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Indian ship captain, crew win 'exceptional bravery' awards

FOR RED SEA RESCUE OP

London (Agency): Captain Avhilash Rawat and his crew of an oil tanker have been named among the winners of the International Maritime Organisation (IMO) 2024 Award for Exceptional Bravery at Sea for their "extraordinary courage" shown in a Red Sea rescue mission.

when it was struck by an anti-ship ballistic missile. The explosion ignited a cargo tank, creating a significant fire hazard with flames exceeding 5 meters," reads the award citation.

Despite the extreme danger and the constant threat of further attacks, Rawat and his crew fought the fire using fixed foam monitors and portable hoses. The fire continued to

from the French frigate FS Alsace and the United States frigate USS Carney, which provided additional firefighting foam and support, followed soon after by the Indian warship INS Visakhapatnam.

Marlin Luanda sailed to safety under naval escort," the IMO noted.

Captain Rawat and his crew were nominated for the award by the Marshall Islands and, along with Captain Jorge Fernando Galaviz Fuentes and the crew of the tugboat Pemex Maya, nominated by Mexico, will receive their awards at the annual ceremony to be held at the IMO Headquarters in London on December 2, during the 109th session of the Maritime Security Committee.

A total of 41 nominations were received from 15 member states and three non-governmental organisations in consultative status with IMO. Nominations were initially reviewed by an Assessment Panel, and their recommendations were considered by a panel of judges, who ultimately selected the recipients of honours. The recommendations of the Panel of Judges have now been endorsed by the IMO Council, meeting for its 132nd session being held in London this week.



Captain Avhilash Rawat swiftly organised firefighting efforts, ensuring the crew's safety and maintaining the ship's navigability amidst the chaos. With the starboard lifeboat destroyed, the remaining crew mustered at the port lifeboat station, ready for potential evacuation," it

spread, particularly affecting an adjacent tank, but the crew managed to contain it using seawater after foam supplies were exhausted, the IMO notes.

They managed to get closer to the fire due to their superior equipment, and their efforts, combined with those of the Marlin Luanda crew, finally succeeded in extinguishing the fire and sealing a significant hull breach.

"Twenty-four hours after the missile strike, the

"India supports return of democracy in Myanmar": S Jaishankar

New Delhi (Agency): External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar on Thursday told his Myanmar counterpart U Than Shwe that India supports the return of democracy in Myanmar even as he strongly pressed for the early return of Indians "unlawfully" detained by gangs involved in cyber scams in Myawaddy town.

Myanmar's deputy prime minister, last month as well when he transited through Delhi while returning to Myanmar from a foreign trip.

Several parts of Myanmar have been witnessing intense fighting between the military junta and resistance forces. The resistance forces have already captured several towns.

The anti-junta forces seized control of several military bases and a command centre at Myawaddy in April. India has been concerned over fake job scams in Myanmar as well. Around five weeks

At a meeting with U Than Shwe, Mr Jaishankar also raised the issue of the flow of illegal narcotics, arms trade and activities of insurgent groups along the Indo-Myanmar border.

The talks took place on the sidelines of a retreat session of the foreign ministers of member nations of BIMSTEC grouping in Delhi. "Met with DPM and FM U Than Swe of Myanmar on the sidelines of BIMSTEC Foreign Ministers' Retreat. Shared our concerns regarding border stability and flow of displaced persons," Mr Jaishankar said on 'X'.



"Also spoke about issues of illegal narcotics and arms trade and activities of insurgent groups. Pressed strongly for the early return of Indians unlawfully detained by cyber scam gangs," he said.

back, the Indian embassy in Myanmar called upon Indian nationals looking for jobs in that country to be careful so that they are not lured into fake or illegal employment. In an advisory, the embassy said an international crime syndicate is active in the Myawaddy region on Myanmar-Thailand border and urged Indians to exercise caution before taking up job offers in the region.

"India supports the return to democracy in Myanmar and engages all stakeholders in that regard," the external affairs minister added. Myanmar has been witnessing widespread violent protests demanding restoration of democracy since the military seized power in a coup on February 1, 2021.

It is learnt that around 100 Indians are trapped in Myawaddy at present after they fell victim of job scams. Separately, the foreign ministers of India, Thailand and Myanmar also held a trilateral meeting on the sidelines of the retreat.

Mr Jaishankar met Than Shwe, also

"Bet on Russia as long-term, reliable partner not a good one": US Official to India

Washington (Agency): Amid concerns over India's ties with Russia, a top US official on Thursday cautioned New Delhi that a "bet on Russia as a long-term, reliable partner is not a good bet" and Moscow would side with Beijing over New Delhi in case of a conflict between the two Asian giants.

also met Prime Minister Modi during his visit.

"Russia is becoming closer to China. In fact, it's becoming the junior partner to China. And in that way, they would side with China over India any day of the week. And ... Prime Minister Modi, of course, has profound concerns about the potential for Chinese aggression against India. Which we have seen over recent years," Mr Sullivan said.

US National Security Adviser Jake Sullivan made the remarks while replying to a question on MSNBC about Prime Minister Narendra Modi's recent visit to Moscow where he held extensive talks with Russian President Vladimir Putin. "We've made clear to every country in the world including India that a bet on Russia as a long-term, reliable partner is not a good bet," said Mr Sullivan, who was in India last month for a meeting with his counterpart Ajit Doval. The top American official had

The NSA, however, acknowledged that countries like India have a historic relationship with Russia and it's not going to change dramatically overnight. "This is playing the long game. It (US) is making investments in democratic partners and allies around the world including countries like India and we think that that will pay off as we go forward," he added.

Rajnath admitted to Delhi AIIMS due to back pain, stable now

New Delhi (Agency): Defence Minister Rajnath Singh was admitted to the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) here on Thursday with complaints of back pain, hospital officials said. He is stable and under



observation, AIIMS media cell in-charge Dr Rima Dada said, adding he is undergoing tests. The 73-year-old was admitted early in the morning and is in the Old Private Ward, she said.

'New India' demands proactiveness: PM Modi to IAS trainee officers

New Delhi: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday asked trainee IAS officers to provide the best possible governance and quality of life to citizens as he said that 'New India' is not satisfied with a lackadaisical approach and demands pro-active-ness.

ensures social justice and prevents discrimination, he said according to a state-

be catalytic agents, and they will feel satisfaction when they see change hap-



ment. He told the trainee officers of the 2022 batch that they should aspire to

opening in front of their eyes. Talking about schemes like 'Lakshpati Didi', 'D'

Didi' and 'PM Awas Yojana', he said all of them should work with a saturation approach to take these schemes further to people. PM Modi said 'Nation First' is not just a slogan but his life's aim and exhorted the officers to walk with him on this journey. He said accolades they had received after their selection as IAS are things of the past and instead of staying in the past they should look at the future. During the interaction, various officers shared their experiences of training.

Advertisement for Ujala Media Group Summer Competition. Includes text: 'UJALA MEDIA GROUP', 'SUMMER COMPETITION', '5 जुलाई 2024 से 15 अगस्त तक', and details about contests and prizes.

Supreme court orders Patanjali to file affidavit confirming removal of ads promoting 14 products

These 14 products had their manufacturing licenses suspended by the Uttarakhand State Licensing Authority on April 15, but the suspension was later lifted.

New Delhi (Agency): The Supreme Court has directed Yoga guru Baba Ramdev's Patanjali Ayurved Ltd, to submit an affidavit on whether the advertisements for 14 of its products have been withdrawn.

These 14 products had their manufacturing licenses suspended by the Uttarakhand State Licensing Authority on April 15, but the suspension was later lifted.

The state licensing authority filed an affidavit in the Supreme Court, explaining that the suspension order was canceled after a high-level committee reviewed Patanjali's complaints. Initially, the suspension was paused on May 17 and later entirely canceled.

During the court proceedings, Justices Hima Kohli and Sandeep Mehta noted that Patanjali, in a May 16 affidavit, claimed to have halted the sale of the 14 products following the April 15 suspension. The

affidavit also stated that Patanjali had taken steps to remove related advertisements from its official social media accounts.

"Respondent number five (Patanjali Ayurved Ltd) is directed to file an affidavit stating inter alia whether the request made to social media intermediaries have been accessed to and advertisements of 14 products have been removed/withdrawn," the bench said.

The Supreme Court is hearing a plea from the Indian Medical Association (IMA), which accuses Patanjali of a smear campaign against the COVID-19 vaccination drive and modern medical practices. The court has given Patanjali two weeks to file its affidavit.

Senior advocate P S Patwalia, representing the IMA, was asked by the court if they had verified the withdrawal of the advertisements as claimed by Patanjali in its May affidavit. An advocate for one of the applicants suggested

that the Central government should swiftly address the issue of misleading advertisements, noting, "This is having a great impact on the online industry," and adding, "The industry should not suffer. That is not the



intent of the orders (of the court)." Justice Kohli emphasized, "The intention is not to cause any harassment to anybody. The intention is only to focus on particular sectors and particular aspects."

An advocate for a radio association noted that their advertisements are only 10 seconds long. The bench

responded, "We are also of the opinion that the industry should not suffer in any manner. The focus of this court has already been highlighted in the previous orders and needs no repetition." The bench stressed

the need for high-level discussions to streamline processes, saying, "We don't want that there should be layers of approval so that whatever has to be shortened and simplified, that should be done."

Acknowledging the expanded scope of the petition as per its May 7 order, the bench requested advo-

cate Shadan Farasat to serve as amicus curiae. The amicus will assist the court by compiling data from state and central authorities to focus on the issues highlighted.

The bench asked Additional Solicitor General (ASG) K M Nataraj, representing the Centre, to convene a meeting with senior department officers for brainstorming. "Can we request you to convene a meeting so that all the stakeholders and the senior most officers of your department can have a brainstorming," the bench said.

Nataraj informed the court that the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting had already conducted high-level meetings with stakeholders to address their issues. "He (ASG) submits that such meetings shall be taken further... to streamline the issues and point out the difficulties being faced by the intervenors and the manner in which they can be resolved," the bench noted.

The court asked the ministry to continue these discussions and file an affidavit with its recommendations within three weeks.

The bench also requested that affidavits from various state licensing authorities be provided to the amicus to identify any non-compliance with the court's orders.

The next hearing is scheduled for July 30. Previously, on May 14, the Supreme Court had reserved its order on a contempt notice issued to Ramdev, his aide Balkrishna, and Patanjali Ayurved Ltd for misleading advertisements. Patanjali had assured the court on November 21 of the previous year that it would comply with advertising laws and avoid making unverified claims about its products. The court stated that Patanjali is "bound down to such assurance." Due to non-compliance with this undertaking and subsequent media statements, the court issued contempt notices.

AAP leader Sanjay Singh gets bail in Epidemic Diseases Act violation case

New Delhi (Agency): AAP Rajya Sabha member Sanjay Singh on Thursday surrendered at the MP/MLA court after a bailable warrant was issued against him for non-appearance in the case of violation of the Epidemic Diseases Act and the Model Code of Conduct. Special judge Shubham Verma granted him bail.

Special Public Prosecutor Vaibhav Pandey said that on April 13, 2021, Bandhuakala police station incharge Praveen Kumar Singh had filed an FIR.



It was alleged that at 3.30 PM on the day, Sanjay Singh was holding a meeting in Hasanpur village in favor of his party's Zila Parishad member candidate Salma Begum in the 3-tier Panchayat elections, for which he did not have permission. There were 50-60 more people with him which violated the Epidemic Act and other laws.

After investigation, the police sent the charge sheet to the court against Sanjay Singh, Maqsood Ansari, Salim Ansari, Jagdish Yadav, Maqsood, Sukai, Dharamraj, Zeeshan, Sahban, Sikandar, Jailil and Ajay. The other accused got bail but when Sanjay did not appear, a warrant was issued against him.

Sanjay Singh's advocate Rudra Pratap Singh Madan said he has been ordered to be released on furnishing two sureties of Rs 20,000 and a personal bond, which has been filed.

E&P sector offers investment opportunities worth USD 100 bn by 2030: Hardeep Singh Puri

New Delhi (Agency): The Exploration and Production (E&P) sector offers investment opportunities worth USD 100 billion by 2030, said Minister of Petroleum & Natural Gas, Hardeep Singh Puri said on Thursday. While speaking at the inaugural session of first edition of Urja Varta, he underscored the importance of the exploration and production sector in achieving energy self-sufficiency and sustaining economic growth. The Minister also announced the formation of a Joint Working Group (JWG) comprising representatives from private E&P operators, the National Oil Companies, MoPNG, and DGH to address industry concerns and improve the ease of doing business in the sector. Further, he directed the DGH to complete the process of integration of its various online portals by the end of the year.

He highlighted the vast potential of India's 26 sedimentary basins, containing substantial reserves of crude oil and natural gas yet to be fully tapped. Despite our substantial progress, the Minister said, "Only 10% of our sedimentary basin area is under exploration today. After the award of blocks under the forthcoming Open Acreage Licensing Policy (OALP) Rounds, it will increase to 16% by end-2024."

Highlighting the need to streamline operational and regulatory processes, Puri stressed that the government is doing its part to catalyse investments in E&P. The Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas

(MoPNG) has instituted sweeping reforms, empowering stakeholders to contribute to our nation's progress. He said that we intend to increase India's exploration acreage to 1 million sq. km. by 2030.

"No-Go" areas in India's EEZ have been reduced by almost 99%", Puri added further. Talking about the accelerated pace of exploration activities through initiatives like the OALP and the Discovered Small Field (DSF) Policy, he said, "Through the first 8 OALP bid rounds, a total of 144 blocks covering approximately 244,007 sq. km. have been awarded and recently announced OALP IX round offers an area of approximately 136,596 sq. km. spread over 8 sedimentary basins, with the vision of expanding nation's footprint in offshore exploration."

He said, the Discovered Small Field (DSF) Policy, since its inception in 2015, has garnered investments of approximately 2 billion USD and brought in 29 new players in the field.

Puri further said that an investment of Rs 7,500 crores is going into the acquisition of new seismic data, including that of the EEZ, financing stratigraphic wells, and acquiring aerial survey data for difficult terrains.

"We have consolidated and simplified 37 approval processes into 18, with 9 processes now eligible for self-certification. However, we recognize the need to push these reforms further," he said.



'No work permit in Meghalaya': CM denies discrimination against external labourers

Shillong (Agency): Meghalaya Chief Minister Conrad K Sangma clarified that there was no work permit system in Meghalaya and hence any Indian national is free to work in the state.

The statement from Sangma came in response to reports of pressure groups acting like vigilantes by checking the work permits of external labourers in the state. Seeking to clear the air on the ongoing document checks by these groups in Shillong, he said the state does not enforce a work permit system.

Reports about some labourers being sent back to their home states surfaced after incidents of violence and even deaths with the police intervention remaining minimal.

Despite the government's assurances of action after each incident, public concern persists. The Labour Department registers labourers for safety and record-keeping purposes. Sangma reiterated that no individual or group is authorised to conduct these checks, deeming such actions illegal.

Delhi excise policy: SC judge recuses from hearing Manish Sisodia's bail plea

New Delhi (Agency): Supreme Court Justice Sanjay Kumar on Thursday recused from hearing AAP leader Manish Sisodia's plea for reviving his bail plea by challenging the Delhi High Court order in the excise policy case.

Soon after Manish Sisodia's plea for the revival of his bail plea was called, Justice Sanjiv Khanna heading the bench said that his brother Judge Justice Sanjay Kumar will not like to hear the matter for personal reasons.

After the recusal of Justice Sanjay Kumar, Justice Khanna ordered the listing of Sisodia's plea next week before an appropriate bench in which Justice Sanjay Kumar is not a member. The matter was listed before a three-judge bench of Justice Sanjiv Khanna, Justice Sanjay Karol and Justice Sanjay Kumar.

Appearing for Sisodia, senior advocate Abhishek Manu Singhvi told the bench that the matter is of extreme urgency.

On June 4, Sisodia's plea was listed before a vacation bench comprising Justice Aravind Kumar and Justice Sandeep Mehta. The vaca-

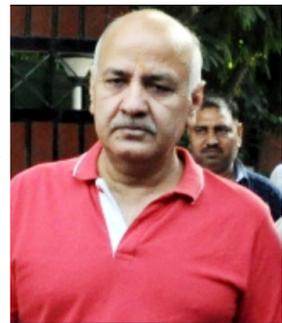
tion bench did not take a call on Sisodia's bail partition as it gave the Directorate of Enforcement time till June 3 to file final charge-sheet in the Delhi excise policy case. While giving time to the Directorate of Enforcement to file the final charge-sheet by July 3, the vacation bench permitted Sisodia to file, afresh, a bail petition thereafter. The vacation bench had recorded a statement by the Solicitor General Tushar Mehta that the Directorate of Enforcement will file a final complaint/charge sheet in two weeks.

"We will not say anything. We will dispose (of the plea for bail) with liberty to revive your prayers. We are not saying anything on merits and all contentions are left open. In both the CBI and ED cases the order is (common).... Ordered accordingly and disposed of. Statement of SG that final charge sheet will be filed by July 3 recorded," the Court had said on June 4, 2024.

During the June 4 hearing, senior advocate Singhvi had told the court, "Liberty to move Supreme

Court? I am inside for 15 months. Let me be very blunt, trial courts and High Courts do not deal with politically sensitive matters (on time)."

The first application for bail by Sisodia was heard by a bench of Justice Sanjiv Khanna and Justice SVN



Bhatti. The October 30, 2023, judgment of the top court had given Sisodia the liberty to make a fresh attempt for bail after three months if it appears that the trial is getting protected or moving at a snail pace.

"In view of the assurance given at the Bar on behalf of the prosecution that they shall conclude the trial by taking appropriate steps within next six to eight months, we give liberty to

the appellant - Manish Sisodia to move a fresh application for bail in case of change in circumstances, or in case the trial is protracted and proceeds at a snail's pace in next three months", the top court had said in its October 30, 2023, judgment. Sisodia, in the instant case, had approached the top court against Delhi High Court order dismissing his bail plea in both the cases being prosecuted by the CBI and the ED.

Sisodia was arrested by the CBI on February 26, 2023, for alleged irregularities in the framing and implementation of Delhi's excise policy for the year 2021-2022. He was arrested by the ED in an alleged money-laundering case stemming from the CBI FIR on March 9, 2023. Sisodia had resigned from the Delhi government on February 28, 2023. The controversial policy was withdrawn amid allegations of foul play by the opposition. He is currently in judicial custody.

The Delhi government had implemented the policy on November 17, 2021, but it was scrapped at the end of September 2022 amid allegations of corruption.

250 villagers trapped in Kheri due to flood waters of Sharda river

Around 250 villagers of Raini Samdaha village of Dhaurhara tehsil got trapped in the foothills of Sharda river. When the administration came to know about this, it started rescuing the villagers surrounded by flood waters.

Lakhimpur Kheri (Agency): Flood havoc continues in Lakhimpur Kheri district where around 150 villages are in the grip of floods due to the swollen Sharda-Ghaghra rivers. Around 250 villagers of Raini Samdaha village of Dhaurhara tehsil got trapped in the foothills of Sharda river. When the administration came to know about this, it started rescuing the villagers surrounded by flood waters. The NDRF team has rescued 18 villagers till 11 am on Thursday, officials here claimed. Officials claimed that by this evening 50% of the trapped villagers would be rescued. During the flood



about two decades ago, the erosion victims of Samdaha village had settled across the Sharda river. These villagers got trapped in this flood again. SDM Rajesh Kumar, present on the spot and was monitoring the rescue of villagers. Food packets are being delivered to the affected families. Meanwhile, a culvert under construction on the road connecting Sampoonanagar police station area to Hazara of Pilibhit was washed away in flood waters. Due to this, transportation from Sampoonanagar Sugar Mill to Ramnagar, Shantinagar, Gandhi Nagar, Kabirganj under Hazara police station have been paralysed.

MoS Commerce and Industry Jatin Prasada visits saffron trade centre in Kashmir

Jammu (Agency): In a significant move to bolster the saffron industry in Kashmir, Union Minister of State for Commerce and Industry Jitin Prasada, on Thursday, visited the India International Kashmir Saffron Trade Centre (IIKSTC) Dusoo, Pampore.

Present on the occasion were the Director of Agriculture Kashmir, Chowdhury Mohammad Iqbal, the Managing Director of Trade Promotion Organization, Khalid Jahangir and other concerned officers. During his visit, Jitin Prasada inspected different sections of the Centre and reviewed various operations at the state-of-the-art processing unit.

He visited different blocks of the centre including, stigma separation, dry-

ing, grading, packing and the E-Auction Center. He was thoroughly briefed by the officers about the advanced facilities and the substantial support being provided to farmers by the unit. The Union minister also held an interactive session with the Farmer Producer Organizations (FPOs) and saffron farmers to discuss the promotion and development of the saffron industry in the region.

Responding to several issues raised by the farmers, Jitin Prasada assured that all their grievances and demands would be resolved on a priority basis.

The Union minister reiterated the central government's commitment towards the welfare and development of farmers of Jammu and Kashmir.

EDITORIAL

LEGAL MARGIN

Vikas Gupta "Advocate"

District and Sessions Court Prayagraj

Demand to reject new Criminal Law, Indian Judicial Code, Indian Civil Defense Code and Indian Evidence Act 2024



A petition was filed in the Supreme Court against the three new criminal laws, implemented in the country from July 1. In the application filed on behalf of the petitioner, it has been said that the content of the new laws is not correct, along with the title that has been kept, there are many flaws in the new law in which mainly duplication of the old law has been done. It was said that, according to him, the new Criminal Act does not explain the legislation nor is it fulfilling the objective of the law in the Indian environment. Request to test the practicality of the laws implemented from July 1, IPC, CRPC and Indian Evidence Act. Indian Justice Code, Indian Civil Defense Code, Indian Evidence Act, 2024 will replace them respectively. In the petition filed this time in all three laws, questions were also raised on the title of the laws. The petition filed in the Supreme Court against the three new criminal laws of the Central Government was duly heard. The main demand of the petitioner in his petition is to stop its implementation with immediate effect and has requested that the practicality of the law be examined by constituting an expert committee. The three laws Indian Judicial Code, Indian Civil Defense Code and Indian Evidence Code have replaced IPC, CrPC and Indian Evidence Act from July 1. The Central Government has issued a notification for this. "The subject and name of the laws are not correct". In this filed application it has been said that the combination of new laws is not right. The legislation is not interpreted according to the title it has been kept, nor is it serving the purpose.

The name of the law is not clear, and there are many contradictions in the sections of the law. It has been said in the petition that as far as the Indian Judicial Code is concerned, most of the sections in it have been kept similar to the IPC. Apart from this, organized crime has also been included in the Indian Judicial Code i.e. BNS, which includes vehicle theft, pickpocketing, sale of question paper in examination and other types of organized crime. In the new law which came into effect from July 1, the definition of organized crime states that if the citizens generally feel that they are feeling insecure due to the actions of an organized gang, then it will be a crime. What constitutes a feeling of insecurity is not clearly defined. It has also been said that gang has not been defined in the Indian Judicial Code. Also, it has been said in the petition that in case of any crime, there is a provision of taking police remand for 15 days and it can be taken anytime during 40 days or 60 days of arrest. In a way, this provision will affect the provision of bail during this period. It is noteworthy that the current provision is that remand can be taken only within 15 days of arrest. It is noteworthy that the Indian Judicial Code (BNS), Indian Civil Protection Code and Indian Evidence Act have come into force from July 1. There are 357 sections in the Indian Judicial Code. Many terminology from the old colonial period has been removed.

Many legal provisions have been made under the Indian Civil Defense Code. In this petition, a demand was made to correct and re-implement all three new laws. Although earlier also the new law has been challenged on different grounds, but the Supreme Court did not give any relief to the petitioners. Many petitions related to this type of demand have been rejected, in which the new criminal law was challenged. A bench led by Supreme Court Chief Justice DY Chandrachud refused to grant relief and said there was no lacuna in the law. In the past also, the Supreme Court has rejected such applications. Similarly, another petition was filed in the Kerala High Court on behalf of Advocate PV Jeevesh, objecting to the Hindi and Sanskrit terminology. The petitioners have not got relief in the case from the Supreme Court. India's present G Chandrachud and the judges along with him have almost the same opinion regarding the new law. According to them, there is no problem of any kind in the new law and if there is any problem in it if problems arise, they will be clarified from time to time and they will be interpreted and corrected as per the law. -- Ujala News Group "Legal Desk"

Fearful and stressful lifestyle reason for spreading cancer in society: Dr. Ajai Kumar Sonkar

Prayagraj: World famous scientist Padmashree Dr. Ajai Kumar Sonkar told that after many years of study, he has come to the conclusion that due to the fearful lifestyle in the society, deadly diseases like cancer are becoming common. He told that when someone comes under stress, the body's defense system reacts under which a hormone called cortisol is produced in the adrenal gland, which temporarily deactivates several organs like digestive system, reproductive organs, pancreas etc and stores a lot of glucose in the blood. Which is many folds higher than normal. To utilize the elevated glucose, the body needs many folds more oxygen in the elevated proportion. Which can be delivered to the body only through intense aerobic exercises. This includes running, which is practically not possible for any person in today's distorted lifestyle to run every time he gets stressed. As a result, the increased glucose in the blood stream cannot be utilized by the body, the amount of fat in the blood increases, which gives rise to heart disease.

There is a lot of extra burden on the beta cells of pancreas due to which they are not able to work properly and the person starts suffering from diabetes. Due to lack of oxygen in the body, a condition called non-cellular arises due to which the glucose present in the cell gets fermented and the outer cover of such cells becomes hard, neither oxygen can enter it nor can waste materials come out from it, such cells are called malignant cells or cancer cells. The fermented sugar inside these cells keeps on fermenting the sugar of healthy cells as well, thus cancer spreads in the body.

He further told that thousands of years ago when man used to live in the lap of nature in the forest, he used to get scared when a cannibalistic creature came in front of him. The fear of losing his life used to create intense stress in him.

In the course of evolution, a special biological function was born in the body's defense system to deal with these dangers. A hormone called Cortisol was produced in the adrenal gland. Which in an attempt to save life, would put a lot of glucose in the blood by interrupting the biological activities of several organs that were not in use for saving life from that acute danger, so that by using that glucose (energy) the person could save his life by

fighting or running away from that cannibalistic creature. In the race to save his life, the person would do physical labor beyond the capacity of his body due to which a lot of oxygen would reach his body and all the extra glucose would be consumed up. This way, man became more skilled and powerful and attained the age of hundred years.

This biological function of the body's defense system, which was born in the evolutionary process to save lives, has become a curse in today's lifestyle, which has put man in danger of deadly diseases like cancer. Today, in our developed and modern urban lifestyle, we are not in danger from cannibalistic creatures like lions or leopards. We have invented countless

unnatural reasons for stress, that are born out of hates, greed,

competitions, fear of failure, feeling of gain and loss. We get stressed due to many such ill reasons while sitting in a safe air-conditioned room. Now, since the cause of stress is not any cannibalistic creature in front of us, we do not even run around to escape. But our body's defense system reacts to stress in the same way. Cortisol is produced in our adrenal glands, which switches off the organs and stores a big amount of glucose in our blood.

Due to a sedentary lifestyle, our body is unable to produce oxygen in proportion to the increased glucose. Due to which the body moves towards deadly diseases. Dr. Ajai told that we can divide stress into three types in our today's lifestyle. 1) Short-term (acute) stress, like getting stressed due to the possibility of missing a train or flight due to getting stuck in traffic, or similar short-term happenings.

2) Long-term stress (chronic stress), like stress arising from worrying about one's own or one's children's insecure future, worry and stress due to a court cases going on for years, stress due to scarcity or less income than required, debt, stress due to constant bitterness in relationships, living in the fear of getting caught due to economic crime, etc. are some examples of long-term stress.

And the third one is Post-Traumatic Stress, the painful effect of any tragic incident that happened in the past is called Post-Traumatic Stress. The corrupt system is also largely responsible for the society living in the shadow of insecurity and fear. Today, if any person has to deal with any government department, it is a scary experience for him. The justice system is also cursed and long spanned. People are living

with the worries of uncertainty and insecure future. The government system does not give them a sense of security or protection, rather it gives them a punitive experience. Governments say that they have built so many hospitals or started health schemes, the truth is that these are not at all effective. If the administration is able to create a sense of security and calmness in the society, then the need for eighty percent of hospitals will automatically end.

Today earning money and popularity, the news medias are relentlessly focused on crime and negative news only, due to which an atmosphere of fear is constantly created everywhere. Today most people have mobile phones in their hands, if someone's mobile suddenly goes switched off, then his parents tremble with fear, the fear of the possibility of inauspicious events engulfs them.

This distorted situation of the society is directly responsible for the recent Hathras incident in which 121 people were killed. People have lost their wisdom and rationality due to fears and insecurity. Everyone is looking for supernatural support, due to which people easily give the status of God to any impostor. And the business of these fake Babas is flourishing everywhere like cucumbers. Our law enforcement institutions and government system seem helpless in front of them. Because the popularity of such fake Babas born out of superstition and hostility has been working as a lifesaver for political gains.



Food addictions

Ethics in business practices has never been a particular concern with multinational companies (MNCs), especially when it comes to selling their products in developing countries with large populations and hence huge markets

GOVIND BHATTACHARJEE

Ethics in business practices has never been a particular concern with multinational companies (MNCs), especially when it comes to selling their products in developing countries with large populations and hence huge markets, which also have poor regulatory structures to control them. The profits or turnover of the MNCs often exceeds the GDP of the countries they operate in, and in their obsession with profits, they throw all pretence of ethics to the winds while governments look on helplessly.

A recent report revealed that Nestlé was adding sugars to their baby foods sold in low-income countries. We are all familiar with their popular baby food, Cerelac. Investigation by Public Eye, an independent Swiss-based organization, and International Baby Food Action Network, an international coalition of public interest groups, found that in Switzerland Cerelac has "no added sugar", while in Senegal and South Africa and the Philippines, it has 6 grams and 7.3 grams of added sugar respectively per serving, which were almost equivalent to two teaspoons. The product is fed to babies 1-6 months old, and experts say that consumption of too much sugar at a young age can not only have long-term consequences like affecting the brain, but can be addictive as well, which assures a future market for MNCs.

In response, Nestlé made a vague statement on its website. "We have reduced the sugar in many of our infant cereals. While there are added sugars in some, we are making progress towards reducing this further, as well as providing more options without added sugar." In 2021, newspapers exposed an internal document of the company which revealed that "60 per cent of its food and drinks portfolio, excluding pet food, baby formula, and coffee, failed to meet recognised health standards", when it announced plans to update its nutrition and health strategy and review its entire product line-up.

It claimed to have reduced sugar content of its cereals by up to 30 per cent over the past five years, a claim that needed to be verified, but even then, it may be outside the limits of health and safety. International standards forbid added sugar in foods for infants under the age of three. The world is already facing a crisis of obesity; to tackle this, inculcating healthy eating habits since infancy is essential. Feeding sugary foods at infancy and childhood make a person dependent on sugar for the rest of his/her life, with the associated health problems. But why bother about the health of lesser humans when profits are ensured over their entire lifetime?

The Food Safety and Standards Authority of India has apparently launched an independent investigation, but in the past similar investigations had produced nothing, and the current investigation may meet the same fate

too. In 2015, the Central government sought a compensation of Rs 285 crore and punitive damages of Rs 355 crore from Nestlé under the Consumer Protection Act when its popular product Maggi was found to contain a dangerous chemical, monosodium glutamate (MSG), and lead content exceeding Nestlé India's claims by 1000 times. Maggi sales accounted for 25 per cent of Nestlé's profit and Nestlé was forced to withdraw 38,000 tonnes of Maggi noodles from the market.

It fought the case, the first of its kind in India, before the National Consumer Dispute Redressal Commission (NCDRC) which dismissed the case in 2024. Developed countries with better regulation and public awareness are



in a better position to control them. In the USA and Europe, Nestlé products were boycotted in 1977, when it was accused of promoting its baby food formula as a healthier option over breastfeeding despite lack of evidence, till the company agreed to follow WHO's international marketing code in 1984. This kind of response is hardly likely in India. How many Indian consumers care to read or can understand the nutritional labels of food packages regarding calories, added sugar, total fat, trans fat, saturated fat, sodium, protein, etc.

Efforts on the part of the government to create food awareness are almost totally missing. Now a National Geographic article by Meryl Davids Landau has highlighted an even more disturbing finding about MNCs selling ultra-processed foods (UPF). UPFs are foods that use ingredients not found in a home kitchen. While processed foods mostly use salt as the major preservative, ultra-processed foods are often high in fat, sugar and sodium and enhanced with flavourings, dyes, artificial sweeteners and

other additives, which act as sensory enhancers to make them irresistibly enticing to their consumers. They are increasingly being consumed by people, especially for their convenience to youth who face tremendous work pressures that leave them little time to cook their own meals.

The UPFs trigger cravings ~ a key feature of addiction, and food MNCs leverage it by applying the lessons learned from tobacco companies. Research in the USA in 2021 showed that 20 per cent of adults and 15 per cent of kids and adolescents showed signs of addiction to ultra-processed foods that lead to their compulsive consumption. They include ready-to-eat breakfast cereals, fast foods, mass-produced breads and desserts, processed non-vegetarian products like sausages, hot dogs, fish fingers, soft drinks, flavoured ice creams, candies and other packaged foods. They are estimated to account for 60 per cent of the total calories consumed in the USA.

The situation in countries like India is hardly likely to be much different. Addictive foods, like alcohol or tobacco, powerfully activate our brain's reward system linked with neurochemicals like dopamine. Evolution has hardwired our brains to secrete feelgood chemicals like dopamine when we seek energy from fatty and sweet foods. Humans have evolved by seeking foods that are sweet, fatty, and high in calories to obtain and store energy in their bodies to survive in an uncertain environment. But in nature, foods are only modestly high in sugar as in fruits, or high in fat as in nuts, but never rich in both fat and sugar. That is a hallmark of UPFs.

Studies with rats during the 1980 showed that activity in the dopamine reward system in their brain increased substantially when they pressed a lever for a food reward. People with an addiction to UPFs have been found to have a microbial composition in their gut similar to people addicted to alcohol or drugs. They also exhibit withdrawal symptoms like headaches, fatigue and irritability when prevented from eating these foods like addicted people. These foods can also trigger compulsive behaviours ~ obese rats were found to ignore their standard food and risked electric shock to get to ultraprocessed cakes and chocolates. Humans do not have to suffer electric shocks to get the food they want.

Recently published research (24 February 2024) in BMJ, a peer-reviewed British medical journal, pointed to direct links between higher consumption of UPFs and a greater risk of heart disease-related deaths, type 2 diabe-

tes, obesity, wheezing, anxiety, depression and sleep problems. These corroborate the results from earlier studies conducted in other countries as well. While the effect of eating too much salt, sugar, and/or saturated fat on blood pressure or blood sugar is well known, most are unaware about the risk that they pose for vascular dementia resulting from decreased blood flow to the brain. Additives like MSG also interfere with the production and release of brain chemicals dopamine, norepinephrine, and serotonin, which may ultimately lead to depression, anxiety, and dementia.

In the late 1980s, tobacco giant Phillip Morris acquired two food companies to form Kraft General Foods (now Kraft Heinz). Tobacco companies researched and used strategies targeting their products to minority groups and adolescents to make them addictive to tobacco. Their expertise was transferred to the food companies to process foods with complex tastes to make them more addictive. Children who consumed these foods were found to have higher levels of unhealthy cholesterol and glucose in their blood. They invariably lead to weight gain because the more you eat these, the more you want. When National Geographic reached out to major food companies Kraft Heinz, General Mills and Unilever for comments, they received a single response from their trade group, the Consumer Brands Association, saying:

"Demonizing shelf ready foods could limit access to and cause avoidance of nutritious foods. Empowering consumers with clear nutritional information and preserving consumer choice so they can make the right decisions for their personal health goals should be the priority in public health guidance." Governments in developing countries can do precious little to regulate MNCs, partly because they need them to bring investments and employment. But MNCs need the developing countries more than the countries need them, because without the huge markets provided by the developing countries, MNCs would be nowhere. Yet it is unlikely that any government will take strong steps against MNCs, because of their vice-like grip on financial and other institutions and their lobbying power.

International joint action by governments is also unlikely ~ developed countries are unaffected. MNCs can stoop to any level for profiteering; when the mid-may meal programme was being launched, they had lobbied for their biscuits fortified with vitamins and proteins, instead of wholesome meals that the programme promised. To create awareness and promote healthy eating habits, the government much launch a blitzkrieg campaign similar to the one against smoking. We also need to involve families and communities to take back control of our diet from the MNCs.

INLD, BSP join ranks to contest Haryana Assembly polls

New Delhi (Agency): Former partners Indian National Lok Dal (INLD) and the Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) on Thursday yet again joined hands to contest the Haryana Assembly polls scheduled later this year.

According to leaders of the two parties, out of 90 assembly seats in Haryana, the BSP will contest 37 seats, leaving the rest for its senior partner in Haryana, where the ruling BJP is eyeing to come to power for the third time in a row. The leaders of the alliance have also decided to project INLD leader Abhay Chautala as its chief ministerial face.

Addressing a joint press conference, Chautala said the alliance is not based on any selfish interests, but has been formed keeping in mind people's feelings.

"In Haryana, we have decided to jointly fight the upcoming assembly elections. Today, the feeling of

common people is to oust from power the BJP, which is looting the state, and keep the Congress party at bay, which looted the state 10 years earlier," Chautala said. BSP national coordinator Akash Anand said BSP supremo Mayawati and Chautala earlier held a detailed meeting to cement the ties between the partners.



"In that meeting, it had been decided that out of 90 assembly seats in Haryana, the BSP will contest on 37 seats while the rest will be fought by the INLD," he said.

"This alliance will not be limited to fighting assembly polls only, we will fight

other elections in the state jointly in the future," Anand said.

Mayawati said in a post on 'X', "BSP and INLD will work together to defeat anti-people parties and form a new coalition government."

"Bahujan Samaj Party and Indian National Lok Dal will fight the upcoming as-

sembly elections in Haryana together with the resolve to defeat the anti-people parties and form a new coalition government, which was announced in a joint press conference in Chandigarh today with my full blessings," she said. "Before the press con-

ference of INLD's principal general secretary Abhay Singh Chautala and BSP's Anand Kumar, national coordinator Akash Anand and party's state in-charge Randhir Beniwal today, successful talks were held between the two parties at my residence in New Delhi regarding the alliance," she said.

Talking to reporters, Chautala said they will like to include more outfits opposed to the Congress and

BJP to join hands with the alliance and build a strong front. "If need be, we can talk to the Aam Aadmi Party too," he added. The alliance partners also promised a slew of incentives if they come to power.

"... No domestic household will get an electricity bill of more than Rs 500 (per month). People will not be charged for drinking water," Chautala said at the presser.

Striking an emotional chord, the INLD leader said Chaudhary Devi Lal and BSP founder late Kanshi Ram worked to bring a big change in this country. The BSP and INLD's thinking is how the poor will get justice and how weaker sections will get empowered, he said. In February 2019, the BSP had called off its alliance with the INLD, which was then Haryana's main opposition outfit. The development at that time had come amid a feud in the Chautala family.

Zuljannah taken out in Imambara Safdar Ali Beg

Prayagraj: After the fourth majlis of Ashra of Mahe Muharram, the Shahih of Zuljannah, the faithful horse of Hazrat Imam Hussain Alaihissalam, was taken out in Imambara Safdar Ali Beg located in Shahganj Pandariba. The white sheet was smeared with red color and roses and jasmine were placed on it. Ziyarat was taken out after being decorated with flowers.

Mirza Babar Baig and Mirza Jahangir read the Marsiya while Maulana Aamirur Rizvi Sahib Qibla mentioned the martyrdom of Imam Hussain and other martyrs. Anjuman Abbasia's Nauhawano Dr. Abrar, Faiz Jafri, Hussain Mehdi Monu etc. read Purdard Nauha. In the same sequence, congregations were organized on the fourth Moharram in other localities including Rani Mandi, Chak Zero Road, Bakshi Bazaar, Rani Mandi, Karaili, Karailabagh, Shahganj, Daryabad Roshanbagh and other localities. Kheraj Aqeedat was presented to the martyrs of. A procession was taken out from the Azakhana of Muzaffar Hussain with the coffin of Hazrat Ali Akbar. A procession on the fourth day of Moharram was taken out from the

Imambara of late Syed Muzaffar Hussain in Dariaabad with Aqeedat and Ahteraam. The procession passed through Kamal Khan's Tekra and stopped at Masjid Imam-e-Raza. Dargah was completed after reaching Hazrat Abbas. Before the procession, Zakir Ahlebait Ashraf Abbas Khan addressed the Majlis.

11 am in the day at Chak Zero Road. Maulana Syed Razi Haider Rizvi Saheb at Imambara Deputy Zahid Hussain, after Qibla's speech, Anjuman Guncha-e-Qasimya will present Nauha and Pursa of mourning. After the Majlis at the Azakhana of Haider Ali Cricketer, located at Sabzi Mandi at 5 pm, Anjuman Guncha-e-Qasimya will present



Nauhawans of Anjuman Hussainiya Qadeem Anjuman Mohafizah Aza Qadeem participated in the procession reciting Purdard Nauha. Shahih-e-Taboot Ali Akbar and Alam also accompanied him.

According to Anjuman Guncha-e-Qasimya spokesperson Syed Mohammad Askari, on the fifth Moharram Friday, at 2 pm in the day, Anjuman Guncha-e-Qasimya will present the Nazran of Nauha and Matam in the fifth Majlis of Imambara Safdar Ali Baig located at Pan Dariba, before that at

Bakshi Bazaar. Will present a scene of mourning and condolence. Imambara Abul Hasan located in Daryabad Pathanvalli where Majlis has been established since the time of Ghadar. The fifth Majlis of Ashra will be held at the same Imambara on Friday at 8 pm, which will be titled by Khatib-e-Ahlebeit Raza Hasnain Advocate. Shahih-e-Zuljannah will be recited. After the presentation of Nauhakawano of Anjuman Hashimaya, there will be mourning of chains armed with sharp knives by the members of Anjuman.

UPCM Yogi conducts aerial survey of flood affected Shravasti and Balrampur, distributes relief material

Lucknow (Agency): Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath conducted an aerial survey of flood-affected Shravasti and Balrampur on Thursday. He took information about the flood affected areas from the officials and instructed them to speed up the relief work.

After this, the CM conducted on-site inspection of the flood affected areas of both the districts. He met children and women affected by the disaster. Apart from this, relief material was distributed to the flood affected people. CM Adityanath presented a cheque of Rs 4 lakh as assistance to the families of

those who lost their loved ones in disasters. He honoured the PAC soldiers who took the flood affected people to safe places by giving them citations. He also announced to give them cash prize along with special prize. The Chief Minister conducted an aerial survey of all the villages of Ikauna tehsil affected by Shravasti flood at around 12 noon. Devi Patan Divisional Commissioner Shashi Bhushan Sushil and Shravasti District Magistrate Ajay Kumar Dwivedi informed the CM that flood situation has arisen in the district due to sudden release of water after torrential rains in Nepal. At

present, the water level is gradually decreasing.

The CM also conducted on-site inspection of Laxmanpur Kothi Rapti Barrage. Here he met 11 victims rescued in the flood and enquired about their well-being. He honoured Rekha Devi, the village guide and five PAC soldiers who gave information about the people trapped in the flood, with citations, and also announced to honour all 7 people with cash awards. Apart from this, a cheque of Rs 4 lakh each was handed over to the four families who lost their loved ones in the disaster. Before this he distributed relief material kits.

Communicating with the flood victims, the CM said that immediate financial assistance was being given to the families of farmers and sharecroppers who lost their lives during human-wildlife conflict, snakebite, lightning and other disasters. He said that at present 12 districts of the state are affected by floods. This includes 633 villages in 33 tehsils, whose population of about 17.97 lakh is affected. More than 18,000 cattle and 1.45 lakh hectares of agricultural land were also affected in this deluge, he said.

The CM said more than 923 flood posts have been established in these areas,

from where the flood situation and relief operations are being monitored. At the same time, more than 1,033 flood shelters have been established, where people affected by floods are living. He said that 116 villages in Shravasti are fully or partially affected by floods. There is a situation of erosion in 15 villages, whose population of 76,000 is afflicted by the floods while more than 23,000 hectares of agricultural land was damaged.

He said that about 50,000 population is affected by the flood in Balrampur where more than 32,000 hectares of agricultural land was under water.

Inauguration of vocational training in KVK Shuats

UJALA SHIKHAR

Naini, Prayagraj: Home gardening, vegetable production and goat rearing training was inaugurated at the Krishi Vigyan Kendra of Shuats on Thursday by Chief Guest Prof. Dr. S.D. McCarty, Director of Research, Shuats Prayagraj. He gave detailed information to the farmer women about different varieties of wheat and paddy developed by SHUTS scientists. Dr. Mukesh P. Masih, in-charge, Agricultural Science Center, SHUTS, Prayagraj, in his address to the working and farmer women of the Agricultural Science Center, told that by making a home garden in the vacant space around the house, one can get additional benefits by producing vegetables throughout the year.



. Dr. Subodh Yadav gave information about goat rearing, management, breeding, breed balanced diet and prevention from diseases. He told that goat rearing is also called 5 star, meat, milk, leather, hair, dung all are used from goat rearing. Dr. Nimisha Natarajan gave detailed information to the farmer women about vegetables for home garden in Rabi and Kharif Zaid season. Dr. Rana Pratap Singh gave detailed information about vegetable production technology. 35 women from Prayagraj district participated in this training. Contemporary answers to the questions asked by them were given by scientists.

COLORS' 'Mishri' actress, shops in Mathura for on-screen wedding

Varanasi: COLORS' latest show 'Mishri' is serving up a sartorial treat that's as sweet as its name. The show's leading lady, Shruti Bhist, is proving she's not just acting the part - she's dressing it too! In a wardrobe plot twist, Shruti's character Mishri is swapping her GenZ take for a bride-tastic makeover that's pure Mathura magic. Talk about a dramatic style evolution! Shruti's onscreen wedding look is a masterpiece that's sure to make hearts skip a beat. Her handcrafted red and gold saree is so stunning, it can make viewers dream about their big day. This bridal ensemble is not just gorgeous on the surface, it has

a backstory too. Sourced from a local Mathura shop by Shruti's team, this outfit is as authentic as Mishri's love for her hometown. From her radiant Haldi look to her magnificent wedding attire, Shruti makes certain that Mishri's style journey is more colorful than a bride's trousseau. She's nailing the 'something old, something new' adage by blending traditional charm with a modern twist. It's like raiding a vintage closet and giving it a millennial makeover! So, as Mishri takes her first steps into reel-life matrimony, she's doing it in a style that's as rich and layered as the plot itself.

Shruti Bhist, playing

the role of Mishri in COLORS' 'Mishri', shares, "When I found out about



the wedding scene while filming in Mathura, I was thrilled. It's my first time being a bride on screen, and I was a mix of nervous and

excited about enlivening the wedding sequence. The whole experience of preparing for this scene was amazing. My team and I went shopping in the local market to find the perfect wedding dress that really captures the spirit of Mathura. We chose a stunning red saree with intricate gotapati work all over and a beautiful gold border. The jewelry is also special - it's all handmade by local craftsmen, with unique designs. I really hope our viewers will love how I look as a bride and enjoy watching the wedding story unfold. We've all worked hard on this show, and I'm looking forward to seeing how our

audience reacts to it."

In the current storyline, Vaani's car breaks down, prompting Raghav to leave the function to assist her. Meanwhile, Mishri, Dadi, and Giri hop into a tempo, where Mishri dreams of revealing her destiny as Raghav's future wife. She buys him a bracelet and later witnesses his heroism, solidifying her belief in his goodness. At the ghat, Mishri, Raghav, and Vaani light a diya together, symbolizing their intertwined destinies. Raghav and Vaani are stunned by the news of their arranged marriage. As their lives take unexpected turns, what fate awaits Mishri, Raghav, and Vaani?

Flipkart expands digital payment offerings

Varanasi: Flipkart, India's homegrown e-commerce marketplace, today announced the launch of five new recharge and bill payment categories, including Fastag, DTH recharges, landline, broadband, and mobile postpaid bill payments on its app. These are in addition to the existing electricity and mobile pre-paid recharge options.

Flipkart has partnered with BillDesk, one of India's leading payment solutions companies, to help integrate the new services with Bharat Bill Payments System (BBPS), developed by the National Payments Corporation of India. As part of a limited-time deal, customers can redeem offers of up

to 10% with SuperCoins by using Flipkart UPI. With the launch of these new categories, customers can make their bill and recharge payments while enjoying shopping on Flipkart.

Commenting on the launch, Gaurav Arora, Vice President, Payments and SuperCoins at Flipkart, said, "With a rapid surge in the digital payments industry, customers are increasingly opting for electronic mode for paying their bills. We have diversified our selection of services in-line with Flipkart's vision to simplify the digital payments journey for customers and further the government's vision of a cashless economy. From buying their favourite

products to addressing digital payment requirements, this enhancement has created a one-stop destination for customers to fulfill all their needs anytime, anywhere in a secure and seamless manner. This initiative is another step towards bringing continued innovation for our customers while elevating the overall experience by making it more enriching and rewarding."

Ajay Kaushal, Co-Founder and Director, BillDesk, said, "We are thrilled to extend BBPS services to Flipkart, our longstanding partner. This strategic expansion allows Flipkart customers to experience seamless bill payments,

receive timely notifications, and check amounts due across their preferred billers, leveraging BBPS capabilities. This collaboration underscores the strong, long-standing relationship between BillDesk and Flipkart, built on a shared commitment to customer satisfaction and innovation."

In FY2024, Bharat Bill Payment System (BBPS) processed approximately 1.3 billion transactions across India, a number expected to grow to over 3 billion by 2026. With 20+ bill categories and over 21,000 billers active in the BBPS ecosystem, more than 70% of bill payments are now conducted electronically. With the launch of new cat-

egories, Flipkart has opened more avenues for customers to pay their bills electronically in a seamless manner while tapping into the growing demand in this space.

Recently, Flipkart launched its UPI service, which offers customers an intuitive, safe, and convenient option for recharges and bill payments while earning rewards through SuperCoins and cashback. Through the introduction of one-click and quick functionalities, Flipkart offers customers a convenient digital payment experience where they can avail features for online and offline merchant transactions within and outside of the Flipkart marketplace.

Targeting Zillennials, Sonata launches new identity and product range

Varanasi: Sonata, the largest-selling watch brand in India from Titan Company Ltd, is set to revolutionize the market with its all-new identity and reimagined product line. The new identity is aimed at presenting a modern perspective on design that captures the growing segment of young professionals, especially those in urban and suburban areas at the start of their careers. With a sleek, contemporary look, the new Sonata seeks to enhance the brand's appeal and excitement, embodying a dynamic new identity that resonates with today's youth.



Speaking on the new journey of the brand, Mr. Prateek Gupta, Head of Brand, Sonata said, "We are thrilled to introduce a newly reimagined Sonata which truly embodies the spirit of today's young dreamers. Our goal is to provide the young upstarts with timepieces that not only enhance their personal style but also serve as a symbol of their journey and accomplishments.

We recognize the value they place on quality and style, and our new designs reflect this blend, offering sophisticated style without compromising on accessibility. By aligning with the aspirations and lifestyles of this dynamic demographic, Sonata continues to stand as a partner in their progress, celebrating every milestone and achievement along their journey."

As per the industry estimates, India has 260 million of zillennial consumers in India who are earning between 3-4 lacs per annum. Zillennials, bridging younger millennials and older Gen Z, are emerging as key economic drivers with their unique ambitions and values. This generation is challenging traditional norms and reshaping the future landscape, driven by a desire to carve their own success stories and understand a brand's purpose and vision. Leveraging these insights, Sonata has crafted a refreshed look and identity to meet the specific needs and preferences of this emerging group.

DM issued guidelines in view of Kavad Yatra starting from July 22

DM nominated SDM Judicial Jalesar as nodal officer, handed over dept-wise responsibilities to other officers

DISTRICT CORRESPONDENT VAIBHAV PACHAURI

Etah: As per the instructions of the Chief Minister and the government, DM Prem Ranjan Singh has issued guidelines in view of the Kavad Yatra starting from July 22. DM said that the month of Shraavan will start from 22nd July and will continue till 19th August. During this period, Kanwar Yatras will be taken out traditionally. To ensure successful completion of the Kanwar Yatra, Jagmohan Gupta, Deputy District Magistrate (Judicial) Jalesar has been nominated as the nodal officer, who will work under the guidance of the Additional District Magistrate administration by coordinating with the concerned departmental officers. DM said that the government is serious about Kavad Yatra, it is necessary to take special caution during Kavad Yatra. The DM has directed the Additional Superintendent of Police to make proper arrangements for route diversion and route diversion on Agra Road, Kasganj Road and all other related routes on special routes. Magistrates will be deployed on all routes and major pagodas. Proper arrangements for ambulances and duty of doctors should be imposed by CMO on the routes of Kanwar Yatra. During the ARMY Roadways Kavand Yatra, ensure the operation of

buses only on the diversion and alternative routes prescribed by the district ad-



ministration. The DM said that all the Kavand roads of the district should be repaired in time by the Executive Engineer, Public Works Department.

All Area Officers and

Deputy District Magistrates, after talking to the elite citizens of the district, Chairman Municipal Council and Nagar Panchayats, should ensure that the Kanwar Yatra route is covered with drinking water, food stalls etc. Superintending Engineer, Power Distribution Division Etah is expected to ensure that the pole becomes free of electric current on the route of Kanwar Yatra. In the areas covered by Kavand Yatra, the speed of the bus should be ensured within the prescribed limit at every position. Adequate police presence should be ensured at sensitive points and routes so that no law and order situation breaks down. The DM directed that in view of the said festival, all the police station in-charges will brief the entire police force engaged in Kanwar duty at their level and by being on tour themselves will ensure that the said Kanwar duty is completed safely. Meat, fish, meat and egg shops and liquor vends etc. should be removed from Kanwar Road in coordination with the Municipality, Revenue Department and Excise Department so that no unpleasant situation is faced. The DM said that the guidelines issued should be strictly followed. Also, if any adverse situation arises, it should be immediately informed.

Another case of girl withdrawing her molestation complaint

DISTRICT CORRESPONDENT VAIBHAV PACHAURI

Etah: The woman who came to Mirhachi police station to file a case of molestation in the case of quarrel and fight in a family dispute, counseling was done by Mirhachi police station under Operation Jagriti Abhiyan, the woman realized her mistake, withdrew the false complaint of molestation. Under the Operation Jagriti campaign being run under the direction of Additional Director General of Police, Agra, John Anupam Kulshrestha, the district police is making people aware about not registering false cases. Very positive effects of the awareness campaign are being seen. Another such case was seen at Mirhachi police station when 07 Sangeeta, wife of Mukesh, resident of Sirsa Tippu, Mirhachi district, Etah, gave a written complaint to Mirhachi police station, in which her own Allegations related to molestation, assault and abuse of Sangeeta were

lodged by brother-in-law Ramkumar, son of Deshraj Singh, resident of the above, whereas preliminary investigation by the local police revealed that there was an altercation and quarrel between the two parties regarding the distribution of family property. When the applicant was interrogated under Operation Jagriti Abhiyan and counseled by Police Station Head, Mirhachi, Shri Krishna Kant Lodhi, the woman realized her mistake and told that she had filed the application for molestation only with the aim of taking strict action against the opposition. When the applicant automatically realized her mistake, she voluntarily submitted the application again. On the basis of which, NCR No. 54/2024 Section 115(2)/352 BNS vs. Ramkumar has been registered against the above at Mirhachi police station and necessary action is being taken from the police station level.

BJP congratulated voters and expressed its gratitude. I always stand with the people: Mukesh Rajput MP

REPORT DILIP KUMAR

Aliganj/Etah: After the victory in the Lok Sabha elections, BJP is now expressing gratitude to the voters. Under this, to express gratitude to the voters of the assembly in Aliganj area, a voter felicitation program was organized on Thursday to express gratitude to the voters. The stage was conducted by District General

prosperity of the nation. The development of the country is possible only under the leadership of Prime Minister Modi, the public has proved this with their votes. I express my gratitude to Janata Janardan and I will be present whenever Janata Janardan needs us. On this occasion, apart from MP Mukesh Rajput, MLA

Tomar, Bittu Rathore, Bhanu Rathore, Sukhveer Tomar, Shyam Sundar Rajput were present. MP Mukesh Rajput said that the public has once again given an opportunity to serve by electing MP from Farrukhabad assembly.

The problem of the common people is our problem. Janata Janardan has proved that the development of the country is possible only under the leadership of Prime Minister Modi Ji. I express my gratitude to Janata Janardan, he has once again given me the opportunity to serve. MLA Aliganj Satyapal Singh Rathore said while taking a dig at the opposition. That the public has faith in the BJP government and because of this faith, the BJP government is in power again for the third time. No matter what tactics the opposition parties adopt, the public has faith only in the BJP. The BJP government has always supported the people in difficult circumstances and will continue to do so in future also.



Secretary Kumari Ashish Rajput. A voter felicitation program was organized on the victory of Farrukhabad assembly for the third time. The program was organized at SPS Resort located on Mainpuri Road and the program was started by garlanding the statues of the eminent personalities. MP Mukesh Rajput said that the godlike public Janardan voted for the integrity and

Satyapal Rathore, District General Secretary Kumari Ashish Rajput, Chairman representative Bobby Gupta, Chairman Jaithra Vivek Gupta, Gopal Verma, Suraj Rathore, Lokpal Singh Shakya, Ankur Rajput MP representative, Satyendra Rajput Nilesh Rajput, Ram Vilas Munim. A large number of voters and workers including Vice President Amod Arya, Sandeep

Under Operation Jagriti 2.0, women are awakening, strong society is being formed

DISTRICT CORRESPONDENT VAIBHAV PACHAURI

Etah: Under Operation Jagriti 2.0, Operation Jagriti campaign was run by the district police in their respective police station areas and the general public was made aware by organizing seminars. Under the direction of Additional Director General of Police, Agra Zone, Anupam Kulshrestha, awareness and self-reliance of women and girls was done. Under the Operation Jagriti 2.0 campaign being run to reduce the crimes against them, on Thursday, Japdia Police raided Pushpa Devi Inter College and Shyam Nagar Colony in Police Station Kotwali Nagar, Gurukul School Kasganj Road and Shri Prasadi Lal Amar Jyoti in Police Station Kotwali Dehat. Inter College, Junior High School Kansuri and Primary School Barthar in Police Station Bagwala, Pidaur and Primary School Bhurigawan of Gram Panchayat of Police Station Marhara, Primary School Sarnau and village Hazratpur Karanpur in Police Station Mirhachi area,

Gram Panchayat Barai and Shankar Lal Inter of Police Station Pilua area. College, village Kaunchidera and primary school of police station Sakit, secondary school Jalalpur Santhal in police station Malavan area, Gram Panchayat Nagla Bhajua and primary school Sundarpur in police station Rijor area, village Kosam of police station Jalesar area and Jawaharlal Nehru Memorial Inter College Naya Kheda, police station Avagarh. Village Barabhodela and Higher Secondary School Barabhodela of the area, Primary School Gahrana in Police Station Nidhauli Kala area, Secondary Higher School Isauli and Gram Panchayat Sisauli in Police Station Sakrauli area, Gram Panchayat Jhakrai and Janta Inter College Keltha in Police Station Aliganj area, Gram Panchayat of Police Station Jaithra. Shekharpur and primary school Moinuddinpur, vil-

lage Abdullahpur and village Asadpur of Rampur area of police station Raja, Subhash Chandra Bose Inter College Navar and Smt. Krishna Devi Higher Secondary School Ubharai in

women elders, distinguished citizens were told in detail about the social, economic and mental disadvantages of today's young generation leaving home during adolescence and



police station Nayagaon area, Gram Panchayat Nadrala and Abdul Qayoom Khan Higher Secondary School of police station Jasrathpur area.

By organizing a seminar, school boys and girls,

also about the women's helpline number. Issues like safe use of social media, cyber bullying, cyber fraud were also highlighted. Under the awareness campaign, the district police told the general public that reg-

istering a false case is not only a crime but also a social evil. After the program, feedback was taken from everyone by asking questions. It was told during the campaign that often when proper resolution of family disputes and mutual land disputes is not seen, the tendency of linking crimes related to women in criminal incidents is also being seen socially. In short, in many other cases, such incidents are registered, which are then converted into the category of crimes related to women and girls, whereas basically it is related to family and land disputes. On the other hand, in the actual crimes committed against women and girls, in serious cases like rape, outraging modesty, the mental state of the abused women and girls is affected to a great extent and the life of the victim gets affected. The trauma and fear of that incident resides in me forever. The victim also needs psychological counseling to recover from the said mental trauma.

Successful unveiling within 12 hours of murder of youth

Main accused injured by bullet in his leg in police encounter, arrested

DISTRICT CORRESPONDENT VAIBHAV PACHAURI

Etah: In the joint action of Marhara police station, SWAT and surveillance team, village Successful unveiling within 12 hours of the murder of a young man who was chopped with

with an axe, in village Meerapur under police station Marhara area, the local police immediately reached the spot and found out that Mayaprakash, son of Naubat Singh, resident of

1. Aakash alias Abhay Pratap son of Atar Singh 2. Atar Singh son of Nathuram 3. Mithilesh wife Atar Singh all residents of Gana village Meerapur police station Marhara After

ily of the deceased tonight or on the day of the wedding. On receiving information that they could carry out the incident, the police teams were combing the canal in search of the accused, when the accused Akash opened fire on the police team, in which inspector in-charge of Marhara police station Mr. JP Ashok got hit by bullet fragments in his left hand. Got injured by. In retaliation, when the police team fired on the accused, the accused Akash alias Abhay Pratap son of Atar Singh, resident of village Meerapur police station Marhara Etah, got injured by a bullet in his left leg. The local police recovered an illegal pistol from the above accused Akash from the spot. One live cartridge, two spent cartridges of 315 bore and the ax used in the incident have been arrested.



an ax in Meerapur, a reward of Rs 25,000. The main accused got injured after being shot in the leg in a police encounter, arrested. An illegal pistol, one live cartridge, two spent cartridges and the ax used in the incident were recovered from the spot. On Thursday, on the information of murder of a person by hitting his neck

village Meerapur, police station Marhara district, Etah, age 48. Year Caste Lodhi Rajput. Akash, son of Atar Singh, resident of Mirapur police station, Marhara district, Etah, has been murdered by hitting him on the neck with an axe. On this information, FIR on Police Station Marhara - 111/2024 Section 103 (1) BNS vs.

registering the data, a team was formed to arrest the accused. On Thursday, police station Marhara received information from the informer that the accused who are absconding in the above case are hiding in the bushes of the canal near village Ratanpur of police station Marhara area and will kill someone in the fam-

B'wood actor Abhishek Bachchan, MP Jaya Bachchan and his sister Shweta Bachchan performed puja at Shri Kashi Vishwanath Temple

Entire puja was done under the Acharya Tatva of Dr. Chandramouli Upadhyay

SUSHIL KUMAR MISHRA

Ujala Shikhar Varanasi: Bollywood actor Abhishek Bachchan, his mother SP MP Jaya Bachchan and sister Shweta Nanda attended the court of Shri Kashi Vishwanath on Thursday evening. Under the supervision of Astrologer Dr. Chandramouli Upadhyay, a member of Shri Kashi Vishwanath Temple Trust, the Bachchan family performed the formal darshan and worship of Baba amidst the chanting of Vedic mantras. After the darshan and worship, the Chief Executive Officer of the temple presented Prasad and Angavastram to the Bachchan family. On coming out of the temple, young fans saw the Bachchan family and chanted 'Har Har Mahadev'. The Bachchan family also greeted him with folded hands. Before this, Abhishek, Jaya and Shweta reached the hotel from Varanasi airport amid tight security. After some rest in the hotel, we went out for darshan and worship of Baba Vishwanath. After worshipping Baba Vishwanath, he also attended Shri Sankat Mochan Temple.



Lecture by Virendra Pathak, coordinator of Prayagraj Vidvat Parishad today

Prayagraj: On July 12, at 3 pm at Central Sanskrit University Ganganath Jha campus, Chandrashekhar Azad Park, there will be a scholarly seminar and book release on the subject of the Vedic mythological Tithi of Prayagraj - the place of Madhav. Chief guest Justice Rahul

Chaturvedi, chaired by Prof. Lalit Tripathi and guest Prof. K.B. Pandey, former Chairman, L.O. Deependra Yadav will be Additional Municipal Commissioner. The main speaker will be Virendra Pathak, coordinator of Prayagraj Vidvat Parishad.

Very important to be in the present: Washington Sundar

Washington Sundar made his India debut in white-ball cricket seven years ago, but till date has featured in mere 19 ODIs and 46 T20Is, and largely been a part of squads and tours in which the more established names are either rested or part of a bigger assignment.

New Delhi (Agency): Washington Sundar made his India debut in white-ball cricket seven years ago, but till date has featured in mere 19 ODIs and 46 T20Is, and largely been a part of squads and tours in which the more established names are either rested or part of a bigger assignment. He has also featured in four Tests (all in 2021), despite an impressive debut against Australia in Brisbane during the famous 2021 Down Under tour.

Currently a part of the Shubman Gill-led side for the brief T20I series against Zimbabwe, the 24-year-old came up with a Player of the Match performance in the third T20I in Harare on Wednesday but insisted that it will take continuous improvement and refinement in his all-around game to cement his spot in future India squads.

Sundar claimed 3 for 15 with his off-breaks, taking the wickets of dangerman Sikandar Raza (15) and Johnathan Campbell (1) in

the same over, before returning later in the innings to remove Clive Madande (37) to eventually turn the tide in India's favour after.



Khaleel Ahmed (1 for 15 from four overs) joined Sundar in the latter stages to stifle the Zimbabweans, and the spinner credited his teammates for keeping their composure in the team's defence of 182.

"They (Zimbabwe) did put us under pressure. We had to bowl to our best and

make sure we restricted them and if possible pick up some wickets as well, break that particular partnership (of Madande and Dion

India's fringes have made the African voyage, taking a 2-1 lead in the five-match series.

The tour proves to be important in the moulding of India's team for future T20 World Cup campaigns, most notably their title defence on home soil (sharing hosting rights with Sri Lanka), with at least three spots from the successful 2024 squad up for grabs.

Sundar, who played a key role in India's famous Test win over Australia in Brisbane to claim the Border-Gavaskar series, is yet to make an appearance in a global event in white ball cricket, but reiterates his passions and efforts to continue in a bid to feature at a World Cup.

"It's a great opportunity for me to play for India. That's a great blessing for me. I need to be there every single day giving my 100 per cent. And that's something I have not compromised on. I've always been giving 100 per cent every season, every single practice session,

Myers) as well. I think all of us really executed the plans that we spoke about very well," he said.

With almost a whole T20 World Cup-winning squad sitting the tour out, and the retirement of Rohit Sharma, Virat Kohli and Ravindra Jadeja from the format, a number of players on

and obviously in games as well," he felt.

"It keeps me just in the present and obviously it's very important to be in the present and just put up those good performances regularly," Sundar added.

India, meanwhile look to claim a series win in the fourth T20I on Sunday, and Sundar believes the experience and lessons from earlier in the series bode well for his side in pursuit of victory.

"Coming here to Zimbabwe and playing cricket, I think we are trying to get a lot more information about the wickets over here, (and) the conditions. We didn't really have so much information (for the first game), as much as we have now," he said.

"Obviously there are a lot of learnings and today (in the third T20I) we played on a different wicket, so it played a lot better I would say for batting. It's a great opportunity for us to keep competing with any team that we play," he further said.

Ganguly buys Kolkata Royal Tigers team ahead of Indian Racing Festival

New Delhi (Agency): Gearing up for its third season, the Indian Racing Festival received a major shot in the arm with former India cricket captain Sourav Ganguly becoming an owner of the Kolkata Royal Tigers Racing team ahead of the 2024 season.

Conceptualised by Racing Promotions, the Indian Racing Festival is designed to captivate the growing motorsport fan base in India. The festival encompasses two main championships: the Indian Racing League (IRL) and the Formula 4 Indian Championship (F4IC).

With eight city-based teams—Kolkata, Hyderabad, Bangalore, Chennai, Delhi, Goa, Kochi, and Ahmedabad—set to compete from August to November this year, the Indian Racing Festival promises an exhilarating season of high-speed action. Kolkata is set to participate for the first time, adding an extra layer of excitement to the competition.

With Ganguly's Kolkata Royal Tigers entering the fray, the upcoming season promises to be another thrilling experience for fans. Expressing his enthusiasm for the association, Ganguly said, "Motorsports has always been a passion

of mine while this opportunity not only allows me to contribute to the growth of motorsport in Kolkata but also aligns with my belief in fostering a culture of excellence and sportsmanship. Together with the Kolkata Royal Tigers, we aim to build a strong legacy in the Indian Racing Festival and inspire a new generation of motorsport enthusiasts, making the Kolkata Royal Tigers a formidable force in the Festival."



Notably, Ganguly, who has an illustrious career representing India in over 113 Tests and 311 ODIs, is also involved keenly with Indian Super League side ATK Mohun Bagan.

Commenting on the association with Dada, as Ganguly is popularly known, Akhilesh Reddy, Chairman and Managing Director of RPPL, said, "Ganguly's influence is set to inspire a new generation of motorsport enthusiasts across India, igniting passion and driving young athletes towards greatness. Additionally, his association is expected to significantly enhance awareness of the Indian Racing Festival (IRF) among a broader audience, further solidifying its position as a premier motorsport event in India."

Ramiz Raja impressed with Arshdeep's willingness to learn

New Delhi (Agency): Former Pakistan skipper Ramiz Raja was effusive in his praise for India's left-arm quick Arshdeep Singh, one of the prime architects of the T20 World Cup triumph.

In the T20 World Cup final against South Africa on June 29, Arshdeep Singh bowled the crucial penultimate over of the match, and gave away just four runs to finish an impressive spell of 2 for 20 leaving Hardik Pandya to defend 16 off the final six deliveries, which he did splendidly.

Arshdeep eventually ended the T20 World Cup 2024 as the joint highest wicket-taker with 17 wickets, the same as Afghanistan's Fazalhaq Farooqi, ahead of India's pace spearhead Jasprit Bumrah (15 wickets), who bagged the 'Player of the Tournament' award.

Impressed by the Punjab left-arm's willingness to learn and hold his nerves under pressure, Raja, who also served as a former chief of the Pakistan Cricket Board, felt that

Arshdeep is learning the trade from Bumrah without getting overawed by his stature as the world's best bowler.

"All the bowlers in India's attack played their role (in the T20 World Cup victory), some got hit but most of them delivered good performances with their tight bowling and cleverness on flat tracks that



test you bowling quality, credibility and credentials. On that note, the name that first comes up is that of Arshdeep Singh," Raja said.

"Bumrah ke hote hue, ye craft seekh bhi rahe hain, par unse dab nahi rahe hain (with Bumrah there, Arshdeep is learning from him and not feeling the pressure because of Bumrah's presence). It's very important for him to

back himself and prove that he is at par with Bumrah, if not better than him," he continued.

"So to challenge himself that way is very important for Arshdeep's growth, because if he will compete with the world's best bowler, then his own bowling will touch the sky," the former Pakistan batsman, who was part of the 1992 ODI World Cup-winning team, said on his YouTube channel 'Ramiz Speaks'.

The 62-year-old Raja also hailed Arshdeep's willingness to learn and not let the pressure get to him. "He comes on to bowl in do-or-die situations (death overs), like if he doesn't deliver, the team will lose and he might be out of the squad. But he bowls cleverly and to his field, when to bowl length balls, slower balls, can bowl the slower bouncer as well. So he offers a lot of advantage to his team," Raja said.

Raja also spoke highly of the quality of the Indian pace-bowling unit that is gradually becoming a fearsome attack.

Indian cricket team unlikely to visit Pakistan for Champions Trophy; Omar Abdullah reacts

New Delhi (Agency): The Indian national cricket team is unlikely to visit Pakistan for the International Cricket Council (ICC) Champions Trophy.

According to sources, the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) is likely to ask the ICC to shift its Champions Trophy

matches to a neutral venue, which may be Dubai or Sri Lanka. The ICC Champions Trophy is scheduled to be held in Pakistan from February to March next year. India has not played any game of cricket in Pakistan since 2008 due to tense relations between the two countries.

Earlier this year, BCCI Vice-President Rajeev Shukla, had made it clear that the Indian cricket team will travel to Pakistan only if the Government of India

allows it. "We will go according to the decision of the Indian government," Shukla had said. Reacting to the development, former Jammu and Kashmir chief minister and National Conference leader Omar Abdullah said that there is nothing new in this as both countries have not played a bilateral match for many years.

Terming it a decision of the BCCI, Abdullah said that it is not just India's responsibility to establish better relations between the two neighbours and that Pakistan too needs to play its role. In view of the recent terrorist attacks on security forces in Jammu and Kashmir, Abdullah said that Pakistan needs to take responsibility and such attacks should not happen. "The kind of attacks that are happening should not happen, the kind of atmosphere that is there, should not be there, Pakistan will also have to play its role in this so that the relations between the two countries improve," he asserted.



Wimbledon 2024: Italy's Musetti holds off Fritz in five sets, to meet Djokovic in semifinals

New Delhi (Agency): All eyes in Italy were on Jannik Sinner at Wimbledon but it is Lorenzo Musetti who has kept the country's hopes alive by reaching the semifinals and setting up a clash with 24-time Grand Slam winner Novak Djokovic, who progressed to the semifinal after Australian Alex de Minaur withdrew due to an injury. Musetti delivered arguably the Grand Slam performance of his career so far on Wednesday to outlast Taylor Fritz 3-6, 7-6(5), 6-2, 3-6, 6-1 in a quarterfinal clash at the grass-court major. In doing so, the 22-year-old became just the fourth Italian men's singles semifinalist in event history.

Even after World No.1 Sinner fell to Daniil Medvedev on Tuesday, Musetti gave an immediate reminder of the strength-in-depth of Italian tennis with a classy and composed display in his maiden major quarterfinal. The 25th seed deployed his slice backhand to great effect to outfox an elite grass-court opponent and set a last-four meeting with Djokovic. The two-time ATP Tour titlist Musetti com-

posed himself superbly in the deciding set after Fritz had snatched the fourth via a break in the eighth game. The Italian raced to a double-break lead with some of his best tennis of the match before sealing a three-hour, 27-minute quarter-final triumph.

The foundation of Musetti's triumph in his debut appearance on the All-



England Club's No. 1 Court was his serve. The No. 25 in the ATP Rankings won 76 per cent (63/83) of points behind his first delivery, and that stability allowed him to express himself freely in return games. Musetti converted six of the 13 break points he earned against one of the biggest servers on the ATP Tour. The penultimate point of the match was a good example of the way

Musetti found his magic touch in the final set. He produced a well-disguised drop shot which Fritz chased courageously. The American caught his leg in the court as he tried to slide and the crowd held its breath, but fortunately, he was soon up to face match point.

There was nothing the three-time Eastbourne champion Fritz could do to rescue the match situation, however. Musetti served out for a famous victory to join his countrymen Nicola Pietrangeli (1960), Matteo Berrettini (2021), and Sinner (2023) as a Wimbledon semifinalist. Alex de Minaur pulled out from Wimbledon before his quarterfinal clash against Djokovic due to an injury. The ninth-seeded Australian announced he was unable to compete against the seven-time champion Djokovic. At a press conference, De Minaur had spoken of jarring his hip in the closing stages of his fourth-round victory against Arthur Fils, and he was unable to recover in time to take on the second-seeded Djokovic on Centre Court on Wednesday.

Jr Women, Men South Zone Hockey: Karnataka, TN, Andhra Pradesh make winning start

New Delhi (Agency): Hockey Karnataka, Hockey Unit of Tamil Nadu and Hockey Andhra Pradesh won their respective matches in the women's matches, while Hockey Unit of Tamil Nadu and Hockey Karnataka were the victors in the men's section on Day 1 of the 2nd Hockey India Junior Women and Men South Zone Championship 2024, that started here on Wednesday. In the opening match of the tournament, Hockey Karnataka defeated Telangana Hockey 6-0 in a women's fixture. Disha M. (8', 36') and Rakshita J. (11', 55') scored a double each while Thanisha R. (27') and Meher Kaur Mehta (58') also scored to complete the first victory of the competition for Karnataka.

In another women's fixture, the Hockey Unit of Tamil Nadu defeated Kerala Hockey 11-0. Anusuya (10',

20', 21') and Roobini M. (38', 42', 50') were the top scorers with hat-tricks. Nithya Rubini (15'), captain, Mumanja R. (19'), Kaviya V.



(37'), Jayashalini (43'), and Dharshini P. (56') also scored a goal each.

In the final women's matchup of the day, Hockey Andhra Pradesh secured victory over Le Puducherry Hockey 23-0. Lalita Kothari

(25', 29', 32', 35', 38', 45', 60') was prolific in front of the goal, accumulating seven goals while Jhansi Bobbili (7', 16', 49', 56', 58')

also scored for Andhra Pradesh. Tamil Nadu overcome Telangana in men's section In an afternoon encounter that marked the beginning of the men's competition, the Hockey Unit of Tamil Nadu beat Telangana Hockey 5-2. Telangana Hockey took the lead Sujeet Rajbhar (15') struck at the end of the first quarter. Nandha Kumar (31') scored the equaliser for Tamil Nadu followed by goals from Gowtham K. (37'), Sunderarajith M. (41'), P. Kuberajith (51') and Vishal S. (52').

Telangana Hockey scored a consolatory goal through Megavath Bhaskar (58) minutes before full-time. In the second men's fixture of the day, Hockey Karnataka defeated Le Puducherry Hockey 10-0. Pilla Akash Nageshwara Rao (15', 44'), Prem Kumar (18', 33') and Dhruva B.S. (35', 37') scored braces while Hrithik Aiyappa (7'), Annam Shanmukha (8'), Akhil Aiyappa (29'), Raju Manoj Gayakwad (30') scored a goal each for Karnataka. The final men's match of the day unfolded into a hard-fought encounter as Hockey Kerala drew Hockey Andhra Pradesh 4-4. Anish Minz (17'), Kolnati Sai Ram (29'), T. Yadav Ram (47') and Akshay B.S. (51') were the scorers for Kerala Hockey while Nadiminti Acharil Venkat (14', 23'), Chharil Kumar Kotte (24'), and Devatha Yaswant (32') scored for Hockey Andhra Pradesh.

USA sack head coach Gregg Berhalter after Copa America exit

Washington (Agency): The USA have sacked head coach Gregg Berhalter following their Copa America group-stage exit. The 50-year-old rejoined the men's national football team in 2023 for a second spell, having led USA to the last-16 of the 2022 World Cup, but defeats to Panama and Uruguay on home soil have brought an end to 14-match tenure. "Gregg Berhalter has been relieved of his duties as head coach of the U.S. Men's National Team, effective immediately," US Soccer Federation said in a statement.

U.S. Soccer Sporting Director Matt Crocker will lead and has launched a search for Berhalter's replacement. "We are deeply grateful to Gregg for his commitment the past five years to the Men's National Team and to U.S. Soccer. Gregg has earned the respect of everyone within our organization and has played a pivotal role in bringing together a young team and moving the program forward. We wish Gregg all the best in his future endeavors, and we know he will find success in his next coaching position," said Crocker. Berhalter compiled a 44 wins, 17

losses and 13 draws record in 74 matches as USMNT head coach and 29 wins, 9 losses and 7 draws record in official competitions during his tenure, leading the USMNT to a successful 2022 World Cup qualification campaign.

"Our immediate focus is on finding a coach who can maximize our potential as we continue to prepare for the 2026 World Cup, and we have already begun our search process," Crocker added. Berhalter's first stint as head coach ended in 2022 with an investigation into his past conduct. He was four years into the role when he admitted kicking his wife when they were teenagers.



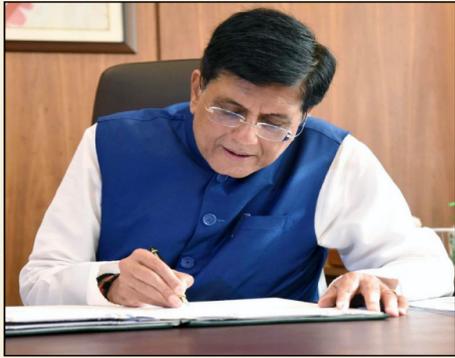
In 2022, he became the first former national team player to coach the US at a World Cup, leading the youngest team on the field in the tournament to a second-place finish in Group B with five points after draws against Wales and England and a win against Iran, before falling to the Netherlands in the Round of 16. Under his guidance, the USMNT won the 2021 Gold Cup and two Concacaf Nations League titles.

India to be 3rd largest economy in next 3 to 4 years: Piyush Goyal

New Delhi (Agency): Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal said India will be the 3rd largest economy in the next 3-4 years while the country's exports would scale the \$ 2 trillion export target by 2030.

Addressing the FICCI national executive committee meeting here, Goyal said: "With the rapidly growing start-up India initiative, growing infrastructure, investments in manufacturing which are creating a lot of opportunities for trade, business, jobs and exports. We will be the 3rd largest economy in the next 3-4 years."

He also observed that the direction in which India



was moving forward deeply resonates with what the industry wanted. India has a lot of untapped potential as the country heads towards becoming a global manufacturing hub.

He said that the government was working on getting India into global value chains, creating more and more global capacity centres working out of India so that services exports could be increased further. "The government along with industry remains deeply committed to achieving \$ 2 trillion export target by 2030. It is doable, achievable, with the right building blocks in place along with a strong macro economy to support it," the minister said. He asserted that in order to achieve the 'Viksit Bharat' vision, the industry has to come forward to collaborate and invest more in R&D, innovation and sustainability. The government, he added, is in the process of finalising the 'Jan Vishwas 2.0'. "How can we converge industry's interest with national goals. A lot more needs to be done but we need you (industry) to come forward and give a balanced view on what is necessary along with the pain points regarding decriminalisation and reducing the compliance burden," he noted. Anish Shah, President, FICCI and Group CEO & Managing Director, Mahindra & Mahindra highlighted the efforts undertaken by the government to make India a manufacturing hub. He also stated that substantial steps have been taken to lower the cost of doing business and improve the ease of doing business.

Odisha: Paradip port handles record 41 million tons cargo in first 100 days of 2024-25

New Delhi (Agency): Paradip Port Authority (PPA) in Odisha has clocked a record 41.12 million metric tons (MMT) cargo handling within the first 100 days of the financial year 2024-25. This outstanding performance



sets a new record for the port, reflecting a 4.78 per cent growth compared to the 39.25 MMT achieved during the same period in 2023-24, said PPA chairman P.L. Haranadh.

This significant accomplishment underscores the port's critical role in bolstering India's maritime infrastructure and its unwavering commitment to enhancing operational efficiency and capacity.

This achievement highlights Paradip Port Authority's ongoing commitment to setting new benchmarks in cargo handling and contributing significantly to the nation's economic growth, he added.



Hezbollah targets Israeli positions in retaliation to attacks in Lebanon

New Delhi (Agency): Hezbollah has targeted Israeli artillery positions with missiles in response to an air attack that targeted the town of Jinta in Baalbek, eastern Lebanon. In response to the attack, the fighters bombed the Israeli artillery positions in al-Zaoura in the occupied

Syrian Golan Heights with dozens of Katyusha rockets, Hezbollah said in a statement, as reported by Xinhua news agency. Lebanese military sources told Xinhua that the Lebanese army monitored the launching of about 30 surface-to-surface missiles from the Lebanese side to

Israel, and Israeli Iron Dome missiles intercepted some of them. According to the sources, the Israeli army targeted on Wednesday three villages in the eastern part of southern Lebanon, including Tayr Harfa, Kafr Kila, and Markaba, with drones and warplanes, and attacked 11 towns and vil-

lages with 45 artillery shells. Tensions along the Lebanon-Israel border escalated on October 8, 2023, following a barrage of rockets launched by Hezbollah toward Israel in solidarity with Hamas' attack on Israel on October 7. Israel then retaliated by firing heavy artillery toward southeastern Lebanon.

Biden calls for NATO allies to step up defence production

New Delhi (Agency): US President Joe Biden said that the way forward for the NATO alliance is for each member country to strengthen their industrial base so that the group can stay ahead of Russia, which has "ramped up domestic production of defence goods with help from China, Iran, and North Korea". Thirty-two leaders of NATO countries, who include leaders of Finland and Sweden, the two new additions, are meeting here in Washington DC for the group's 75th anniversary, with the Russian invasion of Ukraine bringing back memories of World War II that was started in Europe by a man's desire to expand

his country's frontiers driven by historical grievances.

Speaking cogently and

curity shield for member countries to grow and prosper. At a summit two years ago, allies decided to



forcefully, perhaps to allay fears of allies who doubt his ability to govern for four more years if he wins, the US President said that the alliance has provided a se-

modernise their defence and deterrence. But the alliance is now facing fresh challenges.

"Right now, Russia is on a wartime footing with re-

gard to defence production. They are significantly ramping up their production of weapons, munitions, and vehicles. And they're doing it with the help of China, North Korea and Iran," he said, adding "We cannot in my view, we cannot allow the (NATO) alliance to fall behind."

To that end, he noted, that every member has taken a pledge to put together plans to shore up defence production at home. "That means as an alliance (we) will become more innovative and competitive. We're able to produce more critical defence equipment more quickly than we should so that we may need it," Biden asserted.

Reliance Jio likely to head for mega IPO in 2025: Jefferies

New Delhi (Agency): The telecom unit of Reliance Industries Ltd, Reliance Jio Infocomm Ltd, could be headed for a mega IPO in 2025, with a potential valuation of more than Rs 9.3 lakh crore, a Jefferies note said on Thursday.

The note said Jio could list at a USD 112 billion valuation and add 7-15% upside to the Reliance Industries share price.

"Assuming Jio is spun off from Reliance Industries' stable, our fair value for RIL stock would be Rs 3,580. If IPO-ed, RIL's fair value would fall to Rs 3,365 in the base case (adjusted for 20% holding company discount)," Jefferies said.

Jefferies target price, in case of a spin-off, implies a 14% upside in their base case scenario. Further, Jefferies said that the entire

IPO could be an offer for sale by minority shareholders. RIL could look to spin off Jio and list it after a price discovery, the brokerage said, adding that both domestic and foreign investors appear to favour the spin-off route for Jio listing.

In their bull case, they value RIL stock at Rs 3,700, implying 18% upside. Operationally, Jio was the first telecom services provider

to announce tariff hikes. It, however, kept the feature phone tariffs unchanged. This, analysts said, showed Jio's focus on monetisation and subscriber market share gains.

"These moves create a case for a possible public listing in CY25 in our view. RIL could look to IPO or spin off Jio, as it did with Jio Financial Services (JFS)," Jefferies said.

According to Jefferies, shareholders in Reliance Industries would receive their proportionate shareholding in Jio adjusted for RIL's 66.3% stake in the latter.

This would avoid the holdco discount and enable better value unlocking benefiting RIL shareholders. The owner's stake in Jio would fall to 33.3% on listing. "With 33.7% minority

shareholding in Jio, RIL could fulfill IPO requirements by listing 10% of Jio. While RIL would retain majority control after the listing, our analysis suggests the Indian stock market imposes a holdco discount of 20-50% to a listed subsidiary in arriving at a holdco's fair value," it said.

Speaker Birla addresses BRICS Forum at St Petersburg

New Delhi (Agency): Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla, who is leading the Indian delegation to the 10th BRICS Parliamentary Forum in St. Petersburg, Russia, on Thursday addressed the first plenary session on "The BRICS Parliamentary dimension: prospects for strengthening inter-parliamentary cooperation".

Wishing 'Dobroye utro (Good morning)' to the dignitaries present, Mr Birla informed the session that approximately 65 crore voters exercised their franchise in the recently concluded Lok Sabha elections, after which Mr Narendra Modi took oath as the Prime Minister for the third consecutive time.

The Speaker said it is

his good fortune that the country's elected house, Lok Sabha, elected him to the post of Speaker for the second consecutive time.

Extending a welcome to the four new Members, namely Egypt, Ethiopia, Iran, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates into BRICS Parliamentary Forum, Mr Birla commended the Russian Chair for ensuring the seamless integration of the new members into the organization. BRICS, largely representing the interests of the developing world, stands for greater democratization of global governance system, and for reforming the international organizations such as the UN Security Council, WTO, at global level, Mr



Birla said. Emphasising the crucial role of Parliaments

and parliamentarians in advancing the BRICS agenda

for inclusive growth and sustainable development,

he observed that India is a proactive partner in this initiative.

He highlighted India's commitment to uniting emerging markets and developing countries and affirmed its dedication to the principles of mutual respect, understanding, equality, solidarity, openness, inclusiveness, and consensus.

Stressing the importance of enhancing cooperation among BRICS members and other multilateral forums, Mr Birla cited the Indian philosophy of 'Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam,' meaning "the world is one family" which is in sync with commitment of BRICS to equality, solidarity and mutually beneficial cooperation.

Mentioning the successful conclusion of the 18th G20 Summit and the Ninth G20 Parliamentary Speakers' Summit (P20) in New Delhi last year, Mr Birla noted that those historic events exemplify India's commitment to the philosophy of finding collaborative solutions for global well-being and inclusive development.

India believes that the insights and proposals shared by Presiding Officers at the New Delhi P20 summit on Agenda 2030 for SDGs, sustainable energy transitions, gender equality, and public digital platforms will significantly enhance global collaboration for inclusive growth and sustainable development, he said.

Stock market ends marginally lower amid volatile session

New Delhi (Agency): Benchmark indices ended marginally lower on Thursday in the volatile session amid positive global cues ahead of US inflation data due later in the day. Nifty 50 closed nearly 9 points, or 0.03 per cent, lower at 24,315.95, while the Sensex settled 27 points, or 0.03 per cent, down at 79,897.34.

The top Nifty movers were ITC, ONGC, Tata Motors, SBI and Coal India while on the flip side, shares of Mahindra and Mahindra, Bajaj Finance, Larsen and Toubro (L&T), HDFC Bank and ICICI Bank ended as the top drags.

BSE Midcap and Smallcap indices outperformed the benchmarks, rising 0.34 per cent and 0.57 per cent, respectively. The overall market capitalisation of the firms listed on BSE rose to nearly Rs 451.3 lakh crore from nearly Rs 450.1 lakh crore in the previous session.

Among the sectors, Nifty Oil and Gas (1.10 per cent) and Media (1.03 per cent) clocked healthy gains while on the losing side were Nifty Realty (1.49 per cent) and Pharma (0.60 per cent). Nifty Bank rose 0.16 per cent while the PSU Bank and Private Bank indices moved up by 0.17 per cent and 0.16 per cent, respectively.



Nifty FMCG index continued its upward momentum, marking a new milestone with a record high of 59,587 points, extending its winning streak for the fifth consecutive trading session. It gained 0.40 per cent during the session, accumulating a 4.3 per cent increase over the past five sessions, bringing it closer to the 60,000 level.

In a significant uptrend, a report by Motilal Oswal Financial Services said the total number of Demat accounts surged to 16.2 crore in June 2024. New additions spiked by 42 lakh in June, marking the highest account opening rate since February 2024.

This indicates a 4.24 per cent spike from the previous month and a substantial 34.66 per cent rise compared to last year. In comparison, Demat account additions were 36 lakh a month ago and 23.6 lakh a year ago. So far FY25 has seen an average monthly growth rate of 34 lakh. Shares of YES Bank spiked over 7 per cent after Moody's revised its outlook to 'positive' from 'stable' on hopes of improvement in the lender's depositor base and lending franchise.

So far this year, the stock of YES Bank has rallied over 24 per cent. Earlier, YES Bank had touched a 52-week high of Rs 32 apiece on February 9, 2024. Indian Railway Catering and Tourism (IRCTC) shares rose by 2 per cent to Rs 1,041 per share following a collaboration between the Delhi Metro Corporation (DMRC) and the Centre for Railway Information Systems (CRIS) to promote the 'One India-One Ticket' initiative.

So far this year, shares of IRCTC jumped over 16 per cent. Earlier, IRCTC had hit a 52-week high of Rs 1,148 per share on May 22, 2024. The focus was also on the US CPI which is due later on Thursday as it will shape expectations of rate cuts by the US Fed.

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