

# INDIAN CHRONICLE

25 April, 2024 | Thursday | Volume No:12 | Issue No:63

Pages: 8+8

www.indianchronicle.com

Published from : Ranga Reddy (Telangana State)

₹ 3

## TSDCA seizes drugs with misleading advertisements

Hyderabad: The drug inspectors of Telangana State Drug Control Administration (TSDCA) in a series of raids on Tuesday and Wednesday seized two-medicines that were making misleading claims through advertisements. The DCA teams seized stocks of Cardinol Joshanda, a Unani medicine that claimed to clear heart blockages and Colinol-SPAS Tablets, an allopathic medicine, which claimed to treat disorders of menstrual flow. According to DCA, the Unani medicine with misleading advertisement came to their attention when they spotted that it was moving frequently in the market.

## Telangana 2024 Intermediate Results: Class 11 - 60.01%, class 12 - 64.19%



GNS News Agency, April 24

Hyderabad: The Telangana State Board of Intermediate Education (TSBIE) has released the results for both Class 11 and Class 12 examinations. Students can view their results on the official TSBIE website, tsbie.cgg.gov.in, as well as results.cgg.gov.in.

The pass percentage for Class 11 is reported at 60.01%, while for Class 12, it stands at 64.19%. Notably, female students have outperformed their male counterparts in both Inter 1st and 2nd-year exams. Among girls, the pass rate for TS Inter 1st year is 68.35%, compared to 58.5% for boys. Similarly, in Telangana Inter 2nd year, girls achieved a pass rate of 72.53%, while boys achieved 56.1%.

## Tamil Nadu Farmers Rally At Jantar Mantar, Demand Action On Crop Prices And River Interlinking



GNS News Agency, April 24

Approximately 200 farmers from Tamil Nadu staged a demonstration at New Delhi's Jantar Mantar on Tuesday, voicing their grievances against the central government concerning crop prices and the interlinking of rivers. The protestors, carrying what they claimed to be skulls and bones of farmers who had taken their lives, highlighted the dire circumstances faced by agricultural workers. Citing unfulfilled promises by the central government, the farmers lamented the failure to raise crop prices despite assurances of doubling agricultural income. Ayyakannu, the president of the National South Indian River Interlinking Farmers Association, recalled Prime Minister Narendra Modi's pledge during the 2019 elections to enhance crop profits and interlink rivers. In a bold declaration, the protestors asserted their intent to contest Lok Sabha elections against PM Modi in Varanasi if their demands were disregarded. Emphasizing their non-partisan stance, they clarified that their objective was to seek assistance from the Prime Minister rather than oppose him or align with any political faction. The farmers recounted previous hurdles in staging protests, alleging initial resistance from authorities until obtaining permission from the court to exercise their democratic right to dissent. Despite facing obstacles, the farmers reiterated their determination to make their voices heard, citing their ongoing struggle for fair treatment and economic justice. This demonstration at Jantar Mantar marked another chapter in the ongoing saga of protests by Tamil Nadu farmers, underscoring their unwavering commitment to advocating for their rights in the agricultural sector.

## Anurag Thakur calls Rahul Gandhi peddler of Owaisi's communal agenda

GNS News Agency, April 24

Hyderabad: Union Minister for Youth Affairs Anurag Singh Thakur on Wednesday alleged that Congress leader Rahul Gandhi was the peddler of AIMIM chief Asaduddin Owaisi's communal agenda. Addressing a press conference here, Thakur said both Gandhi and Owaisi were trained at the Aurangzeb school of thought. Claiming that the BJP stood for safety, independence and strengthening of women, he alleged that Gandhi and Owaisi stood for appeasement politics. Alleging that the Congress would distribute the wealth of the majority community among the Muslims, :

## Congress ready to set 'dangerous precedent' by implementing Inheritance Tax: PM

GNS News Agency, April 24

Raipur: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday slammed the Congress, saying that the party seeks to destroy the ordinary people of India economically and is about to set a "dangerous precedent" by implementing an 'Inheritance Tax' if voted to power. "Now, the Congress is saying there will be an inheritance tax on inheritance from parents... They will hit you with a higher tax rate till the time you are alive. And after that, they will impose an inheritance tax," the PM said while addressing a public rally in Chhattisgarh's Ambikapur.

Prime Minister Modi's



comments came hours after Indian Overseas Congress (IOC) Chairman Sam Pitroda, a senior party leader who is considered close to Rahul Gandhi, created a massive storm with his remarks on inheritance tax in America. "If a person has property worth US dollars 10 million, then after his death, 45 per cent of the

property goes to his children and 55 per cent of the property goes to the government," Pitroda said and added that there is no such law in India.

"Such issues should be discussed. We are talking about policies that are in the interest of the people, not just the rich," said Pitroda. Reacting strongly,

PM Modi said, "Congress simply aims to loot the 'hard-earned money' of the 'common people' to fill their coffers." Accusing the Congress of disrespecting the founders of the Constitution and pushing for "reservation on the basis of religion", PM Modi mentioned once again that the Congress' mentality symbolises that of the Muslim League. "Congress' anti-Constitutional tendencies aim at providing reservation on a religious basis for vote-bank politics," added the PM.

After Chhattisgarh, PM Modi is scheduled to address two public rallies and will lead a mega roadshow in neighbouring Madhya Pradesh later in the day.

## Congress will form government at Centre: Telangana CM

GNS News Agency, April 24

Hyderabad: Telangana Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy on Wednesday claimed that his Congress is going to form the next government at the Centre. Addressing a corner meeting as part of the campaign for party candidate D. Nagender in the Secunderabad Lok Sabha constituency, he exuded confidence that the Congress will wrest the seat from the BJP. "Secunderabad constituency's history shows that the party which wins the seat forms the government at the Centre. This time, the Congress will win this seat and form the government at the Centre," he said.

Nagender, a former minister and sitting BRS MLA from Khairatabad, joined the Congress last month and the party fielded him from Secunderabad, where Union Minister and state BJP chief G. Kishan Reddy is seeking re-election. Revanth Reddy recalled that in 2004 when Congress candidate Anjan Kumar Yadav defeated BJP's Bandaru Dattatreya, the Congress came to power at the Centre. He predicted that this would be repeated in the May 13 elections.

The Chief Minister also stated that after winning the Secunderabad seat, Nagender will get a key position at the Centre. He said though the BJP leaders who won from this constituency became ministers at the Centre, they did nothing for the city. He alleged that Kishan Reddy failed to get any assistance from the Centre when Hyderabad was hit by floods. While praising BRS candidate Padma Rao as a gentleman, Revanth Reddy cautioned him not to trust BRS chief K. Chandrasekhar Rao and alleged that the BRS fielded Padma Rao to humiliate him. He asked why the party chief and his son and



BRS Working President K.T. Rama Rao did not come when Padma Rao filed the nomination. They are not supporting him. They have mortgaged Secunderabad ticket to BJP, he said. He claimed that it was Congress governments which developed Hyderabad. He recalled that the Metro Rail project for twin cities was developed by the Congress, which also brought water from Krishna and Godavari rivers to Hyderabad and dared the BRS for a debate on this. Revanth Reddy, who performed puja at the Ujjaini Mahankali temple in Secunderabad before campaigning, said the party always maintained communal harmony. Asserting that god should be in the temple and devotion should be in the heart, he remarked that Prime Minister Narendra Modi brought god into the market. The Congress leader said PM Modi was trying to win elections by creating a communal divide. Former Indian cricket captain and Congress leader Mohammed Azharuddin, former MP Anjan Kumar Yadav and other leaders participated in the campaign.

## YS Jagan to Conclude Memanta Siddham Bus Yatra, to file nomination in Pulivendula tomorrow



GNS News Agency, April 24

Chief Minister YS Jaganmohan Reddy's extensive bus yatra under the Why NOT 175 initiative is set to culminate today, marking the conclusion of a dynamic and impactful journey across various districts of Andhra Pradesh. The final leg of the bus yatra will see CM Jagan traveling to Tadepalli after an anticipated meeting in Akkavaram later in the evening, signaling the end of a significant chapter in the pre-election campaign trail. The Memanta Siddham Bus Yatra, which commenced from Idupulapaya, has been characterised by a series of engaging public meetings, interactions with diverse communities, vibrant road shows, and enthusiastic receptions from the people along the route. CM Jagan's proactive engagement with the electorate has garnered widespread support and enthusiasm, with the bus yatra serving as a platform for dialogue, outreach, and grassroots connect. Upon reaching Parasurampuram via Kotabommali and addressing a public meeting in Akkavaram, CM Jagan is scheduled to proceed to

Visakhapatnam Airport from Akkavaram Helipad, eventually making his way to Gannavaram Airport before concluding the day at the CM's camp office in Tadepalli. As the bus yatra draws to a close, the focus now shifts towards the upcoming nominations in Pulivendula, underscoring the YCP's strategic planning and proactive approach towards election preparedness. CM Jagan's proactive stance in announcing Assembly and Lok Sabha candidates ahead of the official election schedule, coupled with the swift initiation of campaign activities, reflects a determined push towards consolidating support and momentum in the lead-up to the elections. With 15 major public meetings already under his belt and a 21-day bus yatra spanning 22 districts, CM Jagan's relentless campaign efforts and direct engagement with the electorate underscore the YCP's commitment to grassroots mobilization and inclusive governance as the electoral landscape intensifies.

## DSP dies in gun misfire at CRPF camp in Bhadrachalam

GNS News Agency, April 24

A tragic incident occurred at the CRPF camp in Pusuguppa village in Charla mandal on Wednesday, April 24, resulting in the death of DSP level officer Seshagiri due to gun misfire. The officer, who was serving at the Pusuguppa CRPF 81 Battalion camp, sustained a bullet wound to the chest and was immediately rushed to the Bhadrachalam Area Hospital for treatment. Unfortunately, Seshagiri succumbed to his injuries.

## SSC Public Exams results on April 30

Hyderabad: The SSC Public Examinations 2024 results will be released on April 30.

Speaking to media persons on the sidelines of the intermediate public examinations results here on Wednesday, Principal Secretary to Government (Education) Burra Venkatesham said the Education department has decided to announce the SSC Public Exams results on April 30.

The evaluation of answer scripts has already been completed by the Directorate of Government Examinations and processing of results is being carried out. A total of 5,08,385 students registered for the exams that were conducted from March 18 to April 2 in 2,676 centres.

## 'At least come for my funeral...', Cong chief Kharge's emotional pitch at rally on home turf



GNS News Agency, April 24

Kalaburagi: Seeking to strike an emotional chord with the people of his home district of Kalaburagi, Congress President M Mallikarjun Kharge on Wednesday appealed to them to at least attend his funeral if they thought he worked for them even though they do not wish to vote for the party candidate here in the coming Lok Sabha elections. Speaking at a poll rally at Afzalpur in this district, the 81-year-old also said that if they (people) did not vote for the Congress candidate, he would think that he did not have "any place" in Kalaburagi anymore.

The Congress has fielded Kharge's son-in-law Radhakrishna Doddamani from Kalaburagi, against BJP's sitting MP Umesh Jadhav. "If you miss your vote this time (if you don't vote for the Congress candidate), I will think that I don't have any place here for me and I could not win your heart," said Kharge, who won the Lok Sabha elections here in 2009 and 2014, but lost in 2019. "Whether you vote for us (Congress) or not, but at least come to my funeral if you think that I have done for Kalaburagi," the Congress chief said.

He also said that he would continue in politics till his last breath to "defeat" the BJP and RSS ideology. "I am born for politics. Whether or not I will contest the election, I will strive till my last breath to save the Constitution and democracy of this country. I will not retire from politics," Kharge asserted. Explaining further, he said retirement happens from a position but one should not retire from his/her principles. "I am born to defeat the ideology of the BJP and RSS and not to surrender before them." He also advised Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, who shared the dais with him, to follow his principles. "I tell Siddaramaiah repeatedly that you may retire as CM or MLA, but you cannot retire from politics till you defeat the ideology of the BJP and RSS."

## Harish Rao challenges Congress govt. to implement loan waiver by August 15



GNS News Agency, April 24

Former minister Harish Rao has ignited political tensions by issuing a bold challenge to the Telangana Congress government, declaring that he will resign from his MLA post if the government fulfills its promises of waiving farmers' loans and implementing guarantees before August 15.

Speaking to the media in Sangareddy, Harish Rao affirmed his acceptance of CM Revanth's challenge, emphasizing the opposition's duty to hold the ruling party accountable for its commitments. Harish Rao extended his challenge to CM Revanth, questioning whether the Congress government would deliver on its pledges by the specified deadline and daring the Chief Minister to step down if the promises remain unfulfilled. In a counter-response to CM Revanth, Harish Rao underscored his unwavering commitment to the welfare of the people of Telangana, prioritizing public interest over political positions. Drawing attention to past instances where promises were allegedly unkept, Harish Rao criticized the Congress party for failing to honor its guarantees, including the delayed implementation of welfare schemes such as the Mahalakshmi scheme for women and the Rythu Bandhu initiative for farmers. The exchange of challenges and accusations between Harish Rao and CM Revanth highlights the intensifying political landscape in Telangana, with contrasting views on governance, accountability, and public trust coming to the forefront. As the discussion unfolds, the electorate awaits further developments and insights into the delivery of promises and the credibility of political commitments in the state.



# Indian Chronicle

English Daily

## Gukesh's triumph

IN the world of chess, where strategy and intellect reign supreme, D Gukesh has etched his name in history. At 17, this prodigious talent hailing from Chennai stunned the world on Sunday by emerging victorious in the FIDE Candidates tournament in Toronto, securing his place as the youngest-ever winner of this prestigious event. His journey to the summit of chess excellence has been nothing short of remarkable. Defying the odds and surpassing the expectations of many, he exhibited a level of composure and maturity far beyond his years. Through 14 rounds of gruelling classical chess, Gukesh remained unfazed against seasoned opponents, showcasing a blend of tenacity and brilliance. Facing off against top-ranked players — from Hikaru Nakamura to Fabiano Caruana and Ian Nepomniachtchi — Gukesh stood tall.

Mentored by the legendary Viswanathan Anand, Gukesh epitomises the high stature of Indian chess on the world stage. Exuding humility and determination, the champion says that he is driven not by the pursuit of records, but by a simple desire to play his best chess. This augurs well for him as he prepares to take on China's Ding Liren for the World Championship title later this year.

Notably, this year marks a milestone for India as a record five players qualified for the Candidates tournament. Three of them — Gukesh, Praggnanandhaa and R Vaishali — hail from Anand's academy. As India celebrates their feats, it is imperative that we seize the moment to propel the game to greater heights. With more elite tournaments and a supportive ecosystem in place, the country can ensure that Gukesh's victory marks the dawn of another glorious era of Indian chess.

## 10 years since launch, how has the Centre's 'adopt a village' scheme fared in Delhi?

GNS News Agency, April 24

In 2014, as part of the Saansad Adarsh Gram Yojana (SAGY) flagged off by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Delhi's seven MPs — all from the ruling BJP — picked a village each under their constituency and were tasked with ensuring its development: proper roads, water supply or sanitation among other things. The timeline? Ensure one 'model' village by 2016 and five such villages by 2024. Fast forward 10 years, and it appears not much has improved on the ground — many of these villages still lack basic necessities. Moreover, a statement by the Centre, issued by the PIB in August 2023, shows that as of August 3 of that year, no village was adopted in Delhi in the last five years — under phases IV-VIII between 2019-2020 and 2023-24 — based on information uploaded by the respective states on the SAGY portal (saanjihi.gov.in). Going by the statement, a total of 12 such villages in Delhi were part of the scheme between 2014-16, 2016-19 and 2017-19. Situated near Asola Bhatti Wildlife Sanctuary, the village was adopted by BJP MP Ramesh Bhiduri. Due to the area's richness in red sand and silica, most residents — refugees from Pakistan — used to work in the construction industry until the government banned mining in the 1990s — leading to job loss. They now travel to Noida in search of work. Festive offer Saansad Adarsh Gram Yojana, Narendra Modi, Delhi's seven MPs, BJP, Power cuts, poor road infrastructure, Delhi's 'model' villages, water supply, indian express news Residents of these villages complained of the poor state of roads, overflowing drains, and lack of water supply. Photo from Bhatti Mines "Kaam-dhanda nahi hai yahan pe... sadkein bhi nahi hai aur naaliyaan bhi nahi hai," said Anil Rajput, a labourer. "The government has completely neglected us... it's like we don't exist." Ankush Kumar (19), who studied in the area's government school and is now enrolled in IGNOU, raised concerns about the school's poor state. "My whole family studied here... there has been no improvement in infrastructure — fans don't work and the school turns into a swimming pool every time it rains. It has no library or a proper playground..."

Others complained about the 'monkey menace' due to the village's proximity to the sanctuary. "There are more monkeys than people here. They bite the kids sometimes, and we have to rush them to the hospital," said 58-year-old Rama Rani. Residents also lamented the absence of a bank in their vicinity, forcing them to travel to Chhattarpur to withdraw money. They also complained of "filthy" public toilets and long and frequent electricity cuts, especially during summer. Two years ago, the road in front of Nitin Sahu's house in Sabhapur village, and his office where he used to offer DJ and band-baaja registrations, was clogged with sewage water after a drain overflowed. Pointing to a giant puddle of murky water, the 32-year-old said, "... Residents of some localities pooled in money to get roads in front of their houses elevated, as no resolution was provided even after complaining to multiple authorities... Some residents of my locality, however, were not ready to pool in money so we could not get the road in front of my house fixed." Located on the outskirts of the Northeast Delhi constituency, the village was adopted by actor-turned-politician and two-time MP Manoj Tiwari — also the only MP in Delhi to be re-elected for the Lok Sabha polls — in the initial phases of the scheme. The village mostly has a Brahmin-dominated populace, and multi-storey houses dominate its landscape. However, it sorely lacks sanitation facilities. "It's disheartening to see the living conditions become so unbearable in a village I was born in... I had to shut my office because the dirty water had started entering the premises," said Sahu, adding that he faced significant losses for months before he shifted his business online. Omprakash Jaiswal, who runs a juice shop, chimed in: "Roads are in bad shape and there are no streetlights... We switch on the lights of the nearby mandir to keep the roads illuminated." The village has only one senior secondary government school, which has a few classrooms, and is filled beyond capacity as students from nearby villages are also enrolled here. MP speak: When contacted, Tiwari said: "I adopted two villages in my constituency, Sabhapur and Khadijpur. We got work done like (installing) streetlights, (laying) roads and sewer lines in the first phase... But there were several hurdles as the government in the state and Centre is different..."

## A slice of rural Karnataka in Bengaluru's Jakkur



GNS News Agency, April 24

The model village, spread over around three acres, showcases life-sized village houses, complete with sculptures of villagers, showcasing the different communities and subcultures of rural Karnataka as well as professions that are prominent in certain districts. The model village, spread over around three acres, showcases life-sized village houses, complete with sculptures of villagers, showcasing the different communities and subcultures of rural Karnataka as well as professions that are prominent in certain districts.

The memory of rural Karnataka is not something that is often brought up in the rapidly urbanising heart of Bengaluru, where even areas once covered by farms are now home to tech parks and skyscrapers. But in Jakkur, the Mahatma Gandhi Institute of Rural Energy and Development houses something that preserves a semblance of the culture of rural Karnataka as it used to be — the Rangoli Gardens Model Village.

The model village, spread over around three acres, showcases life-sized village houses, complete with sculptures of villagers, showcasing the different communities and subcultures of rural Karnataka as well as professions that are prominent in certain districts. The life-like

effect is completed by ambient sound in the background. Some displays depict village professions that would have been common across the state and the country, such as small-scale goldsmiths and bonesetters, and the home of a village headman.

Others display quirks of architecture unique to parts of Karnataka, such as the mud roofs of homes in Kalaburagi district or the sloped tiles that Mangalore is known for. In other sculptures, the specialities of workers in different districts are depicted — such as the oilmen of Chikmagalur, who extract oil from seeds in small mills (often with the aid of animal labour), and the barbers of Koppal district, who traditionally ply their trade while sitting on the doorsteps of homes. A separate section of the display is dedicated to agriculture, depicting the practice of threshing, farmer's markets and cattle fairs. While some exhibits, such as a panchayat platform, are more well-known concepts, others may be obscure to those from outside the state. For example, one of the largest exhibits is dedicated to kambala, the iconic buffalo race of southern coastal Karnataka. According to Chief Operations Officer Ganesh V, the model village has been operating since 2018. A team of 200 artists led by the late TB Solabakkanavar (who completed a similar project in Pune as well) took three years to assemble the various displays. He says, "The main objective was to make the village culture known to the present generation, as they are not aware of how they used to be earlier... We have replicated it here so the present generation can see how the village culture was and how their houses used to be."

Ganesh estimates that the model village sees thousands of visitors every week, with schoolchildren making up the lion's share of visitors when the school season begins in May, while other visitors come from as far afield as Rajasthan and West Bengal. The model village also offers horse rides, while pottery sessions are available on the weekends. An attached cafeteria, the Rangoli Kitchen, specialises in the food of Karnataka.

## J P Nadda demands CBI probe into Hubballi college student murder



GNS News Agency, April 24

BJP national president J P Nadda on Sunday demanded a CBI probe into the murder of 23-year-old college student Neha Hiremath here recently. Neha, daughter of Congress corporator Niranjan Hiremath, was stabbed to death by her former classmate in the premises of her college in Dharwad on April 18 sparking widespread protests. Nadda visited Neha Hiremath's house and offered condolences to her family. Later, he said the BJP will cooperate if the investigation of the case needs to be handed over to CBI so that the victim gets justice.

Addressing reporters, Nadda said, "I offered condo-

lences to the family and came here to stand with them in this hour of grief." "From what I have heard from her (Neha's) father and the way her mother narrated the incident, it is such a heart breaking incident..." he added. Condemning the incident, the BJP chief assured justice to the family of the deceased.

Taking exception to the statements made by Chief Minister Siddaramaiah and Home Minister G Parameshwara, he said it would "influence and dilute" the probe. If the state police was unable to handle the investigation of the case, Nadda said he would request the state government to handover the case to CBI. "If the state government wants, they can refer the case to CBI and BJP will cooperate so that this innocent girl gets justice, humanity gets justice and such incidents do not recur in future... even her father has demanded for a CBI probe because he doesn't have faith in the state police and wants the investigation into the murder of his daughter to be transferred to the CBI," Nadda said. The incident snowballed into a political slugfest between the ruling Congress and opposition BJP in Karnataka. While the ruling party has tried to project it as an "incident with a personal angle", the saffron party suspects "love jihad" and said that it points to the "deterioration of law and order" in the state.

## No power in world can stop implementation of CAA, says Defence Minister Rajnath Singh during poll campaign in Bengal



GNS News Agency, April 24

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Sunday claimed that no power in the world can stop the implementation of the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA). Addressing a meeting for the BJP candidate in West Bengal's Murshidabad, Singh said, "We have made a law to give citizenship to those who have been persecuted in countries like Bangladesh, Pakistan, and Afghanistan for their religion. But Mamata Banerjee won't let it be implemented... The BJP is coming to power in the state. We will introduce the Citizenship Act. No power in the world can stop its implementation," he said. Singh also claimed that the BJP will get more than 30 Lok Sabha seats in Bengal this time.

Incidentally, Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee had recently claimed in a public meeting in Murshidabad that she will not allow CAA or NRC to be implemented in the state. During Sunday's meeting, the defence minister also criticised the Bengal chief minister for playing 'communal politics'.

"Bengal was once famous for its education, and culture but was now getting a bad name for communalism," he said in an apparent reference to the incident of unrest in Murshidabad's Shaktipur during the Ram Navami celebrations. Moreover, Singh also raised the Sandeshkhali issue to take a swipe at the Trinamool Congress-led government over the law-and-order situation in the state. She said, "The BJP has sold the country... Your MPs sleep in AC rooms. They don't talk with or meet people. Your government does not pay its dues to Bengal under the 100-day job guarantee scheme." Banerjee also raised the CAA issue. "Don't apply for CAA. If you do, it will make you a foreigner. No matter what, I will not let NRC and CAA get implemented

here. Who are they to say that you are not a citizen or what you should eat or not?" the TMC supremo quipped. "They have the audacity to decide what people would eat. Not everyone has to eat non-vegetarian food... Vegetarian food costs more than non-vegetarian food. So, 80 per cent of people in India eat non-vegetarian food. Those who eat meat, let them eat. Who are you to interfere with?" she added while campaigning in Balurghat for the second phase of Lok Sabha polls.

## Telangana schools prepare for summer break and infrastructure revamp

GNS News Agency, April 24

Hyderabad: As the bell rings for the last time on Monday, school students across the State will bid adieu to another academic year. Starting April 24, students in Telangana will embark on a nearly 50 day summer break.

The Summative Assessment (SA)-II exams for classes I to IX will conclude on Monday and the results will be declared on Tuesday, followed by a parent-teacher meeting. Students have to submit their cumulative records with their parent's acknowledgment.

The schools have already sent out invitations to parents to attend the last parent-teacher meeting for the present academic year to discuss their wards academic progress. Students will have summer vacations from April 24 to June 11, and fresh academic year i.e., 2024-25 starts on June 12.

With students away for vacation, the Education department has chalked out a plan aimed at providing basic infrastructure in the government and local body schools in the State. It intends to revamp the schools in the summer vacation and present a fresh look as students return to classrooms. In order to provide amenities, the department intends to spend Rs. 1,100 crore and has entrusted the execution of works to 'Amma Adarsha Patashala Committee', which have been recently constituted by the State government in each government and local body school.

## IMD forecasts humid, uncomfortable week for Mumbai and neighbours



GNS News Agency, April 24

The India Meteorological Department (IMD) has issued a yellow alert for Mumbai and Thane, stating the likelihood of hot and humid conditions, until Thursday. While scientists indicated that heatwave-like conditions are likely to elude the city — with temperatures slated to hover near 35 degree Celsius — citizens are in for an uncomfortable week owing to soaring humidity levels. After recording subdued heat, the city witnessed a spike in the temperatures on Saturday with the maximum temperatures touching 35.4 degrees, as per IMD's Santacruz observatory. According to meteorologists, the metropolis will continue to witness temperatures in this range, for the upcoming days. Speaking to The Indian Express, Sunil Kamble, director of IMD Mumbai said that a yellow alert has been sounded for the city as well as its neighbouring districts of Thane and Raigad until Thursday, owing to the influx of moisture-laden westerlies.

"The citizens will be experiencing hot, humid conditions and uncomfortable weather conditions, even though the temperature will remain in the range of 34 — 35 degree Celsius, owing to the high levels of humidity. We are witnessing such discomfort because of the blowing westerlies which bring in a lot of moisture. The presence of this moisture thereby leads to an increase in the humidity levels," explained Kamble.

Responding to questions, scientists maintained that the city is unlikely to witness a heatwave-like spike this week. For the record, a heatwave is sounded in coastal cities like Mumbai when the temperatures surpass 37 degrees for two consecutive days. Sushma Nair from IMD Mumbai said, "What the city is experiencing, in terms of the high levels of humidity, is a typical summer phenomenon. Currently, there is no development on the system which indicates that there will be a heatwave."

Last week, the city was reeling under a spell of a record shattering heatwave, with the IMD's Santacruz observatory registering maximum temperatures of nearly 40 degrees Celsius. At 39.7 degrees on Tuesday, Mumbai had recorded its hottest April day in over a decade. Even as Mumbai continues to swelter, several parts of the state are experiencing thunderstorm and lightning activity for the past weeks. For pockets of Vidarbha and Marathwada, the weather bureau has issued a yellow alert, sounding the likelihood of thunderstorms coupled with lightning and strong winds.

## All is not well in Chandigarh BJP? Senior leaders from city unit stay away from Sanjay Tandon's poll campaign



GNS News Agency, April 24

Most senior leaders in the BJP in Chandigarh, especially those who were in the race for the party's ticket for the Lok Sabha seat, have not joined the election campaign of the party's candidate, Sanjay Tandon. Even as Tandon has tried meeting all of them, the first thing he did after being declared as the BJP candidate, they have kept away from campaigning for him.

Since 2014, Tandon has been facing opposition within his own party. Because of acute factionalism in the party, a parachute candidate, Kirron Kher, was fielded in 2014 and 2019. Kher won, defeating Congress candidate Pawan Bansal. This time, however, owing to constant demands for a local candidate, Tandon was chosen. One of the closest contenders who had eyed the ticket and have been keeping away from Tandon's campaign is former Chandigarh MP Satya Pal Jain. Jain, who has a significant voter base in the Aggarwal community, has not been seen even once with Tandon ever since the latter was announced as the BJP candidate. He had pitched himself as a candidate of high winnability, considering lakhs of voters from the Aggarwal community and his past win from the constituency.

Tandon met BJP leader Satinder Singh a few days back. Singh, an RSS follower, holds a significant sway in the city's colonies. He led the BJP's election management in 2014 and 2019. However, he has not been given any election-related role this time. Arun Sood is the only major BJP leader who has been seen in an event with Tandon, at Kishangarh, even after the party held a welcome event for its candidate early this month. Sources said that Tandon had met and asked Kirron Kher to campaign for him. But Kher told him that if she had the health to join physical campaigns, "she would have again fought the election". But she said she would "certainly do soft-campaigning" for him. Davesh Moudgil and various BJP councillors have been conspicuous by their absence from Tandon's campaign. Certain BJP councillors are attending party meetings but not openly coming out to support the candidate. A senior BJP leader from Chandigarh said, "Tandon had met the dissidents but they haven't come forward to campaign for him. Now he has recommended that we have some new people for election management considering the situation."



## Abu Asim Azmi: The man behind Samajwadi Party's troubles in Maharashtra



GNS News Agency, April 24

The political crisis faced by the Samajwadi Party (SP) in Maharashtra may have ebbed for now with the party's Bhiwandi East MLA Rais Shaikh announcing to his supporters late on Saturday night that he is withdrawing his resignation. However, the man who is responsible for stirring the pot, party state president Abu Asim Azmi, has a history of not being able to retain MLAs on his side. His incendiary rhetoric and exuberant bravado have marked him as the enfant terrible of Maharashtra politics, but 68-year-old Abu Asim Azmi is a man with a significant following, largely among the migrants from Uttar Pradesh who have settled in various parts of the state.

To many Maharashtrians, the Mankhurd Shivajinagar MLA comes across as offensive, loutish and captivatively crude but for 25 per cent of Mumbai's migrant population, Azmi — with personal holdings of Rs 126 crore — represents their voice and is a touchstone of their yearnings and aspirations. Born in 1955 in the decrepit town of Manjeer Patti in Uttar Pradesh's Azamgarh district, Azmi — one of the seven sons of Haji Niyaz Ahmed — followed his disciplinarian father to Mumbai in 1973 to start his career.

Working in his father's embroidery unit in a crowded bylane of the Muslim-dominated Bhandi Bazaar, Azmi soon made the transformation to enterprising businessmen by starting a manpower recruitment agency that sends people to the Gulf and dabbling in real estate. Two decades later, the college dropout who finally managed

to complete his BA in 2001 from a college in Jaunpur, has made his mark in Maharashtra's politics. In a tumultuous two-decade-old journey, Azmi was arrested and honourably discharged by the Supreme Court in the Bombay blast case, was accused of inciting a mob to lynch two policemen in communally sensitive Bhiwandi, was stopped from entering half a dozen districts in Maharashtra, had his passport impounded by the police, saw his son picked up in Dubai for drug abuse charges, was beaten up in the hallow precincts of the Legislative Assembly and was one of the few politicians in the state who managed to win from two Assembly seats in the same election in 2009.

While Azmi is a political survivor, he has found it difficult to retain party cadre and leaders whom he has nurtured. In 1995, the Samajwadi Party entered the state Assembly with a bang, winning three seats. All three MLAs, however, left the party to chart their own political course due to differences with Azmi. Many MLAs who won on the party ticket subsequently broke away citing differences with Azmi and what is perceived to be his dictatorial attitude.

Azmi's zeal in taking on "fascist and communal forces", as he likes to describe most political parties, may be well known but his detractors accuse him of running with the hare and hunting with the hound. Rais Shaikh's resignation too came amid growing conflict in SP's Maharashtra unit over the manner in which Azmi — the only other party MLA in the Assembly — functions. Media-savvy Shaikh, who is seen as the party's progressive face, has increasingly had run-ins with the state chief on how to take the SP forward in Maharashtra. In spite of the criticism he draws, Azmi knows how to draw a crowd and, moreover, how to hold on to it. He has been diligently cultivating constituencies like Bhiwandi and Mankhurd and is one of the few Maharashtra politicians who has extensively travelled the state. While he has maintained a political niche for himself in the state for the last two decades, the changing dynamics within the SP after the leadership baton was passed to Akhilesh Yadav has led to hope among local party leaders in the state that they can have more say in deciding the polity of the SP in Maharashtra. However, it still needs to be seen if Azmi is in a mood to allow people to grow under him.

## From ice popsicles to Chicken Keema: How Byculla zoo's special menu helps animals beat the heat

GNS News Agency, April 24

From Chicken Keema to ice popsicles, as Mumbai experiences one of its most severe heat waves in over a decade, the Veermata Jijabai Bhosale Botanical Udyan and Zoo (Byculla Zoo) has rolled out a special menu to ensure their animals beat the blazing summers. Amongst the city's greenest pockets, the Byculla zoo — with its 6000+ strong tree cover — generally has a lower atmospheric temperature, in contrast to the rest of the city. Even so, scientists and officials from the zoo curate a special menu each year and conduct enrichment exercises which enable the animals to keep cool and healthy.

With animals regularly gorging on ice popsicles, iced meat cakes and hydrating fruits, officials said that these make for the staple delicacies, charting high on the annual summer menu. While the ice popsicles and iced meat cakes provide cooling and relief to animals experiencing heat, hydrating fruits contain high water content that balances the water levels within the animals. At the newly launched croc trail exhibit housing crocodiles, gharials and tortoises, the menu comprises Chicken Keema, fish and other forms of flesh.

Abhishek Satam, a biologist at the zoo told The Indian Express, that like in humans, the proportions of the animals' food is determined based on their age and weight. "We provide the animals with the best resources which facilitates the animals' mating process without any human intervention", added Satam. For Coco (female), Stella (female) and Jerry (male), the latest batch of baby penguins born in the zoo last November, the zoo has curated a menu consisting plenty of mackerels and other fish, in a bid to stimulate their growth at their tender age. However, living within a temperature and humidity controlled environment, the Humboldt penguins remain



unbothered by the summer heat. Responding to questions about the birds, Satam said, "Although the zoo has made artificial nests for birds to comfortably habitat and mate in, the birds prefer to build their own nest. The facility then provides the birds with worm compost made up of leaves and worms along with sunflower seeds."

In a bid to keep the animals moving despite the heat — ensuring their physiological growth — the zoo also conducts enrichment exercises, where animals are given treats for moving around and exercising. For Sloth bears, the zoo designs a honey trail laden with berries and honey, spread throughout the enclosure, which encourages them to explore the enclosure and dig through the half buried bamboo chutes. Tigers and jackals, meanwhile, are encouraged to stretch by tying pieces of chicken higher up on trees. With animals making a splash in the water amidst soaring temperatures, the zoo has also recently installed a special filtration system which cleans the water bodies in the zoo on an hourly basis and removes any waste, algae, charcoal or other materials that harm the animals.

## BJP Mumbai North East candidate Mihir Kotecha: 'I will work towards building Mulund Terminus'

GNS News Agency, April 24

Q: What is your vision for the North-East constituency? After being chosen as the candidate over sitting MP Manoj Kotak, how do you plan to convince the voters? Mihir Kotecha: I have set my objectives for the constituency but just to ensure that the expectations of the people and my vision are on the same page, I have started asking for suggestions. I will accordingly include them in my manifesto.

But at a primary level, I have decided that I will work towards building a Mulund Terminus because a lot of people from the Konkan region stay here and they travel at least three times a year. It could also be a starting point for trains heading to Kutch and Uttar Pradesh.

I also want to shut down the dumping grounds located at Kanjurmarg and Deonar because they affect people staying in the neighbouring areas. I have planned to take the dumping ground far away from Mumbai and to treat the waste, which will help improve our environment. I also intend to create a good tourism zone in my constituency by building a park to spot migrant birds and also an observation desk on the top of the hill near the Cypress area in Mulund. I believe the Eastern Freeway should be extended to Thane with exits in Ghatkopar, Vikhroli, Bhandup and Mulund and another exit connecting the Airoli bridge. I will work towards that because it will help us in decongesting the Airoli/Eastern Express Highway junction.

Q: Are you facing any problems internally, since you have replaced sitting MP Manoj Kotak?

Mihir Kotecha: Everybody is supporting me because every cadre of the party is working with a mindset that Modiji has to be the prime minister of the country. We are stressing Agli Bar Charso Par, and winning the North East constituency is important for that.

Q: Residents of Mulund are opposing two projects to accommodate people in their areas including the rehabilitation of Dharavi residents. How do you plan to help them?

Mihir Kotecha: I primarily believe that slum schemes can be successful only if the redevelopment is done in situ, which is to relocate them within three kilometres from where they are, only then will people agree to shift because beyond that you will disturb their social life. I have already opposed any land parcel of Mulund being given to any such project. Likewise, another project to accommodate project-affected people is proposed near Kelkar College in Mulund (East) and that project was initiated when Uddhav Thackeray was chief minister. We have opposed that since day one and now the matter is sub judice.

Q: What do you think of the BJP's alliance with the NCP because both parties have different ideologies? Do you think it will benefit or hurt the party?

Mihir Kotecha: It is a process of nation-building under the leadership of Narendra Modi-ji and whoever is aligning with Modiji's vision is more than welcome. I clearly believe that the process requires initiative from everyone, so all those parties who agree with Modiji's thought process have come here.

Q: You had sought suggestions from people to prepare your manifesto for the constituency's development. How many suggestions have you received and can you discuss some of the suggestions that the people of North East Constituency have put forth?

Mihir Kotecha: I have received over 300 suggestions but I am yet to analyse them. I had announced that I would take the suggestions till April 21. So I will go through those messages after that. By April 25, I will select a few of them that are doable and I will include them in my manifesto.

## Woman, 4-year-old son die after falling off 11th floor of building in Pimpri Chinchwad; suicide suspected



GNS News Agency, April 24

A woman and her four-year-old son died after falling from the eleventh floor of a residential building in Wakad, Pimpri Chinchwad early on Saturday in what appears to be a case of suicide, the police said, adding that the woman was under treatment for a mental

condition. Officers identified the deceased as Komal Sanket Awate-Harishchandre, 32, who lived with her husband in Texas, USA. She arrived in India on April 5 and was residing with her family members at Regalia Society in Yamuna Nagar.

Senior police inspector Nivrutti Kolhatkar of Wakad police station said the incident took place around 5.30 am when the woman's parents, father-in-law and mother-in-law were sleeping. Officers suspect that she may have taken the extreme step due to her mental condition. Local residents and security personnel rushed to the spot and the police were alerted. A team reached the location and took the two to a hospital where the doctors declared them dead. "We have lodged an accidental death report as per procedure and a probe has been initiated. We came to know from the woman's family that she was undergoing treatment for a mental condition," said Kolhatkar. The police said the woman got married in 2018 and moved to the USA with her husband.

## Acupuncturists who missed exam for registration stare at a bleak future

GNS News Agency, April 24

Several other therapists claimed that the unwillingness of the state to allow them another chance to clear the exam would render them jobless. Several other therapists claimed that the unwillingness of the state to allow them another chance to clear the exam would render them jobless.

A large number of practitioners of the integrative medicine technique of acupuncture face an uncertain future as a new rule mandates obtaining licences to practice in Maharashtra. Under the new rule, all practitioners had to go through a qualifying examination that was held on October 10, 2021, to obtain permanent registration. However, several acupuncturists could not attend the exam as the Covid pandemic was still on. "I was attending to Covid patients due to which I missed the test. The council should at least give us a second chance as our entire career is at stake," said a Mumbai-based acupuncturist who did not wish to be named. The practitioners claim that the unwillingness of the state to allow one more chance to clear the exams has led to many practitioners being unable to practise.

"There are people who have been practising acupuncture for decades. We pray that they give experienced practitioners a second chance as their livelihoods are at stake," said an acupuncturist from Mumbai. In an aim to ensure standard in acupuncture treatment, the state decided to regulate its practice. Under the Maharashtra Acupuncture System of Therapy Act, 2015, it was mandated that all practitioners register themselves with the Maharashtra Council of Acupuncture and clear a basic



proficiency test. Unregistered practitioners are liable to be punished with imprisonment of up to six months or with a fine of up to Rs 1,000 or both. Dr Rumi F Beramji, administrator of Maharashtra Council of Acupuncture, said, "All the acupuncturists were given a fair chance for the process by notifying them through all possible means. Despite the extension of one-and-a-half years, many did not pay heed and thus we came to this decision."

"Out of the 8,000 applicants, nearly 5,000 have cleared the test, becoming eligible for the registration certificate. The remaining 3,000 applicants and others who did not apply will not be allowed to practice without registration. The council requested the government to allow us to conduct the test one more time, but we did not hear anything from them. We clearly cannot go against the act," said Narayan Nawale, the Registrar at Maharashtra Council of Acupuncture.

## Indo-Canadians among those facing charges in Canada's biggest heist

GNS News Agency, April 24

Two Indo-Canadians from Brampton, who worked with Canada's flag carrier Air Canada, allegedly played key roles in a sensational broad daylight gold theft from Toronto Pearson International Airport in April 2023. This heist, valued at C\$23 million in stolen goods and cash, surpasses all previous thefts in the country. Pampal Sidhu, 54, who worked in the Air Canada cargo facility from which the 400-kilo gold shipment was nonchalantly driven off, has been arrested and faces multiple charges. Simranpreet Singh Panesar, 31, a manager with the airline at the time of the heist, is at large, and a Canada-wide warrant has been issued for his arrest.

It might sound like it's straight out of a Hollywood potboiler—think 'Ocean's 11'—and Peel Regional Police Chief Nishan Duraipapp described it as such, stating that it "belongs in a Netflix series." But what was even more remarkable was its simplicity. There was no crawling through AC ducts ('Mission: Impossible') or dodging crisscrossing laser beams ('Entrapment') to enter a highly secured vault. Instead, at a drab warehouse inside the sprawling airport compound, a duplicate airbill for a shipment of seafood was presented. Only, in its place, it was the gold housed in the same facility that was loaded up and driven off in a truck. Their confidence was striking. Panesar would even lead police on a "tour" of the facility. For months, the Canadian investigation couldn't make much headway. In fact, it was the Americans who provided the breakthrough in the case. In September last year, Durante King-McLean, the 25-year-old from Brampton who was the driver of the truck that drove off with the gold, was arrested in Pennsylvania with a cache of illegal guns he was trying to smuggle into Canada. Subsequent investigation linked him to the heist.

King-McLean's arrest provided additional leads, resulting in further charges and arrests. In all, nine people are facing charges, including Prasath Paramalingam, 35, Archit Grover, 36, Amit Jalota, 40, Ammad Chaudhary, 43, Ali Raza, 37, and Arsalan Chaudhary, 42—all from



the Greater Toronto Area. Four of them, including Panesar, are on the run. What happened to the gold? Police stated it was melted down, sold, and the proceeds were used to smuggle guns into Canada from the US—a lucrative illegal trade.

But the craziest thing about the whole affair is this. A day after police were patting themselves on the back for cracking the case and revealing details about the arrest, a video from Brampton went viral on social media. In that video, the camera follows a man in a gym's parking lot. "That's the guy right there," the person shooting the camera screams incredulously, "that's the guys there from the Air Canada heist!" "The guy" he is referring to looks like Pampal Sidhu, who comes out of the gym and sits in his car — like a regular 9-to-5 bloke on just another day. Police confirmed that Sidhu — and others arrested in Canada — had already been granted bail. "The individual on the U.S. side — King-McLean — is still in custody, so it does frustrate us, without a doubt, but as you know, we're one part of the system," Peel Regional Police Chief Nishan Duraipapp was quoted as saying by "Toronto Sun". Opposition leader Pierre Poilievre, a critic of Canada's revolving-door bail system, posted photos of all the accused and wrote: "Why are these gold thieves smiling 48 hours after their arrest? Because Justin Trudeau's catch-and-release laws let them out on bail!"

## Adilabad Collector tours remote village, urges locals to exercise franchise

GNS News Agency, April 24

Adilabad: Collector Rajarshi Shah urged residents of Neradigonda (G) village in Sirikonda mandal to utilise their right to vote without giving a miss. He along with ITDA-Utnoor project officer Khushbu Gupta toured the remote village for the first time to create awareness among locals over the right to vote

Speaking on the occasion, Shah requested the locals to participate in elections without fail on May 13. Those who aged above 18 years should exercise their franchise, he said. The Collector recalled that Sirikonda mandal comprising 13 villages recorded 92 per cent of voting. He wanted the villagers to achieve 100 per cent voting in the ensuing Lok Sabha polls. He said that poll-



ing centres were equipped with basic amenities. He stated that one could cast their votes from 7 am to 5 pm. District Youth and Sports Officer Venkateshwarlu, Neradigonda Tahsildar Vijay Kumar and other officials were present.



## Case against Shashi Tharoor for 'false campaign' against Rajeev Chandrasekhar



GNS News Agency, April 24

The case against Shashi Tharoor was registered based on a complaint lodged by BJP leader J R Padmakumar who accused the Congress leader of carrying out a false campaign against Rajeev Chandrasekhar. Senior Congress leader and Lok Sabha candidate Shashi Tharoor has been booked for allegedly carrying out a false campaign against union minis-

ter and rival candidate Rajeev Chandrasekhar, police said here on Sunday.

The case was registered by the Cyber Police here on April 15 but its details were revealed only today. According to police, the case against Tharoor was registered based on a complaint lodged by BJP leader J R Padmakumar who accused the Congress leader of carrying out a false campaign against Chandrasekhar during a television programme.

The complainant alleged that Tharoor, during the programme, had made defamatory statements against Chandrasekhar with regard to influencing voters of coastal regions in the upcoming Lok Sabha election. The case was registered under Sections 171-G and 500 of the Indian Penal Code and Section 65 of IT Act, a cyber police official said adding that an investigation is going on in the matter. IPC 177-G refers to raising false statement in connection with an election, while IPC 500 relates to defamation. Tharoor, who is contesting from Thiruvananthapuram Lok Sabha constituency, is yet to react on the registration of the case.

## Karnataka man rapes woman in front of wife, forces her to convert, case against couple

GNS News Agency, April 24

An FIR has been lodged against seven people in Karnataka, including a couple for allegedly forcing a 28-year-old married woman to convert to Islam through blackmail using her explicit photos. According to police, the woman in her complaint alleged that she was raped by the man in front of his wife, and was made to wear a burkha and not wear 'kumkum' on her forehead.

The accused, identified as Rafik, manipulated the woman and engaged in sexual activities with her. He then took intimate photos of her which he used to blackmail her, demanding that she convert from Hinduism to Islam. Police said Rafik and his wife made the woman move into their house in Belagavi and demanded that she comply with whatever they said. Belagavi SP Bhimashankar Guleada said the woman alleged that she was raped by Rafik at the house in front of his wife.

In April this year, the couple allegedly asked the woman not to wear 'kumkum' and said she should wear a burkha and perform namaz five times a day. The woman alleged that caste-based slurs were used against her and that the accused said she must convert to another religion as she belongs to a backward caste. Rafik asked



her to divorce her husband and threatened to leak the intimate photos of her if she didn't agree to his demands, the woman said in her complaint. She added that the couple threatened to kill her if she didn't convert. An FIR was registered in Saundatti against seven people based on the woman's complaints. They face charges under the Karnataka Protection of Right to Freedom of Religion Act, relevant sections of the IT law, the SC/ST Act, and the Indian Penal Code, including those for rape, kidnapping, wrongful confinement and criminal intimidation.

## Case against BJP's Hyderabad candidate for directing imaginary arrow at mosque

GNS News Agency, April 24

An FIR was filed against BJP's Hyderabad Lok Sabha candidate Kompella Madhavi Latha after a video went viral on social media which showed her directing an imaginary arrow at a mosque during a Ram Navami procession. In the video, which went viral last week, Madhavi Latha is seen stretching her arms into a position like drawing an arrow and directing it at a mosque which was covered with a white cloth. The complaint was filed against Latha at the Begumbazar Police Station under various sections of the Indian Penal Code, including 295A (anyone who intentionally injures or offends the feelings or religious beliefs of any group by word, writing, symbol, or image representation). "Madhavi Latha has been making derogatory comments against the Muslim community since she was announced as the MP candidate by the BJP party for the upcoming Lok Sabha elections. On 17-04-2024, during Shri Ram Navami Shobhayatra procession, Madhavi Latha made a gesture of drawing an imaginary arrow and shooting it at the Masjid," the FIR stated. "She expressed great joy after her heinous conduct of this action. This irresponsible action of her has hurt the sentiment of the Muslim community to such an extent that the pain and anguish has been felt by the entire community," it added.

The video sparked a massive political controversy with Hyderabad MP and AIMIM chief accusing the BJP of



disturbing the peace of the city. "BJP, RSS people have shown provocative actions. I appeal to the youth of Hyderabad to observe what the BJP and RSS are doing to the peace of Hyderabad, and utilise your vote accordingly. The BJP and RSS want to disturb the peace of the city. You want to spoil the people of Hyderabad. People have seen their actions. Is this Narendra Modi's Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas?" Owaisi had said. However, Latha did issue a clarification over the row, claiming that the video was edited. "It has come to my notice that a video of mine is being circulated in the media to create negativity. I would like to clarify that it's an incomplete video and even because of such a video, if anyone's sentiments are hurt, then I would like to apologise as I respect all individuals," she said in a post on X (formerly known as Twitter).

## Army developing missile systems to counter threats along China, Pakistan borders

GNS News Agency, April 24

The Indian Army, in a bid to enhance the country's defence capabilities against threats from enemy drones and fighter jets, is working on two crucial projects to develop indigenous shoulder-fired air defence missile systems. These initiatives are meant to bolster the armed forces' readiness to counter potential threats along the borders with both China and Pakistan by providing 350 launchers and around 2,000 missiles to the troops from both the Army and Air Force. According to defence officials, the first project focuses on the development of a highly effective laser beam riding Very Short Range Air Defence System (VSHORADS). This project involves collaboration between a defence Public Sector Undertaking (PSU) based in Hyderabad and a private sector company from Maharashtra. Both entities have received project sanctioned orders to develop prototypes domestically, signalling a significant stride towards self-reliance in defence technology. While the project is currently underway, officials have expressed optimism about the progress achieved so far, citing it as highly encouraging.

The second project is being undertaken by the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) in collaboration with selected partners, including Adani Defence and I-Comm Engineering Limited, a Hyderabad-based firm. The DRDO system, initially developed as a tripod-based system for targeting airborne threats, is now being adapted to enable soldiers to launch missiles from their shoulders, sources familiar with the development told India Today TV. India's pursuit of indigenous should-



der-fired missile systems dates back to 2009, with efforts focused on replacing and augmenting the existing inventory, primarily comprising Russian Igla-1M missiles.

Despite previous attempts to find a suitable replacement through tender processes, including the procurement of the Igla-S system from Russia, the project faced setbacks and was subsequently discontinued. However, there are plans to revive the project under the Make in India initiative, with discussions among relevant officials expected to take place soon. Indian forces have received over 48 launchers from Russia under emergency procurement measures, with an additional 48 launchers anticipated in the near future. However, the overall requirement of the armed forces exceeds 500 launchers, underscoring the urgency and importance of indigenous development initiatives in bolstering India's defense capabilities.

## Mamata Banerjee says BJP targeting her, nephew Abhishek: 'We don't feel safe'



GNS News Agency, April 24

West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Sunday accused the ruling BJP of conspiring against her and her nephew Abhishek Banerjee and said that they "do not feel safe". The Trinamool Congress (TMC) supremo also claimed that the BJP was targeting her and the TMC General Secretary. Addressing an election rally in Balurghat, Mamata Banerjee asked Trinamool Congress leaders and workers and the people of West Bengal to be on guard.

"The BJP is targeting me and Abhishek. We don't feel safe, but we are also not afraid of the saffron party's conspiracy. We urge everyone to be on guard against a conspiracy against TMC leaders and the people of West

Bengal," she said. Mamata Banerjee's remark came a day after BJP leader Suwendu Adhikari said that there would be a "big explosion on Monday which will shake the TMC and its top brass". Hitting out at Adhikari, Mamata Banerjee said, "There is a traitor who joined the BJP to protect his family and ill-gotten wealth. Let me tell him, his threat to trigger a chocolate bomb explosion is treated with contempt by us".

"We will counter him by bursting firecrackers. For us, firecrackers are unravelling discrepancies in the PM Care Fund and 'jumla' of crediting Rs 15 lakh in every citizen's bank account. He only peddles falsehood," she said. The Chief Minister also slammed the BJP for the change in colour of the Doordarshan logo and said that the Modi government is painting independent institutions such as Doordarshan in saffron hues. She also stated that the BJP's "appropriating the colour" was an insult to sacrifices made by monks and spiritual leaders of the country for ages. "Why did the DD logo suddenly turn saffron? Why were official residences of army personnel painted in saffron? Why was the uniform of police in Kashi (Varanasi) changed to saffron?" she questioned. "We strongly protest the decision (to change the colour of DD logo). It is another instance of the BJP's authoritarian rule. If it returns to power, there will be no more polls in the future. There will be one man, one party rule, and religious rights of different communities will be at stake," Mamata Banerjee added.

## Karnataka murder accused's father apologises, says victim was 'like my daughter'

GNS News Agency, April 24

The father of Fayaz, who was arrested for killing his former classmate Neha inside the BVB College campus in Karnataka's Hubballi, has apologised to her family and said he welcomes his son's punishment. Baba Saheb Subani, a school teacher and Fayaz's father, said on Saturday, "He (Fayaz) should be punished in a way that no one dares to do such a thing in future. With folded hands, I apologise to Neha's family members. She was like my daughter." A report news agency quoting Subani said he found out about the incident on Thursday evening and was shocked to learn about his son's action. Subani said that around eight months ago, Neha's family called him to inform him that Fayaz was troubling their daughter. He claimed that Fayaz and Neha were in a relationship and added, "Fayaz told me he wanted to marry her, but I refused it with folded hands." Fayaz's father also said he and his wife have been living separately for the past six years. According to him, Fayaz stayed with his mother and the last time he spoke to his son was around three months ago.

Baba Saheb Subani asked for forgiveness and said Fayaz brought shame to his home town. "I request the people of Karnataka to forgive me. My son has done wrong. He will be punished by the law of the land and I welcome it. My town has got a black mark because of my son. People of Munavalli, please forgive me. You raised us. Please forgive me," he cried with folded hands. Neha was the daughter of Congress Corporator Niranjan Hiremath. She was a first-year Masters of Computer Applications (MCA) student at BVB College. The accused,



Fayaz, was Neha's ex-classmate. CCTV footage from the campus showed Fayaz stabbing Neha several times with a knife and running away on Thursday. Fayaz's mother Mumtaz had also claimed that her son and Neha "were in love with each other... I have known about this for the last year". However, Niranjan Hiremath said his daughter was just friends with Fayaz and the two "were not lovers". He also said Neha rejected Fayaz's proposals and warned him that she would file a complaint if he did not stop. Hiremath alleged that his daughter rejected and refused Fayaz's proposals every single time that he made his advances. Neha's family has been alleging that Fayaz stabbed her because she rejected his proposal. They are demanding a death sentence for Fayaz. During questioning by the police, Fayaz claimed that he was in a relationship with Neha, but she had been avoiding him of late.

## Arvind Kejriwal's meals monitored, conspiracy to kill him, claims wife Sunita

GNS News Agency, April 24

Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal's wife Sunita Kejriwal on Sunday claimed that there was a conspiracy to kill her husband inside Tihar jail. She also said that every meal of the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) chief is being monitored by the authorities. "Cameras are installed on his meals. Every bite he takes is being monitored. This is so shameful. He is a sugar patient and is taking insulin for 12 years, but he is being denied insulin in jail. They want to kill the Chief Minister of Delhi," Sunita Kejriwal said while addressing an INDIA bloc rally in Ranchi.

Further in her speech, Sunita Kejriwal called the incumbent regime a 'dictatorship' for putting the Delhi Chief Minister and his Jharkhand counterpart Hemant Soren in jail without them being proven guilty. "They have put Arvind Kejriwal and Hemant Soren in jail. They've put them in jail without them being proven guilty. This is a dictatorship. What is my husband's fault? Is it providing good education, health facilities?" she asked.

She also said that Arvind Kejriwal has put his life at stake for the people of Delhi. "He is an IITan, he could have gone abroad, but he prioritises patriotism. As IRS, he took leave to do public service. He has put his life at stake for people," she said. Sunita Kejriwal also pointed out that Arvind Kejriwal, who was arrested by the Enforcement Directorate last month in connection with the



Delhi liquor policy case, has been a diabetes patient and taking 50 units of insulin every day for the last 12 years. "He is a sugar patient and he has been taking 50 units of insulin every day for the last 12 years. But he is not being given insulin in jail. They want to kill the Delhi Chief Minister. They cannot understand Arvind Kejriwal's thoughts. He is very brave. He is a lion. He is worried about 'Bharat Mata' even in jail," she said. He Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) has claimed that Arvind Kejriwal's blood sugar level has reached 300 and Tihar jail authorities are not giving him insulin. Kejriwal, who has Type-2 diabetes, was arrested by the ED on March 21 and will remain in jail till April 23, when the next hearing will take place.

## College student attacked with sharp weapon at Palampur bus stop; critical

GNS News Agency, April 24

A 19-year-old student of a government college in Palampur of Himachal Pradesh's Kangra district was repeatedly attacked with a sharp-edged weapon by a man after an argument at a shopping complex near the town bus stand. The victim, who sustained severe sharp injuries to her hands and head, was taken to RPGMC Tanda Hospital at Palampur and then referred to PGIMER, Chandigarh, where doctors are performing surgery on her fingers.

While the exact motive behind the attack is yet to be confirmed, sources said the assailant, Sumit Chaudhary, 28, and the victim had been in a relationship for the last four years but the woman stopped interacting with him. Chaudhary, who is from the Nagrota area in Kangra, is a contractual employee with the Public Works Department (PWD). When contacted, Shalini Agnihotri, Superintendent of Police, Kangra, said, "The assailant is in police custody. During interrogation, he claimed the victim had

started ignoring him and blocked him from her social media accounts. Though he claimed to have been in a relationship with her, we cannot solely rely on his statements".

"The victim was referred to PGIMER. We are coordinating with PGI doctors who have advised us to wait for some time before recording the victim's statement," added Agnihotri. A video of the incident has gone viral, triggering outrage among netizens. In the video, the assailant carrying a sharp-edged weapon can be seen intercepting the victim on the stairs and starting an argument with her. When the victim resists, the accused attacks her at least nine to ten times. The video, shot by onlookers, also shows the man threatening passersby if they intervene, but once the victim stops him, several people apprehend the suspect and beat him up. Meanwhile, the Opposition Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) has attacked the Congress-led state government, claiming the "law and order situation in Himachal Pradesh has collapsed". State BJP chief Dr Rajeve Bindal said, "



## UK family leaves eatery without paying bill of Rs 34,000, police complaint filed



GNS News Agency, April 24

In a shocking incident, a family of eight members left an eatery in the UK without paying the hefty bill of 329 pounds ( 34,000 approx) they incurred. The incident came to light after the eatery, Bella Ciao Swansea posted about it on social media. Taking to Facebook, the eatery wrote, "To the family who left the restaurant this evening without paying their £329 bill shame on you!!"

"The lady tried to pay with a savings account card which got declined twice, she then said her son would

wait inside while she went out to get her "other card" of course she does not return and then the son receives a phone call and says he has to go and does a runner... We had no way of contacting you as the number you used to make the reservation was fake! So we had no choice but to report it to the police..." the post read further.

Since being posted, the post has received several reactions online. One user wrote, "All restaurants should change, pay when you order. I don't mind paying when ordering..." Meanwhile, another user who claimed he was seated beside the family, wrote, "A group of us were on the table next to them. We were absolutely disgusted with what happened... There are not many places that they could be living at, get the police in there. Or are they immune from the law? Makes my blood boil..."

Following the incident, the restaurant also filed a case against the family. Providing an update to the incident, it wrote in the same post, "UPDATE: Thank you to everyone who has shared this post and messaged us with information, the police are aware of who they are we just hope they are finally caught and do not do this to anymore businesses"

## Gukesh Dommaraju set to create history as youngest World Chess Championship contender

GNS News Agency, April 24

Indian grandmaster Gukesh Dommaraju will have the opportunity to create history on Sunday by becoming the youngest player to vie for the world chess championship, as he ended the penultimate round of the ongoing Candidates tournament in Toronto as the sole leader. The breakthrough came on Saturday evening at the venue, The Great Hall, as Gukesh outplayed his French opponent Alireza Firouzja in the Open section at the 2024 Candidates Tournament, held by the International Chess Federation or Fédération Internationale des Échecs or FIDE. The winner of the tourney will play for the world crown against its holder Ding Liren of China, later this year. Asked about his thoughts about his final game during the post-game press conference in Toronto, Gukesh said, "I'll just play a good game tomorrow and see what happens."

Asked about the game plan, he said, "I guess I'll go with the same strategy, try and play a good game. I've managed so far and hopefully tomorrow I'll be able to follow the plan." There's a potential for a two- or three-way tie for the lead on Sunday, which could result in a tie-breaking game on Monday, but Gukesh wasn't concerned about that but on the immediate task before him, as he said, "It's too early to think about it. I'm focused only on tomorrow's game." While his lack of experience has been raised as a potential factor going into the stretch, Gukesh felt his youth may have helped him to retain concentration through the gruelling tourney.

Gukesh, just 17, will enter play on Sunday with 8.5 points after 13 rounds, but just half a point ahead of his two American challengers Fabiano Caruana and Hikaru Nakamura and Russian Ian Nepomniachtchi, who was runner-up at the 2023 world championship and is play-



ing under the FIDE flag. Nepomniachtchi and Nakamura played out a draw while Caruana bested another Indian teenager Praggnanandhaa R. With 6 points so far, Praggnanandhaa is out of the contest as is Santosh Gujarathi Vidit, at 5.5.

India's challenge in the Women's category has faded, with Vaishali Rameshbabu and Koneru Humpy, with 6.5 points each, out of contention. Vaishali, though, has struck a winning streak in the latter days of the tourney, with four victories in a row, the latest coming on Saturday against Lei Tingjie of China. That was a setback for the latter's hope of catching the leader of the pack, compatriot Tan Zhongyi, who has 8.5 points, a full point ahead and needing just a draw on the last day to challenge world champion Wenjun Ju. The tournament is being held for the first time in Canada and could reach a tense conclusion on Saturday, as Gukesh plays Nakamura with Nepomniachtchi against Fabiano Caruana. Each of the four top players on the leaderboard will be hoping for a positive outcome, though Gukesh alone has the chance to clinch with a win.

## Donald Trump VP contender Kristi Noem indicates rape survivors should be forced to give birth



GNS News Agency, April 24

South Dakota Governor and Donald Trump VP contender Kristi Noem says that women who are victims of rape or incest should be denied access to abortion services, and the laws should be determined by the state. In an interview on CNN's "State of the Union," Noem recently expressed her alignment with former President Trump on the contentious issue of abortion.

Dana Bash, the CNN anchor, inquired whether Noem still supported Trump's position on allowing states to determine their own abortion laws. As, Noem had previously co-sponsored legislation at the federal level that sought to ban abortion. Noem explained CNN, "The environment changed when Roe v. Wade was overturned. That returned the power back to the States, which is appropriate, and Donald Trump is exactly right. Every state's laws will look different based on what the people in those states want to be their law when it comes to abortion." "And

we should be focusing on these women that are in crisis and they're in unprecedented situations, and they need help and support and all the information that they can possibly have. So, my state's laws may look different than what's going on in California or Arizona or New York and I think that's entirely appropriate." Trump rejected federal intervention on abortion

The former president himself recently expressed his belief that states should have the autonomy to decide their abortion policies. This diverges from the views of some fellow Republicans who advocate for a federal ban on abortion. Trump clarified that he would not sign such a federal ban. Following the overturning of Roe v. Wade, South Dakota enacted a trigger law that immediately took effect. Under this law, doctors who perform abortions in the state could face prosecution. The state's abortion ban allows exceptions only when necessary to preserve the life of the pregnant person. Noem firmly asserted, "I may be pro-life but that doesn't necessarily mean that I'm a dictator and that I get to decide that. Donald Trump recognizes the constitutional authority of the states and I love that. I love that we have somebody running for president who actually follows our Constitution and recognizes on this issue, that having that decision made at the state level is the appropriate decision." When pressed about whether South Dakota's abortion law goes too far, Noem defended the state's position: "But I think that our law today is what South Dakota wants, and they'll continue to have that debate, and I'll continue to follow through on my role, which is to make sure the will of the people is enforced," she argued.

## Russia warns Pakistan of banning rice imports over safety concerns

GNS News Agency, April 24

Russia has warned Pakistan it might ban rice imports if their phytosanitary concerns are not addressed in future consignments, Dawn reported. The Federal Service for Veterinary and Phytosanitary Surveillance (FSVPS) of the Russian Federation issued a notification regarding violations of international and Russian phytosanitary requirements over a shipment of rice imported from Pakistan.

The notification, numbered FS-SA-3/6592 and dated April 2, 2024, highlights the presence of a quarantine organism, "Megaselia scalaris (Loew)," in the rice consignment, Dawn reported. The FSVPS has asked the plenipotentiary and trade representative at the Pakistani embassy in Russia for an immediate investigation into the matter.

A copy of the notice issued by the Russian authorities shows that the FSVPS has asked the relevant official in the Pakistani embassy to prevent such violations in the future and emphasized the importance of adhering to phytosanitary standards to ensure the safety of agricultural products traded between countries, Dawn reported. Meanwhile, the trade wing of Pakistani embassy in Moscow has forwarded the English translation of the Russian authority's letter to the Department of Plant Protection (DPP) in the Ministry of Food Security and other relevant government offices.



The letter by the embassy to the DPP states, "In view of the above, it is requested that an investigation may be conducted immediately and the results of the investigation may please be shared with FSVPS in order to avoid any possible ban on rice exports in the future." Meanwhile, the FSVPS has also sent an official communication to the director of DPP, seeking a higher degree of cooperation in the field of plant quarantine, Dawn reported. Russia had previously imposed a ban on similar grounds in 2019, which remained in place for around two years. It was lifted after a series of negotiations between officials of both sides. Earlier, in December 2006, Russia also stopped the import of rice from Pakistan for not meeting food safety standards.

## Maldives President Muizzu-led PNC inches closer towards landslide win in polls

GNS News Agency, April 24

Maldivian President Mohamed Muizzu appeared to be inching towards a landslide victory with his People's National Congress party bagging 59 seats as the counting of votes is underway for the crucial parliamentary election, which was seen as a litmus test for the pro-Beijing politician whose policies are being closely watched by both India and China amidst regional power dynamics.

Voting for the 20th People's Majlis was conducted on Sunday from 8:00 am to 5:30 pm local time. Election officials sealed the ballot boxes across the country as voting hours ended at 5:30 pm, adhadhu.com reported.

According to information released by the Elections Commission (EC), 207,693 people cast their ballots as of 5:00 pm local time, making for a voter turnout of 72.96 per cent. This includes 104,826 men and 102,867 women. A total of 284,663 people were eligible to vote. A total of 602 ballot boxes were set up in the Maldives and three other countries for the parliamentary election. Polling stations were also open in 34 resorts, prisons, and other industrial islands. The countries in which ballot boxes were placed for voting are Thiruvananthapuram in India, Colombo in Sri Lanka and Kuala Lumpur in Malaysia, psmnews.mv reported. Parliamentarians will be elected to a total of 93 constituencies, with 368 candidates contesting from six parties, including Muizzu's People's National Congress (PNC), the main opposition Maldivian Democratic Party (MDP) and 130 independents. According to a sun.mv report, of the 203 seats where counting is complete, the People's National Congress (PNC) led by Muizzu bagged 59 seats, followed by Maldivian Democratic Party (MDP) at 10 seats and Independents 9 seats. Maldives Development Alliance (MDA) won two seats, while Jumhooree Party (JP) got one. The Democrats, Maldives National Party (MNP) and Adhaalath Party (AP) are yet to open their accounts.

PNC has fielded 90 candidates, MDP 89, Democrats 39, Jumhoory Party (JP) 10, candidates, Maldives Development Alliance (MDA) 4, Adhaalath Party (AP) 4, and Maldives National Party (MNP) 2 nominees. The election is crucial for Muizzu, seen as a pro-China politician, as just a few days ahead of the polls, the opposition parties demanded a probe and impeachment of the president following a leaked report of his alleged corruption from 2018, a charge dismissed by him. Besides, since Muizzu came to office, lawmakers have blocked three of his nominees to the cabinet. Muizzu cast his vote at the polling station in Thajuddin School at 8:40 am. Speaking to reporters after casting the ballot, he urged every citizen to exercise their right to vote as soon as possible, news portal edition.mv reported. "Voting is a constitutional



right and responsibility afforded to every citizen. All citizens should come out and exercise their right to vote as soon as possible. It is the responsibility of eligible voters to not wait until evening and quickly attend their respective polling stations to cast ballots," he said. No major issues or complaints were noted during the voting, the EC said. "Nothing major has been noted as a complaint up until now. There have been complaints about showing ballot papers. That is, complaints about ballots put in the box without being folded," Hassan Zakariyya, EC member and spokesperson, was quoted as saying by Adhadhu news portal. Such complaints have also been few, he said. Former President Ibrahim Mohamed Solih, who now serves as a top advisor at the main opposition MDP, cast his ballot at a polling station in Male. Speaking to reporters outside the polling station, Solih says he sees MDP winning a clear majority in the election, sun.mv news portal reported. "We hope the MDP will be able to secure a good majority by the end of today's voting. We have been seeing this happening today and during the campaign," he said. The election in the Maldives also came amidst deteriorating ties between the archipelago nation and India since Muizzu, 45, assumed power in November last year. During last year's presidential election, he had maintained a strident anti-India stand. While India was forced to withdraw most of its military personnel manning three aviation platforms in the country, Muizzu travelled to China in January and met top Chinese leaders, including President Xi Jinping. China and the Maldives also signed a defence cooperation agreement and several other infrastructure development projects. The Maldives is India's key maritime neighbour in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR) and occupies a special place in its initiatives like 'SAGAR' (Security and Growth for All in the Region) and the 'Neighbourhood First Policy' of the Indian government. On the other hand, China is expanding its footprints in IOR through its 'debt trap' diplomacy and 'String of Pearls' approach, a strategic initiative to create a network of military and commercial establishments in countries falling on the Indian Ocean.

## Iran demonstrated power during operation against Israel: Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei

GNS News Agency, April 24

Amid heightened tensions with Israel, Iran's Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei on Sunday boasted about the recent attack on the Benjamin Netanyahu-led country. Thanking Iran's armed forces, Khamenei said that the country had demonstrated its power regardless of how many targets were hit. "How many missiles were launched and how many of them hit their target is not the primary question, what really matters is that Iran demonstrated its power during that operation," said Khamenei, reported Iran's official news agency. "In the recent operation, the armed forces managed to minimise costs and maximise gains," Khamenei added, urging military officials to "ceaselessly pursue military innovation and learn the enemy's tactics".

On April 13, Iran launched its first ever direct attack on Israel. Iranian forces attacked with more than 300 missiles and drones, as a retaliation after claiming that Israel killed its officials in the Damascus embassy. Several officials including a senior commander of the Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps' overseas Quds Force were killed in an airstrike on April 1 while they were attending a meeting in the Damascus embassy compound. During the April 13 attack, Israel's defence system prevented massive damage as most of the Iranian missiles and drones were



shot down. Israel received support from its ally, the United States. Having attacked Israel, Iran then warned the country from escalating the conflict further and said the matter should be deemed concluded.

However, despite international pressure on Israel to not attack Iran, on Friday, explosions echoed over the Iranian city of Isfahan in what sources said was an Israeli attack. Tehran played down the incident and said it had no plans for retaliation - a response that appeared gauged towards averting a full-blown war and massive unrest in the Middle East region.

## Prince Harry and Meghan Markle keeping their kids, Archie and Lilibet out of Netflix shows

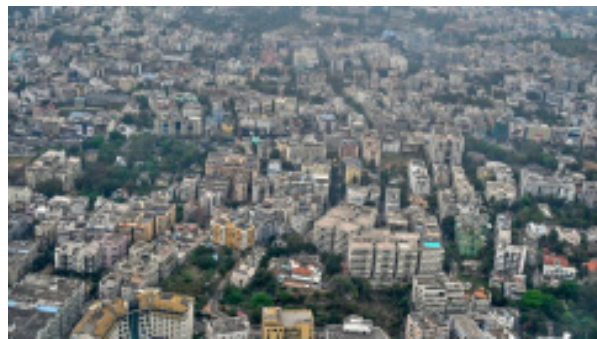
GNS News Agency, April 24

The paparazzi may be all over the place, but that won't mean the camera will focus on their kids, Archie and Lilibet, as Prince Harry and Meghan Markle are preparing their Netflix projects for one that showcases their lives as a couple, according to a report by the Sun. Prince Harry's fight for police protection in the U.K. has received another setback. A judge on Monday, April 15, 2024 rejected his request to appeal an earlier ruling upholding a government panel's decision to limit his access to publicly funded security after he quit as a working member of the royal family. Prince Harry's fight for police protection in the U.K. has received another setback. A judge on Monday, April 15, 2024 rejected his request to appeal an earlier ruling upholding a government panel's decision to limit his access to publicly funded security after he quit as a working member of the royal family. (AP Photo/Rebecca Blackwell, File)(AP) Meghan is currently working on a lifestyle show, which made an early splash last week with the delivery of 50 pots of her American Riviera Orchard strawberry jam to selected influencers. "Harry and Meghan have not always agreed on how much they should expose their children to the media, but in this case,

Harry has clearly won," an insider revealed. DailyMail recently published official paperwork indicating that Meghan's production crew of 50 is filming not at her and Prince Harry's Montecito home, but rather at a nearby property located just two miles away. The authorized filming period began on Sunday, April 14, and will continue until June 25. Aerial photographs of the shoot location depict the property's driveway filled with SUVs, production tents, and an RV. The property, owned by Tom and Sherrie Cipolla—successful businesspeople known locally for supporting charitable causes—is situated in a gated community surrounded by lemon and avocado orchards. Meghan's new show aims to explore "the joys of cooking, gardening, entertaining, and friendship." Both her series and Harry's polo-focused show are unlikely to delve into further grievances or allegations about royal family behaviour. In other news, the Duke of Sussex recently secured a victory in the High Court trial against the publisher of The Sun, News Group Newspapers (NGN), regarding unlawful information gathering allegations. NGN's attempt to postpone a potential full High Court trial was unsuccessful. King Charles III's younger son alleges that he was targeted by journalists and private investigators working for NGN.



## Home loan, other borrowers can switch to fixed-rate regime: RBI



The Reserve Bank on August 10 said it will come out with a framework allowing borrowers to switch to fixed interest rate from floating interest rate, a move that would provide relief to borrowers of home, auto and other loans reeling under the impact of high interest rate. Unveiling the bi-monthly monetary policy, Reserve Bank Governor Shaktikanta Das said under the framework, to be put in place shortly, the lenders will have to clearly communicate with the borrowers about tenor and EMI.

"The supervisory reviews undertaken by the Reserve Bank and the feedback and references from members of public have revealed several instances of unreasonable elongation of tenor of floating rate loans by lenders without proper consent and communication to the borrowers," he said. To address the issue, it is proposed to put in place a proper conduct framework to be implemented by all Regulated entities to address the issues faced by borrowers, he said. "The framework envisages that lenders should clearly communicate with the borrowers for resetting the tenor and/or EMI, provide options of switching to fixed rate loans or foreclosure of loans, transparent disclosure of various charges incidental to the exercise of these options, and proper communication of key information to the borrowers," he said. The detailed guidelines in this regard would be issued shortly, he said. To enable the Infrastructure Debt Funds to play a greater role in financing of the infrastructure sector and to move towards the regulatory objective of harmonisation of regulations applicable to various categories of NBFCs, Mr. Das said a review of the extant regulatory framework for IDFs has been undertaken in consultation with the government.

The revised framework envisages withdrawal of the

requirement of a sponsor for the IDFs; permission to finance Toll Operate Transfer projects (ToT) as direct lenders, access to ECBs; and making tripartite agreement optional for PPP projects, he said. The Infrastructure Debt Fund was created as a separate category of NBFCs in 2011.

With rapid progress in digitalization, Mr. Das said India has embraced the concept of digital public infrastructure which encourages FinTech companies and startups to create and provide innovative solutions in payments, credit, and other financial activities. For digital credit delivery, the data required for credit appraisal are available with different entities like Central and State governments, account aggregators, banks, credit information companies, digital identity authorities, etc, he said.

However, he said, they are in separate systems, creating hindrance in frictionless and timely delivery of rule-based lending. To address this situation, a pilot project for digitalisation of Kisan Credit Card (KCC) loans of less than ₹1.60 lakh was started in September 2022, he said. The pilot tested end-to-end digitalisation of the lending process in a paperless and hassle-free manner. The KCC pilot is currently underway in select districts of Madhya Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, U.P., Maharashtra and the initial results are encouraging. The pilot also enables doorstep disbursement of loans in assisted or self-service mode without any paperwork. A similar pilot is being carried out for dairy loans based on milk pouring data with Amul in Gujarat. Based on the learnings from the above pilots and to expand the scope to all types of digital loans, he said, a digital Public Tech Platform is being developed by the Reserve Bank Innovation Hub (RBIH). Explained | RBI's draft guidelines on penal charges for loans. The Platform would enable delivery of frictionless credit by facilitating seamless flow of required digital information to lenders, he said. The end-to-end digital platform will have an open architecture, open Application Programming Interfaces (APIs) and standards, to which all financial sector players can connect seamlessly in a 'plug and play' model, he said. The Platform is intended to be rolled out as a pilot project in a calibrated fashion, both in terms of access to information providers and use cases, he said, adding, it shall bring about efficiency in the lending process in terms of reduction of costs, quicker disbursement, and scalability.

## Rising food prices may undo recent respite from inflation

India's retail inflation may have spiked close to or over the 6% upper tolerance threshold of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) in July, owing to a broad-based uptick in food prices, and could remain sticky in coming months, economists reckon. This could compel the central bank to stay hawkish and possibly raise its inflation projections for the ongoing July to September quarter (Q2) as well as the full year 2023-24 at its monetary policy review this week, and delay hopes of an interest rate cut.

The RBI's Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) will meet over three days from August 8 and convey its decisions on Thursday, August 10, while the National Statistical Office will release July's retail inflation numbers on August 14. The MPC has projected average retail inflation of 5.2% in Q2 and 5.1% for the full year. Having stayed below the 6% mark for four months in a row, consumer price inflation (CPI) had, however, risen to a three-month high of 4.8% in June owing to a spurt in food prices, particularly, cereals, pulses, milk and tomato prices. This trend firmed up further last month, with tomato prices up almost 176% from a year ago, and tur, rice, salt, milk and pulses rising over 10%, a Bank of Baroda (BOB) report noted. "We expect CPI to settle around 5.8%. RBI in its coming policy would be continuing with its hawkish pause and might revise its inflation projection for Q2 upwards," said Dipanwita Mazumdar, economist at Bank of Baroda. Core inflation may ease

State Bank of India group chief economic adviser

Soumya Kanti Ghosh is not as sanguine and expects inflation to hit 6.7% in July, thanks to food inflation, though he expects non-food, non-energy inflation (core inflation) to ease to 5% from 5.1% in June.

Rice prices have spiked the most in the northeast and southern regions, rising 32% and 17%, respectively, with the latter paying the highest price in the country at ₹53.7 per kilogram. Moreover, extreme flooding as well as relatively poor rainfall in some States have affected rice sowing, with the sown area at just 59% of normal area as of July 28. India's recent non-basmati rice export ban has wreaked havoc for over 140 countries which depend on its supplies, but may bring some relief to consumers, especially in the south, Mr. Ghosh said. Despite easing core inflation, Nomura economists Sonal Varma and Aurodeep Nandi said the food inflation spike, especially during July-September, would likely result in higher overall inflation this year. "We expect higher food inflation to push headline inflation to 6%-6.5% in July and August, before settling in a 5-6% range over the rest of the fiscal year," they said. Mr. Ghosh cautioned that edible oils, whose prices have been subdued in recent months compared to extreme spikes last year after the Russia-Ukraine conflict, could pose fresh pressures. While India has substituted sunflower oil imports from Ukraine with palm oil imports from Malaysia and Indonesia, these could be hit as their crop is likely to be affected by El Niño conditions, he added.

## What is water toxicity, which killed a mom of 2?



In rare instances, drinking too much water can be fatal, as we saw in a recent case when an American mother of two from the state of Indiana in United States died in July after drinking too much water too quickly. She drank an estimated 64 ounces, i.e. 1.8 litres, of water in under 20 minutes, according to The New York Post.

Dr Somnath Gupta, consultant physician and diabetologist, Yashoda Hospitals Hyderabad, said water toxicity or water intoxication occurs when you take excess amounts of water, which can lead to electrolyte imbalance mainly sodium in your body.

"This can be dangerous as it can cause morbidity and mortality because it dilutes the sodium levels in your bloodstream (relative hyponatremia), causing cells to swell, including those in the brain," Dr Gupta noted. Dr Hari Kishan Boorugu, consultant physician and diabetologist, Yashoda Hospitals Hyderabad, explained that water toxicity or excess water intake associated with adverse effects are uncommon. "Normally 2 to 4 litre water intake is sufficient for most people. People with a few neurological conditions or psychiatric disorders may develop excessive thirst (polydipsia) and tend to drink excess water (more than 5 litre/day) and develop low so-

dium levels and related problems," he added.

According to Booguru, patients with heart failure or advanced kidney disease need fluid restriction and are at risk of developing water logging in their lungs and shortness of breath. water toxicity Dr Hari Kishan Boorugu, Consultant Physician & Diabetologist, Yashoda Hospitals Hyderabad, explained that water toxicity or excess water intake associated adverse effects are uncommon. (Source: Ashley Summers/ Facebook)

Symptoms include gastrointestinal symptoms mainly nausea, vomiting, abdominal discomfort, neurological symptoms like headache, confusion, seizures, and in severe cases, coma or death. The condition can be caused by excessive water intake in a short period, often due to strenuous exercise, certain medical conditions, or drinking large volumes of water too quickly. Intake of large quantities of water varies depending on factors like age, weight, and activity level, according to Dr Gupta. Generally, drinking several litres of water in a short duration of time can be risky, he mentioned. Some of these conditions require water restriction to a litre per day, as per Dr Booguru, who said that some patients have an imbalance of hormones maintaining sodium levels (SIADH, Addison's disease etc) and may develop low sodium levels. "Manifestations of low sodium levels depend on rapidity and severity of low sodium levels. Hyponatremia (low sodium levels) may result in poor appetite, weakness, drowsiness and sometimes seizures. Your doctor may suspect this depending on your risk factors and symptoms for developing low sodium," Dr Booguru explained. Treatment involves managing electrolyte imbalances, especially hyponatremia, according to the doctors. In severe cases, hospitalisation may be necessary to restore sodium levels by infusing concentrated normal saline. Immediate first aid includes reducing water intake, consuming salty foods, and seeking medical help if symptoms worsen.

## What happens to your body when you give up refined flour (maida) for a month?

Maida, or refined wheat flour, is a widely consumed ingredient in Indian cuisine and an essential part of many dishes like bread, biscuits, pastries, and snacks. Its versatility and soft texture make it a popular choice for various recipes. However, its overconsumption can be harmful to health. Maida lacks essential nutrients and dietary fibre, leading to empty calorie intake, which can contribute to weight gain and related health issues. So, should you completely eliminate maida from your diet? And, what can possibly happen to your body when you give it up for a month, to begin with? We reached out to experts to know more.

According to Nupur Patil, a nutritionist, when you completely give up maida for a month, several changes can potentially occur in your body: "Improved digestion: Refined flour is often low in fibre and nutrients, making it harder to digest. Giving it up can lead to improved digestion and reduced bloating. Alternatives like whole wheat flour, almond flour, coconut flour, and millet flour (jowar, bajra, ragi, etc.) are higher in fibre, which aids in digestion.

"Steadier blood sugar levels: Refined flour is rapidly converted into glucose in the body, leading to spikes in blood sugar levels. Eliminating it can help stabilise blood sugar levels and reduce the risk of insulin resistance. "Weight management: Refined flour products tend to be calorie-dense and can contribute to weight gain. Cutting them out may lead to weight loss or better weight management. Millet flour, for example, is high in fibre and can help promote a feeling of fullness, aiding in weight loss. "Increased nutrient intake: By replacing refined flour with whole grains like millet (jowar, bajra, ragi, etc.) and other healthier alternatives, you'll likely consume more essential nutrients, such as fibre, vitamins, and minerals. "Improved energy levels: Whole grains and alternatives to refined flour can provide sustained energy release, reducing energy crashes often associated with consuming refined carbs. "Reduced inflammation: Refined flour can contribute to inflammation in the body, while a diet rich in whole foods, including millet, may help reduce overall inflammation.

But, is it really recommended to completely remove maida from your diet? It's generally a good idea to reduce or limit your consumption of refined flour (maida) for overall health, Dr Srikant Mohta, consultant, medical gastroenterology, Narayana Superspeciality Hospital, Howrah said. "Completely giving it up for a month can



offer several benefits, such as improved digestion, better blood sugar management, and potential weight loss. Refined flour lacks nutrients and is often linked to inflammation and negative health effects," he said. However, Dr Mohta added that it is essential to ensure that you are still getting a balanced diet with sufficient nutrients from other sources during this month. "If you decide to eliminate refined flour, make sure to incorporate whole grains, vegetables, fruits, lean proteins, and healthy fats into your meals," he said.

Further, there are several healthier alternatives to refined flour that you can incorporate into your diet. "Whole wheat flour is a common substitute that retains more nutrients and fibre. Other options include gram flour, corn flour, and oats flour, which can add unique flavours and textures to your dishes. Quinoa, brown rice, and sweet potato are excellent sources of carbohydrates that provide more nutrients than refined flour," Dr Mohta.

Maida, as we know, is commonly used for baking purposes. Alternatively, you can experiment with chickpea flour, flaxseed meal, and banana or applesauce as binding agents. "These alternatives offer a range of nutritional benefits and can be used in various recipes to promote better overall health. Remember to consult a healthcare professional or nutritionist before making significant dietary changes," he said. Patil also suggested replacing maida with almond flour, coconut flour, oat flour, quinoa flour, chickpea flour, millet flour, or brown rice flour. "Remember that each alternative has its unique characteristics and may require adjustments in recipes. Incorporating a variety of these alternatives into your diet can offer a wide range of nutrients and flavours while reducing your reliance on refined flour," she concluded.

## Kriti Sanon reminisces about her recent cousins trip to Mexico: 'You realise how important it is to make an effort'

Kriti Sanon loved each and every moment of her birthday celebrations in Mexico with her sister Nupur Sanon, and their cousins. She was seen sharing a carousel of photos and videos from her trip to Mexico's Tulum. Now the Bhediya actor has opened up about planning to make it a yearly ritual to reconnect with herself and her cousins.

Sharing the post, Kriti, who launched her skincare brand Hyphen recently, wrote, "#CousinsTrip - a first of many more to come! Travelled to the other side of the world to meet and hang out...and it felt so good! From intense life chats to teaching a few words of Marathi to ludo matches to just having the best time (heart emoji) Missing already!"

She continued, "@nupursanon @larora92 @kulinarora... Our generation isn't great with keeping in touch... and at times you realise how important it is to make an effort to stay connected! Gotta try and do this every year guys! Maybe next time with the whole gang!" Taking a cue from her post, we decided to understand how essential it is to reconnect with family.

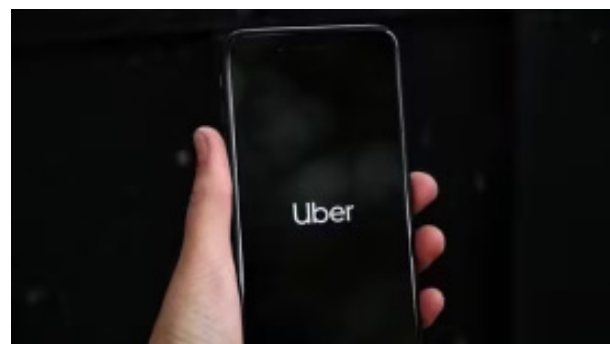
Staying connected to each other is important in order to feel that sense of support and engagement, said Kamna Chhibber, head of department, mental health and behavioural sciences, Fortis Memorial Research Institute, Gurugram.

"In today's day when social media is prevalent in a large way and people often communicate more on text or virtual platforms, real life relations can take a backseat. It can take away from the support one needs in difficult

moments and the feeling of being together across situations. It's absence can make a person feel less valued and impact the sense of self and well-being," said Chhibber.

Here's how it helps Learning and growth: Interacting with diverse individuals exposes us to different perspectives, ideas, and cultures. This exposure promotes cognitive growth and broadens our horizons, enhancing our ability to adapt to new situations and challenges, said Chhibber. Coping with stress: Connecting with others provides an outlet for sharing experiences and seeking advice. During times of stress or uncertainty, having a network of supportive friends and family members can offer practical solutions and emotional comfort.

Building communication skills: Effective communication is a vital life skill. Regular interactions with others, whether face-to-face or through digital channels, offer opportunities to practice and refine communication skills, which are valuable for personal and professional success, mentioned Chhibber. According to Archana Singhal, counsellor and family therapist, real conversations and genuine connections happen when we're together in person. "We can understand each other better, notice small things like body language, and really listen to each other. Online is important, but being with people in real life is special too," said Singhal. Preventing social comparison: Engaging in meaningful connections can shift the focus from comparing oneself to others online, a behaviour that can lead to feelings of inadequacy. "Genuine connections foster empathy and understanding, reducing the pressure to constantly compare oneself to unrealistic standards," said Chhibber.



"I was putting in an order for food one afternoon and went to the payment stage and this pop-up came up saying, 'Your first name is in violation and you need to change your name on the app,'" Chandra told A Current Affair. She explained in the program that while she understood her name's association with Adolf Hitler's Nazi Party, she remained proud of it and wouldn't alter it for anyone. "They don't know that the Hindus used it for thousands of years before Hitler used it in the wrong way," she said.

Australian woman, Swastika Chandra clarified that her first name signifies "good luck" in Sanskrit and was frequently used as a name in Fiji, where she spent her childhood. In 1920, Adolf Hitler adopted the 'Swastika' as a symbol for Germany and incorporated it into the flag of the National Socialist Party, or Nazi Party, which gained prominence in Germany in the subsequent decade.

After five months, Uber finally granted an exemption to Chandra to rejoin the platform, following intervention from The Hindu Council and support from the New South Wales Attorney-General.

The New South Wales Jewish Board of Deputies also supported Chandra. Uber issued an apology to Chandra, acknowledging that their review process took longer than anticipated, in a statement to news.com.au. "Uber is committed to facilitating a safe and welcoming environment for all users," the company said.

"For that reason, Uber has a global policy of restricting access to users whose names entered into the Uber app contain potentially offensive words." "We understand that there are different cultural nuances to names, and therefore our teams address incidents like this on a case-by-case basis to ensure we evaluate each account fairly." "In this case, after reviewing MS. Chandra's request, we reinstated her access to the app." "We have apologized to Ms Chandra for the inconvenience this caused her, and we appreciate her patience as we reviewed the matter, which took longer than we hoped it would."



## Name of Amitabh Bachchan's character revealed; check out new teaser



on Star Sports, which had Amitabh Bachchan covered in yellow clothes. He is seen praying in front of a Shiva linga in what seems like a cave. A child asks who he is and he replies, "Since ancient times, I have awaited the arrival of the Avatar. I am Guru Drona's son. Ashwatthama."

Amitabh Bachchan also took to his X account on Sunday to pen a note on his experience of working in the film. "T 4988 - It's been an experience for me like no other .. The mind to think such a product, the execution the exposure to modern technology and above all the company of colleagues with stratospheric Super star presence..." he said.

Taylor Swift is everywhere you look right now. Wonder what's the big deal about her? Read our special story, a primer on everything Swift

Kalki 2898 AD is a sci-fi film starring Prabhas, Deepika, Amitabh and Kamal in the lead roles. The makers released a new poster on Maha Shivaratri, where Prabhas's character name was revealed to be Bhairava. The film is slated for a May 9 release. At the Synapse 2024 event in Gurgaon, Nag said about the film's name, "The film starts with Mahabharat and ends in 2898 AD. It spans 6000 years in time. We tried to create worlds, imagining what they would be like while still keeping it Indian, and not make it look like Blade Runner."

Nag Ashwin's Prabhas, Deepika Padukone, Amitabh Bachchan and Kamal Haasan-starrer Kalki 2898 AD is one of the most anticipated films of the year. On Sunday, the makers dropped an announcement about the character played by Amitabh Bachchan. He essays the role of the immortal Ashwatthama in the magnum opus. (Also read: Prabhas, Deepika Padukone's Kalki 2898 AD release postponed? Here's what the film's team said)

On Sunday, the makers revealed that Kalki 2898 AD will see Amitabh Bachchan take on the role of Ashwatthama. A new teaser promo of the film was shared

## Who is Anna Sawai, Shogun's Lady Toda Mariko actress the internet can't stop raving about?



art because you won't be disappointed – and this isn't the last you'll see of her.

Who is Anna Sawai?

The Japanese actress-singer-dancer born in New Zealand kicked off her professional future at the young age of 11. Ultimately, five years later, in 2009, she landed her debut film role in the martial arts flick Ninja Assassin. The 31-year-old multifaceted artist is also a former (and original) member of the J-pop girl groups ARA (disbanded) and Faky. She quit the latter band in 2018 to pursue acting and eventually forayed into the familiar domain by taking on supporting roles in series like Colors and HajiAnna Sawai movies and TV shows. In 2019, Sawai's British crime drama Haji found critical acclaim on BBC Two. Subsequently, mainstream traction followed when she was cast in Justin Lin's F9: The Fast Saga. Despite stepping into a franchise overshadowed by the fame of pre-established veterans, Anna held her own. As the movie came out in 2021, once again, professional success followed her, and she was chosen to helm the leading lady's role in Shogun. Simultaneously, another outstanding opportunity knocked at her door and she found her footing in the Apple TV+ hit series Pachinko alongside an impressive cast. It also stands renewed for a second season.

Along the way, she secured a spot in yet another massy franchise - Godzilla. Leading the Monarch: Legacy of Monsters series on Apple TV+ as Cate Randa, she found her way into the second TV title in the MonsterVerse. Premiering in late 2023, Monarch opened to significant praise and will be returning for another season on the streaming platform. While she's already flexed her chops in these various fictional universes, her proactive stance as a dutiful samurai-woman in Shogun is a force to reckon with. Despite being situated in a historical narrative, wherein Hollywood has often consciously benched such characters, Anna's Lady Mariko, thankfully, isn't reduced to a trope. Her short (so far) yet expansive filmography is a testament to her unbending will that won't just dwindle to the status of parenthesis in a male character's story. Shogun has become just as much of a narrative centred around and driven by Sawai's powerful presence with an earth-shaking impact that tugs at your heartstrings, if not more.

As our strides inch closer to the Shogun season finale, we can't not talk about the one actress who's recently bent all major internet trends in her name with her emotionally explosive delivery in Episode 9. Whether you've watched the FX historical drama based on James Clavell's 1975 novel or not, the inevitable epic glory of this series has swept over all kinds of audiences in all directions. With inescapable weekly trends doing the rounds, the Hiroyuki Sanada-led series sits atop the 99% Rotten Tomatoes score (opening with 100%).

It's easily one of those shows that you're probably still not watching but should be, and its wholehearted, engrossing world-building and characters are a testament to historical fiction narratives coming to life like never before. If you're still not caught up on the feudal Japanese drift of the show, then you may have missed out on why Anna Sawai or her character, Lady Toda Mariko, claimed the top spot among last week's trending keywords.

The answer is not going to put a smile on your face due to the tragic bent of the answer. However, that still shouldn't act as a deterrent, pushing you away from hitting the play button on this soon-to-be-completed 10-episode series. While one may indisputably revere Sawai's unmatched acting chops in Shogun as her career-best performance, a quick recapitulation of her past projects is bound to leave your mouth wide agape. The recent Hollywood debutante may be a major driving force in this year's best-limited series thus far, but she already has other equally momentous career heights - critically acclaimed as well as a mainstream blockbuster franchise hit - under her belt. It's time you opened your heart to her

## Manushi Chhillar opens up on 30 year age gap with Bade Miyan Chote Miyan co-star Akshay Kumar: 'Nothing atrocious'

Manushi Chhillar had her fourth release with the Akshay Kumar and Tiger Shroff starrer Bade Miyan Chote Miyan, which came out on April 11, 2024. This is her second film opposite Akshay post Chandraprakash Dwivedi's Samrat Prithviraj. In a recent interview with Zoom, Manushi reacted to the social media discussions over the age-gap between her and Akshay. (Also read: Manushi Chhillar: Being an outsider comes with a sense of pride and you have to start from level zero)

On being quizzed over the debate on social media over the age-difference between herself and Akshay, the actor said, "Working with a superstar is good. You get a certain amount of visibility. If I talk about my first film, there was an age gap. They wanted to play the whole thing. In this film, there was no pairing. We did songs for marketing. There had to be a way to put two people together for the songs, but that's pretty much it, which is fine. I don't see it as something that was atrocious or something that shouldn't have been there. It wasn't like a love story anyway."

Taylor Swift is everywhere you look right now. Wonder what's the big deal about her? Read our special story, a primer on everything Swift. Manushi was crowned Miss



World in 2017. She was born in Rohtak. Prior to participating in the Miss India and Miss World beauty pageants, Manushi was pursuing a medical degree (MBBS) at the Bhagat Phool Singh Medical College in Sonapat. The actor is also a trained Kuchipudi dancer. After making her Hindi film debut with the epic drama Samrat Prithviraj, she later starred in Vijay Krishna Acharya's The Great Indian Family. She acted alongside Vicky Kaushal in the social comedy-drama.

## Sydney Sweeney's acting coach speaks out post Hollywood producer's remarks: 'Audiences love her because she's relatable'

Sydney Sweeney's acting coach Scott Sedita has come out in her defense after the scathing remarks made by Hollywood Producer Carol Baum a few days ago. In a new interview with TMZ, Scott said that Sydney is 'a serious actress' who is loved by audiences because she is 'relatable'. (Also read: Top Hollywood producer Carol Baum says Sydney Sweeney 'isn't pretty', claims Euphoria star 'can't act')

In the interview, the acting coach said: "Sydney is beautiful because she has inner depth, intellect, compassion, style and facial features — eyes, smile, cheekbones — that the camera angles pick up on. The camera loves her 'look' ... Audiences love her because she's relatable and approachable." He further continued, "She's been through the ups and downs of this business. So you have to be pretty much a serious actress if you're gonna go through all that. When taking feedback or critique, she processes it, uses her acting technique and makes the adjustment."

Taylor Swift is everywhere you look right now. Wonder what's the big deal about her? Read our special story, a primer on everything Swift. It all began when producer Carol Baum said that the Euphoria actor 'can't act.'



Sydney's representatives addressed these remarks in a statement to Variety, which read: "How sad that a woman in the position to share her expertise and experience chooses instead to attack another woman. If that's what she's learned in her decades in the industry and feels is appropriate to teach to her students, that's shameful. To unjustly disparage a fellow female producer speaks volumes about Ms Baum's character." Sydney was last seen in the horror film Immaculate, which was directed by Michael Mohan. She was also seen in Madam Web with Dakota Johnson and Anyone But You with Glen Powell.

## Triptii Dimri stuns fans with refreshing summer look

Mumbai: Actor Triptii Dimri, who is also known for her role in the film 'Animal' alongside Ranbir Kapoor and Rashmika Mandanna, recently posted a fresh look on her social media. She wore a powder blue dress, giving off effortless summer fashion vibes. The actress looked stunning with her hair down and a glowing smile. The 'Qala' actress captioned the post, "Better with a bit of breeze in my hair." As soon as the actress shared the pictures, fans chimed in the comment section. Meanwhile, on the work front, Triptii, who has been a part of films like 'Laila Majnu', 'Bulbul' and 'Qala', recently skyrocketed to fame with her role in Sandeep Reddy Vanga's directorial 'Animal'. The actress will be next seen in 'Bhool Bhulaiyaa 3' opposite Kartik Aaryan.'

## Priyanka Chopra confirms that she is not attending Met Gala this year, but is excited to see this star instead



Nick had said that the two "had a great time," at the event but insisted that they went only as friends. The couple stunned at the Met Gala last year as well. Priyanka wore a risqué thigh-slit gown from Valentino while Nick chose an oversized suit.

The 2024 Met Gala is set to take place on Monday, May 6, at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City. It will mark the opening of the Costume Institute's exhibition titled "Sleeping Beauties: Reawakening Fashion." The theme this year is The Garden of Time. It will be co-chaired by Zendaya, Jennifer Lopez, Bad Bunny, and Chris Hemsworth.

Priyanka Chopra just confirmed that she will not be attending one of the biggest fashion events of the year - the Met Gala. In an interview with Access Hollywood during the promotional rounds for the new documentary film Tiger, in which she serves as the narrator, she revealed that she is skipping the event this year because she is currently filming. During the interview, when Priyanka was asked about this year's Met Gala event and whether she is looking forward to anyone attending in particular, she said: "I don't even know who's going this year. I'm definitely not attending this year because I'm filming, but I think I really do enjoy watching people's creativity during the Met Gala and I am really excited to see how it will turn out. I actually have not read anything about who all is going this year."

When she was told that Euphoria actor Zendaya will definitely be present at the event, Priyanka said, "She's amazing, so we definitely look forward to her." Taylor Swift is everywhere you look right now. Wonder what's the big deal about her? Read our special story, a primer on everything Swift

Priyanka Chopra, Nick Jonas walked the red carpet together at the MET Gala, 2017. Did you know that the event was their first official public event? Talking about the same on The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon,

## Aayush Sharma recalls apologising to Salman Khan after Loveyatri's failure: 'Sorry, I blew up your money'



accused of marrying in order to get his a break in Bollywood. The actor opined, "People don't know that when I got married I told Salman Khan that I don't want to pursue acting. I told him 'Trust me, I gave 300 auditions and couldn't even crack two, I can't do it.' Salman said 'Son your training is not good, I'll train you.' " He further added, "The narrative was created that I am blowing up my brother-in-law's money. Should I share my income tax details? When Salman called me during Loveyatri, I had tears in my eyes. I said 'Sorry, I blew up your money.' When Antim's digital rights were sold to satellite and OTT platforms, I was relieved."

Salman often keeps on posting appreciation post for Aayush. The actor had lauded the trailer of Ruslaan on his Instagram handle and wrote, "Aayush, can see the hard work, effort n dedication put into Ruslaan, no matter what just keep giving it your best. Hard work will always pay off. God bless and wish u all the best. Roaring in cinemas on 26th April, 2024. Taylor Swift is everywhere you look right now. Wonder what's the big deal about her? Read our special story, a primer on everything Swift. For the unversed, Aayush is married to Salman's sister Arpita Khan. His father Anil Sharma is a BJP politician. While his grandfather Pandit Sukh Ram is a veteran Congress leader.

Aayush Sharma is currently geared up for his action-thriller Ruslaan. The actor has often been on the receiving end of trolls who have accused him of marrying Arpita Khan for money and fame. In an interview with Siddharth Kannan for his YouTube channel, Aayush responded to the social media gossip over his marriage and career.

During his interaction with Siddharth Kannan, Aayush told that social media created a narrative that he married Arpita for money. He also shared how he has often been

## Atif Aslam's humble reaction to emotional fan during concert leaves internet impressed.



Atif Aslam had a calm response to a fan who hugged him midway during his concert in Bangladesh, and the internet is in admiration for his reaction. Pakistani singer Atif Aslam was performing in a concert at Bangladesh last week, when a female fan turned up on stage and hugged him. The singer's graceful response was captured by a fan and is now going viral on social media. (Also read: Atif Aslam pauses US concert after fan throws money at him, singer asks him to do this instead)

In the video, the female fan was seen embracing Atif and breaking down in tears. She refused to let go of him even as Atif tried to hold her, but ultimately he smiled and gave her a quick hug. He then shook her hand as seen interacting with her in the

middle of the concert. She kissed his hand, and Atif smiled and bowed at her. A few moments later, the emotional fan was escorted down with the audience.

The video from the concert drew a lot of responses on social media, with many praising the singer for handling the situation with grace and dig-

nity. Reacting to the video, a user wrote: "Men have personal space too. Being a fan doesn't mean you can violate their personal space." Another commented, "He acted with grace and sensitivity." A comment also read, "Why do fans put celebrities in such an awkward position? It's so cringe and embar-

assing. Being a fan doesn't mean you lose your senses." "What a gentleman! He seemed a little uncomfortable but handled the situation calmly," read another comment. Taylor Swift is everywhere you look right now. Wonder what's the big deal about her? Read our special story, a primer on everything Swift



## Gautam Gambhir's post after KKR's one-run win: 'Phenomenal display of character by RCB'



Minutes after they lost to the Kolkata Knight Riders by one run, KKR mentor Gautam Gambhir's words on X may rub as salt on wounds for the Royal Challengers Bengaluru. "Phenomenal display of character by RCB today," Gambhir wrote in his post. Following the result in Kolkata, the home side is now second in the points table while RCB languish at the bottom with just one win from seven games. Gambhir has made it known that when it comes to matches against RCB, he's always pumped. "One team which I wanted to beat every time and probably in my dreams was RCB," Gambhir had told Star Sports earlier this season. When prodded by the anchor to divulge the reason, the 2-time IPL winning captain said, "Wanted to. Probably the second-most high-profile team and flamboyant team. The owner and the squad with Chris Gayle and Virat Kohli and AB de Villiers. Not won anything, still thought they won everything. Can't take that kind of an attitude."

It was last year in the IPL when – as part of the Lucknow Super Giants franchise – Gambhir was involved in the infamous tussle with Virat Kohli after RCB emerged victorious at the Ekana International Stadium in Lucknow. However, recently the two have been captured in good spirits. The KKR social media handle had even posted a video of the two sharing laughs in a jovial exchange during the pre-match training session at the Eden Gardens. Kohli himself had cleared the air around the controversy at a recent event. "People are disappointed because I hugged Naveen Ul Haq and then Gauti pa hugged me. Tumhara masala khatam ho gaya toh oo oo kar rahe ho. ('Masala' got over for you)," he had said, though, Gambhir and Co would one up Kohli's RCB. Having put 222 runs on the board batting first at the Eden Gardens with skipper Shreyas Iyer scoring a fifty, KKR were given a close contest by the visitors as the chase went right down the wire.

Will Jacks and Rajat Patidar scored fifties while cameos from Dinesh Karthik and Karn Sharma, who walloped Mitchell Starc for three maximums, took the game deep. Eventually, KKR's record-breaking buy in Starc paid off as the Australian ensured that RCB were unable to get 21 runs from the last over. "It takes a lot off your body and drains you out completely because you go through so many emotions. It's tough to stay calm but I'm elated. We got two points on the board and that's all that matters," KKR skipper Iyer said post-match. Meanwhile, former RCB skipper Kohli was involved in a heated moment following his dismissal early in the chase off what he thought was a waist-high no-ball.

## RCB's wretched season continues as they go down to KKR by 1 run despite Karn Sharma late charge

GNS News Agency, April 24

Synopsis: Mitchell Starc has day to forget as Karn Sharma almost sees RCB through. But Andre Russell's well-timed dismissal of Will Jacks and Rajat Patidar help KKR win by just a solitary run. Dinesh Karthik had said that due to RCB's batting woes, specialist spinner Karn Sharma couldn't play the last couple of matches due to Bengaluru's need to introduce a batter as an Impact player. On Sunday, with 15 runs remaining off the last over, Sharma almost pulled off a heist for his franchise, hitting three sixes off Mitchell Starc but ultimately falling to the speedster as KKR edged past RCB by just 1 run.



Between the 5th to 11th overs, it was looking like smooth sailing for RCB as Will Jacks and Rajat Patidar smashed the KKR bowlers all around the field, bringing up their respective fifties in quickfire fashion while taking their team to 137/2 in 11 overs. Enter Andre Russell in the 12th, snapping up both the well-set batters in the same over as Bengaluru's penchant for collapse returned with a vengeance. Sunil Narine would also strike twice in the 13th over as Cameron Green and Mahipal Lomror were sent back for low scores with RCB tottering at 155/6. Dinesh Karthik would give RCB some hope at the death but he too was snuffed out by Russell, scoring 25 off 18 deliveries.

Jacks, who was bought by RCB for Rs 3.20 crore after an intense bidding war with Rajasthan Royals in the auction, showed what all the hype was about as he took Kolkata's 24.75 crore signing Starc to the cleaners, marauding 22 runs off his second over which was peppered with two sixes and two fours as the Australian continued to leak runs at crucial junctures. He would reach his half century in 28 balls as the Kolkata bowlers had no answer to the onslaught. At the other end, Rajat Patidar would find form after starting the IPL on a below par note, smashing Suyash Sharma for 22 runs in the 10th over, bringing up his 50 in just 21 balls as RCB raced towards the target of 223 which would ultimately prove to be 1 run too many.

Harshit Rana has last laugh. The last time Virat Kohli was here at the Eden Gardens, he had equaled Sachin Tendulkar's record scoring his 49th century in the 2023 World Cup and on Sunday, he started in the same vein smashing Harshit Rana for a four off the very first delivery he faced as familiar chants of "Kohli, Kohli" filled the air. He would send the 54k strong crowd further into frenzy when he pulled Rana for a six in the same over. RCB Kolkata: Kolkata Knight Riders' Harshit Rana bowls a delivery during an Indian Premier League (IPL) T20 cricket match between Kolkata Knight Riders and Royal Challengers Bengaluru, at the Eden Gardens, in Kolkata, Rana, however, would have the last laugh as a dipping full toss

caught Kohli off guard and led to the bowler catching the follow-through. It was reviewed but Hawk-Eye confirmed the ball's trajectory to be dipping below the waist and the dismissal stood, leading to a frustrated Kohli having a word with the umpire before trudging off.

Knights' inconsistent batting. With the mercury touching 41 degrees in Kolkata, most experts predicted the team who won the toss might opt to bat first but RCB captain Faf du Plessis did what his counterpart Shreyas Iyer had done in the last day game at the Eden against Lucknow Super Giants- he opted to bowl first, citing the ground to be more suitable for chasing. The strategy was brought into question as soon as the match began with Phil Salt smashing Mohammed Siraj for a six and a four in the very first over before following up with double fours in the second as the RCB fielders were run ragged under the unrelenting sun. Lockie Ferguson would be the next bowler to be hammered as the Englishman continued his destruction, bringing up KKR's 50 in 3.5 overs. He would, however, miss his 50 by just 2 runs as he was caught out by Rajat Patidar off Siraj for 48 (14).

Meanwhile, Shreyas had to play the anchor role for his franchise yet again as he slowly rebuilt the Knights' innings as wickets fell all around him with Narine and Angkrish Raghuvanshi both failing to contribute, scoring 10 and 3 respectively. Venkatesh Iyer would follow suit as KKR were 4 down even before the 10th over. Shreyas's 50 from 36 balls may not look like the typical T20 innings but it went a long way in steadying the faltering Knights. He would fall soon after trying to clear the long off boundary but ultimately holed out to Faf who took a marvelous diving catch. Ramandeep Singh, who had scored a blistering 17-ball 35 in the first match against Sunrisers Hyderabad here, showed once again why KKR bought him when he smashed two sixes and a four off the 19th over enabling KKR to cross 200. He was accompanied by Russell, who stayed not out with 27 runs while Singh scored 24 off just 9 deliveries to help the team reach 222.



from the relegation zone by a crucial five points. The game commenced with both teams evenly matched, but Everton gradually took control. The breakthrough came in the 29th minute when Idrissa Gueye unleashed a powerful shot from outside the penalty area. The ball, evading the grasp of Nottingham Forest's goalkeeper Matz Sels, nestled into the bottom corner of the net, electrifying the home crowd. As the match progressed into the second half, Dwight McNeil added to Everton's tally. Demonstrating skill and precision, McNeil drove a potent strike from a considerable distance, again defeating Sels and securing a two-goal lead for Everton.

## KKR, DC, now MI: In IPL's home-away format, are local pitch makers offering host teams enough home advantage?



GNS News Agency, April 24

The other night, with Sunrisers Hyderabad nearing another win away from home, former India captain Sunil Gavaskar pondered on the comms if merrier days were ahead for the team in their second half of the season. This, based on the fact that SRH are to play five of their seven remaining league games at their home ground. "Always good to play at home. You are more familiar with the conditions. You can ask the groundsman to make a pitch that suits you. SRH, if they score 250 plus totals, they are going to win," Gavaskar said.

Mukherjee's stance on the matter had come to light last year after Nitish Rana had lambasted the Eden surface by suggesting that every team in IPL enjoys home conditions 'except KKR'. Rana isn't the only one. "To me, it doesn't matter if they are happy, not happy or very happy. IPL is not played on home advantage, and the captain may say anything he wants," Mukherjee had said in response to the then KKR skipper. "Does IPL have a clause where it is written that pitches have to be produced according to the wishes of the IPL franchise?" Since then, multiple other teams have critiqued or expressed bemusement with regards to their home surface. MI captain Hardik Pandya for instance, had said after his side's first game at the Wankhede Stadium, "The pitch was not what we expected."

Having worked with the Cricket Association of Bengal (CAB) for almost 40 years, Mukherjee states that the wickets have been manufactured in accordance with the BCCI and not respective franchises since the advent of the IPL. "There has been no influence from the franchise on the pitch since the very first edition of the IPL. The only thing they have a discussion with us about is when they're going to practice on the ground. Any captain, coach can come and see the wicket under our supervision, that is no problem," he says. KKR however, aren't the only franchise to abide by the aforementioned thumb rule. Delhi Capitals have the worst home record of all the existing franchises. Ahead of their first IPL 2024 game in Delhi last night, veteran pacer Ishant Sharma had expressed an air of uncertainty around the pitch. "We'll have to look at the pitch here and then adapt to the conditions."

A Delhi and District's Cricket Association (DDCA) official explains the reasoning behind it. "Our parent body is the BCCI. We are their curators. Hume aur kisi se kya lena dena. We can't go beyond the BCCI and make a pitch ourselves or on the franchise's directives." Last year, the Kotla strip had come under fire after the then DC as-

sistant coach Shane Watson had scrutinized it for lack of grass. He'd rue, "Next season, hopefully the conditions are going to be more suitable to the make-up of our team. And there'll be more true batting surfaces."

At the time, the rebuttal offered by the home association was, "the wicket was tougher in the 2019 season. If you look at the average scores from that year, they were somewhere around 135-140." It couldn't be a mere coincidence that the first game at the Arun Jaitley Stadium this season racked up 465 runs and had contrastingly more grass on offer. So what changed this year? "(Last year) The absence of grass was owing to excessive heat during the summer." It is likely to hold out in better shape this year with DC scheduled to play fewer games in the sweltering national capital.

Was the decision to add more green in any ways influenced by the home franchise's displeasure from last season? "No, we are neutral. The changes that happen depend on the results that are coming on these surfaces. Weather is different across multiple venues, so that also plays a part," the DDCA official responds. Mukherjee adds that more than the franchise, it is the fans and spectators, who are taken into consideration while curating a pitch. "When the T20 culture came to India with the IPL, at that time the talk was that it should be played on a good wicket. Ultimately, it's for the fans. The consensus was that it should be a good wicket so that the batsmen and bowlers, both can perform well and the spectators can enjoy an even game. If that happens, more spectators will come and watch the games."

Five-time winners, Chennai Super Kings are among the teams that have enjoyed home comforts since the beginning. With the franchise having close ties with the state association TNCA, it has mostly got pitches to its liking. In 2019, after MS Dhoni was unhappy with the slow nature of the pitch, the state association went on to relay the entire square. For a venue that mostly had red soil content, it now also has black soil pitches. IPL 2024 Live Telecast in India: Chennai Super Kings will take on Delhi Capitals at Dr YS Rajasekhara Reddy ACA-VCA Cricket Stadium in Visakhapatnam on Sunday. Chennai Super Kings are among the teams that have enjoyed home comforts since the beginning. But that hasn't stopped CSK from having conditions best suited to their needs. It means, the franchise has been able to assemble a squad at the auctions which is best suited to the conditions at Chepauk. It is the reason why CSK have a win percentage of over 70 at Chepauk — the most for any IPL franchise at home.

While they have traditionally preferred pitches where 160-180 is a par total with good assistance for spinners, CSK have drifted away from the plan since last season. With Impact Player rule in play and extra runs needed, they have altered between flat decks and slow surfaces depending on the opposition. This season, after playing on flat decks against Royal Challengers Bengaluru and Gujarat Titans, they went with a slow pitch against Kolkata Knight Riders, a side that has plenty of power-hitters. It begs the question, should a tournament with a clear-cut home and away format of league games offer teams a home advantage? The noticeable change that the SRH batting has undergone could only benefit more from a home surface that suits their batters' needs. Or as Gavaskar mentioned the other night, "if they score 250 plus totals, they are going to win."

## Accident amputee Anita and landmine blast survivor Narayana combine to secure India's first Paralympic rowing qualification

GNS News Agency, April 24

Col Ramakrishnan, the Commanding Officer of the Army Rowing Node (ARN) at Pune, vividly recalls the day his most intrepid scout and rowing coach, Subedar Mohammed Azad told him their long search was over. Azad had found the perfect candidate. And the young woman went by the solo name, Anita. Matching stroke for stroke with mixed doubles sculls partner, Narayana Konganapalle on Sunday morning at Chungju, Korea, Anita helped India win their first-ever para-rowing qualification for the Paralympics, sealing their ticket to Paris.

Anita had been sighted in 2022 posting insane treadmill and deadlift numbers at a Pune gym wearing her artificial leg. A road accident amputee from Rajasthan, living with her sister in Pune at that time, her below-the-knee disability, aligned with the exact specification of a Paralympics category. India could now ambitiously field a mixed doubles para combination, and aim for a medal.

Col Ramakrishnan had cast the net wide to locate the perfect woman para-rower, across the length and breadth of the country, after another conversation months earlier with the other lead protagonist, Havaldar Narayana. The frontline soldier from a humble family in Telangana had been a mine blast survivor in the Valley, a battle casualty who had stepped on an IED, leading to a painful amputation in 2018. He had slowly revived his spirits, picked up para-rowing, and won Nationals, but sensed a stagnant end-line to his career in 2022 because the Asian Games and Paralympics only offered a mixed doubles competition category.

"There was a sense of disappointment after winning Nationals ki iske aage kuchh nahi hai in Narayana (there is nothing left for him going ahead). He wanted to go on leave with a sulk and I was refusing. But he was too good a talent to get demotivated. We had to do something," Ramakrishnan recalls. "Army per se doesn't have battle casualty, amputees among its lady soldiers. There's no accommodation even at ARN for women. But as a fauji, you never lose hope. I was determined to find the best rowing partner for Narayana. We knew chances were slim, but we sounded out all our coaches across India to scan for a woman with a matching disability. Coach Md Azad found Anita," he adds.

She had great gym metrics for fitness, but there were doubts if she could withstand the rigours of training. "Plus her parents had to agree and were not aware of our search. Fortunately, her father was a jawan from the De-



fence Security Corps (DSC), posted in Gujarat. He was forthcoming and explained she had to regain self-confidence after her accident. Her siblings were all accomplished, brother a doctor, another sister a banker in the USA, but Anita hadn't completed her education after the mishap. We asked for a Pune posting for her father in the morning. By evening we had the papers. At ARN we have male rowers only, so the family rented a flat close by," Ramakrishnan recalls. The Rowing Federation of India came on board, with president Rajalaxmi Singh Deo agreeing within 10 minutes, to pull off this ambitious Mission Paris qualification for Narayana-Anita. Within two months of knowing nothing of the sport, Anita had shown the ability to withstand sustained stress, mental strength, and good skills on the boat.

Having a lady rower on ARN waters came with other adjustments, Col Ramakrishnan hadn't anticipated. "Anita doesn't speak much. Anything you say, she just smiled and said 'OK, Sir.' I used to be really confused. Did she get it? Did she not get what we are training? But within 10 months of starting, the duo medalled at Asian Games. That Games setting was overwhelming for her, and Narayana and coaches had to calm her down. But once on the boat, the two were excellent. The medal moment was surreal for us," he recalls. In Korea over the weekend, the Indian duo consistently finished 50 seconds ahead of their closest competition, winning finals with 7:50.80. "Asia, we know they'll top. At the World level, they might still be just Top 6 or Top 8. Anita's physical parameters are lower compared to European women who tend to be taller, and stronger. She's an Indian body type, 5 feet 5, and slightly built. But globally they are mostly 46-48 years old, our advantage is both our rowers are young and very gutsy," he says.