

6 WORLD China's Xi calls on world powers to help Russia and Ukraine resume direct dialogue
8 NATION Jharkhand: Hemant Soren govt wins trust vote, 11 including ex-CM Champai sworn in as ministers
'Bharat Jodo Yatra' was inspired by Rajasekhara Reddy's 2003 yatra across Andhra: Rahul

Stronger ties between our nations will greatly benefit our people: PM Flood situation remains grim • Relief camps have sufficient essential items: Himanta Rahul's clarion call for aid to Assam flood-hit

MOSCOW, July 8: In his first trip since the start of Moscow's invasion of Ukraine, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday travelled to Russia to hold summit talks with President Vladimir Putin -- a visit that is being seen as having a wider geopolitical context and signalling. Shortly after landing in Moscow, Modi said he is looking forward to deepening bilateral partnership in futuristic areas and that stronger ties between India and Russia will "greatly benefit our people".



President Xi Jinping during his visit to Russia as well. On Tuesday, Modi will co-chair the 22nd India-Russia annual summit with president Putin, interact with the members of the Indian community and visit the Rosatom pavilion at an exhibition. The prime minister is also scheduled to lay a wreath at the 'Tomb of the Unknown Soldier'.

GUWAHATI, July 8: Leader of Opposition (LoP) in Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi on Monday said that he stands with the people of Assam and is their 'soldier in Parliament'. He also urged the Centre to extend all possible help and support to the State expeditiously. "I stand with the people of Assam, I am their soldier in Parliament, and I urge the Central govt to extend all possible help and support to the state expeditiously," he wrote on micro-blogging site X. He further said that Assam needs a comprehensive and compassionate vision - proper relief, rehabilitation, and compensation in the short term, and a pan-Northeast water management authority to do everything necessary to control floods in the long-term.



children like 8-year old Avinash being taken away from us. My heartfelt condolences to all the bereaved families across the state," he added. The LoP also said that Assam Congress leaders apprised him of the situation on ground where over 24 lakh people have been affected, 53,000 and above people displaced and more than 60 people lost their lives.

toll in this year's flood, landslide and storm was 78 with 66 succumbing in the deluge alone. Gandhi was scheduled to arrive at Silchar on Monday and visit a flood relief camp at Fuleral in Cachar district en route to Manipur. On the other hand, Assam chief minister Himanta Biswa Sarma said that all relief camps in flood-affected districts are well maintained and stocked with enough essential items till the situation normalises. He said that the safety and hygiene of flood relief camps was a priority of the government with 'my team reaching out to all people staying there to gather real-time feedback'. Currently, nearly 23 lakh people in 3,446 villages of 28 districts were affected while 68,432.75 hectares of cropland have been inundated by (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

Guwahati Police bust inter-state trafficking racket, rescue minors

GUWAHATI, July 8: Guwahati Police busted an inter-state human trafficking racket, arresting four persons hailing from Assam, Bihar, and West Bengal, rescuing two minor girls and preventing the abduction of another, a senior official said. Guwahati Police commissioner Diganta Barah on Monday said an FIR was lodged at Bhangarh police station on June 29 by a woman who said her daughter and another minor girl had gone missing. According to the woman's complaint, her daughter had been demanding a new mobile phone and, upon refusal, went to her friend's house. "Thereafter, both the girls went missing. We immediately launched a probe to trace them," Barah said. He said while investigation was on, one person called the brother of the victim and demanded ₹ 30,000 for her release. "The call was traced to Purnia in Bihar. Consequently, a police team from Bhangarh was dispatched to Purnia from where they apprehended the caller and rescued both the girls," he said. Commissioner Barah said the girls, planning to travel to Delhi, encountered a man at Guwahati railway station who offered to help them. "That person handed over the two girls to a couple in Basistha locality of Guwahati. Along with another woman from Panjipara in West Bengal, they took the girls to Siliguri by bus and sold them to another person in Bihar for ₹ 1,10,000," he added. The girls were then transported to Purnia and forced to work in a brothel at Rauta in Bihar. "With sufficient evidence against the culprits, police arrested four persons," he added. Investigation also revealed that the woman from West Bengal had been staying with the (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

KAAC CEM adviser clarifies purpose of Sixth Schedule amid criticism

DIPHU, July 8: Elwin Teron, adviser to the Chief Executive Member (CEM) of Karbi Anglong Autonomous Council (KAAC), has clarified the purpose, powers, and limitations of the Sixth Schedule following criticism stemming from a recent two-day workshop organized by 'Team Karbi Anglong' last Friday and Saturday. Speaking at a press conference held at Hambi Hotel, Teron addressed criticisms made by JI Kathar, President of the All Party Hills Leaders Conference (APHL), regarding misconceptions about the Sixth Schedule. "Kathar is misleading the public by suggesting that the Sixth Schedule is robust in its powers for protecting scheduled tribes and needs strengthening. He also proposes renaming Panchayati Raj as Ser Van Kep and other names," Teron stated. Teron traced the origins of the Sixth Schedule back to the significant debate of 1969, when Article 244(A) was introduced. This allowed Karbi and Dimas leaders to choose between remaining under the Sixth Schedule or opting for Article 244(A). Recommendation, would be granted in hilly areas for rapid development," Teron recalled. "Karbi and Dimas leaders subsequently agreed to abide by the Ashoka Mehta recommendation in Assam during a meeting in Diphu on February 20, 1979." Teron acknowledged that while initially hopeful that the Sixth Schedule would suffice for (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)



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Terrorist ambush in JK's Kathua claims lives of four soldiers, six injured

KATHUA/JAMMU, July 8: Terrorists ambushed an army truck in remote Machedi area of Jammu and Kashmir's Kathua district, killing four personnel and injuring six others, officials said on Monday. The attack occurred when terrorists targeted the Army vehicle with a grenade and gunfire during a routine patrol on the Machedi-Kindi-Malhar road near Badnota village in Lohai Malhar, approximately 150 km from Kathua town, at around 3:30 pm, they said. It is the second major attack in Kathua district within one month, following a similar confrontation on June 12 and 13 that left two terrorists and a CRPF jawan dead. After the ambush on Monday, the terrorists fled into the nearby forest as the army, assisted by police and paramilitary personnel, retaliated. An exchange of fire between the terrorists and security forces ensued, with reinforcements quickly dispatched to the area to neutralise the attackers - believed to be three in number and heavily armed - who may have recently infiltrated from across the border. Director General of Police R R (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

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Tripura successfully completes first kidney transplant

AGARTALA, July 8: A successful kidney transplant procedure was performed on a 20-year-old man at the state-run GBP Hospital in Agartala on Monday, in a first for Tripura, an official said. Subham Sutradhar, a resident of Ramnagar who has been suffering from kidney ailments, met chief minister Manik Saha recently during his 'Mukhyamantri Samepeshu' programme and sought help for transplanting one of his kidneys. Saha, who is a doctor by profession, took the matter up with the GBP Hospital, officials said. "Following a request from the CM, we signed an agreement with Shija Hospital and Research Institute (SHRI) in Manipur to start a kidney transplant unit. Today, a group of surgeons from SHRI performed (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

EC allows Sharad Pawar-led NCP-SP to accept donations

NEW DELHI, July 8: The Election Commission on Monday allowed the Nationalist Congress Party-Sharadchandra Pawar to accept donations keeping in mind the forthcoming assembly polls in Maharashtra. The Sharad Pawar-led outfit had requested the commission to certify the status of the party for it to accept voluntary contributions from the public. The poll panel has authorised the party to "accept any amount of contribution voluntarily offered to it by any person or company other than a government company" under the relevant sections of the Representation of the People Act, 1951, which govern the contribution to all political parties. An eight-member delegation of the NCP-SP party led by its working president Supriya Sule met the Election Commission on Monday. "Earlier, we could not receive cheques as contributions to our party. We were not getting tax benefits for contributions like other political parties. We want to fight this (Assembly) election transparently, using only white money. I am grateful to the Election Commission for granting us a letter allowing us to raise money legally and transparently," Sule told reporters here. The authorisation to the NCP-SP to accept donations will be applicable till the final disposal of the petition in the Supreme Court against the Election Commission's decision. In July last year, Ajit Pawar led a rebellion against his uncle Sharad Pawar and claimed the symbol as well as the party name Nationalist Congress Party, citing the support of over two-thirds of the outfit's legislators in the Maharashtra assembly. The Election Commission upheld his claim and asked the Sharad Pawar-led faction to pick a new name as an interim measure in view of the Lok Sabha elections. The authorisation to the NCP-SP to accept donations will be applicable till the final disposal of the petition in the Supreme Court against the Election Commission decision. The Sharad Pawar-led NCP-SP contested 10 Lok Sabha seats in Maharashtra and won eight, while Ajit Pawar's NCP contested five seats and managed to win just one. Sule said the NCP-SP also raised the issue of similar appearing poll symbols such as the "trumpet" and the "man blowing trumpet". The Election Commission had allotted the poll symbol "man blowing trumpet" to the NCP-SP. (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

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Sanctity of NEET-UG breached: Supreme Court

NEW DELHI, July 8: Observing that the sanctity of the NEET-UG 2024 has been "breached", the Supreme Court on Monday said a re-test may be ordered if the entirety of the process is affected and sought details from the National Testing Agency and the CBI including the timing and manner of the paper leak, besides the numbers of wrongdoers, to know the extent of its effect. "Let us not be in self-denial. Self-denial is only adding to the problem," a bench headed by Chief Justice D Y Chandrachud told the Centre and the NTA, which conducts the prestigious test, in a string of strongly-worded observations. "One thing which is very clear is that the leak has taken place. That the sanctity of the exam has been breached is beyond doubt. The question is how widespread is the leak," said the bench which also comprised Justices JB Pardiwala and Manoj Misra. Posing a volley of searching queries, the bench said a re-test has to be ordered if the breach in sanctity affects the entirety of the process. The court said if the sanctity of NEET-UG 2024 is "lost" and if the leak of its question paper has been propagated through social media, then a re-test has to be ordered. It said the extent of question paper leak and the beneficiaries across geographical boundaries have to be ascertained before the top court may order a re-test in the controversy-ridden exam which was taken up by 23.33 lakh students at 4,750 centres in 571 cities including in 14 cities overseas. It said if the breach was confined to specific areas and it was possible to identify the wrongdoers, then it may not be appropriate to order for a re-test in an examination of such a massive scale. The apex court said it will have to scrutinise whether the alleged breach has taken place at a "systemic level", whether it has affected the integrity of the entire exam process and whether it was possible to segregate the beneficiaries of the fraud with untainted candidates who undertook the test on May 5. "In a situation where a breach in sanctity affects the entirety of the process and it is not possible to segregate the (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

Elderly woman injured in road accident

JORHAT, July 8: An elderly woman was injured and admitted to JMCH for treatment after the car she was traveling in with her son was hit by another car driven by a student at Thana Chariali in Jorhat. According to a police source, the male student, who was driving the car, was allegedly in an inebriated condition. He was accompanied by two other girls, one currently studying at the same institute and the other an ex-student. The incident occurred on Sunday night when the car carrying the three individuals was traveling from the Na-Ali side and collided with the other car coming from KB Road while crossing Chariali and moving towards Jail road. The driver of the other car, along with his elderly mother, claimed that they were crossing Chariali after the traffic light turned green when suddenly the speeding car crashed into their vehicle at a right angle. The collision was severe enough to activate the airbags of the speeding car. The man mentioned that if the speeding vehicle had hit their car directly in the middle, the consequences (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

The world's sea surface in June was also the highest ever recorded for the month June warmest on record; every month since July 2023 breached 1.5 deg C threshold

NEW DELHI, July 8: With millions of people across five continents experiencing scorching heat last month, the European Union's (EU) climate agency, Copernicus Climate Change Service (C3S), confirmed on Monday that June was the warmest on record. It also marked the 12th consecutive month of global temperatures reaching 1.5 degrees Celsius above the pre-industrial average. According to scientists at C3S, every month since June last year has been the warmest such month on record. In January, the world completed an entire year with the mean surface air temperature exceeding the 1.5-degree Celsius threshold. June was the 12th consecutive month with monthly average temperatures above the 1850-1900 pre-industrial



average. At the 2015 UN climate talks in Paris, world leaders committed to limiting the global average temperature rise to 1.5 degrees Celsius above the pre-industrial period to avoid the worst impacts of climate change. However, a permanent breach of the 1.5-degree Celsius limit specified in the Paris Agreement refers to long-term warming over a 20 or 30-year period. Earth's global surface temperature has already increased by around 1.2 degrees Celsius compared to the average in 1850-1900 due to the rapidly-increasing concentration of greenhouse gases -- primarily carbon dioxide and methane -- in the atmosphere. This warming is considered to be the reason behind record droughts, wildfires and floods worldwide. According to new data, June 2024 was the warmest on record, with an average surface air temperature of 16.66 degrees Celsius, 0.67 degrees Celsius above the 1991-2020 average for the month and 0.14 degrees Celsius above the previous high set in June 2023. "The month was 1.5 degrees Celsius above the estimated June average for 1850-1900, the designated pre-industrial reference period, making (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

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'Cronyism' is Modi govt's primary economic policy: Congress



NEW DELHI, July 8: Accusing the Modi government of practising "cronyism", the Congress on Monday said companies must expand but at the same time, the government has a responsibility to ensure oligopolies or monopolies do not emerge and that undue advantage arising out of access to political power is not exercised.

Congress general secretary, in-charge communications, Jairam Ramesh alleged that market concentration continues to grow under Prime Minister Modi's watch, and has reached a new high in key industries such as telecom, airlines, cement, steel, and tyres. He also shared on X a media report which claimed market concentration continued to increase in India's key industries as top players grabbed a larger share of the business in 2023-24 either through organic growth or acquisition. In his post on X, Ramesh said, "Cronyism is the non-biological Prime Minister's primary economic policy. Market concentration continues to grow under Mr. Modi's watch, and has reached a new high in key industries such as telecom, airlines, cement, steel, and tyres." "Revenue share of the top two firms has risen across industries in the last two years. Most industries in India are either moderately or (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

Behavioral change needed to attract outside investments to Arunachal: Rijiju

'Even a single instance of law and order issue will create a bad image of the state'

ITANAGAR, July 8: Union minister Kiren Rijiju on Monday advocated for a behavioural change among the people to attract outside investments to Arunachal Pradesh, which will help in creating jobs. The people of the state should create a conducive atmosphere by changing their behaviour towards outside investors so that investment flows to Arunachal Pradesh, a resource rich state, the minister for parliamentary affairs and minority affairs said while addressing a function, organised to felicitate him for being inducted into the Union Cabinet.



"A peaceful atmosphere should be created in the state so that people from outside who are willing to invest in private sectors feel secure. Even a single instance of law and order issue will create a bad image of the state," Rijiju, who represents the Arunachal West constituency, said. "Employment is the biggest chal-

lenge in the state. Today, jobs cannot be obtained through degrees but it requires skill. We will have to change our perception and will have to work to create job opportunities through skill development," he added. Rijiju said only the private sector can create large-scale employment

opportunities. "For that, people need to change their behaviour towards outside investors and should create an atmosphere of peace and security so that the investors evince interest to invest, which in turn will create jobs," he said. For such a situation, society

should shoulder the responsibility and only then Arunachal Pradesh could be a favourable investment and tourist destination in the near future, the minister said. "The land in Arunachal Pradesh belongs to the tribal community and the government cannot allot free land to investors to start their venture. Hydropower is the only sector for investment and people should cooperate with the power developers to invest in the sector," he said. Expressing gratitude to the people of the state for their mandate to elect him for a fourth term, Rijiju said that the support would inspire him to work more dedicatedly for the development of the state. "The faith reposed on me by the people of my state as well as Prime Minister Narendra Modi, I assure you that I will leave no stone unturned to keep the aspirations alive," he asserted and added that he will go the extra mile to provide long-term support to the state from the Centre. (PTI)

Union power minister reviews ongoing projects in Arunachal Pradesh

ITANAGAR, July 8: Union power, housing & urban affairs minister Manohar Lal Khattar on Monday reviewed various ongoing hydropower projects in Arunachal Pradesh. "Pleased to meet Hon'ble Chief Minister of Arunachal Pradesh Shri @PemaKhanduBJP & Deputy CM Shri @ChownaMeinBJP in Itanagar. Reviewed various ongoing hydropower projects, comprehensive scheme of transmission & distribution and the revamped distribution sector scheme in the state," the minister posted on X.

The state has demonstrated a steadfast commitment to enhancing its power infrastructure, resulting in significant strides in sustainability, Khattar added. Taking to social media, chief minister Pema Khandu said, "A productive review meeting today chaired by Hon'ble Union Power Minister, Shri @mlkhattar Ji in Itanagar, focusing on the power sector of Arunachal Pradesh. Grateful to Hon'ble Deputy Chief Minister Shri @ChownaMeinBJP Ji, Advisor to Power Minister Shri Jikke Tako Ji, and officials from various power corporations for their valuable insights."

"We discussed on the status of hydropower projects in Arunachal Pradesh. Our ongoing projects are making steady progress, and we are committed to overcoming any

challenges to expedite their completion. These projects are not only vital for meeting the state's power needs, but also for contributing to the national grid and boosting our economy," Khandu said in another post. The Union minister also attended a presentation by the state Urban Affairs department. "Attended a presentation by the Department of Urban Affairs, Government of Arunachal Pradesh, alongside Hon'ble Deputy Chief Minister, Shri @ChownaMeinBJP Ji and Hon'ble Minister for Urban Affairs, Shri @BaloRaja Ji," Khandu said in a post. Later in the day, Khattar called on Governor Lt Gen K T Parmaik at Raj Bhavan and discussed harnessing the vast hydropower potential in the state and urban amenities. The governor said Arunachal Pradesh with more than 58,000 MW of hydro potential has substantial untapped resources. "The strategic importance of the state, given its geographical location and natural resources, underscores the need for developing its hydropower capabilities to meet both regional and national energy demands. Natural terrain and available water resources provide an attractive opportunity for the state and also for the nation," the governor pointed out. (PTI)

LoP visits relief camps in Manipur

IMPHAL, July 8: Leader of the Opposition in Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi on Monday visited relief camps in Manipur's Jiribam and Churachandpur districts and interacted with the inmates. People displaced by the ethnic violence in the northeastern state, which claimed over 200 lives since May last year, are staying in those relief camps. Gandhi, who is accompanied by senior Congress leaders, is visiting Manipur for the first time after the Congress won both Lok Sabha seats in the state.

"His third visit to Manipur post-violence shows his unwavering commitment to the people's cause," the Congress said in a post on X. Gandhi first visited Manipur weeks after ethnic violence broke out in Manipur on May 3 last year. He also began his 'Bharat Jodo Nyay Yatra' from the state in January 2024. The former Congress president first visited a relief camp set up at Jiribam Higher Secondary School. State Congress president Keisham Meghachandra told reporters that the inmates at Jiribam told Gandhi about the experiences they went through. "He also enquired about what they need. One girl told Gandhi that neither the Prime Minister nor the chief minister had come to visit them. She also urged Gandhi to place the matter in Parliament," Meghachandra said. People came out in thousands to greet Gandhi in Jiribam and many of them wept while talking to him, the state Congress president said. From Jiribam, Gandhi came to Imphal airport via Silchar in Assam and reached by road a relief camp in Tuibong village in Churachandpur district. There also he interacted with inmates. (PTI)

Khandu visits Nyukmadung War Memorial

Pays tribute to 1962 war heroes

ITANAGAR, July 8: Arunachal Pradesh chief minister Pema Khandu visited the Nyukmadung War Memorial near Dirang in West Kameng district and paid floral tributes to the 1962 war heroes. He laid a wreath in honour of the Sino-India war martyrs on Sunday. "Visited the Nyukmadung War Memorial to pay tribute to the brave heroes of the 1962 war. Their valour and sacrifice will continue to inspire us all," Khandu posted on X.



The chief minister also inspected the ongoing construction of the cultural and heritage museum at the memorial site, which is a collaborative effort between the

16th Madras Regiment, the 46th Infantry Brigade, and the Indian Institute of Heritage (IIH). "The museum will not only chronicle the events and bravery of the 1962 war but

also showcase local cultural and historical artefacts. I have suggested that the collection include items from all tribes of Arunachal to truly reflect the diverse heritage of our state," Khandu said.

Additionally, the museum could highlight the contributions of brave local heroes who aided the army during the 1962 war, ensuring their stories are preserved and honoured, the chief minister added. He commended the Nyukmadung-based 16th Madras Regiment, 46th Infantry Brigade and the IIH for their commendable initiative. "Today, I proudly join my voice with the valiant soldiers of the Madras Regiment in shouting their legendary war cry: 'Veer Madrassi, Adi Kollu, Adi Kollu, Adi Kollu!' Salute to their bravery, sacrifice, and dedication to our nation. Jai Hind!," Khandu said in another post while sharing a video clip. (PTI)

Landslides snap surface communication to several Arunachal districts



ITANAGAR, July 8: Surface communication to several districts in Arunachal Pradesh was disrupted by landslides triggered by rains, officials said on Monday. Landslides buried a person in Shi-Yomi district on Friday, according to a report of the state disaster management department. So far four people have died in the state since April due to natural calamities. The Tezu-Hayuiliang road remains blocked at Mompani area in Lohit and Anjaw districts, while landslides blocked the Dari-Chambang and the Palin-Taraklengdi via

Langdang village PMGSY road in Kra Daadi district, they said. NH 513 also remained blocked at Geying in East Siang district, a report said. Over 72,900 people and 257 villages have so far been affected by floods and landslides in Arunachal since April this year. Floods and landslides also caused extensive damage to roads, bridges, culverts, power lines, electric poles, transformers and water supply systems. According to the report, 160 roads, 76 power lines, 30 electric poles, three transformers, nine bridges, 11 culverts, and 147 water

supply systems have been damaged so far. Besides, 627 kutcha and 51 pucca houses and 155 huts have been damaged, it said.

The state capital Itanagar has been reeling under a severe water crisis for the last couple of days due to damage in pipelines. Though the restoration process is on, it will take several days, officials said.

Damin, Parsi Parlo and Panayasang administrative circles under Kurung Kumei district are reportedly cut off from the rest of the state, following incessant rain this week that triggered major flash-floods and landslides.

Multiple blockades occurred on the road towards Damin via Parsi Parlo, reports said.

A massive landslide occurred at Karsingsa block point along the vital NH-415 connecting Itanagar with Banderdewa, forcing the Capital Itanagar administration to close the road for commuters' safety.

After a thorough inspection of the site by Deputy Commissioner Shweta Nagarkoti Mehta, it has been decided to close the road and divert all traffic via Gumto. (PTI)

No initiative taken for commuters' safety on NH-29: Nagaland PWD

HT Correspondent DIMAPUR, July 8: The Nagaland PWD (National Highway) said no earnest tangible initiative to the national grid and boosting our economy," Khandu said in another post. The Union minister also attended a presentation by the state Urban Affairs department. "Attended a presentation by the Department of Urban Affairs, Government of Arunachal Pradesh, alongside Hon'ble Deputy Chief Minister, Shri @ChownaMeinBJP Ji and Hon'ble Minister for Urban Affairs, Shri @BaloRaja Ji," Khandu said in a post. Later in the day, Khattar called on Governor Lt Gen K T Parmaik at Raj Bhavan and discussed harnessing the vast hydropower potential in the state and urban amenities. The governor said Arunachal Pradesh with more than 58,000 MW of hydro potential has substantial untapped resources. "The strategic importance of the state, given its geographical location and natural resources, underscores the need for developing its hydropower capabilities to meet both regional and national energy demands. Natural terrain and available water resources provide an attractive opportunity for the state and also for the nation," the governor pointed out. (PTI)



government has been constantly impressing upon the implementing agency regarding the risks along the road and expeditiously put in place safety measures, especially on the stretches under Package-I considering the terrain. Exactly a year ago on July 4, two persons were killed and three others injured on the same stretch when falling rocks smashed several vehicles. The department said following the July 4, 2023, rockfall incident at Paglapahar, the state government had constituted a high level technical committee (HLTC) on July 5, 2023. The committee submitted its report and recommendations which were conveyed to the NHIDCL

on July 19, 2023, for immediate action. The NHIDCL was directed to carry out short-term measures as per the recommendations of the HLTC, and undertake comprehensive study of the terrain, and take up necessary measures, as recommended, to address and mitigate the risks in the future. The department said the state government is making all possible efforts to make road travel safe for commuters. However, it was very distressing to witness the occurrence of another incident at Paglapahar stretch of NH-29 where a rockfall resulted in injury of passengers and major damage to a vehicle. It added that the state government would take up the matter with the authorities concerned in all seriousness to effectively address the matter. The government also called for proactive and sincere response from the NHIDCL to achieve this collective goal for the safety of commuters.


Rahul Gandhi urges PM to come to violence-hit Manipur

IMPHAL, July 8: Leader of the Opposition in Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi on Monday requested Prime Minister Narendra Modi to visit Manipur to give solace to the ethnic violence-affected people of the state. Gandhi also said that the Congress will do everything it can to bring peace to Manipur. "The tragedy of Manipur is tremendous", the Raebareilly MP told a press conference here. "The Prime Minister should visit the state and listen to the woes of the people as it would give comfort to them," Gandhi said. He said that he came to the state to listen to the woes of the violence-hit people and build confidence in them. "We will do everything we can to bring peace to Manipur... As somebody in the opposition, I have been trying to pressure the government," he said. Gandhi visited several relief camps where people displaced by the ethnic violence in the northeastern state are staying. The strife claimed over 200 lives since May last year. (PTI)

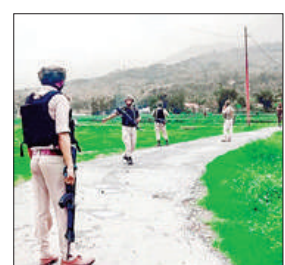
Recruitment Notice

Farmer Producer Company Recruitment for the post of CEO & Accountant under Morigaon District. Applications invited from suitable candidates for recruitment to the following positions of CEO & Accountant, under Farmer Producer Company on purely contractual basis under Morigaon District for the scheme of "Formation & Promotion of 10k FPO scheme" implemented by Ministry of Agriculture & Farmer Welfare (MoA & Fw). Interested eligible candidates who are citizens of India and fulfil the eligible norms of education qualification, experience, age etc. as per respective Terms of Reference (ToR), may submit the scanned copies of the prescribed application form (Annexure I) along with certificates/documents relating to qualification, experience, age, identity proof, two passport size colored photographs etc. to the respective FPC mail id or before 5 P.M of 15/07/2024. The date, time and venue for the walk-in interview and skill test will be communicated to the shortlisted candidates through email. Eligible Candidates are allowed to submit applications for only one position within the below given vacancy list. Vacancy details are as follows:

| Sl. No. | Name of the FPC | Position | No. of Post | FPC Email Id |
|---------|---|------------------|------------------------|---|
| 1 | Rudali Asomi Mahila Farmers Producer Company Limited | CEO & Accountant | CEO -1 Accountant 1 | rudaliasomi@gmail.com Dandua.Kopili.Morigaon PIN-782104 |
| 2 | Bramhaputra Asomi Mahila Farmers Producer Company Limited | CEO & Accountant | CEO -1 Accountant 1 | bramhaputraasomi@gmail.com Mikirbitha.Bhurbandha. Morigaon PIN-782106 |
| 3 | Swabalambi Asomi Mahila Farmers Producer Company Limited | CEO & Accountant | CEO -1 Accountant 1 | seujiasomi@gmail.com Kushtoli, Laharighat, Morigaon PIN-782127 |

For ToR and application form please scan the QR code or use the link provided below.  Sd/- District Project Manager DMMU, Morigaon, Assam https://bit.ly/TOR-FPC

Firing in Manipur's Jiribam district



IMPHAL, July 8: Unidentified gunmen opened fire in the Gularthal area of Manipur's Jiribam district in the early hours of Monday, officials said.

Leader of the Opposition in Lok Sabha, Rahul Gandhi, is scheduled to visit relief camps in the district later in the day and meet victims of ethnic violence.

"Gunmen fired several rounds around 3:30 am towards the Meitei area of Gularthal, prompting security forces to retaliate. The exchange of fire continued till 7 am," an official said. Security personnel have been deployed in the surrounding areas as a preventive measure. One bulletproof vehicle of the state police also was hit by gunshots during the attack, the official said. (PTI)

No. UDB/Tender/01/2022-23/

SHORT NOTICE INVITING TENDER

Date: 06/07/2024

Sealed tender affixing a non-refundable Court fee stamp of Rs. 8.25 (Rupees eight & twenty five paise) only with a validity period of 180 Days which will be converted and drawn up in the printed of F-2 form are invited from the registered contractors of Class-II and Class-I (A,B, & C) category of Assam PWD (Road & Building) and BTC according to their eligibility for submitting tenders for the works under SOPD & various schemes under BTR for the year 2023-24 & other financial years as stated below. The tenders will be received by the undersigned up to 12.00 Noon on 31/07/2024 and will be opened on the same date & place at 2.00 P.M.

| Sl. No. | Name of work | Tender Amount (In Lakhs) | Cost of Tender Paper | Time of Completion of Work |
|---------|--|--------------------------|----------------------|---|
| 1 | Improvement & sand gravelling at No 1 Sapkhaity(Adivasi subba) village road, village-No 1 Sapkhaity,VCDC-N01 Sapkhaity under Adivasi Welfare & Development Council for 2023-24 | 10.00 | Rs.500.00 | 3(three) months from the issue of Formal Work Order |
| 2 | Construction of toilet at Udalguri District jak under 15 th ASFC(P&RD)(Tied fund) for the year 2022-23 | 18.40 | Rs.500.00 | 3(three) months from the issue of Formal Work Order |

Detailed N.I.T. may be seen in all working days during office hours in the office of the undersigned. Tender papers will be issued to the contractors or their authorized agents from 10/07/2024 to 31/07/2024 in the office of the undersigned on payment.

Sd/- Block Development Officer Udalguri Development Block IPR(BTC)/C/2024-25/118

'Kalki 2898 AD' surpasses ₹ 900 crore with worldwide box office collection



MUMBAI, July 8: Kalki 2898 AD continues to rule over the box office and has crossed ₹ 900 crore globally in 11 days, makers announced on Monday.

Featuring a star-studded cast comprising of Amitabh Bachchan, Kamal Haasan, Deepika Padukone, Disha Patani and Prabhas in the lead, the film has been staying ahead of the competition with its collection. The makers shared an update on the X about the film's collection with a poster featuring Prabhas' character from the film. It mentioned, "Epic Maha Blockbuster 900+ crore worldwide."

The caption of the post read, "Raging

towards the magical milestone #EpicBlockbusterKalki in cinemas." Directed by Nag Ashwin, who has previously helmed the projects like "Mahanaati" and "Yevade Subramanyam", the film has been produced by Vjayanthi Movies.

It crossed the mark of ₹ 500 crore at the box office during its opening week and if continues at the same pace, the film is expected to surpass ₹ 1000 crore worldwide.

Bachchan, 81, who essayed the role of immortal warrior Ashwathama in the film, earlier expressed his admiration for

the project in a lengthy post on his personal blog.

Calling it a "massive spectacle", the actor said the film is a "merger of myth and reality" and a "learning to the film makers on the process of putting the mammoth together for a viewing audience." Kalki 2898 AD is reportedly the most expensive film ever made in India with a budget of ₹ 600 crore. The film had a global release on June 27 in five different languages, Telugu, Tamil, Malayalam, Kannada, Hindi and English.

The film is currently running in theatres. (PTI)

Filmmakers must focus on storytelling instead of making projects based on equations, says Imtiaz Ali



NEW DELHI, July 8: Director Imtiaz Ali says it is important that the film industry trains its focus on the essence of storytelling over designing films as projects based on "mathematical equations".

Ali, who released his last film "Amar Singh Chamkila" on Netflix, said filmmakers must understand that a certain X factor draws the audience to the theatres, something which can't be quantified.

"It's just that we make projects in a certain way. We feel that we need mathematical equations... and there is an algorithm and therefore, there will be a recovery. Each time this calculation is done, it turns out to not be accurate.

"Because in every film, you can have all the ingredients, the same actors and a certain director make two films like that but they'll not have the same outcome financially. So there is always that X factor, which perhaps is the audience coming to watch. You got to focus on that, which is actually the essence of storytelling in filmmaking," he said.

Ali was speaking at the second edition of the Indian Express' six-part series Expresso, held in Hyderabad. Also present at the event was actor Taapsee Pannu.

The director, also known for films such as "Jab We Met", "Socha Na Tha", and "Love Aaj Kal", said there is always a period of uncertainty in the industry.

"When I came in, people were saying, 'This was the worst time in the film industry, nothing is working and all films are flopping'... I remember we were all struggling at that point of time to make a film.

"This was a period of great uncertainty and insecurity for the film industry.

And then we came in and said, 'We know. You should make 'Socha Na Tha', you should make 'Black Friday', " he added.

Crisis ultimately turns out to be a great opportunity, Ali said.

"This particular phase that we are sitting on where many movies have not done well, people don't know whether they want to go to theatres anymore and OTT is doing its thing but we don't know what and where will it stand later, will turn out to be a very positive thing because filmmakers will have to leave some old habits behind and it is very disconcerting to do so. Unless we do that, no creativity can spawn."

Pannu, who was last seen in "Dunki", said the need to restructure arises whenever "redundancy sets in".

"It happens every five to six years because you are following the same formula and there comes a point that the formula stops working, so you feel uneasy... This is the right phase to break that monotony and redundancy," said Pannu, who has also produced films such as "Blurr" and "Dhak Dhak".

Asked if she would have said yes to a film like "Animal", the actor said, "On paper, yes."

One of the most controversial films of 2023, the Ranbir Kapoor-starrer "Animal" earned over ₹900 crore at the box office. A sequel of the film, directed by Sandeep Reddy Vanga, is in the works. Pannu said it was "a little strange to hear cheers and whistles" at certain moments where she wouldn't have liked the background score to grow like that. "... where the audience is forced to cheer, clap and whistle at certain moments. That's the issue," she said, adding she doesn't mind playing grey characters. (PTI)

Director Michael Sarnoski teases sequel of 'A Quiet Place: Day One'

LOS ANGELES, July 8: Michael Sarnoski, director of "A Quiet Place: Day One", says he hopes his sci-fi horror film gets a sequel treatment from Paramount Pictures. The movie, starring Lupita Nyong'o and Joseph Quinn, is receiving rave reviews and has already grossed USD 118 million worldwide since its release on June 28.

"A Quiet Place: Day One" is a spin-off movie, which is based on an idea from actor-filmmaker John Krasinski, who directed and starred in the first two films in the "A Quiet Place", a post-apocalyptic horror franchise. Asked about the possibility of a part two, Sarnoski told Variety: "Absolutely. I bet you will. But I don't know — at this point, I'm just recovering from making this one. So I'm sure Paramount will come up with something very fun next."

"A Quiet Place: Day One" follows the story of Sam, a cancer patient, who gets trapped in New York City invaded by sound-sensitive aliens. As she tries to escape the danger along with her service cat Frodo, she meets Eric, a young English law student trying to save his life from the invaders.

The director, also known for his 2021 directorial "Pig", said he would like to see "something similarly off-beat", like an unexpected character in this world.

"What attracted me to this story was the uniqueness of Sam, following this dying person who isn't even really fighting for survival.... The 'Quiet Place' universe does open itself up to any characters that you want to follow and want to explore. I'm not sure. (PTI)



Would love to find perfect project for me and my aunt, Julia Roberts: Emma Roberts

LOS ANGELES, July 8: Actor Emma Roberts says she would love to work with her aunt and Hollywood star Julia Roberts in a film but she is yet come across the "perfect project".

Emma, 33, admitted filmmakers still come to her with an opportunity to co-star with Julia, one of Hollywood's romantic film icons.

"I would love to find the perfect project for me and my aunt, and I know that there will be something. But it's never been the right thing. She's the best, and I want to do something with her. We send each other books and talk about stuff but

it hasn't been right.

"I watch her movies when I'm on location and I'm by myself. I have movies of hers downloaded on my computer that I watch for comfort. 'My Best Friend's Wedding' and 'America's Sweethearts' are my safe movies," the actor said in an interview with Variety.

Julia, 56, is best known for romance dramas and comedies such as "Pretty Woman", "Notting Hill", "Mona Lisa Smile", "Eat Pray Love", and "Runaway Bride".

Emma also addressed the critical and commercial failure of the superhero film "Madame Web".

The actor, who played Mary Parker in the 2024 movie, said she really enjoyed the film fronted by Dakota Johnson.

"I thought everyone in it was great. The director, S.J. Clarkson, I think, did an amazing job. She's the reason I wanted to do that movie.

"If it wasn't for internet culture and everything being made into a joke, I think that the reception would've been different. And that's what bums me about a lot of stuff, even stuff that I've done, is people just make such a joke out of everything now," she added.

Emma has starred in movies, in-

cluding "Aquamarine", "Wild Child", "Nancy Drew", "Holiday", "The Art of Getting By", "Billionaire Boys Club" and "Empire State".

Her latest release is Liz W Garcia's directorial "Space Cadet", which also stars Tom Hopper, Poppy Liu, Gabrielle Union, Kuhoo Verma, Desi Lydic, Sebastian Yatra, Yasha Jackson, Andrew Call, Troy Iwata, Josephine Huang, Dave Foley, Sam Robards and Joshua Harto in pivotal roles.

In the film, Emma portrays the role of Tiffany "Rex" Simpson, who dreams of going to space but things don't go as planned. (PTI)

21-year-old Spaniard is making a habit of turning the impossible into the possible

Alcaraz and Sinner reach the Wimbledon quarterfinal

LONDON, July 8: There Carlos Alcaraz was, down on his backside at a baseline below the Royal Box, briefly taking a seat in the grass after doing the splits when he slipped while running to hit a forehand during his fourth-round match.

So now what? Give up on the point and get ready for the next? Ha. Not this kid. Alcaraz popped to his feet, sprinted to his left to get to a backhand wide of the doubles alley, then raced forward to reach a short shot and, eventually, watched his opponent send a volley long.

That allowed Alcaraz to claim the second set of what would become a 6-3, 6-4, 1-6, 7-5 victory against No. 16 seed Ugo Humbert at Centre Court. The defending champion at the All England Club celebrated the moment by raising his right index finger in a "No. 1" gesture and shouting "Vamos!" as thousands of spectators rose to salute him.

The 21-year-old Spaniard is making a habit of turning the impossible into the possible, figuring out ways to win points many other players would concede and, in the bigger picture, breaking new ground time after time. He's been the first teenager to reach No. 1 in the ATP rankings, and last month's French Open championship made him the youngest man to win Grand Slam titles on three surfaces: hard, grass and clay courts.

Asked during his on-court interview how he'd describe the remarkable sequence against Humbert, Alcaraz offered a huge smile and responded: "Unbeliev-



able, I guess. I just try to fight every point, every ball. It doesn't matter what part of the court."

Unbelievable, maybe, but certainly not unprecedented. For him, at least. Later, at his news conference, he recalled having made that same sort of recovery from a fall during his thrill-a-minute marathon against rival Jannik Sinner at the 2022 U.S. Open, a tournament Alcaraz went on to win.

"I think," Alcaraz said, "that I can reach every ball."

There is a possible rematch against the No. 1-ranked Sinner looming in the semifinals. Each just needs to win once more to get there. In Tuesday's quarterfinals, Alcaraz will face No. 12 Tommy Paul, and Sinner goes up against

2021 U.S. Open champion Daniil Medvedev.

Sinner was bounced in last year's Wimbledon semifinals by Novak Djokovic, who then lost to Alcaraz in a five-set final.

Sinner earned his first Grand Slam title at the Australian Open in January, and he advanced Sunday with a 6-2, 6-4, 7-6 (9) win against No. 14 Ben Shelton, breaking the big-serving left-hander four times — the same total number of breaks others had managed against the 21-year-old American through 15 sets entering the day.

Like Alcaraz, Sinner is capable of some improvised racket wizardry, as he displayed in the third set, bringing his racket around his back at the baseline and flicking a

between-the-legs shot that he followed up with a passing winner.

"I'm not kind of player to have a lot of trick shots. But in this case, it was still the easiest shot. I didn't have space to go right and left," Sinner said, calling it a "lucky shot."

Paul reached his first quarterfinal at Wimbledon by using a 41-14 edge in winners to extend his unbeaten run to nine matches, all on grass, with a 6-2, 7-6 (3), 6-2 victory over Roberto Bautista Agut. Medvedev moved on when Grigor Dimitrov stopped playing because of a leg injury in the first set.

There was another midmatch retirement in a women's fourth-round match: 2017 U.S. Open runner-up Madison Keys hurt her

leg, took a medical timeout and then briefly tried to continue. But she was wiping away tears as she walked to the net when she decided she needed to quit at 5-all in the third set against Jasmine Paolini, who was a finalist at this year's French Open.

"I'm so sorry for her. To end the match like this, it's bad. What can I say?" Paolini said. "I'm feeling a little bit happy, but also sad for her. It's not easy to win like that."

Paolini next meets No. 19 Emma Navarro, who defeated reigning U.S. Open champion Coco Gauff 6-4, 6-3 in the day's last match. The second-seeded Gauff's exit comes the day after No. 1 Iga Swiatek lost and leaves just two of the top 10 seeded women in the bracket: No. 4 Elena Rybakina, the 2022 champion, and No. 7 Paolini.

The other women's quarterfinal established Sunday is Lulu Sun against Donna Kevic. Sun eliminated 2021 U.S. Open champion Emma Raducanu 6-2, 5-7, 6-2 to become the first woman to get through qualifying and reach the Wimbledon quarterfinal since 2010, and the first woman from New Zealand to get that far at the All England Club in the Open era, which began in 1968.

Kevic dropped to her knees at No. 2 Court after getting past Paula Badosa 6-2, 1-6, 6-4 in a match disrupted by three rain delays to make her first quarterfinal at the grass-court event in 10 appearances.

"I feel," said Kevic, a 28-year-old from Croatia, "like I'm living my dream." (AP)

Indian men's hockey team leaves for Switzerland



BENGALURU, July 8: The Indian men's hockey team on Monday departed for renowned adventurer Mike Horn's base in Switzerland which will be followed by a training camp in the Netherlands ahead of the Paris Games.

The three-day arduous camp in Switzerland is designed to instill mental toughness and from there the Indian team will head to the Netherlands to play practice matches before finally heading to the French capital.

Skipper Harmanpreet Singh said the upcoming experiences will ensure that the players are "in the best state of mind and body before we begin our Olympic journey."

"We just completed a grueling two-week camp in SAI Bengaluru and after a short detour in Switzerland with Mike Horn, who is reputed for his extreme adventures that conquer his fears, the Team will play some practice matches against the Netherlands and Malaysia."

Following the final block of training, India are scheduled to arrive in Paris on July 20.

"The team is in high spirits and is looking forward to the final block of training," Harmanpreet said before stepping onto his flight.

India will begin their Paris Olympics journey in Pool B, with a match against New Zealand on July 27, followed by a match against Argentina on July 29.

The Tokyo bronze medallists will then face Ireland and Belgium on July 30 and August 1 respectively, with their final group stage game against Australia on August 2.

India need to finish in top-four to make the knockouts.

"The team has prepared well so far, we identified areas that needed improvement from the London and Antwerp stages of FIH Pro League 2023/24 and worked on it in the training camp in SAI Bengaluru," said India vice-captain Hardik Singh.

"The best teams in the world will take part in the Paris 2024 Olympics but this squad is ready to seize the opportunity and bring glory to India. We are confident in our abilities and excited about the journey ahead." (PTI)

India eye improved bowling show in final women's T20I

CHENNAI, July 8: Desperate to level the three-match series after the second game was washed out, India would hope weather doesn't play spoilsport, besides eyeing a much-improved bowling effort in the final women's T20I against South Africa here on Tuesday.

India are trailing the three-match series 0-1 after losing the opener by 12 runs. Their problems compounded after the second game here on Sunday was washed out midway due to persistent drizzle.

And with 30 to 40 per cent of rain forecast for Tuesday, the Indians are left on the mercy of weather gods.

In both the matches, the Indian bowlers cut a sorry figure as South Africa amassed 189 for 9 and 177 for 6 respectively.

Barring Pooja Vastrakar, who picked up two wickets each in both the games, and spinner Deepti Sharma, most of the Indian bowlers failed to shine against the Proteas women.

Renuka Singh leaked runs in the first game and was subsequently replaced by Sajeevan Sajana in the



second T20I but the latter also didn't her cause.

Shreyanka Patil and Radha Yadav picked up a wicket each on Sunday but continued to leak runs.

India skipper Harmanpreet Kaur would want her bowlers to pull up their socks with the series at stake.

On the batting front, it has been a decent show by the Indians in the first game. The likes of Jemimah Rodrigues (53 not out), Smriti Mandhana (46), Harmanpreet (35), Shafali Verma (18) and Daylan

Hemalatha (14) all making double digit scores.

Uma Chetry, who made her T20I debut on Sunday, is likely to persist with as Harmanpreet and the team management would like to see her exploits with the bat.

South Africa, on the other hand, has been rock solid with the bat with Tazmin Brits, who hit consecutive half-centuries, leading the charge.

Besides Brits, skipper Laura Wolvaardt, Marizanne Kapp and Anneke Bosch have contributed

with the bat as well for the visitors. South Africa's only concern is Chloe Tryon, who has scored identical 12 runs in the two games.

And with the upcoming T20 World Cup in Bangladesh in mind, Tryon will be desperate to prove her detractors wrong.

Teams:
India Women: Harmanpreet Kaur(c), Smriti Mandhana(vc), Uma Chetry(wk), Richa Ghosh(wk), Dayalan Hemalatha, Jemimah Rodrigues, Shafali Verma, Amanjot Kaur, Shreyanka Patil, Sajeevan Sajana, Deepti Sharma, Asha Sobhana, Arundhati Reddy, Renuka Singh, Shabnam Shakil, Pooja Vastrakar and Radha Yadav.

South Africa Women: Laura Wolvaardt(c), Tazmin Brits, Mieke de Ridder(wk), Sinalo Jafta(wk), Anneke Bosch, Nadine de Klerk, Annerie Dercksen, Marizanne Kapp, Sune Luus, Chloe Tryon, Ayabonga Khaka, Masabata Klaas, Eliz-Mari Marx, Nonkululeko Mlaba and Tumi Sekhukhune.

Match starts: 7.00 pm (IST). (PTI)

Have been living a dream past few days: Bumrah

NEW DELHI, July 8: India pace spearhead Jasprit Bumrah on Monday said he has been "living a dream" for the past few days as he expressed gratitude for the stupendous reception that he and the rest of his teammates got for winning the T20 World Cup in the Caribbean.

The 30-year-old, who picked up 15 wickets in the mega-event that concluded on June 29 in Barbados, was a key figure in India's second overall and first in 17 years world trophy in the shortest format. He was adjudged Player of the Tournament for his performance.

"I am so thankful for the last few days. I've been living a dream and it has filled me with happiness and gratitude," Bumrah posted on X, along with a video of him enjoying the rapturous homecoming that included a breakfast meet with Prime Minister Narendra Modi and a victory parade attended by lakhs of fans in Mumbai.

The 42-second clip featured the audio of Virat Kohli's speech during the felicitation function after the parade last Thursday where the champion batter had lauded Bumrah's contribution.

The fast bowler had combined with all-rounder Hardik Pandya to turn it around wonderfully for India in the final.

The two were brought in for their second spell in the match at a time when South Africa needed 30 off 30 balls. They wreaked havoc to ensure that the Proteas eventually fell short by seven runs.

Kohli had called Bumrah a "once in a generation" player during the speech at the Wankhede Stadium, prompting the assembled crowd to chant the bowler's name in appreciation.

"What I would like everyone to do is to applaud a guy who brought us back into games again, and again, and again. It was phenomenal. He is a once in a generation bowler. I am so glad he plays for us," Kohli, who retired from T20 Internationals at the end of the World Cup, had said.

Bumrah was welcomed with flower petals after arriving at his Ahmedabad home recently. (PTI)

Jayasuriya named Sri Lanka's interim coach



COLOMBO, July 8: Former captain Sanath Jayasuriya was on Monday named the interim head coach of Sri Lanka's cricket team ahead of this month's white-ball home series against India with the country's board saying that he is "well-positioned" to guide the side till a "permanent solution" is found in the next few months.

The Indian team will be touring Sri Lanka for three T20 Internationals and as many ODIs, starting July 27. Jayasuriya, who has also served as a chief selector in the past, will continue in the post till Sri Lanka's Test tour to England in August-September, comprising three games.

"Sri Lanka Cricket wishes to announce the appointment of Mr. Sanath Jayasuriya as the 'Interim Head Coach' of the national team. He will function in the position until the completion of Sri Lanka's tour of England in September 2024," the SLC said in a statement. The 55-year-old, a swashbuckling opener in his prime, was named for the interim post after Englishman Chris Silverwood resigned last week as Sri Lanka head coach.

Silverwood stepped down in the wake of the country's disastrous T20 World Cup campaign, during which it was ousted from the league stage itself.

One of the most attacking batters of his time, Jayasuriya had recently been a consultant for the team during this year's T20 World Cup in the USA and Caribbean.

"Jayasuriya is currently serving as the full-time 'Cricket Consultant' of Sri Lanka Cricket. His new appointment comes into immediate effect."

"Sanath with his wealth of international cricketing experience is well positioned to guide the national team, until we find a permanent solution," said SLC CEO Ashley De Silva. Jayasuriya featured in 110 Tests between 1991 and 2007, scoring 6973 runs at an average of 40.07, with the help of 14 centuries and 31 fifties.

In the 445 ODIs he played, the left-hander struck 13,430 runs at an average of 32.36, with 28 hundreds and 68 half centuries.

He was a key member of the Sri Lankan team that won 1996 ODI World Cup. He also served as Member of Parliament from 2010-15. (PTI)

Mentor Yuvraj must be proud now: Abhishek Sharma

HARARE, July 8: India opener Abhishek Sharma has revealed that his mentor Yuvraj Singh was delighted when he got out for a duck on his T20I debut against Zimbabwe here as the swashbuckling former all-rounder, for reasons best known to him, felt it was a "good start".

Making his India debut, Abhishek was out on duck as the Men in Blue lost the first T20I against hosts Zimbabwe by 13 runs on Saturday. But the 23-year-old came back strongly to set the stage ablaze with a blistering maiden century (a 47-ball 100) to fashion India's 100-run win in the second game a day later.

"I spoke to him yesterday (Saturday) also, and I don't know why he was very happy when I got out on zero. He said that's a good start but he must be very happy and proud just like my family," Abhishek said in a video posted by BCCI.

He credited the hero of India's 2011 World Cup triumph for not only helping him hone his skills on the cricket field but also supporting him in his life away from the field.

"It's all because of him as well, the hard work he has put in (shaping) me. (For) two-three years, he has worked really hard not only on my cricket but off the field (life) as well." (PTI)

India is set to field its largest ever contingent with more than 125 athletes

Current generation of athletes is not chicken hearted: Abhinav Bindra

NEW DELHI, July 8: India's first-ever Olympic champion Abhinav Bindra feels the current generation of athletes is much more confident than the "chicken-hearted" players of his time but advised the Paris-bound Indian contingent to not make the mistake of thinking about either past or future.

Bindra, who won a shooting gold in 2008 Beijing Games, was speaking during a panel discussion organised by the Embassy of France with the Indo-French Chamber of Commerce & Industry (IFCCI) on the country's preparations for the Olympic Games, starting July 26.

India is set to field its largest ever contingent with more than 125 athletes qualifying for the biggest sporting event on earth.

"I came from a generation that was chicken hearted, in nature. These athletes are much more confident, have self belief. They want to go and win and not just win but win gold medals and it comes out very clearly. That is a reflection of our society, how it has developed over the years," said Bindra.

The 41-year-old said the way



sport is looked at and spoken about have changed but what has not changed is the stiff competition that athletes face.

"The conversations are different now. But there are similarities, they have to show up in Paris and perform on that particular day. It's not going to get easier in any way. They have to learn to soak in the pressure and focus on process perfected over years, process of execution of their skills."

"The biggest mistake athletes

make is that they are either living in the past or thinking about what the future holds. They forget about the only reality that exists, remaining present in moment." Thierry Mathou, the Ambassador of France to India, said Paris was ready to deliver exceptional Games.

He said that innovation, sustainability, solidarity, gender equality, employment, education and inclusivity was at the heart of their organisation of the Games.

Mathou also informed that



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