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Bike-borne civic volunteer of Kolkata Police held for entering protest area

Sanjay Kumar

Kolkata, August 31: A civic volunteer of Kolkata Police was arrested on Saturday for allegedly riding into a barricaded area with his motorcycle and injuring one of Rabindra Bharati University students...

District judiciary is 'backbone of the judiciary': CJI DY Chandrachud

Simmi Kaur Babbar

New Delhi, August 31: Terming the district judiciary the "backbone of the judiciary", Chief Justice of India DY Chandrachud on Saturday said as a crucial component of the rule of law, district court judges have the ability to transform the present and future of our society.

Seventy-five years after Independence, the time has come for us to bury one more relic of the British era - the colonial mindset of subordination.



Justice Chandrachud said. "Every judge has the ability to transform not only the lives of lawyers who appear in court, but the present and future of our society," he said.

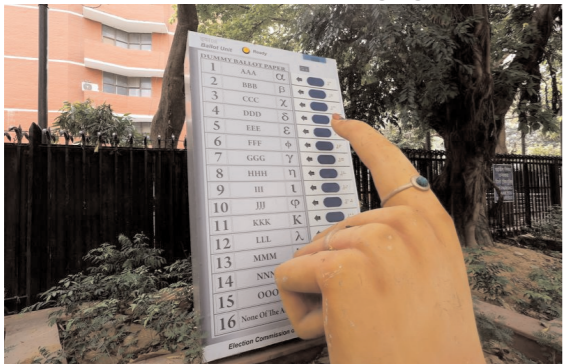
district judiciary in the past few years. Women consisted of 58% of the total recruitment for Civil Judges in Rajasthan in 2023. 66% of the judicial officers appointed in Delhi in 2023 were women.

Noting that over 3,500 court complexes and more than 22,000 court rooms have been computerised under the e-Courts Project, Justice Chandrachud lauded the district judiciary for playing a crucial role in deploying technology in day-to-day affairs.

EC defers Haryana Assembly poll by 4 days to October 5, result on October 8

ST Correspondent

New Delhi, August 31: The Election Commission on Saturday deferred the Haryana Assembly poll date to October 5 from October 1, keeping in mind a centuries-old festival of the Bishnoi community.



tions of the Bishnoi community, which has upheld a 300-400 years old practice in remembrance of their Guru Jambheshwar. The EC had received a representation from the national president of the All India Bishnoi Mahasabha, Bikaner, Rajasthan, for rescheduling the date for the Haryana assembly elections.

'People revere cows...who can stop them': Haryana CM Nayab Saini

Chandigarh, August 31: Haryana Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini addressed the recent Charkhi Dadri lynching case, where a man from West Bengal was killed by cow vigilantes over suspicion of consuming beef.

Rahul Gandhi to visit Dallas, Washington DC

New Delhi, August 31: Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha, Rahul Gandhi, would visit the US from September 8-10, during which he would hold numerous interactions in Washington, DC, and Dallas, including at the University of Texas.

After Champai Soren, ex-JMM MLA Lobin Hembrom joins BJP

Navdeep Singh Sahni

Ranchi, August 31: A day after former Jharkhand chief minister Champai Soren joined BJP, ex-JMM legislator Lobin Hembrom on Saturday crossed over to the saffron camp.



overall development of the state and make it free from Bangladeshi infiltrators." He also added, "JMM and Hemant Soren should also join the BJP's move-

"bitter humiliation", Jharkhand BJP chief Babul Marandi alleged, "The leaders, who nurtured JMM with their blood and sweat, are leaving the party. There is something wrong with the party, MM has nothing to do with tribals and indigenous people of the state.

Existing laws strong enough for rape: Centre responds to Mamata Banerjee's letter to PM Modi

Tejinder Kaur Babbar

New Delhi, August 31: Union Minister Annapurna Devi on Friday asserted that existing laws were stringent enough to tackle violence and crimes against women and urged the West Bengal government to implement the same in "letter and spirit".

Banerjee, who wrote to Modi a few days ago on the issue following nationwide



uproar over the rape and murder of a doctor at the R G Kar Medical College and Hospital in Kolkata on August 9, sought mandatory provision for time-bound disposal of cases of rape/rape and murder.

spite of the pendency of 48,600 rape and POCSO cases in West Bengal, the State has not operationalised additional 11 FTSCs which may be exclusive POCSO courts or combined FTSCs dealing with both rape and POCSO cases, as per the state's requirement.

earlier to the West Bengal," Devi said. She said in the event of an insufficient workforce, states and Union Territories have the option to engage judicial officers and court staff on a contractual basis under the FTSC scheme.

Ex-AMMA chief Mohanlal breaks silence on Hema panel report

Naresh Malhotra

Thiruvananthapuram, August 31: Top actor Mohanlal on Saturday broke his silence over the shocking revelations in the Justice Hema Committee report which has shaken the Malayalam film industry, and said the entire industry is answerable to the questions raised, but the actors' association is targeted and blamed for everything.

of women professionals in the Malayalam film industry. Speaking on the sidelines of a programme, the actor said the executive panel of the association headed by him resigned recently in the wake of "unnecessary allegations" being raised against it after the release of the report.



said, he was unaware about the report's revelations on the alleged presence of a power group in the film industry. "I am not part of any

power group in Malayalam cinema and not aware of the existence of any such group. I have heard about it for the first time," the actor said. The National Award-winning actor also justified the actions of AMMA, whose executive panel helmed by him was resigned recently.

right to crucify an outfit alone for all these issues," Mohanlal said. Most of the questions were directed at the actors' Association and himself which resulted in the recent resignation of its executive panel, the top actor said.

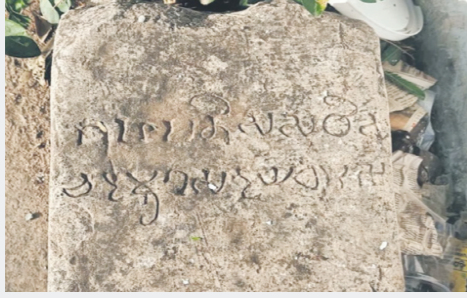
Gujarat HC rejects Asaram's plea for suspension of sentence in rape case

Ahmedabad, August 31: The Gujarat High Court has rejected a plea for the suspension of sentence filed by jailed self-styled godman Asaram in a 2013 rape case, stating that there were no "exceptional grounds" to consider the application.

News box

Second-century inscription found in Prakasam district

ONGOLE: A second-century common era (CE) period Brahmi inscription in the Prakrit language was recently discovered near Tripurantakam village in Prakasam district recently. Local historian and Village Revenue Officer (VRO) Thurimella Srinivasa Prasad of Yerragondapalem, along with his team, found this inscription on a pillar near the Tripurantakesvara temple. The team has sent them to the Archaeological Society of India



(ASI) in Mysore for verification. Munirathnam Reddy, Director (Epigraphy) at ASI, Mysore, confirmed the inscription's contents. Experts identified the text as being in Prakrit, using Brahmi script from the second century CE. The inscription reads: 'Gahapatisa Sehis Chadamukhasa Deyadhama,' accompanied by a swastika symbol. It records a donation of a six-faced pillar (Chadamukhasa) by a householder named Sethisa (Gahapati). Additionally, two 15 century Telugu stone inscriptions were also found within the Pullalacheruvu mandal of the district.

Karnataka updates signage rules for integrated medical practitioners

BENGALURU: In response to the concerns from the Karnataka State Registered Integrated Medical Practitioners Association, the health department introduced a new regulation for integrated doctors. Previously, practitioners who are qualified to offer both allopathy and indigenous medicine had to use a light green colour board similar to that of Ayush doctors, who practise Indian medicine (Unani, Ayurveda, Siddha, and Homeopathy). However, the common use of a light green board lacked a clear differentiation, which was potentially misleading patients, as per the integrated doctors. The association president Dr Aravinda Paradkar argued that the uniform green board failed to distinguish integrated doctors from their Ayush counterparts. He highlighted that the use of a single colour could confuse patients into believing that all doctors at the establishments, which display a light green board, provide both allopathic and Ayush services, especially in rural areas. With integrated medical courses discontinued nearly 30 years ago, and only a limited number of these practitioners remaining, clear signage became crucial to avoid deception. Considering these issues, the health department mandated a new board design for integrated doctors. Under the new regulation, these doctors must display a board that is horizontally divided, with the upper half in light green, and the lower half in light blue, to ensure transparency and avoid confusion among visitors.

48 arrested in Bengaluru water resources recruitment scam

BENGALURU: The Special Enquiry Squad of Central Crime Branch (CCB) arrested 48 people, including three government employees, in connection with a scam in the direct recruitment of second division assistants in the Water Resources Department (WRD). The arrested include 37 candidates, who had submitted fake documents, and 11 middlemen. The Department had invited online applications to fill 182 backlog 'C' group posts in October 2022. The middlemen had a network of creating counterfeit marks cards of class 12. The candidates who were not eligible as per the department criteria used the services of these middlemen. They obtained marks cards with good marks in all subjects as prescribed in the eligibility criteria. Department officials filed a police complaint at the Central division on July 28, 2023 after finding 62 ineligible candidates applying for the vacancies by submitting fake Class 12 marks cards. The case was later handed over to Central Crime Branch.

The three arrested government employees are Anand, principal, Morarji Desai Residential PU College in Kalaburgi, Krishna Gurunath Rathod, First Division Assistant, Karnataka Power Corporation Limited, Jog in Shivamogga and Gangoor Pradeep, Second Division Assistant, Water Resources Department, Hassan. The 11 middlemen were arrested from Hassan, Mandya, Jewargi, Vijayapura, KGF, Bengaluru, Shivamogga and Tumakuru. The middlemen reportedly created fake marks cards for II PUC, Class 12 of CBSE and NIOS. The counterfeit mark cards were submitted online, robbing genuine candidates of their opportunity. In all, 62 candidates from 12 districts submitted fake marks cards, of whom 25 were from Kalaburagi, 12 from Hassan, six from Belagavi, three each from Yadgir, Vijayapura and Bidar, two from Chitradurga district, and one each from Ramanagara, Koppal, Kolar, Raichur and Vijayanagar districts.

Bengal student leader gets bail for role in violence during Nabanna protest

Sayan Lahiri was arrested on August 27 evening for playing an active role in leading the Nabanna rally which, the police said, turned violent, causing destruction of public and private property and attacks on police officers.

Kolkata. The Calcutta High Court on Friday granted bail to Paschim Banga Chhatra Samaj leader Sayan Lahiri, who was claimed to be one of the organisers of a rally to state secretariat Nabanna on August 27 to protest the rape and murder of a trainee doctor at RG Kar Medical College and Hospital in Kolkata. Paschim Banga Chhatra Samaj, an unregistered student group, was one of the two organisations that gave the call for 'Nabanna Abhijan'. Lahiri was arrested on August 27 evening for playing an active role in leading the rally which, the police said, turned violent causing destruction of public and private property and attacks on police officers.

Observing that Lahiri appears to be an absolutely insignificant character who does not hold any position of power or influence "in the massive cry for justice in the aftermath of the RG Kar incident", Justice Amrita Sinha said that to uphold and restore the faith of the public in the judiciary, he was liable to be released on bail. Acting on a petition by Lahiri's mother Anjali seeking cancellation of proceedings against him and grant of bail, the court ordered his release from custody by 2 pm on Saturday. Justice Sinha restrained the police from taking any

coercive action against Lahiri in connection with the case, which he has been arrested or any other case which has been or may be registered against him without the leave of the court.

The court directed the state to file an affidavit in opposition to the averments made by the petitioner by September 20 and reply, if any, by the petitioner within



October 4. Passing the order, the court observed that admittedly, Paschim Banga Chhatra Samaj does not have a legal existence and that it is a spontaneous bond created amongst the student fraternity supported by the public at large who got anguished by the RG Kar incident. Justice Sinha noted that protests over the incident have spread across the entire society and

the nation. "Had the RG Kar incident not occurred, there would not have been the existence of the Paschim Banga Chhatra Samaj," the court said. It noted that thousands of common people joined the protest rally and that the status of the protesters cut through all barriers and boundaries. It cannot be said with certainty that it is only at the call of the son of the petitioner there had been such a huge turnout on the public streets/roads and thoroughfares. The agitators and the protesters were out in the streets seeking justice," Justice Sinha said. Noting that the protests were going on continuously from the very next date of the incident, the court said that the "authorities ought to have handled the issue in a more sensitive manner rather than target the protesters to prevent them from continuing their agitation." The authorities ought to appreciate that the protests are more in the form of a social uproar against the unfortunate incident at RG Kar," she said in the order. Justice Sinha said that the Supreme Court had on August 22 made it clear that peaceful protest should not be disturbed or disrupted, while restraining the state authorities from taking any precipitate action against peaceful protesters.

No takers for 66% tech seats, 74% vacancy in private colleges

Government colleges, on the other hand, have fared well in counselling this year.

BHUBANESWAR: A significant chunk of engineering seats in Odisha has remained vacant after completion of the BTech counselling for 2024-25 with private colleges and institutions facing yet another year of declining enrollment. Data from the Odisha Joint Entrance Examination (OJEE) committee that carried out BTech admission to different colleges and institutions for the current academic year reveal that 66 per cent of engineering seats are still vacant after four rounds of counselling. The rate of decline in enrollment is 3.8 per cent more than the



previous year during which around 62.80 per cent of seats had remained vacant after four rounds of OJEE counselling. Of the total 44,484 BTech seats available in nine government and 75 private engineering

colleges and institutions in the state, sources said, only 15,342 seats have been filled up while the remaining 29,142 are vacant after the OJEE counselling that concluded on Thursday. Out of the total 38,758 BTech seats in private engineering colleges, only 10,052 have been filled up. Over 74 per cent BTech seats are vacant in less reputed private engineering colleges. Last year, seat vacancy in private engineering colleges was 68.5 per cent. Government colleges, on the other hand, have fared well in counselling this year. BTech enrollment in these colleges rose to 92.5 per cent in 2024-25 from 80.4 per

cent last year.

A technical education official said BTech seats have remained vacant primarily due to disinterest of students towards traditional engineering courses in the rapidly evolving job market. However, this is also an opportunity to bring new reforms, especially in private institutions, he added. OJEE officials said the vacant seats will now be handed over to private colleges for enrollment at their level. Spot admission will also be carried out for a few hundred seats which have remained vacant in government engineering colleges.

RySS delegation launches natural farming model in Zambia

On August 27, the APCNF team visited the Valponasca Learning Farm, where they were warmly welcomed by local farmers.



VIJAYAWADA: A delegation from Rythu Sadhikara Samstha (RySS), under the Andhra Pradesh Communist Managed Natural Farming (APCNF) programme, is currently in Zambia to launch a Natural Farming model in Africa. The six-member team, led by chief technology and innovation officer Lakshma Naik, was invited by Nolen and Winkler Partners (NOW Partners), an international organisation, and two local community

organisations, Valponasca Learning Farm in Luwingu and the Kasisi Agricultural Training Centre in Lusaka. The visit, which began on August 27 and will continue until September 7, follows a visit by a Zambian delegation to Andhra Pradesh in June 2024. Facilitated by NOW Partners, the delegation included farmers and officials from the Zambian Ministry of Agriculture. Impressed by the APCNF model, the Zambian organisations requested the RySS team to visit and initiate the Natural Farming model in

Zambia. On August 27, the APCNF team visited the Valponasca Learning Farm, where they were warmly welcomed by local farmers. Naik explained the delegation's purpose and discussed seed varieties and cattle breeds at the farm.

Over the following days, the team engaged in hands-on activities, including the preparation of Ghana Jeevamrutham with Zambian farmers. On August 29, the team selected a site for Pre-Monsoon Dry Sowing (PMDS) and demonstrated the Drava Jeevamrutham method, addressing various questions from the Zambian farmers.

RySS executive vice chairman, Thallam Vijay Kumar, "The visit of the team from RySS to Zambia marks our first international outreach. We are very proud and excited to test the effectiveness of Andhra Pradesh's natural farming technology in Zambia."

Government failure: Jagan Reddy's party on hidden camera in girls' hostel toilet

Amaravathi. The YSR Congress (YSRCP) on Friday hit out at the TDP-led government in Andhra Pradesh over a hidden camera being discovered in a washroom of a girls' hostel at an engineering college in Krishna district, describing it as a heinous act and a failure of the government.

Speaking to the media at the party office, YSRCP spokesperson P Shiva Shankar stated that the incident caused significant distress among the students and their parents. He alleged that the state's education system was destroyed since the TDP-led coalition came to power.

He criticised the state government for "merely watching" while 300 students protested at Gudlavalluru Engineering College since midnight on Thursday over the incident. He questioned why the college management suppressed the issue for a week, even after the students filed complaints. He also asked why the police were not informed immediately or why they failed to respond if they were

informed. Shankar raised concerns about the lack of basic security in the girls' hostel and demanded that the culprits be identified and punished. He alleged that the main suspect, a final-year student, in the incident



had Jana Sena Party (JSP) posters on his Instagram. According to students, over 300 videos were allegedly recorded and circulated among the boys' hostel. A protest broke out at the engineering college over the incident. Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu, who has ordered an inquiry into the matter, was closely monitoring the

investigation. It is reported that secret cameras were installed in the washrooms in the women's hostel of the engineering college in Krishna district and the Chief Minister ordered a detailed inquiry after receiving complaints.

Soon after learning about the matter on Friday morning, Naidu asked his minister Kollu Ravindra, the local MLAs and the officials of the Krishna district to visit the college campus. He also spoke to the district collector and the superintendent of police over the phone to find out the ground reality. The Chief Minister told Ravindra and the district officials to see to it that the ongoing inquiry was conducted most transparently. He demanded stringent action against the culprits if the charges were proven to be correct. He also asked students to send evidence to him over allegations of the management adopting a negligent attitude towards their complaints filed over the incident.

Karnataka: Missing Gadag woman found alive in empty well after three days

GADAG: A woman, who went missing from Totaganti village in Gadag district on August 20, was found alive in an abandoned empty well on the outskirts of the village after three days. She is now under treatment at the Gadag Institute of Medical Sciences (GIMS) Hospital. Parvati Kalmath of Totaganti village told police that an unidentified woman entered her house around 5 am on August 20 when she was working in the kitchen. "The woman dragged me to an isolated place in the village where she snatched my mangalsutra, bangles and other ornaments and pushed me into the empty well," Parvati said. "I lost consciousness after the woman pushed me into the well. I regained consciousness on the third day when I got drenched in rain. I screamed for help for almost two hours. Finally, some people heard my cries and pulled me out of the well," she said.

Some villagers said many such incidents happened in the village in the past where lonely women were targeted. They had informed the police about such incidents.

Docs: Parvati recovering fast

The villagers said Parvati and her husband came to Totaganti village six months ago. They have been living in the village since then. The villagers said some boys, who were grazing their sheep and goats near the well, rushed to Parvati's rescue after hearing her screams for help. Parvati was weak and could not even speak when she was pulled out of the well. The police said that they will question Parvati once she recovers fully. Meanwhile, the doctors attending to her said she is recovering fast.

ORRCA urges civic bodies to address infrastructure issues on Outer Ring Road

BENGALURU: The Outer Ring Road Companies association (ORRCA), a representative body for more than 10 lakh employees and 500 companies, has called upon civic agencies to take steps to create a smooth and safe tech corridor along Outer Ring Road (ORR). In a communication to BBMP, BWSSB, BDA and BMRL on Thursday, General Secretary of ORRCA, Ramesha VT put out a detailed list called 'ORR Pain Points'. He said, "Companies along the ORR are struggling daily due to poor road conditions, lack of public transport option and other infrastructure challenges."

ORRCA also listed multiple unfinished works along the ORR. "We urge authorities to prioritise infrastructure maintenance and upgradation work, including road repairs, pothole filling, waterlogging solutions, footpath and service road upkeep, flyover micro-surfacing and clearance of storm water drains."

Ramesha said employees were increasingly raising these concerns with company representatives and association members. "We find it difficult to respond to their concerns as there are no visible improvements," he added.

No New Liquor Shops to Open in Odisha This Year

BHUBANESWAR: The state government on Friday announced that no new IMFL Off-shop, country liquor shop and out-still liquor shop will be opened in Odisha during the current financial year. The new excise policy was announced by the state government in tune with the election promise of BJP to work for a 'Nisha Mukti' (addiction free) Odisha. The policy announced by the state government a few days after the Chikiti hooch tragedy also stated that no new liquor On-shop will be opened in rural areas of the state except in three-star or above category hotels. It said licences of 57 On-shops which were not renewed earlier, will not be considered for renewal this year too. Besides, there will also be no increase in minimum guarantee quota (MGQ) in the current financial year. Earlier, the MGQ used to be increased every year. As announced by Excise Minister Prithiviraj Harichandan, dance bars have been banned in the new policy. The policy said no dance performance will be allowed

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Editor-in-Chief
Gurcharan Singh Babbar
Mob : 965407232, 9971359517
Website : www.sikh-times.in
Email : sikhtimesindia@gmail.com

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Legal Advisors:

Advocate Mohd. Sajid
Advocate Dr. A.P. Singh
Advocate Manish Sharma
Advocate Pooja Bhaskar Sharma

News box

Gurgaon: Remove campaign posters from autos, MCG tells owners

GURGAON. With autorickshaws being used increasingly for political campaigning ahead of Haryana assembly election, MCG on Friday took cognizance and directed unions to ensure that such posters are taken down as model code of conduct (MCC) was in effect. The corporation told autorickshaw owners that they have two days to remove any political posters, and if they don't, stern action will be taken by the regional transport authority (RTA). Autorickshaws are fast becoming a new method of campaigning, with posters being displayed on the three-wheelers while they traverse the city. Officials said that it is a convenient alternative to putting up posters or hoardings, which are often taken down by authorities.

MCG additional commissioner Balpreet Singh, who is also the MCC nodal officer in the city, said that a drive was initiated to remove hoardings, banners, stickers and wall paintings of political parties or functionaries from public places. "If any vehicle is found with promotional materials of campaigning for the election, the vehicle will be seized, and an FIR will be registered," Singh told RTA officials on Friday. Tek Chand, a member of the Gurgaon Auto Association, said representatives of the group attended Friday's meeting too. "We understand that model code of conduct is in place. So, we have decided to take down these posters and advertisements," Chand said. Haryana goes to the polls on Oct 1, and results will be declared on Oct 4. On Friday, the additional commissioner said anyone can flag MCC violations through the C-Vigil app, social media and other channels. "If any MCC violations are found during any inspection by EC and administration officials, action will be taken against responsible officials of that area. All concerned officials must ensure strict compliance with MCC within their jurisdictions," Singh said.

Rash driving video goes viral, YouTuber Rajat Dalal booked in Gurgaon

GURGAON. A YouTuber has been booked after a video of him allegedly rashly driving at a speed of over 140kmph on an arterial road in Faridabad was widely circulated on Friday. Several people, including AAP MP Swati Maliwal, have appealed to the police to initiate stringent legal action against the accused.

Cops said, they came across the video linked to Rajat Dalal on social media and, taking suo motu cognizance, a case has been registered at Sarai Khawaja police station against him. Rajat Dalal has 2.3 lakh followers on his YouTube channel and posts fitness-related videos. Head constable Mahesh lodged a complaint on Friday night stating that he had come across a video on social media where a car was being driven at a very high speed. "The driver was speeding zig-zag in a dangerous manner," head constable said. Police then contacted the person who uploaded the video - Kartik Chhabra. "Chhabra confirmed that he recorded the video and the incident happened on Feb 25 this year," the head constable said. A case was registered under IPC sections on Friday night. Dalal said in a post on social media platform X that the video isn't recent and he was ready to bear punishment if he had made a mistake.

MCG to buy 40 compactors to collect, transport waste

Gurgaon: To reduce its reliance on private contractors, Municipal Corporation of Gurgaon (MCG) has planned to purchase 40 hydraulic trash compactor systems at a cost of Rs 36 crore. The corporation had sought approval from the state govt to buy waste compactors before the implementation of model code of conduct, but it is still pending. Under the proposed plan, each of the 35 wards will be allocated one compactor and the remaining will be deployed to serve the extended areas under the corporation's jurisdiction. The direction to acquire such systems came during a July 7 meeting conducted by Haryana chief secretary TVSN Prasad to assess the progress of Solid Waste Environment Exigency Programme (SWEPP).

"The decision was made in the light of the termination of the concessionaire agreement with Ecogreen. We have written to the state govt to procure 40 hydraulic waste compactors. Our proposal would have to be tabled before the high-powered purchase committee, which approves purchases of over Rs 5 crore, as each compactor costs around Rs 90 lakh," said an MCG official privy to the matter. The corporation terminated the contract with its concessionaire Ecogreen on June 15. The concessionaire was engaged in primary (doorstep) waste collection, secondary waste collection and transportation of waste to Bandhwari. Two agencies were hired for secondary waste collection and transportation, one of which was recently issued a notice for not transporting enough waste to the landfill site. Meanwhile, the MCG also recently sought 600 additional sanitation workers through Haryana Kaushal Rozgar Nigam (HKRN).

Rash, fever and lymph nodes: UP lists Mpox symptoms

Noida. The health department issued an advisory on Friday on possible Monkeypox symptoms, asking people to report to the doctor if they had rash, fever, and swollen lymph nodes. The advisory noted that Mpox was usually self-limiting and lasted 2 to 4 weeks. It added that in severe cases, the mortality rate was between 1-10%. The disease, it said, can be transmitted through contact with infected animals, humans, or contaminated surfaces, entering the body via broken skin, respiratory tract, or mucous membranes. The guidelines suggest animal-to-human transmission may occur through bites, scratches, or consumption of bushmeat from wild mammals and can spread through contaminated bedding. "The clinical presentation of Mpox is similar to Smallpox, though less contagious and severe. The incubation period ranges from 6 to 13 days, and affected individuals are typically not contagious during the infection. However, they can spread the virus 1-2 days before rash onset until the scabs fall off," said Sunil Sharma, CMO of Noida. Sharma added.

5L likely to visit International Trade Show this year, says DM

Noida. With 2,500 exhibitors from 80 countries, the second edition of the UP International Trade Show (UPITS 2024) is expected to attract a footfall of 5 lakh people, said district magistrate (DM) Manish Kumar Verma at a news conference on Friday. The five-day show, which will include a laser show and a lucky draw, will begin on Sep 25 at the India Expo Centre and Mart in Greater Noida. DM Verma also mentioned that the shuttle services will be available from the Botanical Garden and Pari Chowk to the venue during the five days. "The second edition of UPITS is being organised by the state govt following the success of the first edition last year. The event offers a platform to connect buyers and sellers from various categories and regions within India and internationally. Arrangements for visitor parking will be in place at the NASA parking area, with traffic police deployed to guide commuters. Last year's dates overlapped with the Moto GP event, which caused significant traffic congestion. However, this year we have

ensured that UPITS does not coincide with any major events," said an official. Rakesh Kumar, chairman of India Exposition Mart Limited (IEM), highlighted that the 2023 edition of UPITS had 1,914 exhibitors, 70,000 business-to-business (B2B) visitors, and 2,37,000 business-to-customer (B2C) visitors from 60 countries. "This year, we are expecting 1,00,000 B2B visitors and 3,50,000 B2C visitors from 80 countries," said Kumar, adding that a meeting with the Noida Resident Welfare Associations (RWAs) has been held to gather suggestions, feedback, and their extended support. Sudeep Sarcar, CEO of Expo Mart, said that the focus sectors for this year's UPITS include agriculture and allied sectors, e-commerce, electronics, fisheries and animal husbandry, handloom, textiles, horticulture, leather industry, ODOP, retail, sports, tourism, toys, MSMEs, and Khadi. Sarcar also mentioned that three authorities—Noida, Greater Noida, and YEIDA—along with UPSIDA, will have their stalls at the event. Additionally, there will be a laser

show featuring images of India's rich heritage, including the Kashi Vishwanath Temple and Ram Temple of Ayodhya. Visitors can also participate in a lucky draw by submitting a form. "Daily draws will be held, and participants could win electronic items such as TVs, fridges, and mobile phones. The grand lucky

draw on the final day will award a four-wheeler to one lucky visitor," Sarcar added. The event's timings are from 11 am to 3 pm for business delegates and from 3 pm to 10 pm for the general public. Entry will be free. Additionally, a food court will offer delicious food at reasonable rates.

Man poses as IPS officer for free hotel stay, held

Noida. A 55-year-old man from Bengal was arrested in the city on Friday for allegedly posing as an IPS officer and using a forged ID card to stay in a hotel in Sector 51 without paying. Indraneil Rai from North 24-Parganas allegedly stayed at the hotel for several days. Police seized Rai's fake ID card after nabbing him on Friday. Manish Kumar Mishra, additional deputy commissioner of police, Noida, said that when the hotel staff approached Rai with the bills, he would claim to be an IPS officer from the 2000 batch to avoid

payment. "The suspect allegedly presented a fake ID and told the hotel staff that he was posted with the Research and Analysis Wing (R&AW). He then tried to convince the staff to treat him well, promising to help them secure a govt job," said Mishra. During interrogation, Rai told the cops that he owns a transport business in Bengal. "His business had not been doing well for some time, and he got the fake ID made to avoid payments and other situations. Officials have also seized a PAN card.

MCG staffer thrashed over 'affair with scrap vendor's wife' in Gurgaon, dies

GURGAON. A sanitation supervisor with MCG died after he was allegedly thrashed by a scrap vendor and his friends who believed that the 38-year-old corporation staffer had an affair with his wife. According to police, the scrap vendor is on the run, but three of his associates were arrested on Friday. Police said the incident took place on Aug 28, when Naresh Kumar was near a public health centre (PHC) in Madanpuri. An associate, Vikas, kept track of Naresh's location and informed scrap vendor Ramveer.

"Around 10.30am, Ramveer and two of his friends Pankaj and Jitesh came on two bikes and forcibly took Naresh with them to an unknown location. The scrap vendor and three of his friends then thrashed Naresh for hours. Later, they left him near a private hospital on Basai Road," said Gurgaon police spokesperson Sandeep Kumar. Naresh, cops said, got first-aid at the hospital and went back to his home in Dhankot village. "After reaching home, Naresh told the family members that he was beaten up by

Ramveer and tried to rest. But, in the evening, his condition suddenly deteriorated due to internal injuries and family members rushed him to a private hospital in Sector 43. He



succumbed to his injuries while undergoing treatment," the spokesperson said. Naresh's brother Jagbir Singh filed a complaint and an FIR was registered under sections 103(1) (murder), 140(1) (kidnapping or abducting in order to murder), 190 (unlawful assembly) and 191(2) (punishment for rioting) of BNS at New Colony police station on

Thursday. Police went to Ramveer's house in Ram Nagar, but he was absconding. Sector 10 Crime Branch officials questioned Ramveer's family and on Friday, arrested Pankaj (19) of Jacobpura, Vikas (30) of Nangloi in Delhi and Jitesh (19) of Basai.

"The three of them are Ramveer's friends. Pankaj and Jitesh helped Ramveer in kidnapping Naresh. Vikas kept a watch on the movements of Naresh and all four of them were involved in assaulting the victim," a police officer said. A post-mortem examination was carried out and its report is pending, police said, adding that they handed over the body to Naresh's family for last rites. "During the interrogation, the accused confessed that they had kidnapped Naresh on suspicion that he had an affair with Ramveer's wife and thrashed him. They will be produced before a court on Saturday. The main accused is on the run and our teams are trying to nab him," the spokesperson said.

5 cheat people in name of trading software, held

Noida. Five persons were arrested for allegedly cheating people in the name of an artificial intelligence (AI) software used for trading. They fleeced people of Rs 2 crore though the scam, police said. The suspects, identified as Amar Singh Buddhist, Purushottam, Pramod, Deepak Kumar, and Ekta, ran their operations through two fraud companies called RobotechPro IT LLP and Intravisor Technologies (OPC) Pvt Ltd. "RobotechPro would put out advertisements selling an AI software ALGO that helps people in trading," said Hirdesh Kathariya, Additional Deputy Commissioner of Police, Central Noida.

When clients approached the company after suffering losses, the fraudsters would demand money saying their software had to be upgraded and they could help only after re-subscription was done, Kathariya said, adding that

the suspects had been duping people this way for the past two months. If the victims caught on with the fraudsters, the latter would call them and claim to be from Intravisor Technologies. They would then suggest that they abandon ALGO software for another programme and continue to dupe them. The scam came to light after police received a complaint from a person who was duped of more than Rs 10 lakh and raided the scammers' office. As many as 33 laptops, 37 mobile phones, one printer, three stamp seals, three QR codes, certificates, and e-stamp forms were confiscated and the accused arrested. "Six others associated with the companies, identified as Robin Chandel, Rupali Agarwal, V R Sharan, Shivam Agarwal, Prerna

Morya, and Shalini, are currently on the run and attempts are being made to trace them," said police. According to ACP Diksha Singh, the suspects said they didn't use any software but attempted to get clients to pay up for re-subscription. "When questioned, the suspects shared their modus operandi and said they did not use any AI software. They would simply market and sell existing trading programmes for Rs 14,000 to Rs 1,20,000 and try to get loss-incurring clients to resubscribe. They would also advise clients on trading without research and this would lead to huge losses," she said. Cases have been registered under sections 318(4), 316(2) and 111 of BNS for cheating, criminal breach of trust and organised crime and under 66 D of IT Act.

Nepalese rapist-killer gets death for Faridabad rape-murder, court calls 2022 crime 'diabolical & dastardly'

GURGAON: A Nepali man arrested in 2022 for the brutal rape and murder of a woman sitting alone near a metro station in Faridabad was handed the death sentence on Thursday by a local court, which saw no reason to show leniency for a crime that it described as "diabolical, revolting and dastardly".

Manoj Nepali was arrested after he was spotted on CCTV footage walking with the woman close to the crime scene. What made this case "brutal and grotesque" was the horrific manner in which the crime was committed. The woman was found dead with a trauma injury on her head. She also had internal injuries from a broken pipe he thrust into her private parts. On the night of Nov 7, 2022, she was sitting alone near Bata Chowk metro station after a fight with her mother when Manoj - a daily wage - walked up to her and enquired if all was well. After striking up a conversation, he offered to share her problems and persuaded her to walk with him. Manoj took her to a vacant building in Sector 7, where he overpowered and raped her. He forced her to walk with him and sexually assaulted her again near a park. The woman tried to fight him off, he pulled the two ends of her dupatta, strangled her and banged her head against a wall. "The tormentor would not let go of the dupatta. After some time, she slumped



to the ground. Realising she had died, Manoj picked up an iron pipe lying nearby, inserted it into her private parts and fled the spot," said Suresh Chaudhary, the public prosecutor. Passersby spotted her body the next morning and informed police. A case of rape and murder was registered at Sector 8 police station and a manhunt was launched for Manoj, based on the footage. The hunt took police all the way to the Nepal border at Sonauli in UP. On Nov 18 - 11 days after the crime - Manoj was trying to sneak into Nepal when he was arrested. Originally from Samdu, he had been working in Faridabad

for some years. On Nov 21, police reached out to the woman's husband with her photograph. He identified her as his wife. The husband told police his wife had left for her parents' house in Ballabhgarh three months before the day she was murdered. On Nov 7, when his in-laws informed him she had left home after a fight, he said he had started looking for her. Police had said at the time the husband - a construction site worker - did not have a TV set or phone at home, which was why he was not aware of the rape and murder. During the course of the hearing,

the prosecution submitted in court the footage showing Manoj walking with the woman, and other forensic and medical evidence to seek capital punishment for him. Sudhir Kumar, who represented Manoj in court, argued there was no witness to the crime and police had relied only on circumstantial evidence to arrest his client. This argument was rejected by the court. On Thursday, additional sessions judge Purushottam Kumar observed that "all incriminating circumstances were duly proved by the prosecution and are consistent only with the hypothesis of the guilt of accused Manoj Nepali and are inconsistent with his innocence". "It formed a complete chain and proved that in all human probabilities, the victim/deceased was brutally raped and murdered by the accused Manoj Nepali only and no one else," the court said.

The court, in its order, also took note of the multiple injuries on the woman, bloodstains on the wall where she banged her head and marks of resistance on the ground. "The offence was committed in an extremely brutal, grotesque, diabolical, revolting, and dastardly manner, so as to arouse intense and extreme indignation of the society," the judge observed.



News box

Doctor charged in 'Friends' star Matthew Perry's death 'incredibly remorseful'

World. One of two doctors who are amongst the five people charged in the ketamine overdose death of "Friends" star Matthew Perry was barred by a federal judge on Friday from practising medicine and through his lawyer afterward expressed remorse.

Dr. Mark Chavez appeared in U.S. District Court in Los Angeles for a brief arraignment on a single felony count of conspiracy to illegally distribute ketamine and was permitted to remain free on \$50,000 bond. Chavez has previously signed an agreement with federal prosecutors to enter a guilty plea, which defence lawyer Matt Binninger told reporters his client would do at a later proceeding to be scheduled within a few weeks. No plea was entered on Friday. As part of the bond conditions set by Magistrate Judge Jean Rosenbluth, Chavez also surrendered his passport and was ordered not to practice medicine. He had agreed to surrender his medical licence at a separate administrative hearing earlier this week, according to a spokesperson for the U.S. Attorney's Office. "My client is accepting responsibility. He's doing everything in his power to cooperate, to help in this situation, and he's incredibly remorseful," Binninger said outside the courthouse. The lawyer added that Chavez's regret stemmed not from Perry's celebrity but from the fact that "someone who was trying to seek treatment died."

You could almost hear the river crying 'I am free': Tribes celebrate as dams fall in US river, freeing salmon trapped for a century

World. Workers on Wednesday dismantled the final dams on a crucial section of the Klamath River, US. This action cleared the way for salmon to swim freely for the first time in a century. The removal is part of the largest dam removal project in US history.

Yurok tribal member and attorney, Amy Bowers Cordalis, had tears in her eyes as she witnessed the return of the river: "It was surreal. It was so emotional. I felt so hopeful and so satisfied that we have restored this river," she said. "And looking at it you could almost hear the river crying, 'I am free, I am free', as reported by the Associated Press.

Cordalis is engaged in a battle for the removal of Klamath dams since 2002 when she witnessed thousands of salmon die in the river due to a bacterial outbreak caused by low and warm temperatures. As the river flows freely once more, how quickly the salmon will return to their historical habitats remains uncertain. Early reports suggest that salmon have already begun their journey upstream. Michael Belchik, senior water policy analyst for the Yurok Tribe, said, "I think we're going to have some early successes. I'm pretty confident we'll see some fish going above the dam. If not this year, then for sure next year."

This demolition is set to be completed in the coming month and is part of a nationwide movement to restore rivers to their natural flows and revive ecosystems. According to the advocacy group American Rivers, more than 2,000 dams have been removed in the US in the last 25 years. Crews used excavators to dismantle rock dams that had been diverting water upstream of the nearly removed Iron Gate and Copco No 1 dams. This restoration happened just in time for the king salmon to start their spawning season.

BLA terror attacks may delay launch of China-backed airport in Pakistan

ISLAMABAD. The start of operations at a Chinese-funded airport in Pakistan's Balochistan has been pushed back for a security review after last week's attacks by separatists in the area, govt and aviation sources said. More than 70 people were killed in the attacks, where militants seeking the region's secession have been targeting govt forces and projects being developed as part of the China Pakistan Economic Corridor. The \$200-million airport in Gwadar, a joint venture between Pakistan, Oman and China, is close to completion. The initial plan was for PM Shehbaz Sharif to inaugurate it on Aug 14 alongside Chinese officials,



but that was called off after an ethnic Baloch rights group started a sit-in protest, the officials said. Following the attacks, two officials at CAA and two others in the provincial govt said the start of flights would be delayed as authorities review security in the region.

Pakistan's military, meanwhile, said it had killed five insurgents and wounded three others in intelligence-based operations launched in the province in response to the attacks. "Operations will continue until all perpetrators, facilitators and abettors are brought to justice," the army said.

Wells Fargo employee death tragedy: How did body go unnoticed for 4 days of ignored odors

World. In a tragic and unsettling case, Wells Fargo employee Denise Prudhomme, 60, was found dead at the company's Tempe office on August 20, four days after her last recorded scan into work. Authorities and colleagues are grappling with the disturbing details of the discovery, raising questions about the conditions at the office.

Prudhomme had scanned into the Wells Fargo corporate office near Priest Drive and Washington Street at 7 am on August 16, according to reports. The body was discovered only when security personnel, responding to reports of an unresponsive individual, checked the building. The Tempe Police Criminal Investigations Bureau confirmed that there were no signs of foul play. An anonymous worker shared their shock and was reported by 12News as saying, "It's really heartbreaking and I'm thinking, 'What if I were just sitting there?' No one would check on me?" Another employee expressed their distress over the incident, revealing that several people had noticed a foul odor but passed it



The cubicle where Prudhomme was found was reportedly located on the third floor, away from the main aisle. This isolation

may have contributed to the delayed discovery of her body. "To hear she's been sitting at the desk like that would make me feel sick," the employee said, highlighting

concerns about the lack of immediate action.

Despite Wells Fargo's statement expressing deep sadness and offering support through Employee Assistance Consulting services, some employees feel the bank has not been transparent enough about the incident. "I just feel like they aren't being transparent with us," one worker lamented. "Somebody needs to acknowledge this."

The Tempe Police Department and the Maricopa County Medical Examiner's Office are working together to determine the cause of Prudhomme's death. The investigation is ongoing, but preliminary findings indicate no signs of criminal activity. Wells Fargo has assured the public that they are fully cooperating with the investigation and have addressed the situation internally. The company's statement to 12News emphasized their commitment to supporting affected employees and ensuring the building was thoroughly cleaned.

US woman found dead in cubicle 4 days after checking into building for work

World. Four days after last scanning in for work, a 60-year-old office worker in Arizona was found dead in a cubicle at her workplace, having never left the building during that time, authorities said. Denise Prudhomme, who worked at a Wells Fargo corporate office, was found dead in a third-floor cubicle on Tuesday, August 20, Tempe police said. She had last scanned into the building on Friday, August 16, at 7 am, police said. There was no indication she scanned out of the building after that. Prudhomme



worked in an underpopulated area of the building. Her cause of death has not been determined, but police said the preliminary investigation found no

obvious signs of foul play. The investigation is continuing. "We are deeply saddened by the loss of our colleague, Denise Prudhomme," Wells Fargo said in a statement. "Our thoughts are with her family and loved ones, and we are in contact to ensure they are well-supported during this difficult time. We are committed to the safety and wellness of our workforce." Counsellors have been made available to support employees, the company said. Police responded after on-site security called about an employee they believed to be dead. Prudhomme was pronounced dead at 4:55 pm on August 20, police said.

China reasserts its claims in regional disputes, pushes rivals' limits

Beijing. China's campaign of confrontation, from remote reefs in Southeast Asia to Taiwan and far-flung Japanese islands, is designed to wear down regional rivals competing with it for contested territories, analysts say. Beijing in recent years has asserted its claims in the long-running disputes far more boldly as its military strength has grown.

The escalating actions -- over islands in the East China Sea claimed by Japan, the self-ruled territory of Taiwan and the South China Sea -- have also come as Beijing's rivals have drawn closer to the United States. China believes its strong-arm tactics are paying dividends, Duan Dang, a Vietnam-based maritime security analyst, told AFP. China has in recent months deployed military and coast guard vessels in a bid to eject the Philippines from a trio of strategically important reefs and islands in the South China Sea. "The number of fronts where an accident could spiral suddenly is very real," Dylan Loh, an assistant professor at Singapore's Nanyang Technological University, told AFP. The latest flashpoint is Sabina Shoal, just 140 kilometres (86 miles) west of the Philippine island of Palawan and roughly 1,200 kilometres from China's nearest major landmass, the island of Hainan. On Monday, Beijing said it took "control measures" against two Philippine Coast Guard ships that "illegally" entered the waters near Sabina Shoal.

Manila countered that Chinese vessels had stopped Philippine ships from resupplying their own coast guard vessels in the area -- slamming Beijing as the "biggest disruptor" to regional peace.

"Push the envelope" China has for years sought to expand its power in the South China Sea, brushing aside an international ruling that its claim to most of the waterway has no legal basis. It has built artificial islands armed with missile systems and runways for fighter jets, and deployed vessels that the Philippines says harass its ships and block its fishers.

In 2012, Beijing seized control of Scarborough Shoal, another contested area close to the Philippines.

Brazil's Supreme Court judge orders suspension of X amid feud with Elon Musk

Sao Paulo/Brasilia. A Brazilian Supreme Court justice ordered on Friday the "immediate suspension" of social media platform X in the country, after a court-imposed deadline expired for the company to identify a legal representative in Brazil. The move is the latest chapter in an ongoing feud between Brazilian Supreme Court Justice Alexandre de Moraes and Elon Musk, which also included the freezing of the satellite internet provider Starlink's financial accounts in Brazil. In the decision, Moraes ordered the full and immediate suspension of X in the country until all related court orders on X were complied with, including the payment of

finances amounting to 18.5 million reais (around Rs 27.66 crore) and the nomination of a legal representative in Brazil. Moraes ordered telecommunications regulator Anatel to implement the suspension order, and to confirm to the court within 24 hours that it had carried it out. In a bid to avoid the use of virtual private networks (VPNs) to circumvent the blockage, Moraes said that individuals or companies who tried to keep access to the social network that way could be fined up to 50,000 reais (around Rs 7.47 lakh) a day. X said late on Thursday that it expected Supreme Court Justice Alexandre de Moraes to order a shutdown "soon", after a court-imposed

deadline expired for the company to identify a legal representative in Brazil. Earlier this year, Moraes ordered X to block certain accounts implicated in probes of so-called digital militias accused of spreading distorted news and hate. Musk, denouncing the order as censorship, responded by closing the platform's offices in Brazil. X, formerly known as Twitter, said at the time that its services would still be available in Brazil. Amid the underlying feud over X, Brazil's Supreme Court also blocked the local bank accounts of the Starlink satellite internet firm, which is 40 per cent owned by Musk, leading the company on Friday to ask the court to suspend that decision.

Russia strikes residential building, playground in Ukraine's Kharkiv, 7 dead

Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said a 14-year-old girl was amongst the dead. Ihor Terekhov, the city's mayor, had earlier said on Telegram that one child was killed in the playground.

mayor, had earlier said on Telegram that one child was killed in the playground. The 12-storey apartment block caught fire as a result of the strike, the mayor said. The death toll from the attack climbed to seven when a woman's body was recovered from the rubble, he added in a later statement. About 20 of the injured were in severe condition, regional governor Oleh Synchubov said. One end of the block was engulfed in black smoke, with many of the upper floors in flames. Several cars parked outside were gutted by fire. Emergency services and rescue volunteers rushed to carry survivors out of the building. The body of one of the victims lay under a carpet on the ground outside, surrounded by police.



injuries. Kharkiv has been the focus of heavy Russian bombing throughout the war, although there has been a drop in intensity in recent weeks, possibly related to a shock incursion launched by Ukrainian forces into Russia's Kursk region. Ukrainian authorities said that Friday's attack involved five aerial guided bombs launched from planes in Russia's Belgorod region, also known as

"glide bombs", which are fitted with a navigation system taking them to their targets. The weapons are hard to intercept, and they have become a fearsome tool in the war in eastern Ukraine in recent months that can cause huge devastation. Russia denies deliberately targeting civilians. Thousands have been killed and wounded during the full-scale invasion Moscow launched in Ukraine in 2022. In the wake of the Kharkiv strike, Zelenskyy renewed a call on Western allies to allow Ukraine to use long-range Western weapons to attack Russian military air bases. "A strike ... would not have happened if our defence forces had the ability to destroy Russian military aircraft where they are based," Zelenskyy said on Telegram. "There is no rational reason to restrict Ukraine's defences."

Kyiv says that the most effective way to counter such strikes is to target Russian planes, not the bombs themselves.

US dog breeder Paul Peavey's murder: Suspect Sergio Ferrer arrested, puppies still missing

World. In a case that has captivated local and national interest in the US, the murder of Paul Peavey, a renowned Colorado dog breeder, has taken a chilling turn. Peavey, 57, was found dead on August 21 at the bottom of a hill on his 110-acre Idaho Springs property, his body covered by debris. The discovery was made by friend Bruce Boynton, who had grown concerned after Peavey failed to answer his phone. "I'm the one that went up to the property and realized things were awry to the point where the puppies were gone, the house was tossed, anything of value missing," Boynton recounted, revealing the disturbing scene, reported by the Washington Post. The home was in disarray, with Peavey's gun, metal detector equipment, and jewelry missing. The door to the shed where Peavey kept his Dobermans was open, and a few adult dogs were found wandering outside. As per the reports, the Clear Creek County Sheriff's Office has since arrested Sergio Ferrer, 36, on charges of murder and aggravated



robbery. Ferrer was initially detained on an unrelated warrant from Nebraska but was identified as a person of interest in Peavey's death. Authorities are now focusing on the missing puppies as a crucial piece of the puzzle. "Locating Peavey's unaccounted-for puppies may also help solve his

homicide," the sheriff's office said. Peavey, known for his business Elite European Dobermans, bred high-quality Dobermans and was an active community member. His dedication to his dogs was evident, with each puppy trained to be both a trusted companion and a skilled guardian. "That

was his life," Boynton said. "I mean, that's what kept him going, was those dogs," quoted the Washington Post. The missing puppies, all microchipped, may have been sold through social media since August 20. The sheriff's office is urging anyone who has recently purchased a Doberman puppy to check for a microchip and report any findings. Boynton's frustration with the investigation's initial handling led him to organize a search party. His group quickly located Peavey's body, prompting an apology from Sheriff Matthew Harris for the mishandling of the initial welfare check. "I felt a lot of sadness and a lot of anger," Boynton said. As the search for Peavey's stolen puppies continues, the case has drawn significant attention, highlighting the intersection of grief, crime, and the deep bond between a breeder and his beloved dogs. The investigation into Ferrer's alleged involvement remains ongoing as authorities piece together the mystery surrounding Peavey's tragic death.

News box

NIT Trichy student harassed in hostel room, protest erupts over 'victim-shaming'

Trichy, Tamil Nadu. Students at the National Institute of Technology, Trichy (NIT-T) staged a protest on campus, accusing hostel management and police of victim shaming a student who allegedly faced sexual harassment. The protest erupted after a technician allegedly attempted to masturbate in front of a student while repairing a Wi-Fi device in her room on Thursday. The protesting students claimed that instead of taking action, hostel authorities blamed the girls for the incident. When students approached the police, the girl allegedly faced comments about her attire.

Angered by the response, students held an all-night protest that continued till the morning. NIT officials and police engaged in talks with the students, while the accused technician was taken into custody. In response to the protest, NIT-T administration expressed distress over the misconduct by an outsourced worker in the Opal women's hostel.

The administration assured students that stricter measures will be implemented to prevent such untoward incidents in the future. The institute's administration has reviewed the incident and promised to enhance safety measures, particularly for female students. The security officer has been instructed to increase vigilance to prevent similar occurrences.

Odisha's first-ever band of musicians with disabilities is set to debut on September 5

BHUBANESWAR: State's first band of musicians with disabilities will make their debut in the capital city on Teachers' Day. The Social Security & Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (SSEPD) department and Odisha Sangeet Natak Akademi have collaborated to form the band called 'Ninad'. Officials of the SSEPD department said 'Ninad' has been formed with the finest musical talents among persons with disabilities selected from across the state through auditions. Mentored by eminent musicians of the state, the artistes will perform before Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi on September 5. Principal secretary Bishnupada Sethi said the initiative will provide them a platform to showcase their musical talents, a feeling of inclusiveness in the society and engage them in different cultural festivals and events through which they can eke out livelihood. The department will provide them platforms - cultural events and festivals organised by government and private organisations to perform.

Online rummy loss: Chennai woman stages theft of 25 sovereigns

CHENNAI: A 55-year-old woman was arrested by Valasaravakkam police on Friday for staging a robbery. The suspect allegedly pawned her daughter's 25 sovereigns of gold and lost the money in online rummy. She staged the robbery to keep her daughter in the dark about the loss.

Police sources identified the suspect as Shanthi. She worked as a cook in the locality and resided with her daughter Santhanalakshmi (28) and son-in-law Sivamurugan (30) at Karapakkam near



Porur. Early Friday morning, when Sivamurugan came out of his room, he found Shanthi lying on the floor of her room. She was gagged and her hands and legs were tied.

"She was hospitalised and the police were alerted. The family told the police that an unidentified gang broke into their house and stole 25 sovereigns. They also claimed that the gang sprayed a sedative on Shanthi before tying her up. However, CCTV footage showed no one entering the house and there was no sign of forced entry. Growing suspicious, they checked the house and found receipts of pledged gold jewellery," a source said.

Perusal of Shanthi's call records showed that she regularly spoke to a pawn shop owner. Upon inquiry, the shop owner said that the woman had pawned 25 sovereigns with him. Upon further interrogation at the hospital, Shanthi allegedly confessed to the staged robbery," a police officer said. She will be taken into custody after her discharge from the hospital.

Malayalam actor Jayasurya booked in another sexual harassment complaint

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM: The tremors that followed the release of the Justice Hema Committee report continued to shake the Malayalam film industry with one more woman levelling sexual misconduct allegation against actor Jayasurya. Meanwhile, the police probing the allegations are expected to complete the recording of complainants' secret statements before magistrates in the coming days. Adding to Jayasurya's troubles, the Karamana police have registered a second case against him based on the complaint filed by a junior artist. The alleged incident took place on the location of the movie Pigman in Thodupuzha in 2013. The complainant alleged that Jayasurya held her from behind

while she was returning from the bathroom on the location. The woman alleged that when she pushed him away, Jayasurya apologised. Based on the complaint, the police have booked him for outraging the modesty of the woman. The case will be transferred to Thodupuzha police for further action. Earlier, the Cantonment police had registered a case against Jayasurya after a Kochi-based actress filed a complaint against him. DIG S Ajetha Begum, who is posted in Thiruvananthapuram, will be monitoring the investigation into the cases registered against Jayasurya and Siddique at police stations in Thiruvananthapuram. AIG G Poonguzhali will monitor all the seven cases registered in



Kochi. Also, two DySP-ranked officers have been included in the SIT to investigate rape cases registered in Kochi.

On Friday, the special investigation team (SIT) recorded the statements of a Kozhikode-based male artist who had alleged that he was sexually abused by director Ranjith in Bengaluru. A team led by IPS officer Aishwarya Dongre recorded his statement. A fresh case against Ranjith will be registered in Kozhikode based on

the complaint, and it will be transferred to Bengaluru as the alleged offence took place there.

Two DySP-ranked officers included in probe team

Sources said since Dongre is awaiting a transfer to North Kerala, she will be monitoring the cases registered there. The SIT has been expanded with about 50 new officers — male and female — drafted. Of them, about 35 officers will be part of seven teams that are investigating the cases registered on the complaints of a Kochi-based actress. The newly drafted officers have been split into 10 teams, each headed by an investigating officer in the rank of DySP or inspector. The investigating officers in the cases against Siddique, Mukesh, V S

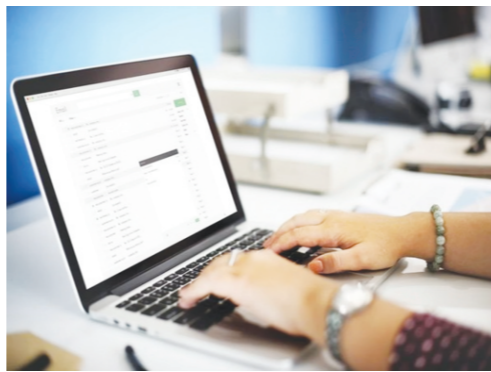
Chandrasekharan and Edavela Babu are of DySP rank, while those in the rest of six cases are inspectors.

Sources said the exercise of recording the secret statements of the complainants before the magistrates will be completed soon. The cops have recorded the statements of the Bengali actress who had filed a complaint against Ranjith online. Sources said her statement will be recorded soon. The police can either record her statements in the area where she resides or ask her to get it done in Kerala. The two DySP-ranked officers included in the SIT are Cheralath DySP K V Benny and Thrikkakara ACP P V Baby. Baby has been tasked with probing the rape cases against Edavela Babu and V S Chandrasekharan.

Andhra Pradesh Legislature to go paperless with NeVA

VIJAYAWADA: The Legislature of Andhra Pradesh will soon go paperless. To make the entire process digital and paperless, the AP Legislature will become part of the National e-Vidhan Application (NeVA) administered by the Union Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs. A proposal to this effect was approved recently by the Chairman of Legislative Council and the Speaker of Legislative Assembly. At the invitation of AP Legislature, Umang Narula, Secretary, and Satya Prakash, Additional Secretary, Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs, visited the AP Legislature on Friday, and interacted with the stakeholders. They explained the key features of NeVA. "The Centrally sponsored NeVA is one of the Mission Mode Projects (MPPs) aimed at transitioning all legislative bodies in the country into a paperless format and unify them onto a single platform as Digital Legislatures," Umang Narula said. Satya Prakash made a presentation on NeVA and

answered the queries of officers of the legislature. To take this project forward, it was agreed to enter into a tripartite Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)



among the Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs, the AP Legislature and the Department of IT, Government of AP. Once the Detailed Project Report is prepared based on the template provided

by the Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs, the work to digitally enable both the Houses of AP Legislature will begin. Simultaneously, training and orientation programmes will be organised for legislators, officers and staff of legislature and other stakeholders from the executive arm. The Legislature Secretariat will be the project executing authority. Like any other Centrally sponsored scheme, the Centre provides 60% of the project cost for NeVA.

Secretary (Expenditure) M Janaki, Special Secretary (ITE&C) B Sundar, senior officials of NIC and officers and staff of AP Legislature Secretariat participated in the meeting. Later, Umang Narula and Satya Prakash, along with AP Legislature Secretary General Prasanna Kumar Suryadevara, called on Legislative Council Chairman Koyye Moshen Raju, and also met Chief Secretary Neerabh Kumar Prasad.

Retired teacher, bank cashier sentenced for demonetised currency fraud

BENGALURU: A retired school teacher and his student were sentenced to seven years rigorous imprisonment by the Special Court for CBI cases for unauthorisedly regularising demonetised currency notes. The convicts are Parashivamurthy Mallunathan (57), the then Head Cashier of State Bank of Mysore of Kollegal Branch in Chamaraanjaganar district, and his teacher Sayed Quiam (78), a resident of Mudigundam village of Kollegal taluk.

Special Court Judge Shridhar Gopalakrishna Bhat also imposed a fine of Rs 95,000 on Mallunathan and Rs 85,000 on Quiam. Mallunathan admitted that Quiam was his school teacher and also a regular customer at the bank. The



complaint, registered by the Central Bureau of Investigation in 2016, stated that Mallunathan, while working as head cashier between January 1, 2015 and November 24, 2016, entered into a criminal conspiracy with three accused, including Quiam. Of the total Rs 1.5 crore he exchanged illegally, Rs 10 lakh was in favour of Quiam. Senior public prosecutor KS Hema argued that

Mallunathan exchanging specified bank notes (SBN) of Rs 1.55 crore for legal tender illegally cannot be considered a misnomer or an oversight because of the rush of work as claimed by him, she argued, opposing any lenient view on the accused while imposing a sentence. The court ruled that Mallunathan, who was entrusted with the bank funds, had taken undue advantage of the trust reposed on him, while Quiam took undue advantage of the situation for personal gain. The act of the accused affected the very purpose of implementing demonetization, the court said. It was in violation of an RBI circular and the notification dated November 8, 2016 issued by the government for demonetisation of Rs 500 and Rs 1,000 notes, it said.

Karwar trio arrested for allegedly leaking INS Kadamba Naval Base information to Pakistani agent

KARWAR: Three men, who were taken into custody by NIA sleuths on Wednesday for allegedly sending pictures and vital information on the INS Kadamba naval base to enemy countries, were honey trapped by a Pakistani woman agent. Investigations revealed that the Pakistani agent, who introduced herself as a marine officer, obtained vital information and pictures of the naval base from the trio. She became close to the trio after sending them friend requests on Facebook in 2023. The accused are Vethan Tandel from Mudga, Sunil of Thodur and Akshay Naik from Halavalli.



Sunil quit his job at the naval base three years ago and joined a restaurant in Goa. Vethan got information from his friends and relatives who work in the naval

base. According to NIA sleuths, the Pakistani agent gathered information on the arrival of warships, their departure and other security details and paid each of them Rs 5,000 every month. Vethan Thandel and Akshay Naik received money every month for eight months. Sunil, who received money from her for four months, later blocked her on Facebook.

Mobile phones, electronic devices seized from trio

NIA sleuths from Hyderabad nabbed one Deepak and a few others in 2023 at Vishakapatnam in a similar case. During interrogation, they revealed their Karwar

network. Vethan, Sunil and Akshay got money transferred to their bank accounts from the same account Deepak and his team used to get.

After the arrest of Deepak and his team, Vethan and Akshay stopped getting money. Based on this evidence, NIA sleuths from Bengaluru and Hyderabad arrived in Karwar on August 27 and took the trio into custody on August 28. The sleuths have seized mobile phones and some electronic devices from the trio. Notices have been issued to them.

Vethan has been directed to go to Hyderabad for further investigation. Akshay has been asked to appear before a team of NIA officers next week.

Stray dog bite cases surge in Bengaluru amid population control efforts

BENGALURU: After back to back stray dog bite cases being reported in Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) in just three days, TNIE gathers that there have been 11,448 stray dog bite cases recorded from January this year. However, the Palike's Animal Husbandry Department maintains that the number of cases reported has been coming down, compared to previous years. "There were as many as 42,818 cases of stray dog bites, in the 2019-2020. However, this year, only 16,888 are reported, which also include caes of pet dog bites," said a senior official. According to the BBMP special health commissioner Suralkar Vikas Kishore, "Around 30 to 40 cases have been recorded daily, since January. Compared to the statistics from 2018, the numbers have drastically reduced.

This apart, stray dog population has also come down. "There were over 3.10 lakh stray dogs in 2019. With continuous Animal Birth Control (ABC) programs, the number has reduced to 2.7 lakh, as per a survey in 2023,"

said the special commissioner. A senior animal husbandry department official said that the palike has managed to cover 72 per cent of stray dogs, and operated in core areas of Bengaluru, and added that majority of the stray dog population is in outer areas like Bommanahalli, RR Nagar and Mahadevapura. "There are 2,79,335 stray dogs in Bengaluru, out of which 1,65,341 are male dogs and 82,757 are female.

Details about 31,237 dogs is still not known. The department has managed to cover 12,773 stray dogs under the ABC program since January, and has vaccinated 37,394 stray dogs by engaging four agencies," said the Deputy Director of BBMP animal husbandry department, Dr Chandiraiah T.A. A senior animal husbandry department official said that the palike has managed to cover 72 per cent of stray dogs, and operated in core areas of Bengaluru, and added that majority of the stray dog population is in outer areas like Bommanahalli, RR Nagar and Mahadevapura.

Minor boy on bike falls off Chennai flyover, dies

CHENNAI: A 16-year-old boy died on Thursday night when the bike he was travelling pillion on hit the Medavakkam flyover's parapet wall and he fell off the bridge. The rider, also aged 16, sustained head injuries in the accident. His condition is stable now. Pallikaranai Traffic Investigation police said they would book the owner of the bike, who was friend of the 16-year-olds. "Yogeshwaran of Kovilambakkam and Santhosh of Medavakkam studied at a private polytechnic institute in Agaramthen. They borrowed a bike from their friend Navin, and were riding on the flyover

along Velachery Main Road when Santhosh lost control of vehicle and rammed it into the parapet wall," a police source said. Due to the impact, Yogeshwaran, who was riding pillion, fell off the bridge and sustained severe injuries. Santhosh too suffered head injuries.

Passersby rushed them to a hospital, where Yogeshwaran was declared dead. Treatment for Santhosh is under way and his condition is stable now. A case has been registered and an inquiry is on to verify whether the bike was registered in his name or his father's.

Corporate dominance widening rich-poor gap

INDIAN economy has witnessed a meteoric rise of corporate companies over the decades. Although the Industrial Policy Resolution of 1956 reserved the commanding heights — steel, heavy industries, machine building sector, metallurgy, defence, etc. — in the public sector through the licensing system, private companies were able to grow in consumer goods and banking businesses. The RK Hazari Committee and S Dutt Committee were set up in the 1960s to review and examine the working of the licensing system and suggest measures to improve its working. These committees found that companies belonging to large business houses violated and exploited the system; these firms were able to get licences in areas such as defence, reserved for the public sector. Also, private companies owned by large business houses were able to get licences in sectors reserved for small and medium companies. It was found that on the pretext of foreign collaboration in 70 items in the category of non-essential items, licences were given to companies of business houses. In view of the above, the Government of India enacted the Monopolies and Restrictive Trade Practices Act in 1969. According to this Act, a monopoly company/business house owned assets of Rs 20 crore or above. Such a company or business house was not to be given licences for further expansion and setting up of new enterprises. This limit was raised to Rs 100 crore or above in 1985. This limit of assets and definition of a monopoly house became redundant with the abolition of the licensing system. In the wake of a foreign exchange crisis, a package of policy changes was introduced in 1991. This was called the new economic policy, marked by liberalisation, privatisation and globalisation. This was done to allow private corporate companies to expand their businesses and freely collaborate with foreign capital. This also reflected the growing clout of these companies in India. According to the National Account Statistics, the share of corporate companies in the GDP has risen to 40 per cent. A report by the World Inequality Lab at the Paris School of Economics, authored by Thomas Piketty and others, brings out that top 1 per cent of India's population possesses 40.1 per cent of the wealth. Consequently, the number of billionaires has risen from one in 1991 to 162 in 2022. The Forbes Global List of billionaires shows that the number of Indian billionaires has reached 200. On the other hand, 80 crore people out of 140 crore are dependent on the government for the supply of free ration. With their increasing grip on the economy, corporates have spread their businesses in various sectors. They control industrial production, distribution of products, fruits and vegetables, telecommunications, roads, airports, ports, TV channels and newspapers, etc. The character of these houses is oligopolistic. A few companies (three or four) control a major proportion of the business in a specific line. They collude to fix supply prices of the output or purchase prices of inputs from small business or agriculture. These firms pay low wages/salaries to workers and employees. Using market power, they charge higher prices as suppliers and pay low prices when acquiring inputs to earn high profits. These firms are major beneficiaries of loan waivers and huge subsidies given by the government in the name of incentives. They have penetrated the government through lateral entry at the joint secretary level and are major contributors of election funds to political parties. Thus, the clout of the corporate sector extends from economy to administration and politics. A nexus has emerged between the ruling party at the Centre and corporate firms. With the increase in the area of operation of big business, they have started setting the terms of discourse or the agenda for discussion in the country. One remembers how the mainstream media came out in support of the new economic policy in 1991 and later globalisation under the World Trade Organisation. It was one-sided uncritical support for the new economic regime, shifting from regulated capitalist development towards free and liberalised regime for corporates.

Curb the menace of child molestation

TRYSTS AND TURNS: The proliferation of sex offenders in cities and towns across the country must be combated

TWO four-year-old girls were sexually abused by a sweeper in a privately run school in Badlapur, a small town in Thane district adjoining Mumbai city. He had been employed just days before the crime took place. He was reportedly the only male employee in the pre-primary section of the school. On two consecutive days, he was sent by a teacher to take the two girls to the toilet. It turned out that no background check was conducted prior to his hiring. Police investigations into his antecedents revealed that the man was just 24 years old but had been married thrice in a short period of less than a year. He had discarded his first wife two or three days after marriage and the second one within 10 days. The third wife, who is presently with him, is in her fifth month of pregnancy. Even if a proper background check had been done, it is doubtful if the man's proclivities would have been detected. But his act of changing his partners should have alerted the principal against taking him on in a school which had many girl children.

Sexual offences are being reported almost daily in the media. This particular case hit the headlines probably because the school was rumoured to be owned by someone connected to one of the ruling parties in Maharashtra. The Assembly elections are due in the state before the year ends. The Opposition perhaps felt that since a crime like this disturbed the peace of mind of parents and even common citizens, it would be a fit issue to create a ruckus that could affect voting patterns. A bandh was announced by the Opposition parties, but it had to be shelved after the Bombay High Court, hearing a public interest litigation, decided that such bandhs were illegal. A city-based NGO, Public Concern for Governance Trust (PCGT), set up 30 years ago by former Cabinet Secretary BG Deshmukh, former Medical Director of Mumbai's Jaslok Hospital Dr RK Anand and I, had moved the high court against this practice of political parties depriving workers of earning their living and forcing the closure of shops and offices. The PCGT won its case in the court. The two political parties then in the Opposition, the BJP and the Shiv Sena, were each fined Rs 20 lakh for the

mayhem caused by the bandh. More importantly, the bandh as a political weapon had been laid to rest, at least in the city of Mumbai. The hardship it caused to the homeless, who depend on eating houses for their daily meal, and little children, who depend on the arrival of the milk vans for their sustenance, was

constable, specially selected, was assigned to each of the 91 police stations in the commissionerate to visit each school in the precinct every month, address the parent-teacher meetings and impress on the parents first, the teachers next and the senior students later the lurking possibility of molestation and ways and means to prevent it.

The steps to be taken in case sexual offenders from within the school or outside manage to break the law were also listed. The police presence at the parent-teacher meeting was meant to engender confidence in the minds of parents that attention was being paid by the school and the state to the security of their wards. The police, too, would not have an excuse for any delay in dealing with complaints made by the school authorities. The steep increase in incidents of child molestation in buses hired by schools to transport children, in classrooms or staff rooms and in lavatories by the non-teaching staff or senior students preying on juniors is a sign of a sickness that needs to be combated head-on.

There is an urgent need for case studies by top psychologists to list the root causes of the malaise and suggest possible remedies. That will help to draw the attention of parents and teachers to a danger that afflicts not only our country but most countries of the world. In some European countries, child pornography has become such a menace that special squads have been created in crime-fighting units to address the problem.

The steady proliferation of sex offenders in many cities and even towns in our country needs immediate attention and involvement of the state. In Mumbai, NGOs involved in helping the authorities combat the menace are many. The current government at the Centre distrusts civil society bodies working to address such secular issues. Corporate funding has been discontinued to such NGOs and diverted to the PM Cares Fund.

The government would be well advised not to frown on such NGOs whose only motive is to better the quality of life of ordinary citizens. To dump every NGO in one basket is a strange way of going about the business of governance.



highlighted in the court by a few affected citizens in sworn affidavits. In place of the projected bandh, parents of schoolgoing children, politicians and their followers taped their own mouths with black cloth and marched through the city streets demanding better security for schoolchildren.

Five years ago, a delegation of fathers of little boys going to private schools approached me with an offer of professional help, according to their individual expertise, to counter the menace of young children being molested in schools. The PCGT then tied up with another NGO working on the same issue, and approached the Commissioner of Police, Mumbai, who earmarked a DCP from the Crime Branch to liaise with us. We organised a number of seminars and meetings, including training workshops for principals of government and municipal schools, on the basis of the POCSO (Protection of Children from Sexual Offences) Act and how it could be effectively implemented.

Unfortunately, Covid-19 struck soon after our preliminaries were completed. The city police had started a 'Didi' programme in which a woman police

Industrial fillip

Punjab should make the most of Rajpura project

THE Centre's nod to set up an industrial smart city in Rajpura presents a now-or-never opportunity to Punjab to establish itself as a major destination for investors. Fiscal mismanagement by successive state governments has led to the double whammy of high indebtedness and low investment, stifling the state's potential for economic growth. The fact that Rajpura has been chosen as one of the 12 sites for projects on the Golden Quadrilateral, which connects the country's major industrial, agricultural and cultural hubs, shows that the border state is very much part of the Centre's scheme of things.

Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann's recent visit to Mumbai, where he met several industry leaders, was an attempt to showcase Punjab as an investor-friendly state. In 2022, the state was listed among the 'top achievers' in ease of doing business, rubbing shoulders with Haryana, Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Karnataka,



Telangana and Tamil Nadu, according to the Business Reforms Action Plan report of the Union Ministry of Commerce & Industry. The vastly improved performance on this count indicates that Punjab can provide a conducive environment to attract big-ticket investments.

For that, it is vital to cut red tape and minimise disruptions. Domestic as well as foreign investors prefer to pump their money into states where hassle-free, uninterrupted industrial activity can be conducted. Around 1,100 acres have been acquired and fenced for the Rajpura project. This is a welcome development, in stark contrast to the land acquisition hitches that have led to the termination of some national highway projects in the state. With India-Pakistan relations remaining in deep freeze, Punjab continues to suffer on the trade front, besides battling the drug menace, unemployment and the exodus of its youth to foreign lands. Hopefully, the industrial smart city, where world-class infrastructure will be created, will help the state make an economic turnaround and incentivise its young people to stay on and work here.

India has its bases covered ahead of Lanka's presidential poll

Sri Lankan leaders know that when the chips were down, India provided \$4-bn aid to bail the island nation out.

INDIA is keeping a close eye on the developments in the run-up to the September 21 presidential election in Sri Lanka, where public protests had led to the exit of then President Gotabaya Rajapaksa in 2022 at a time of severe economic distress. However, Sri Lanka had not dissolved its Parliament and allowed the political system to operate. This led to a consensus on former Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe, whose United National Party (UNP) had fallen on hard times. He was elected President by Parliament and has seen through the rest of Gotabaya's term. Ranil is a candidate again, but this time, his Puluwan Sri Lanka front has got 34 parties backing him, including leaders who, though from other parties, are a part of his government.

Ranil has stated that there is unfinished business with regard to Sri Lanka's economic distress. He has maintained good relations with India, China and the West for debt relief and management plans.

The main party in Parliament, the Sri Lanka Podujana Peramuna (SLPP) of the Rajapaksas, which backed Ranil for the presidency during the crisis, decided not to support him further. It has pitched for Namal Rajapaksa, son of Mahinda Rajapaksa, as their candidate. If Namal fails to perform well, the SLPP would face challenges in the parliamentary elections, likely to be held within a year. Sajith Premadasa founded the Samagi Jana Balawegaya (SJB) after splitting from the UNP in 2020 and it has been the main Opposition front in Parliament. He marshalled his political resources to be seen as a viable candidate. He has formed an alliance with 27 small parties and mobilised public support against the government. A potent challenger is Anura Kumara Dissanayake of the National People's Power (NPP), which is the political wing of the radical Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna (JVP). The JVP, after its hostile

activity till 1989, has become a political party and works underground. It was the mainstay of Aragalaya (the struggle), the 2022 agitation. The people's angst and frustration led to Mahinda's resignation as Prime Minister; subsequently, Gotabaya quit as President. Despite having only three MPs, the NPP worked assiduously to harness public anger.

According to a pre-poll survey, Anura is leading with 43 per cent of the votes. Ranil (27 per cent) is ahead of Sajith (22 per cent). Namal has only 3 per cent support. In recent weeks, 10 per cent of the undecided voters seem to have moved in Ranil's direction, giving his campaign a fillip. However, poll analysts in Colombo say the contest is between Anura and Sajith. In the Sri Lankan system, there are three preferences for voters. A candidate must get 50 per cent plus of the first-preference votes to be elected President. If no candidate gets that, the second and third-preference votes of candidates, besides the top two, will be counted. Analysts say that it is these second and third-preference votes which are likely to determine whether the second-placed candidate can upstage Anura, who is the leading choice on first-preference votes. Should India be worried about the outcome of this election? The turmoil in Bangladesh months after January's General Election, which was won by now-ousted Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's Awami League, is a cause for concern. India seems to have played its cards better in Sri Lanka. During his June visit to Sri Lanka, External Affairs Minister (EAM) S Jaishankar met leaders of all hues, including Sajith and Anura. Anura made the first-ever visit by a JVP leader to India at the

government's invitation in February. He met the National Security Adviser, the EAM and others while visiting Delhi, Thiruvananthapuram and Ahmedabad. He acknowledged India's role in helping Sri Lanka during an economic crisis two years ago. Anura said he did not follow the JVP's old policy of being anti-India and would like to work

Sri Lanka, and that Delhi was a valuable friend. Ranil has been a friend to India since long. He attended PM Modi's swearing-in in June and discussed various matters with the Indian leadership. India has got its bases covered with all major parties in Sri Lanka and is not taking sides in this contest whose result is not easy to predict. India would have laid out its preferences to all the parties, in line with the Neighbourhood First policy, supporting economic activity and seeking a level playing field for Indian economic interests and no threats to Indian security.

Sri Lankan leaders know that when the chips were down, India provided \$4-billion aid to bail the island nation out, and then participated in a debt rescheduling exercise when China did neither. Yet, China will always remain important to Sri Lanka for investment in its projects, and to balance India out. Hence, Chinese naval ships will not be prohibited from visiting Sri Lanka, but they will be advised not to carry out surveillance or anti-India activity, like it was done in the case of a research vessel two years ago. India would have to live with this and do more, possibly with Japan, trilaterally, to build economic relationships to balance China out in Sri Lanka. India's private sector investments in Sri Lanka and development cooperation projects are highly regarded, giving India the reputation of a good neighbour. If this election can pass off without attracting nationalist voters' sentiment targeting India, Delhi would have indeed learned a new lesson and implemented it.



with everybody possible. Sajith, whose father Ranasinghe Premadasa was an anti-India UNP leader, has modulated his stance. Though invited to India, he decided not to come this year, possibly under astrological advice not to travel overseas before the election get over. In his meeting with Jaishankar in Colombo, Sajith acknowledged that India's timely assistance was of great sustenance to

Yes, parenting is a tough task, especially for those who also juggle a career. "However, sharp and smart individuals know that the scenario at work and at home are almost similar. The situations and the solutions are almost always interchangeable. The tactics that you apply at office can also work wonders with your children," says parental adviser and psychologist Rashmi Desai. Here are some simple corporate survival techniques you can try when dealing with your kids...

SETTING OBJECTIVES MAY LEAD TO NOWHERE

The only place where 'goals' look nice is probably on your

Corporate hacks you can try while dealing with Kids



employee who is encouraged by way of citation and letter of appreciation is more likely to work harder than the one who has been reprimanded in front of his colleagues."

HEADS, I WIN, AND TAILS, YOU LOSE

It's okay to accede to your child's whims and fancies once in a while. But often, give them options such that they choose what you want. Sri Dixit, communication head with a reputed MNC, says, "I learnt this trick from my boss, who casually told me I could either do the official tour I so hated with his team now or during the weekend when I had plans of celebrating my wedding anniversary. I now use this on my son, who is in Class IV, all the time. I give him a choice between doing his homework now or when his favourite cartoon is on. Either way, I accomplish what I intended to."

BE A ROLE MODEL

It's important for a boss to set a good example for their subordinates to follow. Similarly, kids learn by watching their parents. Rashmi says, "If you lose your cool at the drop of a hat, your child will do the same. Children follow on their parents' footsteps. Be tolerant, soft-spoken, kind and selfless if you want your kid to be the same."

BE OPEN TO CHANGES

Flexibility and willingness to adapt and adjust your parenting style will make your journey much easier. Rehana says, "The work environment at a new office will be different from the one at your old place. You need to be flexible to sail through smoothly. When my daughter was two, she would listen to everything I said, even though she wouldn't understand most of it. But now, she is eight and has formed her own opinions. So, instead of mollycoddling, behave like an adult with her. We reason things out and choose what's best."

AT TIMES, IT'S OKAY TO CALL IT A DAY

Overworking and burning yourself out at your workplace will lead to no good. It's fine to just go home when you know things are going nowhere. Adapt the same policy with your kids as well. Rashmi adds, "It's perfectly fine to give in to your child's tantrums, but only sometimes. If they insist on staying up late on weekend, tell them it's fine as long as they don't create a ruckus and finish their school work the next day. If they don't want to eat their spinach, give them a healthy alternative. Parenting is all about little compromises."

BE CREATIVE

Narendra says, "My wife whips out these nice looking, interesting lunches every day so our twins gobble them up without making a fuss. She presents the dishes

resume. For, many parents vouch that setting objectives, both at home and office, is almost always pointless. Narendra Jain, a marketing manager and father of two, says, "I convince myself that I need to achieve a specific target within two months, but I never manage to do that because my goals are influenced by external factors as well. In the end, I am left feeling dejected. Similarly, my wife and I vowed that we would potty train our twins by the time they are two. But we kept racing between our bedroom and the restroom till

they turned four. Letting things take its own course is one of the parenting mantras we follow now."

BONUS, INCREMENT, BRIBES ARE GOOD MOTIVATORS

'Carrot and stick approach' works brilliantly well both with kids and at office. Rehana K, an HR professional, says, "Just like how bonus and increment push staff to perform better, promise of extended playtime and a picnic over the weekend motivates my daughter to

study and behave well. Bribery is a punishable offence, but all is fair in love, war and parenting."

CITATION AND WORDS OF APPRECIATION ARE LIFESAVERS

Encourage your child by appreciating accomplishments; this boosts their self esteem. Rehana adds, "Your body language and tone matters a lot. If your son has tied the shoelace on his own, make sure you compliment him. Avoid making comments that belittle his efforts. An

creatively, just like how we rack up our brains to present our ideas differently to our clients."

IT'S ALRIGHT TO FIB

While being transparent and honest are important for any relationship to survive, it's okay to lie sometimes. Gauri Manjrekar, a fashion consultant, says, "I fib to my six-year-old son so that he drinks his glass of milk, comes with me for a medical checkup, goes to bed on time and doesn't OD on chocolates. I'm not being dishonest, I just say few harmless lies so we both can co-exist peacefully."

Kids cause greater strain in relationships than illness



Having kids, the main purpose of matrimonial relationships, can bring in greater strains in romantic relationships than illness of partners, a new study suggests. The study looked at the relationship quality of 721 couples in Switzerland over a period of thirteen years. "Transition to parenthood is associated with a higher degree of closure of the couple, as well as greater differentiation of functional roles," said researcher Manuela Schicka from the University of Geneva in Switzerland in an official statement.

Schicka, who conducted the research as part of her PhD thesis, explained that women often abandon or substantially reduce their participation in the labour market once they become a mother, because of lack of institutionalised child care facilities. This also generates a great deal of frustration. On the other hand, illness and accidents are seen as linked to bad luck and not personal responsibility.

There is therefore less grief and bitter thoughts between partners when the latter occur, Schicka stated. The study also found that transition to retirement succeeds in reuniting couples at an age that is generally not perceived as the most romantic one. The research demonstrated that while the various styles of conjugal interactions generally remain stable along the life course, some critical life events and transitions weigh much more on relationship quality than others, sometimes in unexpected ways.

5 ways to keep your kids safe online

With the proliferation of new technologies and social media apps, it seems these days as if our children are almost constantly online, and as parents/guardians, we sometimes have a tough time keeping pace.

How can we ensure that we are as good parenting online, as we are offline? Use these five tips to educate, empower and protect yourself, as well as your children, to have safer and more meaningful online experiences.

Use technology together This is a good way to teach online safety, and it creates the opportunity for you to address safety issues as they arise. Be involved in your child's online life. Discuss also the importance of unplugging from their mobile device, and establish phone-free times such as during class, at family dinners or after a certain time on school nights.

Use privacy settings/ parental control on devices There are many sites for sharing ideas, photos, videos and more. Many of these service providers offer privacy settings and controls that will determine who can see your content before you post it. Talk with your family about what they



should and should not share publicly. Teach your family to communicate responsibly: one good thumb rule is, if you would not say it in person, then do not text it, email it, instant message it, or post it as a comment on someone's page. Discuss how what you say online might make other people feel, and come up with guidelines about what is appropriate communication. Help them respect the privacy of others by keeping the personal details about family or friends private, and by not identifying people by name in publicly shared social media. This

should include personal information such as phone numbers or home addresses. Teach your family not to accept files or to open email attachments from strangers. Write down the rules and keep them near the computer.

Check age restrictions Many online services have age limits restricting

who can use their services. For example, for an email account, you would have to meet age requirements; some email products are restricted to users who are 18 years and older. Always check a website's terms of usage before allowing your child/ward to sign up for an account, and be clear with them if you have rules on which websites and services they can use. Supervise computer use. If possible, the family computer should be kept in a common area of the house. You should also set reasonable limits on computer

usage. Show your children the value of privacy: encourage them to protect their passwords and personal information, as they would with something like a diary. Children under eight should have direct supervision while online. Tweens, those from eight to 12, should have more freedom, but a parent/guardian should still be close by, with privacy settings at their highest level. Teens, due to smart phones, laptops and school computers will have more Internet access, which is why it is important to set the rules early and encourage ongoing conversations.

Keep the conversation going Staying safe is not a one-off event; technology evolves, and so will the needs of your family. Make sure you keep up an ongoing dialogue. Check in on everyone's progress, change the rules if necessary, and set aside time to chat at regular intervals, for example, at family dinners. Encourage their questions. Invite conversation.

No discrepancies in EVM-VVPAT data matched so far: Poll panel

After the Lok Sabha elections, applications seeking checking of results and matching and confirmation of data were received from only eight out of 543 constituencies. Out of these eight, four have been checked so far and all have proved correct.

New Delhi: Doubts and questions raised on the accuracy of Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs) by certain political parties have been put to rest for the time being as the data of four Voter Verifiable Paper Audit Trail (VVPAT) checked so far have been found to be correct, officials said on Friday. After the Lok Sabha elections, applications seeking checking of results and matching and confirmation of data were received from only eight out of 543 constituencies. Out of these eight, four have been checked so far. These applications were related to matching of data from 92 polling booths in six states. In the Assembly elections, three applications related to 26 polling stations of two states were received. According to a Supreme Court verdict, the two closest rivals who lost in the general election can

get the data verified by getting the data of EVMs and VVPATs matched after paying a fixed amount of fee. If the complaint is found to be correct, meaning if there is any discrepancy found in terms of the data, the fee will be refunded and appropriate action will be taken. If the complaint is found to be false, the fee will be confiscated. According to Election Commission officials, an investigation on two out of eight Check and Verification i.e. Cand V applications, remained pending because the defeated candidates who challenged the results had filed an election petition in court. In two of the cases, the C and V process was stopped because the complaining candidates did not show up. However, four C and V processes were completed, and no irregularities were



found in any of them. As a significant step towards transparency in the democratic process, the Election Commission has provisioned that candidates who suspect irregularities in voting, those who are unsatisfied with the voting and counting, can choose any EVM of any polling station for examination, whose data and VVPAT

slips can be matched. The chief poll body received complaints and applications for EVM-VVPAT re-matching from eight candidates since the results of the Lok Sabha elections were declared on June 4. In these, losing candidates expressed apprehensions of irregularities or tampering with the machine, data, counting, matching and microchip, among others.

EVM-VVPAT DATA MATCHING SOP

The Election Commission has issued a Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) and announced to provide this facility to the candidates who finish as runner-up and second runner-up in elections. As per the rules, five per cent of the total number of EVM-VVPAT sets in any constituency are matched randomly. Within this number,

candidates can request for investigation by paying an appropriate fee, stating the booth of their specific choice and the serial number of the EVM. According to poll panel officials, for the memory verification of EVM and VVPAT during the recent Lok Sabha elections, Rs 40,000 per machine and 18 per cent of Goods and Services Tax (GST) has to be deposited in advance. The team of technical experts of the commission then verify the data in front of everyone.

SUPREME COURT RULING ON EVM-VVPAT DATA MATCHING

As the decision of the Supreme Court bench of Justice Sanjeev Khanna and Justice Dipankar Dutta on April 26 states, it is necessary to apply for verification within seven days of the counting of votes.

Helicopter being airlifted by Air Force chopper crashes in Kedarnath

New Delhi: A faulty helicopter, which was being brought for repair by the Indian Air Force, crashed in Kedarnath in Uttarakhand on Saturday. The helicopter was being taken to Gauchar airstrip in Uttarakhand with the help of the Indian Air Force's MI 17 helicopter. However, the MI 17 helicopter lost its balance after a while due to the weight of the other helicopter, following which the pilot dropped the helicopter near an open space in the valley.



Rudraprayag Tourism Rahul Chaubey said that the damaged helicopter had suffered a technical fault during landing earlier this year on May 24. The helicopter had made an emergency landing just 100 metres before the helipad in May and all passengers onboard had escaped unhurt. The faulty helicopter was being taken for repair to the Gauchar Airstrip by the MI 17 helicopter at around 7 am on Saturday, Chaubey said. However, the Air Force helicopter couldn't handle the balance of the faulty helicopter, following which the pilot dropped it near the Tharu camp in Kedarnath.

In a first, Jharkhand appoints transgender as community health officer

Amir Mahato, who completed her nursing training in Jharkhand's Sambalpur village, was among the 365 candidates appointed under the National Health Mission. Her appointment letter was given by Chief Minister Hemant Soren.

Ranchi. In a historic first, the Jharkhand government has appointed a transgender from West Singhbhum district as a community health officer. Chief Minister Hemant Soren on Thursday handed over the appointment letter to Amir Mahato, who was visibly pleased. Mahato, who completed her nursing training in Sambalpur village, was among the 365 candidates appointed under the National Health Mission. Mahato said her mother had wanted her to become a nurse, but she could not pursue her profession due to financial constraints at home.

My mother's dream has come true. I have no complaints



to God. I am really happy and never thought I would be appointed as a community health officer in Jharkhand. I thank the Chief Minister for taking such an initiative," she said. With Mahato's appointment, Jharkhand became one of the few states after Bihar, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu and West Bengal to have a provision to appoint transgenders in government departments. In September last year, the Jharkhand Cabinet cleared the approval to reserve seats for transgenders. The state government has envisaged a reservation under the OBC quota in educational institutions and government appointments for the third gender.

Kashmir-based Chinara Corps to get new commander after Assembly polls

New Delhi: Lt Gen Prashant Srivastava was appointed as the new commander of the Kashmir Valley-based Chinara Corps, effective October 15. Lt Gen Srivastava, a veteran of counter-terrorist operations, will succeed Lt Gen Rajiv Ghai, who will move to the Army Headquarters as the next Director General of Military Operations (DGMO). The change in command will take place two weeks after Assembly elections wrap up in Jammu and Kashmir.

An alumnus of the National Defence Academy, Lt Gen Srivastava has extensive experience in combat operations, particularly in regions with high levels of insurgency, such as Punjab, Jammu and Kashmir, and



the Northeast.

The senior Army officer has extensive experience in the Kashmir Valley, having served multiple tenures there. Prior to moving to the Army Headquarters, he was commanding a Rashtriya Rifles Force in the Valley. During this time, he oversaw the planning and execution of numerous operations aimed at combating

militant activity. Lt Gen Ghai will continue to be in charge of the Corps' security operations in the Kashmir valley and the Line of Control until the handover. Lt Gen Ghai has been cleared to take over as the new DGMO, succeeding Lt Gen Pratik Sharma. Several officers have already been posted to new positions, including the 3 Corps in Dimapur and the new Army War College Commandant, as part of the recent postings announced on July 22. Jammu and Kashmir is going to the polls after a 10-year gap. The three-phase Assembly election will begin on September 18 and conclude on October 1, with results to be announced on October 4.

Gujarat man kills mother, posts photo on social media: 'Sorry mom, I kill you'

New Delhi: A 21-year-old man was arrested in Gujarat's Rajkot for allegedly murdering his mother and later posting a picture with her dead body on Instagram, officials said. The incident came to light when a local resident informed police about the incident and officials arrived at the scene to see the accused, Nilesh Gosai, sitting next to his mother's body in Bhagatsinhji Garden on University Road in Rajkot.

Nilesh confessed to the murder during questioning, revealing that he initially tried to attack his mother with a knife. When Jyotiben managed to wrest the knife away, Nilesh resorted to strangling her with a blanket. After committing the crime, he posted a photo of his mother on Instagram with a caption, "Sorry mom I kill you, I miss

you, Om shanti (sic)." In another post, he wrote, "I'm kill my mom, loss my life, sorry mom, om shanti, Miss you mom (sic)". After initial investigation,



it was revealed that Jyotiben had been struggling with severe mental illness for years, leading to frequent arguments and physical altercations with her son.

On the day of the incident, a heated argument between Nilesh and Jyotiben escalated into violence. Jyotiben's marriage had ended approximately 20 years ago, and since then, she and Nilesh had lived together, with minimal contact with her other children. She was undergoing treatment for mental health issues, but had stopped taking her medication a month prior to the incident, exacerbating her condition, an official said. Notably, Jyotiben's ex-husband and her other children refused to claim her body or take responsibility, forcing the police to file a complaint and arrange her final rites. Nilesh is currently in police custody and further investigation into the matter is underway.

Joined BJP after coming to know I was being 'snooped on': Champai Soren

Former Jharkhand Chief Minister Champai Soren, who joined the BJP with his son, accused the Hemant Soren-led government of keeping track of his movements, and called it a "shameful act".

Ranchi. Former Jharkhand Chief Minister Champai Soren, who joined the BJP on Friday, asserted that he had never imagined being put under surveillance and said his decision to join the saffron party became firm after knowing his movements were being tracked. The former Jharkhand Mukti Morcha (JMM) leader, who was once close to Chief Minister Hemant Soren's father and party

chief Shibu Soren, chided the state government for its "shameful act" of tracking his movements. "I had never imagined that I was being tracked and followed by the special branch for espionage. It is really a matter of investigation. My decision to join BJP grew firm after I came to know that my movements are being tracked," he alleged.

"It's a shameful act that the JMM attempted to track and follow my movement," he claimed. Champai Soren's spying claims came after Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma accused the JMM-led coalition of keeping the former under surveillance for the past six months.

Sarma, who is the BJP co-in charge for Assembly elections in Jharkhand, said the people would give a befitting reply in the upcoming polls due in the state later this year. While lashing out at the Hemant Soren-led government, Champai Soren said, "I felt insulted in the JMM. I had thought of calling it a day, but supporters

motivated me to stay in mainstream politics. After considering all the situations, I decided to join the BJP." He accused the JMM and Congress of not



thinking about the welfare of tribals and asserted that only the BJP could guide the tribals towards a brighter future. "That's why I have joined BJP with an open heart. We will build a new Jharkhand by staying here with the BJP," Champai Soren said. Champai Soren, along with his son Babulal, crossed over to the BJP at a ceremony attended by Union Minister Shivraj Singh

Chouhan, Sarma, senior party leaders Laxmikant Bajpai, Arjun Munda and state party chief Babulal Marandi in Ranchi.

Champai Soren's joining is seen as a significant boost for the BJP's efforts to strengthen its connection with the Scheduled Tribes (STs), a strong support base of the JMM. Earlier, Sarma announced that Champai Soren would be joining the BJP on August 30 (Friday), after the latter met with Union Home Minister Amit Shah in Delhi.

On February 2, Champai Soren was appointed Chief Minister, following Hemant Soren's resignation and subsequent arrest by the Enforcement Directorate (ED) in a money laundering case. He resigned from the post on July 3, clearing the way for Hemant Soren to resume office on July 4 after being granted bail. In a letter to Shibu Soren on Wednesday, Champai Soren resigned from JMM and said he was compelled to quit after being "aggrieved by the present style of functioning of the JMM and its policies".

Odisha, Andhra brace for heavy rain as low-pressure area forms in Bay of Bengal

New Delhi: A new low-pressure area has formed in the Northwest Bay of Bengal and is expected to intensify into a deep depression, bringing rain to several areas of Odisha and coastal Andhra Pradesh, the India Meteorological Department said.

The well marked low pressure area over west-central and adjoining northwest Bay of Bengal off north Andhra Pradesh and South Odisha persisted and lay over the same region," the IMD's update on Saturday morning said. The low-pressure area is likely to move further west-northwestwards towards the north Andhra Pradesh and adjoining south Odisha coasts and intensify into a depression over the west-central and adjoining northwest Bay of Bengal during the next 24 hours, the weather agency said.

Some areas in Odisha are expected to receive heavy to very heavy rain, while light to moderate rain will affect most areas of the state on Saturday and Sunday. Similar weather conditions are likely in coastal Andhra Pradesh, according to the IMD. The wind speed is also set to intensify, and the sea condition is likely to be rough, the officials said, warning fishermen against venturing into the sea along and off the south Odisha and north Andhra Pradesh coasts on Saturday.

SITUATION IMPROVES IN GUJARAT

With Cyclone Asna, which formed over the coast of Kutch in Gujarat earlier in the day, moving further into the Arabian Sea towards Oman, the weather conditions are set to improve in Gujarat, though many areas remain inundated. The cyclone left the Gujarat coast without causing any major impact on the region. It is likely to continue moving nearly west-northwestwards over the northeast Arabian Sea, away from the Indian coast, during the next 24 hours and then west-southwestwards subsequently, the officials said.

Meanwhile, Union Home Minister Amit Shah reviewed the ground situation in his Gandhinagar Lok Sabha constituency on Friday following a spell of heavy rain. He gave necessary instructions to the administration as several parts of Ahmedabad continued to be submerged in knee-deep water.



Stuck in the

Wrong Career?

Stuck in the wrong job? Brave enough to have changed careers, three go-getters explain how you can exchange 'earning a living' to 'living a life'.

Strong performances certainly helped make Raju Hirani's 3 Idiots a record breaking success, but more than the calibre of its actors, what seemed to resonate with the country's young audience was a message - one's career choice should not be dictated by parents or peers. It should, instead, reflect one's own predilections. Shalini Umachandran's new book *You Can Make Your Dreams Work* profiles 15 individuals who have managed to fight against all odds and pursue a career option of their choice years after having started out in another profession. Umachandran says the motivation was simple - people switched careers to follow their own interests or passions. "Not all of us have one overarching passion. We don't always know what we want, but you need to zero in on what you like most," says the author and journalist. Most of the profiles in Umachandran's book are of people who had spent five-six years in a certain profession before they decided to make a shift. So, one would imagine that they had a steady job to fall back on. But

Umachandran informs that none of them considered their previous profession as a backup. "When you decide to take the plunge, you ought to have an 'all or nothing' perspective. If you have a 'plan B', you won't be as committed. They also said it is best not to give oneself a deadline like: 'I'll try it out for a year'," explains the author. Featured in Umachandran's book, here are three career mavericks who have managed to ditch their old jobs to follow their dream. They tell us how to figure out if you're in the wrong profession, find what's best for you and prepare for metamorphosis.

FROM TOXICOLOGY TO SOCCER
Abhijit Barse was living the great American dream after a PhD in aquatic toxicology. He had joined a German company in the US as a toxicologist, but a year and a half later, he somehow felt empty. Barse returned to India and decided to teach at a college in Nagpur and then quit teaching to join Nagpur-based Slum Soccer in 2010, an organisation that uses football to keep

kids in school and off drugs."
EVALUATE YOUR PRIORITIES
Today, there are a lot of ways to find out what would be your ideal job. There are consultants who help you do that. Figure out what is it that drives you. For someone hoping to make more money, it's a no-brainer. But if there's something missing at work, you surely need to evaluate your priorities. If you're always complaining about work, you're in the wrong job.

"PRIOR RESEARCH IS ESSENTIAL"
If you're just beginning your career, it's easier to make a shift. As time passes, responsibilities pile up and you can't chuck one job and pick another easily. I didn't do it overnight. I eased myself into it. A change of job can leave you with psychological problems, especially when you go from a '9 to 5' job to one where you don't have assigned timings. When I started out, there was no money, projects or structure, so I had to study about the field. This is essential before you nose-dive into a new profession. You need to know exactly what your job description

would be and what the job entails.
FROM WALL STREET TO SOCIAL WORK

Vikram Bhat, a Wall Street analyst in New York, gave up his 10-year career in finance and computer engineering in 2008. Having moved to Bangalore, Bhat decided to teach in a school for children from low-income families.

"AVOID UNREALISTIC EXPECTATIONS"
Financial security is the biggest obstacle when trying out a new profession. At 33, when I decided to figure out what I wanted to do, I was old enough to not have to listen to my parents. My wife is a doctor and it helped that she had a stable income and was willing to support me. The biggest challenge when you enter a new career is that you have unrealistic expectations about how satisfying it will be. We all have a certain vision of ourselves, but we don't build on it much. Try to figure out how practical or impractical that vision is by making it more realistic for yourself.

"INTERNSHIP BRIDGES A GAP"
Before you take up a new job, an internship can help bridge the gap, as it did for me. From the outside, it all looks great, but it has to make sense to you on a daily basis. You have to have your basic finances sorted and have close ones on board with your decision. Find yourself a mentor and periodically remind yourself why you made the shift. You have to be patient as

you will face disappointment in your new career. You need to envision the progress you see for yourself in this new chapter.

FROM LAW TO LEH
Piya Bose ditched the legal profession to launch *Girls On The Go*, an allwomen's travel company, in 2008. Initially clueless about what she wanted to do, the former corporate lawyer's only mission was, 'I would rather live than spend my life earning a living'.

"EMBRACE THE UNPREDICTABLE"
I was working at a reputed law firm in Mumbai and I took home a fat paycheck. But the work I was doing failed to inspire me. I had no doubt that I was stuck in the wrong job. Stepping into a new profession without a guide was a trial by fire. Startup cash was a challenge. I overcame that with a zero-cash business model. Entrepreneurship is all about unpredictability, a certain risk appetite and having faith in the invisible forces that govern the market. I once went through a prolonged rough patch when things didn't work out as planned. I encountered aggressive clients and started losing faith in myself, but I couldn't give up.

"IT IS AN ADVENTURE"
The only way to figure out your best career choice is through a series of eliminations. Be clear about the reasons you are opting for a career change. Is it only because you will earn more or is it because you want a new lease of life? Treat it as an adventure and you will stay inspired when the going gets tough. If you are able to hold on even when you're at the bottom, the rewards will be very satisfying.

Effects of workplace

Gossip

Gossip in the workplace can function as a weapon to attack people's reputation or a gift in enhancing it, according to researchers. Lead researcher Tim Hallett, assistant

professor in Indiana University Bloomington's Department of Sociology, and team looked at the power dynamics involved in organizational charts as the gossip unfolded. The study "identifies subtle ways that people who are targets of gossip

are negatively evaluated during formal work meetings, including veiling criticism with sarcasm or talking up another colleague for comparison.

"It also discusses how efforts to embark on negative gossip can be effectively -- and again, subtly -- derailed, by changing the subject, targeting someone else for criticism or by pre-emptive comments that are positive."

Hallett said: "When you're sitting in that business meeting, be attentive to when the talk drifts away from the official task at hand to people who aren't present.

"Be aware that what is going on is a form of politics and it's a form of politics that can be a weapon to undermine people who aren't present. But it also can be a gift. If people are talking positively it can be a way to enhance someone's reputation."

The research, co-authored by IU sociologist Donna Eder, a leading authority in gossip research, and Brent Harger, now a sociologist at Albright College, further discovered that gossip in a formal setting is more likely to involve veiled criticism.

Hallett said: "If you're interested in learning how an organization works, you can look at the organizational chart, which can be useful.

"But often people say, 'I still can't tell how things get done, who the prime movers are.' If you're attentive, you can see who has the informal status, which isn't on the formal charts. It can help you understand how work actually gets done."

How to deal with bad day at work



A bad day at work can really put you down and you may feel like you hate your job. Here's how you can deal with when it is just not your day...

- Talk it out with someone at workplace as it helps in bringing out another perspective to it. You might want to speak to your immediate senior in order to sort out the issue. Someone who is generally positive and looks at the larger picture than on the minute details.
- Rather than focusing on what you hate, try looking at the brighter side by looking at things you like about

your work. Don't take an impulsive decision by deciding to put your papers down. As time passes, the feeling, too, shall subside.

- Listen to your favourite song or read your favourite book or watch an old favourite movie or series in order to divert your attention.
- Meet a friend for a cup of coffee and some conversations. You may or may not talk about your day at work. The best would be to faintly mention about it, get over the topic and go back to talking about something more fun and end the day on a lighter note.



APSEZ acquires 80% stake in Astro for \$185 million in all-cash deal

NEW DELHI: Adani Ports and Special Economic Zone Ltd (APSEZ) has entered into a definitive agreement to acquire 80% stake in Astro, in an all-cash deal for \$185 million, implying an enterprise value (EV) of \$235 million and EV/FY25E earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation and amortisation (EBITDA) at 4.4 times. The transaction is expected to be value accretive from the first year itself, said APSEZ on Friday.

Incorporated in 2009, Astro is an offshore support vessel (OSV) operator in the Middle East, India, Far East Asia and Africa. Astro owns a fleet of 26 OSVs comprising anchor handling tugs (AHTs), flat top barges, multipurpose support vessels (MPSVs) and workboats and provides vessel management and complementary services. During the year ending April 30, 2024, Astro posted \$95 million revenue and \$41 million EBITDA. As of April 30, 2024, Astro was net cash positive.

"Astro's acquisition is part of our road map to become one of the world's largest marine operators. Astro will add 26 OSVs to current fleet of 142 tugs and dredgers,



taking total to 168. The acquisition will give us access to roster of Tier-1 customers, consolidating footprint across Arabian Gulf, Indian subcontinent and Far East Asia," said Ashwani Gupta, director & CEO, APSEZ. Astro has a roster of Tier-1 customers including NMDC, McDermott, COOEC, Larsen & Toubro and Saipem. As per APSEZ, Astro leverages an efficient mix of medium to long-term contracts with customers, which allows it to maintain high fleet utilisation and benefit from increasing charter rates, driven by limited supply of OSV fleet globally.

Bengaluru houses 35% of BFSI global capability centres

BENGALURU. Bengaluru secures the top spot as the premier destination for Banking, financial services and insurance (BFSI) Global Capability Centres (GCCs), as it houses 35% of all BFSI GCCs.

The city also houses a thriving talent ecosystem, where 26% of active job seekers bring the in-demand skills that fuel industry innovation, talent solutions provider Careerment said in a report. Bengaluru is followed by Pune with 15%, Hyderabad with 14% and Chennai with 12% of the active talent pool with in-demand skills in the sector. As per the report, Hyderabad is gaining popularity as the go-to preferred destination for companies looking to set up new centres or expand their operations in India. Moreover, Hyderabad is increasingly becoming the second most preferred city, after Bengaluru, for BFSI professionals looking to relocate. Neelabh Shukla, chief business officer, Careerment, said, "With a vast pool of skilled professionals, India offers GCCs the ideal ecosystem to drive growth, innovation, and transformation."

Sebi amends rules to regulate influencers

NEW DELHI. Markets watchdog Sebi has amended norms in a bid to regulate unregistered financial influencers or finfluencers amid growing concerns about potential risk associated with such unregistered persons. In three separate notifications, the regulator has restricted associations between its regulated entities and unregistered individuals. This came after the board of Sebi approved a proposal in this regard last month.

As per the notifications, the persons regulated by Sebi and the agents of such persons will not have any association like any transaction involving money, referral of a client, interaction of information technology systems with any other person who, directly or indirectly, provides advice, recommendation or makes explicit claim of return.

"No person regulated by the Board (Sebi) or the agent of such a person shall have any direct or indirect association, with another person who provides advice or any recommendation, directly or indirectly, in respect of or related to a security or securities, unless the person is registered with or otherwise permitted by the Board to provide such advice or recommendation; or makes any claim, of returns or performance expressly or impliedly, in respect of or related to a security or securities, unless the person has been permitted by the Board to make such a claim," the regulator said. By requiring finfluencers to register with Sebi and adhere to specific guidelines, the regulator is setting a standard for accountability and expertise in the sector, market experts said. The move would ensure that mutual fund houses, research analysts, registered investment advisors and stock brokers do not partner with finfluencers. On the other hand, a small window has been provided for investor education from such partnership. This is subject to a condition that these finfluencers do not provide any recommendation or claim any return or performance. This came amid growing concern over the potential risks associated with unregulated finfluencers who might offer biased or misleading advice. They usually work on a commission-based model. Finfluencers have significantly impacted their followers' financial decisions in the last few years and thus Sebi's regulatory framework can make them accountable and responsible for the advice they provide.

To give this effect, Sebi has amended norms governing depository participants, intermediaries and Securities Contracts.

UK's Aviva found guilty in \$26 million fake invoice scandal in India: Report

Mumbai Non-food bank credit registered a growth of 15.1 per cent to Rs 162.92 lakh crore as of July 2024 as compared with 14.7 per cent a year ago, according to the Reserve Bank of India's latest data.

However, deposit growth of banks lagged behind at 11.3 per cent at Rs 213.28 lakh crore, RBI data shows. With deposits growth slowing down, banks are racing to mobilise funds through special deposit schemes and other innovative plans to meet the credit demand in the system. Many banks have reported a decline in deposits during the quarter ended June 2024 as customers are now looking at alternative avenues like the capital markets to park their funds at better returns. Credit to agriculture and allied activities remained robust registering a growth of 18.1 per cent at Rs 21.55 lakh crore in July 2024, compared with 16.7 per cent a year ago, RBI said. Credit growth to industry strengthened significantly at 10.2 per cent to Rs 37.05 lakh crore in July 2024 compared with 4.6 per cent in July 2023. Among major industries, credit to chemicals and

chemical products, food processing, petroleum, coal products and nuclear fuels and infrastructure recorded a higher growth in July 2024 as compared to their growth a year ago, while credit to basic metal and metal product and textiles moderated, the RBI said. The central bank said credit growth to medium industries rose to 17.2 per cent to Rs 3.17 lakh crore and large industry by 8.5 per cent to Rs 26.74 lakh crore.

Festive offer Credit growth to services sector moderated to 15.4 per cent in July 2024 from 19.7 per cent a year ago, primarily driven down by relatively lower credit growth in non-banking financial companies (NBFCs) and trade segments. Credit growth in commercial real estate, tourism, hotels and restaurants and computer software accelerated during July 2024, the RBI said. However, personal loans growth was lower at 17.8 per cent to Rs 51.39 lakh crore in July 2024 as compared to 18.4 per cent a year ago, largely due to moderation in growth recorded in other personal loans and vehicle loans.

However, credit growth to housing, the largest constituent of the segment, accelerated.

According to the RBI, growth in credit card outstanding declined to 22 per cent to Rs



2.75 lakh crore from 32.4 per cent a year ago. As per ICRA's assessment, the recent regulatory actions like urging banks to reduce their credit-to-deposit (CD) ratio, increasing risk weights towards high growing loan segments, and the proposal to review the LCR framework, all point to the need to align credit growth with deposit growth while focusing on

growing retail deposits. The non-food bank credit (NFBC) growth may slow down to Rs 19.0-20.5 lakh crore (11.6-12.5 per cent YoY) in FY2025 from Rs 22.3 lakh crore (16.3 per cent) in FY2024. Incremental deposit growth is expected to moderate to Rs 19.4-20.0 lakh crore (9.5-9.8 per cent YoY) in FY2025 from Rs. 23.2 lakh crore (12.9 per cent YoY) in FY2024. With credit growth outpacing deposit growth, the CD ratio reached an all-time high of 78.0 per cent (80.2 per cent including impact of HDFC merger) as of March 2024 in the last five years. Thereafter, following the regulatory nudge to banks to moderate their CD ratio, there has been a slight dip to 77.1 per cent as of June 2024 with incremental CD ratio declining to 60 per cent in Q1 FY2025, ICRA said. Banks are expected to witness a moderation their credit growth targets in the run-up to the proposed implementation of revised LCR norms from April 1, 2025, resulting in an improvement (decline) in the CD ratio and increase in liquidity buffers.

Forex Update: India's Foreign Exchange Reserves Surge Over \$7 Billion to Touch Record \$681.6 Billion

Gold reserves increased \$893 million to \$60.997 billion during the week ended August 23, according to the latest RBI data.

New Delhi India's forex reserves surged \$7.023 billion to touch a new high of \$681.688 billion in the week ended August 23, according to the latest data from the Reserve Bank of India (RBI). The overall reserves had jumped \$4.546 billion to \$674.664 billion in the previous reporting week. The previous all-time high for the overall reserves was recorded at \$674.919 billion as of August 2. During the week ended August 23, gold reserves increased \$893 million to \$60.997 billion, according to the latest RBI data.



For the week ended August 23, foreign currency assets, a major component of the reserves, increased by \$5.983 billion to \$597.552 billion, the data released on Friday showed. Expressed in dollar terms, the foreign currency assets include the effect of appreciation or depreciation of non-US units like the euro, pound and yen held in the foreign exchange reserves. The special drawing rights (SDRs) increased \$118 million to \$18.459 billion. India's reserve position with the IMF was up by \$30 million to

\$4.68 billion in the reporting week, according to the latest data. "The record all-time high level of India's forex will create external sector resilience. With the support of strategic policy initiatives and a diligent monetary policy stance, the forex has reached a record all-time high of over \$681 billion (as of August 23, 2024), amidst global economic headwinds and deepening geopolitical uncertainties," Sanjeev Agrawal, president of the PHD Chamber of Commerce and Industry, said. This will boost India's economy on a faster development trajectory, strengthening its position internationally, drawing in foreign investments, and promoting domestic trade and industry, he said. "Moving ahead, the country's substantial foreign exchange reserves will provide the RBI greater flexibility in monetary policy and currency management," said Agrawal.

Fiscal deficit touches 17.2% of annual target as of end-July

NEW DELHI. The country's fiscal deficit reached 17.2% of the annual target as of the end of July in the current fiscal year (FY25), according to data published by the Controller General of Accounts (CGA) on Friday. In absolute terms, the fiscal deficit amounted to Rs 2,76,945 crore. In comparison, during the same period in FY24, the deficit was much higher, accounting for 33.9% of the Budget Estimates (BE). In the Union Budget for 2024, the government set a target to reduce the fiscal deficit to 4.9% of the gross domestic product (GDP) for FY25. This is a decrease from the fiscal deficit of 5.6% of GDP recorded in 2023-24. In monetary terms, the government aims to limit the total fiscal deficit to Rs 16,13,312 crore for the current fiscal year (2024-25). As per the data, the net tax revenue was Rs 7.15 lakh crore, or 27.7 per cent of the BE for the current fiscal.

During the first four months leading up to July, the central government's total expenditure amounted to Rs 13 lakh crore, which represents 27% of the



Budget Estimates (BE). This is a decrease from the 30.7% of BE recorded in the same period last year.

Out of the total expenditure, Rs 10,39,091 crore was allocated to the revenue account, while Rs 2,61,260 crore was designated for the capital account. According to Aditi Nayar, Chief Economist with ICRA, "The outlook for revenue receipts seems fairly favourable, while there may be a miss on capex and disinvestment targets. Nevertheless, expenditure savings typically accumulated by ministries every year are likely to provide additional cushion to offset shortfall from other heads, if needed. Govt targets fiscal deficit to 4.9% of GDP for FY25. In the Union Budget for 2024, the government set a target to reduce the fiscal deficit to 4.9% of GDP for FY25. This is a decrease from the fiscal deficit of 5.6% of GDP recorded in FY24. In monetary terms, the government aims to limit total fiscal deficit to Rs 16,13,312 crore for FY25.

Latest GDP numbers cast a cloud over the great Indian growth story

What's upsetting is the fact that all the other moving parts of the economy, taken together, couldn't make up for the decline in the gold vein of government spending.

NEW DELHI. India's growth fairy seems to have lost a bit of its roar. During the first quarter of the current fiscal, real GDP grew by 6.7%, as against 7.8% in Q4, FY24 and 8.2% a year ago. The continuing decline in agriculture, private consumption along with a slowdown in government expenditure landed a sidwinder punch on the growth rate, which hit below 7%.

The estimate is within the consensus expectations that stretched a wide range of 6%-7.1%, but the slowdown in economic activity raises doubts if India can see another banner year, especially after FY24's growth momentum, which seemed unstoppable, like the march of time. Analysts had forewarned about the likely decline in growth citing lower government expenditure amid the 2024

election season. But what's upsetting is the fact that all the other moving parts of the economy, taken together, couldn't make up for the decline in the gold vein of government spending. In other words, private consumption, investments and agricultural sector that were expected to ginger up and aid growth, are yet to commit themselves fully.

According to the data released by the National Statistics Office on Friday, real Gross Value Added (GVA) grew by 6.8% in Q1, FY25 as against 8.3% in Q1 of the previous financial year, led by the growth in secondary sector that turned in 8.4% growth over last year. In absolute numbers, real GDP at constant prices is estimated at Rs 43.64 lakh crore during Q1, compared to Rs 40.91 lakh crore a year before, registering a 6.7% growth rate. Real GVA in Q1 is estimated at Rs 40.73 lakh crore as against Rs 38.12 lakh crore last year, showing a growth of 6.8%. On the supply side, if both primary and tertiary sector saw a slowdown, Q1 headline number got the gentlest of encouragement from the secondary sector. Primary sector comprising agriculture and mining and quarrying registered a pale growth of 2.7% in Q1, as against 4.2% last year. Within this,

growth in agriculture and allied services sector, which is enduring a sober fate, crawled to a dismal 2% compared to 3.7% registered a year before. Mining and quarrying, on the other hand, saw a



flat growth of 7.2% compared to 7% last year. The primary sector is like the breath of life itself and needs to do better. It holds the keys for both food inflation, as well as, private consumption -- the two other components that are troubling households. Tertiary sector, like the primary sector, witnessed a slowdown registering 7.2% growth rate during Q1 compared to 10.7% registered last year. Two of three sub-components namely trade, hotels, and other services and financial, real estate and professional

services saw a significant decline in economic activity during the quarter gone by. However, public administration, defence and other services posted a growth rate at 9.5% in Q1 compared to the previous year's 8.3%, but the marginal increase wasn't significant enough to make up for the decline in trade and financial services sectors. It's the secondary sector that did the heavy lifting during Q1, having turned in a growth rate of 8.4% as against 5.9% last year. All the three sub-components namely manufacturing, electricity, and other utility services and construction clocked in higher growth rates over last year at 8.4%, 10.4% and 10.5% respectively. On the expenditure side, private consumption, the largest component accounting for over 56% of the GDP, needs lots of improvisatory energy. During Q1, it grew by 9.8% as against the previous year's 8.2%, but has much potential. Government final consumption expenditure, which has been playing to the whistle, finally took a break, thanks to the elections. It saw a de-growth of declined to 0.2% y-o-y at Rs 4.14 lakh crore. Gross fixed capital formation, an indicator of investment activity, increased by 7.5% in Q1.

NEWS BOX

US Open: Bopanna into men's and mixed doubles pre-quarters, Bhambri advances

India's Rohan Bopanna advanced to the pre-quarter finals in both men's and mixed doubles events of the US Open



New Delhi. India's Rohan Bopanna made progress in both men's and mixed doubles event of the US Open on Saturday, August 31. The 44-year-old competing alongside Indonesia's Aldila Sutjiadi beat Demi Schuurs and Tim Pütz in a tight first round match by 7-6 (7), 7-6 (5).

Both pairs put on an excellent exhibition of tennis fighting tooth and nail for the victory forcing both games into a tie-breaker. However, it was Bopanna and Sutjiadi who prevailed over the German-Dutch duo to progress to the pre-quarters where they will face the pair of John Peers and Katerina Siniakova. Bopanna also had a field day even in the men's doubles event as he, along with Matthew Ebden, edged past the pair of Roberto Carballés Baena and Federico Coria comfortably in the second-round match. The second-seeded duo beat the Spanish-Argentinian duo by 6-2, 6-4 to seal their spot in the pre-quarters. They will be up against the Argentinian pair of Maximo Gonzalez and Andrés Molteni in the next game.

N Sriram Balaji crashes out

Meanwhile, another Indian, Yuki Bhambri, also progressed ahead at Flushing Meadows with a second round victory along with Albano Olivetti. The duo beat Austin Krajicek and Jean-Julien Rojer by 4-6, 6-3, 7-5 to progress to the third round.

However, N. Sriram Balaji failed to move ahead in the competition losing in the second round along with his Argentine partner Guido Andreozzi. The duo lost to Michael Venus and Neal Skupski in straight sets by 6(4)-7, 4-6 to bring their journey to an end. Earlier, Balaji and Andreozzi had started their journey by beating the Kiwi-Mexican pair of Marcus Daniell and Miguel Angel Reyes-Varela in the first round.

US Open: Frances Tiafoe solves Ben Shelton puzzle, Grigor Dimitrov marches on

New Delhi. It deserved to be on primetime, but it played out to be a Friday matinee blockbuster. Local boys Ben Shelton and Frances Tiafoe threw punches at each other over five sets in an epic third-round match in front of a packed Arthur Ashe Stadium at the US Open on Friday, August 30. It was Tiafoe, the 20th seed, who prevailed in a slugfest that lasted four hours and three minutes. There was only respect between the two at the end as Tiafoe and Shelton took a moment to embrace each other at the net after the marathon contest. Frances Tiafoe came from behind to win 4-6, 7-5, 6-7(5), 6-4, 6-3 against his big-serving fellow American opponent to book his place in the fourth round where he is likely to face Novak Djokovic, the defending champion.

Tiafoe's win marked a significant revenge against Shelton, who had defeated him in the quarterfinals of the US Open last year. The electric atmosphere at the stadium was palpable as the two players engaged in a high-intensity battle, with both showcasing exceptional shotmaking and athleticism. "Ben is an incredible player man. He's an incredible player. He really is. He goes for all kinds of shots. He's got no care in the world. It's really annoying," Tiafoe said, perfectly summing up his emotions during an on-court interview.

"He has for a great serve. He has great mercy out here. He's really talented. He comes up with great shots. So can I. It gives highlight after highlight. I really hope you guys enjoyed the show. It was a battle," he added.

Despite Shelton's powerful serve, which included 23 aces, Tiafoe managed to carve out 21 break points, converting five of them to take control of the match. The turning point came in the fifth set, where Tiafoe notched the only break of serve to take a decisive 3-1 lead. This momentum shift ultimately sealed Shelton's fate, as Tiafoe went on to win the set and the match.

Tiafoe's performance was marked by his relentless approach to the net, where he executed volleys with precision, winning 35 out of 48 points when he advanced. His ability to redirect Shelton's powerful groundstrokes to his advantage and his more comfortable day on serve also contributed significantly to his victory. Tiafoe's resilience and determination shone through. After failing to convert break points in consecutive return games in the second set, he bounced back to clinch the only break of the set. Similarly, when Shelton took a 6/0 lead in the third set tie-break, Tiafoe responded with five straight points, recapturing some of the momentum.

Manchester United sign Manuel Ugarte from Paris Saint Germain

Manchester United completed signed Paris Saint Germain and Uruguay mid fielder Manuel Ugarte for an initial fee of £42m. Ugarte made 37 appearances for PSG across all tournaments and also helped them to their 12th Ligue 1 title.



along with his initial fee of £42m taking his overall earnings to £50.5m.

Reacting on his transfer, Ugarte said that he was delighted to be a part of Manchester United calling it an ambitious club. He also stated that he's eagerly looking forward to playing in front of United fans at Old Trafford. "It is an incredible feeling to join a club of this magnitude; one that is admired all around the world. Manchester United is an ambitious club and I am an ambitious player. I know how incredible United fans are and I cannot wait to experience Old Trafford," Ugarte was quoted as saying by BBC. Further speaking ahead, Ugarte vowed to fight to win trophies for the club and elevate its level.

We will fight to win trophies; Ugarte "I'm someone who is so determined to

succeed; I will sacrifice and give everything for my team-mates. Together we will fight to win trophies and reach the level where this club needs to be," he added. United had Ugarte on their target throughout the transfer window and are delighted with the signing of mid-fielder. Sporting director Dan Ashworth hailed Ugarte as one of best ball winning midfield players mentioning

his stellar record both at the club and international level.

"He is among the very best ball-winning midfield players in the world and has an excellent record at both club and international level. His qualities, experience and passion will be a great complement to our strong group of midfielders," said Ashworth.

Azam Khan falls on ground after being hit by bouncer on neck in CPL 2024

New Delhi. Pakistan's wicket-keeper batter Azam Khan is taking part in the Caribbean Premier League 2024. However, he is not having the best of times in the T20 league so far. The batter who has not contributed many runs for Guyana Amazon Warriors in the league, was involved in a bizarre dismissal on Friday. Azam arrived at the crease as the No. 5 batter for the Warriors in their match against Antigua and Barbuda Falcons. He managed to score only five runs in the last seven balls. After initial struggle, he tried to bring the momentum

back by hitting a four against Shamar Springer.

However, the bowlers responded with a bouncer on the very next delivery. Azam tried to pull the delivery towards the leg-side but missed the contact with ball altogether. Rather the ball struck him straight on his neck and he couldn't maintain his balance and collapsed on the ground. As the bouncer castled him at the crease, his bat also hit the stumps, which put an end to his innings. Azam fell on the ground while holding his neck as the other team checked upon him.

Chennai all set to witness supercars vroom in F4 and IRL night street racing

Chennai. Chennai is all set to witness the Night Street racing from 31st August to 1st September in F4 and Indian Racing League. Two types of cars which will compete in the races were displayed on Marina beach next to 'Namma Chennai' sign to encourage the public who are going to witness the race for the first time in the City. For Formula 4, Mygale F4 Gen 2 cars with Alpine 13 litre, turbo engines reaching a speed of 210 kmph and for Indian Racing League, Wol Thunder GB08 with Aprilia RSV5 1.0 engine with a top speed of 240 kmph are set to be used. 18-year-old Ruhaan Alva, competing in the race said that he has been racing since he was seven years old. "I drove street track in Hyderabad and it was real fun and I'm expecting the same here. Racing circuits are



purpose-built just for racing but streets are particularly modified streets for an event and to choose between the two is a tough question", stated Rehaan Alva. 31-year-old Gabriella Jilkova from the Czech Republic started racing at the age of five with Karting and technically matured to race the current car, while in Europe she was driving GT

cars. "It's my third year competing in the Indian Racing League. I like India, it's different to Europe and I like to explore and I'm always happy to come back here. You can't compare racing in a circuit to driving in a street. If you are into cars, you will love the acceleration, downforce, braking and G force which is normally between 2 or 3," stated Gabriella.

Chetan excited to race on street circuit

Chetan, from Chennai stated that competing in his home circuit said it was a wonderful feeling. "I've been racing for 18 years but never have I ever raced in a street circuit. I've seen night race in Bahrain and it is going to be challenging", stated Chetan. Being a paraplegic as both his legs were amputated in a very early age due to deformity.

Who is Alexei Popyrin 25-year-old Australian dumps out Novak Djokovic in US Open

New Delhi. Alexei Popyrin clinched the biggest win of his career when he stunned defending champion Novak Djokovic in four sets at the US Open on Friday. The 25-year-old Australian made it to the fourth round of a Grand Slam for the first time in his career. Popyrin said was not able to believe what he had done over three hours at the Arthur Ashe Stadium, halting Djokovic's bid to win his first major of the year. In a thrilling match that lasted 3 hours and 18 minutes, Popyrin secured a 6-4, 6-4, 2-6, 6-4 victory. Remarkably, Popyrin is the first Australian in 18 years to defeat Djokovic at a Grand Slam. Alexei Popyrin is an Australian tennis player whose career has been marked by impressive performances and steady progress through the ranks. Born on August 5, 1999, in Sydney to Russian parents, Popyrin's diverse cultural background is reflected in his ability to speak three languages: English, Russian, and Spanish. His journey in tennis began at a young age, and he quickly made a name for himself by peaking at No. 2 in the junior rankings. A major milestone in his early career was winning the 2017 Roland Garros boys' singles title, a victory that hinted at his potential on the professional circuit.

That moment for Alexei Popyrin pic.twitter.com/DbAMvn4rGJ — US Open Tennis (@usopen) August 31, 2024

Popyrin's career so far

Popyrin's professional career has been a story of gradual ascent. He won his first ATP title at the Singapore Open in 2021, followed by a second title at the 2023 Croatia Open, where he defeated three-time Grand Slam champion Stan Wawrinka in the final. His success continued in 2024, when he claimed his third title at the Canadian Open in Montreal, a Masters 1000 event. Ranked



No. 62 at the time, Popyrin stunned the tennis world by defeating several top-20 players, including three who were ranked in the top 10. His victory over fifth seed Andrey Rublev in the final was a testament to his growing confidence and ability to compete with the best.

Popyrin vs Djokovic Popyrin's match-up against Novak Djokovic

has become a recurring theme in 2024. The two have faced each other in three Grand Slam events this year, barring Roland Garros, with each encounter showcasing Popyrin's potential to challenge the elite player. Their first meeting was at the Australian Open 2024, where Popyrin managed to take a set from the 24-time Grand Slam champion and had several chances to win another. Although he eventually lost the match, his performance was a clear indication of his ability to push even the greatest players to their limits.

Their second encounter came at Wimbledon 2024, where Popyrin again proved to be a tough opponent for Djokovic. He won the opening set and put up a strong fight before the Serb eventually took the match in four sets. However, it was their third meeting at the US Open that marked a significant milestone in Popyrin's career. "Third time lucky I guess, obviously we had some battles at Australian Open, at Wimbledon, I had chances to win those matches but couldn't take it. This match was a little bit different I was able to take my chances when I had them and yeah played some good tennis," said Popyrin said after the game.

Gus Atkinson on 'surreal' achievement of century at Lord's: 'Hasn't sunk in yet'

Gus Atkinson scored maiden Test hundred at Lord's

Atkinson became 6th player with a century and 10-fer at Lord's

Atkinson scored 118 (115) smashing 14 fours and four sixes

New Delhi. England fast bowler Gus Atkinson said that he never thought that he would get his name on the Lord's honours board as a batter after scoring his maiden Test hundred on Day 2 of the second Test against Sri Lanka. Notably, Atkinson played a magnificent innings of 118 (115) with the help of 14 fours and four sixes to help England reach a good score of 427 in the first innings. Coming in to bat at number 8,

Atkinson got involved in a crucial 92-run stand for the seventh wicket with Joe Root and later added 85 runs for the ninth wicket with Matthew Potts (21) to bring England in a commanding position. Reacting to his maiden Test hundred at the home of cricket, Atkinson called the entire experience surreal and said that he never thought about having his name in the honours list. "It was very surreal, I don't think it has sunk in yet. To be out there and score a 100 - I didn't ever think I would be on the Lord's honours board for batting, so a pretty cool day. My dad, brother and sister were here - it's my brother's birthday so it was a nice treat for him - then a few mates as well," said Atkinson after the Day's play. Further speaking ahead, Atkinson revealed that he was under pressure after a chat with his



teammates but relished the achievement with a smile on Day 2. Atkinson's entry in elite club "I went for dinner with Zak [Crawley] and [Harry Brook] last night and they were saying 'Oh yeah, it took me five Tests to get a hundred' and stuff, so there was a bit of pressure on there. It is hard not to smile in that situation. I don't think I cracked

a smile when I was walking off but it was hard not to," he added. Following his century, Atkinson got his name in the elite list as he became just the sixth player to score a hundred and take a ten-wicket haul at Lord's. Earlier, he got his career off to a remarkable start picking a 12-wicket haul on debut against West Indies in July. He now has his name in all three honours board at the historic venue namely players with five wicket haul, ten wicket haul and a century. The 26-year-old took just four innings to complete the feat, becoming the fastest player to do so. Meanwhile, England finished Day 2 on top of the game as they bundled out Sri Lanka for 196 to take a massive 231-run lead in the first innings. They finished the day on 25/1 after seven overs with Ben Duckett (15*).



Sara Ali Khan

Looks Chic In Athleisure, Smiles At Paps As She Steps Out From Gym, Video Goes Viral

Sara Ali Khan is a fitness lover and never misses it. She is often seen exiting the gym and sharing her pilates session workout. Today, Sara was once again snapped in the city. She was seen coming out of the gym in a chic athleisure. The video has gone viral. In the video, shared by Snehzala, we can see Sara wearing a green colour shorts and a white top. She completed the look with a multi-colour sling bag. While heading towards her car, Sara smiled at Paps. She even posed for them. The actress recently shared a photo with her co-star Aditya Roy Kapur and director Anurag Basu, which has undoubtedly increased the excitement among fans. Moreover, Aditya reshared the picture on his Instagram handle. The latest post shows the duo with their Metro In Dino director, Anurag Basu. The trio was spotted making faces and wearing goofy expressions as they



posed for a selfie. The silly photograph appears to have been taken in a clinic set up. Another picture showed the trio posing with other crew members as well. The actors also made a collaborative post with the goofy selfie and wrote, "Metro In Dino Madness mein hum Teeno."

"Metro In Dino is a sequel to 2007's Life In A Metro. The film, directed by Anurag Basu, will also star Pankaj Tripathi, Neena Gupta, Konkona Sensharma, Fatima Sana Shaikh, Ali Fazal and others in leading parts. The film was originally intended to be released in September, but it was postponed to April earlier this year. It will now be released on November 29 in theatres.

In a conversation with Karan Johar on his popular show, Koffee With Karan, Sara Ali Khan talked about her equation with Kareena Kapoor Khan. When the host joked about whether Saif Ali Khan had ever asked her to address Kareena as her 'Chhoti Maa,' the Kedarnath actor said, "I think Kareena would have a nervous breakdown if I was to call her chhoti maa." The actor further added that Kareena would be like, "What? No!" Talking about the same, the Murder Mubarak actor Sara said, "I used to be like, 'What should I call her? Kareena? Auntie?'" Then, her father, Saif Ali Khan, told her, "You don't want to call her auntie!" Laughing at her chatter with her father, Sara Ali Khan concluded by saying that she calls her 'K' or 'Kareena.'



Did Justin Bieber and Hailey's Friend Accidentally Reveal Baby Jack's Real Birthdate?



Justin and Hailey Bieber recently delighted fans by announcing the arrival of their newborn son, though they kept his exact birth date under wraps. However, their close friend, British model Adwoa Aboah, may have unintentionally revealed the date. Justin officially introduced their son, Jack Blue Bieber, on August 24, sharing a photo of his tiny foot on Instagram. On August 28, Adwoa posted heartwarming photos of her baby daughter, Shy Trinity Afua Wheatley, born on August 23, alongside her husband, American skateboarder Daniel Wheatley. When Hailey left an enthusiastic comment on Adwoa's post, her response, "A day apart," led fans to speculate that Jack might have been born on August 22. As of now, neither Justin nor Hailey has confirmed their son's exact birth date.

According to Mirror US, Justin and Hailey Bieber's choice of name for their son, Jack Blue Bieber, holds special significance for the couple. The name "Blue" is particularly meaningful, as it is also the middle name of Justin's father, Jeremy Bieber. This name choice continues a long-standing Bieber family tradition of using the initials "JB." Justin's half-siblings, Jazmyn and Jaxon, also share this pattern, making it a cherished family custom. Interestingly, the only exception in the family is Jeremy's youngest daughter, Bay Lynn, whose name does not follow this tradition.

After welcoming the son, a source close to the new parents told People, "They're both overjoyed. The baby is such a miracle. He's adorable and doing well. Hailey's doing well, too. The pregnancy was something that they very much wished and prayed for. The day they found out that Hailey was pregnant was the best ever for Justin. He was over the moon with excitement. It was a big celebration for them. Justin's already a great dad."

Pyaar Ka Punchnama Actress Ishita Raj 'LOVES' Hardik Pandya, Says 'It Is Fun To...'



Kartik Aaryan's Pyaar Ka Punchnama actress Ishita Raj has said that she 'loves' Hardik Pandya. In a recent interview, Ishita was asked about the cricketer when she admitted having a crush on him and shared that she is really fond of Pandya. "He is a great cricket all-rounder. It is fun to watch him bat. I love him, he is really one of my favourite cricketers," she told Filmigyan. Interestingly, this comes at a time when Hardik is rumoured to be dating singer Jasmin Walia. Speculations regarding their dating life began last month after eagle-eyed followers noticed that the two shared photos on Instagram by the same pool, with the scenic Greek landscape in the background.

Jasmin posted a sultry picture of herself in a blue bikini, covered with a breezy blue shirt, stylishly posed by a pool with the stunning Mykonos scenery behind her. Her look was completed with a wide-brimmed straw hat and oversized sunglasses, adding to the chic vacation vibes. On the other hand, Hardik shared a video of himself walking around the same pool, dressed in a casual yet fashionable outfit consisting of cream-colored pants, a patterned shirt, and sunglasses. The matching backgrounds in their posts sparked a wave of curiosity among fans. Hardik Pandya was previously married to Natasa Stankovic. The two, who tied the knot in May 2020 and renewed their wedding vows according to the Hindu and Christian rituals in February 2023, confirmed their separation in July 2024. They issued a joint statement and mentioned that it was a "tough decision" for both of them and added that they

"After 4 years of being together, Hardik and I have decided to mutually part ways. We tried our best together and gave it our all, and we believe this is in the best interest for the both of us."

Ananya Panday

Aditya Roy Kapur Have Eyes Only For Each Other, Rumoured Exes Surprise Fans

Ananya Panday and Aditya Roy Kapur were rumoured to be dating for two years until they reportedly broke up in June this year. Ananya Panday's rumoured relationship with Aditya Roy Kapur has often hit headlines. Now, a brand collaboration video has been released, nearly two months after their breakup, in which the actors can't take their eyes off each other. Ananya and Aditya shot for this eyewear brand a little while before they broke up. Several video campaigns were released after the alleged breakup. However, the release of this video, nearly two months later, has surprised fans. In the video, Ananya Panday could be seen smiling brightly as Aditya Roy Kapur looked at her lovingly. Ananya also shared the video on her Instagram Story.



One person wrote, "How can this possible...babu mushay it's Bollywood." Another added, "Omg, I don't know how this will happen but I want to see them together." Another commented, "Hope they are together." One fan asked, "Are they together again?" Another wrote, "This is so weird."

While the duo never confirmed their relationship, their public appearances and several confessions during interviews were proof enough for fans. It started after Ananya appeared on Koffee With Karan 7 last year. The actress was talking about relationships when Karan Johar dropped a hint that she and Aditya could be together. After that, Ananya and Aditya enjoyed a romantic getaway in

Europe. Previously, Ananya and Aditya attended an Arctic Monkeys concert together in Madrid. Aditya and Ananya reportedly dated for almost two years. In June, the latter took the internet by storm with her cryptic post. The post hinted that they'd broken up. "If it is truly meant for you, it will come back to you. It will leave only for the sake of teaching you the lessons you could only learn on your own. If it is truly meant for you, it will return even if you've pushed it away, even if you're in denial, even if you assume something so beautiful could never be truly yours - because if it's truly meant for you, it is never not a piece of you. It is never not intricately tied into the depths of your soul," read the quote shared by Ananya on her handle. She captioned it as "Monday Manifesting" alongside a thank you, an evil eye, and a blue butterfly emoji.

