



Indo-Pacific on agenda for Biden-Sunak talks in UK



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## POST-BUS TRAGEDY

# SAMRUDDHI EXPRESSWAY CONTROL ROOM SEES A RISE IN CALLS ABOUT REST SPOTS



After the horrific bus accident that killed 25 people on Nagpur-Mumbai Samruddhi Expressway earlier this month, the control room has seen a rise in phone calls from motorists and travellers asking about amenities, petrol pumps and spots that are safe for halts on the route, an official said on Monday.

The 701 km expressway, which was inaugurated last year, is open for vehicular traffic from Nagpur to Bharvir in Nashik. Twenty-five passengers were charred to death after a private bus caught fire on the expressway in Buldhana district on July 1. The sleeper coach bus ran into the road divider and caught fire.

A control room has been set up at Harsul for the functioning stretch of the expressway and travellers can get

in touch using a toll-free number, the official said. Earlier, motorists would call asking for entry-exit points, reporting accidents, animal hits, among other issues, he said. "However, now people have started calling the toll-free number even before they enter the expressway. Since the bus accident, we have received 45 calls about safe spots for halts. People are asking about the stop area near entry and exit points, amenities and petrol pumps," Ashish Farande, divisional officer for Samruddhi Control unit told PTI. People travelling in cars mostly call to enquire about safe rest spots to halt on the expressway, he said. "We receive around 100 to 125 calls per day for various reasons on our toll-free helpline number," the official said. PTI

## Why is Kerala's intolerant growing towards RSS workers?

Editoritis



Dr. Vaidehi

For the past few months, I have been frequently visiting Kerala to help my newly married friend to settle there. Without much searching or stress, she got a nice place for rent. When I observed that the owner of the house has only one eye and he limps while walking, I assumed that he might have had an accident injury in the past. To my curiosity, I asked what has happened to him, and he just smiled and ignored answering my question. The next morning, he was going somewhere and looking at his outfits I asked are you an RSS worker? He proudly said Yes, not only me but my entire family is devoted to RSS. His wife was in the corridor doing something. My friend used to stay on the first floor of the bungalow and the owner used to reside on the ground floor.

I reached the lady just to be friends with her, we spoke for some time about Mumbai and Kerala and then she invited me to have coffee with her. I asked her what had happened to her husband and son, she said they are beaten to death by some communists. And in that attack, he lost his eye and permanently injured his feet. There are many RSS workers who got killed and their families are bereaved. In spite of all these challenges, there is a huge rise in RSS volunteers. The lady said it is also a fight between the Cow eaters and cow worshipers. Beef can never be food for humans, but Muslims and Christians can not do without killing cows. There are many Hindu atheists and communists who make it obvious by hurting the sentiments of staunch Hindus.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 02

# Editoritis

# Why is Kerala's intolerant growing towards RSS workers?

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*The RSS volunteer is attacked and killed in Kerala because the Kerala ruling party is Communist. These attacks on RSS volunteers and workers are purely political vendettas.*

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I was shocked to know that the RSS workers get beaten, killed, and sometimes physically attacked on a daily basis. In spite of such atrocities the state has the highest number of RSS shakhas, but it doesn't have any impact on the electoral prospects for the saffron party. The demography of Kerala is unfavorable for BJP because the major population of Christians and Muslims vote for UDF — The floating voters among them vote for LDF. There are many Hindus who are Communists for many generations and they vote for LDF no matter what.

The RSS volunteer is attacked and killed in Kerala because the Kerala ruling party is Communist. These attacks on RSS volunteers and workers are purely political vendettas. They want to demoralize Hindu organizations and the exclusive ideology of RSS. Communism which has deep roots in Kerala often clashes - even violently - with other ideologies be it socialism or right wing. Regardless of the party, such murders are carried out by criminal gangs. These communist parties produce run-of-the-mill offenders who take charge for political purposes. Even if they are convicted, CPIM takes care of the families. There are no takers for RSS volunteers and victims because the very existence of these people is a threat to the ruling party ideology.

RSS ideology advocates humanity and Dharma (duty). Every patriotic Indian irrespective of religion or caste is free to join them. It's difficult to believe that no one compels the government to take stern actions against such killings. Making peace with the Killings and killers displays inherent friction and conflict. Anyone professing to be a Hindu is met with derision and scorn and no wonder an organization for the Hindu welfare is a threat to these intellectuals. These intellectuals only cry wolf from rooftops, when one of their own ilk is offended. The so-called intellectuals here have totally different agenda and schedules for treason and personal gains of power and wealth. While some of the media had a word or two of the events in Kerala, even these have other priorities and ongoing and ever-continuing events of importance, to cover the death of an individual.

The spread of communal threats and cries for "Azadi" have drowned any voices of the saner media as well.

In none of these cases, Killers have been sentenced to Capital punishment, despite being carried out in public. There is a lack of political will and the ruling parties want such killings to continue so that the perception of RSS / BJP never improves which certainly prevents them from emerging as a political alternative. Most of the murders are actually been either charged or accused in previous attacks. Some are even absconders on the police list.

Rashtriya Swayam sevak Sangh is believed to be a pro-Hindu organization, but pro-Hindu doesn't mean anti-Islam or anti-Christian. Similarly, people in Kerala have this misunderstanding that RSS is an organization that creates a communal divide and this perception is mainly created by the communists, Muslims, and Christians, as they have been made to believe that the RSS is a threat to their ideology.

Some parts of Kerala have violent politics. The UDF and CPI(M) are just two sides of the coin. Most of them live by the sword in some parts of Kerala and encourage assassinations. I went to Shakha and met many volunteers and got to know that they are brave hearts and not at all dispirited by the attacks, because they strongly believe in working tirelessly to protect Dharma. They live for the nation and they can die for the nation. They have motives and duties towards India, what has damaged them the most is the acuity created about them by various urban Naxals. RSS poses a threat to those elements that are a threat to the Indian Values, lifestyle, and culture. Kerala is mostly dominated by particular sects that carry anti-Hindu agenda.



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## Letters to the Editor

### Shocking and Dangerous

DRDO scientist Dr Kurulkar who is currently under arrest for providing sensitive information of Indian Army to Pakistani Intelligence. It has been revealed in the 1837-page charge sheet filed by the Maharashtra ATS that Pradeep Kurulkar had provided information about India's highly sensitive "Brahmos Agni and UVC" missiles to Pakistani spies. The Pakistani agent befriended Dr Kurulkar through social media and created various accounts.

Pakistani agent created two fake social media accounts named Zara Dasgupta and Juhi Arora dragged Dr. Kurulkar into a honey trap. Providing important information about drones, robotics and Indian missiles to Pakistan is very shocking and dangerous from the point of view of the country's defense and scientists like Dr. Kurulkar are working for the national interest. How do they forget the most common protocols of privacy while doing it? Even common government workers are kept confidential in government work, so how can these highly educated scientists share information about the country's defense across the world through social media? The Ministry of Defense should take strict notice that such Kurulkar will not happen again. Dr. Kurulkar's actions are shocking and dangerous in terms of national interest.

**Dattaprasad Shirodkar**

### \Blood and Ballots

Violence in West Bengal panchayat elections is never news. Mostly, it does not result in fatalities. But this time, it is widespread and has claimed at least 12 victims. This has come about because of infighting in the Trinamool Congress, the chief minister's tacit encouragement, the state election commission's inefficiency and the Centre playing an amplifying role in the mess. The state BJP cannot be completely absolved either. Is life so cheap in West Bengal? Are the powers so callous and unscrupulous that they use humans as pawns to achieve their aims?

**Jahangir Ali**

### Tomatoes have become costlier than petrol

The price of tomatoes has risen to more than Rs 130 a kilo in several parts of the country and has become even more costlier than petrol. Tomatoes are the major dietary source of the antioxidant lycopene, which has been linked to many health benefits, including a reduced risk of heart disease and cancer. They are also a great source of vitamin C, potassium, folate, and vitamin K. The government must control inflation and do something to bring down the price of tomatoes and other household ingredients as a relief to the common man.

**Jubel D'Cruz**

### World Bank Lend India

The World Bank's Board of Executive Directors has approved \$1.5 billion in financing to accelerate India's low-carbon energy development. It is welcome for India where daily using goods prices are rising hastily and tomatoes price reached above 200, it may support the Indian economy to be better but the question is that would it be used in political curriculums or people's welfare because a general election is nearer and World Bank already has lent to an Indian state Chhattisgarh just some days ago. Apart from that we hope that these dollars will be used to make India better. The concerning matter is that Bangladesh's GDP has been better than India, so bearing in mind the Inflation, Health, Education, Infrastructure, Economy, and Environment, Govt should use that dollars.

**MT Farooqi**

# Increased demand for skilled workers in chemical engineering

After schooling, parents are often confused as to which course or course should be taken next so that the child can stand on his own feet. The answer to this question has also changed over time. There was a time when the number of graduates was very less and a person who did bachelors could easily get a job. With the passage of time, this number increased, but the number of jobs did not increase accordingly. Technical education During the last years Apart from the traditional courses like mechanical, civil and electrical, some courses are being run under technical education, which attract more employment opportunities for the students due to being in fewer colleges. One of these courses is Chemical Engineering. By the way, this course has been in existence for many years, but because the youth do not have much information about it, they are not taking full advantage of it. From brushing your teeth when you wake up in the morning, to pastes, soaps and daily life products that the industry There is a need for skilled people with chemical engineering knowledge everywhere. For this requirement of the industries, the youth who have done Diploma in Chemicals are perfectly suited. Apart from this, there is a special need for people having skills related to this subject in the pharmaceutical and chemical manufacturing industries.

Need for skilled workers Currently, our country is going through a period of technological development, due to which the need for skilled workers is increasing. Every industry is producing with new technologies and devices, due to which The need for skilled workers is increasing day by day. Keeping this need in mind, getting vocational training and technical education for the youth is the best



option to move towards a better future. Course Nowadays courses related to this subject can be done at all levels, like a one or two-year certificate course in industrial training institute after the tenth, three-year diploma course in technical education after the tenth or twelfth, or four after the twelfth. year degree course followed by Masters's and Doctorate.

Three-year diploma as per industry requirement. The course is perfectly suited to their needs. During the diploma course, where students study theory, they also get thorough practical knowledge. During the course itself, the students are also given training in the industry. This is the reason why students are getting a chance to make their future golden under this course for the last several years. Job opportunities Due to the good demand-supply ratio of the industry related to this course, most of the students get a job during the course itself.

Whenever a company chemical engineering diploma students are required, then they contact the concerned college and get selected for the student job through campus placement. Every year, various companies select students in colleges on the best annual package. It is also a good alternative for the youth who are making their future by staying in Punjab. With the opening of an oil refining refinery at Bathinda, the employment op-

portunities for the students of this course have increased. As the refinery or other industries are expanding in Punjab, Chemical Engineer Job opportunities are also increasing for the students of G. The door to a better future A Diploma in Chemical Engineering has always proved to be the gateway to a better future for the youth after schooling and the demand for this course is increasing in the coming times. After getting detailed information about this course, youth can make their future golden by choosing this option for themselves.

Acceleration in the field of research and development The Diploma of Chemical Engineering is only available in a few selected polytechnic colleges of Punjab. Curriculum of Chemical Engineering Dr. By HL Roy In 1921 Yadavpur University, West Bengal was incorporated for the first time. This curriculum was prepared by combining Mathematics and Physics along with Chemistry. With the advent of this exclusive curriculum in the field of engineering, where the industries benefited, there was also a rapid acceleration in the field of research and development

**- Vijay Garg**

Columnist

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**No postal letters will be entertained**  
(The views expressed are authors' own.)

# Another NCP MLA joins Ajit Pawar's camp after NCP split

**N**CP MLA from Wai constituency in Maharashtra's Satara district, Marakand Patil, on Monday, said he has joined the camp led by senior party leader and Deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar.

Patil said he decided to join the Ajit Pawar camp to save two sugar factories in his constituency which are in financial crisis and in the hope of bringing development and resolving tourism-related issues in Wai. Notably, Patil was present during Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) founder Sharad Pawar's visit to Karad city, a day after Ajit Pawar and eight other MLAs joined the Shiv Sena-BJP government.

The MLA claimed his name had figured in the list of nine ministers of NCP, including Ajit



Pawar who took oath last Sunday. "But I told Ajit Pawar that I would have to consult my supporters and people from the constituency before taking any decision," he told PTI.

Several workers and supporters of Patil from Satara dis-

trict met Ajit Pawar in Mumbai on Saturday. In the video of the meeting, an NCP functionary from the Wai constituency is seen demanding a Cabinet berth for Patil. The MLA said it was a very difficult call to take as both Sharad Pawar and Ajit Pawar

are dear to him. "It was a tough decision. Recently, I took over two sugar factories that were in a financial crisis. Just because of people's insistence, I contested the elections to these factories. I could handle the last year's (sugarcane crushing) season without

any problem," he said.

Patil said they faced various difficulties in the last year when not in power in managing the factories. "Against this backdrop, we have decided (to join the Ajit Pawar camp) to save these sugar factories, and to address the issues related to development and tourism in my constituency," he added. Patil claimed he took this decision on the insistence of NCP workers who flagged issues related to the sugar mills and development in Wai. After joining the Eknath Shinde-Devendra Fadnavis government, the Ajit Pawar camp has staked the claim to the NCP name and symbol. Ajit Pawar loyalists, including Praful Patel, are insisting that they have the support of "40 plus" out of the 53 MLAs of NCP. PTI

## Mumbai receives 31.17 pc of average annual rainfall this monsoon season



**M**umbai has received 31.17 per cent of the annual average rainfall of 2,547 mm till Monday morning, as per the city civic body's monsoon report.

The India Meteorological Department's (IMD) Mumbai centre declared the onset of monsoon in the country's financial capital on June 25, late by about a fortnight.

According to the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation's (BMC) report, the IMD Mumbai has recorded 1,043.8 mm rainfall at its Santacruz observatory (representative of suburbs) and 658.7 mm rainfall at the Colaba observatory (representative of the island city) in the last 15 days.

The downpour recorded at the Santacruz observatory is

37.49 per cent of the average annual rainfall of 2,784 mm and the figure at the Colaba observatory is 28.52 per cent of the average rainfall of 2,310 mm, according to the report. During the same period last year, the Santacruz and Colaba observatories recorded 1,106.6 mm and 1,015.1 mm rainfall, respectively.

The IMD Mumbai has predicted moderate rain in the city and suburbs in the next 24 hours, the report said. The island city, eastern and western suburbs received 13.12 mm, 13.59 mm and 19.77 mm rainfall, respectively, in the 24-hour period ending at 8 am on Monday, as per the BMC's report. PTI

## Heavy rains have affected prices of vegetables



**R**etail price of tomato has touched up to Rs 200 per kilogram in some parts of the country including Delhi as incessant rains disrupted supplies, traders said and added that the rates of other vegetables have also firmed up.

Heavy rainfall in producing areas has led to waterlogging leading to the damage of tomato crop and other perishable vegetables grown below the soil especially onion, and ginger, they said. As per the data maintained by the Consumer Affairs Ministry, the all-India average retail

price of tomato was ruling at 104.38 per kg on Monday, with maximum price quoted was Rs 200 per kg in Swai Madhopur and minimum was Rs 31 per kg in Churu in Rajasthan.

Among metros, retail price of tomato was quoted highest at Rs 149 per kg in Kolkata, followed by Rs 135 per kg in Mumbai, Rs 123 per kg in Chennai and Rs 100 per kg in Delhi, the data showed. The retail price of tomato and other vegetables varies depending on the quality and the location where they are sold. PTI

## Person was held in Mumbai for posing anti-narcotics personnel and extorting money from people

**O**ne person from a six-member gang was arrested for allegedly posing as anti-narcotics personnel and abducting and extorting money from a businessman in Versova in the western part of Mumbai, a Crime Branch official said on Monday.

The gang entered a restaurant on Sunday and threatened to implicate the victim in a drugs case if he did not pay them Rs 50 lakh, the official said. "They abducted him and ensured he gave them

Rs 5.30 lakh and a mobile phone. The accused drove the car around the city all through the night. A cheque of Rs 20 lakh that the businessman gave to the accused could not be encashed due to technical reasons," he said.

"They allowed him to leave at a spot in Andheri. He approached Versova police station where a case was registered," he said. A Crime Branch team conducting a parallel probe managed to arrest the main accused, Bandra Unit

IX senior inspector Daya Nayak said. Main accused Deepak Jadhav is a history sheeter who has been accused of a robbery in a firm in Pune, kidnapping in Andheri's DN Nagar area and two offences in Chunabhatti, police said. Jadhav has confessed to the crime and revealed the role of his five associates, and efforts were on to nab them, as per police. He was produced in court on Monday and has been remanded in police custody till July 15. PTI

## Auto driver was arrested for raping a woman in Goregaon

**A**n autorickshaw driver was arrested for allegedly raping and assaulting a woman passenger in Aarey Colony in suburban Goregaon, a Mumbai police official said on Monday.

The 20-year-old woman had boarded the autorickshaw of accused Indrajit Singh from CBD

Belapur in Navi Mumbai to reach her destination in Goregaon, he said. "The incident took place in May. The woman, who had a C-section some time ago, started experiencing abdominal pain. Doctors treating her noticed injuries and on being asked she told them and kin about the rape-assault ordeal," he said.

## Nation

### Delhi HC refuses to prepone hearing of RTI case related to PM Modi's Graduation Degree



The Delhi High Court on Monday refused to prepone the hearing of a case related to RTI information on Prime Minister Modi's Graduation Degree. The court has listed the matter for hearing on October 13. An application seeking early hearing on the plea moved by Delhi University challenging Central Information Commission's (CIC's) 2016 direction to

allow inspection of records. Justice Subramonium Prasad refused to grant an early hearing on the petition moved by the University challenging an order passed by the Central Information Commissioner (CIC). The CIC had directed the University to allow inspection of records related to students of the BA Course of the year 1978.

PM Modi is also stated to

have passed the BA of Delhi University examination in 1978. The order passed by the CIC was stayed by the High Court in January 2017. However, the High Court issued the early hearing application moved by the RTI Activist Neeraj Kumar. Senior advocate Sanjay Hegde appeared for the applicant and submitted that the matter requires an early hearing as it has been pending for a long time.

Justice Prasad refused to grant an early hearing and said, "The matter is listed in October. Take it from me, it will be disposed of then, provided I continue in the roster. It does not impress why it (preponing) should be done." The bench issued notice on the application on the date already fixed in the matter. ANI

### Jain monk killing: "No need for CBI probe, arrests made" says Karnataka minister; BJP claims "appeasement politics"



Karnataka Home Minister G Parameshwara on Monday said there is no need for a Central Bureau of Investigation probe into the murder case of Jain monk Acharya Sri Kamakumara Nandi Maharaja of Chikkodi even as Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) has said that the Congress government in the State was indulging in "appeasement politics." Police recovered body parts of the Digambar seer from a defunct borewell in a field in Chikkodi in Belagavi district on Saturday (July 8).

The monk was reported missing by the manager of the ashram

where he used to stay and two persons have been arrested in this connection.

"Our police department is competent, the accused have been arrested and the investigation has started," minister Parameshwara said. "No need to hand it to the CBI or anything. The truth will come out after our department's investigation is over. It is not right to make accusations. Legal action will be taken. The police are working impartially without any pressure," the minister added. Union Minister Prahlad Joshi has termed the murder as "highly condemnable." ANI

### Assam flood situation remains grim; nearly 35,000 people affected

The flood situation in Assam continues to remain grim with nearly 35,000 people in four districts (Dhemaji, Lakhimpur, Jorhat and Sivasagar) and one sub-division (Biswanath) having been affected. Following incessant rain, the water level of the Brahmaputra River and its tributaries is rising at many places in the state.

The Brahmaputra River is flowing above the danger level mark at Neamatighat in Jorhat district while the Disang River

has crossed the danger level mark at Nanglamuraghat in Sivasagar district. The flood waters have submerged 111 villages under 13 revenue circles in the districts. In the Sivasagar district, the flood waters of the Disang River inundated several parts of the Disangmukh area and low-lying areas and entered many houses. According to the flood report of Assam State Disaster Management Authority (ASDMA), over 18000 people have been affected in the Lakhimpur district while nearly

16,000 people were affected in Dhemaji district.

ASDMA informed on Sunday that nearly 8,000 people have been affected in the Gogamukh Revenue Circle and 7,400 people in the Sissoborgaon revenue circle area. As per officials, 18268 domestic animals, and poultry have also been affected by the deluge. The flood waters damaged one embankment, 4 roads, and a protection bundh in the last 24 hours. ANI

### Foxconn withdraws from India's semiconductor JV with Vedanta

Foxconn on Monday said it has decided to pull out of its semiconductor joint venture with Indian conglomerate Vedanta, according to a statement. Foxconn said it is "working to remove the Foxconn name from what now is a fully-owned entity of Vedanta". "Foxconn has no connection to the entity and efforts to keep its original name will cause confusion for future stakeholders," Hon Hai Technology group (Foxconn) said.

Foxconn, the global con-

tract electronics maker, and Vedanta had inked an agreement last year to build semiconductor and display production plants in Gujarat entailing an investment of about Rs 1.5 lakh crore. In a statement on Monday Foxconn said: "In order to explore more diverse development opportunities, according to mutual agreement, Foxconn has determined it will not move forward on the joint venture with Vedanta." The statement said that for over a year Hon Hai Technology Group

(Foxconn) and Vedanta have worked hard to bring a great semiconductor idea to reality. It has been a fruitful experience that can position both companies strongly going forward. "Foxconn is confident about the direction of India's semiconductor development. We will continue to strongly support the government's 'Make In India' ambitions and establish a diversity of local partnerships that meet the needs of stakeholders," it said. PTI

### 15 building collapse incidents reported in Delhi amid record rainfall

Record rainfall over the last couple of days has taken a heavy toll of the national capital, with as many as 15 house collapse incidents leaving 2 dead and 7 injured, an official informed on Sunday. Speaking to ANI on Sunday, the director of Delhi Fire Service, Atul Garg, confirmed receiving as many as 15 calls pertain to house collapse incidents over the last couple of days.

He informed further that in several of these incidents, the firefighters ran into trouble reaching the spot on account of heavy and extensive waterlogging. "We received 15 such calls, the most in a single day. Some old, decrepit houses and some under-construction buildings couldn't sustain the heavy rainfall and collapsed. Further, on account of severe waterlogging, we had trouble reaching the spot," Garg told ANI. ANI

### Flood situation grim at some places as rainfall continues in Punjab, Haryana

Rains battered many parts of Punjab and Haryana for the third consecutive day on Monday causing flooding at many places, as authorities scrambled to lead rescue operations to shift people to safer places. The Punjab gov-

ernment ordered the closure of schools in the state till July 13 in view of the prevailing situation. According to the meteorological department, it has been raining in many parts of Punjab and Haryana since morning on Monday.

World

# Indo-Pacific on agenda for Biden-Sunak talks in UK

The Indo-Pacific region and the broader geopolitical context were among the topics on the agenda for talks when British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak hosted US President Joe Biden at 10 Downing Street in London on Monday. The US leader arrived in the UK ahead of a North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) summit in Lithuania, with the Russia-Ukraine conflict and the West's support for the latter central to the talks. Biden, who was received by King Charles III at Windsor Castle later, hailed the UK-US relationship as "rock solid" ahead of his discussions with Sunak. "Looking ahead to this week's NATO Summit, the Prime Minister and President Biden agreed on the need to



strengthen our alliance and maintain our support for Ukraine," a Downing Street spokesperson said in a readout of their discussions. "They discussed the progress of the counter-offensive and

emphasised the importance of the country's international partners committing to its long-term defence, providing the support Ukraine needs to win this war and secure a just and lasting peace. On broader NATO is-

ssues, they agreed on the need to ensure that Sweden has a swift path to full NATO accession," the spokesperson said. "The Prime Minister and President Biden also discussed the broader geopolitical context, including in

the Indo-Pacific and with regard to Iran," the spokesperson noted.

It marked the first time Biden has visited Downing Street as the US President and his sixth meeting with Sunak since he became Prime Minister in October last year. The US President was driven in his official vehicle, known as "The Beast", with an accompanying security convoy and posed for the customary photograph at the famous door of 10 Downing Street during a warm greeting by Sunak before the British Indian leader led the visiting dignitary to the garden. "We stand as two of the firmest allies in that alliance and I know we'll want to do everything we can to strengthen Euro-Atlantic security," said Sunak. PTI

## China's military seeks to break its West Pacific noose

China has already gained de facto control over huge swathes of the South China Sea, it daily sends aircraft and warships close to Taiwan, and it contests passages of foreign warships through the South China Sea and Taiwan Strait. Yet the People's Liberation Army (PLA) is still dissatisfied, for it feels confined by what is referred to as the First Island Chain. This so-called chain stretches from the Japanese archipelago to Taiwan, the Philippines and Borneo. If the PLA is to make the most effective use of its brand-new equipment and exercise greater global reach, especially in times of conflict, it must penetrate the First Island Chain. If an enemy site's anti-ship mis-

siles, sea mines, air defenses and submarines narrow straits through which Chinese warships must pass, it becomes extremely perilous for the PLA.

Furthermore, China does not have any natural friends along the First Island Chain, especially since the Philippines' brown-nosed Rodrigo Duterte has departed. Controlling the South China Sea and East China Sea matters little if the PLA's enemies can keep it bottled up inside the First Island Chain. This fear of containment also emphasizes the importance of Taiwan to China, since capturing it immediately snaps the First Island Chain in two and gives China instant access to the West Pacific. The Second Island Chain runs

from mainland Japan, through Iwo Jima, Guam, the Northern Marianas, Micronesia, Indonesia, Papua New Guinea and Australia. The PLA's intention is to not only break through the first chain, but to also gain dominance in the maritime area behind it and thus restrict US freedom of movement. Grant Newsham, a former colonel in the US Marine Corps, testified before the US House of Representatives on the topic of Chinese influence on Compacts of Free Association (COFA) states on 14 June. COFA is an agreement between the USA and three sovereign states comprising the Federated States of Micronesia, the Republic of the Marshall Islands and the Republic of Palau. ANI

## Pakistan: Health emergency in Khuzdar after diarrhoea outbreak

The Balochistan government announced a health emergency in the Aranji area of tehsil Wadh of Khuzdar district after the outbreak of acute diarrhoea, Dawn reported. The government has sent doctors and paramedics to the area to provide medical facilities to the affected patients.

The provincial secretary of health has dismissed the services of a doctor who had refused to perform emergency duty in the affected area. On Saturday, two women and a child died due to acute diarrhoea in the remote area of Khuzdar district. DG Health Noor Mohammad Qazi said a complete diagnosis related to cholera was still awaited, adding the area was

quite remote and due to rains and floods, there are problems in reaching there, reported Dawn. He added a health emergency had been declared in the area and a control room had also been established in the DG Health office in Quetta. Qazi added that Khuzdar was monitoring the medical work.

An official notification said the health department had dismissed a doctor appointed on an ad hoc basis after he allegedly refused emergency duty in the Aranji area of Khuzdar. Departmental action against three other doctors had also been initiated for showing reluctance to go to the affected area, the notification said. ANI

## Iran women can attend top league games: Football Federation's Head

For women in Iran witnessing a soccer match is among the rarest things but now with the announcement made by the head of the Football Federation, they will be allowed into stadiums during the upcoming season, Islamic Republic News Agency (IRNA) reported. Head of the Iranian Football Federation Mehdi Taj said that Iran's Supreme National Security Council (SNSC) has decided to let women watch football matches by attending the stadiums.

"Women will be able to visit stadiums, and the Supreme Na-



tional Security Council has made such a decision" Taj said on Friday. He added that a working group responsible for the implementation of the project has been appointed, reported IRNA. Taj concluded that the Interior Min-

istry, Sports and Youth Policy Ministry, the football federation and two institutions of the Ministry of Information are developing a plan for implementing the job. Soccer is Iran's most popular spectator sport, with wrestling and volleyball not far behind. Team Melli, which literally means "the nation's team," enjoys tremendous support. But ever since the revolution, women have been outlawed from watching those sports in person or in public places such as restaurants, according to Washington Post. ANI

## Bangladesh moves beyond dollar to settle trade with India in rupee

Bangladesh is all set to settle trade with India in Rupee from Tuesday, a move to cut their reliance on the American currency, which was involved in nearly 90 per cent of global forex transactions in 2022, The Daily Star reported. Bangladesh Bank and the Indian High Commission are expected to announce the news regarding the Indian currency at an event at Le Meridien Hotel in Dhaka tomorrow.

The central bank governor and the Indian high commissioner will also join, a Bangladesh Bank (BB) official said. The BB has already given permission to three banks

- Sonali Bank, Eastern Bank and State Bank of India (SBI) in Bangladesh - to open nostro accounts with their counterparts in the neighbouring country. The nostro account is an account that a bank holds with a foreign bank in the currency of the country where the funds are held. It is used to facilitate foreign exchange and international trade transactions involving foreign currencies. This new move will open the letters of credit in the rupee to source a portion of the products from the neighbouring country and thus cutting the use of the US dollar to some extent, according to The Daily Star. ANI



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There is rampant tree cutting in forest and other areas in the name of development. Jungles after jungles have disappeared. The greedy traders are offering exorbitant price to farmers and transporting wood to far-off areas illegally for building materials and bakeries etc. The temperatures have risen like never before. It is just the beginning of summer and one can imagine what will be conditions in peak summer. The road widening of highways has taken heavy toll of ecology. It is time to ponder and plant trees to keep ecological balance. This issue is of dire importance, throughout the whole country, not limited to any particular area. A striking example is the splendid Darjeeling hills, where so many films were shot, are now barren in many parts.

Forests are our wealth and means to our progress and prosperity. Man has been mercilessly for wood, fodder and other domestic or industrial purposes. Deforestation also leads to pollution. Our growing population caused trees to be cut down to make space for cultivation and for constructing houses or for establishing industries for finding job opportunities. As a result our forests disappeared and the atmosphere which was quite clean and clear has now become land for agriculture, river valley projects, roadways, railways and other Industries.

Cutting of trees leads to soil erosion which results in the formation of infertile wastelands on earth. Not only deforestation, a number of other illegal deeds of human beings have disturbed the ecological balance of our environment, including poaching.

Illegal poaching of animals, despite being banned by the Government, is still being practised on a large scale. Animals such as Tigers, deer, elephants, stags etc are hunted and made to die cruelly to fulfill the whims and fancy of the rich. Cosmetics, leather bags, shoes, purses, soaps, detergents, perfumes all made of animal products. Even the wildlife conservation Acts did not bother the bureaucrats. While the Government is playing its role, people will share an equal responsibility in protecting our environment. Unless we learn to regulate ourselves, we should soon be living in deserts with no plants, no animals, no rain and ultimately, there will be no life on earth.

Man is God's most beautiful creation but now he is acting ugly by cutting down the friends of our environment trees. These trees maintain a balance in the

ecosystem. Without trees, there would be no control over soil erosion, floods, pollution etc. The trees also maintain a balance between oxygen and carbon dioxide gases in the air. Besides these productive functions, trees have innumerable productive functions. They provide man with timber, fuel, pulp, gum, resin, rubber, fruits, nuts etc. So, the trees are really very-very important. In a tropical country like India 1/3rd of the land is under forest. However, the satellite reports show that out of the given per cent-age only 20% is forests. The forests have been destroyed and forest land has been used for cultivation and constructions of buildings. As the future inhabitants of this earth, it is only our children who are going to suffer and it is only we who can make the earth a better living place for tomorrow.

# Entertainment



## This is what Rashmika Mandanna do "in-between takes"

Actor Rashmika Mandanna, who is busy shooting for her upcoming Pan-India film 'Pushpa: The Rule' gave her fans a sneak-peak of in-between takes. Taking to Instagram stories on Sunday, the 'Goodbye' actor shared a video of herself playing with lights in-between takes.

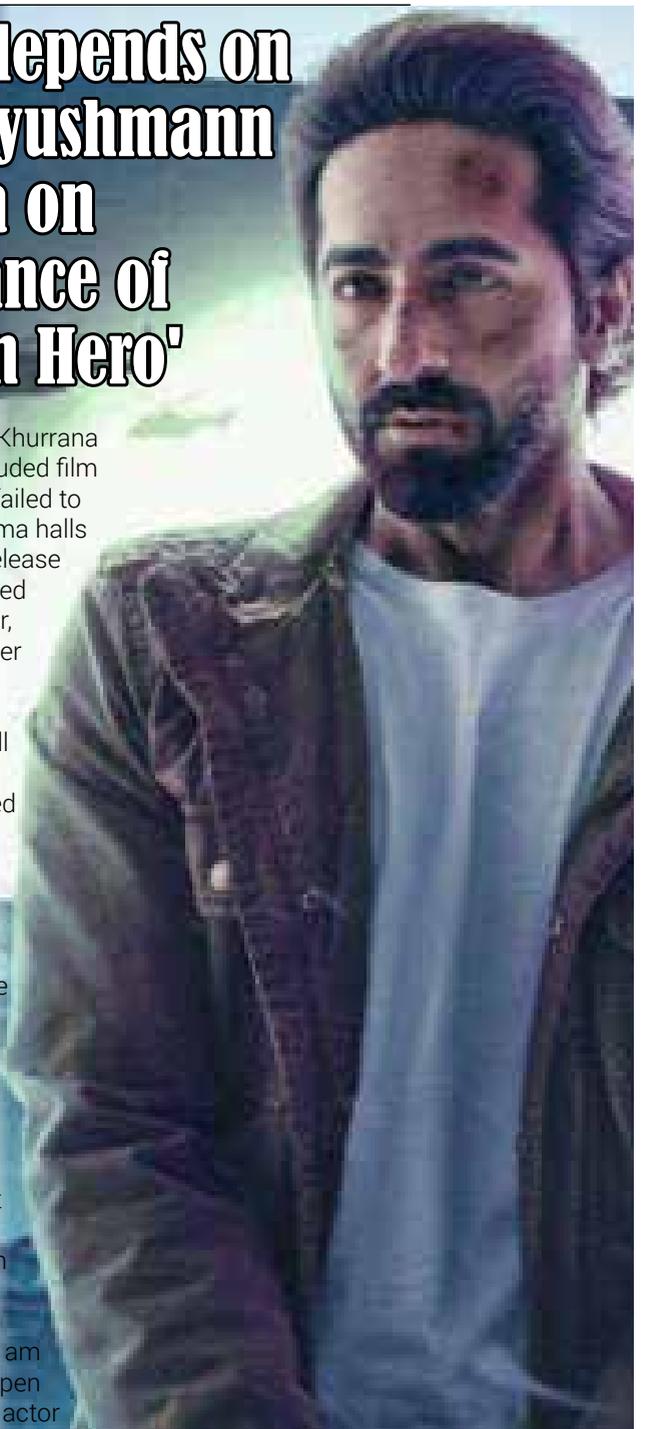
Rashmika wore a white t-shirt and kept her tresses half-tied and half-open. On the same day also posted a couple of mirror selfies on her Insta handle. She wore a half-sleeve black and white striped crop top with blue denim. Rashmika opted for minimal makeup and kept her hair in a messy bun to complement her cute yet stylish look.

Sharing the pictures, she wrote, "Trying to get my mirror selfie right. Do you think I'm getting better at it?" ANI

## It really depends on timing: Ayushmann Khurrana on performance of 'An Action Hero'

Actor Ayushmann Khurrana says his highly lauded film "An Action Hero" failed to draw audiences to cinema halls because its theatrical release timing was "bad". Directed by debutant Anirudh Iyer, the action-comedy-thriller opened to good reviews upon its December 2 theatrical release but fell short at the box office. "An Action Hero" received a better response when it premiered on Netflix in January. According to Khurrana, timing matters a lot for theatrical releases in the post-pandemic era.

"It really depends on timing. This is the best time, the theatricals are also back and I am glad mid-budget films are working. It is a great silver lining. "I think it was a bad time then. 'An Action Hero' got a lot of love later. I will keep on making these choices. I am sure theatricals will happen and we will do well," the actor told PTI.



## Jeffrey Carlson, 'All My Children' star dies at 48

Jeffrey Carlson, who played the groundbreaking transgender character Zoe in All My Children, has died at age 48, Deadline reported. The actor has been a regular on the daytime drama since 2006.

Time Out New York theatre editor Feldman called Carlson she announced the news on Twitter. Feldman called Carlson a powerful actor, deadline reported. He wrote, "RIP Jeffrey Carlson, 48, exposed-nerve star of Broadway (Billy in The Goat, Marilyn in Taboo) and TV (the groundbreaking trans character Zoe on All My Children). A powerful actor and a painful loss." ANI



## Sonam Kapoor exudes elegance in her sister Rhea's white gown

Actor Sonam Kapoor wore an outfit that belongs to her sister Rhea Kapoor. Sonam took to Instagram on Sunday to share a series of photos of herself wearing a white midi dress. She captioned the post, "Summer ethereal white, for a dance party... Wearing my sister's dress, styled by her."

She revealed that the outfit is owned by her sister Rhea Kapoor and also was styled by her. Rhea also posted pictures of Sonam on her Instagram and wrote, "Like a swan. ANI

