

जल्द ही पेपर शुरू होने वाले हैं। नई कक्षा में पहली बार परीक्षाएं होंगी। अगर तुम इनमें अच्छे नंबर लाते हो तो तुम सबकी नजरों में आ जाओगे। इसीलिए जान लो कि कैसे कर सकते हैं अच्छा स्कोर...

दोस्तों, कई बार ऐसा होता है कि पूरी तैयारी के बावजूद पेपर में तुम्हारे नंबर उतने नहीं आ पाते, जितने की तुम्हें उम्मीद होती है। कई बार ऐसा भी होता है कि पेपर के पहले तो तुम्हें सब याद होता है, पर जैसे ही प्रश्न पत्र सामने आता है, तुम सब भूल जाते हो। इसलिए कुछ बातों का ध्यान रखना जरूरी है, जो तुम्हें पूरे नंबर दिलाने में सहायक होंगे।

सवाल ध्यान से पढ़ कर देना जवाब

अक्सर परीक्षा के वक्त तुम सवाल को ध्यान से नहीं देखते और उत्तर देना शुरू कर देते हो। सरसरी निगाहों से प्रश्न पत्र देखने पर कई बार तुम सवाल को सही से समझ नहीं पाते। कई सवाल एक-दूसरे से काफी मिलते-जुलते होते हैं, ऐसे में तुम अगर सवाल सही नहीं समझ पाते हो तो अपने अनुसार उसका उत्तर लिख देते हो। ऐसा करने पर तुम्हें उसके लिए अच्छे नंबर नहीं मिल पाते।

प्रश्न पत्र के निर्देशों को समझ लेना

प्रश्न पत्र में दिए गए निर्देश को जरूर पढ़ना। ऐसा करने में तुम्हें पांच से दस मिनट का समय लग सकता है, लेकिन यह तुम्हारे लिए काफी फायदेमंद होगा। कई बार सभी सवालों का जवाब देना अनिवार्य नहीं होता, लेकिन गलती से तुम सभी सवालों का जवाब देकर अपना समय बर्बाद करते हो। निर्देश (इंस्ट्रक्शन) में यह बात स्पष्ट रूप से लिखी होती है कि कितने प्रश्नों का उत्तर देना है या किस सेक्शन से कितने प्रश्नों को हल करना अनिवार्य है।

रिक्त स्थान दिलाएंगे पूरे नंबर

तुम्हारे पेपर में कई वैकल्पिक प्रश्न भी पूछे जाते हैं। इन प्रश्नों में चार विकल्प होते हैं, जिनमें से कोई एक विकल्प सही होता है। ध्यानपूर्वक अगर उसका सही उत्तर दोगे तो उसमें पूरे नंबर मिलेंगे। इसके साथ ही कुछ प्रश्न रिक्त स्थान वाले भी होते हैं। इन प्रश्नों में एक या दो शब्द के उत्तर से रिक्त स्थान को भरना होता है। अगर तुम सही-सही उत्तर दोगे तो इनके पूरे नंबर मिलेंगे।

मेन पॉइंट को करो अंडरलाइन

परीक्षा में तुम पेन के साथ एक स्केच या बुक मार्कर जरूर ले जाना। सभी सवालों को हल करने के बाद उत्तर पत्र को गौर से पढ़ना और उसमें जो भी मेन पॉइंट लगे उसे स्केच या बुक मार्कर से जरूर अंडरलाइन कर देना। ऐसा करने पर टीचर जब तुम्हारी ऑंसरशीट को चेक करेंगे तो उन्हें महत्वपूर्ण पॉइंट पहले ही दिख जाएंगे।

अंत में देख लेना पूरा पेपर

परीक्षा के दौरान प्रश्न पत्र इस तरीके से करना ताकि सभी सवालों को हल करने के बाद भी तुम्हारे पास अंतिम समय में कुछ समय बच जाए। पांच मिनट का समय अगर तुम्हारे पास बचा रहेगा तो इस समय में तुम अपने उत्तर पत्र को एक बार फिर से पढ़ कर उसमें सुधार कर सकते हो।



टाइम टेबल से पढ़ाई को बनाओ आसान

अगर तुम टाइम टेबल बनाकर पढ़ाई करोगे तो तुम्हारे लिए तैयारी काफी आसान हो जाएगी। तुम एक रूटीन चार्ट बना कर सभी विषयों के लिए समय तय कर सकते हो। जिस विषय में तुम्हें ज्यादा मेहनत की जरूरत है उस पर ज्यादा समय दो और जो विषय तुम्हारे लिए आसान है, उसे थोड़ा कम समय दो, लेकिन सभी विषय के लिए हर दिन समय जरूर तय करो। ऐसा करने से सभी विषयों की अच्छे से तैयारी हो जाएगी। और हां, टाइम टेबल बनाते समय खेलने और दोस्तों संग मस्ती करने के लिए भी रखना। इससे तनाव कम होगा।

वर्ड पजल बनाओ

वर्ड पजल खेलना तुम्हारे लिए काफी फायदेमंद होगा। पजल मेमोरी शार्प करने का काम करता है। पजल बनाने से तुम्हारी टेंशन कम होगी। तुम रिफ्रेश हो जाओगे। अब जब भी दो-तीन घंटों की पढ़ाई के बाद तुम्हारा पढ़ने में मन नहीं लगे तो दस मिनट के लिए पजल खेलना, इससे तुम तरोताजा हो जाओगे।

लिखना रहेगा बेहतर

निरंतर लिखना काफी अच्छा होता है। यह परीक्षा में तो तुम्हारे काम आएगा, साथ ही भविष्य में भी तुम्हारे लिए काफी मददगार होगा। अक्सर परीक्षा में लिखते वक्त छात्रों को परेशानी होती है। तुम्हारी लिखने की स्पीड कम होने की वजह से नियत समय में सभी सवालों का जवाब देना तुम्हारे लिए मुश्किल हो जाता है। अगर निरंतर लिखते रहने का अभ्यास करोगे तो परीक्षा हाल में तुम्हें लिखते वक्त किसी तरह की परेशानी का सामना नहीं करना पड़ेगा।

तनाव हावी न होने दो

परीक्षा को हौवा न बनाओ, परीक्षा का तनाव कभी न लो। जैसे स्कूल जाना, खाना, खेलना और लोगों से मिलना-जुलना तुम रोज करते हो, उसी तरह परीक्षा भी तुम्हारी पढ़ाई का एक हिस्सा है। इसलिए तुम बिना तनाव लिए इसे दो। अगर तुम बिना तनाव के पढ़ोगे तो परीक्षा भी अच्छी जाएगी और नंबर भी अच्छे आएंगे। परीक्षा को नारियल के फल जैसा ही समझो- ऊपर से दिखने में काफी कठोर, लेकिन अन्दर से नरम। जैसे नारियल को अगर तरीके से तोड़ोगे तो अच्छा सा फल खाने को मिलेगा, नहीं तो चोट लगेगी, वैसे ही परीक्षा को टेंशन फ्री होकर दोगे तो तुम्हें अच्छा रिजल्ट ही मिलेगा।

सोना भी बहुत जरूरी है



ऐसे करोगे पेपर... तो मिलेंगे पूरे नंबर

दिमाग एक मशीन है और अगर मशीन से ज्यादा काम लगे तो वह थक जाएगा, इसलिए जरूरी है कि इस मशीन का सही से इस्तेमाल करो और थकने पर इसे चार्ज करो। मतलब कि ज्यादा पढ़ाई करने पर दिमाग रूपी मशीन को आराम भी दो। आराम बहुत जरूरी है, इसलिए तुम अच्छी नींद लो। परीक्षा के दबाव में आकर तुम हमेशा अपनी नींद खराब कर देते हो और देर रात तक जागकर पढ़ने की कोशिश भी करते हो। इससे तुम्हारा स्वास्थ्य खराब होने की संभावना बढ़ जाती है। पढ़ना जरूरी है, लेकिन नींद भी जरूरी है, इसलिए हर दिन आठ घंटे की नींद पूरी करो। अगर अच्छी नींद पूरी करोगे तो अगले दिन दोगुने उत्साह के साथ दोगुनी रफ्तार से पढ़ाई कर सकते हो।

समय का सदुपयोग करना सीखो

परीक्षा के दिनों में सबसे ज्यादा महत्वपूर्ण है समय का सदुपयोग। समय का प्रबंधन करके तुम अच्छे से समय का सदुपयोग कर सकते हो। सभी कामों के लिए तुम समय को बांट लो और फिर उसी के अनुसार अपना काम करो। पढ़ाई के अलावा अन्य कामों को कम समय दो और पढ़ाई के लिए रू टि न



बनाओ। सभी विषयों के लिए समय का विभाजन कर दो।

जमकर खाओ कुछ बनकर दिखाओ

खाने को तुम अक्सर मना कर देते हो, लेकिन चुस्त दिमाग का इस्तेमाल तभी हो सकता है जब शरीर चुस्त हो। इसलिए मम्मी की बात मान कर पौष्टिक खाना खाओ। जंक फूड को बिल्कुल 'न' कर दो और जमकर फल, जूस और दूध लो। दूध और जूस दिमाग को तेज-तरार बनाता है और तुम्हें स्वस्थ रखता है।

इनका रखना ध्यान

पढ़ाई करो, परिणाम की चिंता नहीं

कभी भी रिजल्ट का तनाव लेकर पढ़ने मत बैठो। टेंशन लेने से तैयारी अच्छी नहीं हो पाएगी। खुले दिमाग में कोई बात ज्यादा आसानी से समझ आती है, इसलिए तुम कूल होकर सिर्फ पढ़ाई पर ध्यान केन्द्रित करो। अगर तुम अच्छे से पढ़ाई करोगे तो यकीन मानो रिजल्ट खुद ब खुद बेहतर होगा।

नोट्स बनाओ, एक्सचेंज करो

परीक्षा के ख्याल से नोट्स बनाना बेहतर होता है। चैप्टर में जो भी महत्वपूर्ण तथ्य लगे, उसके नोट्स बनाकर रख सकते हो। जब कई दोस्त नोट्स बनाओगे तो काफी मदद मिलेगी एक-दूसरे से। तुम अपने दोस्तों के साथ नोट्स की अदला-बदली कर लो। ऐसा करने से तुम्हारी अच्छी तैयारी होगी।

ग्रुप स्टडी है बेहतर

पढ़ाई और परीक्षा की तैयारी के लिए सबसे बेहतर होता है ग्रुप स्टडी। सुनी हुई बात पढ़ी हुई बात से ज्यादा जल्दी समझ में आती है और ज्यादा समय तक याद रहती है, इसलिए तुम अपने दोस्तों के साथ ग्रुप स्टडी कर सकते हो।

रिवीजन का कोई विकल्प नहीं

परीक्षा के अंतिम दिनों में रिवीजन सबसे अधिक काम आती है। रिवीजन करने से पढ़ी हुई सारी चीजें तुम्हें याद आ जाती हैं और कम समय में भी तुम अच्छी तैयारी कर सकते हो। इसलिए अब तक सिलेबस का जितना भी भाग तुम्हें पढ़ाया गया है, उसकी अच्छे से रिवीजन कर लो।

जीव-जंतुओं को कैसे होता है समय का ज्ञान



मनुष्य अपनी जैविक क्रियाओं के समय-चक्र को जानने के लिए घड़ी की सहायता लेता है। जंतु किस प्रकार समय पर ज्ञान प्राप्त कर लेते हैं? क्या उनके पास भी कोई घड़ी है? जैव वैज्ञानिक इस बात से सहमत हैं कि जंतुओं में जैविक क्रियाओं के समय-चक्र के ज्ञान के लिए विशेष तंत्र होता है, जिसे वैज्ञानिक जैविक घड़ी या बायोलॉजिकल क्लॉक कहते हैं। जैविक घड़ी जंतुओं और वनस्पतियों दोनों में होती है। पेड़-पौधे भी समय से प्रभावित होते हैं। जंतुओं और पेड़-पौधों में जैविक घड़ी की खोज में वैज्ञानिक लम्बे समय से प्रयोग करते आ रहे हैं। लेकिन सफलता अभी हाल में ही मिली है। इस नवीन खोज के अनुसार, मछलियों, रेंगने वाले जंतुओं, मेंढकों तथा स्तनधारी जंतुओं में जैविक घड़ी का कार्य पीनियल ग्रन्थि करती है। पीनियल ग्रन्थि, मस्तिष्क में नलिकारहित छोटी-सी ग्रन्थि होती है। इससे मिलेटोनिन हॉर्मोन नामक विशेष प्रकार का साव निकलकर रूधिर में मिल जाता है। यही हॉर्मोन समय संबंधी दैनिक क्रियाओं, मौसम संबंधी परिवर्तनों तथा जंतुओं के व्यवहार के लिए जिम्मेदार है और इसी से समय का ज्ञान प्राप्त होता है।

करोड़ों में नीलाम हुई सुपरमैन की पहली कॉमिक्स

दोस्तों, कॉमिक्स तो खूब पढ़ते होंगे तुम। कोर्स की बुक में छिपा कर भी. है न सच। मम्मी-पापा कॉमिक बुक्स पढ़ने से मना भी करते हैं, पर तुम कहाँ मानने वाले हो। सुपरमैन, स्पाइडर मैन, बैटमैन आदि का नाम तो सुना ही होगा तुमने। इसके अलावा और भी कई ऐसे कॉमिक बुक हैं, जो तुम सबको काफी पसंद हैं। अभी हाल ही में एक शॉपिंग साइट पर सुपरमैन कॉमिक बुक की पहली प्रति की नीलामी की गई। इस नीलामी ने तो रिकार्ड तोड़ दिया, क्योंकि जो कीमत इसके लिए आंकी गई, वह तो कल्पना भी नहीं कर सकते तुम। पूरे 3.2 मिलियन डॉलर में बिकी है यह कॉमिक्स। इसके साथ ही सुपरमैन की पहली कॉमिक बुक अब तक की सबसे महंगी कॉमिक बुक बन गई है। इसकी कीमत सुन होश उड़ गए तुम सबके। विश्वास नहीं होता न...पर यह सच है। दुनिया को सुपरमैन से मिलवाने वाली एक्शन



कॉमिक्स नंबर वन सुपरमैन कॉमिक बुक की शुरुआत वर्ष 1938 में हुई थी। जाहिर है कि इस पहली कॉमिक्स में सुपरमैन का पहला एडवेंचर भी होगा। कल्पना कर पाओगे उस वक्त के कॉमिक्स की। कैसी होगी कहानी, उसमें छपे चित्र, रंगों के तालमेल अगर तुम्हें मिल जाए तो... संग्रहालय में रखने वाली चीज होगी है न। इसकी शुरुआती कीमत केवल 10 सेंट्स थी। डारन एडम्स ने इस दुर्लभ कॉपी की नीलामी का फैसला किया और इसकी शुरुआती बोली 99 सेंट्स रखी। जब नीलामी खत्म हुई तब वाशिंगटन के फेडरल वे में प्रिस्टाइन कॉमिक्स के मालिक ने पाया कि यह राशि 3207852 डॉलर हो गई। एक्शन कॉमिक्स नंबर 1, 1938 की किताब है जिसमें सुपरहीरो को पहली बार दर्शाया गया था। मतलब यह काफी दुर्लभ है। हालांकि शॉपिंग साइट ने इस बात का खुलासा नहीं किया है कि इस किताब को किसने खरीदा है।

दुनिया का दुर्लभ फूल साइप्रिपेडियम कैलकेलस



कभी ये जंगली ऑर्किड पूरे यूरोप में मिलता था। लेकिन अब यह सिर्फ ब्रिटेन में होता है। पीले और जामुनी से रंग वाला ये फूल अब इतना दुर्लभ है कि इसकी एक डाली पांच हजार अमेरिकी डॉलर में मिल सकती है।

A team that took everyone along

THE entire nation was united and overjoyed when Team India won the T20 World Cup. Our cricketers not only snatched victory from the jaws of defeat in the final against South Africa in Barbados but also remained undefeated throughout the tournament where victory or defeat was greatly dependent on a single player or two. The Proteas were cruising to victory with only 30 runs required from the last five overs. South African batsman Heinrich Klaasen was at his destructive best, hitting one six after another. And just when we had lost all hope, he was dismissed by Hardik Pandya. This was the turning point. Later, in the last over, the amazing catch taken by Suryakumar Yadav at the boundary line off Hardik's bowling to dismiss David Miller sealed the fate of the South Africans. Suryakumar had to keep all his wits about him to not lose his balance and then jump back and catch the ball before it hit the ground. Hardik, whose captaincy of Mumbai Indians in the Indian Premier League (IPL) had drawn criticism because of the franchise's poor performance this year, regained his composure and form to shine in the final and most of the preceding games. He had replaced Rohit Sharma, a popular captain of Nita Ambani's franchise for years.

The wonderful pace bowler Jasprit Bumrah was as economical and effective with the white ball as he always is. He was well supported by another speedster, Arshdeep Singh, who peaked at just the right time. Irfan Kohli came good just when the team needed him the most. His performance in the final contributed massively to our victory. This was his last appearance in T20 Internationals. He will not forget the moment. Fellow Indians will certainly not forget the debt the nation owes to this big-hearted cricketer. I am honoured that he has chosen my city of Mumbai as his permanent residence in deference to his wife's wishes.

Another stalwart who has decided to hang up his boots in T20 cricket is the captain himself. Rohit has provided immense joy and much entertainment with the willow over the years. He has assumed the role of the wrecker-in-chief for India as well as Mumbai Indians. His sixes and fours, which he hits with gay abandon, have delighted his fans in international and league cricket. He was not that successful in this World Cup except in the Super Eight match against Australia, in which he narrowly fell short of a century. He was also part of the Indian team which won the inaugural T20 World Cup back in 2007 in South Africa. I welcome the Nagpur-born Rohit back to Mumbai, where he settled down as a young cricketer.

Flamboyant wicketkeeper-batsman Rishabh Pant was another delight to watch, not just behind the stumps but in front too. Two other big hitters, Suryakumar and Shivam Dube, all-rounder Axar Patel — who bailed out the team at crucial moments — and Chinaman bowler Kuldeep Yadav, all contributed their mite to the success of this team. It was a great team effort, spearheaded by a great leader.

Opponents were treated with respect. There was no room for complacency even when playing against minnows like the USA and Ireland.

Our political leaders can learn a few lessons from this World Cup-winning team. The most important lessons are in the domain of leadership. Take everyone along, utilise the strengths of each player and never treat your opponents as dirt to be trampled on. Even the RSS sarsangchalak gave that advice after the BJP's below-par show in the Lok Sabha elections, in which the saffron party lost substantial ground in its stronghold of Uttar Pradesh.

Drawbacks of Agnipath scheme far outweigh its benefit

If the scheme is designed to inculcate discipline in the country's youth, as some have said, this can be achieved through less risky options.

THE Agnipath scheme came under scrutiny during the just-concluded session of Parliament. It also made headlines during the recent Lok Sabha elections. In a traditional army like ours, the introduction of a scheme that changes its basic structure must be backed by strong and cogent reasons.

Even though not so stated, the main reason for the change was to reduce the pension expenditure, thus saving money for the modernisation of the defence forces. That is understandable, since over 70 per cent of the defence Budget currently goes into meeting the revenue needs. Pensions have been singled out as a major drain. The One Rank One Pension (OROP) scheme has been vilified, though unfairly. There are many other categories of pensioners who have been beneficiaries of the OROP or its equivalent. Soldiers only started getting benefits of the scheme in 2015, after over three decades of struggle. The number of pensioners is on the rise because of their longer life span. But this trend is temporary. Statistically, the numbers entering the pension scheme and those exiting it are likely to plateau soon. Unfortunately, India does not have a defence culture. An average citizen has scant knowledge or interest in the subject. There is an age-old wish for the defence forces: 'may there never be wanting, and may they never be wanted'. A good army does not keep the country secure by fighting a war, but by preventing one.

It does this through deterrence by remaining fully equipped, trained and ready. To keep it thus ever ready entails costs.

When an annual review is done, all ministries and departments show a tangible utilisation of the allocated funds. This is done by counting additional highways, universities, hospitals, airports, etc. But those entrusted with keeping the country safe have nothing to show in physical terms. The fact that every other development has been possible because of them is often overlooked. Their contribution is not perceptible, and their expenses are liable to be misconstrued as being wasteful. Consequently, they are the first to come in the crosshairs of the cost-cutting measures. The Army's manpower is internally reviewed regularly. However, it

needs to be remembered that weapons and technology per se do not win wars; it is the soldier who does. If that were not true, Israel, with far superior weapons and technology, would have achieved its avowed aim of finishing the ragtag Hamas a long time ago. But Israeli Defence Minister Yoav Gallant is desperately asking for 10,000 additional soldiers. India has over 15,000 km of land borders. These run through the toughest terrain in the world. The situation on some 7,000 km of the land border remains perpetually active, calling for the deployment of troops. It is debatable whether the 12 lakh-strong Army is too large. Although Pakistan is no



pole star, it is pertinent to remember that our western neighbour — with less than one-fourth of our size and nearly one-seventh of our population and an economy in a shambles — is maintaining 6.5 lakh personnel. By that yardstick, our defence forces' strength should be around 33 lakh instead of the present more than 14 lakh personnel. With our booming economy, the incessant drumbeat of our Army being too large and causing a burgeoning expenditure needs to be muted.

Maintaining peace and security is not the purview of the Army alone. It requires a synergy of diplomatic, economic, political and other factors. Unfortunately, our relations with our immediate neighbours have remained strained over the years. It falls to the Army to 'manage' those relations by keeping the adversaries at bay. This underscores the need for keeping a strong

army. As a result of the suspension of recruitment in the Covid-19 years, while retirements continued, the Army manpower had come down by nearly two lakh. Luckily, there was no war during the period. If considered prudent by the security policymakers, that reduced strength can be institutionalised. But whatever is retained must be homogenous. A hybrid army comprising a mix of regular and contractual soldiers cannot match a cohesive force.

After controversy erupted, certain benefits of the Agnipath scheme were put forward. One is the lowering of the age profile by two/three years. It may be mentioned that after the 1962 war debacle, the Army had sent out teams to different theatres to carry out physical tests at varying altitudes. Based on their findings, mandatory standards were prescribed for annual battle physical efficiency tests. Interestingly, the standards for all aged from 18 to 35 years were exactly the same. The age factor, therefore, is more of a post-event justification than a factor in favour of the continuation of the scheme.

It is true that the short service commission officers who served for five or 10 years performed laudably well in wars. But officers serve as leaders, where they take individual decisions at the cutting edge. The soldiers, on the contrary, always work as a team in which esprit de corps is their glue. This is difficult to achieve in a disparate group. It has also been reported that an internal survey of the Army found the scheme to have merit. The reality,

however, is that the system does not allow the Army to publicly express disagreement with a government scheme. All internal analyses get dovetailed into support for the decision that has already been taken; it is not examined critically.

If the scheme is designed to inculcate discipline in the country's youth, as some have said, this can be achieved through less risky options. For one, the NCC (National Cadet Corps) scheme can be expanded and more Army personnel can be involved in the training than at present. The only known benefit of the scheme is bringing down the pension expenditure. This is clearly and quotably visible. The serious drawbacks of the scheme will only be known in the event of a war. But it will be too late by then.

LAC imbroglio

India-China talks making no headway

EXTERNAL Affairs Minister S Jaishankar and his Chinese counterpart Wang Yi have agreed to 'redouble efforts' through diplomatic and military channels for an early resolution of the remaining issues along the Line of Actual Control (LAC). It is tempting to regard this declaration as a breakthrough, but the problem is that many such averments have been made in recent years amid the prolonged standoff in eastern Ladakh. The two leaders, who met on the sidelines of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation meeting in Kazakhstan, are also apparently in agreement on the need to stabilise and rebuild bilateral relations. Yet again, peace and tranquillity are the buzzwords, but there is little inclination to go beyond the platitudes and make tangible progress on the ground.

The trust deficit is exemplified by the competitive development of border villages. India has reportedly decided to set up villages or habitations in Arunachal Pradesh 'closer to the LAC' in a bid to match China's



efforts. The Chinese have established over 600 'prosperous villages' (Xiaokang) along the LAC to bolster their territorial claims and enhance their military readiness. India's counter is the Vibrant

Villages Programme, which was launched last year. The ambitious project aims to cover around 3,000 villages in Arunachal, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Ladakh and Sikkim. The focus on improving road and telecom connectivity, housing and tourism facilities has a larger objective — to encourage more and more villagers to become the eyes and ears of the soldiers in border areas.

Amid this all-out infrastructural push and troop buildup, the periodic talks at the diplomatic and military levels have often been inconclusive. A summit-level interaction between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and President Xi Jinping has remained elusive. As Asia's largest powers, it is in the interests of both countries to engage in dialogue and address the thorny issues, including China's unwillingness to exchange maps of the LAC.

Community service offers a window of opportunity

The key objective of community service is to promote among offenders a sense of responsibility towards society.

THE new criminal laws have come into force. The Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita and the Bharatiya Sakshya Adhinyam have replaced the Indian Penal Code (1860), the Criminal Procedure Code (1973) and the Indian Evidence Act (1872), respectively. The transition will be very challenging for all stakeholders. Some teething troubles are bound to happen as the police and the judiciary will have to juggle the two systems of law.

The new statutes are aimed at providing justice in contrast to colonial legislation, which focused on 'punishment'. A progressive shift under the BNS is the introduction of community service as a form of punishment under Section 4(f). The BNS, however, does not define what community service entails. This will apply to six offences: attempting suicide to compel or restrain the exercise of lawful power, defamation, theft of property below Rs 5,000, misconduct in public by a drunken person, non-appearance at the specified place and time as required by a proclamation, and a public servant engaging in trade. The community service sentence can be awarded in addition to the prescribed punishment. This legislative change provides an alternative to imprisonment and reflects a rehabilitative approach.

Community service, as ordered by the court, offers the offender the opportunity of compensating society for the wrong s/he has done by performing unpaid work for the benefit of the community instead of going to prison. A proportionate use of imprisonment is essential for an effective penal system. India has over 5.73 lakh inmates in its 1,330 prisons, with an occupancy rate of 130 per cent. Undertrials constitute 75 per cent of the prison population. Not every suspect needs to be imprisoned. Non-custodial measures and, in particular, community service as a penal sanction are also in line with the United Nations Rules for Non-Custodial measures (The Tokyo Rules) of 1990. Positive experience with the introduction of community service has been seen in



many countries across the world, including the UK, the US, Australia and African nations such as South Africa and Zimbabwe. This sanction is based on the restorative and rehabilitative justice models, which hold offenders directly responsible for the damage they have caused to society. The key objective of community service is to promote among offenders a sense of responsibility towards society. Who will implement this judicial decision and the manner of its implementation remain a bit unclear as of now. Community service orders must be correctly worded in order to avoid possible confusion. The orders must specify the number of hours required to be worked; the days on which work is to be performed; the starting and finishing times of the work; and the place where the work is to be performed.

The work and the supervision required need to be specified. Hence, having detailed provisions is essential

for successfully implementing this provision. Staff will have to be trained for the supervisory work as well. Will it be probation officers, the social welfare department, the prison department or community service supervisors who will oversee it? These issues need to be resolved promptly. In India, it was only under the Juvenile Justice Act, 2015, that community sentence could be given. The judges and Juvenile Justice Board members have not always been clear in terms of what kind of sentence should be passed. The Pune Porsche accident case is a notable example of how one order can spark a legal debate on the appropriateness and arbitrariness of such a measure. Hence, having clear guidelines is very essential. This promising step requires careful planning for its successful implementation. Identifying the community work, places for work and the supervision and monitoring agencies in any state is a task for the

governments, along with capacity building and training of relevant stakeholders. There are international best practices in this regard that can be considered. Community service in Spain and Singapore requires that the work should have some relation with the offence committed. The number of work hours varies — a range of hours is specified. Work like cleaning public areas, tree plantation, maintaining public parks and buildings may also be ordered. Centres of community service can include government hospitals, health clinics, schools, orphanages and old-age homes, along with charitable organisations like Pingalwara. Seva is an essential component of our culture; in the Sikh religion, the one who is declared tankhaiya is ordered to do kar sewa as penance and is then accepted back into the community. John Braithwaite, a criminologist, argues in favour of the 'reintegrative shaming' approach, which eschews stigmatisation to deal with the crime problem. The reintegrative process involves a reciprocal relationship between the offender and the community. In certain jurisdictions, community sentencing is monitored by specifically established boards/institutions. A breach of the community sentence can be dealt with through a fine, an increase in the hours of work or sending back the offender to prison. The role of the supervisor is important, as it involves monitoring the offenders' work, ensuring compliance with the sentencing order and reporting back to the court. This sanction helps an offender make reparation for offences and can enhance self-respect. Community service projects can also empower communities as the offenders engage in community-building service endeavours. There are many possibilities for better designing the sentencing landscape. Successful implementation of the new laws can happen only when all stakeholders and the community come together and work in tandem. Knowing the direction where we are going becomes important for all agencies.

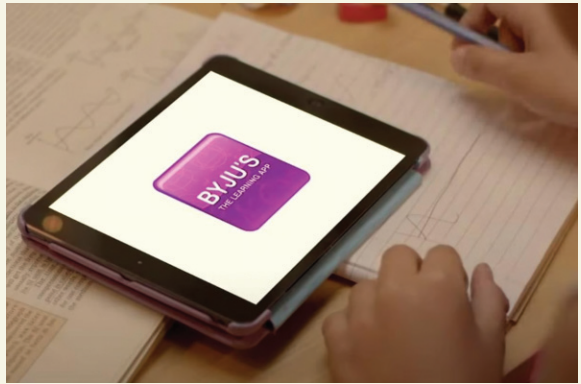
India has more consistent compounders than China: Report

NEW DELHI. Marcellus Investment Managers said on Friday that among emerging markets, both India and China have produced a significant number of consistent compounders — companies that have consistently achieved 10% YoY revenue growth and 10% RoCE over a decade. However, India not only surpassed China in the number of consistent compounders but also outperformed by delivering more than double the shareholder returns as against its Chinese counterparts. India has 162 compounders as against 126 in China. This is despite the fact that the Chinese economy and its capital market are much bigger than India. The finding stated that over the long term, India's equity market (Nifty50) has given superior returns as against any other market in the world. In the last 20 years, Nifty50 has given an annual return of 11.6%. The US market (S&P 500) comes next at 9.9%. China's Shanghai Composite has had an annual return of 5.9% in the past 20 years. Marcellus said as global businesses look to diversify their supply chains away from China, India is poised to benefit. Key sectors like smartphones, active pharmaceutical ingredients (APIs), and medical devices are expected to drive this growth, potentially contributing an additional \$300 billion to India's economy, it added.

The report said 5,000 companies that sit below the 800 most profitable companies in India are growing at a faster pace. It also stated that the share of the top 20 companies in overall PAT of India Inc (listed players) reached its peak during Covid but fell sharply after that.

Karnataka High Court asks Byju's to maintain status quo

BENGALURU. The Karnataka High Court on Friday restrained ed-tech firm Byju's from proceeding with the second rights issue till the NCLT decides on the plea by a group of investors. Four investors had objected to Byju's second rights issue saying this would dilute their holding. A few days ago, a single judge of the Karnataka High Court had set aside the interim NCLT order that had restrained Byju's from launching a second rights issue. The NCLT has been directed to decide the application filed by investors by July 31. Earlier, Think and Learn Pvt Limited (Byju's) and



Byju Raveendran had filed writ petitions against the order of NCLT dated 12 June 2024. The High Court has remanded the matter to the NCLT for fresh consideration within 2 weeks from 4 July 2024.

"During the proceedings of remand and till the decision which may be taken by the NCLT, the parties shall maintain status quo about the subject matter dispute as obtained on today," the order stated.

The respondents shall not make allotment of shares in the interregnum, to be subject to the final order which may be passed by the NCLT, it added. Also, if any transactions took place from July 2-4, 2024, they will remain subject to a final order that may be passed by the NCLT and the rights in that regard will be governed accordingly.

HDFC stock falls nearly 5%, drags sensx down



MUMBAI. HDFC Bank shares fell 4.6% on Friday, dragging the sensx below the 80,000 mark despite relatively strong sentiment in the equities market. The country's largest private lender came under pressure after it reported a decline in both loans and current & savings account deposits in the first quarter. The sensx closed 53 points down at 79,996 largely because of HDFC Bank. Nifty, which represents a broader range of stocks, continued to gain and closed 22 points higher at 24,324, with most of the gains coming in the last 30 minutes of the trade. According to brokers, if HDFC Bank's shares had not fallen, the sensx would have been up by over 500 points. Despite HDFC Bank being a drag, the sensx had its best week in over six months as well as the fifth consecutive week of gains.

Among the 30 sensx stocks, 17 posted gains. SBI shares gained the most at 2.5%, while Reliance Industries, which gained 2.3%, hit a new lifetime high at Rs 3,197. Shares of Raymond jumped 10% on Friday after the textile major said it will demerge its real estate business.

"The broader market outperformed the benchmarks, with Nifty mid-cap and small-cap indices gaining more than 0.5% each. Technically, Nifty managed to defend the 24,200 support level on a closing basis, indicating strength. As long as the index holds this support, it may attempt to test the levels of 24,500-24,600," said Hrishikesh Yedve of Asit C Mehta Investment. In Friday's session, HDFC Bank erased the gains it had made earlier in the week after reporting its June-end shareholding numbers.

SMEs on IPO spree in April, May as corporates mobilise nearly Rs 85,000 crore from equity offerings

Leading the equity issuance surge during the first two months were IPOs from the small and mid-cap (SME) segment, with 44 of these companies getting listed in the first two months of the current fiscal (FY25).

NEW DELHI. In just the first two months of financial year 2024-25 (FY25), Indian corporates have mobilised Rs 84,866 crore through equity issuances, including initial public offerings (IPO), follow-on public issues and preferential allotment. In the twelve months of FY24, corporates had raised Rs 67,956 crore from the IPO market and are expected to mobilise over Rs 1 lakh crore through primary issuances in the current fiscal. Leading the equity issuance surge during the first two months were IPOs from the small and mid-cap

(SME) segment, with 44 of these companies getting listed in the first two months of the current fiscal (FY25). This comes amid the Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi) Chairperson Madhabi Puri Buch raising concerns over manipulation in the listing of SMEs a few months back. While 44 companies got listed on SME platforms of the BSE and the NSE in April and May, there were a total of 52 listings (main board IPOs plus SME IPOs) during the two month period. In fiscal 2023-24, the total number of SME companies that were listed was 196. A total of 21 SMEs were listed in April, raising Rs 527 crore, while there were 23 SME IPOs which mobilised Rs 673 crore in May, according to the data from Sebi data. In March this year, the Sebi Chairperson had said that there were signs of price manipulation in SME IPOs and trading of such shares in the secondary market. "The reality is that SMEs are relatively small entities, the market is small, the free float is small, it is relatively easy to manipulate both at the IPO level and the trading level," Buch



had said. On an overall basis, Indian corporates mobilised Rs 84,866 crore through equity issuances, including initial public offering (IPO), both mainboard and SME platform, follow-on public offering and preferential allotment in the first two months of fiscal 2024-24, the SEBI data showed. India Inc raised Rs 14,661 crore through eight main board IPOs in April and May, the data showed. Some of the main board IPOs included Aadhaar Housing Finance (Rs 3000 crore), Go Digit General Insurance Rs 2,614 crore and Awfis Space Solutions Ltd (Rs 599 crore). Indian corporates raised Rs 67,956 crore from the IPO market in FY24 and they are expected to

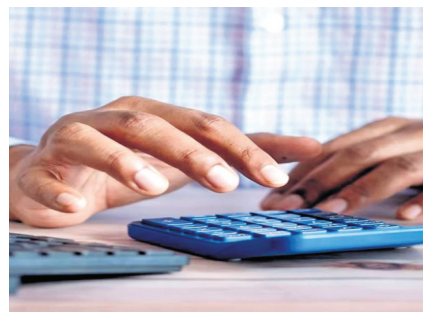
mobilise over Rs 1 lakh crore through primary issuances in the current fiscal. The rise in the number of companies raising money through IPOs can be attributed to the strong macroeconomic growth of the country, stable government and interest rates, and ease in inflation. According to Sebi data, corporates did not raise money through the follow-on public offer route in May this year.

However, in April, Rs 18,000 crore was raised through a single FPO of Vodafone Idea, which was the largest issue in the country. Funds amounting to Rs 3,798 crore were raised through 20 rights issues in April and May. Funds raised through preferential allotment during the two months stood at Rs 32,695 crore. The amount raised through QIP (Qualified Institutional Placement) stood at Rs 14,512 crore in the period. In May 2024, Rs 1,207 crore was mobilised through the public issue of debt, compared to the Rs 687 crore raised during April. Private placement of debt raised Rs 61,227 crore in May, compared to Rs 30,508 crore in April.

Government unlikely to do away with angel tax, say experts

NEW DELHI. Even though the Department for Promotion of Industries and Internal Trade (DPIIT) has recommended the finance ministry remove the angel tax, it is unlikely that the government may pay attention to such recommendations. The DPIIT Secretary in a press briefing on Thursday said his department has recommended the removal of Angel Tax to the finance ministry and that it had done so in the past as well. "Ultimately, the decision has to be taken by the ministry," he told reporters on Thursday. However, tax experts are of the view that the government is unlikely to remove the angel tax, which is levied on unlisted companies raising capital through the issue of shares.

Rohinton Sidhwa, partner, of Deloitte India, told TNIE that the debate has died down because the government has largely fixed the issue though it's an irritating thing it involves a lot of documentation.



"Companies have, however, realised that they have to do the paperwork, but at least the issue has gone away," said Sidhwa. Shrutu KP, partner, taxation, AZB & Partners, says the likelihood of any major change (in Angel Tax) is quite limited. If at all, the government may try and provide more exceptions, rather than removing the angel tax provision entirely, she says.

However, she admits that the angel tax is an unnecessary hassle and tax burden for businesses including for startups,

especially given that it now applies even to investments made by non-resident investors. "The so-called exceptions do not help very many businesses. As a tax professional, therefore, I do hope the MOF accepts the recommendation made by DPIIT," says Shrutu KP. Angel tax was introduced in 2012, and it is the tax that unlisted companies are liable to pay on the capital they raise through the issue of shares, and it is calculated based on the premium amount received above the fair market value of the shares. IT industry body Nasscom in its pre-budget meeting with the finance minister has raised the issue of angel tax. It said very few start-ups can avail the exemption from angel tax and even if a start-up avails exemption, it is not useful. "The end-use restrictions for utilising exempted investments are constraining and impact the business of start-ups," it added.

Fintech funding falls 59% to \$795 mn in H1, 2024

BENGALURU. In the first half of this year (January-June 2024), the fintech sector witnessed a declining trend in funding as they could manage to raise only \$795 million, a 59% fall compared to \$1.93 billion raised in the same period last year. The sector garnered \$896.7 million in H2, 2023, according to market intelligence platform Tracxn. In its semi-annual report, the firm said the funding in late-stage rounds stood at \$551 million, a 63% decline from the \$1.5 billion the sector raised in H1, 2023.

Neha Singh, co-founder at Tracxn, said, "The slowdown in funding reflects the need for a cautious outlook and strategic planning among start-ups and investors. Our Fintech sector remains dynamic, and we are optimistic that a supportive policy environment and technological advancements will create new opportunities for growth and innovation in the



near future." The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) recently came up with the Framework for Self-Regulatory Organisation for FinTechs, and this is to promote self-regulation in the industry to adhere to government rules. "This can potentially help bring trust and stability to the sector and highlight the importance of Fintech start-ups in the country's financial system," the report said.

The funding in both the seed-stage and early-stage too declined in the first half of this year. About \$179 million was raised in early-stage rounds, which is a 50% decline from \$361 million raised in H1 2023. First quarter of 2024 (January-March) has been the major contributor to funding so far, as the quarter witnessed \$582 million in fundraising, and Q2, 2024 saw only \$214 million in funding. Alternative Lending, RegTech, and Banking Tech were the top-performing sectors in this space, and Perfios is the only start-up that turned unicorn in this space. With 37% of total funding (about \$297 million), Bengaluru leads the space in terms of total funds raised in this period, followed by Mumbai (\$231

New norms for funding infra, setting standards

NEW DELHI. The Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE) has unveiled scheme guidelines aimed at funding testing facilities, infrastructure, and institutional support to develop standards and regulatory frameworks under the National Green Hydrogen Mission. With a total budget of Rs 200 crore allocated until the financial year 2025-26, the scheme targets addressing gaps in existing testing facilities for components, technologies, and processes across the Green Hydrogen value chain. It will facilitate the establishment of new testing facilities and the enhancement of existing ones to ensure secure and efficient operations. "The scheme aims to identify and bridge gaps in the current testing facilities for components, technologies, and processes in the Green Hydrogen value chain. It will support the creation of new testing facilities and upgrade



existing ones to ensure safe and reliable operations," stated MNRE in a statement. The National Green Hydrogen Mission (NGHM), launched on January 4, 2023, with a budget of Rs 19,744 crore, aims to position India as a global hub for the production, usage, and export of Green Hydrogen and its derivatives. This initiative is a crucial step towards India's goal of achieving self-reliance through clean energy and will serve as a model for the global transition to clean energy. According to government sources, the National

The National Green Hydrogen Mission (NGHM), launched on January 4, 2023, with a budget of Rs 19,744 crore, aims to position India as a global hub for the production, usage, and export of Green Hydrogen and its derivatives.

Institute of Solar Energy (NISE) will serve as the Scheme Implementation Agency (SIA). NISE's responsibilities will include developing robust quality and performance testing facilities to ensure the sustainability, safety, and high standards of Green Hydrogen (GH2) production and trade.

Retail, apparel dominate informal enterprises, employ most workers

The use of the internet for entrepreneurial purposes has increased by 7.2 per cent, indicating a rapid rate of digitisation in the sector, MoSPI said.

NEW DELHI. Retail trade, manufacturing of wearing apparel, and community, social and personal services were the top activity categories in the informal sector and employed the highest number of workers among the informal enterprises, the Annual Survey of Unincorporated Enterprises (ASUSE) for 2021-22 and 2022-23 released by the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI) on Friday showed. The total number of establishments



in the informal sector increased to 6.50 crore in 2022-23 from 5.97 crore in 2021-22, recording a 5.88 per cent annual growth. Out of the total number of establishments, other services sector topped with the highest share of enterprises at 37.88 per cent in ASUSE

2022-23, followed by trade (34.71 per cent) and manufacturing (27.41 per cent), the MoSPI release said. Other retail trade accounted for 30.38 per cent of the enterprises and employed 29.80 per cent of the total workers in ASUSE 2022-23, followed by manufacturing of wearing

apparel with 11.27 per cent share of establishments and 8.39 per cent share of total workers.

The unincorporated non-agricultural sector employed about 11 crore workers from October 2022 to September 2023, up from 9.8 crore in ASUSE 2021-22. More than one-third of this labour force was engaged in the states of Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra and West Bengal. The use of the internet for entrepreneurial purposes has increased by 7.2 per cent, indicating a rapid rate of digitisation in the sector, MoSPI said. Unincorporated sector enterprises' Gross Value Added (GVA) grew 9.83 per cent at current prices in October 2022-September 2023 compared with the April 2021-March 2022 period. The highest number of establishments (rural and urban combined) were recorded in Uttar Pradesh, followed by West Bengal and Maharashtra. The proportion of female workers has marginally increased to 25.63 per cent in ASUSE 2022-23 from 25.52 per cent in ASUSE 2021-22.

Rainy weekend likely in Delhi, no respite in flood-hit Assam, Uttarakhand

Torrential rainfall continued to batter flood-hit states, including Assam, Uttarakhand and Himachal Pradesh, with no respite on the cards for now, while Delhi is likely to receive light rainfall today.

New Delhi: More rainfall is predicted in several parts of the country, including Delhi, on Saturday, while floodwaters did not recede in states, including Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand and Assam, as torrential downpours continued to batter these regions. In Delhi, 0.6 mm of rainfall was recorded on Friday with the maximum and minimum temperatures pegged at 33.2 degrees Celsius and 27.1 degrees Celsius, respectively. Humidity was recorded at 75 per cent at 5:30 pm. Across North and Central India, isolated heavy rainfall was very likely in Himachal Pradesh, Haryana and Chandigarh on July 6, Uttarakhand Uttar Pradesh, East Rajasthan and East Madhya Pradesh between July 6 to 9, Punjab and West Madhya Pradesh on July 7, Vidarbha on July 8 and 9, and Chhattisgarh between July 7 to 9, the India Meteorological Department (IMD) said in its daily bulletin.

An orange alert for heavy rain was predicted in Uttarakhand and East Uttar Pradesh on July 6 and 7, and Punjab, West Uttar Pradesh and

West Madhya Pradesh on July 6, the weather office said. In the East and Northeast, isolated heavy rainfall was predicted in West Bengal, Sikkim and Bihar between July 7 and 9, Jharkhand on July 7, Odisha on July 6 and 8, Nagaland, Manipur, Mizoram and Tripura between July 6 to 9, according to the Met Department. An orange alert for heavy rain was likely in West Bengal, Bihar and Sikkim on July 6, Odisha on July 7, Arunachal Pradesh, Assam and Meghalaya between July 6 and 9. In southern and western India, an orange alert was issued for Konkan and Goa and coastal Karnataka on July 6, Madhya Maharashtra on July 6 and south interior Karnataka on July 6, the IMD said. A red alert for extremely heavy rain was likely in coastal Karnataka on July 6. According to the weather department, heavy rain was predicted in Kerala and Mahe between July 6 and 8, coastal Andhra Pradesh and Yanam between July 6 and 8, Telangana on July 8 and 9, coastal and south



Interior Karnataka between July 7 and 9 and north interior Karnataka on July 8.

FLOODS DISRUPT DAILY LIVES IN SEVERAL STATES

In Assam, the flood situation remained grim with major rivers flowing above the danger mark and nearly 24 lakh people affected. Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma visited several flood-hit areas in Dibrugarh, one of the 30 affected districts in the state, which is reeling from the worst

deluge in recent years. At least 77 wild animals have died -- either due to drowning or during treatment -- while 94 have been rescued from the flooded Kaziranga National Park as on Friday, an official said. Two people, including a child, were killed and another was injured in a landslide following incessant rainfall in the Dispur area of Kamrup Metropolitan district, taking the death toll in this year's floods, landslides and storms to 64. In Uttarakhand, which has received heavy rain over the past few days, a five-year-old drowned in a rainwater-filled pit in Dehradun and a teenager in a Haridwar rivulet. The continuous rain in the hill state triggered numerous landslides, blocking key roads, including the national highway leading to Badrinath. In Rudrapur district, debris from a landslide blocked the opening of an old tunnel on Friday. However, no casualties were reported, Superintendent of Police Vishakha Ashok Bhadane said.

Supreme Court To Consider Requests To Review Verdict On Same-Sex Marriage

New Delhi: The Supreme Court is scheduled to consider on July 10 a batch of pleas seeking review of its last year's judgement which refused to accord legal recognition to same-sex marriage.

According to the cause list of July 10 uploaded on the top court website, a five-judge bench headed by Chief Justice DY Chandrachud would consider in-chamber the pleas seeking review of the October 17 last year verdict. As per the practice, the review pleas are considered in-chamber by five-judge benches.

Besides the CJ, the other members of the bench will be Justices Sanjiv Khanna, Hima Kohli, BV Nagarathna and PS Narasimha. In a setback to gay rights activists, the top court had on October 17 last year refused to accord legal recognition to same-sex marriage, saying there was "no unqualified right" to marriage with the exception of those that are recognised by law.

The top court, however, had made a strong pitch for the rights of queer people so they don't face discrimination in accessing goods and services that are available to others, safe houses known as 'Garima Greh' in all districts to provide shelter to members of the community facing harassment and violence and dedicated hotline numbers which they could use in case of trouble. Holding that transgender people in heterosexual relationships have the freedom and entitlement to marry under the existing statutory provisions, the top court had said an entitlement to legal recognition of the right to union, akin to marriage or civil union, or conferring legal status to the relationship can be only done through "enacted law". A five-judge constitution bench headed by CJ Chandrachud had delivered four separate verdicts on a batch of 21 petitions seeking legal sanction for same-sex marriages.

Kerala records fourth case of rare brain-eating amoeba infection: Report

New Delhi: Kerala has reported another case of amoebic meningoencephalitis, a rare brain infection caused by a free-living amoeba found in contaminated waters, taking the total number of such cases to four. According to a report with news agency PTI, the patient is a 14-year-old boy, a resident of Payyoli in Kozhikode district of north Kerala, and is being treated



at a private hospital. The state has reported four such cases since May, and all patients were reported to be minors, three of whom have already died.

In the latest case, one of the doctors treating the boy said that he was admitted to the hospital on July 1, and his condition is improving, PTI reported. The doctor also said that on Saturday, the infection was identified quickly at the hospital and treatment, including medicines from abroad, was given immediately. On July 3, a 14-year-old boy infected with the free-living amoeba died in the state. Before that, two others -- a five-year-old girl from Malappuram and a 13-year-old girl from Kannur -- died on May 21 and June 25, respectively, due to the rare brain infection.

On Friday, Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan held a meeting in which several suggestions, including not to bathe in unclean waterbodies, were given to prevent further infections. In the meeting, it was also suggested that there should be proper chlorination of swimming pools and children should be careful when entering waterbodies as they are mostly affected by this disease, the statement read. The Chief Minister also said that everyone should take care to keep the waterbodies clean.

NEET-UG counselling deferred until further notice amid paper leak row

New Delhi: The counselling for the National Eligibility cum Entrance Test (Undergraduate) or NEET UG was on Saturday deferred until further notice. The new date for the counselling was yet to be announced.

Sources told India Today TV that the exam authorities want to wait for a court hearing in the case, which is scheduled for July 8.

Moments after the announcement, senior Congress leader Jairam Ramesh said the future of lakhs of students is unsafe in the hands of BJP leaders. "The whole NEET-UG issue is getting worse by the day. The non-biological PM and his biological Education Minister are adding

further proof to their demonstrated incompetence and insensitivity," he said in an X post. "The future of lakhs of our youth is simply unsafe in their hands," Jairam Ramesh added.

On July 5, amid the growing clamour for cancellation of the controversy-ridden NEET-UG, 2024 exam over alleged malpractices, the Centre and the National Testing Agency (NTA) told the Supreme Court that scrapping it would be "counterproductive" and would "seriously jeopardise" lakhs of honest candidates in the absence of proof of large-scale breach of confidentiality. The NTA, which conducts the NEET exam for admissions to MBBS, BDS, AYUSH

and other related courses, and the Union Education Ministry have been at the centre of media debates and protests by students and political parties over alleged large-scale malpractices ranging from question paper leak to impersonation in the test held on May 5. The Union Education Ministry and the NTA filed separate affidavits opposing the pleas which have sought the scrapping of the exam plagued by controversy, a re-test and a court-monitored probe into the entire gamut of issues involved.

In their responses, they said the CBI, the country's premier investigating agency, has taken over the cases registered in different states.

Hathras Stampede: Main Accused Surrenders In Delhi, Claims His Lawyer

New Delhi: Devprakash Madhukar, the main accused in the July 2 Hathras stampede which claimed 121 lives, has been taken into custody by Uttar Pradesh Police after he surrendered in Delhi, his lawyer claimed on Friday night.

Madhukar, the 'mukhya sevadar' of the 'satsang' where the stampede occurred, is the only accused named in the FIR lodged at Sikandra Rao police station in Hathras in connection with the incident. In a video message, Madhukar's lawyer A P Singh claimed that his client had surrendered in Delhi, where he was undergoing treatment.

Today, we have surrendered Devprakash Madhukar, who was called the main organiser in the FIR



in the Hathras case, after calling the police, the SIT and the STF in Delhi since he was undergoing treatment here," Mr Singh said.

"We had promised we would not apply for anticipatory bail since we did not wrong. What is our crime? He is an engineer and a heart patient. Doctors said his condition is stable now and

so we surrendered today to join the probe," the lawyer said. Mr Singh said police may now record his statement or question him but must take into consideration his health condition and ensure that "nothing wrong happens with him". Recently, the Supreme Court lawyer had claimed that he represents Surajpal alias Narayan Sakar Hari alias Bhole Baba, the self-styled godman at whose 'satsang' the stampede occurred. Uttar Pradesh Police had announced a reward of ₹1 lakh for information leading to Madhukar's arrest. Till Thursday, six people, including two women volunteers who were members of the organising committee of Bhole Baba's 'satsang', had been arrested in the case.

Cheetah 'Gamini', Her 5 Cubs Enjoy Rain At Kuno National Park

Union Minister Bhupendra Yadav shared the joyous moment in a post on X, stating, "Together, they weave a timeless tale of familial harmony amidst nature's seasonal embrace."

New Delhi: South African Cheetah 'Gamini' with her five cubs on Friday morning, enjoyed the rain at Kuno National Park in Madhya Pradesh Sheopur. Cheetah Gamini was seen playing with her cubs, who also engaged in playful antics with each other. Union Minister Bhupendra Yadav shared the joyous moment in a post on X, stating, "Together, they weave a timeless tale of familial harmony amidst nature's



seasonal embrace."

Earlier on March 10, South African Cheetah 'Gamini' gave birth to five cubs at Kuno National Park. An announcement in this regard was made by Union Minister for Environment, Forest and Climate Change Bhupendra Yadav on Sunday. The Union Minister said that the total number of Indian-born cheetah cubs has gone up to 13. "High Five, Kuno!

Female cheetah Gamini, age about 5 years, brought from Tswalu Kalahari Reserve, South Africa, has given birth to 5 cubs today. This takes the tally of the Indian-born cubs to 13. This is the fourth cheetah litter on Indian soil and the first litter of cheetahs brought from South Africa," Bhupendra Yadav said in a post on X. He lauded the officers and staff at Kuno National Park for ensuring a 'stress-

free environment' for the cheetahs.

"Congratulations to all, especially the team of forest officers, vets, and field staff who have ensured a stress-free environment for cheetahs, which has led to successful mating and birth of the cubs. The total number of cheetahs, including cubs in Kuno National Park, is 26. Gamini's legacy leaps forward: Introducing her adorable cubs!" he said. Earlier in January this year, Namibian Cheetah 'Jwala' gave birth to four cubs at Kuno National Park. Cheetahs were declared extinct in India in 1952, only to be reintroduced through the ambitious project in 2022. In 2022, eight cheetahs - brought from Namibia - were introduced in India under Project Cheetah. Subsequently, twelve cheetahs from South Africa were also translocated and released in Kuno National Park in February 2023. A cheetah translocated from Namibia, died at Kuno National Park in January this year. So far, seven adult cheetahs and three cubs born in India have died since March 2023.

NEWS BOX

There will be no change in foreign policy with India, irrespective of who becomes President of Iran: Ambassador Elahi

World Iran-India ties will continue to be robust, irrespective of who wins the Presidential elections. The results are expected this afternoon and the contest is between centrist Masoud Pezeshkian versus Hardline Conservative Saeed Jalili. Friday, Iranians voted in a Presidential run-off as the results of the June 28th elections were inconclusive with nobody getting a clear majority. Four polling stations were set up in India – Delhi, Mumbai, Pune, Hyderabad – to facilitate the over 3000 Iranian population to come out and vote.

“There will be no change in the foreign policy between Iran and India, irrespective of who comes to power. Iran-India is involved in a major infrastructural project Chabahar port – and that agreement will always be honoured. Infrastructure development is one of the bases of cooperation between our two nations,” Iranian Ambassador to India, Iraj Elahi told this newspaper.

Iranians while exercising their vote in Delhi were seen getting their thumb pressed against the ink stamp, followed by putting their thumb impression against the candidate of their choice. Iranian voters are identified by their identification number (similar to Aadhar in India) which has to match the number listed against their name in the system. On the June 28th poll Pezeshkian led with 42.5 per cent votes while Jalili managed 38.7 per cent. Both ran short of an outright majority. In Iran, the winning candidate must get 50 per cent +1 votes to be elected. However, in the run-off, the candidate who gets more votes is declared the winner.

Pezeshkian is a physician and was the Minister of Health while Jalili was the deputy foreign minister and National Security Advisor of Iran and negotiator of nuclear issues.

US lawmaker says Israeli hostage photos were vandalized in protest

Washington Democratic US Representative Brad Schneider's office was targeted by what he called on Friday "a vile act of hate," after pro-Palestinian protesters demonstrated outside his office in the US Capitol building and tore down posters of Israeli hostages held in Gaza.

Schneider, a staunch supporter of Israel, posted a photo of the posters crumpled on the floor. "This was a shameful act on any day, but especially on July 4, our country's Independence Day," Schneider said on social media. Schneider, who is Jewish, represents a district covering the suburbs north of Chicago, Illinois. nstagram page "Direct Actions for Palestine" said protesters demanded the lawmaker support restoring US funding for the UN agency for Palestinian refugees (UNRWA) and ending the war.

Washington suspended funding to UNRWA after Israel alleged that members of the UNRWA staff had ties to extremist groups, a claim the UN said Israel has yet to provide evidence for. An Oct. 7 attack on Israel by Palestinian Hamas militants killed 1,200 people, while about 250 other people were abducted to Hamas-governed Gaza as hostages, according to Israeli tallies. Israel's subsequent assault on Gaza has killed over 38,000, according to the local health ministry, flattened most of the enclave and caused widespread hunger. The US Capitol Police said in a statement that it was "aware and investigating" the incident related to the US lawmaker's office but could provide no further details. Schneider also said his home was targeted last weekend, with "approximately 50 masked demonstrators banging drums, blowing horns and screaming antisemitic chants" at 2:30 a.m. Protesters were criticizing Schneider's votes to defund UNRWA, according to the "Direct Actions for Palestine" Instagram page. A clip showed them as saying: "If we don't get no justice, then you don't get no sleep."

The conflict has also led to protests around the United States, Israel's most important ally, over US support for Israel. Rights advocates have noted a rise in antisemitism and Islamophobia.

How Texas is still investigating migrant aid groups on the border after a judge's scathing order

World Texas is widening investigations into aid organizations along the US-Mexico border over claims that nonprofits are helping migrants illegally enter the country, taking some groups to court and making demands that a judge called harassment after the state tried shuttering an El Paso shelter. The efforts are led by Republican Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton, whose office has defended the state's increasingly aggressive actions on the border, including razor wire barriers and a law that would allow police to arrest migrants who enter the US illegally. Since February, Paxton has asked for documents from at least four groups in Texas that provide shelter and food to migrants.

That includes one of the largest migrant aid organizations in Texas, Catholic Charities of the Rio Grande Valley, which on Wednesday asked a court to stop what the group called a "fishing expedition into a pond where no one has ever seen a fish." The scrutiny from the state has not stopped the organizations' work. But leaders of some groups say the investigations have caused some volunteers to leave and worry it will cast a chilling effect among those working to help migrants in Texas. Here are some things to know about the investigations and the groups: What started the investigations? Republican Gov. Greg Abbott sent Paxton a letter in 2022 urging him to investigate the role non-governmental organizations play in "planning and facilitating the illegal transportation of illegal immigrants across our borders." Two years earlier, Abbott began rolling out his multibillion-dollar border security apparatus known as Operation Lone Star. Without citing evidence, Abbott's letter referenced unspecified "recent reports" that some groups may be acting unlawfully. Paxton later accused Annunciation House in El Paso, one of the oldest migrant shelters on the border, of human smuggling and other crimes. The groups have denied the accusations and no charges have been filed. Other Republicans and conservative groups have cheered on Paxton's effort. Which groups are targets? Many nonprofit organizations on the Texas border are faith-based and have operated for years — and in some cases decades — without state scrutiny. Several groups have coordinated with Abbott's busing program that has transported more than 119,000 migrants to Democratic-led cities across the US.

Iran reformist Pezeshkian defeats hardliner Saeed Jalili in presidential runoff

Iran's reformist candidate Masoud Pezeshkian got more than 17 million votes while hardliner Saeed Jalili garnered more than 13 million out of about 30 million votes cast in a runoff presidential election.

Tehran Iran's reformist candidate Masoud Pezeshkian on Saturday won a runoff presidential election against ultraconservative Saeed Jalili, the interior ministry said. Pezeshkian got more than 17 million votes and Jalili more than 13 million out of about 30 million votes cast, electoral authority spokesman Mohsen Eslami said, adding that voter turnout stood at 49.8 per cent. The election, called early after the death of ultraconservative president Ebrahim Raisi in a helicopter crash, followed a first round marked by a historically low turnout last week. Iran's supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, who wields ultimate authority, had called for a higher turnout in the runoff,



emphasising the importance of the election. He said the first round turnout was lower than expected, but added that it was not an act "against the system". The ballot comes against a backdrop of heightened regional tensions over the Gaza war, a dispute with the West over Iran's nuclear programme, and domestic discontent over the state of Iran's sanctions-hit economy.

REFORMIST SUPPORT

In last week's first round, Pezeshkian, who was the only reformist allowed to stand,

won the largest number of votes, around 42 per cent, while Jalili came second with around 39 per cent, according to figures from Iran's elections authority.

Only 40 per cent of Iran's 61 million eligible voters took part in the first round — the lowest turnout in any presidential election since the Islamic Revolution of 1979. The candidacy of Pezeshkian, a relative unknown until recently, has raised the hopes of Iran's reformists after years of dominance by the conservative and ultraconservative camps. Iran's main

reformist coalition supported Pezeshkian, with endorsements by former presidents Mohammad Khatami and Hassan Rouhani, a moderate. Pezeshkian, a 69-year-old heart surgeon, has called for "constructive relations" with Western countries to revive the nuclear deal in order to "get Iran out of its isolation". Jalili, 58, is Iran's former nuclear negotiator who is widely recognised for his uncompromising anti-West stance. During his campaign, he rallied a substantial base of hardline supporters and received backing from other conservative figures. Ahead of Friday's runoff, Pezeshkian and Jalili took part in two televised debates during which they discussed the low turnout, as well as Iran's economic woes, international relations and internet restrictions. Pezeshkian vowed to ease long-standing internet restrictions and to "fully" oppose police patrols enforcing the mandatory headscarf for women, a high-profile issue since the death in police custody in 2022 of Mahsa Amini. The 22-year-old Iranian Kurd had been detained for an alleged breach of the dress code and her death sparked months of nationwide unrest.

Biden's latest gaffe featuring Trump, says he'll beat him 'again in 2020'

New Delhi US President Joe Biden on Friday (local time) made yet another gaffe when he vowed to beat his Republican rival and former president Donald Trump "again in 2020" instead of saying 2024. He, however, corrected himself quickly and said he would do it "again in 2024".

Biden's latest slip of the tongue came amid concerns from a section of Democrats about the 81-year-old president's ability to serve a second four-year-term after last week's lacklustre performance at the first presidential debate with Trump. There have been calls for Biden to step aside given his health and age concerns.

However, Biden remained adamant during a campaign rally in Madison, Wisconsin, telling a cheering crowd that he was staying in the race. The presidential election is due to be held on November 5. "You probably heard that I had a little debate last week. I can't say it is my best performance. But ever since then, there's been a lot of speculation. What's Joe going to do? Is he going to stay in the race? Is he going to drop out? What are you going to do?" he said. "Well, here's my answer, I



am running and I am going to win again," the president said, with the crowd chanting 'Let's go, Joe'. He also admitted that some people were pressuring him to withdraw from the race. "I'm the nominee of the Democratic Party. You voted for me to be your nominee, and no one else. You, the voters, did that. And despite that, some folks don't seem to care who you voted for. Well, guess what they are trying to push me out of the race," he said. "Well, let me say this as clearly as I can - I'm staying in the race. I'll beat Donald Trump. I will beat him again in 2020," the president said, before realising his mistake, adding, "I am going to do that again in 2024." Biden asserted he would not let a 90-minute debate wipe out his work done in the

last three-and-a-half years. Earlier on Thursday, the 81-year-old president tripped up when he described himself as the "first black woman to serve with a black president" as he continued to struggle to reassure voters he was still fit to lead again. The New York Post reported. Biden made the gaffe when he was trying to describe having served as former President Barack Obama's vice president and then choosing Kamala Harris as his deputy. "By the way, I'm proud to be, as I said, the first vice president, first black woman, to serve with a black president," he told host Andrea Lawful-Sanders of Philadelphia's WURD black radio station. On Wednesday, White House Press Secretary Karine Jean-Pierre denied reports that Biden was planning to step aside from the race. "Absolutely not," she said. Her response came after The New York Times had reported that Biden had told a key ally that he knows he may not be able to salvage his candidacy if his next few public appearances do not go well. However, the ally emphasised that Biden is still deeply in the fight for re-election.

Delaware judge rules in favour of late pop star Prince's former business advisers in estate dispute

World A Delaware judge has declined to throw out a lawsuit brought by former business advisers to the late pop music icon Prince against two of his siblings and other heirs in a dispute over his estate. The judge also agreed with plaintiffs L Londell McMillan and Charles Spicer Jr that an agreement purportedly replacing them as managers of a limited liability company established by three siblings was invalid. Prince passed away in 2016 from an accidental fentanyl overdose, leaving no will. His six siblings inherited equal shares in the estate. Three of them assigned their combined 50 per cent interest to Prince Legacy LLC and granted McMillan

and Spicer each a 10 per cent interest in the company, along with extensive and exclusive management authority. However, one sister, Sharon Nelson, later regretted the decision and spearheaded an effort to remove McMillan and Spicer as managing members by amending the LLC agreement.

Chancellor Kathaleen St Jude McCormick determined that the terms of the initial LLC agreement are unambiguous and prohibit the defendants' attempts to amend it. She stated that the agreement remains in effect and McMillan and Spicer continue as managing members. "As a matter of contract law, this is the only

reasonable interpretation," the judge wrote. McCormick also ruled that the plaintiffs can pursue a claim that the defendants breached the LLC agreement by acting without authorization to amend it and remove McMillan and Spicer. The lawsuit arises from disagreements involving Tyka Nelson, Prince's sister, and five half-siblings: Sharon Nelson, Norrine Nelson, John R. Nelson, Omarr Baker, and Alfred Jackson. Tyka, Omarr, and Alfred sold their stake to a music publishing company called Primary Wave Music, LLC, which later assigned its interests to an affiliate, Prince OAT Holdings LLC. Alfred has since passed away.

Republicans turn their focus to Harris as talk of replacing Biden on Democratic ticket intensifies

NEW YORK. For years it's been a Republican scare tactic. A vote to reelect President Joe Biden, the GOP often charges, is really a vote for Vice President Kamala Harris. It's an attack line sometimes tinged with racist and misogynist undertones and often macabre imagery. But after Biden's dismal performance at last week's presidential debate, which has sparked Democratic calls for him to step aside, what was once dismissed as a far-right conspiracy — Harris replacing Biden — could now have a chance of coming to pass. And Republicans, including Donald Trump, are ramping up their attacks. Trump and his allies have been rolling out new attack lines against Harris, insulting her abilities, painting her as Biden's chief enabler and accusing her of being part of a coverup of his health. It's an effort, campaign officials insist, that is not a reflection of their concerns about a potential change at the top of the ticket, given Biden's insistence he is not leaving the race. But in a post marking Independence Day on his Truth Social site Thursday, Trump singled out Harris, calling her his "potentially new Democrat Challenger"

and giving her a new derisive nickname: "Laffin' Kamala Harris." She did poorly in the Democrat Nominating process, starting at Number Two, and ending up defeated and dropping out, even before getting to Iowa, but that doesn't mean she's not a 'highly talented' politician! Just ask her Mentor, the Great Willie Brown of San Francisco," he wrote. (Harris dated Brown in the mid-1990s, he post came after Trump campaign senior advisers Chris LaCivita and Susie Wiles released a statement earlier this week that offered a different, but similar, moniker, calling her Biden's "Cackling Copilot Kamala Harris." Trump also posted an expletive-laced video, which was first reported by the Daily Beast, in which he was captured on the golf course calling Biden an "old broken down pile of crap" and declaring that he'd driven the president from the race. (Trump, in interviews, has repeatedly said he did not expect Biden to be pushed aside.) "He's quitting the race," Trump said. "And that means we have Kamala. I think she's going to be better. She's so bad. She's so pathetic," he said. Allies have also joined the attacks, painting Harris as a chief



defender of Biden's faculties and accusing her of lying to the American public. Biden, the White House and his campaign insist he has no plans to drop out of the race. During an interview with ABC News that aired Friday night he said that only "the Lord Almighty" would drive him from the race. hite House press secretary Karine Jean-Pierre pushed back against the tenor of attacks against Harris, particularly Trump's decision to invoke a decades-old relationship and other sexist rhetoric. I think it's gross, I think it's disturbing," Jean-Pierre told reporters Friday aboard Air Force One. "She

should be respected in the role that she has as vice president. She should be respected like any other vice president before her who was in that room. It is appalling that I'm going to be careful here, that a former president is saying that about a current vice president. And we should call that out — it is not OK." It remains unclear how Harris would fare against Trump, compared to Biden. Replacing a candidate this late in a presidential cycle — much less an incumbent president who has already sailed through the Democratic Party's primaries — would be unprecedented in modern history, and the mechanics are complicated and potentially messy. Polling shows that Harris' favorability ratings are similar to Biden's and Trump's. A June AP-NORC poll found about 4 in 10 Americans have a favourable opinion of her. But the share of those who have an unfavourable opinion is slightly lower than for Trump and Biden, and about 1 in 10 have no opinion of her yet.

Reformist Pezeshkian wins Iran's presidential runoff election, besting hard-liner Jalili

DUBAI. Reformist candidate Masoud Pezeshkian won Iran's runoff presidential election Saturday, besting hard-liner Saeed Jalili by promising to reach out to the West and ease enforcement on the country's mandatory headscarf law after years of sanctions and protests squeezing the Islamic Republic. Pezeshkian promised no radical changes to Iran's Shiite theocracy in his campaign and long has held Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei as the final arbiter of all matters of state in the country. But even Pezeshkian's modest aims will be challenged by an Iranian government still largely held by hard-liners, the ongoing Israel-Hamas war in the Gaza Strip, and Western fears over Tehran enriching uranium to near-weapons-grade levels. vote count offered by authorities put Pezeshkian as the winner with 16.3 million votes to Jalili's 13.5 million in Friday's election. Supporters of Pezeshkian, a heart surgeon and longtime lawmaker, entered the streets of Tehran and other cities before dawn to celebrate as his lead grew over Jalili, a hard-line former nuclear negotiator. But Pezeshkian's win still sees Iran at a delicate moment, with tensions high in the Mideast over the Israel-Hamas war in the Gaza Strip, Iran's advancing nuclear program, and a looming U.S. election that could put any chance of a detente between Tehran and Washington at risk. The first round of voting on June 28 saw the lowest turnout in the history of the Islamic Republic since the 1979 Islamic Revolution. Iranian officials have long pointed to turnout as a sign of support for the country's Shiite theocracy, which has been under strain after years of sanctions crushing Iran's economy, mass demonstrations and intense crackdowns on all dissent. Government officials up to Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei predicted a higher participation rate as voting got underway, with state television airing images of modest lines at some polling centres across the country. However, online videos purported to show some polls empty while a survey of several dozen sites in the capital, Tehran, saw light traffic amid a heavy security presence on the streets. The election came amid heightened regional tensions. In April, Iran launched its first-ever direct attack on Israel over the war in Gaza, while militia groups that Tehran arms in the region — such as the Lebanese Hezbollah and Yemen's Houthi rebels — are engaged in the fighting and have escalated their attacks. Iran is also enriching uranium at near weapons-grade levels and maintains a stockpile large enough to build several nuclear weapons, should it choose to do so. And while Khamenei remains the final decision-maker on matters of state, whichever man ends up winning the presidency could bend the country's foreign policy toward either confrontation or collaboration with the West.

NEWS BOX

ZIM vs IND, 1st T20I: Prediction, team news, pitch conditions and predicted XI

New Delhi. India have once again visited the shores of Zimbabwe as a goodwill gesture between the countries. The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) has for long used these bilateral series to find the next generation of international players and this time it is no different. The Indian team is set to play their first T20I match of the series on Saturday, 6 July, under the captaincy of young Shubman Gill. It is a win-win situation for both boards as the series is surely expected to grab eyeballs given the very low average-age of the Indian team. The GT captain is being seen as a long-time successor of Rohit Sharma in all formats of the game and has been given a chance to prove his mettle against a wily T20I side. Zimbabwe might have shockingly missed the T20 World Cup 2024 berth after their loss against Uganda, but are fully capable of springing up surprises. Players like Sikandar and Blessing Muzarabani have played in the Indian Premier League and are well-known for their T20 credentials across the world.

There is going to be high expectations from Abhishek Sharma and Riyan Parag, who have been superb in the IPL 2024 season. The Indian team would also like to test out young fast bowling contingent in the absence of Jasprit Bumrah and Arshdeep Singh, who have made the T20I spot their own. India captain Shubman Gill has already confirmed that he and his state teammate Abhishek Sharma are going to open the innings. This will mean a demotion for Ruturaj Gaikwad, who has captained India in the past and also opens for his side in the IPL. Harare is expected to be a high-scoring venue, and the match might bring a little refreshment for people who love to watch sixes getting hit, especially after the low-scoring T20 World Cup 2024.

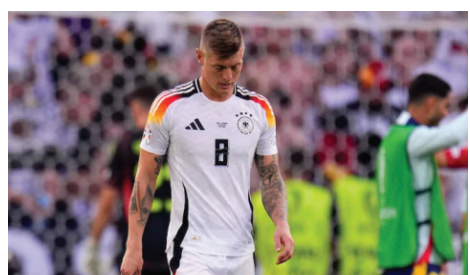
Cristiano Ronaldo consoles heartbroken Pepe after Portugal's Euro 2024 exit

New Delhi. Legendary Cristiano Ronaldo consoled his compatriot Pepe after Portugal were knocked out of the Euro 2024 after their quarter-final loss to France on Friday, 5 July. Portugal were beaten in the penalties 5-3 after the match remained 0-0 after Extra Time in Hamburg, Germany. Pepe broke into tears after the match as the 41-year-old Pepe signed off, from what surely is his final appearance in the competition.

Ronaldo, who had broken into tears after missing the penalty in the previous game, held things together as the players around him were inconsolable after the team's exit from the tournament. France secured a nail-biting win over Portugal via penalties, which marked a bitter-end to Cristiano Ronaldo's Euro 2024 journey. After a stalemate throughout the game, the match again found its way to the spot-kicks and France had the last laugh. There were very few factors to separate the two sides, but Joao Felix's penalty hitting the post sent Kylian Mbappe's side to the semi-final against Spain on July 10. France defender Theo Hernandez struck the winning penalty in a 5-3 shootout win against Portugal to reach the semi-finals of Euro 2024 where they will meet Spain. Joao Felix missed for Portugal during the shootout which came after the match finished 0-0 following extra time.

Both teams missed a string of chances in 120 minutes of open play at the Volksparkstadion, the best chance falling to Cristiano Ronaldo in the first period of extra time when he skied over from close range.

Toni Kroos picks positives from bitter farewell vs Spain: The exit covers it all



NEW DELHI. Veteran Germany midfielder Toni Kroos opines there were a lot of positives for his national side to take away from their narrow loss to Spain after an action-packed UEFA Euro 2024 quarter-final on July 5. Kroos, who played his last professional football match in Germany's 2-1 loss to Spain in extra-time, believes that the future of his side is in good hands based on their performance on Friday. Spain knocked out the hosts to book their place in the semi-final, after a goal by Mikel Merino in the final minute of extra-time. Speaking post-match, Kroos reflected on the bitter end to what had been a phenomenal career, but did not shy away from marking the all-out approach of Germany against Spain. "I would not say it was the most brutal match, but one where we put everything in. We did not want to lose, we were so close... Now at the moment the exit covers it all. We wanted to achieve something big and that dream is now gone. We will realise we played a good tournament, but being so close to reaching the next round is hard," Kroos said. We can all be proud because we improved. I am happy to have helped Germany as a football nation to have hope again. In the future I am convinced the team will succeed, but today we are sad because we wanted to stay in this competition a bit longer," Kroos added.

After King Kohli bids adieu to T20I, time for Prince Gill to stake claim of throne

Star India off-spinner Ravichandran Ashwin expressed his emotions seeing nationwide celebrations for the Indian team following their T20 World Cup 2024 victory.

New Delhi. Following India's historic T20 World Cup triumph in the West Indies, the Men in Blue have lost arguably the greatest batter in T20Is in Virat Kohli. The 35-year-old bid adieu to the game being the highest run scorer in the history of T20 World Cup (1292 runs) and the second highest run scorer in T20Is (4188 runs).

In his illustrious career, Kohli took India home from several precarious situations after an early batting collapse stamping his authority as the 'chase master' in the shortest format of the game. However, with him gone, team India has massive shoes to fill as they look the find a worthy successor of the king. Hailed as the prince of Indian cricket for his rapid rise at the international level,



India captain for the Zimbabwe tour, Shubman Gill, will be eager to make a strong case for the king's throne in the upcoming series. In the 14 matches played in his T20I career so far, Gill has scored 335 runs from 14 innings at an average of 25.76 and a strike rate of 147.57. The 24-year-old has also

registered the highest individual score by an Indian batter in T20Is having scored a magnificent 126* (63) against New Zealand in February 2023 in Ahmedabad. However, Gill hasn't had a memorable in the shortest format after scoring his century as he only has just one 50-plus score in the last eight

innings. During this time period, the right-handed batter has scored 133 runs from eight innings at an average of 16.62 and a strike rate of 126.66, out of which 77 came in just one innings against West Indies in August 2023. Gill further had a decent IPL season earlier this year where he scored 426 runs from 12 innings at an average of 38.72 and a strike rate of 147.40 with one hundred and two fifties.

Gill to embark on India's new chapter in T20Is

However, it didn't prove to be enough for him to find a place in the 15-member squad for the T20 World Cup 2024 where he got included as a reserve. Hence, the upcoming series will be the perfect platform for Gill to start afresh in his T20I career and fill in the massive spot left behind by Virat Kohli.

The Punjab-born batter has shown enough promise at the international level in the two formats so far and will be eager to bring all his talent to the fore in the shortest format as well to embark on a new journey for the Indian T20I side.

Rajeev Shukla responds to Aditya Thackrey's 'Hosting World Cup final in Mumbai' remark

New Delhi. BCCI (Board of Control for Cricket in India) vice president Rajeev Shukla has responded to Shiv Sena Leader Aditya Thackrey's remark that BCCI should never take the World Cup final away from Mumbai. Notably, the Indian Cricket Team was given a rousing reception in Mumbai upon their arrival from Barbados following the T20 World Cup 2024 triumph. A special roadshow was organized by the BCCI for the World Champions where people turned up in huge numbers to see their stars up close. The entire squad was also felicitated at the Wankhede Stadium in front of a packed crowd who cheered at the top of their voices for the Men in Blue. Seeing the fervour for cricket in the people of Mumbai, Thackrey took to his X account and wrote, "Yesterday's celebration in Mumbai is also a strong message to the BCCI. Never take away a World Cup final from Mumbai. BCCI Vice President Rajeev Shukla has also reacted to the statement saying that as per the cricket board's policy, the final cannot always be given to a particular city.



"It is BCCI's policy that where the final should take place. It cannot always be given to a particular city. There has been a final match -- 1987 World Cup -- in Kolkata also, and Kolkata is considered as Mecca. So it can't be decided that it should always happen in a particular city," Shukla told PTL. "There are semi-finals and finals which have taken place in Mumbai. Similarly, the Ahmedabad ground has got a capacity of 1,30,000, and we go by capacity also," he continued. Kolkata (Eden Gardens) has got a big capacity, around 80,000 spectators (approx. 66,000) can be accommodated. Similarly, other cities also," he added. Notably, team India won the ODI World Cup 2011 at the

Wankhede Stadium. However, in the last year's edition of the tournament held in India, the hosting rights of the final were awarded to the Narendra Modi Stadium in Ahmedabad which boasts a capacity of around 1,30,000. Unfortunately, India lost the final against Australia leading to a breakdown of cricket fans all over India.

Really delighted to see Mumbaikars and their response: Rajeev Shukla

Further speaking ahead, Shukla revealed that he was delighted to see such a response from Mumbai for the victory parade and said that the city is always their priority. "This is purely a decision keeping in mind the entire country and all the venues. You cannot confine to one venue. We were really delighted to see Mumbaikars and their response. Mumbai is always our priority. It's not that (it is not). But it has to be decided by the entire BCCI, where to host finals, where to have semi-finals... Every match is important. Mumbai is always on our priority list. But saying that all the finals should take place in one city... It never happens in any country," Shukla concluded.

Saba Karim backs Abhishek Sharma to fulfil all-rounder's role vs Zimbabwe

New Delhi. Former India cricketer Saba Karim has backed Abhishek Sharma to fulfill all-rounder's role in the upcoming Zimbabwe vs India five-match T20I series. India will take on Zimbabwe in the first T20I on Saturday, July 6 at Harare Sports Club, Harare. For the tour, several players have earned their maiden India call-up and 23-year-old Abhishek Sharma is one of them. The opening batter had a phenomenal season with the bat in the Indian Premier League (IPL) 2024 scoring a mammoth 484 runs from 16 innings at an average of 32.26 and a breathtaking strike rate of 204.21. The southpaw made headlines for exhibiting a fearless brand of cricket in the season and rightfully earned his place in the Indian team. Speaking about Abhishek ahead of the series, Saba Karim backed the youngster to not only contribute with the bat but also roll his arm over to chip

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The southpaw made headlines for exhibiting a fearless brand of cricket in the season and rightfully earned his place in the Indian team. Speaking about Abhishek ahead of the series, Saba Karim backed the youngster to not only contribute with the bat but also roll his arm over to chip in a few overs with the ball. "About whether he will get that role or not, I think that's the way the team management and I'm sure the selectors are also looking at him. If he has to play, as I said, I think it the opening slot is perfect for him because he has excelled and he has grown as a player. There's more maturity in him.

ZIM vs IND: Would be nice to get captain Shubman Gill out, says Blessing Muzarabani

New Delhi. Zimbabwe pacer Blessing Muzarabani said that it would be nice to get Shubman Gill out during the upcoming series against India, starting on July 6, Saturday. India will be fielding a young side during the series with Gill leading them, in what will be his first captaincy assignment with the national team. Gill is expected to be the key batter for India during the series. In an exclusive interaction with Indiatoday.in, Muzarabani was asked if Gill would be one of the players he would target and trying to dismiss quickly. The Zimbabwe pacer said that he does have a lot of respect for the Indian star, who he feels is already a big name in international. However, Muzarabani said he functions a bit different from other bowlers and would take each wicket as they come. "I think I'm a bit different to probably some of



the other bowlers. I do give Shubman Gill a lot of respect because he's already performed a lot in international cricket. He's actually a big name in cricket world. But as for me, I just take every wicket as it comes, actually. So I don't really look at any player, and want to make any bunny or anything like that," said Muzarabani.

Shubman Gill is a good player

Muzarabani said that the goal at the end of the day is to ensure Zimbabwe get over the line and he isn't really looking at the names he will be up against. "The goal is to win the game for Zimbabwe. Either take a wicket or don't take the wicket. So it's just all about us as a team and try and do what's required for me to win the game. So I'm not really looking at the names. Either I get them out or don't.

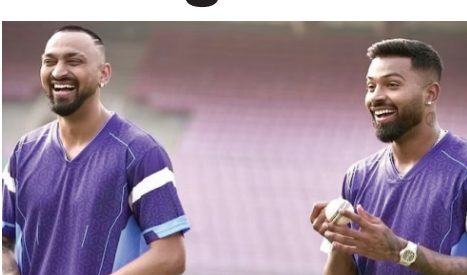
Krunal Pandya pens emotional note for brother Hardik: 'People forgot he's a human'

India cricketer Krunal Pandya penned an emotional note for brother Hardik after his historic T20 World Cup 2024 triumph. Hardik was booed by fans during IPL 2024 after replacing Rohit Sharma as skipper.

NEW DELHI. India cricketer Krunal Pandya penned an emotional note for his brother Hardik following his pivotal role in India's T20 World Cup 2024 triumph. Notably, Hardik bowled the crucial last over of the final against South Africa and successfully defended 15 runs by dismissing the dangerous David Miller on the first ball itself. As a result, India managed to win the match by seven runs and clinched their second T20 World Cup trophy ending their 11-year-long ICC Trophy

drought. Following their win, Hardik has become a national hero as all the hate which was spewed on the India all-rounder in the past few months has been replaced with loud cheers all around. Encapsulating his brother's struggles in an Instagram post, Krunal mentioned how the last few days have been emotional for him seeing Hardik at the centre of India's historic triumph.

"It's almost been a decade since Hardik and I started playing professional cricket. And the last few days have been like a fairy tale that we've dreamt off. Like every countryman I've lived this through our teams heroics and I couldn't be more emotional with my brother being at the heart of it," wrote Krunal in his Instagram post. Krunal further recalled Hardik's struggles in the last few months where he was booed and jeered by the crowd after replacing Rohit Sharma as the skipper of MI for Indian Premier League 2024 (IPL 2024). However, the elder Pandya lauded his brother for passing through that with a smile and working hard towards winning the World Cup for India. The last six months have been the toughest for Hardik. He



simply didn't deserve what he went through, and as a brother, I felt very, very bad for him. From booing, to people saying all kinds of nasty things, at the end of the day, we all forgot that he is just a human being who also has emotions. He somehow passed through all of this with a smile, though I know how hard it was for him to put on a smile. He kept working hard and focusing on what he needed to do to get the World Cup since that was his ultimate objective," he added. "He has now played his heart out to realise India's long standing dream - And nothing has ever meant to him more. From the age of 6 - It's playing for the country and winning the World Cup that's been the dream. I just want to remind people that what Hardik has

done in such a short span in his career is unbelievable. His efforts for the national team have never been compromised. Every time, at every stage of Hardik's life, people have written him off, and that has only motivated him to come back even stronger," Krunal further wrote. "For Hardik, it has always been country first, and it will always be that way. For a young boy coming from Baroda, there can be no bigger achievement than helping his team win the World Cup," he concluded.

Hardik's all-round show in T20 World Cup

Notably, Hardik shined with both bat and ball in India's victorious campaign scoring 144 runs from six innings at an average of 48 and a strike rate of 151.57 registering one half century. His highest score of the tournament came against Bangladesh in the Super 8 stages when he scored an unbeaten 50* (27). With the ball, the right-arm seamer picked up 11 wickets from eight innings at an average of 17.36 and an economy of 7.64. The 30-year-old saved his best bowling performance for the final picking up 3/20 in three overs which included the prized scalps of Heinrich Klaasen (52 off 27) and David Miller (21 off 17).

Varun Dhawan

Comes Out In Support of Samantha Prabhu After Doctor Calls Her 'Health Illiterate'

Bollywood actor Varun Dhawan and several other actors has stepped forward to defend Samantha Prabhu, after she was criticized by a doctor who labeled her as health illiterate. Earlier this morning, Samantha took to her Instagram stories when she recommended the use of hydrogen peroxide nebulisation. Her post caught The Liver Doc's attention who then called her "health and science illiterate" and mentioned that the use of hydrogen peroxide nebulisation "is dangerous for health". The doctor even demanded that Samantha should be jailed and added, "In a rational and scientifically progressive society, this woman will be charged with endangering public health and fined or put behind bars. She needs help or a better advisor in her team." However,



at Samantha Ruth Prabhu for allegedly playing "victim". The doctor, who previously slammed the actress for recommending hydrogen peroxide nebulisation, has now called her a 'serial offender'. He called Samantha's claims about the use of hydrogen peroxide nebulisation "unscientific, pseudoscientific and baseless". "Please note, she is a serial offender in the context of healthcare misinformation and she has been in the line of fire previously too. The reason why doctors like me have to spend (waste) time from our busy schedules to fight misinformation online is because it is peddled by large influential "celebrity" accounts that have no regard for public health. Engagement and monetization is their concern," he wrote.

earlier today, Samantha reacted to the doctor's criticism and mentioned that she "merely suggested" the use of hydrogen peroxide nebulisation with "good intention" since it was suggested to her by a "highly qualified doctor".

Varun who would be seen sharing screen space with Samantha, took to the comments section dropped a heart emoji. Rhea Chakraborty on the other hand wrote, 'Potatoes gonna potato,' in the comments section. Other celebs like Kiara Advani, Tahira Kashyap, Rakul Preet Singh, and Manushi Chhillar liked her post.

Hours after Samantha's post went viral, Dr Cyriac Abby Philips aka The Liver Doc once again lashed out



Anushka Sharma To Permanently Move To London After Virat Kohli's Retirement? Here's What We Know



Anushka Sharma is currently in London with her two kids, Vamika and Akaay. Virat Kohli was also seen jetting off to meet them soon after he returned to India from Barbados. Virat Kohli recently announced his retirement from T20 cricket after Team India lifted the T20 World Cup on June 29. Now, fans suspect that the couple will permanently shift to London to live a 'normal' life. This speculation comes especially because Anushka and Virat have often been spotted in London. In 2023, Virat even took a break from his hectic schedule and spent some time with Anushka in London. A viral photo featured Anushka and Virat outside a restaurant in London. Virat was also seen with Vamika at a restaurant in London, days after Akaay's birth was announced.

This led to the belief that Akaay was born in London. Anushka Sharma reportedly spent several months of her pregnancy in London, away from the limelight. Anushka Sharma and Virat Kohli announced the birth of their son five days after he was born and till then, fans had no clue about Akaay's birth - which is uncommon if a celebrity goes into labour in Mumbai. Reports also claimed that Virat Kohli missed the India vs England Test series and travelled to England for the birth of his second child.

Anushka Sharma's absence from Bollywood events and films also has led to this speculation. Last year, the actress said that she didn't want to do too many films anymore and spend time with her family instead. "I enjoy acting but I don't want to do too many films as much as I was doing earlier. I want to do one film a year, enjoy the process of acting which is what I like and balance my life out like the way I am, give time to family," she said. Virat Kohli has often expressed that he loves spending time with his family in London where they are not recognised. "We were not in the country. Just to feel normal for two months - for me, my family - it was a surreal experience. Couldn't have been more grateful to God for the opportunity to spend time with the family."

There Is Nothing Dia Mirza Enjoys More Than Her Son Ayaan Azaad's Company; Here's Proof



Dia Mirza is happily engrossed in her maternal duties. The mother of two recently returned from a family vacation in London. Keeping her fans engaged, Dia has been sharing photos and videos on Instagram, capturing precious moments with her loved ones. She has now added a new clip to her London diaries on Instagram, and the wholesome video is filled with pure love. In a blissful scene, Dia Mirza was seen playing with her three-year-old son, Ayaan Azaad. With her little bundle of joy in her arms, the actress beamed with joy. The bright smile on her face as she lovingly gazed at her son is proof. Later, we can see the adorable duo in some more playful moments. For her casual day out, Dia sported a comfy look in a blue printed shirt and relaxed-fit jeans elevated with brown sneakers. Her little munchkin looked every bit cute in a printed co-ord set and little black shoes. Dia Mirza captioned her post, "Let go. Play, laugh, be joyful! Our children teach us this everyday. The art to be."

Beyond her professional endeavours, Dia Mirza is a devoted wife and mother. Not long ago, she marked Father's Day by honouring her husband, Vaibhav Rekhi through an Instagram post. She shared a series of photos featuring her son and step-daughter, Samaira along with husband Vaibhav. In her caption, the actress expressed her love and admiration for him, stating, "We love you. You are the absolute best." Dia Mirza entered marital bliss with businessman and investment banker Vaibhav Rekhi on February 15, 2021. In the same year, the couple embraced parenthood and welcomed their first child together, Ayaan. Before Vaibhav, Dia Mirza was married to Sahil Sangha. The former couple separated in August 2019.



Shruti Haasan

Teams Up With Rajnikanth For Lokesh Kanagaraj's 'Coolie'

Actor-musician Shruti Haasan has joined the cast of the much-anticipated film "Coolie" starring Superstar Rajnikanth. The Lokesh Kanagaraj directorial promises to be an action-packed drama combining Rajnikanth's screen presence and Kanagaraj's direction. Thalaivar 171 officially titled Coolie is now garnering headlines after Lokesh Kanagaraj recently shared the first look of Rajnikanth for the film. He also announced that the film's shooting will start from next month-July. The look test for Thalaivar 171 was recently conducted. On this occasion, Lokesh Kanagaraj shared the stylish look of Rajnikanth. The superstar was seen sitting before the mirror while Lokesh Kanagaraj stood behind him to snap the photo of the actor. Rajnikanth donned a black shirt along with sunglasses of the same colour. In a semi-white beard and smoky hairstyle, the actor looks dashing as he poses for the picture. More than giving a glimpse of a possible look of Rajnikanth in the film, the director also delighted the superstar's fans with the announcement of the shooting date of Coolie. "Look test for #Coolie. On floors from July" wrote Lokesh Kanagaraj.

As soon as the photo was posted by the filmmaker, the fans flooded the comment box with compliments. "Rs 1000 crore loading," wrote one of the users. Another fan simply mentioned "Thalaivaa" in respect to the actor. Anirudh Ravichander will be composing the music for the film. The teaser released by the makers consisted of a noteworthy background score that sets the tone for what's to come. The film also stars Prithviraj Sukumaran, Ranveer Singh and Parvathy Thiruvothu in key roles. Produced by Sun Pictures, Coolie is expected to be released in 2025. This film will mark the first collaboration between director Lokesh Kanagaraj and Rajnikanth.

