

Catch 22, and the quest for sanity

Groucho Marx is credited as saying that he refused to join any club which would admit him as a member, implying that he only wanted to join a club that wouldn't admit him! Rule one that could generate from this is that you can only join a club which would admit you, but a club that would admit you isn't a good enough club to join! That is a typical Catch 22. Almost like a rule that states that the government can change only if you vote, but you can vote only if you support the government. I am sure all of us can come up with rules like this, being governed by bureaucracies, whose only work seems to be to put up such obstacles for everything. You can only apply for benefits for the homeless if you have an identity card with an address. But if you have an address, you are not homeless and you cannot avail of the benefits.

The inspiration for this column is not any maze of bureaucratic rules but a book (which was made into a film later), a cult classic, called 'Catch 22'. Its writer Joseph Heller was born on May 1, 1923, 101 years ago. Like others of his generation, he took part in World War-II. He joined the US Army Air Corps in 1942, when he was 19. He served in Italy and flew about 60 combat missions. This experience of war went into writing 'Catch 22' (1962). If I were to choose two books about WW-II, I would select this one and Kurt Vonnegut's 'Slaughterhouse-Five, or, The Children's Crusade: A Duty-Dance with Death' (1969). As you can see, it always takes time to think and write about traumatic cataclysmic events.

Heller actually began writing the novel in 1953, much after the war. He has said that what he thought of first were a couple of lines about the main character Yossarian and the chaplain. He thought of writing a very short novel and began to think of other characters and the plot. He finished one chapter within a week and it was published as a standalone story a couple of years later, in 1955, when he had not progressed much with the book. The story was published as 'Catch-18'. However, when it eventually became a novel, the title was changed to 'Catch 22', which certainly sounds better!

The novel is about the war experiences of Yossarian, who is in the Army Air Corps (as Heller himself was). Yossarian tries to escape combat missions (we see him faking an illness to escape the insane war), but he is forced by the military administration to stay on. His officer in command keeps raising the number of missions you have to fly in order to complete a tour of duty and return home. So, the airmen in his unit can never get a break. Only a mental breakdown can allow the medical staff to certify that an officer is in no condition to fly. An army psychiatrist explains that the catch in the rule that allows a pilot to be certified as not being mentally fit to fly combat missions is that it also states that the pilot has to request mental evaluation first. However, such a request demonstrates that the officer is sane! This then is Catch 22, a term that has taken on a life of its own outside the book. It is a crazy world after all. This bureaucratic world that enmeshes us with rules which we sometimes admire — it takes such a wicked and smart brain to think them up — is part of all varieties of ideological systems. This is the stuff of Jaspal Bhatti's comedies (and think how easily this world could become tragic in its absurdity). However, what the novel and the term bring out is the way in which the lives of ordinary people do not matter at all to the powers that be.

Significance of Sudhir Kakar's works

Sudhir Kakar, who passed away recently, finally found his calling after meandering through engineering and then economics (PhD) when his fortuitous meeting with Erik Erikson in Ahmedabad revealed his life's purpose to him! Erikson became his guru. Kakar trained in Freudian psychoanalysis at the Psychoanalytic Institute in Frankfurt with Erikson's recommendation.

He went on to write 20 non-fiction and six fictional books and is known mainly for his original work on identity formation in Indians in relation to the culture that they grow up in. By culture, he alluded to the cultural unconsciousness which seeps into Indians of all castes, religions and hues and which encompasses myths that we encounter daily in the form of movies, festivals, folk songs and traditions.

Born in Nainital a year (1938) before Sigmund Freud died, he traversed the then undivided Punjab with his civil servant father. His idealisation of Gandhi as a pioneer of practical spirituality may have stemmed from an early attendance of one of Gandhi's prayer meetings with an aunt. "Gandhi is not inferior to Christ in goodness and sanctity and a promise of sanity in the madness of this world," he wrote in 'The Seeker, A Novel'.

'Inner World — A Psychoanalytic Study of Childhood and Society in India' (1981) was Kakar's major work on the development of a family or societal ego in Indians rather than an individual ego. Replete with allegorical references to popular myths, it purports to explain the lack of animosity in Indian women towards men despite their inferior status. An Indian woman's identity is/was inextricably linked with the birth of her children as her role in the family and society was validated only then. It contains Sita and Draupadi's quotes (of doubtful veracity, and written probably by men of those times) as partly the reason that women accept their status since they are the ego ideals for Indian women. It also talks of the Ganesha complex — an inverted Oedipus complex as the father envies the unique position of the male child vis a vis the mother.

In 'Culture and the Psyche — Selected Essays', he highlighted the high value in Hindu society on connectedness not only with the family, but society and the universe. The stronger fusion and extended dependence on the mother (and other family members) ensure that Indians grow up with more ambiguity and more accepting of dualities. In 'Indians — A Portrait of a People', which he co-



wrote with his second wife Katharina, a scholar of contemporary religions, he emphasised again how the cultural part of our personal identity is wired before we attain adulthood. In 'Shamans, Mystics and Doctors', he elaborated on the role of traditional healers in Indian society. However, he faced criticism that he exoticised many of the traditional healers rather than producing a more nuanced expose.

His 'Colours of Violence', in which he explored religious conflict, is a pertinent commentary that is relevant to the current sociopolitical climate. It analyses how modernisation leads to heightened anxiety among people, who face loss of traditional customs and take solace in building a new cultural identity by aligning with groups such as the right and left wing. The ego ideal of the revered leader of the group represents past historical figures and a vision of a shared future, thus raising self-esteem of the followers of the group's ideology.

Kakar was an ardent advocate of developing psychoanalysis and even a psychology of non-western cultures. Joseph Heinrich said that WEIRD — Western Educated, Industrialised, Rich and Democratic — psychologists, sociologists and philosophers have been the producers of psychology which the rest of the world blindly followed. Kakar, along with thinkers such as Dr JS Neki and Dr NN Wig, wished to bring a more Indian context to psychotherapeutic interventions. His extensive writings are extremely relevant for understanding how culture and psyche mould one's identity and personality, while some of his other works appear reductionistic and are open to debate.

It is surprising then that though most psychiatrists and psychologists read Freudian concepts, there is still no mention of Sudhir Kakar's work on culture and psyche.

He will be remembered for his significant work, plus his erudition and humaneness.

Manipur's ordeal

Year after clashes erupted, it's time to heal wounds

MANIPUR has been in the throes of an ethnic crisis ever since clashes broke out on May 3 last year. A 'Tribal Solidarity March' organised that day in protest against the majority Meitei community's demand for Scheduled Tribe status had triggered clashes between the valley-based Meiteis and the tribal Kukis, who live in the hills. The conflict has claimed more than 200 lives and displaced thousands of people in the BJP-ruled state. Both the Central and state governments have neither been able to resolve the differences between the warring communities nor restore peace and normalcy. Despite an incessant clamour for the removal of Chief Minister N Biren Singh over alleged misgovernance and incompetence, the BJP has stubbornly persisted with him.

In his address on Independence Day last year, Prime Minister Narendra Modi had declared that the entire nation was with Manipur and that the Central and state governments were making every effort to find a



solution to the vexed issue. He had also claimed that the situation in the violence-hit state was improving.

However, the PM has not visited the state after trouble broke out, drawing flak from Opposition parties, which have accused him of abandoning the people of Manipur.

Since this northeastern state is not electorally significant in the national scheme of things — it sends just two MPs to the Lok Sabha — it has been reduced to a mere footnote during campaigning. Still, it is commendable that the Manipuris' nightmarish ordeal has not shaken their faith in democracy. A high turnout of 81 per cent was recorded at six polling stations in Outer Manipur Lok Sabha constituency during repolling on April 30. Miscreants' attempts to disrupt voting by damaging EVMs and threatening voters have proved futile. The resilience of the state's people should spur the powers that be to heal their wounds. Things have been allowed to drift for too long — it's time to make amends for the sake of peace and stability in the beleaguered border state.

A-bout Bhushan Jr in fray

When half the population 'loses', the other half too loses when men from the clan of, say Brij Bhushan or Prajwal Revanna, become lawmakers

Moments after winning a bronze at Rio de Janeiro in 2016, Sakshi Malik forgot years of pain and taunts and broken ligaments and dislocated joints; this is what it takes to win an Olympics medal. At the same Rio Olympics, there was a sickening sound and an anguished scream when Vinesh Phogat's knee got impossibly twisted during her bout against Sun Yunan. This is what it takes to win medals in top international events — a broken leg and ligaments, and years and blood and sweat and tears, for 'India's daughters' to be lionised. But daughters lose, too, and far too often for comfort. After Karan Bhushan Singh, son of former Wrestling Federation of India president and Member of Parliament Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh, was given the ticket to contest the Lok Sabha election from Kaiserganj, the family stronghold, wrestler Sakshi Malik said: "India's daughters have lost."

Addressing the BJP, she added: "Leave the arrest, today by giving the ticket to his son, you have broken the morale of crores of daughters of the country. If the ticket goes to only one family, is the country's government so weak in front of one man? Only votes are needed in the name of Lord Shri Ram, what about the path shown by him?" It's interesting that Sakshi, India's only woman wrestler to win an Olympics medal, invoked Lord Rama — in a dismal world, bereft of hope and justice, the final resort for the believers is god; among Indian athletes, the most rooted to Indian traditions and customs and religion are the wrestlers. Sakshi invoking Lord Rama is symbolic of the most devout of Indian sportspeople losing faith in the system. The imperatives of power are severe — chillingly unfeeling, cold-hearted, insensitive; siyast ke scene mein dil nahin hota (politics is heartless), as they say. So, while Brij Bhushan Singh does have an ongoing sexual



harassment case against him, and the Delhi Police did file a chargesheet in connection with the case in June last year, the fact is that he and his clan are highly electable — too powerful a man to be alienated in what could be a close General Election. Perhaps, in political circles, allegations of 'mere' sexual harassment don't amount to too big a sin — in the outgoing Lok Sabha, 44 per cent of the MPs have a criminal record; nine are accused of murder, and three of rape.

According to the Association for Democratic Reforms (ADR), among the serious charges against the MPs

are murder, attempt to murder, creating communal disharmony, kidnapping, rape and other crimes against women. No major political party is unblemished — according to the ADR, 118 (40 per cent) of the BJP's 294 MPs had mentioned criminal cases in their affidavits. Out of the 46 Congress MPs, 26 (57 per cent) had declared criminal cases in the affidavits. So, with MPs with murder and rape cases against them completing their terms in the Lok Sabha, perhaps parties really believe that the sexual harassment case against Brij Bhushan Singh isn't serious enough for his clan to be banished from

Parliament. This is a strong indictment of the state of our democracy, and leads to disenchantment; when politicians are caught lying, dog-whistling, instigating riots, stealing public money or, as in the case of JD(S) Member of Parliament Prajwal Revanna, committing sexual crimes, this adage is thrown up: 'In a democracy, we deserve the leaders we elect.' But do we Indians really deserve the likes of Brij Bhushan or Prajwal? Aren't they new royalty, foisted upon us? They're dynasts of democracy, behaving like the potentates who ruled their riyasat as per their whims and fancies before Independence. Democracy, designed to end succession and rule by birth, has strengthened satraps and their fiefdoms across the country. Sakshi's comment that "India's daughters have lost" is interesting, too; it's true that only women can really feel and know what it's like to be a woman in India — the stares, comments, whistles; public groping; the impossibility of venturing out for a serene walk or drive at night in most parts of India. Women only can feel the fear when a powerful politician they've accused of harassment continues to wield and accrue power. Yet, when half the population of a country "loses", the other half loses, too — though the hurt and fear may not be personal in their case, men too lose when men from the clan of, say Brij Bhushan or Prajwal (grandson of a former Prime Minister, no less), become lawmakers.

The state of women, the crimes against them, invoke a very stirring question, raised by American activist Catharine A MacKinnon: 'Are women human?' It can be argued that by being denied human rights, a very large section of them is being treated as sub-human. Yet, there's hope, and it lies in the spirit of Vinesh, who slays her demons every night as she pursues that elusive Olympics medal.

Supreme Court Agrees To Hear Plea Over Covishield Side-Effect Concern

New Delhi: The Supreme Court will hear a petition on a rare side-effect associated with the COVID-19 vaccine developed jointly by British pharma giant AstraZeneca and Oxford University, manufactured by the Serum Institute of India and sold, in this country, as Covishield.

A date for the hearing has not been set but Chief Justice DY Chandrachud acknowledged the issue, which includes demands for an expert panel to investigate the side-effect and for the government to provide compensation for families of those who may have died after taking the drug. An early hearing of the petition, though, has been ruled out. Specifically, the petitioner has demanded the expert panel probe both the side-effect and other potential risks, and that this investigation be monitored by a retired Supreme Court judge.

The petition claims instances where those who took the vaccine also became disabled, and wants directions to the government to

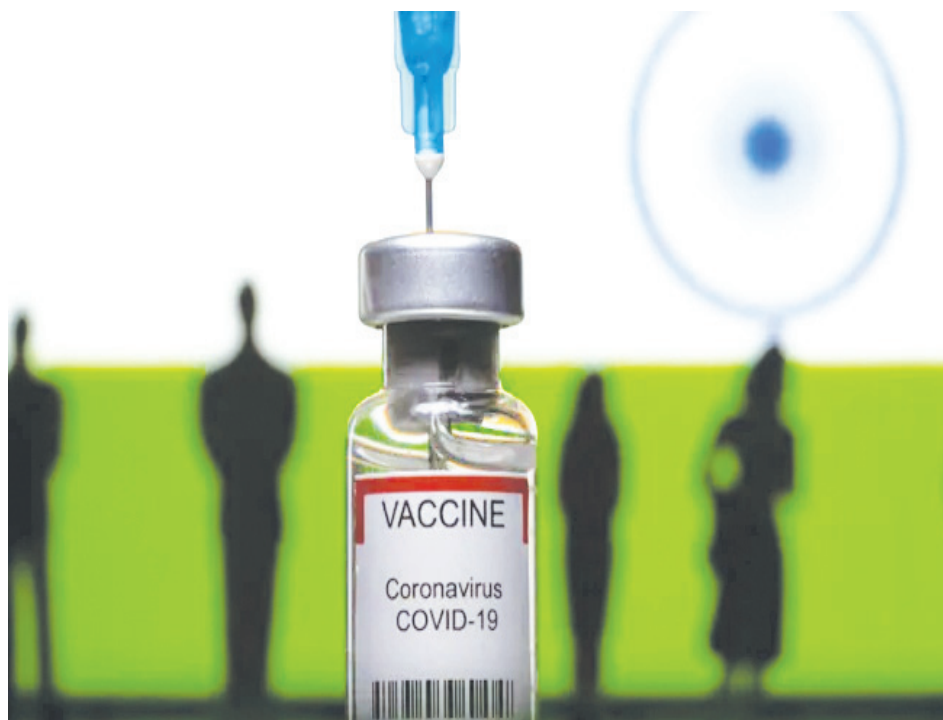
provide compensation for them too. Last month AstraZeneca said its vaccine could, in rare cases, cause TTS, or thrombosis with thrombocytopenia syndrome, a condition that leads to blood clots and low platelet count. The company is facing class-action lawsuits in the United Kingdom that were triggered by a complaint from Jamie Scott, who claims he suffered a permanent brain injury after a blood clot that formed after he was injected with the vaccine in April 2021.

AstraZeneca initially contested the claim but later told a UK court that "the AZ vaccine can, in very rare cases, cause TTS...". There are over 50 cases before the courts with claimed damages up to 100 million pounds. In a statement issued last week AstraZeneca expressed sympathy for those who have lost loved ones or reported health problems, but reiterated its commitment to patient safety and adherence to "stringent standards to ensure the safe use of all medicines..."

News of a possible side-effect of the

Covishield vaccine - widely administered in India - have led to concerns, but medical experts and a fact-check by The Healthy Indian Project indicate the claim is only half-true; i.e., while the risk of TTS is true, the probability is "very rare". Medical experts have pointed out that side-effects are a not uncommon feature of most, if not all, vaccines, even those that have been in use for decades, and these are "usually very minor and of short duration", according to the World Health Organization. Regulatory agencies worldwide, including the WHO, continue to maintain that the benefits of vaccination far outweigh the risks posed by exceedingly rare side effects.

The Covishield vaccine uses a viral vector platform rather than mRNA technology. This vaccine employs a modified chimpanzee adenovirus, ChAdOx1, to transport the COVID-19 spike protein into human cells. While this cold virus cannot effectively infect recipients, it effectively "teaches" the immune system to defend against similar viruses.



Supreme Court Grants Mukhtar Ansari's Son Bail In Poll Code Violation Case

New Delhi: The Supreme Court on Monday granted bail to Umar Ansari, son of late gangster-turned-politician Mukhtar Ansari, in a criminal case registered against him during the 2022 assembly elections for alleged violation of the model code of conduct.

A bench of Justices Hrishikesh Roy and PK Mishra asked Umar to appear before the trial court



concerning the case. On January 25, the Supreme Court granted him protection from arrest in the case. The Allahabad High Court on December 19 last year rejected the anticipatory bail application of Mr Ansari. It said that looking at the facts and circumstances of the case, the offence is made out. An FIR was lodged on March 4, 2022, at Kotwali police station in Mau district against Abbas Ansari (SBSP candidate from Mau Sadar seat), Umar Ansari and 150 unknown people. It was alleged in the FIR that on March 3, 2022, at Pahadpura ground, Abbas Ansari, Umar Ansari, and organiser Mansoor Ahmad Ansari in a public meeting called for settling a score with the Mau administration. It was a case of violation of the election code of conduct. Jailed gangster-turned-politician Mukhtar Ansari died of cardiac arrest at a hospital in Banda in Uttar Pradesh on March 28.

"12 Billion": S Jaishankar Puts Figure To India's Cashless Payments

Bhubaneswar (Odisha): Highlighting the country's growth in cashless payments, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar said many countries sit with India to discuss digital infrastructure "which has become our identity in the world". Upto 12 billion cashless payments are made every month in the country, he said.

"There are many countries, where when we are done talking our business, they sit with us to discuss our Digital Infrastructure. This has become India's identity in the world... Every month, Indians make 10-12 billion cashless payments. In contrast, the US makes 4 billion cashless payments in an entire year," Mr Jaishankar said while addressing a public meeting in Sambalpur. "What is the meaning of the digital infrastructure? One is, we all make payments through mobile phones. It has become our habit. Four-five years ago, we had a doubt about the link between the mobile and the money. There was also fear that something might happen once the payment is done," he added.

Mr Jaishankar said that India is one of the top five economies of the world. "10 years ago, the world was worried about India's economy... Today, the same people say that India is one of the top five economies of the world and in the coming days, it will be the third largest economy," he said. Mr Jaishankar said India will play a big role in global economic development due to the strength of its structural soundness. "International Monetary Fund says in the next 20 years, because of the strength of India's structural soundness, India will play a big role in global economic development," he said.

"Many nations have not made economic recoveries after COVID. Among big economies, India is the only country that has made a 7 per cent growth rate," Mr Jaishankar added.

94% Indian Service Professionals Using AI Believe It Saves Them Time: Report

New Delhi: About 94 per cent of Indian service professionals using artificial intelligence (AI) said that the technology saves them time, a new report revealed on Monday.

According to enterprise software major Salesforce, about 89 per cent of service professionals at organisations with AI said that the technology helps them reduce costs. "As customer expectations continue to increase, the benefits of AI are clear -- increased productivity, cost reduction and improved customer experiences," said Arun Kumar Parmeswaran, MD - Sales, Salesforce India. "AI and Data are fueling the next level of customer



experience, with AI proving its value with a variety of use cases, delivering unmatched value to customers while unlocking revenue-generating opportunities," he added. The report surveyed over 5,500 service professionals across 30 countries -- including 300 from India.

Moreover, the report found that 93 per cent of service organisations in the country plan to increase AI investments this year. The top three service use cases for AI in the country include -- Automated summaries and reports, Intelligent offers and recommendations, and Knowledge article creation. In addition, the report revealed that about 79 per cent of organisations in the country expect service to contribute more revenue this year. While 85 per cent of service organisations expect more budget this year, around 80 per cent expect more headcount this year.

Days After Bomb Hoax In Delhi, Similar Threats Made To Ahmedabad Schools

New Delhi: Seven schools in Gujarat's Ahmedabad received bomb threats via email - from servers with Russian IP addresses, sources said - on Monday. Teams of police officers, including those from the bomb disposal squad, were deployed to secure and search the various buildings. No suspicious material has been recovered as yet, officials have said. The schools that received the threatening emails include Amrita Vidyalayam, Kendriya Vidyalaya ONGC (Chandkheda), Army School (Shahibagh), Anand Niketan and DPS (Bopal).

Ahmedabad, and the rest of Gujarat, will vote Tuesday in the third phase of the 2024 Lok Sabha election. Gujarat, Prime Minister Narendra Modi's home state, has 28 seats. These threats come after 151 schools in the National



Capital Region - Delhi, Gurugram, Noida, and Greater Noida - were forced to evacuate students and staff last week after receiving, in some cases repeated, e-mails about bombs on the premises. A massive security op was launched in response to those threats, which officials said may have also originated from a Russian domain; the mails were sent from sawariim@mail.ru.

Officials have, though, cautioned the accused may have masked the IP address. The cops believe the mail was sent using a combination of a VPN, or virtual private network, and the dark web, which is an encrypted online platform that allows individuals to hide their identity and location from others.

There is also suspicion of a "deeper conspiracy" hatched by terrorists looking to disrupt the general election, officials said. The use of 'sawariim', an Arabic word meaning 'clashing of swords' and one associated with Islamic State terror propaganda, has raised concerns. The Home Ministry has said there is no cause for alarm. "Delhi Police (which has written to the CBI seeking information via Interpol) and security agencies are following protocols..."

Delhi records season's hottest day at 41.1 degrees Celsius

Delhi on Sunday witnessed its hottest day of the season, with the maximum temperature soaring to 41.1 degrees Celsius, according to the India Meteorological Department (IMD).

New Delhi: Delhi recorded its hottest day of the year on Sunday, clocking a maximum temperature of 41.1 degrees Celsius, two notches above normal, according to the India Meteorological Department (IMD). This was the highest maximum temperature recorded in the national capital this summer so far. The previous hottest day recorded was on April 27, when the maximum temperature settled



at 40.5 degrees Celsius. The weather office has forecast mainly clear skies for Monday, with maximum and minimum temperatures likely to settle at 41 and 24 degrees Celsius, respectively. Several states in India experienced scorching heat on Sunday with temperatures soaring up to 45 degrees Celsius. Parts of Telangana, Rayalaseema in Andhra Pradesh, Vidarbha in Maharashtra,

north interior Karnataka and northern Madhya Pradesh recorded temperatures of 44-45 degrees Celsius, marking a surge in heat in isolated pockets across these states. Sweltering conditions in parts of Marathwada, southeast Uttar Pradesh, northeast Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, north Odisha, Gangetic West Bengal, Jharkhand, Tamil Nadu, and Coastal

Anand Mahindra Offers To Support Young Boy Selling Rolls On Roadside Cart

New Delhi: Anand Mahindra, chairperson of Mahindra Group, has shared online a video of a young boy who makes rolls on a roadside food cart. In the clip, the 10-year-old named Jaspreet, can be seen making an egg roll. On being asked, the boy shared that his father recently died from brain tuberculosis. The boy, who also has a 14-year-old sister, said that their mother has left them, refusing to take responsibility. Despite these challenges, Jaspreet manages to attend school in the morning and runs his food cart in the evenings. In addition to egg rolls, the young boy also sells chicken rolls, kebab rolls, paneer rolls, chowmein rolls, and seekh kebab rolls.

Sharing the clip, Mr Mahindra asked for the boy's contact details. He wrote, "Courage, thy name is Jaspreet. But his education shouldn't suffer. I believe, he's in Tilak Nagar, Delhi. If anyone has access to his contact number please do share it. The



Mahindra foundation team will explore how we can support his education. "Commenting on the post, many people applauded Jaspreet's courage and appreciated Mr Mahindra for his kind gesture. A user wrote, "He is not giving up... this kid has decided to take up the responsibility & stand up for self... His courage is inspiring which is pushing him (to) stand during odd times... Salute to him... with right guidance in terms of education he will create many milestones..."

Another added, "Jaspreet is fearless! Education is crucial. It's great that the Mahindra foundation is stepping in to support his education." "It just made me cry. I really Hope Anand Ji will reach out to this Brave Boy and Help in every Possible Way. You can also raise Crowd Funding to help this Boy. After the Help i want this Boy to Ignore his Mom if she comes back for money," read a comment. It's not the first time Anand Mahindra has extended help to a child. Previously, a young girl heroically saved her little sister from monkeys that had entered their home. Soon after, the business mogul shared a post expressing his admiration and offered her a job at the Mahindra Group when she grows up. Click here to read in detail.

NEWS BOX

Al Jazeera office in Jerusalem raided as Israel takes channel off air

Jerusalem. Israeli authorities raided a Jerusalem hotel room used by Al Jazeera as its office after the government decided to shut down the Qatari-owned TV station's local operations on Sunday, an Israeli official and an Al Jazeera source told Reuters.

It reserved the right to "pursue every legal step". The network has criticised Israel's military operation in Gaza, from where it has reported throughout the war.

"The incitement channel Al Jazeera will be closed in Israel," Netanyahu posted on social media following a unanimous cabinet vote. A government statement said Israel's communications minister signed orders to "act immediately", but at least one lawmaker who supported the closure said Al Jazeera could still try to block it in court.

Israeli satellite and cable television providers suspended Al Jazeera broadcasts following the government decision. There was no official comment from the Qatari government, which deferred to Al Jazeera.

The network last month complained of "a series of systematic Israeli attacks to silence Al Jazeera".

It said Israel deliberately targeted and killed several of its journalists, including Samer Abu Daqqa and Hamza Al Dahdouh, both killed in Gaza during the conflict. Israel has said it does not target journalists.

Qatar established Al Jazeera in 1996 and views it as a way to bolster its global profile. "Al Jazeera Media Network strongly condemns and denounces this criminal act that violates human rights and the basic right to access of information," the network said in a statement. "Al Jazeera affirms its right to continue to provide news and information to its global audiences."

'Cancel exams, pass everyone': Columbia law students after Gaza war protests

World Law students of Columbia University have urged the administrators to cancel their examinations and give them all passing grades, saying they are "irrevocably shaken" after police recently dismantled pro-Palestine protest encampments, leading to hundreds of arrests.

The letter came after the New York Police Department broke up protesters' tent city on Tuesday night and evicted them from nearby Hamilton Hall, which students took over illegally in support of the Palestinian cause. Columbia administrators had convened a Zoom meeting with student leaders, hoping for a solution, but the standoff couldn't be resolved.

"We believe that canceling exams would be a proportionate response to the level of distress our peers have been feeling. In the alternative, making courses mandatory pass/fail would be the next most equitable solution," the Columbia Law Review editors said.

Columbia Law School resumed final exams on Thursday (May 2) after cancelling all tests the preceding day due to the Pro-Palestinian protests and the closure of the university campus. All the final exams at the school are ongoing remotely instead of in-person, news agency Reuters reported, citing a message to students from law dean Gillian Lester.

Trump calls out Biden's 'Gestapo administration' in latest Nazi reference

World Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump accused Democratic rival President Joe Biden of running a "Gestapo administration" in a private address to donors in which he also attacked prosecutors involved in his criminal indictments, according to a recording heard by US media outlets.

Trump, whose own rhetoric has drawn accusations of fascist tendencies from civil rights groups and other critics, made the comparison with the Nazi police in Germany's World War Two regimes at a donor retreat Saturday night at his Mar-a-Lago resort in Palm Beach, Florida.

California mocked over \$11 billion high-speed bridge that leads to 'nowhere'

Several people, including Tesla founder Elon Musk and Dogecoin creator Billy Markus, have mocked the California High-Speed Rail Authority after it proudly announced the completion of the "Fresno River Viaduct" last year.



San Francisco to Los Angeles. Elon Musk took to his X (formerly known as Twitter) and expressed disappointment with a sad, crying emoji about the project, which reportedly faces the possibility of cancellation.

years and 11 billion dollars. It takes about 5 minutes to walk 1,600 feet, so a high-speed rail for that is a really big deal," he added. The money spent on the project includes the bridge and other infrastructure for the first phase of the high-speed route, which stretches from Bakersfield, north of Los Angeles, to Merced, approximately 80 miles from the

The state government of California is under scrutiny for its celebration of the completion of a high-speed rail bridge. A project that has cost taxpayers over 11 billion US Dollars, and took nine years for its construction, seems to lead nowhere.

Bilawal Bhutto likely to become Pakistan's Foreign Minister again: Report

World Pakistan's former foreign minister Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari is likely to make a comeback for another stint as his Pakistan Peoples Party and the Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz (PML-N) were close to finalising a power-sharing deal.

thing is certain: the PPP will be part of the cabinet in June, according to sources. The incumbent foreign minister, Ishaq Dar, was appointed as deputy prime minister to allow room for Bilawal to become the top diplomat.

international profile. They believe that Bilawal's return to the Foreign Office would only benefit him and his party. The final decision regarding PPP joining the cabinet will be taken by its Central Executive Committee (CEC).

Citing sources, it said that Shehbaz wanted the PPP to join the cabinet before the next budget is presented in the first week of June. It is, however, not clear whether the PPP will join the cabinet before or after the budget. One

Since the PML-N fulfilled its commitment by letting the PPP appoint its men as governors in three provinces besides clinching two other constitutional positions, the presidency and the chairmanship of the Senate, the PPP would return the favour by joining the cabinet.

Sources in the Foreign Office said that Bilawal is a good choice as he proved himself to be an able foreign minister during his 16-month stint before the elections, according to the paper.

78 dead, 105 missing due to heavy rain, floods in southern Brazil

Porto Alegre The death toll from the heavy rain that caused flooding in Brazil's southern state of Rio Grande do Sul has risen to at least 78, local authorities said on Sunday, with more than 115,000 people displaced.

Saldanha said he and three friends have used jet skis to save about 50 people from floodwaters since Friday on islands that are part of the city. "The only thing we hear when we enter a street is 'help', 'help'," Saldanha said.

triggered landslides and the partial collapse of a dam at a small hydroelectric power plant. More than 400,000 people were without power on Sunday evening, while nearly a third of the state's population was without water, authorities said.

It is a war scenario, and will need post-war measures," state governor Eduardo Leite added. Volunteers using boats, jet skis - and even swimming - have assisted in ongoing rescue efforts.

Flooding from storms in the past few days has affected more than two thirds of the nearly 500 cities in the state, which borders Uruguay and Argentina, leaving more than 115,000 people displaced, according to authorities.

In Porto Alegre, the Guaiba lake breached its banks, hitting the highest water level on record, according to the national geological service. Porto Alegre's international airport has suspended all flights since Friday (May 3).





Bipasha Basu

Asks Paps To Turn Off Camera Flash As She Gets Snapped With Karan Singh Grover, Devi

Bipasha Basu and Karan Singh Grover along with their daughter Devi were spotted at the airport today. The family was seen coming out of the airport when the actress requested shutterbugs to turn off the camera flash. She said because Devi might get scared. The video has gone viral.

In the video, shared by Filmygyan, we can see Bipasha Basu dressed in a green colour co-ord set and Devi in red colour rompers. Karan opted for causals. All three even engaged in a fun chat with shutterbugs. Fans also dropped heart emojis. Bipasha always shares cute videos of her daughter playing or saying new words on her social handle. Karan and Bipasha welcomed their daughter, Devi, in 2022. In a conversation with Neha Dhupia on Instagram Live the previous year, Bipasha had spoken about Devi. She had said, "I remember the third month, when we went for the scan, I pretty much did all the research, met surgeons, had been to hospitals, spoken

to doctors, and I was a kind of ready, Karan was not ready. I knew that she had to be okay and I knew that she will be okay. And she is okay now. But the tough decision was to get your child operated at the right place and at the right time."

Life has changed a lot for Bipasha after she welcomed Devi into her life. Talking about being a mother now, she says, "Devi's my number one when it comes to everything and anything. Whether my eyes are open or shut, it's always her. Every time I step out, I just want to run back home and be with her. Everything in my life now revolves around her... Karan is number three, I'm number two and Devi is number one." As for Karan, not much has changed. Prod him further and he jokes, "I'm a slave who used to have one master. Now I've two masters and I'm still a slave. So, nothing much has changed for me." On the professional front, Bipasha has been absent from the silver screen since her cameo appearance in 2018's *Welcome to New York*. However, she did a web series in 2020, titled *Dangerous*.



Sunny Deol Credits Daughter-In-Law For Family's Career Success: 'Her Arrival Transformed Our Life'



In 2023, the Deol family experienced a prosperous year. Sunny Deol's *'Gadar 2'* set new records, Bobby was praised for his role in *'Animal'*, and Dharmendra appeared in *'Rocky Aur Rani Kii Prem Kahaani'*. Sunny's son, Karan Deol, tied the knot last June, bringing even more success to the family. During a recent episode of *The Great Indian Kapil Show*, Sunny Deol expressed how his daughter-in-law, Drishti Acharya, has brought luck and positivity to their professional lives. Reflecting on their journey, Sunny emotionally shared, "There have been many years, so many events have unfolded. We've all worked on various fronts. Various things were happening. We were putting in our best efforts. It wasn't that we weren't trying. I was involved in many things, so was Bobby (Deol), and even Papa (Dharmendra). However, all of a sudden, with my son's marriage, and the arrival of a daughter at our home, the atmosphere completely changed." He added, "Since the 1960s, Papa has been here, and we've been in the same limelight. We've seen so many things, arriving and departing in their own time. But the current unfolding of events, along with past occurrences, and the love we're receiving from people... People have always loved us. We get a lot of love, Papa is loved a lot. And that's why Bobby and I receive a lot of love. But, somehow we were perplexed why things aren't falling into place. But then, the beti (daughter) came home. Then *Gadar* came. Papa's film had released before that. And after that, *'Animal'* came. All records were broken." Sunny Deol's elder son, Karan Deol, who made his acting debut in *'Pal Pal Dil Ke Paas'* in 2019, married Drishti Acharya, a childhood friend working in the travel industry. Their marriage in June marked the beginning of a series of good news for the Deol family throughout the year.

Jeh Rushes To Dad Saif Ali Khan As He Wants To Sit With Him In Car, Video Goes Viral; Watch



Saif Ali Khan and his youngest son Jeh was spotted in the city today. The actor was seen in causal wear along with son Jeh who was running to hold his father's hand. The clip showcases a tender father-son bond. The video went viral on social media. In another video clip, Jeh was seen with father and brother Taimur. In the video, shared by Viral Bhayani, we can see Jeh running behind father to sit with him in the car. But Saif asked him to sit back. He is seen shouting Abba. Earlier, a video shared by Filmygyan, we can see Saif walking forward while Jeh run behind him to hold his father's hand. The actor was affectionately hold his hand and start walking. Both looked cute and fans also reacted the same. Kareena Kapoor was recently appointed Unicef India's National Ambassador. During her recent appointment ceremony, the actress shared how necessary it is to make her kids understand gender equality and that both husband and wife can be busy with their work.

Recently, Saba shared a collage of the siblings. The left side of the collage displays a throwback picture of Taimur with a bat in his hand. It was accompanied by Jeh's cute picture as he also posed with a bat. The glimpse of the cutest star kids seemingly enchanted everyone, their aunt Saba to be specific. Saba also added a note to her story and remarked, "Boys... will be... brothers! Mahsha' Allah."

Saif Ali Khan is gearing up for his next film *Devara* with Jr NTR and Janhvi Kapoor. The film was initially releasing in April but now it will hit theatres on October 10, 2024. *Devara* is set against the coastal lands and is helmed by Koratala Siva. The film marks Janhvi Kapoor's debut in South films and her first-ever collaboration with Jr. NTR. Just like *RRR*, this Telugu movie will reportedly have high-octane action sequences that are expected to blow away the minds of the audience. As per reports, *Devara* is being made on a huge budget. The makers are reportedly spending a whopping Rs 140 crore on its VFX. The rumour mill is rife that the makers are also spending 33 percent of the movie's original budget on special effects.

Anjali Arora

Talks About Playing Sita in Shri Ramayan Katha, Comparisons With Sai Pallavi: 'I Will Be Happy'

Fans are eagerly anticipating Nitesh Tiwari's *'Ramayan'*, featuring Ranbir Kapoor and Sai Pallavi as Ram and Sita respectively, while influencer Anjali Arora has announced her silver screen debut as Sita in Abhishek Singh's *'Shri Ramayan Katha'*, both films drawing inspiration from the Hindu epic. During a recent interview with ETimes, Anjali shared her profound sense of gratitude for the opportunity to portray Sita. She recounted her initial curiosity about securing the role, mentioning that she had been informed about competing with several other actors by the director. Despite the competition, she was ultimately chosen by the filmmakers for the role.

Anjali also mentioned her proactive approach to preparing for the character since being finalized for the role last month, which included watching videos and actively participating in workshops. She told the portal, "I believe they saw something in me that convinced them I could do justice to the character. I was finalized last month, and since then, I have been watching videos, doing readings, and attending workshops. I will give my best to do justice to the character."

Since both films draw inspiration from the Hindu epic, Anjali Arora recognized that her portrayal of Sita will naturally invite comparisons to Sai Pallavi's depiction in *Ramayan*. Despite this, she shared her satisfaction at being measured against a seasoned actress, affirming, "If I am compared to a Bollywood actress, I will be happy."

Anjali gained a sizable following on social media through viral dance videos and her appearance on the reality show *Lock Upp*. Addressing concerns about potential audience perception due to her social media presence, she acknowledged that she could not control others' opinions but stressed her commitment to portraying Sita authentically. Anjali acknowledged the presence of online trolls and their right to express views, asserting that her social media persona does not reflect her acting abilities or impact her performance in any way. In Nitesh Tiwari's *Ramayana*, Ranbir Kapoor will be playing the role of Lord Ram. Sai Pallavi has been roped in for the role of Sita. KGF star Yash is also likely to play Ravana in the movie whereas Sunny Deol has reportedly been locked for the role of Hanuman.

Bobby Deol and Vijay Sethupathi are also reportedly in talks for the roles of Kumbhakarna and Vibhashana respectively. It was recently reported that Amitabh Bachchan has been finalised for the role of King Dashrath in the movie. However, there is no official confirmation regarding this as of now.

