

BJP's political wing': AAP on probe agency ED's K Kavitha 'conspiracy' claim

AAP accuses Enforcement Directorate of 'working for BJP' Claims of conspiracy between AAP leaders and BRS leader K Kavitha denied AAP states no new evidence presented by Enforcement Directorate



Directorate of money laundering transferred their proceeds of crime to BJP accounts immediately after being raided. An impartial investigation into this would result in at least a thousand FIRs. This also includes companies raided by the Enforcement Directorate in the excise policy case which later ended up donating electoral bonds to the BJP.

every day" it said. The AAP further said that the Enforcement Directorate investigation does not present any new fact or evidence. It only "speaks volumes of its frustration since they have not recovered a single rupee or piece of evidence in this case, despite carrying out over 500 raids and questioning thousands of witnesses".

The AAP statement came hours after the probe agency claimed in its investigation on Monday that in exchange for these "favours", K Kavitha allegedly paid Rs 100 crore to the AAP leaders. Illegal funds, in the form of kickbacks from wholesalers, were generated for the AAP by "acts of corruption and conspiracy", it alleged.

New Delhi. The Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) has accused the Enforcement Directorate of "working like a political wing of BJP" after the probe agency claimed that arrested Bharat Rashtia Samithi (BRS) leader K Kavitha "conspired" with top AAP leaders, including Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal and Manish Sisodia, for favours in the now-scrapped Delhi liquor policy.

Yoga Guru Ramdev Summoned By Supreme Court Over Patanjali's Misleading Ads

New Delhi. The Supreme Court today came down heavily on Patanjali Ayurved for failing to respond to a contempt notice for issuing misleading advertisements and ordered yoga guru Ramdev to appear before it.

The Supreme Court last month pulled up Patanjali for prima facie violation of its assurances about its products and statements claiming their medicinal efficacy. The court had issued a notice to Patanjali and Balkrishna, asking why contempt proceedings should not be initiated against them.



The order states both Ramdev and Balakrishna were prima facie in violation of Sections 3 and 4 of the Drugs and Remedies Act, which deal with misleading ads of medicines. The court also issued a contempt notice to Ramdev, co-founder of Patanjali, and asked him to explain why he should not face action for contempt of court.

Senior lawyer Mukul Rohatgi, appearing for Patanjali Ayurved, opposed the move and sought to know, "How Ramdev comes into the picture?" "You are appearing. We will see on the next date. Enough," the court replied. "We had our hands tied earlier but not now. As an officer of the court, you (Mr Rohatgi) should know your position," said Justice Amanullah.

Jharkhand Mukti Morcha MLA Sita Soren resigns from all party posts

Jharkhand Mukti Morcha MLA Sita Soren, the sister-in-law of former Jharkhand Chief Minister Hemant Soren, has resigned from all party posts.



Ranchi. Jharkhand Mukti Morcha MLA Sita Soren, the sister-in-law of former Jharkhand Chief Minister Hemant Soren, on Tuesday resigned from all posts of the party.

In her resignation letter written in Hindi, Sita Soren said that since her husband's death, she and her family have been constantly disrespected. "We

have been separated and isolated by members of the party and the (Soren) family, which has been extremely painful for me," she added. Sita Soren said that she expected with time, situations would get better, but lamented that the party now does not

carry the legacy that her late husband had forged to make it great once. "The party is now in the hands of people whose vision and objectives do not match our values and principles," she added. She further said that "despite tireless efforts by JMM supreme Shibu Soren to keep us all together, I came to know that a deep conspiracy is being hatched against me and my family".

Raj Thackeray meets Amit Shah amid chatter of Maharashtra tie-up

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has said that the fight in 2024 is between those who want to destroy 'Shakti' and those who worship them. In a rally in Telangana, he also predicted more than 400 seats for the BJP and its alliance partners.



New Delhi. Maharashtra Navnirman Sena (MNS) chief Raj Thackeray met Home Minister and BJP heavyweight Amit Shah on Tuesday amid rampant speculation that the right-wing party may be

welcomed into the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) fold ahead of Lok Sabha polls. Accompanied by his son Amit Thackeray, the firebrand politician held a meeting with Amit Shah in Delhi. The tete-a-tete between the two leaders comes a day after sources told India Today TV that the MNS is likely to join forces with the BJP-Shiv Sena alliance in Maharashtra with weeks to go to the high-stakes parliamentary elections.

Chief Minister Devendra Fadnis, state BJP President Chandrashekhar Bawankule are also in the national capital. Thackeray is likely to demand two seats -- South Mumbai and Shirdi -- for his party MNS, sources said. Raj Thackeray is the estranged cousin of former Maharashtra Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray, who is in the opposition in Maharashtra. Raj Thackeray is the nephew of Uddhav's father Bal Thackeray, the late founder of Shiv Sena.



'Injustice': Pashupati Paras quits as minister after BJP-Chirag Paswan deal

reportedly ignored the Rashtriya Lok Janshakti Party (RLJP) chief's claim over a number of Lok Sabha seats in Bihar, including Hajipur. Paras had declared that he would contest from Hajipur, which had been a bone of contention between him and Chirag Paswan. His estranged nephew had indicated that his party will contest from the seat. In the end, the BJP gave Hajipur to LJP (Ram Vilas), angering Paras further. The Lok Janshakti Party, which was led by Ram Vilas Paswan, split into two after his demise in 2020. His brother Paras leads the Rashtriya Lok Janshakti Party (RLJP) and his son Chirag Paswan the Lok Janshakti Party (Ram Vilas), both part of the NDA. In the 2019 Lok Sabha polls, the BJP and JD(U) had contested 17 seats each, while the then undivided LJP headed by Ram Vilas Paswan had fought six.

New Delhi Union Minister Pashupati Paras resigned from the Modi cabinet on Tuesday, a day after the BJP finalised a seat-sharing pact with his estranged nephew and LJP (Ram Vilas) chief Chirag Paswan for Lok Sabha elections in Bihar. "I have tendered my resignation as Union Minister. Our party faced injustice in seat-sharing," Pashupati Paras said. On Monday, the BJP-led National Democratic Alliance (NDA) announced its seat-sharing formula for Lok Sabha elections in Bihar, giving 17 seats to the BJP, 16 to the JD(U) and five to Chirag Paswan's LJP (Ram Vilas). Two other NDA allies -- Hindustani Awam Morcha (HAM) and Upendra Kushwaha-led Rashtriya Lok Morcha -- will contest one seat each. Pashupati Paras's LJP faction found no mention in the seat-sharing deal. However, Bihar BJP chief Samrat Choudhary said that talks are going on with him. Paras had earlier indicated that he may walk out of the ruling NDA if seat allocation was not to his satisfaction. The BJP

To Counter Uddhav Thackeray Factor, BJP's Pick Is His Estranged Cousin Raj

Raj Thackeray reached Delhi last night and has now reached the residence of Union Home Minister Amit Shah

Mumbai. The BJP's push to maximise its Lok Sabha seats tally in Maharashtra is likely to resurrect Raj Thackeray's Maharashtra Navnirman Sena (MNS) from political oblivion. Determined to blunt the challenge by the Uddhav Thackeray-led party, the BJP has reached out to his estranged cousin. Raj Thackeray reached Delhi last night and met Union Home Minister Amit Shah today, apparently to discuss his party's possible entry into the NDA. "I was told to come to Delhi. So I came. Let's see," the MNS chief said on arriving in the national capital. He

did not speak to the media after the meeting. MNS leader Sandeep Deshpande has said they will share details of the meeting soon. "Whatever decision will be taken will be for the greater good and in the interest of Marathi, Hindutva and the party," he said. The answer to why the BJP is reaching out to MNS lies in how Maharashtra's political landscape has transformed since the 2019 Lok Sabha polls. In the last general election, the BJP and the Shiv Sena contested the polls together. The alliance decimated rivals and won 41 out of the state's 48 seats. Months later, it clinched another victory in the state polls. But differences over sharing power led to the Sena parting ways with the NDA. The Shiv Sena, then led by Uddhav Thackeray, teamed up with NCP and the Congress to form the government. But more drama was to follow. In 2022, Sena leader Eknath Shinde led a mutiny that toppled the Uddhav Thackeray government. Mr Shinde then joined ranks with BJP to take over. In the legal battle that followed, Uddhav Thackeray lost his party's name and symbol



and his camp was named Shiv Sena (Uddhav Balasaheb Thackeray). In a strikingly similar manner, the Sharad Pawar-led NCP split after a rebellion led by his nephew Ajit Pawar. The NCP veteran, too, lost his party's name and symbol and now leads a faction named NCP (Sharadchandra Pawar). So

from a straight contest in 2019, the Maharashtra Lok Sabha fight is now a multipronged battle with the BJP, NCP and Shiv Sena on one side and the Congress and the camps led by Sharad Pawar and Uddhav Thackeray on the other. The BJP knows that it is a tricky terrain and it is in no mood to

take chances in the politically-significant state that is critical to the BJP's target to win 370 Lok Sabha seats. So to counter the Uddhav Thackeray factor, it has reached out to his cousin Raj. MNS Eyes Big Return Founded in 2006 after Raj Thackeray walked out of Shiv Sena over differences with cousin Uddhav, the MNS recorded its best electoral performance in the 2009 state polls when it won 13 seats. In the 2014 elections, however, it emerged as the big loser, winning just one seat. In the 2019 polls, too, its tally remained unchanged. Over the past decade, Raj Thackeray has struggled to stay in the political limelight with often controversial remarks in the media. When the Shiv Sena split, he went all out against his estranged cousin, holding him responsible for the party's crisis. He has also warmed up to Eknath Shinde, with the two leaders meeting on several occasions. Post a comment If the seat-sharing talks with the BJP are finalised, the MNS may get a shot at reviving its political fortunes.

Congress spokesperson Rohan Gupta withdraws candidature from Lok Sabha elections

Ahmedabad Congress candidate from Gujarat's Ahmedabad East Lok Sabha seat Rohan Gupta on Monday said he had withdrawn from the contest due to the serious medical condition of his father. Gupta is the party's national spokesperson and his name was declared in the list announced by the party on March 12.

"Due to serious medical condition, my father is admitted in hospital and I am withdrawing my candidature for Ahmedabad east parliament seat as Congress Candidate. I will extend complete support to the new candidate nominated by party," Gupta posted on social media platform X. Gupta also posted an image of his handwritten letter to Gujarat Congress president Shaktisinh Gohil informing about his withdrawal.

4 Maoists Killed In Encounter With Police In Maharashtra's Gadchiroli

Gadchiroli. Four Naxalites, carrying a collective bounty of ₹ 36 lakh, were killed in an encounter with police in Maharashtra's Gadchiroli district on Tuesday, a senior official said.

The police received information on Monday afternoon that some Naxalites had entered Gadchiroli from neighbouring Telangana by crossing the Pranhita river with an aim to carry out subversive activities amid the model code of conduct in place for the upcoming Lok Sabha elections, Superintendent of Police Neelotpal said.

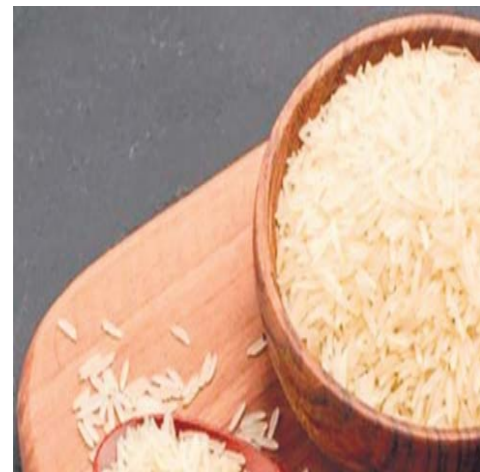
Multiple teams of C-60, a specialised combat unit of the Gadchiroli police, and the Central Reserve Police Force's Quick Action team were sent for a search in the area.

While one of the C-60 unit teams was conducting a search on Tuesday morning in the Kolamarka mountains near Repanpalli, Naxalites fired at them indiscriminately to which the security personnel retaliated, the official said. After the firing stopped, the area was searched and bodies of four Naxalites were found, he said, adding that they were carrying a collective cash reward of ₹ 36 lakh on their heads. An AK-47 gun, a carbine, two country-made pistols, Naxal literature and other items were also recovered, the official said. The deceased Naxalites have been identified as Vargeesh, Magtu, both secretaries of different Naxal committees, and platoon members Kursang Raju and Kudimetta Venkatesh, the police said.

K-Rice flies off shelves, Kerala govt orders 8k MT more

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM: The positive response to K-Rice, its initiative to provide rice to people at subsidised rates, has prompted the government to place orders for more quantities of cereal grain from suppliers in other states.

Sources said, Supplyco, which is the procurement agency, has placed an order for another 8,000 metric tonnes (MT) of rice. As per the data, 1.6 lakh families have purchased K-Rice so far. Of the 2,000 MT of rice bought in the first phase, nearly 1,800 MT have been distributed so far. Three varieties - Jaya, Kuruva and Matta - are available for purchase. Jaya rice is being distributed in the Thiruvananthapuram region, Matta in Kottayam and Ernakulam regions and Kuruva in the Kozhikode region. The



procurement is done through the government's electronic tender system and suppliers are mostly from Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu and Karnataka. The local Matta variety, however, is purchased from suppliers across Kerala. Meanwhile, the government is making efforts to make Supplyco outlets more lucrative ahead of the Lok Sabha elections. It has begun the process to procure essential commodities that are then sold at subsidised rates via Supplyco outlets.

Priority cards

The Food and Civil Supplies Department has decided to supply priority ration cards to 19,384 families which had been on its waiting list. They will be included in the Priority Household (PHH) Category funded by the state government. Mustering for priority ration card holders has been temporarily stopped due to technical issues. The National Informatics Centre and Kerala State IT Mission are working on the issue and the process will be resumed at the earliest.

Water crunch ahead: TN reservoirs only 33% full despite ample rains

Water department officials say infrastructure damage during intense rains in the southern districts has made it impossible for the state to store water above 50% of total capacity.

CHENNAI. In spite of the state receiving bountiful rains during this year's northeast monsoon, the state's water reserves have reached worryingly low levels. Compared to last year, the state has witnessed a staggering 50% decrease in its water storage.

Reports indicate that, as of Monday, the state's reserves stand at 76,233 tmcft, which makes for only 33.99% of the total capacity of 224,297 tmcft. In contrast, same day last year (March 19, 2023), the storage level was at a more satisfactory 60% of full capacity (135,087 tmcft). The concerning situation

has prompted the Water Resources Department (WRD) to anticipate potential water shortages in rural areas this summer.

According to official WRD data accessed by TNIE, out of the state's 90 reservoirs, six of them have run dry, 25 others are only 20% full, and 39 more between 20-50%. It is noteworthy that apart from Tirunelveli's Vandal Odai, which has reached its maximum storage capacity of 58 million cubic feet (mcf), none of the other state reservoirs have reached full capacity.

While WRD officials have assured that there will be no shortage of drinking water, they have made it clear not even a single drop of water will be released for irrigation purposes during the summer, and have advised farmers to postpone cultivation. A senior WRD official told TNIE, "During the intense rains in southern districts, the state lost several storage structures along major water bodies, making it impossible to store water above 50% total



capacity. To address these issues, the state government has allocated ₹ 280 crore for those districts." Once the tender is finalised, works can begin, he added.

Highlighting the Cauvery delta region, another official added, "Water levels at Mettur dam, with a maximum capacity of 93.47 tmcft, stood at 69.21 tmcft this time last year (March 18, 2023) with 56.4mm of rainfall. It now stands at 26.05 tmcft with no rainfall.

Unless the state receives rains in the summer months, providing drinking water would prove to be a tough task."

Regarding Chennai's status, the official pointed out that, as of Monday, the city's drinking water reservoirs' stand at 8,454 tmcft, which is 63.98% of a full capacity of 13,213 tmcft. Hence, it seems to be smooth sailing through the summer, he added.

KV Elankeeran, president of the Federation of Cauvery Delta Farmers' Association, said, "We received sufficient rainfall during the northeast monsoon, but we are unable to store it properly due to the lack of infrastructure. Farmers have faced such issues every summer. Constructing more check dams across water bodies and strengthening infrastructure such as bunds, and concrete linings are the only solution to save water."

Tamil Nadu Vivasayigal Sangam secretary K Balasubramani also suggested that desilting the Mettur reservoir would aid in storing additional water.

"Nothing Bigger Than Self-Respect": BJP MLA Resigns From Gujarat Assembly

Gujarat BJP MLA Ketan Inamdar said his move was not a pressure tactic and that he will work to ensure the victory of the BJP candidate in the upcoming Lok Sabha polls.



Vadodara district submitted his resignation to legislative assembly speaker Shankar Chaudhary. In the letter, Mr Inamdar said he was resigning after listening to his "inner voice". Earlier also, he announced his resignation as an MLA in January 2020, but it was not accepted by the speaker. Talking to reporters after tendering his resignation on Tuesday, Mr Inamdar said it was not a pressure tactic.

"For a long time, I felt that small and old workers (associated with the party since long) have not been taken care of by the party. I have apprised the leadership of this," the BJP leader said. Mr Inamdar said he represented the Savli seat for more than

11 years and ever since he became an active member of the BJP, he has remained associated with the party. "But like I had said in 2020, there is nothing bigger than self-respect. And this is not the voice of Ketan Inamdar alone but of every single party worker. I have said earlier that old party workers should not be ignored," he said. "I will work day and night to ensure that our Lok Sabha poll candidate Ranjan Bhatt wins by the biggest margin. But this resignation is the result of my inner voice," he added. After Mr Inamdar resigned in 2020, he had claimed senior government officials and ministers were ignoring him and his constituency and that many MLAs in the saffron party were feeling "frustrated" like him. He first won the 2012 assembly election as an independent candidate. He later joined the BJP and won twice in the 2017 and 2022 polls.

The BJP currently has 156 out of the total 182 seats in the Gujarat assembly. Polling for all the 26 Lok Sabha seats in Gujarat will be held in a single phase on May 7 and votes will be counted on June 4.

Drugs in parcel fraud: Victims lost Rs 1 crore to scammers in Andhra

Four such cases were reported at various places across the State in which the victims lost around Rs 1 crore to the cybercriminals.



crore to the cyber criminals. Explaining the modus operandi of these criminals, APCID cybercrime superintendent of police (SP) V Harshavardhan Raju said that the gang

members target a section of people and collect the details of a person such as Aadhar card, PAN card and mobile number. Once they have the sufficient information, one of the gang members will approach the victim through a phone call and intimate that a parcel was booked in his/her name from an unknown location and upon inspection they have found drugs or passports in the said parcel. The accused further threaten the victim of registering cases under NDPS Act and Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA Act) and he alone creates a situation for the victim to negotiate with the officer by connecting to another person, who claims to be their superior officer. "Taking advantage of the situation, they demand money ranging from Rs 10 lakh to Rs 25 lakh to close the case and stop further proceedings," he added. The SP further told the public to be aware of such gangs and asked them to report such incidents to cybercrime police through the toll-free number '1930'.

On the other hand, TDP senior leaders castigated the police officers for not making enough security arrangements for the meeting and appealed to the Election Commission to take action against the responsible police officers. Accusing the police of miserably failing in crowd control and traffic regulation for the meeting, former minister Kollu Ravindra said the DGP had failed to perform his duties. TDP leader Dhulipalla Narendra Kumar faulted the State government for the security lapses at the meeting attended by Prime Minister Narendra Modi. He urged the Chief Election Commission to promptly address the negligence of police officers responsible for security at the Prajagalam meeting. Highlighting the failure of the police in crowd and traffic control, Dhulipalla noted that thousands of people were unable to attend the meeting due to traffic jams. Meanwhile, a delegation of leaders from the TDP, BJP, and JSP called on Chief Electoral Officer Mukesh Kumar Meena and submitted a representation on the lapses on the part of the police for the public meeting attended by Modi and also listed out the names of the police officers, against whom they demanded action.

Police failed to control crowd at public meet'

Sources said Naidu is focusing on the finalisation of the candidates for these constituencies and is contemplating releasing the list in a day or two.

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Kerala, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu to hold wild animal census

The move aims to avoid human-wildlife conflicts, which have claimed several human lives this year alone.

KOCHI. Spurred by the spike in human-wildlife conflicts in Kerala, the state forest and wildlife department, along with the Tamil Nadu and Karnataka governments, will undertake a simultaneous survey of wild animals to find out the increase in their numbers. While announcing on Monday, Forest Minister A K Saseendran said the current number of wild animals in Kerala are estimated based on the census done in 2018. "The last time the survey was done was five years ago. To find out the rise in the number of wild animals and their current status, Kerala, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu have jointly decided to undertake a new census at the same time," Saseendran told reporters in Ernakulam. He said the government has also come up with initiatives to ensure availability of water in forests to prevent



wild animals from straying into human habitats. The move aims to avoid human-wildlife conflicts, which have claimed several human lives this year alone. Blaming climate change for the incursion of wild animals into human settlements, Saseendran said, "Availability of water will be ensured in forests to prevent wild animals from entering human settlements. A pilot project in Thiruvananthapuram proved the issue could be resolved by spending Rs 5

lakh, and we have decided to go ahead with its implementation. I have directed the officials to identify and submit a report on natural springs and swamps inside the forest within a week and find places where water can be easily supplied," Saseendran said. Around 240 such water bodies have been identified in Wayanad forest division alone. The project will be implemented with the cooperation of local bodies and hotel owners, and using corporate social responsibility funds.

Odisha: Missing girl found dead in forest, father cries murder

BERHAMPUR. Mystery shrouds the death of a nine-year-old missing girl whose decomposed body was recovered from a forest near Bainibas village within Muniguda police limits in Rayagada district on Monday. In the morning, some villagers were passing through the forest when they sensed a foul smell.

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NEWS BOX

25-year-old man held for raping disabled woman

Gurgaon. A 25-year-old man, who allegedly raped a mentally challenged woman in Manesar last year, was arrested on Sunday, Rakesh alias Thakur told police that he kept changing his locations for nine months from Bihar, UP to MP to evade arrest. Cops said Rakesh was accused of raping a woman on June 7 last year in Manesar, and had been on the run since then. On Sunday, he returned to his village Kherla, when police acted on a tip-off and nabbed him. During the interrogation, he also confessed to being a drug addict. He also has a criminal record and is a habitual offender with a propensity for violence. "He has a previous case of loot and Arms Act registered against him in Bilaspur police station in the city," Naresh Sukhralia, police spokesperson, said. Rakesh has been produced in court, which has remanded him to judicial custody on Sunday. We also published the following articles recently 15-year-old arrested for raping toddler in Chhattisgarh In Bilaspur, a 15-year-old boy sexually brutalized a three-year-old girl, leading to tragic consequences. The incident sparked demands for justice and action under the Juvenile Justice Act, emphasizing the community's outrage and the need for a swift response. 108598308 Nine arrested for attack on French police station Nine arrested for firework attack near Paris Olympics after teen's moped death in police chase. Incident echoes riot-triggering event. Videos show people firing fireworks at police station. 108587017 51-year-old woman killed in hit-and-run while collecting scrap Shanta Magare, 51, died after a hit-and-run on Khairani Road, Mumbai. The incident involved a speeding four-wheeler. She succumbed to injuries at Rajawadi Hospital. Saki Naka police are investigating. Kishore mentioned her hospitalization after help from an auto rickshaw driver and a young person.

2 cyber cons linked to ?16cr fraud, 4.4k complaints

Gurgaon. Two youths arrested by city cops last month have been linked to cyber frauds worth Rs 16 crore and 4,400 complaints registered across the country over the past few years. Mohammed Amir and Akram Khan are from Nuh — which has assumed notoriety for cyber frauds that targeted victims with a modus operandi made famous by gangs in Jharkhand's Jamtara. The two, police said, have been named in 215 FIRs registered in Rajasthan, Punjab, Madhya Pradesh, Haryana and Uttar Pradesh. Of these, 13 cases were lodged in Haryana and two in Manesar. "Forensic analysis of the phones seized from them and their SIM cards provided crucial evidence. Data sourced from the Indian Cyber Crime Coordination Centre of the Centre revealed they had common links. Their names were mentioned in 215 FIRs," said Naresh Sukhralia, a spokesperson for police in Manesar. The modus operandi of the duo was varied — from phone calls tricking targets to share OTPs to blackmailing victims with video calls and morphed pictures and instilling fear in them by posing as officers of law enforcement agencies, among others. Sub-inspector Kuldeep said Amir was arrested on Feb 10 this year in connection with a complaint of cyber fraud lodged on Dec 29 last year. Ambalika Saikia, a Sector 86 resident, had been cheated by a man who expressed interest in taking her flat on rent. Saikia told the cops that on April 7, 2023, a man who identified himself as Anil Kumar enquired about her flat that she had put up for rent. "After exchanging some documents on WhatsApp, the accused asked for the woman's bank account details so that he could transfer money from his 'Army account'. He said he was posted in Kolkata. After she had shared the details, the woman received a text message from her bank that Rs 45,856 had been withdrawn from her account. She blocked the account," Kuldeep said. Amir was booked under sections 420 (cheating and dishonestly inducing delivery of property) and 419 (punishment for cheating by personation) of the IPC. He was nabbed last month. Sub-inspector Pramod, who investigated the case against Khan, said he, too, was arrested last month. He could not recollect the exact date. The case against him followed a complaint by a resident on Sept 22 last year, when a person was blackmailed with a video call and forced to pay up Rs 2.5 lakh.

Warmer days ahead as max temp likely to reach 32C

GURGAON: A boiler exploded at an auto parts factory at Dharuhera in Rewari on Saturday evening, leaving around 40 workers injured, some of them with critical burns. Videos of the victims at a trauma centre that emerged later in the evening showed some of them had charred limbs and severe burns as they were being stretched into the wards. The factory, which belongs to Lifelong Pvt Ltd, manufactures spare auto parts. When the blast happened, at 5.50pm, more than 150 workers were on duty, officials said. Most of them are contractual workers. Representatives of the company couldn't be reached for a comment. Rewari SP Deepak Sharan said the explosion likely occurred due to a fire in the boiler, which spread to the dust collector unit (a device used to control dust pollution). "So far, we have identified 38 of the injured workers. We are still assessing the number of injured people and how exactly the incident happened. No FIRs have been lodged till now," he told TOI. Videos from the factory showed people running out as columns of thick smoke rose to the sky. Several fire tenders and



ambulances rushed to the factory to assist in rescue efforts. According to civil surgeon Suresh Yadav, around 15 of the injured were admitted to Sir Shadi Lal Trauma Centre in Rewari. One critically wounded worker was referred to PGIMS, Rohtak. Several others were admitted at Rewari's Civil hospital and private

facilities in the city. Some were brought to Gurgaon. "It was a tragic industrial accident. We have alerted the Rewari wing of the Indian Medical Association to arrange for beds and surgeons for the victims," Yadav said. The scene outside the Civil hospital was one of chaos. Victims, so badly charred that they were

unable to lie on their stretchers, writhed in pain as the hospital staff tried to rush them in for treatment. Manish Kumar, an employee of Lifelong, said, "We heard a deafening sound that left many unconscious and with severe burns." A relative of one of the injured accused the factory of neglecting safety protocols and forcing employees to work "in dangerous conditions." "The explosion was heard from afar and we were wondering what it was. When we came to know about the incident, we hurried to the factory. Upon arrival, we found the factory gates sealed shut. We were informed that the victims had been transported to the govt hospital," a person who was at the hospital to inquire about one of the injured said. "At the hospital, it was utter chaos. We were met with the sight of victims with severe burn injuries and clothing sticking to their skin. The first to be evacuated were those who had the least injuries," he added. Pramod Kumar, the investigating officer, said, "Patients who are in a critical condition are being transferred to other hospitals. So far, no fatalities have been reported."

Group of 5 beats up man on his way back after spat at club

Gurgaon. A 26-year-old man was beaten up by five men on his way back home after a spat with some guests at a club in Sector 29 during early hours of Sunday. No arrests have been made so far. Bobby Sharma was at the club with a friend to celebrate the latter's birthday. While dancing, he accidentally hit a guest on the dance floor instigating a brawl. Bouncers asked Sharma and other guests involved in the brawl to leave the premises to avoid any further chaos. He hopped on his motorcycle and left the club. But on his way back, Bobby was intercepted by a white Swift car around 1.30am. Five people came out of the car and thrashed him with iron rods and sticks, leaving him seriously injured. "One of them was carrying an iron rod and hit me on the head with it. He then attacked my right hand and leg with the rod. The other four also allegedly beat me up with fists and kicks," said Bobby, a native of

Palwal, residing in a rented PG at Rajiv Nagar area of the city. When he cried for help, the attackers fled the spot threatening to kill him if he complained or ever tried to meddle with them. Passersby rushed the injured Sharma to Max Hospital nearby where he was admitted. The hospital authorities informed the local police about the incident. Investigating officer Deepak, head constable at Sector 29 police station, visited the hospital and recorded Sharma's statement after he was declared fit. Based on the complaint and medical examination, IPC sections 147 (riots), 148 (rioting, armed with deadly weapons), 323 (causing hurt), 341 (wrongful restraint) and 506 (criminal intimidation) have been invoked against the unidentified attackers. Sharma has received injuries on head and leg with the rod. The other four also allegedly beat me up with fists and kicks," said Bobby, a native of

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Not consulted before new CM was chosen: Inderjit

Gurgaon: Union minister and city MP Inderjit Singh told BJP workers he hadn't even been consulted before Nayab Singh Saini was made the new chief minister. Saini (54) replaced Manohar Lal Khattar as the CM on March 12, a day after Prime Minister Narendra Modi visited the city to inaugurate the Dwarka Expressway there. Former home minister Anil Vij had stayed away from the swearing in ceremony, triggering apprehension that he was unhappy with the selection. Inderjit, too, had expressed dissatisfaction in Hisar, saying the people of south Haryana had wanted him as the CM. He had said though the region had played a crucial role in the formation of successive govts, it hadn't been given its due. The expansion of the new state cabinet was delayed, fuelling speculation in political circles that the unhappiness of Vij and Inderjit was responsible for it. Asked if it was true, Inderjit told party workers, "If some people are saying I stalled the expansion of the state cabinet, they are wrong. I was not even consulted." The city MP visited the BJP office and interacted with party workers on Monday. Inderjit had often emerged as a strong CM contender in the past. Asked why he wasn't chosen this time, he said, "The party has already made Mohan Yadav as the Madhya Pradesh CM. So, it would not be feasible politically to select another CM from the same community." Both Inderjit and Manoj Yadav are from the Yadav community.

Noida proposes to recover unused Unitech land, adjust it against dues

NOIDA: Stalled for years, a decision on restarting Unitech's housing projects will boil down to what gets preference - a proposal that reduces the company's legacy dues or one that lets it raise capital - when the Supreme Court hears this next in April. Noida Authority has refused to approve revised layout maps for housing societies started but not completed by the real estate company, which was founded by the Chandras but was taken over by a govt-run board, at the behest of Supreme Court, after they were arrested. Taking this stand in its submission before the Supreme Court, Noida Authority has instead proposed to ask the Unitech management to return project land that has not been used, which it will adjust against its dues. Last Feb, Supreme Court had directed Noida

completion plan, not just for its projects in the city but also elsewhere. So while dues may be out of the way, generation of funds will be a challenge for Unitech if the Noida Authority plan is followed. Unitech is one of the largest defaulters, with dues of around Rs 10,000 crore. The next hearing in

its dues. We have submitted our reply before the Supreme Court. Officials said Noida Authority will regain 222 acres of prime land in sectors 96, 97 and 98 alone if the proposal to take back unused land from Unitech projects passes muster. It can then monetise this land by putting it up for re-allotment. "Having regard to the contents of the convenience note submitted by the additional solicitor general, it is apparent that a substantial number of homebuyers have now expressed their confidence in the proposed construction in the above sectors. At this stage, it would be appropriate if Noida processes the applications for approval of revised layout plans, building plans, and

Grid of legal notices including Name Change, Public Notice, and Date of Birth Change. Examples include: NAME CHANGE: I, hitherto known as DEEPAK VERMA... PUBLIC NOTICE: I, hitherto known as PARKASH alias MALA RAM... NAME CHANGE: I, SANJAY KUMAR S/O KHEM CHAND...

Grid of legal notices including Name Change, Date of Birth Change, and Public Notice. Examples include: NAME CHANGE: I, ANITA CHOUDHARY mother of NO-14858789N Rank HAV... DATE OF BIRTH CHANGE: I, NEELAM SINGH W/O NO-14676782H Rank-HAV... PUBLIC NOTICE: Public at large is hereby informed that my client Mr. Rohit Beniwal...

Grid of legal notices including Name Change, Date of Birth Change, and Public Notice. Examples include: NAME CHANGE: I, CHAND BI W/O MAZHAR KHAN... DATE OF BIRTH CHANGE: I, NEELAM SINGH W/O NO-14676782H... PUBLIC NOTICE: Be it known to all that my client Gajendra Solanki...

Grid of legal notices including Name Change, Date of Birth Change, and Public Notice. Examples include: NAME CHANGE: I, R SUPRIYA W/O JC-313449A... DATE OF BIRTH CHANGE: I, NEELAM SINGH W/O NO-14676782H... PUBLIC NOTICE: Be it known to all that my client Gajendra Solanki...

Grid of legal notices including Name Change, Date of Birth Change, and Public Notice. Examples include: NAME CHANGE: I, SUHAVNI D/O RITESH OBEROI... PUBLIC NOTICE: It is for general information that I, SHAZIA D/O BABU KHAN... NAME CHANGE: I, SAHIL S/O BRIJESH KUMAR...

NEWS BOX

Israeli Forces Raid Gaza Hospital; 20 Killed, 200 Detained

Tel Aviv. Israel's military said 20 Palestinian operatives were killed Monday and scores detained during a raid on Gaza City's Al-Shifa hospital that targeted "senior Hamas terrorists".

Soldiers rolled in with tanks and air strikes hit the area around the Hamas-ruled territory's biggest medical centre, a complex crowded with patients and displaced people. "During the operation we arrested more than 200 suspected terrorists and they are currently in investigation," Rear Admiral Daniel Hagari, Israel's military spokesman, said in a televised statement.

"We eliminated more than 20 terrorists inside the hospital complex" and another 20 "in the area surrounding the hospital", Hagari said. Among the dead was Fayq al-Mabhouh, who Hagari said was "head of special operations at the Hamas internal security organisation". A Gaza police source confirmed his death, saying Mabhouh was a brigadier general in the force.

Speaking late on Monday, Hagari said Israeli soldiers were "continuing operations inside the hospital complex tonight". The latest military operation around the hospital -- which was raided by Israeli troops before, in November, sparking an international outcry -- triggered alarm from the World Health Organization.

"We are terribly worried about the situation at Al-Shifa Hospital in northern Gaza," WHO chief Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus wrote on X, formerly Twitter. "Hospitals should never be battlegrounds."

An AFP journalist witnessed air strikes on buildings in the area around the hospital and reported seeing "hundreds of people, mostly children, women, and the elderly, fleeing their homes". Israel has repeatedly said the complex housed an underground Hamas control base, a claim denied by the militants. Hospitals out of action -- Hagari said it housed Hamas militants including commanders who had "turned it into a command centre from which they dispatched and managed terror operations and managed combat". Tedros said that Al-Shifa had "only recently restored minimal health services". Most of Gaza's hospitals are no longer functioning, according to the United Nations.

Cuba protests US comments following protests against power blackouts, food shortages

HAVANA. Cuba's government on Monday protested as interventionist comments from the U.S. Embassy on the island following demonstrations against power blackouts and food shortages by hundreds of people in eastern Cuba. Cuba's Foreign Ministry delivered a note expressing the complaint to the charge d'affaires at the U.S. diplomatic mission in Havana, Benjamin Ziff. On Sunday, protesters took to the streets in the eastern city of Santiago decrying power outages lasting up to eight hours and shortages of food. State media confirmed the protests in Santiago, while the U.S. Embassy in Havana said there were also reports of protests in a number of other provinces across the island. Videos showing people chanting "electricity and food" were quickly shared by Cubans on and off the island on platforms like X and Facebook. A nongovernmental human rights group that monitors Cuba said there had been at least three arrests. The U.S. Embassy urged the Cuban government to respect the protests in a post on its Facebook page.

"We urge the Cuban government to respect the human rights of the protesters and attend to the legitimate needs of the Cuban people," it said. On Monday, Cuban Deputy Foreign Minister Carlos Fernandez de Cossio, speaking to The Associated Press, called the comments "disrespectful" and an "open interference is Cuba's domestic affairs." "It was also cynical, as we said publicly, and hypocritical because it was referring to issues that are occurring in Cuba in which there's an import and responsibility from the U.S. government," said Fernandez de Cossio, referring to the longstanding U.S. embargo on the island.

Heat wave: Record index of 62.3C scorches Rio de Janeiro

RIO DE JANEIRO. A heat wave stifling Brazil set new records on Sunday, with Rio de Janeiro's heat index hitting 62.3 degrees Celsius, the highest in a decade, weather authorities said. The heat index measures what a temperature feels like, taking into account humidity. The actual maximum temperature



in the city was 42 oC on Monday, the Alerta Rio weather system said. The 62.3C record was notched in western Rio at 09H55 local time, and was the "highest mark" since Alerta Rio began keeping such records in 2014. The iconic Ipanema and Copacabana beaches were packed with people as authorities published tips on coping with the heat. "I am very afraid it will get worse, because the population is increasing a lot and deforestation is very high due to the increase in housing," lamented 49-year-old administrative assistant Raquel Correia in a park in central Rio. The previous heat index record was set in November, when it hit 59.7C. Meanwhile, extreme rains were wreaking havoc in the south of the country and are forecast to continue next week, according to authorities. "The week will be of very high risk in the center-south of Brazil due to intense rains and storms. The most worrisome system is a very intense cold front that will arrive with torrential rains and possible gales," weather information agency MetSul warned Sunday.

Indian-origin man pleads guilty in Singapore court to sexually assaulting worker

Singapore. A 20-year-old Indian-origin man has pleaded guilty to sexually assaulting a maintenance worker from India whose identity is protected under court order.

Sree Kanth Murugan, who works in the hospitality industry, sexually violated the worker before running away when the victim woke up. Another charge of molestation will be taken into consideration for sentencing Sree.

The 34-year-old worker was sleeping at the void deck of a housing block where Sree lived, according to a report by Today newspaper. District Judge Carol Ling called for probation and reformatory training suitability reports before her judgement on May 9. Deputy Public Prosecutor (DPP) Ho May Kim has called for a report to assess Sree's suitability for reformatory training and told the court that probation would not be a "realistic" sentencing option, considering the "brazen sexual offence" that he had committed. DPP Ho also argued that probation would have a "limited" effect in deterring Sree from committing such offences, and rehabilitation would be more effective in a structured

environment such as reformatory training. Reformatory training is a regimented rehabilitative programme offered to young offenders under 21 and offenders need to stay at a training centre to undergo various programmes. Unlike probation and community sentences, those who are sent for reformatory training will have a criminal record. Sree's defence lawyer Asoka Markandu said that he was "completely flabbergasted" at the prosecution's objection to probation and instead asked for a probation suitability report to be done. He argued that sending his client for reformatory training would be akin to placing him in a "den full of wolves", adding that a probation officer would provide him with sufficient guidance. Asoka said that sexuality issues are a big concern for young people today since the digital age has made youth more aware of such topics at a younger age, and that his client was "someone screaming for help", which led him to "satisfy his urge" in such a public manner. In



response, DPP Ho said that Sree was already at the "cusp of adulthood" when he committed the offence and that reformatory training was an option that already took rehabilitation into consideration. DPP Ho emphasised that Sree had "preyed" on the victim when he was sleeping and in a vulnerable state, and ran away once he was detected.

District Judge Ling agreed with both the prosecution and the defence that rehabilitation would be the predominant

consideration for sentencing and called for both suitability reports. Around 10:30 pm on October 27 last year, the victim chatted and drank three cans of beer with his relative at a void deck of a public housing block along Kim Keat Avenue. While waiting for his relative to get ready to give him a ride back to his dormitory, the victim fell asleep on a concrete slab. Around 30 minutes later, Sree arrived and sat at a table near him. Sree then molested the man before sexually assaulting him. The victim woke up to find his private parts exposed and Sree sitting at his feet. Sree ran off and though the foreign worker chased him, he managed to escape to his home, which was nearby. He was later arrested. Anyone who commits sexual assault involving penetration can be jailed for up to 20 years, and can also be caned or fined.

US Senator 'deeply concerned' about CAA impact on Muslims in India

World An influential US lawmaker has voiced apprehension regarding the Indian government's issuance of rules for the enforcement of the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA), stating that it is vital for cooperation between Washington and New Delhi to be rooted in shared values of safeguarding human rights irrespective of religion. "I am deeply concerned by the Indian government's decision to notify its controversial Citizenship Amendment Act, particularly the law's potential ramifications on India's Muslim community. Making matters worse is the fact that it is being pushed during the holy month of Ramadan," stated Senator Ben Cardin, chairman of the powerful Senate Foreign Relations Committee. "As the US-India relationship deepens, it is critically important that our



cooperation is based on our shared values of protecting the human rights of all persons, regardless of religion," he continued. The lawmaker's remarks coincide with Hindu American groups' endorsement of the rollout of CAA. Last week, the US State Department voiced concerns over the notification of CAA. Spokesperson Matthew Miller said the Biden administration would be closely

monitoring the implementation of the contentious law. "Respect for religious freedom and equal treatment under the law for all communities are fundamental democratic principles," Miller had said. India promptly criticised the US State Department's critique of the CAA as "misinformed and unwarranted."

The Centre implemented the Citizenship (Amendment) Act, 2019, last week, facilitating citizenship for undocumented non-Muslim migrants from Pakistan, Bangladesh, and Afghanistan who arrived in India before December 31, 2014. Additionally, the government issued a press statement asserting that Indian Muslims need not fear as the CAA will not affect their citizenship and is unrelated to the community, which enjoys equal rights as Hindus.

US claims top Hamas commander Marwan Issa killed in Israeli air strike

World US National Security Advisor (NSA) Jake Sullivan on Monday confirmed the death of top Hamas leader Marwan Issa in an airstrike conducted by the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) last week. "Hamas's number three Marwan Issa was killed in an Israeli operation last week," news agency AFP quoted NSA Jake Sullivan as saying on the matter. "The rest of the top leaders are in hiding, likely deep in the Hamas tunnel network, and justice will come for them too," he added. However, Hamas has yet to confirm the killing of Issa by Israel. Earlier on March 11, the IDF said that an airstrike on an underground compound in central Gaza on March 9-10 had targeted Issa, describing him as one of the planners of Hamas's October 7 attack on Israel. According to Israeli military spokesperson Rear Admiral Daniel Hagari, Issa was a deputy of Mohammed Deif, who heads Hamas's armed wing, the Ezzedine al-Qassam Brigades. Meanwhile, on Monday, US President Joe Biden and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu spoke over the phone and discussed the prevailing situation in Gaza. In their



conversation, Biden pressed on the urgent need to significantly increase the flow of lifesaving aid reaching those in need throughout Gaza, with special emphasis on the north. "President Biden spoke with Prime Minister Netanyahu today about the latest developments in Israel and Gaza, including Israel's military operations, increasing humanitarian assistance going to Gaza, and efforts to bring hostages home. President Biden emphasized his commitment to

ensuring the long-term security of Israel and affirmed that Israel has a right to go after Hamas," the White House said in a post on X. At the same time, a humanitarian crisis has descended across Gaza. More innocent civilians have died in this military operation than in all previous wars in Gaza combined," it added. President Biden stressed the urgent need to significantly increase the flow of lifesaving aid reaching those in need throughout Gaza.

Donald Trump's 'Access Hollywood' tape won't be played at hush money trial

New York. A New York judge ruled on Monday that the infamous "Access Hollywood" video in which Donald Trump bragged about grabbing women sexually without asking permission will not be shown to jurors at the former US President's hush money criminal trial. Judge Juan M. Merchan said Manhattan prosecutors can still question witnesses about the 2005 tape, which wasn't made public until the final weeks of Trump's 2016 White House campaign. But the judge said "it is not necessary that the tape itself be introduced into evidence or that it be played for the jury". Merchan said he found the tape "relevant to the critical issues" in the case, including the prosecution's contention that it helps establish Trump's intent and motive for making and concealing a hush-money arrangement at the heart of the case. However, siding with Trump's lawyers, he said playing it could be unduly prejudicial.

Merchan issued his rulings on the "Access Hollywood" tape and other issues even after deciding last Friday (March 15) to postpone the trial until at least mid-April to deal with a last-minute evidence dump that Trump's lawyers said was hampering their ability to prepare their defense. Merchan scheduled a hearing for March 25, the trial's original start date, to address that issue. Trump's lawyers complained that they only recently started receiving more than 100,000 pages of documents from a previous federal investigation into the matter that put Trump's former lawyer and fixer Michael Cohen behind bars. They asked for a three-month delay and for the case to be thrown out.

Trump's hush-money case, one of his four criminal indictments, centres on allegations that he falsified his company's records to hide the true nature of payments to Cohen, who helped Trump bury negative stories during his 2016 presidential campaign.

Cohen paid porn actor Stormy Daniels \$130,000 and arranged for the publisher of the National Enquirer supermarket tabloid to pay former Playboy model Karen McDougal \$150,000 to suppress their claims that they had extramarital affairs with Trump years earlier. Trump's company then reimbursed Cohen and logged the payments to him as legal expenses, prosecutors said.

Trump, now the presumptive Republican presidential nominee in his quest to retake the White House, pleaded not guilty last year to 34 felony counts of falsifying business records. His lawyers argue the payments to Cohen were legitimate legal expenses and not part of any cover-up.

Gaza's catastrophic food shortage means mass death is imminent: Report

Cairo Extreme food shortages in parts of the Gaza Strip have already exceeded famine levels, and mass death is now imminent without an immediate ceasefire and surge of food to areas cut off by fighting, the global hunger monitor said on Monday.

The Integrated Food-Security Phase Classification (IPC), whose assessments are relied on by UN agencies, said 70 per cent of people in parts of northern Gaza were suffering the most severe level of food shortage, more than triple the 20 per cent threshold to be considered famine. The IPC said it did not have enough data on death rates, but estimated residents would be dying at famine scale imminently, defined as two people out of every 10,000 dying daily from starvation or from malnutrition and disease. Gaza's health ministry has said 27 children and three adults have died so far from malnutrition. "The actions needed to prevent famine require an immediate political decision for a ceasefire together with a significant and immediate increase in humanitarian and commercial access to the entire population of Gaza," it

said. In all, 1.1 million Gazans, around half the population, were experiencing "catastrophic" shortages of food, with around 300,000 in the areas now facing the prospect of famine-scale death rates.

The prospect of a manmade famine in Gaza has brought the strongest criticism of Israel from Western allies since it launched its war against Hamas militants following their deadly attack on Israeli territory on October 7. "In Gaza we are no longer on the brink of famine. We are in a state of famine... Starvation is used as a weapon of war. Israel is provoking famine," EU foreign policy chief Josep Borrell said at a Brussels conference on aid for Gaza. Israeli Foreign Minister Israel Katz responded that Borrell should "stop attacking Israel and recognise our right to self-defence against Hamas' crimes". Israel allowed "extensive humanitarian aid into Gaza by land, air, and sea for anyone willing to help", Katz said on X, and aid was "violently disturbed" by Hamas militants with "collaboration" by the UN's aid agency UNRWA. UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres called the IPC report an



"appalling indictment" and said Israel must allow complete and unfettered access to all parts of Gaza. Britain's foreign minister David Cameron said he would carefully review the report: "It's clear the status quo is unsustainable. We need urgent action now to avoid a famine." Israel, which initially allowed aid into Gaza through only two checkpoints on the enclave's southern edge, says it is opening more routes by land, as well as allowing sea shipments and air drops. The first boat carrying aid arrived last week.

Aid agencies say they still cannot get enough supplies through or distribute

them safely, especially in the north.

HOSPITAL ASSAULT

In the ruins of Gaza City, the main settlement in the north of the Gaza Strip, Israeli forces launched a major assault on Al Shifa hospital overnight. Once the Gaza Strip's biggest hospital, it is now one of the only medical facilities still even partially functioning in the north of the territory. Israel said it had killed more than 20 Hamas fighters, including a senior Hamas commander, Fayeq al-Mabhouh, in the hospital. Hamas said he was a Palestinian police official tasked with overseeing the protection of aid deliveries in Gaza.

Negotiations for a ceasefire in the war, now in its sixth month, were due to resume on Monday with an Israeli delegation led by the country's spy chief heading to Qatar. But an Israeli official said nailing down any deal would probably take at least two more weeks, a clear disappointment for Washington which had sought a deal by the start of the Ramadan holy month last week.

BJP stitches up Tamil Nadu alliance, gives 10 seats to PMK party

Chennai. The BJP on Tuesday finalised its alliance with the Pattali Makkal Katchi (PMK) in Tamil Nadu for the upcoming Lok Sabha elections. Under the terms of the alliance, the PMK has been allocated 10 Lok Sabha seats in Tamil Nadu by the BJP. This decision comes a day after the PMK announced its intention to join the BJP-led National Democratic Alliance (NDA) and contest the parliamentary polls in the state. PMK President Anbumani Ramadoss said at a press briefing, "For the benefit of the country and to ensure the continuation of PM Modi's governance, we have decided to join



forces with the NDA. We believe this decision will bring about the change that the people of Tamil Nadu, who are dissatisfied with the current political scenario, are eagerly anticipating. Our alliance aims for a massive victory not only in Tamil Nadu but across India, paving the way for Prime Minister Modi to secure a third term in office." Sources said that the agreement on seat sharing was signed at the residence of Ramadoss in Thailapuram this morning.

Tamil Nadu BJP Chief K Annamalai said the PMK's decision to go with the NDA would ensure a massive victory for the alliance with over 400 MPs. "Since yesterday night, Tamil Nadu has changed.

Raj Thackeray reached Delhi last night and has now reached the residence of Union Home Minister Amit Shah

Now in their 66th year, the International Safety Awards recognise and celebrate organisations from around the world that have demonstrated their commitment to preventing workplace injuries and work-related ill-health during the previous calendar year.

Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala. Adani Vizhinjam Port Private Limited (AVPPL) has won an International Safety Award for calendar year 2023 from the British Safety Council in recognition of its commitment to keeping workers and workplaces healthy and safe. AVPPL is one of 269 global organisations to win a distinction in the International Safety Awards 2024, out of the total of 1,124 that won the award. The organisations span all sectors, with significant representation from the construction, manufacturing, oil, gas, mining, power and utility sectors. Winners were drawn from 49 countries worldwide, with 269 organisations awarded a distinction, 456 a Merit and 399 a Pass. Now in their 66th year, the International Safety Awards recognise and celebrate organisations from around the world that



have demonstrated their commitment to preventing workplace injuries and work-related ill-health during the previous calendar year. They also acknowledge organisations that have shown commitment to well-being and mental health at work.

Ashwani Gupta, CEO, APSEZ, said, "This achievement underscores our unwavering commitment to maintaining the highest safety standards across all our operations. It's a testament to the dedication and hard work of our entire team, and it reaffirms our position in building the safest port in the country."

Mike Robinson, Chief Executive of British Safety Council, said, "The vision of British

Safety Council is that no one should be injured or made ill through their work anywhere in the world. Achieving this requires more than complying with legislation; it means people committed not only to health and safety but also to workplace well-being and compelling others to follow suit. Our heartfelt congratulations to Adani Vizhinjam Port Private Limited; all of those working there should be enormously proud of their achievement." The International Safety Awards scheme is open to organisations of all types, sizes and sectors in the U.K. and internationally, both members of the British Safety Council and non-members, and relate to the health and safety management at a specific site or

business unit. The awards include a range of auto enter awards as well as free to enter awards. Applicants must answer a series of online questions about their management of health and safety risks during the previous year which are assessed by a team of independent health and safety professionals. If the application meets the required standard, a pass, merit or - for exceptional submissions - a distinction is awarded. Selected high scoring winning organisations are shortlisted for additional recognition in auto entry awards including Sector, Company, Country, and a Chief Adjudicators Award for the highest scoring applicant/s. These awards are judged by independent adjudicator panels.

Four Naxal commanders killed in encounter in Maharashtra's Gadchiroli



Mumbai Four Naxal commanders, who collectively carried a cash reward of 36 lakh, were killed in an encounter with Gadchiroli police commandos and CRPF along the Maharashtra-Chhattisgarh border. Gadchiroli police received intelligence input on Monday afternoon that some members of the Telangana State Committee had crossed the Pranhita river from Telangana into Gadchiroli to carry out subversive activities during the model code period ahead of the upcoming Lok Sabha elections. Multiple teams of C60 and CRPF QAT

were dispatched from Aheri Sub Police Headquarters led by Additional SP Ops Yatish Deshmukh for searches. On Tuesday morning, the security teams encountered gunfire from the Naxals in the Kolamarka mountains. An encounter ensued as security forces retaliated, killing four Naxals. Various arms and ammunition were recovered from the site, including one AK-47, one carbine and two country-made pistols.

Among the deceased were high-ranking Naxal leaders DVCM Vargeesh, secretary of Mangi

Four Naxal commanders killed in encounter along Maharashtra-Chhattisgarh border

The Naxals crossed the Pranhita river from Telangana into Gadchiroli

They collectively carried a cash reward of 36 lakh

Indravelli area committee and member of Kumuram Bheem Mancherla divisional committee, and DVCM Magtu, secretary of Sirpur Chennur area committee. The other deceased were platoon members Kursang Raju, and Kudimetta Venkatesh. All the Naxals carried a combined cash reward of 36 lakh declared by the Maharashtra government. Following the encounter, search and anti-naxal operations are underway in the region.

Last month, Gadchiroli police personnel had raided a new base camp of the Naxals and seized explosive materials and detonators after an encounter. The seized items included explosive materials, wire bundles, IED battery, detonators, hooks for claymore mines, and solar panels.

Bengal Governor launches 'Log Sabha' portal to address grievances during elections

Bengaluru. After reports that the BJP will give only two seats to its alliance partner Janta Dal Secular in Karnataka for the Lok Sabha elections, JD(S) state president HD Kumaraswamy said that he "trusts" that the BJP will give three to four seats to his party.

Addressing the press on Monday, the former Karnataka Chief Minister said, "I won't speak about our constituencies until there is an official announcement. I have not asked for six or seven seats from the BJP, but have asked them for three to four seats." He further said that even the BJP knows the strength of the JD(S). "I have trust in them that they will give us three to four seats. Should I ally with them just to get two seats?" Kumaraswamy said. He said, "I reiterate that our candidates will win in Mandya and Hassan constituencies even if we contest the elections independently. If there is a triangular contest, we will win easily." Kumaraswamy said that senior party leaders have asked him to communicate to the BJP the need

to treat the JD(S) "respectfully" and make them understand its strength in around 18 Lok Sabha constituencies. "If we spend our strength (vote bank) in many constituencies, that will become a



plus point for the BJP. Karnataka's politics is different than national politics. Our leaders want me to present the picture of the political situation in Karnataka before the BJP high command," he said, adding that he has asked the BJP for three seats, namely, Hassan, Mandya and Kolar. The BJP announced its candidates for 26 out of 28 Lok Sabha seats in the state in its second list released on March 13.

"If We Call, They Will Join": Himanta Sarma's Cross-Over Warning To Congress

The Assam leader made similar claims in November 2020; that was before the Assembly election in which the BJP-led alliance dominated, winning 75 of the state's 126 seats.

Guwahati. Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma has put the Congress on alert - even before the Lok Sabha results are declared - warning his former party that several, if not all, of its winning candidates in the state will jump ship to Prime Minister Narendra Modi's side shortly after the election. Mr Sarma's jab at the Congress - his message to voters was that there is, therefore, no point in voting for the opposition party - came as he started his campaign from Assam's Karimganj district.

"The question is whether a Congress candidate will remain in Congress or not. Now, no one wants to stay in Congress... everyone wants to join the BJP. This time, if I can bring all Congress candidates... then what will be the benefit of voting for Congress?" the Assam Chief Minister told reporters. Mr Sarma laid credit for cross-overs at Prime Minister Narendra Modi's feet, proclaiming, "PM is the Sun, and we are the Moon", and claimed opposition leaders "are ours... if we call, they will join us". "Modiji will again become Prime Minister



and there is no question about who is a 'minority' and 'majority'. There will only be 'sabka saath sabka vikas' ('development with all, for all', the BJP's tagline). There is no opposition. They are ours and if we call, then they will join us," he said. The Assam

leader made similar claims in November 2020; that was before the Assembly election in which the BJP-led alliance dominated, winning 75 of the state's 126 seats. The BJP won 60 of 93. "Before polls, people change political positions and there are a few good leaders still in the Congress in Assam. I have invited them to join the BJP. I am in touch with many of them..." he said then. Mr Sarma himself joined the BJP from the Congress in 2015, after sharp swipes at party leaders Sonia Gandhi and Rahul Gandhi. He was seen then as the mastermind of the Congress' hat-trick of wins from 2001 to 2011, but fell out after being overlooked for the Chief Minister's post. The 2024 election dates were announced by the Election Commission of India on Saturday. Assam - which sends 14 MPs to the Lok Sabha - will vote in seven phases from April 19. In 2019 the BJP contested 10 of those 14 and won nine. The saffron party's allies - the Asom Gana Parishad and the Bodoland People's Front contested four but failed to win any.

Modi ridicules Congress govt, leader waiting to become Karnataka CM

SHIVAMOGGA. Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday termed Congress as "a party that always lied, deceived and looted the people to fill its pockets". Participating at a rally here, ahead of the Lok Sabha polls, Modi alleged that the Congress government in the state has become an ATM for the party, adding that there is a leader in the ruling party who is a "CM in waiting", 'Future CM', 'Super CM', 'Shadow CM', and 'Delhi Collection Minister'. "I said resentment towards the Congress government is growing in the state, and the NDA will win in all the 28 Parliamentary constituencies here. He called upon the people to vote for NDA candidates. Shouting a new slogan, "Chaar June... Chaar Sou Paar," Modi asked the people to cast their votes in favour of BJP, and help NDA cross 400 seats, for the



development of India and Karnataka to bring down poverty, provide a corruption-free government and to help the farming community and youth of the nation.

Commencing his speech in Kannada, he paid homage to Siganduru Chowdeshwari and commended former chief minister BS

Yediyurappa for his contributions in building BJP in the state, from the time when he was not even a municipality councillor. Earlier in the day, Yediyurappa said the BJP government introduced a scheme providing Rs 4,000 to each farmer, which has been halted by the Congress government. Former PM HD Deve Gowda also said over phone that he will join the election campaign for the BJP-JDS alliance to win all the 28 constituencies, Yediyurappa said. BJP state president BY Vijayendra, MP BY Raghavendra, former home minister Araga Jnanendra, Mangaluru BJP candidate Capt Brijesh Chawta, JDS MLA Sharada Pooryanaik, former MLA KB Prasanna Kumar, JDS district president Kadidal Gonal and others were present.

Girl strip-searched for alleged theft dies by suicide in Karnataka; teacher, HM booked

BAGALKOT. A First Information Report (FIR) has been registered against the teacher and the headmaster of the government high school of Kadampur in Bagalkot in connection with the suicide of a Class 8 student of the school.

It may be noted that a 14-year-old girl of Kadampur village had allegedly died by suicide due to dejection after being accused of stealing the money of a teacher. The girl had ended her life on March 16 at her house after she was accused of stealing Rs 2,000 from a teacher of the school. According to sources, one of the female teachers of the school, after reportedly losing money from her purse, grew suspicious over four students including the 14-year-old deceased girl. She reportedly checked the bags of all students and also made them swear in God's name to prove their innocence. Though it is not confirmed whether money was found or not, however, of the four students, the 14-year-old girl felt severely upset after the incident. She later committed suicide at home by hanging herself. Interestingly, the parents did not bother to report the matter with the police and

The teacher reportedly checked the bags of all students and also made them swear in God's name to prove their innocence.

performed her final rites. They visited the police station the next day to file a case against teacher Jayashri Mishikoti and headmaster H M Mujawar at Rural Police station. Speaking to media persons, the deceased girl's father, alleged that the teacher forced the students to admit the crime and return the money, else the students' admission would be cancelled. Due to fear and dejection, his daughter committed suicide, he said. Meanwhile, the police have registered a case and investigation is underway. If you are having suicidal thoughts, or are worried about a friend or need emotional support.

Revisiting Zulfikar Ali Bhutto's 'judicial murder' in 1979

IN June 2011, the then President Asif Ali Zardari moved the Pakistan Supreme Court to review the death penalty given to late Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto in February 1979 by a seven-member SC Bench (four-three verdict). On March 6, 2024, Chief Justice Qazi Faez Isa announced the unanimous decision of the nine-member Bench that it "didn't find that the fair trial and due process requirements were met." Bhutto's execution was considered as a 'judicial murder' by many legal experts due to several reasons, including his trial being the only one in Pakistan's judicial history to be conducted by a 'high' court and not in a regular trial court. As a result, he was denied some rights of appeal. Zia's military coup took place on July 5, 1977. Bhutto was initially detained for a month. After his release, he was greeted by massive crowds, which made Zia panicky, whereupon he was arrested on September 3 on a 1974 murder charge. Mubhashir Hasan, Bhutto's Finance Minister, narrates details of the judicial transgression in his book *The Mirage of Power*. The chargesheet in the murder case was presented on September 11, 1977, in the Sessions Court. The same day, the military government moved the Supreme Court to transfer the case to the Lahore High Court without giving a notice to Bhutto. Simultaneously, acting Chief Justice Maulvi Mushtaq Hussain of the Lahore High Court, a known Bhutto hater, was summoned from his foreign tour. Hasan quotes Hussain telling his journalist friend: "If I do not try the case, no other judge will hang Bhutto." A part of the trial was conducted in camera. The death sentence was given on March 18, 1978. The Supreme Court heard the appeal, but gave the final verdict of 'guilty' on February 6, 1979.

Former US Attorney General Ramsey Clark, who represented Bhutto in the Supreme Court, revealed to *The New York Times* (February 14, 1979) that two of the nine SC judges were prevented from attending the court through questionable means. Had they been present, the verdict would have been different. He also said that the case had no eyewitness, direct evidence or physical evidence and the glaring defects in the lower court's proceedings were not rectified. On March 24, 1979, the Supreme Court finally rejected the family's appeal. Bhutto was hanged in the Central Jail, Rawalpindi, on April 4.

Hasan writes that Bhutto was kept in "appalling conditions" in the jail and treated inhumanly after the death sentence was passed. He was shifted to the Rawalpindi jail in "a transport fit enough to carry only garbage". Before the hanging, appeals from several world leaders, including three pleas from then US President Jimmy Carter, were ignored by Zia, who privately ridiculed them of indulging in 'trade union' activity. On March 1, 1979, the US House of Representatives passed a resolution requesting Zia to spare Bhutto's life.

The glaring exceptions were India's leaders Morarji Desai and Atal Bihari Vajpayee, who said "this issue was Pakistan's internal matter, in which India did not want to interfere." However, Opposition leader Indira Gandhi issued a statement "condemning the hanging" and said Bhutto had become a victim of a conspiracy. Bhutto's last testament *If I am Assassinated*, written in his death cell "with the paper resting on my knees", had cast aspersions on some foreign powers, mainly the US, over his downfall. The manuscript was smuggled out to Britain and distributed in Xerox copy form. This book was published by Vikas Publishing House (New Delhi) in April 1979, with an incisive introduction by legendary journalist Pran Chopra, who wrote it before the Supreme Court's final verdict. Bhutto was hanged by the time the book appeared. Chopra quotes India-born US academic Shirin Tahir-Kheli, then with Temple University (US) and later an American diplomat, who wrote in the *Asian Survey* (1978) that the outgoing US Ambassador in Islamabad had bluntly told Bhutto that.

Strategic interests draw India, Greece closer

Greece controls the world's biggest merchant shipping fleet, making it critical for India to form a partnership.

GREEK Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis' recent visit to New Delhi sparked excitement in Indian strategic circles. It followed PM Narendra Modi's historic visit to Athens last year to build a 'strategic partnership' with the Hellenic Republic. Inheritors of ancient civilisations, India and Greece have been faced with similar predicaments in the regional security environment in their respective regions. Adherents of non-expansionist principles, they have been forced to be defensive in the face of accusations by their neighbours. On March 25, Greece will celebrate the 203rd anniversary of its independence, marking the evolutionary process of a nation that, like India, has succumbed to foreign domination more than once. A European nation in civilisational terms, it shares vital historical elements of the Ottoman Empire. Greece is also a Mediterranean country with a strategic route for trade and culture. Greece and India are located in geopolitically volatile areas. As recent events in the Red Sea have shown, the security of the East Mediterranean and the Indian Ocean Region are interconnected. West Asian turbulence and Islamic fundamentalism are of particular interest to Athens, as are the complex Balkan affairs characterised by political instability and rising nationalism. Greece's position on the eastern flank of the European Union (EU) and the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) and the idea of constructing the India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor (IMEC) make compelling reasons for New Delhi to build strategic ties with Athens. Importantly, Greece's position is not exclusive of the rivalry vis-a-vis Turkey in the region. Like Pakistan in India's case, it was Turkey that preoccupied Greece's foreign policy for decades. For Greeks, Turkey is a hegemonic power still dreaming of the Ottoman Empire. Their rivalry centres on the long-running Cyprus conflict since the early 1950s, which culminated in the Turkish invasion of Cyprus in 1974 and the occupation of 36 per cent of the Cypriot territory for the last 50 years. Since then, Greece and Turkey have been locked in a set of disputes ranging from conflicting claims of sovereignty over the delimitation of their maritime boundaries in the Eastern Mediterranean to discord over islands in the Aegean Sea. There has been a thaw in Greco-Turkish relations lately, but it focuses on the bilateral rather than the complex trilateral Cyprus factor. The détente assumes significance against the ongoing Hamas-Israel war and conflicts in Syria, Libya and Iraq. Regional tensions



have escalated since the discovery of gas by Israel, Cyprus and Egypt, which prompted Turkey to send drilling ships into the Eastern Mediterranean. The civil war in Libya exacerbated tensions between Turkey and Greece. Arab states moved closer to Greece after Ankara pursued a pro-Arab Spring policy. The reduction in the US footprint and the EU's hands-off approach to Greco-Turkish relations meant a rise in Turkish hegemonic tendency. Turkey certainly plays a bigger role in European affairs: Ukraine, the Black Sea, the West Asia, the Balkans and the South Caucasus, but Greco-Turkish tensions impact NATO's unity. Greece is still the highest defence-spending NATO country. Turkey suffers from the empire syndrome. Like Pakistan in our case, it is a superpower's use of Turkey for short-term gains that endowed it with greater confidence in the region. Greece, like India, faces no direct threat from the Islamic world. It is Turkey's short-sighted policies that the Greeks are fighting against. Greece's outreach to India assumes significance. Modi's visit to Athens last year stirred intense strategic interest among Greece's political and business leaders. And what set the tone was Mitsotakis' statement that "India will find no better gateway to Europe than my country, and for Greece, there is no better gateway to Asia than a close strategic relationship with India." Greece controls the world's

biggest merchant shipping fleet, making it critical for India to strengthen the partnership to meet our impending need for connectivity and maritime collaboration in the Mediterranean and to make the Piraeus port a key hub in the IMEC, besides exploring investment prospects in cities like Athens and Thessaloniki. Despite the war in Gaza, the two countries have agreed to go ahead with the IMEC plans. Greek and Indian businesses are likely to find more reasons to partner with each other. The bilateral trade stands at a meagre \$2 billion, but India aims to double it by 2030. Turkey and Pakistan share ideological angst against the ancient civilisations of India and Greece. Together, they collaborate to project the Turkish version of history in South Asia, the Caucasus and Central Asia.

Turkey has been raising the Kashmir issue on a global platform, and it recently supplied its Bayraktar combat drones to Pakistan. This makes it important for India and

Greece to forge a strong alliance to support each other on Kashmir and Cyprus issues. Athens has consistently supported New Delhi's core foreign policy objectives. It was the first Western country to acknowledge India's nuclear tests in May 1998; it condemned the Pulwama terrorist attack in 2019 and firmly stood up for India in the EU. It ardently supports India's candidacy as a permanent member of the UN Security Council. The two countries have stepped up military cooperation, with the Indian Air Force joining the Hellenic Air Force in the INIOCHOS-23 air exercise. The Indian Navy's INS Chennai was engaged in a passage exercise with Hellenic naval ship Nikiforos Fokas during a visit to Souda Bay, Crete, strengthening maritime collaboration. India and Greece, along with Cyprus and Israel, have formed an 'informal economic partnership' for the drilling of oil in the Western Mediterranean.

Mitsotakis' visit seemed to have entailed an amazing opportunity to address a spectrum of pressing global and regional security issues to boost ties in defence and security, especially cybersecurity, counter-terrorism and maritime security, and link co-production and co-development in defence manufacturing. India-Greek ties, built against the backdrop of their 2,500-year-old foundational Indic and Hellenic identities based on Greco-Buddhism, are likely to prove enduring.

Poll bugle sounded

Transparency in electoral funding a must

THE Election Commission of India (ECI) has announced the Lok Sabha poll schedule amid a verbal duel over the now-scrapped electoral bonds, whose details have been disclosed at the Supreme Court's insistence. The Opposition, led by the Congress, has accused the BJP of running an 'extortion racket', while the ruling party continues to defend the bond scheme as a measure to combat black money. Indeed, the importance of transparency in electoral funding to ensure a level playing field cannot be overstated. The poll arena is set to witness a surge in competitive populism over the next few weeks, with political parties vying with each other to woo voters with all kinds of promises. The BJP's organisational prowess and aggressive campaigning have put it in pole position, demonstrated by its ability to win over leaders from other parties and mobilise its cadre effectively. The ruling party has managed to tick its



core agenda boxes in recent months — the consecration of the Ram Temple, the rollout of the Uniform Civil Code in

Uttarakhand and the implementation of the Citizenship Amendment Act. Prime Minister Narendra Modi remains popular despite being at the helm for almost a decade, while the Opposition bloc INDIA doesn't have a leader of his stature. Moreover, the alliance is grappling with internal conflicts and lacks a unified narrative to counter the BJP.

As the ECI gears up to deploy 1.5 crore personnel at 10.5 lakh polling stations for the seven-phase Lok Sabha elections starting on April 19, upholding the sanctity of the democratic process becomes imperative. Concurrently, Assembly polls in Arunachal Pradesh, Sikkim, Andhra Pradesh and Odisha are scheduled. With over 97 crore eligible voters poised to make their choice, the onus is on the electorate to separate fact from fiction amid misinformation, tall promises and fake news, and exercise its franchise responsibly.

Agni V test a high, but challenges remain

Indigenisation of military inventory is an arduous endeavour for a developing nation

INDIA carried out a successful Agni V missile test with MIRV (multiple independently targetable re-entry vehicle) capability on March 11. This is a commendable achievement. Kudos to the missile division of the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO). With this demonstration of MIRV capability, India has joined a select band of nations — the US, Russia, France, UK and China — that can launch intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs) of 5,000 km-plus range. MIRV capability implies that a single warhead can carry multiple nuclear warheads and each of them can strike separate targets at different locations. Such a capability was first acquired by the US in the 1970s during the Cold War and subsequently by the erstwhile USSR (now Russia); the other three nuclear powers followed suit. The distinctive feature of MIRV capability is that it degrades anti-ballistic missile defences and has significant and complex implications for deterrence stability.

China acquired MIRV capability in 2015. There is a certain inevitability about the manner in which a major power moves up the techno-strategic ladder of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) capabilities. China became a nuclear power in October 1964 and India, after some reluctance, in May 1998. After the disintegration of the USSR and the emergence of the US as the global hegemon, Beijing resolutely invested in acquiring trans-border military capability; the WMD domain received special attention. Seeking MIRV capability is part of this quest. Inasmuch as China seeks to assuage its WMD insecurity in relation to the US in the strategic arena, this element unfolds at a different level in relation to China and India and the

Agni V MIRV test is part of this geopolitical trajectory. However the major difference is that the two Asian giants are neighbours and share a 4,000-km land border. Furthermore, they have an unresolved territorial dispute with troops facing each other, and the ground situation in certain sectors is tense. The Indian missile programme acquired visible traction in the early 1980s under then PM Indira Gandhi's stewardship. This was an extraordinary accomplishment by the DRDO at a time when India was under a severe technology denial regime imposed by the US. Beginning with the modest Prithvi series, the IGMDF (integrated guided missile programme) has now added the nascent MIRV-capable Agni V to the Indian WMD arsenal. This capability will have a significant impact on regional WMD stability apropos of the China-India-Pakistan relationship. In an unintended coincidence, even as India is celebrating the MIRV success, the annual report of SIPRI (Stockholm International Peace Research Institute) noted that India remained the world's largest importer of arms. The March 2024 report has observed that India's arms imports increased by 4.7 per cent between 2014-18 and 2019-23. The gist of the latest SIPRI report is no different from what was highlighted in 2023 — that India is at the top of the arms importer list globally. The 2023 report noted that "with an 11 per cent share of the total global arms imports, India was the world's biggest importer of major arms in 2018-22, a position it has held for the 1993-2022 period." This reality check is contrary to the perception that India has acquired a credible degree of self-reliance (atmanirbharta) in its military inventory and that it is also a major arms exporter.



The assertions made in this regard by Defence Minister Rajnath Singh are illustrative. What explains this dichotomy wherein the DRDO's missile programme has been a visible success but there is little in the conventional arms spectrum that can be applauded as significantly contributing to the indigenous effort? A caveat must be added that slender verticals in surveillance and communication equipment have been success stories, but these are exceptions in the less-than-flattering macro track record of the DRDO. It is a matter of shame that over the past 50 years, while India has made significant progress in the WMD domain (missiles, nuclear weapons and nuclear propulsion), indigenisation of the conventional military inventory continues to have bleak prospects. From a personal weapon (rifle) to the larger artillery gun, tanks and combat aircraft, the scorecard is dismal. The political apex,

the military brass, the defence bureaucracy and the government scientists are all culpable for this morass. The ecosystem they have nurtured encourages arms imports. The DRDO has been the subject of numerous reviews by redoubtable domain experts, from former President APJ Abdul Kalam (who led the missile programme during his DRDO years) to Vijay Kelkar, Palle Rama Rao and Naresh Chandra, but there has been no tangible improvement in the output of the DRDO. Many claims of high-octane successes have been made over the past five years, but they fall in the 90-10 matrix — a modest 10 per cent success has been inflated and projected in the public domain as being 90 per cent and world-class. Some initiatives have been taken to infuse dynamism into the moribund indigenous defence R&D and production sector, but they remain aspirational and may be described as earnest, work-in-progress efforts. The national security challenges for the next government will be daunting, but one tenet merits repetition: when it comes to matters of national security, electoral compulsions should not muddy the domain and create invalid or counter-factual narratives. Indigenisation of the military inventory is an arduous endeavour for a developing nation; there will be numerous setbacks. The recent crash of a Tejas fighter aircraft is a case in point. The remedy lies not in obfuscation but in an objective review of failures and finding the optimal way ahead, with a much higher degree of institutional integrity and professional competence to the atmanirbharta quest than what has been the chequered experience of the past four decades.

Being a leader is a lot more than just having the position where you can give orders and be at the top of the team build up. Being a good leader also means that people are willing to take orders and they see you as their leader. A good leader is simply who people like to follow. And these are simple tips you can practice to be a good leader.



make confident choices and have the power to decide quickly and properly, and if you are confident of your ability of decision making, then you will surely hit the bull's eye.

Take responsibility

Always take responsibility of things that go by in the team. If you have the position of a leader in the team, and if a team member commits a mistake, you should step up and take responsibility of their actions. This is what good leaders are made of.

Talk less, listen more

Leading a team doesn't always mean giving orders and only saying what you think. It is also about listening to what others have to say. And if you are a good listener, you can be a good leader. Also take care that you do what you preach.

Follow these tips to be an Inspiring Leader



Take part

Be a part of the team you are leading. Being a leader or the boss doesn't mean that you distance yourself from your group. In fact,

if you mingle well with the people they will be more supportive of you and help you lead better.

Be confident

Being confident in decision making is one of the most important part of being a good leader. People look up to people who can

6 ways to deal with sibling rivalry

Are you irritated every time your kids fight over who will eat the last bite of ice-cream or quibble over who will play with the new video-game you bought for them?

Sibling rivalry is an inevitable parenting evil. Moreover, its degree can determine positive or negative effects on your kids in the long run. Here are ways you can foster a healthy bond between your kids.

1. Start early: Introduce your older child to the younger one when the latter is in the womb itself. This will prepare him/her for the new addition in the family as well as build a friendly bond between the two. Let your kid pat your bulge and talk to the child.

2. Set boundaries: Make sure that your kids know what behaviour is acceptable and what is not, especially when they are quarrelling. Sit them down and lay down the limits where calling each other names, physical violence as well as stealing each other's belongings is definitely not acceptable.

3. Avoid comparisons: Picture this — Your five-year-old son is having a meal and drops some food on his shirt. You scold him, 'Even your baby sister doesn't do something like this.'

especially if the older kid feels ignored when he/she sees you pampering the younger one. Make the older kid feel important and ensure that you pay equal attention to both of them and love them equally.

5. Separate them: Are there times when your kids want to watch the television at the same time or are quarrelling for a bicycle ride? If you can't find a way to solve the situation, ask them to go their respective rooms. Allot particular time periods for each during which they can use common things. From an early age, encourage your kids to share their things with each other.

6. Reconsider when to intervene: When your children are fighting, it isn't necessary that you interfere on every account.



Comparisons like these do more harm than good. Your older child may develop negative feelings towards his/her sibling.

4. Give equal attention: Rivalry often stems from jealousy,

However, if you feel that things are going out of hand or you just can't ignore their misbehaviour, you could meddle in their affairs. However, at that time, be a neutral parent and avoid passing any judgments on either of the kids.

Enrolling your kids in summer classes and keeping them occupied with storybooks during the vacation will help them spend their time wisely.

6 fun ideas to strengthen bond with Your kids



But, joining them in their endeavours will get you more 'us' time and make your relationship strong. Here are some fun things you can do with your tots...

Get adventurous

Rock climbing, bungee jumping, trekking, biking, rafting these are some of the options you can pursue with your kid if the two of you are adventure junkies. Parthiv Painter, who has been attending freehand climbing sessions with his 14 year-old son and 12-year-old daughter, says, "I have been spending three hours with my kids every weekend, attending these classes. My son is quite gung-ho about adventure sports, and my daughter is also loving it. Now that we've had our training, we are planning to go for a rock climbing and water rafting trip. These trips, in a way, help prepare kids to face challenges. Also, it's fun screaming and shouting together when you are hanging 15ft above the ground, secured only with a rope."

Get creative with them

If your kid likes to paint or make things at home, then join him/her. You two can spend the evenings painting or making those DIY bracelets. You two can even start making cute

birthday or anniversary cards by writing your own verses and decorating them according to your tastes. Nikita Nijam, mother of two, says, "Every day, my two daughters and I sit together and make interesting card games. We come up with our own puzzles as well. The topic depends on their choice -we cut pieces of cardboard into different shapes and paint one side with their favourite toon characters. This keeps our afternoons occupied." You can also arrange a small party at home and invite your kid's friends over for a role play, and get them to work on costumes and props as well.

Spring cleaning in summer

Want to bond with your tot inside the comfort of your home? Then, spring cleaning is a good option. This will not only be a fun activity for the two of you, but also declutters your home. Start with one room and pull out all the junk that's occupying precious space in your place. General physician Raghuraman adds, "Of course, make sure you don't expose your kid to

too much dust. You can also realign your books or give your kid's room a makeover."

Make health a family affair

Working out alone can get quite boring. But, getting your kids to join you can make the whole exercise quite fun. Rohit Dinkar, a marketing professional, says, "Every morning, my wife and my 13-year-old son got to the park near our home and jog for half an hour. We then do some stretching and my wife teaches us basic yoga. This is the only time I get to spend with my son because I'm mostly out at office throughout the day."

Child counsellor Ramola Vishwas says, "Kids must be taught from a young age how important a healthy lifestyle is. They need not go to the gym when they are that young; playing and running are some of the activities that will help them warm up to the idea of workouts. So, when your kids have time this vacation, play with them. It can be something as simple as hide and seek and a game of catch or some outdoor sports like basketball!"

Explore places

If your kids love history, then exploring nearby museums and heritage structures are an option. You can even plan a weekend trip with the family to places of historic importance. Anusha Sidhwani, a preschool teacher, says, "This vacation, my 6-year-old son and I've been checking out all the parks in our city. The idea is to spend as much time together as we can and find out little known facts and places about our city."

Get pet-friendly

Looking for a novel way to spend the vacation usefully? Try building shelters for stray birds and animals. Animal activist Rithangshu Bhatt says, "My daughter, who is in Class 5, has been wanting to do her bit for animals. So, my wife and I decided to make use of this vacation to help her realise her dream. She's got together her friends as well and we've been working on building shelters for animals and baths for birds. We've also been feeding the strays together. It has been a fun and a humane exercise in kindness."

Delhi world's most polluted capital, India has 3rd worst air quality: Report

Delhi's PM2.5 levels worsened to 92.7 micrograms per cubic metre in 2023
India ranks third in worst air quality globally in 2023, after Bangladesh and Pakistan
1.36 billion Indians exposed to PM2.5 concentrations exceeding WHO guidelines

had the third-worst air quality out of 134 countries in 2023 after Bangladesh (79.9 micrograms per cubic metre) and Pakistan (73.7 micrograms per cubic metre), according to the World Air Quality Report 2023 by Swiss organisation IQAir. In 2022, India was ranked as the eighth most polluted country with an average PM2.5 concentration of 53.3 micrograms per cubic metre. Begusarai stood out as the most polluted metropolitan area globally with an average PM2.5 concentration of 118.9 micrograms per cubic metre. The city did not even figure in the 2022 rankings.

Delhi's PM2.5 levels worsened from 89.1 micrograms per cubic metre in 2022 to 92.7 micrograms per cubic metre in 2023. The national capital was ranked the most polluted capital city in the world four times on the trot starting in 2018.

It is estimated that 1.36 billion people in India experience PM2.5 concentrations exceeding the World Health Organisation (WHO) recommended annual guideline level of 5 micrograms per cubic metre, the



report said. Also, 1.33 billion people, 96 per cent of the Indian population, experience PM2.5 levels more than seven times the WHO annual PM2.5 guideline. This trend is reflected in

city-level data, with more than 66 per cent of the country's cities reporting annual averages greater than 35 micrograms per cubic metre. IQAir said the data utilised to create this report was aggregated from the global

distribution of more than 30,000 regulatory air quality monitoring stations and low-cost air quality sensors operated by research institutions, governmental bodies, universities and educational facilities, non-profit non-governmental organisations, private companies and citizen scientists.

The 2022 World Air Quality Report included data from 7,323 locations in 131 countries, regions and territories. In 2023, those numbers have grown to include 7,812 locations in 134 countries, regions and territories. Causing an estimated one in every nine deaths worldwide, air pollution is the greatest environmental threat to human health. According to the WHO, air pollution is responsible for an estimated seven million premature deaths worldwide every year.

Exposure to PM2.5 air pollution leads to and exacerbates numerous health conditions, including but not limited to asthma, cancer, stroke and lung disease.

Exposure to elevated levels of fine particles can impair cognitive development in children, lead to mental health issues, and complicate existing illnesses, including diabetes.

New Delhi. Bihar's Begusarai emerged as the world's most polluted metropolitan area while Delhi was identified as the capital city with the poorest air quality, according to a new report.

With an average annual PM2.5 concentration of 54.4 micrograms per cubic metre, India

'Committed to combating piracy': PM on rescue of hijacked Bulgarian ship

New Delhi. A day after Bulgaria thanked India for rescuing the hijacked vessel MV Ruen, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday said the country was committed to protecting freedom of navigation and combating piracy and terrorism in the Indian Ocean region.

"We are happy that seven Bulgarian nationals are safe and will be returning home soon," PM Modi tweeted.

On Monday, Bulgarian President Rumen Radev thanked PM Modi after the Indian Navy rescued seven Bulgarians who were part of a crew that was held hostage by pirates aboard the MV Ruen, which was hijacked around 1,400 nautical miles from the Indian coast. My sincere gratitude to PM Narendra Modi for the brave action of the Indian Navy in rescuing the hijacked Bulgarian ship 'Ruen' and its crew, including 7 Bulgarian citizens," Radev had tweeted.

Bulgaria's deputy PM Mariya Gabriel had also expressed gratitude in a post on X to which External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar responded by saying, "That's what friends are for." In an operation spanning over 40 hours, the Indian Navy got 35 pirates to surrender and rescued all the 17 crew members without any injuries. For the operation, the Navy deployed its P-8I aircraft, INS Kolkata and INS Subhadra, and an unmanned aerial vehicle. The MARCOS commandos were air-dropped for the operation by C-17 aircraft. "The vessel MV Ruen was hijacked by Somali pirates on December 14 last year and was reported to have sailed out as a pirate ship towards conducting acts of piracy on the high seas," the Navy said in a statement.

Over 250 central security personnel to be deployed at Parliament after breach



New Delhi. More than 250 Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) personnel will be deployed at the Parliament House complex as an "essential security upgrade" following the major security breach in Parliament on December 13, 2023, when two men jumped into the Lok Sabha chamber while the Winter Session was underway, and released yellow gas from canisters while also shouting slogans. The new security set-up approved by CISF Director General Nina Singh, will see more than 230 personnel dedicated to the security division, with the remainder allocated to the Force's Fire Department. Meanwhile, the enhanced staff will also comprise 12 inspectors, 45 sub-inspectors, 30 assistant sub-inspectors, 35 head constables, and 85 constables.

The CISF was initially introduced in Parliament in January with 140 personnel stationed at specific entry points. Since then, the Force has been charged with regular visitor frisking and baggage screening at designated entrance gates.

The December 2023 Parliament breach triggered chaos and raised queries on security measures at the premises. The intruders, who jumped into the chambers of Lok Sabha from the visitor's gallery on the day when the nation remembered the December 13, 2001 terrorist attack in Parliament, were issued authorisation passes by Pratap Simha, a BJP MP from Karnataka's Mysore seat. The party, however, dropped Simha from contesting the upcoming Lok Sabha elections and has fielded Mysuru royal scion Yaduveer Krishnadatta Chamaraja in his place. Six people have been arrested in the case so far, including the two intruders, Sagar Sharma and Manoranjan D.

Discriminatory, 'not anti-citizen': Arguments for and against CAA

New Delhi. The Centre's implementation of the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) just weeks ahead of the Lok Sabha election has led to a flurry of fresh petitions against the rules in the Supreme Court. Apart from these, around 200 petitions challenging the legislation are also pending in the Supreme Court since December 2019. Ever since the rules were notified on March 11, four years after the law was passed, fresh protests have erupted in Assam and Tripura. Petitioners against the legislation have alleged that the Act was discriminatory, and called it "unconstitutional" as it was based on religion. The CAA grants citizenship to Hindus, Jains, Christians, Sikhs, Buddhists, and Parsis who arrived in India from Bangladesh, Pakistan, and Afghanistan on or before December 31, 2014.

ARGUMENTS AGAINST CAA
 The foremost argument against the law is



that the CAA discriminates against Muslims on the basis of religion. "Such religious segregation is without any reasonable differentiation and violates right to equality under Article 14," the petitioners have said. The All Assam Students Union (AASU), in its plea, has said that the CAA rules "legitimise illegal migrants", adversely impacting indigenous culture and violating constitutional provisions. AASU and other protesting outfits fear a reduction in the indigenous Assamese population following the granting of citizenship to Hindu-Bengali migrants from

neighbouring Bangladesh. Another petitioner, Debabrata Saikia, an Assam Congress MLA, has flagged the inconsistencies in the treatment of persecuted religious minorities, citing the exclusion of groups like Sri Lankan Eelam Tamils.

ARGUMENTS FOR CAA
 Union Home Minister Amit Shah has said that the chosen three countries had a declared state religion. "All the three countries from where persecuted minorities can come to India are Islamic nations. Can Muslims be religiously persecuted there?" he said. The Home Ministry has clarified that the CAA does not nullify existing naturalisation laws, and Muslim migrants from any foreign country can apply for Indian citizenship.

The government has said that the CAA does not snatch the citizenship of people, and it had nothing to do with the National Register of Citizens (NRC).

Bengaluru facing 500 million litres water shortage: Karnataka Chief Minister

New Delhi. Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah said Bengaluru currently faces a shortage of 500 million litres of water per day (MLD) against the actual requirement of 2,600 MLDs amid the severe drinking water crisis in the city. He also said that "out of 14,000 borewells in Bengaluru, 6,900 have dried". The Chief Minister told reporters on Monday that officials have been directed to meet every day to work out a plan to resolve the crisis, as per a report by the PTI news agency. Following a meeting with the officials of civic agencies and the Irrigation Department, Siddaramaiah said, "Water bodies have been encroached or dried. Bengaluru needs 2,600 MLD of water. Out of this, 1,470 MLD comes from the Cauvery river and 650 MLD from borewells. We have a shortage of about 500



MLD. Pinning hopes on the Cauvery Five project to help resolve the water crisis, he said "it will be able to cater to 110 villages, which were added to the Metropolitan Bengaluru Municipal Corporation in 2006-07". "We have enough storage of drinking water in Cauvery and Kabini, which is sufficient to last till June. There is 11.04 TMC water storage in KRS, 9.02 TMC in Kabini," the PTI news agency quoted the Chief Minister as saying.

He further informed that the state government plans to drill additional borewells across 313 areas, while 1,200 inactive ones will be revived, adding that measures will be implemented to fill up dried lakes.

Siddaramaiah said that officials have also been instructed to use all private water tankers, including the ones from the Karnataka Milk Federation, to provide water to slums, areas that depend on borewells and villages. He assured that the government did not have a shortage of funds to provide drinking water and a special committee would be set up to ensure that a similar crisis doesn't happen in the future again. Amid the water crisis, the Karnataka Water Supply and Sewerage Board has banned the use of drinking water for car washing, gardening, construction, and maintenance in Bengaluru.



The police said that an FIR has been filed on the basis of the woman's complaint and a case under Sections 328/376/506 of the IPC has been registered against the man, who is currently on the run. According to the FIR, the woman told her husband about the incident on February 10 and they both went to confront Aggarwal in his office located in Malviya Nagar, the PTI news agency reported. But he denied any wrongdoing and resorted to verbally abusing and threatening the couple.

Citizenship Act CAA Unconstitutional 237 Petitions Before Supreme Court

A bench led by Chief Justice of India DY Chandrachud and comprising Justice JB Pardiwala and Justice Manoj Misra is hearing the matter.

New Delhi. Amid the row over the Centre's move to implement the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) weeks before Lok Sabha election, the Supreme Court is hearing a batch of 237 petitions challenging the law. A bench led by Chief Justice of India DY Chandrachud and comprising Justice JB Pardiwala and Justice Manoj Misra is hearing the matter. Among the petitioners are Indian Union Muslim League (IUML), a political party primarily based in Kerala, and Democratic Youth Federation of India (DYFI), Congress leader Jairam Ramesh,

Trinamool leader Mahua Moitra and AIMIM chief Asaduddin Owaisi. The day after the Centre notified CAA rules, the two organisations approached the Supreme Court, seeking a pause on the implementation of the law. They termed CAA "discriminatory" against the Muslim community. Back in 2019, when the Citizenship Amendment Bill cleared the Parliament, multiple petitions had been filed against it. But the court had not paused its implementation because the rules had not been notified. On Friday, Senior Advocate Kapil Sibal told the court that there was no question of a pause back then since the rules were not notified. Solicitor General Tushar Mehta then said that the fact that the rules were notified before the elections was irrelevant. Under this law, non-Muslim migrants from Bangladesh, Pakistan and Afghanistan fleeing religious persecution can seek Indian citizenship. Persons from Hindu, Sikh, Buddhist, Jain, Parsi or Christian



communities from Afghanistan, Pakistan and Bangladesh, who entered India on or before December 31, 2014, are eligible to seek citizenship under CAA. The Opposition has slammed the Narendra Modi government over the timing of the law's implementation - four years after it cleared the Parliament. The move is "evidently designed to polarise the elections, especially in West Bengal and Assam", party leader Jairam Ramesh has said. Trinamool Congress chief and Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee has said she doubts the legality of CAA

and alleged a conspiracy to "snatch citizenship rights". "BJP leaders say CAA gives you rights. But the moment you apply for citizenship, you become illegal migrants and you will lose your rights. You will lose rights and be taken to detention camps. Please think before you apply," she said. The Centre has trashed the Opposition's allegations.

Stressing that the CAA is not "unconstitutional", Home Minister Amit Shah has accused the Opposition of resorting to the "politics of lies". On the timing of the law's implementation, he said, "BJP made it clear in its 2019 manifesto that it will bring CAA and provide Indian citizenship to refugees (from Pakistan, Bangladesh and Afghanistan). BJP has a clear agenda and under that promise, the Citizenship (Amendment) Bill was passed in both houses of Parliament in 2019. It got delayed due to Covid."

The next time your dog looks at you, panting and with his tongue out, he's not asking for a pat on the head, he might be suffering a sunstroke. That's one of the key symptoms of the heat-based illness, say experts. "We get an increasing number of complaints about pets suffering from sunstroke," says veterinarian Dr Persis Ghiara.

"Pugs and boxers are more affected as they are more hyper. The more excitable a dog is, the more he is running around, pulling things, the more susceptible he is to the heat," she adds. Another huge reason for this is when pet owners go shopping and leave their pets in a car without the window rolled down, says vet Sunita Patel. "I have had two to three cases like this already. Now, temperatures are touching 40 degrees and to leave dogs or even animals like cows, tied up outside in that heat, is hazardous for them." With the mercury set to rise even further, make sure you know how to help your pet cooled down the right way. There's a lot one can do, from exotic treatments at the spa, to simple techniques and even foods that can help them battle the heat.

Doggie ice cream? It's pawisable!

Dogs need to have cold treats in summer as they get heated up really fast. These have to be all-natural and are just meant to cool them down. Says dog food maker Yadika Sharma, "Dogs can't have sugar, but you can sometimes give them an ice cube to play around with, just make sure the cube is of a size that they won't choke on. You can also make frozen yoghurt made with plain, low-fat yoghurt, in say, fresh strawberry and carrot chip. In addition, try making sorbets with just fresh fruit and ice and minus any dairy products and sugar. We've made ones with crushed watermelon and honey as well as banana, pineapple and even mango. These are set in an ice tray or made into bone and paw shapes; dogs love them."

Spa-cial remedies

Dogs need skin care in summer just like humans do. Says animal care professional Gauri Keskar, "Dogs get rashes, hotspots etc and what helps the most is if you trim 50% of their hair. This makes them cooler and more

comfortable. The other important thing is to give them anti-tick and flea baths. You also have soothing aroma baths — like cucumber-watermelon, mild olive and strawberry-apple. And to soothe the skin, there are oatmeal or aloe-based (which is cooling) shampoos," she says.

Heat stroke symptoms in dogs

- Excessive panting, lethargy
- Suffocation
- Temperatures rising above 105 to 106 degrees farhenheit

What to do immediately:

- Put your dog in the bath tub.
- Hose him with cool shower or let him stand in a tub of water.
- Put a cold compress on his head to lower the body temperature.
- Rush him to the vet who will administer an intravenous to hydrate him as well as (sometimes) an anti-histamine, so the animal does not go into shock.

Some quick solutions Dr Ghiara presents a few easy tips to help pets to battle the hot season...

1. If you have an air-conditioner at home, keep it on for a few hours a day.



From jumping into the pool, to getting some spa 'TLC' and licking on doggie ice-creams, animals are finding their own way to beat the heat

2. Dogs must have adequate water to drink. Keep a bowl filled with water in the room at all times. Your dog will sense the requirement of how much to drink and you can refill it accordingly. You may also add some ice to the bowl so the water is cooler.
3. Make sure the animal gets enough shade. If you keep the dog in the verandah, make sure there is an enclosure or covered porch space.
4. Let your dog take a dip in the pool if you have one. But pet pools are expensive and

rare, so instead have a portable spool at home for it. You could give the dog a hand shower once a day, if say, the dog has been out for a long while. But my advice is that it is preferable to take it out for a walk before 7 or 8 am and after 6 in the evening. Heat stroke in cats Cats cannot tolerate rising heat. Their breathing starts to become shallow and it can escalate into heatstroke. Cats pant or sweat through their foot pads so as to get rid of this excess heat. It is important to help a cat cool down or else the temperature can result in organ damage or

even death. **Watch out for these signs:**
 - Restlessness and panting
 - Sweaty paw pads
 - Higher rectal temperature
 - Redness of the tongue and mouth
 - Vomiting
What to do immediately:
 Says Dr Dipti Valavalkar, "It's important to keep cats out of the direct sunlight as much as possible. But in case the cat does suffer from heatstroke, keep it in an

airconditioned or cooler environment. Put a wet cloth on it. You must also rush the animal to the vet who will see what is wrong, monitor the cat and administer the right medications to it."
Heard of paw booties?
 As the hot tar road and pavement can hurt the dog's paws, you can get your pet dog booties. "These are good but they only protect the paws and cannot prevent heatstroke. Also, dogs may not be acceptable to wearing them," warns Dr Ghiara.



Innovative ways to make family time count

Here are ways to ensure that you bond better with your folks

Take classes together

Join yoga or aerobics classes offered for parents and kids together. If your little one is too young to participate, look for classes that help you burn calories with your baby by incorporating him into your yoga moves or just take them along with you for an evening walk, or jump into the pool for a swim and bond.

Holiday time

Getting away from the city, automatically, helps you switch off from the daily grind. Family holidays are great occasion for each member of the family to get relaxed. Only a peaceful environment can help them to forget the tensions and rejuvenate the mind and body to lead life actively and happily.

Happy eaters

Get the kids to accompany you to the market and let them pick their own fruits and vegetables. Involve them in the food preparation. This way, they are more likely to enjoy their meals and try new things. This would prevent you from stressing on what the little one's eating habits. Likewise, what toddlers munch on during snack time will have a lasting effect on their health down

the road. The period from birth to two years is a critical window for the promotion of optimal growth.

No desserts as rewards

The easiest way for parents to get their little ones to eat fruits and veggies is by bribing them with a candy post meal. However, this bribe can cost their health in the long run because it builds a greater aversion to foods like peas, bitter gourd and long gourd. Often, parents offer a food once, and if the child doesn't eat it, they never reintroduce it. The



key is to introduce (children) to new foods.

Family dinners

A 2000 survey found that the nine to 14-year-olds who ate dinner with their families frequently consumed more fruits and vegetables and less cola and fried foods. Their diets also had higher amounts of many nutrients, like calcium, iron, and fibre. While on the table, serve your child small portions. A study has also found that when children served themselves food, the portions were appropriate for their age, whereas when adults served them double portions, the children ate 25 per cent more. Kids who frequently eat with their families are less likely to get depressed or develop an eating disorder.

Be there fully

It doesn't help if you are just there physically at home, and mentally still occupied with your job. So, set aside a specific time when you check your mails and return calls, instead of doing so throughout the day. Once home from work, also tape a note to the telephone that says 'No!' to remind you not to spread yourself too thin.

Revive date plans

Happy parents make happy kids. So, it won't hurt to revive the dating game. Catch a film or head out for a cup of coffee, while your kids are asleep. Working out together is also a fun way of spending time with your partner.

Redo your room

Too often, family rooms are the centre of laziness in a home. Change things around. Get the room painted in brighter colours or replace the comfy sofa with a bean bag. Clear up the clutter to breathe in new energy into the room.

Make chores fun

Instead of assigning each family member a chore to do alone, turn chores into a game you can do together. Race to see how fast you can get the house cleaned, and then try to beat your old time the next week. Play music while you are doing laundry and enlist the kids to sing and dance while helping to fold and put clothes away.

Top 10 annoying office habits!

Overbearing, obsessively rude, noisy, and opinionated - there are so many things that can be found annoying in that one person in office. So, what actually are some of the 'universally' bad behaviours for office work? Here's a look at the top 10 annoying office habits...



think it's a good idea to come in to work? The world really won't stop if that report doesn't get finished and the boss more likely regards you as a mug than a martyr. Your work mates, of course, will shower you with love for ruining their plans for the weekend and keeping their kids out of school.

1. **Office drummers** - There are lesser annoying office habits than the person who has to tap out a rhythm while waiting for their brain to submerge into the work they're assigned.
2. **Foghorn phone voice** - The breed of office worker who raises their tone several decibels as soon as they pick up the phone.
3. **Pod pong** - Well, these are those people who marinate themselves in perfumes overnight.
4. **Key smashers** - All offices have at least one person who appears to think that to make the little symbols on their keyboard appear on the screen, they need to exert the force of an atomic bomb through the ends of their digits.
5. **Paid for nothing** - In this case, an employee gets paid for standing out in the sunshine chatting to wheezy and addicted mates while the fresh-lunged members of the workforce are indoors putting their mind to work.
6. **Snot funny** - What is it with people, who riddled with pleurisy, the bubonic plague or cancer of the entire body, still
7. **Lucifer's lunch** - Egg and mayonnaise sandwiches, tuna fishcakes, blue cheese with crackers, breakfast burritos with extra onion and chips with salt and vinegar - all food items which should be banned from the workplace, thanks to their smell.
8. **Ringtone hell** - This section includes all those people who play bits of their favourite heavy metal music collection from a speaker on their desk, via their mobile phone.
9. **Space invaders** - You distinctly remember hearing the boss bring your new work mate over to his or her work area and say, "This is your desk". The boss did not follow that up with the words, "but feel free to use your colleague's desk for overspill if there's not enough room for your inane gossip magazines and pictures of your 17 children".
10. **Eau de underarm** - There are fewer things more noxious than a damp-shirted male who, after working up a sweat running for the bus, is left to "mature" over a keyboard for eight hours.

Krystal Integrated IPO allotment: Step-by-step guide to check status

NEW DELHI. The Krystal Integrated Services Limited's initial public offering (IPO) closed for public issue on Thursday, March 14, 2024. The latest update shows that it has been oversubscribed 13.49 times. Among the subscription figures, retail investors bid 3.41 times, Qualified Institutional Buyers (QIB) bid 7.32 times, and Non-Institutional Investors (NII) bid 45.22 times.

The IPO offered 29,38,286 shares, but received a staggering bid for 3,96,26,200 shares. Final allotments are expected to be completed by March 19, 2024, with the company aiming to be listed on both the Bombay Stock Exchange (BSE) and the National Stock Exchange (NSE) by March 21, 2024.

Investors keen to know their allotment status can easily do so online. They can visit either the Bombay Stock Exchange (BSE) or Link Intime India, the registrar to the issue.

Gold, silver price : Precious metals record hike on MCX

New Delhi. Both gold and silver prices recorded a hike on the Multi Commodity Exchange (MCX) on Tuesday, March 19, 2024. Gold futures, maturing on April 5, 2024, stood at Rs 65,657 per 10 grams on the MCX, after recording a marginal hike of Rs 49 or 0.07 per cent. The previous close was recorded at Rs 65,608.

Meanwhile, silver futures, maturing on May 3, 2024, witnessed a hike of Rs 104 or 0.14 per cent and were retailing at Rs 75,600 per kg on the MCX against the previous close of Rs 75,496.

GOLD, SILVER PRICES IN MAJOR CITIES

The gold and silver prices in India depend on several factors, including the value of the rupee against the dollar. Global demand also plays a key role in determining the trends observed in the rate of precious metals.

GOLD, SILVER PRICES ON INTERNATIONAL MARKET

Gold held steady on Tuesday as investors stayed on the sidelines ahead of the U.S. Federal Reserve policy meeting this week, which could offer further clues on the timing of likely interest rate cuts this year, news agency Reuters reported. According to the latest metal report, spot gold stood at \$2,160.79 per ounce. US gold futures were flat at \$2,164.10.

Sensex, Nifty Tank In Early Trade Amid Weak Asian Markets, Foreign Fund Outflows

Mumbai. Benchmark equity indices Sensex and Nifty declined in early trade on Tuesday in tandem with weak Asian markets and fresh foreign fund outflows. Also, investors turned cautious ahead of the US Fed interest rate decision this week. The 30-share BSE Sensex tanked 420.56 points to 72,327.86 after opening on a weak note. The NSE Nifty declined 126.35 points to 21,929.35. From the Sensex basket, Tata Consultancy Services, Nestle, Bajaj Finserv, Wipro, Maruti Suzuki India, Reliance Industries, Larsen & Toubro and NTPC were the major laggards. (Also Read: Rupee Declines 5 Paise To 82.95 Against US Dollar On firm Crude Prices)

Tata Steel, Bajaj Finance, JSW Steel and Bharti Airtel were among the gainers. In Asian markets, Seoul, Tokyo, Shanghai, and Hong Kong were quoting lower. The Wall Street ended in positive territory on Monday.

Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) offloaded equities worth Rs 2,051.09 crore on Monday, according to exchange data. "Markets' attention now shifts to the Fed's meeting outcome on March 20," Prashanth Tapse, Senior VP (Research), Mehta Equities Ltd, said. (Also Read: Stock Markets Close Higher In Volatile Trade Ahead Of Key Fed Policy Meeting) Global oil benchmark Brent crude dipped 0.14 per cent to USD 86.77 a barrel. The 30-share BSE benchmark climbed 104.99 points, or 0.14 per cent, to settle at 72,748.42 on Monday. The NSE Nifty went up 32.35 points, or 0.15 per cent, to 22,055.70.

Rupee Declines 5 Paise To 82.95 Against US Dollar On firm Crude Prices

Mumbai. The rupee declined 5 paise to 82.95 against the US dollar on Tuesday due to firm crude oil prices and foreign fund outflows. At the interbank foreign exchange market, the rupee opened at 82.94 to a dollar, down 4 paise over the previous close of 82.90.

The local currency moved in a tight range of 82.93 to 82.95 to a dollar in early deals. The rupee traded at 82.95, down 5 paise, against the US dollar at 9.15 am.

A stronger US dollar and firm bond yields ahead of the US Fed interest rate decision also weighed on the local unit, forex dealers said. The US dollar index, which measures the greenback's strength against a basket of six currencies gained 0.20 per cent to 103.64.

Brent crude, the global crude oil benchmark, also stayed



above USD 86 per barrel to trade at around four-month high levels. Losses in local stocks also weighed on the rupee. Benchmark BSE Sensex declined by 398.79 points or 0.55 per cent to 72,349.63 while broader Nifty dropped 120.10 points or 0.54 per cent to 21,935.60.

Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) offloaded equities worth Rs 2,051.09 crore on Monday, according to exchange data.

Paytm shares jump for 3rd straight session. Will the rally continue?

Paytm shares jump nearly 5% as positive momentum continues

Shares of digital payments firm hit 5% upper circuit for past two sessions

Paytm shares have gained over 12% in the past five sessions

NEW DELHI. Paytm shares rose sharply on Tuesday after brokerage firm Yes Securities upgraded its stock. Shares of Paytm rose 4.96 per cent to Rs 408.50 on the Bombay Stock Exchange (BSE) at 11:40 am. Paytm stock had hit the 5 per cent upper circuit in the previous two

trading sessions.

Yes Securities upgrade

Yes Securities has upgraded Paytm's rating from 'Neutral' to 'Buy' and significantly raised the target price to Rs 505 per share, compared to the previous Rs 350. The brokerage firm stated, "We value OCL at 2.7 times FY25E P/S for an FY28-31E EPS CAGR of 78 per cent. We have not assumed any rehabilitation of OCL's Wallet business in our assumptions. We have assumed a relatively constrained outlook for the loan distribution business. The market is currently pricing in an even more acute scenario." Yes Securities outlined key reasons for the upgrade, including Paytm's reduced dependence on the wallet business for revenue and the recent approval from the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) allowing Paytm to participate in UPI as a Third-Party Application Provider (TPAP) in the multibank model. The brokerage highlighted that this approval



will ensure continuity in Paytm's UPI services. Additionally, Yes Securities noted that Paytm has effectively managed client loss resulting from reputational damage and on-ground confusion following the Reserve Bank of India's action against Paytm Payments Bank Limited (PPBL). Despite a reported 14 per cent month-on-month decline in Paytm's UPI transaction value in February 2024, adjusted figures indicate a more modest ~10 per cent decrease.

Will the positive rally continue?

Investors are also regaining confidence in Paytm's stock as the RBI's action against PPBL has not severely disrupted services offered by Paytm since March 15. While the stock is down over 37 per cent from the beginning of the year, recent developments have been favourable for the digital payments firm. Paytm shares have gained over 12 per cent in the past five sessions, and nearly 13.5 per cent in a month. According to analysts, Paytm's share price may continue to gain or remain over the next few trading sessions as payments and other services offered by the digital payments firm continues to operate smoothly. However, it may be noted that several brokerages, who had downgraded Paytm following the RBI's action on PPBL, are yet to revise their views on the stock. These brokerage firms are likely come out with updated ratings, which will decide the future course of the Paytm stock.

Popular Vehicles and Services lists at 2 per cent discount over issue price

New Delhi. Popular Vehicles and Services Limited (PVSL) saw a lacklustre debut on Dalal Street as its shares listed at a discount.

The shares listed at Rs 289.20 at a discount of 1.97 per cent on the National Stock Exchange (NSE) and at Rs 292 at 1.02 per cent on the Bombay Stock Exchange (BSE), compared to its issue price of Rs 295 per share. The listing of Popular Vehicles and Services had been anticipated to be modest. Prior to its debut, the company's shares didn't command any premium in the grey market, indicating a subdued or on-par listing. However, there was a slight uptick in the unofficial market with shares trading at Rs 25-30 above the issue price when bidding



began. Hailing from Kerala, Popular Vehicles & Services offered its shares at a price range of Rs 280-295 each.

Investors had the opportunity to bid for a minimum of 50 shares and multiples thereafter. Through its initial public

retail investors and employees subscribed to theirs just over one time and nearly eight times, respectively. However, non-institutional investors subscribed to only 66 per cent of their quota.

Explained: Why TCS shares fell 3% in early trade

TCS shares fell 3 per cent on the Bombay Stock Exchange to Rs 4021.25 in early trade and continue to trade in negative territory.

NEW DELHI. Shares of Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) dropped by 3 per cent in early trade on Tuesday as Tata Sons, the holding company of Tata Group, reportedly sold around 2.02 crore shares of the IT firm in a block deal. Following this transaction, TCS shares fell 3 per cent on the Bombay Stock Exchange (BSE), settling at Rs 4021.25. The deal is estimated to be valued at around Rs 9,000 crore, with an average share price of Rs 4,043. The block deal, initiated by Tata Sons, aimed to offload up to 2.34 crore shares of TCS at a floor price of Rs 4,001 per share, representing a 3.65 per cent discount from the previous day's closing price. However, the final confirmation of the buyer and seller will be disclosed



when the stock exchanges release the data later in the evening.

It may be noted that Tata Sons holds the majority stake of over 72 per cent in TCS, India's largest software services exporter and second in terms of most valued listed company, with a market capitalisation of 14.5 lakh crore.

Reason behind stake sale

While an official statement explaining the rationale behind the stake sale is yet to be released, there is speculation that Tata Sons' decision could be driven by the goal of debt reduction and the exploration of investments in burgeoning sectors like semiconductors. Furthermore, the sale

may also serve as a strategic manoeuvre to circumvent the possibility of Tata Sons' IPO, given the regulatory restrictions imposed by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) on nonbanking finance companies. Following reports that the RBI declined to grant an exemption to Tata Sons, potentially leading to similar demands from other corporate holding companies, Tata Sons has been seeking advice from legal and financial experts to address the situation.

With borrowings exceeding Rs 20,000 crore, Tata Sons aims to bring down its debt below the threshold of Rs 100 crore to avoid falling under the regulatory ambit of the RBI. While majorly held by the Dorabji Tata Trust (28 per cent) and the Ratan Tata Trust (24 per cent), Tata Group also has various cross-holdings across its entities. Despite the stake sale, Tata Group retains its status as India's most valued conglomerate, with its market value surpassing the Rs 30-lakh crore mark. TCS alone contributes to half of this valuation.

Coal stocks at comfortable level to meet peak summer demand, says official

NEW DELHI. The country's coal stocks are at comfortable levels to meet the demand during the peak summer season, said a senior official from the coal ministry. The official highlighted that the current stock at 143.59 MT (million tonne) as of March 16, 2024, is significantly higher than the 109.24 MT recorded last year for the same period. Stock at pitheads managed by Coal India Limited (CIL) and Singareni Collieries Company Limited (SCCL) is 82.56 MT. Additionally, the National Power Portal reports that coal stocks at power plants with capacities exceeding 189 GW stood at 45.48 MT as of March 16. Stocks at captive and commercial mines are 10.26 MT, with an additional 5.29 MT stored at PW/GSS/Ports. "We are in a very comfortable position in terms of coal stock in the country," the official affirmed. "Even though power demand is likely to increase, our production and coal stock are sufficient to meet the demand," said the official. The India Meteorological Department (IMD) has predicted a hot summer, with above-normal temperatures and an above-normal number of heatwave



days from March to May due to El Nino conditions. This is expected to significantly increase power demand this summer, requiring more coal as 70% of India's power still comes from coal-fired plants. This year power demand is

expected to grow at 6-7% year-over-year due to rising consumption from industries and households. The peak power demand in this financial year was 241 GW in September 2023, and the ministry expects it to grow at 7% annually to 260 GW in

FY25. To address this anticipated rise, power ministry on March 4 advised thermal power plants (TPPs) to continue importing coal for blending at 6% till June 2024 to maintain ample stocks at plant end.



divided over relevance of CBDC, as in the current scenario most payments are taking place via UPI and net banking. "The main purpose behind introducing eRupee was to curtail cryptocurrency. The government has succeeded in achieving that target. Online transactions are already happening via net banking, UPI and other online modes, so there is no relevance of CBDC," a top official further. Recently, finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman underscored the perils linked to unregulated cryptocurrencies. She said the threats of illicit activities like terror funding and drug financing arising from lack of consistent regulations globally. Another banking official, however, said CBDCs can be used in capital account and large scale commercial transactions as there are limitations in net banking and UPI while executing them. "Net banking and UPI have their own limitations. In addition, several other issues like financing of terror activities and counterfeiting of currencies can be sorted with the launch of CBDCs," said another official.

Meanwhile, as per sources, banking officials are

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NEWS BOX

New team, new challenge: Captain Pat Cummins links up with SRH for IPL 2024

New Delhi. Pat Cummins reached India on Tuesday, March 19 to play for the Sunrisers Hyderabad (SRH) in the Indian Premier League (IPL).

The Sunrisers shared a post on their social media handle with the caption, "Look who's here. Welcome to Hyderabad, Pat Cummins". The Sunrisers are scheduled to start their campaign on Saturday, March 23 with their match against Shreyas Iyer's Kolkata Knight Riders (KKR) at the Eden Gardens in Kolkata.

Pat Cummins set for a new role

Cummins has a massive role to play for the Sunrisers after being named as their skipper for the 2024 edition of the T20 league. He has replaced Aiden Markram at the helm after the Sunrisers failed to advance to the IPL playoffs last time around.

It's pertinent to note that Cummins has not captained any team thus far in T20 cricket, although he has tasted success as skipper in ODIs and Test cricket. In fact, it is highly likely that Mitchell Marsh will lead Australia in the T20 World Cup 2024 and not Cummins. Sunrisers went berserk to buy Cummins, who became the first cricketer in the history of the IPL to cross the INR 20-crore mark in the auction. SRH



bought Cummins for a whopping price of INR 20.50 crore after an intense bidding war with Mumbai Indians (MI), Chennai Super Kings (CSK) and Royal Challengers Bangalore (RCB).

In 42 matches in the IPL, Cummins has racked up 379 runs at an average of 18.95 and a strike-rate of 152.21 with 3 half-centuries to his name. He also has 45 wickets to his name at an economy rate of 8.54. Cummins played a couple of seasons for the Knight Riders before moving to the Sunrisers, who are looking to win their second IPL title since David Warner brought them glory in 2016.

PSL 2024: Imad Wasim smokes inside dressing room during tense final vs Sultans

New Delhi Islamabad United skipper Imad Wasim was seen smoking inside the dressing room during the Pakistan Super League (PSL) 2024 final against the Multan Sultans on Monday, March 18 at the National Stadium in Karachi.

Wasim was seen with a smoking object in hand at the fag end of the Sultans' innings. Commentator Waqar Younis was heard saying, "Sitting out now, he can relax, he has done his job" when the cameras panned towards Imad. As far as 'job' is concerned,



Imad did it with precision as the United won their third PSL title after beating the Sultans by 2 wickets in the final. After the United were sent to field first, Imad finished with figures of 4-0-23-5, getting the wickets of Yasir Khan, David Willey, Johnson Charles, Khushdil Shah and Chris Jordan. On the back of his spell, the United restricted the Sultans to 159 for 9. Thereafter, the captain kept his cool as his team chased down the target off the last ball. The southpaw stayed not out on 19 off 17 balls with 2 fours.

It also happened to be Imad's second PSL title as skipper after he captained the Karachi Kings to glory in 2020. Although he accepted that the United should have tried to finish the match in the penultimate over, he was happy with the victory.

"4-5 years of cricket left in me" Imad, who has retired from international cricket for Pakistan, also said that he has plans to playing the game for the next 4 to 5 years. "Didn't know that it would go on to be the best ever tournament. Just wanted to have an impact in the team's win. It was a new experience - taking five wickets in the final. Took lesson that we should've finished it one over earlier. I'm happy playing cricket. Trying my utmost to contribute to the team. 4-5 years of cricket left in me," Imad said.

Miami Open: Simona Halep set to face Paula Badosa on return from doping ban

Simona Halep is set to be back after her doping ban

Halep will take on Paula Badosa in the first round

Simona Halep was suspended in October 2022

New Delhi. Simona Halep will make her competitive return this week after winning an appeal over a doping suspension when she takes the court at the Miami Open where Indian Wells champion Iga Swiatek will look to pull off the Sunshine Double. Halep, who accepted a wild card into the Miami Open after her four-year ban was cut to nine months by the top court for global sport, will face Paula Badosa on Tuesday with the winner getting world number two Aryna Sabalenka in the second round.

For Halep, the clash against world number 80 Badosa of Spain will mark her first match



since the 2022 U.S. Open where she was upset in the first round by Ukrainian qualifier Daria Snigur. Halep, a former Wimbledon and French Open champion, was suspended in October 2022 after testing positive for roxadustat - a banned drug that stimulates the production of red blood cells - at that year's U.S. Open. Halep vigorously denied the charges against her.

The Romanian former world number one owns a 2-0 record in head-to-head meetings with Badosa, having never lost more than three games in a set. Top seed Swiatek missed her Miami Open title defence last year due to injury but returns in stellar form and fresh off a dominant 6-4 6-0 win over ninth seed Maria Sakkari in the Indian Wells final.

Now Swiatek will set her sights on capturing the Indian Wells and Miami Open titles back-to-back, a feat known as the Sunshine Double given the tournaments' respective

locations in California and Florida, for a second time. Should Swiatek, who will face either Italy's Camila Giorgi or fellow Pole Magdalena Frech in the second round, claim the Miami title she would join Steffi Graf (1994, 1996) as the only women to complete the Sunshine Double twice.

Florida resident Coco Gauff, who reached the Indian Wells semi-finals, will enjoy plenty of crowd support as she returns to Miami for the first time since her triumph at last year's U.S. Open. On the men's side, Carlos Alcaraz will also chase the final piece of the Sunshine Double after a successful title defence at Indian Wells where he beat reigning Miami Open champion Daniil Medvedev in a rematch of the 2023 California final.

While the Miami men's draw is stacked, one notable absence will be world number one and six-times champion Novak Djokovic, who expressed a desire to limit the number of events he plays at this stage of his decorated career. The 36-year-old Djokovic is still without a trophy this year having represented Serbia at the United Cup before reaching the Australian Open semi-finals and suffering a shock third round exit at Indian Wells.

IPL 2024: Navjot Singh Sidhu makes his comeback to commentary

New Delhi. Navjot Singh Sidhu has made his comeback to commentary and will be seen during the Indian Premier League (IPL) 2024, which gets underway on March 23 with the season opener between Chennai Super Kings (CSK) and Royal Challengers Bangalore (RCB) at the MA Chidambaram Stadium in Chennai. The 60-year-old Sidhu has been amongst the iconic voices in Indian cricket, having plied his trade across the globe. Apart from lending his voice in international matches, Sidhu also worked for several broadcasters in the IPL. During his time away from commentary, Sidhu was also involved in a controversy after he was removed from the Kapil Sharma Show back in 2019. Navjot Sidhu's journey in commentary



Sidhu embarked on his commentary career during India's tour of Sri Lanka in 2001. Known for his distinctive and vibrant style, Sidhu quickly became famous for his witty

one-liners. His unique blend of humour and cricket insight made him a beloved figure amongst cricket fans and commentators alike.

Sidhu's transition from the cricket field to the commentary box was seamless, thanks to his deep understanding of the game and his ability to engage audiences with his charismatic personality. His contributions to cricket commentary in India have left an indelible mark, making him one of the most memorable voices in the sport.

Sidhu was one of India's most stylish cricketers during his playing days. His career spanned 15 years from 1983 to 1998. In 51 Tests and 136 ODIs, Sidhu scored 3202 and 4413 runs respectively with 15 centuries and 48 half-centuries to his name.

Lazio appoint Igor Tudor as new manager following Maurizio Sarri's resignation

Lazio appoint Igor Tudor as their new manager

Lazio replace Maurizio Sarri with Igor Tudor

Lazio are placed 9th in the Serie A points table

New Delhi. Croatian Igor Tudor has been announced as the new manager of Serie A club Lazio, following Maurizio Sarri's recent resignation. The former Juventus player, who has previously managed Serie A teams Udinese and Hellas Verona, signed an 18-month contract with Lazio. Tudor also had a successful stint with French team Olympique de Marseille, leading them to a third-place finish in Ligue 1. The move comes after Maurizio Sarri tendered his resignation as Lazio's coach on March 13. Lazio, who are currently positioned ninth in the Serie A standings, called upon assistant coach Giovanni Martusciello to lead the



team to a 3-2 victory against Frosinone this past Saturday. Sarri had been facing criticism for Lazio's form this season, having won just two of their last eight league matches prior to his resignation. This was a huge downturn from their last season's performances, where they pipped the likes of Inter Milan, AC Milan, AS Roma and Juventus to finish second behind Napoli in Serie A.

In a statement released by the club, Lazio thanked Sarri for his services while wishing him the best for his managerial future. Sarri, a former Chelsea and Napoli manager, took

over the reins in Lazio in June 2021 from Simone Inzaghi, who left to sign with Inter Milan. "S.S. Lazio announces that Maurizio Sarri has handed in his resignation as head coach of the first team. The club would like to thank the coach for his achievements and for the work he has done, wishing him the best of luck in his professional and personal life," read the statement.

The club at the moment are just four points adrift of the qualifying places for the European competitions. Prior to their 3-2 win over Frosinone, the Rome-based team has succumbed to four back-to-back losses. Ciro Immobile has been their top-scorer this season, netting just six goals in the league while Felipe Anderson has provided the most assists for them (6).

Lazio are currently placed ninth in the Serie A points table, having amassed 43 points from 29 matches, winning 13, losing 12 while drawing four games. They have a goal-difference of 3, having netted 36 goals while conceding as many 33.

Good Vibes, Great WPL: How Smriti and Perry nurtured a winning atmosphere at RCB

New Delhi Royal Challengers Bangalore's spirit and steely resolve were rewarded when they went on to win the Women's Premier League, clinching their maiden title on Sunday, March 17. This was RCB's first ever title triumph in the franchise's 16-year history. The celebration in New Delhi was an extravagant affair, and rightly so, as the team lifted the trophy against all odds at the Arun Jaitley Stadium on Sunday. Just like the final, where they had to overcome an incredible Shafali Verma onslaught, RCB had to see off a fair few storms throughout their campaign that ended on a high. After almost getting knocked out due to a slump in form midway through the tournament, RCB clawed their way back and sneaked into the play-offs. In the Eliminator, RCB defeated Mumbai Indians to set up a final against Delhi Capitals, against whom they lost twice in the league stage. In the final, Shafali Verma and Meg Lanning started off in a dominant manner, and it once again looked like RCB would be blown away. However, the team stuck together and staged an incredible turnaround as the powerful Delhi batting

collapsed with the Capitals losing their last 9 wickets for just 49 runs.

HOW RCB TURNED THEIR FORTUNES

According to Asha Sobhana, the senior leg-spinner who was one of the architects or their stellar bowling show, RCB did not panic for one moment even when Delhi had registered the joint highest powerplay score (61/0) in this season in the final of the tournament. "I mean, even in the match we won the last over (Eliminator vs MI). It was the least total we defended. So that match also, we were cool in such an environment. These experienced players, including Sophie Devine and Perry created an environment that was something different. It was not for us like 'Oh, my God. 135. No, it is enough. 135. Just keep smiling and take the game as deep as possible'. That was the only conversation," Sobhana said in an RCB event on Monday in New Delhi.

"Even when DC were hitting in the final, the message was simple: 'just take the game ahead. It's okay. Just keep smiling'," added Sobhana. **RCB LEVELS UP DOMESTIC**



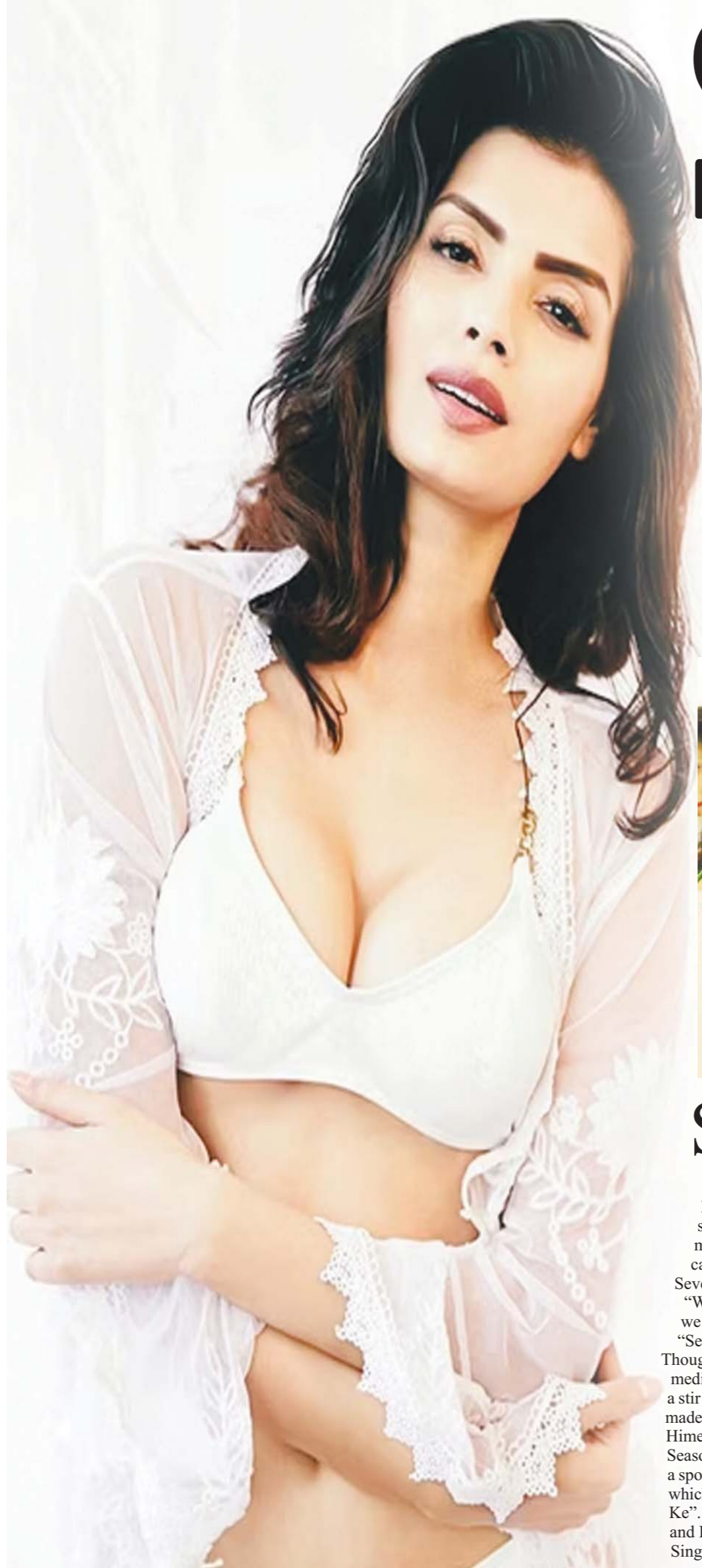
PLAYERS

At 33 years of age, this was Sobhana's first full season with the RCB. The WPL has been a boon for cricketers like her, who have not been able to break into the Indian national team. It has offered them a consistent platform to showcase their class and earn the selectors' attention. Sobhana spoke in detail about how RCB had helped her level up to the WPL standards by taking meticulous care of her training regime. The bowling all-rounder revealed that RCB had hosted multiple camps for the Indian domestic

contingent throughout the year to get them in shape and in form for the WPL 2024. "A lot of work has been done, especially during the off-season. We used to have at least 3 to 4 days of camp. Especially for domestic players, RCB conducted fitness camps specifically like 30 to 40 days or 40 to 50 days. So that really helped me, because it's not easy for, uh, for anything to conduct such a camp. Uh, it's not like a normal camp, like an international standard fitness camp," Asha Sobhana said. "That player I have never experienced. So, it was a really good thing for me. I mean, I tried my best to improve my fitness. That really helped me," Sobhana further added.

THE HAPPY VIBES

The spin bowling all-rounder, however, credited the team's incredible bonding as the main reason behind RCB's title-winning run. "This year we got you know, we got the team. We got enough time to sit and talk. Last time it was all in a hurry. So, this time we had enough time in Bangalore also.



Sonali Raut

Sizzles As She Flaunts Her Curves In Neon Swimsuit, Denim Jeans Combo; See Viral Pic



Sonali Raut often shares mesmerising pictures and videos on her Instagram, where she consistently woos her fans with her sex appeal. As one of the hottest actresses in the industry, she exudes an enviable figure that commands attention. Having said that, in her latest photo, the actress went bold once again, leaving everyone gasping for air. On Monday, Sonali Raut took to her Instagram handle and drooped a sizzling picture of herself, in which she can be seen sporting a neon green swimsuit and denim jeans combo. The actress and model oozed glamour as she struck a pose against a mirror. She wrote in the caption, "3 in One!!!"

Several fans took to the comment section to compliment her. One of them wrote, "Wow what a hotness you have." Another one commented, "Hotness! That's how we play with Neon colour". Someone else said, "Sundar hai yaar." A fan stated, "Sexy!" Another one commented, "Super stylish!"

Though Sonali Raut hasn't appeared in many movies, she's quite popular on social media. She often shares attractive photoshoots and behind-the-scenes videos, causing a stir online. She joined the Kingfisher Calendar in 2010 when she was just 19. Sonali made her acting debut in 2014 with the movie The Xpose, where she starred alongside Himesh Reshammiya and Yo Yo Honey Singh. She also participated in Bigg Boss Season 8, where her quirky and outspoken personality entertained viewers, earning her a spot as one of the finalists. In 2016, Sonali appeared in the film Great Grand Masti in which she played Shiney. She was also seen in an item song of the film "Lipstick Laga Ke". She also worked in the web series Dangerous, which starred Karan Singh Grover and Bipasha Basu. The series was directed by Bhushan Patel and produced by Mika Singh.

Rakhi Sawant's Ex-Husband Adil Khan Durrani Kisses Somi Khan In FIRST Appearance After Marriage



Rakhi Sawant's former husband Adil Khan Durrani recently got married to Bigg Boss fame Somi Khan. The couple have now made their first appearance after marriage and their video has gone viral all over social media. Earlier, while speaking to News18 Showsha, Adil had called this his "first marriage". In the video which has gone viral, Adil could be seen holding Somi close as they posed for the paps. The newly married couple held hands as they smiled for the photos. They were seen twinning in yellow traditional outfits.

Earlier, in an exclusive conversation with News18 Showsha, Adil had said, "This is my first wedding only. We are currently in Bangalore. We'll be flying to Mumbai tomorrow. We'll make an official announcement. I'll share everything in detail soon." Adil Khan Durrani was previously married to Rakhi Sawant. However, they parted ways last year after the Bigg Boss fame levelled several allegations against Adil and accused him of being involved in extramarital affairs. Adil was then picked up from Rakhi's residence and arrested on February 7, 2023. After being imprisoned for five months in a Mysuru jail, Adil walked out and levelled several counter-allegations against Rakhi. In an interview with Bollywood Bubble, he talked about Rakhi's claims of miscarriage and claimed that the actress could not get pregnant. He alleged that Rakhi had gotten a uterus-removal surgery. Adil also claimed Rakhi was still married to Ritesh (her first husband) when she married him.

Prior to Adil, Rakhi was also married to Ritesh. The two entered the Bigg Boss 15 house together but parted ways soon after the show's grand finale. In February 2022, Rakhi announced her separation from Ritesh and shared a statement claiming 'a lot happened' after Salman Khan's reality show. As for Somi Khan, she was a part of Bigg Boss 12 with her sister, Saba Khan. Dipika Kakar had emerged as the winner of Salman Khan's show during that season.

Aamir Khan, Genelia D'Souza's Chemistry Is Palpable In BTS Shot From Sitaare Zameen Par; See Viral Photo



Genelia D'Souza and Aamir Khan have begun filming for their Bollywood comeback film, Sitaare Zameen Par. The actress shared a BTS photo of the duo on set on Monday, March 18. Aamir Khan is eyeing to rule the Christmas 2024 box office yet again. The actor, who has often released his films on the occasion of Christmas, has confirmed that he will be releasing his comeback film Sitaare Zameen Par on Christmas this year. In the photo shared by Genelia, the actress could be seen dressed in casual clothing. She wore a white top with a pair of distressed jeans. Genelia looked radiant as she laughed at something Aamir seemingly said. The actor also opted for a relaxed look in a black T-shirt with jeans.

Speaking with TV9 during their conclave, Aamir confirmed that Sitaare Zameen Par will be a Christmas release. "My next film as a lead actor, which has just begun filming, is Sitaare Zameen Par. We are trying to release it by the end of this year, on the occasion of Christmas. It is an entertaining film, I like the story. The shooting of the film has begun," he said. It was earlier reported by Pinkvilla, "Aamir has been in the prep mode for Sitaare Zameen Par over the last few months and is all set to take the film on floors from February 2. He has finally zeroed down on his look for the film and has done several reading sessions with the ensemble cast. "It's going to be a marathon schedule for Sitaare Zameen Par and the actor has allotted 70 to 80 working days on the film. With a lot of time invested in pre-production, this would be among the fastest films that Aamir would deliver to the audience," the insider added.

Katrina Kaif

Understands Punjabi 'Perfectly', Tries To Speak It At Home Says Vicky's Father Sham Kaushal

Katrina Kaif and Vicky Kaushal are one of Bollywood's most loved couples. They often leave their fans gushing over them when they talk about their relationship in interviews. Recently, Vicky and his father Sham Kaushal spoke about Katrina and Sham mentioned that Katrina understands Punjabi perfectly. "She tries speaking in Punjabi and understands it perfectly," Sham told The Week. He added, "Now, when people ask me how they should introduce me, I tell them, 'Not as an action director, but as the father of Vicky and Sunny, and the father-in-law of Katrina Kaif.'"

Meanwhile, Vicky also gushed over his wife in the interview. He said, "Katrina comes from a completely different geography. But if you meet her family, you will see that her core life principles are similar to mine. In terms of family, ours is a middle-class upbringing, [where you value] what you have and how you have earned it. When we have family get-togethers, the difference is only linguistic. Actually, I was taken by surprise when I got to interact with her; it is not what it seems from afar. I was a fanboy and admired her for a long time... even if she was an astronaut, I would have fallen in love with her."

Meanwhile, on the work front, Katrina Kaif was earlier seen in Salman Khan's Tiger 3. She reprised her role as Zoya in the third instalment of the franchise. She was last seen in Merry Christmas alongside Vijay Sethupathi. Now, she will be seen in Farhan Akhtar's Jee Le Zara with Priyanka Chopra and Alia Bhatt. As for Vicky, he was last seen in Sam Bahadur. He recently signed Sanjay Leela Bhansali's Love and War with Ranbir Kapoor and Alia Bhatt. He will soon be seen in Bad Newz with Ammy Virk and Triptii Dimri.

