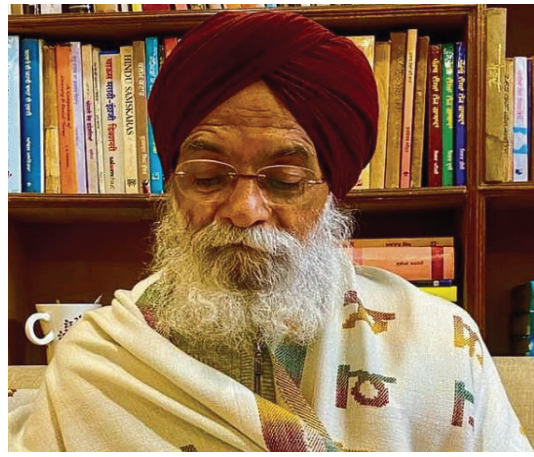


What Surjit Patar means to me

The conversation that has been going on since Surjit Patar's death has focused on just a small part of him. It will take some time and much work to map his achievement and fathom its depths. No doubt he was the tallest Punjabi poet for decades, a position he used meaningfully to intervene in public discourse. His stature derived from an inimitable voice that many tried to imitate, but none could. One's voice is the soul of one's style, for it is the articulation of one's presence in the work. Patar was wholly present in his best work.

From which it follows that he must have worked as much on himself as on his work. Signs of insistent self-scrutiny appear often in his poetry when he addresses himself, as when he says: He carried an immense reservoir of patience, refusing to react on impulse. He took some time to respond to the farmers' movement. He was diving into agitated waters and had to reach the hard rock of clear understanding. This was not possible without bringing an epic poet's many-sided, far-seeing vision to bear on the situation. The writings that followed showed the movement as a moment of civilisational crisis. Indeed, Patar would not stoop to paint on a canvas less than epic. His poetry is elemental and cosmic even when it is meant to light a lamp to show a neglected little corner of someone's small, circumscribed world. After all, as he often said, his inspiration came from the greatest. And he not only lived tradition, but also reanimated it with his own breath. The poet in him



cannot be isolated from the vast-minded reader, the transcending translator, the introspective man, the literary critic, the thinker and the heart-warming conversationalist that he also was.

Folk songs, in a changed form, supplied the fuel that propelled some of his political poems. His early engagements with Sartre and Camus and with myth made him wonder, at the end of his rendering of Racine's 'Phaedra', if our very choices are fated. He pondered all his life on the mysteries of the creative process. A poem arrived in a kind of inner quivering, he would say. This reminds you of the initiatory spandan, as Shaivism terms it, of creation. The name and the form appear and dissolve on the seeming surface of an endless flux, he wrote in a poem. The deepest insights of Buddhism blossomed effortlessly in his consciousness.

Yes, he was a gifted poet: among his finest poems are those he wrote as a university student. But he ceaselessly worked on his gift. In this, his talent had the luck to be cradled by several fervent, luminous minds in Patiala and Jalandhar. Sohan Singh Misha once told him to read a lot of books and not waste time in coffee houses in the company of mediocre versifiers.

So, he read widely and deep. He was reading Leonard Cohen's poetry and songs when we met in March. He told the audience that Cohen sometimes revised a text a hundred times. He often invoked Greek drama, Shakespeare, French literature, Persian poetry, Sanskrit poetics, Octavio Paz, Brecht, and others. He drew no self-protective boundaries, for he was centred in himself, thanks to the light that fed his spirit: the light from the Gurus, the Bhaktas, and Waris. It gave him the courage to say that Racine's 'Phaedra' was far richer than Shiv's 'Loona'. Among the finest essays on music in Punjabi is an essay he wrote.

Difficult to digest how things fall apart

Once the best of friends, the two Iranians in a Chandigarh college fell out over political developments back home

My parents were of the generation that survived Partition. Much of my mother's family had been killed and my father came away with a gunshot wound to his leg. This was the moment that was to substantially define the rest of their lives. Years of work, hopes and plans were gone; as were their homes and many of their friends and family. For the moment, there was nothing or next to nothing to fall back upon. Slowly, like thousands of others, they made new lives in places and situations that could not have been imagined even a few weeks earlier. Expectedly, some of that trauma was to spill over in various ways through the rest of their lives and to the generations that followed.

After Partition, my parents chose to become teachers. There were motives for this, but let's leave that for another time. My father taught physics and my mother, Hindi. I was no good at either — though, funnily enough, for the brief period that I studied Sanskrit, I was rather good at it and there was a time that I hoped to read originals in that language. While physics lay abandoned at the first available opportunity, Hindi, expectedly, continued. Perhaps, as some sort of atonement for my abject failure as the school's only student of 'Higher Hindi', one used and mostly spoke in the language.

Then, one went to college and stayed in the hostel. There, most of us lived as little islands. The Punjabis from Punjab stuck together. The Punjabis from elsewhere, also stuck together. The Himachalis and the Haryanvis made friends with both and then retreated into themselves. There were no 'whites' in our college and the foreigners were Iranians, Nepalese, Afghans, Mauritians and Fijians. Some liked each other and some did not. So, here, we had our stereotypes that were ready and raring to go.

It was an unusual ice-breaker that got one into a conversation with the Nepalese and then, with the Iranians. Sitting in the mess, eating the standard fare of rajmah-chawal, one of the Nepalese boys remarked that of the 'city-Indians', I was the only one who spoke in Hindi and all others, even while conversing among themselves, talked in English. "So," he asked, "have you come to this college to learn English?" For that moment, I was stumped. Maybe mine was a mere 'street version' of Hindi, but that was the language I knew before I learnt English.

Across the steel bowls of rajmah-chawal, the Iranians, sitting opposite, became animated and said that they



only knew Farsi before they came to India and were now quite fluent in English — and had even learnt some phrases in Punjabi. For reasons, after that last bit, they went into peals of laughter. Two of the Iranians, Hassan and Ismael, had adjoining rooms opposite mine and over the next few months, we became fairly friendly. Both of them were somewhat older than the rest of us. From what one vaguely remembers after all these years, one of them may have been married. Apart from the teenage banter with someone even slightly older, in our conversations, one gathered that both were ambitious and quite idealistic. They wanted not only a good life for themselves, but also a good country back home.

This was the time when the revolution in Iran was on the cusp. Here, in Chandigarh of the late 1970s, the best of friends Hassan and Ismael fell out. One supported the revolution and the other was a communist. Now, one watched them ignore each other as they passed in the corridor.

Apart from the rare times that they ate in the mess with the rest of us, the Iranians had their own place going. They had taken a house on rent and ran a kitchen too. The political situation in their country led to a spillover and their one-time joint mess also split into two. Now, as the numbers were also not enough to

sustain both kitchens, they started looking for support elsewhere.

And a couple of others were invited for a meal. And what a meal it was. Perfectly done mutton with naan and if that was not enough, there was a slab of butter to slather the naan. This was followed by a rich rice pudding full of pistachios and almonds. In a couple of days, we received an invitation to the other mess.

Living in a hostel, the stomach got the better of conscience and off we trooped to another fine meal. The menu and the quality of food in both was similar and, in a word, 'excellent'. Food apart, the atmosphere in both was tense and what conversation there was, remained guarded. One mess had huge portraits of their leaders and the other, had theirs.

Then came the crux. An invitation came to join one mess. Hot on the heels of that, came another invite to join the other, and now the rival, mess. The matter was settled quite easily — given our limited allowance, we could not afford either. Back to good old rajmah-chawal we went.

It seems to be one of those quirks of human nature that, often enough, when the closest of friends become estranged, they become the bitterest of enemies. We later heard that both Hassan and Ismael, one-time friends, were dead — one fighting for the revolution, the other against.

Anti-BJP protests

Candidates facing farmers' ire in Punjab

THE crackdown on protesting farmers at the Shambhu border in February is casting a shadow on the BJP's poll campaign in Punjab. Party leaders and candidates are being shown black flags and stopped from entering villages, particularly in Malwa and Majha. These disruptions prompted state BJP chief Sunil Jakhar to lodge a complaint with the state's Chief Electoral Officer last week, alleging that the AAP government had failed to ensure a level playing field for all candidates. The Punjab Police have claimed that they are taking steps to ensure the safety of the contestants, including those belonging to the BJP, but the latter is not convinced.

Farmers from the state had launched the Dilli Chalo agitation earlier this year, seeking a legal guarantee for the minimum support price (MSP). However, they were prevented from reaching the Capital by the authorities



in BJP-ruled Haryana, which resorted to a heavy-handed

approach. The MSP issue has remained unresolved despite a series of talks between the Centre and some farm unions.

The BJP has its task cut out in the state, where it is going solo after its efforts to mend fences with its old ally, the Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD), proved futile. The SAD had parted ways with the NDA in 2021 amid the farmers' agitation over the contentious farm laws enacted by the Centre. Even the repeal of the laws did not help the BJP win over the state's farming community, as seen in January 2022, when protesters forced PM Modi to go back without addressing a poll rally in Ferozepur. With its nominees also facing the heat in parts of rural Haryana, the saffron party can't afford to ignore the anger and anguish of the region's farmers. At the same time, the alleged infringement of the candidates' right to campaign needs to be probed and accountability fixed for the lapses.

Saying goodbye to the extraordinary Alice Munro

Munro was a 'Sultana of the Short Story', one who drew on her personal experiences and surroundings

I have been writing in this column about birth anniversaries of writers, but sometimes you have to stop and talk about death and loss. The Nobel Prize winning Canadian writer Alice Munro passed away on May 13. She was 92 years old. Alice Munro was a 'Sultana of the Short Story' (we have had a few in our literatures as well), one who drew on her personal experiences and surroundings, and interviewers would often identify and ask her about the settings of her stories. Her stories, though often called "domestic stories", cover a whole range of emotions and relationships. It is almost as if she had decided when she began writing that she would find all her material around her, in her family, in her environment. She made time to write amidst her household chores as she has said in many interviews.

Munro once said, "When the kids were little, my time was as soon as they left for school. So I worked very hard in those years. My husband and I owned a bookstore, and even when I was working there, I stayed at home until noon. I was supposed to be doing housework, and I would also do my writing then. Later on, when I wasn't working everyday in the store, I would write until everybody came home for lunch and then after they went back, probably till about two-thirty, and then I would have a quick cup of coffee and

start doing the housework, trying to get it all done before late afternoon." (The Paris Review, 1994). Thus, the patronising headline in the Vancouver Sun (in 1961) that began an article about her after she had published her early stories — 'Housewife finds time to write short stories' — doesn't seem too off the mark!

She wrote during her pregnancies, she wrote whenever she could, but she wrote. Her first collection was published when she was in her mid-thirties, and contained stories written over 15 years. Her stories talk to us because they talk to her. After all, all the stories come from her life. One can say that Alice Munro wrote only one book, the book of her life. She writes about her Scottish ancestors, her parents, her relationship with them and their home, her own life. Set mostly in Ontario, Canada, in Huron county, Munro's work is like a historical and anthropological study of the place and the people, a dissection of her own life, and that of her contemporaries.

Supported by her husband, who gifted her a typewriter to encourage her writing, Alice Munro began her married life like other middle-class girls of the time, staying home while her then husband went out to work. As she writes in 'The Moons of Jupiter' (1978), the small-town life of the time was one of "wives yawning, napping, visiting, drinking

coffee, and folding diapers; husbands coming home at night from the city across the water". In a damning line, she writes: "We had become a cartoon couple, more middle-aged in our twenties than we would be in middle age." Books and writing became her life. The couple went on to open a bookshop. Her first book was published in fortuitous circumstances — she had been asked to submit some stories for an anthology that never got published, but she impressed the editor, who began to read all her published stories. The publishing house then asked her to write three more to make a book, and she made a mark immediately. 'Dance of the Happy Shades' (1968) won the Governor-General's Award, resulting in another collectible headline — 'Literary fame catches city mother unprepared'.

Alice Munro's stories are about ordinary people but her range is vast, mainly because even ordinary people live complicated lives, lives which she brings to us with such skill that you get to know each one of her characters intimately. Alice Munro gives us lives of desires and deceit. She does not hesitate to write about sexual peccadilloes. She was a complete short story writer. Always modest and insecure about her writing ability, Alice Munro felt surprised by attention even after she won the Nobel Prize in 2013.



Severe heatwave in Delhi, Punjab and Haryana for next 5 days

New Delhi: The India Meteorological Department (IMD) has predicted a severe heatwave in Delhi, Punjab and Haryana for the next five days, with no respite from the unrelenting intense heat that has continued to scorch many parts of the country. On Monday, the temperature in Delhi is expected to soar to 44 degrees Celsius, a day after the city recorded the season's highest at 44.4 degrees. According to the latest IMD bulletin issued today, severe heatwave conditions will also prevail in parts of Rajasthan from Tuesday to Friday, and in some regions of Uttar Pradesh on Monday and Tuesday. Meanwhile, heatwave conditions have also been predicted for parts of Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Jharkhand, West Bengal, Odisha, Bihar, and the hill states of Uttarakhand and Himachal Pradesh this week. This week, the mercury is expected to soar to 45 degrees Celsius in Delhi on Tuesday, Friday and Saturday. Delhi weather for next

five days. (Pic credit: IMD) Residents of Delhi woke up to a warm morning on Monday, with the minimum temperature settling at 29.2 degrees Celsius, three notches above the season's average, according to the IMD. Meanwhile, on Sunday, the mercury reached or crossed 47 degrees Celsius in at least eight places across India, with Delhi's Najafgarh area recording 47.8 degrees, making it the warmest place in the country for the second time in the last three days. In Rajasthan, the highest temperature of 46.7 degrees Celsius was recorded in Sriganganagar and Anta, while Nuh was the hottest in Haryana at blistering high of 47.2 degrees Celsius.

Meanwhile, Chandigarh, the capital of Punjab and Haryana, recorded a high of 44.2 degrees Celsius. Faridkot was the hottest in Punjab at 44 degrees Celsius, followed by Amritsar in second place with 43.9 degrees. Madhya Pradesh's Datia saw 47.5 degrees, while in Uttar Pradesh, Agra

recorded 47.7 degrees and Jhansi recorded 47.2 degrees. The IMD has expressed concerns in the wake of the blistering heat and urged people in heatwave-affected areas to avoid exposure, wear light-coloured cotton clothes, use hats and umbrellas to cover one's head. "There is a very high likelihood of developing heat illness and heat stroke in people of all ages, and a health concern for vulnerable individuals such as infants, the elderly, and those with chronic diseases," the weather office said.

IMD PREDICTS HEAVY RAIN FOR SOUTH INDIA

Meanwhile, the weather office has predicted heavy rain in parts of Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Kerala and Puducherry this week. It said that parts of Lakshadweep will also receive heavy rain on Monday and Tuesday, while light to moderate rain has been predicted in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands for the next seven days.



Man Arrested After Video Of Him Voting Eight Times In UP's Etah Goes Viral, Polling Officials Suspended

New Delhi: A man has been arrested from Uttar Pradesh's Etah after his video of voting eight times for the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) went viral. The state's chief election officer has issued orders to suspend all the members of the polling party from the station. The arrested youngster has been identified as Rajan Singh, a resident of the village of Khiriya Pamaran in Etah district. According to officials, the incident was reported in Farrukhabad parliamentary constituency, and action was taken after the video went viral on social media on Sunday. Several opposition leaders, including Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav, posted about it on social media platform X.

Responding to Yadav's post, Uttar Pradesh Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) Navdeep Rinwa said an FIR of the incident was registered under several sections of the Indian Penal Code and Representation of the People Act, 1951, in Nayagaon police station in Etah district. "The person appearing to be voting multiple times in the video has been identified as Rajan Singh, son of Anil Singh and resident of village Khiriya Pamaran. He has been arrested," the CEO said. The official also said instructions to "suspend and institute disciplinary proceedings" against all members of the polling party have been issued.

Stomach Infection, Dehydration & Fever: Heat-Related Illnesses Surge in Delhi-NCR. Here's How You Can Stay Safe

New Delhi: Hospitals are seeing an increase in cases of stomach infection, loose motions, dehydration, dizziness and fever — all linked to the ongoing heat wave. Doctors are anticipating a huge surge in admissions related to heat in the coming days as the weather department issued a 'Red Alert' warning for Delhi-NCR. The India Meteorological Department (IMD) issued a Red Alert for heatwaves in Delhi, Punjab, Haryana, and most parts of Western Rajasthan for Sunday (May 19).

According to doctors in Delhi-NCR, excessive heat conditions are mostly impacting the elderly, infants, young kids and working individuals involved in travelling or working in the sun. "Heat-related admissions have increased this week, with people showing symptoms of dehydration, gastroenteritis and heat-related fever. Such admissions are expected to grow even further in the coming days as temperature spikes," Dr Sumit Ray, medical director at Holy Family Hospital in Delhi, told News18. "The elderly and infants are affected due to inadequate heat control mechanisms of the body. Even if they don't venture out in the heat, they may still be affected. Other categories are young children and the working class who are exposed to the outside harsh weather conditions." Dr Manisha Arora, unit head, internal medicine, at New Delhi-based Sri Balaji Action Medical Institute has been observing a significant increase in cases of acute gastroenteritis, dysentery with dehydration, and typhoid fever. "We are seeing seven to eight patients daily in our OPD." Similarly, Dr Yatin Mehta, chairman, Institute of Critical Care and Anesthesiology at Gurugram-based Medanta, told News18 that the consequences of the ongoing heat wave are becoming evident as emergency and hospital admissions rise. "While dehydration is a major issue, people must also remember to maintain the consumption of salt which they lose while sweating," he advised. "Salt loss leads to drop in blood pressure, dizziness, fainting, heart attack and stroke." Mehta added that dehydration or salt loss leads to lethal injuries due to fainting or a drop in BP such as a head injury due to a fall or heart attack or strokes due to low BP. "Dehydration also leads to thickness in the blood causing attacks or strokes." Dr Satish Koul, Senior Director and Unit Head, Internal Medicine, Fortis Memorial Research Institute, Gurugram, said: In OPD, we are also seeing many heat-related illnesses like dehydration. The number of cases is increasing every day. At present, we are looking at almost 10 patients per day. "Experts added that the current weather conditions also lead to stomach infections as people end up drinking unhygienic water if they feel thirsty and do not have access to clean water around.

Phase 5 Voting In 49 Lok Sabha Seats Records 23.7% Turnout Till 11 am

New Delhi: Voters from 49 constituencies across 6 states and 2 Union Territories will decide the fates of many key leaders today -- Union Ministers and party chiefs. Among those in fray are Smriti Irani, Rahul Gandhi, Chirag Paswan and Omar Abdullah.

Here are the Top 10 points in this big story: Voting is on in five seats in Bihar, Jharkhand (3), Maharashtra (13), Odisha (5), UP (14), West Bengal (7) and two Union Territories - Jammu and Kashmir (1) and Ladakh (1). With this phase, election will be over in Maharashtra and Ladakh. An average turnout of 23.7 per cent has been recorded till 11 am. Voting is being held on 35 seats of the Odisha Assembly and 21 Lok Sabha seats as part of the simultaneous polling in the state.

While this phase has the least number of seats, most are high-profile constituencies from where Union

Ministers and leaders of national and regional parties are contesting. In 2019, the BJP won 32 of these 49 seats. The big fight is expected in the seven seats of Bengal and the 13 seats



of Maharashtra. Ten of the 13 seats are in the Shiv Sena stronghold and the clash will be between two factions of the party, led by Chief Minister Eknath Shinde and his predecessor Uddhav Thackeray. In Bengal, a tough fight is on the cards on several seats, with Congress and CPM muscling into what was expected to be a

straight fight between the BJP and the ruling Trinamool Congress.

In Uttar Pradesh, the BJP had won 13 of the 14 seats going to polls today -- the exception being Raebareilly, won by Sonia Gandhi. The key candidates include Union Ministers Piyush Goyal (Mumbai North), Bharati Pawar (Dindori), Smriti Irani (Amethi), Rajnath Singh (Lucknow). Among key allies are Lok Janshakti Party-Ram Vilas chief Chirag Paswan (Hajipur), Shrikant Shinde, son of Maharashtra Chief Minister Eknath Shinde (Kalyan). From the Opposition, Congress's Rahul Gandhi is defending his mother Sonia Gandhi's bastion Raebareilly after she moved onto Rajya Sabha; RJD chief Lalu Prasad Yadav's daughter Rohini Acharya is contesting against BJP's former Union Minister Rajiv Pratap Rudy from Saran; Shiv Sena-UBT leader and forme

Sex Scandal: Where is Prajwal Revanna? What's Causing The Delay in Bringing Him Back?

Bengaluru. An arrest warrant against absconding JD(S) MP Prajwal Revanna, accused of alleged rape and sexual harassment, is expected to be followed by a red corner notice. Permission was granted by the special court for elected representatives to cancel Prajwal Revanna's passport, but the question still remains: Where is Prajwal Revanna? It is learnt that the Special Investigation Team (SIT) is now preparing a detailed dossier to convert the blue corner notice issued in Prajwal's name to a red corner notice by the CBI, which would lead to the cancellation of Prajwal's passport. It is learnt that there have been efforts and multiple communications with the Centre by the SIT to track and trace the whereabouts of the absconding MP, who is known to be travelling on a European visa and was last seen in Germany. A senior Karnataka police officer with experience in handling red corner

notices across international borders said that there are a few technical formalities that the SIT has to get clearances for.



"With their jurisdiction largely restricted within Karnataka, in this case, since he (Prajwal) is a fugitive, the SIT would have to take the help of the CBI and MHA to bring him back. The process is lengthy but can be expedited based on the urgency of the case," said the officer who did not want to be named.

INTERPOL NOTICES EXPLAINED BY COLOUR

As per Interpol's notices, which are colour-coded based on severity and importance, there are seven types: Red Notice, Yellow Notice, Blue Notice, Black Notice, Green Notice, Orange Notice, and Purple Notice. A Red Notice is issued when a criminal's location is traced, and they are wanted for prosecution or to serve a sentence. A Blue Notice, which is presently against the Hassan MP's name, allows authorities to collect information on the person's identity, location, and criminal activities if they have fled the country. Senior Supreme Court Lawyer and former Karnataka State Public Prosecutor (SPP) BT Venkatesh weighs in. In his opinion, for more than a decade, Indian investigating agencies have used algorithms and top notch technology to trace suspects, absconders, or wanted criminals, and the same could be done to trace Prajwal's whereabouts.

Police seize CCTV footage from Arvind Kejriwal's residence in Swati Maliwal case

The Delhi Police has seized the DVR of CCTV cameras installed inside Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal's residence in connection with its probe into the "assault" on the party's Rajya Sabha MP Swati Maliwal.

New Delhi: The Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) on Sunday said the Delhi Police seized the DVR of CCTV cameras installed inside Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal's residence in connection with its probe into the alleged assault on Swati Maliwal. The party also accused the cops of planting stories to tarnish the party's image ahead of the elections, according

to news agency PTI. There was no immediate reaction from the Delhi Police.

Notably, the AAP Rajya Sabha MP, in her complaint, has said that Kejriwal's aide Bibhav Kumar slapped her seven-eight times and repeatedly kicked her in her chest and stomach when she went to the Chief Minister's residence on May 13. Maliwal further claimed that the brutal assault by Kumar did not stop even after she mentioned that she was on her periods. After the assault, she claimed her arms were sore and she had difficulty walking. AAP has rubbished her allegations and claimed that Maliwal is acting at the behest of the BJP to frame Kejriwal. On Saturday, Kumar was arrested by the Delhi Police and a local court sent him to five-day custody. Addressing a press conference on Sunday, AAP leader Saurabh Bharadwaj said the police have

already seized the DVR (digital video recorder) of CCTV cameras.

"Yesterday (Saturday), they seized the DVR of cameras installed at the entry gates, boundary walls and today



(Sunday), they seized the DVR of cameras installed in other parts of the house. The police are planting stories that the CCTV (camera) footage has been deleted but they have already

Green credits: Govt nod to 12 projects, 24 under consideration

New Delhi: The Centre has approved 12 greening projects under the Green Credit Program (GCP), which was notified last year as a market-based mechanism designed to incentivize voluntary environmental actions across diverse sectors, officials aware of the development said. Estimates of 24 plans submitted by different state forest departments are under consideration, the officials said. The government has been pushing the public-sector undertakings (PSUs) to take a lead in registering for the programme, especially in mining heavy states, and is developing guidelines for third-party verification of projects under the scheme, sources added. The GCP, notified on October 13, 2023, seeks voluntary participation in "environmental positive actions" such as afforestation, water conservation, waste management among others from PSUs, private industries, non-profits and individuals. The GCP's governance framework is supported by an inter-ministerial Steering Committee, and The Indian Council of Forestry Research and Education (ICFRE), Dehradun, which serves as GCP administrator, responsible for programme implementation, management, monitoring, and operation. Those investing in these initiatives will earn green credits in return which they can trade on a platform. The greening activities will happen on degraded land parcels and state forest departments have identified over 10,000 hectares of degraded land so far.

Over the past few months, the Environment Ministry has held meetings with the PSUs to push for registration under the initiative, with a special focus initially on states such as Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh and Odisha, where large forested areas have been diverted for mining.

Those interested in undertaking plantations have to first register on a government portal and the state departments then identify plots. A plantation plan and cost estimate are submitted to ICFRE, which clears final proposal. ICFRE is working on evolving a mechanism for third-party verification of greening projects, sources from the government body said.

"We are looking at a timeline of another month to finalise a draft on third-party verification. We are also deliberating on whether stakeholders who register under the scheme should be included in the monitoring committee," the source said. Under the green credit rules, the ICFRE can deem an entity a 'designated agency' to carry out verification of activities executed under the programme.

Discussions are also underway on evolving a definite mechanism on linking the green credits to the compensatory afforestation compliance of industries, a senior government official said.

NEWS BOX

Argentina's president calls Spanish PM's wife corrupt, Madrid recalls envoy

Madrid. Spain recalled its ambassador to Buenos Aires for consultations on Sunday after Argentina's President Javier Milei made derogatory comments about Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez's wife during a far-right rally in Madrid. Milei had called Sanchez's wife Begona Gomez "corrupt" during a rally in Madrid organised by the far-right Vox party and attended by many of its international allies. Spanish Foreign Minister Jose Manuel Albares said he expected an apology from Milei. Other ministers also condemned Milei's speech, in which he described socialism as "cursed and carcinogenic". Sanchez leads Spain's Socialist Party. "With his behaviour, Milei has brought the relationship between Spain and Argentina to its most serious state in recent history," Albares said in a video statement. Milei would not apologise, his spokesperson said in an interview with an Argentine TV channel later Sunday. Spanish officials should retract its views they have made against him, he added. Milei's visit broke with diplomatic protocol as he refused to meet Spain's King Felipe and Sanchez, instead preferring to promote his book alongside Vox leader Santiago Abascal at the party rally. The European Union's foreign policy chief, Josep Borrell, said in a post on social messaging app X that "attacks against family members of political leaders have no place in our culture". Spain's main opposition party, the conservative People's Party (PP), refused to support Madrid's stance, with party sources saying that Sanchez should have provided explanations about the alleged corruption case weeks ago. "His silence generates internal doubts, but also distrust abroad," a PP source said, adding that the party's job was to oppose the Spanish government and not Milei. A city court said in April it was looking into accusations of influence peddling and business corruption against Sanchez's wife, brought in a private complaint by Manos Limpias, or Clean Hands, an anti-corruption activist group.

Lai Ching-te sworn in as Taiwan president as tensions with China on knife edge

Taipei. Taiwan's Lai Ching-te was sworn in on Monday as president of the democratic island in the face of growing Chinese military pressure and a hostile parliament. China claims Taiwan as part of its territory and has branded 64-year-old Lai a "dangerous separatist" who will bring "war and decline" to the island. Lai succeeds President Tsai Ing-wen, whose eight years in power saw a sharp deterioration in relations with Beijing over her rejection of China's claim.

Like Tsai, Lai is a staunch defender of the island's democracy and in the past has described himself as a "pragmatic worker for Taiwan independence". He has toned down his rhetoric and has repeatedly vowed to maintain the "status quo" on the Taiwan Strait, which means preserving Taiwan's sovereignty while not declaring formal independence. The inauguration ceremony was held at the Japanese colonial-era Presidential Office Building in Taipei, where Lai and his vice president-elect Hsiao Bi-khim were sworn into office shortly after. Lai and Hsiao -- arguably better known on the global stage due to her former role as Taiwan's top envoy to Washington -- are both part of the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP), which has championed Taiwan's sovereignty. Lai will on Monday deliver his inaugural speech -- which will be scrutinised for clues on how he will handle Taipei's delicate relationship with Beijing -- in front of thousands of people outside the Presidential Office. Eight heads of state and representatives of 51 international delegations were invited -- including from the United States, Japan and Canada -- in a show of support for the island's democracy. More than a thousand performers showcasing traditional operas and dances will take part in a celebration that also includes an Air Force aerial formation to salute the new president. Defence spending with only 12 allies, Taipei lacks diplomatic recognition on the world stage.

'Several million euros' of jewels robbed in armed heist at luxury Paris boutique

WORLD. Armed robbers who used a motorbike as a battering ram made off with "several million euros" (dollars) worth of valuables in a heist of the luxury Paris boutique of self-declared "Jeweler to the Stars" Harry Winston, the French prosecutor's office overseeing the police probe said. Winston refused on Saturday to confirm that Harry Winston was the target, the Paris prosecutor's office did so on Sunday, saying the



dazzling, by-appointment store on the tony Avenue Montaigne was robbed by a gang of at least three people. The store was using a two-wheeler. They stole jewellery from several windows, while one of them kept watch," carrying a long-barreled firearm, the prosecutor's office said.

As they sped away, they pointed the firearm "in the direction of police officers, who had to put an end to their pursuit," it said. "The damage, currently being assessed, is several million euros," it said. Harry Winston didn't reply to emailed questions from The Associated Press. This is not the first time the luxury store has been robbed. Eight people were convicted in 2015 in connection with a spectacular 2008 holdup in which three cross-dressing gunmen stole about \$92 million in loot.

Israeli airstrike kills 27 in central Gaza, leaders divided over post-war plan

WORLD. An Israeli airstrike killed 27 people in central Gaza, mostly women and children, and fighting with Hamas raged across the north on Sunday as Israel's leaders aired divisions over who should govern Gaza after the war, now in its eighth month. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu faces criticism from the other members of his War Cabinet, with main political rival Benny Gantz threatening to leave the government if a plan is not created by June 8 that includes an international administration for postwar Gaza. His departure would leave Netanyahu more reliant on far-right allies who support full military occupation of Gaza and rebuilding of Jewish settlements there. Netanyahu's office in a statement said they focused on Israel's military operation in the southern Gaza city of Rafah, humanitarian aid and hostages held in Gaza. The US said Sullivan said Israel should "connect its military operations to a political strategy"

and proposed measures to ensure more aid "surges" into Gaza. In recent weeks, Hamas militants have regrouped in parts of northern Gaza that were heavily bombed in the war's early days. The airstrike in Nuseirat, a built-up Palestinian refugee camp in central Gaza dating back to the 1948 Arab-Israeli war, killed 27 people, including 10 women and seven children, according to records at Al-Aqsa Martyrs Hospital in nearby Deir al-Balah, which received the bodies.

A separate strike on a Nuseirat street killed five people, according to the Palestinian Red Crescent emergency service. In Deir al-Balah, a strike killed Zahed al-Houli, a senior officer in the Hamas-run police, and another man, according to the hospital. Palestinians reported more airstrikes and heavy fighting in northern Gaza, which has been largely isolated by Israeli troops for months and where the World Food Program says a famine is underway. The Civil Defense said strikes hit several homes near Kamal Adwan

Hospital in Beit Lahiya, killing at least 10 people. And in the urban Jabaliya refugee camp nearby, residents reported a heavy wave of artillery and airstrikes. Abdel-



Kareem Radwan, 48, said the whole eastern side has become a battle zone where the Israeli fighter jets "strike anything that moves." Ahmad Bassal, a spokesman for the Civil Defense, said rescuers had recovered at least 150 bodies, more than half of them women and children, since Israel launched the operation in Jabaliya last week. Netanyahu opposes Palestinian

statehood, saying Israel will maintain open-ended security control over Gaza and partner with local Palestinians unaffiliated with Hamas or the Western-backed Palestinian Authority.

Israel launched its offensive after Hamas' Oct. 7 attack in which militants stormed into southern Israel, killing around 1,200 people, mostly civilians, and abducting about 250. Mourners gathered Sunday for the funeral of one of four hostages killed in the attack whose bodies were recently found by Israeli troops in Gaza. The war has killed at least 35,000 Palestinians, according to Gaza's Health Ministry, which doesn't distinguish between combatants and civilians. Around 80% of the population of 2.3 million Palestinians have been displaced within the territory, often multiple times. "We need a decent life to live," said Reem Al-Bayed, who left Gaza City and shelters with thousands in the gritty coastal Muwasi camp in the south without basic facilities like wells. "All countries live a decent life except us."

Who is Mohammad Mokhber, man set to become Iran President after Raisi's death?

Tehran. Mohammad Mokhber, Iran's First Vice President, who, based on the country's constitution, is expected to become interim president following the death of Ebrahim Raisi in a helicopter crash. As interim president, Mokhber is part of a three-person council, along with the speaker of parliament and the head of the judiciary, that will organise a new presidential election within 50 days of the President's term on September 1, 1955. Mokhber, like Raisi, is seen as close to Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei, who has the last say in all matters of state. Mokhber became First Vice President in 2021 when Raisi was elected President.

Mokhber was part of a team of Iranian officials who visited Moscow in



October 2023 and agreed to supply surface-to-surface missiles and more drones to Russia's military, sources told Reuters at the time. The team also included two senior officials from Iran's Revolutionary Guards and an official from the Supreme National Security Council. Mokhber had

previously been head of Setad, an investment fund linked to the supreme leader. In 2010, the European Union included Mokhber on a list of individuals and entities it was sanctioning for alleged involvement in "nuclear or ballistic missile activities". Two years later, it removed him from the list. In 2013, the US Treasury Department added Setad and 37 companies it oversaw to a list of sanctioned entities. Setad, whose full name is Setad Ejraiey Farmane Hazrate Emam, or the Headquarters for Executing the Order of the Imam, was set up under an order issued by the founder of the Islamic Republic, Khamenei's predecessor, Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini. It ordered aides to sell and manage properties supposedly abandoned in the chaotic years after the 1979 Islamic Revolution.

Who was Ebrahim Raisi, Iran's hardline President who died in helicopter crash?

WORLD. From being prosecutor general of Tehran in 1994 to Chief Justice of the country, Ebrahim Raisi, a hardline cleric close to Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, has worn many hats before becoming the President in 2021. However, the tenure of Raisi, who died in a helicopter crash on Sunday, has been rocky by anti-government protests over the custodial death of a 22-year-old woman, Mahsa Amini, in 2022, as well as the war in Gaza between Israel and Iran-backed Palestinian group Hamas. It was also under Raisi that Iran entered into a direct conflict with Israel for the first time after Tehran launched an unprecedented missile and drone strike in April. The response came after Israel allegedly conducted an airstrike on the Iranian embassy complex in Damascus, killing two Iranian generals.

Born in 1960 in Mashhad, Iran's second-biggest city, Ebrahim Raisi attended a seminary in Qom at the age of 15 and

did his PhD in law from Shahid Motahari University. His father, who was a cleric, died when he was just five years old. As a student, Raisi took part in protests against the Western-backed Mohammad Reza Shah Pahlavi, better



known as the Shah of Iran. The Shah was eventually toppled in 1979 in an Islamic Revolution led by Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini. This is when Raisi started to become closer to Ayatollah Khomeini. He joined the judiciary when he was just 25 years old and soon became the deputy prosecutor of Tehran. All this while, he was trained by Ayatollah Khamenei,

who took over as Iran's president in 1981.

MEMBER OF DEATH COMMITTEE AND 'BUTCHER OF TEHRAN'

As deputy prosecutor, Raisi was one of the four judges of the controversial "Death Committee", a secret tribunal set up in 1988 to retry thousands of prisoners who were jailed for their political activities against the government. Most of the prisoners were members of the leftist opposition group Mujahedin-e-Khalq.

Human rights groups have claimed that about 5,000 men and women were executed by the "death committee". However, Raisi, who earned the moniker of 'Butcher of Tehran', has repeatedly denied his role in the death sentences.

The hardline cleric then went on to serve as Tehran's chief prosecutor. He was elected to the Assembly of Experts, which is charged with appointing and overseeing the Supreme Leader.

Biden tries to reconnect with Black voters, faces silent protest at Martin Luther King Jr.'s alma mater in Atlanta

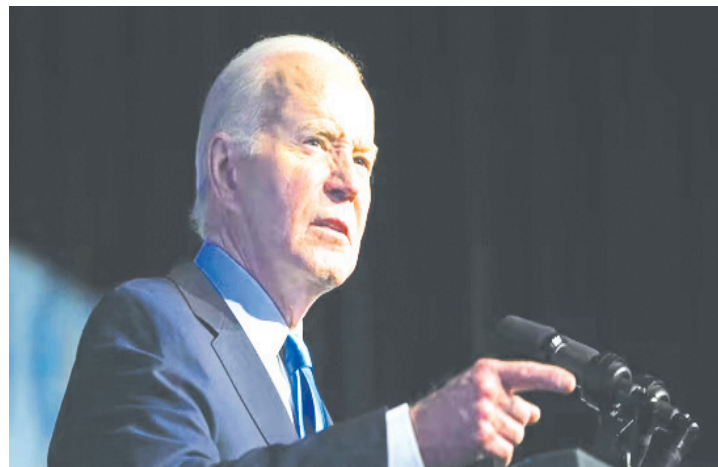
During a commencement address at Morehouse College, a historically Black university in Atlanta, Georgia, U.S. President Joe Biden encountered a silent protest from a small group of graduates opposing his stance on the Gaza conflict. Morehouse College is the alma mater of civil rights leader Martin Luther King Jr. Joe Biden says, "I know it breaks your heart. It breaks mine as well" as he referred to Gaza war as a complicated humanitarian crisis. (AFP) Joe Biden says, "I know it breaks your heart. It breaks mine as well" as he referred to Gaza war as a complicated humanitarian crisis. (AFP) Several graduates turned their backs on Biden, some waving Palestinian flags, while one held up a fist. Others donned keffiyeh scarves over their gowns, signifying solidarity with nationwide campus protests against Israel's military actions in Gaza following the Hamas attacks on October 7.

Biden addressed the protest directly, emphasizing his support for peaceful demonstrations. "I support peaceful, non-violent protest. Your voices should be heard, and I promise you I hear them," he said, dressed in the school's maroon and black colors. This speech marked Biden's most direct engagement with students

amid the ongoing Gaza protests, which have posed significant political challenges ahead of his anticipated election rematch with Donald Trump. Discussing the Gaza conflict, Biden acknowledged the complexity and emotional impact of the situation. "This is one of the hardest, most complicated problems in the world. There's nothing easy about it," he remarked, noting the deep frustration and heartbreak it causes.

Though he didn't provide specifics, reports suggest First Lady Jill Biden had previously urged the president to address the mounting civilian casualties in Gaza. Despite calls from some Morehouse students to cancel his speech due to the conflict, the event proceeded without interruption. Biden described the crisis in Gaza as a "humanitarian crisis" and reiterated his commitment to seeking an "immediate ceasefire to stop the fighting, bring the

hostages home." He stressed the need for a "lasting, durable peace" in the Middle East, advocating for an independent Palestinian state as the "only solution." "I know it angers and frustrates many of you,



including my family, but most of all, I know it breaks your heart. It breaks mine as well."

National Security Advisor Jake Sullivan was in Saudi Arabia and Israel over the weekend, working on securing a ceasefire

and fostering normalization between the two nations. Biden's speech coincided with Morehouse College's valedictorian, DeAngelo Jeremiah Fletcher, also calling for a ceasefire, emphasizing the heavy casualties suffered by both sides since October 7. "This is what we're up against -- extremist forces aligned against the meaning and message of Morehouse," said Biden. Morehouse President David Thomas commended Biden's willingness to confront tough issues, noting, "You spoke to the hard issues confronting our nation and the world at this moment."

The speech was part of Biden's broader effort to reconnect with Black voters amid slipping support, highlighted by recent polls. Biden highlighted his administration's historic appointments, including Vice President Kamala Harris and the first Black female Supreme Court justice. He warned of the heightened threat posed by a potential second term for Trump, framing his outreach efforts as crucial to preventing Trump's return to power.

NEWS BOX

No personal coaches, media blackout in NRAI's guidelines to Olympic-bound shooters

New Delhi. The National Rifle Association of India has laid down strict rules for Paris Olympic-bound shooters, which includes not taking the help of personal coaches at the national camp and a "media blackout" in order to ensure the readiness of its athletes for the quadrennial showpiece. The federation has issued a "national team protocol", where, among other things, it has also told the shooters that parents will not be allowed to "stay" or "visit" their wards at camps, and that the decision to make an exception solely lies with the High Performance Director (HPD), Pierre Beauchamp.

In a letter sent to Olympic-bound shooters, titled, "NRAI Olympic Team Undertaking and SOP for Paris 2024 Olympic Games - Pistol/Rifle Teams", a copy of which is with PTI, the NRAI has said the objective is to "ensure the clarity of the training and readiness plan for Olympic Games Paris 2024 by the shooters and the National Team Coaches and Sport Science support." "It is essential to have effective organization, discipline, planned and dedicated training programme for the best performance of shooters participating as National Team India at the Paris 2024 Olympic Games," the letter says. As per the letter, only NRAI-approved personal coaches and sport science consultants with signed SOP (Standard Operating Procedure) shall be allowed to assist the "National Training team for the concerned shooter(s) in assisting and/or discussing with the National Training Team under the leadership of the HPD and the chief coach (rifle and pistol)." However, personal coaches, who are not approved by the NRAI, will not be allowed.

"Personal coaches and including physios, nutritionist, psychologist will not be entitled as part of the NRAI National Team program of the Olympic Games." Under the subhead "Media Blackout", the NRAI has said the shooters will have to stay away from the media.

Money in the drain: Yash Dayal's father recalls facing trolls after son's RCB selection

New Delhi. Yash Dayal's father, Chandarpal, recalled the times when his son was severely trolled after RCB picked him for Rs 5 crore in the Indian Premier League (IPL) 2024 auction. Last year, while playing for GT, Dayal was taken to the cleaners by KKR's Rinku Singh, who hit the speedster for 5 sixes on the trot at the Narendra Modi Stadium. In the auction, the Titans tried to buy him back, but RCB secured the services of the pacer after an intense bidding war with the 2022 champions. Dayal's father said that RCB were ridiculed after they shelled out a whopping amount for the 26-year-old seamer.

'We quit all WhatsApp groups'

"In one of the WhatsApp groups, a person I know shared a meme, mocking Yash for conceding five sixes and I still remember what he wrote with the picture 'Prayagraj Express ki kahaani shuru hone se pehle hi khatam ho gayi (The story of Prayagraj Express got over before it even began)," Dayal told The Indian Express.

"It never stopped, as we as a family literally quit all WhatsApp groups, barring our family one. Even when RCB picked him in the auction for Rs 5 crore, I remember someone saying 'Paise naale mei baha aaye Bangalore waale (The franchise threw the money in the drain)'. We live in a world where even if you switch off from social media, you will end up seeing all kinds of stuff," he added.

WI vs SA: Brandon King named skipper for T20I series amid Rovman Powell's IPL duties

New Delhi. West Indies have named Brandon King as the skipper for the upcoming 3-match T20I series against South Africa at home. King is set to lead the Caribbean team for the first time in the absence of Rovman Powell, who is currently with RR for the Indian Premier League (IPL) 2024 playoffs. The Royals will lock horns with RCB in the Eliminator on Wednesday at the Narendra Modi Stadium. Shai Hope and Nicholas Pooran have been rested from the series after their hectic campaigns with DC and LSG respectively. They will join the squad on May 27 before the T20 World Cup 2024. Alzarri Joseph and Sherfane Rutherford, currently playing for RCB and KKR respectively, will link up with the team only if their franchises do not qualify for the final.

Desmond Haynes, the lead selector, said that the series is a chance for the Caribbean players to get themselves up and running before the World Cup.

"These are among the last competitive T20 international matches before the start of the World Cup. Players have the opportunity to fine-tune their skills and ensure they are as prepared as they can be for the World Cup, whether they are in the final squad or reserve pool," Haynes said. Head coach Daren Sammy said, "We have not played together as a team since the Australia series, but we just completed a very high-intensity training camp in Antigua. Now we have the chance to integrate some of our players returning from the IPL and build some momentum as a group going into the World Cup."

The 3 T20Is between South Africa and West Indies are scheduled to take place on May 23, 25 and 26 at the Sabina Park in Kingston, Jamaica.

West Indies squad for South Africa T20Is

Brandon King (C), Roston Chase, Alick Athanaze, Johnson Charles, Andre Fletcher, Mathew Forde, Jason Holder, Akeal Hosein, Shamar Joseph, Kyle Mayers, Obed McCoy, Gudakesh Motie, Romario Shepherd, Hayden Walsh

CSK, RCB fans accuse each other of unruly behaviour after thriller in Bengaluru

Things turned ugly between the fans after the RCB vs CSK match in Bengaluru. The fans of both teams accused each other of unruly behaviour after RCB beat Chennai in a final over thriller on Saturday, 18 May.

BAENGLURU. RCB beat CSK to reach the playoffs of the Indian Premier League 2024. The hosts booked the final spot in the playoffs after beating CSK by more than 17 runs in a final-over thriller at the M



Chinnaswamy Stadium on Saturday, May 18. As the RCB team basked in the glory of an incredible turnaround, the ugly head of fan wars rose its head on Saturday night. While the RCB team hailed its fans on Twitter for their incredible support, CSK on the other hand hoped that its fans reached their homes safely on the night.

Chaos ensued outside the stadium with fans from both teams accusing each other of unruly behaviour on the streets.

Many women fans of CSK took to Twitter to reveal their grievances and stated that they had been harassed by the RCB fans on the road and that they felt under threat. On the other hand, CSK fan pages accused RCB

of hounding the away fans in the stadium by coming to their face and crossing lines while celebrating their victories.

Bengaluru police said on Sunday that they had noted the activity on social media but said that official complaints had not been filed yet. RCB vs CSK Controversy The RCB vs CSK turned out to be a memorable encounter in the IPL 2024 season. CSK needed just 17 to qualify for the playoffs in the final over, even if that came at the cost of losing the game, with the target being 35 from the final 6 balls. However, the trio of MS Dhoni, Ravindra Jadeja and Shardul Thakur, who batted the 6 balls failed to hit Yash Dayal for boundaries. Dayal gave away just 7 runs in the final over and clinched an incredible win for the RCB side. After the match, MS Dhoni waited for the RCB players to come and shake hands with the team, but left after seeing that the side was busy celebrating. The fans were divided over the incident and some even criticised RCB players for not showing enough respect to the former India captain. RCB will now face RR in the Eliminator of the tournament.

Designed for you: Virat Kohli asks Chris Gayle to return to IPL as Impact Player

New Delhi. Virat Kohli hilariously asked Chris Gayle to return to the Indian Premier League (IPL) next year as an Impact Player. Gayle was present in the stands along with other big names like Smriti Mandhana and Anushka Sharma when RCB faced CSK in the IPL 2024 match on Saturday, May 18 at the M Chinnaswamy Stadium in Bengaluru. After RCB made it to the playoffs, Gayle visited their dressing room to congratulate their cricketers. The players were delighted to see the Universe Boss. Adding a bit of humour to the happy environment, Kohli requested Gayle to play in the IPL as an Impact Player. Kaka, come back next year, impact player is on now. You don't have to field anymore. It's designed for you," Kohli said in the video



uploaded on the social media handles of RCB. After the match against CSK, Kohli went to the top of the list of leading 6-hitters in the ongoing tournament. In 14 games, the 35-year-old has hit 37 sixes and is also the Orange Cap holder with 708 runs at an average of 64.36 and a strike-rate of 155.60. Kohli slipped to second in the table after Abhishek Sharma

of SRH topped him. Abhishek hit 6 sixes in the match against PBKS on Sunday and currently has 41 sixes to his name from 13 matches.

Gayle's incredible career for RCB

As far as Gayle is concerned, he started his IPL career by playing for KKR before making a move to RCB. Thereafter, he ended his career by playing a couple of seasons for PBKS. Gayle is currently the third-highest run-scorer for RCB in T20 cricket, having scored 3420 runs from 91 matches at an average of 43.29 and a strike-rate of 154.40 with 5 centuries and 21 half-centuries. RCB are next set to cross swords with Sanju Samson's RR on Wednesday, May 22 in the Eliminator at the Narendra Modi Stadium in Ahmedabad.

Former tennis star Camila Giorgi accused of stealing, not paying rent by landlord

New Delhi. Former Italian tennis star Camila Giorgi has been accused of stealing antiques and defaulting on rent of 6 months before fleeing to the United States of America (USA). Her date of retirement is officially listed as May 7, 2024 after the International Tennis Integrity Agency registered her name in the list of retired players. Last week, she dropped a post on her Instagram story, making a public comment on her retirement.

Before leaving her home country, Camila stayed in a rented property in Calenzano, Tuscany. It has been reported that Giorgi fled to the USA after Italy's financial police wanted her for questioning. As per the investigations conducted by Florence Prosecutor's Office, Giorgi and her family also have "gaps" in unsubmitted tax returns.

'A hateful behaviour'

"They made half of our furniture disappear. Persian rugs, fine furniture, even an antique

half-ton table. We are talking about damage between 50 and 100 thousand euros," the landlord told La Repubblica, an Italian news outlet.



Along with Camila, her mother Claudia, father Sergio and her brothers Amadeus and Leandro also reportedly departed for the USA. The landlord also claimed to have been in touch with Camila's father. "I wrote to him that they must at least give us back our things, he responded in a contemptuous

way, saying that they were objects of little value. A hateful behaviour, for those like me who have suffered economic but also emotional damage," he said. "I can't know how much is true or how much Camila owes the State, but I know what he owes us. Those objects are part of my mother's life and mine: I want them back, at least this much, given that we have lost hope due to the thousands and thousands of euros in back rent," the landlord added. Camila last played professional tennis back in March 2024 when she lost to World No. 1 Iga Swiatek, who recently won the Italian Open and Madrid Open, in the quarterfinal of the Miami Open. Back in October 2018, she achieved her career-best ranking of No. 26 after running the legendary Serena Williams close in a thrilling quarterfinal of Wimbledon that year. She won four titles in her career, in Merida (2023), Montreal (2021), Linz (2018) and s-Hertogenbosch (2015).

Out with injury, Rahul Tripathi brings back positivity at SRH in final league game

SRH beat PBKS in their final group-stage game in the Indian Premier League. Back from injury, Rahul Tripathi played an aggressive cameo to set up the team's win in Hyderabad.

Hyderabad. SRH beat PBKS in their final group-stage game of the season on Sunday, May 19. The win helped SRH finish at the second position in the Indian Premier League points table, giving them an advantage in the playoffs stage. The match saw an impressive cameo from Rahul

Tripathi, who featured in the line-up after almost 10 days after his previous match. Tripathi spoke to the IPL website and revealed that he was injured. The right-handed batter said that he looked to be positive in his innings of 33 off just 18 balls, which helped SRH set up the 215-run chase despite losing Travis Head early. Tripathi and Abhishek added 72 runs together in just 4 overs, which made life easier for SRH batters lower down the order. Was injured for a bit, but the team was doing well, and I was thinking how positive I can be. I waited to get a chance and I wanted to be at my best when I make a comeback and with God's grace, it happened today," Rahul



Tripathi told the IPL website after the match. "I think the message has been clear throughout the season, go aggressive, especially, go hard in the powerplay," he spoke about the intent of the team.

Tripathi has not had a good time in the IPL this season and the PBKS was the first match where he looked in his old form. Tripathi lauded the team and the fans for their resilience and belief in the group-stage of the tournament. "Now the IPL is of 10 teams so it is tough to get into the top 4. Really happy with the support at our home ground. The atmosphere was terrific, even in the game that it was raining. The crowd did not leave till the final call was made to abandon the game," Tripathi concluded. SRH will take on KKR in the first match of the IPL playoffs. If SRH win the game they will qualify for the directly for the finals. In case they lose, they will get a second chance to qualify and play the winner of RR vs RCB.



their approach. "Great blowout after sort of 10 days off to come together against a team that was still ready to perform. We were obviously a little rusty with the ball at the start but to fight back in the last 4 overs was incredible," Daniel Vettori said in a video uploaded by SRH on Monday, 20 May.

"Abhishek and Rahul took the game on to win the powerplay and that is how we have won most of our games, and again that was exceptional. You have to play exceptionally well to chase those big scores," Vettori lauded the SRH batters. "Nothing changes when we go into the playoffs. Take the game on, play exactly the same and stay consistent and true to our methods, so, well done boys," concluded the coach, who joined SRH in the 2024 season and had immediate impact. SRH will play KKR in the playoff 1 in Ahmedabad. In case they lose to the top of the table team, they will get a second chance against the winners of RR vs RCB in Chennai. SRH have won only one IPL title, that too back in 2016 under the leadership of David Warner.



Medha Shankr

Flaunts Ample Cleavage In Black Outfit, Hot Photos Go Viral; See Here

Medha Shankr rose to fame with her performance in the film 12th Fail. The actress won everyone's hearts. Well, today Medha shared a series of sexy photos on social media which have gone viral on social media. The actress is seen flaunting her cleavage in a black colour outfit. Taking to her Instagram handle, Medha Shankr shared photos in which she is seen wearing a black colour off-shoulder top and pants. Her makeup game is also on point. Fans are calling her sexy and hottie in the comment section.

Medha Shankr made her cinema debut with the acclaimed "12th Fail". Starring Vikrant Massey and Shankr, the Hindi film is based on Anurag Pathak's best-selling novel about the incredible journey of IPS officer Manoj Kumar Sharma and IRS officer Shraddha Joshi. Directed by Vidhu Vinod Chopra, "12th Fail" was a surprise hit at the box office. Shankr, who played Shraddha Joshi in the movie, said she received a lot of love from all quarters once "12th Fail" started streaming. "I tasted success after the OTT release because of the kind of love I got from the industry and otherwise on the internet. My Instagram literally blew up. This is just my first film and people have been incredibly kind to me," the actress told PTI in an interview.

Shankr said she is full of gratitude. "Twenty-five weeks in the cinemas. It's big. We're just cherishing that moment for now. It's definitely opened up more avenues, more opportunities. But right now, I'm just enjoying the moment. People have so much respect and regard for every single actor in the film and the filmmaker. They (audience) look at us as if we have given them some motivation and inspiration. That regard in somebody's eyes is very special," she added. "Every single day we have to restart in our lives because self-doubt is going to creep in from time to time. All the negative talk is going to creep in. But you have to believe in yourself and keep going. "You have to be your biggest critic and your biggest cheerleader and just give yourself the self-belief because nobody else is going to give it to you. So, you have to give it to yourself and keep going," she added.



Heeramandi: Jason Shah BREAKS Silence On Rape Scene With Manisha Koirala, 'Didn't Find It Too Emotional'



Actor Jason Shah recently shared his experience working on Sanjay Leela Bhansali's debut streaming series, 'Heeramandi: The Diamond Bazaar.' Jason discussed the intense rape scene involving him, Manisha Koirala, and several other actors. He also mentioned that he did not perceive his character, Alastair Cartwright, as queer. During an interview with ETimes, Jason Shah talked about the rape scene, stating that he didn't find it particularly draining or emotional. He explained that he viewed his role as overseeing rather than directly participating in the assault on Koirala's character, Mallikajaan. He stated, "I didn't find it too emotional for me because, at that moment, I felt like I wasn't trapping her, I felt I was letting my eye it easier for him to perform the scene. Jason Shah was also seen getting intimate with Ustadji, played by Indresh Malik in one of the episodes. Jason admitted that he was hesitant before shooting the scene but added that he had full confidence in Bhansali and was sure that the director would not portray it cheaply. "Obviously there was, because this isn't something I've done before. To be so close to another man, you will face... hesitation is the perfect word. I wasn't hesitating to say yes to the show, and I felt comfortable because I was working with Sanjay Leela Bhansali, so I knew aesthetically, it wouldn't be portrayed in a way that would seem cheap. I knew that his standard would be met. I was definitely nervous coming up to that day. They told me in the night that tomorrow would be that scene," he told Filmibeat OTT.

Released on May 1, Heeramandi: The Diamond Bazaar is Sanjay Leela Bhansali's OTT debut. The show premiered on Netflix also also stars Manisha Koirala, Sonakshi Sinha, Richa Chadha, Sanjeeda Shaikh, Aditi Rao Hydari, Sharmin Segal Mehta, Farida Jalal, Fardeen Khan, Shekhar Suman and Adhyayan Suman in key roles. It explores the various aspects of a woman's trials and tribulations.

Kiara Advani Reveals If She And Sidharth Malhotra Will Reunite Soon On-Screen After Shershaah



Kiara Advani, who recently represented India at an event in Cannes, is preparing for an exciting array of upcoming projects. Nevertheless, her fans and those of her husband, Sidharth Malhotra, continue to express their wishes for the duo to collaborate again following their 2021 war drama, Shershaah. In a recent interview, Kiara shared her appreciation for the love they have received for Shershaah and unveiled her intentions to reunite with Sidharth on screen. In a recent discussion with Film Companion during her visit to Cannes, France, Kiara Advani talked about her experience working with her husband, Sidharth Malhotra. She remarked, "I feel like Shershaah gave us a lot of love as a couple. So there's a certain excitement, and people want to see us together."

However, she emphasized their mutual respect for each other's space as actors. While they are both excited about the prospect of working together again, she clarified that any script they consider must appeal to them individually. "I've never really thought of it like, 'As a couple, how does this work?' I think we're individual people first and actors first so that's how we would go about looking for something. But yeah, we would love to work together, but it has to excite us equally," she added.

Meanwhile, on the work front, Kiara Advani is all set to step into the action genre with Don 3. Directed by Farhan Akhtar, the film will also star Ranveer Singh in the lead. Previously, Kiara was speaking to ABP News when she admitted that Don 3 would be her first action film. She shared that she consciously decided to sign this movie to break away from the way the audience has seen her as of now.

Alia Bhatt

And Akansha Ranjan Kapoor Vibe To 'Dekhha Tenu' From Mr And Mrs Mahi

Alia Bhatt has often shared photos and videos with her bestie Akansha Ranjan Kapoor. Today, also the actress took to her social handle and shared a video in which both are seen vibing to the song Dekhha Tenu from the film Mr & Mrs Mahi. The video has been trending. To note, Mr & Mrs Mahi star Janhvi Kapoor and Rajkumar Rao. Taking to her Instagram handle, Alia shared a video in which she is seen sitting with Akansha in a restaurant when suddenly her bestie started singing Dekhha Tenu song. Alia thought that the song was for her but then Akansha was singing it for French fries. "This song, These fries #MrAndMrsMahi in cinemas May 31st!"

In an interview with ETimes, Akansha had earlier confirmed her relationship with rumored boyfriend and director Sharan Sharma. She said, "Yes, I am in a relationship with Sharan." The actress added, "While I have not hidden the fact that I am dating him, I don't like to discuss my personal life too much." The trailer for Mr and Mrs Mahi has dropped and it blends cricket and romance into an exciting narrative. Directed by Sharan Sharma, known for Gunjan Saxena, the film features Rajkumar Rao and Janhvi Kapoor in the lead roles. The promo reveals the actors as a married couple who share a passion for cricket. Janhvi Kapoor's character is a doctor who enjoys watching and playing cricket, while Rajkumar Rao's character is an aspiring cricketer who hasn't yet made a name for himself in the sport. Earlier, Rajkumar Rao shared a glimpse of the second song titled Agar Ho Tum. Fans were quick enough to react to the video. The full song will be out tomorrow. The teaser opens with Rajkumar and Janhvi sitting in a café and staring at each other with a smile. "The power of love in its entirety is heading your way! #AgarHoTum song out tomorrow! #MrAndMrsMahi in cinemas on 31st May," read the caption.

Salman Khan also took to his social media to give a big shoutout to Karan Johar-produced Mr and Mrs Mahi. The film stars Janhvi Kapoor and Rajkumar Rao in lead roles. The trailer is already out and there's been much buzz around it. Sharing the trailer on his Instagram Stories, Salman Khan wrote, "Looks good, wishing the cast n crew the very best (sic)." Janhvi was quick to re-share it on her Stories. "Rajkumar, too, shared it and wrote, "Thank you so much dear @beingsalmankhan sir. Our wishes mean a lot to us."

