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### Rahul Gandhi claims ED planning raid on him over Chakravayuh speech

ST Correspondent

Chandigarh, August 2: Rahul Gandhi- Congress MP and Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha- has claimed that the Enforcement Directorate (ED) was planning a raid on him. He said some ED insiders had told him about a raid being planned, and that he was 'waiting with open arms'. In a post on X on Friday, Rahul Gandhi said, "Apparently, 2 in 1 didn't like my Chakravayuh speech. ED 'insiders' tell me a raid is being planned. Waiting with open



arms, @dir\_ed. Chai and biscuits on me." Former probationary IAS officer Puja Khedkar's mother gets bail in criminal intimidation case 'Rahul had on July 29 given a speech in the Lok Sabha during a discussion on the Union Budget, where he said: "Thousands of years ago, in Kurukshetra, six people trapped Abhimanyu in a 'Chakravayuh' and killed him. I did a little research and found out that 'Chakravayuh' is also known as 'Padmavayuh' - which means 'Lotus formation'... In the 21st century, a new 'Chakravayuh' has been formed... What was done with Abhimanyu, is being done with India - the youth, farmers, women, small and medium businesses." Rahul's speech was flayed by BJP MP Anurag Thakur over Chakravayuh statement and said the country has seen many "Chakravayus of Congress Party".

### Kerala CM Pinarayi Vijayan orders withdrawal of controversial note restricting scientists' comments on landslides

Thiruvananthapuram, August 2: Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan has directed Chief Secretary V Venu to withdraw a controversial note issued by the State Disaster Management Authority (SDMA), which restrained science and technology institutions in the state from sharing their opinions and study reports with the media regarding the recent deadly landslides in Wayanad. In a statement on Thursday night, Vijayan said the news that the SDMA had directed scientific institutions and scientists not to visit the disaster-affected Meppadi Panchayat in Wayanad and not to express their opinions was misleading. "The state government does not have such a policy," the Chief Minister said. "The Chief Secretary has been directed to immediately intervene and withdraw the communication that conveyed such a message," he said.

### GPS coordinates, aerial drone pictures used by rescuers to locate survivors

Sanjay Kumar

Wayanad, August 2: Rescue teams on Friday used GPS coordinates from aerial drone pictures and cell phones, including the last location of people who lived in the landslides-hit areas of Wayanad to help locate survivors, amidst accelerated search operations after the completion of the 190-foot-long Bailey bridge by the Army. A family of four was rescued from an isolated house in an area near Padavetti Kunnu on the fourth day of the deadly landslides, giving hope to hundreds of rescuers, racing against time to search for survivors. With nearly 300 people still missing, the death toll is expected to go up. As many as 201 people have died and 264 were injured in the massive landslides that hit Wayanad district in the

wee hours of July 30. Additionally, 130 body parts were also recovered, according to the Kerala Health Department. The search and rescue operations that resumed early morning received an impetus as the Bailey bridge helped the rescue teams to move the heavy machinery, including excavators, and ambulances to the worst-affected Mundakkai and Chooralmala hamlets. Former probationary IAS officer Puja Khedkar's mother gets bail in criminal intimidation case ' According to official sources, the extent of human loss will emerge when rescuers clear houses covered by debris and wooden logs using heavy machinery. Authorities reported that many more body parts had been collected and genetic testing was under way to identify the remains.

## Shivraj Chouhan's 'adharmik' dig on Cong for Chakravayuh-Shakuni references from Mahabharata

Naresh Malhotra

New Delhi, August 2: Union agriculture and farmers' welfare minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan on Friday took swipes at the Congress asking why do leaders of the principal opposition party remember "adhaarmik (non religious) references from the Mahabharata instead of the deeply inspirational episodes related to Lord Krishna. "Shakuni, Chakravayuh, Choupad (the traditional dice game)...why does Congress make only these non-religious references from the Mahabharata while we in the BJP remember Lord Krishna, Lord Kanhaiya when we recall the Epic," Chouhan said at the start of his hour long reply on Friday to the debate on agriculture budget in Rajya Sabha in which he alleged that the Congress DNA was "anti-farmer." Leader of Opposition in Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi had first made the "chakravayuh" reference during his Union Budget speech in the

Lower House. On Thursday, Congress' lead speaker on the agriculture budget - Randeep Surjewala - repeated it. Chouhan, who will



continue his reply on Monday, said farmers, for the ruling BJP, are not "vote banks but Gods." "Who perpetrated frauds on farmers? It was Congress leaders whose DNA is anti-

farmer. Pt Nehru wanted to imposed the Russian model of agriculture in India and was stopped by Chaudhry Charan Singh; late

Indira Gandhi's government imposed levies on farmers; late Rajiv Gandhi spoke of bringing an agriculture price policy but did nothing to raise farmers' incomes; late PV Narasimha Rao brought liberalisation but farm related companies were not delicensed," said Chouhan listing copious data to stress that the BJP led NDA government had truly empowered farmers. The minister saluted the farmers of Punjab and Haryana for filling India's food basket and assured them continued MSP support. Though silent on legal MSP - a long standing demand of the farmers protesting on the borders of Punjab and Haryana-Chouhan said MSP rate was being continuously revised and was many times higher than what the UPA led Congress used to give. Chouhan asked why

## High court transfers coaching centre deaths case to CBI

Simmi Kaur Babbar

New Delhi, August 2: The Delhi High Court on Friday transferred the probe into the drowning of three civil services aspirants at the basement of a coaching centre here from Delhi Police to the CBI "to ensure the public has no doubt over the investigation". A bench headed by Acting Chief Justice Manmohan asked the Central Vigilance Commission (CVC) to appoint a senior officer to oversee the probe by the CBI in the criminal case. "Having regard to the nature of the incident and to ensure that the public has no doubt with regards to investigation, this court transfers the probe to the CBI," the court said. It castigated the police and Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) over the drowning incident, saying it was unable to fathom how the students could not come out and sought to know whether the doors were blocked or staircases narrow. The bench, also comprising Justice Tushar Rao Gedela, said administratively

Delhi has a multiplicity of authorities which are only passing the buck and doing nothing. The public perception is that civic authorities are inefficient, the bench said.



It said physical infrastructure in Delhi is nearly 75 years old and it is not only inadequate but poorly maintained. On being informed by the MCD commissioner, who was present in the court, that the storm water drains in the area were dysfunction-

al, the bench asked why didn't the officials inform the MCD chief about it earlier. The bench also ordered the removal of encroachments and unauthorised constructions, including on storm water and sewage drains, in the Rajinder Nagar area. It said MCD officials are not bothered and it has become a norm. The court said with the rise in Delhi's population, the city needs a robust system and due to various subsidy schemes, the migration in the national capital is also increasing. It is time to have a relook at Delhi's administrative, financial and physical infrastructure, the bench said and formed a committee headed by the chief secretary to deal with the issue. Slamming the police, the high court said, "Mercifully, you have not challaned rainwater for entering the basement, the way you arrested the SUV driver for driving his car there."

## Didn't cancel NEET-UG 24 examination as there was no systematic breach: Supreme Court

Navdeep Singh Sahni

New Delhi, August 2: The Supreme Court on Friday said it did not cancel the controversy-ridden NEET-UG 2024 examination amid concerns of paper leak because there was no systematic breach of its sanctity. In its detailed reasons for the order which was pronounced on July 23, a bench of Chief Justice DY Chandrachud and Justices JB Pardiwala and Manoj Misra said the National Testing Agency (NTA) must stop its flip-flop which was noticed this year as it does not serve the interest of students. The bench issued a slew of directions and expanded the remit of the Centre-appointed panel headed by former ISRO chief K Radhakrishnan to review the NTA's functioning and recommend exam reforms. It said since the remit of the

panel has been expanded, the committee would submit its report by September 30 on various measures to rectify deficiencies in the examination system. Former probationary IAS officer Puja Khedkar's mother gets bail in criminal intimidation



case ' The bench said the Radhakrishnan panel should consider framing standard operating procedure for adoption of technological advance-

ments to strengthen the examination system. It said the issues which have arisen during the NEET-UG examination should be rectified by the Centre. On July 23, the top court dismissed the pleas seeking cancellation and re-test of the controversy-ridden exam, holding that there was no evidence on record to conclude that it was "vitiated" on account of "systemic breach" of its sanctity. The top court, while pronouncing the order, said its detailed reasons would follow. The interim verdict came as a shot in the arm for the embattled NDA government and the NTA, which were facing strong criticism and protests, on streets and in Parliament, over alleged large-scale malpractices like question paper leak, fraud and impersonation in the prestigious test held on May 5. Over 23 lakh students gave the National Eligibility-Entrance Test-Undergraduate (NEET-UG) in 2024 for admissions to MBBS, BDS, AYUSH and other related courses.

## Air India suspends Tel Aviv flights amid escalating Middle East tensions

Tejinder Kaur Babbar

Chandigarh, August 2: Air India has suspended all flights to and from Tel Aviv, effective immediately until August 8, amid escalating tensions in the Middle East, the airline said on Friday. Airlines are avoiding Iranian and Lebanese airspace and cancelling flights to Israel and Lebanon, as concerns grow over a possible conflict in the region after the killing of senior members of militant groups Hamas and Hezbollah this week. "In view of the ongoing situation in parts of the Middle East, we have suspended scheduled operation of our flights to and from Tel Aviv with immediate effect up to and including 08 August 2024," Air India said in a post on X. Former probationary IAS officer Puja Khedkar's mother gets bail in criminal intimidation case ' Singapore Airlines also appeared to no longer be using Iranian airspace for any of its routes, according to flight tracker Flightradar24.

The airline did not respond to a request for comment. Taiwan's EVA Air and China Airlines also appeared to be avoiding Iran airspace for flights to Amsterdam on Friday which previously had flown over Iran, Flightradar24 data showed. The air-



lines did not immediately respond to a request for comment on the route changes. Many airlines, including US and European airlines, already avoid flying over Iran, especially since the reciprocal

missile and drone attacks in April between Iran and Israel. Singapore Airlines' flight to London Heathrow early on Friday went north of Iran through Turkmenistan and Azerbaijan, rather than crossing through Iran as it did the day before, Flightradar24 showed. However, a significant number of airlines on Friday were still flying over Iran, including United Arab Emirates carriers Etihad, Emirates and FlyDubai, as well as Qatar Airways and Turkish Airlines. Over the past two days, Air India, Germany's Lufthansa Group, U.S. carriers United Airlines and Delta Air, and Italy's ITA Airways said they had suspended flights to Tel Aviv. Airlines this week have also been cancelling and delaying flights to the Lebanese capital Beirut after a strike in the Israeli-occupied Golan Heights on Saturday. Israel has blamed the attack on Lebanon-based armed group Hezbollah,

which denied involvement. Canada on Thursday issued a notice to Canadian aircraft to avoid Lebanese airspace for one month due to the risk to aviation from military activity. Britain has for the past month advised pilots of potential risk from anti-aircraft weaponry and military activity in Lebanon's airspace. Should an all-out war break out in the Middle East, OpsGroup said civil aviation will likely face the risk of drones and missiles crossing airways, as well as the increased risk of GPS spoofing - a growing phenomena around Lebanon and Israel where militaries and other actors broadcast signals that trick a plane's GPS system into thinking it is somewhere it is not.

### Mamata Banerjee threatens to hit the roads if GST on insurance premiums is not rolled back

New Delhi, August 2: Echoing Union Road Transport and Highway Minister Nitin Gadkari, West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Thursday demanded rollback of GST on life insurance and health insurance premiums and threatened to hit the roads if the Central government did not pay heed to the demand. 'Our demand to Government of India is to roll back GST from life insurance and medical insurance premiums on grounds of people's health imperatives,' CM Mamata Banerjee wrote on X. 'This GST is bad because it adversely affects the people's ability to take care of their basic vital needs,' the Trinamool Congress supreme said. 'If Government of India does not roll back the anti-people GST, we will be bound to hit the road,' she warned.

### Dhankhar makes a case for upward revision of MSP rates

New Delhi, Aug 2: Rajya Sabha chairman Jagdeep Dhankhar on Friday asked the government to keep revising the Minimum Support Prices of crops upwardly to control the market forces and ensure farmers get a fair remuneration for their produce. Dhankhar spoke when Agriculture minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan was replying to the debate on union agriculture budget in the Rajya Sabha today. "We often speak of low MSP procurement but the fact is that low procurement on MSP means farmers are getting better prices in the market and are therefore not selling on MSP. MSP is essential to ensure that farmers get an assured minimum price if he does not get an adequate and better market price," Dhankhar said.



## News box

## City initiative to protect strays in monsoon

**MUMBAI.** In an initiative to protect Mumbai's stray animals during the monsoon, Adv Ashish Shelar, MLA of Bandra West, has teamed up with Rahul Kanal of the I Love Mumbai Foundation to unveil the city's first Monsoon shelters. These shelters, located across Bandra, Khar, and Santacruz, are designed to offer refuge to stray dogs and cats during the heavy rains.

Shelar emphasized the importance of providing safe spaces for these animals, particularly during Mumbai's monsoon season. "These shelters are more than just structures; they are places where our stray animals can find comfort and protection from the rain," he said. The shelters are built to withstand Mumbai's weather, offering a dry environment for multiple animals. Positioned in areas with high stray populations, they are accessible to animals in need, providing relief from the monsoon's impact.

"There are plans to expand the initiative beyond its initial areas, with the aim of covering more neighborhoods across Mumbai. This project serves as a model for other cities facing similar challenges, showing the impact of community collaboration in addressing social issues," Kanal said.

## Bar employee arrested for molesting woman

**Kolkata.** The New Market Police has arrested one Irfan Khan (31), an employee of a bar on Chowringhee Road, for allegedly molesting a female staffer of another bar in central Kolkata. The complainant alleged that the accused — a resident of VIP Nagar in Anandapur — molested her in front of his workplace on July 31 and snatched her mobile phone after stalking her for the past 15 months. She had allegedly asked him to stay away from her in the past.

The accused, who had been charged under multiple sections of the BNS, was produced at a local court on Thursday. Probe was underway, cops said.

Sindhudurg environmentalist couple allege assault, molestation by mob, but no FIR lodged. A Sindhudurg-based environmentalist couple, Dr. Pranjali Jadhav and Joseph Paul, alleged they were attacked by villagers twice over property and timber disputes. Despite their pleas, police have not registered their FIRs. The couple, fearing for their safety, have approached senior authorities as local police were unresponsive.

Man held for molesting woman aboard moving train. A 22-year-old man was arrested for allegedly outraging the modesty of a 35-year-old woman on a moving express train. The incident happened on July 30 when Ramesh Deveraj Singh was traveling on the Mumbai-bound Saurashtra Mail. The woman raised the alarm and Singh was detained by passengers. He was handed over to the police thereafter.

Charges framed against Haryana ex-minister Sandeep Singh in 'molestation' case. A local court in Chandigarh framed charges against former Haryana minister Sandeep Singh in a molestation case involving a junior athletics coach dating back 19 months. Singh, who resigned his sports portfolio in January 2023, faces charges under multiple sections of the IPC.

## Freshers get separate hostel, Main Hostel jitters for seniors

**Kolkata.** A batch of 12 first-year students arrived at the Jadavpur University's Old PG Hostel on Thursday, which has been earmarked as a freshers' hostel from this year along with the New Block Hostel. Meanwhile, some senior students (UG3, UG4 and PG) who have been asked to relocate to the Main Hostel expressed fear and insecurity to the authorities and did not want to shift.

TOI had earlier reported that not only freshers but UG2 students will also be kept in separate hostels — New Boys' and the second-floor of JPJU quarters.

Dean of students Rajat Ray said: "We have been able to earmark the New Block and the Old PG Hostel exclusively for freshers. Already 12 students from the science faculty have arrived at the Old PG Hostel. Students from arts and engineering faculty will arrive next." Diganta Saha, a computer science professor, has been assigned the responsibility of warden for the freshers' hostels.

A parent of a fresher from Bankura said: "We are apprehensive after last year's incident but at least they have ensured that first-years are accommodated separately." A fresher student from North Bengal said: "It is a relief that we will stay separately and not with seniors."

While senior borders were being shifted to the Main Hostel, a section of them shared their unwillingness. Math PG student Abhijit Samanta said: "I do not want to relocate because the culture of Main Hostel is not safe. We have even approached the VC but we have been told that it is the university's decision and we will have to abide by it."

Medical student found hanging in hostel in Karnataka's Chitradurga. A second-year student, Manoj KL, aged 22, from Basaveshwara Medical College in Chitradurga, was found hanging in his hostel room.

## Population, 'entertainment biz' influx has changed area, frayed social fabric

**Kolkata.** Two sides of what has now turned into one of the city's busiest neighbourhoods have transformed remarkably — and in diverging ways — over the last few decades.

One side of the Bypass has changed from neighbourhoods populated by the underprivileged people living in colonies to the neighbourhoods dotted with skyscrapers and stand-alone buildings housing the upper and middle class people. The other side of the road, which once had bheris and wetlands, are now dotted with illegal buildings and "singing bars" that have turned it into a big extortion zone.

Kajal Kumar Ghosh (74), a retired professor of physics at a govt college in Asansol, had bought a flat at VIP Nagar in 2004. Since then, he has been witness to a great change in the character and social fabric of the Bypass belt.

"At that time our building was new and there were several vacant plots in its vicinity. In fact, Bypass had a different look then and the lane leading to our apartment had many tile-shed houses. The old population is still here but the colonies are not. Several illegal buildings have come up on the land where the colonies were located. Extortion gangs are on the prowl and they ask for money from those buying new property," said Ghosh.

Moloy Malakar (70) who has been living



near Uttar Panchannagram since 1982 recounted that the other side of the Bypass was spread over fields and wetlands, with a few shanties where fishermen mostly lived. "The character of this side has changed completely and the population has also increased with many migrating to these areas. A big chunk of this population include employees of private firms in Bypass, Salt Lake and Rajarhat areas. The

transformation has also resulted in syndicate raj, crimes and drunken brawls at pubs at night," said Malakar.

Sushanta Kumar Ghosh, chairman of KMC's borough XII and councillor of ward 108 that covers several Bypass areas, conceded that there are rampant violations by bars or pubs that stay open till 2 am or 2.30 am, anti-social activities and illegal constructions in the Bypass zone. "I am requesting the administration for a crackdown on these illegal activities. Apart from the negative side, Bypass has become a throbbing zone in the city after Park Street. People from different parts are flocking here for food and entertainment.

High-rises, hospitals, Metro connectivity and good transport have improved the standard of living here," he said.

Suresh Agarwal (56), a businessman who has been living near Bypass for over 20 years said the transformation has both good and bad aspects. "While the Bypass has worn a new look over the last few years, there should also be lens on anti-social activities in some areas," he said.

Like Agarwal, Shahensha Burman (71), a resident of Purbalok, has also seen the transformation. "Bypass has become one of the city's prominent locations. But in some parts, there are still law and order issues," he said.

## 7% of land in Chennai will be submerged by 2040: Study



**CHENNAI.** By 2040, around 7% of the land in Chennai would be submerged due to rise in sea levels, according to a report by the Center for Study of Science, Technology and Policy (CSTEP).

The report 'Sea level rise scenarios and

inundation maps for selected Indian coastal cities,' which was released on Thursday, stated that Adyar Eco-Park, Island Ground, State Emblem Monument, Pallikarai wetland and port would be at high risk of sea level rise.

## 'Identification of slum dwellers involves complicated process': Supreme Court on functioning of Maharashtra slum areas

**NEW DELHI.** Observing that identification of slum dwellers involved a "complicated process" of proof of such a status, Supreme Court on Tuesday ordered review of the functioning of the Maharashtra Slum Areas (Improvement, Clearance and Redevelopment) Act, 1971.

"The executive branch has a constitutional duty to ensure that the purpose and object of a statute is accomplished while implementing it. It has the additional duty to closely monitor the working of a statute...reviewing and assessing the implementation of a statute is an integral part of Rule of Law," a bench of justices PS Narasimha and Aravind Kumar said Tuesday. The bench said the judiciary has another role to perform and that is of a facilitator of access to justice and effective functioning of constitutional bodies. "In this role, the judiciary does not review executive and legislative actions, but only nudges and provides impetus to systemic reforms," it said. The directions were issued in a judgement dismissing an appeal

of Yash Developers against a Bombay high court verdict. HC had upheld cancellation of a slum redevelopment project in Borivli granted in favour of the real estate firm in 2003. The project was unduly prolonged for over two decades and the agreement was terminated by Apex Grievance Redressal Committee on Aug 4, 2021. SC not only dismissed the plea of the firm, but also imposed a cost of Rs 1 lakh payable to Supreme Court Mediation and Conciliation Project Committee. Justice Narasimha, writing a 43-page judgment, red-flagged the working of the law and concurred with the "exasperation" expressed by HC. Referring to National Judicial Data Grid data, the bench said it showed that 1,612 cases, involving disputes arising under the Act, are pending before HC. "Of these, 135 cases are more than 10 years old. In the last 20 years, 4,488 cases have been filed and disposed of under the said Act. Latest data from Bombay HC show that about 923 cases on the appellate side and

738 on the original side are pending adjudication. The Act is a beneficial legislation, intended to materialize the constitutional assurance of dignity of the individual by providing basic housing, so integral to human life. However, the propensity and the proclivity of the statute to generate litigation are worrisome," the bench said. The bench said HC's "exasperation" about working of the Act is "understandable". "The present appeal is a classic example of why HC's concern is genuine. It has been noticed that the statutory scheme is problematic with respect to identification and declaration of land as a slum. This problem involves an examination of the role of authorities in giving such recognition, insidious intervention of builders in the said process cast doubts on the independence and integrity in the decision-making process," it said. The SC said the process of identification of slum dwellers involved a "complicated process" of proof of such a status.

## NHAI begins 100-crore makeover of 'dangerous' container road in Kochi

**KOCHI.** The National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) has finally started implementing a Rs 100-crore project which is aimed at giving a major makeover to the 17.12-km-long Container Road, linking Kalamassery with the International Container Transshipment Terminal (ICTT) at Vallarpadam. The project includes installation of 1,106 streetlights, setting up of four dedicated truck lay-bys, relaying of the entire road stretch and strengthening of 11 bridges.

Earlier, the Kerala high Court had asked the state government to take measures to make the stretch safer for vehicular traffic after a spate of fatal mishaps were reported. The main issues identified then were illegal parking of container lorries on the roadside and absence of streetlights. The HC had directed the state government to remove all encroachments and restrict the parking of trucks on the stretch. The NHAI had come under fire for failing to provide essential



infrastructure on the stretch despite collecting a hefty toll fee.

"We've started the bridge repair works and other preliminary construction activities. The works like BC (bituminous concrete) overlay will be taken up only after the monsoon. Five per cent of the total construction activities have been

completed. We aim to finish the entire work in a year," said P Pradeep, NHAI project director.

Initial rectification works such as fixing of guard stones, W-beam crash barrier, embankment and shoulder repairing have been completed. The boring of holes and concrete foundation laying for the installation of streetlights & mast lights with LeD system, has been taken up on the entire stretch.

All 11 bridges on the stretch are being strengthened for smooth traffic flow by uplifting the deck. The activities also include replacement of bearings, and expansion joints, repairing of cracks/damage, and relaying of the bridge approach roads. Service roads covering a distance of 10.4 km will be taken up for improvements. A culvert is also being constructed to link the service road near Mulavukad. Similarly, the construction of a drainage for a length of 5.9 km has also

started.

## Backwardness is exceptional: Panel to Bombay HC on Maratha survey

**MUMBAI.** While justifying its recommendation for 10% reservation in education and govt jobs for Marathas, the Maharashtra State Commission for Backward Classes has told the Bombay high court there is "exceptional backwardness" among the community, which is "pushed to the dark edge of mainstream society" and "looked down upon" by the open category.

The Justice (ret'd) Sunil Shukre-headed commission replied to petitions that challenged its Feb 15 report before the high court. On July 10, a full bench of Chief Justice Devendra Kumar Upadhyaya and Justices Girish Kulkarni and Firdosh Pooniwalla directed the panel to file its reply.

The reply, filed by Asharani Patil, member-secretary, said the commission carried out a quantitative analysis of data regarding 1.58 crore households after extensive field surveys. It evaluated the data with previous committee reports and other reputed agencies. Its data set out the regression of the Maratha community in govt services and economic and social backwardness. There was decreasing representation in govt services, an increase in households below the poverty line and landlessness, worsening living conditions, caste and occupation-related inferiority, rising superstitious practices, women indignity, high suicide rates, and an alarming increase in child marriages.

The reply said the data clearly revealed societal reality. "These indicators together showed the deepening of social and economic backwardness of the Maratha community and that the Maratha community had been pushed to the dark edges of mainstream society that it can no longer be considered a part of the mainstream of society in any real sense of the term," it stated. Also, the above indicators were found to be "exceptional circumstances and extraordinary situations which would justify reservation for the Maratha community." The commission concluded that such "measure (reservation) would be a pathway for the community to overcome these exceptional and extraordinary challenges, ensuring equal opportunities in education, employment, and social upliftment, thereby contributing to their holistic development and integration into the mainstream of society." The commission had also analysed contemporaneous quantifiable data up to 2024 and found the Maratha community has a lower level of education vis-a-vis the open category. It had prepared 57 tables on the basis of its data to show the Maratha community "is socially and educationally backward." However, the petitioners have adopted a "pick and choose" approach and pointed to alleged defects, the panel said.

## Verify records of caste cert recipients: HC

**Kolkata.** Calcutta High Court on Thursday directed the Malda sub-divisional officer to serve notice on three private respondents, asking them to come to the SDO office for verification of documents for the Scheduled Caste certificates issued to them.

A division bench of Chief Justice TS Sivagnanam and Justice Hiranmay Bhattacharyya passed the order after taking note that the Malda SDO and the Chanchal SDO had cancelled two SC certificates each, soon after the matter went to the HC.

The petitioner had alleged that caste certificates were issued to eight persons who didn't belong to the community. UP to use family IDs to issue caste and income certificates. The government simplified issuing income and caste certificates by leveraging the family ID system. If a family member possesses a certificate, others can obtain one by proving their relationship, bypassing lengthy verification. This streamlined process aims to save time and will be operational in August, pending application development by NIC, according to Alok Kumar, principal secretary, planning department.

Supreme Court allows sub-groups within 15% Scheduled Caste quota. The Supreme Court allowed states to sub-categorise Scheduled Castes based on socio-economic factors to ensure those most in need benefit from the 15% SC quota. The court mandated that the 'creamy layer' be excluded from this reservation. This decision overrides a 2004 ruling and aims to promote genuine equality under the Constitution. Madras High Court directs removal of community, caste names from government schools in Tamil Nadu. The Madras High Court directed the Tamil Nadu government to remove caste and community names from government school names statewide, following concerns of stigmatization. Highlighting that terms such as 'Tribal' in school names could negatively affect childrens self-esteem, the court urged the Chief Secretary to initiate necessary actions, reflecting Tamil Nadu's commitment to social justice.

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DEVI for all future purposes vide  
Affidavit dated 02/08/2024 before  
Notary Public, Delhi.



News box

Vladimir Putin receives Russians returning to Moscow after prisoner swap

**Moscow.** Russian nationals involved in a complex swap of prisoners with Western countries arrived in Moscow late on Thursday and were met at the airport by President Vladimir Putin, Russian news agencies reported.

The agencies quoted Putin as saying that the eight returnees would all be presented with state awards and that he told them that their homeland "had not forgotten them, not for a single minute".Also meeting the returnees, according to the agencies, were the head of the FSB intelligence service, Alexander Bortnikov, the head of the SVR foreign intelligence service, Sergei Naryshkin, and Defence Minister Andrei Belousov.The eight returnees included Vadim Krasikov, convicted by a German court of killing a Chechen dissident in Berlin, and two men convicted of cyber crimes in the United States, Vladislav Klyushin and Roman Seleznev.

US recognizes opposition candidate González as the winner of Venezuela's presidential election

**CARACAS.** The stakes grew higher for Venezuela's electoral authority to show proof backing its decision to declare President Nicolás Maduro the winner of the country's presidential election after the United States on Thursday recognized opposition candidate Edmundo González as the victor, discrediting the official results of the highly anticipated vote.

The U.S. announcement followed calls from multiple governments, including close allies of Maduro, for Venezuela's National Electoral Council to release detailed vote counts, as it has done during previous elections.The electoral body declared Maduro the winner Monday, but the main opposition coalition revealed hours later that it had evidence to the contrary in the form of more than two-thirds of the tally sheets that each electronic voting machine printed after polls closed.“Given the overwhelming evidence, it is clear to the United States and, most importantly, to the Venezuelan people that Edmundo González Urrutia won the most votes in Venezuela’s July 28 presidential election,” U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken said in a statement.

Maduro responded with a quick admonishment: "The United States needs to keep its nose out of Venezuela!"

The U.S. government announcement came amid diplomatic efforts to persuade Maduro to release vote tallies from the election and increasing calls for an independent review of the results, according to officials from Brazil and México.Government officials from Brazil, Colombia and Mexico have been in constant communication with Maduro's administration to convince him that he must show the vote tally sheets from Sunday's election and allow impartial verification, a Brazilian government official told The Associated Press Thursday.

Chinese parents install spy camera in 20-year-old daughter's bedroom, spark outcry on social media

**World.** Social media in China is in an uproar after a 20-year-old student went to the police because her parents put a surveillance camera in her bedroom, according to the South China Morning Post.

The student, identified only as Li, went to a police station in Beijing on July 26, seeking help after fleeing from her home in another province. Li, a second-year university student, revealed that her parents had installed a camera to monitor her every move. They reportedly became violent, hitting her and throwing her phone on the floor whenever she made mistakes.

Li explained that this extreme parenting style had caused her significant trauma and was driving her to seek independence. She planned to find part-time work in Beijing to support herself and escape her controlling parents.Concerned that her parents might report her missing and cause a commotion, Li went to the police to inform them of her situation and ensure her safety. Police officer Zhang Chuanbin reassured her, stating that her parents' approach was an inappropriate way to show care. Zhang contacted Li's parents and advised them to respect their adult child's need for personal space.Following this intervention, Li's parents agreed to remove the surveillance camera, and she subsequently returned home. However, the incident has sparked widespread condemnation online, with many criticising the invasion of privacy.

“So horrible. Having no private space at all despite being 20,” commented one user on Weibo.“Children are independent individuals, not parents’ belongings – some Chinese parents should keep this in mind,” said another.

“Even a prison respects people’s privacy more than this,” another person remarked.

Donald Trump loses appeal of gag order in hush money criminal case

◀The New York court's decision means that Trump cannot comment publicly about individual prosecutors and others in the case until Justice Juan Merchan sentences him on September 18, seven weeks before the November 5 election.

**New York .**A New York state appeals court on Thursday rejected Donald Trump's challenge to a gag order in his hush money criminal case, where the former US president was convicted in May on charges stemming from hush money paid to a porn star.The decision by the Appellate Division in Manhattan means the Republican presidential nominee cannot comment publicly about individual prosecutors and others in the case until Justice Juan Merchan sentences him on September 18, seven weeks before the November 5 election.

Trump's lawyers have argued that the gag order violated Trump's constitutional free speech rights under the First Amendment.The gag order is blatantly un-American", Steven Cheung, a spokesperson

for Trump's campaign, said in a statement.

A Reuters/Ipsos poll released on Tuesday showed Trump locked in a tight race with Vice President Kamala Harris, who is poised to become the Democratic nominee.Harris led Trump 43 per cent-42 per cent among registered voters, within the margin of error.On Thursday afternoon, Trump's lawyers renewed their demand that Merchan recuse himself, citing his daughter's work as a Democratic political consultant and her "long-standing" relationship with Harris.

They also said the "unjust and unconstitutional" gag order restricts Trump's ability to respond to Harris, saying she framed her candidacy as that of "prosecutor vs convicted felon." Harris served as California's attorney general earlier in her career.Merchan rejected a similar recusal request by Trump before the trial began, and another recusal request last year.

The judge imposed the gag order a few weeks before the trial began on April 22, saying



Trump's history of making threatening statements could undermine the proceedings. Merchan's original order prevented Trump from commenting on prosecutors, court staff, witnesses and jurors. A separate order against naming the anonymous jurors remains in effect.Merchan lifted the restrictions on witnesses and jurors following Trump's May 30 conviction.

The Appellate Division, a mid-level appeals court, said threats that Bragg's staff received in the wake of the verdict continue to pose a "significant and immediate" threat.

"Justice Merchan did not act in excess of

jurisdiction by maintaining the narrowly tailored protections," the five-judge panel said.The appeals court upheld Merchan's original gag order in May, citing the need to protect people from "threats, intimidation, harassment, and harm," and rejecting Trump's First Amendment argument.

The order leaves Trump free to speak about Bragg and Merchan.Jurors found Trump guilty on 34 felony counts of falsifying business records, for covering up former personal lawyer and fixer Michael Cohen's \$130,000 payment to adult film

actress Stormy Daniels.The payment was made in exchange for Daniels' silence before the 2016 election about a sexual encounter she says she had with Trump a decade earlier, which Trump denied. Trump won the presidency by defeating Democrat Hillary Clinton.The criminal trial was the first of any US president.Trump faces up to four years in prison, and can also be fined.

Time behind bars is rare for people convicted in New York for falsifying business records, especially those like Trump with no prior criminal histories.

Italy PM Meloni's pep talk to boxer Angela Carini: 'In an equal competition...'

**World.** Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni met with boxer Angela Carini in Paris on Thursday, offering words of encouragement after Carini abandoned her Olympic bout against Algerian opponent Imane Khelif. The match sparked a heated debate on gender eligibility rules in women's sports.

Meloni posted a picture of herself consoling Carini and wrote in Italian on X, "I know that you won't give up Angela, and I know that one day you will get what you deserve through strength and sweat. In a competition that is finally equal."

Carini described Meloni's greeting as that of a mother meeting a daughter, urging her not to give up on her dreams. The meeting came after the Italian PM came out in support of her and said the bout against Khelif was not a fight among equals."I think that athletes who have male genetic characteristics should not be admitted to women's competitions," Meloni had remarked.Carini, 25, lasted only 46 seconds in the fight after sustaining a series of blows from Khelif, who had previously failed a gender eligibility test at last year's World Championships.The Italian pugilist fought back tears as she ended the match, later telling the BBC, "It could have been the match of a lifetime, but I had to preserve my life as well in that moment."

The boxer refused to criticise Khelif's placement in the women's competition, saying, "I wish her to carry on until the end and that she can be happy. I am someone who doesn't judge anyone. I am not here to give judgements."Khelif's participation in the women's boxing competition at the Paris Olympics has been met with criticism from prominent figures like JK Rowling and Elon Musk, who argue that athletes with male chromosomes should not compete in women's events.

The controversy surrounding Khelif's participation has sparked a wider debate on gender eligibility rules in sports.Last year, Khelif and Taiwan's Lin Yu-ting were disqualified from the women's World Championships in New Delhi for failing a gender eligibility test. IBA President Umar Kremlev had said.

Hamas chief Haniyeh killed by bomb snuck into guesthouse 2 months ago: Report

**World** Top Hamas leader Ismail Haniyeh was assassinated by an explosive device covertly smuggled into the Tehran guesthouse where he was staying, the New York Times (NYT) reported, citing officials. The bomb had been hidden around two months before his stay.

Haniyeh had travelled to Iran's capital for the inauguration of President Masoud Pezeshkian. He was put up in a guesthouse run and protected by the Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps in an upscale neighbourhood of northern Tehran. He had often stayed at the guesthouse during visits to Tehran.Officials told NYT the bomb was detonated remotely once it was confirmed that he was inside his room at the guesthouse, killing him and a bodyguard. The explosion shook the building, shattered some windows, and caused the



partial collapse of an exterior wall.In the immediate aftermath, speculation centred on the possibility of an Israeli missile strike, but the operation exploited a security lapse that allowed the bomb to be planted and remain hidden for weeks.While Israel has not publicly taken responsibility for the killing, NYT reported that Israeli intelligence officials briefed the United States and other

Western governments on the details of the operation.The United States, however, denied receiving advance knowledge of the assassination plot, according to Secretary of State Antony Blinken.

A public funeral ceremony for Haniyeh was held in Tehran on Thursday, with crowds of mourners paying their respects. Iran's supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei led prayers for Haniyeh, having earlier threatened "harsh punishment" for his killing.Qatar is set to hold funeral ceremonies for Haniyeh on Friday, with Arab and Islamic leaders as well as representatives of other Palestinian factions and members of the public expected to attend, reported AFP.

The assassination came just hours after Israel conducted an airstrike in Lebanon's Beirut, killing Fuad Shukur, a military commander of Hezbollah, a Hamas ally.

US continues to expect accountability from India on Pannu assassination bid

**WASHINGTON.** The United States continues to expect accountability from India concerning the alleged role of an Indian government employee in the failed attempt to assassinate an American citizen on US soil last summer, an official said.We continue to expect accountability from the government of India in relation to the alleged role of an Indian government employee in the failed attempt to assassinate a US citizen on US soil that occurred last summer.? State Department Deputy Spokesperson Vedant Patel told reporters at his daily news conference.We continue to raise our concerns directly with the Indian government at senior levels, he said.



Patel, however, declined to comment on a news report alleging that Canadian authorities claim to have arrested five Indian nationals planning to target a Sikh separatist at a wedding ceremony.

"As it relates to the news that you mentioned out of Canada, I would refer you to the Canadian government to comment on issues that are happening within their law enforcement system," the official said.We continue to raise our concerns directly with the Indian government at senior levels, he added.In November last year, US federal prosecutors charged Indian national Nikhil Gupta with working with an Indian government employee in the foiled plot to kill Gurbatwant Singh Pannun in New York.

Gupta, who was arrested in the Czech Republic in June last year, was extradited to the US on June 14.

Biden credits allies for prisoner swap with Russia: Why it's vital to have friends

Joe Biden called the multinational prisoner swap deal "a powerful example of why it's vital to have friends in this world."

**World.** The US President shared an image with the families of Evan Gershkovich, Paul Whelan and Alsu Kurmashev and Vladimir Kara-Murza standing inside the Oval Office. All four have been released by Russia as part of the prisoner swap deal."Today, I stood beside the families of Paul, Evan, Alsu, and Vladimir in the Oval Office as they spoke to their loved ones for the first time since they regained freedom. These families never lost hope.

And today, they'll each be reunited with the missing piece of their soul," Biden tweeted.Evan Gershkovich is a Wall Street Journal (WSJ) reporter who was arrested by Russia last March on espionage charges. Former US Marine Paul Whelan was arrested in Moscow in 2018 on espionage charges. Russian-American journalist Alsu Kurmasheva was accused of spreading false information about the Russian military.Vladimir Kara-Murza, an outspoken critic of Russia's war in Ukraine, was sentenced to 25 years in 2023. He holds dual citizenship of Britain and Russia.

US national security advisor Jake Sullivan said that no money was exchanged as part of the biggest East-West prisoner exchange since the



end of the Cold War. He added that no sanctions were loosened to facilitate the deal. The landmark prisoner swap agreed by Russia, the United States and several of its allies that freed

16 people was more than two years in the making, involving secret talks and complex diplomacy involving Germany, Russia and the US, a Reuters report mentioned.

Welcome home: Biden greets Evan Gershkovich, others freed in Russia prisoner swap

**World.** A plane carrying three freed Americans, including journalist Evan Gershkovich and former US Marine Paul Whelan, landed at Joint Base Andrews in Maryland late on Thursday as part of a massive prisoner exchange deal involving multiple nations, which saw 26 prisoners being released.

Gershkovich, Whelan and Russian-American journalist Alsu Kurmasheva were freed on Thursday by Russia as part of the biggest prisoner swap since the end of the Cold War.

All three American detainees were warmly welcomed and received by US President Joe Biden and Vice President Kamala Harris. They were also greeted and hugged by families who had tears of joy and relief as they saw them after a long time. "Welcome home," Biden told the released detainees.According to the White House, the US had negotiated the prisoner swap with Russia, Germany and three other countries. The agreement, negotiated in secrecy in Turkey's Ankara for over a year, had 26 prisoners, including 16 of those coming to the West from Russia and

eight being sent back to Russia from the West.

The families of the released detainees had an emotional moment at the Oval Office as they spoke to their loved ones by phone.In a brief conversation, Biden told the three Americans that they were detained "wrongfully" and "we were overwhelmed" that they returned home.

"We just want to say how overwhelmed we are. You've been wrongfully detained for a long time, and we are glad you are home," Biden told the released detainees as the families stood around the presidential Resolute Desk.

"Every parent, child, spouse and loved one who joined me in the Oval Office today has been praying for this day for a long time," he said.In an emotional conversation, the mother of Gershkovich, a Wall Street Journal reporter based in Russia, told her son over the phone that it was her speaking.

"This is mamma. Do you hear me? It's your mom," Gershkovich's mother told her son over the phone. The entire moment was captured in a two-minute video posted on the X handle of Biden's office.Gershkovich was arrested

in March last year on espionage charges, which he and the US government vehemently denied. He was subsequently sentenced to 16 years in a high-security Russian prison.Whelan, a former Marine who was working as a corporate security executive from Michigan, was detained in Moscow in 2018 and convicted on espionage charges. He has been serving a 16-year sentence in a Russian prison. Whelan and the US government have denied that he is a spy, and Washington has designated him as "wrongfully detained".Kurmasheva, an editor with Radio Free Europe-Radio Liberty (RFE/RL), a media organisation funded by the US government, travelled to Russia in May last year to meet her mother. However, she was temporarily detained by Russian authorities while waiting for her return flight and her dual US and Russian passports were confiscated, USAToday reported.The 47-year-old was initially fined for failing to register her US passport with Russian authorities. However, she was arrested and charged in October for "failing to register herself as a foreign agent."



News box

Why this helplessness?  
HC raps Maharashtra for failure to act against illegal hawkers

MUMBAI. The Bombay High Court on Thursday rebuked the Maharashtra government for failing to fully implement the provisions of an Act against unauthorised hawkers and instead getting into a blame game with the Mumbai civic body while citizens continue to suffer. Expressing dismay over non-execution of its orders passed from time to time, the HC cautioned that if forced, then it would not shy away from exercising contempt jurisdiction.

A division bench pointed out that state authorities have failed to implement the provisions of the Street Vendors Act, introduced 10 years ago, even as citizens continue to suffer the menace of unauthorised hawkers and vendors on public roads in the metropolis.

The bench of Justices M S Sonak and Kamal Khata said it was "unfortunate and sad" that the government has not implemented a Parliamentary enactment since 2014, but was instead getting into a blame game with the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) over non-cooperation.

"It is very unfortunate and sad that not only is the law not implemented, but even our orders passed from time to time are not followed," the court noted. "Why this helplessness? The state government says the BMC is not helping... the BMC will blame someone else. Everyone is suffering... Give us an answer as to how you are going to reduce the problem of the common person till such time your scheme is not in place," the court asked.

FIR as NCP (SP) MLA  
Awhad's car attacked in Mumbai 'over remark on Sambhajiraje'; neta detained

MUMBAI/THANE. NCP (SP) MLA Jitendra Awhad's vehicle was attacked by around 5-6 people on Thursday over his remarks against former Rajya Sabha MP Sambhajiraje Chhatrapati. The incident took place on P D'Mello Road, near the Eastern Freeway.

The men who attacked Awhad's car with sticks and broke the rear window glass fled after the police personnel from Awhad's escort car got down and chased them. The attackers were shouting "Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Ki Jai."

Nitin Deshmukh, spokesperson for NCP (SP), lodged an FIR with the Dongri police. Deshmukh, in his complaint, stated that he saw in a video that Ankush Kadam, a functionary of Swaraj Sanghatna, was gesturing some men to attack. He further stated in the FIR that through the media, he learnt that Dhananjay Jadhav, a functionary of Swaraj Sanghatna, said that the Swaraj Sanghatna claimed responsibility for the attack. Kadam and Jadhav have been named in the FIR. Police registered the case against the accused for wrongful restraint, unlawful assembly, criminal conspiracy, rioting, etc., of the BNS. The Pune city crime branch officials on Thursday evening detained the spokesperson of a political party allegedly involved in the attack. Pune police handed over the custody of the spokesperson to Mumbai police later in the night. The attacks were likely provoked by Awhad's recent remarks holding Sambhajiraje Chhatrapati accountable for instigating violence in a few villages following the demolition of some religious structures in Kolhapur last month.

Inter student dies by  
suicide at hostel room  
in Hanumakonda

HANUMAKONDA. An intermediate first-year student died by suicide at a college hostel in Nakalagutta of Hanumakonda. Though the incident took place on Wednesday night, she died while undergoing treatment at a hospital in the wee hours of Thursday.

The deceased was identified as A Bhavani Reddy, a resident of Kamalapur village in Mangapet Mandal of Mulugu district. She was pursuing an intermediate first-year MPC course at a private junior college in Hanumakonda. According to information, the deceased had gone home from July 14-21 as she was unwell. She returned to the hostel on July 22 and started attending classes in the college regularly. Her roommates observed that Bhavani was in depression after returning from home. When they questioned her, she told them that her parents inquired about internal exam results and warned her to secure good results in the examinations.

On Wednesday night, Bhavani took this extreme step in her hostel room while her roommates had gone out for dinner. She was immediately rushed to a private hospital where she died on Thursday morning.

On learning of the incident, Bhavani's parents rushed to the college and staged a protest with their relatives. They damaged furniture and broke windows in the college. The police reached the spot and shifted the body to MGM Hospital, Warangal. Janhvi Kapoor reveals her mother Sridevi didn't think her daughters needed to wear undergarments: 'She gave up her career when she had me' Janhvi Kapoor shared insights into her mother Sridevi's struggles with accepting her daughters' growth, especially regarding wearing bras.

OISF takes charge of Odisha's  
Nandankanan zoological park security

A 35-member OISF unit comprising one inspector, four sub-inspectors and 30 constables has been deployed in the zoo and the botanical garden.

BHUBANESWAR. The Odisha Industrial Security Force (OISF) has taken charge of the security of Nandankanan Zoological Park here.

A 35-member OISF unit comprising one inspector, four sub-inspectors and 30 constables has been deployed in the zoo and the botanical garden.

The transfer of park security from local police and forest guards to OISF has been made in view of rising breaches and disturbances created by miscreants in the zoo.

The Forest department decided to enhance the safety and security of zoo after two officials and staff were assaulted by armed anti-socials in April this year. The anti-socials, brandishing sharp weapons, created havoc on the office premises, punching and slapping

defenceless officials and breaking mobile phones, electronic items and other furniture. The PCR van contacted for assistance allegedly stayed put outside the zoo premises raising serious question on the protection measures in place for the park officials and staff.

"The enhanced security by posting OISF personnel will not only curb anti-social incursions but also help in better zoo management and crowd control. An MoU between Nandankanan and OISF was signed on Monday," said an official.

Meanwhile, in another development, the zoo lost a tiger cub born to white tigress Mousumi. The tigress gave birth to two stillborn and one cub on July 29. However, born prematurely, the cub was abandoned by the mother.



BDA should fix allottees' issues: BJP MLA Suresh Kumar

BENGALURU. With the Bangalore Development Authority (BDA) gearing up to invite applications for the allotment of plots in Dr Shivaram Karanth Layout, former minister and BJP leader Suresh Kumar on Thursday said the agency "should first allot sites in Shivaram Karanth Layout to BDA's site allotment victims".

"I noticed through the media that BDA is gearing up to invite applications from citizens for allotment of plots. I would like to draw your attention to the issue of plot allotment in Banashankari 6th Stage Layout, which is Turahalli forest area. It was a designated forest buffer zone about 20 years ago in 2003-2004, and today more than 1,500 site allottees have not been able to construct their houses because of the standoff between the forest



department and BDA," he said. "The BDA and forest department have not been able to discuss and come to an agreement on the ownership of the land."

He said that similarly, owners of more than 5,000 plots in BDA layouts like

Banashankari 6th Stage, Arkavathy Layout, Visvesvaraya Layout and Anjanapura are unable to construct houses as they are not in actual possession of their land.

Complete pending projects soon, BDA told

BDA chairman NA Haris on Thursday inspected the BDA villa project at Hunnigere. He called for its timely completion. A release said, "The chairman inspected the villas. He asked the Authority to develop the garden, swimming pool and club house in a much better manner." Haris also inspected common amenity sites at Dasarahalli, besides the Malleswaram market and ordered completion of the floor and the parking lot within a month.

KMDA plans to repair Sdah  
flyovercarriageway

Kolkata. The Kolkata Metropolitan Development Authority (KMDA) plans to take up urgent repair of Sealdah flyover carriageway, including patchwork of the surface, repairing of potholes, minor repair and uprooting of plants from the flyover structure.

Officials said that wear and tear were developing on the flyover's carriageway stretch and the potholes were getting larger due to the monsoon rain. Besides, small plants have been found to be growing on the flyover structure at different places which may cause internal structural damage.

The authorities have initiated the process to engage an agency for doing the work, which is expected to be taken up from this month end. An estimate of Rs 4.8 lakh has been fixed for the agency to conduct the work.

KMDA has also been planning to strengthen the flyover but before work could be taken up, hawkers and vendors doing business below the flyover need to be temporarily relocated.

Some flyover plans lack holistic view: HCThe Gujarat High Court criticised Ahmedabad town planners for planning a flyover from IIM-A to Polytechnic at Panjrapol Crossroads after a PIL challenged the project. The court expressed concerns over traffic, reduced green cover, and planning. It urged an expanded PIL to address these issues and planned hearings for a week later.

Man jumps to death from Kathipara flyover in ChennaiA 23-year-old man, Samuel Raj from Virugambakkam, allegedly died by suicide by jumping off Kathipara flyover in Chennai. Witnesses reported the incident to the police and emergency services. Samuel Raj was pronounced dead at the scene and his body was taken for an autopsy. An investigation is underway to determine the reasons behind his actions.

BBMP to revive JC Road flyover project in BengaluruThe Congress government revived the Minerva Circle-Hudson Circle elevated corridor project along JC Road under the Brand Bengaluru initiative. Initially approved by the previous BJP government, the 2.7km flyover scheme aims to alleviate traffic congestion.

Rlys told to pay 2L to retd employee

Bengaluru. Denied reimbursement of the cost he had incurred for his late wife's ovarian cancer surgery and treatment under a scheme floated by his employer, a 61-year-old man approached a consumer court. The court recently directed the railways to clear the retired employee's claims as per rules, along with over Rs 2.2 lakh for deficient service and litigation cost of Rs 25,000.

Ramprasad, 61, from Davanagere alleged that he'd spent nearly Rs 41 lakh for his wife Bhavani's treatment, asserting that negligence and delay by the authorities in settling his reimbursement claims under the Railway Employees' Liberalized Health Scheme (RELHS) caused him financial and mental distress. Bhavani was initially treated at a hospital in Davanagere for uterine-related ailment. She was later diagnosed with ovarian cancer at another hospital in Davanagere. Due to the advanced stage of her cancer, she was referred to a Bengaluru hospital,

where she received chemotherapy and treatment for four months, until her demise on March 8, 2017.

Ramprasad submitted his claim for reimbursement on May 4, 2017, and allegedly got evasive reasons in reply, following which he approached Karnataka State Consumer Disputes Redressal Commission.

Railways argued before the commission that Ramprasad was not eligible for reimbursement under RELHS as the treatment wasn't conducted in a govt or philanthropic hospital, nor was it an emergency as defined by the scheme. They added Ramprasad hadn't sought prior approval from railways' medical authorities before opting for private healthcare.

The commission noted Ramprasad's 32-year service with the railways without any remark and the chronic and critical nature of his wife's illness. The judgment acknowledged that while RELHS has

specific guidelines, the emergency nature of the cancer warranted immediate and specialised treatment, which justified seeking private healthcare.

Zydus secures marketing approval for cancer treatment product by Mexican regulatory authorityZydus Lifesciences Ltd announced that Mamitra, a Trastuzumab biosimilar for cancer treatment, received marketing approval in Mexico. The approval by COFEPRIS allows its marketing in different strengths. Developed in-house and launched in India in 2016, the biosimilar aims to enhance access to affordable oncology therapies in Mexico.

Recognizing lung cancer: Comprehensive guide on symptoms, diagnosis, treatment, and preventionLung cancer remains a significant health issue, with 50% of cases occurring in non-smokers. Key symptoms like persistent cough, chest pain, and unexplained weight loss call for prompt medical attention.

Inaccessible public spaces for differently-abled

KOCHI. For Sivan Sukumaran, the journey from the entrance of the Thiruvananthapuram Central railway station to the platform is one fraught with challenges. "The fear is not one induced by my visual impairedness. Instead, of having to depend on others. Especially for me, who has been trained to do all my work without assistance," says Sivan.

For Hima Manukumar, the difficulty is in navigating the steep rises and descends on her electric wheelchair, especially when boarding a train. "I would need at least four people to help me onto the train. The width of the coach door is also an impediment. In addition, the ramp facilities at the station are awkward. The incline does not allow us to use the ramp effectively. The condition of the toilet facilities is best left unsaid," Hima says.

According to Section 40 of the Right of Persons with Disabilities (RPwD) Act 2021, the Union government has laid down standards of accessibility for movement, transportation, information and communication for persons with disabilities in rural and urban areas. Under these rules, formulated as 'Harmonised Guidelines and



Space Standards for Universal Accessibility in India 2021', several initiatives have been taken up such as the 'Accessible India campaign'. Universal accessibility is also underlined while revamping city infrastructure as per initiatives such as the Smart City projects, in which Thiruvananthapuram finds a place.

Yet, the city's accessibility quotient is low despite the state government's ambitious Barrier-Free Kerala claims, says Krishnakumar P S of Mobility in Dystrophy (MIND). The forum has drawn up a report

that will soon be presented to the district collector flagging the glaring need for the city to make public places inclusive enough to be accessible by persons with disabilities.

Isolating experiences

"It is not that there are no ramps in public places or transport facilities. But can they be accessed by us is the question," asks Hima. "We had some KSRTC Volvo buses earlier which had ramp facility, but that's nowhere to be seen now. In panchayat offices, we have ramps that are either not aligned to the ground properly or at an incline that's not accessible with our wheelchairs," she points out. "There are some private facilities like hospitals and shopping malls which are better off," she says, adding, "What about government hospitals, schools, colleges, even roads and parks?" Such a state of affairs, she says, isolates persons with disabilities from the larger society.

In December, Hima had even gone to the Nava Kerala Sadas to put forward these issues before the chief minister. "Despite all that, the situation remains the same," she says.

It reeks of government inefficiency, says Justice S H Panchapakesan, the former state

commissioner for persons with disabilities. "As per the Accessible India campaign, the Union government had kept a five-year deadline in 2017 for states to achieve universal accessibility. Kerala has not even completed 5 per cent of the work," he says.

Though Kerala asked for an extension, the Union government had made it clear that extensions would only be given to those states that are nearing the completion of the required work. "It gave an extension to Tamil Nadu because 85 per cent of the work was done. The situation in other south Indian cities such as Bengaluru and Hyderabad are far better," he adds.

Barrier-Free project

The Barrier-Free Kerala project, which precedes the RPwD Act as well as the Accessible India campaign in its launch, had embarked on several projects for the capital which was moving in fits and starts. Today, it's on a standstill, Panchapakesan says. "The RPwD Act also has very stringent statutes concerning the facilities in buildings. If violated, the fine could be anywhere between Rs 10,000 to Rs 5 lakh," the former commissioner says.

Plugs & scorers find new market on Reddit site for their 'high stuff'

HYDERABAD. Amid a police crackdown on the drug menace in Hyderabad, junkies in the city have found a new marketplace: Reddit. On offer on this social platform, and rather candidly at that, is a buffet of drugs -- right from marijuana and magic mushrooms to the occasional cocaine. And each of them, by the dealers' own admission, come in varying quality grades with different price tags, anywhere north of Rs 4,000 for 50 grams of marijuana.

When TOI scrolled through some of these threads of conversations, it found 'plugs' (read: dealers) blatantly posting photographs of the 'stuff' (read: drugs) calling out to prospective 'scorers' (read: buyers) to DM them for details.

Majority of these suppliers and clients were

either students or young professionals - all of them in their 20's. One 1,200-member-strong community by the name "r/HyderabadEnts", for instance, had put out a direct message on its homepage: This is mainly created to give news about weed in Hyderabad, since people who are trying to "score" are being trapped by cops.

There were other individuals as well, ready to cut deals with anybody looking for a 'high'.

One user, @Shoddy\_Compote.195, posted pictures of weed and wrote in the caption 'DM.' His post sparked a flurry of comments with one user writing: "Please help me find the score near SR Nagar" even as another asked, "Where to get weed near ECIL." On a different thread, a post read: "Hello, can anyone please help me out in scoring? I am

new to Hyd. From what I've experienced, going to pan shops and autowalas doesn't help, and people are pretty hush-hush about it. Please help a brother out," wrote the user with the handle @Overall-Boot.

Dozens of others flooded these threads with similar queries.

Buzz in underground market attracts scammers, posts warn potential buyers

And every dealer appeared to follow the same MO: Identify the buyer, invite the person to a private chat (either on Reddit or Telegram), discuss the price and seal the deal. While most buyers on this platform were found asking for a 'drop' in locations along the IT corridor - Hi-Tec City, Gachibowli and even Jubilee Hills -- there were some requesting for the stuff to be shipped to Dilsukhnagar,

Begumpet, Secunderabad as well. There were pick-up services available too.

Such is the rush that even posts from as long as four years ago, were found getting traction. "DM me for some G in Hyderabad. Good greens and cash on delivery," wrote one of the 'plugs' @strictlystreetG while another Redditor @Boring-Ad-5166 was seen redirecting buyers to Telegram and Instagram to connect with local drug dealers. "IG: Hyderabad green weed. All over Hyderabad green available. DM him for stuff," the user posted. Meanwhile, the buzz on this underground market has started attracting scammers. Many of those active on the platform were seen tagging IDs of fraudulent dealers. "GUYS BEWARE!! This guy is a scammer.



Rainwater harvesting to overcome water scarcity

Nationally and internationally, 2023 is an important year for the water-related goals. The United Nations (UN) adopted a resolution in 2017, declaring 2018-28 as the International Decade for Action on Water for Sustainable Development. Water is an important resource for the development of any society and is helpful to maintain the integrity of the ecosystems. It is a critical resource for the growth of any economy. Water management is very essential to get the food security and prevent the soil erosion. It has been observed that demand of water has been increased almost eightfold in the last 100 years. There is availability of about 1,400 Million Cu. Kilometers of water in the world but only 0.003 per cent of this can be used for the hygiene, drinking, agriculture and industry. But all this water is not accessible because part of it flows through in to the rivers during the seasonal floods. The average annual rainfall overland is 1, 10,000 Km3, but about 70,000 km3 evaporate before reaching to the sea. The remaining 40,000 km3 is available for human use but two-thirds of it run off in floods. About 60 per cent area in India is still rain fed so the monsoon rains play a significant role in India. Global population is increasing at an alarming rate whereas the natural resources such as land and water are static. The world may face 40 per cent shortfall between forecast demand and available supply of water by 2030. It has been observed that the global water withdrawal grew 1.7 times faster than the population. Climate change may worsen the situation by increasing the frequency and intensity of floods and droughts, making water more unpredictable by altering hydrological cycles.

About 80 per cent of land is rain fed in the world and this land contributes about 60 per cent of food production. Rest 20 per cent comes under irrigated agriculture which contributes about 40 per cent of food production. It brings the self-sufficiency in the developing nations across the globe. The complexity of problems in rain fed agriculture is greater than that of irrigated agriculture. In India about 127 million ha cultivable land comes under rain fed condition which is approximately 70 per cent of the total cultivated land. Agriculture is the largest consumer of freshwater and during the last 30 years food production has been increased by 100 per cent. Over 1 billion people across the world are involved in agriculture. And they generate about \$ 2.4 trillion in economic every year. Thus the importance of rainwater harvesting is increasing over the years. In India huge amount of budget is being invested on rainwater harvesting to mitigate the climate risks. Cost-effective technologies and an in depth analysis on rain water management are needed for the sustainable agriculture. There is need to adopt alternative food crops and irrigation practices for sustainable agriculture. Millets can be promoted under rain fed agricultural system as they can be grown with less water. Rainwater is recognized as the viable alternative to mitigate the demand of washing, sanitation and crop irrigation. It is also helpful to mitigate the demand of droughts. It will give the food security and reduce the impact on humans and environment. During rainfall 70 per cent of annual ground water is contributed by the states such as Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Mizoram, Meghalaya, Gujarat etc. There is 61 per cent contribution of recharge rainfall both from the monsoon and non-monsoon to the country's to the country's total annual groundwater and the remaining 39 per cent recharge comes from other sources such as recharge from tanks, canal seepage, ponds and water conservation structures.

Monsoon plays a significant role in the Indian agriculture as the major sown part of the country is still rain fed. The summer monsoon accounts for 70 to 80 per cent of the annual rainfall over the major parts of the South Asia. Timely rainfall is important for the Kharif season crops. Coastal areas of the country such as Tamil Nadu receive the much of the rainfall from the North-East Monsoons, between October and December. Average rainfall in India is 1183 mm out of which 75 per cent is received during the monsoon period i.e. July to September.

Is International Law Significant for Dispute Resolution?

International law refers to the body of legislation that governs relations between States. International conflict resolution is the process of controlling or settling disputes between nations so they can each pursue their own objectives, whether they be collective or personal. States are acknowledged as the actors within the legal system by the framework provided by international law. It describes what they have to do to treat people living inside their borders and how they should interact with one other. These duties cover a wide range of topics, including the use of force, behavior during hostilities, immigration and refugee concerns, international criminal activity, disarmament initiatives, and prisoner care.

International law also regulates space operations, international commerce laws, global communication networks, sustainable development strategies for the oceans, and the environment. A treaty is an international agreement signed between States that is subject to international law, regardless of whether it is included in a single document, two or more related instruments, or known by another name. Treaty law, also referred to as the law of international agreements, governs the creation, interpretation, modification, and termination of treaties. The law of treaties, a pillar of international law, is essential for fostering mutual understanding and amicable conflict settlement.

PEACEFUL DISPUTE RESOLUTION

The foundation of Pacific dispute settlement is the idea that, while it can certainly be used for other objectives like status-seeking and fear-mongering, war is essentially a tool for resolving disagreements. Additional presumptions include the idea that a lack of understanding among decision-makers about the possibility of peacefully resolving issues to the mutual benefit of both sides—a lack of awareness stemming from pride, ignorance, a lack of imagination, or self-centered and cynical leadership—often leads to war. Thus, by conceiving and institutionalizing alternative, peaceful conflict resolution procedures and convincing the nations to employ them, international organizations may be able to help prevent wars. The International Criminal Court is one of the most significant mechanisms (ICC). The International Criminal Court (ICC) is a permanent court that was created to try people for the most

heinous crimes that affect the entire world, like crimes against humanity, war crimes, and genocide. When it comes to encouraging responsibility and making sure victims of human rights atrocities receive justice, the ICC has been instrumental. A peace strategy known as "collective security" entails an agreement amongst governments to take joint action against any state deemed to be an aggressor. It focuses on preventing violence by using an overwhelming international force against any aggressor, putting aside issues with resolving conflicts, upholding the law, or ensuring justice. Even though collective security was a major component of both the League of Nations Covenant and the United Nations Charter, albeit in slightly



different forms, it was an utter failure in both instances. The idea behind disarmament and weaponry limitation is that states have a natural tendency to want to outgun any prospective competitors and that this leads to arms races that ultimately result in conflict. This theory's main flaw is that it frequently tends to mix up cause and effect. Even though arms races gain speed on their own, political tensions that escalate into conflict are what cause them. To put it briefly, tensions rather than armaments contests are what lead to conflict. To believe differently would be to confuse a symptom with the cause. As a result, lowering weaponry levels does not always result in lowering tensions.

CONFLICT REDUCTION

Due to the lack of success with these key peace initiatives outlined in its Charter, the UN has created two new processes designed to reduce the number of wars. First, "preventive diplomacy," which mostly consists of the secretary-general's

diplomatic initiatives and the deployment of peacekeeping troops, has helped to keep local crises under control and avoid escalation, particularly when the superpowers are involved. Second, although not having any legal power behind them, the General Assembly has grown in importance as a key player in the process of what has been dubbed the communal legitimization of state programs. A state's likelihood of receiving universal censure increases the cost of resorting to war. However, hostilities that the assembly may favorably see as wars of colonial liberation are not affected by this new constraint on war. Furthermore, states could not be expected to refrain from going to war in order to further an interest they believed to be truly necessary despite the assembly's rejection.

INTERNATIONAL LAW AND HUMAN RIGHTS

International law also encourages the protection of human rights. The United Nations General Assembly adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948, which is a seminal document outlining each and every person's fundamental rights and freedoms. International law has created a number of procedures to guarantee the protection of human rights because it understands how important they are.

Globally, human rights advocacy and protection are greatly aided by international law. It lays out the rights and freedoms to which every person is entitled and offers a framework for holding states accountable for how they treat people living under their control. The relationship between human rights and international law is intricate and multidimensional, involving numerous organizations, treaties, and conventions aimed at preserving human dignity. This paper explores the complexities of this relationship by examining important elements, historical trends, obstacles, and the influence of international human rights law on international justice.

Historical Development of International Human Rights Law

The genesis of international human rights law can be found in the wake of World War II, which saw previously unheard-of atrocities and a worldwide resolve to stop them from happening again. A turning point in this process was the United Nations General Assembly's 1948 ratification of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR).

Wayanad calamity

Landslides expose lapses on ecological front

A massive rescue operation is in progress in Kerala's Wayanad district, which has been ravaged by a series of landslides triggered by heavy rain. The death toll has crossed 150, even as the immediate priority is to evacuate and rehabilitate as many people as possible. Though it is being conveniently described as a natural calamity, the impact of factors such as climate change, an eco-sensitive terrain and the loss of forest cover cannot be discounted. As per the landslide atlas released by the Indian Space Research Organisation's National Remote Sensing Centre last year, 10 out of the 30 most landslide-prone districts in India are in Kerala, with Wayanad ranked 13th. According to a 2021 study, all landslide hotspots in Kerala are in the Western Ghats region, concentrated in Idukki, Ernakulam, Kottayam, Wayanad, Kozhikode and Malappuram districts. Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha and former Wayanad MP Rahul Gandhi has asked the Central Government to prepare an action plan to



address the growing frequency of natural disasters in the ecologically fragile region of the Western Ghats. No less important is the need to assess the preparedness of various states and work out ways to make them better equipped to handle such catastrophes. The loss of lives and property can be minimised through an efficient early warning system, which doesn't seem to have happened in Kerala's case. India's approach to disaster management has improved from reactive to proactive as well as pre-emptive in recent years, but there are still some gaps to be plugged. A major stumbling block is the unwillingness of state governments, industries and local communities to pay heed to experts' warnings about the ramifications of infrastructure development and promotion of tourism in ecologically sensitive zones. As the nation extends support to a battered Wayanad.

Havoc on Ecology and Economy: Small Hydro-power Project Branwar and Broken Vows

We all know that in order to gain something, one has to lose something. Even happiness is built on someone else's misfortune and for every loss there is a hidden gain. For hidden gain there is a loss as well. In this world, there are some occasions and times when people lose everything and get nothing in return except disasters and stress. A famous Urdu couplet explains this aptly: This couplet describes the fate of many communities and people living in remote areas of Jammu & Kashmir especially the forest dwellers whose resources (land, forest, water) were acquired for so-called developmental projects. These projects, especially hydropower generation ones, left communities with economic losses and ecological damage. Even small hydropower projects, otherwise minimal in their impact on the environment, have been harming the biodiversity, ecology and economic conditions of people. When the 7.5 MW Branwar Hydropower project was being constructed around 15 years back in a forest village called Branwar in District Budgam, a lot of false promises were made to villagers by the local politicians in power. Many villagers whom I met in the recent past told me that the former Finance Minister of J&K Mr A R Rather who was also the five-times legislator from Charar-e-Sharief had assured residents of Branwar that they would get free electricity from the hydropower project. "We were told by Mr A R Rather, our former MLA and Finance Minister of J&K, that within a 5 kms radius people would get free electricity, especially the residents of Branwar Neegu and Jabbad villages. That remained only a promise and the successive PDP-BJP Govt also could not make sure we get free or at least subsidized electricity from the power project", said Ghulam Qadir Ganai a local resident of Branwar. After more than a decade, the electricity crisis is still bad in Branwar. Infact, it is just as bad in but also in adjoining areas and villages like Neegu, Jabbad, Surasyar, Bonen, Batwodder



and Kutbal as well. During winters people get mere 4 to 5 hours of power supply and when it snows, power supply is interrupted for weeks. No new electric cables, transformers or iron pylons have been erected. Lot of electricity transmission loss is taking place and locals have to pay for these losses as well. Even after a drizzle, power supply is cut in most of the villages in this remote area of Budgam which comes under the Surasyar block. Recently, when I visited Meechi Khanain meadow, trekking 12 kms up Branwar, I found the old course of Doodh Ganga dry. This was the area I along with my friends would catch fresh trout but that is now a history. From Meeche Khanain downstream to Branwar, the Doodh Ganga is almost dry. A little water joins it around Yusmarg from the Kalnag stream but that is very little. From Meeche Khanain to Frasnag and downstream 2 kms this waterbody is completely dry now and everything in this stream has perished.

Hundreds of Trees axed in Branwar forest

The private company which got the project on a 40-year lease only destroyed the local forest landscape and biodiversity with the support of the then Government especially the Forest department. After 15 years, locals of Branwar and adjoining villages say that it seems that hundreds and thousands of forest trees (Kail, Fir, Deodar) were axed to help this company. On the other hand, the local people who actually own these forests under the Forest Rights Act 2006 got nothing in return. Not only were the trees in Branwar forest uprooted and axed but even the course of Doodh Ganga was changed which not only impacted the aquatic life but also continues to impact the forest cover even after 15 years.

Green Meadow dredged

The pristine and green meadow around Metch Khanain 12 kms up Branwar was dug with huge JCBs to create an artificial canal for diverting Doodh Ganga waters. A small water reservoir was created and a huge pipeline was laid through another green meadow

called Haijan. JCB cranes, trucks and lorries went into deep jungle which was virgin until 2008-2009. The massive pipeline was laid over the green meadow of Haijan which is like a massive scar on its landscape and beauty. Trees were axed to make the canal in deep forest and trees which are there on the embankments of this artificial canal continue to get impacted with water. No concrete embankments or stone pitching was done to prevent oozing of water from the canal towards surrounding forest and trees.

Misleading information on UNFCCC

There is hardly any detailed information available on Govt websites in J&K about the Branwar 7.5 MW small hydropower project. After surfing the internet, I found a document related to this project called Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) on the website of United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). The UNFCCC is the UN process for negotiating an agreement to limit dangerous climate change. It is an international treaty among countries to combat "dangerous human interference with the climate system. The CDM allows emission-reduction projects in developing countries to earn certified emission reduction (CER) credits, each equivalent to one tonne of CO2. These CERs can be traded and sold, and used by industrialized countries to meet a part of their emission reduction targets under the Kyoto Protocol. Under the Kyoto Protocol it is required that countries limit or reduce their greenhouse gas emissions by setting such targets. It also helps countries meet their emission targets, and to encourage the private sector and developing countries to contribute to emission reduction efforts, negotiators of the Protocol included three market-based mechanisms – emissions trading, the clean development mechanism (CDM) and joint implementation.





Improve

Your business presentation

Skills

Making a presentation can give anyone jitters, more so, when you are asked to pitch your products and services to potential client and customers. In most corporate cases, the content presented is usually well researched. However, lack of presentation skills spoil the deal. The mantra here is: Presentation skills are just as important as the information collected. Here are six reminders that will help you present better: Know your audience While preparing a business presentation, the most important thing to be kept in mind is who the 'target audience' will be. Find out everything you can about the audience - their age group, interests, profiles, and what they expect from your presentation. Frame the presentation as though you were a part of the audience. Once you know the audience, you can sell the benefits of your idea smartly. Extensive research, detailed knowledge and a clear thought process will help you to present better. Confidence matters A butterfly in one's stomach is no excuse of getting away with a bad presentation. Consider a presentation as a formal conversation. When on a mission to sell, do not try to use fancy language, for that complicates things for you as well as the audience. Speak about the product, service or business idea, instead of introducing yourself. Do not read from a text. When doing so, make sure you have read the text multiple times to understand better. "No one will ever want to listen to a non-confident speaker. His/ her confidence levels are apparent in the usage of words and effective body language. So, plan



well," suggests Radhi Nair, corporate trainer. The best way to improve confidence levels is to stand in front of a mirror or a group of people and speak about various issues and interests. Always remember, the better you know your content and aim, the less nervous you will be. Limit the use of text Bombarding the audience with slides full of text is the biggest mistake a presenter can make. Unless absolutely necessary, avoid the use of large text paragraphs. Excess of text will confuse you as well as the audience. Instead, illustrate key points, use visuals and charts, and provide bullet points wherever necessary. Hand over a detailed printed copy of the presentation to the audience. The audience always prefers listening, than reading and writing. Keep check of your

language when you script the presentation. Backing this thought, Nair says, "Language is the only nonambiguous medium of communication and exchanging ideas, and hence is of paramount significance." Time it right While scripting and presenting a business idea is manageable, timing the presentation is where the challenge lies. The audience has a short attention span. Keeping this in mind, we cannot miss out on presenting important information. So the challenge is to deliver all the information tactfully, within the given time frame. With time, one must learn to modify the time limit of the presentation last minute. Keep the end in mind Introduce the presentation with a short brief. Let the audience know what to expect. The audience believes in profit and benefit, and not continuous promises and commitments. "Deliver what you promise. Track record of some of the most successful companies. They live up to customers/ consumers promises. If you don't deliver what you promise they will move on--they have plenty of choices," quips Nair. At the end of your presentation, ask for audience feedback. Post the formal question answer session, stick around the venue for an have prepared for a 30 minute presentation,

Business presentation  
skills are just as  
important as the content  
of the presentation.  
Anishaa Sahijwala lists  
down reminders that will  
help you develop your  
skills.

know the content so well that you can cut it down to 15 minutes without missing on important points. Explains Nair, "Time management is an all time premium. In business communication, we believe in KISS - Keep It Short and Straight." Always remember, a good presentation is never a stroke of luck. It requires a lot of hard work, research and timeliness.



10 ways to make

your life more

Romantic



Here are tips to bring back some fun into your relationship Sometimes we get so busy with our work that we don't get time to express our love to the most important person of our life. So here are some tips to bring back the romance into your marriage. **Spend quality time** Sometimes you maybe in the same room for hours but not talk to each other simply because you are busy with your own work. If you are alone with your husband make sure you spend the time talking to him. **Arrange for a date** If you have kids, arrange for a baby sitter and go out on a date. If he enjoys dancing then you can hit a nice place where you can shake a leg. If your man would like to indulge in some games take him to a

bowling parlour. Believe it this will work like a charm. **Be the chef** Food is the easiest way to a man's heart. So, cook a great meal comprising of the dishes he likes. But if you aren't convinced about your culinary skills don't try and experiment, order food from his favourite restaurant and then set up some candles for a romantic candlelight dinner. **Leave love notes** Whether it's leaving some love notes around the house or SMSes or email, write him a lovey-dovey note. Men may pretend to be tough but they do like to know that they are on your mind. **Express it loud** Though you may have sent him a love note or email, there's nothing like professing your love every now and then. Do let him know that after all the years as a married couple you are still very much in love with him. **Shower him with attention** Dote on him once in a while. Praise him for his hard work. Men love attention though they may claim otherwise. Praise him for his taste in clothes or perfumes, he's sure to like it a lot. **Plan a surprise vacation** If you are not likely to get any alone time in the city,

plan a vacation. Depending on the kind of time you both can spare, take a long or short trip. You could take him out to the place he's always wanted to go. **Find ways to spend time together** It could be while travelling to or from work or just going shopping together or even a long drive after dinner. If you can't head out for a vacation just find ways to be in each other's company. **Let him spend time with his gang** Yes, you should spend some time together, but your man will really appreciate it if



you let him spend an evening with his buddies. Ensure that you don't call him during the time when he is with his friends. **Appreciate things he does** Even if it's something simple, try and tell him how much you appreciate his help around the house. More then the praise and attention that you shower on him, it's this appreciation that will make him fall in love with you all over again.

These traits can make you stand out in a crowd **Decisiveness:** A lot of women either don't want to make decisions, or then have a really hard time being decisive on a date. So, when you are asked for your opinion, don't be afraid to express yourself and tell people what you want. **Independence:** We all know how men love women who are independent. When you are dependent on someone not only do you end up feeling like a burden on someone, but somewhere

Traits that can

set you apart

down the line, you might lose your own identity. **Confidence:** Confidence always makes it easier for you to approach everything in life. When you are confident about yourself, you automatically come across as someone who is sure about herself.

**Sense of humour:** Not taking yourself seriously is a great quality to have, but not something that could definitely set you apart. As for men, they prefer women who have a mind-blowing sense of humour, along with intelligence.





# 13 children 'mysteriously' die in 20 days at Delhi shelter home

**The cause of the deaths at Asha Kiran shelter home in Rohini is not known yet. A report by the SDM has raised questions about the quality of drinking water.**

**New Delhi:** An investigation by a sub divisional magistrate has found that 13 children have died at a Delhi government-run shelter home for the specially abled in the past 20 days. So far, 27 deaths have been reported since January at the Asha Kiran shelter home in Rohini, inviting allegations of neglect and poor living

conditions from the BJP. The cause of the deaths at Asha Kiran shelter home is not known yet. Noting that the number of deaths was much higher than last year, the SDM said the real cause of the fatalities would be known after the post-mortem reports. The report by the SDM has raised questions about the quality of drinking water being provided to the children. The National Commission for Women (NCW) has sent a fact-finding team to the shelter home while lashing out at the AAP government for negligence. "For years, the Asha Kiran shelter home run by the Delhi government has lost all asha (hope). People are suffering and dying in it and the Delhi government does nothing, nothing at all. Taking cognisance and sending my team to enquire into it," NCW chairperson Rekha Sharma said. She said the NCW was also carrying out an audit of night shelters run by the Delhi government. Delhi minister Atishi, however, differed on the number of deaths and asked the additional chief secretary (ACS) of the Revenue department to initiate a magisterial probe and submit a report in 48 hours. In her letter, Atishi noted that there were 14 deaths since January 2024 at the shelter home. The minister also sought recommendations on action to be taken

against those whose negligence had caused the deaths. She also sought suggestive measures to be taken to prevent the occurrence of such incidents in the future. **BJP VS AAP OVER SHELTER HOME DEATHS** A team from the Delhi BJP has also reached Asha Kiran shelter home to take stock of the situation. "As per our information, the children are getting dirty water, they don't get food, they don't get treatment. An inquiry should be conducted and all the officers who are involved in this should be punished," Rekha Gupta, BJP Mahila Morcha vice president, said. Hitting out at the BJP, Delhi minister Gopal Rai said the leaders of the saffron party did not visit the home of the mother and son who had drowned in a drain in Mayur Vihar. "The BJP is protesting. But, they did not protest when a woman and her son died in Mayur Vihar after slipping into a drain. They came to protest at Asha Kiran because they know that it comes under the Delhi government," Rai said. He also said the concerned minister was closely monitoring the case and the guilty people would not be spared. "The Delhi government stands with the people," he said.

**27 deaths since January at Asha Kiran shelter home**  
**Official says number of deaths much higher than last year**  
**Raises questions about quality of drinking water**



## Rain fury across many north Indian states, more showers likely in Delhi

**New Delhi:** At least 14 people died and 10 more were injured in heavy overnight rains that triggered flooding and a house collapse as several rivers swelled in Uttarakhand on Thursday. This came as the India Meteorological Department (IMD) said India is predicted to record above-normal rainfall in August and September, with a high possibility of landslides and floods. The Kedarnath Yatra was suspended as heavy rain triggered landslides in many places.

The trek route remains blocked by boulders at Ghoraparav, Lincholi, Badi Lincholi and Bhimbali, officials told news agency PTI. In an official statement, the Uttarakhand government said the Centre has dispatched two Indian Air Force helicopters, a Chinook and an MI 17, to aid rescue operations in the state after the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) took stock of the situation in the wake of the intense showers. So far, 425 pilgrims have been brought to safety in helicopters from Lincholi and Bhimbali, while 1,100 pilgrims have reached Sonprayag on foot from various places with the help of rescue teams, according to police. Neighbouring Himachal Pradesh also reeled under monsoon fury as multiple cloudburst incidents killed five people and left about 50 missing. Homes, roads and bridges were swept away by torrents of mud and water. The state emergency operation centre said the cloudbursts occurred in Nirmand, Sainj and Malana areas in Kullu district, Padhar in Mandi and Rampur district in Shimla district. The Manali-Chandigarh National Highway has been damaged at several places due to landslides, an official said.

### FLASH FLOODS IN JAMMU KASHMIR

While most parts of Jammu and Kashmir received moderate rainfall on Thursday, torrential downpours in some parts triggered flash floods. The Dachan area of Kishtwar and the Khrew area of Pulwama experienced torrential rains, leading to flash floods in these localities.

## 308 dead in Wayanad landslides, drone-based radar to look for survivors

**New Delhi:** The death toll in Tuesday's massive landslides in Kerala's Wayanad district crossed the 300 mark on Friday with rescuers racing against time to search for survivors who are still trapped in collapsed buildings and under the debris. So far, 308 people have died in the landslides triggered by heavy rainfall in the hilly areas of Wayanad. Rescue operations, which entered the fourth day, will be further widened and also include a drone-based radar to find the survivors. Over 200 people suffered injuries as rescue efforts were hampered by various challenges, including treacherous terrain due to destroyed roads and bridges, and a shortage of equipment and a shortage of heavy equipment, making it difficult for emergency personnel to clear mud and uprooted trees that fell on houses and other buildings.

### WAYANAD RESCUE OPERATIONS UPDATES

A joint team comprising the Indian Army, NDRF, Coast Guard and the Indian Navy were conducting the searches in the affected areas. Each team will have three locals and one forest department employee. Forty teams of rescue personnel will divide the search areas into six zones to carry out the rescue operations. The first zone consists of Attamala and Aarammala. Mundakkai is the second zone, Punjirimattam is the third zone, Vellarmala Village Road is the fourth zone, GVHSS Vellarmala is the fifth zone and downstream of the river Chaliyar is the sixth zone.

Police personnel from eight police stations surrounding the river and locals who are experts in swimming will also participate in the searches. Meanwhile, the Indian Army found four people -- two men and two women -- who were stranded in Padavetti Kunnu in Wayanad. They were evacuated by helicopter. However, one of the rescued women is experiencing difficulties with her leg and is receiving necessary medical attention. As many as 25 ambulances will cross the Bailey Bridge constructed by the Indian Army in record time to Mundakkai after the structure collapsed due to the landslides. The Indian Air Force will deploy its C-130 aircraft from Hindon airbase in Ghaziabad for the rescue operations and will carry specialised drone systems along with a team of experts to Wayanad for sub-soil evacuation monitoring and searching for survivors.

## South Delhi school evacuated after receiving bomb threat via email

**New Delhi:** Summer Fields School in Delhi was on Friday evacuated after the authorities there received a bomb threat via an email. According to the details, the email was received at 12.30 am on Friday. However, the authorities noticed the email only after the school was opened this morning. The school is located in South Delhi's posh Greater Kailash area.

The police were informed, and an evacuation was ordered on the school premises. As the investigation into the case progressed, the police said they suspect it was a hoax call. Case was registered, and a probe was underway. Commenting on the email, Shalini Agarwal, the school principal said the students were evacuated within 10

minutes after the authorities saw the email. She also said the school premises was being checked by the



bomb squad. "We received an email late at night which was checked early morning today. As per the SOP, we evacuated the students within 10 minutes of receiving the email. We

informed the police and district administration, and we are thankful to the police - they supported us magnificently as they came immediately," she told reporters.

"There are hardly any students here, we are just waiting for a few parents to come and collect their wards." "Police and bomb squad are here and they are checking the premises. There was absolutely no panic amongst the parents," she added. In June this year, several museums in Delhi received a

bomb threat, which later turned out to be a hoax. Prior to that, many schools and hospitals in Delhi received bomb threat emails, which also turned out to be hoaxes.

## Akali Dal expels patron Sukhdev Singh Dhindsa for 'anti-party activities'

**New Delhi:** The Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD) disciplinary committee on Thursday expelled party patron Sukhdev Singh Dhindsa from the primary membership for anti-party activities, including taking up the leadership of expelled leaders. A decision to this effect was taken unanimously by a three-member party disciplinary committee which was presided over by chairman Balwinder Singh Bhundur and included the other two members - Maheshinder Singh Grewal and Gulzar Singh Ranike. Briefing the media about the decision, Grewal said "The committee was of the opinion that Mr Sukhdev Singh Dhindsa was not upholding the honour of his post. He was not only issuing unauthorised statements but was also acting against the party's constitution and its rich and glorious traditions". He said the disciplinary committee also

took into account the various statements issued by Dhindsa in the recent past as well as the manner in which he took on the leadership of the eight expelled party leaders on Wednesday. Disciplinary committee



chairman Balwinder Singh Bhundur said Dhindsa forced the party to take this action. He said that the party, on its part, had invited all the disgruntled leaders to attend meetings and discuss their misgivings in the party forum.

"Instead of doing this, the disgruntled leaders became part of a conspiracy scripted in Nagpur to weaken and divide the party. These leaders have even given credence to the wild allegations of the main perpetrator of the sacrilege of Sri Guru Granth Sahib in 2015", Bhundur said.

When due action was taken against them, Mr Dhindsa sought to come to the rescue of the leaders and even tried to mislead the party cadre by asserting he had overruled the same. Now the party has taken definite action against Mr Dhindsa to set the record straight", he added. Meanwhile, the disciplinary committee members said that indiscipline would not be tolerated at any cost even as it appealed to Punjabis to shun opportunist persons who had entered into a conspiracy with agencies to weaken the party.

## Air India suspends flights to Tel Aviv until August 8 amid Israel-Iran tensions

**Air India cancelled its Delhi-Tel Aviv flights until August 8 due to escalating tensions in the Middle East. In an official statement, the airline said the suspensions were effective immediately.**

**New Delhi:** Air India on Friday said it suspended its flights to and from Tel Aviv in Israel due to Middle East tensions, with immediate effect. The flight operations were suspended until August 8, the airline said in a statement. "In view of the ongoing situation in parts of the Middle East, we have suspended scheduled operation of our flights to and from Tel Aviv with immediate effect up to and including 08 August 2024," the statement read. "We are continuously monitoring the situation and are extending support to our passengers with confirmed bookings for travel to and from Tel Aviv



during this period, with a one-time waiver on rescheduling and cancellation charges," it read. "Safety of our guests and crew remains our foremost priority. For more information, please call our 24/7 Contact Centre at 011-69329333 / 011-69329999," the statement added. Air India operates four flights from Delhi to Tel Aviv every week. In another update on its website, Air India said it has cancelled its flights AI139 from Delhi to Tel Aviv and AI140 from Tel Aviv to Delhi on August 1 due to operational reasons. "Passengers having confirmed bookings for travel on these two flights, will be provided with a one-time waiver on rescheduling and cancellation charges. The inconvenience caused is sincerely regretted," it said.

## ED conducts first raid in Leh-Ladakh region in fake cryptocurrency case

**The raid, conducted under the provisions of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA), targeted six premises located in Leh, Jammu, and Sonipat in connection with a fake cryptocurrency business run by AR Mir and others.**

**New Delhi:** The Enforcement Directorate (ED) of the Srinagar zone conducted its first-ever search operation in the Leh-Ladakh region on Friday. The raid, conducted under the provisions of the



Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA), targeted six premises located in Leh, Jammu, and Sonipat in connection with a fake cryptocurrency business run by AR Mir and others. According to the official statement, thousands of investors had invested their money in a cryptocurrency named 'Emoilent Coin.' However, they

have not received any returns or the currency itself, following which multiple FIRs were filed in the Leh region, while numerous complaints have been lodged in Jammu and Kashmir.

The agency launched the search operation based on a complaint from Leh's Additional District Magistrate. The complaint named AR Mir and Ajay

Kumar Choudhary as the accused. A probe held by a panel formed by the District Magistrate revealed that AR Mir and his agents were running a fake cryptocurrency business under the name "Emoilient Coin Limited" from an office at the Anjuman Moin-ul complex in Leh. Following the probe, the panel closed the office. In an elaborate scheme, individuals were enticed into buying the fake cryptocurrency, Emoilient Coin, through cash, bank transfers, or Bitcoin exchanges via a mobile app. The scam promised investors returns of up to 40% after a 10-month lock-in period. Additionally, investors were incentivised to recruit others, earning commissions of up to 7% for direct referrals. This multi-level marketing structure offered further commissions of 3% at the second level and 1% for subsequent levels up to the tenth, creating a complex and deceptive financial web. The investigation revealed that 2,508 investors had invested a total of Rs. 7,34,36,267 in the scheme.



# Your anxiety is making your kids Aggressive

You may want to be warm as well as restrictive if you want to limit the amount of violent video games that your kids play as a recent study has suggested so.

Parents who are more anxious and emotional can impact the amount of violent video games their children play, according to new consumer research from Iowa State University.

Researcher Russell Laczniaak says given the harmful effects of violent video games, he and his colleagues wanted to better understand how parents influence children's behavior. They found that

were successful in limiting children's play of violent video games. However, highly emotional and anxious parents had the opposite effect - their children played more.

It's not surprising that warmer and more restrictive parents, or what we call authoritative, are most effective at reducing the amount of violent video games played by their children, Laczniaak said, adding that if parents are more anxious, their message is not as well received by their children and it inhibits what they're trying to do.

In the paper, researchers explain

d that warm parents tend to refrain from physical discipline and show approval through affection. Restrictive parents set and enforce firm rules for the household. Anxious-emotional parents are often overprotective and show elevated emotions when interacting with their children.

Laczniaak says the biggest takeaway for parents is to set limits and be more calmly detached in the relations with their children, adding that for parents, who are more anxious, the rules become less effective and those kids are going to play more.



Right from the time corporal punishment has been banned, it is extremely difficult to control children. However, it is for parents to take it up in a fun way....



To inculcate good values and discipline in kids is surely an umpteen task as schools these days have taken a rather lenient way to educating them. Right from the time corporal punishment has been banned, it is extremely difficult to control children. However, it is for parents to take it up in a fun way....

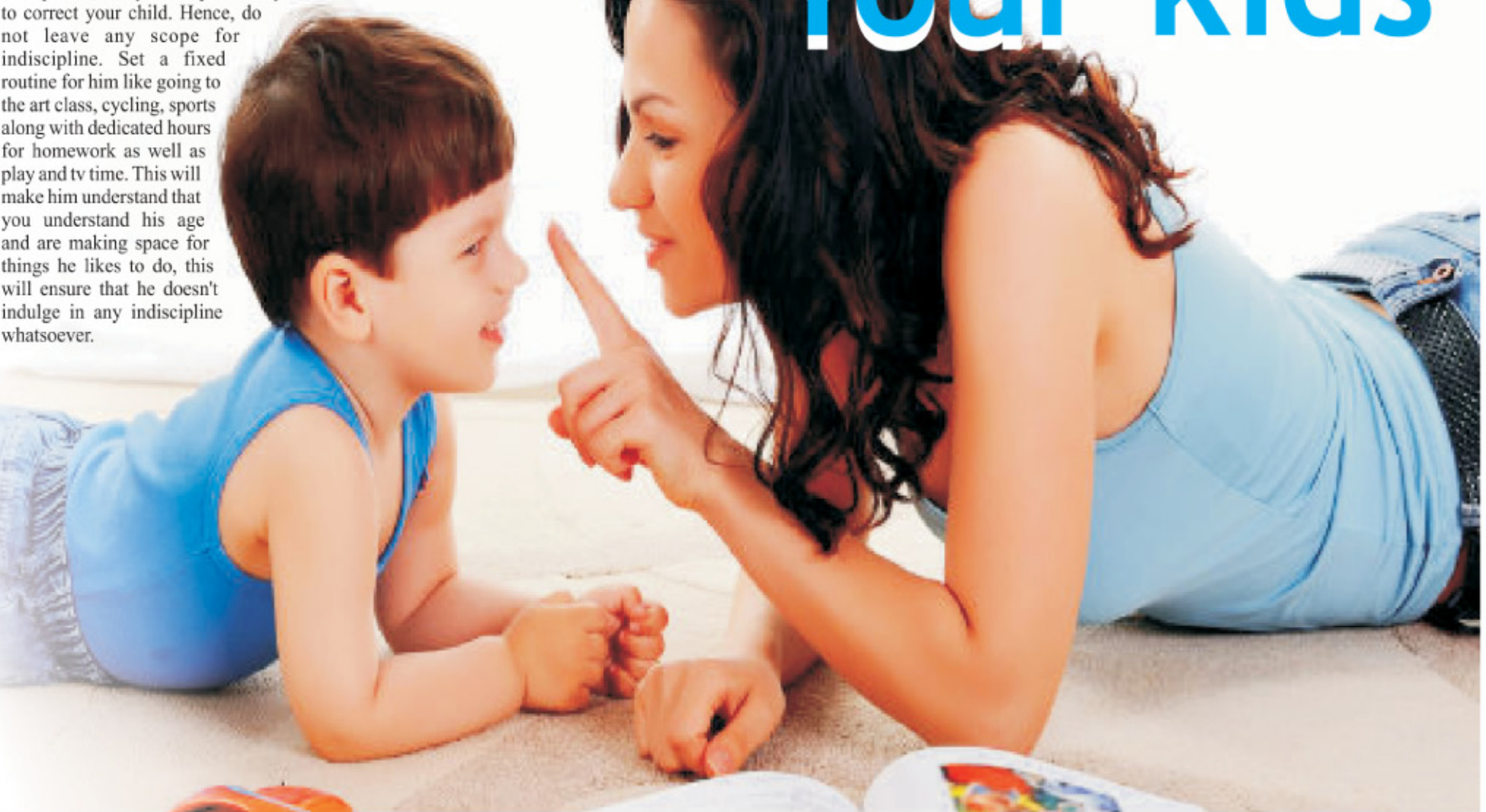
**Reward them when do good**  
This helps a lot, whenever your child is seen in his best of behaviour, reward him. For instance, if there's a month when there's not a single complaint from school about his in discipline or he has been a good child when you were away for some work till late. This will motivate him to stay disciplined.

**Set ground rules**  
Make a list of all his indisciplinary actions and a punishment for every action. This will make your child cautious of his

behaviour. Monitor his actions regularly, and never let any indiscipline go unnoticed. Also, let the child also understand how gruesome his act is and hence always keep someone as a trump card to complain about him, someone who can set him straight.

**Try subtle tactics**  
Make sure you correct the child depending at times, on the seriousness of the issue. Also, a better way are the subtle things like not talking to them for some time, not buying their favourite candy when grocery shopping. This will make him realise his mistakes and the child would make an effort to clean up his act.

**Set a routine**  
As a parent, it is your responsibility to correct your child. Hence, do not leave any scope for indiscipline. Set a fixed routine for him like going to the art class, cycling, sports along with dedicated hours for homework as well as play and tv time. This will make him understand that you understand his age and are making space for things he likes to do, this will ensure that he doesn't indulge in any indiscipline whatsoever.



# Don't buy dogs if you can't commit for a lifetime



older, their needs go up. Shruti and Zubi's non-profit initiative 'A place to bark' registers that labradors top the abandonment list. "People buy them thinking they are cute as pups. But once they grow older, their energy multiples and so do their bodies. They need a lot of exercise and most people can't give them that much of dedicated everyday time," they say.

Labs are followed by

If you can not commit for a lifetime, please do not buy dogs, plead animal rescue workers.

When Shruti Darak and her co-rescuer Md Zubi found little Disney, an abandoned Lhasa Apso, it was heartbreaking.

Despite coming across several cases of abused and abandoned pedigree dogs, these animal-lovers still well up with tears.

"You can see her hair is matted and her skin has infections and she has not been fed for days," says Shruti, as she rushes from the police station to hydrate the dog. Disney also had to be shaved to help her recover from skin and hair ailments.

Yes, these rescuers are expected to report an abandoned dog to a station, and get a letter to allow them to foster and re-shelter them if the owner does not claim them for 15 days. If the owner is unknown, the dog has to be reported the news about the lost dog has to be spread, and only after a month can one take personal action.

"In the case of Disney, we traced the owners and called them. Although they promised to come and pick her up in an hour's time, she was never picked up," explains Shruti. "We did get a call from the driver, however, asking us, 'What is the need to go to the police for a dog?'" This is the attitude of the people. Most pedigree dogs are bought because they are "super cute" as pups, but as they grow

Pomeranians. "Poms, as pups, are very small and adorable. But as they grow they tend to yap and bark a lot. It is also very difficult to rehouse them as they come under the category of 'single parent' dog. So they need to be socialised before they can be re-sheltered," adds Shruti.

Another people-run organisation Noah's Army also reveals that 35-40 per cent of their rescue cases have been pedigree dogs, including ill-treated dogs. "Our rescues are mostly accident-hit, injured, or tortured dogs. We just started in February this year and although our primary focus was to feed and help strays, we were surprised to see the number of pedigree dogs that are ill-treated," says Rahul, a member of Noah's Army.

Once these dogs are rescued, these animal-lovers foster them at homes and after a span of six weeks, they are given to loving families. Some of these non-profits have tie ups with shelters as well. For rescue and fostering, these volunteers work with help from donors of money, pet food or medical needs.



# Thoughtful ways of disciplining Your kids



## AEL to transfer Wilmar stake to shareholders

**NEW DELHI.** Paving the way for a potential stake sale, Adani Group flagship company - Adani Enterprises (AEL) - will transfer its stake in Adani Wilmar (AWL) to its shareholders. AEL, at present, holds a 43.94% stake in Adani Wilmar through Adani Commodities LLP. Post the restructuring, the shareholders of AEL will directly own Adani Wilmar shares. Shareholders will receive 251 shares of Adani Wilmar for every 500 Adani Enterprises shares they hold. "The food FMCG business and other businesses of the demerged company are capable of attracting a different set of investors, strategic partners, lenders and other stakeholders," said AEL in a statement. Adani Wilmar is a joint venture between the Adani Group and Singapore-based Wilmar



Group. It added, "There are also differences in the manner in which the Food FMCG Business and other businesses of the Demerged Company are required to be handled and managed. In order to lend greater/enhanced focus to the operation of the said businesses, it is proposed to reorganize and segregate the food FMCG business by way of demerger and transfer the same to the resulting company." Following the demerger, the promoter stake in Adani Wilmar, including Wilmar International will be reduced to 76.7% from 87.8%. "This demerger is in line with AEL's incubation strategy, which includes demerging of the business once it is self-sustained and properly established. In the past, AEL has demerged businesses including Adani Green Energy, Adani Energy Solutions once they became self-sustaining," said the company.

## Bank of Baroda PAT rises 10% to Rs 4,458 cr on fall in bad loan

**NEW DELHI.** Bank of Baroda (BoB) has reported a 10% rise in standalone net profit to Rs 4,458 crore in the first quarter of the financial year 2024-25, helped by a decline in bad loans. The state-owned bank had registered a net profit of Rs 4,070 crore in the year-ago period. Total income in the quarter increased to Rs 32,116 crore from Rs 29,878 crore, BoB said in a regulatory filing. The lender's interest income also increased to Rs 29,629 crore against Rs 26,556 crore in the same quarter a year ago. Gross non performing assets (NPAs) fell to 2.88% of gross advances by June 2024 from 3.51% in FY24. Net NPAs too fell to 0.69% compared to 0.78% at the end of the first quarter of the previous year. As a result, provisions and contingencies came down to Rs 1,011 crore in the April-June period of FY25 against Rs 1,947 crore in the year-ago period. Capital adequacy ratio improved to 16.82% in Q1 compared to 15.84% in the year-ago period.

## Gross GST collection for July rises 10.3% to Rs 1.82 lakh crore

**NEW DELHI.** After facing criticism for not officially announcing the monthly GST collection numbers in June, the government on Thursday announced the revenue figures for July 2024. The gross GST collection in July rose 10.3% to Rs 1.82 lakh crore as against Rs 1.65 lakh crore in the corresponding period last year. The GST revenue in June, as per government sources, was Rs 1.74 lakh crore.

Gross revenue from domestic transactions was Rs 1.34 lakh crore, up 8.9%. GST revenue on imports rose 14.4% to Rs 48,039 crore. In the first four months of FY25, gross revenue has seen a 10.2% growth to Rs 7.4 lakh crore. "While the gross GST revenues have shown an rise of 10.3%, it is interesting to observe that the growth in GST mop-up from imports is more than that from domestic supplies. These collections are based on supply transactions during June 2024, which is typically a slow offtake month before the onset of the festive season," says MS Mani, Partner, Deloitte India. After deducting the refunds, net GST collection during the month rose 14.4% to Rs 1.66 lakh crore. Net collection for the fiscal has been Rs 6.6 lakh crore, up 11% over last year. Many large states have seen a subdued growth in collection. Revenue in UP grew only 4%, Bihar, Tamil Nadu and Kerala saw 5% rise, Telangana saw a muted collection of 2%, while Andhra Pradesh registered a fall by 7%. However, Karnataka and Gujarat (13%), MP and Maharashtra (11% each) saw double-digit growth. Various media outlets reported that the government didn't want to publicise the growth in GST collections in fear of backlash from common people. However, GST department sources told TNIE that the government will now release the monthly GST numbers on a regular basis.

### FY25 revenue up 10.2%

The gross GST collection in July rose 10.3% to Rs 1.82 lakh crore as against Rs 1.65 lakh crore in the corresponding period last year. The GST revenue in June, as per government sources, was Rs 1.74 lakh crore. Gross revenue from domestic transactions was Rs 1.34 lakh crore, up 8.9%. GST revenue on imports rose 14.4% to Rs 48,039 crore. In the first four months of FY25, gross revenue has seen a 10.2% growth to Rs 7.4 lakh crore.

# Apple's quarterly profit beats forecast, pins hopes on AI as China sales falter

**NEW DELHI.** Apple Inc reported a strong financial performance for the June quarter, with a profit of \$21.4 billion on revenue of \$85.8 billion, marking a new record for the period and a 5% increase from the previous year. CEO Tim Cook expressed enthusiasm for the company's upcoming AI-powered tools, collectively known as Apple Intelligence, which are expected to drive user engagement and device sales.

In China, a critical market for Apple, sales continued to decline, dropping 7% from the previous year. This decline, though concerning, was less severe than in the previous quarter. Despite these challenges, Apple maintains a strong financial position, with quarterly earnings per share at \$1.40, above Wall Street estimates. Sales in other segments, including the Mac and iPad, showed growth, while the wearables segment saw a slight decline.

iPhone revenue slightly declined to \$39.3 billion compared to the same quarter last



year, while the company experienced solid growth in the iPad segment, generating \$7.2 billion in revenue. Apple also reported a new high in active devices

across all geographic regions, although specific figures were not provided. Analysts weighed in on Apple's AI strategy, with Emarketer analyst Jacob Bourne

noting that the company has tied its AI efforts to core business components, particularly the iPhone. The effectiveness of Apple's AI investments will primarily be measured by device sales and potential growth in subscription revenue. As the company prepares to launch its AI-powered features, the market eagerly awaits the impact on iPhone demand and overall performance.

Apple's shares experienced a minor uptick of 0.5% in after-hours trading following the earnings report. As the tech giant gears up to make its mark in the AI space, investors and industry experts will closely monitor its progress and the reception of its new AI-driven offerings.

Looking ahead, Apple plans to integrate various AI features in its products, including making its virtual assistant Siri smarter. These features, part of a free software update expected in the autumn, will initially be available on premium iPhone models equipped with a special AI chip.

## Sensex down 700 points, investors lose Rs 4 lakh crore. What triggered the fall

**New Delhi.** Benchmark stock market indices opened sharply lower, leading to significant losses for investors. The S&P BSE Sensex plummeted 814 points to 81,026, and the NSE Nifty50 dropped 282 points to 24,728 around 9:48 am. The decline resulted in over Rs 4 lakh crore loss in market capitalisation for all listed companies on the BSE.

However, markets have pared some losses. At around 11:38 am, Sensex was down 625.7 points at 81,241.85, while the Nifty50 traded 192.10 points lower at 24,818.80.

The sell-off affected all major sectoral indices, with Nifty Metal and PSU Bank suffering the most, each falling over 2%. Meanwhile, the Nifty Smallcap100 and Nifty Midcap100, which focus more on domestic markets, fell over 1% each. Here are some of the top factors behind the weakness on Dalal Street:

### Tech sell-off in US markets

The Indian equity market followed the downward trend in US markets. On Thursday, US stocks tumbled due to weak manufacturing data, raising



doubts about the US economy and offsetting optimism about potential Federal Reserve interest rate cuts. The Dow Jones Industrial Average fell 1.57% to 40,200, the S&P 500 lost 1.76% to 5,424, and the Nasdaq Composite dropped 2.76% to 17,114. In early Asian trading hours, US stock futures continued to decline, with Nasdaq futures tumbling 1.5% and S&P 500 futures falling 0.9%.

### Asian markets in red

Asian shares also slid following weaker-than-expected US factory data, sparking fears of a worsening economic outlook. MSCI's broadest index of Asia-Pacific shares outside Japan slumped 0.8% in early Asia trade. Japan's Nikkei was headed for its worst

day in over four years, weighed down by a surging yen and uncertainty over potential rises in domestic interest rates. It was last down 4.89%, on track for its steepest daily fall since March 2020.

### Missing trigger in earnings

The June quarter earnings season has been in line with expectations, but analysts note there were no major positive surprises to drive the market higher. ICICI Securities reported that Q1FY25 results showed a ratio of earnings beats to misses of 1.9:1 for the NSE200 universe. While sectors like banking, financial services, IT, FMCG, and oil & gas saw higher beats and in-line earnings, the pharma, cement, and metal sectors experienced misses.

### Rise in oil prices

Oil prices rose on Friday amid concerns over potential supply disruptions in the Middle East. Brent crude futures gained 62 cents, or 0.75%, to \$80.12 a barrel, while US West Texas Intermediate crude futures rose 61 cents, or 0.8%, to \$76.92. These increases add pressure to global inflation.

## Top 3 carmakers report decline in July sales

**NEW DELHI.** Despite partial relief from the intense heat wave and election fervour subsiding completely, passenger vehicle (PV) sales remained under pressure in July 2024 with the top 3 carmakers reporting a dip in sales. The fall comes even as original equipment manufacturers (OEMs) and deal showrooms are offering hefty discounts to lure buyers. Domestic PV sales of Maruti Suzuki (MSIL), India's largest carmaker, fell 9.6% YoY to 137,463 units in July 2024 as against 152,126 units in the corresponding month last year. Not only in the mini and compact segment, but MSIL also registered a dip in its utility vehicles (UVs) sales. It sold 56,302 UVs in July 2024 as against 62,049 sold in July 2023. IPO-bound Hyundai Motor India (MSIL) domestic sales fell 3.33% YoY to 49,013 units in July 2024 as against 50,701 units in July 2023. Tarun Garg,



Whole-time director and chief operating officer, HMIL said, "SUVs continue to demonstrate a robust contribution, accounting for 66.6% of total HMIL domestic sales. The new Hyundai CRETA achieved key milestones of 1 lakh unit sales till July 2024, while also achieving highest ever monthly domestic sales of 17,350 units in July 2024."

Tata Motors' domestic PV sales fell 6% to 44,725 units in July 2024 from 47,628 units in July 2023. Its electric vehicle plummeted 21% to 5,027 units last month as demand from fleet operators dried up. The automaker said that although demand has remained less than anticipated, they expect it to pick up during festive period. "New product launches will augur well for the business. Our focus is to increase addressable market by introducing new nameplates, strengthen multipowertrain strategy to leverage industry powertrain shifts and grow the EV market in India while maintaining market leadership," Tata Motors said in its result. Meanwhile, SUV majors Mahindra & Mahindra (M&M) and Toyota (TKM) continue to report healthy growth in sales.

grocery, and e-commerce industries.

The brokerage anticipates Zomato will achieve margins of 4% in FY 2025 and 8.7% in FY 2026, while acknowledging the difficulty in valuing Blinkit accurately. Other brokerage firms such as Equirius and ICICI Securities have also set targets of Rs 300 or higher for Zomato.

Out of 28 analysts covering the stock, 25 have a "Buy" rating.

Morgan Stanley retained its "overweight" rating and raised its target from Rs 235 to Rs 278, citing Zomato's goals of 20%+ growth in food delivery, expanding to 2,000 quick commerce stores by 2026, and launching a new app for the "going out" segment. Nomura upgraded its price target from Rs 225 to Rs 280, praising Zomato's growth trajectory and improving profitability in both food delivery and quick commerce sectors.

Citi described Zomato's results as a "stellar quarter," maintaining its "buy" rating and increasing its price target to Rs 280 from Rs 235. Jefferies, while noting potential volatility from Blinkit's expansion plans, raised its target from Rs 230 to Rs 275, keeping a "buy" rating.



# Infosys GST notice saga: Why it led to an outcry among IT firms, legal experts

**New Delhi.** The information technology (IT) sector was recently shaken by a substantial Goods and Services Tax (GST) notice issued to Infosys. The Karnataka state authorities had sent a "pre-show cause" notice to the IT giant, demanding Rs 32,403 crore in GST claims. The notice has since been withdrawn, but it sparked significant concern within the industry, raising questions about the GST enforcement mechanism and its understanding of the IT sector's operating model.

### Initial GST Notice to Infosys

The controversy began when the Karnataka government sent a notice to Infosys, claiming the company was liable to pay Integrated GST (IGST) under the reverse charge mechanism for "supply of services" by its foreign branches from FY18 to FY22. The revenue department's interpretation was that expenses for overseas branches were payments for services delivered by the offshore offices of the Indian entity. According to experts, this interpretation was contentious because it implied that reimbursements

for expenses could be construed as payments for services, and that foreign branches were distinct legal entities from their Indian unit.

### Industry outcry over Infosys GST notice

The issuance of such a substantial GST notice led to an outcry from the IT industry and experts. The National Association of Software and Service Companies (Nasscom), an industry lobby group, criticised the notice. It stated that the notice reflected a misunderstanding of the IT industry's operating model. Nasscom highlighted that government circulars based on GST Council recommendations should be respected to avoid creating uncertainty and negatively impacting India's ease of doing business. "Recent media reports of a GST demand of over Rs 320 billion (Rs 32,403 crore) reflect a lack of understanding of the industry's operating model. This is an industry-wide issue, and multiple companies are facing avoidable litigation, uncertainty, and concerns from investors and customers," Nasscom said without naming



Infosys. Nasscom also said that GST enforcement authorities were issuing notices for remittance by Indian head offices to their foreign branches in cases where there was no actual service between the head office and the foreign branch. This, according to Nasscom, was not a case of 'import of service' by the head office from the branch. The organisation pointed out that courts have previously ruled in favor of the industry in similar cases under the erstwhile service tax law. "This is not a new problem, and courts have been ruling in favor of the industry in these cases. This

issue was even addressed during the erstwhile service tax law, where favorable judgments were delivered by the Customs, Excise, and Service Tax Appellate Tribunal (CESTAT)," Nasscom added.

### Withdrawal of the notice

A day after the initial notice, Infosys announced that the Karnataka state authorities had withdrawn the GST notice. The company received communication that directed it to submit further responses to the Directorate General of GST Intelligence (DGGI).

The move has shifted the oversight of the tax probe to the DGGI.

### What do experts say?

Experts have voiced concerns about the potential precedent set by issuing such a large notice. Rajat Mohan, director at accounting firm MOORE Singh, indicated that more tax notices for similar alleged violations could follow, particularly targeting multinational companies in the IT sector.



NEWS BOX

From highs of T20 WC to a new dawn of Indian cricket: Rohit's message for fans

New Delhi. A new dawn for Indian cricket has begun with the change in the guard of T20I captaincy and appointment of a new head coach, Gautam Gambhir. After a clean-sweep in the T20I series against Sri Lanka, team India will aim to do a repeat of it in the 50-over format. The difference this time? Two of the stalwarts of Indian cricket, Rohit Sharma and Virat Kohli, are making a comeback in ODIs after eight months. The duo, who have dominated the 50-over format for a decade, will aim to make a memorable comeback.Ahead of the start of the series, Rohit delivered a special and rather emotional message to all the Indian cricket fans. The video captured all the memorable moments that the fans and the players shared a few weeks ago. From Rohit's captain's shoot in Barbados to the



victory parade near Marine Drive, the iconic dance at the Wankhede Stadium, the video had it all.

A beginning of new era

Rohit, in the video, said that he still has the urge to put his pads on and play for India in the shortest format. In his usual avatar, the captain addressed the fans and said that the last one month has been really special, filled with memories.

"Wow, what a month it was. Maza hee agaya. Flooded with memories, etched in history. A moment like this, which will stay with us forever. So much so that I feel I can put my pads on anytime for the shortest format. Nahi yar, choro bhai. I had my time. I enjoyed it, and it's time to move on," Rohit said in the BCCI video.

IND vs SL 1st ODI: Match Preview

Rohit also said that the series would be marking the start of a new era with many fresh and old talents in the side."It's time for us to get back on the field with the start of a new era. A new start with a new coach. A partnership that is going to hold Indian cricket as paramount. It's time to hit the reset button. It's time for us to get back on to the field.

First ODI: Rohit Sharma, Virat Kohli to start fresh against Sri Lanka

CHENNAI. India might have swept Sri Lanka 3-0 in the shortest format, but come Friday, they will have to start fresh with the senior pros, including captain Rohit Sharma and Virat Kohli, back in the mix. For the skipper, and the newly-appointed head coach Gautam Gambhir, a new partnership begins as it will be the first time they work together in their respective roles for the Indian team.

Rohit, however, isn't worried as much as he explained what lies ahead on the eve of the first ODI. "I have known Gambhir for a very long time and we have played a little bit of cricket together. He has a very clear mind and knows what he wants from the team," he said, before adding, "Basically, our chats have centred around what the team needs, what are our shortcomings, BENGALURU: The National AntiDoping Agency (NADA)



conducted a session for Indian cricketers at the National Cricket Academy to spread awareness about doping in sports and how to create a fair sporting environment for athletes. Dortmund signs Gross from Brighton where have we done well etc. It was a discussion on how to take the team forward. But we don't want to plan too far ahead. We are here for three games, and the idea is to take something back from these three games, and learn how we want to play and what we want to achieve in ODI cricket."

Rohit reiterated that maintaining the standard of Indian cricket and everything else comes after. "At the end of the day, the standard of Indian cricket is more important and while doing that if you lose a game then it is absolutely fine. You are still trying to do something different and you are not compromising on the standard. We are a sports team, a cricket team, and we should also be allowed to lose while we are trying to do things differently. We want to achieve something out of every series or game we play, but not at the cost of not showing intent or purpose," he said.

Simone Biles claims sixth Olympic Gold in Paris, win women's all-around title

Simone Biles won her sixth Olympic gold in Paris, securing the women's all-around title for the second time. At 27, she became the oldest champion since 1952, extending her record as the most decorated gymnast with 39 career medals.

New Delhi Simone Biles added another chapter to her legendary career by winning her sixth Olympic gold medal and her second of the Paris Games on Thursday. In a closely contested final, Biles triumphed over Brazil's Rebeca Andrade to capture the women's all-around title for the second time. The 27-year-old gymnast returned to the top of the gymnastics world eight years after winning her first Olympic all-around title in Rio. Biles is now only the third woman to win this prestigious title more than once, joining Larisa Latynina of the Soviet Union

(1956 and 1960) and Vera Caslavskaya of Czechoslovakia (1964 and 1968). Biles, a once-in-a-lifetime athlete known for making the extraordinary look effortless, led the field of 24 gymnasts with a score of 59.131 points. Andrade finished nearly two points behind, earning a silver medal, while Biles's US teammate Suni Lee, the defending Olympic all-around champion who has battled multiple kidney diseases over the past two years, secured the bronze medal."I just couldn't believe that I did it," Biles said afterward. "I know that I did it, but I don't think it's hit me just yet. It will probably hit me whenever I go back to the [Olympic Village]. I'm just ecstatic with my performances tonight. And we still have three finals left for me. Now it's time to have fun and the hard part is over."

Simone Biles creates history

Biles also became the oldest women's all-around Olympic champion since Maria Gorokhovskaya of the Soviet Union, who won gold in 1952 at the age of 30. Biles continues the American dominance in the event, becoming the sixth straight US woman to win the title, following Sunisa Lee (2021), herself (2016), Gabby Douglas (2012), Nastia Liukin (2008), and Carly Patterson (2004).



This historic victory marks Biles's 39th career medal between the Olympics and world championships, extending her record as the most decorated gymnast in history. Since winning her first national title in 2013, she has claimed every all-around competition she has entered.The final in Paris featured multiple former Olympic champions, including Biles and Lee, but it was primarily a showdown between Biles and Andrade. Biles began on the vault, executing a sky-

high Yurchenko double pike and scoring 15.766 despite a few steps back on the landing. Andrade's Cheng vault earned her 15.100, setting up a close competition.On the uneven bars, traditionally Biles's weakest event, Andrade scored 14.666. Biles made a significant error but managed a score of 13.733. After two rotations, Biles was in second place, trailing Andrade by 0.267 points. However, Biles's strength on the balance beam and floor exercise propelled her back to the top.

Biles overcomes challenges to win gold

Biles's latest win highlights her longevity and resilience, especially after her Tokyo 2020 withdrawal due to "twisties." Since then, she has focused on her mental health and returned stronger than ever. Incorporating music from Taylor Swift and Beyoncé into her routines, Biles continues to inspire and break boundaries.Reflecting on the eight-year gap between her all-around gold medals, Biles said, "It feels amazing. I was a little bit naive in the process. So I appreciate my craft a little bit more."Simone Biles's achievements in Paris further cement her status as the greatest gymnast of all time, and her journey continues to inspire fans around the world.

SL vs IND: Sri Lanka needs sharpening of cricket awareness, says coach Jayasuriya

New Delhi. Sri Lanka's interim coach Sanath Jayasuriya doesn't see a lack of commitment in the side and feels the players' cricket awareness needs to be sharpened ahead of the start of the ODI series against India. Sri Lanka ended up being beaten by India 3-0 in the T20I series after losing all three matches from winnable positions. In the final match, Sri Lanka lost 7 wickets for 27 runs as India took the game into a super over and won it.

Speaking ahead of the 1st ODI against India on August 2, Jayasuriya felt that the players need to learn on how to tackle pressure better. He would open up about the 'cricket awareness' aspect by telling that the players need to think about taking 2s and 3s on the big grounds in Sri Lanka, instead of just looking at big hits.

SL vs IND 1st ODI: Preview

"I don't see a lack of commitment, but they have got to tackle pressure better. Their cricket awareness also needs sharpening.



We are taking the responsibility; you can't go away from that. As long as they realise that, and make sure that, we'll have to keep giving them the confidence and support."

"When you talk about power hitting, I don't think you need that much," Jayasuriya said. "If you hit enough fours and enough twos, you get the total that you need. The [Sri Lankan] grounds are a little bigger. There's no reason why you can't hit boundaries, or twos, or threes. If you can

do that, you can get by without hitting so many sixes."

Jayasuriya backs Asalanka

Charith Asalanka would take over as the captain of the white-ball team during the T20I series and Jayasuriya backed him to perform well as the skipper. The interim coach said that Asalanka should be given time to perform as a captain.

"Charith Asalanka is one of our best players in this format, and we need to remember that," Jayasuriya said. "But when you

get the captaincy, there is some pressure. I've been there too. You have got to give them a little time in that position.

"There are ten more players in the side, and 16 in the squad. We all have to get together and give him the confidence too. At any moment, the captain could click. Charith Asalanka is someone who works really hard. He's very professional and communicates well."

PV Sindhu has no regrets with Paris Olympics preparation, rues defensive errors

New Delhi India's ace shuttler PV Sindhu had no regrets over the way she prepared for the Paris Olympics 2024 but felt her defence let her down in the Round Of 16 clash against China's He Bing Jiao on Thursday, August 1. Sindhu had a close contest with Jiao on Thursday but ultimately came up short in the contest. The Chinese shuttler won the battle 21-19 21-14 in 56 minutes.This would end Sindhu's quest for a hat-trick of medals at the Olympics. The Indian ace, while talking to PTI, said that she should have controlled things in terms of her errors while defending. Sindhu, who trained with Prakash Padukone in Germany for the games, felt everyone did their best to get her ready for Paris and the rest was destiny."I should have controlled in terms of a little bit of mistakes on my defense is what I felt," Sindhu said, reflecting upon the reason for her defeat."Everybody worked hard, so we've



done whatever we could. Rest is destiny. I don't regret it," she said.

"I kept fighting still because you never know anything can happen. Both of us were fighting for each point because until the end you can't expect."It's not easy win or easy points, you can't think that you have finished the game."

LA Olympics still 4 years away

Sindhu also commented on being at the LA Olympics and felt that it was still 4 years away. The Indian ace said she is currently focused on resting up a bit and taking a break and coming back."It's still four years away. So for me, right now, I just go back and rest for a bit, maybe just take some break and then come back and let's see what it is because four years is a very, very long time. So let's see," the 29-year-old said.

"It's sad. The result, I couldn't get what I expected, but it's a journey, isn't it?"It's been a wonderful journey so far. There were ups and downs, and I came back from an injury, and everything was going on well. You can't expect easy wins or picking the form at the right time. Sometimes it might not be your day. We all really worked hard."With Sindhu and Satwik-Chirag's exit, Lakshya Sen is India's only hope in Badminton at the Paris Olympics 2024.

Unfortunate for Lakshya and Prannoy to face each other in R16: Prakash Padukone

New Delhi The majority of the Indian badminton contingent were wiped out of the Paris Olympics on Thursday, August 1. While PV Sindhu was knocked out by China's He Bing Jiao, men's doubles duo of Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty fell in a gruelling 3-game battle against Malaysian pair or Chia-Yik. However, the most hurtful result of the day was HS Prannoy getting knocked out by compatriot Lakshya Sen in the Round of 16 match at the Games.Prannoy and Lakshya, who are playing their maiden Olympics, were expected to be medal contenders in Paris. However, due to the nature of the draw, unseeded Lakshya faced 13th-seed Prannoy in the early stages of the tournament. Reacting to the same, legendary Prakash Padukone said that it was unfortunate for the duo to meet this early in the tournament. However, the former player and a coach

added that it was the nature of the game and one had to obey the rules.

"It happens all the time, even in the BWF events. So in the first round itself, you meet each other. I think one of the Chinese doubles, they meet in the pre-quarter itself. It happens, the rules are very clear. It's already announced beforehand. It doesn't matter which country you come from," Prakash Padukone told IndiToday on Thursday, August 1.

Paris Olympics 2024: India Schedule | Full Coverage | Medal Tally |

"But in the men's singles, I think it was a draw and it happens. You know, if there are two good players, sometimes you do. It's a little unfortunate, but I think one has to obey the rules and follow," he further added.Asked about Lakshya Sen's chances of winning a medal in the Paris Olympics, Padukone said



that Lakshya was in good form. However, his praise came with a slight caution and warning, where he stated that past results did not matter in the Olympics and one had to overcome the pressure on the day that they were playing.

"I think he's in good form. I think a lot of the credit goes to the team led by Vimal. I'm of course helping them but you know, in terms of strategy and tactics they really worked

hard. He seems to be in good form but needs to maintain his form for the next three or four days. As of now he seems good, but I think each day is different. I always keep saying that the past result, the future results, whether you have beaten him in the past, all of that does not matter. Just this one week, you have to be at your best. You have to try to reach the peak, and that's what we are hoping for from Lakshya," Padukone said. It was not meant to be for Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty. The former World No. 1 and Asian Games gold medalists were knocked out in the quarter-finals of men's doubles badminton at the Paris Olympics on Thursday, August 1. One of India's biggest medal hopes, Satwik and Chirag lost to higher-ranked Aaron Chia and Wooi Yik Soh of Malaysia in three games - 21-13, 14-21, 16-21, in an hour and 4 minutes on Court 3 at the La Chappelle Arena in Paris.

Harbhajan Singh's sarcastic jibe at Pak journo over security issues in country

New Delhi Former India cricketer Harbhajan Singh slammed a Pakistani journalist who tried to target him for his stance over India's participation in the Champions Trophy 2025. Harbhajan took a sarcastic jibe at the Pakistani journalist who tried to mock him. Harbhajan had supported BCCI's stance of not wanting to send the Indian team to Pakistan for the upcoming Champions Trophy 2025. The journalist posted a scorecard of Harbhajan getting hit for four sixes by Shahid Afridi during India's tour to Pakistan in 2006.The Pakistani journalist tried to mock the former India player by saying that these are the kind of security issues he has been pointing out. Harbhajan retweeted the post and shared a screenshot from a newspaper from 2009 when the Sri Lankan team bus was attacked by Pakistani terrorists. He used this reference to point out



the security concerns within the country and suggested that this was the reason as to why the Indian team should not travel to Pakistan.

"No not for this. Cricket Mai Jeet har lagi rehti hai. I will tell u the real problem is this . Check the photo . Now get the Fāææ. out of here . F ka Matlab samaj aa gya hoga ya samjau? F means ur name . Plz don't think what u r thinking th meaning of F. You know what I mean ??Peace," Harbhajan wrote in the caption on X.

Harbhajan slams Pakistani journalist

Pakistan bagged the hosting rights for the Champions Trophy 2025. The country will host a mega event after more than two decades. After the terror attack on Sri Lanka's team bus, Pakistan was banned from hosting any international matches for a decade. Other countries have started touring Pakistan now, but amid the cross-border tensions between India and Pakistan, there is no green signal to their travel to the neighbouring country.

During last year's Asia Cup, as well when Pakistan were hosts, India played all their games in Sri Lanka. The BCCI is keen on getting neutral venues like Sri Lanka or the UAE for the Champions Trophy matches in 2025.





# Shivali Parab

## Bewitches In Brown Bodycon Mini Dress

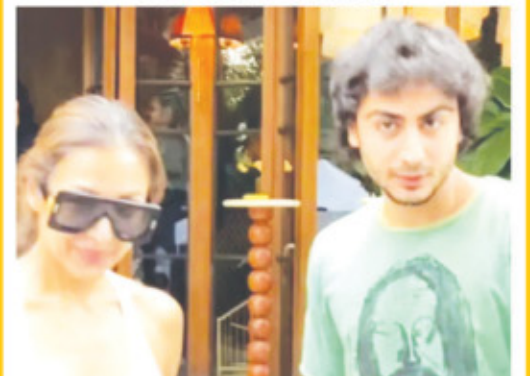
Marathi television actress Shivali Parab recently captured attention on social media with her chic outfit. In the photos, Shivali is seen wearing a body-hugging dress with a tie-dye pattern in shades of brown and beige. The outfit perfectly accentuates her figure, giving her a sophisticated yet edgy look. Paired with trendy sunglasses and holding a glass, Shivali exuded confidence and elegance. Her minimalistic makeup and curly hair added to the overall appeal, making her look effortlessly glamorous. Shivali captioned the post with the hashtags #shivaliparab, #kalyanchichulbuli, and #love, reflecting her character's name and her love for the stylish look. The post quickly garnered attention, receiving over 13,000 likes and numerous comments praising her fashion sense. There was another section of netizens who trolled her.

On Shivali's post, one user commented, "Don't lose the popularity you gained from the comedy shows". Another commented, "It seems you're also getting attracted to Bollywood". "This doesn't suit you; you look better in traditional Marathi attire", someone commented. Shivali Parab is an active social media user and often engages her fans through her posts and videos. She recently shared some pictures on Instagram that were widely shared on social media platforms. In the pictures that went viral, she was seen wearing a light blue oversized shirt, perfectly teamed up with denim shorts. The shirt has text written on it which has created some buzz among her fans. The text written on her shirt is Onkar 71. Netizens mockingly questioned whether the shirt belonged to actor Onkar Raut.



Onkar was also part of the show Maharashtra Hasya Jatra. Shivali gained her fame through this show itself. Onkar Raut himself commented on the photo as well, he asked whether this shirt had his name on it.

### Malaika Arora Is All Smiles As She Goes On Lunch Date With Son Arhaan Khan

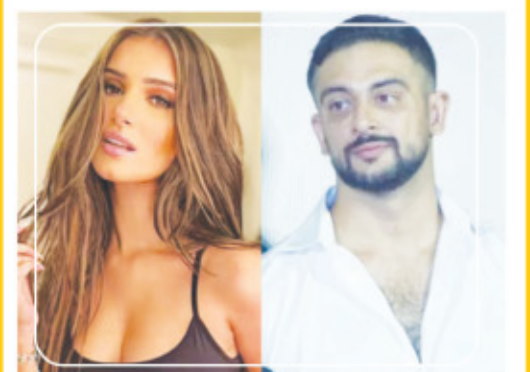


A part from being a model, dancer and fitness influencer, Malaika Arora is also a doting mother to Arhaan Khan, whom she shares with her ex-husband Arbaaz Khan. The diva has a very healthy bond with her 21-year-old son and they are often seen spending quality time together on vacations or lunch dates. On Wednesday, the mother-son duo was papped outside a restaurant in Mumbai. Several pictures and videos of them have now surfaced on social media. In one such video, both Malaika and Arhaan are seen exiting the restaurant and making their way to the vehicle. As soon as they headed out, paps stationed outside requested them to pose for a picture together.

Malaika, who is a true fashionista, for the recent outing opted for a casual outfit. She wore a white deep-neck sleeveless top paired with blue denim and white sneakers. She accessorised her look with black shades and a grey handbag. As for the tresses, she tied her hair in a messy low bun style. Talking about Arhaan, the young star kid wore a green T-shirt that he paired with black pyjamas and white sneakers.

Malaika and Arbaaz Khan got married in 1998 and welcomed their son Arhaan in 2002. The two parted ways in 2017 and have been co-parenting Arhaan since then. Earlier while talking to Hello Magazine, Malaika shared that it was initially "tricky" but now she and Arbaaz have struck a balance in co-parenting their son. She said, "For what it's worth, touch wood, we've finally struck a good balance. Initially, it was a little tricky. And rightly so, because that's how life is. We both realized that whatever happens between two adults, it should never be reflected on a child—and we have found a really friendly style of co-parenting." However, Arbaaz is now married to Shweta Khan, whereas Malaika has reportedly ended her relationship with Arjun Kapoor after a few years of dating. Meanwhile, talking about Arhaan, he recently made his debut as a podcaster and launched his venture Dumb Biryani, in collaboration with his friends.

### Tara Sutaria Finds Love Again After Break-Up With Aadar Jain ? Here's What We Know



Looks like Bollywood actress Tara Sutaria has given love another chance. Sources close to the actress have revealed that she has been seeing actor Arunoday Singh for quite some time now. Buzz is that, they have been secretly dating for over a year and a half, taking their friendship to the next level. It seems Cupid has struck the duo, and they are now more than just good friends. According to a report in ETimes, "It all started from mutual liking for art and led to the two currently finding solace in each other. Tara's family is not only aware of Arunoday but also likes him a lot. The two often go out on dates. It is just that they have not hired a PR to publicize their relationship."

The source further added, "Tara wishes to keep the relationship private, and Arunoday has always been very private. The two are very similar. They have the same penchant for the English language and culture. They are also very much into art. Reportedly they have also been spotted the two on a date with Tara's mum and dad in a restaurant in Bandra, Mumbai. Tara was previously dating actor Aadar Jain. The two reportedly broke up somewhere in January 2023 or a little before that. In an exclusive chat with News18 Showsha, Tara confirmed the relationship has indeed ended. Tara and Aadar parted amicably and have decided to remain friends. However, they haven't been spotted together in recent times. Arunoday Singh, on the other hand has been living separately from his ex-wife Lee Elton since their divorce in 2019. Neither Tara or Arunoday have commented on their relationship. Last seen in the 2023 survival thriller Apurva for Disney+Hotstar, Tara is said to be a part of the upcoming film titled Humraaz.

# Samantha Ruth Prabhu

## On Working With Varun Dhawan In Citadel Honey Bunny: 'He's The Nicest Human Being'

Varun Dhawan is gearing up for his OTT debut with 'Citadel: Honey Bunny,' co-starring Samantha Ruth Prabhu. The series has been generating buzz since its announcement, keeping fans eagerly anticipating its release. Now, the wait is over as the makers have unveiled the much-awaited teaser and announced the release date. At the grand launch event, Samantha Ruth Prabhu shared her experience of working with Varun Dhawan for the first time, adding to the excitement surrounding the series. The actress heaped praises at her co-star by stating, "All he thinks about from the moment he wakes up is how to improve his craft. He's constantly focused on how to perform each scene better. Not only is he dedicated to his work, but he's also one of the nicest human beings I've ever met."



She continued, "His wonderful sense of humor and positive attitude make sure everyone on set is happy. He's always smiling, ensuring that there's never a rough day for anyone around him. In 'Citadel,' he has brought a completely new vision to his role, particularly in the action scenes, showcasing a fresh and unique approach." The teaser, released on Thursday, introduces Samantha as Honey and Varun Dhawan as Bunny, both playing spies. It opens with the track 'Raati Baaki Baat Baaki' playing in the background, setting a nostalgic tone. The teaser combines the elements of a gritty spy thriller with high-octane action sequences and a love story, all set against the vibrant backdrop of the 90s. We see glimpses of Samantha and Varun excelling in their spy roles, as well as snippets of their on-screen romance. The teaser culminates in a tense moment with Samantha pointing a gun at Varun, leaving viewers eager for more.

Citadel: Honey Bunny is an exciting new spin-off

from the original Citadel series, which featured Priyanka Chopra and Richard Madden. Amazon Prime Video has revealed that these spin-offs will take place in various locations, including India, Spain, Italy, and Mexico, with Priyanka's series serving as the central hub connecting all the narratives. The first of these spin-offs to debut is set in India, titled Citadel: Honey Bunny, and boasts a stellar cast. Joining the ensemble are Kay Kay Menon, Simran, Soham Majumdar, Shivankit Singh Parihar, Kashvi Majumdar, Saquib Saleem, and Sikandar Kher in significant roles. The series is slated to release later this year on November 7.

