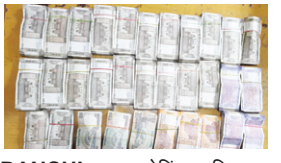


BRIEF NEWS

वाहन चेकिंग के दौरान
11.45 लाख रुपये बरामद



RANCHI : वाहन चेकिंग अभियान के दौरान लालपुर इलाके से 11.45 लाख रुपये बरामद किए गए हैं। बरामद पैसे पंडरा बाजार समिति के एक कारोबारी का बताया जा रहा है। गौरतलब है कि पूरे राज्य में लोकसभा चुनाव को लेकर सचन चेकिंग अभियान चलाया जा रहा है। इसी क्रम में रांची के लालपुर थाना क्षेत्र में भी लालपुर पुलिस द्वारा रविवार को वाहन की चेकिंग की जा रही थी। इसी दौरान एक कार को चेक किया गया तो उसमें से 11.45 लाख नगद रूपए बरामद किए गए। रांची के सीनियर एसपी चंदन कुमार सिन्हा ने बताया कि लोकसभा चुनाव को लेकर लगातार वाहनों की चेकिंग की जा रही है, ताकि अवैध हथियार, शराब और नगद सहित दूसरे चीजों को बरामद किया जा सके।

नाबालिग से सामूहिक दुष्कर्म पर झालसा ने लिया संज्ञान

RANCHI : मीडिया में खबर आने के बाद झारखंड हाईकोर्ट सह झालसा के कार्यपालक अध्यक्ष न्यायमूर्ति सुजीत नारायण प्रसाद ने संज्ञान लिया है। उन्होंने जिला विधिक सेवा प्राधिकार को आदेश दिया कि तत्काल दुष्कर्म पीड़िता और उसके परिवार को सहायता करें। इस आदेश के आलोक में न्यायायुक्त-सह-अध्यक्ष जिला विधिक सेवा प्राधिकार रांची विचारक पंच ने सचिव को पीड़िता को हर सभव मदद पहुंचाने का निर्देश दिया है। बता दें कि 13 अप्रैल को जराया मेला देखने गीता नाबालिग के साथ पांच युवकों ने सामूहिक दुष्कर्म किया था। झालसा सचिव राकेश रंजन ने एक टीम गठित की और खुद भी टीम के साथ बजरा स्थित पीड़िता के घर पहुंचे।

श्री चैती दुर्गा पूजा महासमिति के पंडाल का उद्घाटन आज

RANCHI : रांची के मेन रोड स्थित भुलाहा तालाब में श्री चैती दुर्गा पूजा महासमिति के पंडाल का उद्घाटन सोमवार को किया जाएगा। रविवार को समिति ने प्रेसवार्ता कर इसकी जानकारी दी। महामंत्री गोपाल पारीक, अध्यक्ष शंकर दुबे ने बताया कि सोमवार कि सुबह सर्वदेव पूजन एवं माता का प्राण-प्रतिष्ठा किया जाएगा।

गीता कोड़ा के लिए बाबूलाल मरांडी ने मांगी सुरक्षा

RANCHI : भाजपा के प्रदेश अध्यक्ष बाबूलाल मरांडी ने सिंहभूम लोकसभा क्षेत्र से पार्टी कैडिडेट गीता कोड़ा की सुरक्षा को लेकर चिंता जताई है। साथ ही झामुमो पर आरोप लगाया है कि लोकसभा चुनाव में अपनी हार निश्चित देखकर हताशा में इस पार्टी के कार्यकर्ताओं ने रविवार को प्रचार के दौरान गीता कोड़ा की एवं उनके समर्थकों को धरकर क्षति पहुंचाने का प्रयास किया है। सोशल मीडिया के जरिए नाराजगी और हेरानी जाहिर करते कहा कि मुख्यमंत्री के गृह जिला में रहने के बावजूद प्रशासन गीताजी को सुरक्षा मुहैया नहीं करा पा रहा है। उन्होंने झारखंड के डीजीपी से तत्काल मामले का संज्ञान लेकर दुस्साहस करने वाले लोगों पर अतिवर्ध कारवाई सुनिश्चित करने की अपील की है।

रामनवमी को लेकर जिला प्रशासन अलर्ट, सोशल मीडिया पर आपत्तिजनक पोस्ट करने वालों पर पैनी निगाह

माहौल बिगाड़ने की लगी भनक तो जाएंगे जेल

CRIME REPORTER RANCHI : रामनवमी के मौके पर सोशल मीडिया पर किसी भी तरह की अफवाह फैलाने वाले सोधे जेल जायेंगे। इसे लेकर झारखंड पुलिस की ओर से गाइडलाइन जारी की गई है। झारखंड पुलिस के प्रवक्ता सह आईजी ऑपरेशन अमोल वेणुकांत होमकर ने बताया कि राज्य के सभी जिलों के एसएसपी, एसपी और डीसी को अपने-अपने सोशल मीडिया सेल द्वारा जारी दिशा-निर्देशों को लोगों के साथ-साथ महावीरी अखाड़ों और शांति समितियों को साझा करने का निर्देश दिया गया है। उन्होंने बताया कि सोशल मीडिया पर नजर रखने के लिए जो मॉनिटरिंग सेल बनाया गया है वह काफी हाईटेक है। उदाहरण के तौर पर अगर कोई किसी अनजान सर्वर से मैसेज वायरल करता है तो इसकी जानकारी तुरंत मॉनिटरिंग सेल के जरिए साइबर टीम को दे दी जाएगी। सोशल मीडिया के

जयंती पर याद किए गए देश के पहले कानून मंत्री बाबा साहब डॉ. भीमराव अंबेडकर हमारा संविधान ही हमारी ताकत : कल्पना

PHOTON NEWS RANCHI :

डॉ भीम राव अंबेडकर की जयंती पर झारखंड ने उन्हें याद किया और श्रद्धासुमन अर्पित किया। झारखंड मुक्ति मोर्चा की नेत्री कल्पना सोरेन ने उन्हें श्रद्धांजलि दी। झारखंड कांग्रेस ने उनकी जयंती पर कार्यक्रम का आयोजन कर उन्हें याद किया। राष्ट्रीय जनता दल की ओर से भी कार्यक्रम आयोजित कर उन्हें श्रद्धांजलि दी गयी। संविधान निमार्ता को उनके अमूल्य योगदान के लिए लोगों ने याद किया। विश्व हिंदू परिषद रांची महानगर द्वारा डोरंडा स्थित उनकी प्रतिमा पर माल्यार्पण कर उन्हें श्रद्धा सुमन अर्पित किया गया। कल्पना सोरेन ने कहा कि संविधान हमारी ताकत है। संविधान हमारा स्वाभिमान है। देश को संविधान रूपी महान ग्रंथ देने वाले संविधान निमार्ता, सामाजिक समता और सामाजिक न्याय के पुरोधा, भारत रत्न बाबासाहेब डॉ भीमराव अंबेडकर की जयंती पर शत-शत नमन। सोशल मीडिया एक्स पर उन्होंने लिखा है कि यह संविधान और हमारे वीर पुरुषों के संघर्ष की ताकत है कि हम तानाशाही ताकतों के सामने न कभी झुके हैं, न कभी झुकेगे। तानाशाही ताकतों की आंखों में आंखें डालकर न्याय की लड़ाई लड़े हैं, लड़ेंगे। डॉ भीमराव अंबेडकर सामाजिक समानता व समरसता के थे प्रणेता : बाबा साहब डॉ भीमराव अंबेडकर की जयंती पर विश्व हिंदू परिषद रांची महानगर द्वारा महानगर अध्यक्ष कैलाश केसरी के नेतृत्व में डोरंडा स्थित उनकी प्रतिमा पर माल्यार्पण कर उन्हें श्रद्धा सुमन अर्पित किया गया। इस अवसर पर विशेष रूप से उपस्थित विश्व हिंदू परिषद के झारखंड प्रांत मंत्री मिथिलेश्वर मिश्र ने डॉ अंबेडकर को सामाजिक समानता एवं समरसता का प्रणेता बताते हुए कहा कि समाज के वंचित वर्ग एवं



डॉ भीमराव अंबेडकर को श्रद्धासुमन अर्पित करती कल्पना सोरेन समेत अन्य।

लोकतंत्र को कमजोर करने में कुछ ताकतें लगी हैं, हम जवाब देंगे : मिथिलेश टाकुर

PHOTON NEWS RANCHI :

बाबा साहेब डॉ भीमराव अंबेडकर जी के जयंती पर झारखंड सरकार के मंत्री मिथिलेश कुमार टाकुर ने रांची के डोरंडा स्थित पुराने हाईकोर्ट के समीप उनकी प्रतिमा पर माल्यार्पण किया। मौके पर मंत्री मिथिलेश कुमार टाकुर ने कहा बाबा साहेब की जयंती पूरे देश में मनाई जा रही है। इस पावन दिवस पर हमें ये संकल्प लेना है कि जो हमारा संविधान है वो पूरे दुनिया में अजूबा संविधान है। हम सभी हिंदू, मुस्लिम, सिख, ईसाई सभी धर्मों के लोगों को एक समान अधिकार इस संविधान ने दिया है। हमें ये संकल्प लेना है कि इस संविधान को अशुभ रखना है, समतामूलक समाज की ओर आगे बढ़ना है। हमारे लोकतंत्र को



बाबा साहेब को श्रद्धांजलि देते मंत्री मिथिलेश कुमार टाकुर व अन्य।

कमजोर करने में कुछ ताकतें दिन रात लगी हुई है, उन ताकतों को हमें जवाब देना है। सभी के अधिकारों की रक्षा करने का संकल्प : झामुमो के जिलाध्यक्ष मुस्ताक आलम ने कहा कि बाबा साहेब की जयंती पर श्रद्धासुमन अर्पित किया। साथ ही इस संविधान को बचाने के लिए संविधान विरोधी ताकतों को जवाब देने और सभी के अधिकारों की रक्षा करने का

संकल्प लिया। मौके पर समनूर मंसूरी, अश्विनी शर्मा, कलाम आजाद, डॉ हेमलाल कु मेहता, अफरोज अंसारी, संजय राय, फरीद खान, परवेज आलम, सोनू मुंडा, संजय सचिव रमजान राजा, पुष्पा बरदेवा, सुषमा बरदेवा, प्रदीप मिर्चा, असद टिकू, राकेश वर्मा, अतिकुर रहमान, फिरोज, मो नौसाद आलम, परवेज अख्तर, प्रिंस सहित अन्य उपस्थित रहे।

झामुमो ने अंबेडकर जयंती पर किया धरना-प्रदर्शन संविधान में दिए गए अधिकारों से लगातार हो रहा खिलवाड़ : सप्रियो



PHOTON NEWS RANCHI :

बाबा साहेब डॉक्टर भीमराव अंबेडकर के जयंती पर संविधान वचाओ देश बचाओ एक दिवसीय धरना कार्यक्रम का रविवार को आयोजन किया गया। यह कार्यक्रम झामुमो ने रांची के मोरहाबादी स्थित बापू वाटिका के सामने आयोजित किया। केंद्र सरकार और भाजपा के संविधान विरोधी नीतियों के खिलाफ यह धरना आयोजित हुआ। मौके पर मुख्य रूप से

मकान मालिक और किराएदार के विवादों का निपटारा होगा आसान

RANCHI : झारखंड में मकान मालिक और किराएदार के बीच उत्पन्न विवादों का निपटारा अब न्यायाधिकरण करेगा। इसके लिए भाड़ा नियंत्रण अधिकरण का गठन किया जाएगा। हाईकोर्ट की सलाह पर जिला न्यायाधीश को इस अधिकरण का अध्यक्ष बनाया जाएगा। इसके लिए राज्य सरकार झारखंड भवन पट्टा, किराया और बेदखली विधेयक जल्द ही ड्राफ्ट तैयार करेगी। हालांकि, इस विधेयक पर दो साल से विचार चल रहा है, जिसे अब अंतिम रूप दिया जाना है। झारखंड भवन पट्टा, किराया और बेदखली विधेयक का ड्राफ्ट तैयार करने के लिए उच्चस्तरीय कमेटी का गठन किया गया है। समिति में सदस्य सचिव के पद पर अतुल कुमार को शामिल किया गया है। इस संघर्ष में नगर विकास विभाग ने आदेश जारी कर दिया है।



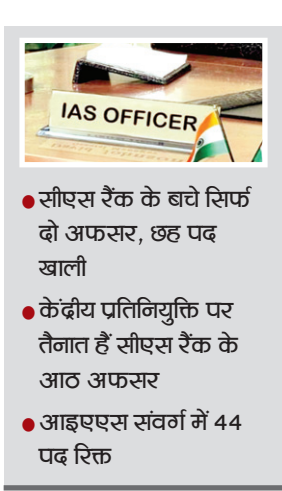
फिर 40 डिग्री पहुंचा झारखंड का तापमान अभी और बढ़ेगी गर्मी

RANCHI : झारखंड का तापमान एक बार फिर 40 डिग्री हो गया है। आने वाले दिनों में गर्मी और बढ़ेगी। अगले 4-5 दिन में उच्चतम तापमान में 3 से 4 डिग्री की वृद्धि होगी। मौसम विभाग ने यह जानकारी दी है। भारत मौसम विज्ञान विभाग (आईएमडी) के रांची स्थित मौसम केंद्र ने सोमवार को पूर्वी सिंहभूम, सरायकेला-खरसावां और पश्चिमी सिंहभूम, साहिबगंज, गोड्डा, खूंटी और सिमडेगा में बारिश का येलो अलर्ट जारी किया है। मौसम विभाग ने कहा है कि इन जिलों के कुछ भागों में हल्के दर्ज की बारिश होगी। मौसम केंद्र रांची के प्रमुख अभिषेक आनंद ने कहा कि मौसम 04 जिलों में गरज के साथ छीटें पड़ेंगे। बादल गरजेंगे और कुछ जगहों पर वज्रपात होने की भी आशंका है। उन्होंने कहा कि इसलिए झारखंड में मौसम को देखते हुए इन जिलों के लोगों को सावधान रहना चाहिए। साथ ही सतर्कता भी बरतनी चाहिए। मौसम को देखते हुए कुछ दिशा-निर्देश भी मौसम विभाग ने जारी किए हैं। इसमें कहा है कि लोग सुरक्षित स्थान पर शरण ले लें। मौसम खराब हो जाए, तो सतर्क और सावधान रहें।

झारखंड ब्यूरोक्रेसी का कैडर मेनेजमेंट चरमराया राज्य में टॉप लेवल के IAS अधिकारियों की भारी कमी

PHOTON NEWS RANCHI : झारखंड ब्यूरोक्रेसी का कैडर मेनेजमेंट चरमरा गया है। मुख्य सचिव रैंक में सिर्फ दो अफसर ही कार्यरत हैं। जिनमें मुख्य सचिव एल। ख्यांते और अपर मुख्य सचिव अविनाश कुमार शामिल हैं। इस रैंक के छह पद रिक्त हो गए हैं। झारखंड में चीफ सेक्रेटरी रैंक के कुल आठ पद हैं। वहीं इस रैंक के आठ अफसर केंद्रीय प्रतिनियुक्ति में हैं। जिसमें राजीव गौबा, एनएन सिन्हा, अलका तिवारी, एमएन भाट्टिया, एसकेजी रहाटे, शैलेश कुमार सिंह और सुरेंद्र सिंह शामिल हैं। इसमें से सुरेंद्र सिंह को छोड़ सभी केंद्र में सचिव रैंक में पदस्थापित हैं। वहीं आइएएस संवर्ग में 44 पद रिक्त हो गए हैं। आइएएस के लिए झारखंड में 224 पद स्वीकृत है, जिसमें 180 अफसर ही कार्यरत हैं। प्रधान सचिव के छह अफसर केंद्रीय प्रतिनियुक्ति पर : झारखंड केडर के प्रधान सचिव रैंक के छह

अफसर केंद्रीय प्रतिनियुक्ति में हैं। इनमें सतेंद्र सिंह, सुनील वर्णवाल, राहुल शर्मा, केके सोन, हिमानी पांडेय और आराधना पटनायक शामिल हैं। वहीं झारखंड में प्रधान सचिव रैंक के अजय कुमार सिंह, नितिन मदन कुलकर्णी, चंद्रना दौदेल, मस्तुराम मोंगा, विनय चौबे, सुनील कुमार और राहुल पुरवार शामिल हैं।



- सीएस रैंक के बचे सिर्फ दो अफसर, छह पद खाली
- केंद्रीय प्रतिनियुक्ति पर तैनात हैं सीएस रैंक के आठ अफसर
- आइएएस संवर्ग में 44 पद रिक्त

Shadow of economic distress on polls

IS this the 2004 moment? That General Election remains special for the shocking results — not just for the loser but for the winner too — and has left a lasting impact on political observers for the deceptive campaign that ended in regime change. In fact, the Congress did not do much to win, but the BJP's India Shining slogan did it in. For, India wasn't shining for the majority, which, in turn, took offence to some smart alec copywriter's punchline. What reminds one of the 2004 electioneering is a survey done recently by the Centre for the Study of Developing Societies (CSDS) — a think tank founded by political scientists Rajni Kothari, DL Sheth and Ashis Nandy some 60 years ago. The results of the survey were published by a national daily on Thursday. According to the CSDS survey, unemployment and price rise are the key poll issues (or primary concerns, as the survey terms them) and not Hindutva.

The Ram Temple and corruption, with 8 percentage points each, are relegated to the fifth spot after jobs (27 per cent), inflation (23 per cent), development (13 per cent) and other answers (9 per cent) in the order of primacy of concerns. It is shocking to note the extent of distress over unemployment brought out by the surveyors, who claim to have gone to 400 polling stations in 100 parliamentary constituencies across 19 states to speak to 10,019 respondents. About 62 per cent of those surveyed seemed to have found it difficult to get a job, more so in the big cities than in towns and villages. This is an alarming figure. Jobs for the largest number of people out on the streets ought to be the real measure of a society's progress, not the rise and rise of the stock index or the wealth of Indian billionaires. When India was shining for the ruling party in 2004, it wasn't for the poor, who expressed their displeasure on the voting day. The other issue that hits a poor person is price rise: 71 per cent of those were surveyed talked about rising prices and that figure goes up for the poor — 76 per cent of them are upset. This should make the BJP sit up and take notice. Unemployment and price rise are two complementary livelihood issues that can override politics of identity. It actually does not matter what the opinion-makers and influencers think if the worse-off voters are upset because their numbers are huge, according to this survey, and this is all that counts. Like in 2004, the government of the day seems to know about the distress. All its actions in the run-up to the polls show that the ruling party is in a hurry to make amends. From Kashmir to Kanyakumari, the BJP has been either tying up with local partners or ensuring a three- or four-cornered contest to get the Opposition votes divided. Ghulam Nabi Azad's party has ensured an effective multi-cornered contest at least in the Udhampur constituency, where Ghulam Mohammad Saroori is expected to split Muslim votes. The four-cornered contest in Punjab is expected to offer a mixed bag of results, unlike a frontal fight between two fronts. The quiet ouster of Jannayak Janta Party (JJP) from the BJP government in Haryana will only help the ruling party split the Opposition's Jat votes. The Chautala clan has two parties in the fray — JJP and Indian National Lok Dal — and both are expected to take a slice of Jat votes away, which would have otherwise accrued to the Congress' Bhopinder Singh Hooda. Now, with Birender Singh and his son back in the Congress, the party's Jat credentials are getting burnished. But with OBC Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini in the saddle, the BJP expects to overcome the anti-incumbency of Manohar Lal Khattar's nine-year rule and also trigger a counter-consolidation of non-Jat votes. The ploy may or may not work, but what is on display is a poll plan based on an understanding of local issues, anti-incumbency and social factors. Can these measures counter the distress caused by unemployment? According to the Centre for Monitoring Indian Economy (CMIE), Haryana had the country's worst unemployment rate (37.4 per cent) in January 2023. Sure, the Haryana Government had contested it and the CMIE data need not be taken as gospel truth but just an indicator. It is interesting to take note of the economic distress and the BJP's political remedy — change of CM and a vote-splitting strategy.

Court must stem rot

Criminalisation of politics will persist unless the judiciary cracks the whip or voters make political parties fall in line.



THE scourge of criminalisation of politics has existed for decades. It was red-flagged by the NN Vohra Committee report, which was submitted in October 1993. The report drew the following conclusions: "On the basis of the extensive experience gained by our various intelligence, investigative and enforcement agencies, it is apparent that crime syndicates and mafia organisations have established themselves in various parts of the country. The various crime syndicates/mafia organisations have developed significant muscle and money power and established linkages with governmental functionaries, political leaders and others to be able to operate with impunity (as recently exemplified by the activities of the Memon brothers and Dawood Ibrahim)." The public exposure came two decades ago because of a series of judgments by the Delhi High Court and the Supreme Court that made it mandatory for candidates contesting elections to the Lok Sabha and Assemblies to disclose in a sworn affidavit their criminal, financial and educational antecedents. The petitions concerned were filed by the Association for Democratic Reforms (ADR).

The organisation compiled the data from the affidavits submitted by candidates in the 2004 Lok Sabha elections and made it public. It has been doing it since then for every Assembly and parliamentary election.

It is in this context that the recently released information about the candidates in the fray in the first phase of the 2024 Lok Sabha elections needs to be seen. The information available so far shows that out of the 1,618 candidates whose affidavits were analysed, 252 (15.57 per cent) have declared that they have criminal cases pending against them. These details need to be examined in two ways for comparisons. One is to compare this data with similar data from the earlier elections, and the second is to see what kind of MPs such candidates would make if elected. The percentage of candidates with criminal cases in the 2004, 2009, 2014 and 2019 Lok Sabha elections has varied from 12 per cent to 19 per cent. In view of this, the fact that 15.57 per cent such candidates are contesting the first phase of the current Lok Sabha elections is not out of line. It is too close to 17 per cent (2014) and 19 per cent (2019) to indicate any

significant reduction in the proportion of candidates with criminal cases against them. Moreover, this data is only for the first phase, and the overall percentage might go up. The other comparison is the conversion of candidates with criminal cases into MPs with criminal cases. The percentage of elected MPs with criminal cases is higher than that of the candidates facing such charges. This shows that the number of tainted MPs is certainly more than 15.57 per cent. I make this assertion purely based on the data. It is certainly not my hope that the percentage of MPs with criminal cases is more than, or equal to, 43 per cent. Let us now come to why this happens. Irresponsible behaviour on the part of various political parties is to blame for this. Parties choose to give their tickets to persons with a criminal background on the grounds that they are electable candidates. And since one party does this, others claim they have to do it too. The matter has been in the Supreme Court. The court has been very positive in some cases, saying that if a party gives a ticket to a person with criminal cases, it has to declare reasons why it is doing so and how come it did not find a person without cases pending against them. Parties are also required to publish advertisements declaring the reasons. Parties have complied with these directions only perfunctorily, completely violating the spirit of the judgment. Public-spirited persons have gone back to the top court with the plea that parties have not been following the directions properly. The court has even levied fines on some parties for not complying with the provisions of the law laid down by the court. This has, however, had no impact on the parties, which continue to give tickets to persons with criminal cases pending against them with impunity. Pleas have been made to the apex court, praying that persons with criminal cases pending against them — in which the prescribed punishment is two years of imprisonment or more; cases have been filed at least six months prior to the date of the election; and charges have been framed by a court of law — should not be allowed to contest elections. However, the court has not been keen on doing that on the grounds that this would amount to the making of a law, which is not a function of the judiciary. It has been brought to the notice of the court that when there is a gap or infirmity in the law and the legislature has not had the time or inclination to fill the gap or correct the infirmity, it is the duty of the judiciary to fill the gap till the legislature does it. The court has done this, filling the gap in law several times and twice in cases filed by the ADR, once in 2002 and recently in the case of the appointment of the chief election commissioner and election commissioners. The menace of criminalisation of politics will not go away till the apex court does the needful or we, the people, decide to make it happen through widespread public action.

School bus mishap

A wake-up call to ensure students' safety

THE heartbreaking loss of six young lives in a school bus accident in Haryana's Mahendragarh has laid bare grave negligence and blatant disregard for fundamental safety protocols. Distressingly, the bus, which belonged to a local private school, was operating on a day that had been declared a holiday on account of Eid. The recklessness displayed by the driver, reportedly under the influence of alcohol, caused the tragedy. The culpability extends beyond the driver; the school principal and an official have been arrested for their role in this incident.

This case not only emphasises the need for accountability but also a comprehensive review of the safety measures governing school transportation. Despite guidelines laid down by the Supreme Court in 1997, it is evident that enforcement mechanisms have fallen short, allowing such



tragedies to occur across the country with alarming frequency. The SC instructions, mandating experienced drivers, adherence to speed limits and stringent

disciplinary action for traffic violations, must be rigorously enforced. The authorities in all states must uphold these standards to ensure the wellbeing of every child. A dedicated regulatory body should be formed to oversee school transportation. Such an entity would be responsible for monitoring compliance, conducting regular inspections and implementing corrective measures to minimise risks.

It's incumbent upon policymakers, educators and law enforcement agencies to heed this wake-up call and take concrete steps to prevent such mishaps from recurring. The Mahendragarh case must serve as a catalyst for meaningful change, ushering in an era where the safety of children is non-negotiable. Anything less would be a disservice to the memory of innocent lives lost and a betrayal of our collective responsibility to protect vulnerable citizens.

Raise the political bar

Criminalisation of politics will persist

THE information that the Association of Democratic Reforms (ADR), which has been pressing for electoral reforms for a quarter century now, has released about the criminal cases against candidates contesting in the first phase (April 19) of the Lok Sabha elections is noteworthy. As mandated by the Election Commission of India, the candidates are required to state in self-sworn affidavits the criminal cases they are facing. The ADR had scrutinised 1,618 of the 1,625 affidavits. It showed that 252 (nearly 16 per cent of the contestants) faced criminal charges. And those facing serious criminal charges were 161, which accounted for 10 per cent of the candidates contesting the election in the first phase. The party-wise distribution is interesting as well. Of the BJP's 77 candidates in this phase, 28 are facing criminal charges (36 per cent) and 14 (18 per cent) are facing serious criminal charges. Of the Congress' 56 candidates, 19 (34 per cent) are facing criminal cases and eight (14 per cent) serious charges. At the state level, the DMK (Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam), the ruling party in Tamil Nadu, has 22 candidates in the fray, of whom 13 (59 per cent) are facing criminal charges and six (27 per cent) serious charges. The AIADMK (All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam) has 36 candidates in this round, and 13 of them (36 per cent) are facing criminal charges, while six (17 per cent) face serious criminal charges. More interesting is the case of a smaller Tamil Nadu political party with a significant political clout in its social segment, the Pattali Makkal Katchi. Out of its 10 candidates, six have criminal cases pending against them and the others face serious criminal charges.

What do these figures indicate? They suggest that political parties have members who are allegedly involved in criminal activities, including serious ones like murder, attempt to murder and rape. And this leads to the inevitable conclusion that parties have in their ranks people who are troublemakers, lawbreakers, and, in plain terms, criminals. Many of the so-called



'strongmen' who muscle their way into grabbing party tickets to fight elections have climbed up on the basis of their criminal acts to a position where they have created an aura of fear around them.

But there is another side, too. Political activities in India are marked by protests, violent clashes and arrests. And when the police register cases, they use relevant, and sometimes irrelevant, provisions of the Indian Penal Code to make their case. There are those involved in murder and rape cases among political workers, and there are those who have been framed.

The hallmarks of a political activist in this country are

participation in a street march, facing police lathi-charge, tear gas and rubber bullets and spending time in police lockup. On the record book, many of these are shown as acts of breaking the law. So, this would require further analysis of the nature of the criminal charges that each candidate faces. Then there is the case of hardened criminals, which includes politicians who get their rivals attacked or killed. Or they are involved in crimes against women when they are in power and even when they are not. What is needed then is to narrow down the crime list to murder, rape and sexual harassment to start with. The job becomes difficult because the police are at the beck

unless the judiciary cracks the whip

and call of the ruling party. And they are likely to register more cases against activists of Opposition parties. The police records need to be scrutinised.

These issues are not going to get sorted out in a jiffy. Society has to change, and people have to demand that clean and honest politicians are nominated as candidates. And the voters should vote out anyone with a criminal record, whether their names figure in the police files or not. It is a known fact in India that many of the so-called powerful politicians shut out members of marginalised communities from voting through the use of force and intimidation.

To bring about this long-term change in the quality of political life, the role of democracy watchdogs is indispensable. There is a need for more groups like the ADR to emerge and join hands to ensure that political standards do not fall, and democracy is kept alive. Elections must continue to be held, and governments must change. But these things need to be monitored continuously. What people need the most is democratic auditing because the parties in power will not do it, and the Opposition parties are biased.

It is left to civil society groups to take up the task.

The formation of democracy clubs and freedom associations across the country, which should run into thousands and where groups of people can meet and discuss political issues, could go a long way in supporting the work of such groups. This will make it difficult for authoritarian governments to crack down on people who are monitoring politics. These groups need to be supported by the people. And when people are presented with undeniable facts, they can make an informed choice. The political parties will fall in line. People should be the pressure group. Parties should not believe that they can lead people like sheep. People have to be the shepherds.

HMPL Board Approves Rs 486-Crore Fundraising Plan

New Delhi. Infrastructure company Hazoor Multi Projects Ltd (HMPL) on Saturday said its board has approved a proposal to raise Rs 486 crore through the issuance of warrants. The plan was approved by the board of the company at a meeting on Friday, HMPL said in a regulatory filing. The board has approved fundraising of Rs 4,860 million through issuing and allotting up to 1.62 crore fully convertible warrants to the persons belonging to the 'non-promoter' and 'public' category on a preferential basis at an issue price of Rs 300 per warrant, the company said. The proposal is subject to the approval of shareholders and other regulatory authorities, HMPL added. "Upon issue of Warrants in accordance herewith, an amount equivalent to 25 per cent of the total issue size shall be called upfront from the proposed allottees," it noted. The company said it looks to utilise the proceeds to enhance financial resources to fund its growth. Besides, the constitution of a fundraising raising committee was among the several proposals approved by the board. HMPL is into building road projects on an engineering, procurement and construction (EPC) basis.

Adani Cement eyes 20% market pie by FY28

NEW DELHI. Adani Cement, which comprises ACC, Ambuja Cement and Sanghi Industries, is eyeing 20% market share by FY28 from the existing 14%, according to an investor presentation of the company. It hopes to grow at a compounded annual growth rate of 16% to reach 140 million tonne per annum production by 2028. It predicts the cement industry to grow at a CAGR of 7-8% till 2028. To grow at 16% CAGR till 2028, Adani Cement plans to implement an accelerated capex program through internal accruals. However, the company hopes to remain debt-free despite undertaking the capex. It sees a capacity addition program would give leverage of cost benefits over peers. "Securing major raw



material assured supplies at cost competitive and efficiency & productivity improvement capex will help in cost optimisation by 8-10%," says the company in its investor presentation. With this cost optimisation, it would reduce the gap with world's lowest cost cement maker by Rs 1,000 per tonne. It has a cumulative 8,000 million tone limestone reserve in possession at NIL to nominal premium. Adani Group in 2022 acquired 63.15% stake in Ambuja Cements and 56.69% stake in ACC in a \$6.4 billion deal. Last year, it acquired Gujarat-based Sanghi Industries for Rs 5,000 crore. "Strong balance sheet, better enterprise risk management, accelerated growth & cost leadership supported by group synergies is one of the most important differentiating points for Adani Cement," says the company.

Bullish Economic Outlook: FPIs Infuse Rs 13,300 Crore In Equities In April So Far

NEW DELHI. Foreign investors have infused over Rs 13,300 crore in Indian equities in the first two weeks of the month owing to a resilient domestic economy with promising growth prospects. Going ahead, concerns over changes in India-Mauritius tax treaty will weigh on Foreign Portfolio Investor (FPI) inflows in the near-term till clarity emerges on details of the new treaty, V K Vijayakumar, Chief Investment Strategist, Geojit Financial Services, said. Another major concern is the surcharged geopolitical situation in the Middle East with heightened tensions between Iran and Israel. These will keep the markets on tenterhooks in the near-term, he added. Since domestic institutional investors (DIIs) are sitting on huge liquidity and the retail and HNIs in India are highly optimistic about the Indian market, FPI selling will be largely absorbed by domestic money. According to the data with the depositories, FPIs made a net investment of Rs 13,347 crore in Indian equities this month (till April 12). Although, Friday



witnessed FPI selling to the tune of Rs 8,027 crore on fears of changes in India-Mauritius tax treaty. Himanshu Srivastava, Associate Director, Manager Research, Morningstar Investment Research India, said that several factors might have helped in the huge inflow including Fitch's downgrade of China's sovereign credit rating outlook from stable to negative due to growth concerns. In addition, anticipation of a normal monsoon season this year that could alleviate inflationary pressures, and a resilient domestic economy with promising growth prospects too helped in massive inflows, he added. Apart from equities, FPIs have made a net investment of Rs 1,522 crore in the debt market during the period under review.

FPIs have been pumping money in the debt markets for the past few months driven by upcoming inclusion of Indian government bonds in the JP Morgan Index. They invested Rs 13,602 crore in March, Rs 22,419 crore in February, and Rs 19,836 crore in January. JP Morgan Chase & Co. in September last year announced that it will add Indian government bonds to its benchmark emerging market index from June 2024.

New versus Old regime: Does opting for the old income tax regime for TDS on salary make ITR processing, refunds easier?

New Delhi. At the beginning of each financial year, salaried individuals must select an income tax regime for TDS (tax deducted at source) on their salary. They need to tell their employers whether they prefer the old or new tax regime, as their employer will deduct taxes from their salary according to the chosen regime's income tax brackets. But does opting for the old tax regime lead to smoother processing of ITR (Income Tax Return) and income tax refund claims? As per an ET report, if someone chooses the old tax regime for TDS on their salary and claims any allowed deductions, these deductions will appear on Form 16 if they provide the necessary proofs to their employer on time. However, if they choose the new tax regime, only standard deductions and Section 80CCD (2) deductions (if claimed and eligible) will be shown on Form 16. However, some individuals may initially choose the new tax regime for TDS on salary but later decide to file their ITR under the old tax regime, as it may seem more advantageous at the time. In such cases, they'll need to calculate their deductions themselves to reduce their tax burden. Moreover, the income tax

department is more likely to ask for proof and documents for deductions claimed when they're not reflected in Form 16 from the employer. This issue doesn't occur if someone switches from the old tax regime (selected at the start of the financial year for TDS on salary) to the new tax regime when filing their ITR. This is because the two main deductions allowed under the new tax regime are also permitted under the old tax regime. Hence, these deductions would still appear in Form 16 prepared by the employer under the old tax regime. ALSO READ | TDS on salary: Don't pay higher tax! How to choose between new and old income tax regime Aarti Raote, Partner at Deloitte India, explains that if the income tax department notices any disparities between the income details, exemptions, and deductions on Form 16 compared to those declared in the income tax return, they are likely to raise questions. Additional deductions and exemptions must be supported with evidence. In many cases, during the initial processing of the ITR by the CPC (Centralised Processing Centre) of the income tax department, such claims are denied. As a result, the



employee may need to file a rectification application to substantiate these additional deductions. Shalini Jain, Tax Partner- People Advisory Services, EY India, was quoted as saying, "In case of a mismatch, the individual is prone to receiving an electronic intimation from the tax authorities, which needs to be responded to with necessary information to reconcile the tax return and the Form 16."

Choosing tax regimes for TDS on salary: What should taxpayers do?

Raote recommends that taxpayers play it safe by selecting the old tax regime if

TDS on salary, claim all eligible exemptions and deductions, and switch to the new tax regime during ITR filing if it proves more advantageous. "This will result in fewer questions from the tax department. However, this will double the administrative work for the employee in terms of submitting proofs to the employer." That's because under the old tax regime, the employee needs to submit proofs to the employer, but those documents might not be necessary when filing ITR under the new tax regime. Certainly, the ideal scenario would be if the tax regime chosen for TDS from salary at the beginning of the financial year aligns with the regime under which the ITR is expected to be filed. Jain notes that the processing of the income tax return tends to be smoother when the information on the income tax return aligns with Form 16 in terms of income and exemptions claimed. "As long as the deductions are bonafide and calculated correctly, there is no harm in switching from new to the old tax regime while filing the tax return; responding to a mismatch intimation is only procedural," she explains.

Bournvita confidence' jolted? No 'health drink' label on ecommerce sites

NEW DELHI: Generations of children have guzzled it with milk or hot water. Others just munch it, a spoonful at a time. Their parents did the same - indeed, some still do so. Some restaurants put it in their beverage menu. And, some will remember it being sprinkled on coffee, or what went by the name of coffee, that came from big, boxy coffee machines, popular in pre-reforms India.



Bournvita is one of those brands that seep into collective consumer consciousness - its ad taglines like "Tann ki Shakti, Mann ki Shakti" and "Do you have Bournvita Confidence?" are all too familiar. So, the news that govt has advised ecommerce companies to remove Bournvita, as well as other drinks and beverages, from portals' health drinks category, will likely stir up memories. Bournvita isn't banned, of course. But this product from

Mondelez, which owns other well-known brands like 5-Star, Cadbury, Oreo and Toblerone, can't be sold online as a health-booster. The advisory was issued by dept for promotion of industry & internal trade, following a probe by National Commission for Protection of Child Rights, which took its decision under Food Safety and Standards Act. Bournvita is the only brand named in the advisory. Govt has left it to ecommerce firms to decide what other brands should

be removed from 'health drinks' category. Bournvita sold as 'nutrition brand' on e-platform NPCR had taken up the issue of Bournvita with Mondelez last year, asking it to take down 'misleading' advertisements after it received complaints over high sugar content in the product. The company had argued Bournvita was a 'scientifically formulated' drink with 'permissible' sugar content. Mondelez had also served a notice on an online influencer, who had raised concerns. On platforms such as Amazon, Bournvita is currently sold as a "nutrition brand" that should be "consumed as a part of a daily balanced diet and healthy lifestyle". The product has multiple variants. Mondelez did not issue an official response to the advisory. But sources said that it has been issued to e-commerce platforms and the company itself labels Bournvita as a "cereal-based beverage mix", not a health drink.

Sovereign Gold Bond Vs Physical Gold: Which One Should You Pick?

New Delhi. With gold prices today ranging between Rs 74,000 to Rs 74,500 per 10 gm in India, every consumer must be thinking about how to add this precious metal to their portfolio. Gold is a great avenue for investment as can be seen by the popularity of the metal amidst surging prices all over the world. However, it is important to consider the type of gold you want to invest in. Primarily, you can invest in either physical gold or sovereign gold bonds (SGBs). There are other forms of gold investment available as well, however, these two options remain the most popular and convenient form of investment in the yellow metal. When it comes to gold investment, there is no right or wrong, the choice of gold depends on your financial goals and needs. So let's do a comparison of investing in gold bonds

and physical gold, be it in the form of biscuits or jewellery. Physical Gold The lure of gold in the form of jewellery or even a biscuit or coin is never ending. The touch, feel, and beauty of physical gold has been a centrepoint of the Indian culture and is visible when we dedicate specific days as auspicious to buy the metal and gift it to our loved ones. Even from investment point of view, it might make sense for you to go for physical gold if the pros and cons align with your perspective. Gold in physical form provides great liquidity for the investor. It can be bought and sold with great ease at any jewellery store or bank or lending institution, in exchange for an easy access to cash. Liquidity represents the ease with which you can trade your assets for cash in the market. Global Acceptance - The recognition that gold enjoys is on a

worldwide scale and adds to the value of your investment. This helps an individual to not only deal in gold as an investment but also secure their future financial needs by simply taking their jewellery with them. Emergency - If you find yourself in an unfortunate situation, it might not be ideal to go to the bank or the ATM and take out cash to manage the sudden circumstances. Physical gold helps provide that security in an emergency. This is the reason why Indian women have relied on keeping their gold jewellery with themselves as a security option to cash in to should any unforeseen situation arise. Physical gold needs to be maintained in the sense of safety. It might not be the safest option to keep your gold jewellery at home. You will have to avail a bank's locker or safety deposit box services.

Equality At Risk: Women Demand Fairness In BFSI Workplace Dynamics, Says Report

New Delhi. Even as companies are stepping up efforts to promote diversity and inclusion in the banking, financial services and insurance (BFSI) sector, a report on Friday revealed that one out of every four women employees feel inconsistency in terms of recognition, fair pay, and workplace equity. According to workplace assessment and recognition organisation Great Place To Work India, gender disparities persist despite overall positive sentiment within the BFSI sector, underscoring the need for focused efforts to promote diversity and inclusion. Women employees are 5 per cent less satisfied with workplace equity compared to their male colleagues, the 'Insights from India's Best Workplaces in BFSI 2024' report, which presented insights gathered from a survey among 12 lakh employees from 167 organisations, added. The report also revealed that there were notable disparities between Gen Z and Millennial employees, particularly in their intent to stay long-term, sense of purpose at work, and perceptions of job security. Generation Z are those born between 1997 and 2012, while Millennials are those born between 1981 and 1996.



Almost 21 per cent of Gen Z and 15 per cent of Millennial employees are seeking meaningful work and a sense of impact within their roles, reflecting a shift in priorities and expectations. Meanwhile, the report found that there has been a decline in employee sentiment in fintech, health and general insurance, and investment verticals. This decline in employee sentiment is highest (10 per

cent) among Millennial and Gen-Z managers early in their tenure, said the report. These findings emphasise the importance of targeted strategies to address challenges unique to each vertical and demographic group, the report noted. "The BFSI sector is witnessing robust hiring fuelled by both established players and innovative fintech companies. Banks are growing stronger, fintech is

expanding, and investments and insurance are on the rise. "Despite offering unique benefits and healthy profit-sharing practices, a concerning trend of disparity emerges within BFSI workplaces, which cannot be ignored," Great Place To Work, India, Serial Entrepreneur and CEO Yeshasvini Ramaswamy added. Despite being a sector that prides itself upon being a service vertical, the lack of robust efforts in effectively addressing customer grievances appears to be counterintuitive to its very essence, found a survey by Kapture CX. In tandem, the participants were asked to choose from the four potential issues: Customer Service Interactions, Understanding Product/Service, Fees and Charges Transparency, and Account Management Ease. Amidst this conquest to revolutionise customer experiences in the BFSI sector, the survey revealed customer service interaction to be the predominant issue, with 68% of respondents including customer experience leaders and subject matter experts identifying the same, underscoring the need for its immediate redressal.

Can the FPO revive fate of Vodafone Idea?

NEW DELHI: Vodafone Idea Limited (VIL), India's third-largest telecom service provider, is pulling out all stops to raise funds from the market to improve its financial health. The debt-laden telco, formed in 2018 when the UK-based Vodafone India Group merged with Indian Idea Cellular, has been bleeding with massive losses and fall in the number of subscribers, losing confidence of investors at large. After having raised about Rs 7,000 crore from promoters since 2022, the telco has announced a follow-on public offer (FPO) of Rs 18,000 crore, the success of which would decide the fate of the company in the longer term. After the merger of Vodafone and Idea, it became India's largest telecom operator with a market share of 32.2% in India. However, since then, it has lost a large chunk of its market share, and as per the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI), it now holds 18.93% market share in the wireless segment as of February 2024. This decline can be attributed to the lack of funds, accumulated debt, and insufficient investment in network upgrades. These factors have pushed the company to the third position in the Indian telecom market, with a continuous month-on-month loss in market share. Therefore, to arrest user loss and remain competitive, VIL requires significant amount of capital. But its efforts to raise funds for the last few years failed to yield any result. Meanwhile, its cash-rich competitors, Reliance Jio and Bharti Airtel, are leaving no stone unturned in investing in their infrastructure and network expansion.

Fund raised so far

VIL has been trying to raise funds since 2020, without much success. As the company was unable to pay its adjusted gross revenue (AGR) to the government, the latter converted it into equity. The company was also struggling to pay vendors such as ATC and Indus Tower. Last year, ATC has subscribed to optionally convertible debentures of Rs 1,600 crore. The company managed to raise about Rs 5,000 crore in the first half of 2022. On February 27, 2024, the telco announced plans to raise Rs 45,000 crore via a combination of equity and debt. In an exchange filing, it stated that its board had approved a fundraising of up to Rs 20,000 crore via a combination of equity and equity-linked instruments. Additionally, it is looking to raise an additional Rs 25,000 crore through debt. Following the announcement, it raised Rs 2,075 crore by issuing preferential shares to Oriana Investments, a promoter entity within the Aditya Birla Group. The third-largest telco has announced a follow-on public offer (FPO) of equity shares aggregating up to Rs 18,000 crore. VIL has set the FPO price between Rs 10-Rs 11 per share. The higher end of the price band Rs 11 represents a discount of 26% as against the recently approved preferential issue price to the promoter entity and a discount of about 15% compared to the last closing price.

Shots fired outside Salman Khan's Mumbai home, gunmen flee on bike

Two bike-borne men fired several rounds of shots outside Bollywood actor Salman Khan's residence early on Sunday. Security was tightened following the incident.

- ▶ **2 bike-borne men fired shots outside Salman Khan's Mumbai house**
- ▶ **No casualties or injuries reported in the incident**
- ▶ **Security has been tightened outside Salman Khan's house**

fleeing the spot. Security has been tightened outside Salman Khan's house following the incident.

The crime branch, local police and forensic teams visited the spot for an investigation.

The incident came as jailed gangster Lawrence Bishnoi and wanted gangster Goldie Brar have announced several times to kill Salman Khan. According to sources, Lawrence Bishnoi and Goldie Brar had sent their shooters to Mumbai to kill the actor. In 2018, Lawrence Bishnoi's aide Sampat Nehra did a recce of Salman Khan's house. However, the Haryana Police arrested Sampat Nehra before he could carry out the attack. During questioning, he had revealed the entire plan of attacking Salman Khan.

Given the multiple threats from the gangs of Lawrence Bishnoi and Goldie Brar, the Mumbai Police have deployed police teams working in three shifts outside Salman Khan's house.

Salman Khan has been provided with weapons by trained security personnel since the threats from Lawrence Bishnoi



and Goldie Brar came to light. He has also been provided with a personal weapon licence and he can carry a personal weapon for his safety. he Mumbai Police became alert after Salman Khan received an e-mail death threat allegedly from the Lawrence Bishnoi gang in March last year. In November, the Mumbai Police undertook a security review of Salman Khan after an indirect threat was issued to him on Facebook by an account claiming to be Lawrence Bishnoi. The said Facebook account even had the gangster's photo as a display picture. Lawrence Bishnoi is currently behind bars in a drug smuggling case investigated by the National Investigation Agency (NIA).

Earlier, in an interview with Aaj Tak/India Today, Goldie Brar had said Salman Khan was their target and that he and the Lawrence Bishnoi gang would attack the actor if they got a chance.

Mumbai/New Delhi. Two unidentified bike-borne men fired three rounds outside Bollywood actor Salman Khan's house in Mumbai's Bandra area early on Sunday. Nobody died or was injured in the incident. The incident occurred around 4:51 am when two men fired three rounds and another four rounds outside Galaxy Apartments before

'Will fight polls': Senior National Conference leader denies ill health rumours

Srinagar. Senior National Conference leader and party's Lok Sabha candidate from Anantnag-Rajouri Parliamentary constituency, Mian Altaf, on Saturday rejected rumours about him not contesting the Lok Sabha elections, saying he was unwell earlier, but his health has now improved, and he is ready to fight the upcoming polls.

In a brief video, Mian Altaf said that he had not been feeling good for the last couple of days and was advised to take rest by the doctors. "I am recovering now and will be contesting the Lok Sabha polls," he said, rejecting rumours about dropping out of the race. The reports earlier claimed that he would not be contesting in the elections due to his deteriorating health. Itaf, however, termed the reports as baseless, stating that he was ready to



contest the parliamentary elections. "Omar Abdullah too met me today at my residence and enquired about my health condition. He didn't visit here to discuss political issues but enquired about my health condition only," he said.

Spot Probe Points To Violation Of Human Rights In Sandeshkhali: Rights Body

New Delhi. In a spot inquiry into the Sandeshkhali case in West Bengal, the NHRC has flagged "several instances of atrocities", saying it indicates that there was a "violation of human rights" due to "negligence" in the prevention of such incidents. The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC), in its report, also observed that the "pervasive fear of reprisal, coupled with the power dynamics at play, acted as a formidable barrier", preventing individuals from voicing their grievances. The rights panel has made several recommendations and sought an action taken report (ATR) within eight weeks on each of the recommendations made therein from the government of West Bengal, the NHRC said in a statement on Saturday.

"The Commission's spot inquiry has revealed several instances of atrocities inflicted upon the victims, which clearly demonstrate, prima facie, that there was a violation of human rights due to negligence in the prevention of such violation or abatement thereof by the public servant," it said. The report has been uploaded on the NHRC website for "wider dissemination of information," the statement said.

The Commission has sent its spot inquiry report to the chief secretary and DGP, West Bengal for submitting the ATR. The NHRC report made an observation that the "atmosphere due to the atrocities by the alleged accused persons rendered the victims silent", and intimidation, and terror made them "reluctant to seek justice". This "climate of terror" not only "perpetuates the cycle of abuse" but also underscores the urgent need to create a safe and supportive environment for victims to "break free from the shackles of silence", it has observed. The rights panel has also made an observation that the "atmosphere of fear" not only affects the victims but also has a "negative impact" on the growth and health of the children who constantly witness the ordeals of their parents at the hands of these alleged accused.

On February 21, the NHRC had taken suo motu cognisance of print and electronic media reports that in Sandeshkhali, North 24th Paragan, "innocent and impoverished women have been harassed and sexually assaulted by a group of local gang of a political person". As a result, for the last few days, local villagers had started protesting, seeking appropriate legal action against the "perpetrators of horrific crimes indulged by various goons and anti-social elements, when the local administration failed to take appropriate legal action against the perpetrators of crime," it added.

One injured in rhino attack, another in firing by forest guards in Assam

One person was injured in an attack by a rhinoceros while another in firing by forest guards who were trying to send back the animal towards the Kaziranga National Park on Saturday, an official said.

New Delhi. One person was injured in an attack by a rhinoceros while another in firing by forest guards who were trying to send back the animal towards the Kaziranga National Park on Saturday, an official said. A man was attacked during his morning walk by a rhino, suspected to have strayed out of the national park in the Bafala area.

He was seriously injured and admitted to the Jorhat Medical College and Hospital (JMCH). In another incident in the Dergaon area of Golaghat district, one person was injured when forest guards opened fire at the Kayroni area to chase back a rhino to the park. The injured person was also admitted to Jorhat Medical College and Hospital, the official added.



Under NIPUN Bharat Mission, Delhi primary schools to receive Samagra Pitara

NEW DELHI. As part of the NIPUN Bharat Mission, the primary and pre-primary schools under Delhi government will receive Samagra Pitara which will include activities, wall hangings, puzzles, etc to enhance their creative thinking.

It will include ten wall hangings on various themes providing children a vibrant and welcoming playful learning environment; wall mounts in English, Hindi and Mathematics to provide a basis for formation of a strong beginning for language and numeracy learning. Besides, it will also include games like elephant ring, hopscotch for physical development and further fine motor skills.

There will also be a preschool calendar to facilitate understanding of the concepts of time, weather, seasons, days in a month and week etc. In addition, there will be wooden frames, wooden theme puzzles, packs of 10



hand puppets and 10 face masks to encourage usage by teachers and other stakeholders to integrate storytelling methods in the daily teaching learning process. For free, imaginative and social role play to enhance creative thinking in the early grades, rainbow pebbles will be included.

However, as per the deputy director

education, there will be a Nipun pitara for classes 1-5. The kit will have magnetic boards with standee and magnetic flash cards combo including languages and literacy.

The magnetic board with standee will provide an opportunity to the students to practice free hand while learning.

For the grade 1-5 students, there will be a numeracy game with dice to inculcate numeracy skills in a playful manner and lastly, the kids will also have shapes/counters combo pack of 4 for zipponing and buttoning/magnetic counters. The Samagra Shiksha department of the education department has asked all school heads to make use of the material provided for the overall development of children, including the three domains for effective teaching learning.

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Saturday said loans of farmers will be waived if his party comes to power at the Centre.

New Delhi. Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Saturday said loans of farmers will be waived if his party comes to power at the Centre. Addressing a rally in Sakoli in Maharashtra's Bhandara district, he said the main issues plaguing the people of the country were unemployment and inflation, though these were ignored by the media, which concentrated on programmes of the Prime Minister and celebrities. "Loans of farmers will be waived if the Congress comes to power. People are distressed due to

unemployment and inflation. The situation is such that people earning just thousands and those making crores are paying the same GST," he said while attacking the NDA government at the Centre. Gandhi said farmers asked him during his Bharat Jodo and Bharat Jodo Nyay yatras about why they were not getting the benefit of loan waivers like billionaire industrialists or MSP (minimum support price) for farm produce. "We will also give legal guarantee for MSP," he said.

Gandhi said his party would conduct a caste census after attaining power, since it is important for the future of the country. "No one knows the percentage of backward groups in the country. Dalits, tribals and OBCs do not have representation in government jobs, bureaucracy, media, top 200 companies as per their proportion in the population," he said. "After coming to power, we will



carry out caste census, economic and institutional surveys to find out who has the country's wealth and how much of it is with Dalits, tribals, backwards and minorities. Caste based census is revolutionary," Gandhi further said. Gandhi said, since Independence, the Congress had worked towards green revolution, white revolution, IT revolution and bank nationalisation,

adding that it would take more such steps after coming to power. Prime among them would be women's empowerment, with the introduction of a scheme to give women living below poverty line (BPL) Rs 1 lakh annually, or 8,500 per month, Gandhi announced.

Slamming the Centre's Agnipath programme, in which soldiers called 'Agniveers' are recruited for four years, Gandhi said it would be scrapped since "the Army was not in its favour". Attacking Modi, he said the Prime Minister, who calls himself an

OBC, must tell the country what he has done for the segment in his 10-year rule. The Union government is working for a few industrialists, while common people are getting nothing, he claimed. "Just 22 people have wealth equivalent to that held by 50 per cent of the country's population. But Modi only keeps talking about religion and tries to create enmity among castes and communities," Gandhi alleged.

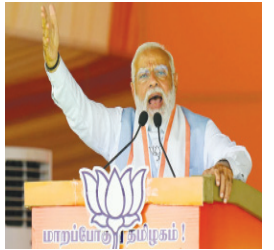
"Pray For Speedy Recovery, Good Health Of Jagan Reddy": PM Modi

Earlier, on Saturday evening, chief minister Jagan was left with a deep gash under his eyebrow after a stone-pelting attack during the 'Memantha Siddham' bus yatra in Vijayawada.

New Delhi. Prime Minister Narendra Modi expressed anguish over the stone-pelting attack on Andhra Pradesh Chief YS Jaganmohan Reddy on Saturday, while wishing him a speedy recovery and good health. Taking to his official X handle, PM Modi posted, "I pray for the speedy recovery and good health of Andhra Pradesh CM YS Jagan Garu." Earlier, on Saturday evening, CM Jagan was left with a deep gash under his eyebrow after a stone-pelting attack during the 'Memantha Siddham' bus yatra in Vijayawada.

According to sources in the ruling YSR Congress, an unidentified individual hurled a stone at the chief minister, leaving him with an external injury on his left eyebrow. The party sources further informed that the CM was immediately administered first-aid on the bus.

CM Jagan continued his bus journey after receiving first aid, they added. Meanwhile, ruling YSRCP leader and the party's candidate for the upcoming assembly polls from the North constituency, KK Raju, on Saturday led a protest against the alleged stone pelting at Chief Minister YS Jaganmohan Reddy at Vijayawada. Leading



the line at the protest along with hundreds of supporters of the ruling party, Raju, who is also the chairman of the Non-Conventional Energy Development Corporation of Andhra Pradesh Limited (NREDCAP), staged a sit-in and chanted slogans condemning the attack on the chief minister. Claiming that the principal Opposition force in the state, the TDP, along with its NDA partners, the BJP and the Jana Sena Party of actor-turned-politician Pawan Kalyan, orchestrated the stone pelting, the YSRCP leader told reporters, "The TDP and its allies (BJP and JSP) were behind this attack. They pelted stones at Chief Minister Jagan Mohan Reddy's convoy."

State IT Minister Gudivada Amarnath also condemned the attack on CM Jagan Reddy in Vijayawada during the 'Memantha Siddham' roadshow.

NEWS BOX

Biden says US support for Israel is 'ironclad' as Iran launches attack

World The United States stands by Israel and will "support their defense" as Iran launched attack that's expected to 'unfold over a number of hours', the White House said on Sunday. "Iran has begun an airborne attack against Israel, and it is likely to unfold over several hours," the White House said. "President Biden has been clear: Our support for Israel's security is ironclad." National Security Council spokesperson Adrienne Watson said in a statement. "The United States will stand with the people of Israel and support their defense against these threats from Iran," it stated. Meanwhile, Iran also warned the US to 'stay away' from conflict with Israel.

Joe Biden, who warned Iran against attacking Israel after saying such a scenario appeared imminent, was kept regularly updated, and his team was in "constant communication" with the Israelis and other allies, Watson said. Biden was due to meet in the White House's heavily secured situation room with his top officials, including Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin, Secretary of State Antony Blinken and CIA chief Bill Burns, the White House added. Iran had vowed retaliation after a presumed Israeli strike on April 1 leveled an Iranian diplomatic building in Damascus, killing seven members of the elite Revolutionary Guards, including two generals. Israel's army had said earlier that Iran had launched direct drone strikes at it. Iran's Revolutionary Guards later confirmed that an attack was underway and Iranian state TV said it involved "drones and missiles."

Joe Biden says US helped Israel take down nearly all Iranian drones, missiles

World Iran launched drones and missiles at Israel directly from its territory on Sunday, marking a major escalation in the shadow war between the two nations. Israel's military said more than 100 drones were launched from Iran, with security sources in Iraq and Jordan reporting dozens seen flying overhead. US President Joe Biden said America helped Israel take down "nearly all of the incoming drones and missiles", according to the White House. His statement came after Biden and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu held a phone conversation following the Iranian attack.

In a statement, Netanyahu said Israel has a clear principle, "whoever harms us, we will harm them". "We will defend ourselves against any threat and will do so level-headedly and with determination," the Israeli PM added. The Israeli military claims that over 100 explosive drones have been launched by Iran so far, news agency Reuters reported. Two security sources in Iraq said dozens of drones had been spotted flying from Iran towards Israel over Iraqi airspace in what Iranian Press TV called "extensive drone strikes" by the Revolutionary Guards. Iranian Defence Minister Mohammad Reza Ashtiani warned that Tehran will firmly respond to any country that "opens its airspace or territory for attacks on Iran by Israel", news agency Reuters reported.

Won't Hesitate To...": Iran After Launching Missile Barrage At Israel

Jerusalem. Iran today fired armed drones and missiles against Israel, marking a new volatile phase of the Middle East conflict. The attack, in retaliation for a strike in Syria that killed top Iranian military officers, was the first time Iran has struck Israel from its soil.

In a statement, Iran said that the attack was carried out in self-defence against the Israeli military's "aggression". It said the action was a "legitimate" defensive response to the strike in Damascus — which Israel hasn't acknowledged carrying out — and suggested it was a warning. It also warned the US to stay away from the conflict. "On 14 April 2024, the Islamic Republic of Iran's armed forces have carried out a series of military strikes on Israeli's military bases in response to, and in exercise of its inherent right of self-defence as recognized under Article 51 of the Charter, against Israel's recurring military aggressions, resulting in the martyrdom of the Iranian military advisors present in Syria," Iran's mission to the United Nations said in its statement. The Islamic Republic of Iran reaffirms its commitment to the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and international law, while reiterating its determination to forcefully defend its sovereignty, territorial integrity and national interests against any unlawful use of force and aggressions," it added. The country also reiterated that it would launch more attacks if Israel does not cease their actions. "The Islamic Republic of Iran would not hesitate to take further necessary defensive measures to protect its legitimate interests against any act of military aggression or unlawful use of force," Iran said. Sirens wailed and Reuters journalists in Israel said they heard distant heavy thuds and bangs from what local media called aerial interceptions of explosive drones. Authorities said a 7-year-old girl was critically injured.

Solomon Islands readies for election in shadow of China's influence

HONIARA. Solomon Islanders will head to the polls this week, voting in an election that promises to bolster or blunt China's regional ambitions, with security consequences that will ripple far beyond the Pacific nation's palm-fringed shores. The archipelago, one of the world's least-developed countries, is the unlikely focal point of a diplomatic scramble pitting a rising China against Western rivals. Solomon Islands has veered into China's orbit under Prime Minister Manasseh Sogavare, who inked a secret security pact with Beijing in 2022. Sogavare has vowed to deepen these bonds if re-elected. His challengers, meanwhile, are deeply sceptical of Beijing's influence in the archipelago, known as the Pacific's "Hapi Isles". "Everyone knows this election is going to be very closely watched by the United States, by China, and by other Pacific island countries," said Solomon Islands expert Anouk Ride from Australian National University. The former British colony gained independence in 1978, establishing diplomatic relations with Taiwan as one of its earliest foreign partners. But those long-standing ties were abruptly junked in 2019, when a freshly installed Sogavare gave his full-throated backing to Beijing's "One China" stance. A wave of Chinese aid and investment followed, including tens of millions of dollars for a state-of-the-art medical centre and a 10,000-seat athletics stadium.

Sydney mall attacker was mentally ill, cops rule out terror motive

Sydney, Australia. Australian police have identified a 40-year-old man who suffered from mental illness as the perpetrator of a Sydney shopping centre stabbing rampage that killed six people and left several more in critical condition. New South Wales police Assistant Commissioner Anthony Cooke said Sunday the man had come from the northeast state of Queensland and was known to law enforcement. "There is still to this point nothing that we have, no information we have received, no evidence we have recovered, no intelligence that we have gathered that would suggest that this was driven by any particular motivation, ideology or otherwise," said Cooke. "We know that the offender in the matter suffered from, suffers from, mental health."

The 40-year-old man -- who was shot dead by a senior police officer at the scene Saturday -- was named as Joel Cauchi. A Facebook profile said he came from the Toowoomba, near Brisbane, and had

attended a local high school and university. A distinctive grey, red and yellow dragon tattoo on his right arm was used to help identify him. He is believed to have travelled to Sydney about a month ago and hired a small storage unit in the city. It contained personal belongings, including a boogie board. Police are still trying to understand whether those attacked were chosen at random.

Five women and one man were killed during Cauchi's Saturday afternoon rampage, which took place in a bustling shopping centre in Sydney's Bondi Junction neighbourhood, not far from the famed beach. Among the injured was a nine-month-old baby girl who was said to be in a "serious but stable condition in hospital". The baby's mother is believed to have succumbed to her injuries after desperately passing the child to strangers in the hope they could save the newborn's life. Two of the victims are said to have no family in Australia and attempts are being made to contact the relatives overseas.



Prime Minister Anthony Albanese said Australians -- who are largely unaccustomed to incidents of violent crime -- were struggling to understand an "unspeakable" attack that is "really just beyond comprehension". "People going about their Saturday afternoon shopping should be safe, shouldn't be at risk. But tragically, we saw a loss of life, and people will be grieving for loved ones today," he said. "We also know there are many people still in hospital dealing with recovery, and our thoughts and prayers

are with them." Albanese said he had received messages from US President Joe Biden, British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak, and New Zealand Prime Minister Christopher Luxon among others. He again hailed the officer who shot Cauchi dead as a hero. The "wonderful inspector", he said "ran into danger by herself... without thinking about the risks to herself." Outside the shopping centre early on Sunday, a collection of flowers started to build. One white ribbon wrapped around a bunch of flowers simply said "RIP" with a heart drawn in black marker. Families embraced as they lay flowers. One man stood silently and wiped away tears, before moving on. Sydney resident Paul Hoolahan said he came to pay his respects to those who died at the shopping centre, where he often has coffee with his grandkids. "It is emotional." Hoolahan told AFP. "It shouldn't happen. It hit here," he said pointing to his chest.

Oldest living conjoined twins die aged 62

Reading, US. Conjoined twins Lori and George Schappell, who pursued separate careers, interests and relationships during lives that defied medical expectations, died this month in Pennsylvania, according to funeral home officials. They were 62.

The twins, listed by Guinness World Records as the oldest living conjoined twins, died April 7 at the Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania, according to obituaries posted by Leibensperger Funeral Homes of Hamburg. The cause of death was not detailed. When they were born, the doctors didn't think we'd make 30, but we proved them wrong," Lori said in an interview when they turned 50. The Philadelphia Inquirer reported, George came out as transgender in 2007. The twins, born September 18, 1961, in West Reading, Pennsylvania, had distinct brains but were joined at the skull. George, who had spina bifida and was 4 inches shorter, was wheeled around by Lori on an adaptive wheeled stool. Despite each having to go where the other went, it was "very important" to both "to live as independently as possible," the obituary said. Both graduated from a public high school

and took college classes. George went along for six years as Lori worked in a hospital laundry. Lori — "a trophy-winning bowler," according to the obituary notice — gave up the job in 1996 so her sibling could launch a country music career. "Since the age of 24, they have maintained their own residence and have traveled extensively," the obituary notice said.



Over the years, they appeared in many documentaries and talk shows, as well as in an episode of the FX medical drama "Nip/Tuck."

The Philadelphia Inquirer reported that Lori was once engaged to be married but that her fiance died in an automobile accident. When I went on dates," Lori said, "George would bring along books to read."

The twins said in a 1997 documentary that they had different bathing schedules and showered one at a time. George spoke of giving someone you love and respect "the privacy and compromise in situations that you would want them to give you." Lori said compromise meant "you don't get everything you want right when you want it." Conjoined twins occur once in every 50,000 to 60,000 births when identical twins from a single embryo fail to separate. About 70% are female, and most are stillborn. Only a small percentage are joined at the head, with nearly three-quarters joined at the chest and others at the abdomen or pelvis. Separation was deemed risky for the Schappell twins, but Lori Schappell told The Associated Press in a 2002 interview at the twins' apartment in a high-rise seniors complex that she didn't think such an operation was necessary in any case. You don't mess with what God made, even if it means you enjoy both children for a shorter time," she said. In the 1997 documentary, George also strongly ruled out the idea of separation, saying, "Why fix what is not broken?"

Hamas junks Israel's truce proposal, remains adamant on main demands

Cairo, UPDATED. Palestinian terror group Hamas has rejected an Israeli ceasefire proposal, saying on Saturday (local time) it had handed to mediators in Egypt and Qatar its response to the proposal it had received on April 1. After more than six months of war with Israel in Gaza, the negotiations remain deadlocked, with Hamas sticking to its demands that any agreement must end the war.

We reaffirm our adherence to our demands and the national demands of our people, with a permanent ceasefire, the withdrawal of the occupation army from the entire Gaza Strip, the return of the displaced to their areas and places of residence, intensification of the entry of relief and aid, and the start of reconstruction," Hamas said. Israel wants to secure the return of hostages seized by Hamas in its October 7 attack that triggered the



war, but says it will not stop fighting until Hamas is destroyed as a military force. It also says it still plans to carry out an assault on the southern Gaza city of Rafah, where more than a million civilians have taken refuge.

Hamas said on Saturday it was ready to conclude a prisoners-for-hostages swap deal with Israel that would see the release of 133 hostages still believed to be held in Gaza in return for hundreds of Palestinians jailed in

Israel. There was no official Israeli comment on Hamas's response. The Hamas's statement came a few days after Israel killed several members of the family of the group's chief Ismail Haniyeh in Gaza, raising fears among the families of hostages that it would derail efforts to secure their release from Gaza. Speaking to Reuters in Qatar a day after the killing, Haniyeh said his group still sought a deal but accused Israel of procrastinating and evading a response to the group's demands. Global calls for a ceasefire have been growing as the war has entered its seventh month, but there has been little sign of progress in the talks. Hamas is demanding an end to the Israeli offensive, a withdrawal of Israeli forces, and permission for Gaza's displaced Palestinians to return to their homes.

174 stranded after deadly Turkey cable car accident rescued after 23 hours

Istanbul, Turkey. The last of 174 people stranded in cable cars high above a mountain in southern Turkey were brought to safety Saturday, nearly 23 hours after one pod hit a pole and burst open, killing one person and injuring seven when they plummeted to the rocks below. Interior Minister Ali Yerlikaya announced the successful completion of the rescue operation on X Saturday afternoon. A total of 607 search and rescue personnel and 10 helicopters were involved, including teams from Turkey's emergency response agency, AFAD, the Coast Guard, firefighting teams and mountain rescue teams from different parts of Turkey, officials said. Helicopters with night-vision capabilities continued rescuing people throughout the night. The stranded people had been stuck on the Tunektepe cable car, just outside the Mediterranean city of Antalya, since 5:30 p.m. on Friday, when the accident occurred.

Istanbul resident Hatice Polat and her family were rescued seven hours into the ordeal. Speaking to the Anadolu agency, she said the power went out, and the pod flipped four or five times.

"The night was awful, we were very scared. There were children with us, they passed out," she said. "It was torture being up there for seven hours. It is swaying every second, you're constantly in fear. ... It was very traumatic, I don't know how we'll get over this trauma."

State-run Anadolu Agency identified the deceased as a 54-year-old Turkish man. Those injured included two children and there were six Turkish citizens and one Kyrgyz national. They were all rescued by Coast Guard helicopters soon after the crash and sent for treatment. Images in Turkish media showed the battered car swaying from dislodged cables on the side of the rocky mountain as medics tended the wounded.

Yerlikaya also announced that 13 people rescued from other cars were also taken to hospitals for checkups. Friday was the final day of a three-day public holiday in Turkey marking the end of the Muslim holy month of Ramadan, which sees families flock to coastal resorts. The cable car carries tourists from Konyaalti beach to a restaurant and viewing platform at the summit of the 618-meter (2,010-foot) Tunektepe peak. It is run by Antalya Metropolitan Municipality. The cable car line was completed in 2017 and receives a major inspection around the beginning of the year, as well as routine inspections throughout the year.

Antalya Chief Public Prosecutor's Office has launched an investigation. An expert commission including mechanical and electrical engineers and health and safety experts was assigned to determine the cause of the incident.

Iran wouldn't have attacked Israel 'if I were President': Donald Trump

Former US President Donald Trump has slammed Iran's attack against Israel and said "this would never have happened if I were President".

World Former US President Donald Trump has slammed Iran's retaliatory attack against Israel and said "this would never have happened if I were President". He also claimed that President Joe Biden's address to the nation on the unprecedented attack was "taped". In a post on his Truth Social app, the Republican presidential candidate said, "ISRAEL IS UNDER ATTACK! This should never have been allowed to happen - This would NEVER have happened if I were President!" Trump's post came shortly after Iran on Sunday launched a barrage of drones and missiles directly towards Israeli territory in retaliation against the April 1 airstrike on its consulate in



Damascus that killed seven Revolutionary Guards, including two commanders, and six Syrian civilians. Israel, however, has not acknowledged the airstrike. The Israel Defense Forces claimed that more than 200 missiles and drones were fired and that it intercepted the "vast majority". The military also

said that a number of "small hits" were recorded in southern Israel, with minor damage to infrastructure. In response to the attack, President Biden said the US's support for Israel's security is "ironclad" and Washington "will stand with the people of Israel and support their defence against these threats from

Iran". But, Donald Trump also criticised Biden's address to the nation on the Iranian attack, saying it was "taped". In another post on Truth Social, the former President criticised his successor, saying "this is no time for taped speeches". Trump further claimed that after reading his Truth Social post, "Biden's handlers convinced him not to release his taped speech". "He'll (Biden) now attempt to do it live, probably tomorrow. He doesn't want to leave his house, with the Corvette, in Delaware!!!" According to reports, Biden had been called back to the White House on Saturday night from his residence at Rehoboth Beach in Delaware where he had flown in for a weekend getaway. Meanwhile, the former President also reiterated his backing for the Jewish nation, saying "America supports Israel". "I want to say God Bless the people of Israel. They're under attack right now and it would not have happened if we were in office," he added.

NEWS BOX

Rule of the Subs: How usage of Impact Players has evolved in 2024

CHENNAI. When the Impact Player (IP) rule was introduced in the 2023 Indian Premier League, something fundamentally changed with the way teams operate. For starters, there was a predominant need to be proactive as a batter because teams have that extra batter who could potentially come into play. The perfect example is someone like Ruturaj Gaikwad. The Chennai Super Kings opener had a 590-run season at a strike rate of 147.5, but in the 15 innings he batted, Gaikwad had just four fifties. Gaikwad was the enforcer at the top for CSK, coming in and scoring the quickfire 30s — something that is unlike for a batter like him. But he had made peace with it because of the IP rule. "With the impact player rule, you have to make sure you don't hold yourself back," he had said when asked about not converting the starts into big scores. It is just one side of the cause and effect, and it has remained the same in 2024 as well. However, there is something else that has changed. When the IP rule came into play months before the IPL season, initially, people needed some time to understand how it works. How it fundamentally changes the way the game is played. It is no more a 11 vs 11, but a 12 vs 12. Teams had already been formed and to put it simply, last year the emphasis was on adding the extra 20-odd runs. While some teams had a consistent use of IP rule for specific players, it was not the case for all. CSK, for example, kept Ambati Rayudu as IP substitute on most occasions irrespective of the situation while a team like Rajasthan Royals were using Dhruv Jurel as the extra batter in the lower-order because of their long lower-order (read bowlers). This year, however, it is a lot different. Knowing that the rule will be in place, teams seem to have constructed their squads in such a way that they can have ultra-specific roles for certain players. For CSK, Shivam Dube has become the IP player, Mohit Sharma for Gujarat Titans, Khaleel Ahmed for Delhi Capitals and Arshdeep Singh for Punjab Kings. While it might seem like they all have a fixed role to play for their respective teams — and they do — there is more to it. Although, they are the go-to IP subs for their respective teams, who comes in for them, how and when changes according to various factors from toss to opponent to conditions. This is not just about being proactive and going for the extra 20 runs, but also about maximising the strengths as much as they can.

Ruud finally beats Djokovic and Tsitsipas downs Sinner to set up Monte Carlo Masters final

MONACO. Casper Ruud finally got the better of Novak Djokovic, beating the top-ranked Serb 6-4, 1-6, 6-4 on Saturday to set up a Monte Carlo Masters final against two-time champion Stefanos Tsitsipas.

Tsitsipas won the earlier semifinal against a tiring Jannik Sinner 6-4, 3-6, 6-4 to hand the Australian Open champion only his second defeat of the season. Djokovic double-faulted on match point in his first career defeat in six matches against Ruud. He had never even taken a set off Djokovic before, including at last year's French Open final.

Djokovic trailed 4-1 in the deciding set but held his next serve and broke a nervous-looking Ruud's serve to love to pull back to 4-3. At 15-15 in the eighth game, Djokovic turned and shouted an expletive toward someone in the crowd. Chair umpire Mohamed Lahyani urged fans not to call out during a rally, but did not issue a verbal warning to Djokovic despite the loudly audible expletive, which was followed by an angry glare. A sloppy 10th game in the deciding set saw him trailing love-40 on serve, and the eighth-seeded Ruud received the victory on his third match point.

Ruud and the 12th-seeded Tsitsipas are chasing their first titles of the year and 11th overall.

The record 24-time men's Grand Slam champion Djokovic still hasn't won a title this year, and remained on 98 in his glittering career. Sinner, who has three titles in 2024, looked in control in the deciding set when he led Tsitsipas 4-3 with a service game to follow. But he called for a medical timeout during the changeover and a trainer massaged his right knee and thigh. Although a smiling Sinner shared a joke with the trainer, things got more serious in the next game when Tsitsipas broke his serve at the fifth attempt to level the score.

Sinner limped a little at the end of the next game and clutched the hamstring area of his left leg, then had both legs massaged. His movement was restricted in the ensuing game, and Tsitsipas clinched victory on his first match point when Sinner's backhand from the back of the court went long as he struggled for balance. "He is one of the toughest opponents I have faced so far and to find ways when there weren't that many, I am proud of that," Tsitsipas said.

American actress Zendaya, British actor Josh O'Connor and other cast members from the tennis movie "Challengers" were among the crowd enjoying the sunshine at Monte Carlo Country Club. Italian fans crossing the nearby border made Sinner feel at home, but Tsitsipas enjoys strong support here after winning in 2021 and 2022.

IPL 2024 , MI vs CSK: MS Dhoni set for potential Wankhede Stadium farewell

- ➔ Eoin Morgan said that Arshdeep Singh is as good as Bhuvneshwar Kumar
- ➔ PBKS pacer Arshdeep Singh impressed with a four-wicket haul against SRH
- ➔ Arshdeep Singh moved to 3rd spot in Purple Cap list with 8 wickets

New Delhi, There will be a sea of yellow at the Wankhede Stadium when MI host CSK in the first and only El Clasico of IPL 2024 league stage on Sunday. It might turn out to be a momentous occasion at the iconic venue as MS Dhoni is set to likely walk out for one last time at the Wankhede Stadium as a professional cricketer. CSK and MI only meet once in the league stage of IPL 2024 and the playoffs and the final have also not been scheduled in Mumbai. The man, who oversaw one of the most glorious chapters of Indian cricket history when he hit the World Cup-winning six on April 2, 2011, has

enjoyed incredible support nationwide over the last two seasons even as speculation about his IPL future has been rife. And Mumbai will roar for the former India captain for probably one last time in what promises to be a blockbuster contest on Sunday, April 14.

Memories must have gushed back when MS Dhoni was spotted posing with the World Cup 2011 trophy on the eve of the IPL 2024 match. As the former India captain walked out for training, he made sure he got a glimpse of the World Cup trophy at the BCCI headquarters at the Wankhede Stadium. Dhoni was even seen presumably adjusting the position of the trophy on the trophy cabinet in his own inimitable style. Dhoni has played 13 matches for India at the Wankhede Stadium, the most by any player from the country. And the one that stands out is the big World Cup final 13 years ago. Promoting himself to No. 4, one of his many masterstrokes as captain, Dhoni hit a match-winning 91 off 79 balls in a sensational partnership with Gautam Gambhir to help India chase down 275 against Sri Lanka. And he finished it with that iconic six. Dhoni has seats named after him as the Mumbai Cricket Association, in



2023, immortalised the part of the Wankhede Stadium where his winning six landed on that fateful evening.

In the IPL, Dhoni has played 27 matches at the Wankhede Stadium, hitting 392 runs with a fifty. He has hit 17 sixes at the iconic venue and has struck at 116.37 for the Super Kings. LAST DANCE AT WANKHEDE?

MS Dhoni might be calm and composed on the outside, but the CSK superstar will have trouble handling his emotions if he gets an opportunity to walk out to the middle at the Wankhede Stadium with the bat on Sunday. Regardless, the decibel levels are going to go through the roof whenever he is spotted

before, during and after the IPL 2024 contest. MS Dhoni has not yet opened up about his future in the IPL. Even when he spoke after lifting the trophy last year, the 42-year-old said he would want to return to play the IPL for "at least one more season" as a return gift to his fans. However, there are enough suggestions that IPL 2024 might be his last as a player in the league. The 5-time champion handover of captaincy to Ruturaj Gaikwad on the eve of their opening match in Chennai, hinting at the start of a transition period. Also, the vintage long hair does hint at an imminent big call from the superstar cricketer.

Dhoni has looked fitter and leaner when compared to last year. The wicketkeeper-batter underwent surgery to treat a long-standing knee issue after having managed throughout last season. Dhoni has been nearly flawless with the gloves. Dhoni has gotten opportunities to bat only thrice in the season and he took fans down memory lane during his whirlwind knock of 37 off 16 balls in Visakhapatnam. CSK fans cheered even when the team lost as they were thrilled at the sight of Dhoni smashing them into the stands.

Jitesh Sharma not PBKS vice-captain? Coach Bangar clears confusion after RR loss

- ➔ Sam Curran led PBKS in the match against RR
- ➔ Bangar has revealed that Jitesh isn't the vice-captain of PBKS
- ➔ RR defeated PBKS by 3 wickets on Saturday

New Delhi, PBKS coach Sanjay Bangar has cleared the air regarding the confusion surrounding Jitesh Sharma being vice-captain of the side, as Sam Curran led them during the loss to RR on Saturday, April 13. Curran, who had led Punjab last year during the IPL, stepped in to fill for Shikhar Dhawan after the PBKS skipper had to miss the home match on Saturday due to an injury. Jitesh had appeared for the captain's seminar meeting and many assumed that he had been given the role of being the deputy to Dhawan for the 2024 season. However, seeing Curran leading the team against RR

left a lot of fans stunned as they wondered what had happened to the PBKS wicketkeeper and his position as the vice-captain of the side. Coach Bangar revealed during the post-match press conference that



Jitesh isn't actually the designated vice-captain of the team.

Though was always Sam Curran as PBKS vice-captain: Bangar Bangar went on to say that people may have got the impression that Jitesh was the deputy as he had attended the captain's seminar meeting. The PBKS coach

said that the thought was always that Curran would be the vice-captain of the team as he had led the side in IPL 2023. "Jitesh Sharma is not the designated vice-captain of the Punjab Kings. The impression might have been that due to the captain's seminar meeting at the start of the IPL. But the thought was always that since Sam Curran had led the team in the previous season, he would be the vice-captain.

Why did Curran not attend the captain's seminar instead of Jitesh?

Bangar would also reveal that Curran didn't attend the captain's seminar in Chennai ahead of the IPL as he had arrived late from UK and they wanted to have a few sessions with him.

Sam was late to arrive from UK and we wanted to have a few sessions with him and so we could not send him to Chennai for the inauguration of the season," said Bangar. Curran's return as skipper of PBKS was a sour one as RR would beat them in the final of the game by 3 wickets to hand Punjab their 4th loss of the campaign.

MI vs CSK: Toss will play massive advantage in 'battle of nerves', says Robin Uthappa

NEW DELHI. MI and CSK will face each other in the group stage of the Indian Premier League on Sunday, 14 April. MI are slowly getting back in the groove and have won two back-to-back matches in the competition. CSK on the other hand, are coming off a victory at home against KKR, but have been poor while travelling away from home.

Speaking ahead of the game former India cricketer Zaheer Khan felt that MI could be threatening due to the momentum they have found in the last two matches of the Indian Premier League. In their previous game of the IPL, MI thrashed RCB by chasing down 197 runs in just 15.3 overs with 6 wickets in hand. Every MI batter slammed the RCB bowling, with Suryakumar Yadav being the standout of them all - batting at a SR of 273+. No fan will want to miss this game since they are only playing once in the league phase. MI have shown how threatening they can be with the momentum that they have. CSK are always up for a challenge," Khan said on Jio Cinema.

There will be nerves during MI vs CSK: Uthappa

Former cricketer Robin Uthappa, on the other



hand, felt that MI vs CSK could turn out to be a battle of nerves as the one winning the toss might have a massive advantage in the fixture. "I think there will be nerves, but both teams have played in Wankhede quite a bit. The one who wins the toss will have a massive advantage, whoever chases in the



game will have the upper hand," Uthappa concluded.

CSK are currently in the 3rd position in the points table with 3 wins from 5 matches, while MI sit at the 7th spot with 2 wins. A win for MI on Sunday will drastically change the complexion of the points table.

Blessing and curse: Hetmyer on double-edged finisher's role in IPL 2024

- ➔ Shimron Hetmyer saved Rajasthan vs PBKS
- ➔ Hetmyer wins the POTM award for his 10-ball 27*
- ➔ RR return to winning ways in the IPL.

Mullanpur Rajasthan sneaked past PBKS in a final over thriller at the Mullanpur Stadium on Saturday, 13 April. RR were saved by Shimron Hetmyer's 27* off just 10 balls, where the batter kept his nerve and chased down 10 runs in the final over against Arshdeep Singh. Hetmyer won the player of the match award for his terrific innings which brought Rajasthan back to winning ways in the Indian Premier League 2024

Speaking after the game, Hetmyer said that it was a blessing and curse to be a finisher in the tournament as things were so unpredictable



in the final few overs of the game. On the day, Hetmyer was under pressure after missing the first two balls of the final over but managed to pull off a terrific victory for the Jaipur-based franchise.

"I practice hard. I try to back myself for batting

in these situations in the nets. I try as much as possible in the nets. I try my best to hit sixes. Sometimes, it comes off; sometimes, you can't. Happy to pull off a victory for my team tonight," Hetmyer said in the post-match presentation ceremony.

Bruno Fernandes double earns unconvincing Manchester United 2-2 draw vs Bournemouth

Manchester United needed two penalty decisions to salvage a 2-2 draw at Bournemouth in the English Premier League on Saturday, although the point did little to boost its chances of Champions League soccer next season. United was largely outplayed and trailed 2-1 when a shot by Kobbie Mainoo from outside the area was deflected onto the arm of Adam Smith. Referee Tony Harrington pointed to the spot even though the ball was traveling away from the goal and the Bournemouth player had little time to react. Bruno Fernandes converted the 65th-minute penalty for his second goal of the game to secure a point for United, but it was another unconvincing performance from Erik ten



Hag's side that is unlikely to quell speculation about the manager's future. Harrington initially awarded Bournemouth an injury-time penalty when Ryan Christie collided with United defender Willy Kambwala as he was running into the box, but a VAR review ruled the foul happened just outside the area. United still has a slim chance of securing Champions League qualification but couldn't take full advantage of fifth-placed Tottenham's loss at Newcastle earlier. United is 10 points behind fourth-placed Aston Villa and Tottenham with six rounds to go. The Champions League's new format next season means five teams from the Premier League could qualify for the competition. Dominic Solanke gave Bournemouth the lead after shrugging off Kambwala to break into the area and then slotting a low shot past André Onana.

Fernandes equalized by volleying in his second effort from close range but it took only Bournemouth five more minutes to restore its lead as Justin Kluivert was allowed to waltz into the United area unchallenged and beat Onana at his near post. Milos Kerkez had a great chance to make it 3-1 before halftime but headed against the crossbar, and United was then on the right side of the two penalty decisions in the second half. Bournemouth were in 12th place, safe from relegation but seemingly with little chance of earning European qualification.

At one point in time, it seemed like RR had made a mess of a simple 149-run chase after they opened with uncapped Mumbai spinner Tanush Kotiyan. Kotiyan, who plays as a spin bowling all-rounder for Mumbai in the domestic circuit looked out of his depth and was only able to score 24 off 31 balls. Things got quite tricky for the RR finishers in the final over, but two cameos from Rovman Powell and Shimron Hetmyer were able to give them the edge that they needed to win the game. "After missing a couple of deliveries first up in the final over, Boult came to me and said you have got this, mate. Yeah, definitely. I would have taken a single if it was there on offer with two needed off two. We (Boult and me) spoke about it. Single or double whatever was offered at that stage, we were going for it. A full toss came my way, and I was like (chuckles), backed myself and went for the six," concluded the ever-smiling Hetmyer. With the win, Rajasthan remained at the top of the table with 10 points from 6 games.

Disha Patani

Flaunts Her Toned Abs In Fitted Crop Top, Hot Video Goes Viral



Disha Patani is making heads turn with her impeccable fashion sense! Her everyday looks speak volumes about her sense of style. Be it with her gym outfits or tank tops and baggy pants flaunting her curves and elegance, the actress always manages to make heads turn. Having said that, the Yodha actress recently left her fans gasping for breath with her latest hot video. Disha looked all things ravishing and radiating in a beige crop top with loose pants. She was spotted with her furry friend. Finding the right balance between elegance and charm, Disha posed with perfection. She wore her hair in a loose braid to bring together the whole look.

Meanwhile, on the work front, Disha Patani was last seen sharing the screen space with Arjun Kapoor, John Abraham, and Tara Sutaria in Ek Villain Returns. She will also be seen in Nag Ashwin's action drama Kalki 2898-AD alongside Deepika Padukone, Dulquer Salmaan, and Amitabh Bachchan. Disha Patani is currently seen in Sagar Aambre and Pushkar Ojha's action drama Yodha, where she shares the screen with Sidharth Malhotra and Raashii Khanna.

Apart from her professional life, Disha often grabs headlines for her personal life. Time and again, she has been linked to Tiger. Though the duo never admitted to dating each other, they have always maintained that they are close friends. In a recent interview, Tiger, who is currently gearing up for the release of Bade Miyan Chote Miyan along with Akshay Kumar, opened up about his relationship status. "Are you single? Aapki zindagi kis 'Disha' mein jaa rahi hai?" Times Now.com asked Tiger, while hinting at his dating rumours with Disha. To this, Tiger wittily replied, "Meri ek hi Disha hai life mein... aur wo hai mera kaam (I have only one direction/focus in my life which is my work)."

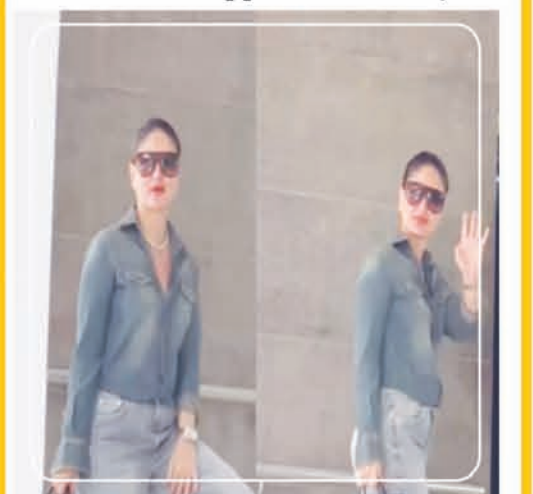


Did You Know Actress Priyamani's First Salary Was Rs 500?



Priyamani is one of the sought-after actresses across India. She is already a popular name in the South film industry. After her meaty role in Raj and DK's thriller series titled The Family Man, she quickly gained recognition and fame in the northern belt of the country and became a renowned pan-India actress. Priyamani now charges in crores, but can you guess what her first salary was? She marked her entry into the entertainment realm with the Telugu movie, Evare Atagaadu in 2003. Her first movie earned her immense appreciation from viewers and critics. In the following year, she marked her debut in Tamil and Malayalam industry with Kungalal Kaidhu Sei and Satyam respectively. Currently, she is one of the highest paid south actresses. Her first salary was just Rs 500. In an interview, Priyamani once opened up about her first salary. When asked about one thing that nobody knew about her, she said, "My first earning was just Rs 500 and I treasure it preciously." In the same interview, she also expressed her one true desire and that was to sing in any of her movies in the future. Apart from this, one of her unfulfilled wishes is to act in a movie minus the makeup. Priyamani may have played brief roles in Bollywood movies like Raavan and Rakht Charitra II, she gained fame for her stint in The Family Man opposite Manoj Bajpayee. As per reports, she was given Rs 80 lakh for the series. Soon, she starred in one of the blockbuster movies of 2023, opposite Shah Rukh Khan in Atlee's Jawan. She demanded Rs 2 crore for her role in this high-octane action thriller movie. Jawan also starred Deepika Padukone, Sanya Malhotra, Nayanthara and Sanjay Dutt. Looks like 2024 is going to be a busy year for Priyamani. She starred in Bhamakalappam 2, which had an underwhelming performance at the box office. Next, she starred in Article 370 directed by Aditya Suhas Jambhale. The political action thriller has received positive reviews from the audience and critics with few pointing out the release of the movie before elections.

Kareena Kapoor Khan Effortlessly Rocks Denim On Denim Look As She Gets Papped In The City



Kareena Kapoor Khan is currently very happy with the response to her recently released film Crew. The female-led comedy-drama has impressed audiences a lot and has been creating history at the box office. Well, the fashionista Kareena Kapoor was spotted in the city wearing a denim outfit. In the video, shared by Viral Bhayani, we can see Kareena Kapoor Khan coming out of her car and posing for the camera. She opted for denim on the denim look. Kareena completed the look with minimalistic makeup and red lipstick. Fans were also seen reacting to it. Many dropped heart emojis in the comment section.

Kareena Kapoor Khan, Tabu and Kriti Sanon starrer Crew opened to a warm response from the masses upon its release on March 29. The film, over its first weekend, performed significantly well and concluded its first weekend in India with a collection of Rs 32.60 crore. However, on its first Monday, the film witnessed a 60 per cent drop in its collection, and the downward trend persisted with its earnings further decreasing from Tuesday to Thursday. As per Sacnilk.com, the film minted a total of Rs 3 crore on Day 7 of its release.

Crew, the all-female lead film, directed by Rajesh A Krishnan, has managed to earn Rs 43.75 crore in India till its seventh day. On the other hand, its worldwide collection stands at Rs 82 crore so far. Notably, the film witnessed a smooth landing at the box-office with a collection of Rs 62.53 crore worldwide. Crew revolves around three air hostesses played by Tabu, Kareena and Kriti. The narrative of the film witnesses the three leads stumbling upon a dead passenger smuggling gold biscuits. What unfolds after they decide to steal the gold amidst the backdrop of their airline Kohinoor facing bankruptcy, forms the basic plot of the film.

Vidya Balan

Shares Her Views On Nepotism In Bollywood: 'The Industry Belongs to No One's Father...'



Vidya Balan is eagerly preparing for the release of her new romantic comedy, Do Aur Do Pyaar. Renowned for her diverse roles, she continues to embrace unique characters. During a conversation with The Indian Express, she discussed the issue of nepotism and its influence on a career in the arts. Vidya spoke candidly about nepotism, stating, "Nepotism or no nepotism, I am here. Kisi ki baap ki industry nahi hai, nahi toh har baap ka beta, har baap ki beti successful hote (The film industry does not belong to anyone's father, else every star kid would be successful)." She elaborated, "I have been happy doing my own things. There were times when I felt like, 'Maybe if I had the protection of certain people, people would have been a bit kinder in those phases.' But in terms of opportunities, I don't think anybody has been able to deny me my share." Her upcoming film Do Aur Do Pyaar is a humorous yet insightful exploration of human relationships, focusing on themes such as compatibility and fidelity within contemporary marriages. The film also stars Pratik Gandhi, Illeana D'Cruz, and Sendhil Ramamurthy in key roles. Following Neeyat in 2023, this marks Vidya's first film for 2024.

Additionally, Vidya will appear in Anees Bazmee's Bhool Bhulaiyaa 3, cast alongside Kartik Aaryan and Tripti Dimri. Sharing a glimpse from the first day of shooting, Vidya expressed her excitement: "Super thrilled to begin this eerie yet funny adventure of #BhoolBhulaiyaa3 with the incredibly talented @kartikaaryan and @tripti_dimri, the visionary @aneesbazmee, and the driving force behind it all #BhushanKumar! Eagerly awaiting #Diwali2024." The trailer opens with introducing the main characters of the film. As the video proceeds further we get to see their life and its hardships. But there is a catch. The trailer is a refreshing love story. The film seems to be a perfect rom-com for the summer. Complemented by a stellar line-up of renowned artists like Lucky Ali, Armaan Malik, The Local Train, Lost Stories, and Ananya Birla, the soundtrack of the film is anticipated to be a treat for the ears.

