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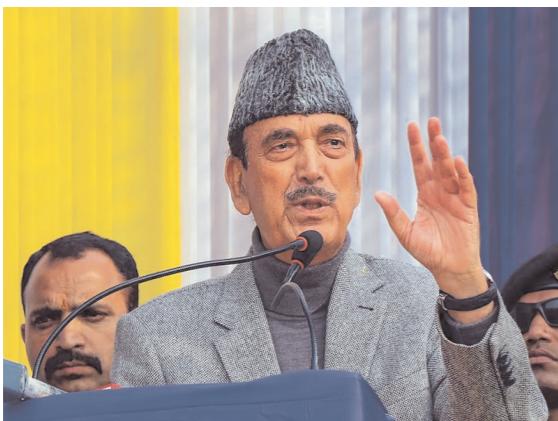
Harbhajan Singh writes to
West Bengal governor,
CM Mamata Banerjee
Sanjay Kumar

New Delhi, August 18: Former cricketer and AAP Rajya Sabha MP Harbhajan Singh has written to West Bengal Governor C V Ananda Bose and Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee, urging them to 'act swiftly and decisively' in the rape-murder case of a Kolkata doctor. With deep anguish over delay in justice to the Kolkata rape and murder victim, the incident which had shaken the conscience of all of us, I have penned a heartfelt plea to the Hon'ble Chief Minister of West Bengal, 'With deep anguish over delay in justice to the Kolkata rape and murder victim, the incident which had shaken the conscience of all of us, I have penned a heartfelt plea to the Hon'ble Chief Minister of West Bengal, and Hon'ble Bengal Governor urging them to act swiftly and decisively,' Singh said in a post on X. The safety and dignity of women are non-negotiable, he said, adding the perpetrators of this heinous crime must face the full might of the law, and the punishment must be exemplary. 'Only then can we begin to restore faith in our system and ensure that such a tragedy never occurs again and we create a society where every woman feels safe and protected. We must ask ourselves ?if not now, when? If I feel, the time for action is now,' he said on X. 'I demand justice for the victim. I demand a safer society. I demand positive change.'

DPA Party claims Congress spreading rumours of former Jammu and Kashmir CM Ghulam Nabi Azad joining

ST Correspondent

Jammu, August 18: With the reports of former Chief Minister of Jammu and Kashmir Ghulam Nabi Azad joining Congress doing the rounds, his party Democratic Progressive Azad Party (DPAP) has claimed these to be rumours being spread by the Congress. 'Rumours are being spread by Congress leaders of Jammu & Kashmir for the last



two weeks that Mr. Ghulam Nabi Azad and his party is joining Congress. It is also being spread that Mr. Azad was approached by the central Congress leadership to join the Congress Party' Salman Nizami who is the chief spokesperson of DPAP said in a statement. Nizami further said 'As chief spokesperson of DPAP, let me make it clear, on behalf of the party Chairman, that ever since Mr. Azad has left Congress Party, neither Mr. Azad has approached any congress leader nor any congress leader has ever approached Mr. Azad directly or telephonically'. He rubbished the claims to be rumours and stated these to be 'totally baseless and false, just to create confusion and break our party'. The statement further stated that Azad has approached Nizami. Nizami further said 'As chief spokesperson of DPAP, let me make it clear, on behalf of the party Chairman, that ever since Mr. Azad has left Congress Party, neither Mr. Azad has approached any congress leader nor any congress leader requested all his party leaders and workers 'not to get into this trap' and also requested the media persons 'not to give any importance to these rumours'. Reports generated from different quarters had claimed that Azad was likely to merge his party with the Congress ahead of Assembly elections in Jammu and Kashmir. However, the Congress has not given any official statement over the issue.

Indian Coast Guard Director-General Rakesh Pal dies of heart attack in Chennai

New Delhi/Chennai, August 18: Indian Coast Guard Director-General Rakesh Pal died at a government hospital in Chennai on Sunday following a cardiac arrest, officials said. He had taken charge as the 25th Director-General of the Indian Coast Guard on July 19 last year. Pal, who was to attend an ICG event along with Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, was admitted to the Rajiv Gandhi General Hospital (RGGH) earlier in the day after he complained of uneasiness, they said. Singh, who also attended a Tamil Nadu government event to release a commemorative coin on late DMK patriarch M Karunanidhi's birth centenary, rushed to the hospital to pay his respects to Pal. Deeply saddened at the untimely demise of Shri Rakesh Pal, DG, Indian Coast Guard in Chennai today. He was an able and committed officer under whose leadership ICG was making big strides in strengthening India's maritime security. My heartfelt condolences to his bereaved family. Arrangements are being made to bring his mortal remains to Delhi, the officials said. In his distinguished career spanning over 34 years, the flag officer had held several key appointments on the sea and ashore.

New Delhi, August 18: Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi on Sunday termed as an 'anti-national step' the government's move of recruiting public servants through lateral entry, alleging that the reservation of SCs, STs and OBCs is being 'openly snatched away' by such an action. The former Congress president also alleged that Prime Minister Narendra Modi is 'attacking the Constitution by recruiting public servants through the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh instead of the Union Public Service Commission'. Gandhi's attack came after it emerged that 45 specialists would soon join key posts of joint secretaries, directors and deputy secretaries in different central ministries. Usually, such posts are manned by the officers of all-India services - the Indian Administrative Service (IAS), Indian Police Service (IPS) and Indian Forest Service

Experienced 'bitter humiliation' as Jharkhand CM will seek alternative path: Champai Soren

Navdeep Singh Sahni

Ranchi, August 18: Jharkhand Mukti Morcha (JMM) leader Champai Soren on Sunday said he experienced 'bitter humiliation' as chief minister, which compelled him to seek an alternative path. His comment came shortly after he reached Delhi amid speculation about a potential switch to the BJP. 'After so much humiliation, I was forced to look for an alternative path,' Champai posted on his social media accounts. He alleged that all his government programmes in the first week of July were abruptly cancelled by the party leadership without his knowledge. Ramgiri Maharaj faces multiple FIRs in Maharashtra over remarks against Islam, Prophet. 'When I enquired about the reasons for cancellation, I was informed that there was a meeting of party legislators on July 3 and that I could not attend any government programmes until then,' he said. 'Can there be anything more humiliating

in a democracy than having a chief minister's programme cancelled by another person?' he questioned. Soren claimed that although the CM had the authority to call a meeting of the Legislative Party, he was not even informed of the meeting's agenda.

da. 'During the meeting, I was asked to resign. I was taken aback. Since I had no desire for power, I resigned immediately. However, my self-respect was deeply hurt,' Soren added. He mentioned that he

Privatisation of IAS is 'Modi's guarantee' for ending reservation: Rahul Gandhi

Tejinder Kaur Babbar

(IFoS) - and Group A services, among others. 'Reservation of SC, ST and OBC classes is being openly snatched away by recruiting through lateral entry on import-

tant posts in various ministries of the central government,' Gandhi said in a post in Hindi on X. 'I have always said that the underprivileged are not represented in all the country's top posts, including the top

bureaucracy. Instead of improving it, they are being pushed further away from the top posts through lateral entry,' he said. 'This is a robbery of the rights of talented youth preparing for UPSC and an attack on the concept of social justice including reservation for the underprivileged,' he alleged. The SEBI is a vivid example of what representatives of a few corporates will do by sitting on decisive government posts, where for the first time a person from the private sector was made the chairperson, Gandhi said in an apparent reference to the conflicts of interest allegations against SEBI chairperson Madhabi Buch. The INDIA bloc will strongly oppose this 'anti-national step' that hurts both the administrative structure and social justice, Gandhi said. The Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) on Saturday advertised 45 posts - 10 of joint secretaries and 35 of directors/deputy secretaries - to be filled through the lateral entry mode on a contract basis.

'Bangladesh had 27% Hindus at Partition, today they are 9%; where have others gone'

Naresh Malhotra

Ahmedabad, August 18: Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Sunday said a large number of refugees were denied citizenship rights in the country due to the appeasement policy of past governments led by the Congress and its allies. Addressing a gathering in Ahmedabad after handing over citizenship certificates to 188 Hindu refugees in Gujarat, Shah said the Citizenship (Amendment) Act (CAA) is about giving rights and justice to lakhs of refugees. He also assured Muslims that there is no provision in the CAA to take away anyone's citizenship, as it is about granting citizenship. 'Because of the policy of appeasement of past governments headed by the Congress and its allies, those who came to the country seeking refuge did not get (citizenship) rights and justice from 1947 to 2014,' Shah said. Ramgiri Maharaj faces multiple FIRs in Maharashtra over remarks against Islam, Prophet. 'They (refugees) were not just tortured in neighbouring countries for being Hindu, Jain, Buddhist and Sikh, but also in our country as

Union minister said. However, even today cer-



tain state governments are misleading people, he said. 'The absence of such a law granting citizenship ensured people of our country

remained destitute in our own country. What can be a bigger misfortune and irony than this? It could not happen due to the policy of appeasement for so many years. Prime Minister Narendra Modi decided to bring the law in 2019, and I had the privilege of passing the law in Parliament,' Shah said. He said Bangladesh had 27 per cent Hindus at the time of Partition, but today they are just 9 per cent as they have been subjected to forced religious conversion. 'Where have the rest gone? They were either subjected to forced religious conversion, or ran here seeking refuge. Don't they have the right to live as per their religion? If they can't live with respect in the neighbouring country and seek refuge in our country, what should we do? We cannot sit as silent spectators. This is the Narendra Modi government, you will get justice,' he asserted. He told refugees from all over the country to apply for citizenship without hesitation as this will not affect their job or their properties since they will be granted citizenship with retrospective effect.

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Udaipur stabbing: Family members of victim claim they are not allowed hospital visit

Jaipur, August 18: Family members of the boy whose stabbing by a classmate triggered communal violence in Udaipur took part in a rally in the city on Sunday, alleging that they were not being allowed to see the victim at the hospital. A large number of people, including family members of the boy, were part of the rally that began at Udaipur's Mukherjee Nagar Chowk. Raising slogans, the rally reached MB Hospital, demanding that the family members be allowed to see the boy. Udaipur SP Yogesh Goyal said, 'There was some confusion that family members cannot meet the boy. But, they are allowed to do so.' His condition is stable but critical and soon a medical bulletin on him will also be released, Goyal said. The SP said that while mobile internet services continue to remain suspended considering the law and order situation, markets were open on Sunday. Additional police force has also been deployed in the area. A class 10 student allegedly stabbed another boy—both minors—at a government school on Friday, triggering communal violence in the city. A mob set fire to cars and pelted stones as news of the stabbing spread. Members of some Hindu outfits also protested the stabbing incident. Later, the house of the boy was razed by the district administration using JCB machines on Saturday in the presence of police personnel.

was emotional and struggling to control his tears. 'But all he (referring to Chief Minister Hemant Soren without naming him) seemed interested in was the chair. I felt as though I had no existence, no presence in the party to which I had dedicated my entire life,' he said. Soren noted that he faced many such humiliations, which he preferred not to detail at the moment. The ex-CM said he had announced in the legislative party meeting, 'A new chapter in my life is going to begin from today.' 'From that day until now, and through the upcoming Jharkhand Assembly elections, all options are open for me in this journey,' he said. Soren emphasised that this is his personal battle and he does not intend to involve any party members or harm the organisation. 'I can never think of harming the party which we have nurtured with our blood and sweat. But circumstances have been created such that...' he added. He also mentioned that party supremo Shibu Soren is not active in politics due to health reasons.

Central Government holds high-level review meeting as mpox cases rise globally

New Delhi, August 18: Prime Minister's Principal Secretary P K Mishra on Sunday chaired a high-level meeting to review the preparedness for mpox amid enhanced surveillance for prompt detection. A statement said there is no reported case of mpox in the country as of now, and the risk of a large outbreak with sustained transmission is low, as per the current assessment. It may be noted the World Health Organisation (WHO) has declared mpox a Public Health Emergency of International Concern (PHEIC) in view of its prevalence and spread across many parts of Africa. It was briefed during the meeting that mpox infections are generally self-limiting, lasting between two and four weeks, and its patients usually recover with supportive medical care and management. The mpox transmission happens through prolonged and close contact with an infected patient. Among the steps taken so far, a meeting of experts was convened by the National Centre for Disease Control (NCDC) on August 12 to assess the risk for India. A Communicable Disease Alert on mpox issued earlier by the NCDC is being updated to capture the newer developments. Sensitisation of the health teams at international airports (ports of entry) has been undertaken. A video conference was convened by the Director-General Health Services with more than 200 participants. Health authorities at the state level, including the Integrated Disease Surveillance Programme (IDSP) units in states and at the ports of entry, were sensitised in this regard, the statement said. Mishra directed surveillance be enhanced and effective measures be taken for prompt detection of cases. He said the testing laboratories network should be geared up for early diagnosis, the statement said. Mishra said protocols for prevention and treatment of the disease should be disseminated on a large scale, stressing that an awareness campaign among healthcare providers regarding the signs and symptoms of the disease and the need for timely notification to the surveillance system. As per an earlier statement from WHO, 99,176 cases and 208 deaths had been reported due to mpox from 116 countries globally since 2022. Subsequently, mpox cases have been steadily increasing in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

News box

Bengaluru: Schoolkids to tie sustainable rakhis to 100 trees

BENGALURU: A school in Bengaluru will be celebrating the festival of Raksha Bandhan - known for the bond between brothers and sisters - by tying rakhis to 100 trees to reflect the same meaning for the environment that protects us. With the city's tree cover fast depleting in the name of development, school students of The Green School Bangalore (TGSB) located in Muthasandra in Varthur have hand-crafted colourful rakhis made of waste materials. This is being done as a symbolic gesture and will be undertaken by 350 students from kindergarten to high schools on Monday, and they will also be hugging trees as part of 'Save trees, Save Bengaluru' Campaign. "Our arts and crafts teacher guided us to create beautiful, big rakhis from recycled paper and waste. We used pistachio shells, pencil shavings, old fabric and corn cobs to create the rakhis," said an excited Aadhyar, a Class 5 student.

The students will also visit the Muthasandra Government Hospital and the Panchayat office and tie rakhis to the wardens, as a mark of respect for the selfless service being rendered by them. "TGSB is a progressive Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) school committed to promoting harmony and environmental awareness. Through this unique Raksha Bandhan, we are creating awareness about protecting the city's tree cover of our city," said Usha Iyer, Founder and Principal, of one of India's first zero carbon schools. She added that this is the first time that students will be making rakhis out of waste materials to send out a message that festivals can be celebrated by recycling and reusing waste.

After tree fall toll, BBMP intensifies pruning

BENGALURU: Following the death of an autorickshaw driver after a tree fell on his vehicle on Friday, the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) has intensified pruning of dangerous trees and branches. BBMP forest division officials said that between August 1 and August 17, 756 complaints of trees getting uprooted and branches falling were reported and all complaints were addressed. Deputy Conservator of Forest, BBMP, BLG Swamy said the Palike has deployed sufficient staff in each zone, and since August-September is considered peak monsoon season, the staff have intensified the activity to identify dangerous trees and branches, and are removing them. "BBMP is taking action based on the inspection and complaints regarding such vulnerable trees," said Swamy. "The trees and branches that were cut were loaded and transported by agencies hired by the Palike. Under the supervision of range forest officials and assistant conservator of forest in BBMP, the wood was sent to sheds in respective zones," said an official.

The DCF said the Palike paid an ex-gratia of Rs 5 lakh to the family members of tree fall victim Shivardraiah. The Palike also cleared hospital bills and cremation charges amounting to Rs 75,000, he added. The Palike has also paid Rs 5 lakh each to Manikyavel, who suffered a spinal injury, and Vijayalakshmi, who sustained a fracture in her thigh, after a tree fell on them on Monday. Among the four schoolchildren, one child was given Rs 1 lakh as she suffered a fracture in her hand, and three others were given Rs 20,000 each for minor injuries.

GHMC all set to make Hyderabad a sponge city

HYDERABAD: The Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation is all set to embrace the sponge city concept through its plan to create sponge zones in all six zones of Hyderabad at the cost of Rs 20 crore. The initiative comes amid rapid urbanisation and an increase in urban flooding. Sponge cities are urban areas designed with a permeable construction model that allows for the percolation, absorption and storage of rainwater in an ecologically friendly way, thereby minimising surface runoff in city areas. Elements required for a sponge city include permeable ground surfaces that mimic sponges, water bodies, trees, rooftop gardens and rainwater harvesting structures. The idea is to capture and reuse every drop of rain.

GHMC sources echoed the need for parks, trees and natural drain systems to increase 'absorbency' and resilience to floods. The civic body will consult experts for the preparation of a detailed project report on sponge zones in the city and integration of various elements required for such zones, apart from undertaking flood retention measures at various lakes.

The consultants must also assess current conditions, identify potential challenges and evaluate the benefits of sponge city techniques.

Apart from this, they must also carry out a detailed soil investigation of the identified zones and suggest suitable measures to ensure that maximum water percolates into the ground. This will improve the groundwater table and reduce flood runoff.

Andhra Pradesh government gives nod to relax ban on transfer of staff

No transfers in Edu, Medical & Health depts, transfers to be effected from August 19 to 31

VIJAYAWADA: Giving the nod for transfer of employees working in various departments, the State government on Saturday issued orders relaxing ban on transfer of employees. However, there will be no transfers in the Education, Medical and Health Departments. Employees who have completed a period of continuous stay of 5 years at a station as on July 31, 2024, will invariably be transferred. Employees, other than those who completed 5 years of stay at a station, will also be eligible for transfer on administrative exigencies or on personal request. The transfers made as per the guidelines of Election Commission during the General Election 2024 and retransferred to their original stations after completion of Election process, will not be treated as transfer for the purpose of counting of service at a station.

The transfer ban will be relaxed from August 19 to 31 covering the departments of Revenue (Land Administration), Panchayat Raj & Rural Development, including SERP, Municipal Administration & Urban Development, GVWV & VSWS, Civil Supplies, Mining and Geology, Engineering staff in all departments, Endowments, Transport, Environment, Forest, Science and Technology (EFS&T), Industries, Energy, Stamps & Registration and Commercial Taxes. For the Excise department, the ban will be relaxed from September 5 to



15. Preference will be given to, visually challenged employees, those who have mentally challenged children and seeking a transfer to a station where relevant medical facilities are available, employees who worked for more than two years in tribal areas, employees with disabilities of 40 per cent or more. Preference would also be given to employees seeking transfer on medical grounds (pertaining to self or spouse or dependent children), chronic diseases such as cancer, open heart operations, neurosurgery, and kidney transplantation

among others, widows appointed on compassionate grounds, visually challenged employees. In the case where both husband and wife are Government employees, efforts will be made to post both of them at one station or in the stations that are nearer to each other. All vacancies in the notified agency areas should be filled first before filling posts in the non-ITDA areas. Besides ITDA areas, other areas which are interior and backward with a large number of vacancies should be given preference while filling up vacancies on transfers.

27 special teams, 9 checkposts set up in Andhra Pradesh to curb ganja

VIJAYAWADA: As part of 100-day action plan to eradicate ganja smuggling in Andhra Pradesh and neighbouring states, Visakhapatnam Range Deputy Inspector General of Police (DGP) Gopinath Jatti announced the formation of 27 special teams and nine checkposts.



At a review meeting with SPs from five districts, Jatti highlighted the progress, including 223 ganja smuggling cases, the seizure of 9,517 kg of ganja worth ₹4.75 crore, and the arrest of 545 offenders. Specialised canine units were deployed in Anakapalle and Narsipatnam areas, and Preventive Detention Act proposals were filed against key offenders. Efforts are underway to disrupt the ganja supply chain and promote alternative crops among farmers. To date, 8,585 farmers have received seeds for alternative crops, and 31,491 silver oak plants have been distributed over 4,498.5 acres. Anakapalle SP M Deepika Patil, Alluri Sitharamaraju district SP Amit Bardar, Vizianagaram SP Vakul Jindal, Manym SP SV Madhav Reddy, Srikakulam SP Maheswara Reddy and NDPS special public prosecutor V Govinda Rao and others attended the meeting.

Muslim clerics in Kerala oppose DYFI's 'pork challenge'

The Pork Challenge organised by the DYFI at Rajapuram in Kasaragod on August 10 saw around 350 kg of meat being sold. A similar challenge is slated to be held in Kothamangalam on August 18.

KOZHIKODE: A section of Muslim scholars has criticised the 'Pork Challenge' launched by the Democratic Youth Federation of India (DYFI) as part of a fundraising campaign for the survivors of the Wayanad landslides, saying it amounts to insulting Muslims. The Pork Challenge organised by the DYFI at Rajapuram in Kasaragod on August 10 saw around 350 kg of meat being sold. A similar challenge is slated to be held in Kothamangalam on August 18. In a Facebook post, Nazar Faizi from Jamia Nooriyya Arabiyya, state secretary of the

Sunni Yuvajana Sangam (SYS), claimed that the challenge is an attempt to introduce blasphemy. "DYFI is aware that consuming pork is a taboo for many survivors of the tragedy. Despite this, the Kothamangalam committee of the organisation included it in the challenge," Faizi said. He said using a product that is taboo for many survivors, to collect funds is an insult. There are other permissible food items that can be used for the challenge, he added. Muslim scholar and teacher Ziyaudeen Faizi from

Pattikkad, Malappuram, also initially opposed the challenge but later withdrew his statement. In a Facebook post, Ziyaudeen Faizi said: "There is freedom in the country to both conduct and oppose the Pork Challenge. However, I withdrew my post after realising that the controversy would only serve to give the challenge more publicity and that there seemed to be a political motive behind it." However, the DYFI has dismissed the criticism. DYFI Kasaragod district president Shalu Mathew said: "We have previously

organised various challenges such as the Biriyani Challenge, Fish Challenge and Vegetable Kit Challenge. Unfortunately, that issue has sparked controversy: DYFI dist prez." The choice of the Pork Challenge for the Rebuild Wayanad project was based on its popularity and market demand in the area," said Shalu Mathew.

He explained that the Pork Challenge, organised by the Rajapuram regional committee in Kasaragod, was highly successful due to the area's substantial pig farms and pork exports.

All five stoplogs installed at broken crest gate in Tungabhadra dam

HOSAPETE : The damaged crest gate of the Pampa Sagar dam on the Tungabhadra river in Koppal district, was finally fixed, one week after its chain snapped. The team of experts successfully installed all five stoplogs at the broken crest gate no 19 of the Tungabhadra Dam after two days of continuous efforts. The outflow of water from the broken crest gate of the reservoir has reduced from 65,000 cusecs to 500 cusecs after the installation of all the temporary stoplogs on Saturday. The team led by expert Hydro Mechanical Engineers were successful in stopping the water outflow as promised. Farmers and government officials of Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh and Telangana expressed

their gratitude and appreciated the team. After completing the installation work, water flow from all crest gates has been stopped. Hydro Mechanical Engineer and team lead N Kannaiyah Naidu said that the installation of the first temporary stoplog

was challenging. "On Friday, we successfully installed the first temporary gate, and then we worked all Saturday to install all five stoplogs. I thank all the three state governments and my workers for working 24x7 to finish the work. The current water inflow is over 85,000 cusecs, and within three days the dam storage will again increase to over 20 TMC. The crest gate gave way because the chain link was more than 50 years old. Installation of the new crest gate no 19 will be done next year during the summer season," he added. The broken crest gate was found near the dam's downstream area after a week of the incident. Officials tried to lift it from the river on Saturday.



Kerala government puts Hema Committee report on hold until High Court considers fresh plea

Info officer of cultural affairs dept will take a call after HC considers plea filed by actor Renjini

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM: In spite of the High Court rejecting a petition seeking to prevent making public the Hema Committee report, which looked into harassment faced by women in Malayalam cinema, the government has decided to buy more time in view of another petition pending before the High Court. The information officer of the cultural affairs department, who has been entrusted with the task of releasing the report, will take a decision on whether to release the same or not only on Monday after the High Court considers a petition filed by actor Renjini. Though the information officer had earlier informed the petitioners who had applied for the report under Right to Information Act that it would be provided on Saturday after removing certain sections, on

Saturday morning the official informed the applicants that the report would not be released till the High Court considers the petition. The information officer's decision has sparked controversy as there was criticism against the government for allegedly delaying release of the report.

However, Cultural Affairs Minister Saji

view", an official told TNIE. However, the applicants and those in favour of releasing the report alleged that the court had not stayed its earlier order allowing the release of the report. They also suspect intervention from some quarters to sabotage the release of the report. State Women's Commission chairperson P Sathidevi has also demanded that the report should be released soon. "The report should be made available not only for the film fraternity but also for the public", she said.

Meanwhile, actor Renjini told media that though she was in favour of releasing the report, she wants to see the report first, so as to verify the statements given to the Hema Committee. "It is my right to verify the report. Every individual who has given statement has the right to see the report and its recommendations before releasing it. We want a tribunal in the film industry. Organisations like AMMA have no role in the matter. We have waited for five years. Why can't we wait for another week. I thought the Women's Commission would interfere and verify the report. However, it didn't," she said.



Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation urges dog owners to register pets on its app

HYDERABAD: The Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation has urged dog owners to register their pets on the MyGHMC app. To encourage 100 percent registration, the civic body is conducting pet dog registration drives with the assistance of its entomology staff. This free and easy process will provide pet owners with essential information and support while also helping GHMC in its efforts towards ensuring responsible pet ownership. Following the registration process, owners will receive timely reminders about vaccinations and deworming schedules. The app will also keep them updated on pet-related rules and regulations, socialisation tips and their responsibilities as pet owners.

For more information, citizens can contact these senior veterinary officials: D Ranajit (LB Nagar 9866699401), T Srinivas Reddy (Charminar 9989930397), K Chakrapani Reddy (Khairatabad 9989930358), JD Wilson (Serilingampally 9704456521), C Sukunand Reddy (Kukatpally 9989930359), and Y Sadguna Devi (Secunderabad 9177904941).

Push for Unesco tag for Kochi enters phase II

KOCHI: A mass awareness campaign on the rich heritage of Kochi will be initiated as part of a citizens' movement aimed at getting a Unesco heritage tag for the city, which has several sites of historical importance. A workshop on 'Kochi as World Heritage' was held on Saturday, which was inaugurated by chief guest M K Das, writer and columnist whose latest work 'Cochin Fame and Fables' traces the historical importance of the city.

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News box

Gurgaon: Weeks after 3 died on flooded road, MCG says will replace electric poles, wires

GURGAON. Around two weeks after three persons died of electrocution on a waterlogged street near IFFCO Chowk metro station, MCG has prepared an estimate of Rs 3.1 crore to replace exposed wires, panel boxes, and damaged electric poles. "After an inspection, Rs 1.8 crore will be spent on fixing streetlight cables, including the stretch from IFFCO Chowk to Huda City Centre, Golf Course Road, and the link from Golf Course Road to Galleria Road. Moreover, Rs 1.3 crore will be used to replace dilapidated poles and fix exposed wires and panel boxes from Medanta Hospital to Jharsa Road, Jharsa Road to Sector 30/31 dividing road, and NH-8 to Sector 30/31 dividing road," said Praveen Dalal, executive engineer (electrical), MCG. He said the work has already started in areas where the tender process has been completed. He appealed to residents to maintain a safe distance from light poles during the rainy season.

After the death of three persons on July 31, a four-member committee, headed by the chief engineer (operations), Delhi, DHBVN, was constituted to investigate the circumstances leading to the incident. MCG will hire four private agencies for operations and maintenance of streetlights, as the contract with existing agencies will expire on Oct 31. The project, which is estimated to cost Rs 13.7 crore, will be completed in two years. MCG has issued tenders to engage one agency for each of the four zones.

Sugar mill 'owner' cuts a bitter deal, cheats 11 of 20cr

Ghaziaab. A 40-year-old man was arrested for posing as the owner of a closed sugar factory in Basti and cheating at least 11 scrap dealers of nearly Rs 20 crore on the pretext of selling them the mill's machinery.

Qumarruddin of Lucknow was caught after a scrap dealer from Hindon Vihar submitted a complaint at Nandgram police station on Aug 14 against the director of Phenil Sugars Ltd for taking Rs 1.5 crore from him as an advance payment for the purchase of mill machinery worth Rs 3 crore. The complainant, Naushad, said the company's director had shared documents for the company and the mill while striking the deal but did not give him the equipment even after the first tranche of money was paid via RTGS transactions and cash. Naushad said Qumarruddin refunded Rs 49.5 lakh after a few meetings but refused to return the rest. Instead, Qumarruddin abused and threatened Naushad. "Qumarruddin was traced through surveillance and local inputs and arrested on Saturday. We have found that the accused has duped several scrap dealers in UP and other states of more than Rs 20 crore using a similar modus operandi," DCP (City) Rajesh Kumar said. Police said Qumarruddin is an MBA and owns an office in Hazratganj under a company named G Multi-Trading and Services. He worked in share trading and lost some business during Covid. During the investigation, cops found that Qumarruddin and his wife pose as directors of Phenil Sugars and approach scrap dealers in Meerut, Basti, Ghaziaab and even Rajasthan. "The couple would say that they had shut the Basti mill and needed money to pay sugarcane farmers, who had supplied them with crops. So far, 11 cases have been registered against Qumarruddin across UP," the DCP said.

We also published the following articles recently
From director to dealer: Erik Fleming's shocking link to Matthew Perry's overdose and tragic demise revealed
The tragic case of Matthew Perry's death took a surprising turn with Erik Fleming's arrest.

Clouds shift, Gurgaon to get scattered rain now: IMD

GURGAON. After experiencing a week of good spells, rainfall activity in the city is likely to ease with the possibility of only short bursts at isolated places over the next 3-4 days. According to the weatherman, the monsoon trough has shifted to the south of its normal position, while cyclonic circulation lies over west Rajasthan. This will only cause scattered to isolated rainfall in southern Haryana.

According to an official, there will be cloudy intervals with a chance of a few brief showers on Sunday. The expected minimum and maximum temperatures are 27 and 32 degrees Celsius, respectively.

On Saturday, the city woke up to overcast skies with a minimum temperature of 26.5 degrees Celsius, a slight decrease from 26.7 degrees Celsius the previous day, but still higher than usual for this season. It remained partly cloudy throughout the day with muggy conditions, and the temperature rose to 35.3 degrees Celsius, an increase from Friday's 33 degrees Celsius, which is above the normal temperature for this time of the year. The relative humidity ranged between 72% and 73% throughout the day. "The monsoon trough has moved to the south of its normal position. As a result, the spread and intensity of rainfall decrease, and it only brings isolated to scattered rainfall over the state. However, northern Haryana might experience heavy rainfall on the 20th and 21st. We are not expecting a major temperature change," said the IMD official.

This season, the city has received 420.8 mm of rainfall, which is 26% more than the normal of 333.5 mm. In contrast, last August saw only 69.5 mm of rain, a 62% deficit. With a month and a half remaining in the season, this year's rainfall may exceed last year's figures.

The city's air quality index stands at a satisfactory 100. Gurgaon: After experiencing a week of good spells, rainfall activity in the city is likely to ease with the possibility of only short bursts at isolated places over the next 3-4 days. According to the weatherman, the monsoon trough has shifted to the south of its normal position, while cyclonic circulation lies over west Rajasthan. This will only cause scattered to isolated rainfall in southern Haryana. According to an official, there will be cloudy intervals with a chance of a few brief showers on Sunday. The expected minimum and maximum temperatures are 27 and 32 degrees Celsius, respectively. On Saturday, the city woke up to overcast skies with a minimum temperature of 26.5 degrees Celsius, a slight decrease from 26.7 degrees Celsius the previous day, but still higher than usual for this season.

GURGAON. As the new academic session got underway on Friday, govt and private colleges across the state installed drop boxes on their premises for students to file complaints anonymously if they were subjected to ragging. Anti-ragging committees set up in colleges and universities will regularly monitor the boxes and take action on the complaints lodged by students. These committees usually have three to five members in them, most of them college professors and teaching staff.

"The academic session for undergraduate and postgraduate courses started in colleges from Friday. For now, students are being sensitised about ragging through seminars and posters across hostels. Moreover, the contact numbers of members of the anti-ragging committee are also being displayed on notice boards. The directorate of higher education has issued specific guidelines for the prevention of ragging. Colleges and universities failing to curb the practice are likely to face penalties," said



the principal of a govt college in the city. Sunidhi, principal of Government Women's College in Faridabad and the city's higher education officer, said apart from installing drop boxes, an anti-ragging team of five officials had been formed at the institute. A helpline number, she added, had also been

circulated. The central govt has its own anti-ragging portal for students to lodge anonymous complaints. The aim of the portal is "to eliminate ragging in all its forms from universities, deemed universities and other higher educational institutions in the country". So, what constitutes ragging? "It can be anything -

like using offensive words, writing humiliating content about a person, causing inconvenience to others, provoking or angering someone, triggering physical and mental harassment, undisciplined behaviour towards juniors on campus, psychologically manipulating someone or instilling fear. Basically, any act done in public that embarrasses a junior constitutes ragging," another college principal said. Anyone found guilty of ragging would face strict punishment, which may include an FIR as well, officials said. "It can range from expulsion to writing a public apology along with a fine.

There can also be immediate suspension of scholarships and other benefits, prohibition from representing the institution in any event, withholding of results, filing of an FIR, and collective punishment if the perpetrator's identity remains unknown," said an official from the higher education department.

Bomb hoax triggers evacuation at malls in Gurgaon and Noida

GURGAON/NOIDA. Two of the biggest malls in NCR - Mall of India in Noida and Ambience Mall in Gurgaon - were evacuated after bomb threats were made over emails on Saturday morning, reminiscent of the chain threat emails sent to schools earlier this year. After searches involving sniffer dogs and the bomb squad, police declared the threats a hoax.

Additional CP (Noida) Shivhari Meena told TOI the searches were conducted after the Mall of India management received a threat email around 9.30am. "Police teams evacuated the visitors and staffers from the premises by 11am and a bomb disposal squad swept the building for nearly 2 hours. But no explosive or suspicious object was found. By 1pm, the mall was cleared for resuming operations," Meena said. Around 1.30pm the Mall of India management issued a statement clarifying it was a simulated exercise for security readiness and no threats were received by them. "We would like to inform you that the recent activity at DLF Mall of India was a security drill conducted in collaboration with Noida police. We are pleased to confirm that the mall is now open and fully operational... The safety of our patrons is our utmost priority, and DLF is consistently dedicated to maintaining the highest security standards to ensure a safe and enjoyable experience for all," the statement said.

In Gurgaon, an anonymous email was received by the Ambience Mall management soon after it opened for the day, claiming explosives had been planted inside the building as well as various malls across Delhi-NCR. While the few early shoppers and staff were evacuated by police teams, dog and bomb disposal squads were called in for a thorough search operation, but no suspicious objects were found. While cops are yet to confirm the source of the threat, they said the emails were hoaxes, intended to create fear and panic among the public. Gurgaon police said they were closely monitoring social media posts to stop the spread of any misleading or false information related to the bomb threat. On May 1, panic gripped multiple schools in Delhi-NCR, including Noida, Ghaziabad and Gurgaon, after they received emails about bombs being planted on their campuses. The threat, which had thrown security agencies into a tizzy, turned out to be a hoax. In Gurgaon, at least five schools, including Delhi Public School (DPS) and Amity School branches, were evacuated after their management received threats.

Man in Gurgaon refuses free washing machine repair, held hostage and beaten up



GURGAON. A technician called to repair a washing machine was held hostage for hours and beaten up by three men in Manesar. According to police, the victim asked for the washing machine's bill to check if it was still under warranty. The house owner refused to provide the bill and insisted that the machine be repaired free of cost. When the technician refused to comply, he was allegedly tortured, threatened and locked in a room for hours. An FIR was registered on Friday. Rajesh Kumar, a service engineer working with an electronics company, was assigned a service in IMT Manesar on August 13. The service centre had received a washing machine repair request from Kulwinder Chauhan, a resident of Bas Kushla near Khatu Shyam Colony in Sector 7, IMT Manesar.

Rajesh arrived at the address around 5pm. Kulwinder and two other unknown individuals were present at

the house. Kulwinder insisted that the machine was under warranty.

Following protocol, Rajesh requested to see the warranty card or bill for verification. However, the men could not produce any documents. Rajesh explained that without proof of warranty, he couldn't proceed with the repair.

The three then punched and kicked Rajesh repeatedly until blood streamed from his nose. Overpowered and disoriented, Rajesh was dragged into a room and locked inside. The men threatened him, saying that he would not be allowed to leave until the

washing machine was fixed. They even threatened to kill him if he refused to fix the machine. It was only after several hours that the men let him go, leaving him battered and traumatised. The next day, Rajesh sought medical attention at Kamla hospital in Gurgaon. The medical report confirmed two blunt-force traumas to his head and face. He went to the police station on Aug 14 and filed a complaint against Kulwinder and the two other men. On Aug 16, a case was registered under sections 115 (voluntarily causing hurt), 351(2) (criminal intimidation), and 127(2) (wrongful confinement) of the BNS at IMT Manesar police station. An investigation team was dispatched to the crime scene, confirming that a violent altercation had indeed taken place. "The case is now under investigation, we are collecting evidence and statements," said a police spokesperson.

No road, no vote: Stir over Gurgaon's new sector cratered stretch

GURGAON: Residents of new sectors off the Dwarka Expressway took to the streets on Saturday to protest against the failure of civic authorities to resurface a road since Feb 2022. The protesters chanted slogans such as "no road, no vote", and formed a human chain to partially block a 120m stretch near Bestech Ananda in Sector 81, where deep potholes have turned commute into an ordeal. Dozens of residents from various housing societies participated, highlighting the deplorable state of the Rampura-Pataudi Road, which had to be completed by Aug 2023. However, it remains unfinished as the project has been mired in litigation. With assembly elections approaching on Oct 1, residents are demanding basic amenities before candidates seek their votes. "It's disgraceful that we have to protest for a functional road. We have had enough of the empty promises and endless delays. Our message is clear: No road, no vote," said Manju Suhag, a Sector 81 resident. With deep craters up to 2 feet and waterlogged potholes, the condition of this stretch has

only gone from bad to worse after the recent monsoon rainfall, residents said. The poor road conditions have disrupted daily life - school buses avoid the area, city buses reroute, and private vehicles frequently suffer damage. "This is not a road but a danger zone. We see near-miss accidents daily. People are even hesitant to visit us, and even cabs are reluctant to come to the society gate," said Manjeet Ahlawat, RWA president of Bestech Ananda. "Maximum roads in Gurgaon are full of potholes, and this road sees heavy traffic daily. We pay taxes and deserve safe, functional roads. Elderly people, children, and women suffer daily because of the administration's apathy," said Dhruv Kapoor, a commuter and resident of Orris Carnation. "Life in the new sectors is at a standstill. Residents have paid EDC and IDC, with thousands of crores from Gurgaon filling Haryana's treasury, and yet the

road construction is stalled due to technicalities. If compensation was an issue, it should have been resolved long ago. HSVP and GMDA must take responsibility," said Praveen Malik, vice president of the United Association of New Gurugram. The road is a vital link to NH 8, Pataudi Road, and Dwarka Expressway. The redevelopment of a 5.6km stretch, estimated at Rs 66 crore, was meant to widen the road and add service lanes, cycle tracks, footpaths, and green areas. However, progress has stalled, leaving residents frustrated. Officials have cited ongoing litigation, delays in acquiring a 100-metre and a 120-metre stretch, and the removal of a temple as the main reasons for the project's delay. A GMDA official acknowledged the issue, stating that attempts to fill the potholes have been made but faced local resistance. "The road is under litigation in the Supreme Court. For now, we can only offer temporary.

Rainwreck: Why is waterlogging problem in Gurgaon so hard to solve

GURGAON: Every monsoon, it's the same story. There's scarcely a part of the city that doesn't flood, just from a heavy spell of rain. The monster gridlock, which lasted nearly a day in 2016, was a rude wake-up call, following which new drains have been built and craters have been sunk into averting a rerun. But what makes Gurgaon's drainage problem so difficult to fix? Urban town planners have pointed out several factors that contribute to this.

Signature Towers Road

The primary reasons include a flawed drainage system that lacks proper outlets to channel rainwater. Over time, the natural water channels in the city have been encroached upon and obstructed, exacerbating the situation. The city's unique topography, since it is surrounded by the Aravallis, also plays a role in the accumulation of water flowing from the hills to the low-lying areas. "Unsuitable" drains, water bodies that no longer exist, and members of the executive committee of the Council of Architecture, said there used to be a drain going through Sikanderpur, where a road has come up today. There are two aspects of the problem, one at the macro level and

another at the micro level. The macro level issues pertain to the city's drainage - is there a drainage plan for the city, where are the water bodies and streams that will channelise excess water away from the city? I have not come across a drainage plan for Gurgaon," he said.

Sadar

Sethi added that at the micro level, every sector needs to have drains suited to the area's needs. "For example, a concrete box-type drain has been laid on either side of the Huda City Centre roundabout. But it is doing nothing to prevent waterlogging at the spot as the design and slopes of the drain are flawed. The whole exercise is futile if authorities don't carry out a study to ascertain what type of drain the area needs. Huda City Centre metro station is inundated whenever it rains as water is not channelised properly there either. Similarly, underpasses along Golf Course Road witness waterlogging during monsoon. There is something drastically wrong with how our govt agencies execute infrastructural work."

Former chief town planner KK Yadav said authorities didn't initially consider Gurgaon's topography while planning the city. "Gurgaon is surrounded by the Aravallis on three sides. When we were

planning the city's infrastructure, we didn't keep that in mind. Also, the encroachment of ponds and other water bodies over time has made the city more prone to floods. If the Aravallis can be protected and integrated with the master plan, we can resolve the problem. A comprehensive drainage system with large nullahs and drains linked to networks of smaller drains should be implemented. The natural stormwater drains which have been encroached upon should be channelised and connected with the bigger drains," he said. Mukta Naik, a fellow at the Centre for Policy Research, too said authorities should work on reviving natural drainage channels. "Govt should constitute a group of experts and residents to formulate a sustainable plan to overhaul the drainage network," she

said.
Rajiv Chowk

At the sector level, it is essential to integrate rainwater harvesting systems with green spaces and open areas, Yadav added. "This approach will allow for the efficient collection and utilisation of rainwater, promoting sustainability and reducing burden on drainage," he said.

The city's stormwater drain network runs from the eastern to western side, as the water runoff flows from the Aravallis towards Najafgarh drain.

There is a level difference of nearly 70 metres from the Ghata side in the Aravallis to Najafgarh drain. The city has three master stormwater drains - Leg 1, Leg 2 and Leg 3 (Badshapur drain).

Subhash Chowk Underpass

GMDA CEO A Sreenivas said a committee will be formed to develop a cohesive and long-term plan to tackle urban flooding. The panel's primary aim will be to equip the city with an adequate and efficient drainage system, he said. "GMDA has conducted a thorough analysis of satellite data spanning a five-year period to identify and map areas prone to waterlogging within the Gurgaon-Manesar Urban Complex."



News box

Ticketless man boards US flight after 'following family', airline probes

World szDelta Air Lines said Friday it is reviewing how a man who allegedly followed a family around the terminal then boarded the family's plane earlier this month without a ticket for the flight. The incident happened at Washington Dulles International Airport.

"Delta has processes in place for gate agents and flight crews to verify that individuals onboard aircraft prior to departure are customers that are booked on that particular flight," the airline said in a statement. "Delta is reviewing the matter in question internally and has been in touch with airport authorities in conjunction with this review."

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Swiss flight makes emergency landing in Kazakhstan due to medical incident

Astana, A Boeing 777 aircraft operated by Swiss International Air Lines flying from Tokyo to Zurich made an emergency landing in Kazakhstan on Saturday due to a medical incident onboard, followed by issues after the aircraft landed, the airline said. The Boeing 777-300ER's nose wheel got caught in the grass and was stuck, requiring it to be towed back onto the runway, the airline said in a statement. The aircraft will be examined for damage and will be a subject of an investigation. Swiss confirmed that none of 319 passengers onboard were injured due to the incident. "We'll defer to the airline for information about their fleet and operations," Boeing said in a statement.

Volcano erupts after 7.2-magnitude earthquake hits Russia's Kamchatka region

Moscow Russia's Shiveluch volcano has erupted, sending an ash column up to 8 kilometres high, following a magnitude-7.2 earthquake that struck off the eastern coast of the country, CNN reported, citing the state-run media outlet TASS. The volcano has released a gush of lava and there were no reports of people injured, according to the reports. A magnitude 7.2 earthquake struck off the east coast of Russia's Kamchatka region at a depth of 51 km (32 miles), according to the European Mediterranean Seismological Centre (EMSC). There were conflicting reports of tsunami warnings. The US National Tsunami Warning Centre said there was a tsunami threat from the quake. However, the Kamchatka branch of Russia's emergency ministry reported that there was no tsunami threat. Russian officials added that the recorded aftershocks from the quake ranged in magnitude from 3.9 to 5.0. According to the US Geological Survey, the earthquake struck 29 kilometres below the surface with its epicentre approximately 102 kilometres east of Petropavlovsk-Kamchatsky, which is a port city with over 181,000 residents, is surrounded by volcanoes and is located across a bay from a key Russian submarine base.

The Shiveluch volcano, which is situated around 450 kilometres from Petropavlovsk-Kamchatsky, is a colossal, perpetually active volcano. Renowned as one of the world's largest and most volatile volcanoes, it has a history of frequent and powerful eruptions. Russian news agency reported that there was no "major damage" in the quake and "buildings are now being examined for potential damage, with special attention paid to social facilities". The US National Weather Service's Pacific Tsunami Warning Centre in Honolulu warned minor sea level fluctuations could occur in some coastal areas near the earthquake site for several hours.

Thai King endorses nation's youngest PM 2 days after being elected

Bangkok. Paetongtarn Shinawatra was endorsed as prime minister by Thailand's king on Sunday, two days after parliament elected her, paving the way for her to form a cabinet in the coming weeks. Paetongtarn, 37, becomes Thailand's youngest prime minister just days after ally Srettha Thavisin was dismissed as premier by the Constitutional Court, a judiciary central to Thailand's two decades of intermittent political turmoil. Daughter of divisive former Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra, Paetongtarn won by nearly two-thirds in a house vote on Friday to become Thailand's second female prime minister and the third Shinawatra to take the office, following Thaksin and her aunt Yingluck Shinawatra. The approval by King Maha Vajiralongkorn, a formality, was read out by House of Representatives Secretary Apat Sukhanand at a ceremony in Bangkok on Sunday. Dressed in official uniform, Paetongtarn knelt in homage to a portrait of the king before giving a short speech thanking the king and the people's representatives for endorsing her as prime minister. "As head of the executive branch, I will do my duty together with the legislators with an open heart," she said. "I will listen to all opinions so together we can take the country forward with stability," she said. In her first press conference, Paetongtarn said she will continue with all policies of her predecessor Srettha, including "major" economic stimulus and reform, tackling

multiple fronts, with the economy floundering and the popularity of her Pheu Thai party dwindling, having yet to deliver on its flagship digital wallet cash handout programme worth 500 billion baht (\$15 billion). After accepting the royal endorsement, Paetongtarn hugged her father Thaksin and other family members.

In her first press conference, Paetongtarn said she will continue with all policies of her predecessor Srettha, including "major" economic stimulus and reform, tackling

details of her government policies will be presented to parliament next month. The fall of her predecessor Srettha after less than a year in office is a reminder of the risk for Paetongtarn with Thailand trapped in a tumultuous cycle of coups and court rulings that have disbanded political parties and toppled multiple governments and prime ministers. Also at stake is the legacy and political future of the billionaire Shinawatra family, whose once unstoppable populist juggernaut suffered its first election defeat in over two decades last year and had to make a deal with its bitter enemies in the military to form a government.

The upheaval of recent days indicates a breakdown in a fragile truce struck between Thaksin and his rivals in the royalist establishment, which had enabled the tycoon's dramatic return from 15 years of self-exile in 2023 and ally Srettha to become prime minister the same day.

More than a week ago, the court that dismissed Srettha over a cabinet appointment dissolved the anti-establishment Move Forward Party - the 2023 election winner - over a campaign to amend a royal insult law that the court said risked undermining the constitutional monarchy. The hugely popular opposition, Pheu Thai's biggest challenger, has since regrouped under a new vehicle, the People's Party.

Israeli airstrike targeting Hamas vehicle in West Bank kills two terrorists

Ramallah. Israel said it killed two senior Hamas terrorists in an airstrike on their car in Jenin in the occupied West Bank on Saturday, claiming they were involved in the killing of an Israeli. A joint statement from the Israel Security Agency and the Israel Defence Forces identified the terrorists as Ahmed Abu Ara and Rafet Dawasi, both from the West Bank's northern district around Jenin. In a statement, Hamas' Al-Qassam Brigades military wing said it was mourning the deaths of two fighters in an Israeli air strike on their vehicle in Jenin. The Israeli statement said the two terrorists were involved in planning a shooting attack last week in the West Bank's Jordan Valley where an Israeli man, Yonatan Deutsch, was killed. Israeli authorities said that then Palestinian gunmen opened fire on a main road in the occupied West Bank on Aug. 11, killing one and wounding another. Later that day, the al-Qassam Brigades said its West Bank-based fighters killed an Israeli soldier at point-blank range near the settlement of Meholah in the Jordan Valley and "returned to their bases safely." Hamas said the operation came in retaliation for Israel's strike on a school where displaced Palestinians were sheltering in Gaza City which the civil defence service said had killed at least 90 people. Violence in the West Bank has escalated since the war in Gaza between Israel and Palestinian group Hamas broke out in October, with more Israeli raids, Jewish settler violence and Palestinian street attacks. In a move condemned by the United States, the United Kingdom and France, Israeli settlers killed at least one Palestinian on Thursday in an attack on a village near the West Bank city of Qalqilya. The latest West Bank violence comes as a new round of talks in Doha aimed at ending 10 months of fighting in Gaza are due to resume next week. The Gaza war and escalating West Bank violence threaten to spill into a wider regional conflict involving Iran and its proxies in the region, including Hezbollah in Lebanon and the Houthis in Yemen.

UK plans to treat extreme misogyny as form of terrorism

World For the first time, the United Kingdom government is planning to treat extreme misogyny as a form of terrorism. The Telegraph reported that UK Home Secretary Yvette Cooper has issued an order to review the country's counter-terrorism strategy to address violence against women, identify gaps in the current laws, and study emerging ideologies. This move will put violence against women in the same bracket as far-right extremism. Under the proposal, it would be compulsory for school teachers to refer students they suspect of extreme misogyny to the government's counter-terror program. The local police will assess anyone who is referred to the program to see if they display signs of

radicalisation and need to be deradicalised. Speaking with The Telegraph, Cooper stated, "For too long, governments have failed to address the rise in extremism, both online and on our streets, and we've seen the number of young people radicalised online grow. Hateful incitement of all kinds fractures and frays the very fabric of our communities and our democracy." The Labour MP added, "Action against extremism has been badly hollowed out in recent years, just when it should have been needed most. That's why I have directed the Home Office to conduct a rapid analytical sprint on extremism, to map and monitor extremist trends, to understand the evidence about what works to disrupt and divert people

away from extremist views, and to identify any gaps in existing policy that need to be addressed to crack down on those pushing harmful and hateful beliefs and violence," he stated. This comes after a senior police official warned last month that social media influencers like Andrew Tate could radicalise youth into extreme misogyny in the same way terrorists draw in their followers. Calling it "quite terrifying," Deputy Chief Constable Maggie Blyth stated that the Online Safety Act needs to advance further and that rapid actions should be taken in order to protect children. Earlier last month, the UK's National Police Chiefs' Council released a report on violence against women and girls.

US man arrested in connection to 1973 murder case based on DNA evidence

Boise An Idaho man has been arrested in connection with the shooting death of a woman in California more than 50 years ago, authorities said. DNA evidence led investigators to identify Michael Eugene Mullen, 75, as a suspect in the death of Nina "Nadine" Fischer in 1973, the Marin County Sheriff's Office said. Mullen was arrested near Salmon, Idaho, on Wednesday, and he is being held in jail while awaiting extradition to California. Mullen's defense attorney, Dan Brown, did not immediately respond to voice and email messages left for him on Saturday. Fischer lived in San Rafael, California, with her husband and young

daughter when the 31-year-old was killed in November 1973, the Marin County Sheriff's office said in a news release. Both Fischer and her husband were Swedish nationals, and they were preparing to move back to Sweden at the time. Fischer's husband found her body when he returned home from work. She had been sexually assaulted and shot three times, and her 2-year-old child was found unharmed in another room. Law enforcement officials questioned some witnesses — including movers and an assessor who had been at the house that day — but the investigation turned up no leads and the case went cold, according to

newspaper articles published after her death. In 2021, the Marin County Sheriff's Office sent the case to the California Department of Justice's Familial Search Program. The program compares DNA from crime scenes to a DNA database in an effort to try to find relatives of a potential suspect. After several months, the DNA resulted in a possible lead, and after three more years of investigation Mullen was identified as the suspect, the sheriff's office said. The Marin County District Attorney's office and sheriff's office worked with the Idaho State Police and the Lemhi County Sheriff's.

85 dead as Sudan paramilitary fighters attack village, authorities allege

The RSF has been repeatedly accused of massacres, rapes and other gross violations across the country since the war started in April last year.

Cairo Fighters from Sudan's paramilitary group rampaged through a central village, looting and burning and killing at least 85 people, including women and children, authorities and residents said on Saturday, the latest atrocity in the country's 18-month devastating conflict. The paramilitary Rapid Support Forces began attacking Galgani in the central province of Sennar late in July and last week RSF fighters "indiscriminately opened fire on the village's unarmed residents" after they resisted attempts to abduct and sexually assault women and girls, Sudan's Foreign Ministry said in a statement. More than 150 villagers were wounded, it said. The RSF has been repeatedly accused of massacres, rapes and other gross violations across the country since the war started in April last year, when simmering tensions between the military and the group exploded into open fighting in the capital Khartoum and elsewhere. Describing the hours-long attack, three residents said hundreds of RSF fighters stormed the village on Thursday, looting and burning houses and public properties. The offensive came after the residents put up resistance and repelled an attack by a small group of RSF fighters, according to a health care worker at the local medical centre who spoke to The



Associated Press. The group retreated but hundreds of RSF fighters in dozens of pickup trucks with automatic rifles and heavy weapons returned, according to the worker and another resident. As of Friday, the medical centre had received at least 80 bodies, including 24 women and minors, said the worker, who spoke on condition of anonymity because of fears for his safety. Mohamed Tajal-Amin, a villager, said he saw seven bodies — six men and one woman — laying in the street midday Friday.

"The Janjaweed are in the street and people are not able to recover their dead and bury them," he said, using the name of the Arab militias that became synonymous with genocide and war crimes in

Darfur two decades ago and from which the RSF grew out. RSF spokespeople didn't return requests for comment on Saturday. In June, the RSF assaulted Sinnar's provincial capital, Singa, about 350 kilometers (217 miles) southeast of Khartoum. They looted the city's main market and took over its main hospital, forcing thousands of people to flee. The latest attack came as the United States has led efforts to resume peace talks between the military and the RSF. The talks, which are boycotted by the military, began last week in Switzerland. Diplomats from Saudi Arabia, Egypt, the United Arab Emirates, the African Union and the United Nations were attending the talks. The RSF sent a delegation to Geneva but didn't take part in the meetings. "The RSF remains here ready for talks to start; SAF needs to decide to come," US Special Envoy for Sudan Tom Perriello posted on X on Friday, using the acronym for Sudan's Armed Forces. The talks were the latest international effort to settle the devastating conflict that killed dozens of thousands of people and pushed the county to the brink of famine. Already famine was confirmed last month in a sprawling camp for displaced people in the western region of Darfur.

Biden to make case against Trump in Chicago convention, Harris likely to join

Joe Biden, who stepped aside from running for re-election a month ago under pressure from fellow Democrats, will give a prime-time address to the convention on Monday night to make the case for electing Harris and defeating former President Donald Trump, the Republican candidate.

Washington Vice President Kamala Harris is likely to join President Joe Biden on stage at the Democratic National Convention in Chicago on Monday as he passes the torch to her as the party's candidate in the November 5 presidential election, sources said on Saturday. Biden, who stepped aside from running for re-election a month ago under pressure from fellow Democrats, will give a



prime-time address to the convention on Monday night to make the case for electing Harris and defeating former President Donald Trump, the Republican candidate. Two sources familiar with

internal deliberations said the campaign has been discussing having Biden and Harris appear on stage together on Monday night and that it was likely to happen. There also have been talks about her appearing before

Biden speaks at the big event. Harris will be coming off a bus tour of western Pennsylvania on Sunday. She will be in Chicago for much of the crucial convention week. She will make a side trip to Milwaukee on Tuesday for a campaign event, returning to Chicago to hear her husband, Doug Emhoff, address the convention that night. Biden, 81, reluctantly abandoned his re-election bid after Democrats raised questions about his mental fitness after a poor debate performance against Trump on June 27. The president told reporters on Friday night that he would spend the weekend fine-tuning his convention speech. His message for the convention? "Win," he said with a smile.

Biden had lost ground to Trump in some polls after the debate and Harris, 59, has made the race a more competitive one in several states where the election is likely to be decided.

News box

Husband kills wife over illicit relationship, hangs himself in Bengaluru

BENGALURU: A dejected husband, who had often warned his wife about her illicit relationship, killed her and then hanged himself on Friday night. The incident occurred in the Hulimavu police station limits on August 16. The deceased have been identified as Meena (36), a domestic help hailing from Kolar, and her husband Mahesh Kumar (46), a crane operator hailing from Mumbai. The couple were staying in Doddakammanahalli in Hulimavu and had been married for 15 years with two daughters and a son.

The police said that Kumar was Meena's second husband. He got to know her illicit relationship and had repeatedly warned her about it, even informing her family. Despite his warnings, Meena continued the relationship. It is suspected that after multiple unanswered calls from Meena, Kumar got frustrated by her behaviour on Friday and attacked her with an iron rod around 7.30 pm. She succumbed to her head injuries on the spot.

Meena's son found her body and alerted the police. The police rushed to the scene, inspected the house, and suspected Kumar of killing her. A search operation was launched to find him. On Saturday, around 3.30 pm, Kumar was found hanging in a deserted area near Doddakammanahalli, and his body was sent for post-mortem.

Siddipet tense as Congress, BRS activists face off

SIDDIPET: The war of words between the Congress and BRS over the crop loan waiver took a serious turn in Siddipet town with activists of the grand old party resorting to vandalism in the office of former minister T Harish Rao late on Friday. A tense atmosphere continued to prevail in the town on Saturday following face-offs between supporters of the two parties. It all began late on Friday after Congress activists erected a flexi in the town questioning the whereabouts of local MLA T Harish Rao who had announced that he would resign if the loans of farmers were waived as promised by Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy. The Congress activists then proceeded to march to the MLA's camp office, demanding Harish Rao's resignation. The activists reportedly broke the lock of the main gate, entered the premises and tore down posters of former chief minister K Chandrasekhar Rao and Harish Rao. Soon, BRS activists began gathering at the spot. They resorted to a protest near the camp office. BRS supporters also tore down the flexi targeting Harish Rao. This led to further confrontations as Congress workers arrived at the scene, resulting in a heated exchange. Fortunately, the police intervened before the situation deteriorated, detaining members from both groups and dispersing the crowd. However, tension persisted as BRS activists converged at the MLA's camp office, donning black badges and taking out a protest march to the old bus stand. This led to the traffic coming to a standstill for nearly an hour in the area. The tension spilled over to Saturday, with Congress workers attempting to lay siege to the MLA's camp office, forcing the police to step in. Throughout the day, BRS and Congress activists engaged in a series of confrontations, tearing down.

This 100-year-old well an oasis for Peddapalli town in Telangana

The dependency on the well has come down over the last few years after the civic body provided domestic water connections.

PEDDAPALLI. Kanchara Bavi, a 100-year-old well in the town, quenches the thirst of residents even today. Located about one km away from 'Jenda Gandhe' (flag post) in the town, the water in the well is available for the locals when municipal water supply fails. It is a sort of an oasis in times of need.

Local people say water in the well purifies itself naturally. The water is always crystal clear. The residents of the town are proud of the well. The water is just three meters deep. People bring containers with ropes to draw water. It has eight pulleys fixed to help them to draw water. The dependency on the well has come down over the last few years after the civic body provided domestic water connections. But even today, the needy go to the well for water. They seem to prefer well water to tap water. A 72-year-old retired government teacher, S Sampath Kumar, described the importance of the well.

"Even during drought, the well does not dry up. On the contrary, it is full to the brim and has helped people meet their drinking water requirements," he said. He said that when he was young he carried water home with his family members. They used the water for drinking purposes. During festivals in the old days, water used to be taken in huge containers on bullock carts, he recalled. "Water in other wells is tasteless. But water in this well is not only clear but very tasty," said Rajitam, who draws water from the well every now and then. Moreover, tortoises swim in the well and yet the water is quite fine for drinking.

22 bus routes identified to solve commuting woes at Kochi's Tripunithura

Feasibility study to be carried out; final report to be submitted before September 30

KOCHI: As part of the route rationalisation exercise being undertaken after years, the motor vehicle department (MVD) has shortlisted 22 new bus routes in the Tripunithura region from among numerous suggestions received during the recent 'Janakeeya Sadas' held in the temple town. "We received numerous proposals from stakeholders such as resident associations, private bus owners, KSRTC and other stakeholders during the Janakeeya Sadas held on August 6. Out of the same, we identified 22 new bus routes. A feasibility study, including factors such as total operating distance, expected commuter demand and overlapping, etc, has been ordered," said Tripunithura joint RTO Abdul Rahman.

"Basically, we are considering the issuance of permits on routes where there are no bus services currently. The decision from the higher-ups is to explore the possibility of

allowing permits to mini buses as well, given the narrow road stretches in the region," the officer said. The initiative is being done on the direction of Transport Minister K B Ganesh Kumar, on whose direction the 'Janakeeya Sadas' is being held in regions like Tripunithura and North Paravoor to provide first and last mile connectivity to existing transportation facilities like Kochi Metro. The final reports, to be prepared on the basis of feasibility studies carried out by respective regional transport offices, have to be submitted to the transport commissioner before September 30.

New routes

Some of the main routes under consideration are Maradu Kottaram-Valanthakadu; Puthiyakavu-Poothotta-MLA Road; Kakkadan-Nettoor Market; Kumbalam-Kumbalam North; Edappally Gate-Cheppanam-Chathamma; Vyttila-Ameda



(via Kaniyampuzha, Eroor, Tripunithura, Kannankulangara, Pavamkulangara); Kakkadan-Mulanthuruthy (via Infopark, Brahmapuram, Karimugal, Ambalamugal, Hill Palace, Chottanikkara); Aluva-Eroor (via Kalamassery, Kakkadan, Palachavada, Vennala); Poothotta-Puthiyakavu-MLA Road; Tripunithura-Vypeen (via Eroor,

Palarivattom); and South Paravoor-Ameda.

Overlapping issue

Meanwhile, several of the proposed routes face "overlapping" issue, with the private bus operators hopeful of the government either giving exemption or relaxing the provisions of the route nationalisation. "The KSRTC will have no issue operating on the routes. It has also placed orders for nearly 300 mini buses. However, many of the private bus operators have also come forward, expressing willingness to conduct services on these new routes. We are hopeful of the government relaxing the route nationalisation provisions," said a senior MVD officer. However, many of the private bus operators have also come forward, expressing willingness to conduct services on these new routes. We are hopeful of the government relaxing the route nationalisation provisions," said a senior MVD officer.

Kerala fisheries department to strengthen surprise checks on fishing boats

KOCHI: In an attempt to regulate illegal and unsustainable fishing practices, the fisheries department will intensify surprise checks on vessels, including trawl boats and country craft used by traditional fishermen. The decision was taken at a meeting held in Vypin on Saturday to end the stand-off between traditional fishermen and trawler operators. Fisheries director Abdul Nasar, joint director S Mahesh and senior officials held talks with the representatives of fishermen unions who seized two trawl boats off the Kochi coast on Friday alleging the use of illegal pelagic nets for fishing. "The director has assured fishermen unions that stringent action will be taken against the use of fishing nets with mesh size below 20 mm. The unions demanded that all trawl boats be directed to fix Turtle Excluder Device (TED) in the fishing nets to facilitate the lifting of the ban on Indian wild-caught shrimp by the USA. He also requested fishermen to stop confronting trawl boats. If they have information about the use of banned nets they have to inform the department," said joint director S Mahesh.

Kerala Swatantra Matsya Thozhilil Federation (KSMTF) president Jackson Pollayil said the unions stressed the need to stop pair trawling by trawl boats using pelagic nets, which is leading to the depletion of fish stocks in the sea. "The department is imposing a fine of Rs 2.5 lakh on fishing boats involved in juvenile fishing. Some trawlboats are using nets with small mesh size for fishing. The catch is brought to the harbours around 3.30 am and is sold to fish meal factories

outside the state. The department should seize such boats, nets and vehicles transporting juvenile fish to fishmeal factories," he said. The unions also demanded the withdrawal of the decision to increase the fishermen's contribution to the welfare fund from Rs 100 to Rs 300. The annual licence fee for in-board engine fishing vessels used by traditional fishermen has been raised from Rs 9,000 to Rs 13,500. The department should raise



the licence fee for fishing boats from other states fishing in Kerala's coastal waters which is currently fixed at Rs 25,000. The government should impose a cess on fish brought from other states for sale in Kerala and the amount should be paid to the welfare fund, said Jackson. The fishermen's unions also held a protest in front of the Matsya Bhavan in Chellanam on Saturday raising these demands.

Fishermen Coordination Committee president Charles George said both the traditional fishermen and trawl boats are using banned nets which has led to

depletion of fish stocks in the sea. He demanded stringent action against the violators. "The traditional fishermen use LED lights to attract fish to the net during the December-January period which is a banned practice.

The use of ring seine and purse seine nets with small mesh size should be stopped," he said. A meeting of trawl boat owners will be held at Munambam on Monday to discuss legal action against fishermen who attack trawl boats and seize them, said All Kerala Fishing Boat Operators Association general secretary Joseph Xavier Kalappurackal. "Though there is a ban on the use of fishing nets with mesh size below 20 mm, the traditional fishermen are using nets with 10 mm mesh. The association will discourage violation of regulations but the government should show the same enthusiasm to curb illegal activities by traditional fishermen. The pelagic nets have a mesh size of 25 mm and a length of 225 m. The inboard engine fishing crafts used by fishermen are 35 m long and they use nets with a length of 1.5 km," he said.

FISHERIES DEPT FINES 2 TRAWL BOATS SEIZED BY FISHERMEN

Kochi: The fisheries department has imposed a fine of D2.5 lakh each on the two trawl boats seized by fishermen on Friday alleging use of banned pelagic nets for fishing operations. The fine was imposed on trawl boats Star Meen and St Ann after conducting an inspection. The catch stored in the boats was auctioned for D50,000 and the amount was paid to the state exchequer, said fisheries assistant director P Anesh.

No distance curbs: Autorickshaws can ply across Kerala

KOCHI/THIRUVANANTHAPURAM/KOZHIKODE:

In a major decision that has sparked significant safety concerns, the government on Saturday decided to grant state permits to autorickshaws, taking away the distance restrictions. The move allows autorickshaws to operate anywhere in the state. The State Transport Authority (STA) decided while considering a petition from the Madai area committee secretary of the Autorickshaw Drivers' Union (CITU). Curiously, the CITU state leadership distanced itself from the demand and categorically opposed the move to grant state permit to autorickshaws. The decision was jointly made by Transport Commissioner Sreejith S, IGP (Traffic and Road Safety Management) Sparjan Kumar and secretary of State Transport Authority Prakash Kumar. "STA has decided to give state permits to autorickshaws. The drivers of autorickshaws shall ensure the safety of passengers by strictly following all the safety directions," according to the minutes of the meeting. Until now, autorickshaws were permitted to operate only a maximum 20 km outside their district borders. "Now, those autorickshaw owners taking state permits can operate anywhere in the state," said a senior MVD official. The 20-km restriction was in place considering safety concerns during long-distance travel.

Meanwhile, the CITU leadership has come out stating that autorickshaws need not be given state permits as it could lead to safety-related issues. The State Auto Taxi and Light Motor Workers Federation has also petitioned the transport commissioner seeking to withdraw the order. "We have demanded that autorickshaws be permitted to operate 30 km outside district borders. But we don't agree with granting state permit," CITU Auto Taxi Federation general secretary K S Sunil Kumar told TNIE. Will withdraw request if CITU state leadership demands, says petitioner. "Usually, drivers in a particular region operate autorickshaws in that area only."

MUDA scam: Just hours after sanction, petitioner files caveat in Karnataka HC

Siddaramaiah is likely to approach the high court on Monday to question the legality of the sanction.



BENGALURU: Anticipating that Chief Minister Siddaramaiah will approach the Karnataka High Court against the sanction granted by Governor Thaawarchand Gehlot to prosecute him in the MUDA scam, one of the applicants before the governor filed a caveat in the high court on Saturday. A few hours after the sanction was granted, the applicant, Pradeep Kumar SP, who is one of three persons who approached the governor seeking sanction to prosecute Siddaramaiah under Section 17 of the Prevention of Corruption Act

and Section 218 of the Bharatiya Nagarika Suraksha Samhita, filed the caveat. Siddaramaiah is likely to approach the high court on Monday to question the legality of the sanction. Now, with the caveat, the high court has to hear the petitioner also before passing any orders on the petition likely to be filed by Siddaramaiah. Part from Pradeep Kumar, social activists Snehamayi Krishna from Mysuru and TJ Abraham from Bengaluru had also sought sanction from the governor, who on Saturday gave sanction accepting their request. Kumar had approached the governor even before filing the complaint. The special court to try cases against sitting and former MPs/MLAs was hearing a private complaint filed by Krishna and Abraham to know whether they had made a prima facie case to accept the complaints for hearing. Is prior sanction necessary to entertain the complaints is one of the major contentions being argued before the special court. The further hearing on the complaints filed by Krishna and Abraham is to be continued on August 20 and 21, respectively.

FCI's Covid-time food supply chain ops part of IAS training academy curriculum

BENGALURU: One of the most extensive food grain supply chain operations in history by the Food Corporation of India (FCI) during Covid is now set to be a case study for Indian Administrative Service (IAS) probationers. The Lal Bahadur Shastri National Academy of Administration has included FCI's pandemic response in its curriculum as a model of effective crisis management and logistical planning. The study, authored by A Rajgopal and DK Shukla, 'Food Challenges due to Covid: The FCI's Response', highlights FCI's monumental effort to maintain food security for 1.3 billion people during

the nationwide lockdown. According to the authors, FCI ran the largest-ever food logistics operation in its 56-year history, nearly doubling its productivity levels compared to normal times. DV Prasad, who served as Chairman and Managing Director of FCI during the pandemic, commented on the operation's scale and impact. "Ensuring uninterrupted foodgrain supply to over 130 crore beneficiaries during such a critical time showcased the robustness of our food security system. The strong institutional framework and efficient transportation network, led by the Indian Railways, were key to making this Herculean task possible," Prasad said. During the lockdown, FCI moved an impressive 15.7 million metric tonnes of foodgrains at an average of 3.14 million bags per day. It also distributed 28.51 million metric tonnes at an average of 5.7 million bags per day. Prasad noted that this could be the highest-ever foodgrain supply chain operation handled anywhere in the world. The study also emphasises the logistical challenges faced during the pandemic, including the distribution of food to remote areas, such as igloo-like structures in Himachal, Uttarakhand, Jammu & Kashmir, and even the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, where supplies were delivered by helicopters.



Let's reawaken as a nation to sing the song of freedom

SEVENTY-SEVEN years after its 'tryst with destiny', India has much to celebrate today. As the fastest-growing economy and the world's largest pluralist democracy that has succeeded in lifting millions of its citizens above abject poverty over the years, its voice is heard with respect in the chanceries of the world. Its imminent rise as the world's third largest economy, demonstrated scientific prowess, democratic resilience and an exceptional cultural heritage of harmonious coexistence are reason enough for every Indian to rejoice. And yet, as we salute the 'Tiranga' in reverence on Independence Day and thereafter, we cannot forget that the road to national glory must navigate the harsh truth of unfreedom, violence and injustices that have scarred the soul of the nation. The heart-rending sight of a man dragging his wife tied to his motorcycle with none showing the courage to stop the horrendous ordeal of the helpless woman, the rape and murder of a young doctor inside a Kolkata hospital, the unspeakable pain of the nation and of its wrestler daughter who lost an Olympic medal over 100 grams of body weight despite her unremitting toil and discipline in the service of her chosen sport, and the forced migration of our youth to foreign lands for want of gainful employment, leaving behind old and often untended parents in the twilight of their lives, tell a painful story. Recurring and aggravated discrimination on account of widening disparities in incomes, shameful display of wealth mocking the poverty of the wretched, continuing suicides by the impoverished, custodial torture of the helpless and murderous police encounters in and outside custody interrogate our claims as a welfare and liberal state.

The economic and social plight of the elderly on account of their neglect by children who caught up in the pursuit of unguided ambition and material gains, loss of dignity of the marginalised even in death, the wrecking of reputations, privacy and dignity in the media without a meaningful recourse and social consciousness generally immune to the misery of the destitute — this is not the Bharat of Bapu's dreams who, along with his compatriots, had envisioned an egalitarian society in which we could live in the shelter of each other, joined together in empathy. Heightened religious strife, escalating caste and regional conflicts, bitter political animosities beyond ideological contestation and the abuse of state power to settle personal scores question the health of Indian democracy. Having celebrated the anniversary of Independence — the day when we unshackled ourselves from the yoke of British colonialism and were reborn to freedom — we must ask ourselves whether we have vindicated the aspirations of a free people for justice and dignity. We must also reflect on whether the present state of our democracy can translate into reality the vision of our founders and ask ourselves whether the conduct of an elevating democratic politics is at all possible without its anchor in public and constitutional morality, as the Father of the Nation never tired of reminding us. The need to repurpose the nation's politics is compelling, and lest we forget the lesson of history, there can be no democracy without humanity; both are integral to each other. While we celebrate our freedom, let us think of the marginalised masses whose sufferings question our gains beyond apology. Let us shed a tear for their unbearable pain born out of undeserved deprivation, denial and unending injustices.

In drawing attention to the bitter truth of our reality 77 years after freedom, the idea is not to apportion blame but to correct the nation's course for the future, as also to remind ourselves that the purpose of human life and freedom is to battle for succour to those bearing the brunt of misery in a life without hope. While I yearn to sing the song of freedom aloud, I find my voice muffled by the deafening cries of pain and grief that 'well up like a lump in the throat'. The reality of hunger, poverty, exploitation and misery of the multitude does not leave me free to exult at this moment.

THE Trinamool Congress' 'laapataa ladies', a sarcastic reference to the Hindi movie by the same name, finally showed up at a march led by their leader and West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee in Kolkata on Friday in support of the female doctor gruesomely raped and murdered a full eight days ago at a state-run hospital in the city. Mahua Moitra, Saayoni Ghosh, Dola Sen, Satabdi Roy, Sharmila Sarkar, Kakoli Ghosh Dastidar, June Maliah — all women MPs — and minister Shashi Panja were among those flanking Mamata as they walked from Moulali to Dorina crossing in Kolkata, seeking to wrest back the narrative that India's only woman chief minister at present seems to have clearly lost in the last one week.

For the first time in years, Didi seems to be on the back foot. She knows she's faltered. Her 11 women Lok Sabha MPs, many of them stars on social media, are keenly aware that when they refused to speak up in support of the victim, except for former journalist Sagarika Ghose, in the all-important hours and days after the grisly murder — the Trinamool allowed the creation of an information vacuum into which the Opposition BJP walked right in.

These smart women, the bane of the BJP in Parliament and in Kolkata, know that when they shut themselves up against their better judgement — perhaps, as they waited for the Kolkata Police to carry out its investigation, or perhaps, waited to hear what their Dear Leader, Didi, first wanted to say on the subject — they waited too long. That, at least for the moment, that sense of trust that politicians constantly strive for in the minds of women and men they claim to lead, seems to be faltering. That for the first time in more than a decade, an element of doubt seems to have crept in. Here's what we know. The rape-murder of the young woman took place between 3 and 5 am on August 9, when after working for 36 hours straight in the hospital, she decided to get some rest in a seminar room. The post-mortem report details the horror — that she was throttled to death (the thyroid cartilage was broken due to strangling), that there were deep wounds on her private parts which were, ostensibly, caused by 'perverted sexuality' and 'genital torture'. That she was bleeding from her eyes and mouth too. Pictures doing the rounds show her legs at awkward angles to each other — some say that that can't be possible unless the pelvic girdle is broken. Strangely, though, for the next six days, all these bright young politicians, a galaxy of shining stars that include Mamata's nephew Abhishek Banerjee, occupied themselves in a variety of matters, including the fell blow to Vinesh Phogat in Paris. Didi, herself, is said to have spoken about the matter in Bangla in Kolkata — a bit like a peacock dancing in a dense jungle which few saw, and then disregarded. By then, events were taking on a life of their own. The principal of the medical college resigned but was within hours given another plum

Laapataa ladies & opportunistic BJP

THE GREAT GAME: Amid outrage over Kolkata rape-murder, Trinamool MPs in danger of being called 'goongi gudiyas'



assignment. Rumours about the police calling it a 'suicide' (they didn't) or that they cremated her without telling her parents (it was the family that cremated her) blew into the information gap. The X handles of all these women MPs, rightfully most vocal about things gone wrong, were strangely silent. Even when more than half of Kolkata was out on the streets that fetid night of August 14-15, seeking to "reclaim the night", thousands of women and men demanding justice, a right to life and safety, the Trinamool was missing in action. Their anger, passion and ardour that often stir up the Lok Sabha had either been spent or misspent. TV gave the girl a name: Abhaya, the Fearless One, invoking the name that was awarded to the girl, Nirbhaya, brutally raped in Delhi 12 years ago. Everyone remembered how that winter of 2012, when the Congress government of Sheila Dikshit sought somehow to save the girl, had turned out. Two years later, the Manmohan Singh government had lost power at the Centre, paving the way for the BJP. Nirbhaya, many said, had shown the way for the fortunes of one political party. Clearly, the BJP believes Abhaya can do for it today what Prime Minister Modi has failed to do in the last 10 years, which is to persuade Bengal to vote for the BJP, or at least turn in its favour since there are no elections on the horizon. Not for nothing has Smriti Irani returned to the TV screens for the first time since she lost Amethi to the unfancied Kishori Lal Sharma in the recent Lok Sabha polls.

But the BJP may still find that Bengal is somewhat different from the Hindi heartland states it has experience of conquering. Despite the growing admiration for Hindutva, the outrage on the streets of Kolkata today is less about the BJP and more about the sheer anger and helplessness it feels against the Trinamool. It is Didi, not the BJP, who invokes Bengal's women as its primary audience and asks for their votes.

On August 14, hours before the midnight mob ransacked the hospital where the girl's murder took place, Saayoni Ghosh was applauding Mamata's 'Kanyashree' project which is full of schemes for the girl child. For the moment, Mamata and the Trinamool are the focus of Kolkata's anger against the sheer corruption and mass helplessness that have begun to pervade the city as well as the state. Nothing seems to work, little seems to have changed. If this mass anger spreads to other parts of Bengal, Mamata knows what can happen — it's happened before, in Nandigram in 2007, when the CPM, then in power, refused to listen to the angry voices from the ground and lost power some years later — when she became the welcome beneficiary of that anger. That's why Mamata led a march in Kolkata on Friday, along with her most articulate women MPs and MLAs. All of them understand that they must fight for Bengal again. That if they don't — and notwithstanding Mahua Moitra — the Trinamool MPs are in danger of being called Bengal's 'laapataa ladies' and its 'goongi gudiyas'.

A stain on justice

The farce of Ram Rahim's frequent furloughs



THE repeated furloughs granted to Gurmeet Ram Rahim Singh, the convicted leader of Dera Sacha Sauda, highlight a troubling pattern of leniency towards a man who has been convicted of heinous crimes. Over the years, Ram Rahim has been granted multiple paroles and furloughs, raising serious questions about the integrity of the judicial and political systems that enable such decisions. Ram Rahim has been serving 20 years in prison since 2017 for the rape of two female disciples and was awarded life sentence for the murder of journalist Ram Chander Chhatrapati. His release on furloughs, especially around election times, casts a shadow over the impartiality of the justice system. The most recent furlough, a 21-day release ahead of the Haryana Assembly elections, marks the 10th instance of such leniency, despite the gravity of his crimes. The Punjab and Haryana High Court's decision to allow the Haryana Government discretion in granting Ram Rahim furlough is deeply concerning. A question

arises on how a government could grant 'good conduct' certificates to someone responsible for grave offences. The timing suggests political considerations, especially in view of Ram Rahim's significant influence over a large voter base in Haryana, Punjab and Rajasthan. His sect has historically been courted by political parties, raising questions about whether justice is being compromised for electoral gains. The dera has a history of aligning with political parties, including open support for the BJP during the 2014 Haryana Assembly polls.

This leniency is not just a legal issue; it's a moral failing. It sends a dangerous message that those with political connections can evade full justice, undermining the victims' suffering and the principle of fairness. The law must apply equally to all, regardless of status. Anything less damages the credibility of our judicial system and the public's faith in it.

The quest for a piece of the Bangladesh pie

The visible social inequalities and the fight for social justice underscore the need for reservations while the practice has often left a lot to be desired.

SHEIKH Mujibur Rahman's legacy has been consigned to history. Nobel laureate Muhammad Yunus has taken over after Sheikh Hasina's ouster. What next for Bangladesh? Will it be a civil war or a period of prolonged instability that provides a fertile ground for foreign operators to play the 'Great Game East' in South Asia? Indeed, the game has been going on within for decades, with rival political players vying for power through any means — elections, mass uprisings on the streets or the assassination of Presidents (Mujibur and Gen Ziaur Rahman). Regrettably, from democracy to dictatorship or a fundamentalist religious state, Bangladesh has seen it all in the past half a century since its birth.

In a throwback to the bloody Partition of British India in 1947, Muslim-majority Pakistan saw itself being dismembered in 1971 to give birth to another Muslim-majority but profoundly secular, liberal and linguistic Bangladesh. In 1947, the British were the sole foreign player. In 1971, during Pakistan's civil war, China, the US, the USSR and India were the four direct actors and the rest of the West was an indirect factor.

The lesson of history, however, is seldom learnt by the fighters, even if they chase a mirage at the risk of their territory being inexorably and inevitably parcelled out. Pages of history are replete with instances of internal political wars turning into an alluring arena for outsiders. Today, four foreign players are again direct stakeholders in the geopolitics and geo-economics of the turbulent nation of Bangladesh: India, the US, China and Pakistan — all with different purposes, though. Resultantly, Bangladesh has to reckon with and reconcile itself to the fact that none of the four is likely to give up its respective strategic interests as long as this young nation burns.

Three of these four nations (the US, China and Pakistan) do not share a border with Bangladesh. It's only

neighbouring India whose fortunes are intertwined with the rise and fall, prosperity or poverty of Bangladesh. Hence, the biggest stakeholder in that country is indisputably India; the leaders in Dhaka need to recognise that. Bangladesh juts into India as its underbelly, directly or indirectly affecting the demography of 12 states ('seven sisters' of the North-East, Sikkim, West Bengal, Bihar, Jharkhand and Odisha). The nearly 30-month-old Ukraine war owes it to the West's NATO-EU combine's determined expansion bid through Kyiv to Moscow's indisputable territorial underbelly. Russia's fear of being shrunk and robbed of its resource-rich land is a supreme factor in the bloody intra-Slav fratricidal fight leading to the devastating Black Sea-Balkan battle.

India already faces a two-front war owing to the Sino-Pak axis stretching from Karakoram to Kameng and beyond to Walong. Now, stretched further because of the Bangladesh crisis, there will be greater pressure on troops along the McMahon Line to Sikkim, Himachal Pradesh and Ladakh, thereby resulting in a colossal rise in costs. And that's exactly what China is up to: to bleed the Indian economy without firing a shot.

Chinese stratagems in Bangladesh have been going on since the days of Gen HM Ershad in the 1980s. So much so that today virtually all main combat ships of Dhaka are built by China's Wuhan Shipyard (Ming-class sub) and frigates and corvettes by Hudong Shipyard (Shanghai) and Wuchang Shipyard, Wuhan.



The Belt and Road Initiative, too, has helped China make deep inroads into dual-purpose ports with the reported setting up of the PLA Navy base in the near future. No wonder the US had sought Hasina's nod for a proposed naval base at St Martin's Island off Cox's Bazar, which is adjacent to Myanmar's restive Rakhine state's coastline. The refusal of Hasina to set up a naval base certainly didn't endear her to the US; it upset Washington's calculations to keep an eye on the Bay of Bengal trio of Dhaka, Yangon and New Delhi. The Chinese quest for at least two ports from

Chittagong, Chalna, Khulna, Mongla, Barisal and Cox's Bazar, too, didn't amuse America. Thus, Bangladesh today has become a frontline state for a conflict between overlapping interests of Beijing and Washington. Lately, the US also has been resentful of India's refusal to take sides in the Ukraine war as Delhi displayed her 'strategic autonomy'. For the US, any mass movement against Hasina, a friend of India, understandably wouldn't have had been bad news at all. Similarly, Dhaka's reduced dependence on Delhi would certainly make China happy. What's the result? Both the US and China are fierce rivals in Dhaka, but both are happy at India's discomfiture after Hasina's exit and the arrival of the perceived anti-Hasina and anti-India ruling class in Bangladesh.

Now, how does Pakistan fit into this Bangladesh game of the giants? Well, one just has to visit the Pakistan Military Academy in Abbottabad, where the 'revenge' mantra is inculcated into every trainee officer over India's role in the 1971 war and the humiliation suffered by the Pakistan army in Dhaka. The idea is to create a permanent state of war without a direct fight — a war of terror to bleed India with a thousand cuts. Thus has begun the 'Great Game East' in which India has got entangled. Pakistan, the US and China would all be happy to see post-Hasina Bangladesh in a prolonged state of instability. The prospect of more nations getting involved in the quest for a piece of the Dhaka pie has increased manifold. Hence, the question: is Hasina's departure from Bangladesh a prelude to a fresh deluge or a new chapter in the 'Great Game East' in South Asia?

Tara Sutaria's team has seemingly confirmed that the actress has been roped in for Yash's Toxic. Although the actress had earlier dismissed reports of playing the 'second love interest' in the film, her hairstylist's recent Instagram post can be seen as a nod that she is, in fact, a part of the film. Eagle-eyed fans noticed that her hairstylist had shared a story on Instagram with Bangalore as the location. The two hashtags in the photo read 'toxic' and 'team Tara'. A screenshot of the same was shared on Reddit and the post immediately went viral on the microblogging site. While the authenticity of the photo cannot be verified (at the time of publishing this article), it is being seen as a confirmation by Tara and Yash's fans.

For the unversed, several reports had earlier claimed that Tara Sutaria has been roped in to play Yash's love interest in his highly anticipated film Toxic. Taking to her Instagram story, Tara wrote, "Hello all! The articles released over the last few days about a project and I are false and not shared by me." The actress added, "Whenever there is something to share, I will share it with all of you! My love always. PS - Nobody is second to anyone."

According to an earlier report by Peeping Moon, Tara will play one of the two love interests of Yash in the upcoming film Toxic, with Kiara Advani cast as the other. The high-octane, multi-lingual film boasts an impressive ensemble cast, including Nayanthara as Yash's sister and Huma Qureshi in a negative role. Set against the dark backdrop of the drug mafia, Toxic will feature Yash in a gritty gangster avatar, promising an intense cinematic experience. The makers have not revealed the information about the additional cast members yet. The fans of the actor have been waiting for updates regarding the shooting schedules of the movie. The wait is now over. As per reports, the first shooting schedule of the movie is set to begin in the second week of April. The makers have not announced this officially yet.

Rasika Dugal

Reveals She Is 'Tired Of Crying On Screen', Credits OTT For Career Boost

Rasika Dugal, known for her pathbreaking performances in shows such as Mirzapur and Delhi Crime, recently said that she is tired of crying on camera, with or without glycerine. She said that there was a time when she could read a script backwards and it would at least have two crying scenes in the last 10 minutes. The candid comments came during an interview with The Indian Express where the actor shared how OTT has added a variety to the roles offered to her. Rasika has carved a niche for herself in the Indian film industry, especially in the digital entertainment space. Talking to the publication, Rasika mentioned how OTT has acted as a driving force in her acting career and

helped her find nuanced work where she could play a femme fatale (such as in Mirzapur) instead of the same overly emotional roles.

Moreover, she said it was due to streaming services that much of her work reached a larger audience. "Streaming services provided a new lease on life for me because many of my films had not received the recognition they deserved. There were numerous small films. Besides the fact that I got a lot of work, shows like Mirzapur allowed me to reach a large audience. This is when I realized that streaming services can help smaller films find an audience," Rasika noted.

However, the actor maintained that although much better than before, small-budget cinema still struggles to find its due on streaming platforms. Moreover, the emergence of OTT has supported new actors and directors but at the same time, not all content on OTT is good. "Time has changed again and smaller films are struggling to find an audience on digital platforms. It is not true that all the shows being made for OTT are of good quality. But there is enough work and enough room for newness, new talent, new directors, new script ideas, all of that, so that's good," the actress added.



Rhea Kapoor Supports Blake Lively Amid Criticism Over It Ends With Us Promotional Campaign



Blake Lively, following her latest release It Ends With Us, has hogged the limelight for all the wrong reasons. The actress is facing criticism for her 'tone-deaf' promotional strategy for the film which is an adaptation of Colleen Hoover's bestselling novel. As fans call out Blake for her 'insensitivity' to belittle the issue of domestic violence that her film addresses, producer Rhea Kapoor came out in her support. She dropped a comment on Blake's Instagram, addressing the criticism around her promotional campaigning. Rhea Kapoor wrote, "The commentary on the marketing of the film is so sad. More power to Blake, Colleen and the producers for promoting the crap out of this movie. As a filmmaker, we know how difficult it is to bring real women's stories into the mainstream and share them with as many people as possible. Celebrate women that we see everyday that have been through this and come out stronger and embrace their light. Normalise telling their stories instead of throwing them into a box." Further, Rhea Kapoor also called out those criticising Blake Lively for wearing 'pretty dresses' during the promotions of a film that addresses a serious issue of domestic violence. She added, "You want to shame the actress for wearing pretty dresses for the press tour instead? What was she supposed to do? Hide at home in sweats? a great way to ensure even fewer of these stories are told. And so what if she promoted her brand she's a business woman and she's doing press god how judgmental. Are. We." To give you some context, Blake Lively's promotional approach for her recently released film It Ends With Us has not sat down well with the netizens.

A Sneak Peek Into Yash And Radhika Pandit's Varamahalakshmi Puja With Kids



GF star Yash and his wife Radhika Pandit have been married for seven years now. The couple continues to celebrate their union through posts dedicated to each other on various occasions. Often documenting special occasions on Instagram, Radhika shared a new post on Saturday, featuring a few glimpses from her Varamahalakshmi puja with family. Apart from Yash and Radhika, the picture also featured Ayra and Yatharay taking part in the festivities at their residence. As seen in the pictures, Yash and Radhika Pandit's house was beautifully decorated with flowers, with an idol of Goddess Lakshmi placed in the living area. Radhika, for the puja, wore a mauve traditional silk saree adorned with golden patterns. With a gold necklace and earrings, she elevated her look. Yash, on the other hand, was dressed in a classic white dhoti and shirt. The pictures captured the couple offering prayers with both their cute kids.

Captioning the images, Radhika Pandit wrote, "A day filled with devotion, gratitude, and family. May the blessings of the Goddess fill your lives with joy and prosperity. Happy Varamahalakshmi to you all."

Earlier this year, Yash and Radhika Pandit celebrated a milestone in their relationship as they completed eight years of being engaged to each other. Seizing the opportunity, Radhika made sure to express her love for her husband through a short yet striking note. Sharing a bunch of throwback pictures on the photo-sharing application, she wrote, "8 years ago on this day, when we got engaged, I knew I would choose you in every lifetime." Radhika Pandit and Yash met each other on the sets of TV show Nandagokula. Their on-screen chemistry soon evolved into a real-life romance which only intensified during the filming for back-to-back projects together. In 2016, the couple decided to get married. Now, they are proud parents to two children. Work-wise, Yash is busy filming for his upcoming film Toxic. A few days back, the actor unveiled his look for the new role wherein he is seen flaunting his short hair and a beard.

Opposition attacks Centre over lateral entry push by UPSC to fill 45 posts



Congress and Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) accused the Modi government of hatching a conspiracy to undermine reservation for the marginalised section of society through this move.

NEW DELHI. The decision taken by Prime Minister Narendra Modi-led Central government regarding the lateral recruitment of 45 positions of Secretary, Deputy Secretaries and Director in 24 central ministries has sparked a political row. Major Opposition parties like the Congress and the Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) have accused the Modi government of hatching a conspiracy to undermine reservation for the marginalised section of society. Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge called the Centre's move a 'double attack' on reservation as a ploy to deprive aspirants from Scheduled Castes (SCs), Scheduled Tribes (STs), Other Backward Classes (OBCs) and Economically Weaker Section (EWS) of opportunities.

"The BJP, which has ripped apart the Constitution, has launched a double attack on reservation! First, the Modi government

issued an advertisement to fill at least 45 posts of Joint Secretary, Directors and Deputy Secretary at the Centre through Lateral Entry. Is there reservation for SC, ST, OBC and EWS? As part of a well-planned conspiracy, the BJP is deliberately making such recruitments in jobs so that SC, ST, OBC categories can be kept away from reservation", Kharge said in a post written in Hindi on X. That is why the Congress Party is demanding a caste census for social justice, Kharge said towards the end of a long post.

Tejaswi Yadav of the RJD, a key component of the INDIA bloc with the Congress and others, echoed Kharge's views. Sharing a picture of the order issued by the Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) on X, Tejaswi wrote in Hindi "This



advertisement is a small example of how the Modi government at the Centre is cracking a dirty joke on and messing with the Constitution written by Baba Saheb and reservation". "If UPSC had appointed 45 IAS through the civil service examination, then it would have had to provide reservation to SC/ST and OBC, i.e. out of the 45, 22-23 candidates would have been

selected from Dalit, backward and tribal classes", he added. Urging the people belonging to Dalit-OBC-Tribal and poor general classes to 'wake up', the former Bihar Deputy Chief Minister accused the Modi government of 'ending reservation in a systematic, planned and cunning manner'.

"In the last election, the Prime Minister, his stooge parties in Bihar and their leaders used to claim with great pomp that no one can take away their rights by ending reservation, but in front of their eyes, with their support and cooperation, the rights of the deprived, neglected and poor sections are being robbed and the so-called self-proclaimed OBC PM and SC/ST and OBC leaders of UP-Bihar-Jharkhand are unfortunately clapping and laughing", Tejaswi lamented. He further claimed that in the name of Hindutva, the BJP was

usurping people's rights. Earlier on Saturday, the UPSC invited applications from private sector employees for lateral recruitment of 45 positions of Secretary, Deputy Secretaries and Director in 24 central ministries. The posts announced by the UPSC included 10 Joint Secretary positions and 35 Director/Deputy Secretary positions. The applications invited for the Joint Secretary positions included, two posts in the Finance Ministry, one post each in the Home Ministry and the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology, among others. Similarly, the applications invited for Director/Deputy Secretary positions included eight posts in the Agriculture ministry, two posts in the Education ministry and one post each in the Ministry of External Affairs and the Civil Aviation ministry and more.

Champai Soren heads to Delhi with 6 MLAs amid speculation of BJP switch: Sources

NEW DELHI. Senior Jharkhand Mukti Morcha (JMM) leader Champai Soren took an early flight to Delhi on Monday amid speculation of him joining the BJP, sources told India Today TV.

Champai, who was recently replaced as Jharkhand Chief Minister by JMM chief Hemant Soren, is accompanied by six party MLAs, sources said. Champai Soren, who is considered close to the Soren family, was appointed as the Chief Minister after Hemant Soren was arrested by the Enforcement Directorate on January 31 in an alleged land scam case. However, Champai Soren stepped down from the post on July 3 after Hemant Soren was granted bail by Jharkhand High Court.

Following this, speculation was rife that Champai Soren was reportedly not happy with the way he was unceremoniously removed from the top post to pave way for Hemant Soren to become the Chief Minister of Jharkhand once again. According to sources, the Jharkhand Mukti Morcha has been unable to contact the six MLAs who purportedly accompanied Champai Soren to Delhi.

Champai Soren, sources said, is in touch with several top BJP leaders. Last night, he was in Kolkata where he met Bengal BJP leader Suvenu Adhikari, sources said. Further, sources indicate that Soren has been in continuous touch with Union Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan. However, the senior Jharkhand Mukti Morcha (JMM) leader on Saturday refuted the rumours of him joining the BJP.

"I don't know what rumours are being spread. I don't know what news is being run, so I cannot tell whether it's true or not. I don't know anything about it...Hum jahan par hain vahi par hain (I am here only)," Champai Soren said on Saturday.

"We Are India's No 1...": IAS Coaching Centre Fined For "Misleading" Ad

New Delhi: A coaching institute for the civil services exam has been fined ₹ three lakh for its "misleading" advertisements, the Centre said today.

In an official statement, the Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution said that the Central Consumer Protection Authority (CCPA) has taken action against Sriram's IAS, which has its centers in Delhi, for a misleading advertisement regarding the UPSC Civil Service Exam (CSE) 2022. It was in violation of the Consumer Protection Act, 2019, the Ministry said.

Coaching institutes and online edtech platforms use pictures and names of the same successful candidates to influence prospective aspirants (consumers), without disclosing the courses opted by such candidates and length of the course so attended," the statement said. The decision was taken to "protect and promote the rights of consumers as a class and ensure that no false or misleading advertisement is made of any goods or services which contravenes the provisions of the Consumer Protection Act, 2019", the Ministry said. Sriram's IAS in its advertisement made the following two claims: "200 plus selections in UPSC Civil Service Exam 2022" and "We are India's No 1 Prestigious UPSC/IAS Coaching Institute".

The CCPA found out that Sriram's IAS advertised various types of courses but the information for the course opted by the advertised successful candidates in the UPSC CSE 2022 was "deliberately concealed" in the advertisement. "This has the effect of consumers falsely believing that all the successful candidates claimed by the Institute had opted for the paid courses advertised by the Institute on its website," the statement read. Information regarding the course opted by successful candidates is important for the consumers to know so that they can make informed choices while deciding which course and coaching institute to join, it said. Sriram's IAS in its response submitted the details of only 171 successful candidates against its claim of 200 plus selections in UPSC CSE 2022.

Air India crew member assaulted in London hotel room by intruder: Reports

The attacker entered the Air India cabin crew member's room at the London hotel and physically assaulted her, hitting her with a clothes hanger before dragging her across the floor.

NEW DELHI. A female crew member of Air India was assaulted by an intruder inside her room at a hotel in London where she was staying, the airline said in a statement on Sunday.

The company said that the incident happened at a hotel operated by a major international chain and stated that a police investigation is underway.

According to reports, the assault took place at the Radisson Red Hotel at Heathrow in London and the airline staff had previously raised concerns about safety at the hotel. A homeless man barged into the room at the hotel where the crew member was staying, news agency PTI reported. As she woke up and noticed the intruder, the man reportedly physically assaulted her. He hit her with a clothes hanger before dragging her on the floor, the reports said. She screamed for help and tried to run out of the room but was

prevented from doing so by the intruder. As per reports, her colleagues heard her cries and came to her rescue. The crew member was taken to the hospital following the incident.



The assailant was arrested.

"We are deeply anguished by an unlawful incident of intrusion at a hotel, operated by a major international chain, that affected one of our crew members," a spokesperson for Air India said. The airline added, "We are providing all possible support to our colleague and their broader

team, including professional counselling. Air India is also working with the local police to pursue the matter to the fullest extent of the law, and with the hotel management to ensure such incidents are not repeated". The airline has not officially commented on reports suggesting that the crew member may have been sexually assaulted. One of the sources told PTI that she was allegedly sexually assaulted at the hotel, while two other sources claimed it was a physical assault. Congress leader Manish Tewari, responding to the reports of the assault, called it a "very disturbing" incident and alleged that Air India "deliberately put the cabin crew at risk" by not addressing the safety issues. The news report pertaining to the sexual assault on an Air India Crew Member in London is very disturbing.

Send reports every 2 hours: Centre to states amid Kolkata murder protests

NEW DELHI. As the country is reeling under the nationwide protest over the Kolkata rape and murder case, the Union Home Ministry has issued an order to all the states, asking them to submit reports regarding the law and order situation every two hours. In the wake of nationwide protests and outrage over a trainee doctor's rape and murder in a Kolkata hospital, the Home Ministry stated that the law and order situation in all the states should be monitored. The Union Home Ministry has directed the police forces of all states across the country to send reports every two hours through email, fax, or even WhatsApp. Henceforth, a continuous two-hourly law and order situation report in this regard may kindly be sent to



the MHA control room (New Delhi) by Fax/Email/ WhatsApp from 4 pm today (16/08/24)," reads the official notification issued by Centre, news agency PTI reported.

On August 9, the 31-year-old postgraduate trainee doctor's semi-naked body was found in the seminary hall of the state-run RG Kar Medical College and Hospital. A civic volunteer of the Kolkata Police, Sanjay Roy, was arrested in connection with a gruesome rape and murder the next day. The Calcutta High Court handed over the probe to the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) on Tuesday. The accused, Sanjoy Roy, will undergo a psychoanalysis test, as the CBI has called in a team of experts from Delhi's Central Forensic Science Laboratory (CFSL) to Kolkata.

Protesting doctors are demanding justice and urgent reforms, including an overhaul of resident doctors' working and living conditions and the implementation of a central law to protect healthcare professionals from workplace violence.

Mercedes Runs Over Cyclist In Delhi, Driver Arrested, Car Seized

New Delhi: In yet another hit-and-run case, a 34-year-old cyclist was found dead on a south Delhi road after he was hit by a Mercedes car on Saturday, police said. A passerby called up the police after seeing the man lying in a pool of blood on the Ashram to Bhogal flyover. The body was found on the roadside while his cycle was discovered around 150 metres away. The victim has been identified as Rajesh Kumar, a gardener, who was a resident of South Delhi's Madanpur Khadar. A case has been registered and an investigation is on.



During investigation, the driver of the Mercedes was identified as 45-year-old Pradeep Gautam, who lives in Noida. The owner of the luxury car had given Gautam the vehicle to put it

up for sale. Gautam has been arrested and his vehicle was seized for further investigation.

The postmortem will be conducted today and the body will be handed over to the relatives after the autopsy. Last week, in a similar hit-and-run incident, a man was killed and his friend was severely injured when a speeding SUV crushed them at Versova beach in the early hours of the morning.

The victim was a 36-year-old rickshaw driver who was sleeping on the beach with his friend to escape the heat. The driver of the SUV and his friend were arrested by the police.

Trinamool vs Trinamool on whether top cop should be probed in Kolkata rape case

Two senior Trinamool Congress leaders, Kunal Ghosh and Sukhendu Sekhar Ray, held different opinions about whether Kolkata's Commissioner of Police Vineet Goyal should be questioned by the CBI in connection with the rape and murder case of a trainee doctor.

New Delhi: Senior Trinamool Congress leader Kunal Ghosh called out fellow party leader Sukhendu Sekhar Ray for demanding the questioning of Kolkata Commissioner of Police Vineet Goyal in connection with the rape and murder of a trainee doctor.

Ray, a Rajya Sabha MP, demanded strict probe by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI), which took over the probe into the rape and murder case from the Kolkata Police. "CBI must act fairly. Custodial interrogation of ex-Principal and Police Commissioner is a must to know who and why floated suicide story. Why wall of hall demolished, who patronised Roy to be so powerful. Why sniffer dog used after 3 days. Hundreds of such questions. Make them speak," Ray said in the tweet.

Ray's remark came as Kolkata's Commissioner of Police Vineet Goyal faces criticism over the police's handling of the case in its nascent stages. While the police claimed they did everything that was expected of them, the Calcutta High Court transferred the probe to the CBI, citing no significant progress in the

police investigation. Besides the Commissioner, Sukhendu Sekhar Ray also referred to Sandip Ghosh, the former principal of state-run RG Kar Medical

also demand justice in RG Kar case. But strongly oppose this demand regarding CP. After got information He has tried his best. Personally CP was doing his job and investigation was in a positive focus. This kind of post is unfortunate, that too from my senior leader (sic)." The role of the city police and the hospital administration was criticised amid huge uproar over the brutal rape and murder of a 31-year-old trainee doctor. The victim's family alleged that the first call they received about their daughter's death mentioned that she had died by suicide.

There are also allegations that the renovation near the third-floor seminar hall of the chest department in the emergency building of the hospital was ordered to destroy vital evidence. Notably, the woman's body was found in the seminar hall on August 9.



and College and Hospital, who had resigned from the post two days after the trainee doctor's body was found on August 9. Ghosh is currently being probed by the CBI. On Ray's comment, Kunal Ghosh said, "I

NEWS BOX

Nottingham Forest's Danilo suffers horror injury in club's Premier League opener

New Delhi Nottingham Forest midfielder Danilo suffered a broken ankle during their Premier League opener against Bournemouth on August 17, a significant setback for both the player and the team. The incident occurred just 10 minutes into the match at the City Ground when Danilo went up for a header in the center of the pitch. As he landed, he collided awkwardly with Bournemouth forward Antoine Semenyo, leading to the severe injury. The match was immediately halted as the medical staff rushed onto the field to attend to the 23-year-old Brazilian. The severity of the injury was evident, and the team used Forest flags to shield the scene from the crowd. After several minutes of treatment, Danilo was stretchered off the pitch, leaving the team and fans concerned about his recovery. Club manager Nuno Espírito Santo confirmed during the post-match press-conference about the seriousness of Danilo's injury. "It's a tough moment for all, especially for Danilo. We don't know yet what has happened but we know it's serious," Nuno



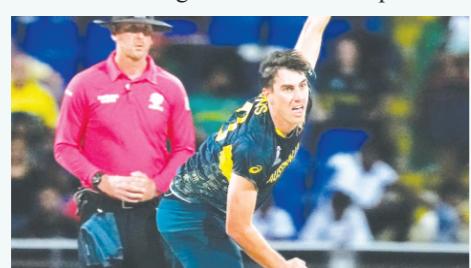
told Sky Sports. "Since last season he has been talented in the way he manages the game. He is a very good player so it is a tough moment. Everyone loves him in the dressing room," Nuno added.

Danilo joined Nottingham Forest from Brazilian side Palmeiras in January 2023 and quickly established himself as a key player. In his time with the club, he has made 43 appearances, becoming a vital part of the team's midfield. However, this injury could see him sidelined for a significant portion of the season, if not the entire campaign.

The injury marks the first major setback in Danilo's career, and it comes at a time when Nottingham Forest is aiming to make an impact in the Premier League. With Danilo potentially out for the long term, Forest may now need to explore options in the transfer market to find a replacement and strengthen their squad to cope with his absence.

Pat Cummins wants to play cricket in LA 2028: Watching Olympics got us excited

New Delhi, Australia fast bowler Pat Cummins wants to participate in the Los Angeles Olympics, set to be hosted in 2028. LA is set to bring back cricket as a sport for



the first time since 1900, and Cummins is excited to become a part of it. Speaking to Fox Sports, Cummins said that the Australian players were excited to be a part of the Olympics when the action unfolded in Paris, earlier in July and August. "Watching the Olympics, it got us all excited. You want to be part of it right there in the middle. I'd love to be on that side (at LA28). I think I'll be 35 or something, so hopefully still there or thereabouts," Cummins said. "Honestly right now, it feels a long way away. Maybe once we get closer and start building into it, everyone gets a bit more excited," the fast bowler further added. T20I is the only format where Cummins does not captain Australia. The fast bowler has won a hat-trick of ICC trophies with the Australian team, winning the T20 World Cup in 2021 and then ODI World Cup and World Test Championship in 2023. CRICKET'S INCLUSION IN LA OLYMPICS

Cricket is set to make a historic comeback to the Olympic Games after a 128-year absence, with its inclusion in the 2028 Los Angeles Olympics. This significant development marks a major milestone for the sport, which has been steadily gaining popularity globally. The decision to include cricket in the Olympics was made following a comprehensive two-year process, during which the International Cricket Council (ICC) collaborated closely with the Los Angeles 2028 Organising Committee (LA28). The inclusion of cricket in the Olympics is expected to have a profound impact on the sport's global reach and appeal. Cricket enjoys immense popularity in the Asian sub-continent, and its inclusion in the Olympics is anticipated to tap into this lucrative market, boosting India's broadcasting rights for the IOC by over \$100 million. The sport's return to the Olympics is also seen as a significant opportunity to expand its audience and attract new fans, particularly in the United States, where cricket is gaining traction through the success of Major League Cricket.

Cricket Australia has announced a special one-off Test between Australia and England in 2027 to celebrate 150 years of Test cricket.

New Delhi Cricket Australia (CA) has announced to host a special Test between Australia and England to commemorate 150 years of Test cricket in 2027. Notably, CA released the men's hosting rights schedule for home Tests till 2031 on Sunday, August 18. While finalizing the schedule, CA revealed the hosting of the special Test between the oldest rivals of the game at the historic Melbourne Cricket Ground (MCG) to celebrate cricket's most respected format. Notably, the first-ever Test match was played from March 15-19 between Australia and England in 1877 at MCG where Australia



emerged victorious by 45 runs. CA CEO Nick Hockley expressed his excitement for the highly anticipated sesquicentenary calling it a wonderful celebration of the pinnacle format. "The 150th anniversary

Test match at the MCG in March 2027 will be a wonderful celebration of the pinnacle format of the game at one of the world's great sporting arenas and we can't wait to host England on that occasion," CA CEO Nick

Jaspal Rana blasts NRAI selection policy: 'No system to protect shooters'

Manu Bhaker's coach Jaspal Rana has blasted the National Rifle Association of India (NRAI) for its inconsistencies in selection policy. Rana has said that he wants continuity from the NRAI where the shooters are better protected by the system.

New Delhi Double Olympic-medallist shooter Manu Bhaker's coach Jaspal Rana has strongly criticized the National Rifle Association of India's (NRAI) "ever-changing" Olympic selection policy, stating that it has harmed promising talents and will continue to do so if consistency is not maintained. Rana, a pistol legend with three Asian gold medals, emphasized the need for a fixed policy, highlighting that the current system fails to support shooters and often leads to their decline. Rana pointed out that the selection policy changes every six months, which creates uncertainty and makes it difficult for shooters to prepare. He

suggested that the federation should decide on a policy and stick to it, regardless of whether it is right or wrong. This consistency, he believes, will significantly improve the performance of shooters. "The (federation's) selection policy changes every six months. I met the sports minister and told him 'get the selection policy from the federation. Let them decide...' whatever they decide, right or wrong, we are not discussing that, and then stick to it! You will see the difference (in the performance of shooters)," said the decorated marksman. Rana cited examples of talented shooters like Saurabh Chaudhary and Jitu Rai, who faded away quickly despite their initial success. He also mentioned Arjun Babu, who finished fourth in Paris and is now struggling to regain his form. Rana questioned why there is no effort to support these shooters and help them regain their

position. The NRAI had amended its selection criteria in 2021, reducing bonus points for quota winners and reintroducing trials.

However, Rana argued that even with these changes, there is no consistency, and the federation's approach remains unclear. He emphasized that Olympic and world medallists need protection and support to continue performing at the highest level. "Where is (pistol shooter) Saurabh Chaudhary, where is (Asian Games gold medallist pistol shooter) Jitu Rai? Does anybody talk about them? No. Are we talking about (10m air rifle shooter) Arjun Babu, who finished fourth in Paris? He missed the medal by a fraction," the firebrand 48-year-old asked. "Nobody is thinking how to get him back on the platform (again)," said Rana, who was allegedly told to leave the Karni Singh ranges by the federation's High Performance Director Pierre Beauchamp during the Paris Olympics Selection Trials. Rana's concerns are particularly relevant for Manu Bhaker, who won two bronze medals in Paris but will have to fight for a place in the national squad once she returns from her break. He advocated for a system that allows Olympic medallists to compete in every trial, ensuring they receive the necessary facilities and support to continue their success.



Enzo Maresca says Chelsea ready for 'always changing' Pep Guardiola and City

Chelsea's new head coach Enzo Maresca is ready for the challenge of facing Pep Guardiola's Manchester City in their Premier League opener, acknowledging the tough task ahead while embracing the excitement of starting against the reigning champions.

New Delhi The Premier League 2024-2025 will witness its first big clash of the new season in the highly-anticipated clash between defending champions Manchester City against Chelsea on August 18.



Meanwhile, the new Chelsea boss Enzo Maresca believes that his side is all ready to take on his former colleague Pep Guardiola's tactical genius. Maresca, who once served as Guardiola's assistant at City, had a successful stint with Leicester City, helping them gain promotion last season. Now, he is tasked with revitalising Chelsea, who parted ways with Mauricio Pochettino

ahead of the new season. This match promises to be an exciting contest, as both teams aim to start their campaigns on a strong note. "After eight or nine years together, you can do so many different things. Pep is not a manager that is always doing the same, he is always changing. For us, it will be exactly the same. It will be a tough game but exciting to start against the champions," Maresca said at the pre-match press-conference. City, under the leadership of Guardiola, are chasing an unprecedented fifth consecutive Premier League title, while Chelsea are looking to find consistency after a turbulent season.

With Manchester United and Liverpool already securing wins in their opening matches, the pressure is on both City and Chelsea to perform.

Kamran Akmal bashes PCB for 'international mockery' due to no crowd in Karachi Test

Former Pakistan cricketer Kamran Akmal has lashed out at Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) for hosting the second Test between Pakistan and Bangladesh in Karachi despite the ongoing construction work at the stadium.

New Delhi Former Pakistan cricketer Kamran Akmal has lashed out at Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) for hosting the second Test against Bangladesh at National Bank Stadium in Karachi. Notably, due to the ongoing construction work at the stadium as



part of the preparations for the ICC Champions Trophy 2025, the PCB has not allowed the crowd to the game. However, the decision hasn't gone down well with Akmal who called it a joke for Pakistan cricket that matches are played without any crowd. The former wicketkeeper-batter said that the board could've arranged the game in some other stadium as Pakistan have many options. "The second Test match will be played in Karachi. So I think you know that there is a renovation going on in Karachi. They are preparing a stadium for the Champions Trophy. So it will be a joke of Pakistan that Test matches are being played in Pakistan without a crowd. And we don't just have 2-3 stadiums; we also have Faisalabad Stadium. We could have played there too; it is a top-class stadium. So much cricket has happened there," Kamran said in a video uploaded from his YouTube

channel. Further speaking ahead, Akmal suggested that Multan stadium would've been a good option calling PCB's decision an international mockery of their cricket. "There is a stadium in Multan. And you know that Multan Stadium is very good. And the crowd also comes there. So you know that this is your stadium; you could have put another Test match at one of these two venues. So it would have been good. So I think it will be an international mockery of our cricket. These things should not happen," he added. Meanwhile, Pakistan will take on Bangladesh in the first Test beginning from August 21 at Rawalpindi Cricket Stadium, Rawalpindi. Bangladesh arrived in Pakistan four days in advance to prepare for the series due to the ongoing political turmoil in their country. Notably, Pakistan have an unbeaten record over Bangladesh having beaten them in 12 out of the 13 matches played between the two teams. Hence, the Shan Masood-led side will be eager to continue their dominant record in the upcoming series as well.

Hockley told cricket.com.au.

Notably, CA earlier hosted the centenary Test between the two teams held from March 12-17 in 1977. It was a grand occasion at the MCG as every living men's cricketer who had played either Australia or England in an Ashes was invited to watch the game.

CA hosted centenary Test in 1977

In a major coincidence, Greg Chappell's Australia beat Tony Greig's England by 45 runs, the same margin by which Australia had won the maiden Test. Meanwhile, Australia and England will ignite their rivalry down under ahead of the sesquicentenary Test in Ashes 2025-26. Notably, Australia have retained the urn since 2017 with England last holding it in 2015. Furthermore, the Three Lions are yet to win a Test in Australia since 2011 having suffered 0-5, 0-4 and 0-4 series losses in the last three Ashes tours. However, England have given tough competition to Australia at home with their last series loss coming in 2003 against their arch-rivals. The Kangaroos managed to draw the series 2-2 on the last two occasions and hence will be hungry to continue their dominance at home in the upcoming series.

Rishabh Pant tries his hand at bowling in Delhi Premier League opener



New Delhi Star India wicketkeeper-batter Rishabh Pant was spotted bowling in the opening match of the Delhi Premier League between South Delhi Superstarz (SDS) and Purani Dilli 6 (PDL) on Saturday, August 17 at Arun Jaitley Stadium in Delhi. Captaining Purani Dilli 6, Pant came in to bowl the last over of the match with SDS requiring just one run to win. The wrist-spinner ended up bowling a low full toss which was driven towards long on for a single as SDS won the match by seven wickets after successfully chasing the target of 198 in 19.1 overs. However, fans were happy to have witnessed the rare sight of Pant bowling. Pant has bowled just two overs in his professional career in first-class cricket where he managed to pick one wicket in the two overs he bowled. Apart from that, he's never bowled in international cricket or IPL. The southpaw scored 35 (32) with the bat in the first innings with the help of four fours and a six.

Pant seemed to struggle against the spinners as he failed to maintain a strike rate of 100. However, he managed to break loose in the end with a flurry of boundaries to boost his score. The India cricketer didn't have a memorable start to PDL as his team lost the match.

Ayush Badoni stars in SDS' win

After being put in to bat first, Purani Dilli 6 posted a huge score of 197/3 in their allotted 20 overs with Arpit Rana (59 off 41), Vansh Bedi (47 off 19) and Lalit Yadav (34* off 21) doing the bulk of the scoring. SDS Captain Ayush Badoni had a good outing with the ball registering figures of 1/27 in four overs. In reply, SDS chased down the target in 19.1 overs courtesy of half-centuries from Priyansh Arya (57 off 30) and Badoni (57 off 29). Sarthak Ray also played a brilliant innings of 41 (26) with the help of four fours and three sixes. Shivam Sharma starred with the ball for PDL picking 2/38 in four overs.



Raksha Bandhan



In India, Rakhi celebrations are about strengthening the bond of love between brothers and sisters and fostering brotherhood. This festival is not a ritual, custom and tradition that can change over time but its style of celebration has become contemporary. Since ages, Raksha Bandhan is being celebrated in the same way. All the traditions are

or any other shop, all are flooded with attractive Rakhi gifts to attract people.

The celebration of Rakhi, in India, is well known for its carnival spirit and strengthening the bond of love between brothers and sisters. In fact, India is globally known for its colorful festivals and ever-green tradition. Celebrated with different rituals, family get-

well being. In return, brothers pamper their sisters and present beautiful gifts to lure them. They also promise to take care of her and stand by her side in any circumstances.

After performing all these rituals, the whole family reunion to enjoy and have fun. Then all of them share the delicious



folk with the same enthusiasm. The gaieties have only blown up to a larger scale. Rakhi festival is the celebration of the chaste bond of love amongst the siblings.

Everyone starts preparing for this festival much in advance. About a month before the commencement of Raksha Bandhan, you can see fancy and colorful Rakhi in every market. Ladies start shopping for Rakhi and Rakhi gifts quite early. They shop for new clothes and beautiful Rakhi gifts specially the one that have to be sent to their brothers staying far. Almost every shop, be it sweet shops, garment shops, gift shops,

together and sweets, Raksha Bandhan is about sentiments, love and enjoyment. Like any other festival, Rakhi has its unique significance.

On the day of Rakhi festival, the festivity of this auspicious day begins by the day break. After taking bath early morning, people get ready by wearing new clothes and gather for worshiping. After invoking the blessings of the Gods, the sister performs brother's aarti, puts tilak and chawal on his forehead and ties Rakhi amongst chanting of mantras. Sisters whole heartedly give sweets to their brothers to eat which in turns add more sweetness in the Raksha Bandhan celebration and pray for their

Rakhi Celebrations



food, tasty sweets, gifts, music and dance. It is a day to remember all the memorable time spent together for those who, for any reason, are far away from their family. Emotions can also be expressed through e-mails, e-cards, Rakhi greeting cards and Rakhi through Internet. The overflowing emotions of siblings cannot be stopped on this day.

Rabindra Nath Tagore started gathering of people like 'Rakhi Mahotsav' in Shantiniketan to propagate the feeling of brotherhood among people. He believed that this will invoke trust and feeling of peaceful coexistence. Raksha Bandhan, for them, is a way to harmonize the relationship of humanity. The tradition continues as people started tying Rakhi to the neighbor and friends.

Rakhi Recipes



List of Rakhi Recipes
Banana Cutlets
Vermicelli Kheer
Vegetable Pancakes
Pakoras
Mal Pua
Khoya Burfi
Tamarind Rice Banana Cutlets
Ingredients: 6 Raw bananas
1/4 cup fresh peas, boiled
1/4 cup beet root, boiled and finely chopped
1 tbs. each mint leaves & coriander leaves finely chopped
4-5 green chillies finely chopped
1" piece ginger grated(optional) 1/2 tsp. each mustard & cumin seeds
1/2 tsp asafoetida
1/2 tsp. turmeric powder
1 tsp. Amchur oil to deep fry 1-1/2 cups Breadcrumbs
salt to taste

Method Steam whole bananas with skins, till soft. Remove skins. Mash while still hot. And keep aside. Heat 2 tbsp. oil in a pan, add seeds, allow to splutter. Add asafoetida, mint, coriander, chillies, ginger, amchur, peas and beet root. Mix this well with the mashed bananas. Add salt and other spices as well. Heat oil in a pan. Shape the cutlets with the mixture, roll them in the breadcrumbs and deep fry till golden brown. Drain and serve hot with green chutney or tamarind

Vegetable Pancakes
Ingredients
1/2 cup Roasted Vermicilli
1.5 liter Milk
1/2 t s p . Carda
chutney or tomato ketchup
Vermicelli Kheer
Ingredients
1 cup Roasted Vermicilli
1.5 liter Milk
1/2 t s p . Carda
m o m
Powder
1/2 t s p . Saffron
Dry fruit and resins
Boil the milk in a broad mouth pan add the roasted Vermicelli and sugar to taste. Let it boil till thick. Dissolve saffron in 1tsp. Water. Add cardamom and saffron to the thick vermicelli and milk mixture. Garnish with soaked almonds and resins.

Rasgulla
Ingredients
250 grams Besan
Raksha Bandhan 3 tbsps Maida
2 tbsp cornflour 3 tbsps rice flour 1 teaspoon baking powder 1 Potato (large) finely chopped 1 carrot (large) finely chopped 2 onion, chopped 1/4 t s p . ground cardamom
Rose water
Fresh cream sweetened
Sugar syrup
Put sugar and water in a



finely chopped 1 tablespoon fresh lemon juice 1-1/2 cups (375 ml) oil 1 c u p (2 5 0 m l) w a t e r , approximately Salt and red chilly powder to taste 300 ml water

Oil for shallow frying.

Method
Mix all the ingredients and make a thick batter with water. Keep aside for 10 minutes. In the meantime grease a pan and heat it. Now drop the batter in 2" rounds in the pan fry till deep yellow on both the sides. Serve hot with green chutney or tomato ketchup.

Pakoras

Ingredients
250 grams besan
1/2 t s p . turmeric
1/2 t s p . red chilly powder
1 t s p . dried pomegranate seeds 1 t s p . Coriander paste
1 medium sized onion, chopped 1 medium sized potato, chopped 1 green chilly chopped. Salt to taste

Method

Mix all the ingredients to make a thick batter. Heat oil in a frying pan. Drop chunks of the batter in hot oil and fry till light brown. Drain cut into small pieces using a blunt knife and re fry till crisp. Serve hot with green chutney and tamarind chutney.

Mal Pua

Raksha Bandhan
Ingredients
250 grams plain flour, sifted water 1 t s p . powdered sugar oil for frying Sugar Syrup 500 grams sugar 625 ml water
Garnish
1/4 t s p . ground cardamom
Rose water
Fresh cream sweetened
Sugar syrup
Put sugar and water in a

saucepans and bring to boil. Simmer for 8-10 minutes till thick syrup is formed.

Mix sifted flour, sugar and water to form smooth, medium thickness batter and keep aside for 30 min. Heat oil in a shallow flat bottomed pan. Carefully spread the mixture in the pan and fry till golden brown. Transfer the pancake into the sugar syrup. Serve hot garnished with cardamom, rosewater and fresh cream.

Khoya Burfi

Ingredients
1 Lt. Milk
75 gms sugar
50 grams naryal chura (coconut powder)
20 grams pistachios, chopped
20 grams almonds, chopped

Method

Boil milk reduce heat and let it simmer for 45-minutes to one hour till thick paste like. Keep stirring in between. Add sugar and coconut powder and stir till sugar dissolves. Grease a thali and pour the batter. Garnish with pistachios and almonds. Let it cool and cut into square or rhomboid pieces.

Tamarind Rice

Ingredients
3 cups Rice cooked with 1 t b s p

butter/ghee/oil 1/2 cup thick Tamarind extract 3 t b s p Channa Dal 2 t b s p grated Ginger 2 level t s p Red Chili powder 1 level t s p Turmeric powder 1/4 t s p Asafetida powder 6-8 Green Chilies slit in two

3-4 dry Chilies Few Curry Leaves 5 t b s p Cashew nuts (broken up and kept) Optional 1/2 cup Vegetable Oil Salt to Taste

Method

1. Heat 1/2 cup vegetable oil. 2. When the oil is hot add the chana dal, dry chillies, curry leaves, green chillies, asafetida powder or a small piece of solid Asafetida. 3. Fry until the Dal is golden brown. 4. Now, add the salt, turmeric powder, chili powder, grated ginger, broken cashew nuts and stir for a few minutes on a low flame. Don't let the turmeric and chili powder burn. 5. Boil for 15-20 minutes till the quantity reduces to half and the mixture becomes thick. 6. Put the cooked rice in a dish, add the prepared mixture and required quantity of the Tamarind extract. 7. Mix to the rice and stir well. Keep covered until ready to serve.

