

Harris stepping in for Biden at Ukraine summit as she takes growing role in heat of 2024 campaign



OBBERG, June 15: It's Vice President Kamala Harris, not President Joe Biden, who joined world leaders Saturday in Switzerland for a summit on Ukraine and planned to meet with Ukraine's Volodymyr Zelenskyy to discuss his country's vision for ending the war launched by Russia.

As she arrived at a resort overlooking Lake Lucerne, Harris announced \$1.5 billion more in U.S. assistance for Ukrainians through the State Department and the U.S. Agency for International Development. That includes money for energy assistance, repairing damaged energy infrastructure, helping refugees and strengthening civilian security.

Biden on Friday wrapped up three days at the Group of Seven summit in Italy, where he held talks with Zelenskyy, and then flew straight to Los Angeles for a Saturday night fundraiser with Hollywood A-listers George Clooney and Julia Roberts.

His decision to skip the summit on Ukraine spotlights the competing election-year demands facing Biden as he

tries to balance a complicated domestic and foreign policy agenda while running against former President Donald Trump. It also reflects the growing profile Harris has found making the case for a second Biden term as the 2024 campaign heats up.

"Being vice president means you take a lot of hits for the team," Matt Bennett, who served as an aide to former Vice President Al Gore, said ahead of Harris' scheduled 28-hour dash from Washington to Switzerland and back. "In the past, these moments on the global stage have been good for her. She looks presidential and very capable among world leaders."

Zelenskyy for months publicly lobbied Biden and other world leaders to take part in the summit, even warning that their absence could further embolden Russian President Vladimir Putin in his 28-month war against Ukraine.

But Biden ultimately decided to dispatch Harris and White House national security adviser Jake Sullivan to represent the administration in Switzerland.

"Skipping the summit is a missed opportunity for the president and for the United States," said Bradley Bowman, senior director of the Center on Military and Political Power at the Foundation for Defense of Democracies in Washington. "That said, sending the vice president with the national security adviser is not exactly sending the junior varsity team."

Biden has increasingly turned to Harris as he tries to reassemble the coalition of voters that helped them beat Trump in 2020, and that they will likely need again to win a second term. For her part, Harris has taken a more visible role in making the pitch for Biden to a diverse cross-section of the Democratic base.

She visited an abortion clinic in Minneapolis to spotlight the administration's record on the issue. She's launched an effort to highlight economic development on Biden's watch, with a particular focus on minority communities.

And she's crisscrossed the country to talk about issues like marijuana legislation and gun violence as Biden's standing with the coalition that catapulted him to the White House has shown signs of eroding. She even squeezed in a visit to Atlanta on Friday to promote the administration's economic agenda before boarding Air Force Two for her red-eye flight to Switzerland. (AP)

US military targets Houthi radar sites in Yemen after a merchant sailor goes missing

DUBAI, June 15: The United States military unleashed a wave of attacks targeting radar sites operated by Yemen's Houthi rebels over their assaults on shipping in the crucial Red Sea corridor, authorities said on Saturday, after one merchant sailor went missing following an earlier Houthi strike on a ship.

The attacks come as the US Navy faces the most intense combat it has seen since World War II in trying to counter the Houthi campaign - attacks the rebels say are meant to halt the Israel-Hamas war in the Gaza Strip. However, the Iranian-backed rebel assaults often see the Houthi target ships and sailors who have nothing to do with the war while traffic remains halved through a corridor vital for cargo and energy shipments between Asia, Europe and the Mideast.

US strikes destroyed seven radars within Houthi-controlled territory, the military's Central Command said. It did not elaborate on how the sites were destroyed and did not immediately respond to ques-

tions from The Associated Press.

"These radars allow the Houthis to target maritime vessels and endanger commercial shipping," Central Command said in a statement.

The US separately destroyed two bomb-laden drone boats in the Red Sea, as well as a drone launched by the Houthis over the waterway, it said.

The Houthis, who have held the capital, Sanaa, since 2014, did not acknowledge the strikes, nor any military losses. That's been typical since the US began launching airstrikes targeting the rebels.

Meanwhile, Central Command said one commercial sailor from the Liberian-flagged, Greek-owned bulk cargo carrier Tutor remained missing after an attack Wednesday by the Houthis that used a bomb-carrying drone boat to strike the vessel.

"The crew abandoned ship and were rescued by USS Philippine Sea and partner forces," Central Command said. The "Tutor remains in the Red Sea and is slowly taking on water." (AP)



Iran and Sweden agree to a prisoner swap freeing man convicted of war crimes over '88 executions



DUBAI, June 15: Iran and Sweden agreed on Saturday to a prisoner swap, freeing Hamid Nouri, convicted of war crimes by Sweden over mass 1988 executions in the Islamic Republic, in exchange for two men held by Tehran.

Iran released Johan Floderus, a Swede who had been working for the European Union's diplomatic corps, as well as a man identified as Saeed Azizi by Swedish Prime Minister Ulf Kristersson.

They "are now on a plane home to Sweden, and will soon be reunited with their families," Kristersson wrote on the social platform X.

Oman mediated the swap, the state-run Oman News Agency reported. Iranian state television reported Nouri was already freed and would be heading back to Tehran.

In 2022, the Stockholm District Court sentenced Nouri to life in prison over his role in the executions. It identified Nouri as an assistant to the deputy prosecutor at the Gohardasht prison outside the Iranian city of Karaj. (AP)

Chinese premier lands in Australia on first such visit in 7 years

MELBOURNE, June 15: Chinese Premier Li Qiang arrived in Australia on Saturday on a relations-mending mission with panda diplomacy, rock lobsters and China's global dominance in the critical minerals sector high on the agenda.

His visit is the first by a Chinese premier in seven years and is expected to pave the way for President Xi Jinping's first journey to Australia since 2014.

This is the second leg of his tour after New Zealand, and will end in Malaysia. Before leaving New Zealand, Li told an audience in the city of Auckland on Saturday that his country was committed to creating a first-class business environment and supporting foreign enterprises to develop in China, according to Chinese state media.

Li said there was vast potential for China and New Zealand to collaborate in areas such as green development and that Beijing welcomed New Zealand enter-

prises, such as dairy company Fonterra, that seized such opportunities, the Xinhua News Agency reported.

During the Australian leg of his travels which ends on Tuesday, China's most powerful politician after President Xi Jinping is expected to visit Adelaide Zoo in the South Australia state capital where his Air China flight landed from Auckland.

Australian Foreign Minister Penny Wong and South Australia Premier Peter Malinauskas greeted Li on the Adelaide Airport tarmac.

Li will also visit a Chinese-controlled lithium processing plant in the Kwinana Beach industrial estate in Western Australia state, as well as Australia's Parliament House in the national capital Canberra.

China initiated a reset of the bilateral relationship after Prime Minister Anthony Albanese's center-left Labor Party was elected in 2022.

The relationship collapsed during the previous conservative administration's almost decade in power over legislation that banned covert foreign interference in Australian politics, the exclusion of Chinese-owned telecommunications giant Huawei from rolling out the national 5G network due to security concerns, and Australia's call for an independent investigation into the causes of and responses to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Beijing imposed an array of official and unofficial trade blocks in 2020 on a range of Australian exports including coal, wine, barley and wood that cost up to 20 billion Australian dollars (\$13 billion) a year.

All the trade bans have now been lifted except for Australian live lobster exports. Trade Minister Don Farrell predicted that impediment would also be lifted soon after Li's visit with Chinese Commerce Minister Wang Wentao. (AP)

GOVERNMENT OF ASSAM
OFFICE OF THE DISTRICT FISHERY DEVELOPMENT OFFICER,
KARBI ANGLONG, DIPHU.

No.AFH-79/Tender Notice/2024-25/

Dated : Diphu the 14th June' 2024.

SHORT TENDER NOTICE

Sealed tender affixing Karbi Anglong Autonomous Council revenue fee stamp worth Rs.10.00 are invited by the undersigned for the following works under Diphu, Bokajan, Howraghat Sub-Division of Karbi Anglong District and West Karbi Anglong District. Tenders will be received in the office of the undersigned and in the office of the Sub-Divisional Fishery Development Officer, Hamren up to 2.00 PM of 5th July' 2024 and will be opened in the same date and time.

The name of works/project in details are given below:-

Sl. No.	Project Name	Estimated Amount
1.	Improvement of Aquaponics division at Aquacentric Park	5.00
2.	Painting of office boundary wall	3.00
3.	Plantation and beautification of Bahani Fish Farm	8.00
4.	Construction of office building at Hamren	50.00
5.	Construction of Fish Framers Training Hall cum open stage at Bakalia	50.00
6.	Excavation of new Fishery at Hemari Bey Residence	5.00
7.	Excavation of new Fishery at Hemai Engti, Tikok Langso	3.00
8.	Excavation of new Fishery at Sikari Pathar, Langpher	3.00
9.	Excavation of new Fishery at Hati Dandi, Langpher	3.00
10.	Excavation of new Fishery at Teteliguri, Bey Gaon	3.00
11.	Excavation of Ningme Fishery Project at Birla, near Sarada LP School	4.00
12.	Excavation of New Fishery at Kongjuk Athoi	3.00
13.	Excavation of Amlva Kro Fishery Project, Kolai Kro Gaon, Ok-Kereng	6.00
14.	Excavation of Birsing Teron Fishery, Dengaon	4.00
15.	Excavation of Nalini Fishery, Pub Dikharu	4.00
16.	Excavation of Pudumi Fishery, Dilaji 10 Km, Kehai Timung Gaon	4.00
17.	Excavation of Lolita Fishery, Dikrenglangso, Diphu	4.00
18.	Excavation of Fishery Project at Bithung	5.00
19.	Excavation of Fishery Project at Bithung	5.00
20.	Excavation of Fishery Project at Bithung	5.00
21.	Excavation of Fishery Project at Bithung	5.00
22.	Excavation of Kaloi Fishery project near Geeta Ashram	2.80
23.	Excavation of Fishery near Assam University, Diphu	5.00
24.	Excavation of New Fishery at Dongchara Bey Gaon	2.40
25.	Excavation of Irish Fishery, Cherop Engti Gaon, Manja	2.40
26.	Excavation of Sampothar Dhansing Fishery	3.00
27.	Excavation of Fishery at Howraghat, Borbil Gaon	2.25
28.	Excavation of Fishery at Langvoku	3.50
29.	Excavation of Fishery at Pub Silputa, Sarthe Engti Gaon, Bakalia	1.50
30.	Excavation of Community Fishery at Dojai Kro Village, Dhentaghat	1.50
31.	Excavation of Fishery project at Langklangvong Model Village, Longnit	1.25
32.	Excavation of Haldiati Sankar Fishery	4.00
33.	Excavation of Fishery Project at Sorupathar	4.00
34.	Excavation of Fishery Project at Langminso	6.55
35.	Excavation of Fishery at Art of living Center, Diphu	3.00
36.	Excavation of Fishery Protect at Amptikhuri	4.00
37.	Excavation of Khorsing Rheta Fishery project, Song killing Gaon, Boylan	4.00
38.	Excavation of Loringiangso Fishery project, Matipung	4.00
39.	Excavation of Fishery Project at Gam Bashi, Itongr hedon	4.00
40.	Excavation of Fishery at Tirkim under Socheng MAC Constituency	3.00
41.	Excavation of Fishery at Rongmandu under Socheng MAC Constituency	2.40
42.	Excavation of Fishery at Chinthong	2.40
43.	Excavation of Sariok Teron Fishery	2.40
44.	Excavation of Bortangs° Fishery	2.40
45.	Excavation of Rongtara Fishery	2.40
46.	Excavation of Longluto Adong Fishery	2.40
47.	Excavation of Tado Fishery Project at Rongmonjir Ward No.11, Diphu	3.00
48.	Taralangso New Fishery Project opposite Helipad	20.00
49.	Construction of retaining wall, repairing, renovation and extension of Departmental exhibition stall at Taralangso	25.00
50.	Installation of CCTV Camera, JioFiber connection etc.	8.00
51.	Renovation of Fishery Board Chairman Quarter	5.00
52.	Lightings of decorative lights at Aquacentric Park	2.45
53.	Making of Departmental documentary vedio	2.00

The other terms and condition for submission of tenders are as follows:-

1. The tender must furnish up to date Income Tax, GST, PAN card, professional tax, Caste Certificate and trading license without which no tender will be considered.
2. Tenderer must furnish earnest money (1% for SC,ST,OBC. 2% for others) shown against the item of work in the form of call deposit duly pledged to the undersigned without which no tender shall be considered.
3. The tenderer should quoted the rate of works as per estimated value/ Scheduled rate.
4. The successful tenderer shall have to come in to agreement in PWD F-2 form within 7(Seven) days from the date of issued work order and allotted work shall have to start within 10(Ten) days failing which in the works shall be cancelled.
5. The work must be executed under the supervisor of the officer duly authorized by the undersigned.
6. Any partnership Farm/ Shamik Bahini submit tender must furnish certificate copy of their registration and power of attorney to execute the deed of agreement and to receive payment.
7. The tender need to submitted in the sealed envelope duly super scribed as tender for the work and name to be has mentioned against each work.
8. The plan and estimates of the work may be seen in the office of the undersigned during office hours on request.
9. The earnest money will be released only after satisfactory completion of specified works.
10. The undersigned is not bound to accept the tender and reserve and the right to reject any or all tender without assigning any reason what so ever.

Sd/-
District Fishery Development Officer,
Karbi Anglong, Diphu.
Dated : Diphu the 14th June' 2024.

Memo No. AFH-79/Tender Notice/2024-25/94-05

Four declared winners unopposed in Nagaland ULB polls

HT Correspondent

DIMAPUR, June 15: The Nagaland Pradesh Congress Committee (NPCC) on Saturday said three of the party candidates were declared winners unopposed in Tuli Town Council in the upcoming elections to the urban local bodies (ULBs) in Nagaland, scheduled for June 26.

The three winners are Imlionen Longkumer from Ward no. 5 (Tuliyong ward), Temsumenba Inmsong from Ward no. 6 (Mendenti ward) and K Imlitem-jen Jamir from Ward no. 8 (Longpong ward). A ruling Nationalist Democratic Progressive Party candidate Seyievino Vitsu from Ward no. 7 under Medziphema Town Council was also

declared elected unopposed in the ULB election on June 13.

Congratulating its three winning candidates, the NPCC thanked the electorate of Tuli town for reposing their trust in the Congress party candidates, especially on the heels of the massive mandate in favour of the party candidate, Supongmeren Jamir, in the recently held Lok Sabha polls.

"We gratefully welcome the vote of confidence and anticipate many more such victories throughout the state during the upcoming urban local body elections," the NPCC communication department said.

Meanwhile, out of the 669 candidates filed nominations for elections to the

urban local bodies, 36 candidates withdrew their nominations so far, according to an update from the State Elections Commission on June 14.

Out of the 36 candidates who withdrew their nominations, 34 candidates are from eastern Nagaland and one each from Dimapur Municipal Council and Wokha Town Council.

The Eastern Nagaland People's Organisation (ENPO) had called for abstention from any central or state polls in Nagaland to press for its demand for creation of Frontier Nagaland Territory comprising six districts of eastern Nagaland. However, 27 candidates from eastern Nagaland are yet to withdraw their candidatures.

Devastating floods impact beekeeping in Imphal East

HT Bureau

GUWAHATI, June 15: The All Manipur Beekeepers' Association (AMBA), accompanied by Th Joysana Meetei, a life time board member of the All India National Bee Board (NBB), New Delhi conducted an extensive inspection of the devastating impact recent floods have had on beekeeping communities in the villages of Maiba Khul, Mongjam, and Koirengi. The inspection, carried out on June 14, 2024, revealed significant damage, with approximately 200 beehives destroyed and numerous bee colonies lost.

The inspection team, comprising Nagngom Khelemba, vice president, AMBA, W Dinamani, treasurer, AMBA, Atom Sunil Singh, secretary, AMBA, and H Folo Singh, assistant secretary, AMBA, observed widespread destruction. The flood-

waters had swept away many beehives, leaving behind scenes of devastation with countless dead bees. W Dinamani expressed the association's commitment to supporting the affected beekeepers, stating, "We will do our utmost to provide assistance to the beekeepers of Manipur during this challenging time." Nagngom Khelemba described the situation as "quite unfortunate," reflecting on the significant hardships faced by the beekeeping community.

Atom Sunil Singh highlighted the broader environmental impact, noting, "The recent floods in Imphal Valley, particularly in Imphal East District, have had a detrimental effect on bee populations. Flooding leads to the inundation of nest-cells and mould growth, which threaten the brood of soil-nesting bees. This reduction

in bee numbers can have far-reaching consequences, as bees are essential for pollination, which is vital for biodiversity and agriculture. The loss of bees can result in decreased crop yields and a potential loss of biodiversity, affecting food security and ecosystems." Th Joysana Meetei emphasised the severity of the situation, stating, "The water level was so high that there was no time to rescue the bees." The Association underscores the urgent need for conservation efforts to protect bee populations and their habitats to mitigate these impacts.

The All Manipur Beekeepers' Association calls on local authorities and the broader community to join in efforts to support the recovery and resilience of beekeepers and to safeguard the essential role bees play in our environment and agriculture.

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER (PHE)

URBAN WATER SUPPLY DIVISION, DIPHU

SHORT TENDER NOTICE NO —1 of 2024-25 UNDER SOPD

Sealed tender affixing KAAC receipt worth ₹10.00 (Rupees ten) only are invited from registered contractors/ firms of PHE Department, Karbi Anglong and West Karbi Anglong district for the below mentioned work of AAP 2024-25 (SOPD) duly approved and accorded A/A by the KAAC authority vide No. KAAC/ PRE-3/ AA /2019-20/2021-22/13-A DL 13-06-2024 under Urban Water supply division, Diphu will be received upto 29-06-2024 upto 2.00 P.M. and tender so received will be opened on the same date at 2:30 PM in presence of intending tenderer or their authorized representative who likes to be present.

Detail tender papers, specification, terms and condition etc may be obtained from the office of the undersigned on all working days from 10:00 AM to 2:00 PM of 17-06-2024 to 28-06-2024 and upto 12.00 noon of 29-06-2024 on payment of ₹100.00 (Rupees one hundred) only in demand draft which should be pledge in favour of "Executive Engineer (PRE), Urban Water Supply division, Diphu". The undersigned have reserved the right to accept or reject or cancel the same without any reason and claim thereof. In case of any unavoidable circumstances if tender could not be received or open on the predetermined time and date the same shall be received and opened in the next working day at the same time for which no separate communication will be made.

The estimates were prepared based on APHE SOR (2015-16) & CPWD SOR (2021-22) and rate analysis based on present market price.

Name of the work: - As per Annexure —"A"

Terms and Condition: -

- Bidder should quote their rates distinctly both in figures and in words on percentage basis as per below / above / and the estimated rates / departmental approved rates.
- The Bidder should furnish their full name and address distinctly in the tender papers.
- Earnest money should invariably be enclosed to the tender papers.
- Income tax, Professional tax and GST clearance certificate should be enclosed with the tender papers.
- The work must be completed within stipulated time.
- The work should be started after signing necessary agreement and in consultation with AEE (PHE) / SO (PHE) i/c.
- Payment will be made subject to availability of fund.
- No advance payment will be made for the work.
- Non-tribal tenderer must produce up to date KAAC trading license along with the tender documents.
- All other terms and condition will be followed as per APWD — 2 form of tender.
- The undersigned reserved the right to accept / reject any or all tender in part of in full without assigning any reason thereof and he does not bind himself to accept the lowest tender rate.

ANNEXURE-A

NIT Memo. PHEE / UWSD / DIP / TB —40 (C) / 2024-25 /24-33

Date: - 15-06-2024

Sl No	Name of Work	Gr. No	Amount (In Lakhs)	Earnest Money		Time of Completion
				Gen	ST/SC	
1	Installation of G.R.P. Tank on existing elevated P.S. Tank at various location including refabrication and M.S. Staggering including labour charge and materials.:- a) 46800 liters capacity P.S Tank at Circuit house	1	₹ 7.00	2%	1%	25 Days
2	New pipe for provision of lifting and delivery arrangement of water distribution	2	₹ 5.00	2%	1%	15 Days
3	Replacement and improvement of 80 mm dia G.I. Distribution main at Forest colony and PWD colony	3	₹ 3.00	2%	1%	10 Days
4	Extension of 80 mm Dia G. I pipe line from DAV School down side to Main tila Tininali (L=400) 14 9 Improvement and Renovation of Teralangso Exhibition hall at Taralangs.	4	₹ 7.00	2%	1%	10 Days

5	Installation of G.R.P. Tank on existing elevated P.S. Tank at various location including refabrication and M.S. Staggering including labour charge and materials.:-a) 46800 liters capacity P.S Tank at Circuit house	5	₹ 10.00	2%	1%	15 Days
6	Installation of DTW in DC office, Diphu, Diphu.	6	₹ 14.00	2%	1%	20 Days
7	Refurbishing including Sanitation and Electrification of Staff Quarter at Rural Water supply complex under Urban W/S Division, Diphu	7	₹ 4.00	2%	1%	25 Days
8	Construction of car shade for parking official car at (PHE) Rural office complex	8	₹ 3.00	2%	1%	15 Days
9	Reconditioning of 50 HP Pump Sets AT Manja Low Pressure pump house.	9	₹ 3.55	2%	1%	10 Days
10	Installation of new sluice valve at various point between Manja pump house and Binapani TP pipe line.	10	₹ 3.50	2%	1%	7 Days
11	Construction of new intake structure for new pump house at Manja low pressure	11	₹ 6.00	2%	1%	15 Days
12	Shifting of pumps from old pump house to new RCC pump House.	12	₹ 3.00	2%	1%	10 Days
13	Water pumping arrangement from one reservoir to other along with mechanical and electrical arrangement at Binapani TP	13	₹ 5.00	2%	1%	10 Days
14	Filter Media replacement at Binapani TP	14	₹ 3.00	2%	1%	15 Days
15	Cleaning and disinfecting of flocculator at Binapani 7P complex	15	₹ 1.50	2%	1%	7 Days
16	Clearing of jungle along with cutting of grass and dressing of the area at 9laks TP	16	₹ 1.50	2%	1%	7 Days
17	Extension of 80/50 mm dia al distribution main from Shiv Bari R.C.O Bridge to nearest Shiv Bari colony (200 RM)	17	₹ 5.00	2%	1%	10 Days
18	Extension of 80 mm Dia G.I pipe line from Rongpoli to Rongbin Akam (L=300 /179	18	₹ 5.00	2%	1%	10 Days
19	Construction of Toilet and Septic Tank at 9 lakhs TP	19	₹ 3.50	2%	1%	20 Days
20	Cleaning and Disinfecting of reservoirs at 9 Lakh T.P. complex under GDWSS (C)	20	₹ 2.00	2%	1%	10 Days
21	Estimate for & low pipeline New Dam intake point including 150mm GI pipe connecting 200 mm MS dia. Main siloni pipeline near Terang Basil under DWSS(M) 2024-25	21	₹ 45.00	2%	1%	20 Days
22	Utility Relocation of existing 225 mm dia C.I. Raw Water Gravity Main by laying and re-aligning with new 225 min dia HDPE pipe due to fallen underneath NH-329 near NAYARA GAS STA'T'ION, Assam Riffles area.	22	₹ 19.50	2%	1%	20 Days
23	Construction of Siloni Pipeline (a)MS 200mm Dia. RCC Pillar between Siloni T.P to intake point at Terang Basti (b) US 200mm Dia. And CI 225mm Dia. RCC pillar between Diphu to Siloni T.P. under DWSS(A.4) 2024-25.at various point	23	₹ 8.00	2%	1%	15 Days
24	Refurbishing including Sanitation and Electrification of Staff Quarter at Siloni under Urban W/S Division.	24	₹ 5.00	2%	1%	20 Days
25	Installation of Ultrasonic Type Flow Meter with Armoured wiring DN 450, PN 16	25	₹ 10.00	2%	1%	10 Days
26	Installation of Remote Terminal Units (RTU) with HMI, Energy Sensor , Level Transmitter , Non slam Air Valve with isolation valve , Tripple action air valve with isolation valve.at High Pressure of DN 450, PN 16	26	₹ 5.50	2%	1%	15 Days

Sd/-

Executive Engineer (PHE)

Urban W/S Division, Diphu.

Memo NO. PHEE / UWSD / DIP / TB —40 (C) / 2024-25 /24-33

Date: -15-06-2024



Young people more intelligent, know what stories to tell: AR Rahman on India's show at Cannes

NEW DELHI, June 15: Music composer A R Rahman says talent shouldn't be restricted to a region and young Indian artists like Cannes winner Payal Kapadia, who are in tune with changing times, play a key role in making stories from India go global.

Kapadia, an alumnus of the Film & Television Institute of India (FTII), is the first Indian filmmaker to win the Grand Prix award for "All We Imagine as Light" at the Cannes Film Festival. The Malayalam-Hindi feature, an India-French production, was the first film from an Indian director after 30 years to make it to the main competition section of the European gala.

Rahman, a multiple award-winning musician feted both at home and around the world with double wins at Oscars and Grammys besides a Golden Globe, said beautiful stories from India deserve international recognition.

"The spirit of the young people has changed now. They are more intelligent. They know where to move stuff, what kind of stories to tell. As long as we tell beautiful stories about India and not just poverty, it's a good thing.

"The art of film is not just for (audience at home), it's international... It's important to learn certain things, not be happy with, 'Oh we got a great audience here, box office is good here.' Some people are not satisfied with that. So they go for (international festivals), Payal Kapadia is one of (them)," the composer told PTI in an interview.

Last month, Rahman was also at Cannes to unveil the Nagaland-set "Headhunting to Beat Boxing", directed by Rohit Gupta, at the festival's market.

"Sunflowers Were the First Ones to Know" by FTII student Chidananda S Naik and Anasuya Sengupta of "The Shameless" fame won major awards at Cannes. Sengupta became the first Indian to win the best actress prize in Un Certain Regard, while Naik's

"Sunflowers Were the First Ones to Know..." won the La Cinef first prize (film school fiction or animated films) at the film festival. Recalling the time when he earned two Academy Awards for the British film "Slumdog Millionaire" in 2009, Rahman said there were people who said he

deserved to win an award for "Lagaan" (which made it to the final five in the best foreign film Oscar category in 2002) and 1992's "Roja".

"We want our stories to be heard, represented and accredited. There's a system to follow. Even when I won Oscars and everything for 'Slumdog Millionaire', (people said) 'Lagaan' should have won, 'Roja' should have won. I said, 'First of all, I didn't even enter (these awards at the time), I didn't even enter all the stuff in any of the systems,'" said the composer, who won the best original song Oscar for "Jai Ho" and another one for the original score of "Slumdog Millionaire".

In February, Zakir Hussain was India's big winner with three Grammys, flautist Rakesh Chaurasia picked up two. Singer Shankar Mahadevan, violinist Ganesh Rajagopalan and percussionist Selvaganesh Vinayakram, Hussain's collaborators in the fusion group Shakti, won one Grammy each.

Giving the example of multiple Grammy winners Hussain and Ricky Kej, Rahman said all in all, the Indian field of arts has witnessed a great high in the last decade.

"Half of the people don't even know (how to enter the system). (They say) 'I think this should win the Grammy'... It's not like that. There's a process for everything. So, even in this case, I think they said it was a collaboration... even Payal Kapadia's film," he added.

"Headhunting to Beat Boxing" is a musical documentary that follows the story of a tribe in the Northeastern state "engulfed in the depths of violence and bloodshed, (the tribe) resurrects itself through the healing power of music and emerges through a musical renaissance". Rahman, who has backed the film via his ARR Immersive Entertainment banner, said he boarded it as a producer five years ago after he fell in love with Nagaland while attending the state's annual Hornbill Festival. (PTI)

KARTIK AARYAN'S 'CHANDU CHAMPION' MINTS ₹ 5.4 CRORE ON DAY ONE

NEW DELHI, June 15: Kartik Aaryan-starrer "Chandu Champion" has earned in ₹ 5.4 crore at the domestic box office on its opening day, the makers said Saturday.

Filmmaker Kabir Khan, known for movies such as "Ek Tha Tiger", "Bajrangi Bhaijaan", "83" and "Kabul Express", has directed the film, which made its debut in theatres on Friday and received positive reviews from the critics.

"Chandu Champion" is produced by Sajid Nadiadwala's Nadiadwala Grandson Entertainment and Kabir Khan Films.

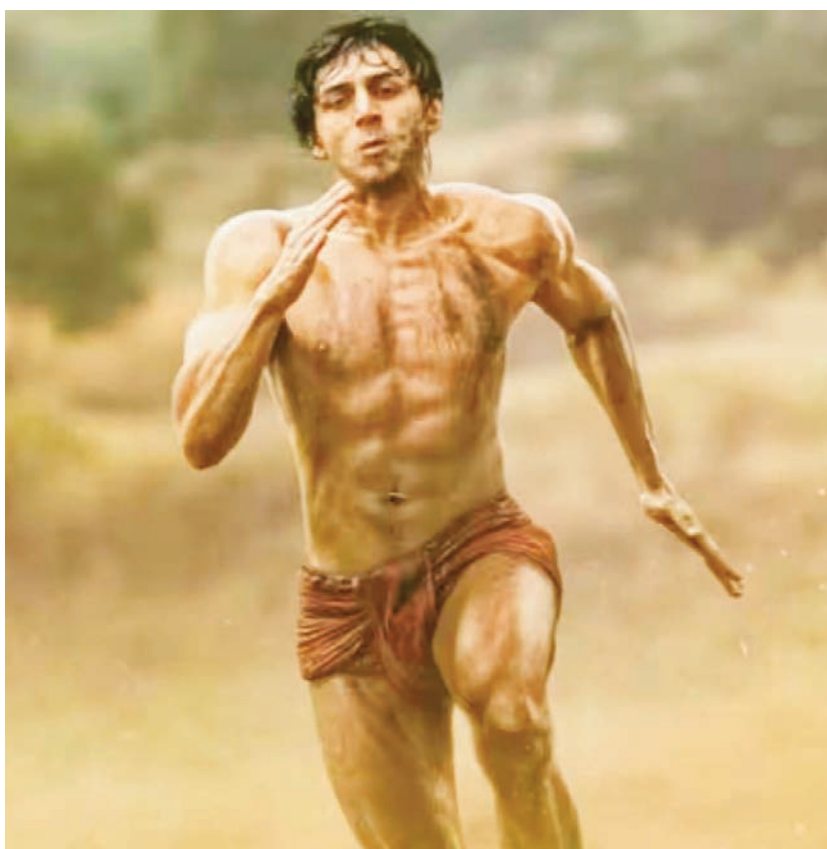
In a press note, the makers said the film has won the hearts of the audience.

"The tremendous love from the audience has got the film an opening of ₹ 5.4 crore at the box office in India on day one.

"... It's indeed a good start for the film, and looking at the kind of buzz and excitement the film has generated with the strong word of mouth the film will jump in its collection over the weekend," they said.

Inspired by the life of India's first Paralympic gold medalist Murlikant Petkar, "Chandu Champion" stars Aaryan in the title role as a man across ages and phases, including being an Indian Army soldier, a wrestler, a boxer, a 1965 war veteran and a swimmer.

The film also features Vijay Raaz, Bhuvan Arora and Rajpal Yadav in pivotal roles. (PTI)



Puri Jagannadh's 'Double iSmart' to release on Independence Day



MUMBAI, June 15: Filmmaker Puri Jagannadh's upcoming film "Double iSmart" will be released in theatres on Independence Day on August 15, the makers announced on Saturday.

The film, also backed by the filmmaker and Charmme Kaur's banner Puri Connects, features Telugu actor Ram Pothineni in the lead.

In a post on Instagram, the actor shared the release date of the film, which will come out in five languages — Telugu, Hindi, Tamil, Kannada and Malayalam.

"Maammmaaaaa! Date block kar!! Ustaad #DoubleiSmart Shankar #DoubleiSmartonAug15," the actor wrote alongside a poster of the film.

"Double iSmart" is a sequel to Pothineni and Jagannadh's 2019 sci-fi action film "iSmart Shankar", about an assassin who helps the police when a slain cop's memories are transferred to his brain.

Bollywood star Sanjay Dutt, who was recently seen in Vijay's Tamil hit "Leo", is also part of the cast of "Double iSmart".

Mani Sharma has composed music for the film. (PTI)

'Mr & Mrs Mahi' earns ₹ 50 crore in two weeks



NEW DELHI, June 15: "Mr & Mrs Mahi", starring Rajkummar Rao and Janhvi Kapoor, has crossed ₹ 50 crore mark at the global box office, the makers said on Saturday.

The romantic sports drama, directed by Sharan Sharma and produced by Zee Studios and Dharma Productions, was released in theatres on May 31.

Dharma Productions on Friday evening shared the box office update on its official X page along with a poster that stated the film has earned ₹ 50 crore gross at the worldwide box office.

"Destiny brought them together, but your love made them score big on dreams!" the banner captioned the post.

In "Mr & Mrs Mahi", Kapoor plays the role of Mahima, a doctor, who becomes a cricketer after her husband Mahendra, essayed by Rao, spots the cricketing talent in her and encourages her to chase her dream.

The movie also features Rajesh Sharma, Kumud Mishra and Zarina Wahab in pivotal roles. (PTI)

YRF's 'Maharaj' doesn't drop on Netflix after Gujarat HC stays release

NEW DELHI, June 15: YRF Entertainment's "Maharaj" did not premiere on Netflix on Friday as scheduled after the Gujarat High Court stayed its release following a petition by members of a Hindu sect who claimed the film would hurt their religious sentiments.

The film, in which Aamir Khan's son Junaid Khan makes his debut, is based on an 1862 libel case between a Vaishnavite religious leader and a journalist, Karsandas Mulji, who alleged in an article in a Gujarati weekly that the godman had sexual liaisons with his women devotees.

"Maharaj" caught the attention of social media users on Wednesday with hashtags such as "Boycott Netflix" and "Ban Maharaj Film" trending on X.

On Thursday, Aamir Khan was also trending on the social media platform.

Responding to a petition by members of Pushtimarg, a Vaishnav sect of Hinduism, the Gujarat High Court stayed the film's release on Thursday. A single-judge bench of Justice Sangeeta Vishen passed the order against the film and issued notices to the Centre, Netflix and Yash Raj Films. The court has posted the matter for further hearing on June 18.

YRF and Netflix are challenging the stay order, said a trade insider.

"The matter is in court. Maharaj is based on a real-life case. It is adapted from Saurabh Shah's book titled 'Maharaj'. The author has also

come out to say that the film does not vilify the Vaishnav community or the religion.

"It is about a social reformer who brought about a positive change in society. The makers are hopeful for a positive outcome on this," the trade source said.

Shah, the author of the 2016 book, said in a post on X that people should form an opinion only after watching the film.

"This film is neither against Sanatan nor Vaishnav sect. Me and my family are part of the Vaishnav community with full devotion. The book written by me and the film made by @yrf are both in favour of the Vaishnav community... 'Maharaj' is a story that Hindus should be proud of," he added on Thursday.

Directed by Siddharth P Malhotra and produced by Aditya Chopra under YRF Entertainment, the movie also stars Jaideep Ahlawat.

And most unlike a mainstream film launching a star son, there were no trailers or teasers, barring a poster featuring Jaideep and Junaid.

The poster shows the two actors side by side with Jaideep's character sporting a 'tilak' on his forehead while Junaid's character is dressed in a waistcoat. According to a press release issued by Netflix last month, "Maharaj" follows the "allegations of misconduct by a prominent figure" and journalist and social reformer Mulji, who was a pioneering advocate for women's rights and social reform. (PTI)



RAMPANT AUSTRALIA WARY OF SCOTLAND THREAT

Pakistan take on Ireland in dead rubber in T20 World Cup

GROS ISLET (ST LUCIA), June 15: A rampant Australia will be wary of Scotland threat when the two teams clash in a crucial Group B encounter in the T20 World Cup here with the outcome set to influence Super Eight qualification.

about Australia manipulating their approach against Scotland to keep England threat at bay, but Jos Buttler's team have done themselves a massive favour by improving their Net Run Rate immensely with a dominant victory over Oman.



store some pride when they take on a under-firing Ireland in their final Group A match at Lauderhill in Florida on Sunday.

conferred to some introspection and relook at their T20 game. But before all that, Babar's side will have to first thwart the Irish challenge.

leading to the T20 World Cup and the contest — if at all it happens — could see both the teams in green fighting hard for a final laugh.

to sign off with their account opened, riding on Pakistan's lack of confidence, their trait of being fallible at crucial stages and a unified effort.

Veteran sports journalist Harpal Singh Bedi passes away South Africa edges Nepal

NEW DELHI, June 15: Veteran sports journalist Harpal Singh Bedi, who covered several highs and lows of Indian sports in a career spanning over four decades, served as the national Olympic contingent's press attache in 2012 and charmed the media box with his inimitable wit and warmth, died after prolonged illness here on Saturday.



spected..." said veteran journalist and sports administrator G Rajaraman as he paid tributes to his former colleague.

Bedi from their time at the university. Bedi was witness to the change and growth in the country's sporting landscape from the time P T Usha attained worldwide fame with her fourth place finish in the 1984 Los Angeles Olympics to the epoch-making gold medal that rifle shooter Abhinav Bindra won in the 2008 Beijing Games.

by a TV channel. "I called him for a comment and I remember he laughed so much and made fun of me for writing about it. Bohot hi pyaare insaan, jo respect dete the, aur badle mein unhe bohut respect milti thi (He was a lovely human being. He gave respect to others and also earned a lot of respect)."

A passionate follower of the sport, Bedi could be seen muttering under his breath in frustration while furiously typing his reports much to the amusement of his colleagues. "The only journalist I knew who could laugh at himself. The press box will not be the same without him," said Vijay Lokapally, a former senior editor with 'The Hindu'.



KINGSTOWN (ST VINCENT), June 15: Nepal came within a whisker of achieving its best-ever win in cricket, losing by one run to powerhouse South Africa here.

HI names 40-member core probable group for junior men's national coaching camp

BENGALURU, June 15: Hockey India On Saturday announced a 40-player core probable group for a 63-day junior men's national coaching camp to be held at the Sports Authority of India (SAI) from June 16.

ented group of players and the intensive training sessions will help them reach their full potential. Our goal is to develop a cohesive and formidable team ready to take on any challenge."

Aditi Ashok is T-16 on the LPGA at Meijer Classic

BELMONT, MI (US), June 15: Indian golfer Aditi Ashok carded two under 70 to be placed Tied-16th at the halfway stage of the Meijer LPGA Classic, here. The Bengaluru player, who is enduring an average season, is due to play her third Olympic Games in August and a return to form will be a relief.

in prime position heading into Moving Day. It is a stacked leaderboard behind Ewing and Kim, with LPGA Tour winner Nanna Koerstz Madsen and two-time KLPGA winner Narin Anst just behind them at -9 and in a tie for third.

Indian men's archery team qualifies as top seed in Final Olympic Qualifier

ANTALYA (TURKEY), June 15: Indian men's recurve archery team of Tarundeep Rai, Dhiraj Bommadevara and Pravin Jadhav entered the 24-team elimination round as the top seed in the Final Olympic Qualifier here on Saturday.

elimination round will get the Paris Olympic quota places in the men's recurve team event.

Groupings within Pakistan team was also a factor in disastrous WC campaign: Sources

KARACHI, June 15: Pakistan's shock early exit from the T20 World Cup is being blamed on "groupings" within the team and non-performance of senior players during critical moments and it could lead to "major changes" not just in the team but also in the PCB.

"The return of Imad and Amir added to the confusion as it was difficult for Babar to get any worthwhile performances from both of them as they had not played top level domestic or international cricket for a long while now except in franchise based leagues.



what is a captain supposed to do when your premier bowler can't even defend 15 in the final over against a weak USA side and concedes a boundary and six on full tosses.

Naqvi has now hinted at making changes in the national team but another well-informed source made it clear that changes would now also be made in the cricket board.

the team and at management level in the board now," he said. "Naqvi is himself facing problems as he is not the ruling government's choice to head the board. He is also now facing criticism for the WC debacle and there are calls for his head as well," said another PCB source.

Mumbai FC sign Kerala forward Noufal on three-year deal

MUMBAI, June 15: The 2023-24 ISL champions Mumbai City FC on Saturday announced the signing of Kerala forward Noufal PN on a three-year contract till the end of 2027 season.

Shaheen Shah Afridi upset at losing the captaincy and Babar not supporting him when required while Muhammad Rizwan was unhappy at not being considered for the captaincy.

According to Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) sources, the biggest challenge before Babar Azam on his comeback as captain was to unite the team but he could not do so because of the groupings.

"There were even instances where some players were not talking to each other and a few of them even tried to appease all the group leaders in the team," added the source.