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Clothes hung on mosques ahead of Kanwar yatra, later removed

New Delhi: Amid growing criticism of several BJP-ruled state governments' diktat to display names of the owners on eateries along the route of the Kanwar yatra, Uttarakhand government has come up with a novel idea to "prevent trouble." On Friday, July 26, two mosques and a shrine, located in the Haridwar city of Uttarakhand were covered with large white sheets, ahead of the Kanwar yatra passing through the route. The sheets were hung on bamboo scaffoldings in front of two mosques and a Mazar, all in the Jwalapur area. Uttarakhand Tourism Minister Satpal Maharaj told reporters that it was done to "prevent trouble" and "maintain peace." But what exactly is this trouble and how does the sight of a mosque disrupt the Kanwar yatra, nobody explained. Instead, the minister said, "It is not such a big thing. We also cover buildings when they are under construction." Meanwhile, the caretakers of the mosque and shrine said they were unaware of any order passed in this regard from the administration. They said this was the first time such a thing had happened. Kanwariyas stop under the shade of trees outside mosques and Mazars to rest, said Shakeel Ahmad, one of the caretakers of the Mazar. He reiterated that this is the first time the administration has come up with such a strange move. Congress



leader and former minister Naeem Qureshi said he has never seen such a thing in his life. "We Muslims always welcome Shiv bhakts (devotees) for the kanwar fair and arrange refreshments for them at various places. This has been an example of harmony between Hindus and Muslims in Haridwar, and there has never been a tradition of curtains," he said. Qureshi said before the Kanwar mela started, the administration had held a meeting and members from both the Hindu and Muslim communities were made SPOs. Congress leader and former district panchayat president Rao Afaque Ali pointed out that some Kanwariyas used to visit the mosques on the route to pay respect. "It has never happened earlier. Some Kanwariyas also go to

mosques to pay obeisance. India is a country where everyone takes care of every religion and caste. Today mosques are being covered, what will happen if temples are covered in this manner tomorrow?" he asked. Meanwhile, Uttarakhand Congress vice president Suryakant Dhasmana said that the move to cover mosques on the route of Kanwar Yatra was a "contempt of the Supreme Court". "The order to put curtains on mosques and mazars on the kanwar yatra route in Haridwar district, whoever has issued it, goes against the Supreme Court which has put a stay on an order which asked hotel and restaurant owners and fruit vendors on the route to display their names, caste and religious identity," Dhasmana said.

Karnataka renames Ramanagara district as Bengaluru South

Bengaluru: Karnataka cabinet on Friday approved the renaming of Ramanagara district to Bengaluru South, a decision followed by an announcement made by Karnataka Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar. "The (state) cabinet has approved to rename Ramanagara district to Bengaluru South district," Karnataka Law and Parliamentary Affairs Minister HK Patil announced, while addressing a press conference on Friday. Earlier this month, Shivakumar said that a delegation of district leaders had proposed renaming Ramanagara district. "Keeping in mind the future and development of Ramanagara, Channapatna, Magadi, Kanakapura, Harohalli taluks, a delegation of district leaders led by them has proposed to Chief Minister Siddaramaiah to rename Ramanagara district as Bengaluru South District," Shivakumar said. The delegation comprising district in-charge ministers, MLAs and leaders met the Chief Minister at Vidhana Soudha and presented him with the proposal to rename the district. Responding to questions by mediapersons, Shivakumar said, "We all originally belong to Bengaluru district, including Bangalore city, Doddaballapur, Devanahalli, Hoskote, Kanakapura, Ra-

managara, Channapatna, Magadi. Administratively, it was previously divided into Bangalore city, Bangalore rural and Ramanagara district. It is necessary to rename the district as Bengaluru Dakshina district while keeping Ramanagara as a central administration, he said adding that Bengaluru has global recognition and under my leadership, the leaders of the district submitted a proposal to the Chief Minister to save the name of this district. "Making Bengaluru South District will further develop Ramanagara, Channapatna, and Magadi up to Mysore, invite the establishment of industries, and also help increase property value. Bengaluru borders Andhra Pradesh on one side and Tamil Nadu on the other. Thus, only Tumkur and this part is left for the development and expansion of Bangalore. We are keeping our name," Shivakumar said. To the question about which constituencies will be included in the proposal given for the new district, he said, "We are not making any new district. The existing district will remain the same. Ramanagara, Channapatna, Magadi, Harohalli, Kanakapura - including these five taluks, we have proposed renaming them as Bengaluru South District."

Cloudburst in Uttarkashi causes flash floods, 82 pilgrims airlifted

Dehradun: A cloud burst on Thursday night unleashed flash floods, causing the Yamuna River to surge dramatically and inflicting widespread damage to properties due to the powerful water currents. The water level rose alarmingly, reaching the parking area in Jankichatti, and resulting in the collapse of embankments in Yamunotri Dham and the security wall of the bridge leading to the revered Yamunotri temple. According to government sources, three ponies and a motorcycle were swept away in Jankichatti

due to the flash flooding. The sudden and intense rainfall caused widespread destruction in the region. District Disaster Management Officer Nandan Singh Rajwar told TNIE, "An alternative helipad has been set up in Gandhar. Out of 105 pilgrims stranded on the Madhyamaheshwar route, 82 have been rescued so far by Trans Bharat and Himalayan Heli Services, under the supervision of the district administration." DDMO Rajwar, who is closely monitoring the situation, stated, "Rescue operations will resume as

soon as the weather clears up." adding to the challenges faced by the rescue teams. Speaking to TNIE, Commandant Manikant Mishra of the State Disaster Response Force (SDRF) revealed, "A team of SDRF, led by Inspector Anirudh Bhandari, has successfully rescued around 25-30 people stranded near Gondar on the Madmaheshwar trek in Rudraprayag district. The team reached the location, five kilometers below Madmaheshwar, via helicopter and safely evacuated the trekkers to a secure location." Commandant Mish-

ra further added, "Another SDRF team has reached the incident site on foot from Augustyamuni Post, ensuring a comprehensive rescue operation." Gangotri Dham Rawal Harish Semwal told TNIE, "The Ganges has assumed a fierce form, and mild earthquake tremors were felt late at night, causing panic in the region for a while." Panic gripped the region overnight as the Yamuna river unleashed its fury along a six-kilometer stretch between Jankichatti and Yamunotri, causing widespread chaos and disruption.

Russia says downed 75 Ukrainian drones in south Rostov region

Moscow: Russia on Monday said that its forces had downed 75 Ukrainian drones, with nearly 50 destroyed over the southern Rostov region. Air defence systems intercepted 47 drones over Rostov, 17 over the Black and Azov seas and 11 in other areas including one over the frontier region of Belgorod, the defence ministry said. Regional authorities in the Black Sea town of Tuapse in the Krasnodar region said that debris from a downed drone sparked a fire in a petrol refinery. "The Kyiv regime once again tried to attack civil infrastructure in Tuapse with drones," the regional authorities said on Telegram, adding that nearly 100 firefighters had been deployed to battle the blaze. There were no casualties, according to preliminary information. Russia almost daily announces the interception of Ukrainian drones which Kyiv says are a response to Russian attacks aimed at military and civilian targets since Moscow launched its special military operation in February 2022.

Nagaland: Massive landslide in Kohima damages 4 houses, 20 families rendered homeless

Kohima: Heavy rains triggered a massive landslide in Kohima, damaging at least four houses, officials said on Friday. Heavy rains triggered a massive landslide in Kohima, damaging at least four houses, officials said on Friday. The incident happened in Pezelietsie Colony in Ward-3 North Block, they said. The landslide also partially damaged some adjacent houses, they said, adding that at least 20 families were rendered homeless. Newly-elected councillors of the Kohima Municipal Council led by their Chairman Neikhozo Suokhrrie and Deputy Chairman Khri-



elieve Chusi visited the affected area. Expressing serious concern over the incident, Suokhrrie said the area was a sinking zone and the KMC would initiate a pilot project for constructing a retaining wall and

drainage in consultation with the state government. The councillor of the affected ward, Ruokuovolie Rut-sa, said that such a massive landslide in the area has occurred for the first time since 2017.

Mizoram sports minister inaugurates Durand Cup 2024, Kokrajhar Chapter



Aizawl: Mizoram Sports Minister Lalnghinglova Hmar inaugurated the Kokrajhar Chapter of Durand Cup 2024, praising Mizoram's football achievements and encouraging Bodoland's development in the sport. The tournament, Asia's oldest, will see participation from 24 teams, including ISL clubs and foreign teams. Mizoram Sports & Youth Services Minister Lalnghinglova Hmar, on July 30 inaugurated the Durand Cup 2024, Kokrajhar Chapter at SAI Stadium, Kokrajhar, Assam. In his speech, Hmar thanked the Government of Bodoland Territorial Region, Indian Army, Assam Football Association and Assam Government for hosting the Durand Cup, stating that he is attending the match not as a politician but as a sports enthusiast. Applauding the Bodoland

officials on their efforts of developing football in the region, Hmar said, "After years of violence, the ability of the Indian Army to peacefully organise a football tournament in the region shows the power of sports in bringing people together. Mizoram with a very low population can achieve great heights in the discipline of football, especially with several players at the ISL and I-League. He highlighted that of the 22 players from the Indian squad who played for the FIFA World Cup qualifier, four are Mizos. Mizoram and that the State is always open to help develop Bodoland and Assam Football. The Durand Cup, which covers the Indian football calendar, was first held in 1888 and is Asia's oldest football tournament. It is one of the three oldest football tournaments in the

world, along with the English FA Cup and Scottish FA Cup. The Durand Cup 2024 is scheduled to be played in Kolkata, Shillong, Jamshedpur and Kokrajhar with 24 teams from Indian Super League, I-League, Indian Services, Central Armed Police Force and invited foreign teams. The final match will be held on August 31, 2024 at the 68,000-seat Vivekananda Yuba Bharati Krirangan, Kolkata. The first match of the Durand Cup was played on July 27, 2024 at the Salt Lake Stadium, Kolkata between reigning champions Mohun Bagan SG and Downtown Heroes FC. Group E matches and quarter final matches will be played in Kokrajhar. In Group E, ISL clubs Odisha FC and NorthEast United FC, BSF Football Team and Bodoland FC will compete for the quarter finals.

Nagaland's Hornbill Festival to mark 25th anniversary with star-studded lineup

Kohima: Nagaland is all set for the 25th edition of the Hornbill Music Festival from December 1-10, 2024. The event promises a blend of cultural heritage and international music acts. Nagaland is buzzing with anticipation as it prepares to host the 25th edition of the Hornbill Music Festival, scheduled for December 1-10, 2024. Abu Metha, Adviser to the Chief Minister of Nagaland, recently unveiled a redesigned logo for the event, signalling the start of the countdown to this landmark celebration. Metha took to social media to share his excitement about the upcoming festival. "The music festival is going to be one of the biggest ever international events... with headliners galore!" he exclaimed, urging fans to start making their plans to attend. The Hornbill Festival, named after the Indian hornbill bird, has become a cultural cornerstone for Nagaland since its inception in 2000. What began as

a government initiative to promote inter-tribal interaction and showcase Naga cultural heritage has evolved into a major tourist attraction, drawing visitors from across India and around the world. Known as the "Festival of Festivals," the event features a diverse array of activities that highlight the rich traditions of the Naga people. Displays of indigenous music, dance, food, and crafts from the state's 16 major tribes. The festival grounds at Kisama Heritage Village, located about 12 kilometers from the state capital Kohima, transform into a bustling hub of cultural exchange and celebration. While details of the 2024 lineup are yet to be announced, organisers hint at an impressive roster of international and domestic artists that will elevate the festival's musical offerings to new heights. The event has previously featured performances across various genres, from traditional Naga music to contemporary rock and pop.

Meghalaya's 'Rapture' wins Best Cinematography award at Malaysian film festival

Shillong: Dominic Sangma's film 'Rapture' has clinched the Best Cinematography award at the 7th Malaysian International Film Festival. The film, set in Meghalaya, follows a boy with night blindness amidst a village plagued by disappearances. Dominic Sangma's Garo-language film "Rapture" has been awarded the Best Cinematography award at the 7th Malaysian International Film Festival (MIFF) held in Kuala Lumpur. The award was received by the film's cinematographer, Toxo Xavier, whose exceptional work has brought international acclaim to this Garo film from Meghalaya. "Rapture" is set amongst the Garo community in Meghalaya, Northeast India, and follows the story of a ten-year-old boy suffering from night blindness. The boy lives in a village gripped with fear as local people keep disappearing, with rumors spreading about kidnappers trafficking in human organs. The film's compelling narrative and stunning visuals have captivated audiences worldwide, showcasing the rich cultural

narratives of the Garo community. The film is backed by Hubert Bals, Visions Sud Est, and the Doha Film Institute. It is produced by Dominic Sangma's Anna Films in collaboration with China's Xu Jianshang and Sun Li, and Indian producers Anu Rangachar, Harsh Agarwal, Aditya Grover, and Stephen Zacharias. Meghalaya-based Eva Gunme R. Marak, a patron of Northeast Indian arts, also played a crucial role in the film's production. After a year of international screenings, "Rapture" will be released for the first time in Meghalaya at Tura, Garo Hills, on August 15. This homecoming release is highly anticipated by the local community and is expected to receive a warm reception. The success of "Rapture" at the MIFF not only highlights the talent within the Garo community but also places Northeast Indian cinema on the global map. The film's intricate portrayal of local folklore and contemporary issues resonates with a universal audience, making it a standout piece in today's film landscape.

3 cadres of PREPAK (Pro) arrested on charges of extortion, huge cache of arms seized

Imphal: In a significant crackdown, the Manipur Police arrested three members of the outlawed outfit PREPAK (Progressive) from Chingmeirong Maning Leikai Nepali Basti in the Imphal West District. In a significant crackdown, the Manipur Police arrested three members of the outlawed outfit PREPAK (Progressive) from Chingmeirong Maning Leikai Nepali Basti in the Imphal West District. The arrested individuals have been identified as Wangkhem Rohit Singh (25), Yensem-



bam Nepolian Singh (27), and Suraj Ayam (20). The cache included a bolt-action rifle, one 9mm pistol with a magazine, six HE-36 hand grenades, six detonators, one Baofeng radio set, 36 live rounds, one stun grenade, one stun shell LR, one stinger cartridge, one smoke shell

LR, three dye marker grenades, one tear smoke grenade, and one tear gas grenade. These coordinated operations underscore the ongoing efforts of the Manipur Police and security forces to combat insurgency and maintain peace and security in the region.

Bajaj Finserv announces large cap fund with unique concentrated strategy

Guwahati: Bajaj Finserv Asset Management Limited has introduced the Bajaj Finserv Large Cap Fund, offering investors a fresh opportunity to capitalize on India's leading corporations. Launching its New Fund Offer (NFO) on July 29, 2024, and closing on August 12, 2024, this fund is designed to provide high returns through a concentrated investment strategy focusing on a select 25-30 stocks. The fund employs a high active share approach, aiming to outperform the Nifty 100 Total Return Index (TRI) over

the long term. According to recent research by Bajaj Finserv AMC, large cap stocks are near their long-term valuation averages, making them a compelling choice for stable, long-term investments. The fund is tailored for investors seeking wealth creation through equity investments in large-cap companies. Ganesh Mohan, CEO of Bajaj Finserv AMC, highlighted the fund's potential, noting, "This concentrated portfolio targets India's corporate leaders, promising high conviction and active management to exceed

benchmark performance." Nimesh Chandan, Chief Investment Officer, added, "Our fund's unique strategy and high active share are key to delivering superior returns and managing portfolio volatility." The fund will allocate 80-100% to large-cap equities, with up to 20% in non-large cap equities, foreign securities, or debt instruments. It is suitable for investors aiming for long-term wealth growth through equity exposure. The scheme offers direct and regular plans with a minimum investment of Rs. 500.

Abbott and YRGCARE launch centers to combat HIV and infectious diseases

Aizawl: Abbott and YRGCARE have inaugurated two innovative outreach centers in India to combat the spread of HIV and other infectious diseases. The Blue Shed facility in Delhi's Yamuna Bazar and an adolescent center in Aizawl aim to transform the lives of over 2,500 people over the next year by providing comprehensive care. The Blue Shed facility, located in a hotspot for HIV transmission among the transient population, offers testing, treatment, counseling, and support services for those at risk for HIV, hepatitis, and other diseases. It features an on-site laboratory for detecting known and emerging infectious diseases, helping to track outbreaks more effectively. Beyond testing, the facility provides linkages to government-run Opioid Substitution Therapy (OST) and Antiretroviral Therapy (ART), as well as tuberculosis treatments. Supported by the Abbott Pandemic Defense Coalition, this center has enrolled over 1,600 young people and continues to grow. The Aizawl market has welcomed this initiative, recognizing its po-

tential to protect the community's health and provide a safety net for vulnerable teenagers. Sunil Solomon, Chairman, YRGCARE said, "Through our work with people in these areas, we recognized that meeting more of their needs and transitioning from a disease focus to a person focus could have a better opportunity to get them connected to healthcare and counselling. The provision of testing services at centers will also help inform the emergence of new strains and need for new diagnostics." Dr. Gavin Cloherty, Head of Infectious Disease Research at Abbott's diagnostic business said, "By ensuring more people who have HIV and other infectious diseases understand their status and have access to treatment, we can help stop the spread of this virus. The COVID-19 pandemic has shown us how large-scale alliances spanning the globe are necessary to effectively address the burden of infectious diseases. We are proud to continue our long partnership with YRGCARE in this important work."

Mahindra launches high-tech dealerships, revolutionizes trucking services across India

Guwahati: Mahindra's Truck and Bus Division (MTBD) is making waves in the automotive sector with the launch of five cutting-edge dealerships in Jhansi, Ghaziabad, Raipur, Bharuch, and Kadappa. These technologically advanced facilities, boasting 37 service bays, are designed to handle over 75 vehicles daily, equipped with the latest innovations in service technology. Features include driver lodging, 24-hour breakdown assistance, and AdBlue

availability, setting new benchmarks in the commercial vehicle sector. Jalaj Gupta, Business Head - Commercial Vehicles at Mahindra & Mahindra Ltd, highlights the company's remarkable 46% CAGR growth in FY24 and the pivotal role these dealerships play in expanding MTBD's technological footprint. "Our new facilities represent the future of vehicle servicing, offering unparalleled efficiency and support," Gupta states. He also introduced

the "Zyada Mileage Nahin toh Truck Wapas" guarantee for BS6 OBD II trucks, a breakthrough in fuel efficiency and profitability for transporters. The new dealership in Guwahati will integrate advanced technology to enhance service capabilities and elevate customer experience, reinforcing Mahindra's commitment to innovation. This expansion reflects Mahindra's drive to lead the industry with cutting-edge solutions and customer-centric advancements.

Bank achieves record Q1 growth, profit jumps 41%, net business hits ₹12.20 lakh cr

Itanagar: The bank has announced strong financial results for the quarter ending June 30, 2024, showcasing impressive growth across key performance indicators. The bank's global business surged to ₹12.20 lakh crore, marking an 11% year-on-year (YoY) increase. Net profit rose by 41% YoY, reaching ₹2,403 crore, up from ₹1,709 crore in the previous year. Operating profit also improved by 9% YoY to ₹4,502 crore. Net Interest Income (NII) saw an 8% YoY increase to ₹6,178 crore. Fee-based income grew by 17% YoY to ₹788 crore. The bank's Return on Assets (RoA) increased by 25 basis points (bps) to 1.20%, while Return on Equity (RoE) rose by 188 bps to 19.76%. Advances to Retail, Agriculture, and MSME sectors grew

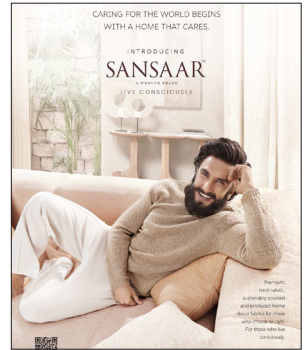
by 13% YoY, contributing 62% to the total domestic advances. ANBC, exceeding the regulatory requirement of 40%. Total deposits climbed by 10% YoY to ₹6,81,183 crore. The bank's gross non-performing assets (GNPA) decreased by 170 bps YoY to 3.77%, while net NPAs (NNPA) fell to 0.39%. Capital Adequacy Ratio improved by 69 bps to 16.47%. In digital banking, transactions reached ₹36,678 crore, with a 33% increase in mobile banking users. The bank also earned accolades, including the Best Customer Experience Initiatives Award at ACI South Asia Converge 2024. The focus remains on leveraging technology to enhance customer experience and deliver comprehensive financial solutions.

Indian Overseas Bank's stellar quarter: A 26.60% profit

Itanagar: Indian Overseas Bank (IOB) is basking in the glow of an exceptional financial performance for the quarter ending June 30, 2024. With a remarkable 26.60% jump in net profit to ₹633 crores, up from ₹500 crores last year, IOB is not just celebrating numbers but a transformation in its operational efficiency and asset management. Operating profit soared by 24.61% to ₹1,676 crores, a significant leap from ₹1,345 crores in the previous year. Total business, a key indicator of the bank's market presence, surged by 16.04% to an impressive ₹5,28,773 crores. This growth was propelled by a notable increase in deposits, which rose by 12.96% to ₹2,98,681 crores, and advances, which grew by 20.30% to ₹2,30,092 crores. The CASA (Current Account Savings Ac-

count) ratio improved to 42.17%, reflecting an uptick from ₹1,16,694 crores to ₹1,25,947 crores. The bank's strides in asset quality are equally noteworthy. The net NPA ratio also saw a decline, dropping to 0.51% from 1.44%, highlighting enhanced credit control measures. The growth narrative is complemented by a 21.54% rise in total income, reaching ₹7,568 crores. Enhanced returns are evident with the Return on Assets (ROA) improving to 0.70% and Return on Equity (ROE) climbing to 14.10%. "These results reflect our unwavering commitment to operational excellence and innovation," said an IOB spokesperson. "Our focus remains on enhancing asset quality and expanding our digital offerings to deliver superior customer experiences."

D'Decor launches Sansaar with Ranveer Singh



Guwahati: D'Decor, the leader in home décor fabrics, has launched its new brand, Sansaar, which focuses on conscious living. Available in 350 stores across 50 metro and non-metro cities, Sansaar offers premium, mindfully crafted home décor fabrics.

The brand's launch is supported by a new TV commercial featuring Bollywood superstar and brand ambassador Ranveer Singh, with the tagline "live consciously." Sanjana Arora, Business Head of Sansaar, emphasized the brand's commitment to quality and environmental awareness. "Sansaar takes pride in its premium, minimalist fabrics crafted in India. This expansion, highlighted by Ranveer Singh as our Brand Ambassador, focuses on providing high-quality home décor solutions that resonate deeply with our discerning customers," she said.

In Guwahati, the market response is highly anticipated. Known for its growing appreciation of sustainable and stylish home décor, Guwahati is expected to embrace Sansaar's unique blend of elegance and environmental consciousness. Retailers predict that the city's consumers will be particularly drawn to the brand's innovative designs and eco-friendly offerings. Ranveer Singh expressed his excitement, stating, "Sansaar represents a vision close to my heart; a vision where homes reflect our values and aspirations. I am delighted to be a part of the D'Décor family."

Paris Olympics: Mirabai Chanu eyes historic second medal in another lone ranger effort

Paris: One of the four individual Indian athletes hoping for a repeat of their success from the Tokyo Olympics and win back-to-back medals, weightlifter Saikhom Mirabai Chanu is the lone weightlifter representing the country in the Paris Olympic Games. Being the only one from India in her sport in Paris, Mirabai will be carrying the weight of the expectations of 130-odd crore people. But lifting weights comes easy for the 29-year-old from Nongpok Kakching in Imphal East district of Manipur. Being a lone ranger for the country in top competitions is also not new for Mirabai as she was also the only Indian weightlifter in Tokyo. Mirabai made history in the re-scheduled Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games in 2021 when she won the silver medal in the 49 kg weight class, becoming the second Indian weightlifter to win an Olympic medal. She is also the most successful Indian lifter at the Olympics and the second one after Karnam Malleswari in 2000 to win an Olympic medal. Now Mirabai, who will be competing in the third Olympics after the 2016 Rio Olympics and 2020 Tokyo, will be hoping to become the second Indian woman sportsperson to win back-to-back medals in the quadrennial Games after shuttler PV Sindhu (2016, 2020). However, the path to the podium in the women's 49kg class is extremely tough, and Mirabai, who became the



World Champion in his weight class in 2017, the first Indian to win. China's Hou Zhihui, the gold medallist at Tokyo, is the run-away leader with a total lift of 200kg while the rest of the field has recently lifted in the range of 180 to 190kg. However, Hou did not have a smooth qualifying route for Paris, grabbing the quota place in the last minute, overtaking her teammate Jiang Huihua with her final lift at the 2024 IWF World Cup held in Phuket, Thailand, which was the last qualifying event for the Olympics. Hou, who set a world record in the snatch category at Phuket by lifting 97 kg, is ranked well clear of three of her top contenders – Mirabai, Surochana Khambao from Thailand,

and Jourdan Delacruz from the United States. Mirabai's strong point is clean and jerk, in which she held the World Record at 119 kg. Thus she will have to do a very good snatch to then capitalise on her performance in clean and jerk to get into medal contention. She has a personal best of 203 kg (88 kg in Snatch and 115 kg in Clean & Jerk) which she lifted in the 2020 Senior National Weightlifting Championships. She improved her performance in clean and jerk to lift 119 kg in the 2020 Asian Weightlifting Championship in Tashkent, where she achieved a total of 205kg. It will also be tough for Mirabai in Paris on another count – injuries. Since winning the silver medal in

Tokyo, Mirabai has struggled with injuries – the hip injury she suffered at the Hangzhou Asian Games in 2023 being the latest setback for her. That injury suffered in October 2023 had kept Mirabai out for five months. Though Mirabai, who won gold medals in back-to-back Commonwealth Games in 2018 and 2022, has recovered from that injury. She has participated in only one event this season, the IWF World Cup in Phuket, where she finished 12th with a combined lift of 184 kilos. While that was enough to secure her a ticket to Paris, the competition in the French capital when the weightlifting competitions start on August 7 will be a different matter altogether for the Indian lifter, who won gold in the 2017 World Championship and silver in 2022 in Bogota and has been conferred with the Khel Ratna Award and the Padma Shri in 2018. Mirabai is currently preparing for the Paris Olympics at the prestigious La FerteMilon in France under her American physio Dr Aron Horschig, whose services in preparation for the upcoming Olympic Games, have been covered under TOPS funding. While Dr. Horschig is trying to keep Mirabai fighting fit for the Olympics, it is chief national coach Vijay Sharma who is in France with the Manipuri lifter and will be planning her campaign to win a medal in the second successive Olympic Games

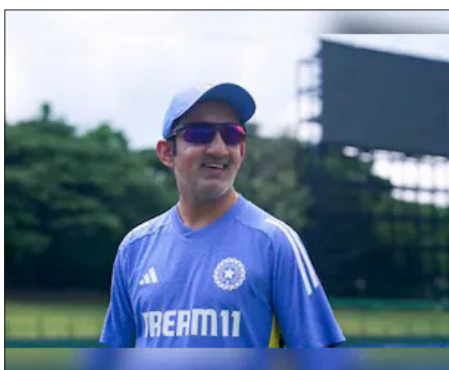
French Alps to host 2030 Olympics and Paralympic Games



Paris: The International Olympic Committee (IOC) announced that the French Alps will host the Winter Olympic and Paralympic Games in 2030. The announced plans are conditional based on the guarantees given by French President Emmanuel Macron that the new office being formed in the country after 2024 will underwrite all the organisational guarantees that must still be signed. "The French Alps will host the 2030 Winter Olympic and Paralympic Games! Thank you to the IOC for its confidence in our country and its mountains. Congratulations to the elected officials and actors who worked for this success. Let's make innovative, sustainable and inclusive Games," Macron posted on X. The 2026 edition of the prestigious tournament will be held in Italy. Situated on the French-Italian border, the Alps are widely known for offering some of the world's best snow skiing. This reputation is well-earned. The highest summit in the Alps at 15,700 feet (or over 5,000 meters), is part of the enormous Alps mountain range. "Driven by a vision to share the magnificence of the French Alps with the entire world and to enable more French people to participate in winter sport, French Alps 2030 will be the first edition of the Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games to fully integrate the principles of Olympic Agenda 2020 and 2020+5," read the statement posted by the International Olympic Committee on their website.

Head coach Gambhir takes charge as Indian players hit the ground in Pallekele

New Delhi: Newly-appointed head coach Gautam Gambhir has taken official charge of the Indian team as the players assembled in Pallekele on Tuesday for the first training session in Sri Lanka ahead of the limited-overs series. Suryakumar Yadav-led Indian team reached Pallekele on Monday for the upcoming three-match T20I series, followed by three ODIs. The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) shared a video of India's first practice session in Pallekele on their official X account. "Head Coach Gautam Gambhir Takes Charge!" BCCI captioned the post. In the video, Gambhir was seen watching players closely and giving some valuable batting tips to wicketkeeper-batter Sanju Samson. Before leaving for the island nation, Gambhir addressed his first press conference with chief selector Ajit Agarkar, who revealed the reason behind the appointment of Suryakumar as the T20I captain over all-rounder Hardik Pandya. "He is one of the deserving candidates. He is one of the best T20 batters in the world.



We wanted a captain who was likely to play all the games. We will see how he will do," Agarkar told the reporters. "As far as Hardik is concerned, he is still a very important player. And that's what we want him to be. Fitness has been a challenge for him over the last few years... Then it becomes difficult for the coach or selectors. I think Surya has the necessary qualities to succeed as a captain," he added. The first T20I between India and Sri Lanka will be played in Pallekele on Saturday.

Vani Kapoor top Indian in Dutch Ladies Open

Netherlands: Vani Kapoor was the best Indians of the three who teed up at the 2024 Dutch Ladies Open. She shot 2-under 70 and was Tied 20th while the other two Indians Tvesa Malik (73) and Ridhima Dilawari (73) were both T-64. Vani's round included three birdies and a lone bogey on Par-3 10th, while Tvesa Malik had two bogeys against one birdie on the fourth for a 1-over 763, and Ridhima Dilawari (73) had two birdies and three bogeys was also T-64. Vani began on the tenth with a bogey but after that she had three birdies and no bogeys. The 29-year-old Kim Metraux fired an opening round of 65 (-7) to take the lead. The Swiss golfer

holed back-to-back birdies on holes two and three before adding another on the seventh. Metraux then went on a birdie blitz on the back nine with birdies on holes 10, 12, 13, 14 and 16 in the Netherlands. She dropped her only shot of the day on the 17th but still sealed a round of seven-under-par. / Three players sit in a share of second place with Eswatini's Nobuhle Dlamini, who was bogey free, England's Gemma Clews and Germany's Laura Fünfstück all on six-under-par. Six players rounded out the top 10 with France's Camille Chevalier, New Zealand's Momo-Ka Kobori, Norway's Marianne Skarpnord, Finland's Sanna Nuutinen, England's