

FROM PAGE ONE

FCRA

increase in time limit for intima- tion of opening of bank accounts. On the compoundable of- fences, the gazette notification said, "Offence punishable under sections 3, 11 and 35 of the Act read with rule 6 for failure to inti- mate about receipt of foreign con- tribution within the prescribed time limit" shall be compound- able with a penalty of "Five per cent of such foreign contribution received in a financial year".

Section 3 of the FCRA states: "No foreign contribution shall be accepted by any... candidate for election; correspondent, colum- nist, cartoonist, editor, owner, printer or publisher of a registered newspaper; Judge, Government servant or employee of any cor- poration or any other body con- trolled or owned by the Government; member of any Legislature; political party or of- fice-bearer thereof; organisation of a political nature as may be specified under sub-section (1) of section 5 by the Central Government; association or com- pany engaged in the production or broadcast of audio news or au- dio visual news or current affairs programmes through any elec- tronic mode, or any other elec- tronic form as defined in clause (r) of sub-section (1) of section 2 of the Information Technology Act, 2000 (21 of 2000) or any other mode of mass communication; correspondent or columnist, car- toonist, editor, owner of the as- sociation or company..."

An official in the MHA said these persons were allowed to re- ceive contribution of up to Rs 1 lakh earlier but ran the risk of pro- secution if they did not inform the government about amounts in ex- cess of Rs 1 lakh within the stipu- lated time.

The other key change is in Rule 6 of the Act. The words "one lakh rupees" have been replaced with "ten lakh rupees" and the words "thirty days" have been replaced by "three months".

Rule 6 deals with "Intima- tion of receiving foreign contribution from relatives" and the amend- ment will allow individuals to re- ceive up to Rs 10 lakh from rela- tives abroad without intimating the government.

In case, the amount is more than Rs 10 lakh, the receiver will get three months, instead of one, to intimate the government.

"The Ministry is constantly working to ease compliance bur- den on NGOs. These steps have been taken with the same ob- jective. It will give them more room for compliance and even com- pound certain offences that were punishable earlier," an official of the MHA said.

In Rule 9, which deals with "application for obtaining 'regis- tration' or 'prior permission' to re- ceive foreign contribution", the government brought amend- ments that will now give NGOs 45 days, instead of 15 days under the earlier rule, to intimate the Union Home Secretary about one or more bank accounts opened for utilisation of foreign funds re- ceived.

The same extension of time for intimation on bank accounts has been offered to NGOs seeking prior permission for receipt of for- eign funds.

In Rule 13, which deals with "declaration of receipt of foreign contribution", the government has deleted clause (b). The clause says: "A person receiving foreign contribution in a quarter of the fi- nancial year shall place details of foreign contribution received on its official website or on a website as specified by the central govern- ment within 15 days following the last day of the quarter in which it has been received clearly indicat- ing details of donors, amount re- ceived and date of receipt".

In Rule 17 A, which requires NGOs to intimate the Ministry within 15 days whenever there is change in an NGO's bank account, name, address, aims, objectives or key members, the deadline has now been increased to 45 days.

In Rule 20, amendments have been brought to ensure applica- tions for revision of an order passed by the "competent author- ity" can be made to the Home Secretary in electronic form as well. Earlier it had to be made on plain paper. However, the Ministry will reserve the right to decide in what form the application needs to be made.

Among the offences made compoundable by the govern- ment are also those falling under Section 11 and 35 of the Act.

Section 11 bars individuals having definite cultural, economic, educational, religious and social programmes from accepting for- eign contributions without regis- tration. Section 35 stipulates a punishment of five years for any- one who helps a person, a polit- ical party or an organisation in get- ting foreign contribution in violation of the Act.

Both have been made com- poundable with a fine of 5% of the foreign contribution received.

Offences under Section 17, Section 19 and Section 37 have been made compoundable with a fine of Rs 10,000 per bank ac- count. Section 17 asks NGOs to open only one bank account for re- ceipt of foreign contribution but allows them to open multiple bank accounts for utilisation. Section 19 asks NGOs to maintain an account of foreign funds re- ceived and utilised. The Act asks NGOs to intimate the government about opening of bank accounts within 45 days. Failure to do so has now been made compoundable.

Section 37 deals with punish- ment for FCRA violations where penalty has not been defined and stipulates it as one year of impris- onment.

Similarly, the offence of failure to intimate the government about change in an NGO's bank ac- counts, name, address, aims, ob- jectives or key members within 45 days has been made compound- able with a fine of Rs 10,000.

Offences punishable under Section 19 for failure to maintain an account of foreign contribution received and utilised in a pre- scribed format and to be put up on a website in a prescribed time limit has also been made com- poundable with a fine of Rs 10,000 for each offence.

Amravati killing

Express, Umesh Prahladrao Kolhe, a 54-year-old chemist, was killed in Maharashtra's Amravati district on June 21, allegedly for circulat- ing a social media post supporting Nupur Sharma on WhatsApp.

While five persons were ar- rested earlier, police on Saturday confirmed the arrest of two more suspects – Irfan Khan, 35, the al- leged mastermind who runs an NGO, and Yusuf Khan, 44, a veteri- nary doctor.

While Irfan was arrested from Nagpur on Saturday night, Yusuf was picked up from Amravati on Friday night.

Police said Irfan is the con- venerator of a registered NGO that runs a helpline called "Rahebar". The Facebook page of the NGO says that it works to "rehabilitate differently able (d) people from the underprivileged segment".

Confirming Irfan's arrest and identifying him as the "master- mind", Arti Singh, Police Commissioner, Amravati City, said, "We are checking his NGO's bank- ing transactions".

Police said at least four of the five arrested earlier were Irfan's friends, and volunteered with his NGO. Irfan is alleged to have planned the killing, assigned spe- cific tasks to the suspects, and pro- vided logistical support like vehi- cle and cash.

Yusuf, the veterinary doctor who has been arrested, is alleged to have acted as the "instigator". "He had put up a post on the WhatsApp group against Kolhe, (saying) that he (Kolhe) was cir- culating posts supporting Nupur Sharma. This provoked the ac- cused against Kolhe, and they de- cided to kill him. So, Yusuf insti- gated the others," said a police officer. Yusuf has been sent to po- lice custody till July 4.

"The motive behind the mur- der was to seek revenge for the post made by him (Kolhe) in sup- port of Nupur Sharma," said Deputy Commissioner of Police, Amravati, Vikram Sali.

"During investigations, we learnt that Kolhe had circulated a social media post supporting Nupur Sharma on WhatsApp. By mistake, he posted the message on a group with Muslim members who were also his customers. One of the arrested accused said this was an insult to the Prophet and hence he must die," a police source told *The Indian Express* on Friday.

In Delhi, sources said the NIA, which is already probing the Udaipur killing will investigate if both the attacks were instigated by an outfit, and if there were any links with Pakistan.

"MHA has handed over the in- vestigation of the case relating to the barbaric killing of Shri Umesh Kolhe in Amravati, Maharashtra, on 21st June to NIA. The conspir- acy behind the killing, involve- ment of organisations and inter- national linkages would be thoroughly investigated," Home Minister Amit Shah's office tweeted earlier in the day.

Kolhe was returning home on a scooter, between 10 pm and 10.30 pm, when he was killed. According to a complaint filed by his son, Sankeet, 27, who was ac- companying him on another scooter, "Two men on a motorcy- cle suddenly came in front of my father's scooter. They stopped my father's scooter and one of them stabbed him on the left side of his neck with a knife".

Worked in NGO

the chemist. The fifth person ar- rested earlier has been identified as Atib Rashid, 22.

Irfan is a resident of Kamela area, a chawl at Pathan Chowk. His neighbours said he was a welder earlier, but his business ran into trouble during the pandemic.

About seven years ago, he be- came "extremely religious" and took up social activities, they said. He is also reported to have sup- ported the anti-CAA protests.

Irfan, a school dropout, lived with his mother, a younger brother, wife, two sons including one who is specially-abled, and a daughter. For the last week or so, his house has been locked.

"I knew him well. He would come to the police station with public issues... He has a petty as- sault case against him; he was also detained for questioning when he helped his friend to elope with a girl from another community," said a police source.

According to local sources, Muddassir Shaikh and Abdul Taufiq Taslim, two of Irfan's friends who have been arrested, were also "very religious".

Chief Justice

learnt to appreciate wholly the roles and responsibilities assigned by the Constitution to each of the institutions."

"The party in power believes that every governmental action is entitled to judicial endorsement. The parties in Opposition expect the judiciary to advance their po- litical positions and causes," he said, adding "this flawed thinking of all hues flourishes in the ab- sence of proper understanding among people about the Constitution and the functioning of democratic institutions."

"It is the vigorously promoted ignorance among the general public which is coming to the aid of such forces whose only aim is to run down the only independ- ent organ i.e., the judiciary. Let me make it clear: We are answerable to the Constitution and Constitution alone."

"To enforce checks and bal- ances envisioned in the Constitution, we need to promote a Constitutional culture in India. We need to spread awareness about the roles and responsibil- ities of individuals and institutions. Democracy is all about participa- tion," he said.

Citing the example of the US, the CJI underlined the need for ho- nouing inclusivity "everywhere in the world including in India" and cautioned that "a non-inclu- sive approach is an invitation to disaster".

Complimenting the Indian community for its achievements, he said "it is the tolerance and in- clusive nature of American soci- ety that is able to attract the best talents from all over the world, which in turn is contributing to its growth. Honouring qualified tal- ents from diverse backgrounds is also essential to sustain confi- dence of all sections of the society in the system."

"This principle of inclusivity is universal. It needs to be honoured everywhere in the world, includ- ing in India. Inclusivity strength- ens unity in society which is key to peace and progress. We need to focus on issues that unite us, not on those that divide us. In the 21st century, we cannot allow petty, narrow and divisive issues to dic- tate human and societal relation- ships. We have to rise above all di- vasive issues to remain focused on human development. A non-in- clusive approach is an invitation to disaster," he said.

He told the gathering that "both India and the United States are known for their diversity. This diversity needs to be honoured and cherished, everywhere in the world. It is only because the United States honours and respects di- versity that you were all able to reach this country and make a mark through your hard work and ex- traordinary skills."

The CJI said "a nation that wel- comes everyone with open arms, a nation that assimilates all cul- tures and a nation that honours every language is bound to be pro- gressive, peaceful and vibrant. It is this character that promotes pros- perity."

Arriving in countries like the US for work or study, he said, used to be the prerogative of a few pri- vileged families once upon a time, but this has changed "due to the vision of some leaders and Chief Ministers who laid a solid founda- tion for India-centric growth al- most two decades ago".

He said "such foundations meant for long-term growth should never be disturbed. All over the world, with the change in gov- ernment, policies do change. But no sensible, mature and patriotic government would alter the poli- cies in such a manner which would slow down or halt the growth of its own territory."

He regretted that "unfortu- nately, we do not come across such sensibility and maturity in India too often, whenever there is a change in government".

The CJI urged the Indian com-

munity to start thinking like em- ployers and not just employees so as to help India reap the demo- graphic dividend.

Zubair custody

custody in the future.

CMM Savaria later denied bail to Zubair, remanding him to judi- cial custody for 14 days.

A row erupted when, more than three hours before the CMM pronounced the order, DCP (Intelligence Fusion and Strategic Operations) KPS Malhotra an- nounced that Zubair's bail plea had been rejected. He retracted his statement after Advocate Soutik Banerjee, representing Zubair, questioned how the police learnt of the order even before it was pro- nounced. Banerjee called it "scan- dalous". DCP Malhotra later claimed he "misheard" the inves- tigating officer.

Additional Public Prosecutor Atul Shrivastava told the court that Zubair "accepted payments through RazorPay from Pakistan, Syria, Australia, Singapore, UAE, which all require further investi- gation".

"If you accept something – do- nation, etc from a person of foreign country – then it's a contravention. As per our CDR analysis, he has ac- cepted through Razor gateway, from Pakistan, Syria, etc which... require further investigation," Shrivastava said.

Advocate Vrinda Grover, who appeared for Zubair, said police had "misled the court" as they re- leased a statement which men- tioned that donations were ac- cepted by the media company Pravda while police took Zubair's name in court as the recipient of the donations.

"Pravda is a section 8 company. Funds are going as per their up- date. See if there is one financial transaction of a foreign company. This power (of the police) is not given to mislead the court. Throw something in the media to say 'oh something is happening'. Say that foreign money is there. All trans- actions are proved. These are fi- nancial transactions. How can they make a submission (that) it has gone into my account? They are saying I am a journalist, I can- not receive FCRA. This is to the company, not to me," Grover said.

The prosecutor told the court that Zubair was the director of the company.

Grover said it was "not a crime to be a director" and that no notice was served to the company.

"A company taking funds is not a violation of FCRA. You have not issued notice to Pravda. You said the journalist took (funds) and then said Pravda," she said.

The prosecutor said the dona- tions will be investigated and they need access to Zubair's phone to get further details on the contri- butions.

Grover said bank account transactions can be seen instead as they contain details of every transaction.

Grover told the court that the tweet – for which Zubair was ar- rested – was made from an Android phone and not a laptop. She said the phone was later stolen and a report had been filed in this regard.

Shrivastava said Zubair had formatted his phone and also changed his SIM before turning up for the investigation.

JP Nadda

India that are dedicated to build- ing a resilient India are met with destruction and disruption."

Irani said Nadda also lauded the PM for his government's "pro- poor" initiatives, while mention- ing schemes such as Jan-Dhan Yojana for economic empower- ment, Awas Yojana for housing, and schemes to build toilets which have helped women. The PM and government have taken a pledge to ensure that the schemes reach the last person in society, Irani said.

The Union minister also called the Opposition's claim that recent incidents were due to "the politi- cal atmosphere created by the BJP" and PM Modi – the killing of a tai- lor in Rajasthan over his support for remarks against the Prophet being one such incident – as reflective of the Opposition's "destruc- tive politics". In reply to a question on the Opposition's criticism, she said: "The BJP works irrespective of propaganda based on nothing but misinformation, with the in- tent to create disruption. Irrespective of these shenanigans of the Opposition, people of India vehemently voted to get Narendra Modi back as Prime Minister, which is evidence that the people of this country believe in him and under his leadership are looking to build India as a strong nation."

The Udaipur tailor, Kanhaiya Lal, was mentioned in a condo- lence message passed at the National Executive.

Irani said that in his speech, Nadda referred to the "politics of violence and political killings" in West Bengal and Kerala, and pledged the BJP's support to its

WWW.INDIANEXPRESS.COM

DOWNLOAD APP

VISUAL STORIES

DAILY BRIEFING

PODCASTS

CUSTOMIZABLE NEWS EXPERIENCE

SCAN THIS QR CODE TO DOWNLOAD THE APP

workers in these states.

Irani also attacked Telangana Chief Minister K Chandrasekh- ar Rao, whose TRS and the BJP have been in a high-pitched battle, since the BJP made clear its expansion plans for the state. Rao, who is try- ing to build a national profile for himself, has gone out of his way to ignore Modi. On Saturday, he did not come to the airport to receive the PM, while according the cour- tesy to the Opposition's joint can- didate for president, Yashwant Sinha. Irani referred to this, and added: "The Prime Minister has given a clarion call for cooperative federalism and, in the last eight years, met all leaders and deferred to them with respect, as is val- idated by maryada. That KCR has disrupted a constitutionally fed- eral protocol reflects on him."

Slamming the TRS leadership for its reference to the BJP National Executive meeting as a "circus", Irani said: "For KCR and his polit- ical entity, politics may be a circus and may be affiliated to clownish behaviour and he may not take it with the seriousness that it de- serves. But for us, it is a medium for social emancipation and na- tion-building."

One of the reasons the BJP picked Hyderabad for its National Executive was to give an impetus to its Telangana plans, and the BJP has pulled out all stops to ensure a grand show.

In discussions held Saturday, a decision was also taken by the BJP to ramp up its outreach pro- grammes over welfare schemes initiated by party governments, and to launch 'Tiranga movement' and yatra to give a thrust to its na- tionalism plank.

A decision was taken at a meeting of office-bearers to ex- plore more ways to reach out to "the 30 crore labharthis (benefici- aries) of government schemes. The party has already reaped ben- efits of this loyal base in elections, including in the 2019 Lok Sabha polls.

Addressing the media, BJP na- tional office-bearer Vasundhara Raje said they would hold talks with the voters "scheme by scheme" and "district by district". The idea is to "find out the difficul- ties and the improvements we could work on" and to determine to what level the schemes can be taken, the former Rajasthan chief minister said.

Raje said nationalism would be another big focus, with plans for a Tiranga Yatra and a 'ghar-ghar Tiranga campaign'. The plan is to reach 20 crore people before the next Lok Sabha elections, she said.

Apart from this, the party will strengthen its organisation, up to the polling booth level. "Each booth will have at least 200 active party workers and WhatsApp groups will be activated," she said. A review would be done of panna pramukhs, in charge of a page each of voters' list, and the first point of contact in the party's election machinery, every 15 days.

Modi, who arrived for the National Executive Saturday, will make the concluding remarks on Sunday and address a publicly afterwords.

On Sunday, Amit Shah will also move the political resolution, which will be seconded by Karnataka Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai and Assam CM Himanta Biswa Sarma.

Pulitzer winner

immigration desk at Delhi air- port," Mattoo tweeted while post- ing her cancelled boarding pass. "I was not given any reason but told I would not be able to travel inter- nationally."

While there was no official word from either the state or Centre, sources in the J&K Police said that Mattoo was among sev- eral journalists from the Valley put on the no-fly list by the govern- ment. In September 2019, Kashmiri journalist Gowhar Geelani had been stopped by im- migration officials at the Delhi air- port on his way to Germany. Last year, the J&K administration had stopped journalist-turned-acade- mician Zahid Rafiq from travelling to the US, where he was to teach

Sean Duca on how to secure the metaverse

NEW EPISODE EVERYDAY

Nandagopal Rajan speaks to Sean Duca, the Regional Chief Security Officer for Asia Pacific at Palo Alto Networks about how to protect data in the metaverse, the question of identity theft and authentication, and how the physical and digital worlds will blur

at a university.

Journalist Ruwa Shah was also prevented from travelling abroad. Another academician from South Kashmir was stopped but later al- lowed to travel after some months.

A resident of Srinagar, the 28- year-old Mattoo works as a pho- tojournalist for the international wire agency Reuters. She won the 2022 Pulitzer Prize in feature pho- tography along with three other Reuters photographers for their coverage of the Covid second wave in India.

Supported by the Institut Francais en Inde, a section of the French Embassy in India, the grant is open to "lens based practition- ers" who are residents of Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka, as per the website of Serendipity Arles.

Qatar kickoff

qualifying for the November 21- December 18 tournament, the country is among the top-10 buy- ers of tickets.

"In 2018, Moscow had just two stadiums and still, there were nights when the entire city was sold out," says Akarsh Sharma, a business executive from Gurgaon who had travelled to Russia to watch the World Cup. "Here, we are talking about a country smaller than Delhi-NCR that will host the entire tournament."

Sharma spent Rs 1.3 lakh on a series of tickets which will give him access to seven matches across all rounds, from the group stage to the final. But he is yet to zero down on an accommodation. And he isn't the only one.

With the skewed demand- supply ratio, combined with the fact that 80 per cent of the total ac- commodation inventory is being sold via a centralised system op- erated by the organising commit- tee, finding a place to stay is nei- ther easy nor affordable.

In December, AP news agency reported that the organisers se- cured a bulk of the rooms for the players and officials of the 32 teams, representatives from world football's governing body FIFA, the tournament's sponsors and inter- national media.

That's left the overseas fans with very limited options. In a statement to *The Indian Express*, the Supreme Committee for Delivery and Legacy.

NSE

company. Based out of Oshiwara in Andheri, it was one of the IT companies tasked with conduct- ing security audits at NSE during 2010 to 2015 when the co-location scam is believed to have taken place. The CBI has recorded the statement of one of the company employees, a source said.

The CBI's investigation over the course of the last four years had led to the arrest of former NSE managing director Chitra Ramakrishna and its former group operating officer Anand Subramanian.

"The security audit company should have been able to detect the breaches in the NSE system during the period when the scam took place. We are looking into the processes followed by the com- pany to test the security of the sys- tems," a source added, speaking of iSec Services Pvt Ltd.

Pandey refused to talk on the issue, while an e-mail sent by *The Sunday Express* to iSec company did not receive any response. An e-mail sent to the CBI seeking its response also did not get any re- ply. However, sources close to the company said that iSec was merely responsible for conduct- ing audits of the devices used by the brokers who were using the co-location facility provided by the NSE, to check if they had proper Internet connection, firewall fac- ility, among other technical aspects. A source said, "iSec did not have any access to the NSE servers, so there was no way they could de- tect that the system had been compromised and a co-location scam was underway."

An expert told *The Sunday Express* that an IT auditor is re- sponsible for analysing and assess- ing an organisation's technologi-

3 WEST BENGAL

GROUND REPORT

As rising inflation punctures wage hike, tea workers seek more — land rights, better health facilities

Across tea estates in Hills, workers threaten strike for fixing minimum wages

SWEETY KUMARI
DARJEELING, JULY 1

TWO WEEKS since the Labour Department of the West Bengal government notified a 15 per cent hike or Rs 30 raise in the daily wage of tea garden workers, 51-year-old Sara Tamang is not very enthusiastic over the raise.

"I heard that they have revised the daily wages by Rs 30. We haven't got the revised amount yet. But I want to know what you get for 30 rupees today," Tamang asks wryly, pointing to the rising inflation — from hike in LPG cylinders to overall increase in food prices.

Tamang, who has been working in the tea gardens of North Bengal for over 15 years, is raising her two daughters — both studying in colleges — alone after her husband died nine years ago.

"I earn about Rs 5,000 a month with a daily wage of Rs 202. My daughters attend college daily, their daily fare to college is more than my entire salary. So, they have started teaching students," she says, adding that with sky-rocketing LPG cylinder prices, refilling a cylinder every month has become difficult now.

"Now we don't cook on gas unless it is for special occasions. We have started using firewood again," says Tamang, who works in a tea garden in Leborg Valley, located just 10 km from Darjeeling town.

"I have struggled my entire life. I don't want my daughter to work in a tea garden, I wouldn't mind if they leave this place for work and lead a life like girls in cities do," Tamang says.

A hike in daily wage doesn't excite her anymore.

"I am not happy with this (wage hike). We don't have health insurance. If we fall ill and take a day's leave it is cut from our monthly payment... I want the government to give us facilities like medical care, land rights," says Tamang.

The story remains the same in almost all the tea gardens — be it Rangheet and Ging in Darjeeling and Thurbo in Mirik.

At present, Darjeeling has a total of 87 tea estates, including many of the world's largest working plantations. While most of the owners make profits, the tea workers get a basic wage of just Rs 120-250 a day, which is the lowest among all other plantation industries.

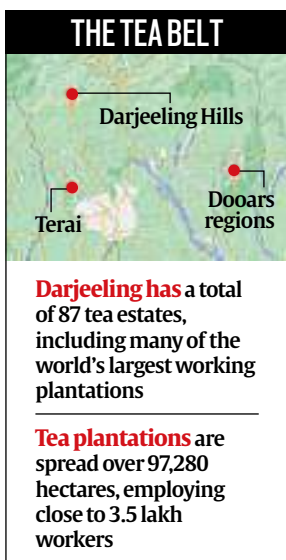
Most of the tea garden workers said minimum wages, land rights, neglected tea gardens and food rations are the biggest issues being faced by them.

On July 14, the state Labour Department notified an interim hike of 15 per cent in the daily wages of tea garden workers soon after Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee made the announcement during her trip to Alipurduar in North Bengal. As per the notification, tea garden owners will have to raise the daily wage of "rated workers" by Rs 30 or 15 percent of their current pay — from Rs 202 to Rs 232. The notification for the interim hike, however, is not likely to be implemented before January 2023.

Unhappy with the revision, tea workers and unions, who have been demanding more welfare measures and rights of tea workers, want the government to fix the minimum wages instead of interim hikes.



Women tea workers at Ging tea estate in Darjeeling. Partha Paul



"Before 2014, wages were revised through negotiations. That was the tradition. For the first time, tea workers in 2014 demanded a structured pay and 29 trade unions launched a joint campaign for it. We didn't sign the traditional agreement of pay revision that year. In 2015, the West Bengal government agreed that in six months a structured wage will be announced. A small committee called an advisory board was formed comprising union members, tea garden owners and bureaucrats. After nearly 17 meetings, there was no agreement on minimum wage. Finally, on December 13, 2018, the advisory board submitted a report saying that minimum wage policy should be implemented from January 2019. But that didn't happen. Again, on June 2, 2020, they agreed to give a minimum wage of Rs 212. But we said that it should be fixed after evaluating the seventh pay commission. Recently, the Labour Department temporarily revised the daily wage of 15 per

cent hike or Rs 30 even though the interim amount proposed earlier was Rs 250," says Saman Pathak, working president of Darjeeling District Tea Kaman Majdoor Union.

"It is an industry where wages are revised on the basis of negotiations, and interim revisions are made during meetings. It is not her (referring to Chief Minister Banerjee) police, or PWD department where she can randomly decide an amount. The interim notification has basically benefitted the tea garden owners. They feel that after the recent revision, tea workers won't ask for minimum wage at least for the time being. Basically, they have tried to divert the focus," Pathak says.

On fixing the minimum wages, a consistent demand of the tea workers, PK Bhattacharya, the president of Tea Association of India, says: "While the issue of minimum wages has not been resolved or no government has taken a concrete step on it, one will have to acknowledge that a code of wages has been notified by an Act of Parliament. The State rules mentions that the Central government has to declare the flow level minimum wages and no state can have minimum wages that are lower than the flow level wages. This is a big constraint. Now, no government has gone out for notification for minimum wages. Since, the process to fix minimum wages has been on, what the governments of both Assam and West Bengal have been doing is issuing administrative orders by revising wages from time to time — the last being in June 2022."

According to Bhattacharya, the tea workers are categorised in two groups — "daily rated worker" and "monthly rated

workers".

"The recent notification on interim wages mentions 15 per cent raise for both "daily rated worker" and "monthly rated workers". While the daily rated workers are happy with the rise, the staff and the sub-staff feel that the raise is not enough. Now, they are threatening strike... The government is convening another meeting on July 4. The government is in favour of giving interim rise. The intentions are clear. So, the process is not being delayed by the employers."

While the association claims to bring in changes, tea workers claim, nothing has changed on the ground in all these years.

Vaskar Gurung, whose mother has worked in a tea garden for 30 years, says: "Wages, medical facilities and housing are the three problems being faced by tea garden workers. Due to inflation, it is getting difficult for workers to sustain their families. Also, there is not a single big hospital in the area. If anyone falls sick, we are forced to travel for at least two hours to Siliguri for medical treatment," says Vaskar. "We do have boots but the risk of snake bites and poisonous chemicals are always there... Headaches, knee pains, muscular pains, severe back pains are very common among us," says Malti Tamang, a tea worker of Thurbo Gopaldhara Tea Garden in Mirik sub-division.

As 45-year-old Lalita Gurung hurriedly wraps up her house chores to walk down 10 km from Malegawn to Ging Tea Estate in the Leborg Valley in Darjeeling, she ruefully says: "The tea gardens too will die a slow death due to non-availability of adequate labours. Who would want their children to work in a tea garden which is the most neglected sector?"

RBU VICE-CHANCELLOR APPOINTMENT

Governor says followed govt's recommendation

Slams TMC leaders for making statements against him

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
KOLKATA, JULY 2

GOVERNOR JAGDEEP Dhanikhar on Saturday said that he appointed Mahua Mukherjee, professor in the department of dance at Rabindra Bharati University, as the RBU vice-chancellor "based on the recommendation of the state government", and therefore, he was within his rights to do so. "Statement @AIT Official -VC of Rabindra Bharati University appointment- reveals disconnect with Gov #MamataBanerjee. It is factually incorrect. Hence record set straight. Expect maturity & propriety from ruling party & Gov. Ever available for connect and interaction (sic)," Dhanikhar tweeted, slamming TMC leaders for "making statements against him".

Later, the Raj Bhavan came out with a press release, stating, "It is most unfortunate and grave impropriety that the ruling party TMC spokesperson has made a totally wrong statement as regards Governor/Chancellor making appointment of the Vice-Chancellor of Rabindra Bharati University. The stance that the Governor did not bother to take into confidence the Education Minister and the Chief Minister before the an-



Governor Jagdeep Dhanikhar

nouncement', betrays ignorance of the law, as according to the enactments it is the prerogative of the Governor/Chancellor to appoint Vice-Chancellors."

"However, in this case, on 24.06.2022, the Hon'ble Minister in Charge, Higher Education Department, Shri Bratya Basu, sent the following note to the Governor/Chancellor: 'Hon'ble Chancellor may kindly peruse notes per-page in connection with his advice marked as 'X' at NSP 16. Accordingly, the Search Committee has recommended 3 names as stated at NSP-21 in order of preference. Hon'ble Chancellor may kindly appoint one among them as the Vice-Chancellor of Rabindra Bharati University.' The Governor/Chancellor appointed Dr Mahua Mukherjee, Professor, Dept of Dance, Rabindra Bharati University, whose name appears at Sl. No. 1," added the Raj Bhavan release.

Countering TMC's charge of several bills being pending with

him, the Governor said, "As regards to the bills, on the subject as passed by the WB Assembly, the same are not pending with the Governor, having been returned to the Assembly on the ground of incompleteness of compliance. The Assembly Secretariat itself, while sending bills for consideration, indicated 'The complete official report of the debates of the West Bengal Legislative Assembly on the Bill will be forwarded as soon as it is ready.' Consideration at this end will be effected once the indicated input is received."

Meanwhile, state Education Minister Bratya Basu, later in the day, issued a press release, stating that a statement was issued to the Governor for the re-examination of the previous recommendation of the state government (on appointment to RBU VC) in view of the bill passed in the state Assembly to replace Governor with the Chief Minister as Chancellor of state universities.

"Regarding the appointment of the Vice-Chancellor of Rabindra Bharati University, a detailed statement was issued on June 30, 2022, regarding the re-examination of the matter/proposal by the state government in view of the bill passed by the Assembly," said Basu.

UG and PG admission in state-run colleges, universities to begin from July 18 & Sept 1

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
KOLKATA, JULY 2

THE STATE government has issued the notification for admission in state-run colleges and universities for the academic session 2022-23, with the admission process for undergraduate courses beginning on July 18 and will be completed by September 15. The first semester of the UG courses will commence on September 19.

The admission process for the post-graduate students, however, commences on September 1 and will be completed by October 21. The first se-

mester of the PG courses will commence on November 1.

The admission will take place strictly based on the merit of the students and online mode, says the notification.

"The results for the West Bengal Higher Secondary Examination 2022 have been published and the results of other equivalent examinations are expected to be announced shortly. Considering the success of the online admission process, and since the requisite infrastructure has already been put in place in the State's higher education institutions, it is hereby informed to all concerned that admissions to all Under

Graduate (Honours and General) and Postgraduate courses in the State-funded Higher Education Institutions in West Bengal for the ensuing academic session 2022-2023 will be made online in Standalone mode," reads the notification dated June 30, which has been made available on Saturday.

The government also informed that the entire admission process will be held in online mode in respective colleges and universities and no physical presence of the students will be required during the process of admission. No application fees will be taken from the students and the admission fees will be

MONEY LAUNDERING

Abhishek's 'aide' declared proclaimed offender

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI, JULY 2

A DELHI court has declared Vinay Mishra, an alleged associate of TMC MP Abhishek Banerjee, as a proclaimed offender for evading court proceedings in connection with a money-laundering probe into a coal mining "scam" in West Bengal, officials said on Saturday.

The declaration has been made under section 82 of the Code of Criminal Procedure (CrPC), which requires the appearance of an accused before the court, they said.

Mishra, 36, is an accused in the case where the role of Banerjee, his wife Rujira and others is being probed by the Enforcement Directorate (ED).

The federal agency has questioned and recorded the statement of both Banerjee and Rujira in the case. The ED has said Mishra never joined the probe.

The money laundering case stems from a November 2020 FIR registered by the CBI that alleged a multi-crore-rupee coal pilferage scam related to Eastern Coalfields Limited mines in West Bengal's Kunturia and Kajora areas in and around Asansol.

A chargesheet was filed by the ED in the case in May last year.

PUBLIC NOTICE
Notice is hereby given that my clients namely :- 1) Sambit Sen, son of late Ananth Nath Sen on behalf of all successor of late Ganendra Nath Mitra, son of late Radhanath Mitra, 2) Nikhilesh Mitra, son of late Narendra Nath Mitra on behalf of all successor of late Radhanath Mitra, 3) Sreemati Chhanda Mitra, wife of late Sukumar Mitra daughter in law of late Sachindra Nath Mitra on behalf of all successor of late Sachindra Nath Mitra son of late Radhanath Mitra, 4) Santinath Mitra, son of late Rachindranath Mitra @ Rabindranath Mitra on behalf of all successor of late Rachindranath Mitra @ Rabindranath Mitra All above clients are residing at Vill. Mitrapara, Joynagar Majlipur, P.O. Joynagar, District South 24 Parganas, Pin- 743337. The above mentioned clients and successors are intending to sale their ALL THAT piece and parcel measuring about 2.09 acre of land situated at District South 24 Parganas under P.S. Joynagar, Mouza- Joynagar, J.L. No. 17, L.R. Dag Nos. 995, 996, 997, 703, 704, 704/1365, 2115 under Khatian No. 1226, 1649, 2886 and ALL THAT piece and parcel of land measuring about 14 satak situated at District South 24 Parganas under P.S. Joynagar, Mouza- Ramnarayanpur, J.L.No. 16, L.R. Dag Nos. 776, 786/1088, 786/1089, 786/ 1090, 786/1091, 786/1092, 786/1093, 706, 707 under Khatian No. 1383, 1393 and others hereinafter mentioned as said properties. Any person or persons claiming any right, title and interest over the said properties and any encumbrances of any nature whatsoever in respect of the said properties either directly or indirectly of the said property or any part thereof including but not limited to by way of sale, gift, lease, transferred deed, trust, security possession, easement power of attorney howsoever may same their objection in respect thereof in writing at the office of the undersigned along with supporting documents within 15 (fifteen) days from the date of publication of this notice, failing which the transfer of the said properties will be completed without any reference such claim and the same if any shall be considered as non existence and I/ or waived.

KALPANA MAITRA (Advocate)
B/34, Narikel Bagan, P. O.-Garia
Kamdhari, Kolkata-700084
Mob.- 9831664664

It is hereby informed that we want to adopt a girl child (Age-within one and a half year). Interested persons contact immediately.

M: 8017071957

NOTICE

That my client, Halima Bibi, is presently the undisputed owner of all that piece and parcels of land measuring about 4 dec. More or less forming a part of R.S. & L.R. Dag No. 1382 under L.R. Khatian No. 1972, J.L. No. 63, Touzi No 23, in Mouza - Khasabaland, under P.S. Haroa, District: 24 Parganas(N) within limits of Khasabaland Gram Panchayat which they had acquired through regd. Deed of conveyance being no.151003272 for the year of 2022. Registered in the office of A.D.S.R. Deganga and recorded in its book No. I, Volume No. 1510-2022. Pages 74542 to 74565. Previous deed being No. 561 for the year of 1988, registered in the office of S.R. Deganga and recorded in its book No. 1, Volume No. 07. Pages 261 to 270 is not mortgaged with any bank or FI. Now my client being the sole owner wishes to pledge the above property and registered deed dated 2022 under equitable mortgage and avail loan facilities. In case anyone has any objection regarding the ownership of the statements herein, is hereby directed to contact the undersigned within 7 days from the date of this Notice in absence of which no claims shall be valid and entertained under law.

Sd/-
Keka Das
Advocate
District Judges' Court, Barasat
M: 6290468448



BEHRAMPORE BRANCH
Banbehari Sen Road, Khagra, Behrampore
Dist. Murshidabad, Pin - 742103, West Bengal

Appendix-IV, [Rule-8(1)] POSSESSION NOTICE (for Immovable Property)

Whereas, the undersigned being the Authorized Officer of Bank of Baroda, Behrampore Branch under the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and in exercise of powers conferred under section 13(12) read with Rule 9 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 issued a Demand Notice dated 11.03.2022, calling upon the Borrower(s) M/s Indra Hardware at the correspondence address: 7, Gurudayal Mitra Lane, Behrampore, Murshidabad - 742101, represented by the Proprietor and Guarantor(s) Mr. Indranil Ghosh at 45, Netaji Road, P.O. Khagra, Behrampore, Murshidabad - 742103, to repay dues to the tune of aggregate Rs.7,10,665.16 (Rupees Seven Lakh Ten Thousand Six Hundred Sixty Five and Sixteen Paise only) (Rs.5,94,424/- in Overdraft Account + Rs.1,16,241.16 in Term Loan BGECL) plus unapplied/unrealized interest and other charges thereon from the date of receipt of the said notice towards outstanding(s) of the availed Credit Facility.

The Borrower/ Guarantors/ Mortgagees in particular and the public in general are hereby cautioned not to deal with the property/ies detailed below and any dealings with the property/ies will be subject to the charge of Bank of Baroda, Behrampore Branch for an amount of Rs.7,10,665.16 (Rupees Seven Lakh Ten Thousand Six Hundred Sixty Five and Sixteen Paise only) (Rs.5,94,424/- in Overdraft Account + Rs.1,16,241.16 in Term Loan BGECL) plus unapplied/unrealized interest and other charges thereon and further interest thereon at the contractual rate plus costs, charges and expenses till date of payment.

The Borrower's attention is invited to provision of sub-section (8) of section 13 of the Act, in respect of time available, to redeem the secured assets.

Description of the Immovable Property

Equitable Mortgage of residential flat located at 1st floor of G + 4 apartment at 6, Murari Mohan Sen Road, P.O. Khagra, P.S. Behrampore, Mouza- Behrampore Kansari Bazar, Plot No. 214 (RS), 327 (LR), Kh. No. 250 (RS), 100, 1302, 1609, 2746, 2747, 2748, 2749, 2750, 281, 403 (LR), Dist. Murshidabad, super built up area: 580 sq. ft. in the name of Indranil Ghosh. The land is buttled and bounded by on the North: Municipal Road, next house of Adi Matri Bhandar, on the South: Bari, on the East: Mahakali Pathsalu new building, on the West: Bari.

Date: 30.06.2022, Place: Behrampore Authorised Officer, Bank of Baroda

2022 - 2023

65+ years of academic EXCELLENCE

ADMISSIONS OPEN

THAPAR INSTITUTE OF ENGINEERING & TECHNOLOGY

BE Programmes: Chemical Engineering | Civil Engineering | Computer Engineering | Computer Science & Engineering (at Patiala & Derabassi Campuses) | Computer Science and Business Systems | Electrical Engineering | Electrical and Computer Engineering | Electronics & Communication Engineering | Electronics and Computer Engineering | Electronics (Instrumentation & Control) Engineering | Mechanical Engineering | Mechatronics

BTECH Programmes: Biomedical Engineering | Biotechnology

Liberal Arts & Sciences Programmes: BA | BBA | BSc

ME Programmes: CAD/CAM Engineering | Thermal Engineering | Infrastructure Engineering | Structural Engineering | Computer Science & Engineering | Software Engineering | Power Systems | Electronics and Communications Engineering

AIETech Programmes: VLSI Design | Biotechnology | Environmental Science and Technology

MSc Programmes: Chemistry | Mathematics | Biotechnology | Mathematics & Computing | Physics

MBA (Psychology) MBA (Derabassi Campus)

Admission to BE/BTech programme will be made on 10+2 PCM* criteria. Once AIR of JEE (Main) - 2022 is available, subsequent admissions will be made on the basis of AIR of JEE (Main) - 2022.

Last date for applications
BE/BTech - 15th July, 2022 | BE/BTech Lateral Entry - 21st July, 2022
ME/MTech/MA/MCA/MSc - 30th July, 2022

*To apply and for detailed information, eligibility etc. visit thapar.edu or call our toll free number 18002024100

RANKINGS & ACCREDITATIONS

NAAC A+ Accredited A+ by NAAC

#23 Engineering Category (2021)

#26 University Category (2021)

501-600 Bracket in THE World University Rankings

ABET Accredited programmes

NBA Accredited programmes

ENGINEERING | SCIENCES | MANAGEMENT | LIBERAL ARTS PARTNERSHIPS WITH GLOBALLY TOP RANKED UNIVERSITIES

Bhadosh Road, Patiala, Punjab - 147004, India
18002024100 | admissions@thapar.edu | www.thapar.edu

Scholarships

BE/BTech Over Rs. 23 Crores.

ME/MTech GATE Qualified Rs. 17,400 per month Non GATE Qualified Rs. 10,000 per month

All BE/BTech and ME/MTech programmes are AICTE approved

International Partnerships
(For details, visit https://iep.thapar.edu)

University of Queensland, Australia
University of New South Wales, Australia
University of Leeds, UK
University of Toledo, USA
Tel Aviv University, Israel
Trinity College Dublin, Ireland

Scan to Apply

HOWRAH

9-year-old
drowns,
swimming
pool shut

Kolkata: A nine-year-old boy drowned in a swimming pool in Howrah's Dumurjola Sports Complex on Friday.

The class 3 student, identified as Bidipto Ghosh, had gone along with his mother to the pool to learn swimming. Soon after the incident, two trainers dived into the water to rescue the boy who was rushed to the Howrah district hospital.

He, however, was declared dead on arrival.

The police said that a case of unnatural death had been registered in this connection.

The Howrah district administration announced to shut the swimming pool for an indefinite period.

The incident occurred nearly a month after two school-going rowers drowned in the Rabindra Sarovar in Kolkata.

Howrah Municipal Corporation board of administrators chairman Sujoy Chakraborty visited the pool on Saturday morning for an inspection.

"It is a very tragic incident. We will look into this to prevent such incidents in future. We will talk to the bereaved family," said Chakraborty.

—ENS



NET PRACTICE

Sports Minister Aroop Biswas and badminton coach P Gopichand during the inauguration of 'Star Badminton Academy' in South 24 Parganas district on Saturday. PTI

MALDA

30 students injured as school bus falls into ditch, 3 critical

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
KOLKATA, JULY 2

AT LEAST 30 students were injured, three of them critically, when a school bus fell into a ditch in the Lakkhipur area of English Bazar town in Malda district on Saturday afternoon, police said.

The bus carrying 71 students of Kendriya Vidyalaya skidded of the road before falling into the ditch on the Malda-Manikchak state highway soon after it came out of the school campus and was trying to enter the main road around 2.30pm.

The bus was carrying 71 students of Kendriya Vidyalaya. No complaint filed against driver so far

The students of classes 5 to 10 were returning home.

Following the accident, local residents rushed to the spot to rescue the injured students. Later, the fire brigade and traffic police joined the rescue operations.

Out of the 30 injured, 13 students were admitted to the

Malda Medical College and Hospital.

The bus driver and helper did not receive injuries, it is learnt.

"The condition of the injured students, including two with head injuries, is stable. We have started an investigation into the matter and a case will be filed," said Malda Superintendent of Police (SP) Pradeep Kumar Yadav.

Debabrata Das, a school teacher, said, "The bus belongs to the railways. Children of railway officers were aboard this bus. So far, no complaint has come against the bus driver."

—WITH PTI INPUTS

INCLEMENT WEATHER HITS RESCUE OPERATIONS

Manipur landslide toll rises to 29, search on for 34 missing



Rescue operations underway at the Tupul railway construction camp in Manipur's Noney district on Saturday. PTI

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
GUWAHATI, IMPHAL, JULY 2

THE TOLL in the landslide at a railway construction site in Manipur's Noney district climbed to 29 on Saturday after eight more bodies were recovered from under the debris, officials said. Out of the 29, at least eight people are from Assam, including an Armyman.

Thirty-four people are still missing after a massive landslide hit the Tupul yard railway construction camp on the night of June 29.

Inclement weather is affecting the search operations, officials said.

Out of the eight bodies recovered during the day, five are of Territorial Army personnel and one of an employee of a construction company. The two others are yet to be identified.

The defence personnel were there to provide security to the construction site. "Eight bodies were found on Thursday and 13 yesterday," an official said.

He said that altogether 34 people, including 14 employees of two construction companies, five villagers and three of the railways, are still missing.

Eighteen people were rescued from the site on Thursday.

The search started at 4am and rescue teams have been advised to proceed with caution. Rainfall since early Saturday morning has hampered the operations, the officials said.

Over 470 personnel, including those of the NDRF, SDRF, state police, the Assam Rifles and local volunteers,

been deployed in the search operation.

Over 30 excavators are being used to clear the debris which blocked the Jjai river, forming dam-like storage and threatening the people living nearby. Earth-movers have been brought in to remove the debris, and create a channel to allow the flow of water from there, officials said.

A defence spokesperson at Guwahati said, "Through Wall Radar is being successfully used. A search and rescue dog is also being employed to assist." Such radars are used for the detection and location of static and moving targets, especially human beings behind walls.

The spokesperson said that bodies of 14 defence personnel, including a junior commissioned officer, were sent to their hometowns.

Full military honours were given to the deceased personnel at Imphal before sending the bodies to their destinations.

Meanwhile, Assam cabinet Minister Pijush Hazarika, who reached Tupul on Saturday morning said, "It is an extremely tragic and unfortunate incident. Search and rescue operations are going on in full swing."

"One railway engineer and 11 other construction company workers from Assam are still missing. Five persons had been rescued, out of which two are currently hospitalised," he said.

Hazarika said the bodies of the deceased civilians will be airlifted to Assam and the state government will make all necessary arrangements. "We will also arrange for transportation of the injured workers back home."

Last rites of 14 soldiers from north Bengal held with full state honours

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
KOLKATA, JULY 2

THE FUNERAL rites of 14 Territorial Army (TA) soldiers from north Bengal, who were killed in a landslide in Manipur's Noney district four days before, were conducted on Saturday full state honours after their bodies were brought to the Darjeeling Hills and surrounding areas.

The total death toll in the landslide at a railway construction camp has reached 29, while nearly 35 people are still missing.

Earlier in the day, a pall of gloom descended in the Darjeeling, Karshiang, Rohini and Mirik areas after the soldiers' bodies arrived in coffins.

In the morning, Gorkha Janmukti Morcha (GJM) founder Bimal Gurung visited the house of a soldier, Marcus Gurung, a resident of Singmari in Darjeeling. Marcus visited his home last in February and was learnt to have talked to his wife on mobile phone last Wednesday. He was supposed to come home in October.

Anit Thapa, president of the Bharatiya Gorkha Prajatantrik Morcha (BGPm) that won the recently held Gorkha Territorial Administration (GTA) elections, has already announced to suspend the Vijay Utsav programme.

In the afternoon, a memorial service was held on the Mall in Darjeeling where BGPm leaders Roshan Giri and Keshab Raj Pokhrel and Bimal Gurung's wife Asha Gurung among others paid tributes to the jawans. A minute's silence is observed and candles were lit.


Roshan Giri and Keshab Raj Pokhrel said, "It is a very painful incident. I wish them peace."

Punam Chhetri, wife of another victim Shankar Chhetri, who hailed from Nagrakata in the Doorga in Jalpaiguri district, said she last spoke to her husband around 9pm on Wednesday.

"A neighbour told me about the tragedy. I repeatedly called up his immediate boss. They confirmed on Friday afternoon that he was no more," Punam said. Shankar was recently transferred to Manipur from Darjeeling.

SALUTE THE SOLDIER

01 OCT 1964 TO 03 JUL 2001
MAJ SAMIR-UL-ISLAM, SC



Maj Samir-Ul-Islam, SC made the supreme sacrifice in the highest traditions of the Indian Army for the honour of the Regiment and the Country while combating insurgents in Assam twenty one years ago. Your heroic deed is a source of inspiration for all of us and we will forever remain indebted to you.

CO and All Ranks 17 Para Fd Regt (8 RAJPUT)


03 JULY

CAPT MANOJ KUMAR PANDEY, PARAM VIR CHAKRA (POSTHUMOUS)


On this momentous occasion of 'BATALIK DAY' we salute and remember CAPT MANOJ KUMAR PANDEY, ParamVir Chakra (POSTHUMOUS) who laid down his life while evicting Pakistani intruders during the Kargil War in 1999.

The Nation would also remain indebted to the supreme sacrifice of the following brave soldiers who along with Capt Manoj Kumar Pandey, ParamVir Chakra (POSTHUMOUS) made the supreme sacrifice during 'OP VIJAY' on this day in 1999.


CO AND ALL RANKS, 1/11 GORKHA RIFLES (BRAVEST OF THE BRAVE) (BATALIK)




Rfn Karna Bahadur Limbu



Hav Ganga Ram Rai



Rfn Kalu Ram Rai



Hav Bhim Bahadur Rai, Vrc

On 03 Jul 1999 No 9422557 Late Rfn Karna Bahadur Limbu, No 9422557 Late Rfn Karna Bahadur Limbu, No 9416967 Late Hav Ganga Ram Rai, No 9422837 Late Rfn Kalu Ram Rai, No 9415981 Late Hav Bhim Bahadur Rai, Vrc of 1/11 GR had made supreme sacrifice during OP VIJAY (Kargil) in Jul 1999

Colonel 11 GR & Sikkim Scouts and All Ranks


Government of India, Department of Atomic Energy, Heavy Water Plant (Kota)

Tender Notice No.: HWPK/PROD/DISPOSAL/2022/02

On behalf of the President of India, General Manager, HWP (Kota), Anushakti - 323 303, Via Kota (Rajasthan) invites sealed tenders for "Sale of Sodium Sulphate Powder of 92% to 98% Purity (as is where is basis) for 200 MT Quantity". Earnest Money - Rs. 10,000/-, Cost of tender document - Rs. 150 /- (personally) & Rs. 200 /- (through post), Period of sale of tender document- 01-07-2022 (11:00 hrs) to 15-07-2022 (16:00 hrs.) [Except Sundays & Public Holidays], Last date and time for submitting tender -20-07-2022 (14:30 hrs.). Bidder shall be allowed to quote against tender enquiry for minimum 40 MT or a multiple of 10 MT but maximum up to 200 MT Sodium Sulphate Powder.

Tender document can be obtained in person or by post from "Deputy Controller of Accounts, Heavy Water Plant (Kota), PO, Anushakti-323303, Via: Kota (Rajasthan)" in cash or through demand draft drawn in favour of "Deputy Controller of Accounts, Heavy Water Plant (Kota)" payable at State Bank of India, Rawatthata branch only. Other details can be seen on the website www.hwb.gov.in or can be obtained by email from dypm@kot.hwb.gov.in or rajeevsharma@kot.hwb.gov.in

General Manager
Heavy Water Plant (Kota)



ALIPURDUAR BRANCH
Srikrishna Market, Marwary Patty
Alipurduar, Pin-736121, West Bengal

Appendix IV, (Rule 8(1))
POSSESSION NOTICE
(For Immovable Property)

The undersigned being the authorised officer of the BANK OF BARODA under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and in exercise of powers conferred under Section 13(2) read with rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 issued a demand notice dated 04.04.2022 calling upon the borrower **Shri Mr Ajit Kumar Dutta & Mrs Namita Dutta** Ward no. 20, Arabindonagar, Near Sardar School, Alipurduar, West Bengal-736121 to repay the amount mentioned in the notice being **Rs.11,49,252.40 (Eleven Lacs Forty Nine Thousand Two Hundred Fifty Two and Fourty Paise only)** within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice.

The borrower having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the borrower and the public in general that the undersigned has taken possession of the properties described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him/her under Section 13(4) of the said Act read with rule 8 of the said rules on this **29th day of June of year 2022**.

The borrower / Guarantors / Mortgagees in particular and the public in general is hereby cautioned not to deal with the properties/ies and any dealings with the properties/ies will be subject to the charge of the **Bank of Baroda, Alipurduar Branch** for an amount of **Rs.11,49,252.40** and interest thereon at the contractual rate plus Costs, Charges and expenses till date of payment.

The Borrower's attention is invited to provision of sub-section (8) of section 13 of the Act, in respect of time available, to redeem the secured assets.

Description of immovable property

All that part and parcel of the property consisting of land & building measuring 0.06 acre JL no 51, in plot no. L.R. 4942, khatian no. 4073 having holding number 172/449 ward no. 20 within Alipurduar municipality butted & bounded by (as per deed no.1-1936 dated 20.04.1995) and District Alipurduar. Bounded; On the North: House of Parimal Biswas, On the South: House of Legal heirs of Bani Mohanta, On the East: Municipal Road, On the West: House of Prabhat Adhikary

Authorised Officer
Bank of Baroda

Date : 29.06.2022, Place: Alipurduar



DELHI JAL BOARD :GOVT. OF DELHI
OFFICE OF CHIEF ENGINEER (SDW) NW
KESHOPUR STP, NEW DELHI 110018

75
जल सेवा
जल सुरक्षा


PRESS N.I.T. 13 EE(SDW)/VIII(2022-23)

S. No	Name of Work	Estimate cost in Rs.	E/Money in Rs.	Tender fee in Rs.	Date of release of tender through e-procurement solution	Last date/time of receipt of tender through e-procurement solution
1.	SITC of Online Monitoring System at various locations(11nos) of Najafgarh drain and supplementary drain with comprehensive maintenance for a period of 5 years	36619876/-	7,34,000/-	1500/-	Tender ID:- 2022_DJB_225426_1	22.07.2022 at 03.00 P.M.

Further details in this regard can be seen at <https://govtprocurement.delhi.gov.in>.
ISSUED BY P.R.O. (WATER)
Advt. No. J.S.V. 221 (2022-23)

Sd/-
(K.P. SHARMA)
EXECUTIVE ENGINEER (SDW) VIII

STOP CORONA: Wear Mask, Follow Physical Distancing, Maintain Hand Hygiene



POSSESSION NOTICE
(Rule 8(1)) Appendix-IV
(For Immovable Property)

Circle Sastra Centre, Circle Office, Nazrul Sarani, B.S. Road, Dist-Malda, 732101 (WB), E-Mail: cs8275@pnb.co.in

Whereas, Punjab National Bank/ the Authorised Officer(s) of the Punjab National Bank under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets & Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002, and in exercise of powers conferred under Section 13 read with the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002, issued demand notice(s) on the dates mentioned against each account calling upon the respective borrower/s to repay the amount as mentioned against each account within 60 days from the date of notice(s) date of receipt of the said notice(s).

The borrower having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the borrower and the public in general that the undersigned has taken possession of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him under sub-section (4) of Section 13 of Act read with Rule 8 of the Security Interest Enforcement) Rules.

The borrower's /guarantor's /mortgagor's attention is invited to provisions of sub-section (8) of section 13 of the Act in respect of time available to redeem the secured assets

The borrower/s in particular and the public in general is hereby cautioned not to deal with the property(ies) and any dealing with the property(ies) will be subject to the charge of Punjab National Bank for the amounts and interest thereon.

Sl.	1) Name of Borrower 2) Name of Branch 3) Account No.	Description of the property mortgaged	1) Date of demand notice 2) Date of Possession Notice 3) Outstanding Amount
1.	1) Borrower: Ratan Sarkar S/o Lt Fekan Sarkar 2) Branch: Malda 3) A/c No: 0233300209250	Property No.1: Equitable Mortgage of Flat in the name of Ratan Sarkar S/o Lt Fekan Sarkar situated at Mouza Mokdumpur, PS English Bazar, Dist Malda 732103, JL No 68 Previous Khatian No 484, Present LR Khatian No 2102, Previous Plot No 200, Present LR Plot No 859, Classification Bastu (flat), Floor Area 630 Sq Ft Super further charges and interest until No 4/12 in the multi storied building namely Gokul Bhawan. Boundary: North: Flat No 16 (Goutam Das) South: Passage of stair case East: Passage of Flat No 16 West: Passage of Gokul Bhawan	1) 23.02.2022 2) 27.06.2022 3) Rs. 9,14,028.50 (Rupees Nine Lakh Fourteen Thousand Twenty Eight and Paise Fifty Only) with payment in full.

Date: 03.07.2022
Place: Malda

Authorised Officer
Punjab National Bank



E-AUCTION
SALE NOTICE

Circle Sastra Centre, Malda, Nazrul Sarani , B.S. Road, Malda, West Bengal 732101

SALE NOTICE FOR SALE OF IMMOVABLE PROPERTIES

LAST DATE & TIME OF SUBMISSION OF EMD (EARNEST MONEY) AND DOCUMENTS: 08.08.2022 upto 4:00 PM

Sale of Immovable property mortgaged to Bank under Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest (SARFAESI) Act, 2002

E-Auction Sale Notice for Sale of Immovable Assets under the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 read with proviso to Rule 8 (6) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002. Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrower (s) and Guarantor (s) that the below described immovable property mortgaged/charged to the Secured Creditor, **PHYSICAL possession** of which has been taken by the Authorized Officer of the Bank/ Secured Creditor, will be sold on "AS IS WHERE IS", "AS IS WHAT IS", and "WHATEVER THERE IS" on the date as mentioned in the table herein below, for recovery of its dues due to the Bank/ Secured Creditor from the respective borrower (s) and guarantor (s). The reserve price and the earnest money deposit will be as mentioned in the table below against the respective properties.

DESCRIPTION OF IMMOVABLE PROPERTIES
(The said properties are under Physical Possession of secured creditor)

Sl No	Name of the Branch	Description of the Immovable Properties Mortgaged/ Owner's Name/mortgagors of property(ies)	A) Dt. of Demand Notice B) Outstanding in Demand Notice C) Symbolic Possession Date D) Nature of Possession E) Date of Physical Possession	B) EMD (last date of deposit of EMD) C) Bid Increase Amount	A) Reserve Price (Rs. in Lacs) B) Rs. 17,88,902.00 (Rs. Seventeen Lakh Six Thousand Three Hundred and Two only) as on 21.02.2018 plus further interest from 01.04.2018 (C) 29.01.2019 (D) Physical deed no -7048 dated 27.11.2008.	Date/Time of E-Auction Details of the encumbrances known to the secured creditors
1	BO Old Malda Borrower: Partha Pratim Jha S/o Mohit Kr Jha Co Borrower: Siddharth Jha S/o Mohit Kr Jha Guarantor: Subhra Jha W/o Partha Pratim Jha055306813400	Land & building situated at Mouza Mongabari Samundul, JL No. 105, Khatian No RS 308, LR 24, Present LR (5160 Sq.ft), Plot No-380, Ward No 5, Holding No 193745, Area of Land- 4.10 decimal(Recorded as 4.0 decimal) Classification - Bastu comprises in Sale deed no -7048 dated 27.11.2008.	(A) 13.04.2018 (B) Rs. 17,88,902.00 (Rs. Seventeen Lakh Six Thousand Three Hundred and Two only) as on 21.02.2018 plus further interest from 01.04.2018 (C) 29.01.2019 (D) Physical deed no -7048 dated 27.11.2008.	(A) Rs.49.00 Lakh (B) Rs. 5.00 Lakh(C)Rs.6.10 Lakh	08.08.2022 From 11:00 AM to 3:30 PM	Not known to Bank

The sale shall be subject to the Terms & Conditions prescribed in the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002 and to the following further conditions:
1. The properties are being sold on "AS IS WHERE IS BASIS" and "AS IS WHAT IS BASIS" and "WHATEVER THERE IS BASIS"
2. The particulars of Secured Assets specified in the Schedule hereinabove have been stated to the best of the information of the Authorized Officer, but the Authorized Officer shall not be answerable for any error, misstatement or omission in this proclamation.
3. The Sale will be done by the undersigned through e-auction platform provided at the Website <https://www.msctecommmerce.com> or <https://ibapi.in>
4. For detailed term and conditions of the sale, please refer www.ibapi.in, www.msctecommmerce.com, <https://procure.gov.in/publish/app> & www.pnbindia.in.

STATUTORY SALE NOTICE UNDER RULE 8(6) OF THE SARFAESI ACT, 2002

Authorised Officer
Circle Sastra Head, Chief Manager
Punjab National Bank
Mob No 9911022218

Date 03.07.2022, Malda



Dakshin Gujarat Vij Company Ltd.

CIN U40102GJ2003SGC042909
Regd. & Corp. Office: 'Urja Sadan', Nana Varachha Road, Kapodara Char Rasta, Surat 395 006 GUJARAT

DGVCL Toll Free No. 19123 (or 1800 233 3003)

Tender Notice

Details for the tenders mentioned hereunder are available on www.dgvcl.com (for view and download tender documents) and www.dgvcl.nprocure.com (for view, download and online tender submission).

Sr. No.	Tender No.
1	DGVCL/SP/2261/22KV Transformer
2	DGVCL/SP/2263/22KV CPT Unit

Note : Bidders may visit our website/s for regular updates till opening of the tenders.

I/c CE (P), DGVCL, Surat.



TITAGARH MUNICIPALITY
E-TENDER NOTICE

Sealed e-tenders are invited by Titagarh Municipality for House Service Water Connection to 4039 nos. of premises at different Wards within Titagarh Municipality under AMRUT 2.0 in terms of e-Tender Reference No.WBMAJ/ULB/Tender/TM/NleT-3(e)/AMRUT_2.0/2022-23. Last date of submission of bid is 29.07.2022. For details visit website: <https://wbtdenders.gov.in> & our Notice Board.

Sd/- Chairman,
Titagarh Municipality
Date: 02.07.2022









Kolkata



Celebrating World's 1st Biryani Day



ADVERTORIAL

Celebrate World 1st Biryani Day with Pioneer of Fresh Dum Handi Biryani

Biryani by Kilo (BBK), Biggest & most loved Biryani & Kebab Chain in India, Known for its Fresh Dum Cooked Handi Biryani is delivering across India with their 90+ Outlets in Delhi NCR, Mumbai, Pune, Kolkata, Bangalore, Hyderabad, Rajasthan, UP, Punjab, MP, Jharkhand, Patna, Mangalore, Mysore, Goa & many more.

The USP of Biryani by Kilo is to make Fresh Dum Handi Biryani for every individual order and deliver the same Handi to customers in which the Biryani is Dum cooked. BBK is the pioneer of Fresh Handi Biryani concept which many food brands have tried to imitate.

BBK uses premium high-quality ingredients like 2 years of naturally aged premium basmati rice, Superior spices handpicked from Kerala, and most stringently selected meats & vegetables for all the Biryani, Kebabs and Kormas.

Biryani by Kilo has served more than 25 Lacs happy customers since 2015, and is India's most loved & Biggest Biryani & Kebab Chain.

Biryani by Kilo is also taking extra safety and precautionary measures, and ensuring a safe dining & delivery experience. Like sanitizing their kitchen every hour, contactless ordering & digital payment. All the meals are cooked at more than 250 degrees Celsius, ensuring the food is safe. The well-being and health of the patrons is the prime priority of Biryani by Kilo. BBK entire team is 100% vaccinated.



CELEBRATING THE JOY OF BIRYANI ON WORLD'S 1ST BIRYANI DAY

Now, all you Biryani lovers can rejoice! BBK in collaboration with Daawat brings you World's first

3rd July to celebrate the joy of sharing to enjoy the recipe crafted with love and warmth for all you biryani lovers.

Biryani by Kilo serves 3 styles of Biryani - Hyderabadi, Lucknowi & Kolkata. The menu also features dishes like Chicken Ghee Roast; Chicken & Paneer 65, Veg & Mutton Galoutis, Dum Nihari Gosht, Chicken Korma, and Delicious desserts like Phirni. For vegetarians, there are Kathal & Paneer Biryani; Paneer 65, Dal Makhani, Paneer Nawabi, and Burani Raita, all of which are from Nizami tradition & utterly delicious. BBK also has premium melt in mouth - Veg & Non-veg Kebab Platters.

BBK has recently launched new products like Fish Biryani & Prawn 65 Biryani which is getting a lot of raving reviews from customers & food connoisseurs.

Biryani By Kilo also has Royal Dine outlets in many cities where you can enhance your fresh biryani and kebab experience.

For exciting offers & orders:
www.biryaniby kilo.com or download BBK App or Call/WhatsApp 9555-212-212
<https://www.facebook.com/biryaniby kilo>
<https://www.instagram.com/biryaniby kilo>



#HandiKhushiyonKi

3rd July is the world's
First Biryani Day



and there's only one right way
to celebrate; **By The Kilo.**



INDIA'S BIGGEST
& MOST-LOVED
BIRYANI & KEBAB CHAIN



DOWNLOAD THE **BBK APP**
www.biryaniby kilo.com
CALL **9555-212-212**

FLAT 200 OFF
ON YOUR FIRST ORDER
USE CODE: **FLAT200** ON BBK APP/WEB

EVERYDAY BIRYANI COMBOS
STARTING@499

ORDER NOW

OUR FOOD IS COOKED AT MORE THAN 250°C :: OUR TEAM IS 100% VACCINATED



Kolkata

6 GOVT & POLITICS

Maharashtra Speaker election today, new CM faces first test

YOGESH NAIK & VALLABH OZARKAR
MUMBAI, JULY 2

WITH THE Speaker's election slated for Sunday after Shiv Sena announced the candidature of its MLA Rajan Salvi for the post against BJP's Rahul Narwekar, the stage is set for the first test for the newly sworn-in Chief Minister Eknath Shinde and his group of Sena rebels, and for BJP and the Deputy CM Devendra Fadnavis. Shinde and Fadnavis were sworn in on Thursday and the Governor has called for a special session of the assembly on Sunday and Monday for the Speaker's election followed by a floor test. The election will mark the first battle in the House between Uddhav Thackeray-led Sena which has 16 MLAs, and Shnde-led group with 39 MLAs. On Saturday, Shiv Sena chief whip Sunil Prabhu issued a whip, asking all the MLAs to be present in the assembly and cast their votes in favour of Salvi. Replying to the whip issued by Prabhu, Chief Minister Shinde asserted that it does not apply to his group as they have more than two-thirds of the total 55 Sena MLAs. He said, "We will face the



Security raised at state Assembly, on Saturday. Deepak Joshi

floor test and we will win". Sources said a separate whip is likely to be issued by the Shinde faction for the election and the floor test. Ajay Chaudhari, Shiv Sena legislative party leader said, "We have a strategy in place but I can't disclose it now." Shiv Sena MP Arvind Sawant said, "We will fight the Speaker's election and we believe in the Constitution. I have heard that the Shinde faction spokesperson Deepak Kesarkar said that Uddhav Thackeray is their leader. These

MLAs now must obey the whip and vote for Rajan Salvi." Shiv Sena parliamentary party leader Vinayak Raut said, "We have issued a whip that the rebel MLAs should vote for Rajan Salvi. If they don't, it will be an added material in our case in Supreme Court for disqualifying them." A three-time MLA, Salvi was accompanied by Shiv Sena MP Arvind Sawant, Sena legislature party leader Ajay Chaudhari, state NCP chief Jayant Patil, and Congress legislative party leader Balasaheb Thorat while filing his

nomination for the election. Meanwhile, late Friday night, Thackeray sacked Shinde from the post of Shiv Sena leader in party organisation for indulging in "anti party activities". "Dear Shri Shinde, You have been indulging in anti-party activities and have also voluntarily given up your membership of Shiv Sena. Therefore, in exercise of the powers vested in me as the Shiv Sena Paksha Pramukha, I remove you from the post of Shiv Sena leader in the party organisation," the letter issued by Thackeray read. The move came after Shinde and Devendra Fadnavis took oath as CM and deputy CM respectively on Thursday. Sources in Shinde camp said that they will challenge the letter legally. As the floor test is also scheduled on Monday, Shiv Sena president and former CM Uddhav Thackeray held meetings with party leaders to carve out a strategy. Congress MLC Bhaji Jagtap and Congress working president Charan Singh Sapra also met Thackeray at Matoshree Saturday and all MVA leaders held a meeting in the evening. The NCP legislature party will hold a meeting on Sunday morning to decide their strategy.

Amid Sena crisis, MNS fields Rajson in Konkan outreach tour

Mumbai: Amid the turmoil within the Shiv Sena, the MNS has launched a 'Mahasampark Abhiyan' to be led by Amit Thackeray, the 29-year-old son of party chief Raj Thackeray. The president of Maharashtra Navnirman Vidyarthi Sena will go on a Konkan tour from July 5 to 11. Sources say the programme is an attempt to carve out a cadre base from the region. Amit's cousin, Aaditya Thackeray, who also leads the Yuva Sena, has been also holding rallies in Mumbai to keep the party cadre intact. **ENS**

BJP NATIONAL EXECUTIVE

At meeting, party appreciates govt's steps to create jobs

LIZ MATHEW
HYDERABAD, JULY 2

THE AGNIPATH scheme for defence recruitment, which had triggered protests in many states and has faced criticism from the Opposition, was "appreciated", along with other "job creating initiatives" of the Narendra Modi government, at the BJP national executive meeting on Saturday, Union Minister Dharmendra Pradhan said.

Briefing the media on the resolution passed on the government's "gareeb kalyan programmes and the economy", Pradhan said welfare initiatives for the poor is the most significant outcome of the eight years of governance by the Modi administration. It has become a "global model", he added.

The resolution, moved by Defence Minister Rajnath Singh and seconded by Union minister Piyush Goyal and Haryana Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar, rejected the Opposition's charges on inflation and job crisis in the country.

In the meeting, attended by more than 300 BJP leaders from across the country, the government was appreciated for steps it has taken to create jobs. "In the coming years, we will create 10 lakh jobs in the government sector," Pradhan said. "Agnipath has

been appreciated, job creation efforts have been appreciated. Implementation of the Gati Shakti will also help create jobs." "Exports are also going up in the global services sector and in the mineral and metal sector export," he added.

The government's recent announcement of Agnipath scheme — under which youths between 17-and-a-half and 21 years would be inducted into the armed forces for a four year tenure, and 25 per cent of them will be taken in regular service — had led to protests, at times violent, in several states.

Pradhan reasoned that the unprecedented crisis in the economy is not limited to India. The pandemic, global crude oil prices and the war in Ukraine have left the prices skyrocketing, he said. But the government, he stressed, has managed the situation well.

Pointing out that the Budget has made the highest allocation for public spending, Pradhan said capital spending during the pandemic was the highest ever. "All these are linked to job creation," he noted. "If there was an acute crisis (in the job sector), social harmony would have been disrupted. The government has created jobs and is taking care of the poor."

The minister also said the "legacy" this government inherited from the UPA dispensation should not be forgotten.

SIDELIGHTS

left any chance to flaunt its president and Chief Minister K Chandrasekhar Rao's clout in the city. The party's pink flags have been squeezed into every corner of the city that compete with the BJP's riot of saffron colour flags.

BANNER BATTLE

The TRS has also placed huge banners welcoming Yashwant Sinha, the Opposition parties' Presidential candidate, who arrived in Hyderabad Saturday as part of his campaign. This inten-

In condolence resolution: Udaipur tailor, Moosewala

Hyderabad: In its condolence resolution meant to pay tribute to its leaders, the BJP on Saturday mentioned Udaipur tailor Kanhaiya Lal and Punjabi singer Sidhu Moosewala, who were killed recently, sources said.

While the BJP mentioned Lal, who was backed to death by two assailants who put out a video of the crime online, the party refused to make any comment on the Udaipur incident.

Asked whether the party would discuss Lal's killing, BJP national vice-president and former Rajasthan chief minister Vasundhara Raje said that the conclave would discuss "every important political development in the country".

The condolence message, read by BJP general secretary Dilip Saikia, also mentioned several dignitaries and BJP leaders and Army personnel who died in a landslide in Manipur.

Days before his killing, Lal had sought protection from local police, saying that he had received threats over a social media post shared from his account, purportedly "supporting" suspended BJP leader Nupur Sharma's remarks on the Prophet.

Shubhdeep Singh Sidhu, also known as Sidhu Moosewala, was shot dead in Punjab's Mansa district on May 29, a day after the AAP government in Punjab pruned the security cover of the singer and 423 people temporarily.

LIZ MATHEW

Shinde, Fadnavis address joint session of BJP, Sena faction

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
MUMBAI, JULY 2

CHIEF MINISTER Eknath Shinde and Deputy Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis on Saturday addressed a joint meeting of the BJP and rebel Sena faction legislators ahead of the crucial Speaker's elections on Sunday. While BJP has fielded Rahul Narwekar as its candidate for the election, Shiv Sena has fielded Rajan Salvi.

Addressing the legislators, Shinde asserted that the whip of state legislative leader Bharat

Gogawale, who is a part of his group, will be applicable to members of his faction, and not that of Shiv Sena's which has been reduced to a minority. The CM said, "We have 170+ members." He said that Sena MLAs had faced injustice [during MVA tenure] and NCP MLAs got the maximum funds and that this won't happen anymore. Fadnavis assured the legislators, "The new alliance between BJP and Shinde will work for the welfare of Maharashtra." He termed Shinde's group as real sainiks who have upheld the torch of Hindutva.

The meeting was attended by 106 BJP MLAs, and 50 from the Shinde faction comprising 39 Sena rebels and 11 from small parties and Independents. Both BJP and Shinde faction issued whip to their respective members. Meanwhile, Shinde himself went all the way to Goa to bring rebel 50 MLAs back on Saturday. The MLAs travelled in a special chartered flight. Later, they were ferried to Taj President at Colaba in a luxury bus amid heavy police presence. Despite threats issued by Shiv Sainiks last week, the Shinde faction faced no challenge on Saturday.

Murmu nomination has got tribal issues spotlight: ex-MP leading 'Sarna' push

Adivasis, parties including JMM seek code for Sarna faith in next Census

SOURAV ROY BARMAN
NEW DELHI, JULY 2

AT A time Droupadi Murmu, who comes from the tribal community, is leading the race to become the next President of India, the long-standing demand to recognise "Sarna" as a separate religion of indigenous communities is gaining traction. This is perceived as a counter to RSS's ideological framework and pushback against its agenda of subsuming Adivasis within the larger Hindu identity. Tribal community leaders and parties, including Jharkhand Mukti Morcha (JMM), have been advocating the need for a separate code for the Sarna faith during the next Census. The followers of the faith do not believe in idol worship and instead revere the forces of nature, be it forests, hills, rivers, or land. In the absence of a Sarna code, the followers enlist themselves in the "Other Religions and Persuasion (ORP)" category during the Census exercise. Timed with the Presidential campaign, and the anniversary of the Santhal Rebellion, the issue has returned to the discourse, with former BJP MP Salkhan Murmu holding a protest in Jantar Mantar on June 30 under the banner of "Adivasi Sengel Abhiyan". The organisation headed by the MP aims to "empower" indigenous communities across India. Incidentally, between 1998 and 2004, Salkhan Murmu represented Mayurbhanj, the place Droupadi Murmu hails from. She

was elected an MLA in Odisha Assembly in 2000 from the constituency of Rairangpur, which comes under Mayurbhanj Lok Sabha seat. "Many are saying Droupadi Murmu's candidature and possible elevation to the post of the President is merely symbolic. But I sincerely feel the debate and dialogue set off by her nomination has helped bring tribal issues under the spotlight," Salkhan Murmu told The Indian Express on Friday. "Going ahead, it is going to be beneficial for the community. He is also determined to raise the demand with the next President. "We tried to meet President Ram Nath Kovind as well, but reaching him is too difficult. So we handed over the memorandum to [Rashtrapati Bhavan] security personnel," he said. At Thursday's demonstration, around 1,000 people gathered at Jantar Mantar over the demand amid a downpour. The demand stems from anxieties over losing identity, culture, and the traditional way of life in the absence of a formal recognition, leaving the vast majority of Adivasis vulnerable to attempts of conversion to Hinduism and Christianity. "Also, in many cases, Census enumerators trick tribals into identifying themselves as Hindus," the former MP said. "If 12 crore Adivasis of the country can be recognised under Article 342 of the Constitution as Scheduled Tribes, their faith also deserves recognition under Article 25. This is our fundamental right."



PITSTOP IN TN

NDA Presidential candidate Droupadi Murmu with AIADMK leader Edappadi K Palaniswami in Chennai on Saturday. Murmu called on BJP allies in Tamil Nadu to seek their support for her campaign. During her near three-hour stopover in Chennai, Murmu met AIADMK's Palaniswami and O Panneerselvam, Tamil Maanila Congress president G K Vasan, and Pattali Makkal Katchi president Dr Anbumani Ramadoss, who all extended their support. **PTI**

Mamata batting for Murmu betrays fear of BJP inroads

ATRI MITRA
KOLKATA, JULY 2

THE RULING BJP-led NDA's move to field the tribal leader and ex-Jharkhand governor Droupadi Murmu as its candidate in the July 18 Presidential election has put the West Bengal Chief Minister and Trinamool Congress (TMC) supreme Mamata Banerjee in a spot. Despite playing a key role in getting the former Union minister and party leader Yashwant Sinha nominated as the Opposition camp's Presidential nominee, Banerjee created a stir by telling reporters in Kolkata Friday that Murmu could have been a "consensus candidate" had the BJP consulted her nomination with the Opposition parties.



Bengal CM Mamata Banerjee

ties. Pointing out that Murmu has a better chance of winning the Presidential election following the Maharashtra political developments, she said, "Had we known they (NDA) were planning to field a tribal woman or a member of a minority community, we could have thought about it (consensus). We have great respect for people from the tribal communities and for women." Noting that Sinha has already filed his nomination papers, she also added that she will however go by the Opposition parties' decision.

In the July 2012 Presidential election, when Pranab Mukherjee was the then ruling Congress-led UPA's nominee, Banerjee had changed her stance and decided to back Mukherjee at the last moment.

The TMC chief's startling remarks, that came a day after "Hul Divas" marking the 1855 Santhal uprising, might have betrayed her realisation that by opposing Murmu in the Presidential poll her party's tribal vote bank, which she regained from the BJP in the 2021 state Assembly elections, might be dented.

On the occasion of "Hul Divas", Banerjee's arch BJP rival and Leader of Opposition Suwendu Adhikari participated in several events across the state's Janglemahal region, which has a significant tribal population, projecting his party's bid to select a tribal woman as its Presidential face. With Murmu set to become the first tribal to become the President of India, Adhikari also said that "while Narendra Modi's candidature is Murmu, Mamata Banerjee's candidate is Yashwant Sinha" and that following her victory he will request President Murmu to visit Janglemahal.

Tribal voters account for 7-8% of the total voters in Bengal. In four parliamentary constituencies in the Janglemahal region — comprising Bankura, Purulia, Jhargram and West Midnapore districts — and eight constituencies spread across North Bengal districts, the tribal voter percentage rises up nearly 25%. Santhals make up over 80 per cent of Bengal's tribal population. Murmu also belongs to the

Santhali community. In the 2019 Lok Sabha elections, when the BJP won 18 seats as against the TMC's 22 seats, the saffron party bagged all seats of Janglemahal and six seats of North Bengal. In the 2021 Assembly polls, however, which the TMC won by a landslide, the TMC got the better of the BJP in Janglemahal districts. Taking the initiative to select the joint Opposition's Presidential candidate, Banerjee had invited 22 Opposition leaders and CMs to attend a meeting in Delhi on June 15, which finally led to the nomination of Sinha, who then resigned from the TMC to become the Opposition's nominee. The TMC camp said Banerjee's bid to calibrate her stance favourably towards Murmu would not lead to her supporting

Gujarat court sends Setalvad, Sreekumar to judicial custody

SOHINI GHOSH
AHMEDABAD, JULY 2

MUMBAI-BASED ACTIVIST Teesta Setalvad and retired DGP RB Sreekumar were sent to judicial custody at Sabarmati Central jail by an Ahmedabad magistrate court upon completion of their police remand on Saturday. Setalvad and Sreekumar were held on charges of criminal conspiracy, forgery and other Sections of the IPC on the basis of an FIR lodged at Ahmedabad Detection of Crime Branch (DCB). Also named in the nine-page FIR is former IPS officer Sanjiv Bhattacharya.

The Ahmedabad DCB had arrested Setalvad and Sreekumar on June 25, a day after the Supreme Court upheld the clean chit by the SIT to then CM Narendra Modi in the 2002 Gujarat riots. The Special Investigation Team, formed to investigate the FIR, did not seek further police remand of the two. Their judicial custody will continue until bail is granted. No bail application has been moved as of now.

DCP Crime Deepan Bhadrar, who is heading the SIT, refused to reveal details of the investigation done so far as "it is an ongoing investigation and it is too early to give those details", but added, "Some statements of witnesses are being taken, documents are being collected, digital evidence is being taken." While both Setalvad and Sreekumar informed the additional magistrate MV Chauhan of there being no ill treatment while they were in police custody, Setalvad, through her advocate SM Vatsa, submitted an application seeking "appropriate security in accordance with law" within jail during the period of her judicial custody.

It was submitted that she and her NGO (Citizens for Justice and Peace (CJP)) had worked for justice for the victims of 2002 Gujarat riots and with several convicted in these cases, many of them imprisoned at the Sabarmati Central Jail, including women convicts, she apprehended threat to her life. Prosecutors Mitesh Amin and Amit Patel opposed the application submitting that she is "not an extraordinary prisoner", and added that "every accused will now ask for security".

At Sinha's meet, KCR attacks PM, says he is killing democracy

SREENIVAS JANYALA
HYDERABAD, JULY 2

TELANGANA CHIEF Minister K Chandrashekar Rao lashed out at Prime Minister Narendra Modi and BJP at the Opposition parties' presidential candidate Yashwant Sinha's meet-and-greet programme with Telangana Rashtra Samiti (TRS) leaders.

Extending the TRS' support to Sinha, KCR asked the MPs and MLAs to vote with their heart and soul so that a deserving candidate wins. "Weigh the two candidates and vote after thinking. It will bring a qualitative change," he said.

The CM said the actions of the Modi government and BJP functionaries had destroyed India's image in the international community. KCR asked the PM to reply to allegations that it was due to his pressure on the Sri Lankan government that a power project contract was given to an Indian industrialist and if he does



Telangana CM K Chandrashekar Rao with Opposition Presidential candidate Yashwant Sinha on Saturday. **PTI**

not reply, the allegations stand true. "Modi is the 15th PM and never has India's image been affected during the rule of the previous 14 PMs," he said.

KCR accused the Centre of killing democracy and using institutional bodies to harass anyone who disagreed.

Accusing Modi of fooling 1.5 billion people, KCR said: "Have

you fulfilled even one promise that you have made?" Addressing the TRS representatives, Yashwant Sinha said the presidential election was being held at an extraordinary time. "We all know what is happening in the country. Intellectuals are describing that the nation is collapsing, and that it is why this election is so important," he said.

her candidature. A senior party leader said by making these remarks the CM has just sought to "reach out to the state's tribals" while signalling that she was not against Murmu's candidature. The TMC chief drew flak from the Opposition Congress and CPI(M). State Congress president Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury said, "This is nothing new for Mamata Banerjee. Earlier also, she has changed her mind before the Presidential election." Bengal CPI(M) leader Sujan Chakraborty said: "Banerjee has always maintained double standards. To prove her leadership, she quickly called meeting of Opposition parties to decide the Presidential candidate... She is now assuring BJP that she is with them so that it does not pose any threat to her."

Nupur skips summons, Kolkata cops issue lookout notice for her

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
KOLKATA, JULY 2

THE KOLKATA Police on Saturday issued a lookout notice for suspended BJP spokesperson Nupur Sharma after she failed to appear before its officers for the fourth time in a row over her controversial remarks on the Prophet that triggered widespread violence in West Bengal.

According to a senior police officer, Sharma skipped summons issued by officers of Amherst Street and Narkeldanga police stations. "A lookout notice has been issued on Saturday after she failed to appear before our officers despite being summoned several times. She was summoned by each of the two police stations twice," said the officer.

Amherst Street and Narkeldanga police stations had separately summoned Nupur Sharma after FIRs were lodged against her last month.

She had cited apprehensions of a possible assault on her if she visited Kolkata and sought four weeks to appear before the police officers.

Monsoon covers nation six days ahead of schedule

Pune: The Southwest monsoon has covered the entire country on July 2, the India Meteorological Department (IMD) said Saturday.

The advance this year took place six days ahead of normal date which is July 8. "The monsoon's east-west advance during the past few days has been smooth and rapid," said Medha Kolhe, Scientist Fat IMD, Pune.

So far, the Bay of Bengal part of the monsoon has been relatively stronger than the Arabian Sea. Except east and northeast India, all other regions recorded deficit rain. At present, the monsoon is active and favourable conditions will prevail for a week. Central India and west coast will receive widespread rain in the next five days, the IMD has forecast. **ENS**

UDAIPUR KILLING

NIA gets 10-day custody of four suspects

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
JAIPUR, JULY 2

A JAIPUR court on Saturday sent the four people accused in the murder of Udaipur tailor Kanhaiyalal Teli to 10-day custody of the National Investigation Agency (NIA).

Teli was hacked to death, allegedly by Mohammad Riyaz and Ghouse Mohammad, on June 28 for purportedly sharing on social media former BJP spokesperson Nupur Sharma's remarks on the Prophet.

Riyaz and Ghouse were arrested the same day. Two others accused in the case — Asif Hussain and Mohsin Khan — were arrested subsequently.

The four were produced before a Jaipur court on Saturday afternoon — of them, Riyaz and Ghouse were brought with their faces covered. The CBI court number 1, which deals with NIA cases, sent them to 10-day NIA custody. With the NIA taking over the probe, the Special Investigation Team (SIT) of Rajasthan Police has handed over all documents related to the case to the central agency.

Outside the court complex, police had a tough time dealing with lawyers and local residents, who shouted slogans against the accused, including seeking their death sentence. As police personnel tried to put the accused back into the police van, they had to jostle with the large crowd, some of whom also allegedly managed to attack the accused.

SHO, two circle officers suspended

Two circle officers and an SHO have been suspended in addition to the Udaipur additional superintendent of police for negligence on their part in handling the circumstances leading to the murder of tailor Kanhaiyalal.

"Circle Officer, East, Jarnail Singh, Circle Officer, West, Jitendra Anchaliya and SHO Suraj Pole Leeladhar Malviya were suspended on Friday night for negligence," sources in the police department said.

Additional SP, Udaipur, Ashok Meena had also been suspended earlier. **PTI**



A crowd assaults one of the accused persons in the Udaipur killing, outside the NIA court in Jaipur on Saturday. Rohit Jain Paras

Cong links accused with BJP, party denies claim

Says not in my hands who clicks photograph

HAMZA KHAN
JAIPUR, JULY 2

WITH THE Congress on Saturday alleging that one of the main accused in the killing of a tailor in Udaipur is a "BJP member", and asking whether the Centre had moved quickly to transfer the case to NIA due to this reason, senior BJP leader and former Rajasthan minister Gulab Chand Kataria said it is not in the hands of political leaders to select who clicks a picture with them at a public event.

Pictures of accused Mohammad Riyaz have surfaced on social media with some state BJP workers, including Kataria, the Leader of Opposition in Assembly.

In New Delhi, Congress media and publicity department chairman Pawan Khera cited the social media posts to allege that Riyaz is a BJP worker. Among others, Khera cited a November 2019 post by BJP member Mohammad Tahir, who referred to Riyaz as a "BJP worker". "It is being said that

there is a photo of one of the Udaipur criminals with me. I have been working with BJP since 1974 and have been an MLA and a minister, too," Kataria said, indicating the need for his presence at different public events.

In Jaipur, state president of BJP's minority cell, M Sadiq Khan, and the cell's national vice-president Husain Khan told the media that no person accused in the Udaipur killing has "any association with any BJP worker".

Kataria said BJP has an "authorised" minority cell, and the image that has surfaced shows Riyaz with Irshad Chainwala, who has been a party minority cell worker. "I have been in (their) programmes as well, and my presence at a minority cell programme is not a crime," Kataria said. "I would have certainly gone to the programme and who stands with me in a photo is not in my hands, or in anyone else's (hands)."

In the image concerned, Kataria is seen flanked by Chainwala and Riyaz.

"Even after that, if someone feels that a crime has been committed, then I want a criminal case to be lodged against me as well, and if the law considers my picture with him a crime, then take action against me. I will have no objection," Kataria said.

"As far as going to BJP's minority cell programmes is concerned, it is my responsibility as a BJP worker, and it is necessary that I continue to go and have gone (to the events) before."

Arguing on similar lines, BJP's Sadiq Khan said, "If someone gets a photo clicked, it does not mean that person has our party's membership. Gulab-ji (Kataria) is our universally respected leader and if someone wants to get a photo (clicked) with him, he can't be told no." Khan also said that with the availability of internet services and mobile phones, "people want to get photos with big leaders and make them go viral."

In Jaipur, state MoS (Home) Rajendra Singh Yadav claimed that Riyaz had been Kataria's

MAN 'VERY CLOSE' TO BJP: TMC'S ABHISHEK

Kolkata: TMC general secretary Abhishek Banerjee said Saturday that the BJP is directly linked to the Udaipur killing. Sharing two pictures of one of the two accused with some BJP leaders on Twitter, he said the man was "very close" to the party. They (BJP) don't want unity, harmony or democracy. The only thing they want is to divide the country, he claimed. **ENS**

"polling agent". Addressing the media in Delhi, Khera alleged that Riyaz Attari, one of the accused in the case, was an active member of the BJP.

He claimed Attari had attended many events of Kataria. Khera said the Congress has found past Facebook posts of Chainwala and Mohammad Tahir, "associated with BJP's minority cell", mentioning Attari.

WITH ENS, DELHI

SEXUAL ASSAULT CASE

Kerala leader held, gets bail

SHAJU PHILIP
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, JULY 2



P C George, 7-time ex-MLA

SENIOR POLITICIAN and seven-time former legislator, P C George, was arrested on Saturday, purportedly on the basis of a complaint of sexual assault filed by a woman, who is also an accused in the 2013 solar panel scandal in the state.

Later, a magistrate court here granted him bail.

Saturday's arrest, which comes two months after George, 70, was held and released on bail for a purported hate speech, came while the senior politician was being questioned by police in another case, lodged against him by former minister KT Jaleel.

George told the media that his arrest is part of a conspiracy of CM Pinarayi Vijayan. "He (Vijayan) has a grudge because I did not give any statement against former chief minister Oommen Chandy in the solar scandal. He (Vijayan) is not going to escape," George alleged.

After the court granted him bail, he said: "Central agencies should probe into Vijayan's frequent visits to the US. The financial resources of Vijayan's daughter Veena's IT firm, Exalogic, should be probed. All financial dealings related to Vijayan have been routed through his daughter's firm. I will not back down from this fight against corruption."

While the woman had earlier made allegations of sexual harassment against several politicians in the state, which are under investigation, George's name did not figure in those complaints.

Last month, former state minister Jaleel had alleged that George had conspired with gold smuggling scandal accused Swapna Suresh in her latest allegations against Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan, the LDF government in the state, and the complainant (Jaleel) himself.

On Saturday, Crime Branch police had summoned George for questioning in their probe into the case registered on the basis of Jaleel's complaint, when

police informed the former legislator about the alleged sexual harassment complaint.

The woman had registered her complaint against George around noon, when police were questioning the senior politician in connection with the case registered on the basis of Jaleel's complaint. Thiruvananthapuram city police subsequently arrested George under IPC Sections 354 (assault or criminal force to woman with intent to outrage her modesty) and 354-A (offence of sexual harassment).

According to the FIR, lodged on the basis of the woman's complaint, George had summoned her to the government guest house in Thiruvananthapuram on February 10 under the pretext of discussing the gold smuggling scandal and outraged her modesty.

Calling the allegations baseless, George's son, Shone George, a member of district panchayat in Kottayam, said the veteran leader was arrested because the state "government wanted to divert attention from the latest allegations related to the gold smuggling scandal". Shone said, "The government also wants to divert media attention from the explosive attack on CPI(M) state headquarters. We will fight this legally."

The woman had earlier been made a witness in the conspiracy case by police and had given a statement before court under Section 164 CrPC. She had earlier made similar allegations against several Congress leaders, including former CM Chandy, AICC general secretary KC Venugopal, Lok Sabha MP Hibi Eden, Kerala Congress (M) leader Jose K Mani and some others. They have denied the allegations.

‘The biggest problem is our dependence on imported energy, which is 4% of our GDP’

Neelkanth Mishra, Co-head of Asia Pacific Strategy, India Equity Strategist with Credit Suisse and part-time member of the PM's Economic Advisory Council, unpacks the inflation basket. This explained. Live session was moderated by Anil Sasi, National Business Editor



On ongoing inflation

As economies have opened up, supply is responding but demand had gone up well in advance. That created inflation exacerbated by what we call supply chain bullwhips. When there is a slight amount of shortage, everyone moves from "just in time" to "just in case." Instead of having enough inventory, you start saying, "I don't want to lose production, so let me order some more." The apparent demand starts to move up much faster than real demand. Everyone is building an inventory. In the US in particular, this became really bad because it didn't have the manufacturing capacity to meet the additional demand, but it had triggered that demand by handing over cash to people through a stimulus. The demand went over to China, Japan, India, Bangladesh and when the goods started hitting the US ports, they realised these didn't have the capacity. This triggered a wage-price spiral in the US, which is the most dangerous form of inflation where people start demanding wage hikes and prices go up.

In February 2022, when the Russia-Ukraine conflict started, the global oil supply went down, exacerbating inflation. Dense energy is critical for economic growth and if there is a shortage of gas and oil, the global GDP has to shrink by that much. Now for that to happen, demand has to fall, and for demand to fall, prices have to go up. I think this is a very serious problem. Fiscal and monetary interventions are being undertaken by most countries which can afford to subsidise oil prices. Everyone, from Australia to the US and China, is giving incentives. They have cut down excise duties so that the retail price of oil doesn't change. But the suppliers benefiting from this are unwilling to invest in increasing capacity because they're unsure how long this will last. Then there is what I would call forced saving. If the global oil market was \$2.5 trillion at \$70 a barrel, it is now closer to \$4 trillion, so \$1.5 trillion is moving from consumers to suppliers. The consumers are buying less and the suppliers are saving the surplus. This



(Left) Neelkanth Mishra (Above) Anil Sasi

AUDIENCE QUESTIONS

On whether inflation could dent Indian economy's recovery

Sustained inflation of above five to six per cent destabilises economies. But as of now the risk and the challenge for us is that we are dependent on imported energy. You cannot grow without dense forms of energy and that has become expensive. I don't think by itself this inflation is going to slow us down. The underlying drivers of growth are quite robust.

is a forced saving which is very bad for growth and leads to stagflation. I don't think this is going away in a hurry.

On CPI inflation converging towards wholesale inflation

Whether rate hikes are the right solution is debatable. We tend to look at inflation on a year-on-year basis. We need to look at how inflation impulses have been coming through month-on-month changes, if they are below or above seasonal. The CPI inflation went up from 4.3 per cent in September last year to 7.8 per cent in April, because of the seasonal moves in the index. The October-November moves were almost 100 per cent in vegetables as prices went up sharply. While there was correction in onion prices,

On the government's FDI relaxation in banking

If the economy had to maintain a 12 to 13 per cent nominal GDP growth, would India's credit or financial system be able to manage that level? This is why the privatisation of PSU banks came to be considered quite seriously and was mentioned in the Budget. The expansion of financial system capacity is very much on the radar. The rest would be as and when necessary.

tomatoes and potatoes became costlier.

The March-April inflation was global because of higher prices of crude oil. Cereal inflation went up mostly because of global wheat and our free grain scheme, the Pradhan Mantri Gareeb Kalyan Ann Yojana, caused rice and wheat prices to fall. So, there are several one-offs in that local component. When you raise rates, you are slowing the economy down to match demand and supply. That is debatable.

On the variation in Central bank interventions

The biggest problem for India is our significant dependence on imported energy, which is four per cent of our GDP. So, if prices go up by 50 to 60 per cent, you see a natural outflow of nearly

two per cent of GDP. It's simplistic, but say everything remains the same and prices go up by 2.5 per cent, is it necessary to raise rates to control that price? Our challenge is the need to curtail demand and our biggest problem is our balance of payments. We were running a reasonably comfortable balance of payment surplus of about \$15 to 20 billion on an annual level. If your imported energy bill goes up by \$90 billion and there are commensurate increases in coal, gas, fertiliser and edible oil, because all of them at some level are linked, your balance of payments is suddenly in a \$70 billion deficit.

Now you can keep paying for it by increasing capital flows but you need to reduce your imports. Before the Russia-Ukraine war, my view was we would report a GDP growth of 3 to 4 per cent in FY23. That number has to be brought down because there's almost a 2.5 per cent extra burden of energy cost. We need to frame monetary policy based on our needs, not follow the US Fed.

On the RBI's role

There are multiple aspects here. In my view the most reliable unemployment indicator is the NREGA job demand. If two crore people are wanting to work at Rs 200 a day, that's an important indicator of the slack in the economy. That number is now only about 20 lakh higher than the average in April 2019, which I think is an important indicator of normalisation.

But the question is which tool do you use? There is a repo rate, the rate at which banks borrow from the Reserve Bank, and there is a reverse repo rate, so that banks can deposit surplus funds to the Central bank. When there is significant overnight liquidity, too much money in the system and banks are unable to lend it, they deposit funds with the



SCAN THE CODE TO WATCH VIDEO

Central bank. When you have this kind of surplus, the effective rate is the reverse repo rate, not the repo rate, and it has gone up. For the fortnight ending September 2021, the cost of absorption, the effective reverse repo rate, was 3.37 per cent, and in February it became 3.87 per cent because the RBI started to absorb liquidity through what they call the VRRR, variable rate reverse repo auctions.

The wage-price spiral in the US is not visible here. Most vegetable prices are local and till the time we see local wage rates go up significantly, there is a lesser need to tighten because of the risk of entrenched inflation expectations. This is something we need to watch.

I think the inflation expectations are more anchored to the Consumer Price Index (CPI). The Wholesale Price Index (WPI) is what companies see and it's much more influenced by crude and commodities. If inflation expectations start getting entrenched, then we need to worry more.

On the signals from RBI

I think the off-cycle hike was to a large extent influenced by the Fed's increase, because when we think about capital flows, we tend to think of it as portfolio investors, as foreign direct investment, venture capital, private equity and external commercial borrowing. A very reasonable part of our dollar inflows is actually trade financing. What happens is that if the Fed hikes and you don't — and these are all very short-term loans — it makes much more sense on a currency arbitrage basis because the US rates are always lower than ours.

There is a risk of the rupee depreciating, which is why those rates are stabilising at a certain gap now. If that gap widens, it makes sense for the new borrower to repay the dollar debt and borrow in rupees. That increases the demand for dollars. If you raise rates, you get more dollar inflows but that is not really true in India.

If you see our capital inflows, most are related to growth. So, for indirect investment, venture capital, private equity, portfolio investment in equities, we don't have rate-linked flows.

In any case, there was some normalisation that was necessary given that the economy is reviving, so some rate hikes will happen and should happen. We need to check if the Fed keeps hiking on the very short-term flows. If we are not careful, we could see a much sharper dollar outflow than we have seen so far, which can then pressure the currency.

THE SUNDAY PROFILE

At T-junction

Uddhav Thackeray tried one way of running Sena and failed. As the loss drives him more into the arms of his family, what went wrong for Sena’s ‘moderate’ face and what lies ahead as Uddhav faces rebels and a pumped-up BJP

ZEESHAN SHAIKH & VALLABH OZARKAR

STUNG BY the revolt of Chhagan Bhujbal with 17 other MLAs, and jibes from within over turning his party into his fief, Shiv Sena chief Balasaheb Thackeray on July 18, 1992, wrote a signed article in *Saamana*, and announced that he was quitting the party.

Two days later, on June 20, a sea of Shiv Sainiks landed up outside the Sena office, pleading with Thackeray to reconsider. Senior Shiv Sena leaders were heckled and manhandled for not being loyal enough and many of Thackeray’s potential detractors were cut to size. Thackeray then “magnanimously” acceded to the Sainiks’ requests to reconsider his decision, with the episode stamping his authority on the party forever.

Almost exactly 30 years later, the above is the best-case scenario for son Uddhav Thackeray. However, on June 29, as he re-signed as the Chief Minister and MLC after a 15-minute-long staid speech, it was with an appeal for peace, which seemed unnecessary. Barring a few incidents of vandalism, the transfer of power from his Sena faction to the one represented by Eknath Shinde in Maharashtra was smooth, with the Sainiks more puzzled than angry at Uddhav for “throwing in the towel” without a fight.

Uddhav seemed determined to maintain the detente though, congratulating Shinde promptly after he was sworn in as CM. Even rabble-rouser Sanjay Raut appealed to the Sainiks to not make a fuss when he appeared before the Enforcement Directorate.

But then again, a day later, Uddhav seemed to flex his muscles by talking about

the BJP’s “betrayal”, and by “expelling” Shinde. For Sena ranks, this dilly-dallying represents all that is wrong with the party. A decade after stepping into Bal Thackeray’s big shoes, Uddhav appears uncertain about where he wants to take the party. Should he stick to the new, ‘moderate’ mould that is seen as better suited to his own personality of a laidback politician? Or under heat from the rebels, over particularly Uddhav’s Hindutva credentials, should he fall back on the in-your-face tactics that have paid off for the Sena over the years?

The numbers

With 39 of 55 MLAs rebelling, any politician would find a fightback difficult. Uddhav must contend with that plus a BJP snapping at his heels. The rebels will have the Sangh’s support and the money and muscle power that comes with being in government.

Many Sena watchers doubt Uddhav has the stomach for it, especially given how the recent crisis played out. Still in the initial stages, Uddhav inexplicably vacated his official residence, making a show of it; then let a good farewell moment pass; only to hang on as numbers dwindled; and lastly quit without using the Assembly floor to make a grand exit.

“He should have presented his case on the floor of the House. He could have put forth his views and explain why he chose the Congress and NCP. That would have been in the records of the House for posterity. Instead he chose Facebook Live,” says leader Prithviraj Chavan, not hiding his dismay.

The loss of 39 MLAs to Shinde won’t be felt only in the Assembly. The Sena has in the process lost its second-rung leadership across Maharashtra. Shinde himself was No. 2, next only to the Thackerays. Of the six MLAs from North Maharashtra and five in Western, none

remain with Uddhav. The same is the case with Vidarbha, where three of the four Sena MLAs have gone with Shinde. In Marathwada, eight of the 12 MLAs, and in Konkan, 12 of the 15, are now with Shinde.

The only place where Uddhav has retained some support is Mumbai, where eight of the 15 MLAs are still with his faction. One of the first tests of how strong that base is will be the approaching BMC polls. The BJP is determined to wrest the cash-rich body, and within hours of the Shinde-Fadnavis swearing-in, the volley against the Sena-controlled corporation started. Says a former BJP corporator tasked with handling the BMC polls: “It is time for change. This year the BJP will get control of the city as well.”

The Sena’s track record in the BMC polls under Uddhav doesn’t inspire much confidence. In the 2002 elections, when he played an important role, while Bal Thackeray was around, the Sena won 97 of the 227 seats. It has been downhill since: 84 seats in 2007 and 75 in 2012 (Thackeray Sr died that year), with the BJP as an ally. In 2017, when the Sena and BJP fought separately, the Sena got 84.

Even in the Assembly elections, the Sena has been on the decline. It came to power in 1995 winning 73 of the 288 seats. After Uddhav started playing an active role, it got 62 in 2004, 45 in 2009, 63 in 2014 and 56 in 2019. In 2014, the Sena, BJP fought separately.

Series of splits

Since Uddhav took over the party in 2003, this is the third split in the Sena. Many Sena rebels note that while Uddhav does not have the aura of his father, he expects to be treated

with the same deference, with no questions raised about his methods. His “aloofness” adds to the problem, with Uddhav operating through a coterie, including his family.

“Those in his inner circle became gatekeepers and many old leaders were disappointed that they had to go through them to approach Uddhav. The trust deficit only grew,” says Sanjay Patil of the University of Mumbai who has traced the Sena between 1985 and 2022 for his doctoral work.

Partymen say that not only did he rely on a select few, Uddhav was unable to monitor what they were up to. NCP chief Sharad Pawar minced no words in private about the Sena being clueless on the brewing rebellion.

After the transfer of power on Thursday, Pawar told reporters: “Uddhav Thackeray’s working style is such that if he has faith in someone, he gives him complete autonomy. We saw this with Eknath Shinde. I do not know if this is behind what transpired.”

Even in the days following the revolt, Uddhav seemed to have left the talking to the others, particularly Raut and son Aaditya. Many Sena leaders feel that the aggressive stance of the two pushed the rebels away.

For now, Uddhav has the support of the

Congress and NCP. But this will be tested when the three parties, with their separate agendas, fight an election. Even Pawar has been guarded over poll commitments.

New Uddhav, or old family man?

Nearly everyone is unanimous that Uddhav needs to readjust. “He needs to face the uncomfortable reality that his hold over the second- and third-rung leadership of the Sena has been wiped out. Him doing some hard thinking to reach out to the Sena cadre, which still has a significant presence on the ground, is essential,” a Congress MLA says.

Whatever he does going forward, Uddhav might find himself even more dependent on the advice of wife Rashmi, Aaditya and NCP chief Pawar. Just like Balasaheb, who after the 1992 rebellion by Bhujbal started inducting his family in the party, Uddhav too might draw an even tighter circle of family around him.

Aaditya’s growing clout, another cause of heartburn for the rebels, is already more visible. The Yuva Sena, which he has headed for 12 years since its formation, is leading the rallies to lobby support across the state. The core committee members, who are mostly Mumbai-based, have been instructed to fo-

cus on districts.

Samajwadi Party MLA Rais Shaikh says that for all of Aaditya’s enthusiasm, he represents a new face of the Sena that the rebels have mutinied against. “With Aaditya, you can talk about nice things like what is happening in Davos. But if you tell him that there is garbage strewn around a chawl... he gets uncomfortable. I had a conversation with him where I told him that these issues will not get votes. He told me somebody should think beyond only votes. I told him that this is not the time. But then he starts ignoring you and stops talking to you,” Shaikh says.

Rashmi is also seen as key to Uddhav’s political career, having played an important role in pushing him to take on the CM’s role. And, more importantly, to making the difficult decision of breaking with the BJP.

On June 22 night, as Uddhav travelled the short distance from his official residence Varsha to his private home Matoshree, it was the dynasty at the forefront. Uddhav, Rashmi and their two sons, hailed and cheered by supporters, appearing repeatedly from their vehicles to acknowledge the support.

That evening showed there could be a new day for Uddhav. But the clock is ticking.



Illustration: Suvajit Dey



TORA AGARWALA

EVERY RESIDENT of Silchar has a story of the “bejaan jol”, or the big flood, that hit the south Assam town on June 20.

“Till my waist,” says the taxi-driver, driving us from the airport to the town. “It came up to my neck,” says the manager at our hotel. The project officer at the Cachar district disaster management, our third stop, holds up his left arm: “This high, for seven days.”

Nine days after the deluge hit, the main road that cuts through the heart of Silchar — the second-most populous town in Assam — is choked with traffic, its sidewalks teeming with pedestrians, its restaurants open.

That an unprecedented flood, which most describe as “worst in their memory”, had submerged the road a few days back, is hard to imagine at first glance. But the signs are everywhere: in the big trucks with banners that read ‘on flood relief duty’, in the marks the water has left on boundary walls, in the shop fronts that have furniture stacked on top of each other, in the white-canopied medical camps. And in the conversations.

Officials admit that in the beginning, there was a complete sense of “helplessness”. “The scale of the disaster was too big. There were not enough boats, not enough manpower,” says a district disaster management official.

At Fatak Bazaar, the wholesale market that is the commercial nerve centre of three Barak Valley districts, a man recounts to bystanders his close shave with a “gang of thieves”, who tried to rob his home during the flood. At Maya Hotel, one of the town’s oldest restaurants, famous for its Sylheti-style fish curry, the cashier can’t help recalling, as he accepts payment from customers: “*Ki be-jaan jol*... What big waters!”

The water gushed in on the afternoon of June 20, following a suspected breach at the Bethukandi embankment along the Barak river the previous day. In a matter of hours, the river came rushing in.

Calling it “a scene from a horror movie”, A Sinha, 41, says water entered first her lane,

Officials admit that in the beginning, there was complete “helplessness”. “The scale of the disaster was too big. There were not enough boats, not enough manpower”

then her porch, then the house, swallowed the floor, then her furniture. Soon, she could see only the tops of cars on the roads.

In another part of town, head teacher Dilip Roy reached his government lower primary school after the waters receded somewhat to find books, OMR sheets, a brand new order of school uniforms floating. Roy and the school watchman are busy laying out the same on the rusted tin roof of the school to dry. “We are trying to save what we can,” says Roy.

At the Cachar Cancer Hospital and Research Centre, the staff fashioned a raft to ferry patients, through knee-deep water.

A temporary OPD was set up under the trees on drier ground. “While the serious patients were ferried to the hospital, what could be done outside, we did it there,” says oncologist and director of the hospital, Dr Ravi Kannan.

In low-lying localities, the water, stagnant for more than 10 days, has started to smell.

At Chencoori road, which now resembles a canal with wooden boats and floating shops, a father who left home to fetch



(Top) At the Durga Shankar Pathshala, a lower primary school in Silchar, a caretaker lays out school uniforms to dry on the roof; a temporary raft used to ferry patients to the Cachar Cancer Hospital. The approach to the hospital has waist-deep water, even 10 days after the flood hit. Tora Agarwala

Complan for his four-year-old daughter is haggling with a boatman. A retired school-teacher wades through the waters to a spot with electricity, holding high a polythene bag of mobile phones, given to him by neighbours, to charge. (“By July 1, 99% power had

been restored in Silchar, save for one locality that is still waterlogged,” an official from the Assam Power Distribution Company Ltd told *The Sunday Express*). A vegetable vendor now sells his wares from a make-shift raft, with his customers correspondingly adjusting.

The stoic resignation hits you, but there are also spurts of anger. “What is the use of taking photos and videos? Not like our problems go away,” says a man. Another shouts from his rooftop: “They spent so much on Namami Barak (a government festival to celebrate the Barak river), they could have dredged the river instead.”

Many say “the only good thing” the floods brought was a “sense of community”. “Without anything to do in the evenings, no phones, electricity, we would sit on our rooftops and talk,” says a resident of Das Colony. “I don’t think we did that before.”

In localities that had network, WhatsApp groups became channels for information. “People were looking out for each other,” says Suraj Singha, a 32-year-old IT professional, adding that a group called ‘Silchar Flood’ with 400 participants became his saviour. “From ‘I have a lifeboat but please return on the same day’ to ‘What is the water level at Link road?’, it tackled various questions,” he says.

However, others have more scarring memories, like Mahitosh Pal, 66. His brother suffered a brain stroke the same day as the floods hit, and died two days later in hospital. The shocked family then realised the town’s crematorium, too, was under water.

Pal was able to cremate his brother only two days later in Udharbond, 15 km away. He hired a country boat for Rs 12,000. “We floated with the body in waters that were 15 feet high... through a town that was in absolute devastation... Some people shouted at us asking us to get food and water, but fell quiet when they saw I had a body with me.”

While floods in Assam arrive every year like clockwork, the geographical spread of the current wave has been unprecedented, with Silchar among those unexpectedly hit.

Many blame the breach at the Bethukandi embankment, about 5 km from the town. The embankment lies adjacent to a wetland, Mahisha Beel. On May 22, a portion of it was allegedly cut by “miscreants”, as Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma put it. On Friday, Sarma announced a CID probe, adding that six persons have been identified.

But the locals who live around the wetland say they did it to “save themselves”, tired of the waters. “For more than two decades, we have petitioned different governments, but our concerns have fallen on deaf ears,” says a local, who did not wish to be named.

Four years ago, a sluice gate was constructed, but it was never completed. In May, after the first wave of floods receded, the water did not decrease at the beel. So locals allegedly cut a canal, to let the water out. They claim they told the authorities about it.

Three weeks later, it was through this now-widened gap that the water came in.

On Friday, workers from different departments are busy reinforcing the dyke.

An irrigation department official says that while the breach was a contributory cause, it was not the only reason behind the floods. “Apart from the breach year, the incessant rains led the waters to top embankments at several places, not just Bethukandi,” he says, adding that the Barak basin had “fragmented over the years owing to developmental activities”.

At its peak last week, the Barak’s water level had risen to 21.59 m, against the danger level of 19.83 m. In the last few days, it fell at an excruciatingly slow pace. Finally on July 1, 12 days after the flood, it hit 19.83, just below the danger level.



Aerial view of flooded Assam

ASSAM FLOODS AS OF JULY 1

Human lives lost	
173	(155 flood, 18 landslide)
30	Districts affected
29,70,405	Population affected
3,03,384	Population displaced
Cachar district flood data (including Silchar) as of July 1	
Human lives lost	24
Population affected	14,04,748
Population displaced	2,35,661
POWER STATUS AS OF JULY 2	
2,210 transformers affected	
1,697 restored	

OTHER NE STATES MEGHALAYA

Lives lost to floods and landslides	35
ARUNACHAL PRADESH	
Lives lost to landslides	9
MANIPUR	
Lives lost to landslides	27
SIKKIM	
Lives lost to landslides	8

Kolkata

10 THE WORLD

TOP OF THE WORLD



A vessel sinking after it snapped in two, Reuters

HONG KONG

Over 24 crew missing as storm Chaba hits

Hong Kong: More than two dozen crew on an engineering vessel with 30 people on board were missing after it snapped in two in waters off Hong Kong as tropical storm Chaba passed through, authorities said. Three crew members were rescued, and search and rescue operations were continuing for others about 300 km southwest of the city, the Hong Kong Government Flying Service said. Some of the crew had abandoned the vessel and harsh weather conditions were hampering rescue efforts, they said. The weather forecaster lowered the storm warning to signal No 3 on Saturday afternoon as Chaba was set to make landfall near Zhanjiang in China's Guangdong province. **REUTERS**

IRAN

Strong quake kills 5, injures 44

Tehran: Five people were killed and 44 others injured in a magnitude 6.3 earthquake in southern Iran on Saturday, state television reported. Rescue teams were deployed near the epicenter, Sayeh Khosh village, which is home to around 300 people in Hormozgan province, some 1,000 km south of the capital, Tehran, the report said. **AP**

AFGHANISTAN

Meet ends with calls for recognition

Kabul: A Taliban-run gathering of thousands of male religious and ethnic leaders ended on Saturday by asking foreign governments to recognise their administration, but made no signals of changes on international demands, such as the opening of girls' high schools. **REUTERS**

ISRAEL

Hezbollah drones shot down

Jerusalem: Israel shot down three unarmed "hostile drones" coming from Lebanon on Saturday that were approaching gas rigs in Israel's maritime economic zone, an Israeli security source said. The source said the drones had been launched by the Iranian-backed Hezbollah group. **REUTERS**

STAY IN SHELTERS: MYKOLAIV MAYOR TO RESIDENTS

As Russia steps up attack, Belarus says intercepted 'missile strikes' by Ukraine

Don't want war, but will fight if territory invaded: Lukashenko

REUTERS

KYIV, SERHIIVKA, JULY 2

EXPLOSIONS ROCKED the southern Ukrainian city of Mykolaiv on Saturday, the mayor said, at the end of a week in which Russian missiles have slammed into an apartment block and a shopping mall in other cities, killing dozens of people. Air raid sirens sounded in the Mykolaiv region, which borders the Black Sea port of Odesa. "There are powerful explosions in the city! Stay in shelters!" Mykolaiv mayor Oleksandr Senkevych wrote on the Telegram. The cause of the blasts was not immediately clear, although Russia said on Saturday it had hit army command posts in the area.

Belarusian President Alexander Lukashenko on Saturday said Ukraine had tried to strike military facilities on Belarusian territory three days ago, but all its missiles had been intercepted, the state-run Belta news agency reported.

Lukashenko, who did not pro-



Firefighters work at damaged residential building in the town of Serhiivka, southwest of Odesa, Ukraine. AP

vide evidence for the claim, said Belarus did not want war with Ukraine, but would fight if its own territory was invaded. The Ukrainian military did not comment. "They are provoking us. I have to tell you, three days ago, maybe more, an attempt to strike military facilities on Belarusian territory was made from the territory of Ukraine," Belta quoted Lukashenko as saying.

"But, thank God, the Pantsir anti-aircraft systems managed to

intercept all the missiles launched by Ukrainian armed forces."

Kyiv says Moscow has intensified missile attacks on targets far from the frontline and that it has deliberately hit civilian sites while Russian forces have been grinding out gains on the battlefield in the east. Russia says it has been aiming at military sites and denies taking aim at civilians. Kremlin spokesperson Dmitry Peskov said "Russian Armed Forces do not work with civilian targets".

Ukraine: Russia dropped white phosphorous on Snake Island

THE NEW YORK TIMES

KYIV, JULY 2

UKRAINE'S ARMY has accused Russia of dropping incendiary white phosphorus on Snake Island on Friday, the day after Moscow's forces retreated from the strategic rocky outcrop on the southwestern part of the Black Sea that is key to the Kremlin's war aims.

Andriy Zagorodnyuk, a former Ukrainian defence minister who leads the Center for Defence Strategies, a think tank in Kyiv, on Saturday described the strikes as "weird," because according to a video released by the Ukrainian military, he said, it appeared that "most of the shots were missed."

He also said the use of white phosphorous seemed strange given that Ukrainian personnel were not believed to be on Snake Island at the time of the attack. He said he believed that Russia had

struck the island "to complicate any Ukrainian presence there."

White phosphorous, which produces a thick white smoke and has a garlic-like odour, can melt deep into flesh when the phosphorous lands on skin and cause severe burns. While controversial, it is not considered a chemical weapon, because it causes harm by burning at a high temperature rather than through toxic properties.

On Saturday morning, Ukraine's top military official, Valeriy Zaluzhnyi, said that two sorties of Russian Su-30 fighter jets flying from the Crimean Peninsula the previous day had dropped phosphorus bombs over the island, known in Ukrainian as Zmiinyi. "The leadership of the armed forces of the Russian Federation does not even adhere to its own statements, which declare a 'gesture of good will,'" General Zaluzhnyi wrote on the Telegram.



Lawmakers debate legislation to consider new firearms regulations. AP

NY overhauls handgun rules to preserve some limits

ASSOCIATED PRESS

ALBANY, JULY 2

NEW YORK lawmakers approved a sweeping overhaul Friday of the state's handgun licensing rules, seeking to preserve some limits on firearms after the Supreme Court ruled that most people have a right to carry a handgun for personal protection.

The measure, signed by Gov. Kathy Hochul after passing both chambers by wide margins, is almost sure to draw more legal challenges from gun rights advocates who say the state is still putting too many restrictions on who can get guns.

Hochul, a Democrat, called the Democrat-controlled Legislature back to Albany to work on the law after last week's high-court ruling overturning the state's longstanding licensing restrictions. Backers said the law, which takes effect Sept. 1, strikes the right balance between complying with the SC's ruling and keeping weapons out of the hands of people.

But some Republican lawmakers, opposed to tighter restrictions, argued the law violated the constitutional right to bear arms. They predicted it too would end up being overturned.

Texas Supreme Court blocks order that resumed abortions

THE NEW YORK TIMES

JULY 2

THE TEXAS Supreme Court allowed a 1925 law banning abortion to take effect late on Friday night, overturning a lower court ruling that had temporarily blocked it.

The decision was the latest in a series of legal battles across the country following the Supreme Court's decision on June 24 to overturn Roe v. Wade.

In Texas, that meant a 1925 law written before Roe that had banned abortions and punished those who performed them with possible imprisonment automatically went into effect, said Ken Paxton, the state's attorney general. Though the law was not enforced after Roe was decided in 1973, it had nevertheless remained on the books.

That ban was temporarily blocked by a Harris County judge after abortion clinics sued for a stay, arguing that it had effectively been repealed after the



Thousands of Australians joined protests across the country on Saturday against the US overturning of abortion rights. Reuters

landmark Roe ruling.

On Saturday morning, Paxton called the reversal of the stay a "pro-life victory!" on Twitter. "Our state's pre-Roe statutes banning abortion in Texas are 100% good law," he wrote. "Litigation continues, but I'll keep winning for Texas's unborn babies."

The State Supreme Court's decision on Friday partially over-

ruled the decision of the lower district court. Both sides will continue to argue their case involving the old law on July 12 in front of that district court. The lifting of the freeze did not allow for criminal enforcement of the ban, the American Civil Liberties Union said in a news release. The group is representing abortion clinics in the legal fight.

Searching for gold, miners in Canada discover frozen baby mammoth preserved for 30,000 yrs

CHRISTINE CHUNG

JULY 2

ABOUT A half-hour before his lunch break one June morning, Travis Mudry was operating an excavator and digging through permafrost in the Klondike gold fields of the Yukon in Canada.

He was scratching at a frozen wall of earth. Suddenly, a big chunk popped out. Along with it was a body of a baby woolly mammoth, frozen and preserved with its hair and hide.

"I thought it was a baby buffalo in the beginning," said Mudry,



The baby mammoth's body was about 140 centimeters from the base of its tail to the base of its trunk, about the size of a deer. NYT

31, of Alberta. "And then I got out, and I was inspecting it, and it had a trunk, so I had no words."

The mammoth was dark and shiny, Mudry said, with short legs and deep, pronounced eye sockets. It had a skinny, wrinkled trunk and a nub of a tail. He quickly waved over a co-worker and called his boss, Brian McCaughan, the co-founder of a family-owned gold mining company called Treadstone Equipment.

"It's in front of us glistening in the sun looking like it just died," McCaughan, 57, said of the discovery, made on June 21.

He compared its size to that of

a white-tailed deer. McCaughan said unearthing bones, even from mammoths, was commonplace during mining, but that this discovery was something incomparable. "It's like we got rewarded by Mother Earth when you pull something like this out of the ground," he said.

Experts estimate the mammoth was just over a month old when it perished in mud. It was then captured in time, encased in the frozen layer of ground known as permafrost, during the ice age more than 30,000 years ago, said Grant Zazula, a paleontologist for the Yukon Government. **NYT**

MEANWHILE

MUSK BREAKS 9-DAY SILENCE ON TWITTER

Elon Musk on Friday night broke his nine-day silence on Twitter, the social media platform he is trying to buy for \$44 billion, posting a picture of him meeting Pope Francis on Thursday. He tweeted a picture where he can be seen standing next to the Pope, captioning it: "Honored to meet @pontifex yesterday."



Senior journalist in Pak calls Army Generals property dealers, assaulted

M ZULQERNAIN

LAHORE, JULY 2

A SENIOR Pakistani journalist and political analyst has been assaulted by unidentified masked men, who also tore his clothes, as he left his office in the Punjab province, a day after he termed Pakistan's powerful Army Generals "property dealers".

Ayaz Amir, 73, was returning home late Friday after recording his television show for *Dunya News TV channel*, where he works as a senior analyst, when unknown people stopped his car. The attackers then manhandled him and also tortured his driver before fleeing from the scene.

With bruises on his face, Amir said the masked men not only "hit him and tore his clothes, they also took away his cellphone and wallet. They left when people started gathering on the busy road". In a tweet later, Amir said those who attacked him did not care about his age. "I have no personal enmity with anyone and I had no quarrel

with anyone. Whoever attacked me didn't even care about my age," he said. "The only fault was that I speak the truth and I will continue to speak, God willing," he said in another tweet.

On Thursday, during a speech at a seminar in Islamabad on the 'Regime Change and its Fallout on Pakistan', Amir targeted the powerful military establishment for its role in Pakistan's politics. The seminar was also attended by former prime minister Imran Khan.

He referred to the Army Generals as "property dealers" and even suggested removing the portraits of Pakistan's founder Muhammad Ali Jinnah and the country's national poet Allama Iqbal and replacing them with the "property dealers".

In an indirect reference to Army chief Gen Qamar Javed Bajwa, Amir said he was into his sixth year of tenure and looking for another extension.

Punjab Chief Minister Hamza Shehbaz has sought a report from police over the assault and ordered that the culprits be arrested at the earliest. **PTI**

China's top diplomat visits Myanmar amid Opposition protest

ASSOCIATED PRESS

BANGKOK, JULY 2

CHINA'S TOP diplomat on Saturday arrived on his first visit to Myanmar since the military seized power last year to attend a regional meeting that the government said was a recognition of its legitimacy and opponents protested as a violation of peace efforts.

Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi will join counterparts from Myanmar, Laos, Thailand, Cambodia and Vietnam in a meeting of the Lancang-Mekong Cooperation group in the central city of Bagan, a UNESCO World Heritage site.

The grouping is a Chinese-led initiative that includes the countries of the Mekong Delta, a potential source of regional tensions due to an increasing number of hydroelectric projects that are altering the flow and raising concerns of ecological damage. China has built 10 dams along the upper stretch of the Mekong.

Military government spokesman Maj. Gen. Zaw Min Tun told a news conference in the capital Naypyitaw on Friday that the attendance of the for-

EXPLAINED

China biggest trading partner

CHINA IS Myanmar's biggest trading partner and an old ally. Beijing has invested billions of dollars in Myanmar's mines, oil and gas pipelines and other infrastructure and is its major arms supplier, together like Russia.

eign ministers at the meeting was a recognition of Myanmar's sovereignty and its government.

He said the ministers will sign memorandums of understanding and contracts. He did not elaborate. It's unclear whether Wang would meet Senior Gen. Min Aung Hlaing.

The foreign minister of Myanmar's shadow government, which opposes the ruling military council, protested the Bagan meeting, saying any such efforts in partnership with Myanmar's military violate the will of the people and undermine community building.

AL JAZEERA JOURNALIST KILLING

Palestinians to hand bullet that killed journalist to US: Official

REUTERS

JERUSALEM, JULY 2

THE PALESTINIAN Authority will hand the bullet that killed prominent Palestinian-American Al Jazeera journalist Shireen Abu Akleh to US author-

ities for forensic examination, a Palestinian official said on Saturday. "We agreed to transfer the bullet to the Americans for examination," Akram al-Khatib, general prosecutor for the Palestinian Authority, told Reuters without providing further details.

COUNTRY HAS NEVER MANDATED MASKS OR VACCINATIONS

Japan's secret to taming Covid-19: Peer pressure, fear of public shaming

MOTOKO RICH & BENDOOLEY

TOKYO, JULY 2

TO UNDERSTAND how Japan has fared better than most of the world in containing the dire consequences of the coronavirus pandemic, consider Mika Yanagihara, who went shopping for flowers this past week in central Tokyo. Even when walking outside in temperatures in the mid-90s, she kept her face fully covered.

"People will stare at you," Yanagihara, 33, said, explaining why she didn't dare take off her mask. "There is that pressure."

Japan's Covid death rate, just

one-twelfth of that in the US, is the lowest among the world's wealthiest nations. With the world's third largest economy and 11th largest populace, Japan also tops global rankings in vaccination and has consistently had one of the globe's lowest infection rates.

Although no government authority has ever mandated masks or vaccinations or instituted lockdowns or mass surveillance, Japan's residents have largely evaded the worst ravages of the virus. Instead, in many ways, Japan let peer pressure do a lot of the work.

Even now, as average daily cases have fallen to just 12 per 100,000 residents — about a

third of the average in the US — a government survey in May found that close to 80 per cent of people working in offices or enrolled in school wear masks and about 90 per cent do so when using public transit. Movie theatres, sports stadiums and shopping malls continue to request that visitors wear masks, and for the most part, people comply. The term "face pants" has become a buzzword, implying that dropping a mask would be as embarrassing as taking off one's underwear in public.

Many factors have undoubtedly contributed to Japan's coronavirus outcomes. But social conformity — and a fear of pub-



A government survey in May found that about 90% of people wore masks when using public transit. NYT

lic shaming that is instilled from the youngest ages — has been a key ingredient in Japan's relative

success in Covid prevention, experts say. Unlike in many other countries, Japanese law does not

permit the government to order lockdowns or vaccinations. The majority of the population followed each other in heeding guidance from scientific experts who encouraged people to wear masks and avoid situations where they would be in enclosed, unventilated areas with large crowds.

After a slow start, once Japan ramped up the distribution of vaccines, most people followed advisories to get them. In Japan, "if you tell people to look right, they will all look right," said Kazunari Onishi, an associate professor of public health at St. Luke's International University in

Tokyo. Japanese culture also depends on an ethic of public self-restraint that can be marshaled into group action. When Emperor Hirohito was dying in 1988, pop singers postponed weddings and schools cancelled festivals. After the 2011 nuclear disaster in Fukushima led to serious power shortages, the public cut back on electricity use voluntarily.

With few legal options for enforcing the guidance, authorities hoped the population would voluntarily comply with pleas to stay home. The public embraced the guidelines, and the overall death rate actually fell below that of the year immediately preceding the

coronavirus outbreak.

Those who tried to buck the guidance were subjected to public condemnation. Toshio Date, who operates a venue in Osaka devoted to the board games Go and shogi, initially tried to stay open when the city requested that restaurants, bars and other entertainment businesses shut down. When local television stations started asking to film the club as an outlier, Date, 58, got the message and quickly closed.

Even after infections settled down in Osaka, which recorded the highest death rate in Japan, and businesses reopened, he said strangers scolded him for hosting too many customers. **NYT**



Kolkata



Swathi Muthyam (1986)

Arun Janardhanan

KAMAL HAASAN has been known to make films that pulse and enact roles that peel the skin of pretence and reveal to us our innermost desires. For over six decades, he has been unfailing in his commitment to cinema, making it his very life breath.

His latest action-thriller *Vikram* has the coffers ringing with an estimated collection of over Rs 172 crore in Tamil Nadu alone, while the global collection has crossed Rs 400 crore since its release a month ago. With *Vikram*, Kamal makes a comeback in the Tamil film industry. Those in his close circles say it's also possible that the actor's huge debt accumulated over the years, due to several disappointments in his film projects and venture into politics, may have been managed. Taking off from his 1986 eponymous film, *Vikram* has 67-year-old Kamal in the lead and tells the story of black ops who rally to eliminate a gang of masked murderers. It's bolstered with power-packed performances by Fahadh Faasil and Vijay Sethupathi.

Kamal always had a movie to work for, and most of them have kept the coffers full. However, over the last two decades, he's had an erratic run at the box office. Though his films were celebrated for content and startling experiments, his peers, Rajinikanth, Vijay and other superstars, won the popular vote in the Tamil film industry. *Vikram*, therefore, emerges undeniably as Kamal's biggest hit in six decades, following previous films such as *Nayakan* (1987), *Indian* (1996), *Dasavatham* (2008) and *Vishwaroopam I* (2013).

Ramesh Aravind, actor, director and screenwriter from the Kannada film industry, says, "Failure and success are not new to him. As far as the audience is concerned, his last few years have not been smooth, so this massive success of *Vikram* couldn't have come at a better time."

One who began his acting career at the age of five, Kamal has appeared in over 250 films across languages, including Tamil, Malayalam, Kannada, Bengali and Hindi. It's the late Malayalam director KS Sethumadhavan who noticed the hero in him and cast him in *Kanyakumari* (1974).

"Kamal sir is truly a man of many talents," says actor R Madhavan. "He has excelled in every field be it singing, dancing, fighting, directing, or writing. He can do a *Sagara Sangamam* (1983) and *Nayakan* at the same time. He will do a *Vikram* and also *Hey Ram* (2000). He can do *Michael Madana Kama Rajan* (1990), a spoofy comedy, and also films like *Sadma* (1983) or *Monodram Pirai* (1982). His range and ability to convincingly play every character are incredible. I don't think any other actor in the world has that ability, that makes me a devout fan of Kamal Haasan," he says, a day before the release of his directorial debut, *Rocketry: The Nambi Effect*.

Bengaluru-based film historian S Theodore Bhaskaran says, "Forget about his big movies and experiments, his first role as a child actor was in *Kalathur Kannamma* (1960). Even today, I watch it because he was so natural in it; he acted as natural as the children in Satyajit Ray's *Pather Panchali* (1955)."

It's his willingness to try new things that sets him apart from other actors in the industry. Be it his 10 roles in *Dasavatham*, a dancer in *Sagara Sangamam*, the triple role in *Apoorva Sagodharargal* (1989), including that of the dwarf character Appu, a don in *Nayakan*, a mentally-disturbed man in *Guna* (1991) or wearing a bun and a *bindi* as the nanny in the Tamil *Avvai Shanmugi* (1996) or its Hindi remake, *Chachi 420* (1997).

Many of Kamal's friends and colleagues, across generations, speak of his unwavering commitment that has kept him focused on the industry. One of south India's best-known actors, Khushbu calls Kamal an encyclopaedia of cinema. "We didn't believe him when he said that television would be the next big thing. Everyone thought the prosthetic make-up he planned for *Indian* would be a waste of money, but he was right on every prediction. Unlike the rest of us, he didn't make any investments outside of the film industry. I don't think anyone else is deserving of this level of success right now," she says.

Kamal was the first to do a digital film in Tamil with *Mumbai Xpress* (2005). His *Mahanadhi* (1994) was the first Indian film edited in Avid Editing software, with its numerous in-built special effects. He was successful in persuading several theatres in Chennai to convert into Auro 3D sound technology, touted as one to bring in the 3D sound experience, which made headlines during the release of *Vishwaroopam*.

He was also the first Tamil superstar to lead in Bollywood with *Ek Duije Ke Liye* (1981), a path that many others such as Rajinikanth and others followed later.



Kalathur Kannamma (1960)



Nayakan (1987)



Mahanadhi (1994)



A HERO WITH A HUNDRED FACES

Kamal Haasan, known for his numerous experiments with form and character in films, after nearly two decades of numerous disappointments, returns with the roaring success of action-thriller *Vikram*



HUNGRY FOR MORE

(Clockwise from top) Stills from *Vikram* (2022); *Chachi 420* (1997); *Ek Duije Ke Liye* (1981); *Sadma* (1983)

Bhaskaran sees Kamal as someone who has a critical understanding of cinema, its possibilities, its strengths, and what cinema is. "In the 1970s, there was a United States Information Service centre in Madras. They used to show American classics. He was a young man then, and would be there at all the screenings. He was raised on those classics. He is sensitive to the art of film. He knows the possibilities of cinema, is well-informed and well-read. I don't agree with the ideology, but the way he made *Hey Ram* and its pe-

riod setting was very good. So was his role as a middle-class father in *Papanasam* (2015), another example of his innate talent," he says.

Kamal brings this level of commitment to his personal relationships as well. "He used to be my mentor, teacher and philosopher. He would flatten my long, curly hair, make dosa for me, carry stones and chase away boys who teased me," says senior Tamil-Malayalam ac-

tor Suhasini Maniratnam, his niece. She recalls the days when they would drive to Madurai from their village near Paramakudi, about 60 km away, just to whistle and clap for movies in which he had brief appearances as a dancer. "After the song, we would leave the theatre and do the same thing the next day," she says. She lived with Kamal and her grandmother in Chennai from the age of 12 to 27, when she married director-producer Mani Ratnam.

Suhasini has seen Kamal grow as a child artiste, a dance assistant, a budding actor to



Apoorva Sagodharargal (1989)

a villain and a superhero. "I have been there with him all along, his entire life, through his success and failures, through his marriages, and everything," she says.

Kamal married Vani Ganapathy in 1978. After their separation, he married Sarika in 1988, a relationship that ended in 2002. He then lived-in with Gautami, a partnership that lasted 13 years. His two daughters, Shruti and Akshara, have also found a career in cinema.

Cinema is not the only thing that makes Kamal a super star. His talent for ventriloquism makes it to his films, as well. He knows morse code and can recall *yappu ilakkanam*, a separate grammar for poetry in Tamil, similar to mathematics.

Sanu John Varughese, who shot Kamal's *Vishwaroopam*, says Kamal is the most educated school dropout he has ever met. "What happens to a computer with the installation of a new operating system is what happened to me after working with him, I was able to see things in a new light," he says.

Chennai-based producer-writer Sujatha Narayanan, who's worked in a few of Kamal's projects, including *Anbe Sivam* (2003), says he's one of those disciplined scriptwriters, "like one who goes to the gym to burn calories on a daily basis. He writes at least one page a day and churns out at least one poem a week. He is one of the best screenwriters and dialogue writers we have."

She adds that during shoot days, Kamal is diligent about maintaining a routine for himself and as a director, he doesn't hold back. "To work with Kamal, one has to have a genuine love for cinema or an in-born talent. As for surprising him with any new film or technical trivia, it's impossible, he's always ahead of us, be it watching films or in the latest technology," she says.

Kamal is a film school for Mahesh Narayanan, the Malayalam director and film editor of *Vishwaroopam*. He believes that Kamal is more than just an actor or director; he is also an efficient technician. "Almost 90 per cent of *Vishwaroopam*'s Afghanistan scenes were shot in Chennai. We had no idea how to shoot those scenes here, like the choppers scene in an airstrike, for instance. Kamal set up a fan with huge propellers with stunning effects, that brought the chopper and the ground together in the correct number of frames," he says.

Melancholy has been a common theme in Kamal's many works, but he is also a hero with a dark side. In his silent film *Pushpaka Vimana* (1987) or *Aalavandhan* (2001), he played out one of the most favourite themes, of good vs evil. In *Kuruthipunal* (1995), he explored the deep layers and psychology of terrorism, while stills of his dream project *Marudhanayagam* (announced in 2015) show a half-naked Kamal riding a buffalo.

Outsiders regard Tamil Nadu as a unique case study where people vote for any film star who enters politics. The fact remains that the state has only favoured those with strong ideologies over the years, not celebrities.

So, when Kamal formed a political party in early 2018, the question was whether he would follow in the footsteps of MG Ramachandran, Tamil super star and the former chief minister, or ven a Captain Vijayakanth, who sustained for about a decade in electoral politics and power. However, after nearly five years of his Makkal Needhi Maiam (MNM) party formation, it is clear that he is neither.

"Perhaps because he lacked the street-smart talent of a politician? But what made him a dictator in the party then? Could it be the need to mobilise resources? All we could manage were a few events, which was easy because people wanted to see the actor. Then why didn't they vote for his party?" asked a leader, who left Kamal's team shortly after the 2021 assembly elections. "In terms of contributions to cinema, he is far ahead of MGR and Rajinikanth. In politics, I do not question his motives, but I believe he was unable to take that political leap in style for a variety of reasons, including a lack of understanding of people and politics itself," he adds.

Many party leaders were either unhappy or refused to discuss Kamal as a political leader. His political endeavours were seen as sluggish, his ideas without logic, and his causes appeared half-baked.

But when it comes to his films, nobody can fault him his passion. "Like Clint Eastwood, I see him as an artiste with no expiration date. He's got more than 50 broken bones due to his passion for acting. Even before he begins filming, he has a finished movie in his head. If cinema is a bug, he is someone who has taken the most bites," says Mahesh, who will direct *Thevar Magan II*, for which Kamal has written the screenplay.

14 ECONOMY

SECTOR WATCH AVIATION

Smoke in cabin forces turnback of SpiceJet flight, 5th incident in 2 mths

PRANAV MUKUL
NEW DELHI, JULY 2

IN WHAT is at least the fifth air safety incident involving a SpiceJet aircraft in the last two months, a Jabalpur-bound flight operated by the low-cost carrier on a Bombardier Q400 Dash 8 plane made an emergency landing in Delhi Saturday morning after smoke was noticed in the aircraft cabin.

EMERGENCY LANDING IN DELHI

■ A Jabalpur-bound flight operated on a Bombardier Q400 Dash 8 plane made an emergency landing in Delhi early Saturday after smoke was seen in the aircraft cabin

MAY DAY call

The aircraft took off from Delhi early Saturday, and while climbing past 5,000 feet, the crew noticed smoke in the cabin along with the lavatory smoke alarm sound going off, a top official at the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) said. "Cabin crew informed cockpit crew of mild smoke in the cabin, but on visual check, no sign of smoke or damage was observed in lavatory," the official added.

Later, when passing 14,000 feet, increased smoke was seen in the cabin and the same was conveyed to the pilots, who levelled the aircraft at 15,000 feet and initiated a turn back to Delhi, the official said, adding that a "MAY DAY" call was declared to the air traffic control.

The aircraft landed safely in Delhi few minutes after 7am and all passengers were evacuated on the taxiway.

In a statement, a SpiceJet spokesperson said: "On July 2, 2022, SpiceJet Q400 aircraft was operating SG-2962 (Delhi-Jabalpur). While passing 5000 ft, the crew noticed smoke in the cabin. The pilots decided to return back to Delhi. Aircraft landed safely at Delhi and passengers were safely disembarked."

Safety incidents

This is at least the fifth air safety incident faced by the airline in the last two months. On June 19, two

EXPLAINED

SpiceJet incidents were reported — one involving a bird hit on a Boeing 737-operated Patna-Delhi flight, in which the pilots landed back safely at Patna after an engine shut down, and the other also involving a Bombardier Q400 Dash 8 plane from Delhi to Jabalpur that had to make an emergency landing in Delhi after cabin pressure did not build up in line with the altitude gain of the plane.

Prior to this, on May 4, a SpiceJet-operated Boeing 737 MAX plane from Chennai to Durgapur made an air turn back after one of its engines had to be shut down mid-air as a result of an oil filter warning.

Just days before this, a SpiceJet Boeing 737 aircraft from Mumbai to Durgapur flew into severe turbulence shortly before landing, which led to several passengers being severely injured.

This is in addition to the DGCA intervening with SpiceJet's simulator training program for the Boeing 737 MAX plane, where it was found that the airline continued to train its pilots on a simulator with known equipment faults.

Following the Mumbai-Durgapur incident, where the damaged aircraft that had witnessed severe turbulence, was allowed to takeoff from Durgapur, the DGCA had ordered a check of all SpiceJet planes.

NITI AAYOG-COMMISSIONED REPORT WHICH STUDIED 3 ORDERS BY SUPREME COURT, 2 BY NGT '5 green verdicts cost govt ₹8K-cr revenue'

SOUMYARENDRA BARIK
NEW DELHI, JULY 2

THE GOVERNMENT lost revenue worth Rs 8,000 crore from mid-2018 to mid-2021, and at least 75,000 people were adversely impacted with around 16,000 workers losing their jobs, due to five major environment-related judgements passed by the Supreme Court and National Green Tribunal (NGT), a report commissioned by the NITI Aayog has estimated.

The verdicts assessed in the report include three judgements by the apex court — stopping iron ore mining in Goa, shutting down Sterlite Copper's Tuticorin plant in Tamil Nadu, and halting consultation of Mopa Airport in Goa — and two from the NGT — the sand mining ban case, and halt on construction activities in Delhi-NCR.

According to a person aware of the deliberations about the report, these five cases were chosen due to their prominence when the report was being commissioned.

According to the report titled 'Economic Impact of Select Decisions of the Supreme Court

and National Green Tribunal of India', in the aftermath of the five verdicts, the industry lost close to Rs 15,000 crore in revenues, and workers lost around Rs 500 crore of income. The estimated revenue loss of Rs 8,000 crore to the government could have resulted in an economic impact of more than Rs. 20,000 crore if invested as capital expenditure, it said. The report was first commissioned in 2019 and has been finalised with financial support from the NITI Aayog. It was prepared by Jaipur-based policy research and advocacy group CUTS International, which submitted the report to the government think-tank this June.

In an order passed in 2018, the SC had cancelled Vedanta Ltd's lease to mine iron ore, which the then Goa government had renewed in 2014. The order also directed mining companies to stop all mining operations until they obtained new environmental clearances and leases. Due to this ban, the report said, "State public debt increased at a Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) of 10.06 per cent from 2007 through 2021, while the market loans taken by the state increased at a CAGR of 19.93 per

JUDGEMENTS ASSESSED



THE VERDICTS assessed in the report include three judgements by the Supreme Court — stopping iron ore mining in Goa, shutting down Sterlite Copper's Tuticorin plant,



and halting consultation of Mopa Airport in Goa — and two from the National Green Tribunal — the sand mining ban case, and halt on construction activities in Delhi-NCR

cent, consequently due to mining suspension."

As a result of the ban on mining in the coastal state, the total revenue earned by the Goa government between financial years 2015-16 and 2017-18 was Rs 1,128.38 crore, which declined by 79.51 per cent to Rs. 231.23 crore in between 2018 and 2021, a difference of Rs. 897.15 crore, the report said.

"As a consequence of the mining ban in Goa, the central and state revenues cumulatively suffered an estimated deficit of

Rs 668.39 crore in taxes paid by the mining companies, whereas the state revenues exclusively suffered an estimated deficit of Rs 1,821.32 crore," it added.

"While quashing 88 mining leases, the SC could have directed the government of Goa to restart mining operations within a stipulated time under the court's supervision and facilitated by a committee of subject experts including economists, environmentalists, etc" the report recommended.

It added, "Such an approach

Power consumption up 17.2% to 134.13 bn units in June

Power consumption grew by 17.2% on-year to 134.13 billion units (BU) in June, amid severe heat and spurt in economic activity, as per Power Ministry data



The third Covid wave hit the country in January, forcing states to impose local restrictions such as night and weekend curfews, which restrictions were eased gradually

POWER CONSUMPTION IN JUNE OVER LAST 2 YEARS:

June 2021
114.48 BU

June 2020
105.08 BU

In pre-pandemic June 2019, power consumption was at
117.98 BU

Peak power demand met, which is the highest supply in a day, during this June remained at an all-time high of 209.80 giga watt (GW), on June 8

Power consumption and demand, according to experts, rose mainly due to severe heat and spurt in economic activities

Source: Power Ministry/PTI

India-EU FTA talks: Next round at Brussels in Sept, says ComMin

ENS ECONOMIC BUREAU
NEW DELHI, JULY 2

THE COMMERCE Ministry on Saturday said that India and the European Union (EU) concluded the first round of talks for their proposed free trade agreement (FTA) on Friday and the next round of talks is scheduled at Brussels in September.

India and the 27-nation bloc resumed negotiations on June 17, after a gap of over eight years, on the proposed agreements on trade, investments and Geographical Indications (GI).

The first round of talks, which began on June 27, ended July 1.

India's FTA negotiations were led by Chief Negotiator Nidhi Mani Tripathi, Joint Secretary in the Department of Commerce and the EU was represented by its Chief Negotiator Christophe Kiener, the ministry said in a statement. The week-long negotiations were held in a hybrid fashion — with some of the teams meeting in Delhi and the majority of officials joining virtually.

During the first round, 52 technical sessions covering 18 policy areas of FTA and seven sessions on investment protection

and GIs were held, it added.

India's bilateral trade with the EU amounted to \$116.36 billion in 2021-22. At present, the EU is India's second largest trading partner after the US, and the second largest destination for Indian exports. "The trade agreement with the EU would help India further expand and diversify its exports of goods and services, including securing the value chains. Both sides are aiming for the trade negotiations to be broad-based, balanced, and comprehensive, based on the principles of fairness and reciprocity," it added. **WITHPTI**

MoS IT meets UK PM; discusses collaboration in innovation, tech

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI, JULY 2

MINISTER OF State for IT Rajeev Chandrasekhar met UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson on Friday and discussed future collaborations and partnerships between India and the United Kingdom in innovation and technology sectors, as per an official release.

Briefing reporters later, Chandrasekhar said both India and the UK want to dramatically expand the innovation economy, the release said.

"Union Minister of State for Electronics and Information Technology Rajeev Chandrasekhar on Friday met UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson

along with a delegation of Indian startups, unicorns and innovators," it said adding that they both discussed future collaborations and partnerships between the two sides on innovation and the technology sector.

Chandrasekhar also met Paul Scully, British MP in this regard. "We want to take the digital economy to be 25 per cent of the

total economy. The UK government also wants to expand the slice of that pie too," Chandrasekhar told reporters.

He also held ministerial roundtable discussions with Priti Patel, Home Secretary UK, Anne-Marie Trevelyan, Secretary of State for International Trade and President of the Board of Trade Government of UK and Chris

Philip, Minister for Technology and Digital Economy UK at the India Global Forum.

Chandrasekhar outlined the rapid strides taken by India in the field of technology, and informed that the country is designing 5G gear and manufacturing devices that go into making of 5G products.

Chandrasekhar also attended

a session on the Future of Digital at the IGF, UK where he spoke on the rapid digitalisation and the need for safeguarding 'Digital Nagriks' against user harm.

He called for collaboration among countries, especially like-minded democracies, to ensure safety and trust for the users in the boundaryless domain of cyberspace.

BRIEFLY

Indian Bank pact

Chennai: Indian Bank said it has signed a memorandum of understanding with the Haryana government towards distribution of mobile phones to consumers through e-unified payment interface system.

D-Mart revenue

New Delhi: Avenue Supermarkets Ltd, which owns and runs retail chain D-Mart, posted a near two-fold rise in standalone revenue from operations to ₹9,806.9 crore for the June quarter. **PTI**

SAS, pilots talks

Stockholm: Scandinavian airline SAS and its pilots have agreed to extend their wage talks until Monday in the hope of averting a strike, a company executive told reporters on Saturday. Close to 1,000 pilots in Denmark, Sweden and Norway plan to strike if talks break down, according to the unions, which SAS had said could leave some 30,000 passengers stranded each day. **REUTERS**

Canara Bank loan

New Delhi: Canara Bank surpassed the Rs 1-lakh-crore mark under Gold Loan outstanding as on June 30. For the current fiscal, the public sector bank grew 26.19% under Gold Loan as compared to previous year, amid contribution from 435 Gold Loan Plaza Branches. **ENS**

E-FILING PORTAL

Infy taking measures to deal with traffic: I-T

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI, JULY 2

AS TAXPAYERS are facing issues in accessing the e-filing portal, the Income Tax department on Saturday said that the software services company Infosys is taking "proactive measures" to deal with the "irregular traffic" on the portal.

"It has been noticed that taxpayers are facing issues in accessing IIT e-filing portal. As informed by @Infosys, they have observed some irregular traffic on the portal for which proactive measures are being taken," the I-T Department tweeted.

The new e-filing portal www.incometax.gov.in — which was launched on June 7, 2021 — had a bumpy start with taxpayers and professionals reporting glitches and difficulties in its functioning. Infosys was given the contract in 2019 to develop the portal.

More recently, the portal faced snags on the first anniversary of its launch and many users complained that they were unable to log in into the portal, while some complained malfunctioning of the search functionality.

The Central government has paid Rs 164.5 crore to Infosys to build the new income tax e-filing portal.

Berkshire Hathaway buys 9.9 mn more Occidental shares

REUTERS
NEW YORK, JULY 2

WARREN BUFFETT'S Berkshire Hathaway Inc said it has bought another 9.9 million shares of Occidental Petroleum Corp, giving it a 17.4 per cent stake in the oil company.

Berkshire paid about \$582 million for the shares, which it bought between Wednesday and Friday, according to a Friday night filing with the US Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC).

Buffett's company is Occidental's largest shareholder, now owning 163.4 million shares worth about \$9.9 billion. Its stake is about 60 per cent larger than that of Vanguard, the next largest shareholder, according to Refinitiv data.

Berkshire also owns warrants to buy another 83.9 million Occidental shares for \$5 billion.

Occidental's share price has more than doubled this year, benefiting from Berkshire's purchases as well as rising oil prices following Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

The Berkshire investment has prompted market speculation that Buffett's Omaha, Nebraska-based conglomerate might eventually buy all of Occidental.

In a June 23 research report, Trust Securities analyst Neal Dingmann saw a "good chance" of a Berkshire takeover once



Berkshire Hathaway chairman Warren Buffett. The company now owns 17.4% stake in Occidental Petroleum Corp. Reuters file

Occidental became an investment-grade credit, saying a purchase would help diversify Berkshire's energy portfolio.

Occidental has been reducing debt, which swelled when it bought Anadarko Petroleum Corp for \$35.7 billion in 2019.

Berkshire bought \$10 billion of Occidental preferred stock to help finance that purchase, and obtained the warrants at that time. It also had a \$25.9 billion stake in oil company Chevron Corp at the end of March.

Berkshire's share price has fallen 8 per cent this year, compared with a 20 per cent decline in the Standard & Poor's 500.

Buffett's company owns dozens of businesses, including the BNSF railroad, Geico car insurer and its namesake energy business, as well as stocks including Apple Inc and Bank of America Corp.

Tesla sales fall, hurt by China's Covid curbs

REUTERS
BENGALURU, JULY 2

TESLA INC delivered 17.9% fewer electric vehicles in the second quarter from the previous quarter, as China's COVID 19-related shutdown disrupted its production and supply chain.

The world's biggest electric car maker said on Saturday that it delivered 254,695 vehicles in the April to June period, compared with 310,048 vehicles in the preceding quarter, ending a nearly two-year-long run of record quarterly deliveries.

A resurgence in COVID-19 cases in China had forced Tesla to temporarily suspend production at its Shanghai factory and also affected suppliers' facilities in the country. Tesla is ramping up production at the Shanghai factory with the easing of the Covid-19 lockdown, which will help boost deliveries in the second half. Early in June, CEO Elon Musk told executives that he had a "super bad feeling" about the economy and needed to cut about 10 per cent of staff at the electric car maker.

Musk has said demand for Tesla vehicles remains strong, but supply-chain challenges still remain. In June, Tesla again hiked prices for some of its models in the United States and China after Musk had warned of significant inflationary pressure in raw materials and logistics.

CONFIDENT OF DIWALI TIMEFRAME TO READY DRAFT

Financial services exciting aspect of India FTA: Sunak

ADITI KHANNA
LONDON, JULY 2

THE FINANCIAL services sector holds out an "exciting" prospect of closer exchange between India and the UK with a free trade agreement (FTA) being negotiated between the two countries, according to British Chancellor Rishi Sunak.

In an interaction with reporters ahead of India Global Forum's UK-India Awards celebrating Indian diaspora success within the UK-India corridor on Friday, the senior British Indian Cabinet minister said he sees enormous opportunity for both countries in areas such as fintech and welcomed the opening up of the Indian insurance market.

The minister also expressed his confidence over the Diwali timeframe for an FTA draft to be ready. "There's good progress being made and I think one of the exciting things for me in my role is financial services," he told PTI.

"Financial service is an area where there's an enormous opportunity for both of our countries. India's goal is to spread insurance across the entire economy because insurance is a great thing for enabling protection for individuals and growth. We can help with that in the UK because we have a fantastic insurance industry. And bit by bit we've been able to provide more



UK Chancellor of the Exchequer Rishi Sunak at the UK-India Awards 2022, in Windsor, near London, Friday. PTI

of those products, services and expertise to Indian firms and citizens and companies," he said.

He also referred to India's plans for a Sovereign Green Bond and the UK having gone through that journey would want to help India raise that capital. "It builds on a tradition of us helping provide capital to India from across the world because one of the defining movements of capital of our time will be the flow of capital from the west into fast growing India. That's an incredibly exciting and significant event. And the UK can really help be the place which allows India the access to the biggest pool of capital on the best possible terms to drive its growth."

In the interaction with the Indian Journalists' Association (IJA), the senior Cabinet minister

said he is "very supportive of India playing an increasingly influential role in the region, and indeed, in the world" as a massive economy and the world's largest democracy and an FTA would prove a greater champion of that cause.

Sunak also highlighted the important role to be played by the Indian diaspora in strengthening a "partnership of equals" between the two countries.

"The UK doesn't have a monopoly on opportunity. There's an enormous amount of opportunity in India, we also want to make sure that if this living bridge is going to be a real thing, we have got to make it easier for people in the UK to go to India, to study at world-class institutions to go work in all these amazing start-ups," he said. **PTI**

Two shuttlers suspended for age fraud

NITIN SHARMA
CHANDIGARH, JULY 2

A DAY after the Badminton Association of India (BAI) postponed the All India Sub-Junior Ranking Tournament in Mohali for a day after parents' made allegations of over-age players in the fray, the governing body for the sport suspended two players from Rajasthan.

While the matches got under way on Saturday at Mohali, the two players were suspended after the protesting parents met Sanjay Mishra, the BAI secretary early on Saturday morning. Mishra assured the parents of strict action. The All India Sub-Junior Ranking tournament (Under-13) is being organised by Punjab Badminton Association.

"After the complaint by the parents, Badminton Association of India has suspended two players from Rajasthan and their Badminton Association of India ID's too have been deactivated. The issue has been forwarded to the age fraud committee and further action will be taken by BAI. Regarding the complaints regarding more players having fake birth certificates, the BAI will take action based on evidence," BAI observer Bamang Tago said.

Earlier this week, more than 60 parents had written to Sanjay Mishra, secretary, BAI, about some players submitting fake birth certificates. While the parents had submitted a written complaint on Wednesday, some of them protested during the main draw matches of the tournament on Friday.

After a two-hour discussion between Tago and the protesting parents, the organizing committee of PBA decided to postpone the matches to Saturday

There were also reports of overaged players participating in the All India Sub-Junior under-13 ranking tournament in Hyderabad too.

"BAI only took the matter seriously when we protested and stopped the matches. We had submitted the complaints earlier too at the ranking tournament at Hyderabad. We are glad that two players from Rajasthan have been suspended. We have also asked BAI to lodge a FIR in this case of age fraud so that it creates a deterrent for other players to do so. We also hope that complaints regarding other players, against whom many parents have submitted proof, are investigated," Ravi Vyas, one of the parents of a player participating in the tournament, said.

KK Sharma, chairman of BAI's age fraud committee, was not available for comments.

SPORTLINE

Ahead of the FIH women's World Cup, Janneke Schopman's Indian team has used football-training technology to help players scan the field faster, make fewer touches on the ball, improve decision making and craft quick passes

Split-second hockey



SmartGoals is a training system that helps to improve players' game intelligence, reaction speed and vision and has been used by the Indian Women's team ahead of the WC.
Hockey India, felixdenayer/Instagram

feat to Belgium a couple of weeks ago. India now stand at a very critical juncture.

A deep run into the World Cup and the Commonwealth Games will go a long way in enhancing their reputation and giving further thrust to women's hockey in the country.



India have speed in the form of Salima Tete, the skills of Lalremsiami and the combination of Monika, Neha Goyal and Navneet Kaur, who find each other easily and play in triangles to unlock opposition defences. The previous coach Sjoerd Marjine made these attackers play give-and-go hockey, wherein a player passes the ball to a teammate and continues her forward run to receive a return pass.

Schopman, who was the analytical coach on Marjine's staff before succeeding him as the chief coach, wants to take the concept forward but has demanded more fluency, higher speed and better accuracy. She is mindful of the fact that against top teams, the players can't afford to depend on the coach to bark out instructions or delay a pass even by a second. "Good players are able to make decisions in a split-second by themselves," she says. "So, we have been training specifically to create awareness."

That meant getting the players to look at each other more often, pre-scan the pitch, play with fewer touches - a maximum of three - and look up all the time to be able to craft a

good pass. These may sound very rudimentary aspects but lest one forgets, it wasn't until five years ago that the women's team started operating in a professional environment.

For India, who are routinely able to get a result against teams ranked closer to, or below, them, this is paramount to challenge the top guns - the Netherlands, Germans and Argentinas of world hockey. In the split second between a player looking down to control the ball and lifting her gaze up to spot a teammate and pass the ball, these teams are capable not just of closing down the passing lines but also stealing possession and launching a counter.

Most of the attacking drills post-Tokyo have centred around making the players operate while looking up and making the right decisions.

In the weeks leading up to the World Cup, the team management even imported a technology, named SmartGoals, to enhance the players' game intelligence, reaction speed and vision. It's an interactive system in which light signals, the shape and size of a training cone, are placed as makeshift goalposts. When a player runs, dribbles, or shoots a ball through them, the light in that smart goal goes off and will jump to another goal.

"So basically, we have to look up all the time to see which goal is lit up and play accordingly," forward Sangita Kumari says. "We play using four such goals in two teams of four and have to keep the ball moving while trying to spot

which goal is open and attack accordingly."

This is a commonly-used training system in football and the manufacturer's website lists Dutch clubs Ajax and PSV Eindhoven, Turkish giants Fenerbahce, Bundesliga side Schalke and the Dutch football association, among others, as their clients.

It's one of the many crossovers between football and hockey, which are perhaps the closest any two sports can get tactically, but Schopman's purpose of using this tool is clear: "To improve their decision-making and awareness. You'll hear me saying those two words a lot."

Sangita, a junior team star who has seamlessly transitioned to the senior level, says the technology has helped them build stamina given the quick switching of the goals, improved reaction speed, and understand how to play while constantly looking up, pre-scan their passing options and enhance their decision-making.



India are in Pool B of the 16-team World Cup, alongside England, New Zealand and China. "It's the group of death. Four good teams..." Schopman says.

Led by goalkeeper Savita Punia, India will open their campaign against England just like at the 2018 World Cup, when the unfancied Indians held the hosts to a hard-fought 1-1 draw in front of 15,000 fans in London.

That result began India's surge but when

the two teams met each other at the Tokyo Olympics twice, including the bronze-medal playoff - England played as Great Britain but a majority of the players remained the same - India lost on both occasions.

England are one of the most dangerous teams while transitioning to attack, which they often do through the middle while committing a lot of numbers forward and using their speed well.

If England play through the centre, New Zealand, Schopman says, like to stretch the field. "For us, it'll be important to be willing to commit our numbers and not drop with them because if we keep walking backward, we'll invite these teams to come up. I really want us to be brave and stay higher and put pressure," she explains. "These two countries are just very good, great attacking transitions, they love big spaces, love to run at teams... that's something we'll have to manage."

It'll put the spotlight on the defence, which has often looked shaky and rescued by Savita, a proper big-match player.

India have gained an upper hand over China in recent years but to arrest their decline, China pulled off a coup by bringing together two of the sharpest minds in international hockey. They recently appointed Australian great Alyson Annan, who succeeded Marjine as the Dutch women's team coach and guided them to a stunning Tokyo Olympics gold medal.

After getting Annan on board, China then appointed the legendary Ric Charlesworth as her assistant. And the duo, within no time, has turned China into a team that is extremely tough to crack, as Belgium and the Netherlands experienced in the FIH Pro League last month.

Four years ago, it would have been hard to imagine that India would escape unscathed from such a group. "But we have grown in the last four-five years. Not many took us seriously until then (2017-18)," Savita says. "But now, we are a team that no one would want to play."

IN A NUTSHELL

India's schedule (Pool B, all matches in Amsterdam)

July 3:	vs	England (8pm)
July 5:	vs	China (8pm)
July 7:	vs	New Zealand (11pm)

BRIDGE

Dealer: South Vulnerable North/South

NORTH	WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
♠KQ104	1C	1S	Pass	1NT
♥A105	Pass	3NT	Pass	Pass
♦J102	Pass			
♣Q64	Pass			
EAST				
♠A97				
♥873				
♦53				
♣KJ1053				

South opens 1C and rebids 1NT. North raises to game and West is on lead. His choice is the line of diamonds. What do you think West has in diamonds?

The West Hand: S - 6 5 2 H - K 4 2 D - 9 8 7 6 4 C - A 9
The South Hand: S - J 8 3 H - Q J 9 6 D - A K Q C - 8 7 2

South is marked with the three top diamonds. West would not lead the nine of diamonds from a holding like K9864. You should credit South with nine points in diamonds. South is marked with the three top diamonds. West would not lead the nine of diamonds from a holding like K9864. You should credit South with nine points in diamonds. How many tricks does declarer have at this point?

You know only part of this answer. You know he has three diamond tricks and you are pretty sure he has three or four heart tricks. The next thing declarer does is lead a low spade from the dummy. What does East know and what does he do?

East knows a lot about the South hand. He has nine points in diamonds (AKQ) and we think he has three points in hearts (QJ). His play in spades is sure clue that he has the jack of spades. That gives him thirteen points that East knows about.

The ace of clubs? Since South opened 1C and rebid 1NT, he should have 12-14 points and he has shown up with thirteen. He should not have the ace of clubs unless he is a sloppy counter, which is not common. If South had the ace of clubs he would have opened 1NT, a bid that players seem to enjoy making.

Lead your fourth best club to West's ace and hope that he has a second club to lead to you. He does and the result is a nice down two.
Dealer: South Vulnerable: North/South

NORTH	WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
♠A4	1C	♠J965	1NT	
♥6542	Pass	♥KQJ	Pass	
♦K87	Pass	♦A10932		
♣QJ10	Pass	♣2		

South gets to 3NT and West leads the ten of hearts, dummy's suit. You play the jack and it wins. You continue with the king and South takes the ace. How do you feel?

SUNDAY CROSSWORD 2380

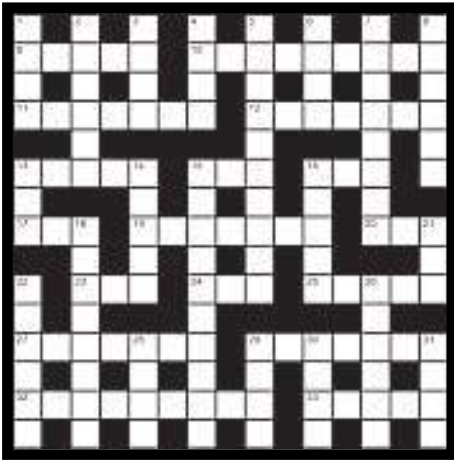
QUICK CLUES

ACROSS

- 9. Golf course (5)
- 10. Face or confront boldly; dare (5,2,2)
- 11. Toy dog breed (7)
- 12. Damaged, harmed (7)
- 13. Musical entertainment (5)
- 15. Purse or a satchel (3)
- 16. Policeman (3)
- 17. Obese (3)
- 19. Progress (7)
- 20. Sweet potato (3)
- 23. ____ Kapital : Karl Marx's magnum opus (3)
- 24. Happiness (3)
- 25. Capital of Japan (5)
- 27. Common (7)
- 29. Type of radio show (5-2)
- 32. Very discommoding (9)
- 33. Sneaked or crawled (5)

DOWN

- 1. A stone fruit (4)
- 2. Director of "Brokeback Mountain" (3)
- 3. Land in the water (4)
- 4. Labourer of yore (4)
- 5. Corridor (10)
- 6. Root of the taro (4)
- 7. Disease-producing fits (8)
- 8. Boundary (6)
- 13. Clumsy fellow (3)
- 15. Cricket trophy (5)
- 15. Winegrowing region of France (10)
- 16. Vault beneath church used as a burial place (5)
- 18. Quality of neatness and orderliness (8)
- 21. Lowing sound (3)
- 22. Strictness (6)
- 26. Caused to turn over or fall down (6)
- 28. A speed (4)
- 29. Domestic hogs (4)
- 30. A killer whale (4)
- 31. Fame or renown (4)
- 33. Fellow's nasty look and mocking laugh (5)



- 17. The bird is black and back (3)
- 19. Going out, one aunt takes the back seat of a car (7)
- 20. Leaders of the north and west abandon the snows with a call for help (3)
- 23. For this one became out of one's mind, perhaps (3)
- 24. There's no holding a key man given some authority (3)
- 25. Mineral well cut we hear (5)
- 27. How golfers start to find drama cancelled! (4,3)
- 29. He uses magical powers in a struggle to get a grip (7)
- 32. Note how different title colour shown (9)
- 33. Fellow's nasty look and mocking laugh (5)

DOWN

- 1. A layman or the French in charge? (4)
- 2. Early pressman (6)
- 3. Put your money on the hot tip, lady (4)
- 4. Winger one is putting in book (4)
- 5. Topless figure to repeat so-called Italian writer (7,3)
- 6. Standing order for printers (4)
- 7. Spell out of order aims at being environmentally unfavourable (8)
- 8. Mutual admiration ceremonies? You may see one or two in Hollywood (6)
- 13. Silently we return to the bench (3)
- 14. Choral composition somehow to have been encountered going

- round (5)
- 15. Instrument noted for precision (6,4)
- 16. Reported fish in lock (5)
- 18. Opinionated setter, perhaps, starts to moan about themes in crosswords (8)
- 21. Is up over 10? Considerably less! (3)
- 22. Assail the devil with a faulty gun (6)
- 26. Overcharged and got the bird? (6)
- 28. Rubbish rots anyway (4)
- 29. Off the mark with an extra run (4)
- 30. Split, if in the night? (4)
- 31. Church of Scotland (4)

Solutions to 2379

QUICK CLUES Across: 1. Ursa, 3. Idly, 6. Babel, 10. Performer, 11. Girls, 12. Psychic, 13. Spiders, 14. Lugs, 16. Famine, 18. Doe, 21. Rio, 22. Buying, 23. Trot, 25. Opacify, 27. Estonia, 29. Lying, 30. Approving, 31. Steps, 32. Spray, 33. Eyed Down: 1. Unpopular, 2. Sorry, 4. Democracy, 5. Yarns, 6. Beguiled, 7. Bartender, 8. Lists, 9. Goths, 15. Globalize, 17. Inkeeper, 19. Estranged, 20. Abridges, 24. Ethos, 25. Ogles, 26. Years, 28. Noisy. CRYPTIC CLUES Across: 1. Ruth, 3. Knew, 6. Peepup, 10. Cabanossi, 11. Ounce, 12. Pedrine, 13. Thinned, 14. Rounce, 16. Rattle, 18. Vio, 21. Hag, 22. PSV, 23. USSR, 25. Intones, 27. Beatles, 29. Tabby, 30. Arch-enemy, 31. Spend, 32. Sing, 33. Tyre. Down: 1. Rock-perch, 2. Tubed, 4. Nosteratu, 5. Wrist, 6. Provided, 7. Penknives, 8. Plead, 9. Snook, 15. Vegetable, 17. Back bacon, 19. Peristyle, 20. Open-eyed, 24. Males, 25. Iotas, 26. Seals, 28. Leery.

If it's your Birthday

Sunday July 3

Your personal prospects are looking up. Sure, there might be a little confusion, even if the results can often be quite amusing. Do try not to misread other people's intentions, though.

Monday July 4

If you have a special strength, it's your ability to work hard to improve, no matter what the odds. The condition is that you have faith in yourself.

Tuesday July 5

This is one of those moments when even without trying you set events in train which lead to remarkable recognition and respect. Great times lie ahead if you lay your reputation on the line.

Wednesday July 6

If you've got any time to day-dream then so much the better. You may soon be knocked off-course by intense emotions, but only briefly, and you will quickly regain your composure.

Thursday July 7

It's a dynamic time, full of potential for positive experiences. You can either give in and go under, or you can meet challenges head on. You know which course to choose, you are determined.

Friday July 8

What you need to do is follow your heart and keep at least half an eye on long-term commitments.

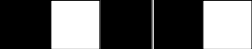
Saturday July 9

A recent romantic or social commitment may change now that you're seeing it through fresh eyes.

JUMBLED WORDS

Given below are four jumbled words. Solve the jumbles to make proper words and move them to the respective squares below. Select the letters in the shaded squares and jumble them to get the answer for the given quip. It is wonderful how quickly you get used to things, even the most _____. Edith Nesbitt (11)

DVAIO



EOWNNT



AOISS



ACTUGH



Answer: It is wonderful how quickly you get used to things, even the most astonishing. Edith Nesbitt

SUDOKU 4884

Difficulty Level 3s

Instructions

To solve a Sudoku puzzle, every digit from 1 to 9 must appear in each of the nine vertical columns, in each of the nine horizontal rows and in each of the nine boxes.

Difficulty Level

1s = Very easy; 2s = Easy; 3s = Medium; 4s = Hard; 5s = Very Hard; 6s = Genius



SOLUTION SUDOKU 4883



Bumrah — Right arm pure theatre

First, there was a small matter of looting runs with the bat; then he squeezed in the pressure with the ball to leave English gasping

SANDIP G
JULY 2

JASPRIT BUMRAH: Right Arm Fast. The categorisation is oversimplifying Bumrah. He is many in one—a versatile new-ball merchant; an old-ball virtuoso, a seam artist; supreme length-manipulator, an all-format freak of nature, a talisman and a matchwinner, an icon and an entertainer. On Saturday, he was all, more than all, and pure theatre too.

There are many reasons spectators flock to watch him in flesh or turn on the television when he is winding up that unique action of his. Apart from the sense of achievement that will grow with the years in just having been there the day that Bumrah did that, a desperation almost to be part of him in some tiny way, Bumrah brings something for everyone. For the masses, he gifts the visceral thrill of a supersonic fast bowler splaying stumps and blasting pads; for purists the joys of his fine subtleties; for the scientists the mechanics of his action; for the students of the game, a light of enlightenment; and for the spectators watching from the stands, a song for their tune, a rhythm for their beat.

If Bumrah does not make you fall in love with cricket, perhaps nothing this decade in cricket will.

He began the Super Saturday, exceeding his own powers to entertain. His 16-ball 31 was both pantomime and cult. He consigned Stuart Broad, he of the retro headband and 550 Test wickets, to another slice of cricketing ignominy—35 runs in an over, 31 runs from his bat. No one ever has scored as many runs in a single over in Tests as Bumrah had—not Rishabh Pant or Virender Sehwag; not Brian Lara or Viv Richards

Using the word “score” to denote those 31 runs hardly does justice, or captures the essence, of those 31 runs. You could call it fluke, freak, or even farce, but it did embellish the entertainment package that Bumrah is. It would be one of the most chaotic overs ever in cricket—a top-edge four that just eluded the long-leg fielder, five wides, a top-edged six off a no ball, a French-cut four, a heave that ended him crashing onto the surface (ala Pant), a one-legged pulled six (ala Gordon Greenidge) and a comic single.

In the middle, Bumrah was rolling in laughter with partner Mohammed Siraj. So were his teammates in the dressing room. But to gauge the impact of his knock, however fortuitous it was, one just had to zoom into the face of Broad and his captain Ben Stokes. Broad looked as pale as someone trapped with a ghost in a Gothic castle; Stokes, for the first time since becoming captain, looked dazed, leaving to fate the passing of the storm.

Those 35 runs not only took India to 416, a target that seemed impossible when they were 100/5 at one stage, but also plausibly destroyed them psychologically. The last three had added 93, and the last pair 41 runs. It was not the first time that he had hurt England with the bat—the 34 not out at Lord’s and 24 at Oval were useful runs. Don’t yet call him an all-rounder though. Stokes blew his cheeks in relief when the partnership eventually ended, with James Anderson consuming Siraj for his 32nd five-wicket haul in Tests.

Then kicked in the real storm. Bumrah with the new ball. His transformation from a goofball to an executioner. From Robin Williams to Al Pacino. He has bowled 6052 balls in Test cricket, before he steamed in from the Birmingham City End. Every stride, every movement, every quirk, every cell of his bowling body might have been dissected, yet he continues to be unmastered. There are batsmen who have played him well, but not mastered him. Joe Root has found success against India in the Bumrah-era, but Bumrah has nabbed him six times. He is a lesson that great bowlers could be decoded but not reined over.



BOOM! A WORLD RECORD

Captain Jasprit Bumrah pulls Stuart Broad for a boundary during the first innings of India’s Test match against England at Birmingham on Saturday. Reuters

■ Jasprit Bumrah smashed Stuart Broad for 35 runs in one over, making it the most expensive in Test history. Bumrah scored 29 while six runs came from extras.

■ He hit Broad, who claimed his 550th Test wicket earlier in the match, for four fours and two sixes in his over, which included a no-ball and a wide.

■ Bumrah bettered the previous mark held by Brian Lara by one run. Lara had hit SA’s Robin Peterson for 28 runs in 2003-04, which included four fours and two sixes.

■ Broad had also been hit for six sixes in an over by Yuvraj Singh in the inaugural World T20 in 2007. Bumrah, meanwhile, remained unbeaten on 31.

Bumrah’s pull in record over evokes memories of Kapil’s Nataraja shot

SRIRAM VEERA
JULY 2

THE MOST breathtaking shot from Jasprit Bumrah in the over of mayhem, in which he looted 29 of the 35 runs against Stuart Broad to break the world record for most runs in a single over in a Test, was a marvellous pull. The front leg swivelled up in the air, and it brought memories of three glorious pulls, somewhat similar. The soul of the shots was the flamboyant upward thrust of the front leg and the individuality comes through in what transpires next.

Kapil’s Nataraja shot

The takeaway from Kapil’s signature shot wasn’t a sense of brutality but of something wildly beautiful. There wasn’t violence in it, like most pull shots can often have.

No wonder The Hindu’s R Mohan instinctively sensed something classical in it and christened the shot ‘Nataraja’, from Lord Shiva’s cosmic dance of creation, sustenance, and dissolution of the universe. Shiva’s *bhujangasana* karana dance pose is a thing of grace – and perfectly befits a cricketer’s shot that also brims with grace just after the destruction of a ball. When he saw Kapil’s pull, Mohan’s mind immediately went to the Nataraja statues. “At home we would have so many of those figurines of Nataraja. See the pose and Kapil’s pull shot was similar, his left foot in the air,” Mohan told this newspaper.

No Kapil mix-tape could escape that shot. An exhilarating kick of the left leg would allow him to balance his weight on the back, and the arms would waft across to absolutely wallop the ball. The crucial difference from Bumrah’s version was that Kapil would cross kick his front

The crucial difference from Bumrah’s version was that Kapil would cross kick his front leg across the body but the shots were quite similar in their essence.

leg across the body but the shots were quite similar in their essence. At times, Rohit Sharma would settle into a Kapil-like Nataraja lift (Kapil even called it the best Nataraja version he has seen after himself), but Rohit’s wasn’t as often and as wildly adventurous as Kapil’s.

Greenidge’s unleashed version

The first instinct when Bumrah finished his swivelling pull over fine-leg was to think about Gordon Greenidge’s version. No batsman has cut the ball harder than the West Indian opener, by all accounts. But he also had a very mean pull, just after Greenidge would press his back leg across, to quote the late Martin Crowe, who was in awe of that shot even decades later, “all sorts of things would happen.”

“Firstly, the knee would come up right up into the stomach. And this would give him the balance and the power to unleash hell on the short ball,” Crowe once told ESPNcricinfo. “Boooof! I have never seen the ball hit so hard.” And Crowe would go on to say that next time he saw that shot was when Brian Lara effected his version of it. “I think Lara copied him.”

Lara’s whiplash version

Once Crowe presented its lineage from Greenidge to Lara, it’s difficult to unsee it. But

the main difference lay in how Lara absolutely whiplashed that small round thing. The press back, the lift of the leg, and then the dance began. No one has used the bat as fluidly as if it was a weightless thing as Lara at his pomp. From that position, with his front leg high and across his hip, he would whiplash his bat at the shortish ball – like a crack of doom. A balletic movement of the feet and the upper body, before he sealed it with a wondrous fluid swing of the wood.

Tendulkar’s pull

It was no Nataraja, but Tendulkar wasn’t ever going to allow himself such self-abandoned flamboyance, was he? Tendulkar’s pull shot was a thing of purist beauty. The compactness is startling. He almost controlled and tamed a shot known for its inherent violence in thought and in sight. The bat levers back straight, it comes back down almost straight, and the elbows line-up perfectly to help finish the shot in one tight arc of arm movement. No energy is frittered away. The body doesn’t lurch sideways too much, the head doesn’t bob away. There is no unnecessary movement.

If only it wasn’t for Fanie de Villiers and his captain Hansie Cronje plotting a downfall at short midwicket, and to a lesser extent Chaminda Vaas and Arjuna Ranatunga, one wonders whether Tendulkar would have allowed himself a greater run with that shot. For a brief while, he had almost become obsessive with that shot and when his obsession turned into a tool of his entrapment, he abandoned it mercilessly. It was at that moment that Tendulkar, whose batting was a mix of Gavaskar and Richards, began to leave the Richards persona behind and went the way of Gavaskar.

BRIEFLY

Ronaldo wants to leave Man United

Manchester: Manchester United risk losing talisman Cristiano Ronaldo this season as the 37-year-old forward has asked to leave the club should the Red Devils receive a satisfactory offer in the transfer window, according to the Times. The Portuguese superstar’s decision is said to be driven by a desire to play in the Champions League for the remainder of his career. Ronaldo believes that he has ‘three or four years’ at the highest level to win major trophies, according to the report.

Kalaivani storms into final of Elorda Cup

New Delhi: Indian boxer Kalaivani Srinivasan stormed into the final with a dominating victory while Kuldeep Kumar progressed to the semi-finals of the Elorda Cup in Nur-Sultan, Kazakhstan on Saturday. Kalaivani demonstrated excellent skills against Uzbekistan’s Farzona Fozilova in the women’s 48kg semi-final. The Chennai-born boxer’s powerful blows and persistent attack didn’t allow her opponent any opportunity to settle down as she comfortably won by unanimous decision in the end. Meanwhile, another boxer in the men’s section, Yashpal lost to Kazakhstan’s Aslanbek Shymbergenov by 0-5 margin in the 71kg quarter-final. The finals will be played on Monday.

Sainz takes pole position for British GP

Silverstone: Carlos Sainz was fastest in the rain at the British Grand Prix to earn his first career pole position in his 150th start in Saturday qualifying. Sainz set the fastest time of 1 minute 40.983 seconds late in the third qualifying session to edge reigning Formula One champion Max Verstappen by just .072 seconds. It was the seventh pole in 10 races for Ferrari this season, though it was Sainz teammate Charles Leclerc on pole prior to Sainz’s surprise run. Leclerc will start third, ahead of Sergio Pérez in the second Red Bull. Seven-time champion Lewis Hamilton qualified fifth for his home race as Mercedes seemed to have made progress with its problems of bouncing at high speed. His teammate George Russell was eighth.

Sourav Kothari wins All-India snooker title

Mumbai: Oozing with confidence, PSPB’s Sourav Kothari raced to a 7-2 victory over Laxman Rawat in the best-of-13-frame finals of the NSCI All India Snooker Open ‘Bauklime’ 2022 held on Saturday. Kothari, who recently had won both the snooker and billiards titles in the Pacific International Championship in Melbourne, recorded a comfortable 95-17, 37-75, 64-05, 70-77, 116-01, 124-05, 70-23, 91-50 71-39 win. The 37-year-old Kolkata-based Kothari compiled breaks of 65 (1st frame), 58 (4th), 83 (5th) and 107 in the sixth, while Laxman managed a solitary break of 63 in winning the fourth. Kothari was presented the champions’ trophy and the winners’ cheque of Rs two lakh.

PTI & AP

Play on a Middle Sunday, commemorative NFT, potential NextGen rivalry

NAMIT KUMAR
JULY 2

FOR AN event deeply steeped in tradition, Wimbledon has embraced change more rapidly than other tournaments recently. It broke its longstanding stance on staying clear of politics by banning Russian and Belarusian players, a decision that has not been repeated by a single tournament.

Other significantly smaller changes follow suit. The grass court Grand Slam is celebrating the 100th anniversary of Centre Court – with a commemorative NFT (Non-Fungible Token) no less – that is accompanied by changes to the showpiece court including a new WWE-style entrance for the players from the clubhouse through a set of automatic green doors to the sound of a roaring audience.

On the court, the biggest change seems to be the end of the ‘Middle Sunday.’ The break between the two weeks of action has been preserved for long, barring a delay caused by rain. But with the advent of technology and retractable roofs on the showpiece courts, it is abolished to give the singles Round of 16s a bit of a breather, ending another preserved tradition of the ‘Manic Monday.’

The changes at SW19 show the All England Club’s attempts to take the sport’s

oldest tournament into a new era. And perhaps fittingly, play on the first Middle Sunday at Wimbledon will be highlighted by the start of a rivalry that could take men’s tennis into a new era – the fourth-round clash between fifth seed Carlos Alcaraz and tenth seed Jannik Sinner.

New rivalry

Sinner, two years his opponent’s senior, was meant to be tennis’ next big thing after he made his breakthrough in the COVID-de-railed 2020 season. However, physical issues – including a left foot injury which forced him to retire from the fourth round of the French Open – have halted his progress.

He has only played 10 tournaments this year out of which he withdrew from three due to injury and is without a title in 2022 so far. Over the past two years, he has been in and out of the top 10.

Meanwhile, Alcaraz has emerged this year as the most exciting teenager in men’s tennis since Rafael Nadal and Novak Djokovic. The Spaniard has won four titles this year – two Masters 1000s and two ATP 500s, and has raced into the top 10.

Alcaraz’s meteoric rise has been a series of ‘one-ups’ on his next opponent. Sinner won the ATP NextGen title in 2019, and Alcaraz won it in 2021. Sinner won his first



Carlos Alcaraz will take on Jannik Sinner in the fourth round on Sunday. Reuters

career title at the age of 19, Alcaraz won his a few months after his 18th birthday. Sinner made his big ATP breakthrough by reaching the Miami Masters final in 2021, Alcaraz won the event the following year. Sinner reached the quarterfinal at Roland Garros in 2020, Alcaraz not only matched the result but actually entered the main draw as one of the favourites for the title.

The duo have made their mark as the most exciting and talented players on tour recently, but are yet to get a rivalry going. They faced off at the Paris Masters last year, where Alcaraz emerged victorious in straight



sets, but have not faced each other in best-of-five sets, where Sinner has the edge. Such is the Italian’s consistency at Grand Slams that he has now reached at least the fourth round at all of the Majors, something an established top 10 player like Stefanos Tsitsipas is yet to achieve.

The hype around the Spaniard, as his results suggest, far outweighs that around Sinner, who has meandered on tour recently. But a win for Sinner has narrative-changing potential, both for this rivalry and his own status as one of the big future stars of the sport.

SWIATEK’S 37-MATCH WIN STREAK ENDS

London: Top-ranked Iga Swiatek’s 37-match winning streak has ended with a straight-set loss to Alize Cornet in the third round at Wimbledon. Swiatek was coming off a title at the French Open but her play was filled with mistakes in the 6-4, 6-2 defeat against the 37th-ranked Cornet. Swiatek had been unbeaten since February and won her preceding six tournaments in a row.

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Contrasting styles

Both players are relatively unknown on grass, making their encounter unpredictable. Sinner’s game, built around a big backhand, redirection of pace, and baseline aggression, has never suited the surface: he had never won a tour-level match on grass prior to the start of the Championships this year.

However, he has looked in inspired form this week. The Italian has navigated a tricky

draw with maturity and high-quality tennis. He took out Stan Wawrinka in four sets in the first round, and withstood the challenge from big-serving John Isner, fresh off the triumph over home favourite Andy Murray, in the third round. The Italian converted two of his four break points against Isner and was laser-focused on his own serve, not conceding a single break point.

Alcaraz brings something different to the game though. He boasts of a punishingly powerful forehand, and an underrated serve that has been in his corner all week, also during a five-set thriller in the first round. His footspeed has already created plenty of highlight-reel moments at the grass Major.

However, it is the dynamism of his all-out attacking style that has built up his stock as one to watch in London this time. For all his evident talent, it is the well-disguised drop shot – a shot of audacity and daring – that has become one of his biggest weapons, perhaps telling of his commitment to variation and attack.

Wimbledon is embracing change, and tennis needs it too. Even though the age-old Nadal-Djokovic rivalry continues to dominate headlines and tournament main draws, the first Middle Sunday at SW19 could be the start of the rivalry of a new generation – one where politics will play a role in sports, and so might N.F.T.s.