

# OPEN SEARCH

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Madonna "Just Plain Scared" : ...P-8



## BRIEF NEWS

### 'Uncertain future': Mamata asks Centre to increase retirement age of 'Agniveers' to 65 years

NEW DELHI, OPEN SEARCH

West Bengal chief minister and Trinamool Congress supremo Mamata Banerjee on Monday urged the Narendra Modi-led Centre to extend the retirement age of 'Agniveers', recruits of the newly announced Agnipath scheme to 65 years, failing which, she said, they will have an 'uncertain' future after a four-year contract comes to an end. "What will these soldiers do after four years? What will be their fate? It's uncertain," Banerjee was quoted as saying. "My motto is to create more employment opportunities unlike policies of the BJP-led central government that train people for four months and recruit them for four years... We demand that the retirement age be extended to 65 years," the Trinamool Congress boss added. Banerjee said the saffron party has launched the new defence recruitment scheme keeping in mind the 2024 Lok Sabha polls.

Under the Agnipath scheme, people between the ages of 17.5 and 21 years will be recruited into the military service of their choice for four years. After this tenure, 25% of the Agniveers will be retained and the remaining 75% will be permitted to return to civilian life. The introduction of the scheme triggered nationwide protests by armed forces aspirants as well as the Opposition. In the wake of widespread protests, the ministry of home affairs relaxed the upper age limit for Agnipath aspirants from 21 to 23 years for the first year (2022 cycle) only and also announced a 10 per cent reservation for 'Agniveers' in the Central Armed Police Forces (CAPFs) and Assam Rifles. Earlier too, the Bengal chief minister had hit out at the Modi government over the new military recruitment scheme, saying that the Bharatiya Janata Party was trying to create its own armed cadre through the programme. "The BJP is trying to create its own armed cadre base through this scheme."

### Mukul Roy resigns as Public Accounts Committee chairman in West Bengal assembly

NEW DELHI, OPEN SEARCH

Mukul Roy has resigned from the post of chairman of the Public Accounts Committee (PAC) of the Assembly. Mukul Roy sent his resignation letter in an e-mail to assembly speaker Biman Banerjee on Monday. At the end of the assembly session on Friday, the speaker extended the term of 41 committees for one more year. As a result, Mukul Roy's tenure as PAC chairman was also extended by one year. A person known to be close to Mukul Roy, who did not wish to be named, said Mukul Roy resigned as the chairman of the PAC on Monday. Roy, who won the 2021 assembly polls on a BJP ticket from Krishnanagar Uttar constituency in Nadia district, had defected to the ruling Trinamool Congress a month later in June 2021. He did not, however, resign as a legislator despite being asked to do so by the saffron party. "I have sent my resignation as PAC chairman to Speaker Biman Banerjee. My tenure (as PAC chairman) was for one year and it is about to end soon. So I decided to resign," Roy. The speaker had appointed him as PAC chairman in July last year.

## Emergency in 1975 a 'black spot' on vibrant history of India's democracy, says PM Modi in Germany

MUNICH: (AGENCY)

*Exhilarating atmosphere in Munich! Addressing a community programme.*



Termining the imposition of the Emergency in 1975 a "black spot" on the vibrant history of India's democracy, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday targeted the Congress Party and said that democracy, which is in the DNA of every Indian, was trampled and suppressed 47 years ago, but the people answered the conspiracies to crush it in a democratic way. Prime Minister Modi, who is visiting Germany to attend the G7 Summit, made the remarks while addressing thousands of members of the Indian community at a grand event held at the Audi Dome stadium in Munich.

"Today is June 26 which is also known as the day when India's democracy, which is in the DNA of every Indian, was trampled and suppressed 47 years ago. Emergency is a black spot on the vibrant history of India's democracy," Modi said, targeting the opposition Congress Party in a speech from abroad.

Emergency was announced in India on June 25, 1975, when Congress leader Indira Gandhi was the

prime minister and was lifted on March 21, 1977.

"The people of India answered all the conspiracies to crush democracy in a democratic way. We Indians take pride in our democracy wherever we are," Modi said in his over 30 minutes speech at the indoor arena,

described as the largest Indian community event of Prime Minister Modi in continental Europe.

Modi said that Indians are proud of their democracy. "Today, we can proudly say that India is the mother of democracy... The diversity of culture, food, clothes,

music and traditions makes our democracy vibrant. India has shown that democracy can deliver and has delivered."

Addressing the Indian community members in Munich, Modi lauded the contribution of the diaspora in promoting India's success.

story and acting as brand ambassadors of India's success.

The Prime Minister highlighted India's growth story and mentioned various initiatives undertaken by the government to further achieve the country's development agenda.

**E**mergency in India was announced on June 25, 1975, when Congress leader Indira Gandhi was the prime minister and was lifted on March 21, 1977.

"In the last century, Germany and other countries benefited from the 3rd Industrial Revolution. India was a slave back then that's why it couldn't leverage benefits. But now India will not be left behind in the 4th Industrial Revolution, it's now leading the world!" Modi said. He said India has shown how well democracy is delivering in such a vast and so diverse country. "The way crores of Indians have achieved big goals together, it is unprecedented. Today every village in India is open defecation free, has electricity and 99% of the villages also have clean cooking fuel. India has been providing free ration to 80 crore poor people for the last 2 years," he added. Not only this, in India, on average, we have a 'unicorn' every 10 days, he added.

## India, UK to hold fifth round of talks on FTA in July

The Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) and its UK counterpart, the Confederation of British Industry (CBI), have formed the UK-India Business Commission to increase cross-industry collaboration and to push the trade deal over the line

NEW DELHI, OPEN SEARCH

India and the UK said on Monday they will hold the fifth round of talks for a free trade agreement in New Delhi in July, with leaders of the two countries having already set a target for concluding the negotiations by October.

The two sides concluded the fourth round of talks for the India-UK Free Trade Agreement (FTA) on June 24, according to a joint outcome statement. During the fourth round of negotiations, a



"detailed draft treaty text was advanced across the majority of chapters," the statement said. "Technical experts from both sides came together for discussions in 71 separate sessions covering 20 policy areas," the statement added.

The fourth round of technical talks was held in a hybrid format, with some teams and a

majority of the officials joining virtually. "The fifth round of negotiations is due to take place in July 2022 in New Delhi," the statement said.

At their summit in New Delhi in April, Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his UK counterpart Boris Johnson said they expected a "majority of talks on a comprehensive and balanced free trade agree-

ment" to be concluded by the end of October. Johnson said the FTA could double trade and investment by the end of the decade. Over the past few months, India has concluded trade deals with the United Arab Emirates and Australia.

Johnson acknowledged at the time that there were difficult issues, such as tariffs on whisky, but said there is also a "massive push" from both governments to get the FTA done. The Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) and its UK counterpart, the Confederation of British Industry (CBI), have formed the UK-India Business Commission to increase cross-industry collaboration and to push the trade deal over the line. The UK's renewable sector is eyeing a greater role in India's transition to clean energy under the proposed FTA.

## Uddhav Thackeray hands over portfolios of Eknath Shinde, 8 rebel ministers to others

NEW DELHI, OPEN SEARCH

Maharashtra Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray on Monday (June 27, 2022) handed over portfolios of nine rebel ministers, who are currently camping with Shiv Sena leader Eknath Shinde in Guwahati, to other ministers. The portfolios of the rebel ministers were being handed over to other ministers for ease of administration, an official statement said.

"Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray has decided to hand over the portfolios of five absent ministers and four ministers of state to other ministers to ensure smooth functioning of the public interest and to ensure smooth functioning of the department in case of heavy rains and calamities," a statement by the Public Relations Room, Chief Minister's Secretariat, said.

The Shiv Sena now has four cabinet ministers, including CM Uddhav Thackeray, Aadiya Thackeray, Anil Parab, and Subhash Desai. Barring



Aadiya Thackeray, the rest three are MLCs.

In the tripartite Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) government led by the Sena, the Uddhav Thackeray-led party had 10 Cabinet-rank ministers before the rebellion and four Ministers of State (MoS), including two from the Sena quota. Nine Maharashtra ministers have so far joined the rebel camp led by Eknath Shinde in Guwahati.

## Punjab borrows leaf from Delhi book for Mohalla clinics, accident victims

The state government has allocated 4,731 crore for the health sector - an increase of 23.80% compared to FY 2021-2022.

NEW DELHI, OPEN SEARCH

The Bhagwant Mann-led Punjab government on Monday announced free treatment for road accident victims as a part of its budget. Taking a leaf from Delhi government book, a 'Farishtey' scheme will be rolled out in Punjab under which a victim of a road accident can be admitted to any hospital.

The injured person will be given a free-of-cost treatment, and the entire cost will be borne by the Mann-led dispensation, the Bhagwant Mann government announced on Monday in its first budget.



Stating that "casualties in road accidents due to the dearth of timely medical help is a remorseful experience", state's finance minister Harpal Singh Cheema said, "The sufferers of road accidents will be given free treatment and the entire cost would be borne by the

government of Punjab." He added that the AAP government is "extremely sensitive" to the cause and would try to make sure that "anyone who suffers from a road accident is saved".

Mohalla clinics, which provide affordable treatment, will be set up across

the state. The AAP government in Delhi has often given example of its Mohalla clinics while listing its achievements.

Meanwhile, Cheema tabled the first budget of the state's AAP government on Monday, three months after the AAP won with a whop-

ping victory in the assembly elections. The state finance minister began by talking of the government's anti-corruption drive.

The state government has allocated 4,731 crore for the health sector - an increase of 23.80% compared to FY 2021-2022. 1,033 crore has been allocated for medical education which is an increase of 56.60% as compared to FY 2021-22.

The Mohalla - which will be also called Pind clinics - aim to decentralise the public health services to the lowest level. The state government has promised to set up 16 medical colleges in the state in the next five years. Further, it will also set up two super-specialty hospitals - one at Patiala and another one at Faridkot in the coming two years.

## SC grants rebels time till July 12 to file reply; Maharashtra govt to ensure MLAs' safety

NEW DELHI, OPEN SEARCH

The Supreme Court on Monday issued notices to Maharashtra deputy speaker Narhari Zirwal, Sena chief whip Sunil Prabhu and legislature party leader Ajay Chaudhary on the petitions by Eknath Shinde and 15 other dissident MLAs challenging the disqualification notice to the rebel camp. "Haste can lead to undesirable consequences," the top court told the deputy speaker. All parties have been asked to file counter affidavits within five days. Shinde camp gets three days to respond to counter affidavits. Next hearing on July 11. The Supreme Court asked the Maharashtra government to ensure protection of 39 dissident MLAs and their family members. The top court records the undertaking by the state government counsel that no harm shall be caused to the life, liberty and proper-



ties of the 39 dissidents.

The Supreme Court asked the Maharashtra deputy speaker Narhari Zirwal to file a detailed affidavit in connection the no-confidence motion moved against him by the Eknath Shinde-led rebel Shiv Sena camp.

The top court issued the directive after the deputy speaker questioned the authenticity of the removal motion by the rebel camp. The Shinde faction on June 22 had filed a notice for the removal under Article 179

of the constitution and rule 11 of the Maharashtra Assembly Rules.

The Supreme Court asked for all the records from the office of deputy speaker, this after his counsel Rajeev Dhavan told the bench that he questioned the authenticity of the removal motion as it was sent through an email. Earlier, the Supreme Court had asked the rebel faction why didn't they approach the high court. Neeraj K Kaul, the lawyer representing,

# Health, Education Key Focus In First Budget Of AAP-Ruled Punjab Govt.

CHANDIGARH: (AGENCY)

Punjab Finance Minister Harpal Singh Cheema on Monday presented the AAP government's first budget for FY23 in the state assembly and announced that the focus in the first year will be to restore deteriorating fiscal health, deliver on the promises of good governance and concentrate on health, agriculture and education. The AAP government is fulfilling its first guarantee (promise) made to the people of Punjab by providing 300 units of domestic power supply per month free to all citizens from July 1, Mr Cheema said.

Presenting the Bhagwant Mann government's maiden budget after AAP came to power in March this year, Mr Cheema said the government has proposed to start the Punjab Young Entrepreneur programme to encourage class 11 students to propose their business ideas.

The state government will pro-



vide seed money of ₹ 2,000 per student under this programme, the finance minister said as he presented the paperless budget.

Mr Cheema also announced that the government will set up 16 new medical colleges over five years.

The government will also establish 117 "Mohalla Clinics", for which ₹ 77 crore has been earmarked. The focus in the first year

will be to restore deteriorating fiscal health, deliver on the promises of good governance by ensuring effective use of public funds and concentrate on health and education, the minister said.

"I propose a budget expenditure of ₹ 1,55,860 crore for 2022-23, which reflects 14.20 per cent growth as compared to 2021-22," he said. The government has decided to approve fresh recruitment of

26,454 people and regularisation of 36,000 contractual employees, he said. The AAP government pledges to stand by farmers and shall continue providing free power to the agriculture sector, he added.

Referred to the white paper on state finances, which was presented in the state assembly on Saturday, he said the document makes it vividly clear that Punjab has suffered decades of fiscal imprudence.

The current effective outstanding debt of Punjab stands at ₹ 2.63 lakh crore, the minister informed.

He said that the state government will issue this year the Gender Responsive Budgeting Guidelines, setting out the strategy to promote the goal of gender equality and mainstreaming for bringing in social transformation and eliminating inequality.

The government has identified 100 existing schools that are proposed to be upgraded as "schools of eminence". ₹ 200 crore has been earmarked for this purpose.

# "Traitors Never Win": Aadiya Thackeray On Sena Rebels After Court Hearing

MUMBAI: (AGENCY)

Maharashtra minister Aadiya Thackeray on Monday threw another dare at rebel Shiv Sena leaders to come face to face and tell him what's wrong with the government. The government and the party, led by Aadiya Thackeray's father Uddhav Thackeray, are facing a mutiny by senior leader Eknath Shinde's faction and nearly 40 of the 55 Sena MLAs. Aadiya Thackeray called the Shinde camp "traitors, not rebels", and said, "Those who betray... they never win. We are confident of and are getting a lot of love." His comments came as the political slugfest reached the Supreme Court, which will next hear the matter on July 11.

Asked specifically about minister Uday Samant joining the Shinde camp in a hotel in Guwahati, Assam, Mr Thackeray said, "It is his decision, but he

will come before us someday. He will have to look us in the eye someday."

Congress "unnatural", demanding that the party, founded by Balasaheb



#WATCH | "We are confident of winning. We have all love with us. Those who betray don't win. Those who run away don't win," says Maharashtra minister and Shiv Sena leader Aadiya Thackeray when asked how confident is he that the MVA gov't won't fall pic.twitter.com/CCg2SZhj0

The rebel faction has termed Shiv Sena's alliance with the Nationalist Congress Party and the

Thackeray, restore its alliance with the BJP as they have a shared ideology of Hindutva. Team Thackeray has rubbished the ideology claim and said the rebellion is scripted by the BJP which leads the government at the Centre.

"Those who ran away from here and are calling themselves rebels, if they wanted to rebel, they should've done it here. They should've resigned.

## Briefs News

### Extend Retirement Age Of 'Agniveers' To 65 Years: Mamata Banerjee

BURDWAN (WEST BENGAL): (AGENCY)

West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Monday urged the Centre to extend the retirement age of soldiers recruited under the 'Agnipath' scheme to 65 years, contending that they will stare at an uncertain future at the end of the four-year term. Chief Minister Banerjee also said the BJP-led central government launched the new defence recruitment scheme keeping in mind the 2024 Lok Sabha polls.

"My motto is to create more and more jobs unlike the BJP. They are training people for four months and recruiting them for four years. What will these soldiers do after four years? What will be their fate? It's uncertain. "We demand that the retirement age be extended to 65 years (under the Agnipath scheme)," she said at an event in Burdwan in West Bengal.

It envisages recruiting in the armed forces youths in the age bracket of 17-and-half to 21 years for only four years, with a provision to retain 25 per cent of them for 15 more years. For 2022, the upper age limit has been extended to 23 years. The West Bengal chief minister had earlier claimed that the BJP was using the scheme to build its own "armed cadre base".

### 2 Terrorists Killed In Encounter In Jammu And Kashmir's Kulgam: Police

SRINAGAR: (AGENCY)

Two unidentified militants on Monday were killed in an encounter with security forces in Kulgam district of Jammu and Kashmir, police said. Security forces launched a cordon and search operation at Nowpora-Kherpora in the Trubji area of the district following information about the presence of militants there, a police official said. He said the search operation turned into an encounter in which two ultras were killed. The identity and group affiliation of the terrorists is being ascertained, the official said, adding the operation is still underway.

### BJP Win In UP Shows People Are In Favour Of Agnipath: Bihar Minister

PATNA: (AGENCY)

A BJP minister in Bihar on Monday claimed that the party's success in by-polls for a couple of Lok Sabha seats in Uttar Pradesh was tantamount to a vote for Agnipath - the contentious new scheme of recruitment in the armed forces which has triggered protests in the two adjoining populous states. Pramod Kumar, who holds the law portfolio, made a declaration to the effect outside the state assembly, giving vent to his frustration over the adjournment of proceedings on account of a ruckus created by the opposition which has been demanding withdrawal of the new scheme. "Agniveers are at work in more than a dozen countries. Many multinational (sic) countries have this scheme", said the minister, apparently referring to many major powers having adopted a system of contractual recruitment in lower ranks of armed forces. "The people of Azamgarh and Rampur in Uttar Pradesh have shown that the public is overwhelmingly in favour of Agnipath. Our party attained huge victories there", said the BJP leader referring to the two constituencies which his party has wrested from the Samajwadi Party in neck and neck contests. In line with his party's stand that protests in Bihar were part of a "conspiracy" and not a spontaneous outburst of aggrieved youths, the minister asked, "why is it that Bihar is in throes of violent protests while many other states where a much larger proportion of population joins the armed forces have remained untouched.

# Prevent Muslims From Being Mised In 2024 Polls: Mayawati To Party Workers

LUCKNOW: (AGENCY)

Appreciating the performance of her party candidate in the Lok Sabha bypoll in Azamgarh, BSP president Mayawati on Monday asked party workers to keep the momentum and prevent Muslims from being misled in the 2024 general election.

"The determination and courage with which all the BSP workers, office bearers and party candidate Shah Alam alias Guddu Jamal have fought the Azamgarh Lok Sabha bypoll need to be maintained till 2024 Lok Sabha general elections as part of the



resolve while maintaining election readiness," Mayawati said in a tweet in Hindi. In another tweet, she said, not only Azamgarh, but BSP's struggle and efforts have to be continued in the entire UP to convert the

groundwork into votes. "In this sequence, it is also important to protect a particular community from being misled in the upcoming elections," she said, in an apparent reference to Muslim voters. Mayawati

had on Sunday said that the outcome of the bypoll has proved that only BSP has the "ground force" to defeat the BJP in the state. "The UP bypoll results has once again proved that only BSP has the 'ground force' to defeat BJP here. The party's effort to prove this to the entire community will continue, so that the much awaited political change can take place in the state," the BSP chief said. She tweeted, "The ruling party wins most of the bypolls, yet the tough fight the BSP has given to the ruling BJP and SP in Azamgarh is commendable.

# "Won't Take Guwahati Route Even If I'm Beheaded": Sena's Sanjay Raut

MUMBAI: (AGENCY)

Shiv Sena MP Sanjay Raut on Monday dubbed the Enforcement Directorate's summons issued to him as a "conspiracy" and said even if he is killed, he will



not resort to the Guwahati route taken by rebel MLAs from Maharashtra.

The Enforcement Directorate, or ED, has summoned Mr Raut on Tuesday for questioning in a money laundering probe linked to the re-development of a Mumbai 'chawl', officials said.

The development comes as the Shiv Sena battles rebellion from a group of its MLAs, who are camping in Assam's Guwahati city, putting a question mark on the future of Maharashtra's Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) government. "I just got to know that the ED has sent me a notice. Major developments are taking place in Maharashtra. We all are Shiv Sainiks of (Sena founder) Balasaheb. This is a conspiracy. Even if I am beheaded, I will not take the Guwahati route," Raut said in a tweet in Marathi and tagged BJP leader Devendra Fadnis.

Sanjay Raut's brother MLA Sunil Raut claimed the ED summons were to scare the parliamentarian as he has been opposing the BJP.

# Assam Floods: Water Level Receding But Over 22 Lakh Still Affected

GUWAHATI: (AGENCY)

Assam's flood situation is showing signs of improvement with the water level of most rivers maintaining a receding trend while over 22 lakh remain affected across the state, officials said on Monday. However, the situation in Silchar, headquarter town of Cachar district, remained grim as several areas are still waterlogged, officials said. The toll in the state has increased to 126 after five deaths were reported on Sunday while two others had gone missing. The total number of affected people declined to 22.21 lakh in 28 districts on Sunday while the figure was 25.10 lakh on the previous day, according to a bulletin issued by the Assam State Disaster Management Authority (ASDMA). The rivers Kopili, Barak and Kushiara are flowing above

the danger level. In Silchar town, which is submerged for over a week, efforts are on to pro-



vide relief to those areas where the administration is yet to reach by air to drop packets with food, drinking water and other essential items by Indian Air Force helicopters. Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (UAV) is monitoring and conducting a survey to prepare a flood

map of Silchar town so as to identify the extent of damage in different areas and help in taking measures to



mitigate the damage in future, Cachar Deputy Commissioner Keerthi Jalli said. The District Disaster Management Authority (DDMA), UNICEF and OXFAM, an international charitable organisation, have started operating boat-mounted water treatment

units to drinking water to the people in need within Silchar and its peripheral areas, she added. Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma visited and reviewed Silchar twice within two days on Sunday and reviewed the relief and rescue operations in the town. Silchar has been severely affected as water gushed in, following a breach in the dyke at Betkundi, and Sarma alleged that the flood in the town is "man made".

The state government has transported 3575 food packets to Silchar from Guwahati and Jorhat. Meanwhile, 2,542 villages under 75 revenue circles across the state remain affected by the current wave of floods while 2,17,413 people have taken shelter in 564 relief camps, the ASDMA said in a bulletin. Large scale erosion was also reported.

# Sanjay Raut's Brother Denies Being In Touch With Rebel MLA Eknath Shinde

MUMBAI: (AGENCY)

Shiv Sena leader Sanjay Raut's brother, Sunil Raut, on Monday dismissed claims that he was in touch with rebel Eknath Shinde, stating that he was a staunch Shiv Sainik and will continue to work for the party till his last breath. Sunil Raut is a two-time MLA from Mumbai's Vikhroli in Maharashtra.

On Sunday, there were media reports that the rebel Eknath Shinde camp had contacted Sunil Raut and the latter might head towards Guwahati where the rebels has been putting up in hotel since Wednesday.

When asked about the speculation, Sunil Raut said: "Why will I go to Guwahati? I would rather go to Goa to see its natural beauty. Will I go to Guwahati to see the faces of those traitors? I am

a Shiv Sainik, and I will work for the party till my last breath."

He further exuded confidence that Maharashtra Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray will surely win.

"Narayan Rane and Raj Thackeray can say all that they want to say. Uddhav Thackeray will surely win. I was in Shiv Sena and I will remain in this party," he added. The Shiv Sena-led Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) government in Maharashtra is facing crisis as more than two-thirds of its MLAs have rebelled against the party president and Maharashtra Chief Minister Thackeray. Meanwhile, Mr Shinde has called a meeting of MLAs camping with him later today, said sources. The meeting is called amid a Supreme Court hearing against the disqualification petition under Rule 6 of MLA Defection Rules seeking disqualification of the rebel



against rebel MLAs. The rebel leader also challenged the appointment of Ajay Chaudhary as the Shiv Sena's legislative leader in the House in place of Shinde. The petitioner, Mr Shinde has sought to issue direction to Deputy Speaker to not take any action in the disqualification petition under Rule 6 of MLA Defection Rules seeking disqualification of the rebel

chief Raj Thackeray about the recent political situation in the state. He spoke to Raj Thackeray over the phone twice and also enquired about his health.

Mr Shinde, who is currently camping in Assam along with other MLAs, on Sunday lashed out at the party for allegedly supporting the culprits of the Mumbai bomb blast, Dawood Ibrahim and those responsible for taking lives of innocent people.

"How can Balasaheb Thackeray's Shiv Sena support people who had a direct connection with culprits of Mumbai bomb blast, Dawood Ibrahim and those responsible for taking lives of innocent people of Mumbai. That's why we took such a step, it's better to die," Mr Shinde said in a tweet. However, Shiv Sena leader Aadiya Thackeray claimed that on May 20, CM

Uddhav Thackeray had asked Eknath Shinde to become CM if he wanted to, but at that time he did drama and now just a month later, he rebelled.

Former minister and Shiv Sena MLA Deepak Kesarkar, who is now in the Eknath Shinde camp, had said that the MLAs of the Shinde camp are ready to face the floor test in the Maharashtra Legislative Assembly at any time, but first recognition should be given to Mr Shinde's faction.

The Shinde faction has named their group 'Shiv Sena Balasaheb'. The naming of the group after the name of the Shiv Sena founder Balasaheb Thackeray attracted sharp reactions from the Uddhav faction as the Chief Minister said that those who left the party should not seek votes in the name of the party founder.

# Kejriwal Govt. to make COVID vaccines available at Aam Aadmi Mohalla clinics soon

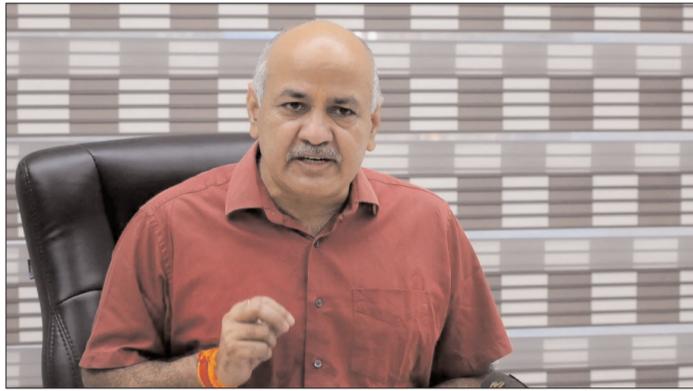
**Addition of new vaccination centres at Mohalla Clinics will help government achieve the higher vaccination target soon, especially for precaution doses- Dy CM Manish Sisodia**

**Kejriwal Government's aim is to ensure last mile delivery of preventive and curative health care services, vaccination sites at Mohalla Clinics will make precaution doses of COVID vaccine more accessible- Dy CM Manish Sisodia**

NEW DELHI, OPEN SEARCH

To give a boost to the vaccination drive in the capital and make the precaution doses more accessible, the Kejriwal Government will now provide COVID-19 vaccination at Aam Aadmi Mohalla Clinics. For this,

vaccination centres will be set up across all the Mohalla Clinics. This is a major step towards further increasing the vaccination rate in the capital, after a door-to-door campaign. Speaking about the initiative, Deputy Chief Minister Shri Manish Sisodia said, "State has adopted the multi pronged strategy to achieve optimal coverage of vaccination of all eligible beneficiaries. Currently, vaccination is being provided in a mission mode, but still a cohort of population for the second dose and significantly higher cohort is due for the newly added precaution dose. Addition of vaccination centres at Mohalla clinics will help us achieve the higher vaccination target soon." Deputy Chief Minister Shri Manish Sisodia added that for this designated staff



at Mohalla Clinics will be provided training regarding COVID Vaccination Operational Guidelines by resource personnel. They will be responsible for carrying the vaccinations and

logistics to the sites at Mohalla clinics. The responsibility of Aam Aadmi Mohalla Clinic will be to provide adequate space for the vaccination site, counsel the beneficiaries, and

ensure that COVID vaccination guidelines are followed at the clinic. Shri Manish Sisodia said, "as soon as the vaccination centres are functional they will be uploaded on the CoWin and

beneficiaries will be able to book their slots easily." He further directed the officials to complete the relevant work soon and get the sites functional on priority. It is to be noted that earlier the government had been using Delhi government schools as vaccination centres, but now that the schools have reopened such a huge population for vaccination cannot be allowed in the premises.

Since Aam Aadmi Mohalla Clinics are located in the heart of populous areas with easy access they will be useful for the government to provide vaccination to left out and eligible beneficiaries. According to the current statistics, 3.49 crores people have been vaccinated including 1st dose, 2nd dose and precaution dose of COVID vaccine.

## Delhi likely to witness partly cloudy sky today; AQI in 'moderate' category

NEW DELHI, OPEN SEARCH

Delhi is likely to see a partly cloudy sky on Monday, with the minimum temperature to stay at 29 degrees Celsius, according to the Indian Meteorological Department (IMD). The maximum temperature, however, is predicted to reach 40 degrees Celsius. The minimum temperature on Sunday was 29 degrees Celsius, one degree above normal, while the maximum temperature was 40.6 degree Celsius, three degrees above normal. The humidity levels in the last 24 hours have varied between 49% and 69%.

The air quality in the national capital was in the moderate category on Monday morning. Data from the Central Pollution Control Board showed that the hourly air quality index (AQI) at 7 am stood at 130. On Sunday, the average 24-hour AQI was 169, which is in the higher-end of the moderate category. The

prominent pollutants in Delhi's air were PM2.5 and PM10.

An AQI between zero and 50 is considered 'good', 51 and 100 'satisfactory', 101 and 200 'moderate', 201 and 300 'poor', 301 and 400 'very poor', and 401 and 500 'severe'.

On Monday, the Union ministry of earth science's air quality monitoring centre - System of Air Quality and Weather Forecasting and Research (Safar) - said, "Air quality index indicates 'moderate' air quality, with PM10 as the primary pollutant. Dust (size > 2.5 micrometer) contributes around 68% of PM10." Safar predicted that for the next three days till June 29, the peak wind speed is likely to be around 18-20 km/hour, causing moderate dispersion; AQI is likely to be within 'moderate' or 'lower end of poor' category. Moderate temperature (around 39-41 degrees Celsius) and mixing of air layers will maintain.

## Delhi health minister Satyendar Jain to stay in jail for two more weeks

NEW DELHI, OPEN SEARCH

Delhi minister Satyendar Jain's judicial custody was extended on Monday by two more weeks by a special court. Jain was arrested



by the Enforcement Directorate in a money laundering case on May 30 under criminal sections of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA). According to Special Judge Geetanjali Goel passed the order on a plea moved by the federal agency seek-

ing extension of Jain's custody after the Delhi health minister, who is currently in hospital, appeared through a video conference.

Earlier during the day, the judge had refused to entertain the plea noting that neither Jain nor any lawyer representing him was present before the court during the proceedings. After being told that Jain was hospitalised, the court directed the ED to ensure Jain's presence before it later in the day through video conference. The judge heard the arguments on the agency's plea and extended the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) leader's judicial custody for 14 days. He was admitted to a city hospital last week after his oxygen level dipped.

## Kejriwal Government to facelift 17 roads in Tilak Nagar

Vikasपुरी and Janakपुरी, projects worth 13.58 crores approved by Dy CM Manish Sisodia

**Total road length of 12.83 kilometres will be renovated under road maintenance project in Tilak Nagar, Vikasपुरी and Janakपुरी, PWD using modern technologies to make roads long-lasting**

NEW DELHI, OPEN SEARCH

The Kejriwal Government is rigorously working on making Delhi's roads better and safer for all the commuters. In this direction, PWD has taken up road maintenance work on a war footing to avoid any inconvenience to the commuters in the capital. Following the same, Deputy Chief Minister Shri Manish Sisodia gave his approval to projects worth 13.58 crore for beautification and strengthening of 17 roads in Tilak Nagar, Vikasपुरी and Janakपुरी. A

total road length of 12.83 kilometres will be covered under this project. Speaking about the road strengthening projects, Shri Manish Sisodia said, "PWD has expedited the work of road strengthening and beautification across the city. Department is using modern technologies and global standards of street design to give a new look to city roads. Along with road strengthening and maintenance, the special focus of the department is on beautifying the prominent city roads to provide a pleasant commuting experience to commuters." It is to be noted that a thorough inspection of these aforementioned roads was conducted by PWD officials to assess their requirements. Following this the projects were prepared and got the approval of the gov-

ernment. In this project of strengthening, along with making the roads long-lasting, PWD is also emphasising on road markings, plantations etc.

The Deputy Chief Minister added that PWD is working in a phased manner to make the city roads better. During the inspection in these areas, it was found that residents had to face a lot of inconvenience due to old dilapidated roads. Taking cognizance of the situation, a new road maintenance project is being started in these areas to avoid any inconvenience to the common public. This will improve the interconnectivity in the area and will save the time of commuters. He further directed the officials to complete the work in the stipulated time. Shri Manish Sisodia said that the

Kejriwal Government is determined to provide hassle free commuting experience to the residents of Delhi, we are following the global standards of street design to make the city roads better and safer. Roads to be renovated in Tilak Nagar and Vikasपुरी -> Keshopur Sabzi Mandi Road-> Tilak Vihar Main Road-> Pelican Road-> Ashok Nagar Road-> Chaukhandi Road-> Guru Virjanand Marg to District Park Vikas Puri-> Brain Public School Road-> KR Mangalam Road-> Shaheed Rajguru to District Park Vikas Puri-> Prof. Joginder Singh Marg-> Major Deepak Tyagi Marg-> Lal Sai Marg-> 60 Futa Road-> Possangi Pur Road-> A-1 Block Main Road-> Road in Opposite A-1 Block-> Asalat Pur Road - 1

## Briefs News

### Sanitation takeover by MCD planned in revamped Chandni Chowk

NEW DELHI, OPEN SEARCH

The Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) will again take up cleanliness and sanitation activities on the redeveloped Chandni Chowk stretch, after it was found that the public works department (PWD), which is the custodian of the stretch, is not doing a proper job of maintaining cleanliness in the area, a meeting of all stakeholders, called by the Shahjahanabad Redevelopment Corporation (SRDC), on June 21 has decided. Plans are also afoot to reduce the number of rickshaws plying on the stretch, so to decongest the area, and introduce an online fining system using CCTV cameras to penalise vehicles found entering the stretch between 9am and 9pm, an official aware of the developments has said.

The phase one of the ₹99-crore Chandni Chowk redevelopment project, aimed at decongesting and conserving the heritage structure of the Emperor Shahjahan-era market between the Red Fort and Fatehpuri Masjid, was inaugurated on September 12 last year. During a surprise inspection on June 10, deputy chief minister Manish Sisodia had found several faults with the maintenance and upkeep of the area and he had directed officials to submit a report on the state of the redeveloped Chandni Chowk market, while reminding them that it was important to ensure that the revamped stretch does not lose its sheen.

The meeting of stakeholders was called following this to discuss steps that needed to be taken to improve the upkeep of the area. Sanjay Bhargava, who heads the Chandni Chowk Sarv Vyapar Mandal, said traders have been requesting the MCD to restart the morning sweeping and cleanliness activities as the newly renovated market was starting to lose its sheen.

"Deputy commissioner of the City Sadar Paharganj (City-SP) zone has been directed to ensure sweeping of the stretch and removal of garbage in the morning as it is the obligatory function of (the MCD) providing sanitation in the area although PWD is responsible for maintaining the area," the directions issued by chief nodal officer H Rajesh Prasad, who is looking after revamped stretch, said.

### Delhi: Roshanara Bagh to get a Sunder Nursery like revamp

NEW DELHI, OPEN SEARCH

Ever since it was opened in its rejuvenated avatar in the winters of 2018, the Sunder nursery--South East Delhi' heritage garden -- has redefined open public spaces in the national capital. For a highly congested capital starved of open green spaces, the 90-acre park has emerged a successful example of an urban renewal project. With historic landscapes of restored monuments, a lush British-era nursery, manicured gardens, lakeside cafe and biodiversity zones-- the green haven abutting Nizamuddin has something to offer for everyone-- families searching for picnic spots to youngsters looking for perfect backdrop for their reels.

The city authorities are now working to set up a similar blue-green infrastructure in northern part of the city. Spread over 57 acres, the 17th century Roshanara Bagh-- a garden developed by the second daughter of the emperor Shah Jahan and begum Mumtaz Mahal-- is now set for a turnaround.

The original garden was designed and commissioned by the princess in 1650s at the time when the city of Shahjahanabad (Walled City) was being built, and the baradari at the centre of the garden now serves as her resting place. Municipal Corporation of Delhi, which oversees the park, and other government agencies are undertaking multiple projects for rejuvenating the neglected space such as reviving a dead lake and building a modern nursery.

Delhi lieutenant governor VK Saxena also visited the garden last week (June 18), announcing that restored landscaped greens at Roshanara Bagh will be at par with Lodhi Garden.

MCD's horticulture department has been tasked with developing a modern world-class nursery over a vacant 8.5-acre space in the Roshanara Bagh that will showcase rare exotic plants and supply more than 300,000 plants to the city every year. A senior MCD horticulturist working on the project said that over next 3-4 months two polyhouse system units will be developed where air and weather-controlled conditions will be maintained to rear rare plant species.

## JNU canteen, dhaba operators face eviction as varsity serves notice

NEW DELHI, OPEN SEARCH

The Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) has sent eviction notices to canteen/dhaba owners on campus who haven't paid bills since they started their business, it said in a statement. The eviction notices were served as these owners did not respond to several notices that have been issued to them since 2019 with a request to clear the dues, the varsity said in a statement late Sunday evening.

"Notices have been issued to all those who have been occupying the space at various places including academic buildings in JNU. They have been doing the business without any due allotment. They continue to



do business without payment of any license fees and other dues like electricity/water/conservancy charges," Campus Development Committee Chairperson Sudhir Kumar said in the statement.

The statement said the decision to serve eviction notice was taken by the CDC in its January 17 meeting.

As on Sunday, the JNU administration had on June 22 served notices to operators of several canteens and dhabas located on campus to clear dues running up to lakhs of rupees and vacate the varsity premises by June 30.

The notice has sent the canteen operators into panic, who said they are too

hard up to pay off the dues and, with eviction notice, risk losing their livelihood entirely. JNU said it is committed to allotting the approved spaces/shops if the due process is followed. A canteen operator, who has been served a notice, said the administration has served him with a bill of ₹10 lakh outstanding in rent and electricity charge.

"I come from a poor economic background. My brother and I are the only earning members and our livelihood depends on this canteen. How can I pay ₹10 lakh? They should have demanded monthly or annual dues," said the canteen operator, who did not wish to be named. "Even if we pay, there is no guarantee they will let us stay.

## Delhi Metro services on Red Line hit, commuters stranded

NEW DELHI, OPEN SEARCH

Delhi Metro services on the busy red line were hit on Monday morning leaving large number of commuters stranded in the early morning hours. "Delay in services is being observed between Inderlok and Pitampura on red line.



"There are normal services on all other lines. The red line has 29 stations that runs from Rithala to Shaheed Sthal with a total distance of 34.55 km," DMRC said in a statement. Akshay Joshi, a commuter, said the metro coming from

Ghaziabad stopped several times before Kashmere Gate. "DMRC should resolve the issue," he added.

Several commuters also took to social media expressing outrage over frequent disruptions.

Gaurav Gautam, another commuter, said the Red Line wasn't working properly.

"I waited for 15 minutes for the gates of the metro to be opened at Rithala metro station," Gautam said. Ravi Aryan, another commuter said there was a significant delay for people like him trying to travel from Rithala towards Shaheed Sthal. Some commuters at Rithala metro station were also seen arguing with the metro staff. Metro services have already seen multiple instances of services getting disrupted.

## Delhiites to see a radical hike in the green area of the state

Kejriwal Government to kick off Mega Plantation Drive under Van Mahotsav Pakhwada from July 11 onwards - Gopal Rai

**Environment and Forests Minister Gopal Rai chairs a high-level meeting with the Forest Department to promote plantation in Delhi**

NEW DELHI, OPEN SEARCH

Under the chairmanship of Environment and Forest Minister Shri Gopal Rai, a high-level meeting was held at the Delhi Secretariat to promote tree plantation in the city today. Officials from the forest department took part in this meeting. During the meeting, in order to increase Delhi's green cover, it was decided to begin the Van Mahotsav Pakhwada from July 11 onwards from the Central Ridge. On July 25, a closing ceremony will be held at

Asola Bhatti Mines, during which more than 1 lakh saplings will be planted. The campaign to plant trees will also begin on July 11 in all 70 of Delhi's legislative assemblies. This campaign will be led in various locations by the Deputy Chief Minister of Delhi, Cabinet Minister, and the Speaker of Legislative assembly.

Along with this, from July 2 onwards free distribution of medicinal plants will commence from Kamala Nehru Ridge. Environment and Forest Minister Shri Gopal Rai, while addressing the reporters, said, "As a result of all the measures taken by the Kejriwal Government, a significant increase in the green cover has been seen inside Delhi. In the year 2013, the green



area in Delhi was 20%, but thanks to the efforts of the Kejriwal Government, it has increased to 23.06 percent for the year 2021.

In addition, Delhi has surpassed all other cities in the country in terms of per capita forest cover. Heading in this direction, the Van Mahotsav will commence

from Central Ridge on July 11 and culminate on July 25 at Asola Bhatti Mines by planting more than 1 lakh saplings. This 15-day event will serve as a catalyst for the tree planting campaign featured in the 14 points of the Summer Action Plan. This effort to plant trees in various districts will be led

by the Deputy Chief Minister of the Delhi Government, Ministers of the Delhi Government, and the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly. Additionally, on July 11, this initiative to plant trees will be led by MLAs in each of Delhi's 70 Legislative Assemblies.

We want to accomplish a significant portion of the saplings our government has set out to plant in Delhi during this Van Mahotsav. "Tree plantation drive is being carried out every year to increase Delhi's green belt and reduce Delhi's pollution. In this regard, this year the Kejriwal government has set a goal of planting more than 35 lakh trees under the Mega Tree Plantation Drive

which will be completed by the green agency of all the 19 concerned departments. Under this campaign, about 29 lakh saplings will be planted and around 7 lakh saplings will be distributed free of cost", he further added.

Free distribution of medicinal plants will commence from Kamala Nehru Ridge from July 2nd onwards. Shri Gopal Rai informed, "Free distribution of medicinal plants in Delhi will commence from July 2 from Kamla Nehru Ridge. Under this, free medicinal plants will be distributed to the people from government nurseries so that the people of Delhi can participate in increasing the green area of Delhi by planting saplings in their homes.

Open Search  
EDITORIAL

Bridge on the Padma

The bridge on the Padma river, inaugurated by Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina on Saturday, is a magnificent superstructure that symbolises the coming of age of the country, half-a-century after its blood-soaked birth. Built at a cost of \$3.6 billion, the 6.15 km rail-road bridge is seen as the embodiment of all that's good about modern Bangladesh — large-scale industrialisation and reduction in poverty, significant improvements in human development indices, important steps towards gender equality and an increasing share of women in the workforce. The bridge lovingly called 'Aamader swapner Padma setu' ('our dream bridge across the Padma') is among the five 'national prestige projects' undertaken by the government under Sheikh Hasina. The opening of a bridge may not appear to some as a cause for national celebration, but Bangladeshis see it as a huge landmark, signifying the spectacular economic progress the country has made. Agriculture used to contribute roughly a third of the country's GDP, but between 2010 and 2018, its share fell to below 15%; concurrently, the industry's contribution to the GDP rose from below 20% to over 33%. Manufacturing's contribution to the GDP has risen sharply, and exports have grown 20-fold since the 1990s. The focus on education has led to women's empowerment according to the World Bank, Bangladesh's female work participation rate was 35% in 2020, much better than 19% for India. In 2007, the per capita income of the country was half that of India, but last year Bangladesh's per capita income surged past India's. The previous year, Bangladesh's per capita GDP had overtaken India's. Even as South Asia's collective GDP contracted by 6.58% in 2020, that of Bangladesh grew by 3.5%. The success of Bangladesh shows that epochal progress can be made by focusing on infrastructure, education, gender equality, manufacturing and exports. Through the new bridge on the Padma which is projected to boost the GDP by over 1% Bangladesh hopes to make the lives of travellers.

India in the world of yesterday

MK BHADRAKUMAR

Prime MINISTER Modi finds himself appearing like a wandering minstrel beside the US President Joe Biden whenever he travels abroad — in Tokyo in May, Bavarian Alps in June. In July, Biden is travelling to West Asia where he, reportedly, plans to form a new quadrilateral called 'I2-U2' to prop up the moribund Arab-Israeli axis against Iran, in which, strangely enough, he has included India, a civilisational ally of Iran. What the so-called liberal internationalists are promoting is effectively a Cold War strategy with a few more non-white countries added to the mix.

India is in high demand in Biden's circuit. The choristers of Delhi establishment claim that it testifies to India's presence at the high table in world politics. A more plausible explanation could be that Washington is not taking its eyes off India, which it considers to be a fence sitter on Ukraine. These are epochal times. The world of yesterday is drifting away. Biden is acutely conscious of the beating that American prestige has taken in recent years. He chaired two summits in the White House recently to press his case against Russia — with countries of ASEAN and the Organisation of American States. Both ended inconclusively. The non-western world is overwhelmingly refusing to sanction Russia, Washington's entreaties notwithstanding.

The catastrophic failure of NATO and the US to defeat Russia in Ukraine is a fundamental reality. Russia's financial system is 'back to business as usual,' according to the deputy chief economist at the Institute of International Finance, and those who thought that 'cutting Russia from financing for a few weeks would stop the war have proven naive.' On the other hand, neither the Biden administration nor its European counterparts expected the economic pressure they now are experiencing. On the battlefield, the Ukrainian forces are losing ground. The CNN's chief national security correspondent, Jim Scuitto, reported on Saturday that US officials close to the intelligence do not expect that the weapons systems recently supplied to Ukrainian forces, including the HIMARS multiple rocket launch system, would change the situation on the battlefield, and Washington and NATO already see the limit to their ability to send weapons to Kiev.

In effect, Russia is winning the war, and the signs of 'war fatigue' in Europe are appearing. The longer the war continues, the more the war fatigue will morph as 'solidarity fatigue'. At the EU summit over the weekend, there was little or no discussion of a seventh package of sanctions, as leaders confronted the reality that punitive measures so far have had little deterrent effect on Russia, despite the heavy cost to European economies.

From the Indian perspective, what is pertinent would be that there is a profound awakening in Russia about the futility of casting its identity in European categories. Most of the themes of the interlude between the two World Wars are up for discussion today — whether Europe is indeed the future of Russia or the place of Russia-Eurasia in the hierarchy of development models in contemporary world. The recrudescence of the Nazi ideology in the West in recent decades reopened the cauterised wounds in the Russian psyche inflicted by Hitler's invasion that took 27 million Russian lives. But the collective West now strategises to 'erase' Russia! Foreign minister Sergey Lavrov defiantly said, "We will make sure that we never find ourselves in a similar situation again and that no 'Uncle Sam' or anyone else can make decisions that are aimed at destroying our economy. We will find a way to no longer depend on it, and it should have been done a long time ago."

Indian analysts with a zero-sum mindset misinterpret the unusual character of the Russia-China partnership. Russia is endowed with scientific brilliance, technological prowess, abundant energy, rich rare minerals and metals — and global warming will increase the agricultural potential of Siberia. If Russia combines with India's resources, vast market and manpower, it becomes the most natural partnership across Eurasia. India should be smart enough to discern where its interests would lie in the American proxy war against Russia playing out in Ukraine. This war is bringing about a decoupling of Russian and western economies. President Putin's speech at the recent SPIEF conference ('Russia's Davos') in St Petersburg messaged that the 'decoupling' will be irreversible for a very long period. Putin is navigating the Russian economy toward a 'new normal'. He has emphasised repeatedly in recent times that he prioritises Russia's partnership with India.

India should also know that what the so-called liberal internationalists promote is effectively.

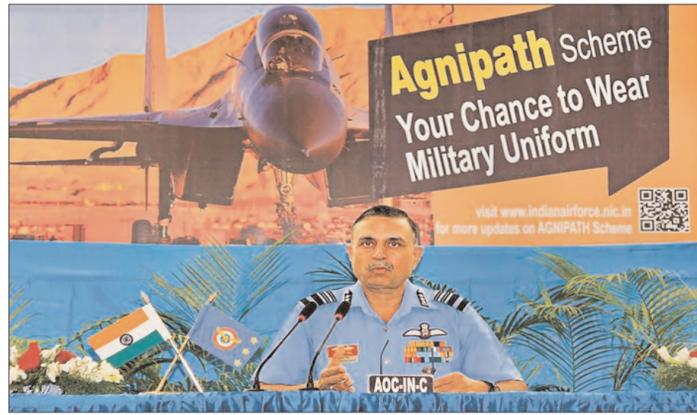
Agnipath scheme needs to be more convincing

The benefits announced by the government for the Agniveers do not inspire much confidence and have not helped.

GP CAPT MURLI MENON

Short service is at best a quick fix for prevailing shortages in cadre strengths of officers and enlisted personnel. Making short military service compulsory for all govt jobs and reducing short service to five years (as was the tenure earlier) have been suggested. This would give the exiting men and women a better chance of competing with peers in the corporate world, where most of them are expected to be rehabilitated.

We never seem to learn lessons from goof-ups in policies related to military personnel. And what was the so-called steel frame of bureaucracy doing while rolling out the Agnipath scheme? Surely, the intention should not be only to score brownie points politically. The entire exercise has been Tughlaq-like, virtually becoming a 'government versus the rest'. Those in service obviously cannot voice their opinion beyond a point. It reminds me of the Pay Commission fiasco of a while ago, wherein the IAF sought to push through some rather controversial pay structures for flying and other branches, leading to a blowback mainly from the technical branches. As someone commanding a key fighter base at that time, I know how it hurt the day-to-day functioning and esprit-de-corps at the ground level. Committed honest professionals helped in dousing the fire on that occasion. The government has now chosen to bring in some drastic changes in key areas of the military's recruitment format. It is natural for veterans to criticise the proposal to induct Agniveers for a four-year short service stint with a quarter of them getting permanency, because the proposal has not been subjected to trial on a smaller scale (rather than the entire military). Targeted at cutting down the government's pension bill, and ostensibly having more monies for equipment upgrade and other development works, the proposal clearly does not pass muster, as apparent from the reactions,



especially from the veteran community. Catering for lateral mobility into the Central Armed Police Forces (CAPF) was only one important rider that needed to be explained in a tangibly convincing manner, to make the proposal viable. We are not a country like the USA where military conscription could be introduced with sops such as accelerated citizenship and university scholarships. The majority of our expected Agniveers come from mofussil and agrarian stock and the security offered by a fauji career means the world to them, including considerable social standing and boosted elan once they manage to get recruited. The impact of a short service, almost mandatory military service, on this strata of Indian society has become clear now, what with the agitation on the streets. However noble the intention may have been to push through such a drastic reform, it smacks of poor

military leadership in decision-making, besides an attempt to seek political mileage. As has been evident to many successful democratic nation-states since Chanakya, the military is indeed the last bastion and any tinkering, especially with critical ingredients of its organisation, is fraught with danger. If pensions are indeed seen to be a drag on the budget, losing a war through a messed up military structure could be even more painful. Let us not forget the measures adopted in our own country such as during the 1962 China debacle, like "emergency stamp" and the like to generate funding and beef up the defence budget. As a general policy, the "don't fix it if it ain't broke" rule should apply to all military matters, especially those related to personnel. The Agnipath scheme is in danger of adversely impacting the role, risks and morale of the soldier, by infusing avoidable large-scale job

insecurity amongst the youth in the country. Attempts by well-meaning nationalistic industrialists such as Anand Mahindra to absorb some of the entrenched Agniveers would not cut much ice, as there are already a large number of ex-servicemen seeking employment and they could start by offering them jobs, with coordination by the Director General of Resettlement. Besides, short service is at best a quick fix for prevailing shortages in cadre strengths of officers and enlisted personnel. Especially for enlisted personnel, short service seems anathema. Also, with more women proposed to be inducted across ranks, other challenges in billeting and discipline considerations would arise. Besides, a recent study into induction of lady officers has clearly brought out the adverse aspects of the measure. Making short military service compulsory for all government jobs and reducing

short service engagement of officers to five years (as was the tenure earlier) have been suggested and are worthy of consideration. These would give the exiting men and women officers a better chance of competing with peers in the corporate world, where most of them are expected to be rehabilitated. Increasing Army retirement age to 56 or 58, without compromising the combat readiness of the troops and reducing CAPF retirement age to 55 may help in lateral mobility of these personnel to other avenues.

Another great disadvantage of Agnipath would be the very limited time a short service soldier would be available in a fighting unit, especially in high expertise areas such as the armoured corps, maritime tasks and aviation duties which call for extended training schedules. Especially for a vast nation such as ours, any drastic change in the recruitment format needs to also aim for nation-building by way of inculcating discipline and civic sense in the citizenry. Care needs to be exercised not to compromise our gross national military capability. The Tour of Duty model of part-time soldiering is one that will affect the Army, more so with the infantry, Air Force and Navy's technical personnel being exempt from ToD. If the intent is to augment the youth's contribution to national security, the same could also be achieved through measures such as an expanded and already proven NCC and Territorial Army.

Ranjit Singh held his own against invaders

The stature of Maharaja Ranjit Singh, whose death anniversary falls today, is unmatched among the indigenous rulers.

ABHIJIT BHATTACHARYYA

The British instantly assessed that Ranjit Singh wasn't to be messed around with and hence the cost of curbing or confronting him could be too high and unacceptable to Her Majesty's subject-traders. The two Anglo-Sikh treaties showed the importance of Maharaja Ranjit Singh in the eyes of emerging foreign landlords in Hindustan. Though it's argued that he got checkmated by the treaties, the reality is that the ambitious British stood to lose more.

Will it be incorrect to suggest that between 1609, when the East India Company's Captain Hawkins visited Mughal Emperor Jahangir's durbar, and 1947, when India became independent, Maharaja Ranjit Singh (who ruled from 1799 to 1839) was the sole unconquered indigenous ruler in the post-medieval history of South Asia? This article revolves around the warrior Ranjit Singh, whose death anniversary falls today, drawing a comparison with greats from the pages of history. He was born in 1780 to Raj Kaur and Maha Singh, the latter being chief of one of 12 Sikh misls (confederacies). Being the "worst of times" of turbulence, lawlessness and anarchy, the 12 Sikh misls separately had partitioned territories spanning from "the Jhelum to the Sutlej" in the Mughal empire's twilight era. Having assembled at Amritsar and professing "Degh, Tegh, Fateh" (grace, power, rapid victory), the Sikhs further expanded from "Saharanpur; Attock and Multan to Kangra and Jammu".

Understandably, this vast terrain didn't belong to one single misl or dynasty per se, as all 12 misls had parcelled it out in accordance with individual convenience and opportunity. They had their own distinct identity: "Bhangi; Kanheya; Sukerchakia, Nakai; Faizullapuria; Ahluwalia; Ramgarhia; Dakewalia; Karora Singhia; Nishanwala; Sahid; Nihang and Phulkia". Historians referred to them as "theocratic confederate feudalism". However, as it so often happened in South Asian history, whenever the common threat receded, the thread sewing unity of indigenous coalition snapped owing to internal



contradictions, differences, dissensions and disputes. It goes to the credit of a precocious Ranjit Singh, certainly destiny's child, that he organised the disunited brethren of the land to form a formidable and recognisable "Sikh national monarchy" from nowhere. Indeed, what actually could have been a familiar disaster before an equally familiar foreign invasion of Kabul's Zaman Shah (1793-98), unexpectedly brought fortune to the young Sikh who had astutely rendered conspicuous services to the Afghan leader in the north-west of South Asia. Impressed by the tender-aged Ranjit Singh's military and administrative acumen, the mesmerised foreigner appointed the local 19-year-old Sikh lad as the lord of Lahore, the epicentre and heart of Punjab. The new star warrior of South Asia had arrived to cross swords with the very victors of the past who had ravaged Punjab for several hundred years. For the next four decades, foreign invasions

of South Asia would be irreversibly repelled by the wonder-warrior of Punjab. Instead of Persians or Afghans moving all over and around Hindustan's heartland, it was now the Sikh Maharaja's turn to launch a counter-offensive with an assiduously crafted united garrison of a divided land, now mauling all.

Ranjit Singh became a one-man force taking on the forces of history. Citadel after citadel fell by the wayside as the unshathed sword of the Sikh sovereign swayed and swerved over the alluvial soil of the Sutlej. Afghans in the north-west apart, the untrammelled moneyed merchant-military combine of Englishmen in mainland India was quick to take note of the Maharaja with alarm. They instantly assessed that Ranjit Singh wasn't to be messed around with because he wouldn't accept the "white man's burden" philosophy ever, and hence the cost of curbing or confronting him could be too high and unacceptable to Her Majesty's subject-traders.

enter and entrench successfully, before or after.

Thus, whoseever faced the Maharaja fell before his fire and fury: Gurkhas (1809-11) lost Kangra; Afghans lost Attock (1813), Multan (1818), Kashmir (1819), Peshawar (1823), and virtually the whole of the Indus valley by 1834. At its zenith, the Sikh empire covered an area of 5.2 lakh sq km and had a population of 1.2 crore. 84 lakh Muslims, 29 lakh Hindus and 7.25 lakh Sikh subjects, all co-existing and intact under the blood-and-iron sovereign warrior's towering impact, without "divide" and "misrule". Could Ranjit Singh have gone further or done more? Gone for a direct combat against the British empire? There's no answer because history doesn't deal with "what would, if...?" History deals with "what, how, why, which, when, who, where", like the counsel's brief before the Bench. No speculation, no betting on the past. It's history as is, where is. Now a few words about Indian warriors of different times, who all were indisputable heroes but couldn't cross the "finishing line". The 16th-century legend Maharana Pratap earned incredible glory but not victory. The 17th-century great Shivaji was a magnificent leader of men and a warrior par excellence. His task, too, remained unfinished. He died in 1680, 27 years before the death of the emperor (Aurangzeb) with whom he crossed swords all his life. And then, the 20th-century epic Bose-British saga imbued with lofty ideas, sterling qualities, grim determination and unmatched probity. Bose was discarded and made a pariah by his own political comrades even before leaving for a physical fight with the British.

# Monkeypox: What We Know About The Virus Reported In Over 50 Countries

SYDNEY: (AGENCY)

The World Health Organization (WHO) has decided not to declare monkeypox a public health emergency of international concern. This may change in the future. However, WHO Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said he was "deeply concerned" about the evolving threat of monkeypox, which he said had reached more than 50 countries. There have been more than 4,100 confirmed cases globally, including at least 13 in Australia. The WHO also acknowledged there were many unknowns about the outbreak. Here are three things we know about monkeypox and three things we want to find out. Monkeypox is a large DNA virus belonging to the orthopoxvirus family. Unlike the related smallpox virus, variola, which only affected humans, monkey-



pox virus is found in rodents and other animals in parts of Africa. We know of two clades (virus groupings), and it is the less severe of the two currently circulating outside Africa. Orthopoxviruses are stable viruses that do not mutate much. Multiple mutations, however, have been described in the virus causing the current outbreak. In the United States,

at least two separate strains have been circulating, suggesting multiple introductions into the country. 2. You can be infected for more than a week and not know it takes an average 8.5 days from infection to showing symptoms, such as enlarged lymph nodes, fever and a rash, which usually looks like fluid-filled blisters that erupt. People are infectious while they have the

these countries. 3. We have vaccines and treatments. Vaccines work. Past vaccination against smallpox provides 85% protection against monkeypox. Smallpox was declared eradicated in 1980, so most mass vaccination programs ceased in the 1970s. Australia never had mass smallpox vaccination. However, an estimated 10% of Australians have been vaccinated in the past, mostly migrants.

Vaccines protect for many years but immunity wanes. So declining population-level protection is likely responsible for the resurgence of monkeypox seen since 2017 in Nigeria, one of seven endemic hot spots in Africa.

Mass vaccination is not recommended. But vaccines can be given to contacts of confirmed cases (known as post-exposure prophylaxis) and people at high risk of contracting.

## Indian-Origin Man Shot Dead While Sitting In Parked Car In US: Report

NEW YORK: (AGENCY)

A 31-year-old Indian-origin man was shot dead in Queens here as he sat in a borrowed SUV parked down the street from his home, days after an Indian national was killed after sustaining an apparent gunshot wound to his head in the US state of Maryland. Satnam Singh was sitting behind the wheel of a black

said, adding that no arrests have been made so far in the case.

The report said that according to the police, the gunman approached Singh on foot but neighbours say the "shots came from a silver-coloured sedan with a black trunk as it passed the Jeep.

"(Singh) was walking up 129th St. going to the car and the other car with the perp in it came up," said neighbour Joan Cappellani.

"(It) made a U-turn, came back and then 'Pow! Pow! Pow!' and then went down 129th St." The incident was



Jeep Wrangler Sahara that was parked in South Ozone Park when a gunman approached and started shooting at him around 3:45 pm on Saturday, a report in The New York Daily News said.

Police said Singh lived just down the street from where he was shot.

Singh was struck in the chest and neck and was rushed to a local hospital, where he died later, according to police.

It appears that Singh had borrowed the car from a friend a short time earlier and needed it to pick someone up, police said. Detectives were trying to "determine if the gunman was aiming at Singh or was hoping to kill the SUV's owner and was unaware who was inside," the report

caught on Cappellani's home security cameras and the New York Police Department personnel are reviewing the footage for evidence.

"It was just another crazy day in South Ozone Park," she said. "He was very kind and quiet," neighbour Christina Persaud said in the New York Daily News report. "I said 'Hi' to him every day when I saw him. Maybe he was targeted, but I don't know." This comes days after Indian national Sai Charan from Telangana was found injured with an apparent gunshot wound inside his SUV in Baltimore, Maryland.

The 25-year-old was immediately rushed to a trauma centre, where he was pronounced dead on June 19.

## Ukraine's Zelensky To Address G7 Leaders, Urge Sanctions On Russia

GERMANY: (AGENCY)

Amid the ongoing Russia-Ukraine war, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky will be addressing the leaders of the Group of Seven (G7) on Monday (local time) to press Western nations for accelerated sanctions on Russia. President Joe Biden and fellow world leaders huddled in the Bavarian Alps, will hear Monday from Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky as they mull the next phase of his country's grinding war with Russia, reported CNN.

The conflict has been at the centre of the Group of 7 summit being held inside a century-old mountain-side castle in Germany's Bavaria region. Leaders have decided on new steps to isolate Russia's economy, including a ban on new imports of Russian gold and are pledging support for Zelensky as his country suffers setbacks in the east.

Moreover, President Biden announced that the group will impose new import bans on Russian gold as a punishment for Moscow's ongoing invasion of Ukraine, reported The Hill. US said that the G7 nations will ban the import of Russian gold with the aim of tightening sanctions screws on Moscow. As the leaders of the world's wealthiest nations gathered in the Bavarian Alps on the sidelines of the G7 Summit, President Joe Biden said, "Together, the G7 will announce that we will ban the import of Russian gold, a major export that rakes in tens of billions of dollars for Russia."

Earlier as well, Biden tweeted, "The United States has imposed unprecedented costs on Putin to deny him the revenue he needs to fund his war against Ukraine. Together, the G7 will announce that we will ban the import of Russian gold, a major export that rakes in tens of billions of dollars for Russia." Notably, these measures were initially flagged by the United Kingdom. However, a senior US



administration representative who spoke on condition of anonymity told reporters that the G7 would make an official announcement on the gold import ban on Tuesday.

A White House readout of Biden's meeting with German Chancellor Olaf Scholz indicated Ukraine was a main topic of conversation. "The leaders underlined their commitment to Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity, as well as their continued provision of military, economic, humanitarian, and diplomatic support to help Ukraine defend its democracy against Russian aggression," the White House readout said.

"The leaders also discussed efforts to alleviate the impacts of Russia's war in Ukraine on global food and energy security," added the release. "Here at this meeting of the G7, as well as at NATO, we will continue to do, collectively, everything we can to make sure that the Ukrainians have what they need in their hands to repel the Russian aggression," US Secretary of State Antony Blinken said in an exclusive interview with CNN's "State of the Union" on Sunday.

There are other important topics on the agenda, including a new effort to counter China's infrastructure investments in the developing world

that have extended Beijing's influence across the globe, reported CNN.

The rising cost of energy, fears of global food shortages and the certain inevitability that war fatigue will set in have lent urgency to the discussions about where the conflict goes next.

Meeting his host, German Chancellor Olaf Scholz, on Sunday, Biden sought to underscore the importance of sticking together. "Putin has been counting on, from the beginning, that somehow NATO and the G7 would splinter," he said. "But we haven't, and we're not going to."

Meanwhile, Zelensky is also planning to address this week's NATO summit in Madrid, and has pressed the West for accelerated sanctions on Moscow and heavy artillery to beat back the Russian invaders, reported CNN. His entreaties will become more urgent following Sunday's missile hits on two residential buildings in Kyiv, the Ukrainian capital that had enjoyed relative calm in recent weeks as the fighting moved eastward.

High oil prices mean Russia is making more revenue from its energy exports, despite bans in Europe and the United States. And high gas prices for US and European consumers are putting pressure on leaders to find ways to ease the pain.

## Crisis-Hit Sri Lanka Urges Work From Home To Save Fuel, Shuts Schools

COLOMBO: (AGENCY)

Troops in Sri Lanka handed tokens on Monday to people queuing for petrol amid a severe fuel shortage in the nation battling its worst economic crisis in seven decades, while schools shut in Colombo and public employees were asked to work from home. With its foreign exchange reserves at a record low, the island of 22 million is struggling to pay for essential imports of food, medicine and most critically, fuel.

"I have been in line for four days, I haven't slept or eaten properly during this time," said autorickshaw driver W.D. Shelton, 67, one of those who received a token meant to hold his place in the queue for when fuel becomes available. "We can't earn, we can't feed our families," added Shelton, who was 24th in line at a

fuel station in the centre of Colombo, but set to stay there as he had no petrol for the journey to his home just 5 km (3 miles) away. It was not immediately clear how far the government could stretch its fuel reserves. The



stockpiles stand at about 9,000 tonnes of diesel and 6,000 tonnes of petrol, Power and Energy Minister Kanachana Wijesekera said on Sunday, but no fresh shipments are due. The government has told employees to work from home until further notice, while schools have been shut for a week in the commercial capital.

## 11 Arrested After Australia Climate Change Protest Disrupts Peak-Hour Traffic

SYDNEY: (AGENCY)

Climate change protesters marched in Sydney on Monday forcing police to close major roads in the city centre while morning traffic through the landmark Sydney Harbour Bridge was disrupted after a woman chained herself to her vehicle. Eleven people were arrested, including the woman who police said allegedly put a bicycle lock around her neck and the steering wheel of a vehicle that was blocking all city-bound lanes. The vehicle has since been removed.

Dozens of members of Blockade Australia, a climate activist group, moved across major roads causing peak-hour traffic chaos for motorists and pedestrians. Television footage showed some people throwing garbage bins, construction barricades and milk crates on the road. When people stand up to Australia's climate destruction, Australia sends in a militarised force against them.

Banging drums and chanting "Australia's climate destruction ends here", protesters held banners with slogans including "Disrupt Sydney" and

biggest carbon emitters on a per capita basis and is the world's top exporter of coal and liquefied natural gas. Under a new Labor government, Australia early



"Resist climate inaction". Police estimated about 60 people were part of the protest.

Blockade Australia said the rally was in response to "Australia's continued blocking of climate action". The protests will continue all week, the organisers said on Twitter.

Climate change is a contentious issue in Australia which is one of the world's

this month raised the amount of carbon emissions it aims to cut by 2030, bringing the country more in line with other developed economies' Paris climate accord commitments.

Climate experts have said global warming is likely to make extreme weather more frequent in Australia, where the last three years have seen devastating bushfires and frequent flooding.

## Briefs News

### Zelensky Urges World Leaders To Push To End War By Year End: Report

GERMANY: (AGENCY)

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky on Monday urged world leaders gathered at the G7 summit to do their utmost to end Russia's invasion of his country by the end of the year, a source told AFP. In his closed-door address via video-link to the gathering of leaders in the German Alps, Zelensky said battle conditions would make it tougher for his troops as they mount their fight-back. A war pushing past winter also risked raging further beyond, he said.

He therefore urged the G7 leaders to do their maximum to end the war by year's end, including by intensifying sanctions against Russia, the source said. Despite the multiple rounds of punitive measures that Western allies have unleashed on Moscow, Zelensky pleaded with them to "not lower the pressure and to keep sanctioning Russia massively and heavily".

Meanwhile, Zelensky is also planning to address this week's NATO summit in Madrid, and has pressed the West for accelerated sanctions on Moscow and heavy artillery to beat back the Russian invaders, reported CNN. His entreaties will become more urgent following Sunday's missile hits on two residential buildings in Kyiv, the Ukrainian capital that had enjoyed relative calm in recent weeks as the fighting moved eastward.

High oil prices mean Russia is making more revenue from its energy exports, despite bans in Europe and the United States. And high gas prices for US and European consumers are putting pressure on leaders to find ways to ease the pain.

### Belarus Critic's Girlfriend Asks President Alexander Lukashenko For Pardon

MOSCOW: (AGENCY)

The Russian girlfriend of a Belarusian dissident sentenced to six years in prison has asked strongman Alexander Lukashenko for a pardon, state media said on Monday. Sofia Sapega, 24, was detained with Belarusian opposition activist Roman Protasevich, 27, in May 2021 when their Ryanair flight from Greece to Lithuania was grounded as it passed over Belarus. Sapega, a Russian citizen, faced seven criminal charges including "inciting social hatred" and "violence or threats" against police and was last month sentenced to six years in prison.

On Monday, the Sovetskaya Belarus newspaper, the official mouthpiece of Lukashenko's office, said Sapega had asked the president for a pardon. The announcement was made after Lukashenko held talks with President Vladimir Putin in Russia at the weekend. Lukashenko said in early June he could pardon Sapega. "We need to resolve this issue," he said at the time.

### Stampede At New York Pride Parade After Fireworks Mistaken For Gunfire

NEW YORK: (AGENCY)

A stampede occurred at a Pride parade in the US city of New York on Sunday, with hundreds of people attempting to flee after mistaking the sound of fireworks for gunfire, police said. "There were NO shots fired in Washington Square Park. After an investigation, it was determined that the sound was fireworks set off at the location," the New York Police Department said in a tweet shortly after the incident. Terrified people ran or walked briskly along a street adjacent to the square after the scare, videos on social media showed. Tens of thousands of people attended Sunday's LGBTQIA+ Pride parade, which wound its way through the streets.

### ALPS INDUSTRIES LIMITED

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### CORRIGENDUM TO NOTICE FOR BOOK CLOSURE DATED 17<sup>th</sup> JUNE, 2022

Please refer to notice published on 17<sup>th</sup> June, 2022, note the following details which now read as under:

Venue: 57/2, Site IV, Industrial Area, Sahibabad, Ghaziabad-201010 (U.P.) is now read as Plot No. 15-B, G.T. Road, Chaudhary Mohr, Ghaziabad-201001, without the physical presence of members.

Dated: 28.06.2022

# Rohit Sharma down with Covid, doubtful for Edgbaston

CALCUTTA : (AGENCY)

India's regular captain Rohit Sharma has tested positive for Covid-19 which could put him in doubt for the rescheduled fifth and final Test versus England, beginning from July 1 at Edgbaston. Rohit is in isolation at the team hotel in Leicester, where the Indians have been playing a warm-up game versus Leicestershire. If the protocols for the ongoing England-New Zealand Test series are followed, Rohit's isolation would then last for a period of five days.

"Team India captain Mr Rohit Sharma has tested positive for Covid-19 following a Rapid Antigen Test (RAT) conducted on Saturday. He is currently in isolation at the team hotel and is under the care of the BCCI medical team," said a BCCI statement. According to the statement, Rohit was also supposed to undergo an RT-PCR test, which would ascertain his CT



value. The news of Rohit testing positive came through after the third day's play of the warm-up game against Leicestershire. He had scored 25 in the first innings but didn't bat in the second.

Last week, photos of maskless Rohit and former captain Virat Kohli posing with fans in England had gone viral. With barely four

days remaining for the England Test, the Indian camp would certainly pray for a quick recovery of Rohit as his absence would unsettle plans and that's problematic in alien, English conditions. That's irrespective of whether James Anderson plays or not.

Rohit, alongside KL Rahul (who's already out

injured), was India's best batsman in the four Tests of the five-match series against England last year, aggregating 368 runs at an average of 52.27. He had scored a hundred at The Oval, where India won to take an unassailable 2-1 lead in the unfinished series.

The fifth and final Test had to be postponed due to Covid concerns in the

Indian camp.

The India quicks were consistent for most part of those four Tests and the vulnerable England batting order had made matters easier for the Indian team. But none can deny the impact Rohit and Rahul had with their strong starts.

With Rahul too unavailable, it remains to be seen who captains India in the Edgbaston Test in case Rohit fails to recover and be match fit in time. That decision, though, will be taken only after chief selector reaches England from Dublin. Will the team management ask Kohli to take up the role for the Test? Or, will senior pacer Jasprit Bumrah, who was Rohit's deputy during the home Tests versus Sri Lanka earlier in the year, be assigned the job? Besides, India will also have to look for a new opening pair and be extra careful in making that decision. Mayank Agarwal, though, has been asked to stay on standby.

# Gareth Bale seeks redemption in Los Angeles

NEW DELHI : (AGENCY)

Wales forward Gareth Bale on Sunday appeared to confirm his move to Major League Soccer (MLS) side Los Angeles FC (LAFC) following his departure from La Liga champions Real Madrid.

The 32-year-old, who signed for Spanish giants Real from Premier League side Tottenham Hotspur in 2013 for a then-record transfer fee of \$105.54 million, is set to join as a free agent with his contract due to end this summer. "See you soon, Los Angeles," Bale wrote in a post on Twitter, following reports of the transfer on Saturday. The post, which was retweeted on LAFC's official Twitter account, was accompanied by a video of Bale wearing an LAFC jersey and cap. Bale enjoyed a trophy-laden spell with Real, winning three La Liga titles, five Champions League crowns, three Club World Cups and the Spanish Cup, although his time at the club was marred by injuries. The Welshman will likely be best remembered for scoring twice, including a stun-

ning overhead kick, in the 2018 Champions League final against Liverpool and also netting a superb winner against Barcelona in the 2014 Copa del Rey final. But

with several injuries. Bale also went on a season-long loan to Tottenham in 2020-21, scoring 16 goals in 34 appearances for Spurs. The brilliant goal-scorer joined



he was also often targeted by the Spanish media, who labelled him a "parasite" after he missed Real's 4-0 home loss to Barcelona in March immediately before appearing for Wales, and he was jeered by some fans during a league game in April. Bale is among the most dynamic attacking players of his generation when healthy and on a top team. He scored 106 goals in 258 appearances for Real but he made only seven appearances for the European champions this past season while struggling

Madrid from Spurs in 2013 for a then-record transfer fee. Bale led Wales to a first World Cup finals since 1958 as they beat Ukraine 1-0 in their playoff in Cardiff earlier this month. He will join Italian defender Giorgio Chiellini who signed for LAFC this month after his departure from Juventus. The secondary transfer window in the US opens on July 7, with a report on the official MLS website saying Bale and Chiellini could make their debuts against local rivals LA Galaxy the following day.

## Briefs News

### Mirabai Chanu hopes to better own mark

PATIALA : (AGENCY)

Weightlifter Mirabai Chanu has a very good chance of standing atop the podium, flashing her radiant smile, after winning a gold medal at the Commonwealth Games on July 30. After all, the Tokyo Olympic Games silver medalist will enter Birmingham, as the title favourite. Chanu's personal best is 207kg (88kg+119kg), which is far better than the best effort of Nigeria's Stella Kingsley, who will be her nearest rival and has managed only 168kg (72kg+96kg) till date.

Chanu's legend has only grown since the last edition of the CWG. She has added the silver in Tokyo, an Asian Championship bronze and a world record to her kitty.

So it did not come as a surprise when she said she herself would be her real competition in Birmingham. "CWG will be easy for me. I will be fighting with myself," Chanu, who already has a silver (2014) and a gold

(2018) at CWG, said. "There is not much competition in CWG but that doesn't mean there is no competition. I have to give my best performance keeping in mind future tournaments," she added. Chanu is eager to rewrite her own clean and jerk world record of 119kg. "I am thinking of attempting 120kg in the CWG." The former world champion also wants to breach the 90kg mark in snatch, which she confesses has become somewhat of a mental block. "Yes (it has become a mental block). We have planned to lift 91kg or 92kg at the CWG. Hopefully, it will happen."

But lifting close to twice your body weight is easier said than done specially when Chanu still struggles with a shoulder imbalance. Earlier this month, she failed to improve her snatch lift, unable to hoist 89kg twice at a domestic event due to her back. Aware of her weakness in snatch, Chanu has worked on tweaking her technique. "I haven't gone above 88kg. But training wise right now I am better placed than I was at the Olympics."

### Syndrela Das shows sparks of a winner

CALCUTTA : (AGENCY)

Paddler Syndrela Das is yet to step into her teens. But the youngster has shown sparks that indicate she will go a long way. Syndrela bagged two medals - a silver in the under-13 singles and a bronze in the under-15 category in the WTT Youth Contender meet in Havirov, Czech Republic, early this month. This, mind it, was only her second international meet.

Syndrela speaks words of wisdom belying her years. "Winning the two medals in Czech Republic gave a boost to my sense of confidence," she soon-to-be 13 told The Telegraph. "But when I play, I follow what Soumyadeep (Roy) Sir told me, and that it to enjoy the game and give my best. The medals will come on their own."

A student of Dhanuka Dhunseri Soumyadeep Poulomi Table Tennis Academy, the youngster has been showing signs of promise from the time she came to the academy at eight years of age.

Initially her parents had enrolled her at a local club to play the game, along with other extra-curricular activities like art and music. The idea was to keep the child occupied. But she took to the game like a fish to water and after she emerged champion at a local tournament where she was representing her club, her parents realised she was cut out for bigger things. "From the beginning her ability to grasp concepts and adopt new techniques and tactics very quickly impressed me," said national coach Soumyadeep, who feels she is made of the stuff of a champion. Last year, Syndrela had broken her right wrist in an accident.

# Ireland vs India: Chase turns to cakewalk

CALCUTTA : (AGENCY)

The stop-and-start rain, after India won the toss and chose to bowl, had led to a frustrating wait before the truncated first T20I finally got underway two-and-a-half hours after its scheduled start. The Indians, though, ensured they didn't frustrate themselves nor their fans any further as they chased down Ireland's 108 for 4 with 16 balls to spare to win the 12-overs-a-side game by seven wickets at Malahide in Dublin on Sunday.

The in-form Ishan Kishan (26 off 11 balls) got India off to a flier they needed inside the four overs of Powerplay, before Deepak Hooda (promoted to open the innings in place of Rituraj Gaiikwad) and skipper Hardik Pandya (24) took the visitors home com-

fortably.

The dismissals of both Kishan and comeback-man Suryakumar Yadav off consecutive balls off pacer Craig Young in the third over of the run chase did set India back a little bit. Although there was still a bit of swing, conditions had become easier for batting and coupled with the Irish bowlers' inexperience, Hooda (47 not out off 29 balls) and Pandya had few problems in unleashing the big strokes in their 64-run stand for the third wicket that helped India stroll to victory. For Hooda, it was a slow start, but he overcame that quite well to finish with a strike rate of 162.06.

Earlier, with Bhuvneshwar Kumar and Pandya striking once each in the first two overs of the game, making use of initial overcast conditions, India



had Ireland wobbling at 22 for 3 inside four overs.

However, Harry Tector produced a fine knock (64 not out off 33 balls) that took Ireland past the hundred mark, giving their total some respectability. That never quite looked possible after Bhuvneshwar (1/16 off 3 overs) had cleaned up captain Andy Balbirnie off the fifth ball of the game and Pandya had Paul Stirling perishing at the wide-ish mid-off region.

Tector's knock included six boundaries and three maximums, while he also got some support from Lorcan Tucker (18). In other words, he was the only batter in this Irish side who looked capable of putting a little bit of pressure back on this Indian team, which is experimenting with most of its back-ups and reserves in order to firm up the team ahead of this year's T20 World Cup. Most of Tector's strokes

were aerial drives over the off side, while he also swivelled hard and even brought about a reverse-scoop off Avesh Khan in the final over of the Ireland innings.

Together, Tector and Tucker forged an important 50-run stand for the fourth wicket before Yuzvendra Chahal had the latter holing out at deep mid-wicket. Leg-spinner Chahal was once again India's standout bowler, conceding only 11 off his 3 overs.

Among others, Pandya was expensive after striking in his first over, and so were pacer Avesh and left-arm spinner Axar Patel. Umran Malik was finally handed his international debut after warming the bench throughout the recent home T20I series versus South Africa. But it wasn't quite a debut worth remembering for the

Jammu and Kashmir pace sensation as he took a bit of a pounding from Tector in the only over he bowled, going for 14 runs.

A confident India, with the T20I series already in their pocket, will look to complete a whitewash when they take on hosts Sri Lanka in the third and final women's T20 International here on Monday. The Harmanpreet Kaur-led outfit had thrashed the home team by 34 runs in the opening T20I and then followed it up with a dominating five-wicket win in the second game to take an unassailable 2-0 lead in the series. More importantly, the wins will be a morale booster for India ahead of the Commonwealth Games in Birmingham starting next month, where women's T20 cricket is set to make its debut.

# Ollie Pope & Joe Root take charge

LEEDS : (AGENCY)

England are 113 runs away from completing a series whitewash against New Zealand after the hosts put themselves in a commanding position with eight wickets in hand in the final innings of the third Test on Sunday. Chasing 296 for victory, Ollie Pope and Joe Root were at the crease at stumps after the pair made light work of a competitive target as England finished Day IV on 183/2.

The pair set up what promises to be an intriguing final day, with Headingley hopeful of having a packed house as they look to replicate the Trent Bridge Test's atmosphere by offering free tickets.

England lost Alex Lees to a run-out after a mix-up in the fifth over while his opening partner Zak

Crawley (25) was caught in the covers off Michael Bracewell, with skipper Kane Williamson involved in both dismissals.



But Pope (81 batting) and Root (55 batting) steadied the ship with an unbeaten 132-run partnership as they saw off the fast bowlers.

Earlier, New Zealand

were dismissed for 326 after the in-form Daryl Mitchell and Tom Blundell had again frustrated the hosts. The hosts were dealt

a blow before play started when wicketkeeper Ben Foakes was ruled out of the remainder of the game after testing positive for Covid-19, with Sam Billings brought in as a substitute.

The West Indies took a 174-run lead over Bangladesh and then shook the visitors with three early wickets in the second innings, on the third day of the second Test in Gros Islet. All-rounder Kyle Mayers, who was overnight not out on 126, was dismissed for 146 on Sunday as the Caribbean team's first innings ended on 408.

Bangladesh, who had managed 234 in their first essay, stumbled again in their second innings. When rain stopped play after 8.5 overs in their innings, Bangladesh were 32/3, still trailing the home team by 142 runs. Windies pacer Kemar Roach claimed all three Bangladeshi wickets to fall. Earlier, Bangladesh medium pacer Khaled Ahmed took five wickets, while Mehidy Hasan Miraz took three.

# Silver for recurve archers

PARIS : (AGENCY)

The Indian women's recurve team of Deepika Kumari, Ankita Bhakat and Simranjeet Kaur settled for a silver medal after the trio's fairytale run was halt-



ed by Chinese Taipei in a one-sided final at the World Cup Stage 3 here on Sunday.

India concluded their campaign with one gold and two silver medals - two of them coming in the compound section. The women's recurve team, who bagged a lowly 13th seed after the trio slipped out of top-30 in their individual qualification rounds, failed to make much of an

impact and lost to Chinese Taipei in straight sets. With Rio Olympics team bronze medalist Lei Chien-Ying in the line up, third seed Chinese Taipei mounted early pressure with two 10s and four 9s as India shot a 7 in the first set that proved to be the turning point. The Indian trio bounced back to level the second set but that was not enough as it again slipped in the third set, while Chinese maintained their consistency to seal the gold. Nevertheless it was a memorable return for world No. 3 Deepika, who returned with a team silver after being sidelined following her Tokyo Olympics debacle. But the tournament was all about compound archer Jyothi Surekha Vennam's dream comeback, who led India's medal tally with one gold (mixed team event with Abhishek Verma).

# Wimbledon 2022: No points, all about prestige

NEW DELHI : (AGENCY)

The 135th edition of Wimbledon starts on Monday with defending champion Novak Djokovic and world No. 1 Iga Swiatek carrying the mantle of being the top seeds. However, this time, the Championships is under a political cloud, having banned players from Russia and Belarus for Moscow's aggression on Ukraine. As a result, the ATP and WTA have stripped it of valuable points. But that has not deterred too many top players from taking part in the world's oldest grand slam. The Telegraph takes a look at Djokovic, with six Wimbledon titles under his

belt, including the last three, is undoubtedly the favourite. But he will have Rafael Nadal to contend with, and with the duo being the top two seeds and featuring at the opposite ends of the draw, chances are they will meet in the final.

Nadal, already leading the men's list with 22 grand slam titles, will look forward to equal Serena Williams' Open Era record of 23 grand slam singles titles.

Conspicuous by his absence will be Roger Federer, who has a record eight Wimbledon titles to his credit. This will be the first Wimbledon since 1998 not to feature the iconic Swiss.



The 40-year-old hasn't played competitively since undergoing knee surgery following his straight-sets loss to Hubert Hurkacz in the quarter finals in 2021.

This will also be the first Wimbledon since the intro-

duction of the ATP rankings in 1973, and the first major tournament since the 1999 Australian Open, where both the reigning men's world No. 1 and No. 2 (Daniil Medvedev and Alexander Zverev, respec-

tively) will not compete. Medvedev is prohibited from playing due to his Russian nationality, while Zverev is recovering from an ankle injury.

With 2021 champion Ashleigh Barty no longer playing competitive tennis, the focus will be on rising star Swiatek. The world No.1, however, has never reached the quarter finals even at the grass court grand slam.

Another player sure to draw eyeballs will be Emma Raducanu. The teenager is the reigning US Open champion and the first British woman to win a grand slam singles title since Virginia Wade in the 1977 at

Wimbledon. She is seeded tenth this time. However, her run-up to SW19 has not been smooth. Earlier this month, she had to retire before the completion of her first-round match at the Nottingham Open.

Raducanu also missed the Eastbourne International due to an injury. And then there will be Serena Williams. With 23 grand slam singles titles under her belt, seven of which came at Wimbledon centre court, the former world No.1 is now 1204 in the WTA rankings and has been granted a wild card to play on the courts that she once ruled. She has not played.

# Small savings rate hike call Bid to sign power buy pacts

NEW DELHI : (AGENCY)

Small savings interest rates are set to go up from next month after a gap of two years. Analysts said the sharp increase in G-Sec yields will push up the small savings rates — protecting those with fixed incomes such as senior citizens. They expect the finance ministry to raise the rates from July 1. The ministry reviews the rates every quarter. The Centre may revise upwards the rates on PPF, National Saving Certificate and senior citizen saving schemes, among others. There has been a sharp increase in the yields on govt security papers (G-Sec) after the Reserve Bank of India raised key interest rates by nearly a percentage point.

The Public Provident Fund (PPF) fetches a 7.1 per cent annual interest rate, while the NSC earns 6.8 per cent. At present, 7.6 per cent interest is available on



Sukanya Samridhi Yojana and 7.4 per cent on Senior Citizen Tax Saving Scheme. Apart from this, 6.9 per cent interest is being given on Kisan Vikas Patra.

The interest rates were reduced sharply by 40-110 basis points in the first quarter of last fiscal, only to be rolled back, with the finance minister saying the "orders issued by oversight

shall be withdrawn".

The reduction of the rates and their withdrawal happened in the run-up to the Bengal Assembly elections. A large number of people, especially older Indians, depend on various small saving schemes, which provide higher interest rates than most banks and are backed by the government. "We

expect the interest rates on small savings schemes to be hiked for Q2 FY2023, given the sharp increases seen in the G-Sec yields of various maturities, to which such rates are linked," Aditi Nayar, chief economist, Ica said. She said an increase in small savings rates could lead to higher flows into such schemes, limiting the need for additional dated

market borrowings to absorb any potential overshooting of the Government of India's fiscal deficit, which is projected at under Rs 1 lakh crore. This would also lessen the nervousness of the bond market and help to cap G-Sec yields. "Based on our expectation of 60 bps of hikes in Q2 FY2023, we expect the 10-year G-Sec yield to rise to as much as 7.75-8.0 per cent during the upcoming quarter, from the prevailing 7.4 per cent," Nayar said. The G-Sec yield on the 1-year paper has shot up to 5.26 per cent from March to May from 3.88 per cent between December and February and 3.50 per cent between September and November 2021. The yield on the 2-year paper rose to 5.65 per cent from March to May from 4.72 per cent (December and February) and 4.41 per cent between September and November. On a 5-year paper, the yield

NEW DELHI : (AGENCY)

The government will invite bids from states to sell electricity generated from 8,000-megawatt (MW) thermal capacities without power purchase agreements, power minister R.K. Singh has said. A total of 8,000 MW of thermal capacities in India are without any power purchase agreements, Singh, who is also the minister for new and renewable energy, said. Replying to a question related to capacities without PPAs in India, the minister said: "There are 8,000 MW of capacities which don't have PPAs in thermal." Sharing the government's plan to resolve the issue, the minister informed that states have been asked to send their electricity requirement, and accordingly bids will be invited. "We will aggregate (their demand) and call on for bids and based on the bids, whoever puts in the lowest bids, PPAs will be signed. Once PPAs are signed, they (states) will

get the power," he said. Speaking further, the minister said there are also some thermal capacities undergoing the National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT) proceedings, and the government has already

in the process of seeking clearances for putting into operation two of its mines in Assam in the current financial year.

The development assumes significance in the wake of efforts being made



taken several steps, including meeting with the bankers, to resolve the issue at the earliest so such plants can start operations. "There are some projects in the NCLT. The country has 17,500 MW plants, which run only on imported coal. Out of that, 2,500 MW were under the NCLT. I had a meeting with bankers etc. We worked out on ways and means of starting this," he said. Coal India unit North Eastern Coalfields is

to avoid the reoccurrence of power outages faced by the country at the beginning of the summer season this year due to the shortage of coal supplies. According to a senior official, once production starts from Tirap OCP (open cast project) of North Eastern Coalfields in Assam, the mine will add 0.6 million tonnes (mt) of coal supplies. He further said that the company is also in the process of getting clearances.

## Briefs News

### GST changes on cards

NEW DELHI : (AGENCY)

The all-powerful GST Council at its meeting in Chandigarh this week is likely to make changes in goods and services tax (GST) rates on a handful of items and may go with the officers' panel's recommendations to maintain status quo in rates of over 215 items. The 47th meeting of the GST Council headed by Union finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman and comprising representatives of all states and UTs, is scheduled for June 28-29. The Council is meeting after a gap of six months. The GST Council is likely to vet a proposal of the panel of state



finance ministers on levying 28 per cent GST on on-line gaming, casinos and horse racing, sources said. The Group of Ministers, headed by Meghalaya

chief minister Conrad Sangma, has recommended that online gaming should be taxed at full value of the consideration, including contest entry fee paid by the player on participating in the game. Major changes proposed by the officers' panel or the fitment committee in the tax rates are a uniform 5 per cent GST rate on prostheses (artificial limbs) and orthopaedic implants (trauma, spine, and arthroplasty implants). Besides, or those (splints, braces, belts and calipers) too have been proposed in the lowest bracket of 5 per cent. Currently, these goods attract tax rate of either 12 or 5 per cent. The committee has also recommended reduction in GST rate on ropeway travel to 5 per cent from 18 per cent. Himachal Pradesh placing this request before the GST Council in September last year.

### Demand revival for Signify

CALCUTTA : (AGENCY)

Signify Innovations India, formerly Philips Lighting, is hoping to regain business levels seen before the pandemic owing to a surge in demand from the corporate and the government sectors. Requirements from offices, retail, hospitality pockets that were hit by the Covid hardest are seeing tailwinds in the private space. Fresh investments and contracts for public infrastructure in the government sector are seeing uptick. Put together, they would translate into a "strong double digit growth" for Signify, India's largest lighting company, which is a global leader too. "We are looking at a double-digit growth this fiscal. First five months have been strong. "We hope to cross the pre-pandemic level," Sumit Joshi, vice-chairman and MD of Signify Innovations India, said.

Signify's total income had fallen from Rs 2,919 crore in 2019-20 to Rs 2,516 crore in 2020-21 due to Covid. Even though the accounts are yet to be finalised for the last fiscal, the company is believed to have reached income seen before the pandemic in 2021-22 and it is set to cross the 2019-20 numbers in the ongoing fiscal. In 2017, the lighting and healthcare verticals of Philips were split and the lighting business was renamed Signify globally. The company has lit up many major landmark buildings, edifices and places of historical significance. Post pandemic, it is seeing more and more government institutions across the country opting for smart lighting to give makeover to existing structures while undertaking new projects, Joshi informed. Philips is a market leader in connected and smart lighting deploying Internet of things. A case in point, he pointed out, is Bund in Shanghai, where many buildings overlooking Huangpu river are conjoined by connected lighting.

In India too, the customers are seeking special lighting recipes to commemorate particular events. "Lighting up places of historical importance is as much a matter of aesthetics as creating a safe environment at night for visitors and livelihood. We are looking at many new projects across states," he added. The company picks highway lighting as a large opportunity as well. Institutional business (B2B) accounts for 45 per cent of company's sales while consumer space accounts for (B2C) the rest. Joshi predicted a low double-digit growth in this space as it grapples with falling demand for traditional in-candescent bulbs, even though relatively expensive LED lights are fast filling up the space. It has launched two brands in connected lighting 'Philips You' and 'Philips Whiz' at two different price points.

## TDS clarity on business gifts, vouchers

NEW DELHI : (AGENCY)

The Finance Act 2022 stirred a hornet's nest by inserting section 194R in the Income Tax Act, 1961 with effect from July 1 casting responsibility on the provider of any benefit or perquisite (aggregate annual value exceeding Rs 20,000) to a resident in the course of business or profession, to deduct tax at the rate of 10 per cent before providing such benefit or perquisite. In other words, business gifts, perquisites and incentives shall now be liable to TDS, which otherwise were not being offered to tax by the recipient, such as distributors, dealers, masons and influencers.

The applicability of TDS will enable the IT authorities to gather more information and widen the tax base. The aggregate annual threshold of Rs 20,000 is to be considered for the entire FY 2022-23 with effect from April 1. However, TDS liability will trigger only on the benefit or perquisite provided on or after July 1, 2022. The Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) has now issued guidelines on section 194R providing clarifications to the practical challenges that the taxpayers face caught in the middle of a TDS conundrum. Industry is apprehensive about whether the TDS provisions were applicable to benefits



or perquisites provided in cash. The CBDT has settled the controversy and clarified that TDS shall apply to all modes of providing benefit or perquisite, whether in cash or kind or partially in cash and kind. This makes it simpler for industry to provide benefits or perquisites in cash since TDS can easily be deducted on cash payments. However, benefits/perquisites in kind such as gift vouchers, white goods, brown goods, gold coins, and free tickets raise inher-

ent challenges as the provider shall either have to bear the TDS liability itself or ensure that proper taxes have been paid by the beneficiary. Further, it casts an additional responsibility on the provider to maintain proper documentation in respect of each beneficiary. Discounts and rebates are the most common form of benefit given to the dealers/customers in various businesses. The CBDT has given a breather to the industry by excluding discounts, and rebates from the purview of benefits/perquisites. One of the grey areas was the liability of the benefit provider in case the ultimate benefit is received by an employee of the dealer or

their family members. It has been clarified that tax shall be deducted in the name of the dealer irrespective of the utilisation of such benefit/perquisite.

This would result in TDS credit and corresponding income as per Form 26AS in the name of the dealer. TDS on dealer conferences and seminars was another hotly debated issue within industry, which has now been put to rest.

Business conferences organised with the prime object of educating dealers/customers about new products, sales techniques and other similar business-related objectives have been excluded from the purview of TDS liability.

## PSU Banks back Adani copper foray

NEW DELHI : (AGENCY)

Ports-to-energy conglomerate Adani Group has forayed into copper manufacturing, tying up finances from public sector lenders for a 1 million tonnes a year unit Mundra in Gujarat. "Kutch Copper Ltd (KCL), a subsidiary of Adani Enterprises Ltd (AEL), is setting up a greenfield copper refinery project for production of refined copper with one million tonnes per annum in two phases," the company said in a statement. For the phase-1 capacity of 0.5 million tonnes, KCL has achieved financial closure through a syndicated club loan for the greenfield copper refinery project at Mundra, Gujarat. It has executed "financing documents with the consortium of banks led by State Bank of India (SBI). The other consortium members are Bank of Baroda, Canara Bank, Exim Bank of India, Indian Bank, Punjab National Bank, and Bank of Maharashtra," the statement said. The consortium of banks has sanctioned and signed an agreement for the entire debt requirement of Rs 6,071 crore for the Phase-1 of the KCL Project.

Vinay Prakash, director, Adani Enterprises Ltd, said the project has requisite technology tied up and the construction works at the site are



progressing well and is scheduled to commence production during the first half of calendar year 2024.

"It will be one of the largest copper refinery complexes in the world, with benchmark ESG performance standards, leveraging state-of-the-art technology and digitalisation. This financial closure enables us to accelerate the project and signifies the commitment of the Adani Group to mobilise the required resources and complete the project within the set timelines," Prakash said.

KCL will be part of the materials, metals and mining vertical of the

Adani group. SBI Capital Markets Ltd acted as the financial adviser and Desai & Diwanji Advocates acted as the lenders' legal counsel. Saraf and Partners Law Offices acted as the legal adviser to KCL.

KCL was incorporated on March 24, 2021, with the objective to undertake copper business - related activities such as the manufacture of copper cathodes and copper rods and associated products. Adani Enterprises Limited (AEL) is the incubation arm of Adani group. Adani Ports & SEZ Limited, Adani Trans-mission Limited, Adani Power Limited.

## Raining SUVs in Indian auto market

CALCUTTA : (AGENCY)

It will be raining SUVs in the Indian auto market as original equipment manufacturers (OEM) gear up to make the most of the upcoming festive season. First to go off the block is Mahindra's Scorpio N, which will debut on June 27. The second generation SUV will coexist along with the older generation, which will be christened as Scorpio Classic.

Following Scorpio N, is Maruti's new Brezza that will be launched on June 30. And right on its heels, the Toyota Hyryder, a jointly developed mid-segment SUV with Suzuki, will be unveiled on July 1. Maruti will launch the cross-badged SUV that it has developed in August. Scorpio has been the most popular brand for Mahindra having been launched in 2002.

The Scorpio predates the Bolero and brought a

whole new level of sophistication to Mahindra products that previously had SUVs such as the Armada.

The latest avatar in the D-segment SUV, is only the second generation Scorpio christened Scorpio-N, which is being touted by



Mahindra as the "big daddy of SUVs".

"It will be offered in both diesel and gasoline options, with manual and automatic transmissions and 4x4 drives, according to the company release. "Engineered grounds-up the new Scorpio is built on an new body-on frame platform has been developed by engineers at Mahindra's re-search centres in Chennai.

## Stocks extend winning run to 3rd day; Sensex, Nifty gain nearly 1%

MUMBAI : (AGENCY)

Benchmark stock indices rose for a third straight day on Monday on buying in IT, banking and FMCG shares triggered by gains in global equities following easing inflation concerns. The 30-share BSE Sensex jumped 433.30 points or 0.82 per cent to settle at 53,161.28. During the day, it rallied 781.52 points or 1.48 per cent to 53,509.50. The NSE Nifty also gained 132.80 points or 0.85 per cent to close above the 15,800 level at 15,832.05. Among the Sensex pack, Larsen & Toubro, HCL Technologies, Infosys, Tech Mahindra, IndusInd Bank, Asian Paints, Bharti Airtel and Tata Steel were the biggest gainers. On the other hand, Kotak Mahindra Bank, Reliance Industries Limited and Titan were the laggards. Elsewhere in Asia, markets in Seoul, Tokyo, Shanghai and Hong Kong ended in the green following sharp gains in US markets on Friday. European markets were also trading in the green in mid-session deals. The Sensex had climbed 462.26 points or 0.88 per cent to settle at 52,727.98 on Friday. The Nifty gained 142.60 points or 0.92 per cent to settle at 15,699.25. Meanwhile, international oil benchmark Brent crude dipped 0.13 per cent to USD 112.93 per barrel. Foreign institutional investors (FIIs) remained net sellers in the capital market, as they sold shares worth Rs 2,353.77 crore on Friday.

## Devina Fogla and Life's Precious Healing Studio are Here to Help you Get your Life Back on Track!

NEW DELHI : (AGENCY)

Founded by Devina Fogla, Life's Precious Healing Studio is a Kolkata-based holistic healing studio that focuses on providing a multitude of holistic healing services to its clients. Devina Fogla's holistic healing journey started way back in 2010. She was suffering from serious lower back issues, which were very severe as doctors had no answers for them. However, after undergoing the Heal Your Life (HYL) certification programme, she subconsciously released the blocks she was storing through the help of affirmations and was able to heal herself to the amazement of her doctors.

Ever since then, Devina Fogla has been a pioneer who has a vision to bring angels to Kolkata, the city of joy. Life's Precious Healing Studio offers a host of holistic healing services, ranging from workshops to one-on-one



healing sessions.

With their one-on-one sessions, Life's Precious Healing Studio offers Angel Card Reading Sessions wherein you get divine guidance from the angels about the issues you are facing. Subconscious mind beliefs or self-limiting beliefs almost always prevent us from getting out of our comfort zones. These mind beliefs were instilled when we were children and do not serve a purpose in our adult lives. Self-limiting beliefs can affect every aspect

of our lives, from preventing us from becoming financially independent to affecting our confidence to take on certain new roles in our lives. Healing sessions help with positive affirmations that release certain mental blocks and get rid of subconscious mind beliefs.

Life's Precious Healing Studio also offers Chakra Healing sessions to help you discover which specific Chakras are blocked and need healing.

Devina Fogla's studio offers other healing services such as healing health issues, money, issues, relationship issues, dispelling fear out of our body, and manifestation services among many other things. Life's Precious Healing Studio also offers corporate healing packages and curated custom-made healing packages as well. Apart from holding healing sessions, both in-person in Kolkata and over zoom calls.

**Jamie Alexander speaks about her return as Lady Sif in 'Thor: Love and Thunder'**

There has been a buzz about Thor: Love and Thunder over the weekend since its world premiere on Friday. From the stars stunning the red carpet to the praises heaped on Christian Bale's portrayal of Gorr the God Butcher, the latest Marvel Cinematic Universe has fans and stars talking about it. Something that MCU fans have been pleased to see is the return of their favourite actors. While Natalie Portman returning to the Thor franchise has fans excited, the return of Jamie Alexander is no less exciting.

On the red carpet at the premiere, Alexander, who is reprising the role of the warrior maiden Lady Sif, dropped hints of what is in store for her character. Hosts Erika Ishii and Anthony Carboni interviewed Alexander before the premiere of the movie to get an idea of what her character would be seen doing in the film.

Getting right to it, Ishii asked Alexander what her character had been doing in 'New Asgard', the town that the survivors of Asgard built on Earth after their world was destroyed in Thor: Ragnarok. Avoiding spoilers, the actress joked that a Marvel sniper would probably take her out if she revealed what her character had been doing in New Asgard. "There are swords involved guys, you should know this," was the only revelation she shared.

Carboni addressed that the character of Lady Sif had been seen in the MCU even though she had been absent in the last Thor movie. The character had made an appearance on the Disney+ miniseries Loki where she was seen punishing Loki (Tom Hiddleston) in a time loop for some prank he had pulled. Speaking about the funny scene from the series, Alexander revealed that "beating up Loki just came naturally". She shared that during the filming of the scene, she did manage to actually hit Hiddleston but he took "the love tap" in good spirit. Talking about any training needed for the reprisal of her role as Lady Sif, the actress dropped a small hint. With a cheeky expression, Alexander shared, "for this instalment, I didn't have to train and you will see why." (AGENCY)

**Briefs News**

**Kartina Kaif, Ishaan Khatter and Siddhant Chaturvedi star in 'Phone Bhoot' teaser out**

The first teaser of upcoming horror-comedy Phone Bhoot starring Katrina Kaif, Ishaan Khatter and Siddhant Chaturvedi was released by the actors as well as its makers Excel Entertainment on Monday. Sharing a quirky video along with the logo and theme song on social media on Monday, Excel Entertainment said that the release date of the film will be announced at 11am on Tuesday. "Ek Bhayanak comedy incoming. Stay tuned. #PhoneBhoot," the post read. The film is produced by Farhan Akhtar and Ritesh Sidhwani's Excel Entertainment and directed by Mirzapur director Gurmmeet Singh. The horror-comedy is written by Ravi Shankaran and Jasvinder Singh Bath. Katrina Kaif, who is returning to screen after her marriage to Vicky Kaushal



was last seen in Rohit Shetty's Sooryavanshi opposite Akshay Kumar. The 38-year-old actress on Monday shared the teaser on her official Instagram handle. The Bang Bang actress will be seen in the film alongside two of the young Bollywood actors, Ishaan Khatter and Siddhant Chaturvedi. Ishaan will return to the screen after a hiatus of two years. He was last seen in Khaali Peeli opposite Ananya Panday and also starred in the BBC television drama A Suitable Boy. The 26-year-old shared the teaser of Phone Bhoot on Instagram. Siddhant Chaturvedi, who made a name for himself with Gully Boy will be seen in Phone Bhoot after Shakun Batra's Gehraiyaan, where he played the lead role opposite Deepika Padukone. The 29-year-old also shared the teaser of his upcoming film on social media. Excel Entertainment announced the film in 2021 and shared an image on Instagram of the leading trio. They captioned it, "Darna allowed hai, as long as you're laughing along the way. #PhoneBhoot, ringing in cinemas near you in 2022."

**Sidhu Moosewala's posthumously released song 'SYL' no longer available on YouTube India**

Sidhu Moosewala's song SYL, which was released posthumously, is now no longer available on the video-sharing and streaming platform YouTube in India. SYL was written and composed by Moosewala, who was shot dead on May 29. Nearly a month since his passing, the song was released by music producer MXRCI on Friday. The song's title refers to the Sulej-Yamuna Link (SYL) canal. The canal is of historical and political significance as it has been a bone of contention between Punjab and Haryana for several decades. The state of Punjab has been demanding a reassessment of its share of the water of the Ravi-Beas river while Haryana has been seeking completion of the canal to get its share. The late singer's posthumously released song addresses this dispute. The song also touches on controversial topics like undivided Punjab, the 1984 riots and the flag hoisting at the Red Fort during the farmer agitation. Since its debut, SYL had amassed over 27 million views on the Google-owned platform and had received 3.3 million likes. However, within two days of its release, the song was removed from YouTube India.

"Video unavailable. This content is not available on this country domain due to a legal complaint from the government," reads the message displayed for the song on Moosewala's official YouTube channel since Sunday. There are other channels which continue to share the SYL music video on YouTube but the platform has been cracking down on the channels by taking down the videos.

**Watch these 5 documentaries on tech entrepreneurs who revolutionised the industry**

Right from personal computers to smartphones and social media to online stores, technology has revolutionised the way we lead our daily life in the past decade or so. During the pandemic, the tech industry was a lifeline for the global economy, but its supremacy was developed by a small group of visionaries who channelled their entrepreneurial ambitions through technical innovation and commercial expansion. Here are some documentaries about some of the most well-known tech entrepreneurs who have helped usher in the future of technology.

The BBC Two documentary portrays Steve Jobs as a figure who sought greatness at any cost. Tim Berners-Lee, Rita Clifton, Stephen Fry, and Steve Wozniak all appear in the documentary, which is hosted by Evan Davis. However, the story's stars are familiar - Mac, iMac, iPod, iTunes, iPhone, iPad. Each represents a paradigm shift, an axis tilting revolution in the way we currently live in the world.

The documentary explores how Steve Jobs was known for waking up staff at various hours of the night to talk about ideas along with his other erratic behaviours which drove him to creep into our pocket



ets and assume command of our lives. Everything was quite spectacular as he led the consumer technology rally to the forefront of the US economy.

Jeff Bezos is not just one of the world's wealthiest individuals, but also the maker of a commercial empire unlike any other in American history. He has unmatched control over everything, right from the future of employment to the future of commerce to the future of technology. As governments and authorities around the world ponder Amazon's worldwide

influence and how to limit Bezos' power. This documentary investigates how he carried out a strategy to create one of the world's most powerful economic and cultural forces from what was called the world's riskiest bet in 2006.

Bill Gates is one of the most well-known entrepreneurs in the world, but this Netflix docu-series focuses on his philanthropy while shedding light on his enigmatic personal life. To unravel the man responsible for the software revolution, Oscar-winning documentary director David

Guggenheim investigates Bill Gates' thought process.

Inside Bill's Brain: Decoding Bill Gates is a three-part docu-series that takes an in-depth look at Bill Gates' personal life and business, as well as his ongoing efforts to make the world a better place. In each of the three episodes, there are two parallel narratives - one about Bill's personal life, and the other about his efforts to address some long-standing problems in order to help mankind prosper. We gain a glimpse into Bill Gates' brilliant yet chaotic mind through in-

depth interviews, engaging animations, restored archive videos, and painstaking shoots.

Mark Zuckerberg, the founder of Facebook, is profiled in this Bloomberg Game Changer documentary. It examines his early years, his stay at Harvard, and the controversy around the founding and expansion of Facebook. It explores how the firm grew to become the most popular social networking site on the Internet in a short period of time. It comprises hours and hours of archival footage of Zuckerberg and

former US President Barack Obama and is voiced by Ted Marcoux.

From Harvard dorm rooms to NASDAQ trading floors, Zuckerberg's sheer and occasionally uncompromising tenacity is revealed. His narrative exemplifies the emergence of the internet industry as a whole. The rise of social media irrevocably altered the way people communicated.

This Netflix documentary explores arguably the most enigmatic, mysterious and polarising businessman of our times and his dream to reach the stars. Directed by Jimmy Chin and Elizabeth Chai Vasarhelyi, this documentary explores Elon Musk and the SpaceX team's historic mission to return NASA astronauts to the International Space Station and transform space travel. Demo-2 was a two-month mission that transported seasoned astronauts Bob Behnen and Doug Hurley to orbit. This documentary depicts a crucial step in the evolution of commercial spaceflight, from images of early SpaceX rockets exploding in roaring fireballs to tearful excitement and nervous preparation, an authentic tour of the SpaceX Dragon 2 spacecraft gives us a glimpse of the future. (AGENCY)

**RD Burman tribute: Pancham's unforgettable music breathed life into many forgettable films**



What is the date today? If you are a Pancham fan, then it is all about celebrations - it is RD Burman's birthday. Needless to build on the introduction - the legendary music director turns a year older - nay, a younger would be apt. The reason? This man personifies zeal and exuberance.

Here is a man whose music still remains the USP. His tunes have, on several occasions, gone on to become a bigger draw than the films they were embedded in. And this is why the legendary SD Burman stands out. We all know how RD was almost in solitary confinement, with the industry

deserting him in the late '80s and early '90s when the likes of Bappi Lahiri, Anu Malik, Nadeem-Shravan and others were in demand. An earnest request to filmmaker Vidhu Vinod Chopra (with whom RD had done Parinda) paid off. "Sunke kuch dhun Vidhu," he had told Chopra and the end result was 1942: A Love Story.

The film was an average grosser, but the music is still a force to reckon with. Ek Ladki Ko Dekha, Kuch Na Kaho, Rim Jhim Rim Jhim and so on. How many of us recall the story? But the songs have left an indelible imprint on us. Years back, when Gulzar

roped in Bengali matinee idol Uttam Kumar to make Kitaab, he was eyeing to make a difference. The movie failed to establish Uttam in Bollywood but the song Dhanno Ki Aankhon Mein turned out to be immortal, thanks to Pancham.

The Kishore Kumar-Amitabh Bachchan journey in its early days had Mehmoond's Bombay to Goa on its list. But more than the movie, it was the song Dekha Na Hai Re that struck a chord with us.

And the list is endless for RD - Ghum Hai Kisi Ke (Rampur Ka Laxman), Raah Pe Rehete (Namkeen), Pyar Mein Dil Pe Maar De

Goli (Mahaan), Yeri Pawan, Ek Roz Main Tadaap Kar (Bemisal), Tum Ho Mere and Rim Jhim Gire (Manzil), Dilbar Mere (Satte Pe Satta), Jaane Kaisa Kab Kahan (Shakti), O Hansini (Zehreela Insaan), Tumse Milke (Chor Police), Tum Saath Ho (Kaalia), Dil Se Dil (Charitraheen)... It is lamentable that those like Raj Kapoor and Yash Chopra preferred Shankar-Jaikishan, Shiv-Hari, Khyaaam and others to RD, but films like Dharam Karam, Biwi O Biwi with Kapoor and Deewaar with Chopra had the RD signature style. Ek Din Bik Jaayega from Dharam Karam, Meri Bulbul from Biwi O Biwi and Kehdoun Tumhein from Deewaar are still revered. One reason why Naveen Nishchol would bask in the glory of his film Buddha Mil Gaya is the number Raat Kali composed by RD. A huge majority of Randhir Kapoor films may have been forgotten but songs like Koi Shama (Jaane Jaan), Kheerishu (Harjaee), Rang Le Aayenge and Aankhe Milayenge (Janwaar) and several others are part of folklore. (AGENCY)

**Alia Bhatt gets congratulatory messages from team Bollywood for baby announcement**

Alia Bhatt surprised all, announcing her pregnancy to the world on social media, on Tuesday morning. The newly married couple, Alia and Ranbir Kapoor, are soon-to-be-parents now. On Alia's Instagram post, Alia and Ranbir Kapoor are seen together looking at the ultrasound monitor. Alia, in a black T-shirt, is seen grinning ear-to-ear while Ranbir's back is visible, looking at the monitor intently. In the second picture, Alia posts a lion, a lioness, and a cub. "Our baby ..... coming soon" - read her post. While some fans thought it was perhaps a cryptic post for a new film project, congratulatory messages started pouring in from the couple's Bollywood friends and family members.

Among others from the Bollywood fraternity who congratulated the couple are Sonam Kapoor, Ajay Devgn, Karisma Kapoor, Tiger Shroff, Malaika Arora, Farhan Akhtar, Kriti Sanon, Shreya Ghoshal, Dia Mirza and Bipasha Basu. At the recent Shamsheera trailer launch, a visibly happy Ranbir had said, "Jo

Alia hai mere life mein, woh dal chawal mein tadka hai, aacha hai, kanda hai, pyaaz hai, sab kuch hai." The couple, who have been seeing each other since 2017, tied the knot on April 14 this year, at their own apartment in the presence of only a few family members and close friends, followed by a close-knit reception at a hotel. Just weeks after marriage, Alia trav-



elled to the UK to shoot Netflix's Heart of Stone, finishing a schedule of Karan Johar's Rocky Aur Rani Ki Prem Kahani with Ranveer Singh. While Ranbir got busy shooting Luv Ranjan's film opposite Shraddha Kapoor. He is also working on Sandeep Reddy Vanga's Animal. After Ranbir's Shamsheera's release on July 22, Ayan Mukerji's adventure drama Brahmastra starring the newly married couple is lined up for release on September 9. (AGENCY)

**Alia Bhatt announces pregnancy, posts picture from hospital**

Alia, 29, took to Instagram to share the news as she posted a picture from an ultrasound session at a hospital with Kapoor, 39. "Our baby... coming soon," the "Gangubai Kathiawadi" star captioned the photo.



The couple, who got married in an intimate ceremony in April this year, is also set to share screen space for the first time in "Brahmastra: Part One Shiva", scheduled to be released on September 9. At a press conference for his upcoming film "Shamshera" last week, Ranbir said he couldn't have asked for a better life

partner than Alia. "It is a very big year for me. It is a great year for me, I got married, it is a beautiful thing that has happened in my life... My life with Alia is the best," he said. The couple's family, including veteran actors Neetu Kapoor and Soni Razdan as well as Riddhima Kapoor Sahni, showered them with love and blessings post the announcement.

Neetu Kapoor, who was filming for a reality show here on Monday, was congratulated by the paparazzi present on the set, to which she replied with a big smile and "Thank you".

"My babies are having a baby. I love you both so much," Ranbir's sister Riddhima Kapoor Sahni wrote on Instagram Stories alongside the couple's photograph. (AGENCY)

**Madonna "Just Plain Scared" Over US Supreme Court Overturning Roe V. Wade**

Madonna was in great spirits celebrating New York Pride at Terminal 5 on June 23, Thursday night, but woke up to some 'terrifying news' the next day when she saw the news that the United States Supreme Court had overturned Roe v. Wade.

"I woke up to the terrifying news that Roe V Wade had been overturned and that legislation has decided that We no longer have rights as women over our bodies. This decision has plunged me And every other woman in this country into deep despair," she wrote in a note posted on Instagram on Sunday, June 26, where she shared a slideshow of new photos from the earlier celebrations. Madonna continued: "Now the Supreme Court has decided that Women's



rights are no longer constitutional rights. In fact we have less rights than a gun." "I am scared For my daughters. I'm scared for all women in America. I am

just plain scared," the star added. "I Guess God Put this on our shoulders right now because he knew that we were strong enough To

beat the weight. Strong enough to FIGHT! Strong enough to overcome. And so We Shall Overcome! We will find a way to make It A Federal Law to Protect Abortion Rights! Ladies are you ready..... To Fight?," wrote Madonna.

Madonna is among a list of countless artists who have taken to social media since Friday to voice their opinions on the disturbing Supreme Court decision. On stage, the likes of Olivia Rodrigo, Megan Thee Stallion, Phoebe Bridgers, Billie Joe Armstrong and Billie Eilish addressed audiences at their live shows across the UK over the weekend: Rodrigo dedicated the tune 'F\*\*\* You' by Lily Allen to the Supreme Court, while Armstrong renounced his U.S. citizenship. (agency)