who have booked a

up will receive an email notification at least one day in advance, sent to their engineer in charge and contractor via their registered BSL email ID. Contract workers are required to report to BGH on the scheduled date by 7:30 AM on an empty stomach. Those deemed fit based on their medical reports will proceed with two days of safety training starting the next day. The medical check-up reports will be emailed to the engineer in charge and contractor by 7 PM on the same day.

# Few booths in Palamu registered 1.9%, 2.2% voting

Palamu administration has shortlisted the polling stations where polling was as low as 1.9 percent and also not above 50 percent in the recently concluded lok sabha election.

Bishrampur assembly constituency came handy for the worst polling percentage.

Here was polling station number 181. It was an upgraded high school north of Untari Road. The total number of votes

here at this north booth was But only 25 votes were

cast. It comes to 1.9 percent of polling.

Here again there was another booth called 182

upgraded high school south. Here the total number of votes was 402 but against it

only 9 votes were cast. It comes to 2.2 percent of the

So the north end booth and south end booth voted miserably. Here these booths had

witnessed extrordinary mess. A group of voters just not only stayed away from voting but they prevented others from voting

The administration handled the situation with great effort and tact otherwise May 13 here the day of voting could have scripted any more bad story for Palamu and the Administration country. lodged the FIR under sections of both RP act and IPC against identified obstructors to the

Apart from this a good many booths of Kandi block too bad voting wise. Kandi block comes under the Garhwa district and is a part of the Palamu's Bishrampur assembly constituency.

collector Additional Kundan Kumar said this is a fact that north end and south end booths at Untari Road had presented themselves in the worst of act and administration is all determined to contain such elements who had exhibited such a brazen irresponsible attitude and towards the voting which is a pious duty of every eligible voter. Kundan Kumar said the administration would not let such obstructors get away.

#### Nayak writes to CM, Health Minister on Ayushman Bharat scheme

PNS: RANCHI



Vijay Shankar Nayak, National General Jharkhand Incharge Sampoorna Bharat Kranti Party, has written a letter to the Chief Minister and Statthe outstanding amount of crores of rupees for the last 6 months under Ayushman Bharat Yojana, all the private hospitals of the state have refused to treat poor patients.

The beneficiaries of this scheme are facing difficulties in getting treatment in government hospitals, due to which at present these poor patients are not getting any kind of service under Ayushman Card. Many hospitals have duly pasted information on their notice boards that at present the treatment facility for Ayushman card holders is closed. Nayak said that many hospital operators have also informed in this context that about Rs 100 crore of private hospitals are stuck under the Ayushman Bharat scheme in the entire state. It is proving difficult for them to serve the patients by stopping the salary payment of doctors and staff. There is also a huge expenditure every day in the operation of medical equipment, in such a situation the hospital management is facing a huge crisis. At present, even in government hospitals, poor patients holding Ayushman cards are facing huge prob-

# Chairman of Durgapur Mission Hospital, to address at CME Program in Bokaro



PNS: BOKARO

Bokaro, June 2024 — The Hotel Hans Regency in Bokaro is set to host a significant Continuing Medical Education (CME) program focused on advanced treatments in cardiac care. This landmark event will be headlined by the esteemed Dr. Satyajit Bose, a leading figure in cardiac surgery and the chairman of The Mission Hospital, Durgapur. Dr. Bose will share his extensive knowledge and insights on the future of cardiac surgery, aiming to inspire and educate the medical community. The program will feature a distinguished lineup of medical professionals from across the region. Dr. Bibhuti , CMO from Bokaro General Hospital (BGH) will honor the event with his presence, contributing his vast experience and perspeccardiac care. Representing Mission Hospital in Durgapur, Dr. Srikant and Dr. Debargha Dhua are slated to participate, offering their expertise in innovative cardiac treatments and the latest advancements in the field. Additionally, Dr. Satish, renowned cardiologist and chairman of Well Mark Hospital Bokaro, extended his best wishes to the event. despite being on an international tour.

Adding to the illustrious list of participant. Dr. Debasis, the Jharkhand in-charge, will be present to provide insights on regional advancements and the state's progress in cardiac care. Additionally, Rajiv Kumar will present during the program, focusing on collaborative efforts and the latest developments in medical technology and patient care practices. This CME program aims to foster an environment of knowledge exchange and professional development among the medical community, with a keen focus on cutting-edge treatments and techniques in cardiac surgery. Attendees can look forward to a series of informative sessions and valuable networking opportunities designed to enhance their clinical practice and improve patient outcomes. With a program designed to address both current challenges and future opportunities in cardiac care, this CME event is set to be an invaluable experience for all participants, pushing the boundaries of what is possible in cardiac surgery and

# RS 62.10 LAKH GIVEN TO MOTOR EHICLE ACCIDENT VICTIMS

As per the instructions of Jharkhand State Services Authority (JLSA), Ranchi, under the aegis of District Legal Services Authority, Garhwa and on the instructions of Principal District Sessions Judge cum-Chairman, District Legal Services Authority, Garhwa, Rajesh Sharan Singh, a special Lok Adalat related to motor vehicle accident claim was organized on Saturday.

10 cases related to motor vehicle accident claims were disposed of in the special Lok Adalat. In which a total compensation of Rs. 62,10,000

was given to the victim party. Principal District Sessions Judge Rajesh Sharan Singh



said that as per the orders of JhaLSA Ranchi, a special Lok Adalat related to motor vehicle accident claim has been organized. Under which benches have been constituted in Garhwa and Nagar Untari sub division. In this, a

maximum number of cases are being settled. Counseling and mediation work was being done continuously for the last 15 days. In which after hearing both the parties, we have ensured settlement of many cases. In my opinion,

this is an initiative so that people are not unnecessarily entangled in disputes and they get the compensation amount immediately.

Two benches (including Nagar Sub-Divisional Civil Court) were constituted for

the execution of cases related to motor vehicle accident claim, in which Shivnath District and Additional Sessions Judge-III and Manoj Kumar Tripathi, District and Additional Sessions Judge, Nagar Untari were present. One advocate each was also nominated along with the judge of all the

10 cases related to motor vehicle accident claims were executed in the organized special Lok Adalat. In which a total compensation of Rs. 62,10,000 was given to the victim party. On the occasion, Secretary, District Legal Services Authority, Ravi Chaudhary, In-charge Judge cum- Judicial Magistrate Mahendra Pandit, litigants, advocates, court staff, PLV

## Stringent measures implemented on overloaded and non-compliant vehicles in Bokaro

PNS: BOKARO

In a late-night operation on Friday, the district administration, under the directives of Deputy Commissioner Vijaya Jadhav, launched an extensive checking campaign against overloaded vehicles on the Dhanbad-Bokaro route. This operation was led by District Transport Officer (DTO) Vandana Shejwalkar at key checkpoints, including Pupunki Toll Plaza and

by bikers was also checked.



During the operation, vehicles without proper registration papers, permits, and reflective tape, as well as those found overloaded, were subjected to strict fines and penalties. Shejwalkar reported that ten major vehicles were fined a total of INR 2 lakh for non-compliance with these regulations.

Notably Transport department officials, including Shejwalkar, inspected various vehicles such as trucks and mini-haulers. Over 50 vehicles were scrutinized, and several were fined for overloading. She emphasized that this rigorous checking campaign was initiated following complaints about overloaded vehicles and that such inspections will continue in the future. Additionally, compliance with permits, insurance, fitness certificates, pollution standards, and the use of helmets

To ensure safe road operations, the transport department has issued necessary guidelines, particularly for navigating foggy conditions. DTO Shejwalkar mentioned that these measures are vital for reducing road accidents. The campaign aims to enforce compliance with permits, insurance, fitness, pollution standards, and reflective tape. Offenders will face penalties and fines. The department is also running continuous awareness campaigns to educate the public on traffic rules and vehicle safety compliance.

RANCHI I SUNDAY I JUNE 9, 2024

# Ranchi Loco Pilot among VVIPs to attend PM's oath taking ceremony

#### BJP senior leaders, MLAs, MPs have been invited for the ceremony

ho's who from the nation and near' neighbouring countries have been invited to attend the swearing- in ceremony of Narendra Modi, who is set to become the Prime Minister for a third consecutive term on Sunday

From Jharkhand BJP senior leaders including State BJP Chief Babulal Marandi, former State chiefs, Rajya Sabha MPs and newly elected Lok Sabha MPs, division heads and party veterans too have been called to attend the ceremony.

However, the real star from Ranchi, ASP Tirkey, a



locomotive pilot working with the Ranchi Railway Division will also be present on the

Tirkey flew to New Delhi

on Friday to attend the swearing- in ceremony of Prime Minister- elect Narendra Modi, which will take place on Sunday, June 9 at 7:15 pm at

A resident of Ranchi, Tirkey has been serving in the Indian Railways since 1990. Known for his dedication and hard work, Tirkey is the only loco pilot to have been invited from the South Eastern Railways zone. Tirkey is amongst the 10 loco pilots

who have been invited to

attend the historic event of

Narendra Maodi taking oath.

the Rashtrapati Bhavan.

"I feel extremely honoured to have received an invitation to attend the swearing- in ceremony of the prime minister of India," said Tirkey who is a pilot of the Vande Bharat Express and is involved in operating trains connecting Howrah and Varanasi from

Ranchi. "It is a very proud

moment for us, for the entire division and also for South Eastern Railways that one of our member has been invited to attend the ceremony. This will go a long way in motivating other employees. Just like he is known for his good work, it will inspire others to work hard as well," said Nishant Kumar, Senior Divisional Commercial Manager cum Chief Public Relations Officer of the Ranchi

Railway Division. Trikey has also served as a pilot for Rajdhani and Shatabdi trains and has also received the Best Railway Worker Award. As per the information shared, Tirkey is an Intermediate and ITI Ghaziabad graduate.



**Newly elected Singhbhum MP Joba** Manjhi meets Chief Minister Champai Soren in Ranchi on Saturday. Pix by PNS

# Turncoat legislators' matter stuck with State Assembly

*JP Patel. Sita Soren. Lobin Hembrom. Chamra Linda had changed sides* 

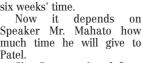


PNS: RANCHI

The matter of turncoat legislators is stuck in the State Assembly as a number of them have either not informed the Assembly speaker about changing parties and a couple of them had resigned in informal ways.

BJP's Mandu Jayprakash Bhai Patel has decided not resign from the membership of House. Patel, contested Hazaribagh on a Congress ticket, will remain in the Assembly with the BJP folder. Leader of Opposition Amar Kumar Bauri had complained against Patel of defection to Speaker Ravindra Nath The Speaker's Judicial Tribunal had taken cognizance of this matter. Both the parties were asked to respond.

Patel and the Leader of Opposition were asked to send their respective versions to the Speaker by June 6. In this matter, JP Patel, who is surrounded by allegations of defection, is procrastinating, his reply has not come after the Speaker sent a notice. Once again he has asked for



Sita Soren resigned from JMM on March 19 and joined BJP. On the same day, she forwarded her resignation from her daughter's email ID. Her resignation has not been accepted yet as it was not sent to the Speaker through proper medium. In this regard, the speaker has informed Sita foren that she should send





her resignation either in person or through her special

Ranchi Police arrest five persons

Ranchi SSP Chandan Kumar Sinha alongwith senior officials showing arrested

contractor did not give us that

money either. Due to which

the man got angry and car-

ried out the incident. Many

other criminals are involved

in this incident for whose

arrest the police is conducting

armed criminals opened fire

and set a container on fire at

the site of SIPL, a company

laying optical fiber for BSNL,

at Karam Kocha in Dulli of

McCluskieganj police station area on May 28 late night.

"During this, the laborer hid-

ing in the container was burnt

alive out of fear. He was iden-

tified as Sanjay Bhuiyan (25),

a resident of Chhallidohar vil-

Aurangabad district of Bihar.

HDD machine, DG tracker

and other items worth crores

Madanpur,

The SSP said that the

raids," he added.

criminals during a press conference at his office in Ranchi on Saturday. PNS

for setting fire at SIPL site

On March 19, while resigning from the party and the post of MLA, Sita Soren wrote an emotional letter to JMM president and her father-in-law Shibu Soren, accusing him of ignoring her. She wrote that she holds the post of central general secretary in the party but she does not get any importance within the party, the party which her husband Durga Soren built with his hard work has gone to such people whose views do not match the ideology of the party. Sita Soren has been an MLA from Jama thrice, after joining BJP, the party fielded her from Dumka, but in the Lok Sabha elections, she had to face defeat at the hands of JMM candidate

Nalin Soren. JMM MLAs Meanwhile, Lobin Hendram and Chamra Linda rebelled and contested the Lok Sabha elections. Lobin has been expelled by JMM. Chamra Linda has been suspended. Lobin Hendram and Chamra Linda will sit in the JMM folder in the Assembly. However, the Assembly has not received any complaint of defection against these two MLAs.

kept inside the container

were burnt in the arson. After

the incident, the criminals left

the place shouting slogans,"

he added. Meanwhile, a gang

running online gambling has

been busted. On the instruc-

tions of Ranchi SSP, Chandan

Sinha, the police team took

action and arrested eight peo-

ple including the mastermind.

Those arrested include mas-

termind Deepak Tandon,

Kumar, Niraj Kumar Rajwar,

Vikash Kumar, Sagar Kumar

and Aditya Kumar. An illegal

pistol and ATM cards of 13

different people were recov-

Tandon was arrested near

Morhabadi ground, on his

information the rest of the

people were arrested from

Mastermind Deepak

Shubham Kumar,



PNS: RANCHI

The Urban Development (HD)has organized Environment Fortnight in all the municipal bodies of the State. This fortnight started on June 6 and it will till June 22.



Under this fortnight, many programs are going on across the state and along with making people aware about the environment, emphasis is being laid on planting more trees, water conservation and soil conservation. In this sequence, emphasis is also being laid on including healthy living and yoga practice in the daily lifestyle so that the common people also become envi-

Development Agency and Ranchi Smart City Corporation also participated in this program and they were also taught yoga by



from scorching sun on a hot afternoon in

# BJP to celebrate 3rd NDA Govt formation in all divisions

#### Marandi attacks CM for not dismissing Almgir from Cabinet He said that due to the

PNS: RANCHI

Preparations for the swearing-in ceremony of the NDA government for the third time under the leadership of the world's most popular leader Narendra Modi are in the final stage. Newly elected MPs from all over the country are reaching Delhi. Along with this, thousands of workers including state officials of the party, state presidents of fronts, district presidents, incharges, Lok Assembly constituency coordinators, in-charges from all the states will witness the grand swearing-in ceremony of the Modi government for the third time on June 9.

Meanwhile, the state BJP has decided to celebrate the swearing-in ceremony in all the organizational divisions of

dent and former Chief Minister Babulal Marandi, state organization general secretary Karmaveer Singh have given necessary guidelines to all the divisions. State President and former

Chief Minister Babulal Marandi said that the people of Jharkhand have given a mandate in favour of the NDA. The workers had resolved to form the Modi government for the third time, which is coming true.

the state, the corrupt, useless appeasement-ridden Thugbandhan government will be shown the way out of power. The public is eagerly waiting for the assembly elec-Meanwhile, Marandi today

attacked on Chief Minister Champai Soren for not dismissing Minister Alamgir Alam from the Cabinet. He said that despite Alamgir Alam's corruption being exposed, Champai Soren is unable to muster the courage to dismiss him from the cabi-

He said that the puppet Chief Minister has taken back the departments under the responsibility of Alamgir Alam but has not removed him from the post of minister. Marandi said that the last

four and a half years have

been tough for the people of Jharkhand, especially the youth. The youth Jharkhand were waiting with bated breath for jobs but Hemant Soren tried to bargain for jobs by entangling the local youth in issues like employment policy, 60:40, outsider-insider and paper

He said that after Hemant Soren went to jail, the public was hopeful that Champai Soren would bring transparency in the appointment process, stop corruption, and rein in criminals, but the exact opposite happened. He said that now the pub-

lic should decide what is the use of such a Chief Minister, who neither has the courage to take action against the corrupt, nor the courage to teach a lesson to the paper leak mafia, nor the will to provide employment to the youth.

#### **Prabhat Sharma** appointed Member of **Governing Body at SDU**

In pursuance of the section of the Sona Devi University, Act, (Jharkhand Act No, 05, 2023), Prabhakar Singh, Chancellor of SDU, Ghatsila, East Singhbhum, has nominated Prabhat Sharma as member of Governing Body Ghatsila, Singhbhum for three years. In a letter Prof. (Dr.) Gulab Singh Registrar, SDU said that the university hopes that Sharma will extend his full support & help in running the affairs of SDU smoothly as per SDU Act,



# organises Environment Fortnight



In this sequence, yoga practice was conducted for three days

in Ranchi Smart City Campus for children of government and

On the third day of the program, children were also given information about Patangsana, Shishupalan Asana, Nadi Vibhangi, Surya Shakti, Shavasana, Uddiyana Bandha etc. Asanas. During the program, children were also made to play many types of games along with Om Chanting. The children were also informed about the cleanliness and conservation of rivers being done through Namami Gange and the tree plantation program being done in cities across the state during this

Officials of Urban Development Department, State Urban

Girls use umbrellas to protect themselves Ranchi on Saturday. Pix by Vinay Murmu



DIVYA MODI : RANCHI

Ranchi lad 32- year old Rohan Deo Pathak is one the few musicians from Jharkhand who has created ripples in Bollywood with his soulful voice. Recently, the singer and composer released a song 'Ishq Mein Malang' with Zee Music on May 27. The video for 'Ishq Mein

Malang' has been shot in Banaras featuring Pathak alongside model Aaindrila Dutta. It has been directed by Suvendu Raj Ghosh and produced by Zee Music. The music production for the song has been done by Jai while Pathak is the singer, lyricist and composer. The song has garnered almost three lakh views on Facebook and YouTube since its release. Four more songs with the production house are in the pipeline and are due to release in the coming months.

Born and brought up in Ranchi, Pathak's journey in singing started under his father teachings at the tender age of 3. Pathak got his first break in Hindi movies with 'Pratyavartan'- a film made by Jharkhand Police in 2014 where he was involved in composing the background score.

The big Bollywood break came in 2020 with 'Chase' where Pathak gained immense recognition as the singer and composer and also clinched the Best Debut award by Bombay Film Association. This was followed by 'Three Sisters and a Dream' in 2020 where he composed the music and was also the singer. In his career Pathak has managed to create a niche for himself in the film industry and has also got a chance to work with popular names. "I feel fortunate to have worked alongside musical sensations of our country

like Shaan, Javed Ali and Asses Kaur. My first duet was 'Piya Rangrez' from the movie Three Sisters and a Dream. For me receiving an award from Kumar Sanu and Zarina Wahab has been very encouraging and sharing stage space with Sanu Sir has been a dream come true," said



Rohan along with his father Raj Kumar Pathak also runs a music studio called RK Musicals in Ranchi where they produce short audio video films. The aim of this set up is to promote local talent, locations and people.

"I have seen that people in metros get more exposure and work. In my experience I have seen those with less potential get more opportunities in big cities. People here have as much vision and potential and want to tap that. With my production house, I want to give the same exposure, work skills and chances to collaborate to the talent here,' explained the composer.

Pathak believes that in today's competitive world one has to be multi- dimensional as the concept presently is of a single show artist. "Earlier it was a team effort where a lyricist, singer, composer and music director would be involved but now production houses want songs that are catchy and will appeal to the masses. I always feel that for someone to learn music, one also has to listen to the various genres because listening teaches you a lot. I have learnt how to play the guitar, keyboard and rhythm through my

observations," added the singer. Owning to his vocals, mary school on scholarship basis. He later completed his schooling from DAV Helal, Ranchi and is a graduate from St Xavier's College in English Honours. Pathank also holds an MBA degree from Ranchi University and a Masters in Music from Chandigarh

University. A resident of Ratu Road, Ranchi, his father Raj Kumar Pathak is a City based event manager and also a music teacher and his mother Vibha Pathak is a home- maker. His wife Amita Pathak is a gold medalist in English from Ranchi University and is currently pursuing her PhD.

'My father has been my teacher and also my biggest inspiration. In fact, both my paternal and maternal grand-



fathers were also involved in music. Music has been there in my family for generations and I too have inherited it. My father always says that a hit or a flop song does not judge the artist's caliber. He has always pushed us to work hard and is very effort oriented rather than result oriented. Though my mother does not sing, she has a keen ear for music and has been a pillar of strength in my journey. My wife comes from a business oriented background but has immense love and respect for the art form and has always supported my passion. A sense of music is God's gift and I am blessed to be born with it," believes Pathak who has won numerous awards over the years.

PNS: RANCHI

been arrested.

Five criminals who attacked

McCluskieganj, Ranchi and

set fire to a container have

are Ravi Munda, Mahesh

Oraon, Rupesh Pahan, Dinesh

Oraon and Aneesh Kerketta.

Police recovered a pistol, a

country-made pistol, six

rounds of bullets and other

Chandan Sinha gave this

information in a press confer-

Sinha also said that the

arrested criminals admitted

before the police that extor-

tion of Rs 2 lakh was demand-

ed from the contractor after

which it was decided to pay

Rs 20,000 as extortion. The

items from them.

ence on Saturday.

The names of the accused

SIPL

# Modi condemns attack on Danish PM

 $P_{\text{Narendra} \ \text{Modi} \ \text{on}}^{\text{rime Minister designate}}$ Saturday expressed concern over attack on Denmark Prime Minister Mette Frederiksen who was hit by a man in Copenhagen and condemned the incident.

"Deeply concerned by the news of the attack on Mette Frederiksen, Denmark's Prime Minister. We condemn the attack. Wishing good health to my friend," Modi said in a social media message.

The assault comes amid the European Union(EU)parliamentary polls in Denmark and follows recent violent incidents involving European political figures.

. Local media in Denmark reported that the assailant approached Frederiksen forcefully and pushed her hard while she was passing Kultorvet Square, a central piazza in Copenhagen. The police arrested a 39-year-old man in connection with the attack.The Danish prime minister suffered minor injuries but is otherwise fine after the incident, her office confirmed in a statement on Saturday. The suspect was scheduled to

appear in a pre-trial custody hearing at 1100 GMT on Saturday at the Copenhagen District Court Frederiksberg.



Earlier on Saturday, French President Emmanuel Macron denounced the "unacceptable" attack. "The attack on the Danish Prime Minister is unacceptable," Macron said in a social media message. "I strongly condemn this act and wish Mette Frederiksen a wish Mette Frederiksen a speedy recovery," he added. Jens Stoltenberg, NATO Secretary-General, said he was shocked to hear what happened to Frederiksen, whom he called a friend. Charles Michel, president of the European Council, condemned on X what he called demned on X what he called a "cowardly act of aggression." The assault comes two days before Denmark head to the polls in the EU election. Three

Minister Robert Fico was seriously injured in an assassination attempt.

The attack on Frederiksen comes amid European Union parliamentary elections, which are underway in Denmark and across the 27-nation bloc. Frederiksen has been campaigning with the Social Democrats' EU lead candidate, Christel Schaldemose, though media reports indicate the attack was not linked to a campaign event.

In May, a German candidate from the centre-left Social Democrats was beaten and seriously injured while campaigning for the European

# Premature to congratulate Modi on securing third consecutive term: Pakistan

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

 $P_{\text{mature" for the country to}}^{\text{akistan has said it is "premature" for the country to congratulate Prime Minister}$ Narendra Modi for securing third consecutive term since the formation of government was going on in India.

These remarks by Pakistan's Foreign Office spokes person Mumtaz Zahra Baloch came on Friday two days ahead of Modi's swearing-in ceremony. This statement by Baloch came after she was asked whether her country had officially congratulated Narendra Modi on winning the general elections.

"We do not have any comments on their electoral process," Baloch said, adding that since the formation of Government was going on in India, it is "premature" to talk about congratulating the Indian Prime Minister. Addressing her weekly Press

briefing, Baloch said Pakistan desired "cooperative ties" with all neighbours, including India, and resolution of disputes through talks. Baloch also said Pakistan has

been acting in a "responsible manner, notwithstanding the difficulties and rhetoric coming from India"

"Pakistan has always desired cooperative relations with all its neighbours including India. We have consistently advocated constructive dialogue and engagement to resolve all outstanding issues, including the core dispute of Jammu and Kashmir," she

Pakistan downgraded its ties with India after the Indian Parliament suspended Article 370 on August 5, 2019, a decision that Islamabad believed undermined the



between the neighbours. India has been maintaining that it desires normal neighbourly relations with Pakistan

while insisting that the onus is on Islamabad to create an environment that is free of terror and hostility for such an engagement.

"Pakistan believes in peaceful co-existence. We hope that India will take steps to create a conducive environment for the advancement of peace and dialogue and resolution of long-standing disputes for the mutual benefit of the peoples of Pakistan and India," Baloch said at the briefing. Asked if Pakistan has con-

gratulated Modi on winning the elections, Baloch said it is the right of Indian citizens to decide about their leader-

Earlier this year, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar said India "never closed doors to talking to Pakistan" but the terrorism issue should be 'fair, square at the centre of the conversation".

"We have never closed our doors on talking with Pakistan. The question is what to talk about ... If some guy has that many terrorist camps ... that should be the central part of the conversation," he

# Modi, says look forward to stable ties

 $\mathbf{I}$ ndia on Saturday thanked China for congratulating Prime Minister Narendra Modi on his election victory and said it would continue to make efforts for normalisation of the bilateral ties based on "mutual respect, mutual interest and mutual sensitivity

The comments by External Affairs Ministry spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal came as relations between India and China remained frosty in view of the lingering border row along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in eastern Ladakh.

Jaiswal was replying to a congratulatory message to Modi posted by the Chinese Foreign Ministry. "Thank you @MFA\_China for congratulating PM @narendramodi on his election victory. Will continue to pursue efforts towards normalisation of India-China ties based on mutual respect, mutual interest and mutual sensitivity," Jaiswal said in a social

India has been consistently maintaining that peace and tranquility along the LAC were key for normalisation of overall ties.

On June 5, the spokesperson of the Chinese foreign ministry said: "Congratulations to Prime Minister @narendramodi, BJP and the National Democratic Alliance on the election victory. We look forward to a healthy & sta-

**ARCHANA JYOTI** ■ NEW DELHI

As heat wave conditions prevail in Delhi and most of us prefer to stay indoors, avoiding the scorching heat is simply not an option for the

winged creatures particularly

pigeons and eagles who have made skyscrapers, buildings, and high mast towers as their

These structures, once their

sanctuaries, now act as lethal

sun, leading to a surge in heat

related illnesses among avian

species, said the wildlife bird

rescue centres and hospitals

busy nursing the heat-struck

"These structures, acting like furnaces, have become lethal

for birds such as eagles and

pigeons. At least 50 per cent of

the injured birds we are receiv-

ing these days are victims of

heatstroke," said Dr Har Avtar

Singh, a vet at Jain Charitable

Birds Hospital in Central Delhi.

Some birds may fall while fly-

ing, not necessarily due to a

lack of energy, but often

because of various factors such

as exhaustion, injury, illness, or

adverse weather conditions.

Birds, like all animals, expend

shelters.

avian species



ble China-India relationship." Leaders of four out of five P-5 countries have congratulated Modi on winning a third term. However, there is no congratulatory message yet from Chinese President Xi Jinping. The permanent members of the UN Security

Council, Russia, the United Kingdom, the United States, China and France are known

The Indian and Chinese militaries have been locked in a standoff since May 2020 and a full resolution of the border row has not yet been achieved though the two sides have disengaged from a number of friction points.

No shelters safe for winged creatures in scorching heat

Dr Singh added that besides

pigeons and eagles, parrot

species like ladybirds and

macaws are struggling to cope

with the blistering weather.

Residents have reported

instances of birds dropping

from trees due to exhaustion or

straining to take flight from the

Or. Singh explained that birds

lack sweat glands, making it

difficult for them to escape the

heat. Without timely treat-

ment, birds suffering from

ground or terraces.

# India thanks China for congratulating | Mandate of LS polls moral defeat for Modi: Congress

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■

The Congress on Saturday claimed the mandate of the Lok Sabha polls has been a "moral, political and per-sonal" defeat for Prime Minister Narendra Modi and said efforts were now being made to justify his "pathetic" electoral performance.

The BJP has won 240 seats in the just-concluded Lok Sabha polls, falling short of the halfway mark in the 543member House, but the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) together won 293 seats. The Congress has won 99 seats.

Congress general secretary Jairam Ramesh said the drumbeat to find silver linings in the mandate that has been "moral, political and personal" defeat for Modi has

"It is being propagated that

heatstroke can face paralysis or

Ornithologists and bird enthu-

the rise in heat-related disor-

the first victims of rising tem-

and nutrients for long periods,

leading to rapid energy deple-

tion. "Feeding them water and food at regular intervals is

crucial, but this is often chal-

lifelong disabilities.



and 1999

a row after Jawaharlal Nehru. How leading a party to 240 seats and becoming an 'onethird' Pradhan Mantri is a mandate is not explained," the Congress leader said.

"Nehru, on the other hand, got 364 seats in 1952, 371 seats in 1957, and 361 seats in 1962 - a 2/3rd majority each time. Yet he remained a complete democrat, nurturing Parliament so very carefully with his constant presence, Ramesh said in a social media

Neither is Modi the only man

lenging for free-ranging birds that struggle to find water and food, making them more prone to heatstroke," Satyanaryan

Experts recommend that bird

# Asia's largest health, fitness

#### event kicks off at Pragati Maidan PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

sworn in thrice in 1996, 1998

And Indira Gandhi was

sworn in 4 times in 1966, 1967, 1971 and 1980, he said.

'The drumbeaters will look

for anything to justify Mr Narendra Modi's pathetic

electoral performance in

In another post, the Congress

general secretary said the

2024 elections have been a

moral defeat" for Modi and

the BJP, while being a "morale

2024," Ramesh said.

sia's largest health and fit-Asias largest health and ...

ness extravaganza, threeday International Health, Sports, and Fitness Festival (IHFF) was kicked off here in the national Capital's Pragati

The highlights of the mega event are two colossal bodycoveted Steadfast Nutrition Pro Show - Asia's biggest bodybuilding championship and the Sheru Classic Pro Qualifiers - India's biggest bodybuilding tournament for amateur athletes, both sponsored by leading sports and wellness nutrition brand Steadfast Nutrition.

In partnership with Steadfast Nutrition, the festival is expected to attract a large audience of around 1.5 lakh spectators. Asked about the significance of these championships and why Steadfast has thrown its weight behind them, Steadfast Nutrition founder Aman Puri said, "The Steadfast Nutrition Pro Show is a milestone event for Indian bodybuilding and



the only road in India to the world's most prestigious bodybuilding championship - Mr Olympia, USA, offering a lifechanging opportunity to Indian bodybuilding athletes. Past champions like Arnold Schwarzenegger and Phil Health cemented their legendary status on this very stage. Steadfast is the first brand in the country to bring a pro show on home soil.

The Sheru Classic is India's biggest bodybuilding event for amateur athletes and brings together fitness enthusiasts and amateurs, giving them global exposure. The events

also promote physical health, contributing to a fitter and more active nation," Aman Puri added.

The event promises to be a focal point for fitness expertise, networking, and knowledge exchange, making it an essential event for those engaged in the fitness and nutraceutical industry.

Four winners will be chosen at the Steadfast Nutrition Pro Show in their respective categories: Men's Physique, Men's Classic Physique, Women's Bikini, and 212 Bodybuilding. The grand finale will take place on June 9.

# 394 officer cadets, including 39 from friendly nations, pass out from IMA

energy during flight, and if they become fatigued or weakened

for any reason, they may strug-

gle to maintain altitude or

control their flight, leading to

"Tragically, at least ten per

cent of these birds perish," he

lamented. The hospital, one of

the oldest bird care centers in

the capital, currently houses

around 2,500 birds. Dr. Singh

noted that most of the 80 daily

cases they handle involve heat-

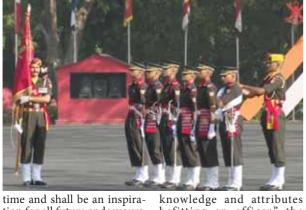
related illnesses, including

heatstroke, diarrhea, and dry

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■

Atotal of 394 officer cadets of 154 Regular Course and 137 Technical Graduate Course, including 39 from 10 friendly countries, passed out from the portals of Indian Military Academy (IMA), Dehradun on Saturday, Defence Ministry said here. Northern Command chief Lt General M V Suchindra Kumar reviewed the Passing Out Parade. He congratulated the officer cadets on the successful completion of their training. He complimented them and the instructors for the excellent parade as well as the crisp and synergised drill movements, indicating high standards of training and discipline imbibed by the young

officer cadets. "The parade is the culmination of your training and the commencement of professional career. This is a moment that comes once in your life-



befitting an officer," the Reviewing Officer told the tion for all future endeavours. The pledge that you take and the vows that you make to officer cadets. your nation are sacred and shall precede all your commitments, henceforth. The fact that you stand proud and strong today is testimony to the hard work and labour that

you have put in to become an

officer. The IMA is an elite

institution that has harnessed

your potential and has

equipped you with all the

He reiterated that the Indian Army is proud to have the best soldiers in the world, who have the wisdom derived from combat and years of operational experience. He urged the officer cadets to always lead with honour; serve with distinction; and inspire those around with unwavering commitment to duty.

feeders be cleaned regularly to prevent infections. "One should

keep cold water in shaded areas and if possible add ORS or electrolytes to the water to ensure birds receive adequate nutrients. In cases where birds are immobilized by the heat, and providing first aid promptly can be life-saving," said Dr Vinod Sharma, a vet expert from Tri Nagar in the national capital. According to ornithologists, eagle populations have adapted to nesting in urban environments, favoring man-made structures like siasts have raised alarms over skyscrapers, communication towers, and utility poles. However, these nesting sites can become unbearably hot ders among birds. Karthik Satyanaryan from Wildlife SOS during heatwaves, posing sigpointed out that birds are often nificant risks to the birds. peratures because their small organs cannot retain water

Eagle chicks, for example, are vulnerable to heat stress, which can cause them to become restless and agitated, leading to accidental falls from nests precariously built on high poles near the city.

#### TERI presents 100 days agenda to tackle green issues PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ **NEW DELHI** s the new Government

As the new Government Asettles in for its five-year term, The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI), a policy research body working in the fields of energy, environment, and sustainability has presented a comprehensive 100-day green agenda

aimed at tackling pressing environmental issues while fostering sustainable development. By embracing these initia-

tives, the government can effectively address climate challenges and fulfill its commitments to sustainable development and environmental protection, said Dr Vibha Dhawan, Director General, TERI. Key proposals include the

introduction of green budgeting to align public spending with environmental pri-orities, and the inclusion of climate vulnerability in the devolution formula to provide additional resources for climate change adaptation at



green public procurement and promoting plastic neutrality are also prioritized to reduce environmental impact across sectors.

Furthermore, the agenda emphasizes the need for sectoral net zero targets and the finalization of the new National Water Policy to address water management challenges. Initiatives such as promoting tree planting outside forests and integrating pyrolysis oil into oil refineries aim to enhance carbon

sequestration and promote clean energy production.
Additionally, the agenda calls

for policies to incentivize biofertilizers, enhance soil remediation initiatives, and empower MSMEs to participate in carbon markets. Integrated approaches like establishing decentralized biogas plants for material recovery underscore the importance of maximizing resource efficiency and reducing waste. The 16th Finance Commission can include climate vulnerability (as part of environment criteria) in the lar economy. A draft policy devolution formula to states to create a climate fund and provide additional resources to state governments to address climate change, suggested RR Rashmi, a prominent climate change expert with the TERI. At the same time, Dhawan

emphasized that the government should strengthen regulations and integrate environmental considerations into various sectoral and non-sectoral policies which will also help in achieving our national and international commitments such as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the Net Zero by 2070 target.Syamal Sarkar, senior consultant with the organisation pitched for a national policy for resource efficiency. Efficiency in use of material resources such as timber, plastic, steel, metals, textiles, construction materials (sand, earth, bricks, cement, etc) and their recycling, reuse needs to be promoted through mandates as well as incentives to sustain a circuhas been in the making for almost five years with the Union Environment Ministry. Also, the Government can establish decentralized biogas plants and material recovery facilities in an integrated manner so that energy generated from biogas plants can be used for operation of material recovery facilities. This will also reduce cost of operations and improve viability. The government can mandate diversion of wet and dry wastes from the landfills and maximize resource recovery, said the experts. There are no policy or regu-

lation mandating cities to collect GHG inventories or conduct climate risk assessments, nor are there targets, incentives, or guidelines for local government involvement in national climate action planning. A proposed solution is to launch a national mission similar to the Smart City Mission, focused on climate action and can be informed by spatial planning tools, they added.

# Israel rescues 4 more hostages | Man assaults Danish PM, arrested

I srael said on Saturday it rescued four hostages who were kidnapped in a Hamas-led attack on October 7, in the largest such hostage recovery operation since the war with Hamas began in Gaza.

Heavy fighting raged in central Gaza, where the hostages were rescued, and at least 55 people, including children, were killed in multiple attacks Saturday as people fled for safety, according to Gaza's Health Ministry. The army said it rescued Noa Argamani, 25; Almog Meir Jan, 21; Andrey Kozlov, 27; and Shlomi Ziv, 40, in two separate locations in a complex special daytime operation in the heart of Nuseirat in central Gaza.

Argamani, has been one of the most widely recognized hostages since she was abducted from a music festival in southern Israel. The video of her abduction was among the first to surface, images of her horrified face widely shared — Argamani detained between two men on a motorcycle, one

arm outstretched and the other Hamas, US Secretary of State held down as she screams "Don't kill me!"

Her mother, Liora, has stage four brain cancer and in April released a video pleading to see her daughter before she dies. Hamas killed about 1,200 people and kidnapped some 250 hostages during the October 7 attack, which triggered the Israel-Hamas war. About half were released in a weeklong cease-fire in November. Israel says more than 130 hostages remain, with about a quarter of those believed dead, and divisions are deepening in the country over the best way to

bring them home. The rescue comes as international pressure mounts on Israel to limit civilian bloodshed in its war in Gaza, which reached its eighth month on Friday with more than 36,700 Palestinians killed, according to Gaza's Health Ministry, which does not distinguish between fighters and civilians. Seeking a breakthrough in the apparently stalled cease-fire negotiations between Israel and Antony Blinken will return to the Middle East next week.

Palestinians are facing widespread hunger because the war has largely cut off the flow of food, medicine and other supplies. UN agencies say over 1 million in Gaza could experience the highest level of starvation by mid-July.

Saturday's operation is the largest recovery of alive hostages since the war erupted, bringing the total of rescued captives to seven.

Two men were rescued in February when troops stormed a heavily guarded apartment in a densely packed town, and a woman was rescued in the aftermath of October's attack. Israeli troops have so far recovered at least 16 bodies of hostages from Gaza, according to the government. Defence Minister Yoav Gallant

called Saturday's rescue "a heroic operation" and said the army will continue fighting until all the hostages are returned. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu is facing growing

ing him to embrace a deal announced last month by US President Joe Biden, but farright allies threatening to collapse his government if he does. Argamani spoke by phone with Israeli President Isaac Herzog and Netanyahu. In an audio message released by the government, Netanyahu is heard asking Argamani how she's feeling and said he hasn't given up on the hostages. She tells him she is "very excited", saying she hasn't heard Hebrew in so long. Her friend, Yonatan Levi, reacted to the news with a sense of disbelief. "Wow. Don't know what to say. So excited such a crazy reality. So happy now and joyful," Levi The rescue comes as Israel is intensifying operations across central Gaza, where the hostages were rescued. The bodies of the dozens of Palestinians killed on Saturday were taken to Al-Aqsa Hospital, where they were counted by Associated Press

pressure to end the fighting in

Gaza, with many Israelis urg-

**AP** ■ COPENHAGEN (DENMARK)

man who reportedly assaulted the Aman who reported, according to the Minister in central Copenhagen will appear in a pre-trial custody hearing on Saturday, authorities

Police confirmed "there has been an incident" with Prime Minister Mette Frederiksen on Friday and that a 39-yearold man was arrested. They didn't provide further details and it wasn't clear if Frederiksen was hurt.

The man is expected to arrive at 1100 GMT at the Copenhagen District Court in Frederiksberg, a municipality enclave within the Danish capital.

The prime minister's office told the Danish state broadcaster DR on Friday that Frederiksen was "shocked" by what happened. Two eyewitnesses, Anna Ravn and Marie Adrian, told the daily BT that they saw a man walking toward Frederiksen and then "pushing her hard on the shoulder so she was shoved aside." They stressed that the premier did not fall

Another witness, Kasper Jorgensen, told the Ekstra Bladet tabloid that a well-dressed man, who seemed part of Frederiksen's protection unit, and a police officer took down the alleged assailant. Soren Kjaeargaard who was working at a



local bar on Kultorvet Square where the incident happened told the BT that he saw Frederiksen after the incident and she had no visible injuries to her face but walked away quickly. Politicians in the Scandinavian country and abroad condemned the reported assault

Swedish Prime Minister Ulf Kristersson said that "an attack on a democratically elected leader is also an attack on our democracy", while Charles Michel, president of the European Council, condemned on X what he called a "cowardly act of aggression".

European Union parliamentary elections are currently underway in Denmark and the rest of the 27-nation bloc and will conclude on Sunday.

Frederiksen has been campaigning with the Social Democrats' EU lead candidate, Christel Schaldemose. Media reports said the attack was not linked to a campaign event. Violence against politicians has become a theme in the run-up to the EU elections. In May, a candidate from Germany's centre-left Social Democrats was beaten and seriously injured while campaigning for a seat in the European

In Slovakia, the election campaign was overshadowed by an attempt to assassinate populist Prime Minister Robert Fico on May 15, sending shockwaves through the nation of 5.4 million and reverberating throughout Europe. Frederiksen, 46, is the leader of the Social Democratic Party and has been Denmark's prime minister since 2019. She has steered Denmark through the global COVID-19 pandemic and a controversial 2020 decision to wipe out Denmark's entire captive mink population to minimize the risk of the small mammals retransmitting the virus.

Assaults on politicians in Denmark are

On March 23, 2003, two activists threw red paint on then-Prime Minister Anders Fogh Rasmussen inside the parliament and were immediately arrested. Foreign Minister Per Stig Moller also suffered some splashes that day.

# Ukrainian attacks leave 28 dead in Russian-occupied regions

Russia-installed officials in the partially occupied Ukrainian regions of Kherson and Luhansk said Ukrainian attacks left at least 28 people dead as Russia and Ukraine continued to exchange drone attacks overnight into Saturday.

A Ukrainian attack Friday on the small town of Sadove in Ukraine's partially occupied Kherson region killed 22 and wounded 15 people, Moscowbacked governor Vladimir Saldo said Saldo said

Russian state news agency Tass cited Saldo as saying that Ukrainian forces first struck the town with a French-made guided bomb, then attacked again with a US-supplied HIMARS missile. He said Ukrainian forces had "deliberately made a repeat strike to create greater numbers of casualties" when "residents of nearby houses ran out to help the injured".

Further east, Leonid Pasechnik,

the Russia-installed governor in Ukraine's partially occupied Luhansk region, said Saturday that two more bodies had been pulled from the rubble following Friday's Ukrainian missile attack on the regional capital, also called Luhansk. Russian state news agency Interfax cited regional authorities as saying this brought the death toll to six. Pasechnik also said 60 people were wounded in the

Pasechnik declared Saturday a day of mourning in the region, with public events cancelled. Ukraine did not comment on either assault.

Meanwhile, drone attacks between Russia and Ukraine persisted. Ukraine launched a barrage of

drones across Russian territory overnight Friday, Russia's Defence Ministry said Saturday. Twenty-five drones were reportedly destroyed over Russia's southern Kuban and Astrakhan regions, the western Tula region, and the Moscowannexed Crimean peninsula On Saturday morning, officials said air defences for the first time shot down Ukrainian drones over the North Ossetia region in the North Caucasus, some 900 km (560 miles) east of the front line in Ukraine's partially occupied Zaporizhzhia region.

Russia's Ministry of Defence said that one drone had been destroyed, whereas regional Gov. Sergei Menyailo reported three downed drones over the region. Menyailo said that the target was a military airfield. Ukrainian air defence overnight shot down nine out of 13 Russian drones over the central Poltava region, south-eastern Zaporizhzhia and Dnipropetrovsk regions, and the Kharkiv region in the northeast, Ukraine's air force

said Saturday. Dnipropetrovsk regional Gov. Serhiy Lysak said the overnight drone attack damaged commercial and residential build-

#### Russia puts former Ukrainian PM on its wanted list

**AP** ■ MOSCOW

reporters.

Russia has put former Ukrainian Prime Minister Yulia Tymoshenko on its wanted list, Russian state media reported, citing the Interior Ministry's database.

Russian state news agency Tass said Tymoshenko was listed as wanted on unspecified criminal

She reportedly joins Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy and his predecessor, Petro Poroshenko, on the same list which also includes scores of officials and lawmakers from Ukraine and NATO countries. Tymoshenko and her Batkivshchyna (the Fatherland) party did not immediately comment Saturday.

Mediazona, an independent Russian news outlet, reported that both Zelenskyy and Poroshenko had been listed since at least late February.

Among others on the list is Kaja Kallas, the prime minister of NATO and EU member

# Pakistan, China agree to upgrade CPEC

ject in the second phase.

PTI ■ ISLAMABAD

Pakistan Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and Chinese President Xi Jinping in their meeting have affirmed consensus on the upgradation of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) and advancing high-quality development of the multi-billion dellar project in the lion dollar project in the second phase

The two leaders held an indepth discussion at the historic Great Hall of the People in Beijing on Friday during the five-day official visit of Sharif which began on June 4. The two leaders were accom-

panied by the ministers and senior officials. This was the first meeting of Sharif with President Xi since assuming office in 2024.

According to the state media, the two leaders showed consensus on up-gradation of the CPEC and advancing the development of the mega pro-

The CPEC, which connects Gwadar Port in Pakistan's Balochistan with China's Xinjiang province, is the flagship project of China's ambi tious Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). The BRI is seen as an attempt by China to further its influence abroad with infrastructure projects funded by Chinese investments across

China has also invested billions in various power projects and road networks in Pakistan under the USD 65 billion CPEC plan, but the implementation of various projects has slowed in recent months. Associated Press of Pakistan

the world.

Sikh pilgrims from India

reported that Prime Minister Sharif briefed President Xi on Pakistan's policies for economic reform and sustained growth, industrial development, agricultural modernisation and regional connectivity and the critical role played by the CPEC in Pakistan's

development. The prime minister recalled the historic visit of President Xi Jinping to Pakistan in 2015 when the CPEC was formally operationalised, marking a

new chapter in the bilateral relationship. He asserted Pakistan's commitment to high-quality develop-ment of the CPEC and to foster synergy between the development strategies of the two countries through close coor-

dination.

Commending President Xi's Belt and Road Initiative and Global Development Initiative (GDI), the prime minister underscored that as the flagship project of BRI, the CPEC had significantly contributed to Pakistan's socio-economic development.

He underlined that the government's agenda for peoplecentric, socio-economic development resonates with the concept of 'shared prosperity'

# 'Indian voters proved West wrong about democracy'

**PTI** ■ WASHINGTON

Prominent Indian-American leader Jasdeep Singh Jassee said the recently concluded polls in India have not only highlighted the robust electoral process in the country but also sent a powerful message to the world about the resilience and vibrancy of its democracy. Despite a wave of scepticism from the Western media regarding the integrity of India's democratic processes, the results have decisively dispelled such doubts, Sikhs for America leader Jasdeep Singh Jassee told PTI in an interview.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi is set to take oath for a third consecutive term, a first in over 60

Singh, who was in Punjab for two weeks during the general elec-tions, said that the allegations appearing in the west of a compromised Election Commission and malfunctioning voting machines have been proven baseless, underscoring the legitimacy and fairness of the elections in the country. "The people of India, through their votes, have demonstrated that they prioritise the nation's overall development. Indian democracy has emerged ened as a result of the latest elections," Singh said.

Responding to a question on Punjab, Singh said the elections have further debunked allegations of human rights violations and curbs on freedom

Showing the inclusiveness of India's democratic framework, he said that Amritpal Singh, a radical pro-Khalistan separatist, participated and won the poll from jail. Additionally, the son of Beant Singh, who assassinated Indira Gandhi, also contested and won, Singh said. Batting for the prime minister's leadership for its 'fast-track development in India', Singh said, "There is optimism that Modi's third term will bring stability and further economic development. The relationship between the United States and India would continue to improve."

# arrive in Pakistan for Jor Mela

Over 800 Sikhs from India arrived here on Saturday to take part in Jor Mela, a threeday festival commemorating the death anniversary of the fifth Sikh guru, Guru Arjan

The Jor Mela will be held from June 15 at Gurdwara Dera Sahib Lahore.

Evacuee Trust Property Board (ETPB) officer Ghulam Mohayuddin told PTI that Pakistan Sikh Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee president and Punjab Minorities Minister Ramesh Singh Arora and the ETPB senior officers welcomed the 846 visiting pilgrims at the Wagah border.

The Sikh pilgrims expressed great joy upon their arrival. "We will have the darshan



Guru's land. I feel very happy," Gurbachan Singh, who heads the delegation, said and added there is a sense of belonging

Arora, the first Sikh minister in Pakistan's Punjab province, said all the arrangements for the Sikh pilgrims have been made by the ETPB, which looks after the affairs of the

minorities in the country.

Special arrangements have been made for the security, (blessing to witness) of our transport and medical facilities

of the pilgrims, he said. Soon after their arrival, the pilgrims left for Gurdwara Panja Sahib in Hasanabdal, about 400-odd kms northwest of here. During their 10-day stay, the Indian Sikhs pilgrims would also visit Gurdwara Janam Asthan, Nankana Sahib, the birthplace of Guru Nanak; Gurdwara Sacha Sauda, Farooqabad; Gurdwara Kartarpur Sahib, Narowal; and Gurdwara Rohri Sahib, Aminabad.

# Macron, Biden hope to move past trade tensions

**AP** PARIS

President Joe Biden is being feted by French President Emmanuel Macron with a state visit Saturday as the two allies aim to show off their partnership on global security issues and move past trade tensions. Biden and Macron attended ceremonies marking the 80th anniversary of D-Day on Thursday and met separately the following day with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy in Paris. The leaders both used those engagements used to under-

invasion. But Macron and Biden have often chafed at the pace of support for Ukraine, especially as the United States, by far the largest contributor to Kyiv's defense, was forced to pause aid up an assistance package.

score the urgent need to sup-

port Kyiv's fight against Russia's

shipments for months while congressional Republicans held The state visit began with a ceremony at the Arc de Triomphe,

France's tomb of the unknown soldier, and a military parade along the Champs-Elysées leading to the Élysée Palace, where the two will hold official meetings and deliver public statements. Later, there is a state dinner at the palace for Biden and his wife, Jill

Biden hosted Macron in December 2022 at the White House for the first state visit of his presidency as the COVID-19 pandemic receded. Jill Biden flew back to Paris

aboard a US government plane after spending Friday in Delaware to support their son, Hunter Biden, who is standing trial on federal gun charges. As the president's trip draws to a close, the far right is likely to emerge as one of the biggest winners in Sunday's European Parliament election while Macron's pro-European Union

movement is flagging.
A top French official said Macron and Biden have a friendly and warm relationship and stressed that the US pres-

including a wreath-laying at ident is spending five days in France, reflecting the importance he attaches to the visit. The official spoke anonymously, in line with customary practices for Macron's office. The official said the US presi-

> dential campaign was not a factor in the discussion. Macron hosted then-President Donald Trump, the presumptive Republican nominee this year, for Bastille Day in 2017, and he came to Washington for a state visit in 2018 before their relation-

> ship soured. US and French officials said Ukraine would be at the top of Saturday's agenda, but the centerpiece of the weekend event would be the strength of the alliance, fortified at Normandy 80 years ago, but with roots far deeper.

"It's probably a good thing for us to remember that we didn't win our independence either without some foreign help or foreign assistance, specifically from France," White House national security spokesman John Kirby said Friday.

Max Bergmann, a former US State Department official who leads Europe research at the Center for Strategic and International Studies, said the US-French relationship is strong despite occasional disagreements.

'There's always tension in Franco-American relations because the French try to do stuff," he said. "They're bold, they throw up proposals, and that leads to some friction when we push back."

For example, he said, France proposed putting Western trainers on the ground in Ukraine, leading to questions of whether this is "really giving Ukraine a major, tangible benefit" or has the potential to be escalatory and dangerous?

Regarding Macron, Bergmann said, "he's the one that pushes the boundaries and throws up ideas." Kirby said the two leaders would have an announcement Saturday on deepening maritime law enforcement cooperation in the Indo-Pacific region. They also were to discuss economic and cli-

mate challenges. While praising the Biden administration's commitment to supporting Ukraine, Macron said earlier this year that Europe must become "capable of defending its interests, with its allies by our side whenever they are willing, and alone if necessary," arguing the continent should rely less on the US for its own defense.

He also warned Western powers against showing any signs of weakness to Russia as he repeatedly said that sending Western troops into Ukraine to shore up its defense should not be ruled out. The leaders were also set to discuss their efforts to bring about a cease-fire to the Israel-Hamas war in Gaza, as the US and Israel await Hamas' response to a Biden-promoted cease-fire proposal that would allow a surge of humanitarian assis-

tance into the territory. Macron is expected to raise US trade practices that he has often criticized, including the Inflation Reduction Act, which favors American-made climate tech-

nology such as electric vehicles. Macron said the US, like China, has "decided not to respect the rules of global trade" by shoring up protections and subsidies while Europe's industry remains open and is stuck in overregula-

The French official said Europe has to defend European interests, after watching the US do the same with its own, but said Macron hopes to find a mutually acceptable outcome.

Gary Hufbauer, nonresident senior fellow at the Peterson Institute for International Economics, said trade with China is a sticking point between the US and Europe, particularly France. The US has been more eager to restrict trade, particularly regarding technology.

Biden is also moving toward tariffs on Chinese electric vehicles and batteries, which could affect European cars that include Chinese parts.

Overall, Hufbauer said, "Europe

wants to maintain much more

trade with China than the US

French President Emmanuel Macron, center right, stands with US President Joe Biden, First Lady Jill Biden and Brigitte Macron, right, during a ceremony at the Arc de Triomphe on Saturday in Paris. President Joe Biden is being feted by French President Emmanuel Macron with a state visit Saturday, as the two allies aim to show off their partnership on global security issues and move past trade

# Looking forward to doing exciting work in India: Musk

A merican tech billionaire Elon Musk has said he is looking forward to his companies doing "exciting work" in India, as he congratulated Prime Minister Narendra Modi on his historic

election victory. Modi will be administered the oath of office on June 9, his third consecutive term as Prime Minister.

"Congratulations @narendramodi on your victory in the world's largest democratic elections! Looking forward to my companies doing exciting work in India," Musk, 52, said in a post on X on Friday.

Responding to Musk's post, Prime Minister Modi said: "Appreciate your greetings @elonmusk.

Modi said the talented Indian youth, country's demography, predictable policies and stable democratic polity would continue to provide the business environment for all its partners

The congratulatory message came two months after the CEO of the electric carmaker Tesla microblogging platform X in April postponed his proposed visit to India due to "very heavy Tesla obligations". Musk — who was expected to be in India on April 21 and 22 and scheduled to meet Prime Minister Modi — later wrote on X that he is



looking forward to coming to India later this year.

In June last year, Musk met with Modi during the latter's US visit and stated that he planned to visit India in 2024 while expressing confidence that Tesla would enter the Indian market

His proposed visit had raised expectations that he would announce plans for electric car maker Tesla to set up shop in the country, along with his satcom venture Starlink.

It was also expected that Musk would announce plans for Tesla to set up its manufacturing unit in India and investments could be to the tune of billions of dollars and the way forward for selling Tesla electric cars in India at the additional to the selling the in India at the earliest.

Not just electric cars, he is also eyeing the Indian market for his satellite internet business Starlink, for which

internet business Starlink, for which regulatory approvals are awaited. Musk had in the past sought import duty reduction in India for it to be able to sell Tesla cars in the country. Musk's plan to visit India in April came on the heels of the government announcing a new electric vehicle policy, under which import duty concessions will be given to companies setting up manufacturing companies setting up manufacturing units in the country with a minimum investment of USD 500 million, a move aimed at attracting major global players like Tesla.

provision is yet to be notified. The procedure was to be

applicable for manufacturers pan-masala, unmanufactured tobac (without 1)

(without lime tube) with or

without a brand name,

'Hookah' or 'gudaku' tobacco,

smoking mixtures for pipes

tobacco (without lime tube)

filter khaini, jarda scented tobacco, snuff and branded or

The manufacturers of such

tobacco products were required to furnish the details

of packing machines being

used for filling and packing of

packages in Form GST SRM-I,

electronically within 30 days

unbranded 'Gutkha', etc.

chewing

and cigarettes,

# Maharashtra, Karnataka, Delhi top UK's investment flows from India: Report

Maharashtra followed by Karnataka and Delhi are the top three states of India bringing in foreign direct investment (FDI) into the UK, according to a pay ionit report according to a new joint report produced by the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) and the High Commission of India in the

"Indian Assets: Charting the Journeys of Indian Companies in the UK", launched in London earlier this week, revealed that companies headquartered in Maharashtra brought in the highest amount of FDI into the UK at 20 per cent in 2023, followed by Karnataka (12 per cent) and Delhi (8.6 per cent).

Delni (8.6 per cent).

Completing the top 10 tallies are the states of Gujarat (7.1 per cent), Tamil Nadu (6.7 per cent), Telangana (6.5 per cent), Uttar Pradesh (5.9 per cent), Haryana (4.5 per cent), West Bengal (3.14 per cent) and Bengal (3.14 per cent) and Kerala (3.05 per cent) — making up 78 per cent of the total FDI from India into the

"As India and the UK continue to evolve and navigate the complexities of a rapidly changing global landscape, I believe that our businesses reimagining the India-UK corridor will realise our shared vision and aspiration for a secure and sustainable future prosperity," said Vikram Doraiswami, the Indian High Commissioner to the UK, who launched the report in London.

The analysis finds the leading sector bringing in FDI from India in terms of the number of companies and employees is IT and software, highlighting the achievements of Indian companies in the UK across sectors such as automotive.

electric car batteries, diagnostics and healthcare, and technology. It also spotlights the positive

impact Indian companies can have on heritage British brands and how the value of these legacy brands is retained and protected when acquired by Indian companies.

'Today, Indian companies with operations in the UK have integrated themselves into the British economy, making their mark in industries in almost all leading sectors. Their ability to adapt, innovate, and forge meaningful partnerships has not only propelled their growth but has also enriched the economy of the UK and its regions, promoting job creation, driving investment, and fostering a culture of diversity and inclusion," said CII Director General

Chandrajit Banerjee. Among some of the other findings of the report, new Indian students cumulatively contributed an estimated GBP 4.3 billion to UK universities against the backdrop of a 5 per cent increase in UK student visas last year.

It also showcases the robust relationship that Indian have companies different UK regions, with the West Midlands, London and the north-west being the top recipients of Indian FDI in the UK across the fields of automotive, software and IT

services and energy.
According to the latest official data from the UK's Department of Business and Trade, total trade in goods and services (exports plus imports) between the UK and India was GBP 39.0 billion in the four quarters to the end of Q4 2023 an increase of 4.8 per cent or GBP 1.8 billion in current prices from the four quarters to

#### PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The GST Network (GSTN) has rolled out a special form for manufacturers of pan masala and tobacco products to report inputs and outputs procured with tax authorities to check evasion.

This new form GST SRM-II came within a month of GSTN rolling out form GST SRM-I for registering machines of such manufacturers.

"The second form namely Form GST SRM-II is also available on the portal. Taxpayers dealing in the manufacture of Pan Masala and Tobacco products can now report the details of inputs and outputs procured and consumed for the relevant month," GSTN said in an update to its taxpayers on June

Singhi Executive Director Rajat Mohan said the newly available Form GST SRM-II requires detailed monthly reporting of inputs and outputs

"This form aims to enhance

# GSTN rolls out form for tobacco manufacturers to report inputs, outputs to tax authorities

manufacturing process of Pan Masala and Tobacco products. Taxpayers must meticulously document their procurement and consumption of inputs to avoid any discrepancies and ensure accurate tax filings," Mohan said.

Taxpayers are advised to familiarise themselves with the details and instructions provided in these forms to and instructions ensure seamless compliance and avoid any potential penalties, he added.

In January, the Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC) announced the introduction of a new registration and monthly return filing procedure to improve GST compliance for manufacturers of pan masala and tobacco products effective April 1. The date was later



The move to overhaul the registration, record-keeping, and monthly filing of such businesses was aimed at improving GST compliance

masala and tobacco products. The GST law was also amended via Finance Bill 2024 to say that manufacturers of pan masala, gutkha and similar tobacco products will

have to pay a penalty of up to of the notification coming into Rs 1 lakh, if they fail to register effect i.E., April 1, 2024. their packing machinery with GST authorities with effect from April 1.

The input and output statement GST SRM-II was to be filed by the 10th of the succeeding month.

# Delhi airport operator DIAL awaits BCAS nod for airside transfer of passenger baggage from T

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Soon, passengers landing at Terminal 1 of the Delhi airport might not have to carry their checked-in baggage for a connecting flight from Terminal 3 as the airport operator plans to ensure the baggage transfer through the

Delhi International Airport Ltd (DIAL) is awaiting approval for the proposal regarding the airside transfer of checked-in baggage of passengers between T1 and T3 from the Bureau of Civil Aviation Security (BCAS), according to officials in the

Similarly, airside baggage

transfer from T3 to T1 for international flight passengers will also be considered, the officials said.

At the Indira Gandhi International Airport (IGIA), international flights are operated from T3, while T1 and T2 are for domestic flights. Currently, passengers landing at T1 have to carry their checked-in baggage to T3 for the connecting flight.

Once the system of airside transfer of the checked-in baggage is in place, the passengers will not be required to carry them while taking a connecting flight from T3. In the case of an international flight passenger landing at T3 and then taking a domestic

Bajaj Housing Finance files



flight from T1, modalities will be worked out, as the baggage has to be cleared by customs. One of the officials quoted above said that a Proof of Concept (PoC) is being worked out so that, after

customs clearance, the baggage

can be dropped at T1. T1 and T3 of the Delhi airport are slightly away from each other and passengers travel between the terminals by road. The airport, having a passenger handling capacity of 100 to 105 million, has three terminals — T1, T2 and T3. The expanded T1 is expected

to be operational in June.
As part of upgrading the airport infrastructure, DIAL, a consortium led by the GMR Group, plans to have an Automated People Mover (APM) or an air train for passengers for seamless transit between the three terminals. Air passenger traffic is on the rise, and airlines are also expanding their fleet as well as

networks to meet the rising demand.

Strategic Cooperative Partnership' and expressed the resolve to further deepen cooperation across diverse domains ranging political and security to economic, trade, and people-

to-people exchanges.
They also exchanged views on regional global including and developments including Afghanistan, Palestine and South Asia, including

Kashmir. President Xi Jinping also hosted a banquet in honour of the prime minister, where another round of discussion

on different matters of mutual interests was held.

# strong progress on debt restructuring front: IMF PTI ■ COLOMBO

Sri Lanka has made

Sri Lanka's macroeconomic policy reforms have started to "bear fruit" and the country is expected to reach agreements with external commercial creditors soon, the IMF has said ahead of the second review of it's USD 2.9 billion bailout programme to the cash-strapped country.

Addressing a press conference on Friday, International Monetary Fund (IMF) Communication Department Director Julie Kozack asserted that Sri Lanka has made "sufficiently strong progress on the debt restructuring front". She said that the island nation's programme performance is

with quantitative and structural conditionality for the second review met or implemented with delay, adding that reforms are still ongoing in some areas. The second review of the IMF's Extended Fund Facility under the USD 2.9 billion bailout of Sri Lanka has been set for June

Kozack confirmed that the IMF's Executive Board will meet to discuss the second review and the Article IV Consultation.

Under Article IV of the IMF's Articles of Agreement, the global lender holds bilateral discussions with members, typically every year, with a staff team visiting the country, collecting economic and financial information, and discussing with officials the country's economic developments and policies.

"In Sri Lanka, we do see macroeconomic policy reform starting to bear fruit," Kozack adding "commendable outcomes" include rapid disinflation, robust reserve accumulation,

and initial signs of economic

growth while preserving the



steps on debt restructuring are to conclude negotiations with external commercial creditors

and implement agreements in principle with the official Kozack said Sri Lanka's domestic debt operations have largely been completed, and debt restructuring discussions

are continuing.
"The authorities have been holding extensive discussions with external official creditors regarding

(memorandum understanding) with the official creditor committee and the final agreements with the Export-Import Bank of China, she said, adding that talks with the China Development Bank

are also at an advanced stage. "There is a strong expectation that agreements with external commercial creditors consistent with programme parameters will be reached soon. So, overall, we assess that there has been sufficiently strong progress on the debt restructuring front," she said. In March, the Washington-based IMF said it reached a staff-level agreement with Sri Lanka for the next phase, enabling access to USD 337 million from the nearly USD 3 billion bailout approved in 2023 for the cash-strapped country. Two tranches of USD

330 million each were released

in March and December 2023. | finance company registered



Bajaj Housing Finance has filed preliminary papers with capital markets regulator Sebi to raise Rs 7,000 crore through an initial public offering (IPO).

The proposed IPO comprises a fresh issue of equity shares of

PTI NEW DELHI

a fresh issue of equity shares of up to Rs 4,000 crore and an offer for sale (OFS) of equity shares worth Rs 3,000 crore by Bajaj parent Finance

parent Bajaj Finance, according to the draft red herring prospectus (DRHP). The share sale is being conducted to comply with the Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) regulations, which require non-banking upper-layer finance companies to be listed on stock exchanges by September 2025.

Proceeds from the fresh issue will be used to augment the company's capital base to meet future capital requirements. Bajaj Housing Finance is a non-deposit-taking housing

with the National Housing Bank since September 2015. It offers financial solutions for purchasing and renovating residential and commercial

properties. It has been identified and categorised as an "upper layer" NBFC by the RBI in India, its comprehensive mortgage products include home loans, loans against lease property, discounting and developer

financing.

For the entire financial year 2023-24, the housing lender posted a net profit of Rs 1,731 crore, marking a growth of 38 per cent from Rs 1,258 crore

Housing finance companies Aadhar Housing Finance and India Shelter Finance have been recently listed on the

stock exchanges. On June 6, the board of Bajaj Finance approved the sale of shares worth Rs 3,000 crore in the initial public offering of Bajaj Housing Finance. Kotak Mahindra Capital Company Ltd, BofA Securities

India Ltd, SBI Capital Markets Ltd, Goldman Sachs (India) Securities Private Ltd and JM Financial Ltd are the bookrunning lead managers that will manage the company's public issue.

# CBIC clarifies on display Assembly of mobile phones for levy of 10 per cent import duty

The CBIC on Friday listed out parts or components, such as touch panel, cover glass, and LED backlight, which constitute the display assembly of a mobile phone and will attract a 10 per cent import duty.

It also said components, including the frame, SIM tray, and side keys like power/volume button, when fitted/attached to the display assembly, integrated display assembly can be imported at the concessional 10 per cent

customs duty. In a circular, the Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC) said currently a concessional basic customs duty (BCD) rate of 10 per cent is imposed on display assembly for use in the manufacture of a cellular mobile phone and a nil BCD rate on inputs or parts for use in the manufacture of a display assembly for use in manufacture of a cellular mobile phone. It said certain cases of misdeclaration by importers were intercepted by the Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI) and other field formations and demand notices were issued in

certain cases as well.

With the industry facing "interpretational challenges" with regard to the display assembly of cellular mobile phones, a committee constituted with officials from both CBIC and MeitY, recommended a principle that may be used to determine the interpretation of display



assembly for extending the concessional BCD

If the display assembly is imported with the items/components, including receiver mesh, speaker net, support frame, and antenna pin, which are fabricated, embedded, fitted or attached to the assembly, the whole integrated assembly should also be treated as a display assembly of a cellular mobile phone, attracting a BCD rate of 10 per cent. ICEA Chairman Pankaj Mohindroo said this

circular is a big relief to the industry and will avoid unnecessary litigation.

# England loses to Iceland in last friendly before Euro 2024; host Germany beats Greece

ngland was booed by some of its own fans after losing 1-0 to Its last fixed by the form of the European friendly before the European Championship, while host nation Germany recovered from a goal down to beat Greece 2-1

Jón Dagur Thorsteinsson left defender John Stones standing as he scored for Iceland in the 16th minute to bring back memories of one of England's lowest points of recent years, its 2-1 elimination by Iceland at Euro 2016. England created few clear-cut chances

against Iceland and nearly conceded a second goal when a promising Icelandic counterattack ended with Thorsteinsson slipping as he shot.

"We learned a lot and we know the performance wasn't good enough," England manager Gareth Southgate told broadcaster Channel 4. "Equally we needed the game; there's a lot of players that we're managing their minutes and it was obviously a disjointed disappointing and performance and we didn't show enough character." England, which beat Bosnia-Herzegovina 3-0 on Monday, gets its tournament under way June 16 against Serbia in Group C.

Germany needed substitute Pascal Gross' 89th-minute goal to secure the win over Greece a week before it opens Euro 2024 against Scotland in Munich.



Georgios Masouras gave Greece the lead in the 34th on the rebound after goalkeeper Manuel Neuer failed to hold a shot from Christos Tzolis, Arsenal forward Kai Havertz leveled in the 56th when he shot on the turn and it went in off Manolis Siopis.

After Benjamin Henrichs sent a shot off the bar in the 83rd, Germany finally took the lead when Gross hit a fierce shot from outside the box.

With a flat first-half performance and a late recovery, the win over Greece continues a mixed bag of form for

Germany, which beat France and the Netherlands in friendlies in March but has also lost to Japan, Turkey and Austria within the last 12 months.

Neuer's error for the Greece goal came shortly after Germany coach Julian Nagelsmann confirmed he was cutting Stuttgart goalkeeper Alexander Nübel as he finalized the 26-player squad for the tournament. Barcelona's Marc-Andre ter Stegen and Hoffenheim's Oliver Baumann are the two other goalkeepers in the squad. Nagelsmann committed in March to

having Neuer as his first-choice goalkeeper for Euro 2024, even though injuries meant the Bayern Munich goalkeeper only played his first game under Nagelsmann for Germany in Monday's 0-0 draw with Ukraine. Also Friday, Poland beat neighbor Ukraine 3-1 with three goals in the opening 30 minutes and Scotland drew 2-2 with Finland after giving up a 2-0 lead. Romania failed to beat one of Europe's

smallest nations, Liechtenstein, in a 0-0 draw. The Czech Republic cruised to a 7-1 win over Malta

Indian women go down 2-4 to Germany, suffer seventh consecutive loss in FIH Pro League

Stung by half-a-dozen losses

over the course of a fortnight,

India started much better on

Saturday with Lalremsiami leading the way in the initial

created some space to drag the

ball into the circle and then

took a powerful shot at the

thwart it in the nick of time.

The Indian midfield then set

up a perfect ball for an

unmarked Sunelita in the

ninth minute as the teenaged

midfielder put it across

Sonntag to give world No.5

Deepika then gave a proper

lesson on how to score on the

counter when she deftly

snatched the ball in the

midfield and ran forward with

India the lead.

minutes.

The Indian women's hockey team could not break its sequence of half-a-dozen consecutive losses in the FIH Pro League, losing to Germany 2-4, its seventh consecutive defeat in the tournament here on Saturday.

The Indian's squandered a twogoal advantage when Sunelita Toppo and Deepika scored excellent field goals in the opening quarter to give the Harendra Singh-coached side the the best chance to break the

Sunelita (9th) and Deepika (15th) scored superb field goals to give India a huge morale-boosting 2-0 lead but soon saw it being cancelled out by Germany's Viktoria Huse, who converted penalty corners in the 23rd and 32nd minutes to bring her team on level terms. Stinne Kurz (51st) then converted a penalty corner before Jule Bleuel scored a field goal in the 55th minute to pile on more misery on the Indians.

The latest defeat comes after India had lost all their four matches against Belgium and Argentina in Antwerp last month and then succumbed to defeats against Germany (1-3) and Great Britain (2-3) here last weekend

Katariya Vandana

company. Vandana drew Sonntag out before relaying the ball to Deepika who tapped it in with ease just two seconds before the end of the first quarter.

The veteran forward first However, German penalty-corner specialist Viktoria converted two penalty corners, goal, only for German goalkeeper Julia Sonntag to

one each in the second and third quarter, as India's lead evaporated. Deepika made some good runs into the circle in the second half, but was unable to time her

shots for maximum impact. The last quarter of play was a story of complete domination for German forwards who unleased a barrage of attacks to overpower the Indian defence. India will play Great Britain in their last Pro League match on

# Carlos Alcaraz will play Alexander Zverev in first French Open final for each

**AP** ■ PARIS

Alcaraz started arlos Opoorly and fell behind early in his French Open semifinal against Jannik Sinner. Later, as both dealt with cramps under Friday's afternoon sun, Alcaraz trailed by two sets to one.

By the end of the latest installment in this burgeoning rivalry between two young, talented players, an engaging five-setter that lasted 4 hours, 9 minutes, Alcaraz actually had accumulated fewer total points, 147-145.

That, of course, is not the score that matters. And Alcaraz, who says he takes pleasure from challenges, ultimately persevered, pulling out a 2-6, 6-3, 3-6, 6-4, 6-3 victory over Sinner to get to his first final in Paris. It made the 21-year-old from Spain the youngest man to reach a Grand Slam title

"You have to find the joy (while) suffering. That's the key — even more on clay, here at Roland Garros. Long rallies.

match on three surfaces.

Alcaraz said. "You have to the player who leads the tour in fight. You have to suffer. But as I told my team many, many times, you have to enjoy suffering?

He won championships at the U.S. Open in 2022 on hard courts and at Wimbledon in 2023 on grass.

Now the No. 3-seeded Alcaraz will face No. 4 Alexander Zverev of Germany on the red clay Sunday. Hours before his 2-6, 6-2, 6-4, 6-2 semifinal victory over No. 7 Casper Ruud of Norway, Zverev's domestic abuse case in Berlin ended, because he reached an out-of-court settlement with his accuser, a former girlfriend. When a reporter tried to follow up on the topic, Zverev said: 'We move on. I never, ever want to hear another question about the subject again. That goes out to everybody?

Ruud started well, but then began to fade, and he was handed some pills by a doctor during a third-set changeover. Ruud, who said afterward he had a stomach problem, looked listless and stopped some shots a sh

match wins this season and has been the runner-up at majors three times - including in 2022 and 2023 in Paris.

Zverev finally broke through at Roland Garros after bowing out in the semifinals each of the past three years. This will be his second Grand Slam final: He blew a two-set lead and lost in five against Dominic Thiem at the U.S. Open in 2020. "I was not mature enough. I

was maybe too much of a kid still," said Zverev, who is now 27. "I didn't know what the occasion means."

This will be the first French Open men's final without Rafael Nadal, Novak Djokovic or Roger Federer since 2004. Djokovic was the defending

champion in Paris, but he withdrew before the quarterfinals after tearing the meniscus in his right knee and had surgery this week. Because he failed to get back to the final, he will drop from atop the ATP rankings, allowing Sinner to rise a spot from No. despite his de



"Obviously disappointed how it ended, but it's part of my growing and the process," said Sinner, who won the Australian Open in January for his first major trophy.

The 22-year-old Italian showed up in Paris with a lingering hip injury that forced him to sit out v-court tournament in

Rome last month. Alcaraz forearm missed that event, too, because of a right forearm issue that he said made him afraid to hit his booming forehands at full

men experienced physical problems in the third set. Alcaraz's right hand began

F1 leader Max Verstappen hit by smoky battery

and left thigh massaged by a trainer during changeovers.

It brought to mind last year's French Open semifinals, when Alcaraz got off to a terrific start against Diokovic but then dealt with full-body cramps that rendered the remainder of the

He and Sinner are seen as the future of men's tennis. The present isn't too shabby, either. Even though this was not necessarily the most aesthetically pleasing of their nine head-to-head meetings -Alcaraz leads 5-4 - and they combined for 102 unforced errors, there were moments of brilliance that generated dueling clap-accompanied chants of each man's first name from the Court Philippe Chatrier crowd. In the fifth set, with shadows

covering more than half the

from spectators in the middle

court, Alcaraz moved out front by sliding until he could reach across his body to snap a second backhand passing winner for a break point. A forehand winner - one of his 30 in the match - made it 2-0 at the  $3\frac{1}{2}$ hour mark, earning a yell of "Vamos!" from his coach, 2003 French Open champion Juan Carlos Ferrero. Soon, it was 3-0, and Alcaraz was on his way. Both players walloped the ball with such force that the balloff-strings thuds elicited gasps

few shades darker than the clay, came out ready at the start of the match, barely ever missing, gliding more than grinding along the baseline, stretching his long limbs to get to nearly everything Alcaraz offered. Alcaraz, his right arm covered by a white sleeve, would deliver a powerful shot to a corner, punctuated with a grunt, and Sinner would somehow get to it, flip it back and draw a mistake. Sinner led 4-0 and it took

Sinner, his rust-colored shirt a

Alcaraz 20 minutes of striving to simply place a "1" beside his name on the scoreboard. The inauspiciously for Alcaraz, who fell behind 2-0. Here's how Alcaraz came

through: He came up with a 32-23 edge in winners over the last two sets. With his strokes, somehow,

gaining zest, and the fans, somehow, getting louder, Alcaraz advanced tournament he grew up watching on TV at home in Spain as his countryman Nadal d up a record 14 titles



# Bose, Ranawade, Lalchungnunga not in India's 23-member squad for away match against Qatar

Indian football head coach **L**Igor Stimac on Saturday named a 23-member squad without the defensive trio of Mohun Bagan veteran Subhasish Bose, Mumbai FC's Amey Ranawade and Lalchungnunga of East Bengal for its away World Cup Qualifier against Qatar on Tuesday

This will be India's first match after the retirement of Sunil Chhetri, who made his last international appearance in a frustrating goalless draw against Kuwait in their second-round World Cup Qualifier at Salt Lake Stadium on Thursday.

Stimac chose to give Jay Gupta the debut as both Bose and Ranawade started on the bench and did not get any minutes in their match against Kuwait.

Lalchungnunga, however, was not named in the Indian team list against Kuwait.

India have five points and are behind table-toppers Qatar who have 13 in the Group A standings. Afghanistan and Kuwait have five and three points, occupying the third and fourth places

respectively. While Qatar have sealed their third-round berth, the other three teams, including India

and bottom-placed Kuwait, have a chance to make the cut. Kuwait will face Afghanistan at home in their concluding second-round clash

India must win against the twotime Asian champions Qatar to make their maiden appearance in the third round of Asia's top-18 teams. A point will be enough for the Blue Tigers if the Afghanistan versus Kuwait tie also ends in a draw.

However, a defeat in Qatar will end India's hopes of progressing, irrespective of the other result. The Blue Tigers will travel to Doha from Kolkata on Saturday

evening.

INDIA SQUAD Goalkeepers: Gurpreet Singh Sandhu, Amrinder Singh, Vishal

Defenders: Anwar Ali, Jay Gupta, Mehtab Singh, Narender, Nikhil Poojary, Rahul Bheke. Midfielders: Anirudh Thapa Brandon Fernandes, Edmund Lalrindika, Jeakson Singh Thounaojam, Lallianzuala Chhangte, Liston Colaco, Mahesh Singh Naorem, Nandhakumar Sekar, Sahal Abdul Samad, Suresh Singh

Wangjam. Forwards: Manvir Singh, Rahim Ali, Vikram Partap Singh, David Lalhlansanga.

problem in Canadian Grand Prix practice **AP** MONTREAL

machine smoking, while Aston Martin's Fernando Alonso had the fastest lap Friday in the second free practice at the Canadian Grand Prix. After Circuit Gilles Villeneuve

was hit by heavy rain, lightning and hail before the first practice session, Verstappen returned to the garage four laps into the second session after a run on dry tires. Red Bull said the smoke was caused by a battery issue.

"It's not ideal, I would have liked to drive more laps," Verstappen said. "It's definitely not how I would have liked to get on in FP2 but I think it's more important to figure out what actually happened and what kind of implications that will have for this weekend and the rest of the year."

Alonso had a fast lap of 1 minute, 15.810 seconds. Mercedes driver George Russell was second at 1:16.273 and Aston Martin's Lance Strol, the lone Canadian in field, followed at 1:16.464.

"It was a tricky Friday for everyone," Alonso said. "But it could be like this for qualifying and the race, so it's still very useful information. The right decision can gain you five seconds, wrong decision and you're out of the race."

Earlier, McLaren's Lando Norris had a lap at 1:24.435 after the downpour delayed the first practice. Ferrari's Carlos



Sainz was second, followed by teammate Charles Leclerc. Lightning, heavy rain and hail rolled through a little more than an hour before the practice start time. Sauber driver Valtteri Bottas attempted to form a snowball out of the large pieces of hail that filled the paddock.

"Today was definitely an odd seven-time season champion Lewis Hamilton of Mercedes said. "It was literally summer this morning, then it rained hailstone. I can't even remember the last time I saw hailstone but they were huge. Then sunny again, really hot and humid, and then raining

again." Event organizers asked spectators to leave grandstands amid inclement weather while police shut down the bridges accessing Notre Dame Island. The storm subsided roughly 15 minutes before the expected start time and the site was reopened to fans. The drivers didn't hit the wet track until 22 minutes into the session as groundcrews worked to clear the water, but conditions remained less than ideal.

Sauber driver Zhou Guanyu triggered a red flag five minutes later when he aquaplaned and clipped the wall at Turn 5 before grinding to a halt. Several other drivers, including Bottas and Stroll, slid off course and into the grass during the session.

### settles for silver in Budapest **PTI** ■ BUDAPEST

Anshu Malik

Indian woman wrestler Anshu Malik could not match the skills of her 21-yearold Chinese rival Kexin Hong in the final, bowing out tamely to settle for a silver in the 57kg category of the Budapest Ranking Series here.

Competing against the No.1 ranked Chinese, Anshu lost 1-12 on technical superiority against the Hangzhou Asian Games bronze medallist in the

53kg category. India's Antim Panghal had earlier fought hard to settled for a silver in the 53kg category, while star wrestler Vinesh Phogat lost to Jiang Zhu of China 0-5 in the quarterfinals in the 50kg category.

Anshu started with an incredible bout against Anastasia Nichita of Moldova, winning 6-5 on points to secure a place in the semifinal. With Nichita leading 5-4 and just 19 seconds remaining on the clock, Anshu scored a takedown on the edge to claim a 6-5 lead to win the

close contest. She then overcame the challenge of world champion Zhang Qi 2-1 on point to secure a title showdown with another Chinese.

But Hong proved far too superior for the Indian, taking a 4lead in the opening round before asserting her class in the second round and taking an unassailable lead with 11 seconds still remaining on the

clock India's only male wrestler to qualify for the Paris Olympics, Aman Sehrawat had earlier won a silver on the opening day losing 1-11 on technical superiority to Japan's Rei Higuchi.

# Praggnanandhaa beats Nakamura; Carlsen wins Norway Chess bottom of the standings behind tangible advantage as the game

PTI ■ STAVANGER (NORWAY)

Grandmaster **T**ndian Praggnanandhaa ended his campaign on a positive note by defeating American Hikaru Nakamura in the finale to sign off third even as world number one Magnus Carlsen won the Norway Chess tournament here.

Carlsen walked away with prize money of 7,00,000 NOK (Around USD 65,000 reserved for the winner) for ending with 17.5 points in the unique tournament that ensured that each round had a winner either through Classical time control or Armageddon if the game ended in a draw.

Nakamura finished second on 15.5 points despite losing to Praggnanandhaa, who concluded third

on 14.5 points.
Praggnanandhaa can be happy with the fact that he defeated the top three Frenchman also won under the ranked players in the world in one of Armageddon, leaving Liren at the



He had beaten Carlsen and Caruana under Classical time control earlier in the tournament and his win against Nakamura ensured that he became the first player ever to beat the top three. The fourth place went to Alireza Firouzja (13.5 points) who accounted for reigning world champion Ding Liren of China. The Iranian turned

Caruana who finished on 10 points for the fifth place in the six-players double round-robin tournament. In the Women's section, Wenjun Ju had

no trouble securing the top spot at the expense of compatriot Tingjie Lei. The Chinese won with 19 points in all coming from three wins under Classical time control.

Anna Muzychuk finished second on 16 points, 1.5 points ahead of Lei who in turn was two points clear of R Vaishali. Koneru Humpy on 10 points was a distant fifth ahead of veteran Pia Cramling who tallied eight points in all. The final round was not devoid of excitement. Carlsen delivers on demand and he did just that yet again against Fabiano Caruana.

After a regulation draw in the Ruy Lopez as white Carlsen reserved his energy for the final Armageddon and his Queen pawn opening ensured a

progressed.
The Norwegian won in the Queen and

pawns endgame after 52 moves when his passed pawn in the centre was about

to become a new Queen. Praggnanandhaa took his chances in the middle game arising out of a London system and did not regret as Nakamura was on the backfoot right from the word go. Unleashing a king

side attack the Indian romped home in

iust 31 moves **Results final round men:** Magnus Calrsen (Nor, 17.5) beat Fabiano Caruana (Usa, 11.5) 1.5-1; R Praggnanadhaa (Ind, 14.5) beat Hikaru Nakamura (Usa, 15.5) 1.5-1; Firouzja Alireza (Fra, 13.5) beat Ding Liren (Chn, 7) 1.5-1.

Women: Wenjun Ju (Chn, 19) beat Tingjie Lei (Chn, 14.5) 3-0; Anna Muzychuk (Ukr, 16) beat Koneru Humpy (Ind, 10) 1.

through the showpiece.

# SPOTLIGHT ON NY PITCH AS STEADY INDIA TAKE ON WOUNDED PAKISTAN

Cricket Stadium at the

Eisenhower Park on the

In the six innings of the three

matches hosted at the stadium

so far, teams have surpassed the 100-run mark only twice.

Some former players have wondered aloud whether the low-scoring conditions would

be of any help in selling cricket

to the American market

outskirts of the city.

acknowledged.

The four drop-in pitches at the venue, laid in April under the supervision of Adelaide Oval confident and well-Aadjusted India would look to capitalise on an groundsman Damian Hough, are yet to settle down properly. The uneven bounce of the surface has also raised safety concerns for the batters, especially after Indian skipper Rohit Sharma was hit on his unpredictable Pakistan's vulnerable state and lack of familiarity with the tricky conditions here when the traditional rivals lock horns in their eagerly-awaited T20 World Cup clash on Sunday. Rohit Sharma was hit on his shoulder, forcing him to stop The marquee game, which is during batting tournament-opener expected to draw the biggest Ireland on June 5. crowd of the tournament so far, will be held at the newly "I don't know what to expect constructed 34,000-seater Nassau County International

from the pitch to be honest. We will prepare as if the conditions are going to be like this (for Pakistan game). This is going to be a kind of game where all XI of us will need to contribute," Rohit had said outskirts of the city.
Heading into this high-profile contest, the 22-yard pitch remains a major talking point, having already faced significant criticism for its unpredictability, which the ICC has officially after the game against Ireland. A day after India's game, the ICC had to release a statement, addressing the growing concerns surrounding the pitches prepared for the New York-leg of this T20 World

Cup.
"The ICC recognise that the pitches used so far at the Nassau County International Cricket Stadium have not played as consistently as we would have all wanted," the

vet to acclimatise to the conditions at Nassau Stadium. They arrived in New York on Thursday night following their shocking defeat to tournament debutants USA and took the next day off.

As a result, Babar Azam and his squad have had limited time to adjust to these challenging conditions, which could be a disadvantage heading into this crucial encounter.

And a defeat against India could significantly complicate their qualification prospects. Against Ireland, the Indian think-tank left out left-arm wrist-spinner Kuldeep Yaday from the playing XI and opted for an extra specialist fast

On Sunday, the strategy is expected to remain the same, particularly as the match is expected to be played on an unused centre turf. South Africa and Netherlands are playing a game at the Nassau stadium on June 8 but on a different track.

However, given Kuldeep's recent form and his favourable match-ups against Pakistani batters, especially Babar, the management might

consider including him. If so, one out of Axar Patel or Ravindra Jadeja may have to sit out. The batting is more or less settled with Rohit and Virat

Kohli expected to continue as

openers and Rishabh Pant taking the No.3 slot. Pakistan, on the other hand, would be hoping to get their act together after the opening

legendary unpredictability was on full display against the USA, who pipped them in the Super Over for a memorable win. Babar blamed th

he cannot afford to overlook is underwhelming performance of the team's batters, including him.

The captain consumed 43 deliveries for his 44, which is nowhere close to being a decent strike rate in the chartest former II. shortest format. He would be hoping to do better.

And with conditions helpful And with conditions helpful for seamers as pointed out by India pace spearhead Jasprit Bumrah after the Ireland game, it won't be a surprise if the lethal version of Pakistan's bowling attack led by Shaheen Afridi decides to show up on Sunday and put the team's campaign back on track.

STRINGENT SECURITY MEASURES: Following an ISIS terror threat received at

ISIS terror threat received at the start of the tournament, stringent security measures have been enforced by local authorities to ensure the safe conduct of this high-profile contest.

County Police Nassau Commissioner Patrick Ryder, in recent media interactions. emphasised on the extensive arrangements, likening them to presidential-level security. 'The scale and magnitude of the security for this Indiacompared to when we hosted the USA President Barack Obama some years ago," Ryder

said. He also confirmed the involvement of officers from Nassau County Police, Suffolk County, New York State, as well as agencies including the FBI, Homeland and Investigations, Customs and Border Protection in comprehensive

arrangements for the game.

security

India: Rohit Sharma (c), Hardik Pandya, Yashasvi Jaiswal. Virat Kohli, Suryakumar Yadav, Rishabh Pant, Sanju Samson, Shivam Dube, Ravindra Jadeja, Axar Kuldeep Patel, Yuzvendra Chahal, Arshdeep Singh, Jasprit Mohammed Siraj. Bumrah,

Pakistan: Babar Azam (c), Abrar Ahmed, Azam Khan, Fakhar Zaman, Haris Rauf, Iftikhar Ahmed, Imad Wasim, Mohammad Abbas Afridi, Mohammad Amir, Mohammad Rizwan, Naseem Shah, Saim Ayub, Shadab Khan, Shaheen Shah Afridi,

Farooqi followed it up with the wicket of the dangerous Devon

Conway in his next over as the

chipped a catch to short extra

He ended his dream spell of 3-0-17-3 taking the wicket of Daryl Mitchell who edged a back-of-a-length delivery that

angled in to have New Zealand reeling at 30/3 inside five overs.

reeling at 30/3 inside five overs. The skipper, who also took 4/17, then weaved his magic after the power-play further pegging New Zealand back when he struck off his first delivery, dismissing his counterpart Williamson for 9 with a Gulbadin Naib taking a smart catch at slip.

wicketkeeper-batter

# WI in search of batting mojo vs Uganda



PTI ■ GEORGETOWN (GUYANA)

o-hosts West Indies will Clook to shake off their batting rustiness and come in their element when they face Uganda in a Group C T20 World Cup clash here.

The pre-tournament favourites two-time former champions suffered a scare chasing a modest 137 before they scraped to five-wicket win over minnows Papua New Guinea in their opening

On a difficult pitch that patience required and Jest Indie kept playing recklessly and found themselves half the side down for 97 with just four overs remaining.
It was then left to Roston

Chase (42 not out) and Andre Russell (15 not out) to safely take them home and avoid an embarrassment.

Against a team who are coming on the back of morale boosting win over Papua New Guinea, West Indies will have to exercise some caution especially with the bat.

Nicholas Pooran has been their most standout batter in the recent past and wicketkeeper-batter will have responsibility to stay at the crease till the end.

On conditions that have assisted the bowlers, pacer Alzarri Joseph and left-arm spinner Akeal Hosein who were impressive in the previous match will look to give early breakthroughs.

Uganda have happy memories of bowling out Papua New Guinea for 77 at this venue but their batting will be in the spotlight as they struggled in the chase before securing a tense three-wicket win in the penultimate over.

**TEAMS (FROM)** West Indies: Rovman Powell

(c), Alzarri Joseph, Johnson Roston Chase, Shimron Hetmyer, Jason Holder, Shai Hope, Akeal Hosein, Shamar Joseph, Brandon King, Gudakesh Motie, Nicholas Pooran, Andre Brandon King, Gudakesh Motie, Nicholas Pooran, Andre Russell, Sherfane Rutherford, Romario Shepherd.

While skipper Richie Berrington has been in form leading their chase with an unbeaten fifty, he would hope Uganda: Brian Masaba (c),

Simon Ssesazi, Roger Mukasa, Kyewuta, Dinesh Cosmas Fred Achelam, Nakrani, Kenneth Waiswa, Alpesh Frank Nsubuga, Ramjani, Ssenyondo, Bilal Robinson Obuya, Henry Hassun, Riazat Ali Shah, Juma Miyaji, Ronak Patel. Match starts: 6am IST.

SCOTLAND FACE OMAN, AIM TO CONSOLIDATE TOP SPOT: Scotland will start as firm favourites against Oman in a Group B clash at the Sir Vivian Richards Stadium in North Sound, Antigua, which will be hosting its first match of the tournament on Sunday.

After their washout against England in their opener that gave both the teams one point each, the Scotland secured a five-wicket win against Namibia in what turned out to be a tense 156-run chase

The result mean that Scotland now have the opportunity to go up to five points which might complicate the Super Eight qualifying scenarios for tournament heavyweights England and Australia who lock horns later on Saturday. Only top two teams make the Super Eight. Australia and Namibia have two points each sitting behind Scotland, while England are second from the bottom with one point from

one match. that their top-three George Munsey, Michael Jones and Brandon McMullen start to

Oman have lost both their matches putting up ordinary shows with the bat and it would be too much of an ask for them to turn things around. **TEAMS (FROM)** 

Oman: Aqib Ilyas (c), Zeeshan Maqsood, Kashyap Prajapati, Pratik Athavale, Ayaan Khan, Shoaib Khan, Mohammad Nadeem, Naseem Khushi, Mehran Khan, Bilal Khan, Rafiullah, Kaleemullah, Fayyaz Butt, Shakeel Ahmad, Khalid

Scotland: Richie Berrington (c), Matthew Cross, Brad Currie, Chris Greaves, Oli Hairs, Jack Jarvis, Michael Jones, Michael Leask, Brandon McMullen, George Munsey, Safyaan Sharif, Chris Sole, Charlie Tear, Mark Watt, Brad

# Spirited Afghans clip Kiwi wings, secure 84 runs upset win in T20 World Cup

**PTI** ■ GEORGETOWN (GUYANA)

A determined Afghanistan frode on splendid spells from their skipper Rashid Khan and left-arm pacer Fazalhaq Farooqi to stun an under-prepared New Zealand

under-prepared New Zealand by 84 runs and make a strong case for a Super Eight berth in the T20 World Cup here. Chasing a tricky 160 at the Providence Stadium here, 2021 runners-up New Zealand were shot out for a lowly 75 in an innings that lasted a mere 15.2 overs with only Glenn Phillips (18) and Matt Henry (12) managing double-digit scores.
The decision to bowl after winning the toss backfired on the Black Caps as the Afghans relied on openers Rahmanullah Gurbaz's 56-ball 84 and Ibrahim Zadran's 44 off relied 41 to post a reasonably good total of 159/6 in the lowscoring tournament.

Gurbaz was expectedly adjudged player of the match for his knock.

The triumph was a reminder of

Afghanistan's first big upset win in 2016 when they defeated West Indies by six runs in Nagpur after restricting the eventual winners to 117/8 in their defence of 123/7.

Farooqi, who snared five wickets for nine runs against Uganda, returned figures of 17/4 off his 3.2 overs, including 17/4 off his 3.2 overs, including the match-sealing dismissal. Rashid was also lethal as he collected the prized scalp of Kane Williamson (9 off 13) with his first ball. He finished overall figures of 17/4 off his four overs. It took Afghanistan to four points from two matches, having earlier beaten Uganda by 125 runs. Uganda by 125 runs.

The West Indies and Uganda occupy the next two spots, while Papua New Guinea and New Zealand are the last two teams whi haven't opened their accounts. Afghanistan next face PNG on

Friday, while NZ will be up against the co-hosts West Indies on Thursday. greatest "One of the

performances from us in T20I



cricket against a big team," said Afghan skipper Rashid Khan terming it a "great team effort." "The way Ibrahim and Gurbaz started again... The wicket was not easy. They did not throw away their wickets.

"Great win for Afghanistan and it is a privilege to be leading this side and winning against NZ." Williamson acknowledged that

Afghans "outplayed them". To get a total like that on a fiddly surface, they kept stump out of the ground.

beautifully. Not good enough from us. Quick turnaround, we have to regroup quickly and onto the next challenge," Williamson said.

Farooqi triggered the New Zealand collapse with the devastating new ball spell. He first cleaned up opener Finn Allen for a golden duck with his very first ball, a full delivery on middle stump that darted in late knocking the leg darted in late, knocking the leg

smart catch at slip.
The NZ top four batting card at that moment read a sorry 0, 8, 9, 5 by Allen, Conway, Williamson and Mitchell in that order. Rashid cleaned up Mark

Chapman (4) with a delivery that kept a little low and crashed into the stumps. Half the Kiwi side was back in the dugout for 43 in nine overs.

# Focussed on our own skills rather than opposition: Rashid Khan

PTI ■ GEORGETOWN (GUYANA)

 $R_{
m his}^{
m ashid}$  Khan always wanted his teammates to have faith in their own abilities instead of fretting over their opposition's strengths and he was ecstatic that it's exactly what they did during Afghanistan's memorable 84run victory over New Zealand in the T20 World Cup game here. Defending 159, Afghanistan shot out New Zealand for 75 with left-arm seamer Fazalhaq Farooqi and the skipper himself decimating the opposition with

four wickets apiece. "Now, we need to beat the teams with our own skills rather than think about the opposition and that's the only thing I have been telling the guys like just make sure we look into our skills," Rashid said during the post-match presentation ceremony

For Rashid, it is the effort that matters more than the results as he believes that if a team is good enough, results take care of itself.

"It doesn't matter whoever we play, it's more about how good you are, how good you're going to play and what type of energy you are coming with into the ground and that for me is very important.

"I don't care about the result a lot to be honest. I care more about the effort we put, that's some-thing which gives me lots of pleasure." In the last year's ODI World

Cup, Afghanistan famously stunned England, Pakistan and Sri Lanka, while in the 2016 T20 World Cup, they secured a



memorable win over eventual champions West Indies.

'We haven't had those victories in T20 World Cups. We had in ODI, but in T20, I feel like this was one of the best performance from the guys," said the skipper who starred in his masterful bowling act of 4/17. Rahmanullah Gurbaz blasted 80 from 56 deliveries while fellow opener Ibrahim Zadran added

44 from 41 to give them a flying

In reply, left-arm seamer Farooqi, who claimed five wickets against Uganda on Monday, grabbed 4/17 from just 3.2 overs, matching his skipper's bowling

"It's not just about a single guy...It's a great team effort, the way Gurbaz and Ibrahim started the innings.

For Afghans, cricket is their biggest source of joy and Rashid was thankful to the fans, who don't care about time difference when the national team's match is aired live.

They don't miss our games. We play at 3am, 4am or 1am, they're always up. Not only in Afghanistan, all around the world, wherever they are, they're going to watch the game. They don't miss the game.

"Cricket is a biggest source of happiness back home. And I'm very sure this will give them so much to enjoy, to celebrate this victory," he said.

#### DR. SHYAMA PRASAD MUKHERJEE UNIVERSITY Ranchi, Jharkhand. Dated: 09.06.2024

Memo: DSPMU/G/473/24

**NOTICE INVITING RE-TENDER** 

Dr. Shyama Prasad Mukherjee University, Ranchi-834008, Jharkhand invites re-tenders under two bid system (Part-I: Technical Bid and Part II: Financial Bid) from experienced and reputed contractor/firms/agencies/ companies only for "Construction of the Main Entrance Gates for the Department of Zoology and Examination at Dr. Shyama Prasad Mukherjee University, Ranchi, Jharkhand".

Sno	Activity	Date
1.	Publication of Re-Tender	09.06.2024 at
	Document in University Website	04:00 PM
2	Last Date & Time for Submission	20.06.2024 till
	of Tender Documents	01:00 PM
-		

can be obtained from the office of the Section-Officer



# Simulation on uneven tracks: Rohit ignores blow and trains hard along with Kohli

PTI ■ NEW YORK

 $R^{
m ohit}$  Sharma was struck on the thumb by a throwdown but didn't seem perturbed as Indian batters put in additional hours at the nets to counter the uneven bounce that might help Pakistan's pace attack during their marquee T20 World Cup clash here on Sunday.

Rohit, while facing left-arm throwdown specialist Nuwan Seneviratne, got hit on his left thumb by a delivery that lifted from the back of a good length

The Indian skipper looked in discomfort but shrugged it off as he continued to bat on. Rohit was then seen moving to the other end of the pitch to face the throwdowns.

The drop-in tracks at the Nassau County cricket ground have copped a lot of flak for the uneven bounce as balls are flying thick and fast from length due to wide cracks which are being rolled to create

an even-bounce strip. The Indian bowlers had a field day bowling out Ireland for 96 but Rohit and the senior pros



know that against Shaheen Shah Afridi, Mohammed Amir, Haris Rauf and Naseem Shah, the challenge will be very And hence, the coaching staff

made three of the six drop-in

practice strips at the Cantiague Park in Long Islands into abrasive ones with cracks to proper matchsimulation for top-order batters. The Indian team's determination to dominate on tracks with dual bounce was evident if one cites an example of South African nets in the morning session on same

While Kagiso Rabada and Anrich Nortje sent down their thunderbolts, none of the top Proteas batters wanted to risk getting injured ahead of the

game against the Netherlands. In contrast, their Indian counterparts embraced the testing conditions, using them to prepare for the upcoming challenge of facing the Pakistani attack on tracks where teams haven't crossed the 100-run mark in four out of six innings. There were no half-measures for the Indian skipper, Virat Kohli and others during a three-hour afternoon session where they faced Jasprit Bumrah, Arshdeep Singh, Khaleel Ahmed and Mohammed Siraj.

# **AFFIDAVIT** I, Shambhu Kumar Sanu R/o Village Chandkopa, P.S. Senha, Dist.-

Lohardaga. That in my matriculation certificate (year 2008, Roll code 1308, Roll No. 0118) my name is written as Shambhu Kumar son of Ambika Prasad Sahu. That in my Aadhar card (6030 9846 9532) as well as PAN Card (JNXPS3478F) my full name is written as Shambhu Kumar Sahu son of Ambika Sahu and same be recorded in my issued educational certificates hence this affidavit. that this affidavit is swearing for correction my name and my father's name. After this affidavit I want to change my name Shambhu Kumar Sahu son of Ambika Sahu in matriculation document. Vide Affidavit Serial No. 131601, dated - 24 Feb. 2024.

The detailed information about the tender document

(General) or from the University Website:www.dspmuranchi.ac.in.

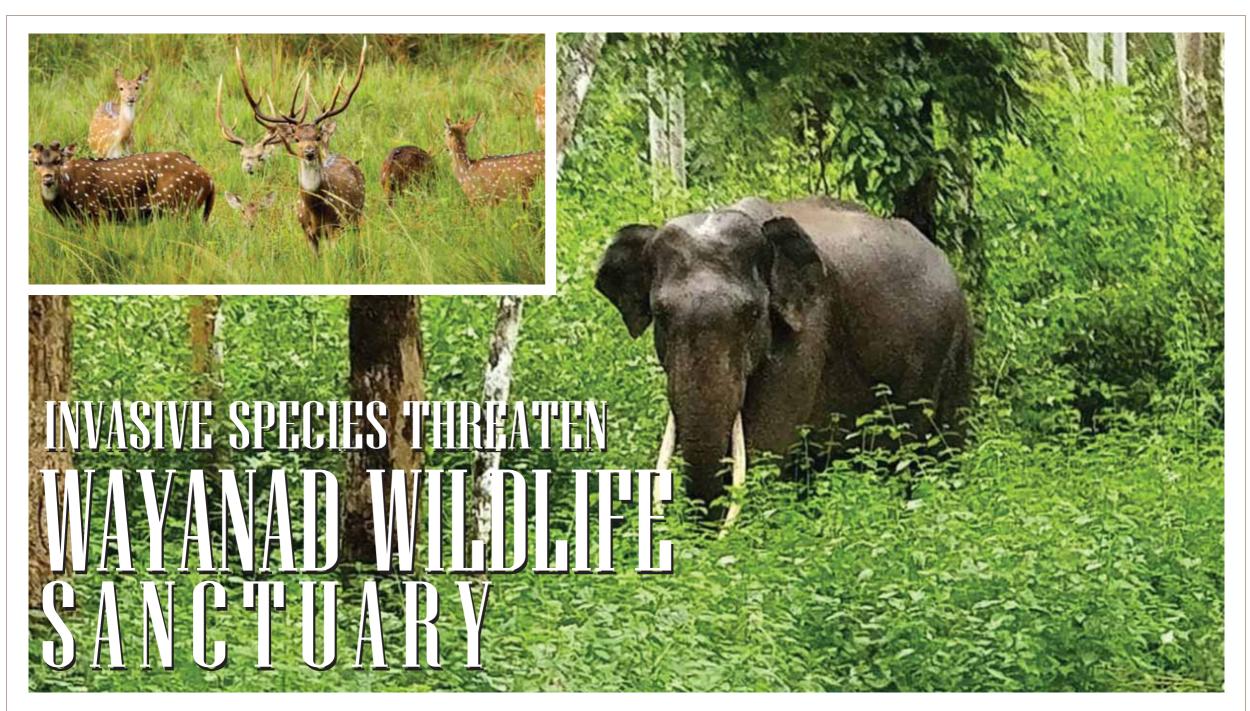
responding to any contents published in this newspaper. The printer, publisher, editor and any employee of the Pioneer Group's will not be held responsible for any kind of loss, consequences and further product-related damages on such advertisements Printed and published by Anupam Sheshank for and on behalf of CMYK Printech Ltd., and published at CMYK Printech Ltd., 304, Radha Kunj, Behind Reliance Mart, Kanke Road, Ranchi - 834 008. Tel. 09234300233, e-mail: ranchipioneer@gmail.com. Printed at VRINDA MEDIA PUBLICATIONS PVT. LTD. Plot No. 342, 344 Chiraundi Boreya Road Ranchi - 834 008. Tel. 09234300233, e-mail: ranchipioneer@gmail.com. Printed at VRINDA MEDIA PUBLICATIONS PVT. LTD. Plot No. 342, 344 Chiraundi Boreya Road Ranchi - 834 008. Tel. 09234300233, e-mail: ranchipioneer@gmail.com. Printed at VRINDA MEDIA PUBLICATIONS PVT. LTD. Plot No. 342, 346 Chiraundi Boreya Road Ranchi - 834 008. Tel. 09234300233, e-mail: ranchipioneer@gmail.com. Printed at VRINDA MEDIA PUBLICATIONS PVT. LTD. Plot No. 342, 344 Chiraundi Boreya Road Ranchi - 834 008. Tel. 09234300233, e-mail: ranchipioneer@gmail.com. Printed at VRINDA MEDIA PUBLICATIONS PVT. LTD. Plot No. 342, 346 Chiraundi Boreya Road Ranchi - 834 008. Tel. 09234300233, e-mail: ranchipioneer@gmail.com. Printed at VRINDA MEDIA PUBLICATIONS PVT. LTD. Plot No. 342, 346 Chiraundi Boreya Road Ranchi - 834 008. Tel. 09234300233, e-mail: ranchipioneer@gmail.com. Printed at VRINDA MEDIA PUBLICATIONS PVT. LTD. Plot No. 342, 346 Chiraundi Boreya Road Ranchi - 834 008. Tel. 09234300233, e-mail: ranchipioneer@gmail.com. Printed at VRINDA MEDIA PUBLICATIONS PVT. LTD. Plot No. 342, 346 Chiraundi Road Ranchi - 834 008. Tel. 09234300233, e-mail: ranchipioneer@gmail.com. Printed at VRINDA MEDIA PUBLICATIONS PVT. LTD. Plot No. 342, 346 Chiraundi Road Ranchi - 834 008. Tel. 09234300233, e-mail: ranchipioneer@gmail.com. Printed at VRINDA MEDIA PUBLICATIONS PVT. LTD. Plot No. 342, 346 Chiraundi Road Ranchi - 834 008. Tel. 09234300233, e-mail: ranchipioneer@gmail.com. Printed at VRINDA MEDIA PUBLICATIONS PVT. LTD. Plot No. 342, 346 Chiraundi Road Ranchi - 834 008. Tel. 09234300233, e-mail: ranchipioneer@gmail.com. Printed at VRINDA MEDIA PUBLICATIONS PVT. LTD. Plot No. 342, 346 Chiraundi Road Ranchi - 834 008. Tel. 09234300233, e-m

Although every possible care and caution has been taken to avoid errors or omissions, this publication is being sold on the condition and understanding that information given in this publication is merely for reference and must not be taken as having authority of or binding in any way on the writers, editors, publishers, and printers and sellers who do not owe any responsibility for any damage or loss to any person, a purchaser of this publication or not for the result of any action taken on the basis of this work. All disputes are subject to the exclusive jurisdiction of competent court and forums in Delhi/New Delhi only. Readers are advised and requested to verify and seek appropriate advice to satisfy themselves about the veracity of any kind of advertisement befo

# the pioneer

"If you can reach out and touch and love and be with wildlife, you will forever be changed, and you will want to make the world a better place."





Senna spectabilis planted with good intentions has become an ecological nightmare, swiftly overtaking large areas of the sanctuary. Its unchecked growth not only threatens biodiversity but also triggers a chain of ecological and economic repercussions, affecting both wildlife and local communities

Earth's surface is threatened by invasive species. These biotic invaders, benefiting from rapid reproduction and a lack of natural predators, outcompete native species for vital resources like food, water, and habitat, posing a significant threat to biodiversity and ecosystem stability The Wayanad Wildlife Sanctuary (WWS), nestled in the heart of the Nilgiri Biosphere Reserve (NBR), is a biodiversity hotspot, brimming with a rich variety of flora and fauna. The sanctuary serves as a habitat for a substantial population of Asian elephants, along with over 3,700 documented species of plants and animals. Spanning an area of 344.44 km, the sanctuary is comprised of four distinct ranges: Sulthan Bathery, Muthanga, Kurichiat, and Tholpetty. Each range, with its distinct characteristics, adds to the rich tapestry of the WWS, making it a vital and vibrant hub of ecological diversity. However, this ecological paradise is under severe threat from several invasive species, including Senna spectabilis, Lantana camara, and Acacia species. This is particularly noticeable in the case of Senna spectabilis, which has proliferated aggressively throughout the WWS and beyond, affecting the NBR and the corresponding ecological continuum of three southern Indian states of Kerala, Tamil Nadu, and Karnataka A decision made in good faith by the forest department in 1986 to plant Senna spectabilis, an ornamental tree with striking yellow flowers, has morphed into an ecological disaster. Little did one know, that this tropical American tree had a notorious history of invading continents, including parts of Asia, Africa, and Australia. By the time the mistake was realized, Senna had stealthily spread into many parts of the sanctuary. It expanded from covering less than 16 km in 2013-2014 to 89 km in 2019 and now stands at a staggering 123.86 km . Considering the total area of the sanctuary is 344.44 km, Senna has already engulfed 35% of it. If this trend is not curbed, the entire sanctuary could be swamped within a decade, turning it into a dense Senna forest.

pproximately one-fifth of the

A 2021 study has revealed that the Asian elephant, a significant inhabitant of the sanctuary, is aiding the spread of the invasive Senna spectabilis. The elephant's dung provides a fertile environment for the Senna seeds to sprout, with a single pile of dung found to contain





ARVIND K JHA

particularly in micro-habitats commonly inhabited by elephants. A single Senna pod harbours over a hundred seeds, and a medium-sized tree can yield at least one lakh seeds. The invasive nature of the Senna species has had a significant impact on the local ecosystem. It has displaced native vegetation by monopolizing the area and inhibiting the growth of species like grass, bamboo and several other minor forest produce. The Senna tree employs a unique method of colonizing its surroundings. It

releases specific substances, known as allelochemicals, either directly onto the target plants or indirectly into the surrounding soil. These allelochemicals interfere with the normal growth processes of other plants, providing the Senna tree with a competitive advantage. The dominance of the Senna tree has significant implications for the livelihoods of rural and tribal people who rely on non-timber forest produce, like amla or gooseberry, for sustenance. Many edible items like berries, mushrooms, and wild tubers, which were once a significant part of the tribal diet, are gradually disappearing from the

approximately 2000 seeds. The study also

found other mammals, such as the chital

and the Indian crested porcupine, contributing to the spread of Senna. The

researchers observed that the fruiting

period of Senna trees in the summer

elephants in Wayanad due to their

dispersal across the landscape,

coincides with a high concentration of

seasonal migration. This synchronicity

could potentially expedite the plant's

forest. The bitter leaves and irritating bark of Senna do not find favour with herbivores resulting in a decline in their numbers in the area. This has had a cascading effect on the region's tiger population, which has decreased from 120 in 2018 to 84 in 2023. The scarcity of prey in the Sennadominated areas is believed to be driving tigers to migrate in search of richer hunting grounds. Similarly, elephants are moving into areas outside the forests in their quest for food and water. Unfortunately, this has led to increased human-elephant conflicts, resulting in a backlash against the preservation efforts of elephants. The ecological disruption has had an unexpected benefit for local communities. With fewer wildlife incursions, settlements near the jungle have seen a significant drop in crop

damage and cattle lifting incidents. The

data from the past three years shows a

downward trend in compensation claims

by farmers for crop raids. In the fiscal year 2021-22, there were 734 cases of crop damage reported in the border agrarian hamlets of WWS. This figure fell to 475 in 2022-23, and in 2023-24, the number has further decreased to just 93 cases. Similarly, cattle lifting cases have also seen a decline, from 83 cases in 2021-22 to a mere 19 in 2023-24. While the decrease in human-wildlife conflict might be viewed as a positive development by those seeking to address this issue, the underlying causes warrant serious concern. Locals like Mr. Stanley Augustine, a member of the Biodiversity Management Committee of Poothadi village, find these changes deeply troubling, particularly from the standpoint of the rural economy. The area is witnessing a worrying decline in agricultural productivity and an increasing trend of farmers abandoning their paddy fields. The forests too are under mounting pressure. The real challenge, therefore, lies in reestablishing equilibrium in the WWS while simultaneously securing the future of the human communities in the area. In response to these challenges, the

Forest Department has launched an

Eradication and Forest Regeneration

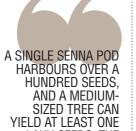
initiative known as the 'Senna

Project'. The project, supported by the National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development, has a budget of Rs 5.31 crore. The initiative is currently being implemented in the Kurichiat and Muthanga forest ranges, to eradicate Senna from 1,672 hectares. To further support this initiative, the sanctuary authorities are exploring partnerships with the newsprint industry, taking inspiration from Tamil Nadu. The state government there has allowed the Tamil Nadu Newsprint and Papers Ltd (TNPL) to extract invasive trees like Wattles and Senna for paper production. In return, TNPL compensates the Forest Department and employs various extraction techniques, attempting to turn an ecological challenge into an opportunity for resource utilization. In some areas, invasive plants, including Senna, are being repurposed to manufacture furniture. Senna, in particular, is valued as a timber source for making lightweight furniture and other wooden products. There is hope that policy changes could permit the extraction of Senna from forest areas and its subsequent sale outside. Such changes could potentially motivate the local community to actively participate in clearing the forest of this invasive plant.

The process of removing the Senna tree, however, is fraught with challenges. Traditional methods such as uprooting, girdling, and herbicide application for eliminating Senna from the area are labour-intensive, costly, and environmentally damaging. Uprooting large Senna trees could disturb the soil, leading to erosion, especially in hilly areas that receive high rainfall. Techniques like girdling and felling can inadvertently harm non-target species. Moreover, the use of herbicides may contaminate water sources and negatively impact the area's biodiversity. Additionally, the resilience of the Senna tree is evident in its ability to regenerate from lateral roots, which complicates its eradication. Given these challenges, it is clear that innovative and sustainable strategies are needed to manage and ultimately remove the Senna species while simultaneously assisting the reestablishment of local species. As we forge ahead, conservation measures must be holistic, encompassing not only the immediate environs of the sanctuary but also the larger watersheds and catchment areas that feed into the rivers. This holistic approach is particularly significant for Wayanad, the source of the Kabini River. The health of this river is essential for sustaining the lives and livelihoods of communities across Kerala, Karnataka, and Tamil Nadu. Notably, initiatives are in progress to increase the flow of the Kabini Rivera major tributary of the Kaveri River—to address the issue of water scarcity in Bengaluru. The situation in Wayanad is a stark reminder of the domino effect triggered

by the introduction of invasive species. The ecological and economic ramifications are far-reaching, impacting not just the wildlife within the sanctuary but also the lives and livelihoods of communities dwelling in its vicinity and beyond. The fight to save Wayanad is a race against time. If immediate and decisive action is not taken, the future of this biodiversity hotspot and the wellbeing of the millions who depend on it hang in the balance. Wayanad's plight serves as a cautionary tale, urging us to prioritize rigorous scientific evaluation before introducing any new species in an area and to act swiftly and collaboratively in the face of ecological threats posed by invasive species.

> (The writers are Former Principal Chief Conservator of Forests, UP and Maharashtra; views expressed are personal)



LAKH SEEDS. THE INVASIVE NATURE OF THE SENNA SPECIES HAS HAD A SIGNIFICANT IMPACT ON THE LOCAL ECOSYSTEM. IT HAS DISPLACED NATIVE VEGETATION BY MONOPOLIZING THE AREA AND INHIBITING THE **GROWTH OF SPECIES** LIKE GRASS BAMBOO AND SEVERAL OTHER MINOR FOREST













# DISCOVER THE DESERT SERENGETI AND ENCHANTING ISLAND OF BUTTERFLIES

Sharjah creates a 'la African Safari' in the Desert and its commitment to nature shines at Al Noor Island, writes GYANESHWAR DAYAL

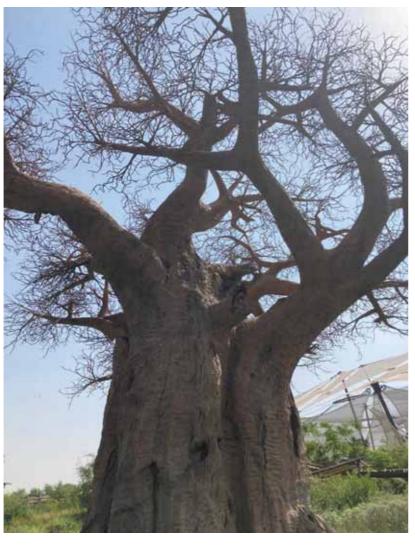
harjah, a jewel in the crown of the United Arab Emirates, boasts a United Arab Ellinaces, Coardinated captivating terrain that marries the charm of golden deserts with the allure of pristine coastlines along the Arabian Gulf. The landscape is punctuated by Gulf. The landscape is punctuated by rolling sand dunes, tranquil oases, and rugged mountains that rise in the eastern region, creating a picturesque backdrop to its vibrant cityscape. Sharjah's climate is characterized by its arid nature, with hot summers that see temperatures soar, and mild, pleasant winters that offer a prechia propriet temperatures soar, and mild, pleasant winters that offer a refreshing respite. The gentle coastal breeze, coupled with the serene desert air, weaves a unique atmospheric tapestry, making Sharjah a place of both stark beauty and subtle elegance. However, it lacks the lush green vegetation and abundance found in tropical climates. Yet, this absence is masterfully compensated by human masterfully compensated by human ingenuity, as nature is carefully crafted and enhanced through thoughtful intervention.

Sharjah has been a beacon of cultural heritage in the region. However, not many people know its commitment towards nature. In fact, it has one of the rarest treats around the world to showcase which has never tried elsewhere on the large scale. Sharjah's commitment to preserving nature and promoting biodiversity is exemplified through its innovative projects, notably creating Serengeti and Sawana in the heart of the desert and organising the African Safari in the desert. As if that was not enough it also has a full-on nature conservation project at in Al Noor Island which hosts thousands of species of plants and birds and has a unique Butterfly House. These initiatives reflect Sharjah's dedication to balancing balancing development with sustainability and fostering a deep respect for the natural world.

#### A 'LA AFRICAN SAFARI' IN THE DESERT

Sharjah's African Safari, set against the testament to the emirate's vision of creating unique and sustainable tourism experiences. This ambitious project recreates the diverse ecosystems of Africa, providing a sanctuary for a wide range of species in an environment that mirrors their natural habitats.

The African Safari in Sharjah is not just a tourist attraction; it is a conservation effort aimed at protecting endangered

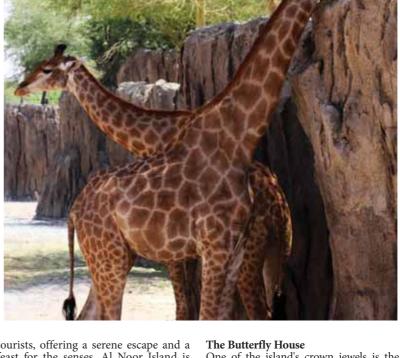


species and educating the public about wildlife and ecosystems. The park hosts animals such as giraffes, zebras, elephants and various species of antelope, living in conditions that closely resemble their native habitats. each ensures that the animals exhibit natural behaviours, contributing to their well-being and offering visitors an authentic experience. Sharjah's African Safari employs sustainable practices to minimise its environmental footprint. This includes the use of renewable energy sources, water conservation techniques, and ecofriendly infrastructure. The park also engages in breeding programs for

endangered species, playing a crucial role in global conservation efforts. By fostering a connection between visitors and wildlife, the safari park encourages a greater appreciation for the natural world and the importance of its

#### **AL NOOR ISLAND: WHERE SERENITY** AND ART COME TOGETHER

Nestled in the heart of Khalid Lagoon, Al Noor Island is a testament to Sharjah's vision of blending nature, art, and culture. Since its opening in 2015, this picturesque island has become a beloved destination for both locals and



tourists, offering a serene escape and a feast for the senses. Al Noor Island is more than just a park; it is an embodiment of Sharjah's commitment to enhancing the quality of life through innovative public spaces that foster a connection with nature and the arts.

Al Noor Island spans 45,470 square meters and is adorned with a rich variety of flora, creating a verdant oasis in the middle of the city. The island's landscaping features over 70,000 around the world, carefully curated to thrive in the local

climate. This lush greenery provides a habitat for diverse wildlife, including numerous bird species that find sanctuary on the island. The meticulously maintained gardens offer visitors a tranquil environment to unwind and connect with nature.

One of the island's crown jewels is the Butterfly House, an architectural marvel that houses over 500 exotic butterflies. The structure itself, designed with intricate latticework inspired by Islamic art, is a sight to behold. Inside, the climate-controlled environment mimics

bical conditions, allowing butterflies to flourish year-round. Visitors can walk among the butterflies, witnessing their delicate beauty up close and learning about their life importance. Butterfly House is not

only a visual delight but also an educational experience, emphasizing the significance of conservation.

#### **Art Installations and Sculptures**

Al Noor Island is dotted with stunning art installations and sculptures, seamlessly integrating art with nature. These pieces,

created by renowned artists from around the world, add a layer of cultural richness to the island. Notable installations include the "OVO" art sculpture, a glowing egg-shaped structure that symbolizes rebirth and renewal, and the "Torus" sculpture by David Harber, which captures the interplay of light and shadow.

The island caters to visitors of all ages with its well-designed children's playground and exercise facilities. The playground is equipped with safe, modern equipment that encourages imaginative play, while the exercise stations offer adults a chance to stay active in a scenic setting.

Night Illumination
As the sun sets, Al Noor Island transforms into a magical landscape illuminated by artistic lighting. The island's pathways and installations glow with soft, colourful lights, creating an enchanting atmosphere. This nighttime atmosphere. transformation offers a unique experience, making evening visits to the island particularly memorable.

Al Noor Island exemplifies Sharjah's dedication to sustainability and environmental preservation. The island employs eco-friendly practices, such as using solar energy for lighting and maintaining a commitment to water conservation. These efforts ensure that the island remains a green and sustainable haven for future generations.

Al Noor Island also plays a vital role in community engagement and education. It regularly hosts workshops, guided tours, and cultural events that promote environmental awareness appreciation for the arts. These programs aim to foster a sense of responsibility and connection to the natural world among

visitors. Al Noor Island as its African safari is a shining example of Sharjah's innovative approach to nature conservation with cultural enrichment. This serene oasis offers a retreat from the hustle and bustle of city life, inviting visitors to explore its lush and engage with its diverse flora and fauna. Through Al Noor Island, Sharjah demonstrates its commitment to creating spaces that nurture the soul, inspire the mind, and promote a sustainable future. Whether you're a nature lover, art enthusiast, or simply seeking peace and tranquillity, Al Noor Island is a destination that promises to captivate and inspire.

# Bookmark these boutique destinations for a summer getaway

#### **BY RUPALI DEAN**

#### STERLING PARK, **KALIMPONG**

Where? Ringkingpong Rd, Kalimpong Khasmahal, Kalimpong, West Bengal. Nestled in the scenic mid-range of the Himalayas, at a lofty 4,100 feet above sea level lies Kalimpong-a perfect fusion of serene mountain vistas and vibrant cultural encounters, offering enchanting getaway for those in search of an unforgettable holiday experience. This cultural hub, blending influences from Indian, Chinese, Nepalese, and Tibetan traditions, provides a captivating and immersive retreat.

Perched atop a hill with a panoramic view of the snowcapped Himalayan peaks, Sterling Park Kalimpong resides in a historic edifice once owned by the Maharaja of Dinajpur, allowing guests a peek into a majestic bygone era. The vistas of Mt Kanchenjunga and other majestic peaks like Pandim and Narsingh, alongside the historic Jelep-la and Nathu-la Passes, resonate with old tales of the Silk Trade Route winding through Lhasa to Tibet. This mountain retreat, situated away from the urban hustle of downtown Kalimpong, exudes an aura of old-world charm with its colonial-era architecture adorned with intricate woodwork, vintage furnishings, and spacious verandahs, transporting guests



back to a nostalgic age.

The lavishly appointed rooms and suites boast breath-taking views of the majestic Himalayas, creating a perfect sanctuary for relaxation. Guests can unwind on the cosy patio, indulge in the finest Darjeeling tea, or revel in the tranquillity of the lush courtyard surroundings. The signature restaurant, Kokomendo, beckons visitors with a diverse array of Indian, Continental, Chinese, Nepalese, and Tibetan delicacies. Together with Sterling Park Kalimpong, Darjeeling, and Gangtok Orange Village, they form a delightful mountain circuit the Eastern Himalayan foothills, promising

unforgettable journey for nature and culture enthusiasts alike.

#### **BAREFOOT BUNGALOW, CHAMBA**

Where? Buranskhanda, Chamba-Mussoorie Road, Buranskhnda, Dehradun, Uttarakhand.

Set amidst the enchanting Himalayan landscape, Barefoot Bungalow, a luxurious 3-bedroom homestay in Buranskhanda, offers a sublime escape from the routine of daily life. Located just 25 kilometres from the renowned hill station of Mussoorie, this serene refuge captures the essence of tranquillity and natural beauty in the Garhwal Himalayas.

At the heart of Barefoot Bungalow of an indoor fireplace.

lies a deep commitment to hospitality, where a dedicated team of professionals ensures that guests are pampered and well looked after. This pet-friendly haven features a personal butler and a talented in-house chef named Arjun, who delights guests with delicious home-cooked meals. The cosy wooden interiors create a warm hill station ambiance, perfect for creating memorable evenings by the bonfire, accompanied by live music performances or the inviting glow

Guests at Barefoot Bungalow can indulge in a culinary delight at the glasshouse restaurant, where they

can watch their meals being freshly prepared in a live kitchen setting. The expansive 14,000-square-foot private garden, embellished with and meticulously ponds landscaped, provides a lush sanctuary for relaxation and reflection. And to top it all off, sweeping views of the majestic snow-capped Himalayan range serve as a breath-taking backdrop to this picturesque retreat.

#### **ONENESS, RISHIKESH**

Where? Rishikesh, Badrinath Highway, Byasi, Uttarakhand. Cocooned within a Lower Shivalik mountain valley, 30 kilometres away from Rishikesh, this resort is

a harmonious blend of river, flora, and fauna, inviting guests to embark on a mesmerizing journey where nature's wild beauty takes centre stage and showcases a diverse array of Sal, Haldu, Figs, and Mulberry trees, forming a biodiverse sanctuary. This lively mountain retreat

encourages visitors to immerse themselves in the wilderness, surrounded by monkeys, langurs, wild cats, the elusive Black Bear, and the captivating Scarlet Minivet. It's commitment to ecology shines through in the careful planting of 30,000 saplings of over 50 medicinal plants, fostering a flourishing ecosystem the embodies the ethos of the resort.

As the Ganges flows below, resonating with the sacred energy of Devprayag, spirituality becomes intricately woven into the fabric of Oneness. Guests can luxuriate in unparalleled comfort within the Luxury Cottages, each intricately designed to provide a unique and immersive stay. From the spacious and finely appointed rooms to the breath-taking views of the gardens and mountains, every aspect has been thoughtfully curated to offer an unforgettable escape. Beyond being just a resort, on offer is an immersive journey.

Engage in a variety of inclusive activities, ranging from leisurely beach moments to captivating stargazing sessions. For our younger guests, an array of kid's activities awaits. Furthermore, optional activities such as Fun Family Float and Memory Plantation present distinctive and memorable experiences.

Go for an adventure intertwined with the allure of unspoiled wilderness. Your expedition commences with experienced guides guiding you through a brief hike, unveiling the untouched beauty of the Lower Shivalik mountains. The path then seamlessly transitions to a unique river crossing experience via a raft, adding a touch of thrill to your sojourn.

(Awarded the 'Best food writer in the country' by the Indian culinary forum, WACS and the Ministry of Tourism, Rupali Dean writes on food and travel)



**GAJRAJ RAO**, the Newgen method actor, redefines the cinematic experience by performing even non-descript roles with élan. This journey explores the nuances of his method acting, writes GYANESHWAR DAYAL

🥆 ajraj Rao, a name that resonates with authenticity and a deep understanding of character portrayal, has carved a niche for himself in the Indian film industry through a blend of meticulous method acting and a rich repertoire of roles. Rao's journey from the sidelines to the spotlight is a testament to his dedication, perseverance, and exceptional talent. Gajraj Rao's foray into acting was marked by a series of small but significant roles that gradually built his reputation as a reliable character Rajasthan, Rao's initial years in the industry were filled with struggles and uncredited roles. His career began in the late 1990s, with minor roles in films and television. However, his ability to imbue even the smallest roles with depth and realism did not go unnoticed.Rao's breakthrough came with the 2018 film *Badhaai Ho*, where he played Jeetender Kaushik, a middle-aged man who discovers his wife's unexpected pregnancy. The film's success catapulted Rao into the limelight, earning him critical acclaim and several awards. His portrayal of Jeetender Kaushik was lauded for its warmth, subtlety, and humor, marking a significant shift in the perception of middle-aged characters in Indian cinema. What sets Gajraj Rao apart is his approach to method acting. Rao's dedication to his craft involves deep immersion into his characters. He often spends extensive time understanding the background, motivations, and nuances of the roles he portrays. This approach allows him to deliver performances that are both authentic and relatable. Method acting, a technique pioneered by Konstantin Stanislavski and later popularized by Lee Strasberg, emphasizes the psychological and emotional aspects of above tear days leaves to the process of th

of this technique involves drawing from his own experiences and emotions to bring a character to life. His preparation often includes detailed research, observing people with similar backgrounds to his characters, and even adopting their mannerisms and speech patterns. Rao's impact on modern Indian cinema extends beyond his performances. He represents a shift towards more realistic and nuanced storytelling in Bollywood. Films like Shubh Mangal Zyada Saavdhan and Lootcase further showcase his versatility, moving away from stereotypical depictions to more layered and authentic characters. In contemporary cinema, method actors like Gajraj Rao are redefining the narrative. They are moving away from the star-centric approach to one that values story and character depth. This trend is visible in the rise of content-driven films and web series that focus on everyday stories and real-life issues. And the time is ripe for such experiments. "Twenty years back I, Pankaj Tripathi, Nawazuddin Siddiqui and many others could not imagine of getting a significant role. Hindi cinema is more democratic and character

driven and gives chance to everyone," says Rao. Method actors today are increasingly collaborating with directors and writers to develop well-rounded characters. They are involved in the creative process from the early stages, contributing to script development and character arcs. This collaborative approach results in performances that are not just believable but also deeply

engaging.
While method acting is rewarding, it is also challenging. The emotional toll of deeply immersing oneself in a character can be significant. For Rao, balancing the intense preparation required for his roles with his personal life is a constant challenge. However, his passion for acting and his commitment to his craft continue to drive him forward. 'I have theatre background where script is very important which all of us cherish. Then we prepare for the role meticulously. What viewers see on the screen is culmination of that preparation,"

Looking ahead, Gajraj Rao's journey seems poised for further success. With the increasing popularity of OTT platforms and a growing

WHAT SETS GAJRAJ RAO APART IS HIS APPROACH TO METHOD ACTING. RAO'S DEDICATION TO HIS CRAFT INVOLVES DEEP IMMERSION INTO HIS CHARACTERS. HE OFTEN SPENDS EXTENSIVE TIME UNDERSTANDING THE BACKGROUND, MOTIVATIONS, AND NUANCES OF THE ROLES HE PORTRAYS. THIS APPROACH ALLOWS HIM TO DELIVER PERFORMANCES THAT ARE BOTH AUTHENTIC AND RELATABLE

audience for nuanced storytelling, actors like Rao are likely to find even more opportunities to showcase their talent. His upcoming projects are eagerly awaited by fans and critics alike, who expect nothing short of brilliance from this seasoned actor. Gajraj Rao's journey as an actor is an inspiring tale of perseverance, talent, and the power of method acting. His contributions to Indian cinema have paved the way for more realistic and relatable storytelling. As he continues to explore new horizons, Rao remains a beacon of authenticity and excellence in the world of acting, embodying the transformative power of method acting in modern cinema In the film *Maidaan*, Gajraj Rao excels in his role by bringing a nuanced depth and authenticity that enhances the movie's historical and emotional landscape. The film, directed by Amit Ravindernath Sharma,

focusing on the life of Syed Abdul Rahim, the coach who led the Indian team to remarkable victories. Rao portrays a pivotal character whose support and conflict with the protagonist add layers to the narrative, showcasing his ability to seamlessly blend into the historical setting while delivering a performance that is both compelling and resonant. His meticulous and resonant. Firs medicinous approach to embodying his character contributes significantly to the film's overall impact, making Maidaan a captivating tribute to a lesser-known yet glorious chapter of Indian sports history.

football from 1952 to 1962,



# Reflections on Acting, Challenges and Audience Influence

MAHESH THAKUR shares insights into his illustrious acting career, spanning television and cinema. From memorable roles to industry evolution, he reflects on the challenges and successes that have shaped him as an artist. In a conversation with SAKSHI PRIYA, he also opens up about his recent show Aangan Aapno Kaa, shedding light on his experience playing a father's role in this heartwarming project

What motivates you to continue acting and how do you view the role of the audience in your

of character development. Rao's use

I get the audience's love and reaction. Being an actor means experiencing the audience's reactions, which keep me going. They encourage me to do better. I would say it is the audience that inspires me to act.

Among the numerous characters you've portrayed, which role has been the most memorable for you and why?

I think a role that is very different from my personality would be Tej Singh Oberoi from *Ishqbaaz*. That character is nothing like me and I had to create a persona that was really nasty, cunning and thought differently. It's a really interesting character that I played, so I would definitely give credit to that role. Generally, the roles I play are similar to my personality and I feel that's not very challenging but the role in Ishqbaaz was challenging. Playing the honorable Prime Minister Narendra Modi was also challenging because it is difficult to embody a character who is very much in the public eye. Another challenging role was playing Sadhu Vaswani. All these characters are memorable because they are different from who I am.

You've often played positive characters. Did you relish the opportunity to portray a villain in Ishqbaaz, and how did you approach that transformation? First of all, in television, we have very different ways of working. The episodes and scripts come on set, so we don't have time to

do much homework. My basic approach in the initial days when worked on any television character, which is very different from the rest, is to do a lot of reading. I read one to six episodes, and once I am done episodes, and once I am done with reading, I try to get into the character and experiment with different voice modulations in my own space. I try taking pauses when delivering dialogues and ensure that I don't repeat certain expressions. In *Ishqbaaz*, my character was so negative that I didn't want my kids to watch it as they were kids to watch it, as they were very young at that time.

What have been some of the biggest challenges and successes in your acting career and how have they shaped you

One of the biggest challenges in my acting career was transitioning to television. When I started doing daily soaps, I realised that you put in just as much hard work as you do in films but it's for one telecast. After that, it's gone and often forgotten. As actors, we used to be very particular about giving a fantastic shot, striving for perfection. However, in television, you don't have much time. You get only a few minutes and maybe 4 to 5 takes to get the shot right. No matter how perfect a shot I gave, there was always room for improvement, but in television, it often goes unnoticed because it airs only once and then it's long gone. This was a learning experience for me, helping me understand that, at the end of the day, actors are a product of the writing and direction. It's not just about the actor. Many actors in the

industry think it's all about them, believing that their performance alone makes a movie or show a hit. But that's not true. It's teamwork that makes a project successful. TV has taught me humility as an actor. It made me realise that while an actor might attract the audience for the initial viewing, it's the combined effort of the entire team that makes a lasting impact.

You've seen the television industry evolve over the years. How do you think it has changed, and what are your thoughts on the current trends in TV shows and content?

Yes, definitely. The sensibility has changed. Audiences are now more open to rich subjects and they have a say in what they want to see. You can't disregard the audience today. You have to be very careful. People always try to bifurcate between whether a film is for villagers, town people or two-tier towns. I think that divide is disappearing. We have to ensure that the content generated is not just to cater to one segment, as the divide is reducing between these three categories, thanks to the internet. Everyone now has access to all sorts of content. So, as a content creator, you have to keep everyone in mind, not just a single type of audience.

Looking back on your time working with Sridevi, is there a specific scene or moment from filming Malini Iyer that stands out in your memory?

Sridevi Ma'am was and will always be a legend because she was one of the first heroines where movies were made if she said yes to a project, like



Chandni, Lamhe, and all these beautiful films she was a part of. No matter how much I say about her or praise her, it will always be

Recently, you are working on a project, Aangan Aapno Kaa. How has your experience been playing the father's role in this project?

I am playing the character of a dad, and it's great. As I said, you need a good team of actors, and we have a very good team here,

especially my daughter, with whom I am very close and interact with often. There are always lots of hugging scenes, giving love, and treating them like babies, so we have to get into a very comfortable zone. Even on the set they call me Papa instead the set, they call me Papa instead of Mahesh Ji, and I am good with that. They are very sweet co-

What was your experience like working on Dil, Dosti Dilemma, especially considering the

fantastic team of women involved, from the director to the producer?

Dil, Dosti Dilemma was great fun because we had a fantastic team filled with women, from the director to the producer. It was nice seeing all the women coming into action and working so brilliantly as a team. I enjoyed my time in *Dil*, *Dosti Dilemma*, and it was shot beautifully. The story was one of the simplest out story was one of the simplest out there on the streaming platform. You can watch it and have a great time with your loved ones.  $I\bar{t}$  was an extremely sweet story, and I just loved working on the

How do you approach acting in different mediums like films, television and web series? Do you have a preference among these mediums?

project.

An actor is always an actor; they should not choose any medium. The only difference between TV and film is not that much. The major difference between working in front of the camera and on stage is significant. When you go on stage, there is a difference in working in front of the camera. In front of the camera, you have to take care of lights, know which dialogue to say and when and work with the say and when and work with the cameraman, co-actors and director, so there are lots of things happening in one shot. It's pretty complicated for a person who starts straight in TV and film because lots are happening on sets. When you do a stage, it's all about you. You forget your line, you're supposed to carry on; you are not supposed to stand blank on the stage because you have a live audience watching you. So, that's more challenging,

I feel, for actors working on stage because it's all about dialogue delivery, trying to work on body language, so much is happening on stage that it's more of a on stage that it's more of a challenge rather than working in the medium of TV and film. Acting on TV and film is also challenging but not as challenging as the stage. Also, if you're good on stage, it doesn't mean you can be good in front of the TV and camera because you have to control your expression and not go too loud because TV is a subtle medium. One thing I learned about the theatre is that learned about the theatre is that in theatre, you have to pronounce your words; you cannot speak loudly. The last person sitting on the back bench in the auditorium should be able to listen to you. It's not about raising your voice; it's literally pronunciation which goes right up to the end.

Many actors look up to your career. What piece of advice would you give to someone just starting out in television

acting?

To all the new actors, hang in there. Hanging in doesn't mean losing your patience, balance or giving up. This is one of the most difficult professions you could choose. If you have multiple choices, I would say let acting be the last one you go for. But if you the last one you go for. But if you are going for it, then be resilient. You have to be there because you never know when the right break will happen for you and when things will start working in your favor. Don't give up. If you are an actor, you should think about it as always being an actor; otherwise, you will never get anywhere. So, choose your profession wisely.







sunday magazine the pioneer agazine



















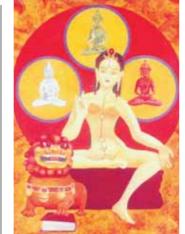




#### ARIES March 21-April 19

This week promises a blend of prosperity and challenge. Financial gains are anticipated from multiple avenues, boosting your earnings. However, a busy schedule and possible travel for work might lead to stress. Expect a twist of sudden changes as the week progresses. Embracing a mindset of detachment from unproductive ties can enrich your life, leading to greater depth and fulfillment. Towards the week's close, you might find yourself driven by a strong urge to acquire wealth and possessions, although these might not hold substantial value. Caution is advised against starting new projects now, as impulsive actions could lead to setbacks. Staying optimistic will be a challenge, but maintaining a positive outlook is crucial to navigate through any negativity.

Lucky number 10 | Lucky colour White Lucky day Monday



#### **LEO** July 23-Aug 22

This period heralds a time of divine favor and blessings, making you the focal point of your own narrative filled with joy, marvel, and revitalization. You will find harmony across your mental, spiritual, and physical states. Expect your standing to be positively influenced during this time. A surge of bravery, optimism, and creativity will infuse your days, and you'll find relief in concluding longstanding matters. You are on the brink of embracing new perspectives and opportunities that promise a brighter future. Anticipate changes that might include new routines, dietary plans, employment, or even acquiring a new vehicle. Embrace the possibility of novel experiences and ventures. The conclusion of the week promises familial happiness and the potential for significant commitments or collaborations, fostering a sense of fulfillment on both emotional and spiritual fronts. Lucky number 6 | Lucky colour Black Lucky day Sunday



#### **SAGITTARIUS** Nov 22-Dec 21

This week, delve into the profound realm of inner resilience. Rather than succumbing to the sway of emotions, you are invited to cultivate a grounded spirit and composed demeanor. This strength stems from the depth of your character and empowers you to navigate through complexities with a clear heart, stripping away any deceits. During this period, you may find inspiration and guidance from a wise individual, often a woman known for her deep understanding and sharp intuition. Consider embracing her insights or emulating her approach as you chart your path forward. Additionally, this is an opportune moment for spiritual awakening. Engage in mindfulness practices such as meditation or yoga, and reconnect with your spiritual beliefs. Let go of mere fantasies and fleeting dreams; the journey ahead calls for your undivided focus and authentic

Lucky number 17 | Lucky colour Off White Lucky day Monday



#### **TAURUS** April 20-May 20

This week presents an excellent opportunity to harness your inherent creativity to generate income. You possess a unique strength bestowed upon you. allowing you to turn your visions into reality. Positive developments are expected from the decisions you make. Your diverse abilities to articulate every thought clearly will leave a lasting impression on those around you, signaling a prosperous period ahead. Mid-week, you may encounter some temporary constraints causing delays in your activities. However, your perseverance and resolve will guide you through, keeping you on track toward your objectives. Expect some encouraging news from abroad. By the end of this week, you will find both financial stability and emotional satisfaction

Lucky number 3 | Lucky colour Red Lucky day Wednesday



#### VIRGO Aug 23-Sep 22

This week, you'll find yourself making firm decisions regarding both your home life and career. Your resilient nature will empower you to tackle life's hurdles with bravery. You may encounter disagreements and personality clashes, which will require a thoughtful approach to resolve. It's a time for reevaluating outdated beliefs and customs, inviting transformation in various areas such as work, living arrangements, and personal relationships. You might face some health challenges or overwhelming stress. Feeling a pull towards deepening your inner life will be significant during these trying moments. As the week progresses, a shift towards positivity will occur. You'll start feeling more at ease, healthier, and financially stable, leading to an overall sense of satisfaction and a desire for a more comfortable lifestyle. Your compassionate nature will drive you to support those in need.

Lucky number 9 | Lucky colour Indigo Lucky day Friday



#### CAPRICORN Dec 22-Jan 19

This week promises to be a whirlwind of activity, touching on every facet of your life. It kicks off with a focus on home-related matters. For those unattached, significant commitments loom on the horizon. As the week progresses, expect some travel opportunities to arise. Your professional life will consume much of your time as you strive for excellence in your craft, working tirelessly toward your aspirations. Additionally, a joyful family event, possibly welcoming a new member, may occur. By the week's end, the fruits of your labor will become apparent, with a notable improvement in your financial situation. Job seekers can anticipate receiving a promising offer from a prestigious company. It's a period to savor success and feel content.

Lucky number 1 | Lucky colour Jade Green **Lucky day** Tuesday



#### **GEMINI** May 21-June 20

This week promises abundant reasons for joy. Life feels vibrant, and your journey is brightly lit by optimism. An uplifting energy seems to accompany you in all your endeavors, attracting others with your ability to spotlight the positive aspects of life and bring warmth to those around you. Midweek may bring a few challenges that could shake your composure, but rest assured, these are merely fleeting shadows. Soon, you will experience a renewed sense of fulfillment as if a benevolent force is aligning things in your favor. You'll likely notice significant advancements in your endeavors, marveling at the extent of your efforts towards achieving your goals. Expect improved outcomes in ongoing projects and a surge in recognition, possibly leading to opportunities that expand your horizons.

Lucky number 5 | Lucky colour Green Lucky day Tuesday



#### LIBRA Sep 23-Oct 22

This week brims with opportunity and creativity. Your enthusiasm will surge, compelling you to embrace challenges with confidence. An inspiring thought or vision may captivate you, indicating you're on a successful trajectory, adept at managing both personal and professional obligations. Midweek brings moments of joy with family gatherings and celebrations, enhancing your emotional well-being. Significant achievements such as home renovations, celebratory events in honor of familial accomplishments, or exciting career developments like new roles or projects will contribute to your contentment. You'll find the environment charged with positive energy, making every moment enjoyable. By week's end, your resolve and strength serve as a beacon of inspiration, reflecting

your successful endeavors. **Lucky number** 11 | **Lucky colour** Yellow **Lucky day** Wednesday



#### **AQUARIUS** Jan 20-Feb 18

This week, you will find yourself embracing life with grand enthusiasm and a sense of accomplishment. Expect to see substantial progress in your professional endeavors, accompanied by significant financial rewards that you might indulge in generously. Family demands will be met with your usual kindness and generosity, adding to your joy. Your partner may have some additional expectations during this period, yet you'll address these with openness and affection. Happiness within the household will be palpable, particularly through achievements or milestones reached by younger family members. However, some of you may experience a need for extra attention to your health as emotional fluctuations or physical concerns could briefly disrupt your equilibrium. Remember to prioritize your well-being amidst the bustling activity.

Lucky number 14 | Lucky colour Musterd Lucky day Friday



#### CANCER June 21-July 22

This period marks a crucial phase where your efforts lay the foundation for future outcomes. Progress might unfold gradually, yet your perseverance will ensure significant achievements. Harness your inner strength to tackle necessary tasks effectively, earning recognition and appreciation for your diligence. Your diverse skills will come to the forefront, drawing admiration for your resilience and drive. Your role as an inspirational force will uplift those around you. Effective communication will enhance your rapport with both peers and leaders, fostering a harmonious work environment. As the week concludes, a fresh wave of innovative thinking will enhance your projects, boosting your productivity in your professional pursuits. Additionally, you will experience a vibrant zest for life, enhancing both your personal joy and interpersonal connections. Embrace this time to relish and enrich your experiences. Lucky number 12 | Lucky colour Lavender Lucky day Thursday



#### SCORPIO Oct 23-Nov 21

Despite your consistent efforts across various fronts to secure a job, it seems that success remains elusive for now. Your dedication and drive are evident, but it appears financial gains might be challenging to come by this week. However, do not lose hope. As the days pass, promising opportunities are expected to emerge, potentially leading to significant achievements. You'll find support from influential figures in your life, such as family elders, who are eager to see you succeed. Remember, patience will be your greatest ally during this period. Maintaining a solid foundation in your endeavors will eventually lead to favorable outcomes Stand firm as you approach the final steps towards your goal, for success is on the horizon, promising longlasting benefits and broader opportunities

Can we reshape our destiny?

ucky number 16 | Lucky colour Purple Lucky day Saturday



#### PISCES Feb 19-March 20

This week promises an increase in material well-being, inviting a deeper search for inner peace. You may find yourself drawn to reflective practices like yoga and meditation. Expect to devote time to hosting meaningful ceremonies that uplift the spirit. However, the week may also present challenges in your personal relationships, possibly causing friction or misunderstandings with a close partner. Such moments could lead to feelings of dissatisfaction and a sense of being emotionally drained. It's crucial now to clarify your aspirations and focus on the positive aspects of your circumstances. Viewing situations from a more optimistic perspective can prevent feelings of sadness and help you navigate through negativity with courage and resolve. Stay determined and use this period to strengthen rather than lose spirit. Lucky number 15 | Lucky colour Brown

Madhu Kotiya is a tarot card reader, spiritual healer, and Founder, MShezaim Institute of Tarot and Divination. Contact details: madhu@indiatarot.com, www.indiatarot.com, M: 9873283331



#### re begin life with high hopes and aspirations, bubbling with energy, and carrying a mind-set that would know no limits, as if nothing is beyond reach. Like a free bird, free from any geographical limitations, unhindered, we all wish to make it to our dream destination. But when faced with hard realities of life, and not being able to make it to the desired destination, we realise that life does not necessarily move to our asking. We then come under pressure and often resign to fate. But a few among us, unfazed by such challenges

The question now is: Were those who created history so destined? Or that they could make it because they sincerely worked towards that end? Well, it is difficult to digest that history can be created by choice. But then focused efforts by choice and discrimination could lead to making history. Provided, such an endeavour ends up serving a meaningful purpose for the society at large.

make history.

Let us first examine how our destiny is formed. It needs to be appreciated here that human beings enjoy the

action by choice and discrimination. That however, is something like a double edged sword, as it carries equal probability of use and misuse. And there is nothing like a free lunch in life. We shall have to bear with the consequences of the choices made. We, thus, get trapped into a circuitous web of cause-effect chain. Following this very script, every happening is the culmination of doings in the past. And how we negotiate with the callings of the present, sets the ground on which future stands. This is the premise on which the concept of destiny works. If we look at this scheme of things on its face value, it would mean that our life is fated. Naturally arises the question: How can we escape the consequences of our own doing? If, however, we look deep into the founding principle on which the

concept of destiny stands, it will come

out that we are not helplessly fated

beyond the scope of reprieve. The

choice option itself enjoins upon us

conscientious choice intended to not

simply overcome the carryover effect

with the freedom to make

exclusive privilege to guide their



of past doing. Also raise our awareness level through fresh educative inputs, which in turn, may help reshape the course of destiny afresh. The paradox, however, is that

seldom are people found ever using this option. But those few who used their choice option in this very spirit, were the ones who could make history. For, even in the event of failure, they

maintained calm and poise, geared up afresh, reaffirmed their resolve, and then made a fresh bid in right earnest towards the designated task. But not without identifying their inadequacies, which they acknowledged and then strived to overcome. They then, explored beyond the known, and equipped themselves adequately to strike upon even unchartered territory. So said swami Vevekanand: "The history of the world is the history of few men who had faith in themselves. Faith calls out divinity within you; you can do everything. You fail only when you do not strive sufficiently to manifest infinite power within." Truth remains that in so far as a being's making is concerned, potentially we carry immense mindpower, which if unfolded in full, would know no limits. The irony, however, is that being bound by cause-effect chain, we carry a very strong legacy from the past, which includes previous birth. That preconditions our mind one way or the other, depending on what short of individual specific experiences one would have had. The

did not lose their nerve. They rather

imprints of these experiences that mind carries from the past, defines the unique character of a being. And that finds reflection by way of our inherent mental propensities - desire trends, likes & dislikes, prejudices and obsessions, habit & attitudes, and even virtues & attributes. That clouds our vision. Consequently, we fail to access full landscape of our mind. So, in effect, our mind-power gets compromised.

It needs to be appreciated here that the choice option available with us very much enjoins upon us with the privilege to self-reflect and identify our inborn fault-lines. If we acknowledge them, and then consciously work upon to free our mind from all such limitations, the best in us will emerge. This is what swamiji's above quoted statement implies. Even astrology can prove handy in identifying our inborn traits and with a fair amount of precision.

The issue continues... The writer is an astrologer, vastu consultant and spiritual counsellor. Connect with him at Tel: 91-11-9818037273/9871037272 Email: bharatbhushanpadmadeo@gmail.com