













Opportunity beckons as oil prices soften

AS the new government prepares for its first Budget, it will have an unexpected bonus of global oil markets remaining bearish. It was earlier expected that geopolitical tensions and supply cuts imposed by OPEC (Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries) Plus would lead to prices firming up, but this has fortunately not happened.

The outlook on the oil front had in April been rather dismal. At the time, crude prices had shot up to \$90 per barrel for the benchmark Brent crude after having been below \$80 since January. The spike occurred due to an escalation of the West Asia crisis, with Iran launching strikes against Israel. Prospects looked dim then for any improvement in view of deepening geopolitical tensions as well as the determination of OPEC Plus to expand production cuts.

The result is that oil prices are now in the range of \$80-83 per barrel, much lower than earlier anticipated for this year. This is a far cry from last year's prediction by Goldman Sachs that crude would touch \$100 by the end of 2024. Current price trends are at variance with earlier forecasts.

For a country like India, this is a huge relief as it imports over 85 per cent of its fuel requirements. The moderation in world prices will ensure that retail prices of products like petrol, diesel and liquefied petroleum gas are contained at existing levels.

It also must be recognised that petroleum products, being out of the ambit of the Goods and Services Tax (GST), are viewed as the perennial cash cows to shore up state government revenue. The Karnataka government, for instance, has just hiked retail rates of petroleum products, evidently in a bid to boost revenue.

Public policy should address these constraints for the sake of vibrant, sustainable and inclusive development. PUNJAB'S regression in economic development has continued unabated over the past four decades.

The slow-growing economy has serious consequences, such as the fall in the state's ranking in terms of per capita income, high unemployment rate, mass migration, degradation of environmental indicators, agrarian distress and rural suicide. The revival of Punjab's economy has been constrained by several interrelated factors. If the remedial measures are implemented, Punjab can again provide exemplary economic leadership.

The first constraint is the production structure. Compared with other performing states of India and the newly industrialising East Asian countries, Punjab's economy is predominantly agricultural both in terms of contribution to the State Domestic Product (SDP) and the share of the workforce deriving its livelihood from farming.

Beware of China's attempt to assume leadership of Asia-Pacific

For India, the border issue is not just a small part of bilateral military relations. It is the issue that must be resolved for a mutually stable neighbourhood.

AMID concerns over the emergence of a 'rules-broken' international order, replacing the 'taken for granted, insufficiently protected and barely modernised rules-based order', the 21st Shangri-La Dialogue, Asia's premier defence summit, was held in Singapore from May 31 to June 2.

The most-watched participants this year included Philippines President Ferdinand Marcos Jr, who delivered the keynote address, Ukraine President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, US Secretary of Defence Lloyd Austin and the new Defence Minister of China, Admiral Dong Jun, who was appointed in December last year.

Despite the backdrop of a sombre and bleak global and regional security environment, the messaging by the Chinese Defence Minister and his accompanying delegation of Generals was far from 'reassuring'. The glaring contrast between the words and deeds of China was evidenced best by the stark difference between the 'prepared' text of the speech of Admiral Dong and his answers to the questions raised (though most were left unanswered).

The most significant observation was that China seemed to have unilaterally usurped the mantle of leadership of Asia-Pacific, articulating its own concerns, guided as the voice of the region.

The threat of use of force for the capture of Taiwan was not even attempted to be disguised. The Dragon's belligerent actions in the South China Sea, particularly against the Philippines, were sought to be justified by dubbing all facts, other than the Chinese 'facts', as 'a fabricated and false narrative'.

THE Congress' encouraging performance in the recent Lok Sabha elections has prompted former party president Rahul Gandhi to retain the Raebareli Lok Sabha seat in Uttar Pradesh and vacate the one in Wayanad, Kerala.

It is obvious that the Congress wants to build on the gains

to displace the US in the Indo-Pacific and create an uncontested, unipolar, Sino-centric Asia and disregard for the centrality of ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) were more than evident.

The harshest words, though, were reserved for Taiwan, termed the 'core of China's core interests'. Taiwanese President Lai Ching-te, who took over in May, is viewed by China as a 'separatist'. Referring to his statements as a 'betrayal of China and their ancestors', Admiral Dong warned: "They will be nailed to the pillar of shame in history."



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In a severe criticism of the July 2016 award of the Permanent Court of Arbitration in favour of the Philippines, Admiral Dong accused the country of enforcing the 'illegal arbitration award'. He described it as "blackmailing others (China) under the guise of international law".

The questions fielded by Admiral Dong's delegation members seemed an extension of the predetermined script. A Major General confronted President Marcos,

Priyanka's poll debut

Congress takes right call to field her from Wayanad



defeat in 2019. It is obvious that the Congress wants to build on the gains

stating that the Philippines' behaviour in recent times risks ruining the long-earned, long-lasting regional peace and that the Philippines seems to be disregarding the other party's (China's) comfort level.

Other references to China's disruptive behaviour included Zelenskyy's assertions that Beijing was attempting to sabotage the global peace summit in Switzerland by pressuring countries not to attend.

The unusually belligerent behaviour of the Chinese delegation at the Shangri-La Dialogue does raise concerns over the Dragon's role in the Indo-Pacific, particularly for its neighbours.

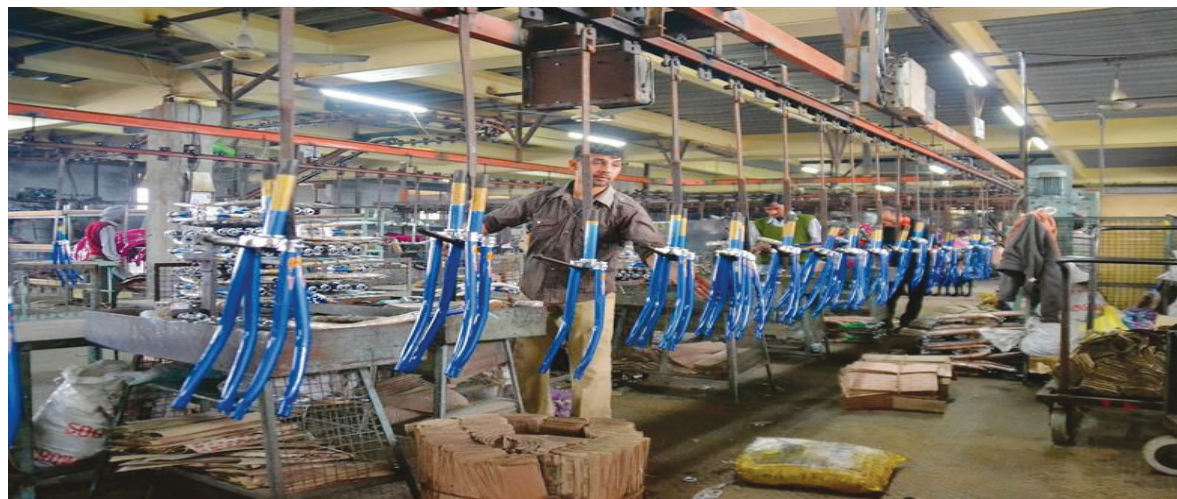
centric unipolar Asia and undermining the centrality of ASEAN; the propensity to create fabricated historical narratives and discredit established international institutions like the Permanent Court of Arbitration (established in 1899); and the willingness to use the military for furthering its perceived national interests.

made in UP and actively assist the Akhilesh Yadav-led SP in dislodging the ruling BJP in the 2027 Assembly elections.

Having made major inroads into the South in recent years, the Congress has chosen a presumably easy seat for Priyanka. The Congress-led United Democratic Front swept the Lok Sabha polls in Kerala, winning 18 of the 20 seats.

Five constraints on revival of Punjab's economy

Public policy should address these constraints for the sake of vibrant, sustainable and inclusive development.



enabling environment. The will of the political leadership can overcome this constraint.

The second major constraint is the dysfunctionality of the fiscal policy. It was in the mid-1980s that the revenue-surplus state turned revenue-deficit for the first time. It was the peak period of turmoil in Punjab when most of the organisations and institutions turned non-functional, including the revenue collection machinery.

both restrictive fiscal rules for the state government and dynamic taxes in the hand of the Centre, the former has a limited capacity to raise resources for meeting the needs of development finance.

The third significant constraint is the result of non-economic factors, such as the use of religion for political purposes and the identity issues that disturb the peace that is desirable for long-term private investment in economic activities.

in the state. The low gross fixed capital investment of 14 per cent of the GSDP in 2023 sums up the state of affairs.

The fourth major constraining factor is the deficiency of human capital. It is counter-intuitive to the historical fact that Punjabis possess great entrepreneurial and leadership skills. Over the past four decades, both educational and health organisations suffered because of a lack of public investment.

Last but not least is the dysfunctionality of development and the lack of decentralisation of developmental institutions. The developmental institutional framework is controlled by vested interests — a gridlock of police-bureaucracy-political elites.







# India Reports Over 40,000 Suspected Heatstroke Cases This Summer

**India heatwave death toll: Temperatures in north India have soared to almost 50 degrees Celsius in one of the longest heatwave spells recorded.**

**New Delhi/Guwahati:** India recorded more than 40,000 suspected heatstroke cases this summer as a prolonged heatwave killed more than 100 people across the country, while parts of its northeast grappled with floods from heavy rain, authorities said.

Billions across Asia are grappling with extreme heat this summer in a trend scientists say has been worsened by human-driven climate change, with temperatures in north India soaring to almost 50 degrees Celsius (122 degrees Fahrenheit) in one of the longest heatwave spells recorded. Birds fell from the skies due to extreme heat and hospitals reported an inflow of heat-affected patients as both day and night time temperatures peaked in recent weeks since the start of summer in March.

The health ministry ordered federal and state institutions to ensure "immediate attention" to patients, while hospitals in the capital Delhi, which is also facing a water shortage, were directed make more beds available. A health ministry official said there were more



than 40,000 suspected heatstroke cases and at least 110 confirmed deaths between March 1 and June 18, when northwest and eastern India recorded twice the usual number of heatwave days. The weather office has forecast above normal temperatures for this month too, as authorities say Indian cities

have become "heat traps" due to unbalanced growth.

"During the ongoing heatwave, most bird rescue calls that we receive are due to birds falling from the skies," said Kartick Satyanarayan, co-founder and CEO of non-profit Wildlife SOS. "In the past two weeks,

Wildlife SOS has been receiving more than 35-40 rescue calls daily, in and around Delhi-National Capital Region. Most of the calls include bird rescue requests. "Separately, floods and landslides triggered by incessant rain in the northeastern state of Assam killed at least six people on Tuesday night, officials said. "A landslide buried a woman and her three daughters alive," a state disaster management official, Siju Das, said by telephone.

"Their house was on a slope, and they died on the spot around midnight," he said, adding that the bodies were retrieved after a three-hour search operation by rescuers.

"A three-year-old was killed too." In Assam, more than 160,000 people were affected, with waters surpassing the danger level in the Kopili, one of the largest tributaries of the Brahmaputra, which ranks among India's biggest rivers. More than 30 people in the state have died since the end of May in floods and landslides brought by heavy rain, officials said.

## I Am Not Secure with Current Kolkata Police Contingent in Raj Bhavan: Bengal Gov Bose

**New Delhi:** West Bengal Governor CV Ananda Bose on Thursday said that he was apprehending a threat to his security because of the presence of the current contingent of Kolkata Police posted at Raj Bhavan here.

His statement came days after he ordered the police personnel to vacate the Raj Bhavan premises. They, however, are still on duty in the Governor House. "I have reasons to believe that the presence of the current officer-in-charge and his team is a threat to my personal security," Bose told PTL. "I have informed Bengal CM Mamata Banerjee that I am insecure with Kolkata Police in Raj Bhavan, but there was no action," he said. Sources in the Governor House said Bose has complained to the state government that there has been constant snooping by the police personnel posted in Raj Bhavan and he could sense that they were doing it on the insistence of "influencers" from outside.

"The policemen posted here have been snooping on my movements as well as many of my officers. Their acts are with the tacit support of their political masters in government. This is violative of the Constitution," Bose said. The governor has brought the matter to the notice of Banerjee from time to time but no action has been taken by her. The chief minister also holds the Home portfolio.

"None of these can happen without the knowledge of the highest authorities in the police department which is under the Home department," he asserted.

Bose claimed he had information about the "misdeeds" of the police contingent posted in Raj Bhavan, under the current officer-in-charge.

## Centre Can't Be Mere Spectator, Should Take Lead To Resolve Quota Issue: Sharad Pawar

**Pune:** NCP (SP) chief Sharad Pawar on Thursday said the Centre cannot be a mere spectator and it should take lead to resolve matters pertaining to the quota demand by the Maratha community and Other Backward Classes (OBCs). Asked about the increasing Maratha-OBC conflict over the reservation issue in Maharashtra, Mr Pawar said there is only one solution that the Centre should take the lead to resolve it and there is a need for amendments in law and the state and Centre's policies. The former Union minister was speaking to reporters at Baramati in Maharashtra's Pune district.

In February this year, the Maharashtra legislature unanimously passed a bill granting a separate 10 per cent reservation in education and jobs to the Maratha community under a separate category. However, the community has been demanding quota under the OBC grouping.

Activist Manoj Jarange has been demanding implementation of the draft notification that recognises Kunbis as "sage soyare" (blood relatives) of Maratha community members and also seeking a law to identify Kunbis as Marathas.

Kunbi, an agrarian group, falls under the OBC category, and Jarange has been demanding that Kunbi certificates be issued to all Marathas, thus making them eligible for quota in government jobs and education. Amid the Maratha reservation demand, two OBC activists have been sitting on a fast in Jalna district, seeking an assurance from the government that the existing Other Backward Classes quota will not be disturbed.

Mr Pawar said, "A change in the policy of the state and centre governments will have to be made." "The governments, specially the Centre, should take the lead in addressing demands of both the communities and ensure the agitation does not cross a limit and that social tension should not take place. The governments cannot be a mere spectator on the issue," he said.

## Airlines, Airports Told To Increase Women Staff To 25% Of Workforce

**New Delhi:** Civil aviation regulator, Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA), has issued an advisory to airports and airlines to increase the number of women employees in their organisations to ensure more gender equality in the aviation sector. "With this move, the DGCA aims to increase the number of women in various positions to a desirable representation of 25 per cent by 2025 within the aviation industry in India," the circular states. The circular, titled "Gender Equality in Civil Aviation Sector", has been issued keeping in mind the principle of gender equality that is enshrined in the Constitution of India and the International Civil Aviation Organisation's (ICAO) vision for promoting equal opportunities in the aviation sector.



The regulator suggested that the airports and airlines should publish the vacant positions on various forums, explicitly encouraging applications from female candidates and drafting positions with precise information on flexible working conditions in their organisations. "The stakeholders are advised to promote enhanced representation of women in the aviation workforce, introduce leadership and mentorship programs for women in the organisation,

address the issue of stereotypes and gender bias and promote a better work-life balance for women employees," the circular states. It has also directed the stakeholders to improve their policies and practices to ensure gender equality in the workplace. Airlines and Airports have been asked to adopt a zero-tolerance policy towards sexual harassment and formulate HR policies to achieve this goal. They have also been asked to diversify the work profiles of women employees, highlighting women role models and other facilitative steps that promote a gender-inclusive work culture. The organisations should also develop suitable programmes to hire women back if they have taken a break due to parenting needs "or other attendant life cycle issues".

## No Relief For Arvind Kejriwal, Delhi Court Reserves Order On Bail Plea In Liquor Policy Scam Case

**New Delhi:** A Delhi court on Thursday reserved its order on the bail plea of Delhi Chief Minister and Aam Aadmi Party's (AAP) national convenor Arvind Kejriwal in connection with the money laundering case related to the now-scrapped excise policy. Appearing on behalf of the ED, ASG Raju said that the central agency has documentary evidence showing that part of the alleged proceeds of crime was used to cover the cost of Kejriwal's stay at the Grand Hyatt Hotel in Goa during the 2022 state elections. This comes a day after a Delhi court extended Kejriwal's custody till July 3. The ED today said its evidence shows that Rs 1.5 lakh was paid in installments of Rs 50,000 each by Charanpreet Singh to settle the hotel



and banquet charges for Kejriwal's stay. The ED alleged that Charanpreet, who reportedly managed AAP's Goa poll funds, received around Rs 45 crore in cash from various "angadiyas" (hawala operators) and was involved in handling cash for the AAP's Goa election campaign. The ED also said it has witness

statements, including from an individual named Sagar Patel, corroborating the cash payments made to Charanpreet, Prince Kumar and Rajiv Mondkar for the AAP's Goa election expenses. The agency argued that Kejriwal's refusal to provide the password to his phone should lead to an adverse inference against him, which is a ground for denying bail even under ordinary bail law. ASG Raju on Wednesday informed the court that the cost of the Delhi chief minister's stay was covered partly in cash and partly by the admin Department of GNCTD. "It was earlier hushed up but we then discovered that the payment was in cash and the same came through hawala. Charanpreet arranged," he said.

## Delhi Burger King Murder May Be Revenge Killing, Mystery Woman Lured Victim

**Delhi Burger King murder: As many as 38 bullets of 3 different makes were fired at Aman Joon inside Burger King outlet at Rajouri Garden Tuesday night**

**New Delhi:** The chilling murder of a 26-year-old man in a shooting spree at a Burger King outlet in west Delhi may have been revenge for a 2020 murder in Haryana, according to reports. Police

suspect gang rivalry led to the shocking murder that has raised questions on the law and order situation in the capital. Latest and Breaking News on As many as 38 bullets of three different makes were fired at Aman Joon inside the fast food outlet at Rajouri Garden in west Delhi Tuesday night, the FIR says. The different bullets suggest that more than two weapons were used by the two shooters. Aman's body was found behind the billing counter, indicating that he tried to flee when the killers opened fire. The killers, the Burger King staff have said, were in the 25-30 years age group.

### The Mystery Woman

The staff have said Aman came to the eatery to meet a woman. She left the spot soon after the attack, possibly with the dead man's phone. The woman, police have found, faces multiple cases in Haryana and had first come to Delhi to prepare for competitive exams and stayed at Mukherjee Nagar. Police suspect that



she was part of the trap set up to lure Aman to the Burger King store. CCTV footage has shown that the woman took a train from GTB Nagar Metro Station to reach Rajouri Garden and after the murder, she took the metro from Rajouri Garden to Shakurpur Metro Station, PTI has reported.

### The Gangster in Portugal

Fugitive gangster Himanshu Bhu, suspected to be in Portugal now, has claimed responsibility for the murder in a social media post and a police officer told PTI that police suspect the same. Himanshu Bhu has said in the post that

## Aviation Watchdog Revises Regulations To Boost Seaplane Operations

**New Delhi:** In a major leap towards sustainable and safe seaplane operations, the civil aviation regulator, DGCA, has revamped its regulatory provisions. Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) informed that the pivotal amendments will streamline infrastructure procedures, pilot training requirements, and regulatory compliances, paving the way for seaplane services to reach remote, inaccessible areas. "Initially established in 2008, the regulatory framework for seaplane operations was long due for a review. According to a DGCA Working Group recommending rationalization and revision of the said regulatory framework, revised regulations (CAR Section 3 Series C Part IX and CAR Section 7 Series B Part XVI) have been promulgated," an official statement said.

The revised regulations incorporate easier training requirements and simplified approval processes for



undertaking seaplane operations. Pilots with a Commercial Pilot License (CPL) can now qualify as seaplane-rated pilots by undertaking training at any ICAO-recognized training organisation globally. Additionally, new training opportunities for support roles are set to enhance employment potential at seaplane hubs nationwide.

The Ministry of Civil Aviation (MoCA) spearheaded the initiative to promote the seaplane ecosystem, providing guidance and engaging with stakeholders, including DGCA, State Governments, the Airports Authority of India (AAI), Airlines, and Aircraft Manufacturers. These collaborative efforts have ensured that the new regulations address key stakeholder concerns and pave the way for growth in this niche area. With the revised regulatory provisions, seaplane operators can utilize the streamlined procedures and optimized infrastructure requirements, to further extend seaplane services across the country and reach the most remote parts of the country, fostering inclusive and sustainable development. The simplified water aerodrome requirements would also aid in economical and efficient operations while maintaining essential safety standards.

Aman was involved in the murder of "our brother" Shakti Dada and "this was revenge". Warning the others involved, he said their "turn will come soon". Himanshu Bhu, whose gang operates across Delhi and Haryana, is notorious for extortion, the police officer said. Bhu, an associate of jailed gangster Neeraj Bawana, fled the country in 2022.

### Ahajjar Murder

Neeraj Bawana's cousin Shakti Singh was shot dead in Haryana's Ahajjar in October 2020. A police officer told PTI that Joon is believed to have tipped off rival gangster Ashok Pradhan about Shakti Singh. Himanshu Bhu, the officer said, wanted to get Joon outside his village so that he can be bumped off and the Burger King post was made. The social media post by Bhu was also mentioned, "14 ke badle 40 goli di hain ginti kar lo" (40 bullets in return of 14, count them)". The authenticity of the social media post is being verified, police said.

## NEWS BOX

## Louisiana mandates displaying Ten Commandments in public school classrooms

**Louisian** . Louisiana has become the first state to require that the Ten Commandments be displayed in every public school classroom, the latest move from a GOP-dominated Legislature pushing a conservative agenda under a new governor. The legislation that Republican Gov. Jeff Landry signed into law on Wednesday requires a poster-sized display of the Ten Commandments in "large, easily readable font" in all public classrooms, from kindergarten to state-funded universities. Opponents questioned the law's constitutionality and vowed to challenge it in court. Proponents said the measure is not solely religious, but that it has historical significance. In the language of the law, the Ten Commandments are "foundational documents of our state and national government." The posters, which will be paired with a four-paragraph "context statement" describing how the Ten Commandments "were a prominent part of American public education for almost three centuries," must be in place in classrooms by the start of 2025.

Under the law, state funds will not be used to implement the mandate. The posters would be paid for through donations. The law also "authorises" but does not require the display of other items in K-12 public schools, including: The Mayflower Compact, which was signed by religious pilgrims aboard the Mayflower in 1620 and is often referred to as America's "First Constitution"; the Declaration of Independence; and the Northwest Ordinance, which established a government in the Northwest Territory — in the present day Midwest — and created a pathway for admitting new states to the Union. Not long after the governor signed the bill into law at Our Lady of Fatima Catholic School in Lafayette on Wednesday, civil rights groups and organisations that want to keep religion out of government promised to file a lawsuit challenging it. The law prevents students from getting an equal education and will keep children who have different beliefs from feeling safe at school, the American Civil Liberties Union, Americans United for Separation of Church and State, and the Freedom from Religion Foundation said in a joint statement Wednesday afternoon.

"Even among those who may believe in some version of the Ten Commandments, the particular text that they adhere to can differ by religious denomination or tradition. The government should not be taking sides in this theological debate," the groups said.

## 68 Indians Among 645 Hajj Pilgrims Who Died In Mecca, Says Saudi Diplomat

**Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.** A diplomat in Saudi Arabia said on Wednesday that 68 Indian nationals died during the hajj pilgrimage this year marked by searing heat, bringing the overall tally to more than 600.

"We have confirmed around 68 dead... Some are because of natural causes and we had many old-age pilgrims. And some are due to the weather conditions, that's what we assume," the diplomat, who spoke on condition of anonymity, told AFP.

The new toll comes after two Arab diplomats told AFP on Tuesday that 550 deaths had been recorded during the hajj, one of the five pillars of Islam that all Muslims with the means must perform at least once.

North Korea is under heavy U.N. Security Council economic sanctions over its nuclear weapons and missile programs, while Russia is also grappling with sanctions by the United States and its Western partners over its aggression in Ukraine.

The total reported dead so far is 645, according to an AFP tally. Riyadh, Saudi Arabia: A diplomat in Saudi Arabia said on Wednesday that 68 Indian nationals died during the hajj pilgrimage this year marked by searing heat, bringing the overall tally to more than 600.

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## Russia, North Korea Pact Shows Mutual Support By Authoritarian Powers: NATO

**Washington.** Russia's new defensive pact with North Korea shows increasing alignment among authoritarian powers and underscores the importance of democracies presenting a united front, the head of NATO said on Wednesday. Russian President Vladimir Putin signed a deal with North Korea's Kim Jong Un that included a mutual defense pledge, a move that overhauls Moscow's policy towards Pyongyang. NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg said North Korea had provided "an enormous amount of ammunition" to Russia while both China and Iran were supporting Moscow militarily in its war against Ukraine. "We need to be aware that authoritarian powers are aligning more and more. They are supporting each other in a way we haven't seen before," he told a panel discussion during an official visit to Ottawa. "When they are more and more aligned — authoritarian regimes like North Korea and China, Iran, Russia — then it's even more important that we are aligned as countries believing in freedom and democracy," he said. The growing closeness between Russia and other Asian nations means it is all the more important that NATO works with allies in the Asia-Pacific, he said, adding this was why leaders from Australia, Japan, New Zealand and South Korea had been invited to a NATO summit in Washington next month. Stoltenberg also said he expected Canada to meet the NATO target of spending 2% of gross domestic product on defense.

Canada's Liberal government, which has poured billions into social programs, only spends 1.37% of GDP on its military. In April it issued a plan to reach 1.76% by 2030.

## Rishi Sunak's Conservative Party set for heavy election defeat, polls forecast

**Polling by YouGov showed Keir Starmer's Labour was on track to win 425 parliamentary seats in Britain's 650-strong House of Commons, the most in its history. Savanta predicted 516 seats for Labour and More in Common gave it 406.**

**London.** Three opinion polls on Wednesday predicted a record defeat for British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak's Conservatives at a July 4 election, forecasting the Labour Party would comfortably win a large majority after 14 years in opposition.

Polling by YouGov showed Keir Starmer's Labour was on track to win 425 parliamentary seats in Britain's 650-strong House of Commons, the most in its history. Savanta predicted 516 seats for Labour and More in Common gave it 406. YouGov had the Conservatives on 108 and the Liberal Democrats on 67, while Savanta predicted the Conservatives would take 53 parliamentary seats and the Liberal

Democrats 50. More in Common forecast 155 and 49 seats respectively. Chris Hopkins, Political Research Director at Savanta, said its projection put Labour on course "for a historic majority".

The three polls were so-called multilevel regression and post-stratification (MRP) surveys, an approach that uses voters' age, gender, education and other variables to predict results in every British voting district. Pollsters used the method to successfully predict the 2017 British election result. They are largely in line with previous surveys predicting a Labour victory, but show the scale of the Conservatives' defeat could be even worse than previously thought. YouGov's forecast of 108 seats for the Conservatives was around 32 lower than its previous poll two weeks earlier. Both Savanta and YouGov predicted that the party of Winston Churchill and Margaret Thatcher could be left with the lowest number of seats in its near 200-



year history contesting elections.

## MISSTEPS

Sunak, who in a final throw of the dice last week pledged to cut 17 billion pounds of taxes for working people if re-elected, has failed to turn the polls around so far in a campaign littered with missteps.

His task has been made harder by the surprise mid-campaign return to frontline politics by prominent Brexit campaigner Nigel Farage, a right-wing populist, whose Reform UK party threatens to split the right-of-centre vote. Britain has a first-past-the-post electoral system, meaning

## Sri Lankan President on India's industrial development: 'We need to join in'

**Sri Lanka must connect with India to benefit from its industrial growth. President hopes to discuss follow-up with Jaishankar on Thursday. In 2022, Sri Lanka declared bankruptcy, its first sovereign default.**



**Colombo.** President Ranil Wickremesinghe on Wednesday said Sri Lanka needs to connect with neighbouring India to reap the benefits of its massive industrial development. "Our neighbour India is going through a phase of massive industrial development. Tamil Nadu, Telangana and Andhra Pradesh are experiencing it. We must also join in," said Mr. Wickremesinghe in his address at the Industry 2024 event in Colombo. The president said he was hopeful of discussing with External Affairs Minister Dr. S. Jaishankar, who is due to arrive in Colombo on

Thursday, about the follow-up on his interaction with Prime Minister Narendra Modi during his visit to India. Usage of solar and wind powers and to obtain liquid hydrogen are areas where we hope to work in collaboration with India," Wickremesinghe, also the finance minister, said, adding that Adani projects in Sri Lanka have pioneered these efforts. Sri Lanka in the second quarter of 2022 had declared bankruptcy announcing the island's first ever sovereign default. Negotiations with the International Monetary Fund for a bailout began almost immediately and

by ongoing debt restructuring negotiations, the government was hoping to get time until 2042 to repay. He said it was important for Sri Lanka to convert into becoming an export-oriented economy from the current import-oriented one. "Since we are an import-oriented economy, we have to find money to import. To become an export-oriented economy, we have to be competitive with our industries to become a production economy," the president said. The IMF while commending Sri Lanka's recovery efforts said the island nation's economy is far from being safe unless persisted with hard reforms needed.

## 8 dead as Israeli tanks advance deeper into Rafah, heavy shelling hit tents

**Cairo.** Israeli tanks backed by warplanes and drones advanced deeper into the western part of the Gaza Strip city of Rafah on Wednesday, killing eight people, according to residents and Palestinian medics. Residents said the tanks moved into five neighbourhoods after midnight. Heavy shelling and gunfire hit the tents of displaced families in the Al-Mawasi area, further to the west of the coastal enclave, they said. Some eight months into the war, there has been no sign of let up in the fighting as efforts by international mediators, backed by the United States, have failed to persuade Israel and Hamas to agree to a ceasefire. Twelve Palestinians were also killed in an Israeli strike that hit a group of citizens and merchants in the south of the Gaza Strip, medical sources told Reuters on Wednesday. The people were hit as they waited for convoys of aid trucks

carrying goods through the Kerem Shalom crossing in Salahuddin Road northeast of Rafah, the sources added. Israeli forces have laid waste to much of Gaza and seized most of the Palestinian territory but have yet to achieve Israel's stated goal of wiping out Hamas and freeing Israeli hostages. Medics and Hamas media said eight Palestinians were killed in Al-Mawasi and many families fled north in panic. They did not identify the fatalities, and the Israeli military said it was looking into the report. Residents said Israeli army forces blew up several homes in western Rafah, which had sheltered over half of Gaza's 2.3 million people before last month, when Israel began its ground offensive and forced most of the population to head northwards. Some United Nations and Palestinian figures put those who remained at under 100,000 people.

"Another night of horror in Rafah. They opened fire from planes, drones and tanks on the western areas to cover for their invasion," said one Rafah resident, who asked not to be named. Bullets and shells landed in the Mawasi area near where people slept, killing and wounding many," he told Reuters via a chat app. An Israeli commander briefing military correspondents in Rafah on Tuesday named two more locations there — Shaboura and Tel Al-Sultan — where the army planned to take on Hamas fighters. "The Hamas battalions there are not yet well worn down and we need to dismantle them completely. We estimate it at more or less a month, at this intensity," Colonel Liron Batito, head of the Givati Brigade, told Army Radio. The Israeli military remained in control of the border between Rafah and Egypt. Footage circulated.

**World.** An Indian national, working as a labourer at a farm in Italy, died on Wednesday after he was left on the side of a road following an accident that severed his arm. The Indian Embassy in Italy took to X on Monday to condole the "unfortunate demise" of Satnam Singh. "The Embassy is aware of the very unfortunate demise of an Indian national in Latina, Italy. We are in contact with local authorities. Efforts are underway to contact the family and provide consular assistance," the post read. Satnam Singh, aged between 30 and 31, was injured on Monday while working at a farm in Latina, a rural area in the south of Rome where thousands of Indian migrant workers live. He was cutting hay when his arm was chopped off by a machine, according to Flai CGIL trade union (an Italian organisation for workers in the agriculture and food industry). Instead of helping Satnam Singh, his employers "dumped" him like a "bag of rubbish near his home", AFP reported, citing the statement by Flai CGIL that likened the situation



to a "horror film". Italian Labour Minister Marina Calderone called the incident "a true act of barbarity" in Parliament. "The Indian agricultural worker who suffered a serious accident in the countryside of Latina and was abandoned in very serious conditions...has died," AFP reported, quoting Marina Calderone. She further stated that authorities were investigating the incident and expressed hope that those responsible for the act would be punished. Police said that they were called by Satnam Singh's wife and friends, and an air ambulance was sent. He was flown to a hospital in Rome, but "died around midday" (local time) on Wednesday, a police spokesperson in Latina told AFP. Satnam Singh was working at the farm without legal papers. The centre-left Democratic Party condemned the manner Satnam Singh was treated in a region known for the exploitation of workers, calling it a "defeat for civilisation".

## Vladimir Putin arrives in Vietnam for final stop on two-nation Asia tour

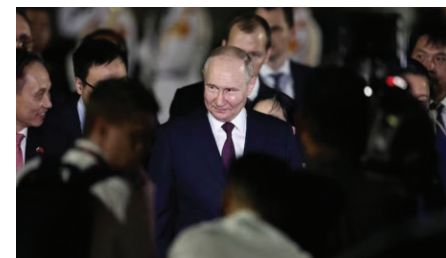
**Putin praised the Southeast Asian Communist country for its pragmatic stance on Ukraine. Vietnam's neutral "bamboo diplomacy" avoids condemning Russia's Ukraine attack, worrying the West. Neither Vietnam nor Russia are members of the ICC.**

**Hanoi.** Russian President Vladimir Putin arrived in Vietnam early on Thursday for talks with the country's Communist leaders on the final stop of his two-nation tour of Asia after concluding a defence pact with North Korea. Putin's aircraft touched down at Hanoi's airport, where he was met on a red carpet by Vietnamese Deputy Prime Minister Tran Hong Ha and top party diplomat Le Hoai Trung. In an opinion piece timed for his visit, Putin applauded the Southeast Asian Communist-ruled country for supporting

"a pragmatic way to solve the crisis" in Ukraine. Vietnam, which officially pursues a neutral foreign policy it calls "bamboo diplomacy" in its relations with world powers, has abstained from condemning Russia's attack on Ukraine, a stance that Western countries view as too close to the Kremlin.

As well as praising Vietnam for its "balanced" stance on the Ukraine war, Putin listed progress on payments, energy and trade between the countries in the article published in Vietnam's Communist Party newspaper Nhan Dan. Although both North Korea and Russia face international isolation, Vietnam has built careful alliances with the United States and the European Union.

"President Putin's visit to North Korea and Vietnam is to demonstrate that Western attempts to isolate Russia are not working and that Russia has partners in Asia," said Carl Thayer, an expert on Vietnam security at the Australian Defence Force Academy in Canberra. Russia was hit with U.S.-led Western sanctions after it invaded



Ukraine in February 2022 in what Moscow calls a "special military operation". In March 2023, the Hague-based International Criminal Court's issued an arrest warrant for Putin over alleged war crimes in Ukraine, charges he denies. Neither Vietnam nor Russia are members of the ICC.

The Southeast Asian country will be the third nation Putin has visited, after China and North Korea, since he was sworn in for a fifth term in May. Vietnam has been gearing up for a full state welcome for Putin, his first visit since 2017 and his fifth in total. Putin is due to meet Communist Party leader Nguyen Phu Trong, state President To Lam and Prime

Minster Pham Minh Chinh. The Russian leader will also attend wreath laying ceremonies, including at the Ho Chi Minh Mausoleum, housing the embalmed corpse of Vietnam's founding leader. The countries have historically close ties and shared Communist roots. Tens of thousands of cadres studied in the former Soviet Union during the Cold War, including the current head of Vietnam's Communist Party Trong. "President Vladimir Putin is a person who has made many contributions to Vietnam-Russia relations. He always has good feelings and concern for Vietnam and values its relationships with Vietnam's senior leaders," Ministry of Defence newspaper Quan Doi Nhan Dan said in an article. "President Vladimir Putin is a person who has made many contributions to Vietnam-Russia relations. He always has good feelings and concern for Vietnam and values its relationships with Vietnam's senior leaders," Ministry of Defence newspaper Quan Doi Nhan Dan said in an article.

## NEWS BOX

## T20 World Cup, Super 8: In the 'Big Boys Club', Afghanistan want to be giant killers

New Delhi. AT the start of the T20 World Cup 2024, did you bet on Afghanistan to make it to the Super 8s? Well, the Rashid Khan-led team has risen through the ranks to make a mark for themselves in international cricket. Their wins over better-ranked teams are no longer an upset. Afghanistan are now in the 'Big Boys Club' as they will take part in the Super 8 stage of the tournament.

The signs of this South-Asian team's rise were evident from the ODI World Cup last year. In their very next ICC event, Afghanistan ensured that they stamped their authority and how! Mind you, they were not placed in an easy group. Group C featured the co-hosts and 2-time T20 World Cup champions West Indies and New Zealand, alongside Papua New Guinea and Uganda.

## AFG brilliant run in T20 World Cup 2024

Afghanistan came out all guns firing in their very first match against Uganda to register their second biggest win in the T20Is, hammering the associate team by 125 runs.



However, this was just a glimpse of what followed next. This time it was New Zealand, who faced the wrath of Afghanistan's batters as well as the bowlers and lost the match by 84 runs. It was followed by an easy win by 7 wickets against Papua New Guinea. Afghanistan laid down an early marker by knocking New Zealand out of the tournament, the team that has always done well in ICC events. Amongst the Asian teams, India have been doing well as they advanced into the Super 8s without any hiccup. Pakistan and Sri Lanka were the let-downs as they were knocked out early. Nepal impressed with the fight they put up against Bangladesh and South Africa. Meanwhile, Bangladesh had a topsy-turvy ride before sneaking through to the Super 8s. While Afghanistan would be proud of how far they have come, they will face India in their first Super 8 match. They have headed to the next phase on the back of a defeat by hefty margin of 104 runs against the West Indies.

## How AFG need to prepare against India?

Former India cricketer Varun Aaron wanted Afghanistan to brush aside the loss and come up with a fresh approach against India. "Tell us the truth, definitely. It's going to bother them because you want to take momentum into a big game like against India. You want to have winning memories instead of losing memories because we all know how losses can snowball into a lot of doubts and problems within a team."

## T20 World Cup 2024: Time to unleash magician Kuldeep Yadav in Super 8s?

New Delhi. Having passed the group stages of the T20 World Cup 2024 unscathed, India will be eager to continue their winning momentum in the Super 8s as they take on Afghanistan on Thursday, June 20 at Kensington Oval, Bridgetown, Barbados. The Men in Blue will be playing their first game in the West Indies after their last fixture against Canada got washed out in Florida. Coming after playing on the sluggish surface at the Nassau County International Cricket Stadium in New York, the Rohit Sharma-led side will probably look to alter



their team combination as per the conditions in the West Indies. The New York surface allowed India to go in with four seamers as batters found it difficult to attack them.

However, the same might not be the case on the surfaces in the Caribbean, with spinners likely to get a lot more purchase out of the pitches. Hence, the Men in Blue will look to bring in their mystery spinner Kuldeep Yadav into the playing XI.

## Kuldeep Yadav ruling the roost

The 29-year-old has 59 wickets from 34 innings in his T20I career at an average of 14.10 and an economy of 6.74. Kuldeep has emerged as India's go-to man in the middle overs to stop the flow of runs by picking crucial wickets.

Despite his incredible numbers, team India will have a lot to think about before bringing him into the squad as they usually don't change their winning combination during mega events. Another headache would be about dropping one of the players from the winning combination to make way for Kuldeep. Mohammed Siraj is likely to be the one making way for the left-arm wrist spinner, having been the least effective amongst the four seamers. The right-arm seamer has picked just one wicket from three innings but has the second-best economy rate amongst all bowlers of 5.18. On the other hand, Jasprit Bumrah (5 wickets), Hardik Pandya (7) and Arshdeep Singh (7 wickets) have all been amongst the wicketers for the Men in Blue. Hence, Siraj most likely seems to be the one to make way for Kuldeep.

## No point in thinking about South Africa and our luck in knockouts: Kagiso Rabada

➔ Rabada said the belief is there in the squad

➔ South Africa have found the knockout matches to be a stumbling block

➔ South Africa will next face England in their second Super 8 clash on June 21



games. The Proteas now have a 100 percent win record in the T20 World Cup 2024 as they beat USA by 18 runs. During the press conference, Rabada was asked if the team isn't thinking

about the curse of the knockouts at the moment. The pacer quickly said they're taking this game by game and keeping their belief that they can head to the final and win. There's no point in thinking about it. You

just take it game by game and the belief is there. Belief is there. If you don't have the belief then you might as well go pack your bags and go home. And whatever happens after that happens but the belief is there," said Rabada.

Never write off anyone

The chase from the USA did come close in the end as Andries Gous scored 80 off 47 balls. Rabada first praised the South African batters for posting a good total of 194 in the end. Rabada also said that you never write anyone off and praised the USA side for their playing style in the tournament.

"The USA have been chasing well and that's the reason why they chose to bowl first. I must commend our batting lineup, especially Quinton. And at the end of the day, we got a respectable total on the board, or more than a respectable total on the board, which gave us an opportunity to put them under pressure with the ball."

"We got a couple of early wickets and then Andres batted extremely well and gave them a good chance and they came close in the end. You can never write any opposition off no matter who they're playing for. The USA have been playing well, they beat Pakistan. So, hats off to the way they're playing," said Rabada.

## Rahmanullah Gurbaz reveals AFG's 'champions' mindset, says 'Bumrah not only target'

New Delhi. Afghanistan opener Rahmanullah Gurbaz revealed that he will not just look to take on star pacer Jasprit Bumrah during their match against India at the Kensington Oval, Barbados on June 20, Thursday. Gurbaz was eager to take on every Indian bowler during the Super 8s clash. He also revealed that the Afghanistan team is participating in the tournament not just for the sake of it but to emerge as eventual winners. Afghanistan created history by qualifying for the Super 8s as they will face India, Australia and West Indies in the Super 8 stage. The Afghanistan team reached the Super 8s on the back of a brilliant performance in the group stage. They beat Uganda, New Zealand and Papua New Guinea to advance into the next stage of the tournament. However, they suffered a hefty defeat by 104 runs in the lead-up to the Super 8s. Gurbaz has been among the leading run-scorers in the tournament. In 4 matches, he has scored 167 runs at an average of 41.75. The Afghan opener exuded confidence as he suggested that he would not hold back while going all guns blazing



against the Indian openers. "Honestly, my target is not just Bumrah. I will look to target all the bowlers, not only Bumrah, because there are 5 bowlers bowling. I have to face them all, not just Bumrah and maybe another bowler could get

me out, but yes, if I get a chance to hit him, let's go for it. Could be Bumrah, Arshdeep or Siraj. Anyone, if they bowl in my area, I will hit. I will either get out or I will hit them," Gurbaz told ICC in a video.

## Afghanistan's 'champion' mindset

Gurbaz also affirmed that Afghanistan are playing the tournament with the mindset of winning it, something that has been evident from their performances as well.

"We have played World Cups before, and we are here again now. But there is a huge difference and the difference is that our mindset was to just participate in the World Cup, but this time it is let's go, and we should be champions at the World Cup. There is no pressure on us to be champions. We don't have those expectations, but we are taking it just one game at a time. That is our focus and I hope we achieve our goals, and we qualify to the semi-final first and then to the final," Gurbaz added. Afghanistan have not won a single T20I against India so far but the Rashid Khan-led side will look to pose a stiff challenge to the opposition.

## Michael Vaughan on fighting 'awful' stress-related illness: I was embarrassed

New Delhi. Former English cricketer Michael Vaughan opened up on the mental health struggles he has been battling for the last nine months. One of England's most charismatic captains, Vaughan, talked about the times when he had to resort to medication after going into a slump due to a stress-related illness. The 49-year-old revealed the troubles he faced in his day-to-day life and was "embarrassed" to go out of his home. Vaughan, who played 82 Tests, 86 ODIs and 2 T20Is, said that he would be grateful if his revelation could help people find their way out of mental trauma. The veteran dropped a post on his social media handle. He also thanked his doctor for prescribing him the right medicines and helping him survive through the tumultuous times.

## 'Hope I can help one or two people'

"Today I have spoken about the stress-related illness I have been fighting for 9 months. I don't want sympathy as I was lucky enough to see a specialist early to give me the best medication. If this helps one person, it has been worth it," Vaughan wrote on X.

"I'll be honest with you; I was never going to speak about it. But then I thought, 'Wait a



minute, there are probably quite a few people who go through similar and stay silent'. I don't want this to appear as if I'm after any sympathy, because I'm not. I just hope I can help one or two people." Vaughan told The Telegraph. "There were loads of times when I wouldn't go out, because I was embarrassed. Even climbing in and out of a car was awful. I would try to walk over the road to Starbucks, and I'd be hobbling. Somebody would ask if I was OK. 'Fine,' I'd reply. 'Just a dodgy knee.'"

➔ Kane Williamson may have announced that he has decided to snub a central contract from New Zealand cricket, but expect the star batter to remain one of the main players for the nation in probably all formats of the game. Here's how Williamson can continue to play for New Zealand despite the contract snub.

## 'Do not ever think you can't get treated'

Vaughan, who last played international cricket back in 2008, said that mental illness isn't a 'visible injury' but can pile up over time, making life tougher for a person. He reckoned that instead of concealing mental health struggles, one should ask for help and consult psychologists and psychiatrists.

"People always talk about mental illness being the hardest to detect because it's not a visible injury; it is just something that happens inside your mind. It's similar to this illness. Over time, it just builds up."

## Key for India will be to get Rohit Sharma-Virat Kohli partnership firing: Brian Lara

➔ South Africa skipper Aiden Markram is wary of the threat posed by the USA side and claimed they weren't 'a small team anymore.' USA shocked the world when they defeated Pakistan in the group stages of the T20 World Cup 2024.

New Delhi. Brian Lara feels that the Virat Kohli-Rohit Sharma partnership firing at the top would be key for India ahead of their Super 8 clash against Afghanistan on June 20, Thursday. Kohli and Rohit have opened the batting in India's all 3 matches but it has failed to click. Kohli has scored just 5 runs

during this time and Rohit has failed to make an impact after his fifty in the first game against Ireland. Fans do feel it would be best to put Kohli at No.3 and get in Yashasvi Jaiswal to open along with Rohit. Speaking to Star Sports before the game, Lara felt that for putting a good partnership in the Caribbean, getting 60-70 runs in the powerplay would be a great start. The West Indies legend feels one of Rohit or Kohli can afford to drop the anchor, but it would depend on the matchups.

"I think there is all sorts of possibilities. They are two very aggressive players. They're two world class players. But sometimes, in terms of putting together a partnership in the Caribbean, you think well, you know 60-70 runs in the powerplay would be a great start. I think one could afford to drop anchor, but it all depends, you know, on matchups. If you feel that, as a batter, that you are better equipped than the other player to do well



against a bowler, then you do that. So I think it's a conversation that has to happen in the middle, and it doesn't necessarily mean that they have to go from both ends," said Lara.

Rohit, Kohli form psychologically important for India. Lara continued by saying that getting Kohli and Rohit into form is psychologically important for India as both



nearly two decades before he decided to hang up his racket in the Laver Cup 2022. It was an emotional day for the tennis fans as the Swiss great played for the last time. The documentary will give insight into his final days as a professional tennis player in the lead up to the Laver Cup. The tennis community is set to face a roller-coaster of emotions as the days in the lead up to Federer's retirement are set to be unravelled. The 20-time Grand Slam champion Federer announced his decision to retire from professional tennis after a celebrated 25-year career spanning 1,500 matches. It was one of the most closely-guarded retirements in sports history.

Federer revealed that him and his wife Mirika Federer cried several times while watching the documentary during its premiere. He also suggested that watching the documentary finally got him on terms with retirement.

## Roger Federer vs Roger Federer lights up London's Tower Bridge

New Delhi. London's Tower Bridge displayed a jaw-dropping advertisement for Roger Federer's latest documentary 'Twelve Final Days'. The fans were reminded to watch the documentary by displaying it on the iconic Tower Bridge. The two towers displayed a video of Federer rallying. One side showcased the young Federer hitting the ball and the other tower had the present Federer hitting it right back. As the ball was moving back and forth between the two towers, the advertisement saw a large screen roll down. The promo of Federer's documentary was displayed, making for brilliant marketing. Federer's documentary is set to be released on June 20th, Thursday on OTT platform Amazon Prime. The creativity was notched up to a high level as this video created a buzz on social media. Federer has possessed the ability to turn heads with his brilliance at the court and this time it was Amazon Prime who nailed it with their creativity this time.

'Twelve Final Days' documentary  
Federer had been a dominant force in tennis for





# Shama Sikander

Set The Internet On Fire In Bikini, Hot Video Goes Viral

Shama Sikander has often made headlines with her sexy photos. Today, also she treated fans with another hot video which has gone viral. Shama was seen flaunting her curves in a bikini as she enjoyed swimming in a pool. saking to her Instagram handle, Shama shared a video in which she was seen enjoying the view while swimming. "Kis kis ka pahado pe jane ka man hai?" her caption reads. Fans also commented. Recently, Shama took to her Instagram handle and shared a series of pictures which are now setting fire online. In these latest clicks, Shama was seen posing in a black bodysuit, looking hotter with every frame. She ditched accessories, opted for smoky makeup and looked gorgeous as ever. In the caption of her post, Shama wrote, "New week, same fabulous me. Bring it on, Monday!" Meanwhile, on the work front, Shama Sikander has worked in several shows including Baal Veer, Ye Meri Life Hai and Maaya: Slave of Her Desires among others. Even though she has been away from television screens for quite some time now, she often stuns fans with her impeccable fashion sense. Previously, in an interview with News18 Showsha, Shama shared that she wants to work in web series and films only now and does not want to return to television. She revealed that she has not watched TV shows for over six years now and added, "I'm looking at only web series and feature films. I believe in doing different kinds of cinema, stories that matter. I want to do characters on screen that can add to people's lives. I feel that content can be used for great purpose for the well-being of everyone in all its art and glory. So I want to do meaty roles, and powerful performances as I am a performer and I deserve the best," she told us.



## Dalljiet Kaur Accuses Estranged Husband Nikhil Patel of Seeking 'Publicity': 'Stop Being So Desperate'



Dalljiet Kaur has accused her estranged husband Nikhil Patel of seeking "publicity" in India by using her name. Recently, the actress took to her Instagram stories and claimed that Nikhil has hired a PR agent in India. She asked him not to use her name publicly and went on to say that he should rather message her directly. "Stop seeking publicity on my name for god sake! And a message on my number directly," she wrote and then added, "Stop being so desperate for fame. You have already managed to do your cultural event/PR party on March 18th and gained enough publicity." "The fact that you hired a PR is the biggest joke. You couldn't have hired someone before March 18th in India, to get published about your personal life," Dalljiet continued and further wrote, "I hope the leaders of your company who were a part of the cultural event called wedding, start worrying about your desperation to be popular by ruining life of a whole family already. And also remember what truly they were invited for, a cultural event or wedding?" Dalljiet Kaur also accused Nikhil of mocking Indian traditions by ruining their married life. She concluded by urging Kenya authorities to take a stand for her and have some "mercy" on her son, Jaydon. i.e. after 10 months of their wedding. Nikhil confirmed their separation in May when he told E-Times. "In January this year, Dalljiet decided to leave Kenya with her son Jaydon and return to India, which ultimately led to our separation. We both realized that the foundation of our blended family wasn't as strong as we had hoped, making it hard for Dalljiet to settle in Kenya. In March 2023, we held an Indian wedding ceremony in Mumbai. Though it held cultural significance, it was not legally binding. This ceremony was intended to reassure Dalljiet's family about her move to Kenya." Recently, Dalljiet moved to Nairobi City court against Nikhil and received a stay order to prevent Patel from evicting her or her son from their home in Kenya.

## Actress Rinku Rajguru's Father Has These Conditions For His Prospective Son-In-Law



Actress Rinku Rajguru is best known for her debut in the Marathi film Sairat and has been impressing the audience with her acting skills since then. Besides her films, Rinku's fans are also interested to know about her personal life, including her wedding. Now, Rinku's father Mahadev Rajguru has spilled the beans on this aspect in an interview. As per Mahadev, who is a teacher by profession, he will get his daughter married to a man who fulfils certain conditions. Mahadev said that he would not immediately accept his daughter's choice and would first contemplate it. According to him, Rinku's prospective life partner should not put any restrictions on his daughter's freedom to do whatever she wants. Lastly, the boy should not have any issues, with his daughter going to many places which is her profession's demands. Rinku Rajguru remains one of the most sought-after actresses in the film industry with hits like Jhimma 2 and Aathva Rang Premacha. Despite being a part of these amazing projects, the 23-year-old doesn't want success to get into her head. She talked about this in an interview with a media portal. She said, "I've just started. I was 13-14 when I did Sairat and have no formal training in acting. I don't understand stardom." According to Rinku, people often tell her that she should behave in a certain way. The Marathi actress said that she is enjoying being the way she is. "On the set, I'm an actor, at home, I'm studying, spending time with family and friends", she concluded. Rinku will next act in the Marathi project Khillar, written and directed by Makarand Mane. Lalit Prabhakar will enact the male lead in this project bankrolled by Nuclear Arrow Pictures. Khillar remains in the pre-production stage for now. Khillar deals with the contentious issue of bullock cart racing which is a tradition in Maharashtra that the Supreme Court of India recognised as legal.

## Varalaxmi Sarathkumar Goes Wedding Shopping With Father, Fiance And His Daughter

Varalaxmi Sarathkumar, a popular face in the Tamil and Telugu film industries, has been grabbing the headlines ever since the announcement of her wedding with Nicholai Sachdev. The actress often shares a few glimpses of herself and her fiance on social media, which receives a lot of attention. As the adorable couple are gearing up for their wedding, she shared some clips and photos of her story from their day out when they went out shopping. Actress Varalaxmi Sarathkumar, her father R Sarathkumar, Nicholai Sachdev and his daughter Kasha Nia Sachdev spent a day out together. The actress shared a selfie of "family fun day" where she can be seen wearing an olive green halter-neck dress, while others wore white attire.

The next story was a clip where her father can be seen dressed in a simple white kurta and pyjama,



Nicholai Sachdev in a white t-shirt and cream trousers and Kasha in a white t-shirt and a black slit skirt. From the stories, it looks like the family was out shopping and spending time with each other. She shared yet another photo with her father R Sarathkumar. Meanwhile, Varalaxmi Sarathkumar is also in the spotlight for her engagement ceremony which took place on March 1 in Mumbai. There was a section of the internet which trolled her fiance and the fact that he has a young daughter from his previous marriage. The news of her wedding has made their fans go into a frenzy. As per the gossip mill, the wedding is set to take place in Thailand for which grand arrangements are being made. Reportedly, the wedding will be held on July 2. If the reports are anything to go by, the wedding will be graced by family members and close friends. The couple has yet to announce the venue and other related details of the marriage. Reports also claim that the pre-wedding rituals and mehendi ceremony will be held at the Taj Hotel in Chennai. The wedding reception will reportedly take place at Leela Palace in Chennai. Who's-who of the Tamil industry are expected to grace the reception ceremony. Varalaxmi Sarathkumar has starred in films like Hanu Man, Sarkar, Vikram Vedha, Vindhya Victim Verdict V3, Pakka Commercial, Mr Chandramouli, Kota Bommalai PS and Naandhi.

