













## Civility a casualty in Biden-Trump debate

ANOTHER hallowed beacon of democracy died in the US last week on the day the country's two main presidential candidates in this November's election held their first debate in a cable TV studio. The independent Commission on Presidential Debates (CPD) had steered some of the mainstay quadrennial events in US presidential politics, beginning with the election to the White House in 1988. Its 36-year record has been so outstanding that presidential debates hosted by the CPD became one of the most popular events of every presidential cycle in the oldest democracy in the world. At least 15 nations around the world, especially emerging post-Cold War democracies like Romania and Ukraine and newly born countries like Bosnia-Herzegovina, have adopted the US presidential debate model. CPD staff have worked with these 15 struggling democracies to implement its model during their presidential election cycles. This year's US presidential aspirants — Democrat Joe Biden and Republican Donald Trump — junked the CPD and opted for a studio debate at the CNN headquarters in Atlanta. For the first time, the debate was held without an audience and without its customary welcome applause for the candidates. Having been part of the foreign media contingent at 12 previous presidential debates, the revelry associated with them is memorable for this writer. Popular participation in those debates was not confined to the auditoriums where the candidates sparred. Such democracy in action eventually became folklore and legends in towns which hosted the debates. Festivities on the streets, in pubs and at debate-watch parties, combined with the serious business of politics, saw the dramatis personae in election after election travel to small towns and diverse states. The CPD debates mostly took place in universities. This, in turn, motivated young people to vote in a country where the turnout has been low for many decades. The CPD may live on in East Europe and Africa, but in the US, the institution is dead, for now.

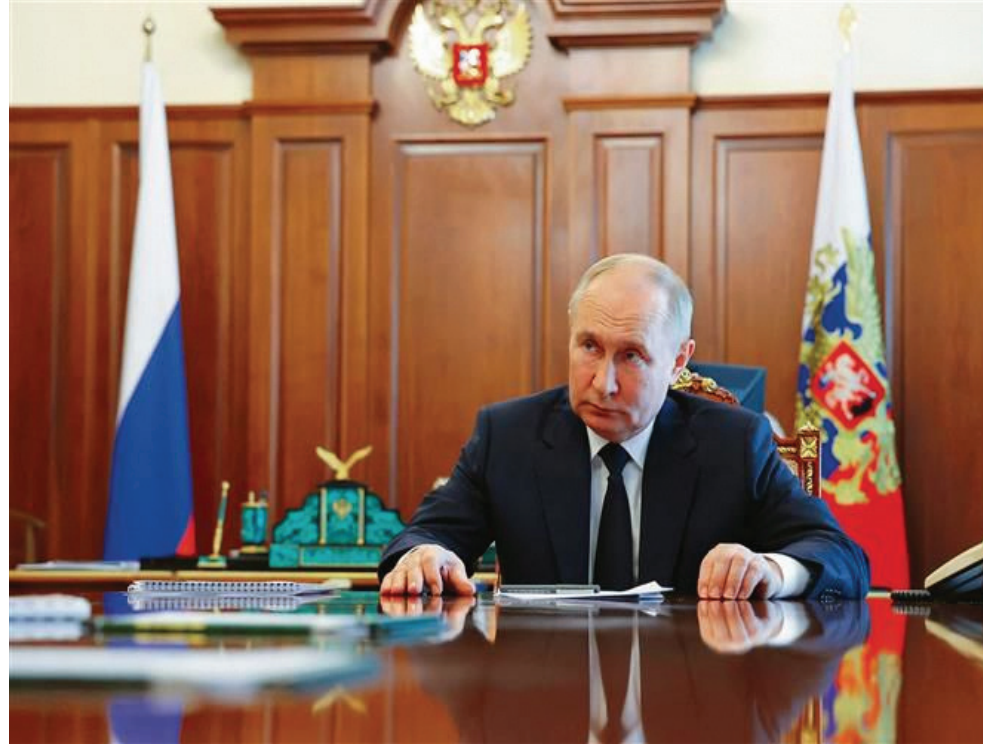
Customary civility was a casualty during the first Biden-Trump debate of 2024. The two candidates did not shake hands like they used to amidst thundering bipartisan applause from the audience. That tradition now lies buried amidst partisan acrimony. At the two Biden-Trump debates in 2020, too, the candidates did not shake hands on the way to the lecterns. But that was under medical advice because the Covid-19 pandemic was raging at that time. Physical contact was discouraged, especially among those over 60 years of age, and social distancing was encouraged among all. The wives of the candidates did not hug each other after the debates in 2020, as was the practice because of the pandemic. Nor did they do so last week. There was no audience the spouses could be a part of to climb the podium and join their husbands at the end of the 90-minute grilling by the moderators, usually TV anchors with coast-to-coast name recognition. Such gracious acts in the past were integral to the idea that when the elections were over, the US would go back to truly being the united states of the American people. No more. No matter who wins the November election, the US Supreme Court made it explicit last week that its judges were no longer going to sit back and watch their country descend into a banana republic and hurtle towards African- or Latin American-style chaos in public life. Judicial activism will restrain Biden and Trump, whoever of the two gets to occupy the White House for the next four years. The violence on Capitol Hill on January 6, 2021, has deeply impacted every American who believes in the rule of law. A spate of Supreme Court decisions, coincidentally made during the debate week, warned that Trump appointees to the highest court would not be his poodles or be grateful to him for their lifetime jobs.

## Onus on West to bring Ukraine war to an end

Russia has been the steadiest of India's allies, both in the best and the worst of times. The bilateral relations just cannot be undermined or weakened.

LOVE him or hate him, but you just cannot ignore him. His comments and views merit an in-depth analysis. In a BBC interview and an article in The Telegraph, Nigel Farage of the Reform UK party (a pivotal figure of Brexit) questioned the West's conventional wisdom: "Don't blame me for telling the truth about Putin's war. Facing up facts about the mistakes of the past has to be the first step towards the peaceful future we all want to see..." Farage was speaking on the genesis of the Russian invasion of Ukraine and the ongoing war.

Without mincing words, Farage called out the February 2022 invasion of Ukraine as "immoral and outrageous". Yet, he recalled his 2014 statement in the European Parliament that "there will be a war in Ukraine" because "the expansion of NATO and the European Union was giving Putin a pretext he would not ignore". Farage added: "If you poke the Russian bear with a stick, don't be surprised if he responds." That takes us to the history as well as geography of the world and of Russia to assess the present imbroglio that the West is well aware of, owing to its past of gory wars and expansionist power politics for two centuries. Let's be clear about Russia's size, location, position and vastness. The erstwhile USSR had an area of 2.26 crore square km. It lost 55 lakh square km in the 1991 breakup. Fourteen of its border provinces became independent. In one stroke, the 'land border' came back to haunt Russian rulers as the prime factor for the safety, security and sovereignty of mighty Moscow. Naval historian Alfred Thayer Mahan's theory that "land powers are perennially insecure" holds true for Moscow as things have gone from bad to worse. Thus, no sooner did Russia shrink — what Napoleon and Hitler failed to do with their guns — that NATO and EU got into the expansion game, as is made clear by Farage. After the 9/11 terror attacks, Russia unconditionally supported the US, leading to the Moscow-Washington summit of Ljubljana, Slovenia, in June 2002. However, it was followed by NATO leading the charge for the membership of Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia to expand its zone of political and military influence. NATO was closing in towards 21st-century



Russia's underbelly as well as routes through which Napoleon and Hitler ravaged Russia. What happened before begs a reference pertaining to the Russian-speaking demography in Ukraine. Essentially, the problem originated because a lack of "national or ethnic homogeneity" is common to all former Soviet republics. The issue of Russian minorities proved to be the most difficult to resolve in Estonia, Latvia, Ukraine, Kazakhstan, Belarus, Kyrgyzstan and Turkmenistan. In the December 1991 plebiscite in Crimea (which has 90 per cent Russian-speaking population), "54.2 per cent voted in favour of independence from Ukraine. It is confirmed by the election of the Crimean parliament with a majority firmly in favour of a union with Russia" (from Frontiers: Territories and State Formation in Modern World by Malcolm Anderson, 1996). Let's now look beyond Russia. Why did France and Germany fight for years over Alsace-Lorraine and Eupen-Malmedy? Why did Germany find it compelling to annex Bohemia, Moravia, Slovakia, Schleswig and Holstein in the 19th and 20th centuries? Why does China object to anyone even talking about Tibet and Taiwan? Why can't India allow any power to go near Bhutanese territory and why does it want its

island neighbours not to pose a threat to Indian security? Why does Iran want the narrow and shallow Strait of Hormuz to be free of US carriers? Why did Margaret Thatcher fight the 1982 war in the Falkland Islands, which are some 10,000 miles from the British Isles? Why does Australia feel apprehensive of any non-Western nation approaching Tasmania, New Zealand and islands around Canberra? Why did the Anglo-French forces fight Egypt in 1956 over the Suez Canal, which legitimately belongs to Cairo and neither to Paris nor London? Why did the US retaliate against Japan with atomic bombs in 1945 and punish Iraq and Afghanistan over the 9/11 attacks? Why is the Levant war, instead of ceasing, showing signs of extinction of several groups

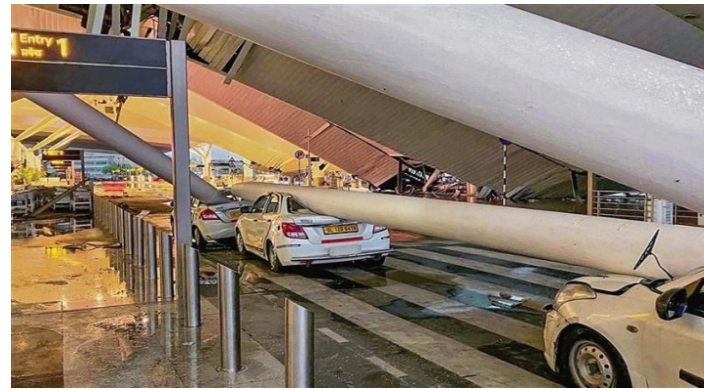
which flourished for years owing to the geopolitical interests of the West? Can it be said that whereas war is the terror of the prosperous, terror is the war of the poor?

Coming back to Farage, there is no doubt that Russian President Vladimir Putin is the aggressor and Ukraine the victim. The West did provoke Putin to the point of no return. It's, therefore, the duty and responsibility of the West to find ways to stop the Ukraine war. The 28-month-old war between Moscow and Kyiv is the longest and most destructive in mainland Europe since World War II. The entire West has been shaken to its foundations, resulting in unprecedented political, economic, social and diplomatic disarray, thereby creating a global crisis. India is right in taking a neutral stand. Nevertheless, the increasing Western pressure on New Delhi to castigate Russia and throttle its economy must be withstood. The business of 'sanctions' is becoming a joke being played by the prosperous West. Russia has been the steadiest of India's allies, both in the best and the worst of times. The bilateral relations just cannot be undermined or weakened.

## Airport roof collapse

Wake-up call for infra and urban planning

FRIDAY's roof collapse at the busy Delhi airport serves as a reminder of the underlying problems plaguing India's ambitious infrastructure push. The incident, which occurred during the heaviest rainfall recorded in Delhi on a June day in 88 years, caused the death of one person and left several injured. It not only disrupted airport operations but also shook public confidence in the robustness of our infrastructure. The incident is symptomatic of a broader problem as similar lapses have been reported across the country. From the collapse of bridges in Bihar to water leakage in the newly built Ram Temple and the fury unleashed by the monsoon in Himachal Pradesh, such disasters raise questions about planning, execution and maintenance of projects. The problem isn't merely the rain; it is faulty drainage. As cities expand and green spaces turn to grey concrete, rainwater floods roads. Most new development projects lack proper stormwater drains, and many existing ones are



repurposed for sewage. Elevated green belts and tiled roadsides obstruct natural drainage, leading to persistent urban flooding — an anthropogenic phenomenon. It calls for a re-evaluation of urban planning. The Delhi airport incident also underscores the necessity of monitoring major projects. The Modi

government has touted infrastructure development as a cornerstone of India's economic policy, with more than Rs 44 trillion to be invested over the next two years. However, the emphasis on rapid construction has seemingly overshadowed the importance of stringent standards and maintenance. The rush to inaugurate projects, often ahead of elections, compromises quality, turning these marvels into electoral gimmicks. Regular audits, adherence to international norms and accountability mechanisms are essential to prevent such tragedies. Ultimately, infrastructure is about more than just economic growth; it is about the wellbeing of the people, with their safety being a non-negotiable aspect of development. The roof collapse should catalyse a comprehensive overhaul of infrastructure policies to prioritise long-term safety and sustainability.

## No room for complacency in J&K as terror threat persists

A decline in violence and the diminished residual strength of terrorists active in J&K should not lull us into a false sense of security and normalcy.

LAST month, terrorists opened fire on a bus carrying pilgrims returning from the Shiv Khori shrine in Reasi. The driver lost control of the bus, causing it to veer off the road and plunge into a gorge. Nine people were killed and 33 others injured. PM Narendra Modi chaired a meeting days later to assess the situation in Jammu and Kashmir after a spike in terror incidents. He was given an overview by Home Minister Amit Shah and National Security Adviser Ajit Doval. Reportedly, he directed them to deploy the full spectrum of the armed forces' counter-terror capabilities. This directive does not call for any dramatic or knee-jerk reaction by the security establishment. However, it is imperative to carry out an in-depth analysis of the security situation and recognise the conceptual shifts taking place in the character of this conflict so as to suitably tailor and direct the state response.

We need to understand that, historically, all conflicts — even the seemingly intractable ones — transform over a period of time, and so has the conflict in J&K. There are numerous factors, both internal and external, including geopolitical changes, that alter the very nature of conflicts. In the state-turned-UT, external factors are more pronounced than the internal ones. Therefore, the intensity of violence in J&K is dependent directly on the role and scope of the support provided by Pakistan to keep the pot boiling. Even if the power of the Pakistani army diminishes, a strong democratic government is unlikely to give up the use of terrorism as an instrument of state policy. With an uncontrollable internal security situation, a fragile economy and an increasingly adverse geostrategic environment, Pakistan has been forced to scale down the terrorists' activities. Therefore, a decline in violence and the diminished residual strength of terrorists active in J&K should not lull us into a false sense of security and normalcy. In such circumstances, the clamour for the reduction of force levels or the revocation of the Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act

from various quarters should not unduly influence policy decisions. The generalisation of episodic events can cloud our judgement. PM Modi's two-day visit to J&K (June 20-21) to launch a developmental project worth Rs 1,800 crore and participate in the International Yoga Day celebrations was significant but not an indicator of normalcy in the UT.

The Army needs to retain and sustain a robust counter-infiltration posture on the LoC and an extensive counter-terrorism grid in the depth areas irrespective of overall violence levels in J&K. Stability and continuity of these grids are established over a protracted period and cannot be achieved by the induction of incremental forces following an incident. A responsive counter-terrorism deployment with a large footprint in the depth areas denies operating space to the terrorists, who otherwise would have free rein to influence the local populace and execute their nefarious designs with impunity. The Rashtriya Rifles units provide the foundation for such a deployment, and their combat edge should not be diluted. At present, there is no room for complacency or letting the guard down in view of the security situation in J&K. The gains made by the security forces should not be frittered away.

The terrorists involved in the recent Reasi and Hiranagar incidents are believed to have crossed the international border, exploiting the gaps in deployment. The deployment of the Central Armed Police Forces and the border police and their operating procedures along the border fence also need to be modified. The existing surveillance mechanisms are insufficient to prevent well-coordinated and determined infiltration attempts. At this stage, the situation is not conducive for the police to take over the task of the Army/paramilitary forces completely. However, an all-out effort should be made to ensure that the police become confident, self-sufficient and ready for the

challenges of the future. Its equipment profile and training threshold need to be improved accordingly. The use of artificial intelligence in the recognition of terrorists/overground workers (OGWs) and monitoring their communications, anti-drone measures and leveraging technology to counter IEDs (improvised explosive devices) should be incorporated on priority.



The goals set originally by the parties to the conflict also change as they come to be regarded as unattainable or requiring unacceptable efforts. Accordingly, while Pakistan's stated aim is to annex J&K, apparently it has been modified to wait for favourable conditions. Similarly, resources and methods have been modified. The attack on Hindu pilgrims in Reasi was an attempt to create communal hatred among religious groups through their network, including OGWs. The use of IEDs is also likely to rise as a low-cost option.

The Election Commission stated in May that J&K had recorded the highest voter turnout in a Lok Sabha poll in the last 35 years, with the Kashmir valley witnessing a 'massive' 30-point jump in poll participation this year compared to 2019. It is a clear mandate by the people of the UT for good governance and aspirations for a better quality of life. While the Jammu region has been hit by a number of terrorist strikes of late, there is a perceptible transformation in the attitude of people and waning support for the terrorists. Overall, the majority of the population remains neutral, and it is this segment that we should strive to win over. Jihad is no longer a cause for the mass movement, but it continues to be a means of prosperity for some. Fear of the gun continues to be the main sustainer of terrorism. The populace has become aware of the benefits of the expanding Indian economy and those accruing locally from expanding tourism and a dip in violence. He changes in the dynamics of terrorism in J&K necessitate the security forces to suitably modify their operational techniques in order to maintain their continued ascendancy over the terrorists. Accordingly, the forces' operations should focus on making the terrorists irrelevant by removing their ability to influence people.

Gradually, as the violence levels drop further and the residual strength of terrorists reduces, the operations of the forces will need to change focus from carrying out purely offensive operations aimed at the destruction of terrorists to positive steps designed to retain and increase the allegiance of the public. Combined with other government initiatives in terms of economic, political and social measures, such changes are likely to reduce public support for the terrorists.





# Swati Maliwal flags 'systemic erosion' of Delhi women panel, helpline shutdown

**In a letter to Arvind Kejriwal, Swati Maliwal underscored several issues being faced by the DCW, including lack of funding, cuts in budget and removal of staff.**

**New Delhi:** AAP Rajya Sabha MP Swati Maliwal has urged Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal to address the shutdown of the 181 women helpline and the "systemic erosion" of the Delhi Commission for Women (DCW) since her resignation. In a letter to Arvind Kejriwal, Maliwal underscored several issues being faced by the DCW, including lack of funding, cuts in budget and removal of staff. Maliwal has also flagged that the post of DCW chief was lying vacant since she was nominated to Rajya Sabha by the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP). "I am writing this letter to bring attention to how the Delhi Government has been systematically dismantling the DCW since my resignation from the position of chairperson in January 2024. It is deeply regrettable that the systems that I painstakingly built since 2015, are being



destroyed by the Government," Maliwal said. "As the Chief Minister of a city infamous as the 'Rape Capital of the World', it is crucial to safeguard systems that protect women and girls," the AAP leader said. Maliwal said the shutdown of the 181 women helpline was "appalling", asserting that survivors of rape and other crimes have been left without crucial assistance for the

past 48 hours. Maliwal's letter comes a day after Delhi Women and Child Development minister Kailash Gahlot said the 181 helpline would now be run by his department rather than the DCW. Gahlot also said the number would be closed for a few days for transition. "The commission has been informed that the order was issued after the approval of the concerned minister and is supposedly in compliance with a Central government directive which states that 181 Women Helpline should be run by WCD departments in states," the letter said. "The DCW works under the aegis of the WCD Department. Hence, there was no need to take over the helpline from the commission," Maliwal wrote. She also alleged that funds to the commission were halted, disrupting its operations. "This funding deprivation over

the past six months has crippled the commission... the dedicated women ground staff members of the commission, many of whom are survivors of atrocities like acid attacks and sexual assault, have been deprived of their rightful salaries since November 2023," Maliwal further said. Maliwal, who has recently accused Kejriwal's aide Bibhav Kumar of assault, said the commission's budget was "unexpectedly reduced" by Rs 10 crore, amounting to a 28.5 per cent cut. The Rajya Sabha MP also said the DCW was ordered by the WCD department in April 2024 to immediately remove all its contractual staff. "However, the commission did not implement the decision, as this would have led to a complete breakdown in its functioning. Presently, the Commission has 100 staff out of which 88 are contractual and out-sourced staff. The commission will be left with only 12 staff if all these staff are removed," she said.

## Couple injured after shed collapses at Delhi's Hyatt Regency hotel

**New Delhi:** A temporary shed at a five-star hotel, Hyatt Regency, in southwest Delhi collapsed, injuring two people. The couple suffered minor head injuries in the incident that took place at 8 pm on Monday. The incident comes days after a portion of a roof at Delhi airport's Terminal-1 collapsed, killing one person and injuring six others. "A PCR call was received at around 8.56 pm (on Monday) in PS (police station) RK Puram about caving/falling of roof and injury to a husband and wife, who were staying at the Hyatt Regency," the police said in a statement.

Police said the couple, Amit Jain (42) and his wife Reva Jain (32), have said they do not want to take any action at the moment. Amit and Reva hail from Punjab's Ludhiana and run a business in Chandigarh. Police said the couple were standing near the pool, located on the ground floor of the hotel, when a portion of a shed collapsed and fell on them. The couple later made a PCR call and informed the police about the incident, PTI reported. "When a police team reached the spot, it found the injured had already been shifted to Fortis hospital, Vasant Kunj," the police said. They have been discharged from the hospital after receiving first aid. Police said the spot was forensically examined, and necessary action would be taken. "The scene was forensically examined, exhibits were lifted and videographed as per procedure. The couple has not filed a complaint yet. Further necessary action will be taken as per the law," police said.

## Maharashtra college bans jeans, T-shirts, jerseys on campus, releases notice

**New Delhi:** A college in Maharashtra stirred a controversy after it banned jeans on campus. An official note by Acharya Marathe College in Chembur stated the students wearing jeans would not be allowed to enter the college premises. The notice also stated that male students should come to college in formal attire.

The female students were allowed to wear ethnic or Western dress. However, any dress which revealed



their religion would not be allowed, the notice stated. "Students can wear half shirt or full shirt and trouser.

Girls can wear any Indian or Western outfit. Students should not wear any dress which reveals religion or shows cultural disparity," the notice read. "Nakab, Hizab, Burkha, Stole, Cap, Badge etc shall be removed while going to common rooms on the ground floor and then only they can move throughout college campus.

Torn jeans, T-shirts, revealing dresses and jerseys are not allowed," it stated. Meanwhile, some students who did not attend college the day the notice was released, were not allowed to enter the premises the next day over the new dress code. According to the details, at least nine female students at the college also approached the Mumbai High Court against the college order.

## Bihar man gets Rs 52 lakh electricity bill, officials promise to rectify error

**New Delhi:** A man in Bihar's Muzaffarpur was shocked after receiving an electricity bill of over Rs 52 lakh. Harishankar Maniyari, who works as a medical representative, received a monthly electricity bill of Rs 52,43,327 for his home on June 27. The incident came to the fore when Maniyari's son informed him that his home's power had been disconnected. Upon receiving the information, he recharged his electricity connection for Rs 500, but even after that, the power was not restored. Maniyari downloaded his electricity bill, which showed the outstanding amount.

Left helpless in a dire situation, he approached the local electricity office to complain about the



electricity bill. Speaking to the media after the complaint, Maniyari said, "On June 27, my home's power was disconnected. When my son informed me about it, I immediately recharged my electricity account with Rs 500, but the power was not restored. Then, I downloaded the bill and it showed an outstanding amount of over Rs 52 lakh." "I met the power department's junior engineer in connection with the matter, but the electricity has not been restored yet. I

have been paying my bills on time. There is also a patient at my home. Despite this, my electricity has not been restored," Maniyari added. Meanwhile, the power department's executive engineer Shrawan Kumar Thakur said work had been ongoing to install smart meters in Muzaffarpur. He said the discrepancy might have occurred due to the readings of the old meter getting transferred to the new smart meter.

I think there was an error in the bill, it will be corrected. We are also developing a system under which every suspicious electricity bill will first reach the department and the bill will be generated," Kumar said while responding to queries about Maniyari's inflated bill.

## Bihar man refuses marriage proposal, lover cuts off his private parts

**New Delhi:** A woman working in a nursing home was arrested after she cut off the private parts of her lover and flushed them in a toilet when he refused to marry her in Bihar's Saran district, police said. The woman, Abhilasha, ran a nursing home in Madhaura and had been in an affair with Vedprakash, a ward councillor of the same facility, for the past several years. During this period, Abhilasha said she and Vedprakash maintained a physical relationship and that she got pregnant. She alleged that Vedprakash deceived her in the name of marriage.

Abhilasha said she had applied mehendi on her hands and claimed Vedprakash asked her to do a court marriage. When he refused to marry



again, the woman cut off the man's private parts with a knife and disposed them off in a toilet. Following that, police arrested the woman and recovered the knife that was used in the crime. She said she had no regrets about the gruesome attack on her lover, who is admitted to Patna Medical College in a serious condition. Saran

Superintendent of Police (SSP) Kumar Ashish said the woman was upset by her man's repeated refusal to marry her and that the wedding date was fixed seven to eight times. "A woman runs a private medical centre and had an affair with this boy for many years. The wedding date was also fixed seven to eight times, but the marriage could not happen. Upset by this, the woman called

the young man and cut off his private parts," he said. "The police, on getting immediate information, sent the man for treatment. The woman was arrested with a knife. Further action is being taken. It will also be investigated whether her nursing home is registered or not," the SSP added.

## Child Labourers At Madhya Pradesh Distillery Worked 11 Hours A Day: Report

**New Delhi:** The Madhya Pradesh government's inspection of a Som Group distillery said child labourers, some aged between 13 and 17, were made to fill and pack liquor bottles and worked long hours. Police are investigating the use of child labour at the distillery in Madhya Pradesh after the National Commission for Protection of Child Rights said last month it had found 58 children working illegally at the factory. The commission released photos of some with hands showing chemical burns and said some children were transported in school buses for factory work.

A day after the children were found on June 15, an inspection report was drafted by the state's industrial health and safety department based on interviews with 27 workers, the youngest among them being 13 years old. The state says those aged under 21 cannot work in a liquor factory. The report, which is not public but was seen by Reuters, says children were working 11-hour shifts starting at 8 am. Som and the Madhya Pradesh government did not respond to Reuters' requests for comment. In a submission to the state government on June 18, also seen by Reuters, Som said some children would visit the company to deliver food and medicines to their parents, and no worker was younger than 21. Som is one of the smaller distilleries in India's thriving alcohol industry, where both foreign and domestic players operate. Its website describes it as an "internationally acclaimed brand" available in more than 20 markets including the US, New Zealand and the UK.

The incident has drawn attention to child labour in Indian supply chains. In 2021, Reuters reported an external audit of two Carlsberg warehouses found underage labourers at a location in Jharkhand. Carlsberg at the time said it had terminated the services of the third-party provider. In the Som inspection report, the state government said the children working there were not given training on how they could protect themselves from harmful chemicals. "Since it is hazardous work, there should have been a health centre at the factory," the report said.

The Madhya Pradesh government temporarily suspended Som Distillery's manufacturing licences, but the company has challenged the decision, saying there has been no conclusive finding of wrongdoing. After Som's challenge, a local court put the state's decision on hold and said it would next hear the case later this month. Som Distilleries and Breweries Ltd said the Madhya Pradesh plant was run by its "associate private limited company" and used labour supplied by contractors who may not have carried out proper age checks.

## 24-Year-Old Posed As Senior Citizen In 'Donkey Route' Attempt To Reach US

**New Delhi:** 24-Year-Old Posed As Senior Citizen In 'Donkey Route' Attempt To Reach US

Guru Sewak had dyed his hair and beard white and wore glasses to appear elderly.

**New Delhi:** In his desperate quest to leave the country for the United States, a 24-year-old man from Uttar Pradesh's Lucknow went to great lengths, including transforming his appearance to resemble a 67-year-old. On the evening of June 18, around 5:20 pm, the Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) stationed at Delhi Airport's Terminal 3 intercepted a suspicious couple. Guru Sewak Singh, accompanied by his wife, approached the immigration counter with forged documents and an appearance designed to deceive. The passport in his possession identified him as Rashwinder Singh Sahota, allegedly born on February 2, 1957 in Punjab's Jalandhar and bound for Canada on Air Canada flight AC 043. The passport bore the number 438851 and

listed Rashwinder's age as 67. However, discrepancies between Guru Sewak's physical appearance and the details in the passport immediately raised red flags. The immigration officer noted inconsistencies in his appearance, voice, and demeanor, sparking suspicion about the authenticity of the documents and the traveler's actual identity.

Closer examination revealed that Guru Sewak had dyed his hair and beard white and wore glasses to appear elderly. Despite these efforts, the mismatch between his youthful energy and the age stated on the passport was apparent. This inconsistency prompted CISF personnel to conduct a more thorough inspection. During the search, authorities found a soft copy of another passport on Guru Sewak's mobile phone. This passport, bearing the name Guru Sewak Singh and a birthdate of June 10, 2000, with the number V4770942,



revealed the passenger's true identity. Confronted with this evidence, Guru Sewak confessed to his real age and name, admitting that the passport in the name of Rashwinder Singh Sahota was forged. Further investigation uncovered a meticulously planned scheme. Guru Sewak disclosed that he and his wife had sought the help of a travel agent named Jaggi. Desperate to reach the United

States, Guru Sewak agreed to pay Jaggi a staggering ? 60 lakh for the journey. Jaggi's plan involved flying the couple to Canada, from where they intended to enter the United States using the "Donkey Route," a clandestine path often used by illegal immigrants.

Guru Sewak had already paid Jaggi ? 30 lakh as an advance. To facilitate the journey, Jaggi had arranged for a fake passport and the necessary visas, providing the couple with fabricated identities. The CISF handed Guru Sewak and his wife over to the Delhi Police for legal action. They were arrested on charges of possessing forged passports and attempting to travel abroad illegally. An FIR was registered, and authorities have launched an investigation to determine the extent of Jaggi's operations and uncover how many individuals he may have sent abroad using similar tactics.

## NEWS BOX

## Teen arrested in Australia after stabbing at University of Sydney

**Sydney.** Australian police said on Tuesday it had arrested a 14-year-old boy after a stabbing at the University of Sydney. Emergency crews treated a 22-year-old man, who was taken to a hospital in a serious but stable condition, New South Wales state police said in a statement. There is no ongoing risk to the community, it said. A University of Sydney spokesperson said a police operation was underway on its Camperdown campus and that police would remain on campus while investigations continue.

## Joe Biden on immunity ruling for Donald Trump: There are no kings in America

**Washington** US President Joe Biden on Monday criticized the Supreme Court ruling on presidential immunity that was seen as a win for his rival, former President Donald Trump, in forceful remarks from the White House.

The US Supreme Court found on Monday that Trump cannot be prosecuted for any actions that were within his constitutional powers as president, but can be for private acts, in a landmark ruling recognizing for the first time any form of presidential immunity from prosecution. "This nation was founded on the principle that there are no kings in America," Biden said, adding that no one is above the law. With the Supreme Court decision, he said, "That fundamentally changed." Biden is running for re-election against Trump and has been sharply critical of his rival's actions related to the January 6, 2021, raid on the US Capitol by Trump's supporters, who believed Trump's false claims that he had won the 2020 election.

Biden, 81, was making his first set of remarks at the White House since his shaky debate against Trump last week led to calls for him to step aside as the Democratic Party's standard-bearer for the election.

After he stumbled over his words on the Atlanta debate stage, his remarks and comportment will be scrutinized for signs that he is up to the job of running for re-election and of governing the country for four more years.

## Five members of Georgia family killed after plane crashes in New York

**Masonville, New York** Five members of a family from Georgia who were visiting Cooperstown, New York, for a baseball tournament died when their small plane crashed in a wooded area of upstate New York, authorities said Monday. The single-engine Piper PA-46 crashed around 2 pm Sunday after taking off from Albert S. Nader Regional Airport in Oneonta, the Federal Aviation Administration said in a statement. The wreckage of the plane and the remains of the five people on board were found Sunday night in the town of Masonville, the New York State Police said in a news release. Drones, all-terrain vehicles and helicopters were used to search for the remote crash site, which was about 125 miles (200 kilometers) northwest of New York City. The victims were identified as Roger Beggs, 76; Laura VanEpps, 43; Ryan VanEpps, 42; James VanEpps, 12; and Harrison VanEpps, 10. The family was returning to Georgia after attending a tournament in Cooperstown, the home of the Baseball Hall of Fame, police said. The plane was headed to Cobb County International Airport in Atlanta with a fueling stop in West Virginia when it crashed, the state police said.

Georgia Gov. Brian Kemp said on the social media platform X that he and his family were praying for the victims' families and offered "our deepest condolences to all who knew and loved them."

## Why did the US judge call Karen Read's cop boyfriend murder 'mistrial'

**World.** A Massachusetts judge in the US declared Karen Read's murder trial "mistrial" after jurors deadlocked in the case with no decision despite over 26 hours of deliberation. The court came to this conclusion after the jurors sent notes to Cannone saying they were hopelessly deadlocked. The judge delivered Toney-Rodriguez instructions — sometimes referred to as "dynamite" instructions intended to blast apart deadlocked juries in Massachusetts, the Washington Post reported. Moments after Judge Beverly J Cannone called a mistrial, Norfolk County District Attorney Michael Morrissey's office announced that they intend to retry the case. The prosecutors said in a statement, "First, we thank the O'Keefe family for their commitment and dedication to this long process. They maintained sight of the true core of this case — to find justice for John O'Keefe. The Commonwealth intends to re-try the case," according to AP. According to the prosecutor, Karen Read, who was accused of drunkenly driving into her police officer boyfriend and leaving him to die in January 2022, was drinking with her partner O'Keefe before she dropped him off at a party at the home of Brian Albert, a fellow officer. They said she hit him with her SUV before driving away. While prosecutors were blaming her for Keefe's death, the defence lawyers tried to paint her as the victim in the case. The defence said that Keefe was killed inside Albert's home and then dragged outside and left for dead, reported Washington Post. They argued that investigators focused on Read because she was a "convenient outsider" who saved them from having to consider other suspects, including Albert and other law enforcement officers at the party. After the prosecutors said that they will re-try, defense attorney Alan Jackson said, "They failed. They failed miserably, and they'll continue to fail... No matter how long it takes, no matter how long they keep trying, we will not stop fighting," AP reported. The trial, which lasted for two months, centered around police procedures and the connections between those involved. Law enforcement officials admitted to gathering blood evidence using red plastic cups and attempting to remove snow to uncover evidence with a leaf blower. The primary investigator also confessed to sending inappropriate messages about Read from his mobile phone.

## Palestinian group Islamic Jihad fires rockets into Israel, no casualties reported

**Cairo.** The Palestinian militant group Islamic Jihad fired a barrage of rockets into Israel on Monday as fighting raged in Gaza and Israeli tanks advanced deeper in parts of the enclave, residents and officials said.

Islamic Jihad, an ally of Hamas - both of whom are backed by Iran - said its fighters fired rockets towards several Israeli communities near the fence with Gaza in response to "the crimes of the Zionist enemy against our Palestinian people". The volley of about 20 rockets caused no casualties, the Israeli military said. But the attack showed militants still possess rocket capabilities almost nine months into an offensive that Israel says is aimed at neutralising threats against it. Residents of several neighbourhoods in eastern Khan Younis, which is in southern Gaza, said they had received audio messages from Israeli phone numbers ordering them to leave their homes. "For your safety, you must evacuate immediately to the humanitarian zone," army spokesperson Avichay Adraee posted on social media platform X in a

call to residents and displaced people living in those areas. Some suggested this could mean Israeli forces will return to the area, which they left several weeks ago. The Israeli military said in a statement earlier on Monday the rockets were fired from the Khan Younis area. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said Israel was nearing its goal of taking out the military capabilities of Hamas, the Islamist group that governs Gaza and led the Oct. 7 assault on Israel that sparked the war. Less intense operations would continue, he said. "We are advancing to the end of the phase of eliminating the terrorist army of Hamas, and there will be a continuation to strike its remnants," Netanyahu said. Violence also flared on Monday in the Israeli-occupied West Bank, where the Palestinian health ministry said a woman and a boy were killed in the city of Tulkarm during an operation by Israeli forces. A day earlier, an Israeli strike in the same area killed an Islamic Jihad member. In some parts of Gaza, militants continue to stage attacks on Israeli forces



in areas that the army had left months ago. Israeli tanks deepened incursions into the Shejaia suburb of eastern Gaza City for a fifth day, and tanks advanced further in western and central Rafah, in southern Gaza near the border with Egypt, residents said. The Israeli military said it had killed a number of militants in combat in Shejaia on Monday and found large amounts of weapons there. Hamas said its fighters had lured an Israeli force into a booby-trapped house in the east of Rafah and blown it up, causing casualties. The Israeli military announced the death of a soldier in southern Gaza without

providing details. Israel's Army Radio said the soldier was killed in Rafah in a booby-trapped house - a possible reference to the incident reported by Islamic Jihad. Also in Rafah, the Israeli military said that an airstrike killed a militant who fired an anti-tank missile at its troops. Israel has signalled that its operation in Rafah, meant to stamp out Hamas, will soon be concluded. After the intense phase of the war is over, its forces will focus on smaller scale operations meant to stop Hamas reassembling, officials say. The war began when Hamas-led fighters burst into southern Israel on Oct. 7, killed 1,200 people and took around 250 hostages, including civilians and soldiers, back into Gaza, according to Israeli tallies. The offensive launched by Israel in retaliation has killed nearly 38,000 people, according to the Gaza health ministry, and has left the heavily built-up coastal enclave in ruins. The Gaza health ministry does not distinguish between combatants and non-combatants, but officials say most of the dead are civilians.

## US heightens security alert at European bases due to multiple threats

**Washington** The US military has raised the security protection measures it is taking at its bases throughout Europe, asking service members to be more vigilant and keep a lower profile due to a combination of threats it is seeing across the region. US European Command said in a statement Sunday that a "variety of factors play into the safety of US military community abroad." Increasing the threat level to Charlie, the second-highest of five levels for service members, is the result of a combination of events occurring across Europe, including elections in France and the UK, the upcoming Olympics and other major sporting events, and the ongoing wars in Ukraine and Gaza, according to two US officials who spoke on the condition of anonymity to provide additional details. But they said they were unaware of any specific

threat. Pentagon deputy press secretary Sabrina Singh would not say Monday whether bases in the Middle East, Africa or the Indo-Pacific were at similar increased force protection



levels. However, one of the officials said that many of those bases, especially bases throughout the Middle East and Africa, already maintain higher security levels. Force protection Charlie is instituted "when an incident

occurs or intelligence is received indicating that some form of terrorist action or targeting against personnel or facilities is likely." The highest of the five levels is Delta, which applies where a terrorist attack has occurred or when intelligence indicates terrorist action against a person or place is imminent, followed by Charlie, Bravo, Alpha and Normal, the minimum level.

Raising the threat level to Charlie means additional security measures will be in place at US military installations, but it's up to each commander's discretion to determine what those measures are. It also means service members and their families who are living in each community should be more aware of their surroundings and maintain a lower profile, one of the officials said.

## Hurricane Beryl 'extremely dangerous' as it gains strength in Caribbean

**Port of Spain** Hurricane Beryl unleashed powerful winds over the Eastern Caribbean on Monday, downing power lines and ripping roofs from buildings, as scientists argue that climate change likely added to how quickly the unusually fierce, early storm formed.

Beryl struck the southeastern Caribbean at Category 4 strength on the Saffir-Simpson five-point scale, spiraling toward the Caribbean's Windward Islands and threatening devastating flooding as potentially deadly winds picked up speed. This is an extremely dangerous and life-threatening situation. Take action now to protect your life!" The US National Hurricane Center said in a post on Monday, urging residents in Grenada, the Grenadine Islands as well as Carriacou Island to shelter in place due to an expected rapid increase in wind force. Across many islands that dot the Eastern Caribbean, residents boarded up windows, stocked up on food and filled their cars with fuel as the storm drew closer. The Miami-

based hurricane center noted that hurricane-force winds spread out from Beryl's well-defined eye by up to 40 miles (64 km), with still-dangerous tropical storm force winds extending outward by another 125 miles (201 km).



Beryl's rapid rise marks an unusually fierce and early start to this year's Atlantic hurricane season, including the earliest Category 4 storm on record. Scientists surveyed by Reuters see the powerful hurricane as a harbinger of an unusually active hurricane season made possible by record-high temperatures in the Atlantic Ocean. Climate change is

loading the dice for more intense hurricanes to form," said Christopher Rozoff, an atmospheric scientist at the United States' National Center for Atmospheric Research in Boulder, Colorado. Andra Garner, a New Jersey-based meteorologist, noted that Beryl jumped from a Category 1 to a Category 4 storm in less than 10 hours.

Leaders in the region sought to prepare locals for the worst, including the prime minister of St Vincent and the Grenadines, Ralph Gonsalves. He said he was expecting a natural disaster that could continue for days. "We have to wait this monster out," he said in an address to the nation in the capital of Kingstown, conditions around the main harbor worsened on Monday morning, with some damage to buildings reported, caused by intensifying winds. Video from the city showed waves crashing over a seawall and palm trees along the shore battered by the wind. Beryl's maximum sustained wind speed had risen to 150 miles (241 km) per hour by Monday afternoon.



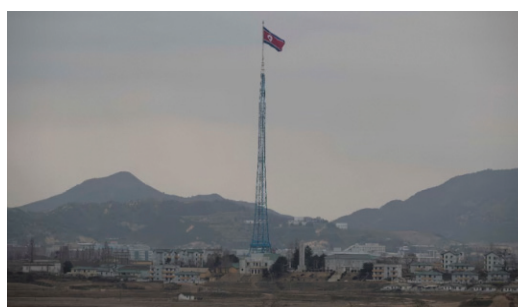
embarrassing fodder for the political opposition. "This entirely politically motivated lawsuit is devoid of merit," Fox News said in a statement. "Mr. Biden did not complain about (it) until sending a letter in late April 2024. The program was removed within days of the letter, in an abundance of caution." Consistent with the First Amendment, Fox News has accurately covered the newsworthy events of Mr. Biden's own making, and we look forward to vindicating our rights in court. "Hunter Biden was convicted by a jury in June of illegal possession of a firearm in a federal trial that again brought to light his years of addiction to alcohol, cocaine and crack cocaine, apparent in many of the images discovered on the laptop.

## North Korea tests missile capable of carrying super-large warhead: Report

**Seou** North Korea said it successfully tested a new tactical ballistic missile on Monday capable of carrying a 4.5-ton super-large warhead, state news agency KCNA reported on Tuesday. day earlier, South Korea reported the launch of two ballistic missiles by North Korea and said the second likely failed soon after launch, blowing up in flight over land. The KCNA report did not make clear if two missiles were launched and referred to the projectile in a singular term. It said the test of the new tactical ballistic missile, named Hwasongpho-11 Da-4.5, was conducted with a simulated heavy warhead to verify flight stability and accuracy. It did not elaborate on the nature of the simulated warhead. North Korea's report on the missile test was likely "deception" with one of the two missiles flying abnormally and appearing to show up in a field not far from Pyongyang, Seoul's Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) spokesperson Colonel Lee Sung-jun told a briefing. "Conducting a test-fire inland is extremely rare and it is highly likely to be false to claim it has succeeded," Lee said. South Korea's military conducted artillery drills at ranges within five kms

(three miles) of the Military Demarcation Line inside the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ) separating the two Koreas on Tuesday morning, an Army official said during the briefing. The resumption of such live-fire exercises near the border comes following the suspension of a military pact signed with Pyongyang after the North launched hundreds of balloons carried by wind across the border that dropped trash throughout South Korea.

The country's Missile Administration will conduct another launch of the same type of missile in July to test the "explosion power" of the super-large warhead, KCNA said in a rare disclosure of a future missile launch plan. Hwasongpho-11, or Hwasong-11, is a series of short-range ballistic missiles (SRBM) developed by the North that are otherwise known as KN-23 and KN-24. South Korea's military said on Monday the first of the two missiles launched by the North appeared to be a KN-23 that flew about 600 km (373 miles). The KN-23 is likely the missile that North Korea has supplied to Russia and was used in the war against Ukraine, according to Ukrainian



authorities who examined debris from missiles launched by Russia since December. North Korea and Russia deny any arms trade, but their ties have rapidly developed since their leaders met in September in Russia pledging closer military cooperation. Russian President Vladimir Putin and North Korean leader Kim Jong Un met again in Pyongyang in June and signed a pact on a Comprehensive Strategic Partnership that included a mutual defence agreement. South Korean officials have said North Korea's recent short-range ballistic missile launches may be intended to show its wares to potential

buyers. The second missile launched on Monday flew about 120 km, the South Korean military said. Given the trajectory and the location of the launch near the west coast, the missile likely fell inland in North Korea, South Korea's military said.

North Korea has raced to develop a range of ballistic missiles in recent years, which it names with the Hwasong identifier, including its intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBM). Hwasong is Korean for Mars. On Tuesday, KCNA reported the North's ruling Workers' Party Central Committee concluded four days of policy meetings led by its leader Kim.

The report said Kim highlighted the progress made in the industrial and agricultural sectors in the first half of the year and presented goals and strategy for the second half. In a departure from usual reporting on his fiery remarks on arms development and anti-US struggle at similar meetings, KCNA made scant mention of any discussion on defence or foreign policy, only saying Kim gave directions for its armed forces.



# Mouni Roy

## Flaunts Her Bombshell Curves In Leather Pants, Hot Photos Go Viral

Mouni Roy needs no introduction. She has become one of the highest-paid Hindi television actresses after appearing in the supernatural thriller series Naagin and its sequel, Naagin Apart from her outstanding acting skills, she is also known as a fashion icon. She never misses a single chance to embrace her distinctive sense of style and surprise her fans. Not only that, her social feed is often peppered with candid pictures and moments. Maintaining that trajectory, Mouni Roy set the internet on fire once again after she dropped a series of sizzling pictures Mouni Roy took to her Instagram handle and gave a glimpse of her latest shoot. The slew of pictures featured the Naagin actress flaunting her bombshell body in a bodysuit and leather pants. She captioned the post, "Old & new! Thank you @itisriti for the recommendations. Loving em x." Check out the post here:

Mouni Roy has come a long way ever since she made her television debut with Ekta Kapoor's Kyunki Saas Bhi Kabhi Bahu Thi. She became a popular name after she starred in Naagin. Mouni made her Bollywood debut with Akshay Kumar's Gold in 2018. Last year, Mouni was seen in Ayan Mukerji's magnum opus, Brahmastra. Recently, she was also seen in a music video titled 'Dotara' along with Jubin Nautiyal. Mouni Roy was also seen in the web-series Sultan of Delhi. She was last seen in Emraan Hashmi-starrer Showtime. In a recent interview, Mouni shared that it is projects like Sultan of Delhi and Brahmastra which changed people's perception of her as an actor. "Brahmastra was absolutely different. When you see Gold, RAW and Made In China, I had played very Indianised characters. Maybe after Naagin and Sati, people could only see me as a 'saree-clad Indian character'. So, for Milan sir to think of me as this cabaret dancer Nayantara, at a time when Brahmastra had not even released. I think it is an exciting time to be an actor where makers can visualise you in different roles. Such great parts are being written. I really feel fortunate to be offered these parts and be able to play them on screen," she told.



### Adman Freddy Birdy Recalls Virat Kohli Flirting Anushka Sharma In The 'Nicest Way', Actress Reacts



Anushka Sharma and Virat Kohli are one of the most powerful couples in Bollywood. Recently, both were seen showering love on each other after India won against South Africa in the T20 World Cup. On this note, Adman Freddy Birdy recalled an old interview in which he visited Anushka Sharma's residence in Mumbai. He revealed that during that time both Anushka and Virat were dating. Taking to his Instagram handle, he wrote a series of posts in which he revealed how the actress first didn't react to the question. However, he further revealed, "But then a couple of minutes later her mobile phone rang, and in the utter silence of the room I could hear the person at the other end flirting in the nicest way and making dinner plans with her and I could tell that it was Virat Kohli". Reacting to the post, Anushka wrote, "Freddy..." with hearts and hug emojis.

Anushka Sharma shared a special post after team India won the T20 World Cup 2024 and Virat Kohli announced his retirement from international T20 cricket format. The Bollywood actress took to her Instagram account and shared a solo photo of Kohli holding the T20 WC trophy. Anushka showered him with love and asked him to have some 'sparkling water' after the win and retirement announcement. "I love this man @virat.kohli. So grateful to call you my home—now go have a glass of sparkling water for me to celebrate this!", Anushka wrote.

Reacting to this, Virat Kohli expressed his gratitude and love for his wife, actress Anushka Sharma after India's T20 World Cup victory in the Caribbean a few days back. "None of this would remotely be possible without you my love. You keep me humble, grounded and you always say it how it is with absolute honesty. I couldn't be more grateful for you. This victory is as much yours as it's mine. Thank you and I love you for being YOU @anushkasharma," Kohli wrote on Instagram with photo of the couple.

### Richa Chadha And Ali Fazal Want To Opt For Free-Spirited Parenting Approach: 'We Will Inculcate...'



Richa Chadha and her actor-husband Ali Fazal are eagerly anticipating the arrival of their first child, expected any day now in July 2024. As they prepare for this exciting new chapter, the couple has meticulously planned every phase of their journey to ensure a seamless balance between their personal and professional lives. In a recent interview with HT City, Richa Chadha opened up about her aspirations for their child's upbringing. She shared her vision for the values and qualities she hopes to instill in their little one, emphasizing the importance of nurturing a well-rounded character. Richa Chadha, who recently captivated audiences with her vibrant portrayal of Lajjo in Sanjay Leela Bhansali's magnum opus Heeramandi, is brimming with excitement about the imminent new chapter in her life: parenthood. The actress revealed that she and her husband, Ali Fazal, are well-prepared for the unpredictable yet thrilling journey of becoming first-time parents.

Reflecting on their upbringing, Richa shared, "We have had very free upbringings where no restrictions were placed on us by our parents. So, I think we will do the same. We will also surely try to inculcate the spirit of curiosity in the child." In a recent interview, Richa Chadha, known for her role in Fukrey, shared that she is anything but idle these days. She is channeling her energy into enhancing the couple's production house, seizing the opportunity to scout new talent, engage with fresh creators, read their scripts, and bring their visions to life. This year, her production unit is set to bankroll exciting projects such as Girls Will Be Girls, Papita, Pinky Promise, and the adult animation Doggie Stylez.

## Rhea Chakraborty's 32nd Birthday, A Look At Actress' Career

Becoming a big name in Bollywood depends heavily on an actor's hard work and also their luck. Actress Rhea Chakraborty is one such name, who got the opportunity to work with big names but was unable to have a lasting impact. As she celebrates her 32nd birthday, let's take a look at the actress' career. Born in Bengaluru in 1992, Rhea belonged to a Bengali family. She is the daughter of an army officer. She started her journey in the world of entertainment through the small screen. In 2009, she appeared in MTV India's TVS Scooty Teen Diva, as a contestant and became the first runner-up. After auditioning for a VJ at MTV Delhi, she was selected for the job. She went on to host several MTV shows like Pepsi MTV Wassup, TicTac College Beat and MTV Gone in 60 Seconds.



She entered the film industry in 2012, with the film Tuneega Tuneega, a Telugu language release. In the film, she was seen opposite Sumanth Ashwin, Mrinal Dutt and Vasundhara Kashyap. It was directed by MS Raju while the producer was Maganti Ramchandran. The production banner behind the film is Padmini Arts. It was released on July 20, 2012. Then in 2013, she made her debut in Bollywood with the film Mere Dad Ki Maruti. Directed by Ashima Chibber, Rhea was paired opposite Saqib Saleem, in the film. The cast also included Ram Kapoor and Ravi Kishan. It was produced by Ashish Patil, under the banner of Y-Films. The music in the film is given

by Sachin Gupta.

In the following years, she went on to appear in lead as well as cameo roles in films like Sonali Cable, Dobaara: See Your Evil, Bank Chor, Half Girlfriend and Jalebi. Most of the films proved to be box-office failures. In 2020, the actress got embroiled in a controversy, after then-boyfriend Sushant Singh Rajput allegedly died by suicide, six days after she left their house. During that period, Rhea had to experience intense media scrutiny and criticism. She was arrested and jailed for 28 days. She made her return to the small screen with MTV Roadies: Karm Ya Kaand, where she appeared as a gang leader.

