

Four departments slapped with fine

Guwahati waterlogging: Gauhati HC slams Assam govt

GUWAHATI, June 27: The Gauhati High Court has criticised the Assam government for its perceived lack of seriousness in addressing the persistent waterlogging issue in the state capital and imposed fines of Rs 1,000 each on four departments concerned for failing to respond to repeated notices.

Hearing a writ petition filed in the form of a public interest litigation (Case No: PIL/14/2024) by North East Eco Development Society, a division bench of Chief Justice Vijay Bishnoi and Justice Kardak Ete on Wednesday noted that no response has been received from the state departments despite giving them several dates over the last few months

"In the interest of justice, we grant one more opportunity to the aforesaid departments to file their response to the writ petition, subject to condition that each of the department shall pay cost of Rs 1,000 only with the Gauhati High Court Legal



Services Authority," the order said. The court has fixed the next date for the case on July 19 and said the cost imposed shall have to be deposited by then.

It noted that response on behalf of Assam government through the additional chief secretary of Forest & Environment Department, principal secretary of Revenue and Disas-

ter Management Department, chief executive Officer of Assam State Disaster Management Authority and Divisional Forest Officer of Kamrup Division has not been filed. During the last hearing on June 3, the petitioner raised the issue re-

garding waterlogging in Guwahati, persisting since long, the order copy said. (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)



dents, including recent rape cases in Mazbat, Dhekiajuli, and Dudhnoi, along with mob violence in Barpeta and Kokrajhar villages. "While such crimes had significantly reduced over the past three said. years, there has been a troubling spike in incidents over the last

The CM highlighted five inci-

"During the last three years, such crimes had declined remarkably, but in the last one month, such crimes". there has been a series of incidents

Dhubri, both minority dominated constituencies and won by the Congress, indicate a weak social fabric and if there is no resistance to this, it will prove to be dangerous for Assamese society.

Regarding the change of the in-vestigation officer (IO) in the Assam Public Service Commission (APSC) cash-for-jobs scam, Sarma said the special court has given the order and we have to abide by it.

"I have, however, asked for an examination of the judgment as the court has the right to summon those considered to be accused by them instead of shifting the onus to the IO," he added.

The court, in a recent order, had directed the additional director general of CID, who is heading the Special Investigation Team, to engage a new investigating officer to conduct further investigation into Sarma had earlier said the Lok the case and submit the report within three (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

and this is a matter of concern," he in such incidents. We will find an appropriate solution to it", he Sarma claimed that a "pattern added. He said his cabinet col-

has emerged with a certain section indulging in these crimes. Police have been directed to take stern action against the perpetrators of

"We are concerned about the rise

Never faced any political pressure Cabinet spares two-₹2,000-crore new terminal of Guwahati airport to open from govt in 24 years as judge: CJI wheeler riders from fines for missing documents

month," he remarked.

in April 2025: official GUWAHATI, June 27: The Adani Group-run Lokpriya

Gopinath Bordoloi International (LGBI) Airport in Guwahati will move to its upcoming terminal by April 2025, a senior official said.

The initial target to complete the terminal building, being developed at a total cost of over ₹ 2,000 crore, was December 2024, but it got delayed by around four months due to a change in design, he said.

"Our new terminal will be ready by April 2025. The little delay was due to a change in the design to include more facilities in the building. We want to make it the most effective terminal in the country, chief airport officer (CAO) Utpal Baruah told PTI.

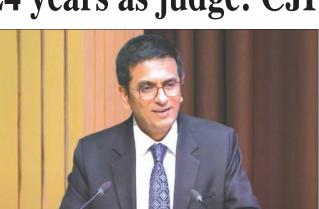
In August 2020, the Union Cabinet accorded its approval for leasing the Guwahati airport for operation, management and development to Adani Enterprises for 50 years. The Airport Authority of India (AAI) was developing the new terminal before the management was transferred to the Gu-

jarat-based entity in October 2021. "We have recently prepared the master plan of the terminal and shared it with all concerned. In the first phase, we are going to have a brand new integrated terminal building, almost six times bigger than the present one and comparable with any global one," Baruah said. The capacity of the new terminal will be 13.1 million passengers per annum (mppa) as against 3.4 mppa of the existing facility, he added. Asked about the investment in developing the structure, Baruah said, "More than ₹ 2,000 crore is being spent (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

NEW DELHI, June 27: Allaying apprehension of any interference of the legislature, Chief Justice D Y Chandrachud has said he never faced any political pressure from any government in his 24-year stint as a judge.

Responding to a question during a session organised by the Oxford Union, he said judges in India are trained to decide disputes in a manner that allows for courts to decide on the basis of settled traditions based on constitutional scheme as opposed to the passions of the moment.

"Political pressure, in the sense if you ask me in the sense of pressure from the government, I would tell you that in the 24 years that I have been a judge, I have never faced a sense of political pressure from the powers that be. Some of the democratic traditions that we follow in India include that we lead lives which are isolated from the political



arm of the government.

"If you mean 'political pressure' in a broader sense of a judge realising the impact of a decision which may have political ramifications, obviously, judges have to be conversant of the impact of their decisions on the polity at large when you are deciding constitutional we are ultimately going to affect," cases. That is not political pressure I believe," Chandrachud said.

<u>HT Bureau</u> GUWAHATI, June 27: The Assam government on Thursday decided not levy any fines on twowheeler riders who do not possess essential documents such as license, Pollution Under Control (PUC) certificate, and registration papers.

The decision was taken during a cabinet meeting chaired under the chairmanship of chief minister Himanta Biswa Sarma in Nalbari.

sure", he said the judges often think "With a view to reduce undue burden of the citizens, the Cabinet about the societal impact of their has advised the Transport Depart-"Many of the cases we decide involve intense societal impacts. As judges, I believe it is our duty to be cognizant of the impact of our deci-

ment to not levy any fine on two wheelers in absence of documents like license, PUC, registration, etc. Not wearing of helmets will consions on the social ordering which tinue to attract fines." said Sarma while sharing the decisions of the meeting on micro-blogging site X.

However, Sarma clarified that riders without helmets will still face fines, with legal action taken as necessary. The Cabinet also determined that three-wheeler vehicles, including auto-rickshaws and e-rickshaws, will receive four warnings for rule violations before fines are enforced.

"These decisions aim to benefit students, gig workers, delivery partners, and public transport drivers, saving their hard-earned money," Sarma emphasised.

In addition, the Cabinet approved a special recruitment drive exclusively for contractual teachers under Sarba Shiksha Abhiyan.

"We will create 35,000 new government jobs in this drive. Only SSA teachers can apply, while fresh candidates may apply for other (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

Justice will be priority not

judgments

leagues have visited the affected areas and stressed the need for analysis into the emergence of these criminal elements. Sabha results in Nagaon and

0

NEW DELHI, June 27: Leaders of the INDIA opposition bloc have decided to raise the NEET issue in both houses of Parliament on Friday and members will give notices in this regard, sources have said.

The decision was taken at a meeting of the INDIA bloc floor leaders on Thursday, they said, adding that opposition members are set to file adjournment notices in the Lok Sabha and under Rule 267 in the Raiva Sabha.

The leaders of various parties have also decided to hold a protest on Monday morning before the parliamentary proceedings start, raising the issue of "political vendetta" against opposition leaders, including Delhi chief minister Arvind Kejriwal, former Jharkhand chief minister Hemant Soren and three West Bengal ministers, using agencies like the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI), Enforcement Directorate (ED) and income-tax department, the sources said

The leaders of the Indian National Developmental Inclusive Alliance (INDIA) met at Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge's residence here. Besides leader of opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi, Sharad Pawar, Supriya Sule (both from the NCP-SP), Derek O'Brien (TMC), Sanjay Raut, Priyanka Chaturvedi (Shiv Sena-UBT), Sanjay Singh, Sandeep Pathak (both AAP), N K Premchandran (RSP) and Mahua Majhi (JMM) were present on the occasion. Gandhi later said in a Facebook post that he attended the (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

Oppn to raise NEET in Parl today **Police, lawyers yet to get Assamese** punishment: Prez Murmu translation of new criminal laws

GUWAHATI, June 27: As new criminal laws are set to be implemented nationwide from Monday, Assamese translations necessary for the state's police force and legal community are still unavailable.

These new laws, which will replace colonial-era legislations, are currently being translated into Assamese, a senior police officer said on Thursday.

"The translation of the new laws into Assamese is a concern. We have not yet received any communication from the government regarding this," senior advocate Santanu Borthakur told PTI.

"We are unaware of whether the translation work is underway," he added.

A police officer, who refused to be identified, said the translation is underway and is being handled by relevant government authorities.

"As far as I know, translation is in progress and should be completed soon,' the officer added

Another police officer said the absence of Assamese translation should not hinder the initial implementation of the new laws

"It shouldn't pose a hindrance to implementing the new laws, at least initially," the officer remarked

Earlier, DGP GP Singh had assured that the police force is fully prepared to implement the new laws, effective nationwide from July 1.

Over the past three years, the force has been preparing for these new laws since the initial drafts were made public. Training sessions for police officials, public prosecutors, and judicial officers have been ongoing, Singh said.

The Bharatiya Nyay Sanhita (BNS), Bharatiya Nagrik Suraksha Sanhita (NSS), and Bharativa Sakshva Adhiniyam (BSA) will replace the Indian Penal Code, Criminal Procedure Code, and Indian Evidence Act, respectively, starting July 1. (PTI)

NEW DELHI, June 27: President Droupadi Murmu on Thursday said the three new criminal laws, which are slated to come into force from July 1, will provide justice rather than punishment, which was the mindset during the British regime.

he said. (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

Talking about the "social pres-

Addressing the first joint sitting of Parliament after the constitution of the 18th Lok Sabha, she said the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita 2023, Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita 2023 and Bharatiya Sakshya Adhiniyam 2023 will speed up the judicial process.

These laws, enacted last year, are set to replace the British-era Indian Penal Code, Code of Criminal Procedure and the Indian Evidence Act respectively.

"The Bharatiya Nyay Sanhita will come into force in the country from the 1st of July. During the British regime, there was the mindset to punish the subjects.

Unfortunately, the same penal system of the colonial era continued for many decades after Independence," she said.

The president said the idea of changing criminal laws was much



talked about for many decades, but it is this government which has shown the courage to do it.

"Now justice will get priority over punishment, which also conforms to the spirit of our Constitution," she said. When the country is becoming free of the colonial mindset in different aspects, this is a big step in that direction, she said. "It is also a real tribute to our freedom fighters."

Union home minister Amit Shah had said in Parliament last year that the new laws will give priority to providing justice in place of the outgoing British laws that gave primacy to penal action. "These three Bills are made by Indians, for Indians and by an Indian Parliament

and marks the end of colonial criminal (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

Dibrugarh grapples with flash floods after heavy rains

DIBRUGARH, June 27: Dibrugarh town has been grappling with flash floods, with most streets waterlogged after heavy rains on Thursday morning. Mancotta Road, one of the busiest stretches in this Upper Assam town, is now submerged in knee-deep water.

For decades, Dibrugarh, located on the banks of the Brahmaputra, has faced persistent flash flooding and waterlogging due to an unplanned drainage system, residents alleged. "Every year, waterlogging occurs mainly because of poor drainage system. Although the department concerned constructs roads in every ward, they refrain from digging up drains adjacent to these roads," said Parimal Banik, a resident of Dibrugarh.

An official, speaking on condition of anonymity, pointed out that encroachments near the Dibrugarh Town Protection (DTP) drain prevents rainwater from flowing out of the town, resulting in waterlogging in several areas.

"We need a scientific drainage system that can flush out water from the town. Dibrugarh is one of the oldest (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

Buying these items from the farmers was a poll promise of the ZPM Mizoram govt to buy four agri products to help farmers

AIZAWL, June 27: Mizoram's Zoram People's Movement (ZPM) government has decided to purchase four agricultural items produced by local farmers to economically uplift the farming community.

Agriculture Minister PC Vanlalruata said that the government will buy ginger, turmeric, chilli and broomsticks from the local farmers

Buying these items from the farmers was a poll promise of the ZPM which came to power in the northeastern state in December last year.

Vanlalruata said that the government will fix a support price for each crop besides taking steps to arrange markets so that they can sell their products at a rate higher than the support price.

The minister said that focus is being made on market linkage and the process is expected to be com-



produce a year.

After three years, farmers are expected to have direct contact over 10 lakh quintals of ginger are with buyers, which will reduce the expected to be produced by farmgovernment's involvement in the ers across the state next year, Vanprocess lalruata said. He said that the government will

He said that a database will be float tender through local agriculdeveloped on farmers and the quantity of crops they expect to tural societies to find buyers for the

pleted within three years.

purchase of crops especially ginger.

The government will also make agreements with large companies so that they buy ginger from Mizoram farmers since the tender or auction system will not be sufficient to sell all the produce in the state.

Processing plants will be set up for sorting, grading and drying ginger, besides making paste of the root and ale, a beverage.

Vanlalruata also urged farmers to form Multipurpose Primary Agriculture Credit Societies in their villages

The ZPM leader said that all processes of buying and selling agricultural products will be executed through local agriculture societies

The ZPM swept the state assembly polls in December last year, dethroning the incumbent Mizo National Front. (PTI)

KA teachers seek overhaul of govt-aided schools amid financial security concerns

<u>HT Bureau</u>

DIPHU, June 27: Teachers from government-aided schools in Karbi Anglong, represented by the Karbi Anglong Venture Schools Employees Association (KAVSEA), have raised significant concerns regarding their working conditions and future security.

In a memorandum submitted on Wednesday to Richard Tokbi, executive member (EM) of Education at the Karbi Anglong Autonomous Council (KAAC), they demanded urgent attention to the challenges faced by government-aided (venture) schools in the region.

KAVSEA highlighted that teachers in these schools have dedicated 25 to 30 years of service to education in the district, despite receiving only minimal financial support through grant-in-aid from KAAC.

'Many retiring teachers, they lamented, do not receive adequate financial security for their post-retirement life, with KAVSEA providing modest assistance ranging from ₹ 5,000 to ₹ 10,000 to affected families,"

they said. With a significant number of teachers set to retire within the next 2 to 3 years, KAVSEA emphasised the need for immediate regularisation of their posts. They called for an increase in ad hoc grant-in-aid salaries to align with the basic pay scale of the seventh pay commission on a monthly basis, rather than annually. Additionally, they proposed a lump sum aid of ₹ 500,000 to be extended to the families of retired teachers as a one-time measure.

The association also pressed for improved infrastructure in government-aided schools, citing high enrollment rates among economically disadvantaged families who prefer these institutions over private alternatives.

They urged that government schemes providing free bicycles to students in government-provincialised schools be expanded to include government-aided (venture) schools, benefiting numerous economically vulnerable students.

According to an assessment,

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BUSINESS

FRIDAY, JUNE 28, 2024

Boney Kapoor's consortium signs concession Sensex breaches 79,000 level, Nifty 24,000 pact with YEIDA for Noida filmcity peak for 1st time on gains in blue-chips NOIDA, June 27: Filmmaker Boney Kapoor and Bhutani Infra-backed firm Bayview Projects on phase

MUMBAI, June 27: Benchmark Sensex breached the historic 79,000 mark while Nifty scaled the 24,000 peak for the first time on Thursday as buying in blue-chip stocks like Infosys, Reliance and TCS helped markets extend gains to the fourth straight day and close at lifetime high levels.

2 THE HILLS TIMES

The 30-share BSE Sensex jumped 568.93 points or 0.72 per cent to settle at a new closing peak of 79,243.18 amid the expiry of monthly contracts in the derivatives segment. During the day, it zoomed 721.78 points or 0.91 per cent to hit the new lifetime peak of 79.396.03

The Nifty ended at a fresh record high of 24,044.50, rising 175.70 points or 0.74 per cent. Intra-day, it soared 218.65 points or 0.91 per cent to hit the all-time peak of 24,087.45.

Among the 30 Sensex companies, UltraTech Cement jumped over 5 per cent after the country's leading cement maker said it will acquire a 23 per cent stake in its Chennai-based rival India Cements Ltd, in a deal estimated to be around ₹ 1,885 crore.

Gains in Infosys, TCS and Reliance Industries drove the benchmark indices to record-high levels. "The benchmark indices exhib-



ited bullish momentum, buoyed by expected revival in the IT sector and consolidation in the cement industry. However, the broader market remained sideways due to valuation concerns and FII selling owing to rising US bond yields,' Vinod Nair, Head of Research, Geojit Financial Services, said. NTPC, JSW Steel, Tata Motors, Bharti Airtel, Power Grid, Kotak Mahindra Bank and Tech Mahindra were also among the major gainers. Larsen & Toubro, Sun Pharma, Nestle, HDFC Bank and Maruti were among the laggard. "The markets traded positively Xiaomi India celebrates 10 years with

for the fourth consecutive session, gaining over half a per cent, continuing the current uptrend. After a flat start, the Nifty edged higher amid volatility and crossed the new milestone of 24,000. Most sectors aligned with this movement, with IT and energy among the top gainers," said Ajit Mishra SVP, Research, Religare Broking Ltd.

In the broader market, the BSE midcap gauge climbed 0.17 per cent while smallcap index declined 0.57 per cent. Among the indices, power jumped 1.74 per cent, IT rallied 1.65 per cent, while teck (1.59 per cent), utilities (1.29 per

major breast cancer screening initiative

cent), telecommunication (1.18 per cent), commodities (0.82 per cent) and auto (0.70 per cent) also advanced. Financial Services, industrials, realty and capital goods were the laggards.

The Nifty hit the 23,000 mark on May 24 this year. The BSE Sensex had breached the 78,000 level on June 25. Analysts said most sectors recorded gains, with IT and energy among the top gainers. Broader indices showed mixed results as midcap index closed in the green while smallcap index lost over half a per cent.

In Asian markets, Seoul, Tokyo, Shanghai and Hong Kong settled lower. European markets were trading on a mixed note. US markets ended in positive territory on Wednesday.

Foreign institutional investors (FIIs) offloaded equities worth ₹ 3,535.43 crore on Wednesday, according to exchange data.

Global oil benchmark Brent crude climbed 0.84 per cent to USD 85.97 a barrel.

The BSE benchmark climbed 620.73 points or 0.80 per cent to settle at a new closing peak of 78,674.25 on Wednesday. The Nifty went up by 147.50 points or 0.62 per cent to settle at a record closing peak of 23,868.80. (PTI)

Thursday signed a concession agreement with YEIDA for development of Noida International Film City.

Bayview Projects had won the bid on January 31 with the offering of 18 per cent revenue share to the Uttar Pradesh government - the highest among four bidders.

Kapoor and Ashish Bhutani of Bhutani Group signed the agreement in presence of Yamuna Expressway Industrial Development Authority (YEIDA) CEO Arun Vir Singh and Additional CEO Shailendra Bhatia at the authority's office in Greater Noida.

YEIDA, an undertaking of the UP government, manages land along the 165-km Yamuna Expressway. The film city is a public-private partnership (PPP) project.

"With the concession agreement, the land parcel for the first phase of the film city development has been handed over to the concessionaire. Now they will begin construction work at the site," Bhatia, also the project's nodal officer, told PTI.

He said major construction is expected to be completed by 2027 while further development would happen subsequently.

The film city is to be built at a 1,000-acre land in Sector 21 of YEIDA along Yamuna Expressway near

Noida. About 230 acre will be developed in the first

"We will make the biggest film city which will come up near the largest airport of the country with a minimum investment of around ₹ 1.510 crore.' Ashish Bhutani told PTI. The MD of the Bhutani Group said the greenfield project would also generate 10,000 employments. Of the 1,000-acre land, 220 acre is for commercial use and 780 acre for industrial use. Bayview Projects was initially competing against Super Cassettes Industries Pvt Ltd (T-series), Supersonic Technobuild (backed by film star Akshay Kumar, Maddock Films, and others), and 4 Lions Films (backed by filmmaker KC Bokadia and others) to develop the film city.

According to Bayview Projects, the film city will have seven distinct zones, including production and studio space in 60 acre, a film university in 20 acre, factories and craftsmanship area in 15 acre, administrative and creative hub in 10 acre and a film university in 20 acre besides a dedicated zone for entertainment and leisure. This was the third time that a tender was floated for the project. A global tender was floated on November 23, 2021 and then on July 11, 2022 but no investor expressed interest. Then the tender was floated on September 30, 2023 with a deadline of January 4, 2024. (PTI)

ONDC to touch 10 million transactions in June: Official

KOLKATA. June 27: The Open Network for Digital Commerce (ONDC), which was set up with an aim to democratise the country's ecommerce ecosystem, is on course to touch the 10-million transaction mark in June, a senior official said on Thursday.

The open network has been adding one million transactions on a month-on-month basis, he said.

"We will touch 10 million transactions in the month of June. We are growing strong, adding about one million transactions month-onmonth," ONDC CBO and President (Network Expansion) Shireesh Joshi said.

sidelines of the Bengal Chamberorganised 3rd edition of 'World MSME Day'

He said testing of financial services with loans has also commenced with two private lenders, and the network will start insurance offerings soon, too.

"Once these two categories settle, we will also include mutual funds," Joshi said.

The official expressed hope that ONDC will surpass major e-commerce players like Flipkart and Amazon in future.

At present, the number of transactions on ONDC is small, but it has been growing steadily and rapidly over the past year-and-a-half,

he said Earlier, there were doubts about the success of ONDC as an open network, but it has been proven that it works very well, and is growing with new categories getting added in phases, Joshi said.

The network has also provided export opportunities, he added. Arup Kumar, the CGM of Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI), said the lender is supporting MSMEs in several ways, including onboarding them onto the ONDO

He also said SIDBI has signed an MoU with the government for funding 'Jan Aushadhi' stores. (PTI)

Contd. from Page 1...

Four departments slapped

"It appears that the aforesaid departments are not serious in solving the problem of waterlogging in Guwahati city, as despite specific time granted to them, no response has been filed till date," it added. The high court had earlier stated that the petitioner raised concern in respect of encroachments and cutting of hills, leading to the artificial floods and landslides

"It is contended that on account of illegal cutting of hills and unabated encroachments, Guwahati city is virtually sitting on a time bomb in case incessant rainfall for few days happens," it had stated on April 20. The PIL was registered on February 23 and the hearing began after five days. (PTI)

CM sees hand of 'section

months. The former investigating officer, Prateek V Thube, has been since replaced by another police official Upen Kalita. (PTI)

₹ 2,000-crore new terminal

in the entire facility. Out of this, about ₹ 1,600 crore is being invested in the terminal building, while the remaining will be used in constructing a new taxiway and expanding the runway." After the completion of the parallel taxiway, the runway capacity of LGBI Airport will increase to 34 air traffic movements from 18 at present, he added.

Mcap of BSE-listed firms hit all-time high of ₹ 438.41 lakh cr

NEW DELHI, June 27: The market capitalisation of BSE-listed firms hit an all-time high of ₹ 438.41 lakh crore on Thursday fuelled by a record-breaking rally in equities where the Sensex breached the historic 79,000 mark for the first time.

Rallying for the fourth day running, the 30share BSE Sensex jumped 568.93 points or 0.72 per cent to settle at a new closing peak of 79,243.18 on Thursday.

During the day, it zoomed 721.78 points or 0.91 per cent to hit the new lifetime peak of 79,396.03.

In the past four trading days, the BSE benchmark jumped 2,033.28 points or 2.63 per cent. The market capitalisation of BSE-listed companies hit a lifetime high of ₹ 4,38,41,960.73 crore (USD 5.25 trillion). Investors' wealth has gone up by ₹ 3.93 lakh crore in four trading sessions. Remarkably, the BSE benchmark took just two trading sessions to cover the jour-

breach the 79.000 mark on June 27. The Nifty ended at a fresh record high of 24,044.50, rising 175.70 points or 0.74 per cent. Intra-day, it soared 218.65 points or 0.91 per cent to hit the all-time peak of 24,087.45.

ney from the 78,000 level hit on June 25 to

The Nifty hit the 23,000 mark on May 24 this year. Among the 30 Sensex companies, Ultra-Tech Cement jumped 5 per cent after the country's leading cement maker said it will acquire

<u>HT Bureau</u> cases diagnosed in advanced stages due to lack GUWAHATI, June 27: To commemorate a of screening, underscores the urgency of our decade of innovation and community engagement in India, Xiaomi India has announced a significant collaboration with the Yuvraj Singh Foundation (YouWeCan). This partnership aims to launch the 'Swasth Mahila Swasth Bharat' project, a breast cancer screening initiative tar-

geting 1,50,000 women over the next year across 15 states. The focus will be on reaching under-represented and under-resourced communities, marking Xiaomi's most ambitious social effort in India to date. Muralikrishnan B, President of Xiaomi India, stated, "In our decadelong journey in India, we have evolved beyond being a technology brand by leveraging our extensive network for meaningful social change. The stark reality that a woman in India dies of breast cancer every 6 minutes, with 70% of

mission. We're proud to join forces with the Yuvraj Singh Foundation (YouWeCan), harnessing our technological expertise to drive large-scale impact. Together, we aim to break stigmas, spread awareness, and enable early detectionpotentially saving countless lives. This initiative embodies our commitment to India, extending far beyond innovation to address critical health challenges and create lasting positive change.'

Yuvraj Singh, former cricketer and founder of the Yuvraj Singh Foundation, expressed his enthusiasm for the campaign, saying, "The 'Swasth Mahila Swasth Bharat' campaign is a crucial step in our fight against breast cancer in India. Despite limited awareness and access to screening, especially in rural areas, we're determined to make a difference.

Nxtra by Airtel joins RE100, pledges 100% renewable energy commitment

<u>HT Bureau</u> GUWAHATI, June 27: Nxtra by Airtel, a leading data center company in India, has announced its membership in the RE100 initiative, a global program led by Climate Group n partnership with CDP. dedicated to promoting renewable energy use. With this commitment, Nxtra aims to source 100% of its electricity from renewable sources, becoming the only data center organization in India to make this pledge and the 14th Indian company to achieve this mile-

stone. This move underscores Nxtra's dedication to environmental sustainability, aligning with its goal to achieve net-

zero emissions by 2031. Ashish Arora, CEO of Nxtra by Airtel, stated, "We are an environmentally responsible

Atul Mudaliar, Director of Systems Change - India, praised Nxtra's efforts, saying, "Despite being highly energyintensive, data centers are often overlooked for their emissions. It is inspiring to see Nxtra taking the lead in adopt-

ing best practices to reduce

their carbon footprint. Nxtra's

initiative to source renewable

energy for their operations will

be a fitting example for data

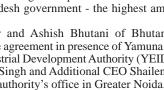
center companies to accelerate

the journey to a cleaner future.

We are delighted to welcome

Nxtra by Airtel to RE100."

Joshi was speaking here on the



a 23 per cent stake in its Chennai-based rival India Cements Ltd, in a deal estimated to be around ₹ 1,885 crore.

NTPC, JSW Steel, Tata Motors, Infosys, Tata Consultancy Services, Kotak Mahindra Bank and Bharti Airtel were also among the major gainers. Larsen & Toubro, Sun Pharma, Nestle, HDFC Bank, Maruti and State Bank of India were among the laggards.

"The Sensex surpassing 79,000 marks a historic milestone, reflecting healthy investor confidence and strong fundamentals in key sectors like banking and telecom. Benchmark indices rallied on Thursday, reversing earlier declines, driven by strong buying in blue-chip companies, propelling the Sensex past this historic barrier and leading the Nifty to a new all-time high. "Remarkably, it took only 23 sessions to rise from 23,000 to 24,000, compared to 88 sessions previously," said Trivesh D, COO at Tradejini, a discount brokerage firm.

"The benchmark indices exhibited bullish momentum, buoyed by an expected revival in the IT sector and consolidation in the cement industry," Vinod Nair, Head of Research at Geojit Financial Services, said. (PTI)

brand and have been increasingly adopting clean energy alternatives. We are on a healthy trajectory towards achieving our net-zero goals of 2031 and are happy to become a part of the RE100 initiative with a commitment to 100% renewable electricity

HDFC Bank launches MSME support campaign

HT Bureau GUWAHATI, June 27: In anticipation of World MSME Day, HDFC Bank, India's leading private sector bank, has initiated an exclusive campaign aimed at bolstering Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) in remote areas. The campaign is designed to raise awareness about various banking products and services, government policies for MSMEs, and encourage the digitization of business operations. As part of this initiative, HDFC Bank will offer a range of incentives on working capital loans, business loans, business cards, trade services, and Dukandar Overdraft. The bank will also conduct virtual and in-person knowledge sessions in collaboration with partners like HDFC SKY, HDFC ERGO, Niva Bupa General Insurance, Bajaj Allianz General Insurance, and Aditya Birla General Insurance. These sessions, focusing on the digital transformation of businesses, will take place in 15 cities: Indore, Surat, Roorkee, Nashik, Ludhiana, Raipur, Dehradun, Coimbatore, Varanasi, Vizag, Patna, Nagpur, Kanpur, Hubballi, and Guwahati, targeting over 1,000 small and medium businesses.

We need to have an approach lighting system that can bring down the visibility requirement for pilots from 1,300 metres to just 550 metres. Besides, in the subsequent phases we have plans for maintenance, repair and overhaul (MRO) facility, aerocity, helipad and various allied services," Baruah said. He said that the company has set four visions for the airport with the first being establishing connection with all the 16 airports of Northeast and major cities of the country.

"We want to develop LGBI Airport as an international hub for South East Asia. We also want to develop a cargo market in the region and introduce air transportation for perishable goods," the CAO said. Stating that the tourism industry and air transportation go hand-in-hand, he said LGBI Airport wants to be the fillip to the development of the tourism sector in the Northeast. (PTI)

Never faced any political

Acknowledging the issue of pendency, Chandrachud said the judge to population ratio in India is among the lowest in the world. "We simply need more judges. We are engaging with the government to increase the strength of the judiciary at all levels," he said. On the issue of social media, Chandrachud said it is a reality and in our courts today, we have live-tweeting by minute. "Every remark which is said by a judge is conveyed on social media. That is something we need not stop and we cannot stop.

"Obviously, we are the receiving end on some occasions. Sometimes the criticism is fair, sometimes the criticism is not fair. But I do believe as judges our shoulders are broad enough to accept the critique which people have of the work we do," he said. (PTI)

Cabinet spares two-

regular positions," Sarma confirmed. Furthermore, all tenders for markets, bazaars, haats, and ghats issued by zila parishads, anchalik panchayats, and gaon panchayats have been cancelled.

This decision follows concerns raised about high bidding prices affecting traders and the public," Sarma explained.

Financial system remains resilient, gross NPAs of banks fall to multi-year low of 2.8 pc: RBI report

MUMBAI, June 27: Indian economy and the financial system remain robust and resilient as the gross non-performing assets (GNPA) ratio fell to a multi-year

Teacher Required

Applications are invited from intending candidates to fill up for the post of B.Sc. (Royal) of Satgaon Assamese High School, Satgaon, West Karbi Anglong. Last date of submission of forms is on

15-07-2024.

Headmistress Satgaon Assamese High School, Satgaon West Karbi Anglong.



low of 2.8 per cent at the end-March 2024, RBI said in its June Financial Stability Report (FSR). Scheduled Commercial Banks'

gross non-performing assets (GNPA) ratio fell to a multi-year low of 2.8 per cent and the net non-performing assets (NNPA) ratio to 0.6 per cent at end-March 2024, it said.

"The Indian economy and the financial system remain robust and resilient, anchored by macroeco-

nomic and financial stability. With improved balance sheets, banks and financial institutions are supporting economic activity through sustained credit expansion," it said. The capital to risk-weighted assets ratio (CRAR) and the common equity tier 1 (CET1) ratio of

SCBs stood at 16.8 per cent and 13.9 per cent, respectively, at end-March 2024, it said. According to the report, macro stress tests for credit risk reveal

that SCBs would be able to comply with minimum capital requirements, with the system-level CRAR in March 2025 projected at 16.1 per cent, 14.4 per cent and 13.0 per cent, respectively, under baseline, medium and severe stress scenarios.

These scenarios are stringent conservative assessments under hypothetical shocks and the results should not be interpreted as forecasts, it said. With regard to nonbanking financial companies (NBFCs), the report said, they remain healthy, with CRAR at 26.6 per cent, GNPA ratio at 4.0 per cent and return on assets (RoA) at 3.3 per cent, respectively, at end-March 2024.

Referring to the global economy, the report said, it is facing heightened risks from prolonged geopolitical tensions, elevated public debt, and the slow progress in the last mile of disinflation.

Despite these challenges, the global financial system has remained resilient, and financial conditions stable, it noted. (PTI)

floor leaders' meeting. "All of us are committed to unitedly raising the issues concerning people and fight for their rights," the Congress leader said in the post in Hindi. The opposition leaders discussed a range of issues that will be jointly raised in both houses of Parliament. The issues include unemployment, price rise,

misuse of central agencies, breakdown of institutions, the NEET exams and paper leaks. With the INDIA bloc parties demanding the appointment of a deputy speaker in the Lok Sabha from the opposition ranks, the sources said they would press for their demand strongly and discuss the names for the post soon. They are of the view that the deputy speaker's post should go to any of the principal opposition parties like the Congress, Samajwadi Party (SP), Trinamool Congress (TMC) or DMK.

"Floor leaders of INDIA parties met at INC President Sh. Mallikarjun Kharge ji's residence to chalk out the strategy for the rest of the Parliament session," Congress general secretary K C Venugopal said in a post on X. (PTI)

Justice will be priority not justice laws in India," he had said. Shah said the laws were not just about changing the nomenclature but would

bring about a complete overhaul of the prevailing laws. He said "soul, body and spirit" of the new laws is Indian. The home minister had said justice is an umbrella term that encompasses both the victim and the culprit and these new laws will ensure political, economic and social justice with an Indian ethos. Zero FIR, registration of police complaints online, summons through electronic modes and mandatory videography of crime scenes of all heinous crimes are the key highlights of the three new criminal laws.

The Union home ministry is gearing up to roll out the three new criminal laws from next week with 40 lakh grassroots functionaries trained to ensure people are aware about the legislations and the impact these will have on everyone, particularly women and children, official sources said Wednesday. Over 5.65 lakh police, prison, forensics, judicial and prosecution officials have also been trained about the new laws. (PTI)

Dibrugarh grapples with flash

towns in Assam and is worst hit during the rainy season," said Ismail Ahmed, a retired professor.

Meanwhile, the flood situation in Assam continues to improve, although almost 1.4 lakh people are still affected across seven districts as of Wednesday evening.

Cachar is the worst hit, with nearly 75,000 people affected, followed by Karimganj with more than 56,500 people and Dhemaji with almost 3,800 people reeling under floodwaters. So far, 41 people have lost their lives in the state in this year's floods, landslides, and storms. (PTI)

Oppn to raise NEET in Parl

REGION

MoU aims to establish vocational training & support services across BTR **Guwahati's Saraf family's education** BTR govt signs MoU with Shishu Sarothi initiative transforms Ratangarh, Rajasthan



HT Correspondent KOKRAJHAR, June 27: A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed between the Women & Child Development Department, government of Bodoland Territorial Region (BTR), and Shishu Sarothi Centre for Rehabilitation & Training for Multiple Disability, Guwahati, aimed at empowering persons with disabilities of BTR

nancial year 2024-25. The signing of the MoU was

held at the BTC Secretariat, Bodofa Nwgwr in Kokrajhar, in the presence of Pramod Boro, the chief executive member of Bodoland Territorial Region, senior government officials, and officials from Shishu Sarothi Centre. The MoU is pursuant to the goal of empowering persons with disabilities of BTR as envisioned in

our vibrant BTR Budget for the fi-The MoU will pave the way for

the establishment of a residential training programme in COPA, multimedia, secretarial practice, and other vocational courses in ITI, Dhauliguri, Kokrajhar, for the youth with disabilities in BTR. This will be further enhanced to

cover all ITIs in BTR. "I'm happy to announce that a Memorandum of Understanding has been signed between the Women & Child Development Department, government of BTR, and

HT Bureau GUWAHATI, June 27: On the Shishu Sarothi Centre for Rehabilitation & Training for Multiple initiative of the Saraf family of Disability on Thursday. The MoU Guwahati, under the supervision of will pave the way for the establishment of a residential training prosenior advocate and philanthropist gram in COPA, multimedia, Dr Ashok Saraf and advocate Dr Birendra Saraf, Shri Hanumanbux secretarial practice, and other vo-Saraf Bhawan and Shri Shankarlal cational courses in ITI, Dhauliguri, Saraf Children Park were inaugu-Kokrajhar, for the youth with disrated in Ratangarh, Rajasthan reabilities in BTR. This will be further enhanced to cover all ITIs in cently. On this occasion, Justice Ujjwal Bhuyan of the Supreme BTR. Subsequently, this MoU will extend to technical and specialised Court of India, Justice Soumitra Saikia, and Justice Debashish guidance in improving the func-Barua of Gauhati High Court, adtioning of District Early Intervenvocate general of Maharashtra Dr tion Centres, hand-holding support Birendra Saraf, senior advocate of for educational and other institutions in providing inclusive educa-Guwahati Dr Ashok Saraf, president of the organisation Ghantion, and any other project as shyam Chandra Soni, secretary conceived by the government of Rajiv Upadhay, and many other BTR or arising out of the field experience of Shishu Sarothi for the eminent personalities were present. On this occasion, dignitaries welfare of CWNs and PWDs," shared their views and said the Saraf family of Guwahati brought "This joint initiative will usher revolution in the field of education in a new era of empowerment, inin Ratangarh, Rajasthan. clusion, and financial freedom for

Dr Ashok Saraf said that Shri Hanumanbux Saraf Bhawan is a pre-primary, fully AC school, where children below the age of six can study scientifically with the help of modern equipment. This is the first play school of its kind in the entire district. The children of this school can play in Shri Shankarlal Saraf Children's Park. All the entertainment facilities are available there as per the needs of the children. On the initiative of Dr Ashok Saraf, who is known as a philanthropist, a total of 71 children were awarded scholarships during the Justice Dr BP Saraf Samman ceremony. In fact, under the encouragement of educational and co-educational talents, 71 tal-



scholarship cheques, silver medals, and citation letters in the Justice Dr BP Saraf Pratibha Samman ceremony on behalf of Gandhi Bal Niketan. On this occasion, district collector Pushpa Satyani, sub-divisional officer Amit Verma, Bhamashah Dr Ashok Saraf, secretary Rajiv Upadhay, and institution president Ghanshyam Chandra Soni were present on the stage. The district collector said that in society we should not only know how to take but also how to give. Educated people should take a pledge that they will educate three other people as well. Drawing attention towards environmental protection, he said that we should take a pledge to plant at least 14 trees in our lifetime so that our future is golden. Bhamashah Dr Saraf said that the scholarship scheme was started to inspire other students so that all students can become successful people by working hard. On this occasion, he also announced plans to provide 10 interactive boards for the Sardarsha-

talents were honoured with a total cheque of Rs 5.20 lakh in the form of Dr BP Saraf Scholarship, six students were honoured with silver medals and citations under Saraf Shiksha Samman, and seven personnel were honoured with silver medals and citations under Saraf Seva Samman. Organisation secretary Rajiv Upadhyay welcomed the guests by presenting garlands, mementos, and Gandhi literature. The function was conducted by Kuldeep Vyas. Under the program, Deepika Sharma, Rupa Bhojak, Mamta Sharma, Babita Kumawat, Tribhuvan Swami, Ankita Matolia. and Chetan Prajapat were honoured with the service award. Jiya Upadhyay was honoured with the sports award and Raman Saini. Bhumika Agarwal, Tanvi Pareek. Ujjwal Saini, Yashvi Chaudhary, and Nidhi Kanwar were honoured with the education award. Apart from these, by providing scholarships to 71 students, Dr Ashok Saraf has laid the foundation for a revolution in the field of education in the district.

Forest dept and KNPTR hold flood preparedness meeting HT Bureau

DIPHU, June 27: A flood preparation awareness meeting was jointly organised by the Forest Department under Karbi Anglong Autonomous Council and Kaziranga National Park Authority Tiger Reserve (KNPTR) at Rongmongve on Wednesday.

The meeting was attended by CCF, field director, KNPTR Dr Sonali Ghosh IFS, who emphasised the need for constant communication between the Forest Department, community-based institutions, and local people, especially during floods and negative human-wildlife interactions.

Other speakers, including Arun Vignesh, IFS, DFO Eastern Assam Wildlife Division; Prahlad Kro, ACF Northern Range, Dolamara; Pranab

NABARD and IFFCO Kisan launch AI based tea cultivation project in Nagaon

rural areas and the farm sector in

HT Correspondent NAGAON, June 27: NABARD, Assam RO, sanctioned a unique project titled 'Climate Resilient Tea Cultivation and AI-based Pest Management for Small Tea Growers' across the state.

The project was ceremonially inaugurated jointly by DC, Nagaon Narendra Kr Shah, and Loken Das, GM, OIC of NABARD, in the presence of deputy director of Tea Board India Kamal Ch Baishya, principal scientist and head of Krishi Vigyan Kendra, Nagaon – Dr Niranjan Deka, NABARD AGM Sankar Das, DDM, NABARD, LDM, Nagaon, regional managers of SBI and AGVB, representatives from DAO, DICC, and others.

The implementing agency will be IFFCO Kisan Suvidha Ltd. (IKSL), and the pilot will be implemented for the STGs of Sewujjyoti Tea Federation, located at Chapanalla in Barhampur Development Block of Nagaon District. Speaking on the occasion, Loken Das, GM, OIC of NABARD, suggested that as per its mandate for the development of

State govt launches **Union Bank of India opens second** state level essay competition

HT Bureau

DIPHU, June 27: In observing Deshbhakti Diwas across all dis-Bank of India, a government of

the country, NABARD has been implementing various projects like integrated watershed development with climate-proofing interventions, integrated tribal development programs, precision farming, and climate change projects, etc. From the surpluses generated from its business activities. Through such projects, NABARD disseminates the utility of artificial intelli-(AI) and various gence technological advancements in the agri-horti sector for the greater benefit of farmers and artisans in rural areas. He suggested that based on the success of the pilot project, its replication can be considered among other groups, along with the involvement of all stakeholders.

Guiding the participants following the inaugural session, DC, Natea sector. gaon Narendra Kr Shah expressed that in the current turbulent times, such initiatives by NABARD will be a great help to the STGs in Nagaon and the sector as a whole. He appreciated the efforts of NABARD through its implement-

branch in Karbi Anglong

ing the use of the latest technologadvancements and ical encouraging farmers to reduce the use of harmful chemicals and pesticides in their farmlands. He also suggested that tea growers judiciously use the resources provided

under the pilot project and consider establishing their own brand. Sharing the role and view of Tea Board India, Kamal Ch Baishya stated that the Tea Board is undertaking every possible step to retain the confidence of local and global consumers. He suggested that all farmers should follow the plant protection codes released by the Board, including checking the quality of tea leaves at regular intervals. He also congratulated NABARD for conceptualising such an AI-based project for the

During the event, equipment like automated wireless weather stations, soil moisture sensors, SMART ravagers, etc., were distributed among the members of the Federation, as stated in a press note

Trafficking organised ing agencies like IKSL for spread-Social Welfare Office, Mayang

Bora

CEM Boro said.

our Divyang brethren and help

greatly in securing a dignified, pro-

ductive future for our children with

International Day Against

Drug Abuse and Illicit

special needs," Boro added

Child Development Project Office (CDPO), in collaboration with Jagiroad College, organised an awareness meeting cum workshop with the students of Jagiroad College at the meeting hall of Jagiroad College on Thursday. The meeting was moderated by the child development project officer (CDPO). Mayang ICDS Project, Nilutpala

While attending the program, district commissioner Devashish Sharma said, "Drugs are a social disease and it is increasingly engulfing our society." He urged the students to be vigilant guardians in preventing the circulation of drugs. The event was attended by Mayang Revenue Circle officer Priyanka Gogoi and several prominent persons who delivered valuable speeches about how various addictions have brought terrible situations to their lives and disturbed society. The meeting was attended by Dr Bhanita Bodo, senior medical officer of Jargaon Block Primary Health Center, and Nimisha Bora, psychiatrist. They

ents were honoured by providing har block. In the function, 57 **District Road Safety Committee** reviews measures to enhance road safety in Dima Hasao



<u>HT Bureau</u>

GUWAHATI, June 27: District commissioner, Dima Hasao, and chairman of District Road Safety Committee (DRSC), Simanta Kr Das, ACS, in the presence of superintendent of police, Dima Hasao, Mayank Kumar, IPS, held

of speed breakers, and permanent reflectors on the Lanka-Umrangso road stretch, and installation of road safety signboards at various locations in the district.

In the meeting, the district commissioner directed the DRSC members to continue their drive against the illegal sale of liquor at roadside dhabas and hotels. All the members were also directed to continue their efforts against road accidents through awareness programs, naka checking, and awareness campaigns on social media. The meeting was also attended by ADC James Aind, ACS, DTO, Dima Hasao, Sr. Dr Parikshit Barman Thaosen of Haflong Civil Hospital, officials from NHAI, and several other heads of departments. villages.

HT Correspondent MORIGAON, June 27: Under the aegis of Drug Free India Mission on the occasion of 'International Day Against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking', the District

tricts of Assam to commemorate and honour the legacy and contributions of Tarunram Phukan to India's struggle for independence. the state government has decided to organise a state-level essay competition among students on July 28.

The competition will be organised under three categories. Category A is for classes 6 to 8 with the topic 'Tarunram Phukan: His Life and Achievements' (800 words). Category B is for students of classes 9 to 12 on the topic 'Role of Tarunram Phukan in India's Freedom Struggle'. Category C is for students in various graduate programs with the topic 'Contribution of Tarunram Phukan to Assamese Literature'.

The essays can be written in Assamese, English, Hindi, Bengali, and Bodo. Each school/college must submit the best essays from each category to the Office of the District Commissioner, Karbi Anglong district, by June 30. Individual submissions by students at the District Commissioner's Office will not be accepted. It is the responsibility of the head teacher/principal of each school/college to submit the best essays.

Each district will select three essays for first, second, and third place winners for each category. The winners will receive cash prizes of ₹ 50,000, ₹ 30,000, and ₹ 20,000 for first, second, and third prize respectively. A special cash prize of ₹ 10,000 for entries in each language in all categories will also be given. The winners will be felicitated at the state-level programme to be held in Guwahati on July 28.

Mahesh Nath releases five new books on nature

HT Correspondent

NAGAON, June 27: As many as five books on forest-related issues penned by Mahesh Nath, a grassroots retired forest official from the Nagaon Borbheti area, were ceremonially released at a prestigious function organised at Nagaon Press Club on Tuesday. The books released are titled 'Boronia Aronya', 'Gahan Bonor Malita', 'Bishyurita Bon', 'Aronyar Dinlipi', and 'Loralir Sunseria Kotha'

India undertaking, opened its new branch office at Dharamnala in Diphu town last Wednesday. This is the second branch in the district; the first branch is at Tumpreng in West Karbi Anglong.

HT Bureau

Holiram Former minister Terang, in whose building the Union Bank of India has opened its branch office, inaugurated it.

Inaugurating the branch, Terang said it is a positive sign that more banks are coming to Diphu town and opening branches. With more banks, there will be a competitive spirit in financial activities.

Regional head from the regional office in Jorhat, Bhaskar Mondal, said, "We are very proud that a second branch office has come up here in Diphu. The first was at Tumpreng, West Karbi Anglong. The opening of a branch office here is one of the North East expansion programmes under which

East India. The Union Bank of India has a rich heritage and history since 1919, whose foundation was laid by Mahatma Gandhi, the father of the nation."

the Union Bank is pledged and is

Last year, a regional head office was set up in Jorhat. There are 40 branches in the North East region. The main objective of the bank is to connect more and more customers to the bank, provide them with essential banking services, and educate the people on financial literacy, Mondal said. He urged the customers to connect more people to the bank for banking services and avail the benefits of these services.

The inaugural ceremony was attended by Retail Loan Point head Sanjay Sharma, MSME Loan Point head Paban Mandal, Diphu branch manager Ann Bey, and Dimapur branch head Daimalu Baglary.

explained the diseases caused by drug use, how it affects society, and how to get rid of it.

The meeting was attended by the principal, faculty, and students of the college. District social welfare officer Monika Barthakur also addressed the students and urged them to stay away from all forms of addiction. The meeting featured a casual speech and drawing competition among the students, with prizes awarded to the first, second, and third place winners.

a road safety meeting with all the DRSC members at the District Commissioner's Conference Hall, Haflong, on Wednesday.

The agenda reviewed in the meeting included actions taken by Dima Hasao Police on accident data and details of the scheme related to cashless treatment for road accident victims, actions taken by the transport department, NHAI, and PWD regarding the installation of reflectors, banners, painting

Terang, ACF, Eastern Range, Bokajan; Amarjyoti Hazarkia, OC, Rongmongve Police Station; and Sushanta Borthakur of WWF-India, along with forest range officers of Kaziranga National Park, discussed appropriate behaviour during floods and parameters for a positive peoplepark interface. The meeting was attended by 86 participants and VDP members from ten fringe

WWF India donates vehicles to Karbi Anglong forest dept

HT Bureau DIPHU, June 27: The World Wildlife Fund (WWF) – India donated three vehicles to the Forest Department of Karbi Anglong and West Karbi Anglong for the purpose of wildlife patrolling. The vehicles were flagged off by chief executive member (CEM), Karbi Anglong Au-

tonomous Council (KAAC), Tuliram Ronghang, at the CEM Bungalow on Thursday morning

The Bolero Camper vehicles were given to the Dokmoka Range, Silonijan Range of East Forest Division, and Hamren Division. The flag-off ceremony was attended by ex-

ecutive members (EMs) D Uphing Maslai and Ritesh Enghi, Members of the Autonomous Council (MACs) Avijit Kro and Phenpiga Rengma, MLA Bidyasing Engleng, senior project officer of WWF - India, Trideep Sarmah, senior landscape coordinator Dr Pranab Jyoti Bora, and forest officials.

Raimona National Park captures first photographic evidence of mainland serow

Significant discovery by state forest department and Aaranyak highlights Raimona's biodiversity

HT Bureau GUWAHATI, June 27: In the newly declared Raimona National Park, officials from the state Forest Department, along with conservationists, have recorded the first photographic proof of the Mainland Serow, a vulnerable mammal species notified by the International Union for Conservation of Nature.

Aaranyak, the region's foremost biodiversity conservation organisation, and the state Forest Department captured the photographic evidence of the mainland serow in two independent events near the Ganda Bajrum Anti-poaching Camp, located in the western range of Raimona National Park, using white flash passive Panthera (New York, USA) V6 digital camera traps. The finding is published as a scientific

paper in the Journal of Threatened Taxa, authored by Aaranyak's senior scientist Dr M Firoz Ahmed, senior conservation biologist Dr Dipankar Lahkar, Nibir Medhi, Nitul Kalita, Bhanu Sinha AFS, DFO of Kachugaon Forest Division, forest official



Pranjal Talukdar, Biswajit Basumatary, Tunu Basumatary, Dr Ramie H. Begum, associate professor, Assam University (Diphu campus), and Dr Abishek Harihar,

we are thrilled by the finding. Our goal is to conserve this species and other wildlife extensively in the national park," says Bhanu Sinha AFS, DFO of Kachugaon Forest Division. The mainland serow population is

widely distributed in the neighbouring Phibsoo Wildlife Sanctuary and the Royal Manas National Park of Bhutan, which may contribute to Raimona National Park's population recovery.

"We would like to extend our warmest thanks to the National Park Authority for their collaborative efforts that led to the discovery of this beautiful species. There is a wealth of wildlife in Raimona National Park, and the finding of this species is good news for the conservation world," says Dr M Firoz Ahmed, senior scientist with Aaranyak.

"The mainland serow (Capricornis sumatraensis thar) is present across various habitats extending from the Himalayas on the Indian subcontinent to southern China, mainland southeastern Asia, and

Sumatra. The species' populations are fragmented, isolated, and rapidly declining due to poaching, habitat destruction, and habitat loss. The lack of reliable data on this species' abundance and distribution makes it difficult to implement effective conservation actions to ensure long-term survival," says Dr Dipankar Lahkar, a senior conservationist in Aaranyak.

Occasional poaching for bushmeat and habitat alteration due to logging during the ethnopolitical violence are the primary conservation concerns of Raimona National Park. With the government now protecting the park, future conservation efforts should consider securing and recovering the species' population and restoring the degraded habitats.

The state government declared the area a national park on June 8, 2021. After nearly three decades of ethnopolitical violence, the Bodoland Territorial Council (BTR) was established in 2020, and conservation efforts have been fueled since then

director of Tiger Program, Panthera. "The discovery of the mainland serow in Raimona National Park is good news for biodiversity conservation aspects, and

4

THE HILLS TIMES VOL. XXV, ISSUE 168, DIPHU, FRIDAY, JUNE 28, 2024

QUOTE OF THE DAY We aim above the mark to hit the mark -Ralph Waldo Emerson

Modi 3.0: Agenda remains unchanged?

he formation of the third Modi-led NDA coalition government raises questions about the future of India's political and economic landscape. Despite losing its parliamentary majority, with the BJP securing only 240 seats, the government's agenda remains largely unchanged. The expected constraints on the BJP/RSS's authoritarian-communal-corporate agenda might slow certain initiatives but are unlikely to cause a significant shift in policy direction. One area where the Modi government may face challenges is in enacting constitutional changes aimed at reinforcing centralist authoritarianism and undermining secular principles. However, the government's broader economic policies and institutional subversion are expected to continue unabated. Early indications, such as the refusal to offer the deputy speakership to the opposition, signal a continuation of the Modi regime's confrontational stance towards parliamentary norms. Within days of taking office, the new government reaffirmed its authoritarian tendencies. Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal's bail was revoked by the High Court, followed by another arrest orchestrated by the CBI. Additionally, writer Arundhati Roy faces prosecution under the UAPA, 14 years after a case was initially lodged against her.

New criminal codes coming into effect from July 1 are set to impose stricter limitations on democratic rights and grant the police greater powers, including enhanced measures to punish sedition. Amit Shah's reappointment as Home Minister suggests that central agencies like the Enforcement Directorate and CBI will continue to target opposition figures and other perceived threats. Economic policies will also see continuity, with big business remaining a staunch supporter of the BJP and Modi. The stock market's recovery following the announcement of the Modi-led NDA government underscores corporate confidence. Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman has committed to advancing next-generation reforms, and the corporate sector is already lobbying for favorable measures in the upcoming union budget. Privatization efforts, such as the National Monetisation Pipeline (NMP), are expected to proceed vigorously.

The Modi government's commitment to Hindutva politics is evident from the early days of its third term. Incidents targeting Muslims have been reported in BJP-ruled states, including the mob killing of three cattle transporters in Chhattisgarh and the arrest of individuals in Madhya Pradesh for allegedly storing beef. In Rajasthan's Jodhpur, a communal clash resulted in numerous arrests. These incidents highlight the ongoing communal polarization and targeting of minorities, central to the Hindutva agenda. The BJP remains the dominant force within the NDA coalition, with allies like the TDP and JD(U) unlikely to assert significant political influence. TDP leader Chandrababu Naidu is primarily focused on securing funds and projects for Andhra Pradesh, while JD(U) is concentrated on consolidating its position in Bihar ahead of the next assembly elections. The opposition now has a greater presence in parliament, providing an opportunity to challenge the Modi government's policies more effectively. However, the real battleground will be in mobilizing mass protests and organizing struggles against the regime's authoritarianism and neo-liberal economic policies.

The role of the Left is particularly crucial in this context. As consistent opponents of neo-liberal policies and Hindutva ideology, the Left must spearhead efforts to link daily struggles with broader opposition to the government's agenda. The recent Lok Sabha election has opened political space for intensified resistance against the Hindutva-corporate nexus. The increased strength of the opposition provides a platform for defending democracy, federalism, and constitutional principles against the ongoing authoritarian assault.

Arab spring and demographic

Unanimous choice: Om Birla's journey to Lok Sabha speaker

m Birla is elected the new Speaker of the 18th Lok Sabha for the second time by voice vote. After which Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Leader of opposition Rahul Gandhi took him to the chair. The opposition did not demand division on voice vote. The opposition's support on Om Birla's name was no less than a surprise for the Modi government. It was expected that the opposition would demand voting and then voting would take place as per the entire process.

But today, while the entire process of electing Birla as the new Lok Sabha Speaker was showcasing the beauty of democratic values, it also gave rise to the possibilities that all the sessions of the 18th Lok Sabha would be full of hope, creating a new history. Om Birla, a thirdtime MP from Kota, has created history by becoming the Lok Sabha Speaker for the second

He is the third person to become the Lok Sabha Speaker for the second consecutive time. Before him, Balram Jakhar was the Speaker for 9 years. Om Birla's election is not surprising, but what was a little surprising was the need for an election for this post

Although, in a democracy, there is no reason to feel bad about any election for any post. But the post of Lok Sabha Speaker is one in which general opinion has always been given importance. The reason is that for the smooth functioning of the House, the Speaker needs the support of both the parties. In such a situation, if both the parties select the person sitting on this post by declaring their trust in him, then the prestige of the post increases manifold.

In independent India, elections for the post of Lok Sabha Speaker were held only three times in 1952, 1967 and 1976. In the year 1952, Congress member G.V.

Mavalankar was elected as the Lok Sabha Speaker. There was no consensus between the government and the opposition parties regarding the selection of the Lok Sabha Speaker, due to which the need for an election arose. This was the first show of strength between the government and the opposition after the formation of the NDA government for the third consecutive time under the leadership of Prime Minister Modi at the centre.

Therefore, the strategists of BJP were engaged in a mission to ensure a big victory for their candidate Om Birla with the support of a maximum number of MPs. In the meeting of India Alliance held the previous night, the leaders said that India Alliance does not have the numbers. Therefore, the process of electing Birla as the Speaker by voice vote without voting was allowed to happen uninterrupted and an atmosphere of happiness is seen on the parliamentary floor.

Prime Minister Modi said that it is the good fortune of the House that you are occupying this seat for the second time. In this important period of Amritkaal, you have got a huge responsibility to occupy this post for the second time; we all believe that you will guide all of us for the coming 5 vears

Rahul Gandhi, the leader of the opposition in the Lok Sabha, while congratulating, reiterated the point of protecting the constitution. Akhilesh Yadav, the leader of the third largest party in the House, said that the post, on which you are sitting, has a very glorious tradition attached to it. Therefore, everything will move forward without discrimination. Impartiality is the great responsibility of this great post. You are sitting like the Chief Justice of democracy.

The highest forum of every nation is the parliament of that nation, which is run by the representatives elected by the



people of the entire nation, decides the rules and regulations of the nation, becomes their voice and works in their interest. It protects the wider interests of the nation. India's democracy is not only strong but also unique and inspiring;

highest forum is the Lok Sabha. Birla started a

healthy tradition by conducting the proceedings of the 17th Lok Sabha sessions in a planned and smooth manner, his experience and capabilities have been ready to give a new vision to the House. The Lok Sabha, the highest

democratic house of the country, has experience of his efficiency and skill in conducting the House. He has not only proved himself in running the Lok Sabha efficiently but has also increased the dignity and pride of the House by setting new standards.

By becoming the Speaker of the 18th Lok Sabha, he will definitely be able to discipline the proceedings of the House, inspire it and pave the way for taking important decisions in the interest of the country by maintaining a balance between the ruling and the opposition, it is believed. Certainly, by discharging his role impartially, he will prove capable of taking the dignity of the House to a new level.

Lok Sabha is not just a beautiful building standing on some pillars; it is the heartbeat of 1.4 billion people. Every minute of it

should be utilized properly. There should be no noise; slogans and misbehaviour, there should be no obstruction. This proves costly

for the poor and the country in every respect. If our representatives do not think and behave m is DEGREE OF THOUGHT honestly, then the common

people of this na-Lalit Garg tion will stop differentiating between right and wrong, moral and immoral. Certainly, on the strength of

balance, impartiality, decency and skill, Birla will give a new height to the proceedings of the new Lok Sabha and will give wings to new hopes.

In this, cooperation of the ruling and opposition parties is required, only then the decency and civility of the Lok Sabha will climb to new heights. The future of the country is written on the face of the Parliament, if there is a display of indecency there, then

the problems get complicated instead of getting solved. Using abusive language on small matters, uproar, taunting, ruckus and walkout are such incidents which reduce the prestige of a representative institution like the Parliament. The kind of expertise Birla has shown in the past in explaining this to the elected representatives and train-

ing them is commendable. The Parliament represents crores of people and becomes their voice. It is the sacred duty of the Lok Sabha of our nation to maintain its sanctity and health and all the representatives take an oath in the presence of God and soul to fulfil this duty with loyalty and honesty. It is not necessary to elect only an MP with long parliamentary experience for the post of Lok Sabha Speaker. It has to be seen whether the person sitting on this post has the ability to take all the parties along or not and whether he has the courage to do proper justice to all the parties or not.

When the values and moral standards in the House become weak and only raising personal status becomes important, then that House definitely becomes weak. Even in the Amrit Kaal of freedom, we should raise our conduct and capability to a certain level. Leaders and heroes are not things to be produced in a factory; the Lok Sabha itself does the work of molding their capability and character.

The qualities of giving importance not only to the words of the Constitution but also to its spirit also develop here. It is also taught to make good use of the freedom of speech. The new Lok Sabha should be like as training laboratory. The new Lok Sabha should give birth to such an environment within itself, which itself comes forward and creates new things, takes the reins of responsibility and starts the work of reform, health and development.

Lok Sabha is trying to ask itself a small question rather than big ideals: who should it say goodbye to in welcoming the new Lok Sabha? Say goodbye to those events of the past due to which the dreams and resolutions of the Lok Sabha remained incomplete and its dignity kept getting tarnished. The beginning is good, let's see what happens next? This much is certain that this time better understanding and maturity will be expected from all parties. (The author is a journalist & columnist who can be reached at lalitgarg11@gmail.com)

Delhi's seismic turmoil: Unveiling the roots of unrest

<u>By: Dipak Kurmi</u>

rime Minister Narendra Modi's firm grip on politics and the BJP's stronghold in Hindutva ideology have been significantly challenged by the recent election outcomes. The upcoming monsoon session of the 18th Lok Sabha promises to provide a glimpse into what

tered on India's alleged involvement in the attempted assassination of Gurpatwant Singh Pannun, a pro-Khalistan activist in New York. According to the US indictment, Nikhil Gupta, an Indian national extradited by the Czechs to the Americans during the talks between Doval and Sullivan in Delhi, was pur-

portedly recruited by a co-con-

Nepal is a lingering sore point. For aficionados of spy thrillers, watching Vishal Bhardwaj's Khufiya today is recommended, offering a glimpse into a narrative that is grittier, more somber, and far removed from the glamour of fiction.

The crucial question today, with Modi embarking on his third term, is the nature of



Julian Assange is finally free from

imbalance thereafter in Europe



By: Er. Rajesh Pathak

hen it was before independence that Gandhi-Nehru-Patel could not win the hearts of Muslims, how could Modi-Shah-Yogi be able to do that? This concludes noted columnist, Balbir Punj, in view of the Lok Sabha-election results. However this is not something unique for India. It is universal phenomena; only what is needed is that eye that could be able to grasp that.

One might think that the reaction of pro-Pakistanis in India in wake of Indo-Pak Cricket-Hockev match is something unprecedented to be witnesses alone in India.

Last year in football match between Belgium-Morocco, the team of Morocco won the match. Then what in jubilation of victory the Moroccan Muslim immigrants settled in Belgium went wild. So much so that they spared not even Belgium's whites, thrashing them and vandalizing their business settlements whichever came in the way of their proceeding celebrating crowd.

In 2010-11 in Europe began the flux of intrusion of Muslims from Arab world comprised of Middle-east and North Africa, where predominantly Arabia language is spoken. Historically, this happened subsequent to what the world know as 'Arab Spring', which is said to be engineered by US president Barak Obama. In view of long term ul-

terior motives, Obama is said to be behind the insurrection of people against dictatorial rule then long reigned in the Arab region. The uncontrolled Civil-unrest gripped Tunisia, Egypt, Libya, Syria and Yemen then ruled by Ben Ali, Hosni Mubarak, Muammar Gaddafi, Bashar Al-Assad and Ali Abdullah Saleh respectively.

Lastly, the people though got the democracy they wanted but only to be tormented by newer evil of Jihad led terror unleashed by IS and such others with different denominations.

So grim the situation turned out to be henceforth so that the people began to flee their countries. In place of giving them the shelter in their lands Saudi Arab-Qatar- Kuwait forced them to make inroads into Europe. However, East European countries like Poland, Hungary and others followed what Arab-Qatar did, yet they were merciful enough to allow them the exit through their regions to enter west Europe.

Under the obsession of high sounding liberalism France, Germany, Denmark and other countries allowed Arabians to settle in their lands. And now if somebody wants to have mere a glimpse of demographic imbalance brought about there in these last 5 to 10 years, he simple has to have the look of the players and their Arabian accented names that the football team comprised of that France own, and other countries like it!

lies ahead, serving as a prelude to unfolding developments.

Amidst the global dynamics dominated by major powers like the US, Russia, and China, India's claim as a stabilizing force in a turbulent region introduces a compelling dimension. Observing how these nations react to India's assertion will be intriguing, shaping the broader geopolitical landscape. In the complex web of global

power dynamics, where the US, Russia, and China hold sway, India's assertion as a stabilizing influence in a volatile region adds a fascinating perspective. The reactions of these nations to India's claim will be pivotal, influencing the course of global geopolitics in significant ways.

The crucial aspect of this meeting was the one that took place prior to the official delegation-level talks. National Security Advisor Doval and his counterpart Sullivan met privately, without aides or notetakers, for a substantial period-around 30 to 40 minutes. While scenes from spy thrillers may come to mind, with hidden recording devices and clandestine settings, both likely briefed their teams on the key outcomes of their discussion afterward. However, it should be clear

that none of the discussions on critical technologies (iCET), the meeting with PM Modi, or the informal 'chai pe charcha' between Sullivan and External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar held as much significance as this particular one. It's noteworthy that Kurt Campbell, the US Deputy Secretary of State and a kev figure in American diplomacy concerning China, was also present during this period in the capital.

This is because, when the glamorous trappings fade away - such as the exquisite dining at Delhi's prestigious Hyderabad House, the customary venue for top-level diplomatic meetings it is the demonstration of tangible power that subtly takes center stage. Part of their discussion undoubtedly cen-

spirator identified as 'CC-1'. The Washington Post recently identified 'CC-1' as Vikram Yaday, an official of India's external intelligence agency, R&AW. By now, the details are well-known. In an effort to appease the Americans during the tumultuous fallout, the Indian authorities repatriated Yadav to his original unit, the CRPF. He is reportedly now stationed in Chhattisgarh, where he is said to be engaged in combating both minor nuisances and potential Maoist threats.

The supposed assassination attempt was scheduled exactly a year ago, on June 22, but was thwarted by American authorities, leaving Pannun unharmed, likely enjoying bagels-andcheese or even aloo ka paratha back home in New York. In the recent Lok Sabha elections, his influence was reduced to sending Punjabi voice messages urging support for Sikh radicals like Amritpal Singh. Though Pannun won from

Khadoor Sahib, it had more to do with Punjab's perennial grievances against Delhi rather than any newfound separatist sentiment. Ultimately, whether alive or not, Pannun's relevance appears negligible.

Sullivan and Doval surely delved deep into this matter each in their own manner. Doval, a seasoned intelligence officer, is not one to issue apologies-nor should he, given his position. However, all parties involved understand the gravity of this high-stakes game where nations assess each other's intellect, strength, and potential. Today, India may find itself slightly behind in this intricate dance of global diplomacy.

Yet, Indians have a formidable memory. The case of Rabinder Singh, the R&AW agent exfiltrated by the Americans in 2004, remains etched in Delhi's collective consciousness. Despite the professed "natural alliance" between the two nations, the covert operation that spirited him away via

India's relationship with the US and vice versa. Equally significant is New Delhi's stance towards Russia, driven by its reliance on affordable Russian oil - quietly redirected to European refineries hungry for costeffective supplies amid sanctions stemming from the Ukraine conflict. India's enduring dependence on Russian arms further underscores this dynamic. Delhi's articulated approach of maintaining a balanced position on Ukraine reflects its strategic navigation in global affairs.

It is highly probable that Modi will journey to Kazan in October for the BRICS summit, held in a city steeped in historical significance. Kazan marks the site of Tsar Ivan the Terrible's decisive 1552 victory over the Mongols, a pivotal event in Russian history amidst the expansion of Islam. This summit, initially comprising Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa, now includes additional participants like the UAE and Saudi Arabia. Notably, Ivan's triumph occurred just 26 years after Babur's ascension as Emperor of Hindustan in 1526, underscoring the enduring historical echoes resonating in contemporary geopolitics.

Modi may feel a certain debt to Vladimir Putin, having not visited Moscow since Putin's last visit to Delhi in December 2021. Particularly notable is Modi's decision not to attend the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation summit in Astana, Kazakhstan, this July, where both Putin and Xi Jinping will be present. Given the ongoing presence of Chinese troops along the Line of Actual Control with India, Modi likely considers it prudent to steer clear of potentially awkward diplomatic engagements. All eyes will be on Modi during his visit to Kazan-from Washington DC to Delhi, and spanning Moscow to Beijing, the geopolitical chessboard remains as active as ever. (The writer can be reached at dipakkurmiglpltd@gmail.com)

By: Ben Chacko

ulian Assange is free, or soon will be. For 12 years he has been a prisoner: for seven of them holed up in the Ecuadorian embassy as a political asylumseeker, for five in HMP Belmarsh, his treatment compared to torture by international experts.

The plea deal by which he secures his freedom is a face-saving exercise by US President Joe Biden. The Democrat Presidential candidate knows complicity in Israel's war on Palestine is already sapping his vote.

His "lesser of two evils" pitch to US citizens rests on pointing to Donald Trump as a threat to the rule of law and the US constitution. It would not be enhanced if the campaign is accompanied by a show trial of the world's most famous ournalist on grounds leading liberal institutions, including the New York Times, have said make a mockery of the first amendment to the US constitution, which guarantees freedom of speech and the press.

The US leader's cynical motives do not detract from the joy that will be felt by Assange, his family and supporters. This is a victory of the people over the system. There is no way Assange would have been offered this deal without a sustained effort by campaigners, from the hardy souls who turned up for years to tiny protests to ensure he was not forgotten, to those who brought the case to international attention and secured the visits by medical specialists and even the UN special rapporteur on torture, whose judgements damned Britain's courts and penal system in the eyes of the world.

The National Union of Journalists and the International Federation of Journalists have been steadfast supporters of Assange, the latter's deputy general secretary Tim Dawson in particular working closely with the Morning Star to ensure no twist and turn in the long saga went unreported in the British press. No other national daily covered every day of Assange's extradition hear-

ings So it is a moment to celebrate. An innocent man has been rescued from a terrible fate. The most powerful country on Earth has been forced to back down before grassroots pressure. But it is not an unqualified victory.

Assange is innocent: he should not have to plead guilty to anything to win his freedom. His doing so rests on a justified lack of confidence in US justice. We have seen, too, how hollow are the claims of British courts to uphold justice. Assange was blatantly a political prisoner.

The campaigner John Rees points out that "in the course of the court hearings it has become public knowledge that a lead witness for the prosecution lied, that Assange and his lawyers were spied on by the CIA, and that the CIA discussed at the highest levels plans to abduct or assassinate Assange. In any normal trial any one of these, let alone all of them, would have had the case dismissed."

Yet this was no normal trial. Washington needed to punish the man who exposed its war crimes: the civilian victims of its wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, the lawless behaviour of soldiers who laughed as they gunned down unarmed people from the air.

What a blow to the reputation of the leader of the so-called "free world." How awkward for its ongoing attempts - and those of the craven British politicians of both leading parties who have slavishly collaborated in the US persecution of Assange - to try to claim the moral high ground over rivals like Russia or China.

As we celebrate Assange's freedom, bear that in mind. The drive to a new world war continues: it will do so whoever is prime minister on July 5. When they bang the war drums, demand higher military budgets, assert the need to defend democracy from malign foreign powers, remember what we learned about the NATO war machine from the exposés of Julian Assange - and don't be taken in. (IPA Service)

The NEET paper leak: A timeline of delays and denials by the government



By: Abhik Deb

n Sunday, the Central Bureau of Investigation filed a first information report about alleged irregularities in the National Eligibility-cum-Entrance Test, which was conducted on May 5 for admissions to undergraduate medical courses.

The FIR was filed after the Economic Offences Unit of Bihar told the Centre that the irregularities in the examination "clearly suggests a paper leak".

The findings in the report submitted by the Economic Offences Unit of Bihar is significant because allegations of paper leak had emerged in the state on May 5 the day of the examination itself. The Bihar Police had even arrested two men in connection with the matter on the same day.

The Bihar Police made a total of 13 arrests before the CBI took over the investigation on Sunday. In Gujarat too, the police had registered a case of attempted malpractice in the examination, three days after it was held.

One of the arrested men in Bihar, who appeared for NEET, has confessed that the question paper was leaked a night before the examination.

These developments took place even as the Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan and the National Testing Agency, which conducted the examination, repeatedly denied large-scale irregularities in the examination.

Even the FIR filed by the CBI on Sunday has been registered on the basis of a complaint filed by the Union education ministry which only alleges "certain isolated incidents [that] occurred in a few states". The central government's decision to adopt this mode of denial seems to have delayed action by its agencies even as investigations in at least two states – Bihar and Gujarat – have been underway for more than a month.

Red flags

Hours after the NEET examination on May 5, an FIR was filed in the Shastri Nagar police station in Patna based on allegations that the question paper had been leaked.

On May 10, The Times of India cited the

nounced that the grace marks would be awarded in a press release on June 6, two days after the results were announced, sparking a controversy over the total scores obtained by some students. In a petition filed in the Supreme Court, the Students' Federation of India has submitted that the inflated marks led to 67 candidates securing the top rank, including six from the same examination centre. The petition sought the court's directions to quash the NEET examination, hold a re-test.

On June 13, the Centre told the Supreme Court that the grace marks would be cancelled. The submission was made in reply to a bunch of petitions alleging question paper leaks, grace marks being awarded arbitrarily and other irregularities in the entrance examination.

Even as the Centre cancelled the decision to award grace marks, it continued to claim that the question paper had not been leaked. Till as recently as on June 12, the National Testing Agency cited the incorrect distribution of question papers in Rajasthan as its defence against allegations of paper leak.

On June 13, Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan also said that there was no evidence of paper leak in the NEET examination. He also said that allegations of corruption in the National Testing Agency were unfounded.

It was only on June 21, after the Centre cancelled another examination – the University Grants Commission-National Eligibility Test as its question paper was leaked – that the minister took "moral responsibility" for loss of confidence among students in competitive examination processes. The University Grants Commission-National Eligibility Test for the post of assistant professor in governmentfunded universities and colleges held on June 18 had also been conducted by the National Testing Agency.

On June 22, the Centre removed National Testing Agency Director General Subodh Kumar Singh from his post.

Law delayed

The government's denial of irregularities in the NEET examination also reflected in the delay in the decisions it took to address

the matter. As the controversy over the NEET and University Grants Commission-National Eligibility Test exams erupted, the government notified the Public Examinations (Prevention of Unfair Means) Bill, 2024, on June 21.

Pakistan's tactical nuclear weapons limit India's conventional military options

By: Amey Velangi and Kartik Bommakanti

OP-ED

fter the overt nuclearisation of India and Pakistan in 1998, the Indian subcontinent sits under the ominous shadow of nuclear weapons. The effects of the long-standing rivalry between India and Pakistan, fuelled by historical baggage and territorial disputes, have also manifested in the nuclear realm of the relationship. While the possession of nuclear weapons has added a new lethal arrow in the quiver of both nations, the introduction of Nuclear Tactical Weapons (TNWs) by Pakistan injects a new element of uncertainty into this volatile relationship. Pakistan's perceived threat from India which emanates from its structural, institutional, and military weaknesses has prompted it to undertake military adventures in 1947, 1965, 1971, and 1999.

Failing which, it has come to a broader strategic conclusion that the Indian military modernisation, enabled by rapid economic and technological strides, makes India conventionally superior. India's conventional military superiority and Pakistan's desire to neutralise it through its TNWs have shaped Pakistan's defence build-up and its nuclear doctrine as a whole.

There is a contentious debate surrounding Pakistan's TNW programme, with proponents arguing that these weapons function as a vital deterrent against large-scale Indian conventional aggression. By introducing a new "rung" on the escalation ladder, TNWs supposedly compel India to exercise restraint in launching a conventional conflict, fearing the potential for rapid escalation to a nuclear exchange. This view, in theory, maintains a precarious form of deterrence stability.

However, critics vehemently challenge this view. They argue that TNWs lower the nuclear threshold and introduce a far greater risk of unintended escalation or miscalculation. This is central to understanding the implications of Pakistan's TNW policy. It hinges on whether the perceived deterrent effect genuinely enhances stability or whether the heightened risk of unintended nuclear escalation outweighs any potential benefits. Mass destruction: Tactical scale

Nuclear weapons have a popular

notion of having massive destructive potential, high yield rate, prolonged residual radiation, and extended nuclear fallout. However, the tactical version of it is majorly attributed to four major factors. First, the range and payload capacity of the delivery vehicle. Second, the yield of the device. Third, the geographical location or deployment area of the weapon. Fourth, the command and control.

Tactical nuclear weapons have a low range and low yield capacity to limit the destruction to a certain targeted area. The presumed area is the battlefield, unlike the countervalue or counterforce targets in the case of strategic nuclear weapons. The command and control of the TNWs are seemingly delegated to the area commander or a middle-rank military official conducting tactical operations on the field.

To understand the theoretical frame of this issue, it is essential to understand the need for Pakistan to acquire such capabilities. There are two major views on this. One is a short-term tactical view that says that it is to counter the 'Cold Start Doctrine' of the Indian Army, which is to conduct quick military strikes inside the Pakistani territory in a pre-emptive way to inflict significant attrition on the enemy. The Cold Start Doctrine emerged after Operation Parakram between 2002 and 2003.

TNWs as a deterrent: Compensating the imbalance

For more than seven decades, since its Independence, Pakistan's foreign policy and its larger security strategy have revolved around the question of how to balance, counter, or neutralise the perceived Indian threat.

The experts have tried to address this dilemma by adopting three approaches: Alliances with major powers to acquire high-tech defence capabilities, terrorism and proxy wars and nuclear deterrence have been integral to Pakistan's strategy. However, the most sustainable option is nuclear deterrence, which makes the strategic equation between India and Pakistan more precarious.

In fact, according to G. Parthasarthy, former ambassador to Pakistan, Pakistan's acquisition of nuclear weapons, was not because India had them, but because such weapons were necessary to balance India's conventional supe-

riority. Pakistan's commitment to full-spectrum nuclear deterrence means that the use of TNWs is integral to it.

When will Pakistan use its TNWs and what are the red lines drawn for their use? Lt. Gen Khalid Kidwai, Head of the Strategic Plans Division (SPD) that oversees Pakistan's nuclear command and control system, claimed that "nuclear weapons (strategic or tactical) would be used only if the very existence of Pakistan is at stake". He further elaborated a framework for its usage, in case deterrence fails.

If India, **1.** Attacks and conquers a large

part of its territory (Territorial or Space Threshold)

2. Destroys a large part of Pakistan's land or air forces (Military Threshold)

3. Proceeds to strangulate Pakistan economically. (Economic Threshold)

4. Pushes Pakistan into political destabilisation or creates internal subversion. (Domestic Threshold) TNWs: High chance of miscalculation

Introducing TNWs into the conventional battlefield generates apprehensions. The American expert Peter R. Lavoy observes that the last two red lines created by Pakistan, i.e. economic and domestic destabilisation are vaguely drawn and are a prelude to conventional war. The development and deployment of TNWs by Pakistan would lower the threshold for nuclear use. Pakistan's redlines drawn vaguely give it the room to instigate and initiate low-level attacks against India.

As strategic nuclear weapons, to some extent prevent a major allout war between two nuclear-powered nations, they provide a playfield for smaller and minimally scaled conflicts to increase. This creates an unstable environment for the relationship due to Pakistan's TNWs. Given the undeclared First Use (FU) doctrine of Rawalpindi, Pakistan has a longheld belief that being the weaker state in this relationship, it can compensate for that by using its TNWs in a conventional war with India. The first use of nuclear weapons by Pakistan would unsurprisingly escalate the conflict from a conventional war to a nuclear one

Another facet that is being missed by the Pakistanis is the

massive retaliation enshrined in India's nuclear doctrine. If Pakistan uses its TNWs in a conventional battle, India's massive retaliation may not be restricted to the tactical sphere of warfare escalating to a strategic nuclear exchange. But the larger question still remains; does Pakistan possess the necessary political will to escalate the conflict?

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TNWs: A political signalling tool

According to Bernard Brodie, the chief purpose of the states after the advent of nuclear weapons must be to avert wars and not to win. To avert wars would mean engaging in active efforts on the part of adversaries to not enter into a war but at the same time saying not to win seems to implicitly mean a war may be fought, yet not to achieve an absolute or decisive goal.

Due to 'mutually assured destruction (MAD)", which is the foundation of deterrence, no two nuclear-armed nations, would ever win if atomic weapons in a conflict were to be ever used. The destruction would be mutually assured, be it strategic or tactical. Consequently, nuclear adversaries would at most continue to strengthen their deterrent capabilities between each other to avoid any chance of a nuclear or conventional conflict.

Pakistan's TNWs might deter India's conventional military superiority from translating into territorial gains. The mere threat of nuclear escalation, even at a tactical level, could compel India to maintain a measured response in a potential conflict.

However, the actual use of TNWs carries immense risks of uncontrollable escalation and catastrophic humanitarian consequences. Therefore, Pakistan's TNW programme likely functions as a deterrent through credible signalling, not a tool for actual battlefield use.

However, strategic stability in South Asia is more likely to be affected in the foreseeable future by the growing asymmetry in conventional forces and the modernisation of strategic forces. In essence, strategic stability will also rest on both sides' willingness to take the risk of calling the other's bluff. The costs are high because a limited war started by Pakistan that involves the use of TNWs can potentially become a total war of annihilation. (*Courtesv: ORF*)

Hitler and the Nazis - Never again!

<u>By: Nargis Natarajan</u>

The wrongs which we seek to con-



flames of hatred, he also projected himself as the only one who could save Germany. And all his ideas worked especially since

police as saying that 20 students had received the question paper before the examination. The police identified Samastipur-resident Sikander Yadavendu as the person who rented a house in Patna to lodge the 20 aspirants who were given the question papers on May 4 - a day before the examination.

The police's version was corroborated by Anurag Yadav, a NEET candidate in Bihar, who told the authorities that Yadavendu, his uncle, had dropped him at a house in Patna where he was given the question paper.

Meanwhile, in Gujarat too, the police named three persons, including a school teacher in Godhra, in an FIR registered on May 8 for attempting to commit malpractice in the NEET examination.

The FIR stated that at the Jay Jalaram School, an examination centre in Godhra, students who had allegedly paid money to an alleged racket were asked to skip questions to which they did not know the answers during the examination. The answers to the blank questions were to be filled out by the teachers involved in the alleged racket, the FIR said. The ploy was thwarted during a raid at the examination centre by an inspection squad from the education department, according to the FIR. On June 14, the Gujarat Police arrested

five persons for alleged malpractice.

Even as these allegations were being investigated by the state police in Gujarat and Bihar, the National Testing Agency maintained that the examination had been conducted in a fair manner.

In a press release issued on the day of the examination, the agency said that in an "isolated incident" at a school in Rajasthan's Sawai Madhopur, incorrect question papers had been distributed. "Despite efforts by invigilators to prevent it, some candidates left the examination centre with question papers," the press release noted.

As a result, "the question paper was being circulated on the internet around 4 pm, but by that time the exam had already started at all other centres across the country", an official of the National Testing Agency told The Indian Express, "So, there has not been any 'leak' of the NEET UG question paper."

The National Testing Agency's press release on the day of the examination made no mention of the developments in Gujarat and Bihar. Nor did it say anything about the purported delay in distributing question papers that led to grace marks being awarded to 1,563 candidates in the NEET examination.

The National Testing Agency only an-

The law provides for imprisonment of up to 10 years and a penalty of up to Rs 1 crore for paper leaks that are the result of "organised crime". It had been passed by Parliament on February 6, but came to effect only after the law was notified on Friday. Four persons arrested in Maharashtra on Sunday in connection to the paper leak case, have been charged under the new law.

The Bihar and Gujarat Police were unable to file cases under this law as it had not been notified when the FIRs were registered in the two states. In addition, since the law cannot be implemented retrospectively, the CBI will not be able to prosecute culprits in the other paper leak case – that of the University Grants Commission-National Eligibility Test, as the FIR in the matter was registered on June 19.

Lack of cooperation?

Besides the failure to curb alleged malpractice in the NEET examination, the National Testing Agency has also come under the scanner for not doing enough to assist the Economic Offences Unit of Bihar in its investigation.

On the day of the examination itself, the Bihar Police had found burnt remains of a purported photocopy of a question paper from a house where the arrested NEET candidates were staying, The Indian Express reported on Monday. The Economic Offences Unit of Bihar has said that 68 questions retrieved from the burnt remains were the same as on the original question paper. The serial numbers of the questions on the retrieved question paper and the original paper were also the same.

The Economic Offences Unit was unable match the burnt remains of the question paper with the original one earlier due to a delay by the National Testing Agency, which only started sharing information a week ago, according to The Indian Express. On June 8, India Today reported that the Economic Offences Unit had received no response from the National Testing Agency after it asked for question papers for a forensic analysis of the burnt remains of the question papers it had found.

On June 15, The Telegraph too had reported that the Economic Offences Unit had in mid-May asked the National Testing Agency to provide information on the chain of custody of question papers. But the testing agency did not provide the inputs. (*Courtesy: Scroll.in*)

demn and punish have been so calculated, so malignant and so devastating that civilization cannot tolerate their being ignored, because it cannot survive their being repeated".

In the opening sentence of the statement of the Nuremberg Trial, one conducted against the peace of the world, a moral message was sent out by the Allies, to bring justice to some of the worst horrors humanity has ever seen. What makes it significant is that everyone involved in it represents the sinister influences that still continue to lurk long after their bodies have returned to dust.

Adolf Hitler, and all men who helped him in his evil mission were all living symbols of racial hatred, terrorism, violence, cruelty, arrogance and power. It's not about just a handful of evil people doing horrible things but how one man could convince a large majority of ordinary men to do it.

It's about deceiving millions with a machinery of propaganda. It's about abusing power.

The reason this docuseries (recreated with a visual storytelling) is important for ALL to watch is because it is time to retell a story that people seem to have forgotten.

According to the director, it was also to reach the millennials and a younger generation because of their high level of ignorance. What is scary is that for some there is a total holocaust denial. And even if some agree that it happened, what is scarier, frightening, terrifying and bloodcurdling is that they think that Hitler was right.

His book 'Mein Kampf', which is loaded with a cocktail of chilled hateful ideas of his plan for German conquest, has now become the bible for the haters and the Autocrats. This is dangerous.

Driven by ambition and ruthlessness, Hitler wasn't loyal even to his own people. He betrayed them often, because ultimately what mattered to him was to secure his own political survival. By being brutally decisive, he tapped into the myth of being the kind of leader that placed himself above politics and did only what was right for Germany.

Adolf Hitler had a knack for attracting the footloose, purposeless nationalists. It didn't matter if they were young or old but they had to be idealistic enough to devote their free time and their entire personalities to help Germany.

Hitler was also adept in changing narratives and although most of us would call him a lunatic, his blinded followers saw him as a man with a deep rooted national conscience.

He knew that even in a lunatic fringe of politics, you cannot attack directly but play with the minds of people and dismantle the system from within. He also knew that power

-🐼

can be built only if you put as many people in positions of influence.

With the help of the media, he crafted a mythical larger than life image of himself and projected himself the ultimate saviour. He pretended to be constantly busy, without any time for a regular marriage; because he was married to the nation.

He also eliminated any organisation that opposed him or posed a threat of becoming a seedbed of disagreement. He took a lot of credit where no credit was due, by exploiting existing plans for public work schemes.

This was in fact one of the most potent symbols of Nazi propaganda about combating unemployment. When one gamble paid off, it strengthened his ego and so he continued to gamble.

And he cultivated politics, not through debate but through violence, believing and making others believe that he was fulfilling one of the biggest injustices of history.

What is shocking is how the Germans never realised they were getting tricked and all their individual liberties were being taken away, one by one by one. I mean, how can people in the modern age, follow or seemingly become devotees of one man?

Perhaps because when for the 'forgotten' ones that always felt were dealt a bad hand, a leader comes, who taps into that fundamentalist disillusionment and projects an image of ceaseless activism, they get charmed. Even when violence is spread to attract headlines, the people are pleased that at least someone is doing something to keep the unruly 'others' in check.

He even made a film on himself, which was the greatest example of the Hitler myth showing him flying above the clouds and landing in Nuremberg. Much like Christ descending as the Son of God onto humanity!

As a spiritual shepherd, his communication with his 'herd' of sheeples was uncanny. They were always spellbound by his speeches believing everything, even the most foolish nonsense.

All his moves were calculated, like a man playing chess for even as he kept feeding the

he had a coterie of evil geniuses who handled everything. In order to harness Hitler's strength, the public image needed to be massaged and who could do it better than the media? They knew that all media is good media, and all coverage is good coverage.

Even if in the liberal circles it was considered a hostile coverage, at least people were talking about them. They were in the news and that's all that mattered.

When Hitler came into power, he started the ball rolling but by a sleight of hand. He created a façade of an economy that made it look as if Germany was tremendously prospering.

Instead the truth was that a lot was done on borrowed money or by printing notes. In order to pay it back he had to plunder the resources of the countries he went about conquering.

War, for Hitler, was a fundamental human activity, the motor of history. This is what he drove and believed would determine the rise and fall of a nation. He actually thought that only by conquering nations, one particular race would rise up to the pinnacle.

It wasn't just a lament that war was necessary. It was what the lunatic in him actually desired. The ideological and the racial struggle for Hitler were the two sides of the same coin.

The unparalleled nightmare of Hitler's reign, was dumping all Jews into ghettos in concentration camps and forcing them into a kind of slave subservience. His aim was to kill as many as possible and make the survivors a peasant class that would serve the Germans.

What is shocking is that even after everything was over, all the defendants actually believed that what they did was something glorious. With flimsy excuses and paltry evasions, they thought that the mass murders somehow elevated them to a higher moral sphere. No one stood up and pointed out to him that this was wrong!

What is also tragic is that even now, with the kind of divisions and the tremendous intolerance we have for each other, it feels like the world has forgotten the Holocaust.

And that is why the slogan 'NEVER AGAIN'- a phrase to denounce fascism was coined by the liberated prisoners who had been to hell and back is so important. In future our efforts should be to work for a better world where there will be no more wars.

I just finished watching and it was so creepy to know that the unspeakable acts were committed by a human being. A sick, diseased maniac but a human being nonetheless! And it is important for us to know how this crazy man came to power so that it can be prevented from happening again. (*Courtesy: The Citizen*)

World

Red Cross envoy: Congo conflict has worsened with sharp increases in sexual violence and wounded

UNITED NATIONS, June 27: The decades-old conflict in Congo's mineralrich east has "drastically deteriorated" since early 2022, and gotten even worse since last October, with sharp increases in sexual violence, the number of wounded, and child recruitment, the top Red Cross official in the country said on Wednesday.

Francois Moreillon called Congo a "double-edged crisis," with the last 30 years of conflict weakening the capacity of government, including at local levels, to deliver basic services such as water, education and food.

When it came to protecting civilians, Moreillon said the crisis was "extremely acute."

Eastern Congo has struggled with armed violence as more than 120 groups fight for power, land and valuable mineral resources, while others try to defend their communities. Some armed groups

have been accused of mass killings. The head of the International Committee of the Red Cross, known as the ICRC, said "all indicators are going through the roof" since October 1 when fighting resumed between Congolese government forces with their allies, and the M23 rebel group

Congo's President Felix Tshisekedi, along with the US and UN experts, accuses neighbouring Rwanda of giving military backing to M23.

Rwanda denies the claim, but in February it effectively admitted that it has troops and missile systems in eastern Congo to safeguard its security, pointing to a build-up of Congolese forces near the border.

Moreillon told several reporters at the office of the ICRC's UN envoy that the number of displaced Congolese rose from 5.6 million in early 2022 to nearly 7.4 million now, which makes Congo



one of the most serious crises for displacement on the planet.'

He said another escalating indicator is the level of sexual violence. In Goma, the largest city in eastern Congo, he said the number of incidents of sexual violence in the first half of 2024 rose 90 per cent compared with 2023 - from 7,500 incidents last year to around 15,000 this year. Moreillon cited the case of a woman

the ICRC cared for who had been raped twice and explained that women in

groups went to fetch wood "taking condoms with them to try to convince the rapist to wear them while they were raped.

This was not just to prevent getting pregnant or sexually transmitted diseases, but also to prevent them from being ordered to leave the house if their husbands learned they were raped, he said

Moreillon said sexual violence can not only be a weapon of war but also a product of decades of war where "anyone with a gun feels he can do whatever he - and the fact that there is imwants" punity for these crimes "does not help." The ICRC has also witnessed an increase in child recruitment, with estimates that it's increased roughly 80 per cent in some areas. "That could be only

the tip of the iceberg," he said. A key reason is that fighting has gotten so intense that armed groups need new

recruits to replace dead combatants, he

said, and children can either be convinced or forced.

Several kids he interviewed said they joined because they thought they would get respect, he said. When families don't give their children to armed groups they are "taxed" and then hand them over to the recruiters.

Another indicator is the number of wounded civilians seeking treatment, Moreillon said.

The ICRC supports three hospitals in eastern Congo including one in Goma where it had to increase the number of surgical teams from two last year to three this year who are working day and night, he said

Last year, Moreillon said, 1,050 cases were treated at the Goma hospital, and just in February this year the ICRC treated 350 cases - a third of last year's caseload in just one month. "So that's a clear indicator of the severity of the intensity of the conflict," he said.

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The ICRC head in Congo said what has changed is that more sophisticated weapons are being used combined with increased fighting in crowded urban set-

He said 45 per cent of those wounded by weapons are civilians, and about 40 per cent of the wounds are caused by shrapnel which wasn't the case last year when most wounds were caused either by bullets or knives.

What about deaths? Moreillon said it's very difficult to get figures, but if the number of wounded "is drastically increasing" this must also be the case for the number killed.

Moreillon appealed to donors to help the Congolese in need, saying his budget for Congo this year - 85 million Swiss francs (USD 95 million) - is only 22 per cent funded. (AP)

Armored vehicles rammed into the doors of Bolivia's govt palace on Wednesday Bolivian general arrested after apparent failed

coup attempt as government faces new crisis

LA PAZ, June 27: Led by a top general vowing to "restore democracy," armored vehicles rammed the doors of Bolivia's government palace on Wednesday in what the president called a coup attempt, then quickly retreated — the latest crisis in the South American country facing a political battle and an economic crisis.

Within hours, the nation of 12 million people saw a rapidly moving scenario in which the troops seemed to take control of the government of President Luis Arce. He vowed to stand firm and named a new army commander, who immediately ordered the troops to stand down.

Soon the soldiers pulled back, along with a line of military vehicles, ending the rebellion after just three hours. Hundreds of Arce's supporters then rushed the square outside the palace, waving Bolivian flags, singing the national anthem and cheering

The soldiers' retreat was followed by the arrest of army chief Gen. Juan José Zúñiga, after the attorney general opened an investigation.

Armored vehicles rammed into the doors of Bolivia's government palace Wednesday as President Luis Arce said the country faced an attempted coup, insisted he stands firm and urged people to mobilize. Government Minister Eduardo del Castillo said that in addition to Zúñiga, former navy Vice Adm. Juan Arnez Salvador was taken into custody.

"What was this group's goal? The goal was to overturn the democratically elected authority," del Castillo told journalists in announcing the arrests.

Late Wednesday, Defense Minister Edmundo Novillo said "everything is now under control." Surrounded by the new military chiefs appointed by Arce, Novillo said that Bolivia lived a "failed coup.

The apparent coup attempt came as the country has faced months of tensions and political fights between Arce and his one-time ally, former leftist president Evo Morales, over control of the ruling party. It also came amid a severe economic crisis.

The clashes have paralyzed the government's efforts to deal with the economic crisis. For example, Morales' allies in Congress have consistently thwarted Arce's at-



Zúñiga referenced that paralysis

during the rebellion, telling reporters the military was tired of the infighting and was seeking "to restore democracy.'

"We are listening to the cry of the people because for many years an elite has taken control of the country," he said, adding that politicians are "destroying the country: look at what situation we are in, what crisis they have left us

> "The armed forces intend to restore the democracy, to make it a true democracy," he said. The rapidly unfolding crisis began in the early afternoon as the streets of La Paz started filling with

soldiers. Arce tweeted that the troops deployment was irregular and soon he and other political figures warned of an attempted coup. Still, the apparent attempt to depose the sitting president seemed to lack any meaningful support, and even Arce's rivals closed ranks to defend democracy and repudiate the uprising

In a twist, Zúñiga claimed in comments to journalists before his arrest that Arce himself told the general to storm the palace in a political move. "The president told me: 'The situation is very screwed up, very critical. It is necessary to prepare something to raise my popularity'," Zúñiga quoted the Bolivian leader as saying.

Zúñiga said he asked Arce if he should "take out the armored vehicles?" and Arce replied, "Take them out."

Justice Minister Iván Lima denied Zúñiga's claims, saying the general was lying and trying to justify his actions for which he said he will face justice.

Prosecutors will seek the maximum sentence of 15 to 20 years in prison for Zúñiga, Lima said via the social media platform X, "for having attacked democracy and the Constitution."

The spectacle shocked Bolivians, no stranger to political unrest; in 2019 Morales was ousted as president following an earlier political crisis.

As the crisis unfolded Wednesday, Arce confronted Zúñiga in the palace hallway, as shown on video on Bolivian television. "I am your captain, and I order you to withdraw your soldiers, and I will not allow this insubordination," Arce

Surrounded by ministers, he added: "Here we are, firm in Casa Grande, to confront any coup attempt. We need the Bolivian people to organize.'

Less than an hour later, Arce announced new heads of the army, navy and air force amid the roar of supporters, and thanked the country's police and regional allies for standing by him. Arce said the troops who rose against him were "staining the uniform" of the mili-

"I order all that are mobilized to return to their units," said the newly named army chief José Wilson Sánchez. "No one wants the images we're seeing in the streets." Shortly after, the armored vehicles roared out of the plaza, tailed

by hundreds of military fighters as police in riot gear set up blockades outside the government palace.

The incident was met with a wave of outrage by other regional leaders, including the Organization of American States, Chilean President Gabriel Boric, the leader of Honduras, and former Bolivian leaders.

Gustavo Flores-Macias, a professor of government and public policy focusing on Latin America at Cornell University, said it's important that world leaders and organizations keep up their condemnation of the coup attempt as developments unfold. (AP)

Heavy police presence in Nairobi ahead of planned protests despite Kenyan president's U-turn Gaitho, one of the many activists

NAIROBI, June 27: Heavy security was deployed on Thursday in Kenya's capital Nairobi ahead of planned protests against a controversial finance bill, despite the president's decision not to sign it after the plans sparked deadly chaos in the capital and saw protesters storming and burning part of

the parliament building. Protesters who said last week that they would march to the State House on Thursday say they still do not trust President William Ruto, who has said the tax hikes would be withdrawn and budget

cuts would be made Deputy President Rigathi Gachagua on Wednesday urged the young protesters to call off planned protests and give

dialogue chance. The leaderless movement began online with

young people demanding that legislators reject the proposed tax hikes. It later

dent's resignation after the bill was passed. On Tuesday thousands of protesters stormed Kenya's parlia-

ment, burning parts of the building and sending lawmakers fleeing. Police opened fire and at least 22 people were reportedly killed in the chaos

Activists were divided about the agenda of Thursday's protests. One protester, Boniface Mwangi, urged others to peacefully march to parliament road where protesters were killed to pay their respects. "Invasion of the State House isn't a soinsisted that young people should march to the State House. Activists and others warned the stakes were higher than in past protesters because Ruto vowed on

mobilizing for the protests online.

Tuesday to quash unrest "at whatever cost". Analyst Javas Bigambo told The Associated Press that the discontent is partly because Kenyans do not trust the president to implement the austerity measures he announced on Wednesday. "Kenyans still have a problem

with the economy and wastage in government," he said.

U.S Secretary of State Antony J. Blinken on Wednesday spoke with Ruto thanking him for taking steps

> "The Secretary underscored the importance of security forces demonstrating restraint and refraining from violence and encouraged prompt

investigations into allegations of human rights abuses," a statement

Ruto has been embraced by the U.S as a welcome, stable partner in Africa while frustration grows elsewhere on the continent with the U.S. and some other Western powers. In May, Ruto went to Washington in the first state visit by an African leader in 16 years. On Tuesday, as the protests erupted, the U.S. designated Kenya as its first major non-NATO ally in sub-Saharan Africa, a largely symbolic act but one highlighting their secu-

to reduce tensions





to lift Conservatives ahead of elections

Sunak as prime minister.

Sunak struggles with missteps while trying

LONDON, June 27: British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak has portrayed himself as thorough and evidence-led throughout his relatively brief political career, but there's always been a nagging question over the keenness of his political antenna.

The general election campaign over the past five weeks has clearly shown that he hasn't got the instinctive touch of some of his predecessors, such as Tony Blair or even Boris Johnson.

Sunak's campaign has seen several missteps since he announced the July 4 election date in the pouring rain in late May, including his suspension of candidates mired in a scandal over betting on the date of the election - a week after Labour Party leader Keir Starmer pressed him to do so.

The biggest blunder -one that prompted him to apologize - was his decision to leave the 80-year D-day commemorations in northern France on June 6 early.

Critics said the decision to skip the international event that closed the commemorations showed disrespect to the veterans and diminished the U.K.'s international standing. Other world))SECURE FUTURE)

leaders including President Joe borrowing costs surging. Biden, French President Emmanuel Macron, German Chancellor Olaf Scholz and Ukrainian leader Volodymyr Zelenskyy years

were all present. As was Starmer, who is the favorite to replace needed to deliver a boost to Since then, Sunak hasn't been able to lift the poll ratings for his Conservative Party, which have been depressed over the past few years as a result of the actions of his two immediate predecessors. First, Johnson was forced to quit after being adjudged to have ship approval.' lied to Parliament over breaches of coronavirus lockdowns at his It must be said that Sunak isn't

offices in Downing Street. Then, trust in the Conservatives tanked during the chaotic - and traumatic - 49-day leadership of Liz Truss, whose unfunded tax cuts roiled financial markets and sent

Opinion polls suggest the Conservatives are likely to lose power for the first time in 14 "The Conservatives badly

Sunak's leader approvals or their leader-focused campaign risks reinforcing weakness rather than building strength," said Rob Ford, a political scientist at the University of Manchester. "A clumsy and error-strewn Sunak campaign has, however, entirely failed to shift the dial on leader-

the most experienced campaigner. He's only been a member of parliament since 2015 and he has never been prominent in, let alone at the forefront of, a general election campaign. (AP)

new multiwarhead missile

N Korea says it tested a

SEOUL, June 27: North Korea said on Thursday it had successfully tested a multiwarhead missile in the first known launch of a developmental weapon coveted by leader Kim Jong Un to overwhelm U.S. and South Korean missile defenses. South Korea quickly dismissed the claim as deception to cover up a failed launch.

North Korea's state media said the launch on Wednesday tested the separation and guidance control of individual mobile warheads to ensure the capability of the Multiple Independent Reentry Vehicles. It said the separated warheads "were guided correctly to the three coordinate targets" and a decoy that separated from the missile was verified by radar.

If confirmed, it would be North Korea's first public launch event related to the development of a multiwarhead missile, though at a preliminary stage.

South Korea's military said later Thursday that a joint analysis by South Korean and U.S. authorities assessed that the North Korean missile launch failed.

Joint Chiefs of Staff spokesperson Lee Sung Joon told reporters that the separation of warheads in MIRV tests happens in descending stages but the North Korean missile exploded in the

initial stage of its flight. He said North Korean photos of the launch showed a weapon similar to a liquidfuel Hwasong-17 ICBM that the country test-fired in March 2023. The South Korean military's ear-

lier assessment Wednesday was that a suspected solid-fueled hypersonic missile was launched and exploded off the North's east coast, scattering fragments in the water. It said it detected more smoke than normal launches, suggesting a possible combustion issue caused by an engine fault.

A multiwarhead missile was among the high-tech weapons systems Kim cited on his wish list during a ruling party meeting in early 2021, along with spy satellites, solidfuel intercontinental ballistic missiles, hypersonic weapons and submarine-launched nuclear missiles. North Korea has since performed a series of tests to develop such weapons systems.

"I had been anticipating a MIRV test for some time now, as this was one of the last remaining items on Kim Jong Un's modernization wish list from the 8th Party Congress back in January 2021," said Ankit Panda, a senior analyst at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. (AP)

lution," he wrote on X. But Francis rity partnership. (Al

Former President Rajapaksa leaves for China

COLOMBO, June 27: Former Sri Lankan president Mahinda Rajapaksa on Thursday left on an official visit to Beijing where he will meet Premier Li Qiang and Foreign Minister Wang Yi to discuss the island nation's debt restructuring agreement with China.

China is Sri Lanka's largest bilateral lender owning 52 per cent of the USD 40 billion external debt when Sri Lanka announced its sovereign default in 2022.

President Ranil Wickremesinghe on Wednesday announced that debt restructuring agreements were finalised with bilateral lenders, including India and China, in Paris, describing the development as a "significant milestone" that will bolster international trust in the cash-strapped island nation. The debt restructuring deal entails allowing time till 2043 to repay USD 4.2 billion of Chinese loans – the bulk of which was drawn during the Rajapaksa presidency 2005-15.

On Thursday, Daily Mirror quoted sources to report that 78-year-old patriarch of the Rajapaksa dynasty's visit was on an invitation by Foreign Minister Wang to attend the commemorative events in Beijing marking the 70th anniversary of the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence.

The event would be attended by Chinese President Xi Jinping and other leading Communist Party of China (CPC) members.

China will hold the Conference Marking the 70th Anniversary of the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence Friday in Beijing, a foreign ministry spokesperson said on Tuesday.

"On the sidelines of the events, Rajapaksa will hold discussions with Premier Li and Minister Yi on areas of mutual interest and also development projects which will benefit Sri Lanka," the news portal said.

Rajapaksa will also discuss Sri Lanka's debt restructuring agreement and express his gratitude for the assistance given by China and the Exim Bank of China, it said. (PTI)

Women's rights will be raised at the UN meeting China calls on scientists of all nations to study lunar samples, but notes obstacle with the US being attended by Taliban, UN official says

UNITED NATIONS, June 27: The UN po-

litical chief who will chair the first meeting between Afghanistan's Taliban rulers and envoys from about 25 countries answered sharp criticism that Afghan women have been excluded, saying on Wednesday that women's rights will be raised at every session.

Undersecretary-General Rosemary DiCarlo stressed to a small group of reporters that the two-day meeting starting Sunday is an initial engagement aimed at initiating a step-by-step process with the goal of seeing the Taliban "at peace with itself and its neighbours and adhering to international law," the UN Charter, and human rights.

This is the third UN meeting with Afghan envoys in Qatar's capital, Doha, but the first that the Taliban are attending. They weren't invited to the first and refused to attend the second

Other attendees include envoys from the European Union, the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation, the United States, Russia, China and several of Afghanistan's neighbours, DiCarlo said.

The Taliban seized power in Afghanistan in 2021 as United States and NATO forces withdrew following two decades of war. No country officially recognises them as Afghanistan's government, and the UN has said that recognition is almost impossible while bans on female education and employment remain in place and women can't go out without a male guardian. When DiCarlo met with senior Taliban officials in Kabul in May, she said she made clear that the international community is concerned

about four things: the lack of an inclusive government, the denial of human rights especially for women and girls, and the need to combat terrorism and the narcotics trade. (AP)



BANGKOK, June 27: China's space officials said Thursday they welcomed scientists from around the world to apply to study the lunar rock samples that the Chang'e 6 probe brought back to Earth in a historic mission, but noted there were limits to that cooperation, specifically with the United States.

Officials said at a televised news conference in Beijing meant to introduce the mission's achievements that any cooperation with the U.S. would be

hinged on removing an American law that bans direct bilateral cooperation with NASA.

"The source of the obstacle in US-China aerospace cooperation is still in the Wolf Amendment," said Bian Zhigang, vice chair of the China National Space Administration. "If the U.S. truly wants to hope to began regular aerospace cooperation, I think they should take the appropriate measures to remove the obstacle." The Wolf Amendment was enacted in 2011 and prevents direct U.S.-Chinese bilateral cooperation except in cases where the FBI can certify that there is no national security risk to sharing information with the Chinese side in the course of work.

Still, China could cooperate with scientists of other countries. It worked with the European Space Agency, France, Italy and Pakistan in the

Chang'e 6 mission.

"China welcomes scientists from all countries to apply according to the processes and share in the benefits," said Liu Yunfeng, director of the international cooperation office of the China National Space Administration. Meanwhile, little information about the global first achieved Tuesday was announced. Chinese officials declined to reveal how many samples they actually gathered or any preliminary find-

"I'm afraid this matter will not be revealed until tomorrow, so I hope everyone can wait patiently for another day,' Chang'e 6 chief designer Hu Hao said at the news conference. On Monday, Chinese scientists said that they anticipate the returned samples will include 2.5 million-year-old volcanic rock and other material that scientists hope will

answer questions about geographic differences on the moon's two sides. The mission had aimed to gather two kilograms (more than four pounds) of material.

The near side of the moon is what is seen from Earth, and the far side faces outer space. The far side is also known to have mountains and impact craters and is much more difficult to reach.

The probe's journey to the far side of the moon was historic in that it was the first time a probe had successfully taken off and brought back samples from the far side directly. Previous samples thought to be from the far side of the moon are from meteorites found on Earth

The probe had landed in the moon's South Pole-Aitken Basin, an impact crater created more than 4 billion years ago. (AP)

NORTHEAST

A Sharda devi discusses current situation **Repoll ordered in 1 polling station** Manipur BJP president meets Shah under Dimapur Municipal Council HT Correspondent DIMAPUR, June 27: The State Election Commis-

IMPHAL, June 27: Manipur unit BJP president A Sharda Devi discussed the ongoing Manipur crisis during a meeting with Union Home minister Amit Shah in New Delhi

FRIDAY, JUNE 28, 2024

During the meeting, the Manipur unit BJP chief drew the attention of the Union Home minister on the need for Centre's immediate intervention to end the ongoing crisis with a solution.

She also conveyed the aspirations of the people while highlighting the efforts on the part of the BJP-led government in the state to address the crisis, the BJP Manipur Pradesh stated in a post on its official social media platform.

"Met Hon'ble Home Minister, Mananiya Shri Amit Shah ji, for an extensive discussion on the current



situation in Manipur. Conveyed the people's aspirations and urged immediate attention to bring per-

to take place in August.

will support us.'

proach.

Hrangkhawl expressed dissatisfac-

criticising its occasional negative ap-

viding maximum support for smooth rehabilitation," the post added.

In response, the Union Home minister assured that the Centre is aware of the delicate situation on the ground and committed to uplifting the people's aspirations, the post claimed.

The violence in Manipur which erupted in May last year has so far claimed more than 221 lives while displacing over 50,000 people after their houses were torched or vandalized during the peak of the violence.

Of late, the violence hit a relatively peaceful Jiribam district where more than 100 houses belonging to both the conflicting communities were reduced to ashes while displacing hundreds of

sion has ordered repoll at polling station no. 4 under Ward 20 of Dimapur Municipal Council. The repoll will be held from 7.30 am to 4 pm on June 28.

State election commissioner T John Longkumer, in an order dated June 26, said the poll taken at the polling station on June 26 has been declared void, under the provisions of Section 31(1) of the Nagaland Municipal Act, 2023 and Rule 66(a) of the Nagaland Municipal Election Rules, 2023, on the basis of the report submitted by the returning officer, Dimapur Municipal Council, and after taking all material circumstances into account.

In another release, Longkumer said a provisional 83.54% voter turnout was recorded in the urban local body elections in the state on June 26.

He said the Atoizu Town Council under Zunheboto district recorded the highest voter turnout with a poll percentage of 95.47% while the Changtongya Town Council registered the lowest turnout with 67.70%. He added that the polling in 24 municipalities

spread across 420 polling stations and 214 wards was held peacefully, except in one polling station under

Dimapur Municipal Council. A total of 523 candidates, 325 males and 198 females, were in the contest. Meanwhile, the Nagaland Pradesh Congress Committee (NPCC) on Thursday expressed shock and pain at the alleged poll-related violence perpetrated by the supporters of NDPP candidate Imlikumzuk at the residence of INC candidate from Alongmen ward Bendangchuba on the polling day.

Condemning the vandalism and physical assault against its candidate's supporters and family members, the NPCC urged the law enforcement agencies and the State Election Commission to take the strictest action against the hooligans responsible for this "dastardly act".

It is for information of all concerned that the under-

In this regard, if any person has any

Sd/-

Assistant Commissioner &

Executive Magistrate, Nagaon

Form No. 3 [See Regulation-15 (1)(a)] / 16(3)

PUBLIC NOTICE

signed is assigned to conduct Enquiry in to the matter regard-

ing firing incident that took place near Nangaldhuwa under

Rupahihat Police Station on 01-05-2023, resulting in injury of

One person namely, Ramijul Hogue (28 yrs), S/o Late Amiruddin

of Vill:- Nangaldhuwa PS- Rupahihat, Dist:- Nagaon (Assam) in

connection with C No.213/2023 U/S 353/224 IPC R/W (b) and

information/knowledge, he/she may attend the office chamber

of the undersigned at Room No.7, ground floor, D. C's Office,

DEBTS RECOVERY TRIBUNAL GUWAHATI

G.S. Road, Ulubari, Guwahti- 781007 (Assam)

Case No.: 0A/165/2024

YES BANK LIMITED

MR SUNIL KUMAR VERMA & Anr

SUMMONS

NHEREAS this Hon'ble Tribunal is pleased to issue summons/ notice on the sai

application under section 19(4) of the Act, (OA) filed against you for recovery of debts

n accordance with sub-section (4) of section 19 of the Act, you, the defendants are

To show cause within thirty days of the service of summons **Publication there c**

of **Rs.6319312.06/-** (application along with copies of documents etc. annexed).

as to why relief prayed for should not be granted;

Suwarna Bhawan, House No. 12, New Town Path, Near Hanu

Rupahihat P.S.Case No.218/23 U/S 353/224, IPC.

Nagaon w.e.f 27/06/2024 to 29/06/2024

No. NRAd 15/2023/997

<u>6 ARRESTED</u> Single mother publicly thrashed in Meghalaya

SHILLONG, June 27: A woman was publicly thrashed by her relatives for having an affair and a video of the incident that happened in Meghalaya's West Garo Hills district went viral on social media, police said on Thursday.

Six people were arrested in connection with the incident that happened in Lower Teksagre village in Dadenggre sub-division on Tuesday, they said.

The woman, a single mother in her mid-20s, was asked to appear before a kangaroo court in her village. Later, she was dragged by her hair by four men and thrashed with sticks in front of a mob that watched, they added.

The entire episode was captured in a video that went viral on social media, triggering a furore.

Superintendent of Police Abraham T Sangma told PTI that six persons, all her close relatives, were arrested on Wednesday within hours of the video going viral.

"While two people were picked up by the police from the village, the rest surrendered. They have been brought back to the district headquarters town," he said. The State Women's Commission has also taken suo-moto cognisance of the incident and has sent a team to meet the victim, officials said. (PTI)

3 die in accident near river bank in Mizoram

AIZAWL, June 27: At least three persons, including a Myanmar national, died in an accident while digging sand on the banks of the Tiau

"Additionally, highlighted the need for resettling IDPs and prothem. (NNN) manent solution and tranquility to BJP-ally Tipra Motha likely to contest panchayat polls alone in Tripura

AGARTALA, June 27: Tipra no point in remaining in the govern-Motha supremo Pradyot Kishore ment," he asserted. Manikya Debbarama on Thursday

Hrangkhawl also voiced frustration over the lack of implementation said the party should prepare independently for the upcoming panof the tripartite agreement between chayat elections in Tripura, expected the Centre, state government, and Tipra Motha aimed at resolving is-In a Facebook post, he stated, sues of indigenous communities.

the state, while appreciating the

ongoing efforts," the post stated.

"Tipra Motha should ready itself for "We are dissatisfied with the curthe panchayat polls based on our rent progress on this agreement. Why own strength and merit. We cannot hasn't the Ministry of Home Affairs convened the first meeting to impleconfine ourselves to limited areas. Let's prepare for the elections indement it? Why is there a lack of rependently. If we are strong, people spect for the agreement?" he questioned.

Speaking to reporters, Tipra Motha president Bijoy Kumar In response to queries, the former rebel leader noted that Tipra Motha was not consulted regarding the uption with the BJP-led government, coming panchayat elections. "We would prefer if Tipra Motha contests the elections independently," he "While we are aligned with the added.

Tipra Motha emerged as the prigovernment, we have responsibilities to fulfill. If we cannot meet our remary opposition in Tripura by securponsibilities to our people, there is ing 13 out of 60 Assembly seats in



the 2023 elections. Subsequently, it firmed the party's right to express its joined the BJP-led coalition govern-

ment after signing an agreement with "In politics, anything is possible. the Centre and state government prior to the Lok Sabha elections, aiming to address indigenous issues. Reacting to the statements by Tipra Motha's supremo, BJP state general secretary Amit Rakshit afship," he remarked. (PTI)

political aspirations

There is still time before the panchayat elections. Tipra Motha previously contested alongside BJP in Lok Sabha elections. They may discuss the matter with our central leader-

Huge cache of arms and ammunition recovered in Manipur



search operations and area domination conducted by security forces in the fringe and vulnerable areas of hill and valley districts", the state police said in a statement

Imphal East district is in the valley area while a portion of Bishnupur district is in the hills.

During a search operation at Keinou Maning near the High Canal in Bishnupur district, one SMG carbine, one 9 mm pistol, nine high-explosive grenades, two smoke bombs and different types of ammunition were found, the police said.

mer Lok Sabha MP from Sikkim Pahalwan Subba died on Thursday at a hospital near Gangtok following a prolonged illness, his family said.

Subba, 90, had successfully contested the 1980 election on a ticket of the Sikkim Janata Party (SJP) and had served as an MP till 1984. He was the second MP of the state and the first one to have won in a contest.

part of India, Congress

To disclose particulars of properties or assets other than properties and asset specified by the applicant under serial number 3A of the original application iii) You are restrained from dealing with or disposing of secured assets or such othe assets and properties disclosed under serial number 3A of the original application

pending hearing and disposal of the application for attachment of properties; u chall not t v of sala course of his business any of the assets over which security interest is created

ummons under sub-section (4) of section 19 of the Act, read with sub-rule (2A) of rule 5 of the Debt Recovery Tribunal (Procedure) Rules, 1993.

Sikkim's second Lok

Sabha MP dies at 90

R/O HOUSE NO 48 PUBERUN PATH HATIGAON CHARIALI KAMRUP METRO DISPUR GUWAHATI-781038 WHEREAS, **OA/165/2024** was listed before Hon'ble Presiding Officer/Registrar o 03/06/2024.

After Sikkim became a

(1) MR SUNIL KUMAR VERMA S/O LATE BINOD SHANKAR PRASAD VERMA R/O HOUSE NO 48 PUBERUN PATH HATIGAON CHARIALI KAMRUP METRO DISPUR GUWAHATI - 781038 (2) MRS GEETA SINGH VERMA W/O SUNIL KUMAR VERMA

directed as under:-

GANGTOK, June 27: For-

river in Mizoram's Champhai district on Thursday, police said.

The incident occurred around 11 am near Melbuk village when a portion of the surface caved in as they were engaged in the digging operation, a police officer said. While two people died on the spot, the Myanmar national succumbed to his injuries en route to a nearby hospital, he said. One person was injured in the incident, and he has been admitted to Champhai district hospital, the officer added. (PTI)

IMPHAL, June 27: Security forces recovered a huge cache of arms and ammunition during search operations conducted in parts of Imphal East and Bishnupur districts, the police said on Thursday.

Eleven grenades, six IEDs, five .303 rifles, three detonators, a carbine, one handgun, various types of bombs and ammunition, besides four walkie-talkies and two radio sets were found.

The recoveries were made during

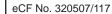
In another operation at the hill ranges of Sanasabi Natum Ching in Imphal East district, five .303 rifles, two 12bore guns, three long-range improvised heavy Mortars, one 9mm Pistol six Improvised Explosive Bombs and other items were recovered.

Meanwhile, the Assam Rifles said that the para-military force in coordination with CRPF and Manipur Police conducted a joint combing operation in Jiribam district on Wednesday after miscreants attempted to torch an abandoned house. (PTI)

leader Chhatra Bahadur Chhetri was elected unopposed from the seat in the 1977 Lok Sabha polls.

Subba's mortal remains will be taken to his ancestral village Timburbung in the Soreng district where his cremation will take place on Friday, his family said.

Chief Minister Prem Singh Tamang expressed his condolences to Subba's family. (PTI)



and / or other assets and properties specified or disclosed under serial numbe 3A of the original application without the prior approval of the Tribunal You shall be liable to account for the sale proceeds realised by sale of secure assets or other assets and properties in the ordinary course of business and deposit such sale proceeds in the account maintained with the bank or financial institutions holding security interest over such assets. You are also directed to file the written statement with a copy thereof furnished to the pplicant and to appear before Registrar on 23/07/2024 at 10:30 A.M. failing which the application shall be heard and decided in your absence Given under my hand and the seal of this Tribunal on this date: 05/06/2024 Signature of the Officer Authorised to issue summon Registrar Seal **Debts Recovery Tribuna** Note: Strike out whichever is not applicable Guwahati

M'laya BJP concerned on high drug trafficking in state

SHILLONG, June 27: BJP chief spokesperson of menace; a menace which has affected the lives of many Meghalaya, M Kharkrang on Thursday said the Meghalaya unit of the party, like every other responsible citizen of the state, is deeply concerned by the high drug trafficking in the state, especially in Shillong. The party urged the government including the police, to use every resource and means at their disposal to control this

a youth and has adversely impacted numerous families, in the process afflicting our entire society, he said in a statement. Kharkrang then said, while the state BJP has appreciated the government's recent efforts through the Social Welfare Department to involve all shareholders by means of the DREAM Project, more needs to be

done and the party insists that such attempts by the Govt, must result in tangible results on ground.

He also said BJP Meghalaya whole heartedly applauds the recent crackdown of the police on drug traffickers in Polo area, as well as entry points of the state, leading to the arrest of one of the kingpins - Maya Gowla – from Khliehriat. (NNN)

MISSING PERSON Miss Shruti Rani

The above is the photograph of one Miss Shruti Rani (17 yrs) D/O Sri Praveen Panchal, Shiv Colony, Shantinagar, Mazra road, Shamli, Uttar Pradesh 247776 who has been missing since 13/06/2024 at around 6 PM from her home

This refers to DGP Grievance Cell email 2853 dated 25.06.2024.

The Descriptive roll of the missing person: Miss Shruti Rani

(a) Complexion	- Fair.
(b) Age	 17 years.
(c) Hair	- Black

All out efforts may be taken to trace out/recover the above noted missing/ untraced person at the earliest and result thereof may be intimated to the office of the undersigned for further necessary action.

> Sd/-Superintendent of Police. Dibrugarh, Assam

Janasanyog /D/1986/24/28-Jun-24

Financial assistance to over 80,000 natural disaster hit farmers

Government will pay an assistance of ₹8,500 per hectare



AGARTALA, June 27: Over 80,000 farmers in Tripura who have been affected by natural disasters will be given financial assistance amounting to ₹ 23.61 crore, state Agriculture Minister Ratan Lal Nath said.

A total of 58,200 farmers were affected in November last year, while 20,078 farmers were affected in December last year. In May, another spell of disaster affected

2,134 farmers, he said. "The Agriculture Department after carrying

out an extensive survey, submitted a report before the Revenue Department seeking ₹ 14.58

crore to compensate the affected farmers. The Horticulture Department also separately conducted surveys," Nath said.

"The government has sanctioned a total of ₹ 23.61 crore, excluding Rs 44.60 lakh to be given under the Fasal Bima Yojana. The compensation will be given to the farmers at a programme in Julaibari on July 4," he added. The government will pay an assistance of ₹ 8,500 per hectare, Nath said. The farmers will also separately get compensated under the PM Fasal Bima Yojana and that money will be credited within 15 days, he said. (PTI)

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- He/She must not be drawing any pension from any other source except under the Emplovees Provident Fund.
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NO APPLICATION WILL BE ENTERTAINED AFTER LAST DATE.

APPLICATION PROFORMA CAN BE DOWNLOADED FROM FORM SECTION UNDER DOCUMENT SECTION OF THE WEBSITE http://dipr.assam.gov.in

> Sd/-Director Information and Public Relations Assam, Dispur, Guwahati-6

NATION

Government's script, full of lies: Oppn leaders on President's address to Parliament

'They (The BJP) just made a few changes to old speeches'

NEW DELHI, June 27: Opposition leaders on Thursday dismissed the President's address to the joint sitting of Parliament as a "script given by the government" that was "full of lies" and also castigated the government over the repeated mention of the 1975 Emergency.

They said there is an "undeclared emergency" in the country and the Constitution is being attacked under the Modi government.

President In her address, Droupadi Murmu described the imposition of Emergency in 1975 as the "biggest and darkest chapter" of a direct attack on the Constitution and said the country emerged victorious over unconstitutional forces.

Speaking to reporters after the President's address, Samajwadi Party president Akhilesh Yadav punched holes in the government's claim of India being the fifth-largest economy in the world.

"The story that is being told about India becoming the fifthlargest economy... has it made our farmers prosperous? If we are the fifth-largest economy, then why are so many youths unemployed? Why is there a scheme like Agniveer? Why can't price rise be controlled?"



On the government's claims about investment, the SP chief said, "We would have witnessed more growth if there was investment. The growth of some individuals cannot enable national growth. It can improve our numbers but what is there in it for farmers, the poor and those who have been most exploited."

Asked about the mention of Emergency by Murmu, he said, "What did the BJP do for the people who were in jail during Emergency? The SP gave them respect

and pensions. Trinamool Congress MP Mahua Moitra said the President read out a "script given by the government" and that the BJP has not realised yet that it does not have a majority on its own. "The government's problem is

that they are not yet able to understand that they have come to 240 from 303. They prepared the speech based on the majority of 303. That is why she said there is a clear majority government when the government is actually in minority," she

Maybe they took portions from the last year's speech, she said. Speaking about the recent general elections, Murmu said the whole world is talking about India's Lok Sabha polls.

"The world is witnessing that the people of India have elected a stable government with clear majority for a third consecutive term," she told the joint sitting of the two Houses of Parliament

CPI (Marxist-Leninist) Liberation MP Sudama Prasad said the President's address was "full of lies"

"This is an alliance government which they are calling a majority government as if it is a BJP government. They should have talked about Manipur. Why are they making empty speeches on women empowerment? Women were paraded naked there (Manipur), people have been rendered homeless ... women wrestlers have not yet received justice. This address was full of lies," he said.

On the President talking about Emergency, Prasad said, "That was a declared emergency and this one has not been declared.

Rahul meets LS Speaker, says reference

"They mentioned Emergency yesterday as well. This is not right. They are mentioning Emergency but we are facing a mega-emergency at present. The Constitution is being attacked, democratic values are being murdered and people are being silenced. By talking about Emergency, they are trying to hide their own mega-emergency," he added. Congress leader Tariq Anwar said there was nothing new in the President's speech.

They just made a few changes to old speeches. There was nothing new in the President's address to Parliament today," he said.

"Several elections have been held since Emergency in which the BJP was defeated. They have nothing new to say," Anwar said.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla have also condemned the imposition of Emergency.

Addressing the media in the Parliament complex ahead of the start of the first session of the 18th Lok Sabha on June 24, Modi had termed Emergency a black spot on India's parliamentary history when the Constitution was discarded and the country turned into a prison. (PTI)

CHENNAI, June 27: Led by party general secretary Edappadi K Palaniswami, AIADMK MLAs and party workers held a hunger strike here on Thursday to press for a CBI probe into the Kallakurichi

hooch tragedy. DMDK chief Premalatha Vijayakanth visited the venue and lent her party's support to the protest.

Clad in black shirts, the AIADMK legislators, who have been suspended from the ongoing Assembly session for disrupting proceedings, began their fast here by 9 am at the Rajarathinam stadium. The fast is also to condemn 'denial of permission' to raise the issue in the state Assembly, according to the main opposition party. Palaniswami, in a post on X, demanded Chief Minister M K Stalin's resignation and reiterated that the hooch deaths be investigated by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI).

While the deaths have 'crossed 60,' why has not Stalin visited Kallakurichi so far, he asked. He also slammed the chief minister's 'reluctance' to have a honest discussion over the issue in the Assembly

Premalatha Vijayakanth, speaking to reporters at the venue of the fast, backed AIADMK's demand for CBI probe and also demanded that Minister for Prohibition and Excise, S Muthusamy resign from his post to do justice.

She alleged police have not permitted the AIADMK leaders to 'make speeches,' (using public address system) and decried 'repression.

Facts related to the hooch tragedy will emerge only if the CBI probed the matter and both the AIADMK and her party the DMDK are firm on this stand. She alleged that, "ruling party persons abetted the brewing of illicit arrack." Denouncing suspension of AIADMK MLAs, she

FRIDAY, JUNE 28, 2024

AIADMK holds hunger strike over hooch tragedy, DMDK lends support



demanded that the government specify the norms violated by the opposition party members. "Where could the Kallakurichi tragedy could be discussed other than the Assembly," she asked.

The leader of opposition 'Annan (elder brother) Edappadi Palaniswami and AIADMK members were not allowed to take up the matter and she asked if this was fair. "The Assembly is for discussing only people's problems. The House is run on tax payers money

Referring to Leader of Opposition Rahul Gandhi's comment in Lok Sabha that he is confident that 'you (Speaker) will allow us to represent our voice, allow us to speak, to represent voice of people of India," and support of DMK MPs for that, she asked how could there exist one kind of rule for the Parliament and another for the state Assembly

She alleged the DMK regime did not allow opposition to raise issues in state Assembly but it is for opposition's voice to be heard in Parliament.

"History will say that it is the DMK (when it was in opposition) which has staged more walkouts and did not allow the House proceedings to go on," she claimed.

She rejected chief minister Stalin's allegation that the AIADMK disrupted proceedings for the sake of publicity.

During the previous AIADMK regime, the way Stalin showed a torn shirt' (in 2017, when the Palaniswami-led regime won vote of confidence amid bedlam) was the height of publicity. The AIADMK does not need any new publicity, a more than 50-year old party that has ruled the state for decades.

Republican Party of India leader C K Tamilarasan also visited the venue of hungerstrike and extended support. (PTI)

No rule of law left in UP in 7 years of BJP regime: Akhilesh

he said.

LUCKNOW, June 27: Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav said on Thursday that in the past seven years, there is no rule of law left in Uttar Pradesh in the BJP regime. "The Chief Minister may claim to modernise the police force, but in reality it is nothing more than a sham. How can the BJP government, which destroyed the state-of-the-art police response system setup during the Samajwadi government out of vengeance, be expected to make the police force technically smart, efficient and capable?

"The chief minister's claim of crime control has been proven false. The BJP government has failed on every front," Yadav said in a statement issued here.

He said there is no rule of law left in UP in the BJP regime

Yadav's reaction came on Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath's statement earlier in the day that the rule of law is fundamental to good governance and the state police has excelled in maintaining it.

Adityanath said this while flagging off the upgraded police response vehicles (PRVs) in the second phase of UP-112 from his official residence here.

Yadav said the law and order situation in the state is in shambles, criminals are running amok, bullets are being fired in broad daylight and murders are being committed. "Anarchy is at its peak. The BJP government has failed to maintain law and order. The BJP workers and leaders are hell bent on anarchy. Recently, bullets were fired openly between two factions in Bareilly.

"The public is troubled by the injustice and atrocities of the BJP government. There is anger among the people," the Lok Sabha MP said.

Alleging that after the defeat in the Lok Sabha elections, the BJP is hell bent on taking revenge from the people, he said the government has no control over the police. Yadav said in the Samajwadi government, the police was modernised to improve the law and order situation. (PTI)

Shivakumar mocks demand for 3 more Deputy Chief **Ministers in Karnataka**

to Emergency could have been avoided NEW DELHI, June 27: Leader of this issue also came up.' Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi met Speaker Om Birla on Thursday and voiced his displeasure over the reference to Emergency made by the chair, saying it was "clearly political" and could have been avoided.

It was a courtesy call during which Gandhi also raised the issue of Emergency being invoked by the Speaker in the House, Congress general secretary K C Venugopal told reporters after the meeting in the

Parliament House. "It was a courtesy call. The Speaker declared Rahul Gandhi as the Leader of Opposition and after that, he along with other INDIA bloc partner leaders met the Speaker," he said. Asked whether Gandhi discussed the issue of Emergency being raised in the House, Venugopal said, "We discussed so many things about Parliament functioning. Of course,

"Rahul ji, as Leader of Opposition, informed the Speaker about this issue and said it could have been

avoided from the Speaker's reference. That is clearly a political reference, it could have been avoided," the Congress leader said. Separately, Venugopal also wrote

to Birla, expressing the party's displeasure over the bringing of the resolution on the Emergency as his first task after assuming office.

"I am writing this in the context of a very grave matter impacting the very credibility of the institution of Parliament. Yesterday, that is 26 June 2024, at the time of offering felicitations on your election as Speaker Lok Sabha, there was a general camaraderie in the House as such occasions generate." he said in his letter to the Speaker.

"However, what followed thereafter, which is a reference from the

encroachment, forms panel to survey areas

KOLKATA, June 27: Stating that hawkers' eviction is not the goal of the West Bengal government, Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Thurs-day gave them one month to clear the footpaths and the stretch of roads urged Karnataka Chief Minister Sid-to our D K Shivakumar in the future, reached based on a "rotational chief

Chair after your acceptance speech, in regard to the declaration of Emergency half a century ago, is deeply shocking. Making such a political reference from the Chair is unprecedented in the annals of the history of Parliament. This coming from the Chair as one of the 'first duties' of a newly elected Speaker assumes even graver proportions.

tional Congress, express our profound concern and anguish over this travesty of Parliamentary traditions," Venugopal said in his letter to the Speaker.

off a firestorm by reading out a resolution condemning the imposition of Emergency as an attack on the Constitution by then prime minister Indira Gandhi, an act that triggered vociferous protests by Congress member in the House. (PTI)

Mamata gives one month to hawkers to clear Vokkaliga seer publicly appeals to CM to step down & make way for Shivakumar

BENGALURU, June 27: A daramaiah, who has experienced (the There were some reports at the

"I, on behalf of the Indian Na-

Soon after his election as Lok Sabha Speaker, Birla had on Wednesday set

BENGALURU, June 27: Karnataka Congress chief D K Shivakumar on Thursday mocked demand from some Ministers to create three more posts of Deputy Chief Minister, saying they will get no "solution" by discussing it before the media.

Some of the Ministers have been pitching for leaders from Veerashaiva-Lingayat, SC/ST and minority communities to be given the post of deputy chief minister.

Currently, Shivakumar, a member of the Vokkaliga community, is only the Deputy Chief Minister in the Siddaramaiah-led government.

"Let those speaking to papers (newspaper or media) go and speak to high command, get a solution and come. Let them go and get whatever solution they want. There is no need to discuss before the media. I will also not discuss anything before the media," Shivakumar said, making no secret of his displeasure.

"Let anyone go and get whatever solution they want, who will say don't? Neither newspapers nor TV channels will give a solution for this, you (media) only give publicity, that's all," he told reporters here.

To a question regarding demand from some quarters in the party about the need to change the KPCC (state Congress) President -- the post he currently holds, Shivakumar said, "very happy, they should not waste time, they should go and find a solution for it....let them go and find solution from wherever they want, we don't have any objection.

According to sources, Chief Minister Siddaramaiah has apparently urged ministers not to issue statements seeking additional Deputy Chief Minister posts in public.

Siddaramaiah is said to have spoken to Minister K N Rajanna, who is in the forefront with such a demand, over the phone and cautioned him against making any more public statements on the issue. He opined that public statements on this would negatively impact the government and the party. A section within the Congress is of the opinion that the statement by the Ministers seeking three more Deputy CMs, was part of a plan by Siddaramaiah's camp to keep Shivakumar in check, amid talks he might seek the CM post after twoand-half years of this government's

tenure, and to counter his influence both in the government and party. Co-operation Minister Rajanna, Housing Minister B Z Zameer Ahmed Khan, Public Works Minister Satish Jarkiholi and a couple of others -- all considered to be close to Siddaramaiah -- earlier this week once again raised the pitch for three more

Deputy CMs. The Congress had decided that Shivakumar will be "the only" Deputy Chief Minister amid stiff competition between him and Siddaramaiah for the Chief Minister's post after the Assembly election results in May last year, according to party sources. It was also said to be a "commitment" made by the Congress leadership to Shivakumar while convincing him to give up his claim for the CM post and to take up the role of Deputy Chief Minister, the sources said. Rajanna, reacting to Shivakumar's statement, said: "we will speak with high command regarding our demand (for three more DCMs), also elsewhere, what is wrong in it? There is nothing that we have to follow what D K Shivakumar says. We have our own mind. I'm a law graduate. I will work or speak, according to my

mind. "Let him (Shivakumar) say that we are doing it (demaninding three more DCMs) for publicity, I have no issues....I have shared my feelings with you (media) when you asked me. Let him take however he wants -- right or wrong, I have no objections," he said, adding that the CM post is not vacant now to fill up, while DCM posts are vacant so there is a demand for them to be filled up. "Ultimately it is left for high command to decide." Meanwhile, leaders in Shivakumar's camp too seem to have started coming out openly in support of their leader.

Channagiri Congress MLA Basavaraju V Shivaganga on Wednesday urged the party to make Shivakumar the Chief Minister.

Rajanna, also hinting about the need to change state party President, had said the party after Assembly polls had announced three things --Siddaramaiah will be Chief Minister, Shivakumar will be lone DCM, and that he (Shivakumar) will continue as party President till the Parliament election. "I will remind the party about the third point." (PTI)

they have encroached on to carry on with their business.

Banerjee's statement came amid the ongoing eviction of encroachers including hawkers from various parts of the state.

The chief minister, who held a review meeting regarding the issue of hawkers' encroachment, also constituted a committee to conduct a survey in this regard and submit a report to her office within 15 days.

She said that the state government would identify 'hawking zones' in the state, erect buildings to accommodate the hawkers, godowns for keeping their wares and issue identity cards to them.

"I have no right to take away anyone's source of income or render anyone unemployed. Millions run their family by doing hawking. There will be no eviction for one month. During this period, the hawkers have to clear footpaths," said Baneriee, also the Trinamool Congress supremo.

"We will conduct a survey. The government will see where legal hawkers can be accommodated. Godowns will also be set up. But roads cannot be occupied. If new hawkers are found (encroaching footpaths), they will be arrested," she said. Senior ministers, bureaucrats and police officers, mayors of all corporations, and chairmen of municipalities were present in the meeting. Banerjee asserted that political leaders and policemen were responsible for occupying the streets.

"Councilors should have kept a watch on this from the start. But they don't even see it. If you help a new hawker (to encroach), you will be arrested. The leaders of the area first take money (from hawkers) and allow them to sit and start doing business. Afterwards they bulldoze them... This cannot be allowed," she said.

"What is the use of blaming the hawkers? It's our fault. Why are we not making a building in the New Market area? The hawkers will be shifted there,' Banerjee stated. (PTI)

daramaiah to step down and make way for his deputy D K Shivakumar, amid a power tussle within the ruling Congress.

The seer's appeal has come at a time, when there is growing demand within the Siddaramaiah cabinet to have three more Deputy Chief Ministers -- from Veerashaiva-Lingayat, SC/ST and minority communities.

Vishwa Vokkaliga Mahasamastana Math seer Kumara Chandrashekaranatha Swamiji raised the pitch for Shivakumar at the Kempegowda Jayanti event here to commemorate the birth anniversary of Bengaluru's founder, in the presence of both Siddaramaiah and the Deputy Chief Minister on the dais.

Shivakumar, who is also the state Congress President, is a Vokkaliga -a dominant community in the southern parts of the state. Currently, he is the only Deputy Chief Minister.

"Everyone has become Chief Minister and has enjoyed power, but our D K Shivakumar has not become the Chief Minister. So the request is, Sid-

and bless him good," Chandrashekaranatha Swamiji said. Addressing the gathering, he said:

only if Siddaramaiah makes up his mind, this can happen, or else it won't happen. So with 'Namakaras', I request Siddaramaiah to make D K Shivakumar the Chief Minister."

Reacting to a question on the seer's appeal, Siddaramaiah, later speaking to reporters, said: "Congress is a high command party....this is a democracy. We will follow whatever the high command says."

Shivakumar said: "things have been said We both (him and Siddaramaiah) are travelling to New Delhi to discuss with MPs from the state, regarding the state's projects (pending approval from the Centre)."

There was stiff competition between Siddaramaiah and Shivakumar for the Chief Minister's post after the declaration of Assembly election results in May last year, and the Congress had managed to convince the latter and made him the Deputy Chief Minister.

minister formula," according to which Shivakumar will become CM after two-and-half years but they have not been officially confirmed by the party. Shivakumar has made no secret of his ambition to become chief minister, while Siddaramaiah had sought public support during the Lok Sabha polls

so that the Congress wins maximum number of seats in the state, which would strengthen his position.

A section within the Congress is of the opinion that the statement by the Ministers seeking three more Deputy CMs, was part of a plan by Siddaramaiah's camp to keep Shivakumar in check, amid talks he might seek the CM post after two-and-half years of this government's tenure, and to counter his influence both in the government and party.

Leaders in Shivakumar's camp too seem to have started coming out openly in support of their leader.

Channagiri Congress MLA Basavaraju V Shivaganga on Wednesday urged the party to make Shivakumar the Chief Minister. (PTI)

Landmark Supreme Court ruling could spur more climate cases in India: Report

NEW DELHI, June 27: A landmark ruling by the Supreme Court of India which recognised the right against adverse effects of climate change as a distinct fundamental right could drive more climate litigation in the country, according to a global report released on Thursday.

Citing the case of M K Ranjitsinh and Others vs. Union of India, the report by the London School of Economics' Grantham Research Institute on Climate Change and the Environment said that climate cases in the Global South are increasing and gaining more attention.

The report said that over 200 climate cases from Global South countries are recorded in databases, comprising about 8 percent of all cases globally.

"While research indicates a growing trend in utilizing the courts as instruments in climate policy responses in some Global South countries, there may be a strategic avoidance of climate litigation in others,' the report said.

For instance, it noted that India's historically low number of climate cases reflects a conscious decision to avoid an overly nar-



row focus on emissions, as this can overlook broader issues related to livelihoods, rights, and ecological concerns.

"However, there may be a shift following a landmark judgment by the Supreme Court of India," the report added.

The M K Ranjitsinh case originated from concerns about the impact of overhead power cables on the Great Indian Bustard. It evolved into a broader discussion on balancing climate action with other conservation measures, as the government argued

that the power transmission lines were essential to India's climate change response.

The authors said the case exemplifies a significant type of non-climate-aligned litigation that has emerged in recent years, known as green versus green litigation. These cases involve a trade-off between climate and biodiversity or other environmental aims.

The authors analyzed a database of 2,666 climate litigation cases compiled by the Sabin Center for Climate Change Law at Columbia University. Around 70 percent of these cases have been filed since 2015, the year the Paris Agreement was adopted. In 2023 alone, 233 new cases were filed.

Although only 5 percent of climate cases have been brought before international courts, the authors said these have significant potential to influence domestic proceedings

The United States leads in the number of documented climate cases, with 1,745 cases in total and 129 new cases filed in 2023. Following the US, the UK, Brazil, and Germany have the highest numbers of recorded cases. (PTI)

NATION

NEET-UG case: SC issues notice to NTA over OMR sheets



NEW DELHI, June 27: The Supreme Court on Thursday asked the National Testing Agency (NTA) to apprise it whether there is any time limit for raising grievances regarding the OMR sheets provided to the candidates who appeared in NEET-UG 2024. A vacation bench of Justices Manoj Misra and SVN Bhatti, which issued notice to the NTA on a fresh plea filed by a private coaching centre and few

he needs to take instructions and sought listing of the petition along with the pending matters. "We will file a short reply by then NEET candidates, tagged the peto the query," he said. Basant tition with the pending matters pointed out that there is no set and listed it for hearing on July 8. procedure or time limit to raise Senior advocate R Basant, apthe grievance and therefore as an pearing for the coaching institute interim relief the candidates are and the candidates, submitted that seeking grant of OMR sheets. a few students, who have ap-The bench then issued notice and peared for the examination, have tagged the petition with the pendnot got the OMR sheets. The ing matters while asking the bench at the outset pointed out to counsel for NTA to file a short Basant as how can a private written reply to the court's query coaching institute file an Article on time limit 32 petition in the Supreme Court

On June 20, the top court and what kind of fundamental rights of the institution are afsought responses from the Cenfected. Counsel appearing for the tre, the NTA and others on a slew NTA submitted that the OMR of petitions, including those seeking scrapping of the National Elsheets have been uploaded on the website and given to the candiigibility cum Entrance dates. The bench asked him Test-Undergraduate (NEET-UG) whether there is any time limit for 2024 and a court-monitored probe, amid mounting outrage raising the grievance of OMR sheets. The NTA counsel said that over alleged irregularities in conducting the all-India medical entrance test.

While hearing separate pleas on the NEET-UG 2024, the apex court had on June 18 said even if there was "0.001 percent negligence" on the part of anyone in the conduct of the examination, it should be thoroughly dealt with. It had listed all the petitions for hearing on July 8. The NEET-UG is conducted by the NTA for admissions to MBBS, BDS, AYUSH and other related courses in government and private institutions across the country. (PTI)

Delhi LG temporarily dissolves DDCD, AAP says 'petty politics'

NEW DELHI, June 27: Delhi Lt Governor V K Saxena has approved temporarily dissolving Delhi Dialogue and Development Commission (DDCD) and removal of its non-official members till a mechanism is developed for screening and selection of domain experts as its vice chairman and members, Raj Niwas officials said on Thursday.

In a file noting marked to the Delhi chief secretary, the LG noted that the whole exercise of creating the DDCD by the incumbent government was only to extend financial benefits and extend patronage to certain favoured political persons of partisan inclinations.

'Ostensibly, the Commission was created to serve as a policy think-tank manned by domain experts, on the lines of the Planning Commission/ NITI Aayog, so as to provide inputs of governance that a political executive assisted by mostly generalist civil services may be deprived of.

"It was not meant to accommodate favoured individuals, unelected friends or politically partisan people," it read.

Saxena said the positions of vice chairperson and non-official members were envisaged to be co-terminus with the term of the incumbent government.

"Albeit initially these positions were honorary, they were subsequently converted into highly paid and perked positions, viz. the Vice-Chairperson, DDCD in the rank, pay and facilities equivalent to the Minister of GNCTD and the non-official members in the rank, pay and facilities equivalent to Secretary to the Government of India." he said.

Saxena noted that as per the Planning Department of the Delhi government, there is no work allocation amongst the Members of

"Therefore, the continuation of non-official Members, whose appointment was made in an arbitrary manner without following any procedure, drawing huge salaries is not only undesirable but also patently illegal. To say the least, it is a blatant and clear case of nepotism and favouritism in utter disregard of all rules.

"Accordingly, the proposal of Service Department... for rescinding the appointment orders of Non-official Members is approved," read the file noting

"... Additionally, the proposal of Services Department ... regarding exploring possibility of dissolving DDCD as an interim measure, etc... are also approved," read the noting.

Bharadwaj reacted by accusing Saxena of doing "petty politics". "LG's dissolving Delhi Dialogue Commision is petty politics. This is well known that all Commissions, Committees, boards of

Central Govt or BJP ruled state Govts have political appointees without any test/interview. "It's an old practice. Women Commission, SC/ST Commision r

all live examples. Irony is even Mr Viay Saxena's appointment as LG is a political appointment without any advertisement, test or interview. (sic)" he said in a post on X.

The AAP leader said if there was an advertisement in newspapers for the post of LG, then he must enlighten the people of this country. Probably he competed in the written exam for becoming LG, Bharadwaj added

In 2022, DDCD vice-chairman Jasmine Shah was restricted from discharging his duties and his office was sealed while the facilities enjoyed by him were withdrawn following an order by the LG. (PTI)

Dated Diphu, the 26th June' 2024

FIR against unknown persons for threatening fashion designer over yoga at Golden temple

VADODARA, June 27: A First Information Report (FIR) has been registered here against unidentified persons for giving death threats to a city-based fashion designer who is facing a criminal case after performing yoga at the Golden Temple complex in Amritsar on June 21.

Releasing a fresh video statement, designer and social media influencer Archana Makwana also said she had done nothing wrong, and the Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee (SGPC) should withdraw its complaint against her for allegedly hurting religious sentiments.

Based on her complaint about threats, an FIR under Indian Penal Code section 507 (criminal intimidation by anonymous communication) was registered at Karelibaug police station on Wednesday night, an official said.

As the police categorised it as 'sensitive', the FIR could not be accessed by the general public on the state home department's website.

"She claimed that unknown persons gave her death threats through email. WhatsApp and

Instagram after photos show-

lice Panna Momaya.

the Golden Temple on June 21, International Day of Yoga, and performed yoga on its 'parikrama' path. The photos

Two days later, the SGPC filed a complaint against her for allegedly hurting religious sentiments, and an FIR was registered against her under relevant sections by Punjab Police.

Makwana then apologised through a video, saying she never intended to hurt anyone's religious sentiments.

on social media platforms, Makwana asked the SGPC to withdraw the complaint against her. 'Thousands of Sikh devotees were there when I performed yoga. Even the person

In her latest video released

who clicked my photos was a Sikh, and the Sevadars (officebearers) of the temple did not stop him. The feelings of those who were present there and watched me doing yoga did not get hurt. So I believe that I have not done anything wrong," she said in the video. The trouble started when some persons outside India made her photos viral saying

that the people's sentiments were hurt by her act, Makwana said. "My intention was not bad. The FIR filed against me by the SGPC is baseless. It was

not written anywhere in the temple that such acts are not allowed. I went there for the first time. Had I been told. I would have deleted those photos right away. I want the SGPC to withdraw its FIR, or

else I and my legal team are ready to fight this case," she added. (PTI)

Fighting for survival: Climate change-fuelled heat pushes poor women to limits of endurance

No. KAAC/Tm/Civil/2017-18/Tender/117/472

NOTICE INVITING TENDER

Sealed Tender by affixing of the KAAC money receipt of worth Rs. 10/- only are hereby invited from the registered contractor/firms/persons etc. for execution of Civil Work as mentioned below in detail of AAP 2024-25, (SOPD) duly approved and accorded Administrative Approval by the KAAC authority vide No. KAAC/Trn/AAP/2022-23/14 Dated Diphu the 24th June' 20224 under KAAC Transport Department for the financial Year 2024-25.

KARBI ANGLONG AUTONOMOUS COUNCIL

TRANSPORT DEPARTMENT

KAAC SECRETARIAT

DIPHU - 782460

The Tender will be received by the undersigned from 27/06/2024 up to 2.00 P.M. on 15/07/2024 and the same will be opened on the same day and hour in presence of the tenderers or their authorized agents if any. If the day of opening of the tender falls on band/holiday the day for opening of the same shall be taken place on the next working day during office hours.

The following are the details scheme/items of Civil Works.

S1. No.	Name of works	Qty.	Amount (in Lakhs)	Earnest Money		Time of Completion
				Gen.	ST/SC	completion
1	Construction of Multi Storey's RCC Building 2nd phase at KAAC workshop Hamren including water staging Tank, Grill, Tiles, Supply of office Stationary etc.	1 Unit	80.00 L	2%	1%	6 Months
2	Construction of Water staging Tank at Commercial building Diphu, including External Pipe Connection.	1 Unit	20.00 L	2%	1%	90 Days
3	Construction of Conference Room at Diphu Executive Engineer (M) Administrative Block	1 Unit	20.00 L	2%	1%	60 Days
4	Construction Courtyard, water boring, water connection in- cluding Dismantle the old building at KAAC Transport Tickets Booking Office at Dongkamukam.	1 Unit	35.00 L	2%	1%	90 Days
5	Courtyard at KAAC Workshop, Hamren	1 Unit	30.00 L	2%	1%	90 Days
6	Construction of Main Gate, at KAAC Transport Ticket Booking Office at Dongkamukam	1 Unit	05.00 L	2%	1%	90 Days
7	Construction of Alignment M/C House, Diphu	1 Unit	10.00 L	2%	1%	90 Days
8	Construction of waiting shed for home gourd at old workshop, Main Gate, Diphu.	1 Unit	05.45 L	2%	1%	90 Days
9	Construction of Waiting shed at Bokulia by Pass near old saint School	1 Unit	10.00 L	2%	1%	90 Days



ing her doing 'shirsasan' (head-stand) at Golden Temple went viral. No suspect has been named in the FIR," said Deputy Commissioner of Po-

Makwana visited

of her act soon went viral.

On June 24, Vadodara po-

lice provided her protection as she started receiving death threats.

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NEW DELHI, June 27: "It's all about survival," says Majida Begum, her face wreathed in sweat as she sifts through waste in Delhi's Seemapuri area, echoing as it were the everyday struggles of millions of women in India facing the brunt of the twin crises of heat and humidity.

As climate change tightens its grip over the globe, a study by the UN's Food and Agriculture Organization shows that female-headed households in rural areas on average lose 8 per cent more of their income due to heat stress compared to male-headed households.

While men have moved on to secondary and tertiary sectors due to improved skills, women remain in unorganised sectors characterised by repetitive and labour-intensive tasks, explained Seema Bhaskaran, gender lead at the NGO Transform Rural India,

And Majida is living testament of it all. Spending hours beneath a makeshift shelter of four slender sticks and a torn bedsheet, the asphalt radiating heat from the sharp sun and high humidity, as she does her day's job, the 65-year-old ragpicker is weather-beaten and old beyond her years.

With beads of sweat tracing paths down her lined face, she walks to a community water tank located around a hundred metres away. She ducks her head beneath the tap, letting the water cascade over her. Refreshed, for the moment, she returns to her sorting in the oppressive heat.

"It's about survival," she explained between tasks. "We drench ourselves with water every hour just to keep going.

This ritual is a necessity for Majida and others like her amid the unbearable conditions of their work - the absence of sufficient drinking water, toilets, sunshades and prolonged exposure to the elements.

Majida's husband, aged 70 and immobile, relies entirely on her earnings. Their estranged son offers no support. On good days, she earns Rs 250 for separating recyclables from the waste stream, but when illness strikes and she cannot work, they are left with virtually nothing.

'Whether we eat at night depends on whether I work during the day," Majida said.

"This is the hottest summer I have experienced in many years. The heat made me unwell, and I could not work for 15 days. I am a heart patient, but I cannot afford to stay at home," she said.

In urban agglomerations and in rural India, climate change-fuelled extreme heat is making women from marginalized communities and poor households more vulnerable to economic and health loses.

Women already earn 20 per cent less than men on average, according to the International Labour Organization, and this gap is further widened due to heat waves.

In an unprecedented summer, where the heat index has crossed 50 degrees Celsius in many places, the stories are many.

Basanti Nag, 28, from Kokawada village in Chhattisgarh's Sukma district, said the summer this year caused nausea and lethargy never experienced before, and the problem was amplified for women who had to travel longer distances to fetch water.

In Dantewada district, Mangaldai's family of three depends on the labour-intensive task of collecting and selling mahua flowers in the peak summer months

"This year, there has been less mahua work than ever before, with almost half the amount compared to previous years. As a result, my income will also be halved," Mangaldai said.

Mahua is a major non-timber forest produce and a primary source of income for many in the country's tribal areas.

"In agriculture, women perform backbreaking operations like sowing, transplanting, and harvesting without any mechanization. Excessive heat leads to exhaustion, dehydration, and an increased risk of urinary infections. Women workers in tea estates, street vendors, and safai sathis are exposed to direct sunlight, affecting their productivity and health. Home-based workers also see their income impacted as they juggle household tasks and work, leading to a loss of income," Bhaskar told PTI.

For women, sustenance tasks like fetching water, fuelwood, and fodder take longer in extreme heat. Pregnant women face risks of stillbirth. Care work increases with rising illnesses, leading to further loss of employment and economic participation, she added.

A survey conducted by Greenpeace India and the National Hawkers' Federation revealed that seven out of eight women street vendors in Delhi experienced high blood pressure during heat waves in April and May, while women in the middle age group raised concerns about delays in their menstrual cycles due to the extreme heat. (PTI)

The A/A accorded under Head Account 2225-02-190-2419-670-32-99 (SOPD) Road Transport for the financial year 2024-25 of Grant No. 76.

TERMS AND CONDITION:-

- 1. Bidder should quote their rate distinctly both in figure and in works on percentage basis as per below/above and the estimated rates/departmental approved rates.
- 2. The KAAC money receipt of Rs. 10/- (Rupees Ten) only must be enclosed along with necessary documents.
- 3. The earnest money will bank draft from any bank of India must be attached along with the tender paper, pledge in favour of the Executive Engineer (M), Transport, KAAC, Diphu at the rate of 1% for ST/SC and 2% for General which must attached along with the tender paper.
- 4. The successful tenderer/bidder shall have to complete his/her their works within given period from the date of issue of formal order with agreement (Where necessary) which shall be provided the required format.
- 5. The authority reserves the right to accept any or reject the all tenders without assigning any reason thereof, and will not bound himself/herself to accept the lower rate.
- 6. All tenders will opened on the same day and hours with presence of the Tnederers or their authorized agent as mention below.
- 7. No tender will be allowed after the time schedule is over in any circumstances.

8. The tenderers shall have to mentioned their name of works/group of works Sl. No. at the time of submission of tender. If any of the items as noted below is not found with their quoted documents the tender will summarily rejected.

- a. Professional Tax Clearance Certificate duly certified by the Superintendent of Tax KAAC, Diphu.
- b. GST Registration Copy from the Superintendent of Taxes, Diphu, Assam along with the name of contractors/firms is mandatory.
- c. KAAC Transport Registration.
- d. The Tenders must attached the up to date return copy of GST properly in the month of May'/2024.
- 9. The works should be completed within the stipulated time. The works should be started after signing necessary agreement in consultation with EE (M) Transport, KAAC, Diphu.
- 10. The above term and conditions are compulsory.

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11. The bills shall be paid after completion of work and subject to availability of fund.

Sd/-Executive Engineer (M) Karbi Anglong Autonomous Council

Entertainment

Kamal Haasan says risk in making films that question govt: It's citizens right to ask questions

MUMBAI, June 27: Artistes are citizens of the country who have every right to hold the authorities to account, said veteran star Kamal Haasan, admitting there is a "risk" in making films that question the government.

The actor was speaking at the trailer launch of his upcoming film "Hindustani 2: Zero Tolerance", in which he reprises the role of Senapathy, a freedom fighter-turned-vigilante who fought against corruption in India.

Titled "Indian 2: Zero Tolerance" in Tamil, the upcoming movie is a sequel to Kamal's hit 1996 film "Indian", which featured him in a dual role. Shankar is returning to direct the second part in the franchise.

Asked whether it's tough to make films that question the government today, the actor said this problem has persisted since the British era. "People were making films even then. We will continue to make those kinds of films, it doesn't matter who is at the top of the establishment. That's not just the filmmaker, that's the citizen's right to ask those questions. "We, as artistes, represent so many of you people. Thanks to the applause, we believe that we are your representatives, hence we talk boldly, without thinking of the guillotine. Yes, there is a risk, the government can get angry, but your applause puts out that fire, so make it louder," Kamal told reporters here. The 69-year-old said not only politicians, but citizens are also to be blamed for the corrup tion plaguing the country. "We are all responsible for the corruption and we must all change our mind. And the best time to change our mind is during elections. These are just reminders of how corrupt we have become... Nothing has changed thanks to corruption. Everything will change thanks to the collective conscience," he added. (PTI)

SHATRUGHAN SINHA 'TRULY OVERWHELMED WITH BEST WISHES' FOR SONAKSHI'S WEDDING WITH ZAHEER

MUMBAI, June 27: Veteran actor-MP Shatrughan Sinha expressed gratitude towards well wishers for celebrating his daughter Sonakshi Sinha's nuptials with fellow actor Zaheer Iqbal, calling it "the wedding of the century". The couple, who were dating since seven years, wed on Sunday at Sonakshi's residence at a private civil marriage ceremony, followed by a reception for industry colleagues and friends here. Shatrughan Sinha shared a series of unseen pictures and videos from the wedding on his official X page on Wednesday evening. "Truly overwhelmed with the best wishes, it really means a lot. no words to express our happiness & appreciation. #SinhaParivar," he wrote. "With an attitude of gratitude we would like to thank everyone for celebrating with us on our special day seems to be the 'wedding of the century' with your warmth, love, congratulatory messages for our darling daughter #SonakshiSinha with #ZaheerIqbal as they start a new chapter in their beautiful journey of their lives," the actor-TMC MP from Asansol said in another post.

HONOURED AND THRILLED TO BECOME MEMBER OF AMPAS: RIMA DAS

NEW DELHI, June 27: Filmmaker Rima Das on Wednesday said she is honoured and thrilled to become a member of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences (AMPAS).

Das, the director of acclaimed and awarded titles such as "Tora's Husband" and "Village Rockstars", is among the 487 new members invited by the Academy this year.

From India, veteran actor Shabana Azmi, "RRR" director SS Rajamouli, producer Ritesh Sidhwani, and noted cinematographer Ravi Varman have also been invited by the AMPAS.

"I am honoured and thrilled to become a member of the Academy. My journey at the Academy began when 'Village Rockstars' was India's Official entry 2019. Now as part of this incredible community, I look forward to contribute to recognizing the best in our craft, celebrating the power and magic of cinema," Das said in a statement.

In a statement shared on its website, the Academy on late Tuesday night said the list includes artists and executives who have distinguished themselves by their contributions to theatrical motion pictures.

Membership selection is based on professional qualifications, with an ongoing commitment to representation, inclusion and equity, according to the Los-Angeles based institution.

The list of new members also include Rama Rajamouli, "RRR" costume designer and wife of Rajamouli, choreographer Prem Rakshith, who created the complex but perfectly synthesised moves in the best original song Oscar winner "Naatu Naatu" from "RRR", Sheetal Sharma, known for her work on movies such as "Gangubai Kathiawadi" and "Kesari", and documentary filmmaker Hemal Trivedi. (PTI)

Onir dreams to make film in Bengali but not sure about finances

KOLKATA, June 27: Celebrated filmmaker Onir, who hails from Kolkata before carving his niche in Mumbai nearly two decades ago, is hopeful of making a movie in Bengali one day.

However, the National Award winning irector said, the problem is he does not



For the ceremony, Sonakshi upcycled her mother Poonam Sinha's ivory wedding saree and Zaheer donned a matching embroidered kurta-pyjama. While there were rumours about Shatrughan Sinha being unhappy about the wedding, he put them to rest when he happily posed with the groom and his family in the run-up to the day. (PTI) have much idea about getting finance for making a Bengali film with his own idea.

Onir debuted with 'My Brother... Nikhil' in 2005 before making acclaimed and audience-backed movies like 'Bas Ek Pal' (Just a Moment, 2006), 'I am' (2010) which won the National Award, and 'Shab' (Night, 2017)

"For so long I had been working in Bollywood, I know the situation there, people know me there. But I don't have

much idea how things function here... And I don't like pushing (my story, idea)," the 55-year-old told PTI.

Asked if he wants to make a film in Bengali, Onir said, "Yes. I hope one day that will happen for sure. I have the dream."

Only a year back, Onir extensively shot in Kolkata for his last project.

"I am from this city. My love for the city runs deep in my bloodveins. So, if you consider it in that way, the soul and spirit of the place had been reflected in my works already though not in the medium of Bengali," he said. (PTI)

First piece of art comes from place of purity, passion: Tahira Kashyap on making feature debut

NEW DELHI, June 27:

There is a bit of Tahira Kashyap in all the five female leads of "Sharmajee Ki Beti", says the director about her first feature film, a passion project that she hopes will make audiences see women in a different light.

Tahira, who has been always been a storyteller, first as a writer of books like "The 12 Commandments of Being A Woman" and "The 7 Sins of Being A Mother", and then as a filmmaker of short "Toffee".

"Sharmajee Ki Beti" chronicles the stories of ambition and struggles of three middle-class women and two teenage girls, who all share the same surname Sharma.

"I think the first piece of art comes from a place of a lot of purity, a lot of passion. You are passionate about the things that you experience and observe.

"All of these five characters, there are three women and two girls, there is some amount of storytelling experience I have observed at the personal level... So it comes from a very pure place of heart," Tahira told PTI in an interview.

The film, which will start streaming on Prime Video from Friday, features an ensemble cast of Sakshi Tanwar, Divya Dutta, and Saiyami Kher, Vanshika Taparia and Arista Mehta.

As a storyteller, the aim was not to be preachy but make people "connect, engage and empathise" with the lead characters, she added.

"It should evoke some sort of emotion in the audience's hearts and their minds and if something reaches their hearts, it will also leave an impression on their minds as well and that's how I want my messaging to happen.

"It was never that I wanted to be preachy or try to drive home a point. I really want people to start thinking about women in a different light altogether. I

would wish all of that to happen with just a click but it takes time and I am ready to invest in that time in the most loving and compassionate

way." According to Tahira, the idea behind having three middle aged women and two under the age of 20 was to connect with a whole spectrum of audience. "They exist on the spectrum of lifespan and they still have interesting and compelling stories to tell. So the idea was to delve into the stories of the women who just don't adhere to the certain stereotype of the women that have been shown in cinema," she said.

Though she has loved making short films, directing her feature gave her a "different kick", the director, who also helmed a short in the 2020 anthology film "Zindagi inShort", said. "It's a different format and there is more stuff that you can tell with more characters, it can be nuanced, it can be deeper storytelling, it can take longer time to resolve and just the format, it's very interesting for me," she added.

She believes that she would never look down upon the short film format, which requires the "same amount of crew, hard work and storytelling".

"It's just that it's done in two or three days, sometimes even more or less. But a feature film is a longer commitment and it felt really nice because I have been wanting to make this feature film for a very long time. It was just beautiful. And I won't really say progression because I really respect the short film format also.

"I feel there is immense storytelling in short films and I really enjoy doing that. But when I got to make this, there was a different kick."

It took her 32 days to make "Sharmajee Ki Beti" and Tahira said she is proud of what she has achieved with the film. (PTI)



Sports

Unprecedented: Over 30 dope sample collection officers at National Inter-State Championships

PANCHKULA (HARYANA), June 27: A huge posse of more than 30 dope control officers (DCO) from the NADA have descended here for sample collection from the athletes taking part at the National Inter-State Championships, the final Olympics qualifying event, and they have been instructed to do target testing also. Usually, dope samples of the medal winners are also collected at big events like the national championships, and the unprecedented number of DCOs present at the Tau Devi Lal Stadium is expected to lead to a large sample size. The DCOs

have mostly come from New Delhi where the National Anti-Doping Agency head office is located. "I can't tell much, but we have a big team here because it's the most important domestic event of the year as it's the final Olympics qualifying event in athletics," one of the officers, who can't be named for obvious reasons, told PTI on Thursday.

"We are also doing target selection of athletes for collection of samples. That much I can tell." Even athletes who finished third or below at the heat races in the morning session of the opening day on Thursday were seen

being asked by the DCOs to sign the receipt of notification form and agreement to undergo the test. The NADA team landed here on Wednesday, a day before the start of the championships. A source also said there was out-of-competition collection of

samples, which would mean that it was done on Wednesday. The officers refused the divulge the exact or the possible sample size. Meanwhile, 100m national record holder Manikanta Hoblidhar qualified for the semifinals despite finishing fifth in his heat race with a time of 11.10 seconds. His national record stands



at 10.23 second. Gold medal contenders Gurindervir Singh of Punjab, Amlan Borgohain of Assam and Animesh Kujur of Odisha won their respective heats easily to make it to the semifinals. In the women's 100m, Assam's Hima Das, who is yet to attain full fitness after an injury, finished sixth in her heat with an unimpressive time of 12.69 seconds. The men's and women's 400m races saw a depleted field as some of the top runners pulled out to concentrate in the mixed 4x400m relay race in which India is hoping for a last minute qualification for the Paris Olympics.

The initial entry list had the likes of Jyothika Sri Dandi, Subha Venkatesan and MR Poovamma among women and Muhammed Anas Yahiya and Amoj Jacob but they did not run the individual quarter-mile event. But still, Kiran Pahal of Haryana stole the limelight in the women's 400m preliminary round with the fastest time of 52.33 seconds.

In men's high jump, national record holder Tejaswani Shankar and Sarvesh Kushare made the finals after finishing first and second in the qualifying round with identical heights of 2.10m. (PTI)

Kvaratskhelia's Georgia upsets **Ronaldo's Portugal** 2-0 to reach the last 16 at Euro 2024

Harmanpreet sees ongoing series as key to mastering home conditions before ODIWC bowl), definitely (I will bowl).

CHENNAI, June 27: Keeping an eye on the Women's ODI World Cup next year, India skipper Harmanpreet Kaur on Thursday stressed the importance of using the ongoing se-ries against South Africa to adapt to different home venues and capitalise on familiar conditions. A dominant India swept the preceding ODI series 3-0 in Bengaluru, as the action now shifts to the Chepauk which will host a one-off Test beginning Friday, and will be followed by three more T20Is here.

"It's a great opportunity to get used to various home conditions," Harmanpreet said in the pre-match media interaction.

"Even though we don't have a lot of experience at home, this series will give us a lot of confidence -- how the wickets behave and the combinations that we can use for the World Cup.'

Chennai's weather has been overcast and there is scattered rain forecast across the city in the next few days.

With the Chepauk track considered slow, Harmanpreet pointed out that it is not entirely different from that in Mumbai, where they played their previous two Tests

"It's been raining for the last couple of days, but the wicket looks really good and we are hoping for it to start turning within one or two days," Harmanpreet said.

"In the last two Tests in Mum- ence on Chennai wicket. But the



practice session from the last couple of days has given us a fair idea and we will play accordingly," she added. "We have seen men's Test

matches here, but women's cricket is completely different. Once we start playing as per the conditions, we will be gathering experience." India have options aplenty in

the bowling department ad Harmanpreet feels that the likes of Arundhati Reddy, Smriti Mandhana and herself can also chip in. "Arundhati is a great package and has done really well. We picked her based on her performance in the last couple of years. She can contribute a lot with the bat as well," she said. "If I get the opportunity (to liver," she concluded. (PTI)

Not only me, but Smriti is also bowling now, and if need be, we can use her as well."

The Indian captain, who has played only five Tests, thanked head coach Amol Muzumdar for helping her adapt to the format.

I don't have much experience in Tests. But in the last two Tests, Amol sir helped me a lot, thanks to his Test-playing experience," she said.

India last year in December hosted England and Australia for successive one-off Tests, winning both.

The women's red-ball cricket also returned to India's domestic calendar after four years with the Senior Inter-Zonal Multi-Day Trophy in Pune in March.

East Zone went on to win the title. Hailing the BCCI, Harmanpreet said: "Our domestic cricket was featured very nicely last year. A lot of girls across age categories played those games, and the BCCI is doing a great job. "They are trying their best to improve women's cricket, and we really hope they keep up with it." It's a great opportunity for all of us. As a player, we always want to play red-ball cricket. And now that we are getting it, we are happy.

"The last two Tests we played (vs England and Australia) were really great. We are looking for a positive result in this Test as well. Hopefully, we will de-



GELSENKIRCHEN (GER-MANY), June 27: A pre-game chat with Cristiano Ronaldo inspired Khvicha Kvaratskhelia and Georgia to one of the biggest upsets in European Championship history, beating Portugal 2-0 and advancing to the last 16. Georgia's No. 7 has admired

Ronaldo for years and had spoken before the game of how much he wanted his hero's shirt. He got it, along with a goal and a slice of soccer history, on a frustrating night for Ronaldo and Portugal.

"Before the match there was a meeting and he wished me suc- at Euro 2024. He felt he deserved cess and it was so much for me a penalty in the first half and because I would never imagine that he would come to me and something to me," sav Kvaratskhelia said in translated comments. "I realized that I could do and we could do so many things today because it

the spot kick low and past Portugal goalkeeper Diogo Costa in the 57th minute.

Georgia advanced in its debut at a major tournament as one of the best third-place teams. Portugal had already qualified from Group F after winning its first two games.

The Georgians will next face Spain on Sunday in Cologne, while Portugal plays Slovenia on Monday in Frankfurt. Slovenia is another defense-first team and it upset Portugal 2-0 in a March friendly.

Ronaldo is still without a goal

for more red-ball cricket in women's cricket calendar

Africa skipper Laura Wolvaardt has called for more Tests in women's cricket calendar and inclusion of red-ball tournaments in the rainbow nation's domestic structure, ahead of their one-off Test against India starting here on Friday.

India and South Africa will face off here at Chepauk for only their third Test in history and first in nearly 10 years, a contest for which Wolvaardt conceded her side is not fully prepared for.

While a multi-day red-ball women's competition was resumed in India last season, South Africa have no such tournaments.

"Most of us don't have any preparation in the format, since we don't play domestic four-day cricket. It's difficult, since I have to leave the balls that I have been cover-driving my whole life, and I still tend to play it by instinct," Wolvaardt said during a press conference here on Thursday.

Citing the lack of preparation for red-ball cricket fixtures which are few and far between, the star batter even suggested scrapping the format.

We either need to play more Tests and incorporate it into the domestic level, or we can just leave it because playing one or three Tests is very hard to adapt to," she said.

"But I want to have more of it," Wolvaardt added.

South Africa's last outing in the format was earlier this year in February when they were trounced by Australia by an innings and 284 runs in Perth.

After this fixture against them on," she said. (PTI)

CHENNAI, June 27: South India, South Africa's next Test assignment will be against England in December.

> "Getting the opportunity to play more red-ball cricket is awesome. Having three scheduled in a calendar year is pretty cool," she added.

similarly. We don't have much

clarity about the wicket here.

We discuss to go out there and

Harmanpreet was confident

"We don't have much experi-

that the practice sessions for the

last three days would be effec-

tive during the match.

see how the pitch is behaving."

"I personally really enjoy the format. So, this Test will be a huge challenge for us, and hopefully, we will adapt to the conditions well.'

"Women's Tests, in general, is a bit unknown as neither teams have too much experience in it. India does have a good home advantage and winning here will be a tough challenge, but we are up for it," she added.

The pitch is expected to be spin-friendly while there is also forecast of rain.

"Preparation-wise, we have been facing a lot of spin in the nets lately since it will be the biggest threat here. The balls were staying low at the nets yesterday," Wolvaardt said.

"Batting-wise, it's going to be a big challenge. But thankfully, we have a few top spinners in our squad who are licking their lips and getting ready for the game tomorrow. Hopefully, they are going to put on a great show," she added.

With the South African men's team making it to the final of the T20 World Cup, Wolvaardt said her side would also be keeping an eye on Saturday's final.

"Most of us woke up early to watch the game, but only to watch them chase 57. It was absolutely amazing to watch and felt incredible. We will definitely watch the final and cheer

Laura Wolvaardt calls Debutantes in focus as India Women take on South Africa in one-off Test

CHENNAI, June 27: The focus will be on young talent, especially the debutantes, when the Indian women's cricket team squares off against South Africa in a one-off Test starting here on Friday, a decade after the two teams last clashed in a five-day game

With Test cricket not being a regular affair for women, as many as five in the Indian squad could get a debut in the longest format, after having established themselves and proved their mettle in the limited-overs circuit. Also, with India coming off a 3-0 clean sweep in the preceding ODI series against the same side, the momentum is surely with the hosts although this will be a dif-

ferent format altogether. The likes of Uma Chetry, Priya Punia, Saika Ishaque, Arundhati Reddy and Shabnam Shakil will be the ones to watch as they prepare for their Test debut.

The last time India competed in a red-ball match was December 2023, which was their first Test outing in two years.

Playing back-to-back home Tests against England and Australia (one each), the hosts were successful in both instances. the Indians last played South Africa in a Test back in 2014 in Mysore, winning it by a comprehensive innings and 34-run

margin. Although the focus has generally been on white-ball cricket for the Indian women, head coach Amol Muzumdar has mentioned that there will be more red-ball cricket going forward. He has said that having a Women's Test Championship will add more value to the bilateral

Tests.

"It's not a bad idea to have a



(Women's) Test Championship, something we can look forward to. But that is for the Board (BCCI and ICC) to decide. If it happens, it's indeed better for the game," he had said on Wednes-

While Harmanpreet Kaur will lead the side with five Tests under her belt, vice-captain Smriti Mandhana is the most experienced of the lot, having played a Test more that her skipper.

Both Mandhana and Jemimah Rodrigues were in good form against England and Australia. They would once again back themselves to come up with a solid show with the bat against the South Africans here.

The likes of Shafali Verma and Deepti Sharma will also be expected to come good as they are currently the team's second and third-highest run-scorers respectively in the format.

As for bowling, Deepti Sharma and Pooja Vastrakar were lethal forces that gave the England and Australia a hard time in December.

-🐼

gave me inspiration.' For Napoli forward Kvaratskhelia, the win even surpasses his club's historic Italian title last year.

"This is the best day in my life because it was more difficult to do it with the Georgian team than with Napoli," he said.

A banner at the Georgian fans' end of the stadium said "Believe," and they did.

The Georgians needed a win to reach the knockout stage at Euro 2024 and got their opening goal after only 93 seconds. Georges Mikautadze intercepted a poor pass and set up Kvaratskelia to score with a low shot.

António Silva gave away the ball before the first goal and gave tinez criticized "very inconsisaway a penalty for the second, tent" video reviews but denied tripping Luka Lochoshvili inside his team had underestimated the penalty area. Mikautadze hit Georgia. (AP)

kicked away a water bottle when he was substituted in the 66th minute.

Ronaldo was given a vellow card for his protests after his penalty appeal was turned down. He wanted the decision after his shirt was pulled in the area by Lochoshvili as a cross came in. No foul was given.

With Portugal already qualified, Ronaldo was one of only three players kept in the lineup from the previous 3-0 win over Turkey, along with Costa and midfielder João Palhinha.

Portugal created little in the second half as Georgia's defense sat deep, but the 2016 champions had chances in added time. Goalkeeper Giorgi Mamardashvili kept Georgia's two-goal lead intact with saves from Nélson Semedo and Diogo Dalot, while Francisco Conceição narrowly missed the target.

Portugal coach Roberto Mar-

Sports pensioners appeal As for South Africa, the **for regular payments and** refund of deductions

> HT Bureau Lahkar, General Secretary, GUWAHATI, June 27: The All AASPA emphasized the hard-Assam Sports Pensioners Association (AASPA) has made a ments. fervent appeal to the state government, urging the prompt clearance of their pending dues and the regular disbursement of their pensions. The association has also requested a refund of ₹ 9,400, which was deducted dur-

Chepauk has hosted only one In a memorandum submitted to the Director of Sports and Youth Welfare, Assam AASPA highlighted the financial diffi-However, Muzumdar asserted culties faced by retired that the team is aware of the desportspersons who rely heavily on their pension. Sankar Datta

Lahkar, General Secretary, ship caused by irregular pay-

"If the payments are not cleared on a monthly basis, they suffer a lot. So, we request the government to pay the pensions regularly," said Datta Lahkar.

AASPA has previously approached the government on several occasions to address these issues, but no action has been taken so far. The association remains hopeful that their latest appeal will prompt the necessary measures to ensure the welfare of retired sportspersons in Assam

However, the team led by Laura Wolvaardt will continue to rely heavily on all-rounders Sune Luus and Delmi Tucker along With the ball, Masabata Klaas and Anneke Bosch are their top wicket-takers, while spinner Nonkululeko Mlaba can be tricky

ing the 2019-20 period.

could be a nightmare for the Proteas, especially on the Chennai track, which is traditionally known to assist spinners. women have played just one Test in two years, against Australia in Perth this February, which the

Also, Sneh Rana's off-breaks

latter won comprehensively. Even the South African side has five names in line for Test debuts

with Tazmin Brits.

to face on this track.

West Indies.

ingly. (PTI)

women's Test to date, back in

1976 when India drew against the

mands here and will play accord-

SPORTS

Kapil's advice to Team India: Play as team, not individuals to win T20 World Cup

NEW DELHI, June 27: India's first World Cup-winning captain Kapil Dev on Thursday said collective performance, not individual brilliance will be the key factor in deciding whether Rohit Sharma's team can end its over-a-decadelong trophy drought by winning the T20 World Cup in the West Indies.

India will take on England in the tournament's semifinal later on Thursday, hoping to make the finals where South Africa are in waiting after annihilating Afghanistan.

"Why talk about only Rohit Sharma, Virat Kohli, Jasprit Bumrah, Hardik Pandya, or Kuldeep Yadav? Everybody has a role to play. Their job is to win the tournament," Kapil told PTI Videos in an exclusive interview.

"To win a match, an odd person can come out, but to win a tournament everybody has to work together. If we are going to depend on Bumrah or Arshdeep, then you are going to lose it," he asserted.

"Let's talk about the team. That gives you a better perspective rather than the odd player. Yes main player is there and we can go around him. But everybody has to chip in to win the World Cup," he added.

Kapil pointed out that in his

1983 World Cup-winning team, he wasn't the only one who performed.

are playing keep on playing like "Roger Binny, Mohinder Amarthat, they should not have a bad nath, Kirti Azad, Yashpal Sharma day and be out of the tournament all came out with match-winning (like) what happened last time in the 50 overs World Cup," said the performances. If you start depending on one player it means you are iconic all-rounder. not going to win tournaments more "They are playing well, they are

enjoying. Hats off to them. Good often," he observed. He wished India good luck luck to them. I wish them all the luck and happiness," he added. ahead of their semi-final match against England and hoped that the Men in Blue clinch the trophy. elected president of Professional

Bumrah is 1000 times

better than me: Kapil Dev

Golf Tour of India on Wednesday, said that he feels proud to see India perceived as title contenders every time they compete in a global event. "We should be happy that we are

able to think that we can win. 20 years back, you weren't thinking. It's important that in every tournament India is going as a favourite. That's a big thing.

"We never thought about that. That's enough encouragement for a youngster to take up the sport. I am very happy to see where Indian cricket has reached wonderfully well," he emphasised.

Kapil lauded Bumrah, who has been the star performer for India with 11 wickets in the tournament so far.

"Bumrah is 1000 times better than me. These young boys are far better than us. We had more experience. They are better. They are very good. Outstanding. They are fitter. They are much more hardworking. They are fantastic," he said.

He, however, played down the role of a captain.

"Everybody can do captaincy. Hardik, Virat, Rohit everyone can do captaincy. When you give ball to somebody, the bowler has to do the job. Yes captain is there to help you out but it's not like if you don't win he is not a good captain." (PTI)



World Cup, the SLC announced. Former captain Mahela Jayawardene had resigned from the post of the consultant coach on Wednesday.

"Being an international coach means long periods away from loved ones. After lengthy conversations with my family and with a heavy heart, I feel it is now time for me to return home (England) and spend some quality time together," Silverwood, who played six Tests and seven ODIs for England as a pacer, said in his statement

"It has been a real honour for me to be part of Sri Lanka Cricket and I will be taking away many fond memories," added Silverwood.

Sri Lanka crashed out of the T20 WC in the group stages itself with two losses, a no result and a solitary win, and it was the former champions' worst performance in the ICC showniece.

During Silverwood's tenure,



wins over Bangladesh. The SLC has already started the process of finding a new head coach ahead the team's next international outing against India in a white ball series next month.

The Lankans will then head to

and overseas, including one against Australia in the 50-over England for a two-match Test seformat and two away Test series ries. (PTI) That's not the pitch you want to have a World Cup semifinal on: Afghan coach Trott

2022 and also reached the final of

the 50-over Asia Cup last year

They also secured a slew of bi-

lateral series wins both at home

where they lost to India.

Sri Lanka head coach Chris



TAROUBA (TRINIDAD), June 27: Afghanistan coach Jonathan Trott has lambasted the pitch that was used for their T20 World Cup semifinal against South Africa here, asserting that it was unfit for a contest of such magnitude

The pitch, which offered lateral seam movement and inconsistent bounce, was a nightmare for batters as Afghanistan were bowled out for 56 - the lowest score in a T20 World Cup semifinal at the Brian Lara Cricket Academy stadium here.

Even though South Africa chased down the target in 8.5 overs, their batters too struggled.

"I don't want to get myself into trouble and I don't want to come across as bitter or it being a case of sour grapes but that's not the pitch that you want to have a match, a semi-final of a World Cup on, plain and simple," Trott said at the post-match press conference. The former England batter said the pitch took bat-

ting completely out of the game.

"It should be a fair contest. I'm not saying it should be flat completely with no spin and no seam movement, I'm saying you shouldn't have batsmen worrying about going forward," he explained.

"If the opposition bowled well and got to a position where they bowled very, very well and it's through skill, then that's fine and then it's about adapting to that," he said.

"But once the ball starts misbehaving and rolling, if we had bowled as straight as South Africa had, I think you would have seen a very interesting second half as well," he added.

Afghanistan had an emotionally charged and hectic 40 hours before their first-ever semifinal appearance at a World Cup. They clinched a thrilling rain-hit eight-run win over Bangladesh in a must-win game that went in to the wee hours of Tuesday in Kingstown. There flight to Tarouba was then delayed by four hours. Even at the toss, skipper Rashid Khan mentioned that his hadn't slept much.

"We only got back to hotel at three o'clock and then we had to leave at eight o'clock -- five hours later so we didn't get much sleep so the guys obviously were very tired and a lot to process really emotionally physically. So all new territory for the guys," Trott said

Having said that, Trott conceded they were outplayed by a strong South African unit.

"But we knew the schedule, so that's not an excuse as such. When you go in World Cups or tournaments, you can't have everything your own way, and you've got to fight and play against the odds which you've done at times and very proud of that. But it's no, it's not the reason why we didn't win today."

"South Africa bowled well, used the conditions, and showed our boys what it's capable of. But it just didn't go our way tonight."

The 43-year-old hoped that the semifinal loss serves as a learning for the team that has improved leaps and bounds in the last five years.

"...we've obviously got one better than the previous (ODI) World Cup in November and it's just about taking it step by step and hopefully we learn from today, the batters certainly.



'PTI Videos'

NEW DELHI, June 27: Iconic former India all-rounder Kapil Dev feels Jasprit Bumrah is a "1000 times better" bowler than what he was at his prime.

Bumrah, who has been doing exceptionally well in the ongoing T20 World Cup, snaring 11 wick-

Ajinkya Rahane joins Ininatarchina

ets at an outstanding economy of 4.08 in the 23 overs he has bowled so far.

"Bumrah is 1000 times better team than me. These young boys are far better than us. We had more expe-

rience. They are better," Kapil told tastic," he said.(*PTI*) **President offers best wishes**

matches

and an economy of under three. His 89 ODI appearances have yielded 149 wickets while his T20I wicket count stands at 85 from 68 Kapil ended his career with a then world record 434 Test wickets and is considered one the best allrounders of all time who also

claimed 253 ODI scalps. The 65-year-old, who led India to their maiden World Cup title in 1983, also lauded the overall fitness levels of the current national

"All the Best, good luck, I hope

The 65-year-old, who was

Bumrah, who is widely regarded

as the best pacer in international

cricket now, has played 26 Tests

for India, picking up 159 wickets

the Indian players, the way they

"They are very good. Outstanding. They are fitter. They are much more hardworking. They are fan-

Tvesa leads Indian Open; Diksha,



HOLZHAUSERN (SWITZERLAND), June 27: Olympic-bound Diksha Dagar has

taken a break from this week's Swiss Open but there are five other Indians in the fray, led by the experienced Tvesa Malik, who is back in form.

Tvesa, the top Indian last week at the Czech Ladies Open, will have Vani Kapoor, Amandeep Drall, Ridhima Dilawari and Seher Atwal for company. Apart from Diksha, the other top Indian player taking a week off is Pranavi Urs. Diksha said she had fever and a stiff neck while playing Czech Ladies and hence decided to take a

challenge in Swiss Pranavi take rest





reicestersiille

to Paris-bound athletes

LEICESTER, June 27: Former India skipper Ajinkya Rahane has signed with English county side Leicestershire for the second half of the ongoing season, the club announced on Thursday.

As per the deal, he will be featuring in the team's final five games of the ongoing County Championship, besides playing in the One Day Cup, where the Foxes are the defending champi-

The 36-year-old joins Leicestershire in place of Wiaan Mulder, who is expected to travel to the West Indies with South Africa in August.

Rahane has accumulated over 26,000 runs across formats (First-Class, List-A and T20), having struck 51 hundreds with a top score of an unbeaten 265.

Playing for the 'Men in Blue' he has collected more than 8,000 runs, including 15 centuries, along with a best knock of 188 in the New Zealand Test in 2016. (PTI)

NEW DELHI, June 27: President Draupadi Murmu on Thursday conveyed her best wishes to Indian athletes who would be competing in next month's Paris Olympics, and backed the country's audacious bid to host the 2036 Games in her address to a joint sitting of the two houses of the Parliament here.

In her address, Murmu said the efforts of the central government, led by Narendra Modi, has ensured higher-than-ever medal hauls for Indians at global events.

"Due to effective efforts of my Government, young Indian players are winning a record number of medals at global platforms. The Paris Olympics is also going to start in a few days," Murmu said.

"We are proud of every athlete representing India at the Olympics. I convey my best wishes to them. To take these achievements further, the Indian Olympic Association is also preparing to host the 2036 Olympic Games," she added.

Over 100 Indians have qualified for the Paris Games, including a record 21 shooters. They would be aiming to better the best-ever haul of seven medals that the country achieved in the previous Tokyo Olympics.

That performance included an unprecedented athletics gold medal from javelin throw star Neeraj Chopra.

Encouraged by the International Olympic Committee (IOC) head Thomas Bach, India would be bidding for the 2036 Games hosting rights but will face competition from strong contenders like Saudi Arabia, Indonesia and Qatar among others.

The bid is yet to be submitted and Indian Olympic Association officials would be lobbying hard for the nation during the Paris Games starting July 26. A decision on the 2036 host will be taken only after the IOC elections next year. (PTI)

break from the event. She used the rest to quickly visit Paris to look at Le National, where the Olympic golf competition will happen in early August.

Tvesa said that she is feeling good, and the last few weeks have given her the confidence she needed and is looking forward to a good week in Switzerland.

Though she did not play in the event last year, she has good memories of a T-11 finish in 2021 when she shot rounds of 66-68 on the final two days.

Vani Kapoor has played a few events this season but has not had a Top-10, while Amandeep Drall and Ridhima have had limited appearances. Seher makes her first start on LET this season. (PTI)

"They should be confident in foot movement and be able to hit through the line or use their skills. T20 is about attacking and about scoring runs and taking wickets, not looking to survive.'

Throughout the tournament, the venue offered swing and seam to pacers and turn to the spinners.

Tarouba hosted five World Cup games and only once did a team batting first cross the 100-run mark. It was done by the West Indies with a 149/6 against New Zealand which was successfully defended by the co-hosts.

"What it takes to play international cricket and play against a bowling side like South Africa on a pitch that's perhaps not conducive to high scoring runs and finding ways of winning games...we just couldn't find a way today.

Openers Rahmanullah Gurbaz (0) and Ibrahim Zadran (2), who were Afghanistan's top run-getters in the tournament, both failed, putting pressure on the middle order that hadn't fired at all in the tournament.

"Nobody else has got runs. We need to find a reason for that," Trott said. (PTI)

Sreeja aims to carry momentum to Olympics

been working a lot on improving

my mental strength and I think that

is the first aspect where I have im-

proved, especially in 2024. I am

mentally well prepared to play

against any opponent, whoever it

is," Sreeja said an interview with

my strength and conditioning, espe-

cially to prevent injuries, and to im-

prove my agility on the table. I think

that has made a lot of difference in

"I have also been working a lot on

Ultimate Table Tennis.

NEW DELHI, June 27: Indian's top-ranked women's table tennis player Sreeja Akula credits her enhanced mental and physical strength over the past two years for her stunning victories against higher-ranked players as she hopes to carry this momentum into the Paris Olympics.

Sreeja created history last week by becoming the first Indian table tennis player to win a WTT Contender singles title and on Tuesday she became the country's top paddler with a career-high ranking of 24.

"For the last two years, I have "I have also worked a lot on my

first ball attack against the push. I have tried to be more consistent in attacking that ball and I can see these three aspects have brought a lot of change in my game," she said. Sreeja would be participating in both the team and individual events and is definitely high on confidence as she has hit a purple patch this year.

"It's my debut Olympic Games but I think I am well prepared for the tournament. I just want to play my best in whichever event I am playing and just want to create the maximum number of upsets." (PTI)

Tournament purely set up for India, ICC should be a little fairer: Vaughan

LONDON, June 27: Former England captain Michael Vaughan feels the ongoing T20 World Cup is "purely set up for India" and global body ICC should have been a bit more "fairer" to other countries as this is not a bilateral event organised solely for commercial gains.

Vaughan, 49, has often criticised the BCCI and India for flexing their muscle and financial might in international cricket.

"Well, it's their tournament isn't it? Literally it's that. You know that. They get to play whenever they want, they know exactly where their semi-final is, they play every single game in the morning so people can watch them at night, obviously in India on the television,' Vaughan said during a podcast with Australian great Adam Gilchrist on the YouTube channel Club Prairie Fire.

Vaughan's grouse is that India got to play all their matches in morning because it suits the Indian audience, who watched the matches in the evening. He lashed out at the ICC for bowing down to India's financial might.

"I get that money is a big play in the world of cricket, and I get that in bilateral series but you would think that when you get to a World Cup, the ICC should be a little bit fairer to everybody," said the man, who scored 18 hundreds in 82 Tests and was the English skipper of the historic Ashes-winning side of 2005.

"When you get to a World Cup, there can't be sympathy or any kind of sway towards one team in this tournament, and this tournament is purely set up for India. As simple as that," Vaughan alleged.

He made no bones of the fact that a team of India's calibre doesn't need any kind of favours to win games of cricket. India didn't play a single night game and were the only team with a permanent classification (A1) and fixed semi-final venue (Guvana).

"Indian supporters believe that on paper, probably they have got the best team, so they don't need to do anything.



They can win a night match, they don't need to play in Guyana in a semi-final, which, by the way, rains 24 days out of 30 in June, so they have already had six days of dryness, so it's going to rain,"

Vaughan said, questioning the choice of

day for a tournament of this magnitude. "Why (no reserve day)? I had been reading about rules and regulations of the tournament and it actually states about India. There are comments about the Indian team in a rule book, which, well, I guess I get it in a bilateral, but not in World Cup.

my game.

Gilchrist agreed with Vaughan that a lot of Indian fans think that scheduling indeed has been "compromised".

"There are some very, very passionate cricket supporters who are well aware of that and they are in agreement, it (scheduling) has been compromised it to an exthe flamboyant keeper-batter tent,' stated.

"Look, let's say it again that India has been the best team. most consistent team throughout, may be South Africa too without losing a game but India should win it and good on them if they do it.

"But you are right, there aren't too many Indian supporters who are naive and blind to that situation," Gilchrist said. To contextualize Vaughan and Gilchrist's allegations, it must be mentioned that pre-seedings, or pre-allocated venues has been an age-old ICC convention which, during a certain period. helped countries like Australia, England and New Zealand who had a bigger say in ICC matters then. Even the West Indies board, whose bosses toed the ECB line.

For example, in 1992, it was pre-decided that both Australia and New Zealand, the two co-hosts, would play their semi-finals at home in Sydney and Auckland unless they are pitted against each other.

In 1996, Pakistan were promised a home quarter-final unless they played against India (eventually it happened in Bengaluru).

In 2011, co-hosts India, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh were promised home knockout games.

So it's clear that all teams have had pre-decided seedings in T20 World Cups over the years. (PTI)

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venue.

He also asked why there's no reserve