

Global headwinds bring India, US closer

RUSSIAN President Vladimir Putin's recent visit to China underlines the depth of the gradually developing close relationship between Moscow and Beijing. This embrace has geopolitical ramifications both at the regional and global levels. From the Indian perspective, in view of the ongoing Chinese expansionism in the Himalayas, any Russian support to this adventurism would be detrimental to India's security interests. Against this backdrop, there is a need to examine the possible trajectory of Indo-US defence cooperation after the elections in both countries. As far as the Indian elections are concerned, the indications are that the present dispensation is likely to retain power. In such an eventuality, it would be fair to assume that the current stance of New Delhi on India-US ties would continue, leading to a steady growth in the relationship. In the US elections — polling is due in November — it is too early to hazard a guess as to whether Joe Biden or Donald Trump will win, especially amid the latter's legal troubles. In case of a Biden victory, the current set of US policies is likely to be followed through in relations with India. However, if Trump wins, some changes can be expected. The quid-pro-quo approach vis-à-vis European members of NATO that Trump followed during his presidency could well be adopted by him while dealing with India.

Irrespective of who becomes the US President, the competitiveness between an aggressive and expansionist China and the US is likely to grow, accentuating the geopolitical divide at the global level. In the regional sphere, the Indian growth story and Chinese aggressiveness have resulted in a confrontational situation, which has defied resolution despite 21 rounds of military-level talks. At the political level, too, no headway appears to have been made.

India is the only nation in the region which has physically resisted Chinese attempts at grabbing territory along the Line of Actual Control (LAC). In the Ladakh sector, China has steadfastly refused to withdraw from several areas it occupied, resulting in an eyeball-to-eyeball deployment. Further, Sino-Pakistan collusion has raised the possibility of a two-front threat to India in the sensitive J&K region. The commonality of perceived threats is a driver of closer Indo-US ties. It has taken the US considerable time to grudgingly accept the Indian stance of 'strategic autonomy' in view of the coinciding national interests. The grant of Tier-1 status to India in 2018, the signing of four key foundational agreements (the Communications Interoperability and Security Memorandum of Agreement, the Logistics Exchange Memorandum of Agreement, the General Security of Military Information Agreement and the Basic Exchange and Cooperation Agreement) and the commencement of the 2+2 dialogue between Quad partners is indicative of the growing Indo-US convergence. Over the past 25 years, China's defence budget has officially been 3-4 times larger than that of India. Unofficially, its budget could roughly be one-and-a-half times the official figures. This has created a huge military capability gap between the two, which is partially offset by excellent and superior fighting ability of our soldiers. So, India has to tread carefully while dealing with the Chinese. Thus, in the Quad deliberations, India has steered clear of security issues in view of the Chinese sensitivities. This aspect has been well understood by India's Quad partners. Defence trade between the US and India has increased substantially in the past 15 years. In 2020, the US Congress authorised \$25 billion worth of defence sales to India up to 2025-26. New Delhi is keen on joint research and production with transfer of technology (TOT) in defence equipment. However, an agreement on this issue is yet to materialise. It needs to be appreciated that technologically, the US is far ahead of India in advanced defence weaponry. Hence, any agreement in this field will entail the US sharing high-end technology details with India.

Uttarakhand beset by Char Dham Yatra chaos, forest fires

The hill state is facing the double whammy of environmental disasters and climate change.

THE Uttarakhand Government led by Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami is responsible for plunging the state into one disaster after another. The most recent example is the gross mishandling of the high-profile Char Dham Yatra, considered a big money-spinner. It was inaugurated on May 10, and within its first 14 days has left over 45 pilgrims dead and many injured. In 2023, the yatra resulted in the death of over 200 pilgrims due to high-altitude sickness, landslides, etc. The administration had a good six months to prepare for the 2024 event since the doors of the four shrines were closed in early November. They could have used this time to introduce basic safety measures such as widening the pathways leading up to the shrines, ensuring basic health facilities and preparing a roadmap for the smooth flow of traffic. Instead, on the first day itself at the Yamunotri shrine, with a carrying capacity of around 4,500 people, there were about 45,000 tourists awaiting their turn on a narrow, unsafe pathway, holding on for dear life to a rickety bamboo railing where one false step would have seen them plunging down a deep crevice. The traffic jam to get to Yamunotri was 45 km long and yatratis complained that they had to wait 10-12 hours for darshan. The picture was no different in Kedarnath, which on the first day saw a crowd of nearly 80,000 yatratis making their way up to the shrine, only to be met by heavy snow and rain; hotels were charging astronomical amounts, which the majority could ill afford. The story in Badrinath was equally chaotic. Pilgrims braved the cold to stand in long queues from 2 am, and when the temple door's finally opened, priority was given to VIP darshan. This so incensed the yatratis that they broke into protests and anti-government sloganeering. With social media flooded with videos of serpentine queues and angry devotees, the state government threatened to take legal action against those spreading fake news or videos to defame the yatra. Local residents have taken to social media, demanding that the administration regulate the flow



of pilgrims and vehicles entering Uttarakhand as the present revenue-driven model was creating fresh environmental challenges. Garbage disposal has emerged as one of the biggest challenges since most of this waste ends up polluting the rivers that originate from the higher Himalayas.

The yatra was preceded by forest fires, which burnt down vast tracts of deciduous and oak forests. Forest fires had started simmering across the state in November 2023. Lack of winter rain and the dry summer spell have seen them spread to practically every forest-covered district from Pauri Garhwal to

state after election campaigning in Telangana and Karnataka when senior bureaucrats received a rap on their knuckles from the Supreme Court.

These fires have dried up thousands of springs, which are the only source of drinking water for the local people and have converted this once-beautiful state into a veritable gas chamber, which is impacting the health of its people. The young and elderly are complaining of irritation in the eyes and are being admitted to hospital because they are facing difficulty in breathing. At the most shocking part of this saga is that the entire burden of controlling these

fires has fallen on the shoulders of the understaffed and ill-equipped foresters, who are working 10 to 12 hours at a stretch, armed with little more than garden rakes and tree branches to control these fires that are racing across the mountain slopes, devouring everything in their path. In a clear violation of an apex court order, the state government managed to secure permission from the Environment Ministry to do mining in its rivers as well as earn enormous profits from the sale of dug-up minerals, sands and stones. The rivers are drying up due to deforestation, excessive mining and pollution. During the summer months, they are

little more than glorified nullahs. But the mining pits dug in these rivers are so deep that several people have drowned in them.

In February last year, the CM went to New Delhi to meet Environment Minister Bhupendra Yadav in order to get permission to continue mining in four rivers (Kosi, Gaula, Sarda and Nandaur) for 10 years. After his meeting with Yadav, he wrote on social media: "Under the leadership of the double-engine government, we are always working towards the development and prosperity of the region."

Unfortunately, Uttarakhand is facing the double whammy of climate change and unprecedented environmental disasters.

Two-state advocacy

Three European countries recognise Palestine

A coordinated move by Ireland, Norway and Spain to recognise the Palestinian state may be largely symbolic, but it reflects growing public outrage in Europe over the devastation and civilian death toll in Gaza, as well as Israel's deepening isolation. This decision followed discussions among several European nations, rooted in the belief that a fresh thrust for a two-state solution is essential. The diplomatic move in favour of Palestinian statehood signals a significant shift in Europe against Israel's excesses in Gaza, widely condemned as genocidal. Notably, Norway, a key player in the Oslo Accords of 1993, has emphasised that recognising Palestine is crucial for peace in West Asia, asserting that a two-state solution is in Israel's best interest. Ireland and Spain have echoed this sentiment, underscoring the need to break the cycle of violence that has worsened since the October 7 attack by Hamas and the subsequent Israeli counter-assaults.



Hopefully, it will inspire other Western countries to follow suit and step up international pressure for a ceasefire and meaningful negotiations. Salman Rushdie

has also pitched into the already muddled debate.

India has maintained a consistent policy, advocating for direct negotiations to establish a sovereign, independent Palestine coexisting peacefully with Israel. It has reiterated its long-standing support for a two-state solution, though Prime Minister Modi's tweet condemning the initial Hamas attack was interpreted by some observers as a shift in its stance.

Meanwhile, the International Criminal Court has issued arrest warrants against the Israeli PM and Defence Minister and three Hamas leaders for alleged war crimes. With the International Court of Justice hearing South Africa's appeal to

stop Israel's attacks in Rafah, the global clamour for accountability and justice is growing

The rise of gold and the fall of dollar

The fetish for gold will vanish if the global community were to fully grasp the shocking level of environmental degradation caused by gold mining.

THE trend of rising gold prices in the last few months does not reflect the usual market fluctuations of supply and demand conditions for this 'precious' metal. But it signifies not only the uncertain global economic conditions but also, even more importantly, the changing geo-political world order afflicted by conflicts. The spot gold prices hit a record of \$2,431.29 per ounce on April 12. The rise in gold prices has become linked to three other global changes: the rise in demand for gold reserves by Central banks, the Russia-Ukraine war and the declining reserves of dollar in the foreign currency reserves by Central banks.

When Russia invaded Ukraine over two years ago, the US-led NATO military bloc did not want to participate in a direct military confrontation with Russia because of the potentially dangerous implications for Europe, and most importantly, for Germany, the largest European economy that was critically dependent on Russian gas supplies for its energy needs. This strategy of avoidance of direct military intervention by the US is also the product of the military and political failures of past US interventions in Iraq and Afghanistan. The Biden administration, in consultation with its key European allies, decided to use the economic weapon of sanctions to cripple Russia economically and, through that, militarily. The US froze Russia's dollar reserves in the hope that — since dollar was the most accepted foreign currency in global trade — Russia will be isolated economically and that this isolation would create adverse domestic economic conditions in Russia and possible domestic unrest, forcing Putin to halt Russian aggression and eventually to surrender to a ceasefire acceptable to the US.

American economic and security strategists could not have imagined that weaponising the dollar would backfire. This weaponisation of currency alerted the policy strategists in all countries that had tense relations of one kind or another with the US that they could one day be subjected to dollar sanctions. This fear led the Central banks of several important countries to go on a gold-



buying spree and reduce dependence on dollar reserves in their foreign currency reserves. The World Gold Council's latest report, published in April, points out that in the first quarter of 2024, the demand by Central banks to buy gold reached record highs. Four countries that were especially noted to have led the high demand were: China, India, Turkey and Kazakhstan. No official announcement from any of these countries would suggest that they are buying gold because of their concerns about possible dollar sanctions in future, but it is obvious that substantial gold reserves in an uncertain world ensure not only safety but also a sound investment. Given the very tense relations between the US and China especially because of their clashing strategic interests in Taiwan, the Dragon has been the most aggressive buyer of gold of late. China's Central bank (The People's Bank

of China) was the largest official sector buyer of gold in 2023. According to the World Gold Council, China's net purchases of gold were 7.23 million ounces, or 224.9 metric tonnes, the highest ever purchase in a single year since at least 1977. China's continuous 18-month gold-buying spree led to the accumulation of its gold reserves equal to 72.8 million ounces of gold by the end of April. Its value is equal to a staggering \$167.96 billion. That it's the demand by Central banks to increase their gold holdings — which has been the prime mover behind gold price rise — is also demonstrated by the fact that the demand for gold for jewellery during this period had decreased as a result of high prices.

The increasing demand for gold reserves by Central banks was accompanied by a decrease in dollar reserves. The dollar had an overwhelming dominance in global

currency reserves for several decades after the Second World War. The dollar was considered the safest currency to hold. Even till the 1990s, the share of dollar in official foreign exchange reserves was 70 per cent, according to the International Monetary Fund data. This has now come down to 58 per cent of the global reserves. The attempt by US strategists to weaponise the dollar through sanctions against Russia has certainly created difficulties for some Russian citizens at home or abroad in their foreign exchange transactions, but it has failed to subdue the Russian state, which has managed to bypass these sanctions. The India-Russia trade in rupees and roubles for the purchase of oil by India from Russia along with some aspects of Russia-China and Russia-Iran trades are some examples of bypassing the dollar. The global confidence in the dollar has been eroded, which, in turn, has diminished one key aspect of America's source of power in the global political economy. Though the dollar remains a strong currency, global trust in it as a reserve currency has suffered a decline. The narratives of de-dollarisation or the alternative BRICS currency floated by President Lula of Brazil — and supported enthusiastically by Russia, silently by China and hesitantly by India — along with the trend of increasing gold reserves are reflections of the declining importance of dollar as a global reserve currency and America as the most dominant global economic power.

Such epochal changes do not take place suddenly. There may even be reversals or — if Trump returns to power in the US — an acceleration of decline in America's influence because of his blinkered vision of American isolationism couched as American nationalism.

It is not difficult to imagine that if there were to be peace in the world, gold would lose the importance it has acquired in the commodified world we live in because, as Karl Marx theorised, gold had no use value, it only had exchange value. The fetish for gold will vanish if the global community were to fully grasp the shocking level of environmental degradation caused by gold mining.

Severe Cyclone Remal to hit Bengal coast tonight, flights suspended in Kolkata

New Delhi: A low-pressure system over the Bay of Bengal intensified into severe cyclonic storm Remal and is expected to make landfall between the coasts of West Bengal and Bangladesh at midnight on Sunday, the India Meteorological Department (IMD) said. Remal, which means sand in Arabic, is the first pre-monsoon cyclone in the Bay of Bengal this season. The name was provided by Oman, following the regional naming system for cyclones in the north Indian Ocean. According to the weather department, extremely heavy rainfall has been predicted in the coastal districts of West Bengal and north Odisha on May 26 and 27. Parts of northeast India may also witness extremely heavy rainfall due to the impact of Remal on May 27 and 28. In its latest bulletin on Sunday morning, the IMD said Remal moved nearly northwards at a speed of six km per hour and intensified into a severe cyclonic storm. It lay centred about 290 km south-southwest of

Khepupara (Bangladesh), 330 km south of Mongla (Bangladesh), 270 km south-southeast of Sagar Islands (West Bengal), 390 km south-southeast of Digha (West Bengal) and 310 km south-southeast of Canning (West Bengal) as of 5:30 am today. With a wind speed of 110-120 km per hour, gusting to 135 kmph, Remal is expected to cross the West Bengal and adjoining Bangladesh coasts between Sagar Island and Khepupara on Sunday midnight, the Met Department said. At the time of the landfall, a storm surge of up to 1.5 metres is expected to inundate low-lying areas of coastal West Bengal and Bangladesh. In view of the cyclone, the coastal districts of North 24 Parganas and South 24 Parganas in West Bengal are under red alert on May 26 and 27 as extremely heavy rainfall is predicted in some areas. An orange alert was issued for Kolkata, Howrah, Nadia, and Purba Medinipur districts, with the weather office warning of wind speeds touching between



80 and 90 kilometres per hour, gusting to 100 kilometres per hour. Heavy to very heavy rainfall was predicted in a few places on May 26 and 27.

The National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) has deployed 12 teams and five additional teams have been kept on standby in West Bengal ahead of the cyclone's landfall. The rescue and relief teams of the Indian Army and the Indian Navy have been kept in readiness. The IMD has warned of localised flooding and

significant damage to vulnerable structures, power and communication lines, unpaved roads, crops, and orchards in South and North 24 Parganas districts. People have been asked to remain indoors and not venture outside, particularly near the sea. On the other hand, the coastal districts of Balasore, Bhadrak, and Kendrapara in north Odisha could receive heavy rainfall on May 26-27, while heavy rainfall was likely in Mayurbhanj on May 27. The Indian Coast Guard (ICG) said nine

disaster relief teams were kept on standby at Haldia and Fraserganj in West Bengal, and Paradip and Gopalpur in Odisha. It said all pre-emptive measures were taken to ensure there was no loss of life or property at sea. In a statement, the ICG said that its remote operating stations at Haldia and Paradwip have been alerting fishing vessels and merchant ships about the cyclone through VHF (very high frequency) broadcasts. All its ships and aircraft were kept on standby for search and rescue operations. Meanwhile, the authorities of Kolkata's Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose International Airport have decided to suspend flight operations for 21 hours from Sunday noon as the state braces for Cyclone Remal. All cargo and container handling operations at the city's Syama Prasad Mookerjee Port will be suspended for 12 hours from 6 pm on Sunday till 6 am on Monday due to the cyclone. Fishermen have been warned to stay out of the north Bay of Bengal until the morning of May 27.

Leh-bound SpiceJet flight makes emergency landing in Delhi after bird-hit

New Delhi: A Leh-bound SpiceJet flight made an emergency landing in Delhi shortly after take-off after one of the aircraft's engine was hit by a bird, an airline spokesperson said. Flight SG123 took off at 10.29 am before making an air turn back and landing safely at around 11 am. An airline spokesperson said, "SpiceJet B737 aircraft operating SG-123 from Delhi to Leh returned to Delhi after suffering a bird hit on engine 2. The aircraft landed safely in Delhi and passengers deplaned normally." Last week, two flights -- Air India



and Air India Express -- were forced to make emergency landings due to technical errors.

On May 19, the Air India Express flight, travelling from Bengaluru to Kochi with 179 passengers and six crew members on board, made an emergency landing at the Bengaluru airport after a fire was reported in the right engine. Just two days earlier, on May 17, the Air India flight, which took off from Delhi with 175 passengers, turned back and landed in the national capital after a fire in its air conditioning unit. On May 1, a New Delhi-bound Vistara flight from Bhubaneswar returned minutes after takeoff and made an emergency landing after the aircraft was caught in a hailstorm and suffered damage.

Food Safety Body Cracks Down On Commercial Sale Of Human Milk

New Delhi: The country's food regulator has warned against the unauthorized commercialization of human milk, stating that its rules do not permit the sale of such products. In an advisory dated May 24, the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) has advised all activities related to human milk sales to be stopped. "FSSAI has not permitted the processing and/or selling of human milk under FSS Act, 2006 and rules/regulations made there under. Therefore, it is advised that all such activities related to the commercialization of human milk and its products should be immediately stopped," read the advisory.

Any violation of the rules will lead to action against the food business operators (FBOs), the FSSAI said in its advisory. The FSSAI, which regulates the



manufacturing and sale of food items in the country, has also called on state and central licensing authorities to ensure licenses are not given to food businesses involved in processing or selling human milk.

The online sale of human milk has boomed with milk banks set up as non-profits collecting milk from lactating mothers and selling them at a profit. A simple Google search shows the numerous options one has to buy such products online, including Instagram handles and milk banks.

Milk banks usually process the milk collected from healthy donors (lactating mothers) and check contamination and nutrient contents before freezing and storing them. Most milk banks, which are attached to government hospitals, usually provide it for free, according to The Times of India.

"Grew Up Washing Cups And Plates As A Child": PM Modi At Mirzapur Rally

Mirzapur: Prime Minister Narendra Modi said on Sunday that he grew up washing cup plates and serving tea, adding that the relationship between Modi and tea is very deep. "I grew up washing cups and plates as a child. I have grown up serving tea. The relationship between Modi and tea is also very deep," PM Modi said while addressing a rally in Mirzapur today. "No one wants to waste their vote on Samajwadi Party. No one will vote for someone who is drowning. The common man will vote only for the one whose government is certain to be formed. The country has come to know the people of the INDI alliance very well. These people are deeply communal. These people are extreme casteists. These people are extreme familyists. Whenever their government is formed, these people take decisions on this basis," he added.

Slamming the SP chief Akhilesh Yadav, the Prime Minister said that there are so many promising people in the Yadav community but he (Akhilesh) gave tickets only to his family members. "These SP people used to release even those terrorists who were caught. The SP government used to suspend any police officer who was reluctant in this. They had made the entire UP and Purvanchal a haven for the mafia. Be it life or land, no one knew when it would be snatched away and in the SP government, the mafia was also seen as a vote bank," PM Modi said. He further asserted that CM Yogi is carrying forward the 'Swachhta Abhiyan' very bravely. The public was at the mercy of the SP government but now the mafia is trembling in the BJP government. "The sacred Constitution of our country is also on their (INDI

alliance) target. They want to loot the reservation of SC-ST-OBC. Our Constitution clearly says that there cannot be reservation based on religion. Samajwadi Party had released its manifesto during the Uttar Pradesh Assembly elections in 2012. Then SP had said in its manifesto, just as Dalits and backward classes have got the reservation, similarly, Muslims will also be given reservation," he added. "SP had said that it would even change the Constitution for this. SP had announced that 15 per cent reservation will be given to Muslims in police and PAC also. How these people were bent on snatching away the rights of SC-ST-OBC to please their vote bank," the Prime Minister said in Mirzapur. PM Modi also emphasized that he is dedicated to the poor, Dalits and backward people.

'Saw death up close': Assistant engineer with PWD department is first Goan to summit Everest

New Delhi: When Pankaj Narvekar, an assistant engineer with the Goa government's Public Works Department, was descending after summiting Mount Everest, an icy ridge collapsed near The Hillary Step in the "death zone", considered the most technically difficult part of the climb. Within seconds, two climbers were dragged down the side of the mountain. "I was standing on the edge of the cliff when a cornice collapsed. It happened right in front of me. Two of those climbers are now presumed dead. At that moment, my only thought was whether I would be able to reach home safely. The oxygen supply was also limited," he recalled. Narvekar, 41, scripted history when he summited Mount Everest

around 5.30 am on May 21 and unfurled the Tricolour, becoming the first Goan to scale the world's tallest peak at an altitude of 8,848 metres. "Mountain climbing is my



passion," Narvekar told The Indian Express over the phone from Kathmandu. Hailing from Porvorim near state capital Panaji, he describes himself as an explorer and traveller. He has successfully climbed Mount

Kamet (7,756 metres) in Uttarakhand, Mount Kun (7,077 metres) in Ladakh and Mount Kang Yatze (6,400 metres) in Ladakh. For Everest, Narvekar's first summit above 8,000 metres, he trained for the past two years. Last year, his daughter Gunjan, aged 12, had successfully climbed three peaks above 6,000 metres in the Markha Valley in Ladakh. "Climbing is about endurance. While summiting, you have to often walk for 18 hours in a day where oxygen levels are low. Typically one has to train daily for five-six hours. I have travelled half of the country. I started with trekking first and gradually got into mountaineering in 2012. This year, I climbed with supplemental oxygen. In the future, my plan is to scale Everest without any oxygen.

Culprits Will Not Be Spared": Delhi Minister On Children Hospital Fire

According to the officials, 12 children were rescued from the incident site where one was already dead before the fire call was made.

New Delhi: After seven newborns lost their lives in a tragic fire incident at a New Born Baby Care Hospital in Delhi's Vivek Vihar, Delhi Health Minister Saurabh Bharadwaj assured of strict action in the case. According to the officials, 12 children were rescued from the incident site where one was already dead before the fire call was made. Six newborn babies lost their lives after the fire broke out and five others have been admitted to the hospital," Delhi Police said.

Saurabh Bharadwaj, in a post on X, said, "Very unfortunate incident reported. I have asked the Secretary (Health) to update me about the current situation. Culprits will not be spared. Strictest punishment will be ensured for those found negligent or involved in any wrongdoing."

Appropriate legal action is being taken against the owner of the hospital namely Naveen Kichi. Atul Garg, Director of Delhi Fire Department told ANI that the operation was very tough as there was a blast of cylinders. "It was a very tough operation. We made two teams. One team started firefighting because there was a blast of cylinders, we can say the chain of blast of cylinders. So we had to save ourselves also. We started rescue operations for babies as well. Unfortunately, we could not save all the



children. We removed all the twelve babies from the hospital. But after arrival, they declared that 6 were dead. That is a regrettable incident," Mr Garg said. A relative of a newborn who died in the incident said that strict action should be taken in the matter. My brother's child was admitted here on May 20. We went to the police station and asked them for information, they asked us to go to the hospital for information. We were not allowed to

J&K Lok Sabha Election Over, Next Step Assembly Election: Amit Shah

New Delhi: Union Home Minister Amit Shah has said that the Modi government's Kashmir policy has been vindicated by the successful polling in Jammu and Kashmir, where even separatists have voted "overwhelmingly", as he assured that the assembly elections in the region will be held before September 30. Once the elections are over, the government will start the process of restoring statehood to the Union Territory, Amit Shah said in an interview to PTI late Saturday.

"I have said in Parliament that we will give the statehood after the assembly elections," he said, adding that everything is going according to plan, such as the surveys of the backward classes and delimitation exercise of the Assembly and Lok Sabha constituencies. "We have completed the delimitation process. Because the reservation can be given only after the delimitation process is completed. Because we have to know about the status of various castes (to give reservation). That has been done. Lok Sabha election is also over (in Jammu and Kashmir). Next is the assembly election which will also be held. We will complete the process before the Supreme Court deadline," he said. On December 11, 2023, the Supreme Court had directed the Election Commission of India to conduct elections in Jammu and Kashmir by September 30, 2024.

Commenting on the relatively high polling percentage in the Kashmir valley in the Lok Sabha elections, Amit Shah said he believed that there has been a big change in attitudes there. "Voting percentage has increased. Some people used to say that people of the valley do not believe in the Indian Constitution. But this election was held under the Indian Constitution because Kashmir's Constitution is no longer there. It was scrapped. Election was held under Indian Constitution. People who sought a separate country, those who want to go with Pakistan -- even they cast their votes overwhelmingly, both at the organisation level as well as individual people," he said.

Amit Shah said "it was a very big victory for the democracy and a big success of the Narendra Modi government's Kashmir policy, which it has been pursuing for the last 10 years." The three seats in the Kashmir valley -- Srinagar (38.49 per cent), Baramulla (59.1 per cent) and Anantnag-Rajouri (53 per cent) -- have recorded the highest voter turnout "in many decades", the Election Commission said on Saturday. When asked why the BJP did not field any candidate in the Lok Sabha elections in the Kashmir valley, he said the party was still working on strengthening its organisation in the valley.

stay here. Strict action should be taken in this matter," Sumit, a relative of a newborn baby admitted at the hospital said. He rescued newborns were shifted to East Delhi Advance NICU hospital.

All of them are on oxygen support and treatment is underway. While speaking to ANI, East Delhi Advance NICU Director Ramji Bhardwaj said that after the accident last night, 12 children came to them, out of which seven were dead.

"The police took the children to GTB Hospital for post-mortem. The remaining five are admitted to us. Out of the five children, one child is very weak whose weight is around 800 grams. He has been kept on a ventilator and his condition is critical. Rest four are stable and their treatment is underway," he said.

NEWS BOX

British Climber And Nepali Guide Feared Dead After Reaching Mount Everest Summit

WORLD. A British man and his Nepali guide are believed to be dead after reaching the summit of Mount Everest on Tuesday. According to the BBC, Daniel Paterson, 39, from Wakefield, and guide Pastenji Sherpa, 23, did reach the top of the mountain but later "fell towards the Tibet side through a very vertical steep."

Donald Trump's Historic Hush Money Trial Ends, Verdict Out Soon

New York: The historic trial of Donald Trump enters its final act Tuesday, with closing arguments to the jury who must then decide whether to hand down the first-ever criminal conviction of a former US president.

Rapper Nicki Minaj briefly detained at Amsterdam airport for 'carrying drugs'

WORLD. Rapper and singer-songwriter Nicki Minaj, who was detained by police in the Netherlands on suspicion of exporting "soft drugs", has been released. She has been fined and allowed to proceed on her journey, the Dutch Police said.

Israeli protesters demanding Benjamin Netanyahu's resignation clash with police

Jerusalem. Scuffles between Israeli police and protesters erupted in Tel Aviv on Saturday after thousands gathered to demonstrate against the government and demand that it bring back the hostages being held by Hamas in Gaza.

The Return of All Hostages" divisions among Israelis have deepened over how Netanyahu has handled the war against Hamas after the attack that killed about 1,200 people and saw 250 others taken hostage.

abroad, to stop the war and allow humanitarian aid into the enclave that is home to 2.3 million Palestinians, almost 80 per cent of whom have been displaced.



for the International Criminal Court requested arrest warrants for Israeli leaders, along with Hamas officials. On Friday, the International Court of Justice ordered Israel to end its military offensive in the southern Gaza city of Rafah and to open the nearby border crossing for

crucial humanitarian aid. The top UN court also said Israel must give war crimes investigators access to Gaza. However, the judges stopped short of ordering a full cease-fire across the entire Palestinian territory, and Israel is unlikely to comply with the court's ruling.

Israel rejects Hamas's claim of capturing its soldiers in northern Gaza

Cairo. A spokesman for Hamas's armed wing said on Sunday its fighters had captured Israeli soldiers during fighting in Jabalia in northern Gaza on Saturday, though the Israeli military denied the claim.

tunnel and photos of military fatigue and a rifle. Reuters could not independently verify the identity of the person shown in the video nor his or her condition.

declined to be identified by name or nationality, said it had been decided that "in the coming week negotiations will open based on new proposals led by the mediators, Egypt and Qatar and with active US involvement"



A Hamas official later denied Israeli media reports the talks would resume in Cairo on Tuesday, and told Reuters, "There is no date."

Nearly 36,000 Palestinians have been killed in Israel's offensive, Gaza's health ministry says. Israel began the operation in response to Hamas-led fighters attacking southern Israeli communities on October 7, 2023, killing around 1,200 people and seizing more than 250 hostages, according to Israeli tallies.

North Korea accuses US, South Korea of flying spy planes, ships

Pyeongyang. North Korea's defence ministry accused the United States and South Korea of ramping up reconnaissance activities around the inter-Korean border, warning that it will act if its sovereignty and security is violated, state media KCNA said on Sunday.

North Korean defectors and activists in South Korea regularly send balloons containing anti-Pyongyang leaflets, alongside food, medicine, money, mini radios and USB sticks loaded with South Korean news and dramas.

mobilising various aircraft with little or no time gap throughout the day, carrying out aerial reconnaissance activities at a level comparable to wartime situations," Kim said in a statement published by KCNA.

Those activities seriously infringe on North Korea's national sovereignty and security, and will not be met with "offensive" countermeasures, he said. "We will act immediately when the nation's sovereignty and security interests are violated," Kim added.

6 killed, dozens injured as Russia strikes hardware store in Ukraine's Kharkiv

Kharkiv, Russia. Russian strikes on a crowded DIY hardware store and a residential area in the Ukrainian city of Kharkiv on Saturday killed at least six people and injured dozens, local officials said.

Zelenskiy issued a plea to Ukraine's Western allies to help boost air defences to keep the country's cities safe. French President Emmanuel Macron, writing on social media platform X, denounced the attack on the store as "unacceptable."

rushed away from the scene of both strikes and lay on their stomachs, fearing a second strike, as has occurred during several recent Russian attacks.



and ... with my colleague, we fell to the ground. There was the second hit and we were covered with debris. Then we were covered to crawl to the higher ground," said Dmytro Syrotenko, 26, who had a large gash on his face. Syrotenko told Reuters he was taken to safety by a rescue worker who helped him.

several colleagues, and shoppers. Zelenskiy, in his nightly video address, denounced the strike as "yet another example of Russian madness. There is no other way to describe it." "When we tell world leaders that Ukraine needs sufficient air defences, when we say we need real decisive measures to enable us to protect our people, so that Russian terrorists cannot even approach our border, we are talking about not allowing strikes like this to happen," he said.



Tesla shareholders asked to reject Elon Musk's 'excessive' \$56 billion pay

Austin. Proxy advisory firm Glass Lewis said on Saturday it has urged Tesla shareholders to reject a \$56 billion pay package for Chief Executive Officer Elon Musk, which if passed would be the largest pay package for a CEO in corporate America.

Delaware's Court of Chancery voided the original pay package. Musk then sought to move Tesla's state of incorporation to Texas, carrying the proposed move to Texas as offering "uncertain benefits and additional risk" to shareholders.

NEWS BOX

KKR vs SRH: Harshit Rana focusing on assessing conditions ahead of IPL Final

New Delhi. KKR pacer Harshit Rana believes that assessing the conditions will be key to winning the Indian Premier League 2024 title. Rana, who has been a key figure in KKR's death over bowling, will hope to win his first IPL title after what has been a really strong season for him. Speaking ahead of their clash vs SRH, Rana told Wisden India about his focus in the match. The fast bowler, who has been banned for a match due to his exaggerated celebrations, said that it has been intense for a bowler throughout the tournament. "The situations are extremely intense when we are playing on the ground. The earlier you assess the conditions and the wickets, the more advantageous it is for me. So, my first focus and priority are to find out what will work on this wicket," Harshit Rana told Wisden India. Asked about his training, Rana said that he has put himself under pressure and tried to simulate match situations so that he can excel under pressure. Rana has 17 wickets from 12 matches at an enviable economy of 9.41. Considering the amount of runs that have been scored in Kolkata this season, an economy of 9.4 and strike rate of 13.47 does not sound bad at all. "It is tough but I have been working hard on these. I keep working on these in the practice sessions, and it becomes easier for me to implement them during the game. It is tough but as I have worked hard on it during training, I know exactly what to bowl when - I have put that pressure on myself to excel in various situations," Rana said.

IPL 2024 Final: KKR vs SRH Match Preview
KKR have reached the final by beating SRH in the Qualifier 1 at Ahmedabad. KKR would hope to beat SRH the third time in a row this season and clinch their third title in the history of the tournament.

Rishabh Pant posts photo with India players before flying out for T20 World Cup

New Delhi. India wicketkeeper batter and DC captain Rishabh Pant flew out with a part of the Indian team for the T20 World Cup 2024 on Saturday, 25 May. Pant, alongside Rohit Sharma, Suryakumar Yadav, Mohammed Siraj, Shivam Dube, Jasprit Bumrah and Rahul Dravid were among the first members of the contingent to leave for the tournament. This was the first time that Rishabh Pant was seen alongside India players since his road accident in December 2022.

Rishabh posted a photo on his social media account before leaving and captioned the photo - back with the blues. Pant was selected for the Indian after he was able to prove his fitness in the Indian Premier League 2024. Not only did Rishabh bat well, he showed promising signs with his keeping and captaincy as well. The Board of Control for Cricket in India took to Twitter as well to post photos of India players waiting in the Mumbai airport lounge for their flights. Amongst the notable absentees from the Indian squad were Virat Kohli and Hardik Pandya. Sports Tak's Vikrant Gupta reported that Virat was stuck due to paperwork, while other media reports suggested that Hardik Pandya was in London and would join the India squad directly in the USA. India play their first match on June 5 against Ireland at the Nassau County International Cricket Stadium in New York. The stadium was recently built from scratch specifically for the T20 World Cup 2024.

WHEN WILL REST OF THE INDIAN TEAM FLY OUT?

Sanju Samson, Yuzvendra Chahal, Avesh Khan and Yashasvi Jaiswal will leave with the second batch of Indian cricketers. Chahal, Jaiswal, Avesh and Samson recently ended their Indian Premier League (IPL) 2024 campaign after RR lost to SRH by 36 runs in the Qualifier 2 on Friday, May 24 at the MA Chidambaram Stadium in Chennai.

LaLiga: Toni Kroos in tears at emotional Real Madrid farewell

Madrid Toni Kroos bade an emotional farewell to Real Madrid fans at a sold-out Santiago Bernabeu on Saturday as the German midfielder played his final home game after a remarkable decade with the Spanish giants.

A goalless draw with Real Betis was largely irrelevant with Real confirmed as LaLiga champions and all the European qualification and relegation spots decided, so the evening was about celebrating the 34-year-old Kroos, one of Real's most successful ever players after making 464 appearances and helping them win more than 20 major trophies including four European Cups. Kroos announced that he will retire after this year's European Championship on home soil. He fought back tears as walked on to the pitch through a corridor formed by his team mates, who were wearing his number eight jersey as the fans held up a giant flag with his face and the words "Thank you, legend" which covered the south stand. In the 85th minute, Kroos broke down in tears when, after receiving another standing ovation as he was substituted, he embraced his three children who were crying on the sidelines.

The game was stopped for several minutes as Kroos hugged each of his team mates and his coach. After the referee blew the final whistle, Kroos, his family and team mates did a lap of honour as the fans serenaded him for almost 30 minutes. "I can only say thank you to all the Madridismo, to the club, to my team mates, to the stadium," Kroos told reporters. "I've always felt at home during these 10 years. I couldn't ask for more. They have been 10 unforgettable years.

IPL Final, KKR vs SRH: Pat Cummins looks to emulate MS Dhoni with prized trophy double

New Delhi. Pat Cummins, the serial trophy-hunter, is back in the spotlight as the SunRisers captain has an opportunity to add another glittery silverware to his decorated trophy cabinet. It's the biggest domestic T20 title that is up for grabs when the SunRisers take on the Knight Riders in the IPL 2024 final in Chennai on Sunday, May 26.

On Sunday, Cummins can become only the second captain after MS Dhoni to complete the World Cup-IPL double. MS Dhoni went on to win the IPL trophy with the Super Kings, months after leading India to their historic ODI World Cup triumph in 2011. In fact, Dhoni is the only captain so far in cricket history to have won the IPL and the ODI World Cup. Social media is abuzz about Pat Cummins standing to the left of the trophy during the mandatory pre-final photoshoot. During the World Test Championship final in London and the ODI World Cup final in Ahmedabad last year, Cummins stood to the left of the trophy and walked away with the coveted prize on both occasions. Call it the luck factor, or a lazy way to define someone's success, Cummins's serial winning ability has left the world in awe. In 12 months, Cummins

has led Australia to win the World Test Championship, and the ODI World Cup and retain the Ashes Urn in England. Not many modern-day captains have had such success. Cummins's elite pack will be complete if he leads the SunRisers to glory on Sunday. Having started his career as a prodigiously talented and express fast bowler, Cummins had to overcome injury setbacks early in his journey. The setbacks did not deter him as he went on to become one of the finest fast bowlers of this era. The 31-year-old has become that rare bowling captain with an incredible success rate. He has changed the fortunes of the Australian Test side since taking over from Tim Paine, who had an unceremonious exit. Australia weren't the favourites at the ODI World Cup last year, but they stunned in-form India to win the big trophy, thereby ending the 12-year-long streak of home teams winning the 50-over top prize. When SunRisers spent a record sum of Rs 20.50 crore, eyebrows were raised as the Australian superstar was an unproven commodity in the IPL despite his incredible success at the international level. In fact, Cummins never led a T20 team at the senior level in his career before



he was named as SunRisers captain.

SRH TURNAROUND UNDER CUMMINS
However, the punt from the SRH management seems to have worked wonders. Cummins, along with head coach Daniel Vettori, seem to have unlocked the incredible potential in the squad. SRH finished with the wooden spoon in 2023, not because of lack of talent, but lack of focus and direction. That's exactly what Cummins has been able to provide to the SunRisers side in 2024. With the likes of some of the hardest hitters of the cricket ball in the team - Travis Head, an in-form Abhishek Sharma, Heinrich Klaasen, and Aiden Markram - SRH shifted from a bowler-dependent team to a batting powerhouse in 2024. SRH,

along with KKR, have led the batting revolution in 2024 - a season which has seen the most number of 250-plus scores in the tournament's history - 8. "I think at the start of the season you map out the style that you want to play to give yourself the best chance to win. Obviously, along the way you're allowed to adapt and maybe change the personnel," Cummins said on the eve of the IPL final. "But we were

pretty strong with how we wanted to play - super-aggressive - and in a 14 game-season, you're not going to win every single game, but we think if we play that way, you're going to win most of them," he said. SunRisers will meet the best team in the tournament in the final. Despite their success, SRH have not been able to beat KKR so far, having lost to them by the barest of margins in a run-fest in Kolkata and then in the Qualifier 1 in Ahmedabad.

Can Cummins repeat what he and his team achieved on November 19, 2023 - beat the best team of the tournament? Well, Australian captains have had success in the past with Hyderabad-based IPL teams. It was Adam Gilchrist in 2009.

Jacks, Salt would have been better off in IPL: Vaughan's dig at Pakistan

New Delhi. Former England cricketer Michael Vaughan has taken a sly dig at Pakistan after their meek display in the first T20I against Jos Buttler's side. England had called back all of their players from the Indian Premier League for their T20 World Cup preparation, which included the crucial T20I series against Babar Azam's Pakistan.

After Pakistan lost the second match at Edgbaston on Saturday by 23 runs, Vaughan said that some of the players might have been better off in the IPL 2024. Speaking at the Club Praire podcast, Vaughan felt that England missed a trick by not letting some of their players play in the IPL 2024. "I think you're going to miss the trick by sending all their players home. You know, I think Will Jacks, Phil Salt, Josh Butler, in particular, playing in the IPL in the eliminators, pressure, crowd, expectation. I would argue that playing here is better



preparation than playing a T20 game against Pakistan," Vaughan said in the podcast. Vaughan said that some of the England batters like Phil Salt and Will Jacks could have been better prepared in the high-pressure IPL rather than playing Pakistan at home. England will go into the tournament as the defending champions. The team did

not have a good outing in the ODI World Cup 2023 and will be desperate to change their fortunes this time around. "I'm all for international cricket, but now and again, this tournament in particular, it's so exposed to pressure. These players are under a huge amount of pressure from fans, owners, and social media. It's massive. I just felt particularly those two, and Butler, probably not as much, but I still think he could have stayed here," Vaughan said. "But Will

Jacks and Phil Salt, I think they'd have been better prepared staying here playing in the IPL, then going back to head and let's play a game," Vaughan concluded the former captain. England play a total of 4 T20Is vs Pakistan. The first match of the series was abandoned due to rain.

Reunion of Champion Knights': Gautam Gambhir catches up with Manvinder Bisla at Chepauk

NEW DELHI. Former KKR captain and current mentor Gautam Gambhir was seen catching up with his old teammate Manvinder Bisla ahead of the Indian Premier League 2024 final. KKR will be locking horns with SRH in the final on Sunday, May 26 at the MA Chidambaram Stadium in Chennai.

Ahead of the big game, Gambhir was seen catching up with Bisla, who played a major role in Kolkata's first IPL victory way back in 2012. Notably, The Haryana-born cricketer played a match-winning innings of 89 (48) with the help of eight fours and five sixes to help KKR chase down 191 and clinch their first IPL trophy in Chennai. Hence, the duo was seen catching up after a long time reminiscing their memories at the venue. KKR's X handle shared the image of their catchup with the caption, "The reunion of our champion Knights." During the IPL 2012 final, KKR faced an uphill task of chasing down a massive score of 191 against the defending

champions CSK in their own den. The situation got tense after captain Gautam Gambhir returned to the pavilion in the very first over itself. However, Bisla made sure to keep his team's current run rate in check with his magnificent knock.



The right-handed batter got involved in a crucial 136-run stand off 82 balls with Jacques Kallis (69 off 49) and brought KKR into ascendency. The game went down the wire with Kolkata needing nine runs to win

off the final over. However, Manoj Tiwary held his nerve against Dwayne Bravo and guided his team home with back-to-back boundaries.

KKR one step away from third IPL title

As a result, KKR won the match by five wickets and two balls remaining as they clinched their first IPL trophy. Two years later, the Kolkata-based franchise added second trophy to their cabinet under the leadership of Gambhir by emerging victorious in the IPL 2014. Ten years after their second triumph, KKR once again find themselves on the verge of lifting their third trophy as they make their fourth IPL final appearance. Under the mentorship of their former captain, Kolkata have made a massive improvement from their seventh-placed finish last season and are just one step away from attaining glory. The two-time champions will be eager to replicate their performance in the 2012 final at the same venue and take down SRH in the summit clash.

Clash of Mentality Monsters: Gautam Gambhir, Pat Cummins face off in IPL Final showdown

Chennai. It's time for the ultimate showdown! The Indian Premier League (IPL) 2024 final between the SunRisers and the Knight Riders on Super Sunday has all the ingredients to be a jaw-dropping affair. Although the legendary MS Dhoni and the Super Kings aren't a part of the IPL anymore, the MA Chidambaram Stadium in Chennai is expected to be buzzing with cheers for KKR and SRH. It goes without saying that they have been the standout teams in the tournament by quite some distance. And it does not spring a surprise that the SunRisers and the Knight Riders are in the final, especially because of the presence of two individuals, who have thrived under pressure over the years in crunch matches - Gautam Gambhir and Pat Cummins.

Gambhir brings back fortunes for KKR.

Gambhir and knockout matches share a romantic relationship and their bonding has never weakened. The architect of India's World Cup wins in 2007 and 2011, Gambhir knows how to up his game in big matches. He did not win the Player of the Match awards in the finals at the Wanderers and Mumbai, but that does not undermine the importance of the knocks.

Gambhir brought the legacy to KKR after he led them to victory in 2012 and 2014. Before Gambhir joined them, the Knight Riders did not have an identity, having not qualified for the playoffs even once. From 2011 to 2017, Kolkata made the playoffs 5 times. When Gambhir was not there with them for 6 seasons, they tried multiple captains, but none of them could win the title for them.

When Gambhir returned to KKR, this time as a mentor, fans could see a glimmer of hope after a couple of lacklustre seasons where they failed to go through to the playoffs. Albeit not as a player, Gambhir was expected to make an impact and bring a change to the team management and he hasn't let the Knight Riders down by any means. There is now a realistic chance for him to win the IPL both as a player and mentor.

Cummins with the Midas Touch

Cummins, on the other hand, is going through a purple patch. Master of his own destiny, Cummins has flourished regardless of the teams he has played for. The SunRisers had faced flak for naming him as their skipper for the 2024 IPL edition despite him not captaining a single T20 team earlier at any level. But he has made captaincy look like child's play. He has made his own luck, so much so that someday, he may magically even pick up 5-wicket hauls as a left-arm spinner or score a hat-trick in a FIFA World Cup match. After winning the World Test Championship and ODI World Cup in the last 12 months has sky-rocketed his confidence.

Shreyas Iyer hilariously charges Pat Cummins Rs 20 crore for autorickshaw ride

KKR captain Shreyas Iyer and SRH captain Pat Cummins were seen being involved in a hilarious banter ahead of the all-important Indian Premier League 2024 final.

NEW DELHI. Ahead of the all-important Indian Premier League 2024 final between KKR and SRH, two captains Shreyas Iyer and Pat Cummins were seen in a jolly good mood as the duo got involved in a hilarious banter. Notably, KKR and SRH will take on each other in the final on Sunday, May 26 at the MA Chidambaram Stadium in Chennai. Ahead of the big game, the two captains did a mandatory photoshoot with the IPL trophy at Chepauk beach. The duo

exhibited their unfiltered self in a fun video released by the IPL where they pulled each other's legs. The video captures fun banter between the two captains as Iyer joked about riding an autorickshaw in his early days and hilariously charged the SRH skipper INR 20 crore for a ride. During their conversation, Iyer also asked Cummins about his IPL triumph in his debut season playing for KKR in 2014. Notably, Cummins was a part of KKR's squad during their second IPL triumph under the leadership of Gautam Gambhir. However, the right-arm seamer only featured in one game where he also picked a wicket. The towering seamer was a part of KKR for the 2015 season as well and further returned to the franchise in 2020 after playing for DD (now DD) in 2017. Captain



Cummins continuing his Midas touch. However, he was bought by SRH in the mini auction ahead of the ongoing season for a whopping INR 20.50 crore and immediately took up the captaincy of the side. Despite having no experience of leading a T20 team before, the 31-year-old

has continued his 'Midas Touch' and led SRH to their first IPL final after six years. Captain Cummins has been the second-highest wicket-taker for his team with 17 scalps to his name in the ongoing season and played a few quick cameos with the bat as well. On the other hand, Shreyas has also done a remarkable job after returning to his side following his last season's absence due to a back injury. The 29-year-old has played a pivotal role in his team's victories in the season with 345 runs to his name from 13 innings at an average of 38.33 and a strike rate of 146.18. Iyer will be eager to help his team win their third IPL title as they look to replicate their success of the IPL 2012 final in Chennai.



Soon-to-be Parents

Amala Paul

And Jagat Desai's Adorable Clip Will Make Your Day

Amala Paul, known for her role in the film Mynaa, is a South actress who appears mostly in Tamil, Telugu, and Malayalam films. She made her debut in the Malayalam film Neelathamara (2009). She played a minor supporting role in the film. She has worked with multiple stars from the industry. She was seen in the film Thalaivaa with actor Thalapathy Vijay; Deiva Thirumalai with Vikram; and Unemployed Graduate with Dhanush. She also appeared in Pasanga 2, opposite Suriya. Some of her famous movies are Pasanga 2, Bhaskar Oru Rascal, and Christopher. Amala Paul's husband, Jagat Desai, recently shared a video on Instagram that is going viral. Her baby bump is clearly visible in the video. In the clip, she is seen talking to her husband and hitting him playfully. Amala is seen wearing a yellow printed dress. Her jewellery looks simple, which adds elegance to her looks. Jagat Desai was seen wearing a white T-shirt and a silver chain. She added a Harry Styles song called As It Was to the video.

In the comment section of the video, her fans have commented on their wishes for the couple. A fan wrote, "First ever time I saw Amala Paul in chubby", when another Instagram user wrote, "Tom and Jerry couples". Another one wrote, "Soo adorable and sweet."

Amala was previously married to director L Vijay. They got married in 2014. Their relationship did not last the test of time. They got mutually divorced in 2017. After her divorce, Amala became busy doing movies. She led a single life until she met her current Jagat Desai. Amala Paul has also appeared on television. She was seen in Kudi Yedamaithe, Ranjish Hi Sahi, Raju Vootla Party, and Victim: Who is Next?. She has received multiple awards through her acting career till now. Edison Awards in 2011, 1st South Indian International Movie Awards in 2012, Times of India Most Desirable Married Women of Kollywood in 2015, and Tamil Cinema Journalist Dailies Association Awards in 2019.



Kartik Aaryan Breaks His No-Sugar Policy After 2 Years. Courtesy: Suniel Shetty And Madhuri Dixit



Kartik Aaryan is currently on a promotional spree for his much-awaited project Chandu Champion. Set to hit theatres on June 14th, the film required the actor to undergo a significant body transformation for his lead role. Kartik Aaryan's dedication was evident as he maintained a strict no-sugar diet for the past two years. However, during his appearance on the Colors reality show Dance Deewane, Kartik indulged in a delicious sweet Rasgulla, all thanks to Suniel Shetty and Madhuri Dixit. In a promo released by the makers, Kartik Aaryan can be seen attending the finale episode of the dance reality show. Upon his arrival on the show, he receives a warm welcome from the Hum Aapke Hain Koun actress who is one of the judges in the show. Madhuri, while welcoming the Bhoor Bhulaiyaa 2 actor, says, "You have come to the grand finale party of the family today our champion is to be declared here. And Chandu Champion, you have also come; the party is going to be superhit today." Proceeding further, Suniel Shetty, another judge on the show, hails the actor for his dedication and sincerity while filming for his upcoming release. Showering praises on Kartik, the Hera Pheri actor says, "He has been through everything. Body transformation is done by many, but you have done it with dedication. I think you must not have eaten sweets since a few years."

The kind words of Shetty prompted the Satyaprem Ki Katha actor to unveil that he considered sugar "poison" for him and has not consumed the same for at least two years. Following his response, Shetty urged him to break his no-sugar policy on Dance Deewane 4. In the end, we can see Madhuri Dixit lovingly feeding him a Rasgulla while also extending wishes for Chandu Champion. Chandu Champion, helmed by Kabir Khan, is inspired by the life of India's first Paralympic gold medalist, Murlikant Petkar. Earlier, the makers unveiled the trailer of the film. Packed with intensified action sequences, emotional depth and a heartwrenching war scene, the trailer struck a chord with the audience, creating hype ahead of the film's release.

Dirty Fellow Review: Internet Calls It An Action-packed Mafia Drama With Intriguing Twists



The new Telugu film Dirty Fellow, starring Shanti Chandra, revolves around a soldier who serves in the Indian Navy. The teaser and trailer have received a good response from the audience. So far, good promotions have created hype around Dirty Fellow. The film was released yesterday, May 24. JP (Nagineedu) and Shankar Narayana (Satya Prakash) are two mafia dons and close friends. One fine day, Satya Prakash hatches a plan to eliminate JP so that he can become the undisputed mafia don. He arranges things in such a way that the cops are after JP but in a tragic turn of events, Shankar Narayana's son gets killed. Shakar Narayana is upset by this and declares war on JP, stating that he will kill his son Satru (Santi Chandra) at any cost.

As time passes, Shanti Chandra has plans to deal with Shankar Naraya and his gang. How this all unfolds is the main story of the film. Dirty Fellow has been directed by Adari Murthy Sai and he sets a good tone right from the start. He starts the film with the character of Dirty Fellow and slowly unleashes the mafia war. Once this is done, the character of Siddhu is introduced, which piques the interest in the story.

The promos may look a little odd, but once you accept the new faces, things start looking pretty good for the viewer. The interest is piqued when the main villain comes to know that Siddhu and Dirty Fellow are the same person, and they have the villain and his gang in their hands. The film has a decent glamour, and the makers have used it in a very sensible way.

The first half has action and romance but is boring when it comes to emotions. The makers should have handled this aspect a little better.

Janhvi Kapoor

Reveals There Is A 'Celebrity Ration Card', Paparazzi Get Paid Per Photo Of Star

Janhvi Kapoor recently opened up about the paparazzi culture in tinsel town. In a new interview while promoting her film Mr. and Mrs. Mahi, the actress stated that the paparazzi get paid based on the photos they click. In an interview with the Lallantop, Janhvi shared that there is a 'celebrity ration card'. She added, "Jaise abhi film ka promotion chalra hai toh, unhe bulaya gaya tha airport. Meri tasveer khichne. Lekin jab film ki promotion nahi hori hai, jab shoot mein nahi jaari hoon, jab gayab hona chahti hoon, tab woh, agar woh extra effort longhe, aur aisa kahi baar hua hai woh gaadi follow karte hai, kyunki har picture ka, har image ka unhe paise milte hai. Har celebrity ka ek ration card hota hai. Inki picture itne mein bikti hai. Agar aapka price ho, toh apuch jaate hain, gaadi follow kar lete hai. Agar price itna high nahi hai, toh bulaya jaata hai."

The Roohi actress was asked about celebrities who call the media personnel to spot them and then act surprised. The actress shared that it varies from celeb to celeb. She added that when she is promoting a film, the paps are invited. She further commented that often paps chase the car of a celebrity, as their picture has a certain value.

In the same interview, the Mili actress mentioned that for Mr and Mrs Mahi's promotions, she has taken 25-30 flights, but the media has been able to spot her just 5-6 times only. She further disclosed that she has requested the paps to not

click her outside the gym as she does not want to be snapped in "tight" gym clothes. She said, "Main nahi chahti hoon ke woh log mujhe gym ke tight tight kapdo mein dekhne. Aur jab woh photo aate baahar to bolte the ke jaan boojh kar ye tight kapde pehan kar dikhna chah rahi hai. To usse acha mat kheencho, main to nahi bulati wahaan gym ke baahar. (I don't want them to snap in tight gym clothes. When those pictures come out, they say that she loves to get herself clicked in tight-fitted clothes. So, they shouldn't click me. I did not ask them to come outside my gym). She also added that she requested them politely and now they do not come. On the work front, Janhvi Kapoor will be sharing the screen with Rajkumar Rao for Mr and Mrs Mahi which is slated to hit the theatres on May 31. She is also gearing up for her Telugu debut opposite Jr NTR in Devara.

