

# TOP NEWS OF J&K

JAMMU, THURSDAY, JUNE 29, 2023

Daily Evening Newspaper



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## BRIEFLY

# First batch of pilgrims arrive at Amarnath Yatri Niwas base camp

### Amarnath Yatra | Indian Railways to run two special trains for pilgrims

JAMMU, Jun 29 (Agencies): To facilitate hassle free travel to the Amarnath Pilgrims, the Indian Railways has announced to run two more special trains, a railway official said here on Thursday.

Earlier, the Railways had started five additional special trains. He said that in view of the extra rush of passengers in Jammu and Kashmir during the Amarnath Yatra starting from July 1, it has been decided to run two summer special trains between New Delhi and Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Katra.

The trains, he said, will operate from New Delhi-Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Katra and New Delhi Gati Shakti Summer Special Express.

The Gati Shakti Summer Special train will depart from New Delhi at 11:15 PM on July 2 and reach Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Katra at 11:25 AM the next day.

He added that the Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Katra - New Delhi Gati Shakti Summer Special will depart Katra Railway Station at 06:30 pm on July 3 and reach New Delhi at 06:50 am the next day.

The trains will have Air-conditioned coaches and have halts at Sonapat, Panipat, Karnal, Kurukshetra, Ambala Cantt, Ludhiana, Jalandhar Cantt, Pathankot Cantt, Jammu Tawi and Udhampur stations.

Whereas, another train will run twice between Delhi Junction to Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Katra. The train will leave Delhi Junction at 11:15 pm on July 3 and reach Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Katra at 11:25 am the next day, he added.

"The train will have air condition coaches along with sleeper and general class coaches and will halt at Sonapat, Panipat, Karnal, Kurukshetra, Ambala Cantt, Ludhiana, Jalandhar Cantt, Pathankot Cantt, Jammu Tawi and Udhampur stations," he added.

### Dr Asgar Samoon retires from service

SRINAGAR, Jun 29 (Agencies): Hours before his colleagues gave him a warm send-off on his superannuation, Principal Secretary, Skill Development Department, Dr Asgar Hassan Samoon unveiled a series of significant reports and plans in the Civil Secretariat on Wednesday.

The releases encompassed crucial documents aimed at enhancing the quality and effectiveness of skill development programs in

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JAMMU, Jun 29 (Agencies): A large number of pilgrims reached the Yatri Niwas Base Camp in Jammu on Thursday, ahead of the commencement of the annual Amarnath Yatra on July 1.

The first batch of pilgrims for the Yatra was seen in huge lines outside the base camp, and in high spirits. Tight security arrangements can be seen at the base camp.

The 62-day yatra, which commences on July 1 and culminates on August 31, is an important pilgrimage for Hindus who visit the Amarnath Cave, believed to be the abode of Lord Shiva. It will start from the ancient paths of Nunwan in Pahalgam and Baltal in the Ganderbal district of Kashmir where pilgrims will set



off on their solemn trek.

In preparation for the Yatra, various langar committees started their preparation on Wednesday, three days in advance, to cater to the pilgrims in Jammu and Kashmir.

The committees pre-

pared sheds, cooking resources and other raw materials on the Jammu Srinagar National Highway in Jammu and Kashmir's Ushampur district. A total of 22 langars have been established this year at various points of the high-

way (NH-44).

Additionally, according to an official statement by the Jammu and Kashmir police, the Director General of Police, Dilbag Singh; Additional Chief Secretary, Raj Kumar Goyal;

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### Amarnath Yatra on-the-spot registration of pilgrims starts in Jammu

JAMMU, Jun 29 (Agencies): The city administration on Thursday began the process for on-the-spot registration of devotees arriving here for the pilgrimage to the Amarnath cave shrine in south Kashmir Himalayas.

Over 1,500 pilgrims, including sadhus, have arrived in Jammu city for the yatra to the 3,880-metre shrine starting on July 2.

While an on-the-spot registration centre has been set up for unregistered pilgrims in Shalimar area of the city, a special camp for registration of sadhus has been set up at Purani Mandi-based Ram temple complex.

Amid tight security arrangements, over 1000 pilgrims have arrived at the Bhagwati-Nagar base camp here for their onward journey to Kashmir, officials said.

The 62-day-long pilgrimage will commence on July 1 from the twin tracks - the traditional 48-km Nunwan-Pahalgam route in Anantnag district and the 14-km shorter but steep Baltal route in Ganderbal district.

The registration of unregistered pilgrims arriving here from all parts of the country have begun on-the-spot at the counter here, Sub-Divisional Magistrate (SDM) Nargesh Singh said. He said all facilities for

smooth registration have been put in place.

"The registration of sadhus has begun in Jammu from today. All arrangements have been put in place for best possible facilities to sadhus", Tehsildar Jai Singh said.

The enthusiasm among pilgrims arriving here for the pilgrimage was palpable

Sanjeev Kumar of Uttar Pradesh said it is the fourth time that he is visiting the cave shrine.

"The registration process has improved from manual to online. This has done away with the process of sitting in long queues in hot weather conditions", he said.

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### Chief Justice of India pays obeisance at Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Ji Shrine



#### Top News Report

KATRA, Jun 29: Chief Justice of India (CJI) Dr Justice D Y Chandrachud visited the Holy Cave Shrine of Shri

Mata Vaishno Devi Ji and paid obeisance at the sanctum sanctorum.

On his arrival at Katra, the Chief Justice of India was received by Anshul Garg, Chief Executive

Officer, Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board. The Chief Justice of India was accompanied by the Chief Justice of J&K and Ladakh High Court.

The CEO briefed the dignitaries about the continuing initiatives being taken by Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board under the Chairmanship of Hon'ble Lt. Governor, JK-UT for upgrading and expanding the infrastructure for facilitating the

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### Peaceful Eid-Al-Adha prayers held across J&K

JAMMU, Jun 29 (Agencies): Eid-Al-Adha prayers were observed with immense devotion and enthusiasm across the Jammu and Kashmir on Thursday.

The largest congregation took place at Hazratbal Shrine in Srinagar with thousands of worshippers gathered to offer prayers, followed by similar gatherings at Chraari Sharief in Budgam and various Eid gahs across other districts.

An official said that the peaceful atmosphere prevailed throughout as



prayers were concluded peacefully across Kashmir.

Hazratbal Shrine, a revered spiritual site

in Srinagar, witnessed a sea of worshippers, united in prayer and seeking blessings on the occasion of Eid ul Adha.

People, adorned in traditional attire, thronged the shrine premises from early morning.

Similarly, Chraari Sharief in Budgam and other Eid gahs across Jammu and Kashmir echoed with the resounding prayers of the faithful as people from various walks of life came together to celebrate the auspicious occasion.

In Jammu, the largest congregation was observed at Eid gah Jammu, where devotees

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### More than 2.74 lakh posts vacant in Railways, over 1.7 lakh of them in safety category: RTI

NEW DELHI, Jun 29 (Agencies): More than 2.74 lakh posts in the Railways are lying vacant as of this month, with over 1.7 lakh of them in the safety category alone, the national transporter has said in response to an RTI query.

In its reply to the questions filed by Chandra Shekhar Gaur, a Madhya Pradesh-based Right to Information (RTI) Act activist, the Railways said 2,74,580 posts are vacant in Group C category, including Level 1 or entry-level staff. This includes 1,77,924

vacancies in the safety category, it said.

"The total number of non-gazetted posts vacant i.e. Group-C (including Level-1) in Indian Railways, as available in this office, as on 01.06.2023 (provisional) is: 2,74,580," the ministry said.

On the safety category, it said there are more than 9.82 lakh posts of which over 8.04 lakh are filled.

"Total number of sanctioned, on roll and vacant posts in safety category of Group-C (including Level-1) in Indian

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### Think, Rethink Consequences of UCC: Farooq Abdullah to Centre

SRINAGAR, Jun 29 (Agencies): National Conference president Farooq Abdullah on Thursday said the Centre should not push through with the Uniform Civil Code and rethink consequences of implementing it. "They should rethink about it. This is



a diverse nation, people of different races and religions live here and

Muslims have their own shariah law," Abdullah told reporters at Hazratbal after offering Eid-ul-Azha prayers.

The Lok Sabha member from Srinagar said the government should think and rethink about the consequences of implementing the

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### Convert Manipur State into UTs: Harsh Dev

#### Top News Report

JAMMU, Jun 29: Expressing concern over the raging fires in Manipur seized by repeated cycles of violence, bloodshed, arson, and mayhem for the last over a month and a half, Harsh Dev Singh former minister and president of JKNPP has accused the centre and state government of complete failure in handling the situation resulting in unprecedented death, destruction and devastation in the troubled state. A combustible mix of faith, identity and politics has kept the pot of conflict boiling in the state with the present regime



having miserably floundered in tiding over the crisis, Singh said.

As per certain reports in the media nearly 120 have been killed, 30,000 displaced, around 50,000 relocated due to raging violence and several thousand injured, divulged Singh. He said that it was shocking to note the statement of

Archbishop of Manipur who had revealed that 249 churches had been burnt merely in 36 hours. And still the centre seems to have abdicated its responsibility under the constitution for reasons best known.

Should the present government be allowed to continue in the state merely for the reason that it is the BJP which rules it. And should the state of Manipur not be divested of its state status, as was done in case of J&K, and it also be divided into Union Territories? Questioned Singh.

Harsh Dev pointed out that J&K state

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# NSSO Regional office celebrates Statistics Day



### TOP NEWS REPORT

JAMMU, Jun 29: In order to create awareness amongst the people, especially the younger generation, for drawing inspiration from (late) Prof. P.C. Mahalanobis about the role of Statistics in socio economic planning and policy formulation, "Statistics Day" is celebrated every year on 29th June on his birthday by organizing events such as essay/debate competitions, seminars and lectures on Statistics by Regional Offices of the FOD.

In this regard National Sample Survey Office (NSSO) (Field Operations Division), Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation, Government of India, Regional office, Jammu organized Statistics Day on Thursday.

The celebration of this day was attended by the officers and the field staff of NSSO (FOD) Regional office Jammu, Sub-Regional Office, Udhampur, and officers from Directorate of Economics & Statistics, J & K Government. Apart from this, the function is also attended by the HOD, Faculty members & some Scholars from Department of Statistics, University of Jammu.

Every year a theme is decided for Statistics Day for focused attention. The theme for the 17 Statistics Day, 2023 is "Alignment of State Indicator Framework with National Indicator Framework for monitoring Sustainable Development Goals".

After the welcome address by R.K Sharma, Assistant Director,

NSSO (FOD), the function was inaugurated by Kishore Kumar, Deputy Director General, NSSO (FOD) UT of J&K in his inaugural speech. DDG emphasized the role of Statistics Day for creating awareness amongst the people, especially the younger generation & the role of Statistics in socio economic planning and policy formulation. The function started with the lighting of Lamp & "National Song".

In the celebrations Prof Parmil Kumar, from Department of Statistics, University of Jammu also addressed the participants and stressed on the role of Statistics in our day to day life. Some Officers from DES, J&K State also gave some valuable addresses. In the event Shri Rajesh Kumar, Regional Passport Officer, Ministry of External Affairs was also present.

He also briefed the participants and officers about the Statistical activities & their role for Nation building. Some research Scholars & Officers from NSSO (FOD), RO Jammu spoke about the theme of the 17 Statistics Day.

The overall Coordination & Comparing was done by Sunil K. Khar, Senior Statistical Officer from NSSO (FOD), RO Jammu. Function ended with a vote of thanks presented by Rajesh Sharma, Sr. Statistical Officer, NSSO (FOD), RO Jammu.

# SRS President urges Amarnath pilgrims to visit Shudhmahadev temple also

### TOP NEWS REPORT

JAMMU, Jun 29: President, Shri Ram Sena (SRS), J&K, Rajiv Mahajan urged Shri Amarnath pilgrims, who are visiting Shri Amarnath Shrine Cave, also visit Shudhmahadev temple on Chenani of district Udhampur.

"Sudhmahadev has remained focal point for devotees of Lord Shiva for spiritual attainment from very early periods of history. This beautiful valley is situated in the foot hills of Dhar Shiv Garh at a distance of 116 kilometres from Jammu. It is in this area that Holy Devika rivulet appeared to purify human body and soul," Rajiv Mahajan said adding that the Holy vibrations and characteristics are same in reputed temples and Shrines of Lord Shiva



spread over in this area like Gouri-Kund, Gaur Karan, Budhi-Shudi, Shool Paneshwar Temple, Haridwar, Banisang, Mandir Dushala and Mantalai etc.

He added that pilgrims should take bath in holy water of Gouri-Kund and offer prayers in the nearby temple of Goddess Parvati. Legends say that Goddess Par-

vati worshipped at this place for thousands of years inside a cave to get married with Lord Shiva, he said adding that the pilgrims will also enjoy the scenic beauty of this place and feel the enchanting cool breeze coming across sacred rivulet flowing nearby.

He also said that it is known as the first Dar-

shan of Baba Amarnath Ji.

At the same time, Rajiv Mahajan urged the Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha to personally visit Shudhmahadev Shrine and promote the holy place so that Shri Amarnath pilgrims first visit this shrine to go forward to Amarnath pilgrimage.

# Rahul Sahai meets Namrita Dogra, Addl Comm State Taxes Jammu

### TOP NEWS REPORT

JAMMU, Jun 29: Rahul Sahai, Chairman PHDCCI Jammu Chapter along with Samar Dev Charak, Co Chair, PHDCCI Jammu Chapter and Amarpreet Singh, R O Jammu met Namrita Dogra, Additional Commissioner, State Taxes, Jammu in her office.

The purpose of the meeting was to discuss about the forthcoming programme on GST Week.

State Taxes Department of Government of J&K is celebrating GST Week from 1st July to 7th July and invited PHDCCI Jammu Chapter to be part of the GST Week.

Namrita shared the details about the events they have planned for the whole week.

On day one 1st July 2023, a panel discussion is planned, for



which Rahul Sahai is invited as an esteemed panelist.

During the meeting Rahul Sahai shared several points related to GST which could be taken up during the panel discussion. He also suggested that trader community is not aware about the GST rules and there is need to create awareness among them.

Samar Dev Charak said that there is need to train the users of the online system of the department.

Rahul Sahai said that we should create flyers related to the points that need to be shared with the trading & Industrial community, like all dealers should submit their own mobile number in the online GST portal,

details of how to change and update the mobile number in the system and other important points.

Namrita appreciated the suggestions given by Rahul Sahai and said that all steps will be taken to create awareness and requested support and cooperation of PHDCCI Jammu to make GST Week successful.

# Amarnath Yatra: Hustle bustle in Jammu as first batch to leave Friday amid tight security

### TOP NEWS REPORT

JAMMU, Jun 29 (Agencies): The 'City of Temples' is witnessing hustle-bustle as the first batch of pilgrims will leave for Shri Amarnath Yatra from Bhagwati Nagar base camp here on Friday amidst tight security arrangements.

Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha is likely to flag-off the first batch from here tomorrow.

The 62-day long pilgrimage is starting from July 1 and ending on August 30.

The pilgrims have started to reach the base camp for the journey tomorrow. Meanwhile on the spot (Tatkal) registration has also started for the pilgrims at different centres established in parts of the district.

"We have started on-the-spot registration of devotees arriving here for the pilgrimage to the Amarnath cave shrine," said an official.

Around 2000 pilgrims, including sadhus, have arrived in Jammu city for the yatra.

Moreover, the langar committees have also

started their preparation to cater to the pilgrims. Director General of Police, Dilbag Singh along with Additional Chief Secretary, Raj Kumar Goyal; Principal Secretary to the Lieutenant Governor, Man-deep Kumar Bhandari, also took an extensive tour of the twin routes of pilgrimage to Amarnath Yatra.

This year, drone surveillance has also been pressed into to augment the security structure en route the yatra.

Deputy Commissioner Avny Lavasa said that 33 accommodation centres have been established across the district while 'Radio Frequency Identification' (RFID) tags will be issued at the registration centres.

"All arrangements are in place and the district administration is on its toes to welcome the pilgrims of Shri Amarnath Yatra," Avny Lavasa said.

She said that across the Jammu district, 33 accommodation centres have been established that included Sabhas, Sarais and Lodges," adding, "at Bhagwati

Nagar based Yatri Niwas, only registered pilgrims will be allowed to enter."

On 'Tatkal registration' the Deputy Commissioner said that pilgrims will get their token number from Saraswati Dham, near Jammu Railway Station and the place and date for registration will be mentioned in the token for which Aadhar card of the pilgrims is mandatory.

"In all five counters have been established for Tatkal registration of the pilgrims at Vaishnavi Dham, Mahajan Sabha, Panchayat Ghar and

two at Geeta Bhawan and Ram Mandir for the registration of Sadhus," she added.

"Pilgrims shall be provided RFID Tag at the registration centre itself which is mandatory with the pilgrims permit," she said.

The Deputy Commissioner also said that pre-registration (online) pilgrims can get their RFID tags at Yatri Niwas and Railway Station, Jammu. So far, more than 3 lakh pilgrims have registered themselves online for the yatra.

# NC's radicalization & separatism fuels injustice towards youth in J&K; over 42,000 lives lost since 1947 days, says Bali Bhagat

### TOP NEWS REPORT

JAMMU, June 29: Bali Bhagat, senior BJP leader and former minister, shed light on the National Conference's role in propagating radicalism among Kashmiri youth under the guise of religion. He accused the National Conference of sowing the seed of separatism, which had long plagued the region, ultimately leading to the unrest in Valley for more than 50 years.

In a statement issued here today, the senior BJP leader pointed out that the nefarious beginnings of sectarianism in Kashmir can be traced back to Sheikh Abdullah's agitations against the rule of Maharaja Hari Singh. Abdullah's fervent push for self-rule in Kashmir acted as the breeding ground for separatist ideologies, gradually poisoning the minds of the Kashmiri

population, he added.

Bali Bhagat said that the National Conference's long-standing radicalization and separatist ideologies have perpetuated grave injustice towards daily wage workers in Jammu and Kashmir. The Daily wagers, who form a significant portion of J&K's workforce, have been gravely affected by the politically-motivated actions of the National Conference.

"These daily wagers, who are already vulnerable due to socio-economic factors, endure further hardships due to the repercussions of the National Conference's divisive ideologies. NC promised these daily wagers in every elections for their regularisation but whenever they came in power betrayed them. Many of them were pushed to join militancy in the name of



Islamic Jihad. "This pressing issue demands immediate attention to alleviate the suffering faced by these marginalized individuals and their families," he said.

The former minister said since the year of independence in 1947 until 2019, more than 42,000 lives have been tragically lost as a direct result of the National Conference's radicalization and separatist agenda. This alarming statistic serves as a sobering reminder of the devastating con-

sequences that arise from political ideologies focused on division and hatred.

Bali Bhagat strongly believed that the National Conference's destructive policies have deprived Kashmiri youth of the opportunities they deserve. Through their governance, the National Conference has ignored the crucial aspects of education, employment, and skill development, thereby hindering the overall progress of the youth in the region, he added.

"The National Conference has consistently disregarded the potential of Kashmiri youth and failed to provide them with adequate support and resources. This negligence has hindered the growth of a generation that could have been the driving force behind the development of Jammu and

Kashmir," he added.

Fearing the potential consequences of such divisive rhetoric and strategies, Bali Bhagat called on the people of Jammu and Kashmir to remain vigilant and steer clear of the National Conference's divisive policies. He emphasized the importance of unity and harmony among all communities, highlighting that progress and prosperity can only be achieved when all individuals work together, regardless of their religious beliefs.

Bhagat also took the opportunity to remind the public that it was the government led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi that has effectively countered Pakistan's aggressive tactics and successfully restored normalcy in Kashmir. Through a strong stance against terrorism, the Modi

government has made significant strides in ensuring the safety and security of the people of Jammu and Kashmir, he added.

The former minister asked people of Jammu and Kashmir to support the BJP and its vision for a united, peaceful, and prosperous India. He stated, "Only by rejecting the politics of division and embracing the principles of unity and progress can we secure a brighter future for Jammu and Kash-

### SPECIAL TRAINS - 2023

In view of Amarnath Yatra in addition to already announced special trains, Northern Railway has planned following additional special trains as under:-

04087/04088 New Delhi - Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Katra - New Delhi Gati Shakti Special Express Train		02 Trips		
TRAIN NO. 04087	STATIONS	TRAIN NO. 04088		
ARR. DEP.	ARR. DEP.	ARR. DEP.		
---	23:15	New Delhi	06:50	---
11:25	---	Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Katra	---	18:30

Days of Run : 04087 from New Delhi on 02.07.2023 and 04088 from Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Katra on 03.07.2023  
Accommodation : AC 3 Tier.  
Stoppages : Sonapat, Panipat, Karnal, Kurukshetra Jn, Ambala Cantt, Ludhiana, Jalandhar Cantt, Pathankot Cantt, Jammu Tawi and Udhampur stations.

04095/04096 Delhi Jn. - Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Katra - Delhi Jn. Special Express Train		02 Trips		
TRAIN NO. 04095	STATIONS	TRAIN NO. 04096		
ARR. DEP.	ARR. DEP.	ARR. DEP.		
---	23:15	Delhi Jn.	06:50	---
11:25	---	Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Katra	---	18:30

Days of Run : 04095 from Delhi Jn. on 03.07.2023 and 04096 from Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Katra on 04.07.2023  
Accommodation : AC 2 Tier, AC 3 Tier, Sleeper & General.  
Stoppages : Sonapat, Panipat, Karnal, Kurukshetra Jn, Ambala Cantt, Ludhiana, Jalandhar Cantt, Pathankot Cantt, Jammu Tawi and Udhampur stations.

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251-Elect/T/Notice No. 06 Elect/2023-24 Dated: 28.06.2023

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## EDITORIAL

REMOVE GENDER  
INEQUALITY

**E**mpowerment means to make powerful. At present, women empowerment is being seen in the context of problems arising out of social, economic and political inequalities. It includes components such as awareness, knowledge of rights, participation and right to make decisions. According to Leela Meihendal- "Fearlessness, respect and awareness all three words are helpful in women empowerment.

In order to bring women into the mainstream of development, the National Policy of Women Empowerment was implemented by the government in 2001. Under this, the purpose of strengthening the legal rights of women and strengthening health facilities has been kept in mind in government policy and welfare schemes. Some social and institutional obstacles have come to the fore in the government's efforts for the upliftment of women.

With the aim of social, economic and educational empowerment of women by eradicating these obstacles, a program called National Women Empowerment Campaign was started on March 8, 2010. Women empowerment program was implemented in all states and all union territories in India. Its main objective is to take programs related to women's development to the grass root level.

Many important steps have been taken in the direction of providing security and autonomy to women. Many types of harassment come under violence against women, such as mental, physical and sexual harassment and dowry-related harassment etc. The vision of women empowerment is that women can lead a life of dignity by being free from these oppressive violence and discrimination.

Gender inequality is the main social issue of India, in which women are continuously falling behind. According to the 2011 census, there were 943 females per 1000 males in India. And at present i.e. in 2022, according to a report there are 108 males per 100 females. There is a need to accelerate women empowerment to end this inequality.

Women are not less than men in any way. If they do the same work that men do then they should get the same remuneration as men, whereas this is not the case in the society. Articles 14 to 18 of the Constitution provide for 'equal work, equal pay'. Efforts are being made to end this economic inequality in women empowerment.

Education removes the darkness of ignorance and opens the way for development and progress. In the Indian society, the same education and other facilities are neglected considering the girl child as someone else's wealth, but today due to the women empowerment movement, changes are taking place in this direction as well.

Today there has been a rapid increase in the enrollment and attendance of girls in schools. According to famous economist Amartya Sen - "Women's education system, independent income and improvement in social status have increased their decision-making capacity in the family and paved the way for inclusion (empowerment) of women."

In the end it can be said that to empower women. No God or Messiah will incarnate, nor will it matter if the society creates the definition of feminism. This will be possible only when women themselves come forward for their rights, fight for their rights. Governments should also not only increase the number of women's rights and laws, but keeping practicality in mind, make such rights and laws, so that the concept of real empowerment can be realized.

## The politics of geography and how societies evolve

By: Abhijit Bhattacharyya

**I**t's time to explore the real history of geography and vice versa. In plain terms, demography and geography (or territorial expanse) create the story of human life and evolution, which tomorrow becomes history. The demography of geography creates society, economy, polity, the rise and fall of empires and their borders, as well as war and peace.

Thus, can any sensible person deny that the evolution of Homo sapiens from cave to city or nomadic and pastoral to organised contemporary agro-industrial map could only happen in a specific territory, or what we call physical geography, which is found favourable for mankind in different areas of the world? Didn't a different demography grow in a different geography, creating a different history in the Nile, Indus and Hwang Ho river valleys?

Let's try to explore the shape and size of India's political map through the ages to come to grips with today's Bharat. Though geographical India has been an indisputable reality for thousands of years, as found from the Vishnu Purana, there never ever has been a standard, static, unitary political map of India. It's been eternally dynamic, fluctuating, oscillating and changing hands between various monarchies, kingdoms, empires and principalities which sprouted and evaporated thousands of years, from Kashmir to Kanyakumari and Kutch to Kohima and beyond.

Even assuming the present Afghanistan and territory of (former) Burma as part of India's geography, the fact remains that South Asia's political boundaries or geography was seldom stable, staid and peaceful. Eternal political turbulence invariably created new boundaries, thereby proving that geography or territory also has its undeniable history of change.

The scholastic work Political History

of Ancient India (From the Accession of Parikshit to Extinction of Gupta Dynasty), a period covering 1394 BC to 6th century AD, by Dr Hemchandra Raychaudhuri, arguably the most eminent ancient Indian historian, begins with the reign of Parikshit, whose accession, according to tradition, took place shortly after the Mahabharata war. Parikshit was the ruler of the Kuru kingdom, which extended from the river Sarasvati to the Ganga and was divided into three parts — Kurujangala, Kuru and Kurukshetra — which roughly spanned modern Sirhind in North India. "Within the kingdom flowed the rivers Drishadvati, Kansiki, Aruna and Sarasvati". Obviously, the political map of Parikshit's kingdom could not have had encompassed the whole of geographical Bharat.

Moving from the post-Mahabharata Parikshit rule's political geography to the broad map of Indian history, only Asoka's empire (273 BC-232 BC) could be considered to have had a vast expanse of land. The various rock and pillar edicts of Asoka, spread across South Asia, reveal the gargantuan scale of Maurya ruler's empire. Shahbazgarhi (Peshawar), Mansehra (Hazara district), Kalsi (Dehradun), Girnar (Junagadh), Sopara (north of Mumbai), Dhauri (Puri district), Yeragudi (former Madras Presidency), Lauriya Araraj (Champaran district), Palkigundu (former Nizam's territory), Sarnath (Varanasi), Allahabad, Rummidei or Lumbini (Bhagwanpur in Nepal) and Nigliva (Nepal Terai) give a fair idea of the length and breadth of the political geography of the third century BC Indian emperor.

Nevertheless, as soon as the last of the Mauryas caved in 185 BC through assassination, the biggest, longest and widest political map of India ceased to exist in no time. Thereafter, not a single ruler in the geography of India could ever build a politically defined

territorial map stretching to such far-flung areas, from Afghanistan to Bengal and beyond, touch the whole of the Himalayas in the north and proceed in the diametrically opposite direction to halt at river Cauvery in the south. The story of India's geography thus became a story of endless fluctuation of fortunes of different and diverse rulers all across terrain which, though always known as Bharat Varsha, was not necessarily a united political entity.

After the Mauryan empire, only the Gupta dynasty proved reasonably powerful to expand and consolidate its political geography. Nevertheless, its shape and size proved to be a fraction of 137-year-long rule of the Mauryas (324 BC to 187 BC). At the peak, the Gupta kings could annex or conquer mainly the Ganga-Yamuna basin, parts of

Bihar, North Bengal, a chunk of Central India, and intermittently the geography of the Upper Deccan and Gondwana. Subsequently, after a long, chaotic interregnum, which saw the rise of Qutbuddin Aibak and his successors (late 12th century to Balban 1287), Alauddin Khalji (1296-1316), the Tughlaqs (1325-1389), Lodhis (1451-1526), and the Mughals (1526-1857), the political map of geographical India continued its characteristic instability and a ceaseless war of all against all. The best or worst part of political India's geography is that every part and direction of Hindustan saw ceaseless conflicts — in the east, south and west, with only difference being that whereas the northern wars saw the advent of horse cavalry men with enhanced mobility, the battlefields of Hindustan also bore the brunt of the advanced artillery and gun power of the Mughals, thereby tilting the balance of war against the local rulers.

Consequently, rarely did the indigent ruling class ever win a skirmish or battle. With the advent of

the Europeans, like the Portuguese, Dutch, Danes, French and British, the internal destruction and defeat continued unabated. This was because of too many quarrelling rajas, maharajas, nawabs and nizam-like rulers across vast swathes of the hinterland of Hindustan.

Therefore, even the British, despite their superior tech, manipulation, cunning, lies, deceit and deception, could not succeed in direct rule over any more than 60 per cent of India's geography. They realised the futility of trying to deprive the 550-plus rulers of the remaining 40 per cent of territory, proving once again how difficult it is for any single entity to politically rule over the entire geography of India. It has always been a Herculean task for political India to interface with geographical India owing to a bewildering variation and variety of demography.

History thus shows that the dormant and docile demography of India's geography has never tolerated the rule of the gun beyond a point as there has always existed, and still exist, ethnic, religious, ideological, tribal and linguistic groups with strong, subterranean nationalist and sub-national sentiments.

India's huge variety is the country's real asset. However, a misreading of the mind and psyche of ordinary people by the ruling class has often led to catastrophic mistakes and stupidity, resulting in avoidable bloodshed. Flexibility, rather than rigidity, makes Indians happy. A single-formula inflexibility will never be appealing as it goes against Indians' love of liberty, liberalism and the lofty idealism of Gautama Buddha.

*(The writer is an advocate practising in the Supreme Court. The views expressed here are personal.)*

## Monsoon Nail Trends: Shahnaz Husain

**I**t is that time of the year again when there is a nonstop downpour. breezy winds and splashy water everywhere. It is a common perception that monsoon has a gloomy face.

Nails take the most hit during the rainy season. The season of monsoon calls for special care of nails to avoid damage due to red, swollen and itchy skin around them. The skin becomes sweaty or infected due to overexposure to water as a result of it both fingernails and toenails get affected by the rains.

Painting your nails is like therapy. Trying out new nail colours and designs are something that just makes you feel groomed and uplifted. When your nails are groomed in invigorating hues, you automatically get a dose of colour therapy that is just great for your mood.

The season of monsoon calls for special care of nails to avoid infection and chipping. The monsoon can lead to rough, brittle and discoloured nails.

Well-kept nails are a part of our presentation and look. Be it any occasion, we all know how essential it is to maintain them.

Try to keep your nails dry with extra care, especially your toes. You may opt for open shoes / sandals/ chappal as if you are wearing closed footwear all the days long then fungus/bacteria may thrive in your feet due to moist and damp environment which can result in dead skin cells and bacteria. ultimately affecting your toes.

Avoid wearing leather, plastic or canvas shoes. Do not wear the same shoes every day. It is better to have an alternate pair of shoes. Wash your footwear regularly. Desist from sitting in wet footwear and socks all through the day. Try to bear waterproof footwear to allow air circulation. Your nail health is

important during the rainy season. Refrain from growing your toenails long. Wash and clean dirt from under the nails as also the edges.

Cut your toenails short to avoid any chances of accumulating dirt and other infections. Try to spray deodorants / talcum / anti-fungal powder in between toe nails regularly at least once in a day to prevent infection.

During the hot and humid season, we go for light, serene, pastel colours for our clothes. The same goes for the nails too. We can select colours that are icy, "cool" and trendy. The way to protect the nails and keep them looking good is to give them regular care. There is no point wearing a glamorous outfit if the feet and toe nails show neglect and lack of care.. Chipped nails and chipped nail polish can really spoil the entire effect.

You need to be very careful while picking a nail polish. While wearing nail polish does not harm your healthy nails.

Typical nail polish is filled with toxic chemicals such as Paraben, diethyl phthalates, dibutyl phthalate

which cause nail brittleness, dryness, and thinning and are bad for the skin surrounding it. Always prefer water-based polishes, which don't last as long but are the safest option out there.

Try our level best to choose natural and chemical-free nail paints that are eco-friendly and cruelty-free. Avoid eating with hands that have paint on its nails as bits of the nail paint can chip and fall into the food, which will eventually go inside your body and cause harm.

Pick a nail colour remover that contains vitamin A, C and E to treats conditions that adversely affect nails and cuticles.

The cuticle (skin surrounding

the nail) should be kept soft and smooth. Otherwise, it sticks to the nail and gets dragged as the nail grows.

Protection of nails is so important, especially during the Monsoons, when fungal infection can set in. Detergents can also lead to itchy and rashy conditions. Wear rubber gloves for your washing chores. Like cleaning with harsh chemicals, gardening, or doing anything that involves hot, soapy water dirtying your hand, always wear rubber, vinyl, nitrile, or plastic gloves — some of which have a cotton liner. It not only protects your polish but keeps anything harsh or drying in your cleaning solutions off your hand.

Massage a cream after your washing tasks, working it into the skin. This takes only a few minutes. Massage cream on the nails and the skin around the nails.

Choose from a range of hand creams, cuticle oil/creams /oils to moisturize them regularly to make them strong, shiny and healthy. I will recommend putting coconut oil around the cuticles daily to moisturize your nails for strong, long, healthy nails. Regular handwashing or use of hand sanitizer can dry out the skin and nail bed quickly, so try to moisturize after every wash, if possible. Coconut oil is excellent for rubbing into your nails and cuticles.

It is advised to wash the hands with lukewarm water to help keep the hands and nails soft and smooth.

Keep a travel-size hand cream enriched with fruit extracts or cuticle oil bottle at every sink in your home.

Apply warm almond oil, soften cuticles and push them back gently with a cotton bud. Use a cotton bud to clean beneath the nails too. Avoid cutting cuticles and using metal instruments. Apply almond oil or

olive oil on the nails and hands. Apply nail varnish, using smooth strokes, from the base of the nails to the tip. First, apply one coat of colour on all the nails. Wait for it to dry and then apply the second coat of colour.

Soak your feet in luke warm water for 10 minutes. The water should contain a few drops of a liquid hand wash and some fresh lemon juice. Next, cleanse your nails and scrub your feet with a foot scraper. Complete this routine by applying a nail cream. Avoid pushing the cuticles, as toe nail fungal infections are very common in monsoon.

As far as nail colours are concerned, pink is ideal for hot and humid weather. Shimmer is very much in, so go for silver shimmer for the day and gold for the night. Lately, dark colours have been in, like bright blue or green, but I feel that subtle colours are more suitable for monsoon hot weather. You can also go for icy colours like pink or mauve. Or, go for shades of brown, like coffee, bronze, copper, or sea shell and then add on glitter.

For a gala evening, go for gold or silver varnish, or try one of those colours with glittering stars. These come in many different colours, with gold or silver stars. As part of nail design, nail varnish can be applied in unusual colours like green, blue or purple. Or, use different colours for each nail.

Nail art has become a specialized field now a days. In the past, simple ways of nail art were followed, but now it is a highly creative field.

*(The author is an international fame beauty expert and is called herbal queen of India)*

# Wrestler Sikander of Maharashtra lifts 101st Int'l Bhatyari-Korga Kesari Dangal Title 2023

## TOP NEWS REPORT

KATRA, Jun 29: Wrestler Sikander Sheikh of Maharashtra defeated Wrestler Monu Dahia of Delhi and lifted "101st International Bhatyari-Korga Kesari Dangal Title 2023". Winner wrestler Sikander Sheikh was awarded with handsome cash prize of Rs. 1,31,000/- along with traditional "Gurj (Gadda) and Patta" by President J&K Indian Style Wrestling Association Shiv Kumar Sharma, while runner-up wrestler Monu Dahia got Rs. 80,000.

Dangal was organized by Rural Development Forum in association with J&K Indian Style Wrestling Association under the overall supervision of Ashok Sawhney (President), Sat Paul Verma, Ram Paul Sharma, Lochan Singh, Om Parkash Verma, Contractor Bablu, Som Dutt Sharma and Sahil Sharma.

70 renowned wrestlers of India participated in the one day long famous and historic Vishal Dangal which was witnessed by large gathering of



nearly 20,000 people of Jammu Province and Northern States. Wrestlers from India and Iran Participated.

Senior Vice President Indian Style Wrestling Association of India and President Kreedha Bharatia Jammu and Kashmir, Shiv Kumar Sharma was the chief guest on the occasion, who witnessed the whole event and encouraged the youths who participated. 35 wrestling bouts were played in the Dangal and an amount of Rs. 7,50,000 distributed in the shape of cash prizes among the winner and runner-up wrestlers by chief guest.

Kishan Morcha BJP J&K UT Prabari and

senior leader Nand Kishore Sharma, BDC Chairman Rehmat Ali, BMO Damsal Dr. Manjoo Ahmed and Ex. President Yuva Rajput Sabha, Rajana Singh (Happy) were Guests of Honour.

Prominent persons who were present on the occasion included Ram Paul Sharma, prominent social Activist and wrestling promoter, Sahil Sharma, Lochan Singh, Om Parkash Verma, Rupal Singh (Sarpanch), Balbir (Sarpanch), Anil Sharma (Sarpanch), Rajesh Sharma (Sarpanch) and Sub Inspector Sanjeev Sharma.

Second main bout was won by wrestler Hamid

of Iran who defeated wrestler Benia Min of J&K Police. Winner wrestler Hamid was awarded with cash prize of Rs. 61,000 while runner-up wrestler Benia Min got Rs. 40,000. Third bout was won by Ishaq Ahmed (Lallu) who defeated Shoota Khali of Chikka (Hararyana). Winner Lallu was awarded with cash prize of Rs. 40,000, while runner-up Shoota Khali got Rs. 30,000. Fourth bout was won by Nishar of Doda who defeated wrestler Taj of Punjab. Winner Nisar awarded with cash prize of Rs. 30,000 while runner-up Taj got Rs. 20,000.

Other Results: Yudhvir of Delhi beat Gamma

of Punjab, Nadeem of Doda beat Titi of Chikka (Hararyana), Gulshan of Sohanjana beat Robbin of Mulapur (Chandigarh), Amana of Punjab beat Muneer Khan of Nagrota, Jammu, Madan Singh of Reasi beat Asalam of Dhuleta (Punjab), Ajay Sharma of Udhampur beat Kamal of Mulapur, Rajesh Sharma of J&K Police beat Herjinder of Doom Charri (Punjab), Vishal of Delhi beat Ranjeet Singh of J&K Police, Noor Shakir of Merrut (U.P) beat Sahil of Reasi, Polu of Ludhiana (Punjab) beat Bablu of Basantgarh of J&K Police, bout played between Vikas of Dera Baba Nanak V/s Laikat Ali of Bajrangi Akhara Jammu ended in a draw. Shiv Kumar Sharma thanked the participants and exhorted upon youth to take part in sports which is the best way to channelize youth energy.

The Government of India is taking all out efforts to provide all basic sports facilities to the youth at their door steps to promote sports culture among youth he added.

# Army conducts Namaz on Eid-ul-Zuha



## TOP NEWS REPORT

GULMARG, Jun 29: In a profound display of communal harmony and unity, an Army Unit of Pir Panjal Brigade, under the aegis of Dagger Division, conducted the sacred Islamic prayer, Namaz, in the enchanting town of Gulmarg.

The event, held on the auspicious occasion of Eid-ul-Zuha (Bakrid), aimed to foster goodwill, understanding, and respect among people of different faiths while promoting a sense of unity and brotherhood within the region.

Set against the backdrop of Gulmarg's breathtaking natural beauty and spiritual significance, the prayer ceremony took place at the Ice Skating Ring, inviting individuals from diverse backgrounds

to join and witness this momentous occasion. This initiative, organised by the Army Unit, highlighted the army's unwavering commitment to nurturing communal harmony, strengthening the bond between different religious communities, and upholding the principles of diversity and inclusivity.

A senior officer of the Army Unit expressed appreciation for the diverse cultural fabric of Jammu & Kashmir, stating, "Our aim is to bridge gaps and build bridges of understanding among different communities. By organising this Namaz ceremony, we hope to demonstrate the message of peace, unity, and solidarity that is at the core of our armed forces."

The event received

overwhelming support from the residents of Gulmarg and the surrounding areas, who recognised the significance of such initiatives in fostering mutual respect and peaceful coexistence. The Army Unit remains committed to promoting social harmony, interfaith dialogue, and national integration by organising events that celebrate the diversity of the nation.

This exemplary event stands as a shining example of the Indian Army's dedication to upholding the values of inclusivity and unity among all citizens. It underscores the importance of recognizing and celebrating the shared heritage of our nation, transcending the boundaries of religion and ethnicity.

# Osaka Alloys and Steels Private Ltd commitment to protect environment, natural resources



## TOP NEWS REPORT

JAMMU, Jun 29: Deputy Mayor Jammu Municipal Corporation Baldev Singh Billaoria with Paryavaran Ratna Awardee and Osaka Alloys and Steels Pvt. Ltd. representative Sushil Singh Charak on Thursday discuss a recycling plastic waste, in Deputy Mayor's Office Jammu, to explore the possibilities of producing interlocking tiles and Plastic lumber from plastic waste. Jammu city produces over 200 tonnes approximately of plastic waste daily which can be recycled.

The Deputy Mayor interacted with Sushil Singh Charak of Osaka Alloys and Steels Pvt. Ltd. and discussed the possibility of manufacturing Plastic lumber and other from plastic waste. The products manufactured from the plastic waste are good for reuse and Plastic lumber are one such option.

Sushil Singh Charak Representative Osaka Alloys and Steels Private Limited also highlighted the Plastic lumber is a plastic form of lumber made of virgin

or recycled plastic. It is mostly made of plastic and binders such as fiber glass or rebar, not to be confused with wood-plastic composite lumber.

Widely employed in outdoor decking, it is also used for moulding and trim and garden furniture such as park benches. Resistant to cracking and splitting when appropriately installed, plastic lumber can be molded with or without simulated wood grain details. Even with a wood grain design, plastic lumber is still easy to distinguish visually from natural timber: the grains are the same uniform color as the rest of the material.

Manufacturers claim plastic lumber is more environment friendly and requires less maintenance than wood/plastic composites or rot-resistant wood. Commercially available polyvinyl chloride fiber glass composite lumber sold for decking meets stringent fire code standards because plastic lumber can displace wood timber (as harvested by forestry), it can be a carbon negative and a carbon capture and utilization technology.

# Dr Karan extends Eid-ul-Adha greetings

## TOP NEWS REPORT

SRINAGAR, Jun 29: Former Member Parliament and former Sadr-e-Riyasat, Dr Karan Singh has extended warm greetings on the auspicious occasion of Eid-ul-Adha to all fellow citizens of the country in general and Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh in particular.

In a statement issued here today, the former Member Parliament wished

for peace, harmony, and brotherhood among all the communities and called for spreading love and compassion. He said that the celebration of Eid-ul-Adha unites people and helps in creating a bond of togetherness.

Dr Karan Singh prayed to the divine force that the festival would bring happiness and joy in everyone's lives, and inspire all to follow the path of righteousness.

# NC leader Kamlesh extends Eid greetings to people

## TOP NEWS REPORT

KISHTWAR, Jun 29: Sarpanch Halqa Panchayat Pochhal A-2 and National Conference leader Kamlesh Kumari extended warm greetings and good wishes to the people of Kishtwar on the auspicious and joyous occasion of

Eid-ul-Azha and wished people a blissful time ahead.

Kamlesh Kumari also wished that people should celebrate the festival in true spirits of our composite culture of peace, brotherhood and co-existence among all sections of society.

# Dr. Bhanu felicitates at Golden Glory Awards

## TOP NEWS REPORT

MOHALI, Jun 29: Dr. Bhanu Pratap Singh Saluja, director of orthopaedics & joint replacement at Ivy Institute of Orthopaedics and Joint Replacement was by Bollywood actress Parineeti Chopra felicitated at Golden Glory Awards in Mumbai.

Dr. Bhanu was felicitated for the recognition for his groundbreaking work in the field of joint replacement, particularly his innovative 3D TMT resurfacing technique



which is also called total meniscal transplantation. This technique has revolutionized the field of joint replacement by

offering enhanced precision, durability, and improved patient outcomes.

Among others several

other prominent personalities including Bharti Singh, Sudhanshu Pandey, Rajpal Yadav, Gauhar Khan, Shreya

Saran, and Bhuvan Bam were also present during the occasion.

The Golden Glory Awards recognized Dr. Saluja's exceptional contributions to the medical field and his unwavering commitment to advancing orthopaedics and joint replacement.

Dr. Saluja said, "This award is a testament to our team's relentless pursuit of excellence and our commitment to providing the best possible care to our patients."

# JKESTW society greets JKites on Eid

## TOP NEWS REPORT

JAMMU, Jun 29: Jammu and Kashmir Excise and state Taxes employees Welfare (JKESTW) Society greeted JKites on Eid-ul-Adha.

In his message Chief Patron Aslam Chodhary IAS (retd) former VC JDA said that he extends his heartiest greetings and best wishes to all.

Patron Naseem Malik said that holy festival is a celebration of the spirit of sacrifice and brother-

hood. Chief Patron Excise B.S Mastana Retd DC Excise said the joyous occasion inspire each one of us to follow the path of love.

President of Society Vijay Sharma Retd DC in his message conveyed that May this festival of Eid-ul-Adha usher in peace prosperity and happiness for all he added.

Senior Vice President Mohan Lal Sharma (Retd KAS) extended his greetings to all Muslim brethren.

# Dimple offers Eid prayers in Jamia Masjid

## TOP NEWS REPORT

JAMMU, Jun 29: Sunil Dimple President Mission Statehood Jammu and Kashmir visited Jamia Masjid, Khadika Talab, Jammu and met with the Qazi sahib who read Namaz.

Dimple offered prayers in Jamia Masjid Khadika Talab, for strengthening and restoration of happiness, prosperity, communal harmony and brotherhood in Jammu and Kashmir.

He also prayed and demanded for the restoration J&K State, implementation of the instru-



ment of accession conditions, constitution of interim govt till assembly elections were held.

Dimple, said the interim

govt of all the political parties, till the assembly elections held is only a way out to come out from the present situation.

# NYK Poonch in collaboration with SSMCS organises awareness program

## TOP NEWS REPORT

MANDI, Jun 29: Nehru Yuva Kendra (NYK) Sangathan Poonch, Ministry of youth affairs and sports Govt of India in collaboration With Sir Syed Memorial Convent School Surankote organised Awareness Programme on theme "Catch the Rain, where it falls, when it falls".

This programme was coordinated by Mohd Maqsood Ex NYV, President Choudhary Super Star youth club Lassa-



na. In this event many students of the School participated which displayed beautiful and meaning full models on rain water harvesting. Different students and

Staff members highlight the importance of rain water harvesting in their speeches. Principal of the school Manzoor Ganie was the chief guest on the occasion who wel-

come the guests and students.

Others who were present on the occasion were Mohd Showkit Qureshi, Maqsood Ahmed, Samreen Bhat and more.

## NOTICE

M/s Jay Automotive has applied for transfer of lease hold right in the favour of M/s Osaka Alloys and Steels Private Limited, Unit II, Samba and applied for Subsequent De-registration in the Office of General Manager DIC, Samba. Unit is formally registered with DIC Samba, E.M No. 070191100379 Part-II. In case, any General Public /Govt. Department, State/ Central having any objection may intimate General Manager DIC Samba within seven days.

## 'RRR' team, Karan Johar, Mani Ratnam among new members invited to join AMPAS

The "RRR" team, including actors Ram Charan, Jr NTR and composer MM Keeravani, as well as filmmakers Mani Ratnam and Karan Johar are among the 398 artistes and executives who have received invitations to join the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences (AMPAS).

"RRR" lyricist Chandrabose, who along with Keeravani won the Oscar for best original song for the film's blockbuster track "Naatu Naatu" in March, has also received an invitation. Two other invitees include "RRR" cinematographer KK Senthil Kumar and production designer Sabu Cyril, a press release stated.

Indian names feature heavily in Academy's class of 2023 with the inclusion of Shaunak Sen, the director of Oscar-nominated documentary, Siddharth Roy Kapur, the producer of India's official Oscar entry "Chhello Show", and Chaitanya Tamhane, known for critically-acclaimed Marathi titles "The Disciple" and "Court" in the list.

It also includes Girish Balakrishnan and Kranti Sarma from the field of production and technology; visual effects artistes Hareesh Hingorani and PC Sanath; film executive Shivani Rawat and Shivani Pandya Malhotra, the managing



director of Saudi Arabia's Red Sea International Film Festival.

According to the AMPAS, the class of 2023 include 40 per cent women and 34 per cent

from underrepresented ethnic/racial communities. 52 per cent of the invitees are from 50 countries and territories outside the US. 76 Oscar nominees, includ-

ing 22 winners, are among the invitees.

In a statement, Academy CEO Bill Kramer and Academy President Janet Yang said the organisation is proud to welcome the "artists and professionals into our membership".

"They represent extraordinary global talent across cinematic disciplines and have made a vital impact on the arts and sciences of motion pictures and on movie fans worldwide," they added.

The Academy has been actively working to introduce more diversity in its voting to avoid a controversy like 2016 when the Oscars were dubbed "white" for failing to recognise talents of colour.

The 2023 batch boasts of major Hollywood names including Academy award-winning actor Ke Huy Quan, Austin Butler, Kerry Condon, Bill Hader, Nicholas Hoult, Stephanie Hsu, Lashana Lynch, Paul Mescal, Park Hae-il, filmmaking duo The Daniels (Daniel Kwan and Daniel Scheinert) and musicians Taylor Swift, Abel "The Weeknd" Tesfaye and David Byrne.

In 2022, the organisation had invited 397 new members which included Indian names such as actors Kajol, Suriya, filmmakers Reema Kagti, Sushmit Ghosh, Rintu Thomas and Pan Nalin.

## Anushka Kaushik gets candid about her role in Lust Stories 2



After being part of projects like Ghar Waapsi, Crash Course, Thar, and Maharani 2

among others, Anushka Kaushik talked about being part of Lust Stories 2.

Anushka shared, "I am playing Rekha in Lust Stories 2 and it's completely different from all the characters I have played before. I cannot reveal much about it but when this character was offered to me, I knew quite little about it but then I gained knowledge and prepped really hard for my role."

"All I can say is that it was a really interesting character play and it gave me an incredible dimension altogether to showcase my abilities as an actor".

She further added, "So, I got this role by Mukesh Chhabra sir and when I got the call from them, they informed me it's for Lust Stories Season 2 and I was genuinely very excited given the amount of love season 1 received. We had meetings and readings for the role and to be honest, I was skeptical if I would be able to do it but then I prepped really hard for it."

## Madirakshi says finding quality work is quite a task



Even though the web as a new medium has opened up and a number of channels and platforms are coming up, finding the right work opportunity is still quite a task.

Actor Madirakshi Mundle shares her experience. "You have to be at the top of people's minds, or better roles should be written for you. But you have to understand that not every character becomes a part of people's lives, and not every story becomes a hit. Some basics remain the same. When actors play the characters well and bring a personal touch, that makes those roles iconic. A good story keeps viewers hooked to the end. So, whatever the medium, numerous production houses, and actors, the basics that will make up something memorable will not change much," she says.

## Shirley Setia collaborates with Arjun Kanungo for music album



Shirley Setia, singer and actress, is set to release her new album, Industry 2, in collaboration with Arjun Kanungo. Shirley says, "Working on Industry 2 with Arjun has been incredible. We've created something very special. We have put in hours of hard work. Shooting in Tokyo with the nicest and hardest-working team definitely had to be the best part of creating this album. Industry 2 is unlike anything I've done before, and I can't wait for everyone to hear it!"

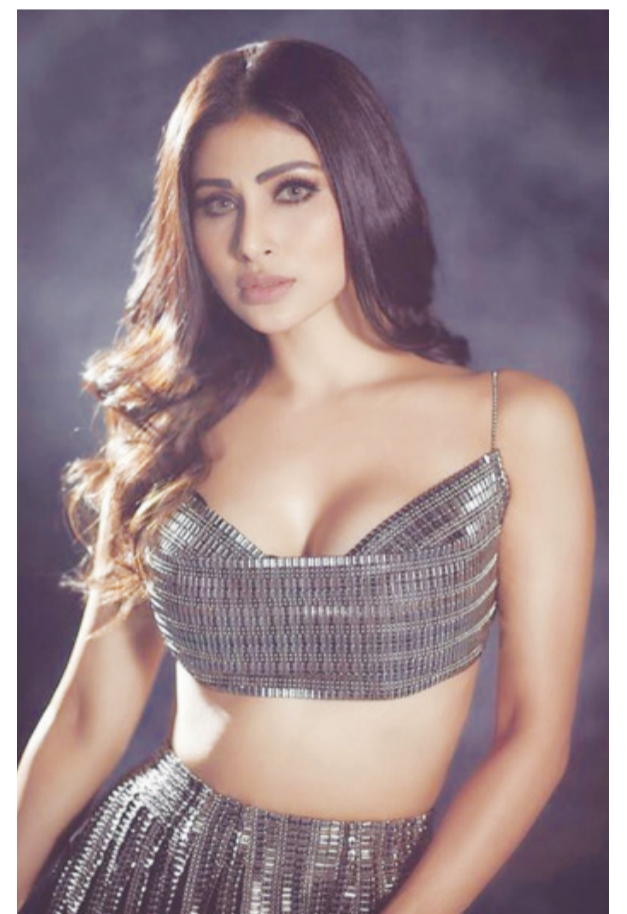
## Mouni Roy says that she is grateful for all the work she's getting

Brahmastra actor Mouni Roy has been working tirelessly to fulfill her work commitments recently.

Since her appearance at the Cannes Film Festival, Mouni has been juggling a multitude of projects. Mouni shot for a magazine cover in the town of Karjat, followed by the IIFA Awards held in Dubai, where she won an award for her performance in the Ayan Mukerji-directorial, Brahmastra.

Currently she is judging a dance reality show in Kolkata. Juggling between script reading and narrations for her next, she also launched her restaurant, Badmaash, in Mumbai.

Mouni says, "I am humbled by the opportunities that come my way and grateful for the chance to work."



## Anjali Tatrari talks about her character, Yuvika

Sony SAB's Vanshaj has elements of family drama, political intrigue, and the interpersonal dynamics of a wealthy business family.

As the story unfolds, Yuvika (played by Anjali Tatrari), a young and ambitious member of the Mahajan family, sets her sights on joining the family office as an employee.

Anjali says, "Yuvika is full of strength and determination and decides to challenge the norms of the Mahajan household. In the story, viewers will see her resilience and ambition as she strives to carve her own path in the family business. Yuvika's story reminds us that sometimes the greatest support we can find is within ourselves. I hope viewers are inspired by her journey and find the courage to pursue their own dreams."



## Though OTT is introducing new content every week, here are some shows that refuse to budge from their top slots

In the era of streaming platforms and on-demand content, binge-watching has become a ubiquitous cultural phenomenon. As digital mediums continue to attract audiences from around the world, we bring the top trending shows on OTT. Brace yourself; there's lot to catch up on the entertainment world and it's just the first half of the year, 2023.

The right heat With the month of June, it isn't just the weather but Indian crime shows also turned up the heat quotient. Simultaneously arrived the Netflix series, Scoop (IMDb rating—7.7/10), and the Disney+Hotstar series, School of Lies (5.5/10).

For Hansal Mehta, director of Scoop, the world of print media, journalism and news did it this time. Again derived from a real story, like his earlier Scam 1992, Karishma Tanna plays real-life crime reporter Jigna Vora on screen. The series is mostly scripted from latter's autobiographical memoir, Behind Bars in Byculla: My Days in Prison. Besides Tanna, the series has Mohd. Zeeshan Ayyub, Harman Baweja and Prosenjit Chatterjee feature in key roles.

Truth wins

Talking of series inspired from the reality, there's Trial By Fire (7.8/10), an Indian Hindi-language crime drama mini-series created by Prashant Nair, Kevin Luperchio, and Randeeep Jha. It is based on the true story of the Uphaar fire incident, as told in the book Trial by Fire: The Tragic Tale of the Uphaar Fire Tragedy by Neelam and Shekhar Krishnamoorthy. It gives an inside view of the lives lost and pain it caused to the families. This series currently holds a 100 per cent Rotten Tomatoes rating. It is available on Netflix. The ensemble cast includes Abhay Deol, Ashish Vidyarthi, Anupam Kher, Rajshri Deshpande, Rajesh Tailang, Ratna Pathak, Shilpa Shukla and Shardul Bharadwaj.

Best of the best Pataal Lok-fame director Avinash Arun's latest series, School of Lies, also garnered much attention. Though its IMDb rating was not so impressive, it was hailed by critics as well as binge-watching audiences. It revolves around a 12-year old boy who goes missing from a boarding school. It makes for an engaging experience with brilliantly orchestrated web of lies,

trauma and secrets.

Back in time

Vikramaditya Motwane's Jubilee (8.5/10) had left audiences asking for more. It made Chandigarh born actors Aparshakti Khurana and Wamiqa Gabbi shine.

Controversial but adorable Another Netflix series, Rana Naidu (7.2/10), has been in the top 10 since its release two months back. And official adaptation of the 2013 crime series, Ray Donovanit, is created and directed by Karan Anshuman and Suparn Verma. It stars Venkatesh Daggubati, Rana Daggubati, Suchitra Pillai, Gaurav Chopra, and Surveen Chawla. Many objected to its language, forcing Netflix to remove the Telugu version of the series.

Winsome combination

The Family Man director jodi Raj & DK when got Shahid Kapoor onboard for a web series, it was already anticipated to be a hit. Titled Farzi (8.4/10), it's a fictional story on counterfeit notes. The series has been renewed for a second season. It also stars Vijay Sethupathi, Kay Kay Menon, Raashii Khanna, and Bhuvan Arora. Also veteran actor Amol Palekar made a

comeback with this one.

From foreign land

Class (6.2/10) is a Hindi-language crime thriller based on the Spanish series, Elite. Set in Hampton International, a fictional exclusive high school in Delhi, it revolves around three working-class children, and their wealthy classmates. Netflix confirmed the series' renewal for a second season.

Seasonal game

Mostly when a popular series progresses to multiple seasons, the quality of content gets compromised. But for Asur (9.2/10) and Rocket Boys (8.9/10) this doesn't hold true. Both the series released their second season on Jio Cinema and SonyLIV, respectively. If one is based on the lives of two biggest scientists of India, the other is a fictional story laced with mythology.

Another series that delivers a second season is The Night Manager (7.6/10). This Sandeep Modi-directorial Part 2 will stream on June 30. It is based on the novel of the same name by John Le Carre. It has Anil Kapoor, Aditya Roy Kapur, and Sobhita Dhulipala.

## 'Spirit of togetherness': PM Modi greets people on Eid ul-Adha

NEW DELHI, Jun 29 (Agencies): Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday greeted people on the occasion of Eid ul-Adha.

"Greetings on Eid ul-Adha. May this day bring happiness and prosperity to everyone. May it also uphold the spirit of togetherness and harmony in our society. Eid Mubarak!" he tweeted.

The festival is



observed to commemorate the spirit of sacrifice and devotion to the Almighty.

## UP: Woman shot dead by kin, police suspect honour killing

MUZAFFARNAGAR, Jun 29 (Agencies): A 22-year-old woman, who eloped and got married a year ago, was shot dead allegedly by a family member in Alipur Aterna village here, with police suspecting it to be a case of honour killing. The incident took place in the Budhana police station area of the Muzaffarnagar district on Wednesday evening. The victim, Farhana, had returned to the village after getting married in court a few days ago. She was

on her way to buy medicines when she was shot dead allegedly by a family member, police said today.

Police said that the accused fled the spot immediately after the incident. The body has been sent for post-mortem, Deputy SP Vinay Gautam told agency on Thursday.

The village head claimed the victim's family did not approve of the relationship and this might have led to the killing.

## Home Minister Amit Shah To Address Public Rally In Rajasthan Tomorrow

NEW DELHI, Jun 29 (Agencies): Union Home Minister Amit Shah is scheduled to address a public rally in Rajasthan tomorrow to highlight the achievements of Prime Minister Narendra Modi-led central government.

Shah will highlight the past nine years' achievements of the Modi government during a rally organized at Gandhi Ground in Rajasthan's Udaipur on Friday afternoon, said sources.

The Home Minister's public rally is part of BJP's plan for holding a month-long mass reach-out program across the country as PM Modi-led Central government completed its nine years in office in two successive terms on May 30.

The senior Bharatiya Janata Party leader is



learned to share the achievements of the Modi government for the welfare of people across the country in the past nine years.

Among those, some achievements include Pradhanmantri Ujjwala Yojana fuels the LPG revolution, holistic growth with a rise in higher education institutions, the impetus to road infrastructure under Bharatmala Pariyojana, empowering women, making qual-

ity medicines affordable for all, digital revolution by transforming India's economy through digital transactions, revolutionizing medical education in India, Northeast India's journey to end insurgency, Jal Jeevan Mission and record growth in the number of airports in India.

Abrogation of Article 370, along with Article 35A, the two articles in the Constitution of India that gave a special status to the former state

of Jammu and Kashmir, is among other achievements of the Modi government that might be counted by Shah during his rally in Udaipur.

The special status implied that Jammu and Kashmir were different from the rest of the country, and were instrumental in fuelling separatism. The two articles were abrogated by the Modi government in 2019, fulfilling a poll promise.

Article 35A gave the state the right to determine who is a permanent resident of the state, which was added to the Constitution by presidential order, not by an amendment. Article 370 said that all the provisions of the Constitution of India do not apply to the state of Jammu and Kashmir, and had listed the provisions that applied.

While Article 35A was abrogated and it no longer exists, article 370 was amended, and it remains in the Constitution, saying "that all the provision of the Constitution also applies Jammu and Kashmir." Along with this, the state of Jammu and Kashmir was also bifurcated into two union territories--Jammu and Kashmir with an Assembly, and Ladakh without one.

Handling Covid-19 is among other achievements of the Modi government which Shah may focus on in his address and its world's largest free immunization program, under which over 200 crore doses of made-in-India Covid-19 vaccines have been administered. The Cowin platform developed to administer the vaccination program has been another success.

## Delhi Police seek death sentence for Shahbad Dairy murder accused

NEW DELHI, Jun 29 (Agencies): The Delhi Police on Thursday said that the murder of 16-year-old girl in Shahbad Dairy area was well-planned and they have put together a watertight case to ensure the accused gets death.

"This was a case of well-planned murder which was carried out in revenge. We have all the evidence and within a month of incident we have submitted the charge sheet to get jus-

tice for the family of the victim," Special Commissioner of Police (Law and Order) Dependra Pathak said.

"We carried out the investigation with a professional and focused approach in the Sakshi murder case and filed a charge sheet before the court in record time. We have tried to make the case as watertight as possible so that the accused gets the harshest punishment which is death sentence," he added.

Police have filed a charge sheet against Sahil, the man accused of repeatedly stabbing and bludgeoning the minor girl to death in full public view in the north-west Delhi's Shahbad Dairy locality on May 28.

The 640-page charge sheet was filed before a POCSO court on Tuesday under POCSO's Section 12 (sexual harassment of a child) and sections of the Scheduled Caste and Schedule Tribe (Prevention of Atrocities) Act,

court sources said.

The accused has also been charged under IPC sections 302 (murder), 354 A (sexual harassment) and 509 (word, gesture or act intended to insult the modesty of a woman) along with the provisions of the Arms Act.

The horrifying murder was caught on a CCTV camera and the footage showed the youth thrusting a knife into the girl no less than 20 times as several of people passed by but none

intervened to save her. She had 34 injury marks on her body and her skull was smashed, police had said after the incident.

Sahil was arrested on May 29 from Bulandshahr in Uttar Pradesh.

Police said the investigation revealed that Sahil and Sakshi were in a relationship but often quarrelled. Both had a fight on May 27, following which Sahil decided to take revenge and killed her brutally the next day.

## 2 children die of suspected food poisoning after eating noodles, parathas in Haryana



SONIPAT, Jun 29 (Agencies): Two children, aged 7 and 5, died due to suspected food poisoning in Haryana's Sonapat. The incident was reported from Mayapuri Colony in the city, where three children

of the same family fell ill after they consumed noodles, chowmein and parathas.

The children were taken to a hospital, where two of them passed away during treatment.

The deceased children were identified as Hema and Taran.

Meanwhile, the police arrived at the scene after they received information about the incident and said an investigation into the matter was underway.

The exact cause of the deaths would be ascertained only after the postmortem report is received, the police said.

## Rahul Gandhi's convoy en route to violence-hit Churachandpur stopped by Manipur Police at Bishnupur

IMPHAL, Jun 29 (Agencies): Congress leader Rahul Gandhi's convoy was on Thursday stopped by the Manipur Police at Bishnupur, about 20 kilometres from Imphal, officials said.

After arriving in Imphal, he was travelling in a convoy to violence-hit Churachandpur to visit relief camps in the area.

Police officials said the convoy was stopped fearing violence along the route.

They said that tyres were burnt on the highway near Utlou village in Bishnupur district and a few stones were thrown at the convoy.

"We fear repetition of such events and hence as a precaution, requested the convoy to halt at Bishnupur," a police officer told agency.

Congress office-bearers are speaking with the police and Army authorities to ensure safe passage for their party leader.

More than 100 people have lost their



lives in the ethnic violence between Meitei and Kuki communities in the northeastern state so far.

Clashes first broke out on May 3 after a 'Tribal Solidarity March' was organised in the hill districts to protest against the Meitei community's demand for Scheduled Tribe (ST) status.

Meiteis account for about 53 per cent of Manipur's population and live mostly in the Imphal Valley. Tribals—Nagas and Kukis—constitute another 40 per cent of the population and reside in the hill districts.

## Heavy rain pounds Thane, Palghar in Maharashtra; 2 swept away in flood waters, many areas inundated

THANE/PALGHAR, Jun 29 (Agencies): Heavy rain pounded Thane and neighbouring Palghar district of Maharashtra in the last 24 hours, resulting in water-logging in many areas and a number of incidents of tree fall, officials said on Thursday.

Two persons were swept away in swollen water bodies in the last two days. While the body of one of them was recovered, efforts were on to trace the other person, they said.

A number of cars were also damaged in Thane district in rain-related incidents, the officials said.

A portion of a compound wall of the upscale NRI Complex in



Navi Mumbai township of Thane district collapsed on Wednesday night after heavy rains, Navi Mumbai Municipal Corporation's disaster management cell chief Dr Babasaheb Rajale told agency on Thursday.

No person was injured in the incident, he said, adding a few cars parked in the complex were damaged.

A 16-year-old boy from Diva in Thane city was swept away in a swollen nullah on Wednesday night and efforts were still on to trace him, officials said.

Thane city received 200.08 mm rainfall in the 24-hour period ending at 8.30 am on Thursday, Thane Municipal Corporation's disaster management cell chief Yasin Tadv said.

Since January this year, the city has so far recorded 506.46 mm rainfall, compared to 198.32 mm in the same period last year, he said.

Following heavy rain on Wednesday as well as on Thursday morning, several low-lying areas in Bhiwandi, Kalyan and Ulhasnagar townships of Thane were flooded, district disaster control room said.

Water entered several houses in low-lying areas and Manpada police station in Dombivli, while various offices reported leakages following heavy showers, it said.

A video of the water-logged police station went viral on social media platforms.

Local firemen and disaster management cell teams were on their toes, attending to several calls of water-logging and tree fall in Thane city in which at least half-a-dozen cars were damaged, Tadv said.

In Palghar, a villager, Devram Ramji Gimbali (45), was swept away in a swollen stream in Wada taluka on Tuesday when he went out to buy seeds for growing paddy, district disaster management cell chief Vivekanand Kadam told agency.

The body was recovered from the stream on Wednesday and sent to a government hospital for postmortem. A case of accidental death was registered, he added.

## 'Petty and partisan government in Delhi' trying to scuttle Anna Bhagya scheme in Karnataka: Congress

Says state government will transfer up to Rs 750 per month to households until enough stock of rice is procured to implement the scheme

NEW DELHI, Jun 29 (Agencies): The Congress on Thursday said the "petty and partisan government in Delhi" will not be able to stop the party government in Karnataka to fulfill the promise it made to the people of the state regarding giving 10 kg rice free of cost to BPL families.

"The Congress Government in Karnataka was more than willing to buy rice at Rs 34 per kg from FCI to implement its Anna Bhagya 2.0 Guarantee", Congress

General Secretary Jairam Ramesh today said in a statement.

"But the Modi Government brazenly stopped FCI from selling it, even as it has allowed FCI to supply rice at Rs 20 per kg for ethanol production", Ramesh added.

The Congress leader said that in keeping with the promise made to the people of Karnataka, the state government would now transfer up to Rs 750 per month to households until enough stock of rice is procured



to implement 10kg free rice scheme.

"We have said it before and we will say it again, there's never been a more petty and partisan government in Delhi

than the Modi Government. But that won't stop us from fulfilling our promise to the people of Karnataka", the Congress Party said in the statement.

## Condition of Bhim Army chief Aazad stable, vehicle used by attackers recovered: Police

SAHARANPUR (UP), Jun 29 (Agencies): The vehicle used by the attackers of Dalit leader and Bhim Army chief Chandra Shekhar Aazad has been recovered from a village here, police said on Thursday.

A bullet grazed Aazad's abdomen when unidentified assailants opened fire at his car in Saharanpur district's Deoband where he had gone to attend a ritual at a supporter's home on Wednesday evening.

The vehicle was seized from Miragpur village late on Wednesday night. The number plate of the car used in the attack showed it was registered in Haryana, police said.

Superintendent of Police (City) Abimanyu



Manglik said the Bhim Army chief was undergoing treatment at the district hospital of Saharanpur and his condition was stable.

There was heavy deployment of police force on the district hospital premises as a precautionary measure as Aazad's supporters started gathering there

Bhim army chief was taken to a community health centre and later shifted to the district hospital, Senior Superintendent of Police of Saharanpur Vipin Tada said.

"The crime scene was examined by a forensic team. As per preliminary findings, four shots were fired at Aazad's vehicle. There were four to five attackers," the SSP said.

Meanwhile, the Azad Samaj Party's founder member and media in-charge Ajay Gautam told PTI that a memorandum would be sent to the President of India as well as the Uttar Pradesh chief minister and governor demanding Z-plus security for Chandra Shekhar Aazad.

## Want to strike 'truly ambitious' trade deal with India: UK PM Rishi Sunak

**There is huge potential to step up bilateral trade ties, says 43-year-old British-Indian leader**

LONDON, Jun 29 (Agencies): British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak has reaffirmed his commitment to a "truly ambitious" free trade agreement (FTA) with India and indicated his plans to visit New Delhi for the G20 Summit in September.

Hosting a special reception to celebrate India Global Forum's UK-India Week 2023 in the garden of 10 Downing Street in London, Sunak said Prime Minister Narendra Modi and he agrees that there is a huge potential to step up bilateral trade ties.

The 43-year-old British-Indian leader interacted with business leaders and celebrities, including boxing champion Mary Kom, musicians Shankar Mahadevan and Zakir Hussain, Bollywood stars Sonam Kapoor and Vivek Oberoi, on Wednesday evening as part of what he dubbed as a "big moment" in the bilateral calendar and the start of an Indian summer for the UK.

"Prime Minister Modi and I agree there's huge potential here. We're making great progress together on the 2030 Roadmap and we want to strike a truly ambitious trade deal that benefits both our nations, bringing tremendous opportunities to businesses and consumers, both in India and here at home," said Sunak.



"It's not just UK-India Week, but a whole Indian summer. And I don't just mean the hot weather we're having, I mean that over the next few weeks, the eyes of the world will be on India. There's the G20 in New Delhi, I can't wait to be there," he said.

India and the UK recently concluded the tenth round of FTA negotiations and an 11th round is set to begin in the next few weeks.

At the UK-India Week reception, the British Prime Minister

was joined by his wife Akshata Murty and joked that the garden party was also in honour of his mother-in-law Sudha Murty, who is visiting from India.

"There is so much to celebrate. The links between our two countries are closer than ever. Just look at the Coronation of His Majesty the King. On that most historic day, people of Indian heritage were at the heart of proceedings, presenting the Coronation regalia and as part of the delegation of faith leaders," he said.

"It shows the depth of the bonds we share, the living bridge between our two nations,

the thriving business links, and the flow of ideas and investments, all stronger than ever. But of course, we want to do more," he said.

"Here we are, in Downing Street, with a Prime Minister of Indian heritage, with all of you at the top of your game, leaders in your fields showing that anything is possible. So, let's keep raising our sights and let's keep scoring boundaries as we build this partnership," added Sunak, using a cricketing metaphor as he also referenced the cricket World Cup to be hosted by India later this year as the "biggest event of all".

The India Global Forum's (IGF) fifth annual UK-India Week, which runs until Friday, brings together ministers, business leaders and policymakers to deliberate on the key sectors of focus within the bilateral relationship.

"We are all here, from such diverse backgrounds, experiences and journeys, yet what unites us is our passion and contribution to enhancing what I describe as the winning partnership between the UK and India," said IGF founder Manoj Ladwa.

## New Zealand says it's the first to ban thin plastic bags used in supermarkets

WELLINGTON, Jun 29 (Agencies): Beginning Saturday, New Zealand will become the first country to ban the thin plastic bags that supermarket customers used to collect their fruit and vegetables.

The new ban will also extend to plastic straws and silverware, as the government expands a campaign against single-use plastics it started in 2019 when it banned the thicker plastic shopping bags that customers used to carry home their grocery items.

These days, most customers bring their own reusable tote bags to stores.

Officials estimate that on average, each New Zealander sends more than three-quarters of a ton of waste to landfills every year.

"New Zealand produces too much waste, too much plastic waste," said Associate Environment Minister Rachel

Brooking.

Brooking said the 2019 bag ban had already prevented over 1 billion plastic bags from being used in New Zealand, and the new ban on thin bags would add a further reduction of 150 million bags per year.

Officials investigated concerns the latest ban wouldn't help the environment much if customers simply switched to using disposable paper bags to collect their fruit and vegetables.

"The answer was still yes, it's still worth doing this, but we really want to reduce single-use anything packaging," Brooking said.

"So we want people to be bringing their own bags, and supermarkets are selling reusable produce bags."

Brooking said the emphasis would be on educating people but that officials could impose penalties on businesses that chose to flaunt the rules.

The Countdown chain

of supermarkets has begun selling polyester mesh bags that can be washed and reused.

Catherine Langabeer, Countdown's head of sustainability, said the mesh bags were tested to be reused up to 5,000 times each.

Countdown was working hard to get customers to think of reusable fruit-and-vegetable bags as the norm, she said.

"But we know change is hard and will take them a little while," Langabeer said.

"We get some grumpy customers." She said other customers were finding creative ways to carry home their purchases using no plastic.

Critics have questioned the liberal government's environmental record, pointing out that the nation's overall greenhouse gas emissions have not decreased since the government symbolically declared a climate emergency in 2020.

## 150 Protesters Arrested Amid Ongoing Violence In France Over Teen's Murder

PARIS, Jun 29 (Agencies): Violent protests broke out in France in the early hours of Thursday as anger grows over the police killing of a teenager, with security forces arresting 150 people in the chaos that saw balaclava-clad protesters burning cars and setting off fireworks.

Nahel M., 17, was shot in the chest at point-blank range on Tuesday morning in an incident that has reignited debate in France about police tactics long criticised by rights groups over the treatment of people in low-income suburbs, particularly ethnic minorities.

The teenager's mother called for a march on Thursday afternoon in the Paris suburb of Nanterre where he was killed, in tribute to her only child.

In a sign of the seriousness of the situation, President Emmanuel Macron called an early morning crisis meeting of his ministers, the Elysee announced.

There had already been clashes the previous evening and while Wednesday night began calmly, unrest erupted in other French cities, including Toulouse, Dijon and Lyon before violence after midnight hit the Paris region, where around 2,000 riot police had been deployed.

"A night of intolerable violence against symbols of the republic, with town halls, schools and police stations set on fire or attacked," Interior Minister Gerald Darmanin wrote on Twitter as he announced the 150 arrests figure.

He expressed support for police but added in an apparent swipe at the hard-left: "Shame on those who did not call for calm."

"Justice for Nahel" In the region around Nanterre, masked demonstrators dressed in black, launched fireworks and firecrackers at security forces.

A thick column of

smoke billowed above the area where agency journalists saw more than a dozen cars and garbage cans set ablaze and barriers blocking off roads.

Graffiti sprayed on the walls of one building called for "justice for Nahel" and said, "police kill".

In the working-class 18th and 19th districts of northeastern Paris, police fired flashballs to disperse protesters burning rubbish, but instead of leaving, the crowd responded by throwing bottles.

"We are sick of being treated like this. This is for Nahel, we are Nahel," said two young men calling themselves "Avengers" as they wheeled rubbish bins from a nearby estate to add to a burning barricade.

One said his family had lived in France for three generations but "they are never going to accept us".

In the Essonne region south of the capital, a group set a bus on fire after forcing all the passengers off, police said, while in Clamart a tram was set on fire.

In the southern city of Toulouse, several cars were torched and responding police and firefighters pelted with projectiles, a police source said, while authorities reported similar scenes in Dijon and Lyon.

At France's second-largest prison complex, Fresnes, protesters attacked security at the entrance with fireworks, a police source told AFP.

"They did not enter the prison grounds. The police were quickly called in," the source added.

"Unforgivable" The victim was pulled over for breaking traffic rules.

Police initially reported that an officer had shot at the teenager because he was driving at him, but this was contradicted by a video circulating on social media

and authenticated by agency.

The footage shows the two policemen standing by the side of the stationary car, with one pointing a weapon at the driver.

A voice is heard saying: "You are going to get a bullet in the head."

The police officer then appears to fire as the car abruptly drives off.

Hoping to tamp down the spreading violence, authorities have pleaded for calm.

On Wednesday, the Nanterre town hall urged an end to the "destructive spiral", while the government issued rare criticism of the security forces.

"A teenager was killed. That is inexplicable and unforgivable," President Emmanuel Macron said during an official visit to Marseille, southern France.

France is haunted by the prospect of a repeat of 2005 riots sparked by the death of two black boys during a police chase. Those protests resulted in around 6,000 people arrested.

"There are all the ingredients for another explosion potentially," one government adviser told AFP on condition of anonymity.

Last year, 13 people were killed after refusing to stop for police traffic checks, with a law change in 2017 that gave officers greater powers to use their weapons now under scrutiny.

"What I see on this video is the execution by police of a 17-year-old kid, in France, in 2023, in broad daylight," said Greens party leader Marine Tondelier said.

But far-right leader Marine Le Pen said the officer was entitled to the "presumption of innocence".

The 38-year-old policeman filmed firing the lethal shot was taken into custody and is under investigation for voluntary manslaughter.

## India removed from UNSG report on impact of armed conflict on children

**UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres has also called upon India to implement remaining measures identified in consultation with his special representative and United Nations**

UNITED NATIONS, Jun 29 (Agencies): UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres has removed India from his annual report on the impact of armed conflict on children, citing "measures taken by the government to better protect" them.

Guterres said in his report last year, he had welcomed the engagement of the Indian government with his special representative and noted that it might lead to the removal of India as a situation of concern.

In his 2023 report on Children and Armed Conflict, the UN chief said, "In view of the measures taken by the government to better protect children, India has been removed from the report in 2023."

Guterres highlighted the technical mission of the office of his special representative in July 2022 to identify areas of cooperation for child protection, and the workshop on strengthening child protection held in Jammu and Kashmir last November by the government, with the participation of the



United Nations.

In his latest report, he also called upon India to implement the remaining measures identified in consultation with his special representative and the United Nations.

These include the training of armed and security forces on child protection, prohibition of the use of lethal and non-lethal force on children, including ending the use of pellet guns, ensuring that children are detained as a last resort and for the shortest appropriate period of time, Guterres said.

He also stressed the implementation of measures to prevent all forms of ill-treatment in detention and the full implementation of the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act and the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act.

Briefing reporters on Tuesday, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict Virginia Gamba said that for the last two years, "we have been working very closely with India".

"India decided to start a prevention engagement," she said, adding the country indicated that it was ready to start engagement to see if it could put in place measures that could be sustained through time and would allow for it to be removed from the report.

In last year's report, Guterres had said he was concerned by the "increased number of violations against children verified in Jammu and Kashmir", and had

called upon the Indian government to strengthen child protection.

The UN chief had welcomed the legal and administrative framework for the protection of children and improved access to child protection services in Chhattisgarh, Assam, Jharkhand, Odisha and Jammu and Kashmir, and progress in the creation of a Jammu and Kashmir Commission for Protection of Child Rights.

New Delhi had expressed concerns that the 2022 report included situations that are "not situations of armed conflict" or threats to the maintenance of international peace and security.

In his annual report on children and armed conflict released here Tuesday, Guterres said that globally in 2022, children continued to be disproportionately affected by armed conflict, and the number of children verified as affected by grave violations increased compared with 2021.

The United Nations verified 27,180 grave violations, of which

24,300 were committed in 2022 and 2,880 were committed earlier but verified only in 2022. Violations affected 18,890 children (13,469 boys, 4,638 girls, 783 sex unknown) in 24 situations and one regional monitoring arrangement, it said.

The highest numbers of violations were the killing (2,985) and maiming (5,655) of 8,631 children, followed by the recruitment and use of 7,622 children and the abduction of 3,985 children. Children were detained for actual or alleged association with armed groups (2,496), including those designated as terrorist groups by the United Nations, or for national security reasons, Guterres said in his report.

The United Nations verified the killing (253) and maiming (656) of 909 children (732 boys, 177 girls), attributed to unidentified perpetrators (694), Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant-Khorasan (ISIL-KP) (112), the Taliban (98) and cross-border shelling from Pakistan (five).

## 3 people stabbed at University of Waterloo in Canada, suspect in police custody

TORONTO, Jun 29 (Agencies): A professor and two students were stabbed Wednesday during a class on "gender issues" at a university in the Canadian city of Waterloo and a suspect has been taken into custody, police said.

The wounds were non-life threatening, police said, adding that the motive for the attack at the University of Waterloo was not immediately clear. The suspect was being questioned by investigators.

"There is no further threat to public safety either on campus or outside in the broader community at this time,"

Waterloo Regional Police Service Supt. Shaena Morris said at a news conference.

Nick Manning, associate vice-president of communications for the University of Waterloo, identified the suspect as a member of "the university community" but declined to confirm the individual is a student. He said two students and a professor were stabbed.

Manning said the stabbing occurred in Philosophy 202, which, according to the university website, focuses on "gender issues."

"Our entire community is really concerned that



this would happen here. It's a big shock," Manning told reporters.

Yusuf Kaymak, a student at University of Waterloo, told CTV News the attack happened in a gender studies class.

"The guy basically

walked in and asked the teacher if he was the professor, he said yeah" then he pulled out a knife and after that, everybody just ran out," Kaymak said to CTV.

"I ran out, and after we went outside, there was a kid that was stabbed.

He was bleeding (from) his arm. I don't know what happened to the professor," he said.

Kaymak said about 40 students were in the class at the time.

Classes scheduled for Wednesday evening in Hagey Hall, where the attack took place, were cancelled, but all other campus operations will proceed as usual, the university said in a tweet.

"Our first thoughts, of course, go to the students who are in the class and have turned immediately to making sure in addition to supporting the police inquiry," Manning said.



# Lok Sabha drill: PM Modi chairs BJP huddle, 3 zones for focused work

Sources said cabinet and party reshuffle could happen in July

NEW DELHI, Jun 29 (Agencies): Prime minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday night chaired a nearly five hour long huddle of the BJP top brass to discuss organisational and government changes, narrative focus and strategy and tools for the upcoming Lok Sabha elections in 2024.

The meeting at the official residence of PM here was attended by BJP chief JP Nadda, party general secretary organisation BL Santosh, union home minister Amit Shah among other senior leaders.

It is learnt that apart from discussing the need for cabinet reshuffle and organisational



revamp for greater vigour the leaders decided to divide the country into east, north and south clusters for micro management and specific focus.

PM has instructed ministers to focus on

the deprived and poor sections and work on 100 per cent saturation of government schemes and benefits across clusters.

The meeting of the east cluster comprising north-eastern states—Bengal

and Odisha— will take place in Guwahati on July 6, north zone meeting—consisting of Delhi, JK, Himachal, Rajasthan, Chhattisgarh, MP, UP, Uttarakhand, Haryana, Gujarat and Chandigarh— in Delhi on

July 7 and south zone meeting— consisting of Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, TN, Kerala and Karnataka— in Hyderabad on July 8.

The meetings will provide future strategies to leaders ahead of elections besides clarifying the big political narratives BJP will push.

PM has made it clear that his government will work on empowerment of the deprived rather than appeasement.

Ways to push the uniform civil code pitch will also be debated at BJP's upcoming meetings.

Sources said cabinet and party reshuffle could happen in July.

# No public namaz in Uttarkashi's Puroloa under VHP's pressure

UTTARKASHI, Jun 29 (Agencies): Under pressure from the Vishva Hindu Parishad, Muslims in the communally sensitive Puroloa town did not gather for namaz in public places on Eid-ul-Adha.

Local SHO Ashok Chakravarty said the decision to not offer namaz in public place was taken by the community itself after a meeting was held on Wednesday to maintain peace.

VHP working president Vitendra Rawat said the outfit had indeed asked Muslims to not gather for namaz in public places.

"We had no intention to hurt the religious sentiments of anyone. We only asked them not to offer namaz collectively in public places. Can

anyone be stopped from offering namaz in the privacy of their homes?" Rawat said.



Puroloa found itself in grip of communal tension days after two men allegedly tried to abduct a woman in an auto on May 26 but were thwarted in their attempt by some alert locals. The two men were arrested the next day.

Hardline Hindutva outfits like the VHP and Bajrang Dal termed the incident an instance

of "love jihad" stoking prolonged tension in the town that led to the imposition of prohibitory orders, declared to prevent a 'Mahapanchayat' by right wing Hindu outfits.

The following fortnight saw posters appearing on shops owned or run by Muslim traders threatening them with consequences if they did not shut their shops and leave the town.

Frightened Muslim traders kept their shutters down and some of them even left the town.

Love jihad is a term used by right-wing activists alleging a conspiracy by Muslim men to lure Hindu women to convert to Islam through marriage. The term however has no validity in the Indian penal law.

# MISPLACED REVENUE RECORD: Tony seeks fixing responsibility, time-bound probe initiated by CS Mehta

Top News Report

JAMMU, Jun 29: Taranjit Singh Tony DDC Member Suchetgarh welcomed the stand taken by Chief Secretary A K Mehta and Settlement Commissioner Rajiv Rajan for fixing the responsibility in the matter of missing Revenue Record terming the issue grave and also sought thorough probe in a time bound manner.

In a statement issued here today, Tony said that the Chief Secretary and the Settlement Commissioner has taken prudent decision to fix responsibility as the land record has gone missing from Revenue offices, which is a grave issue.

While praising the CS and Settlement Commissioner over this decision, Tony asked for a thorough probe in the matter and nabbing the big fish involved in the crime. He categorically asked the CS to make sure that like many other cases in the past, the Patwaris should not be made scapegoats in the matter as such a big crime cannot be carried out without the involvement of higher ups in the department. He sought justice for the Patwaris and other officials in the matter and asked for stringent possible action against the officers involved within one month and the time should not be exceeded at

any costs. He batted for shielding the Patwaris because the way the revenue record has been misplaced, prima facie the higher officials' involvement cannot be ruled out.

Tony said that no doubt Patwaris have a big role in making of the revenue record but the responsibility of the safety and security of the same lies with higher officials including Director Land Records and Settlement Commissioner. Explaining the whole process of creation of revenue record (Bandobast) and its placement in the record room, Tony said that during the time of making the record, the field staff visits the site and marks down the findings in the Field Book with a rough map of the land record. This record is then taken to the office for creation of Lathe and thereafter Musabis are made which are kept in the Record Room under lock and key, and the Director Land Records and Settlement Commissioner are the caretakers of this record.

"Patwaris are not supposed to have possession of Musabis though in case record goes missing, the Patwaris can recreate it by using the Lathe. In case Lathe is missing, the Musabis can be used for getting authentic record but if all this is misplaced then the only

source is Field Book. The Musabis and Field Books are kept in the record room for hundreds of years, he said, adding that if the Musabis and Field Books have been misplaced then the entire responsibility lies on the aforesaid officers having custody of record therefore the government should take all this into consideration while probing the aforesaid matter because conventionally the higher ups in the Revenue Department target Patwaris in such matters to save their skin.

"The matter is complicated and therefore the investigation should be monitored at all levels to ensure that no one tries to fail the exercise by swaying things in the wrong direction. This is the right opportunity to teach a lesson to the corrupt and deter others from doing the same crimes in the future", he maintained.

Tony said who has taken/misplaced the record from the Record Room that is a big question, adding that the integrity of former Directors Land Records and former Settlement Commissioners are in question. Tony appealed to the Chief Secretary that the enquired ordered by him should not be allowed to exceed and the same should be completed within a month.

# All panchayats to be declared UPI enabled on August 15: Govt

NEW DELHI, Jun 29 (Agencies): All panchayats across the country will mandatorily use digital payments for all development work and revenue collection from this Independence Day onwards, and will be declared UPI-enabled, a letter issued by the Panchayati Raj Ministry said.

States should "announce and inaugurate" the UPI-compliant panchayats in the presence of prominent dignitaries, like chief ministers, MPs, and MLAs, the ministry said in the letter to states and Union territories.

Secretary, Panchayati Raj Ministry, Sunil Kumar told PTI almost 98 per cent panchayats have already started using UPI-based payments.

"Payments worth almost Rs 1.5 lakh crore have been made through the Public Financial Management System (PFMS). Pay-



ments to panchayats will now be made digitally. Payments in cheques and cash have almost been stopped," Kumar said.

"It has almost universal coverage now. We have already covered almost 98 per cent of panchayats," he said.

Panchayats have also been asked to hold meetings with service providers and vendors on June 30. A list with details of contact persons from UPI platforms GPay, PhonePay, PayTm, BHIM, Mobikwik, WhatsApp Pay,

Amazon Pay and Bharat Pe has been shared by the ministry.

By July 15, panchayats have to choose appropriate service providers, and finalise vendors by July 30, as per guidelines by the ministry.

Panchayats have also been asked to choose a single vendor which covers the whole area so as to allow economies of scale. It has also been recommended to create a centralised dashboard for monitoring transactions in real time.

Training camps will

be held at district and block level for officials. Minister of State for Panchayati Raj Kapil Moreshwar Patil said enabling digital transactions will help in checking corruption.

"Most panchayats are now using digital payments. It will help in checking corruption. From planning to payment, everything is happening digitally," Patil told agency.

According to government data, 806.3 crore transactions worth Rs 12.98 lakh crore were made through BHIM in January 2023 alone. Contribution of rural and peri-urban areas in digital transactions is around 50 per cent.

Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) are making digital payments through PFMS-eGram Swaraj interface, and over 90 per cent of PRIs have been audited online, according to the ministry.

## FROM PAGE 1

# First batch of pilgrims arrive at Amarnath Yatri Niwas base camp

Principal Secretary to the Lieutenant Governor, Mandeep Kumar Bhandari, on Wednesday, took an extensive tour of the twin routes of pilgrimage to Amarnath Yatra.

It also mentioned that the officials concentrated on full coordination among the forces & other stakeholders for the smooth conduct of the Yatra and they emphasized the identification of sensitive areas which may require an additional arrangement for the pilgrims.

The deployed officers were also directed to implement the devised plans on the ground for the security & safety of pilgrims and to work diligently to ensure the highest standards of professionalism while extending all required assistance and cooperation to the yatis, according to the official statement.

Before the yatra starts, the Anantnag district (Jammu and Kashmir) administration has set up all facilities, including medical care, sanitation, and others, and staff members have been stationed at various locations, added officials.

Deputy Commissioner Anantnag Syeed Fakhruddin Hamid said that "This year as far as RFID, or sanitization or logging all arrangements have been made and all departments are working for the Yatra and like last year all arrangements have been made.

This yatra is also not only about spiritual harmony but also communal harmony, the officials said.

# Amarnath Yatra on-the-spot registration of pilgrims starts in Jammu

Another pilgrim, 69-year-old Jagdesh

Raj from Delhi said, "For my entire life, I have been facilitating people planning to go on the pilgrimage, but could not go myself. However, I am very happy that I am now going to pay obeisance at Amarnath".

The sadhus have arrived here after completing the Char Dham Yatra to Yamunotri, Gangotri, Kedarnath and Badrinath shrines in Uttarakhand.

"We are here for the registration, which began today... It is for the sixth time, I am going to Amarnath", another pilgrim Ramesh Chander Giri said.

# Chief Justice of India pays obeisance at Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Ji Shrine

progressively increasing number of pilgrims to the Holy Shrine.

The CJI complemented the efforts being initiated by the Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board for welfare and providing facilities to the visiting pilgrims to make their pilgrimage hassle-free.

After paying obeisance at the Holy Cave Shrine, the CJI visited Bhairon Ghati to pay obeisance at the Bhairon Baba Temple. This is the first visit of Justice Chandrachud to the Holy Shrine after taking over as Chief Justice of India.

# Peaceful Eid-Al-Adha prayers held across J&K

gathered to offer prayers and seek blessings. The venue reverberated with the beautiful recitation of prayers and the heartfelt supplications of the worshippers.

An official said that the administration and local authorities had made meticulous arrangements to ensure the smooth conduct of prayers and to facilitate the comfort and safety of the worshippers.

Adequate security measures were put in

place to maintain a peaceful environment. Eid prayers concluded on peaceful note, he added.

# More than 2.74 lakh posts vacant in Railways, over 1.7 lakh of them in safety category: RTI

Railways, as available in this office, as on 01.06.2023 (provisional) are: 9,82,037, 8,04,113 & 1,77,924 respectively," the response said.

Railway spokesperson Amitabh Sharma said the issue is being addressed through direct recruitment, expeditious promotions and moving non-core staff to core jobs after training.

In December 2022, Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw informed Parliament that 3.12 lakh non-gazetted posts were vacant in the Railways.

Safety category are personnel directly involved with train operations. They include key profiles like loco pilots, trackspersons, pointsmen, electrical works, signal and telecom assistants, engineers, technicians, clerks, guards/train manager, station masters and ticket collectors.

The shortage of staff in key posts has been flagged by railway unions regularly. In fact, rail unions have urged the ministry for more posts in track maintenance, fitness, senior and junior section engineers, gangmen, and technicians.

Explaining how this has affected the onground work, officials said is tremendous pressure on the workforce and the one on-ground staff has to cover eight to 10 km daily to inspect tracks.

"This is a sensitive job that requires more attention and it's difficult for them to cover so much distance," an official said.

Officials said the Railways, which has set a target of filling up 1.52 lakh vacancies by October 2023, has already provided letters of appointment to 1.38 lakh candidates.

Out of these, 90,000 have joined. They said 90 per cent of these posts are of safety category.

After the horrific Balasore tragedy on June 2 in which more than 280 people died, the Railways directed its zones to launch a "special drive" to fill promotional vacancies especially in the safety category, amid mounting criticism from the Opposition and intense demand by the railway unions.

Railway spokesperson Amitabh Sharma said the national transporter is filling up posts by direct recruitment and also expeditious promotions.

"Apart from this, posts in non-core activities are being identified and they are being converted to core-activity. Existing manpower who are presently doing non-core jobs are being moved to core-jobs after being trained," he said.

# Think, Rethink Consequences of UCC: Farooq Abdullah to Centre

UCC. They should keep all this under consideration and instead of pushing it through, they should think of the consequences. Lest, there might be a storm," he added.

His remarks come two days after Prime Minister Narendra Modi made a strong pitch for UCC and wondered how a country can function with dual laws that govern personal matters.

Abdullah also welcomed the pilgrims visiting Jammu and Kashmir for the annual Amarnath yatra.

"I welcome the yatra. I pray to Allah that it is successful and the yatis return with blessings," he said.

# Convert Manipur State into UTs: Harsh Dev

was demoted and bifurcated into two Union Territories with the BJP government

justifying the action on the pretext of violence and insurgency. Applying the same yardstick, Manipur has definitely qualified to be bifurcated into Union Territories in conformity with the policies of the BJP led NDA government.

Singh added that the BJP government has most vociferously taken the stand that there can't be two sets of laws in the same country. It is further insisting on uniform civil code (UCC) in the country even if it has to downplay the aspirations of a particular community or inspirational group. Having said so, it needs to prove that action taken against J&K was not out of hostility, malice or ill will but genuine decision based on a well conceptualised policy that would be applicable to any other state of the country facing insurgency and bloodshed including BJP ruled states like Manipur.

# Dr Asgar Samoon retires from service

the region, an official spokesman said. One of the reports released by Dr Samoon was a comprehensive review of courses offered by Polytechnics and Industrial Training Institutes (ITIs) in Jammu and Kashmir. Prepared by PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC), the 479-page report extensively explores the current employment scenario and presents key findings, recommendations and proposals for comprehensive reforms in the skill development sector.

Besides, Samoon unveiled the district development plans for all 20 districts of Jammu and Kashmir. These plans outline strategic initiatives and development projects designed to promote skill enhancement, entrepreneurship, and economic growth at the local level, he said. He added that the district development plans are a vital component of the department's efforts to ensure holistic and inclusive development across the region.

Samoon also released a booklet of the Food Craft Institute Jammu, focusing on the significance and benefits of millets. The booklet serves as a valuable resource for promoting the consumption and cultivation of millets, highlighting their nutritional value and contribution to sustainable agriculture.

## Go First revival plan: DGCA to examine documents, conduct audit before restarting operations

The budget carrier is in voluntary insolvency resolution proceedings

MUMBAI, Jun 29 (Agencies): Aviation regulator DGCA will examine documents submitted by Go First related to the revival plan and will also conduct an audit on operational preparedness before allowing the carrier to restart operations, according to sources.

Senior representatives of the current management of Go First, which has stopped flying since May 3, discussed various aspects of the revival plan with officials of the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) in the National Capital, they said.

The budget carrier, which was owned by the Wadia family, is in voluntary insolvency resolution proceedings.

According to the sources privy



to the development, the airline's EY-backed Resolution Professional Shailendra Ajmera and Interim CEO Kaushik Khona made a detailed presentation to the DGCA officials on the revival plan.

DGCA will also conduct an audit to assess the airline's operational preparedness once it completes the scrutiny of the

documents.

The audit is expected to take place next week, one of the sources told news agency.

The second source said the airline, prior to the grounding, was operating to and from 29 domestic destinations. Under the revival plan, the number of destinations is to be reduced to 23.

The airline, when it restarts operations, will not be operating flights from Jaipur, Lucknow, Kannur, Patna, Varanasi and Ranchi for the time being, the source added.

According to the source, lenders have committed an interim funding of around Rs 450 crore, considering a day's operations are expected to cost around Rs 10 crore.

Further, the source said the airline has adequate manpower, including around 300 pilots. The revival process gathered pace after the formation of the airline's Committee of Creditors (CoC), comprising Bank of Baroda, Central Bank of India, IDBI Bank and Deutsche Bank, on June 10.

## ONGC sells KG gas to Torrent, GAIL at USD 11

GAIL picked up 0.8 mmscmd while HPCL took 0.42 mmscmd and Torrent 0.12 mmscmd, sources aware of the matter said.



NEW DELHI, Jun 29 (Agencies): State-owned Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) has sold initial gas it is producing from its KG basin fields in the Bay of Bengal to three firms, including Torrent Gas, sources said.

In an e-auction, the firm sold 1.4 million standard cubic meters per day - a fraction of the planned output from the block that sits next to Reliance Industries' prolific KG-D6 area in the Bay of Bengal, to Torrent Gas Pune Ltd, GAIL (India) Ltd and Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Ltd (HPCL).

GAIL picked up 0.8 mmscmd while HPCL took 0.42 mmscmd and Torrent 0.12 mmscmd, sources aware of the matter said.

The company had sought bids from users like city gas operators that sell CNG to automobiles and pipe cooking gas to households, companies using gas to produce fertiliser or make electricity, LPG producers and traders, for the gas from its KG-DWN-98/2 or KG-D5 block.

ONGC asked companies to quote a premium 'P' that they are willing to pay over and above the rate arrived at by calculating 14 per cent prevailing Brent oil price plus USD 1 per million British thermal unit, the tender document showed.

Currently, at Brent crude oil price of USD 74 per barrel, the base price comes to USD 11.3 per mmBtu (USD

10.36 per mmBtu at 14 per cent of Brent oil price plus a mark-up of USD 1).

The sale price will however be the lower of the price arrived at using this formula or the rate that the oil ministry's arm PPAC notifies twice a year for deepsea fields.

The ceiling price for difficult-to-produce fields like deepsea for six months starting April 1 is USD 12.12 per mmBtu.

So the gas price for Torrent and others would be USD 11.3 per mmBtu.

The company has yet again delayed the start of production from the main fields in the block.

ONGC was originally to start gas production from Cluster-II fields in the KG-D5 in June 2019 and the first oil was to flow in March 2020.

The company blamed contracting and supply chains issues due to the pandemic for shifting the start of oil production first to November 2021, then to the third quarter of 2022 and then to June 2023.

Gas output start target was first revised to May 2021, then to May 2023 and then to May 2024 for non-associated gas to start flowing.

However, these timelines have now been shifted to August, sources said.

A floating production unit, called FPSO, which will be used to produce oil, is already in Indian waters.

ONGC will start with 10,000 to 12,000 bar-

rels per day and reach the peak of 45,000 bpd in 2-3 months, they said adding some gas would also flow with oil but actual gas output will start in May 2024 when 7-8 mmscmd production is expected.

The production estimates are however much lower than what was originally projected.

At the time of its launch in April 2018, ONGC had said the estimated capital expenditure would be USD 5.07 billion and operational expenditure would be USD 5.12 billion over a field life of 16 years.

The block has a number of discoveries that have been clubbed into three clusters -- Cluster-1, 2 and 3.

Cluster 2 is being put to production first.

Cluster 2 field is divided into two blocks namely 2A and 2B, which as per the original investment decision were expected to produce 23.52 million metric tonnes of oil and 50.70 billion cubic metres (bcm) of gas over the life of the field.

Cluster 2A was estimated to contain reserves of 94.26 million tonnes of crude oil and 21.75 bcm of associated gas, while Cluster 2B is estimated to host 51.98 bcm of gas reserves.

Cluster 2A was anticipated to produce 77,305 barrels of oil per day (bopd) and associated gas at a rate of 3.81 million metric standard cubic metres per day (mmscmd) over 15 years.

Cluster 2B is expected to produce free gas of 12.75 mmscmd from eight wells and has a 16-year life.

But now the output estimate is lower - 45,000 bpd of oil and up to 2.5 mmscmd from Cluster 2A and around 9 mmscmd from Cluster 2B.

## Finance ministers of Japan and South Korea agree to resume currency swap agreement as ties warm

TOKYO, Jun 29 (Agencies): Japan and South Korea agreed Thursday to revive a currency swap agreement for times of crisis, in the latest sign of warming ties as the countries work to smooth over historical antagonisms.

Japanese Finance Minister Shunichi Suzuki announced the agreement after meeting with his South Korean counterpart, Choo Kyungho. It was the first time the two countries have held annual financial talks in seven years, though Suzuki and Choo also met in South Korea in May.

Suzuki told reporters that the 3-year currency swap agreement would help reinforce trust in the financial stability of the two countries as a fallback in an emergency. But he emphasized that Japan is fully prepared to deal with fluctuations in the Japanese yen, which has weakened sharply against the U.S. dollar in the past year.

The \$10 billion swap arrangement expired in 2015 and had not

been renewed. Largely symbolic, it allows the South Korean and Japanese central banks to exchange currencies for each country's reserves of U.S. dollars to provide extra liquidity, or cash supplies, in case of a crisis.

The two major Asian economies, both U.S. allies, have recently mended ties as they contend with challenges posed by China and North Korea, despite tensions over issues left over from Japan's 35-year occupation of the Korean Peninsula before and during World War II.

From July 21, Japan plans to reinstate South Korea as a preferred nation with fast-track trade status. That will essentially end a four-year trade dispute that began in July 2019 when Japan removed South Korea from its "white list" of countries given fast-track approvals in the trade as ties deteriorated over compensation for Japanese wartime actions.

Japan's tightening of



trade controls against Seoul was in apparent retaliation for South Korean court rulings in 2018 that ordered Japanese companies to compensate Korean workers for abusive treatment and forced labor during World War II.

Japan also tightened export controls on key chemicals used by South Korean companies to make semiconductors and displays, prompting South Korea to file a complaint with the World Trade Organization and remove Japan from its own list of countries with preferred

trade status.

South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol and Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida met in March in the first formal summit between the two countries since 2015.

Japan colonized the Korean Peninsula between 1910 and 1945, imposing Japanese names and language on Koreans and conscripting many into forced labour or prostitution in military brothels before and during World War II. Japan gave \$800 million to South Korea's then-military-backed government under a 1965 accord to normal-

ize relations which were mainly used on economic development projects driven by major South Korean companies. A semi-government fund set up by Tokyo offered compensation to former "comfort women" when the government apologized in 1995, but many South Koreans believe the Japanese government should take more direct responsibility for the occupation.

The two sides also have a longstanding territorial dispute over a group of islands controlled by South Korea but claimed by Japan.

## Scientists find gene preventing bird flu virus from spreading to humans

LONDON, Jun 29 (Agencies): An international team of scientists has identified a gene that is preventing the bird flu viruses from spilling over into humans.

In the study, published in the journal Nature, researchers revealed a human protein, BTN3A3, which inhibits a crucial step needed for viral replication of avian influenza A virus, also commonly referred to as bird flu.

Scientists led by the MRC-University of Glasgow Centre for Virus Research (CVR) found that BTN3A3 is commonly expressed in human airways, as a key human defence against avian flu.

We determined that BTN3A3 is expressed in human airways and its antiviral activity evolved in primates. We show that BTN3A3 restriction acts primarily at the early stages of the virus life cycle by inhibiting avian influenza A viruses RNA replication, the researchers wrote in the paper.

Avian influenza A virus, also commonly referred to as bird flu, primarily spreads among wild birds such as ducks.

Since 2022 there has been a rise in bird flu



cases around the world in both domestic and wild birds.

The recent outbreak of avian influenza A (H5N1) virus has killed a record number of birds and also spread to otters, sea lions, foxes, dolphins and seals, cats among others.

Scientists expect that bird flu that can cross the species barrier is expected to cause the next pandemic.

Although rare, influenza A viruses have occasionally infected humans. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), from 2003 to 2023, a total of 873 human cases of infection with influenza A (H5N1) and 458 deaths have been reported globally from 21 countries.

In the study, the researchers found that compared to seasonal human flu viruses, which infect the human population regularly, the BTN3A3 gene was able

to block the replication of avian flu in human cells.

In the case of H7N9 virus, which since 2013 has infected more than 1,500 humans with 40 per cent case fatality rate, the team found these strains have a genetic mutation that allows them to "escape" the blocking effects of the BTN3A3 gene.

Further, the researchers found that there had been an increase in the number of BTN3A3-resistant strains circulating in poultry around the same time as spillover events in humans.

Identifying BTN3A3 resistant variants when they first emerge in birds might help prevent human infections, said Rute Maria Pinto, the first author of this study.

Control measures against emerging avian flu viruses can be tailored specifically against those that are BTN3A3-resistant, in addition

to other genetic traits known to be important for zoonotic transmission, Pinto added.

The team also found that all the human influenza pandemics, including the devastating 1918-19 global flu pandemic and the swine flu pandemic in 2009 were caused by influenza viruses that were resistant to BTN3A3.

As a result, this study suggests that having resistance to this gene may be a key factor in whether any flu strain has human pandemic potential.

We know that most emerging viruses with human pandemic potential come from animals. It is therefore critical to understand which genetic barriers might block an animal virus from replicating in human cells, thereby preventing infection, said Professor Massimo Palmarini, Director of CVR. Of course, viruses are constantly changing and can potentially overcome some of these barriers by mutating over time. This is why virus genetic surveillance will be crucial to help us better understand and control the spread of viruses with zoonotic and pandemic potential, he added.

## Human embryo model created from stem cells could help understand why some pregnancies fail



NEW DELHI, Jun 29 (Agencies): A model of the human embryo derived from stem cells has been created in the lab, a breakthrough that scientists say could help understand early human development and why and how some pregnancies fail.

Derived from pluripotent stem cells, or stem cells able to develop into various different cell types, this embryo model is an organised three-dimensional structure replicating some of the early human embryonic developmental processes,

the research from Cambridge University, UK, said.

Such models, allowing experimental modelling of embryonic development during the second week of pregnancy, could also help researchers understand the developmental origins of organs and specialised cells such as sperm and eggs, the study published in the journal Nature said.

Understanding these early developmental processes holds the potential to reveal some of the causes of human birth defects and diseases, and to develop tests for these in pregnant women, the study said.

Until now, the processes could only be observed in animal models, using cells from zebrafish and mice, for example.

"This exciting development allows us to manipulate genes to understand their developmental roles in a model system. This will let us test the function of specific factors, which is difficult to do in the

nancies are lost.

"Our human embryo-like model, created entirely from human stem cells, gives us access to the developing structure at a stage that is normally hidden from us due to the implantation of the tiny embryo into the mother's womb," said Magdalena Zernicka-Goetz, professor in the Department of Physiology, Development and Neuroscience at Cambridge, who led the work.

Understanding these early developmental processes holds the potential to reveal some of the causes of human birth defects and diseases, and to develop tests for these in pregnant women, the study said.

Until now, the processes could only be observed in animal models, using cells from zebrafish and mice, for example.

"This exciting development allows us to manipulate genes to understand their developmental roles in a model system. This will let us test the function of specific factors, which is difficult to do in the

natural embryo," said Zernicka-Goetz.

Scientists so far have only been able to study the period of early human development using donated human embryos. This advance could reduce the need for donated human embryos in research.

Zernicka-Goetz said the while these models can mimic aspects of the development of human embryos, they cannot and will not develop to the equivalent of postnatal stage humans.

The new models derived from human stem cells do not have a brain or beating heart, but they include cells that would typically go on to form the embryo, placenta and yolk sac, and develop to form the precursors of germ cells, that will form sperm and eggs.

Many pregnancies fail at the point when these three types of cells orchestrate implantation into the uterus and begin to send mechanical and chemical signals to each other, which tell the embryo how to develop properly.

## “Win The World Cup For Virat Kohli”: Virender Sehwag Tells India Players

Just like the Indian team won the 2011 World Cup for Sachin Tendulkar, Virender Sehwag wants the players to do the same for Virat Kohli this time.

NEW DELHI, Jun 29 (Agencies): The countdown for the ICC ODI World Cup 2023 has begun, with the schedule for the mega event out. Having last won the World Cup when the tournament was held at home (partly), India would look to pounce on a great opportunity to end their ICC trophy drought. As the preparation for the tournament gets serious, former India star Virender Sehwag wants the team to try and win this World Cup for Virat Kohli, much like the 2011 team had done for Sachin Tendulkar.

In a chat on Star Sports after the announcement of the schedule of the World Cup, Sehwag highlighted how Kohli isn't just a great player but also a person who always tries to help others.



“Everyone needs to win this World Cup for Virat Kohli. The kind of great player he is, a great human being also, he always helps other players”, he said.

Sehwag also drew similarities between Kohli and Tendulkar,

explaining how both always gave their 100 percent on the pitch.

“Virat Kohli is similar to Sachin Tendulkar. The way he plays, the way talks, the way he approaches the game. His passion, and

his dedication is unbelievable. He gave his 100% all the time. He helped cricketers, he is great in everything”.

“Whenever Virat Kohli plays big tournaments he gave everything and more than everyone in the team. I'm sure he will be excited for this world. And whenever he goes in this world cup and people will cheer and supports him a lot”.

When asked if Kohli could go on to break Tendulkar's record of scoring the most number of tons in ODI World Cups, Sehwag said that it was quite possible.

“Possible, I always tell youngsters and my children to learn from Virat Kohli. He never throws his wicket and plays till the end”, he said.

## Duleep Trophy: Shorey's ton shores up North on Day 1



BENGALURU, Jun 29 (Agencies): Dhruv Shorey carried his sublime form from the last Ranji Trophy season, scoring a composed 135 to take North Zone to 306/6 on the opening day of their Duleep Trophy quarterfinal against North East Zone here. Nishant Sindhu

also contributed with an unbeaten 76.

New Delhi's Shorey had scored 859 runs, with three hundreds, in seven matches in the Ranji season at an astounding average of 95.44.

Shorey took his time to settle down as the pitch offered some help to

the pacers. Shorey built partnerships with opening partner Prashant Chopra (32) and Prabhsimran Singh (31). He hit 22 fours in his 211-ball innings before falling to left-arm spinner Kishan Singha.

Singha trapped captain Jayant Yadav lbw two balls later to reduce North Zone to 242/6. The team needed a rescue act and it came from Nishant and Pulkit Narang.

Brief scores: North Zone: 306/6 (Shorey 135, Sindhu 76\*); Singha 2/48) vs North East Zone; Central Zone: 182 (Rinku 38; Muralingh 5/42, Shahbaz 2/42) vs East Zone: 32/2 (Avesh 2/13).

## Ashes: Aussies keep focus as rain, protesters play spoilsport

LONDON, Jun 29 (Agencies): Steve Smith scored an unbeaten 85 to guide Australia to 339/5 as England wasted favourable bowling conditions on the first day of the second Ashes Test at Lord's.

England captain Ben Stokes won the toss under grey skies and floodlights at the home of cricket, sending Australia in to bat with high hopes of taking early wickets in his team's bid to level the series.

But David Warner and Usman Khawaja rode their luck to share a gritty opening partnership of 73 and although Josh Tongue removed them both, Marnus Labuschagne made 47 and Travis Head a rapid 77 to put Australia in a commanding position.

Joe Root removed Head and Cameron Green in the same over to give England late hope but the day firmly belonged to Australia.



The game was disrupted after one over when two Just Stop Oil protesters ran on to the pitch and sprayed orange powder on to

the outfield but Warner and Khawaja were not distracted. They negotiated probing spells from James Anderson and Stuart Broad and, after a short rain delay, Warner reached his fifty by hooking Tongue for six before Khawaja was bowled by the same bowler for 17 just before lunch.

Each batsman was dropped in the slips, Khawaja offering a very difficult chance to Root and Warner a sharp one to Ollie Pope.

Warner lived dangerously after lunch too, particularly against Tongue who continued his impressive spell by bowling the left-hander

through the gate for 66 with a fine swinging delivery to reduce Australia to 96/2.

Smith emerged from the pavilion to a chorus of boos but he settled down quickly and silenced the crowd with two sumptuous drives off Broad to the cover boundary.

Broad almost exacted swift revenge when Smith was given out caught by wicketkeeper Jonny Bairstow in the same over for 24 but the batsman reviewed and the decision was overturned.

Brief scores: Australia: 339/5 (Smith 85\*, Head 77, Warner 66; Root 2/19, Tongue 2/88).

## Indian women's head coach to be picked on June 30, Agarkar frontrunner for chief selector's post



NEW DELHI, Jun 29 (Agencies): The shortlist for the Indian women team's head coach job includes Amol Muzumdar and Tushar Arothe, who are among those to be interviewed on June 30.

While Arothe has coached the Indian team in the past, Muzumdar, who is also in talks to become Baroda coach, has had stints with IPL franchise Rajasthan Royals and the South African national team.

It has also been learnt that Englishman and ex-Durham head coach, Jon Lewis has also applied for the job.

The Cricket Advisory Committee comprising Ashok Malhotra, Jatinder Paranjpe and Sulakshana Naik will conduct the interviews in Mumbai.

“The interviews will be conducted on Friday,” a BCCI official told agency.

The Harmanpreet Kaur-led India, guilty of throwing away knock out games from winning positions in multi-team events over the past five years, has been without a head coach since Ramesh Powar was sacked in December.

Batting coach Hrishikesh Kaniitkar was

in charge of the team in the T20 World Cup in South Africa earlier this year.

India have a tour of Bangladesh scheduled next month and the announcement on the head coach's front will be made before that.

“I don't think bringing back Tushar will be a good choice. The team needs someone with fresh ideas. Someone like Amol is the right person to take the team forward.

“The management needs to build a big pool of players before the T20 World Cup next year which will also be held in Bangladesh,” said a former India player.

Ajit Agarkar frontrunner for chief selector's post

After picking the head coach for the women's team on Friday, the CAC is likely to appoint the chief selector for the Indian men's team — a post that has been vacant since Chetan Sharma's unceremonious exit in February.

The last date of application is June 30 and the interviews are likely to be held on July 1.

“The CAC has the mandate to pick a selector who can stand up to the high profile team management in case there are differences,” added the BCCI official.

Agarkar was linked to the chief selector's post in the past as well, but this time, he is likely to get the high pressure job.

If Agarkar is appointed, there will be two selectors from the West Zone with Salil Ankola being the other.

The 45-year-old played 26 Tests, 191 ODIs and 4 T20s for India. He was a part of the Delhi Capitals' support staff in the recently held IPL.

## F1: Verstappen aims for another record as Red Bull head home to Austrian GP

SPIELBERG, Jun 29 (Agencies): Runaway leader and defending double world champion Max Verstappen bids to become the most successful driver in Austrian Grand Prix history this weekend as Red Bull plans a poignant 'century' celebration on home ground.

The 25-year-old Dutchman, who leads this year's title race by 69 points ahead of team-mate Sergio Perez, shares the record of three Austrian wins with four-time champion Alain Prost.

Another win at the Red Bull Ring circuit would take him to four and be his seventh in nine races this year as well as the team's 101st as they return to Austria for the first time since the death of owner Dietrich Mateschitz last October.



“It's going to be a bit special this time,” said team boss Christian Horner amid celebrations of the team's 100th triumph at the Canadian Grand Prix.

“It's great to return to Austria with this run of form and results and with Max in such exceptional form.

“There will be a very big sell-out home crowd and a great atmosphere. They always put on a big show and this year will be the biggest of all.”

Verstappen has, in fact, won four times at

Spielberg already as he won twice in 2021 when one of the two races staged during the restrictions caused by the Covid pandemic was called the Styrian Grand Prix.

Orange army “We always enjoy coming back to our home race in Austria,” said Verstappen.

“And I'm excited to try to add another trophy to the collection for the team. It's the second sprint race weekend too and they are always more hectic and com-

plex.”

A mass of support for the Dutchman is expected again with a vast 'orange army' camped at the circuit, but after reports last year of racist, sexist and homophobic abuse among spectators, alcohol has been banned and security tightened.

Rain has also been forecast for much of the weekend, particularly Friday and Saturday, but it is unlikely to worry Verstappen who won the sprint race last year when rival Charles Leclerc fought back to take victory from him for Ferrari in the Grand Prix itself.

That was Ferrari's last victory and after another disappointment in Montreal, they are hoping to deliver a response this weekend and, at least, compete with Aston

Martin and Mercedes for a podium finish.

Since that win by Leclerc, who has made clear his dissatisfaction with Ferrari's form and decision-making, Red Bull have won 18 of the 19 contests held, with Mercedes taking the other.

After recent improved results with their updated car, seven-time champion Lewis Hamilton will seek to maintain his momentum while two-time champion Fernando Alonso aims for a seventh podium of the year with Aston Martin.

“I'm hoping that at some stage we can have things a bit more level between us,” said Hamilton, after finishing third behind Verstappen and Alonso in Canada.

“To have all three of us in a super-tight battle would be 'sick!'”

## ‘Tata’ Martino named new coach of Inter Miami ahead of Messi’s arrival

MIAMI, Jun 29 (Agencies): Inter Miami have appointed former Barcelona and Argentina coach Gerardo Martino to take charge of the Major League Soccer team, setting up a reunion with compatriot Lionel Messi.

Martino, widely known as “Tata,” coached Messi with both the Spanish club and his country's national team. He was most recently in charge of Mexico and previously worked in MLS with Atlanta United, winning the title in 2018.

Martino's arrival was widely expected after Miami, rock bottom of the Eastern Conference, fired their English coach Phil Neville. The 60-year-old will take over the team, from interim Javier Morales, once his work documentation has been completed.

“We are very happy to be able to welcome Tata to Inter Miami. We feel he is a coach

who matches our ambitions as a club and we're optimistic about what we can accomplish together,” said Inter Miami Managing Owner Jorge Mas.

“Tata has coached at the highest levels and we believe that experience will be hugely beneficial to us as we aim to compete for titles here,” he added.

Messi said earlier this month that he was joining Miami, co-owned by David Beckham, having opted to leave Paris Saint-Germain at the end of his contract.

“Tata is a highly respected figure in our sport whose track record speaks for itself. We are confident that his achievements in the game and experience as a head coach will inspire our team and excite our fans and look forward to seeing the impact he will have on and off the field,” said Beckham.

The South Florida club also expect to complete the signing



of another of Martino's former charges at Barcelona, Spanish midfielder Sergio Busquets and Mas has indicated Miami could bring in as many as five players during the summer transfer window.

The 60-year-old Martino played for and coached Argentine club Newell's Old Boys, where Messi played as a schoolboy. Martino has been out of work since his contract with Mexico ended after a disappointing World Cup cam-

paign where El Tri failed to get out of the group stage.

“I'm very excited to join a big club like Inter Miami and I know together we can accomplish many great things,” said Martino.

“The club has the necessary infrastructure to be a major competitor in the region and I believe that with everyone's hard work and commitment, we can get there,” he said.

Martino made his mark as a coach in Paraguay, leading the national side to the runners-up spot in the 2011 Copa America. After impressing at Newell's he had a season in charge of Barca in 2013-14 before taking over the Argentine national side for two years and then joined Atlanta in 2016.

Martino will also be re-united with Venezuelan striker Josef Martinez whose 31 goals in 2018 were crucial to Atlanta's MLS Cup triumph.

## Britain's Andy Murray slams Wimbledon 'disaster' after poster snub of female stars

LONDON, Jun 29 (Agencies): Andy Murray labelled a controversial poster of former Wimbledon greats as a “disaster” after the Scot highlighted the lack of prominence given to female stars.

Murray, a two-time Wimbledon champion, was a notable absentee from the official All England Club artwork which features 15 famous players walking down a staircase.

Emerging male players Jannik Sinner and Carlos Alcaraz, neither of whom have made an impact at Wimbledon yet, stand in the foreground of the painting.

They are followed by a selection of “epic” rivalries, beginning with Murray's long-time competitors Novak Djokovic, Roger Federer and Rafael Nadal.

Of the six women depicted, only Chris Evert and Martina Navratilova are among

the front 11 players, with the other four, including Serena and Venus Williams, at the back.

While Murray's uncle and brother criticised his exclusion, the former world number one insisted that is not the issue as he spoke about the poster for the first time since its release. “It was a disaster, wasn't it? I don't need to elaborate any more on it. It's pretty obvious if you see the poster,” he said.

Asked about four of

the front five groups of rivals being men, the three-time Grand Slam champion said: “That was what was slightly strange. I guess the players that are on the poster are ones that have had incredible careers and have been unbelievably successful at Wimbledon.”

“But elsewhere are some of the greatest players of all time. For me, Alcaraz and Sinner are unbelievable players but it just seems strange

that they were all sort of behind them.”

“I personally don't really care that much about it. But I can see when you look at it...it's like, ‘that does look a bit strange’. Me not being on it is certainly not a problem.”

Murray's final warm-up ahead of Wimbledon ended in a 6-4, 6-4 loss to world number six Holger Rune at the Giorgio Armani Tennis Classic.

## Dogri Sanstha Jammu, BSS Jammu organize 'Shastriya Sangeet te Nritya di Surmei Sanj'



### TOP NEWS REPORT

JAMMU, Jun 29: Dogri Sanstha Jammu & Bharitiya Sangeet Sansthan Jammu organized 'Shastriya Sangeet te Nritya di Surmei Sanj' at Kunwar Vijoyi Auditorium, Dogri Bhawan Karan Nagar Jammu in which prominent artists like Ridhima Bajpayee, Dr. Hari Prasad Poudyal, Dr. Hari Prasad Poudyal, Dr. Priyavanda Tiwari Poudyal and Anand Bhardwaj enthralled the audience with their splendid performances and made the evening

a memorable one. The programme started with Ridhima Bajpayee presenting two 'Bandish' of Raag Jogkouns followed by a dogri bhajan written by Gyaneshwar and composed by V.K Sambyal. Thereafter Dr. Hari Prasad Poudyal presented classical performance of flute through two Bandish of Punjabi Adha Taal and Drut Teen Taal in Raag Desh. Anand Bhardwaj presented a Dhun in Raag Kirwani on sitar whereas Dr. Priyavanda Tiwari

Poudyal spellbound the audience with four performances of Bharatnatyam through Ganesh Pushpanjali, Shiv Panchakshar, Ram Thumak Chalat Ramchandra and Tillana. Vijay Kumar Sambyal well known as Rangeele Thakur and an eminent classical singer who is also Managing Trustee, Bhartiya Sangeet Sastha Jammu while complementing the performers said that it was in fact a dream cum true. He said that in the past also prominent performers visited the temple

city and amused the music and dance lovers with their stunning performances. He hoped that the trend of past will show its existence in present also with good future prospectus. The performances in Indian Classical Music & Dance by the reputed artists will inspire the youths to realize their existence through own cultural heritage which needs to be preserved and promoted. Prof. Lalit Magotra, President Dogri Sanstha Jammu while speaking on the occasion said

that such programs help in getting attached to our roots. Indian Classical Music and Dance are our identity which should be preserved and promoted. At this time, when western influences are quite evident in music and dance, we need to realize that we have some responsibilities towards our roots also. He further added that there is no malice with other cultural traditions but when it comes to survival of our own, then undoubtedly we are bound to be accountable. He was confident that such positive steps will yield promising results and Sanstha will always be at forefront when such initiatives will be taken. Raj Kumar 'Behrupia', a well-known theatre activist and himself a classical singer conducted the proceedings of the program. Light and Sound was supervised by Pawan Verma, a well-known theatre activist and dogri poet. The program was watched by galaxy of litterateurs, artists and music lovers.

## Eid-ul-Adha celebrated with religious fervour in Bhaderwah



### TOP NEWS REPORT

BHADERWAH, Jun 29: Like other parts of Jammu and Kashmir UT Eid-ul-Adha which is also known as Eid-ul-Azha was celebrated with religious fervor and gaiety in Bhaderwah here today. The festival honours the willingness of Hazrat Ibrahim to sacrifice his son as an act of obedience to (Allah's) God's command. On the day sheep and goats are being sacrificed in the way of God by the members of Muslim community.

In Bhaderwah Muslims mostly attired in white dresses offered Eid prayers in main Eidgah Bhaderwah where thousands of Muslims participated and offered special Eid Namaz and a religious procession was also taken out in Bhaderwah. The markets in various areas of Jammu were decorated befitting the occasion. The children were overjoyed as they got Eidi a special gift from their elders and relatives on the occasion of holy festival. Attired in colourful costumes they were seen

busy in purchasing toys and sweets. They were also seen enjoying fun and frolic. Eid was also celebrated in Bhalla, Athkar, Thatri, Bhalessa, Chiralla and Pranoo with fervor and gaiety where people of Muslim community offered special prayers in various mosques and Eidgahs. Meanwhile Advocate Mohd Majid Malik appreciated local administration which also included JKP and CRPF for providing appropriate security arrangements in Bhaderwah keeping in Eid festival.

## Zonal Level English Medium Samagam held by SNM Jammu



### TOP NEWS REPORT

JAMMU, Jun 29 : With the divine blessings of HH Satguru Mata Sudiksha ji Maharaj Sant Nirankari Mandal (SNM) Branch Jammu Organised a Zonal Level English Medium Samagam at Sant Nirankari Satsang Bhawan Shastri Nagar Jammu. Devotees from all age group and from Jammu,

Kathua & Samba Districts participated in huge numbers to spread the message of Sant Nirankari Mission. The Samagam was presided over by Saint PP Singh ji from Ambala, Haryana. While blessings the saints he said that the beginning of English medium Samagams owe their importance on the vision of Baba

Hardev Singh ji that any language should not become a barrier in spreading the message of truth, love, peace, harmony and universal brotherhood. English being the most widely spoken language all over the world has its importance in communication. He further said that divine knowledge is most important to get enlightened,

become united with all pervading God and get liberated from the unending cycle of birth and rebirth while living a blissful, cherished worldly life. He added that true master Satguru is a living embodiment of God almighty and his sole purpose is to remove the darkness of ignorance of the truth which is the root cause of all sufferings and sorrows of humans. The true master satguru fulfils the mission of human life which is to know one, believe one and become one thus establishing the ages old concept of "Vasudaivaikutamkum". i.e. the entire world is one family. Aijt Singh zonal In charge SNM Jammu welcomed all and presented the vote of thanks.

## Mahajan Sabha starts Langar for Amarnath pilgrims



### TOP NEWS REPORT

JAMMU, Jun 29: Jammu Central Mahajan Sabha (JCMS) on Thursday started Langar for devotees of Amarnath pilgrimage which will be continue till the collimation of Yatra in the month of August 2023. Under the chairmanship of Romesh Gupta, President of the Sabha along with Shiv Partap Gupta Sr. Vice President inaugurated the Langar which appeared very impressive as sadhus & other yatries raised loudly slogans "Bum Bum Bhole" which marked the luster of the occasion. The Langar was organized under the overall supervision of Sanjay Mahajan, General Secretary of the Sabha. C.P Gupta & Mukesh Mahajan have been looking after press related matters and protocol arrangements in the campus. Balbir Gupta and Yash Pal Gupta are the Incharge of Langar. Romesh Chander Gupta (President of the Sabha) said as the government authori-

ties has again provided an opportunity to the Sabha for the registration of Shri Amaranth Yatries for 2023. It's worthwhile to mention that the Sabha has been organizing Langar Sewa for the last more than 15 years. This noble cause is being organized by the funds raised from donations of its office bearers, working committee members, and others who are well wishers and community members. The people of Jammu are donating

ration items, cash etc. for the Langar. Sabha has decided to continue it for the entire period of the holy Yatra. Romesh Chander Gupta, said this, adding that it is a very pious service, and the Sabha hopes that those who are interested can donate under proper receipts to Sabha office at Mahajan Bhawan, Shalamar Road Jammu. He said that it is not one man show but result of the collective efforts. Even single penny donated for the

noble cause will be fully utilized for Langer Sewa, he said. Romesh Chander Gupta shared that Sabha has planned in such a way that it will be inaugurated by the prominent personalities of Jammu on every day and by the donors also when one has opted the date or day. One can also donate drinking water bottles of small quantity as the consumption of drinking bottles is highly required in these days of summers. Others present on the occasion included Harinder Gupta, Rajesh Choudhary, Dr Mohan Lal, Subash Gupta, Atul Gupta, Prabhu Dayal Gupta, Surinder Gupta, Kulbushan Gupta (Manu), Ashok Gupta, Ramesh Gupta (Bartan wale), Rakesh Gupta, Arun Gupta, Shanti Parkash Gupta, Rajneesh Gupta, Dr. Bimal Gupta Krishan Lal Gupta (Pradhan Lakhdata Bazar), Satish Gupta, Darshan Gupta, Parshotam Gupta, Suresh Gupta, Engineer R.C Gupta and others.

## SSCC stages Nukkad Natak on drugs menace at Kathua

### TOP NEWS REPORT

KATHUA, Jun 29: On world's Anti Drug Day, J&K Academy of Art Culture & Languages organised awareness Nukkad Natak performances by the artists of Sargam Social & Cultural Group (SSCC), Samba. On this day two Nukkad Natak were staged publicly at Kathua and Nagri which were witnessed largely by local people. On this occasion few patriotic songs were sung before Nukkad Natak performances to create sense of nationalism and to connect back the Youth to main stream. The artists of new Sargam Social & Culture Club performed well on the ground to create awareness about ill effects of Chitta drugs among youths. A strong message was penetrated through skits, cautioning the society especially youth to keep them away from drugs menace.



People took keen interest watching live shows that how youth get trapped in drugs racket and how they came under such bad influence. The story revolves around youths, get addicted to use chitta drugs, started stealing money from own house, doing different activities,

forgetting normal life style. But on the receipt of complaint, they both got arrested by police at one hideouts. This was well crafted story to give a message on the subject among society. The artists who took part were Aijt Sharma, Ravi Dutta, Kaka, Jyoti, Neelam Sharma.

## PYF lauds LG's decision for giving Govt job to Deepu's wife

### TOP NEWS REPORT

UDHAMPUR, Jun 29: Deepu Kumar, a resident of Tehsil Majalta of Udhampur district, was shot dead by terrorists in Anantnag in the Kashmir Valley last month, after which several organizations in Jammu division demanded a government job for Deepu Kumar's wife raised before the Lt. Governor, after which, the Lt. Governor Manoj Sinha handed over the government job appointment letter to Deepu Kumar's wife, Advocate Pawan Dev Singh, President Progressive Youth Forum Thanked the Lieutenant Governor for handing over the appointment letter of gov-

ernment job to Deepu Kumar's wife Sakshi Devi. Advocate Pawan Dev said that he welcomes the decision of Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha to give a government job to Deepu Kumar's wife Sakshi Devi. He said that Deepu Kumar's family is very poor and their house was also in a dilapidated condition, Deepu Kumar's brother is blind and father is old, Deepu Kumar was the only one in the home who was earning in the family after the murder of Deepu Kumar there was no earning member in the family of Deepu Kumar, due to which there was no means of earning to maintain the family.