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**In Brief**

**Yadadri power plant trail run success**

**Yadadri:** A historic milestone has begun in the Yadadri Thermal Power Plant, which was ambitiously undertaken by the previous BRS government. Officials conducted a trial run in the power plant today. With the plant works reaching the final stage, TS Genco has successfully conducted trial run under Phase-I in two units and has taken steps towards power generation. Soon the power generation will be taken up in a phased manner and connected to the grid. Officials are doing the work on a war footing with the aim of producing full power in the three units by December this year. As a part of this, the auxiliary boilers in the first and second units were lit up and a trial run was conducted. Officials have successfully conducted a trial run using fuel as an alternative to coal. The air was released through a 275 meter high chimney. Genco officials say that preliminary tests have been completed as part of the trial run. TS Genco CMD Rizvi participated in this trial run. If this is the case, the construction of Yadadri Thermal Plant was undertaken by the previous BRS government in 2015 at Veerlapalem in Damaracharla mandal of Nalgonda district. Telangana Genco has undertaken the construction with supercritical technology with a power generation capacity of four thousand megawatts. Each unit will generate 800 megawatts of electricity. As the construction of the power plant took two years more than the planned deadline, the estimated cost increased from Rs.29,500 crore to Rs.34,500 crore.

## Govt Rolls Out CAA, 14 People Get Citizenship

**New Delhi:** Two months after the Union Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) notified the rules for implementation of the Citizenship (Amendment) Act, which was enacted by Parliament in December 2019, Union Home Secretary Ajay Bhalla on Wednesday physically handed over the first set of citizenship certificates to 14 applicants. Despite its enactment four years ago, the CAA could not be implemented because the rules were not notified. According to the MHA, many other applicants are being given digitally signed certificates through email. "The Empowered Committee, Delhi headed by Director (Census Operation), Delhi, after due scrutiny, have decided to grant citizenship to 14 applicants. Accordingly, Director (Census operation) granted certificates to these applicants," an MHA spokesperson said in a statement. "The first set of citizenship certificates after notification of Citizenship (Amendment) Rules, 2024 were issued today. Bhalla handed over citizenship certificates to some applicants in New Delhi and also congratulated the applicants and highlighted salient features of the Citizenship (Amendment) Rules, 2024," the spokesperson said. Secretary Posts, Director (IB), Registrar General of India and senior officers were also present during the interactive session. According to the MHA, the Centre had notified Citizenship (Amendment) Rules, 2024 on March 11. "The Rules envisage manner of application form, procedure for processing applications by District Level Committee (DLC) and scrutiny and grant of citizenship by State Level Empowered Committee (EC). In pursuance of these rules, applications have been received from persons belonging to Hindu, Sikh, Jain, Buddhist, Parsi and Christian communities from Pakistan, Bangladesh and Afghanistan who have entered India up to December 31, 2014, on account of persecution on grounds of religion or fear of such persecution," the spokesperson said.



## "I Never Said Hindu Or Muslim, I Talked About...": PM Modi

**Varanasi (Uttar Pradesh):** Clarifying his "infiltrators" and "those with more children" remarks, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday said that he did not only talk about Muslims but spoke about every poor family, adding that the day he starts doing Hindu-Muslim, he will be "unworthy of public life." In an interview with News 18, PM Modi said that he does not market love towards Muslims, "I do not work for a vote bank. I believe in Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas." "I am shocked. Who told you that whenever one talks of people with more children, the inference is they are Muslims? Why are you so unjust towards Muslims? This is the situation in poor families. Where there is poverty, there are more children, irrespective of their social circle. I didn't mention either Hindu or Muslim. I have said that one should have as many children as you can take care of. Don't let a situation arise where the government has to take care of your children," the Prime Minister said on Tuesday. Referring to the post-Godhra



riots in Gujarat when he was the Chief Minister of the state, PM Modi said that his opponents "tarnished" his image among the Muslims after 2002 (the Godhra riots). "This issue is not about Muslims. Irrespective of how supportive individual Muslims are of Modi, there is a wave of thought that dictates to them, 'do this, do that'. In my house, there are all Muslim families around me. Eid was also celebrated in our house, and there were other festivals in our house. Food was not cooked in our house on the day of Eid. Food used to come to my place from all the Muslim families. When Muharram started, we needed to come out from under the Tajjiya, we were taught. I grew up in that world. Even today, many of my friends are Muslims. After 2002 (Godhra), my image was tarnished," he added. Asked whether Muslims would vote for him in this Lok Sabha election, he said that the "people of the country will vote for me." "The day I start doing Hindu-Muslims, I won't be entitled to live in the public domain. I won't do Hindu-Muslim. This is my pledge," PM Modi said.

## S Jaishankar Responds To US Sanction Warning Over Chabahar Port Deal

**Kolkata:** A day after the US warned of "potential risk of sanctions" after India inked a 10-year agreement for running the Chabahar Port in Iran, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar emphasised that the project will benefit the entire region and people should not take a "narrow view" of it. He also pointed out that the US itself had appreciated the larger relevance of Chabahar in the past. The EAM was speaking at an interaction after the launch of the Bangla edition of his book 'Why Bharat Matters' in Kolkata on Wednesday. On being asked about the US' remarks, Mr Jaishankar said, "I did see some of the remarks which were made, but I think it's a question of communicating, convincing and getting people to understand, that this is actually for everyone's benefit. I don't think people should take a narrow view of it." "They (US) have not done so in the past. So, if you look at the US' own attitude towards the port in Chabahar, the US has been appreciative of the fact that Chabahar has a larger relevance...we will work at it," he added. Earlier on Tuesday,



the United States warned that "anyone" considering business deals with Tehran needs to be aware of the "potential risk of sanctions." "I would just say...US sanctions on Iran remain in place and we will continue to enforce them," the US State Department Principal Deputy Spokesperson, Vedant Patel said at the press briefing. "Any entity, anyone considering business deals with Iran, they need to be aware of the potential risk they are opening themselves up to, potential risk of sanctions," he added. The Long-Term Bilateral Contract on Chabahar Port Operation was signed between Indian Ports Global Limited (IPGL) of India and the Port & Maritime Organisation (PMO) of Iran on Monday, enabling the operation of Shahid-Behesti port in the Chabahar Port Development Project for a period of 10 years. Mr Jaishankar further said that India had a long association with the project, but was not able to sign a long-term pact, which was important. He added that New Delhi was able to sort out the issues and sign the long-term agreement, which will benefit the entire region. "We have had a long association with the Chabahar Port, but we could never sign a long-term agreement."

## Modi affidavit: Rs 3 cr in assets...

# MOSTLY AS FDs

**Varanasi:** Prime Minister Narendra Modi possesses assets amounting to a little over Rs 3 crore, most of it in bank fixed deposits, according to his election affidavit. As required, Modi submitted the affidavit while filing his nomination papers Tuesday as an election candidate from the Varanasi parliamentary constituency, a seat he has held twice earlier. According to the affidavit displayed on the Election Commission website, his movable assets are worth `3,02,06,889. Most of this amount is in the form of fixed deposits with the State Bank of India that total over 2.85 crore. Other assets include four gold rings weighing 45 grams valued at Rs 2.67 lakh, cash in hand totalling Rs 52,920, National Savings Certificates worth Rs 9.12 lakh and income tax deduction of Rs 3.33 lakh for the past financial year. Under immovable assets, the affidavit says "Nil". Typically, land and houses fall under this category. Jashodaben is mentioned as Modi's spouse. On assets held by her, the document says "Not known". The two live apart. No criminal case is pending against Modi, nor has he been convicted of any crime, according to the document. There are no liabilities due to the government. The prime minister is described as a resident of Ahmedabad, and his profession as public life and political activity. He did his SSC in 1967, got a BA degree from Delhi University in 1978 and an MA from Gujarat University in 1983. In the 2019 Lok Sabha elections, Modi had declared assets worth Rs 2.5 crore including a residential plot in Gujarat's Gandhinagar, fixed deposits of `1.27 crore and `38,750 cash in hand



## After Mumbai's Billboard Tragedy, Civic Body Wants Large Hoardings Out

**Mumbai:** Irregularly shaped hoardings, especially those larger than 40x40 feet, will be removed immediately from the boundary of the railway administration, the Mumbai civic body said days after a 250-tonne hoarding fell in Ghatkopar, killing 14 people and injuring around 75. The rescue work at the site is still in progress and several people are suspected to be buried under the hoarding. The Brihanmumbai Corporation does not allow hoardings larger than 40x40 feet in view of Mumbai's geography. The financial capital of the country is close to the coastline, where high winds can pose a risk. "However, it

has been observed that irregularly sized advertising boards have been installed around the roads/private constructions



within the boundary of the railway administration," read the civic body's notice, sent today to the Central and Western Railways administration. "In the light of this, as an additional measure to prevent accidents, the Additional Municipal Com-

missioner (City) has directed the immediate removal of all advertising boards larger than 40x40 feet within the boundary of the railway administration," the notice added. In Ghatkopar, meanwhile, rescue work is continuing, as many families remain at spot in search of their loved ones. The hoarding had collapsed during a spell of bad weather on Monday, and with a petrol pump buried under it, the rescue work has been moving slowly. Sources said since the accident, petrol has been leaking from some of the vehicles. Given the size and weight of the hoarding, rescue workers fear they may not be able to reach the trapped people in time.

# Congress that drowned the peasantry: KTR

**Hyderabad:** BRS Working President KTR said that the Congress government has neglected the farmers. He said that even though the farmers are in the midst of hardships, the government does not care... He said that the farmers of Telangana are currently in a miserable situation. He said that grain purchases have been frozen. Speaking at a press meet at Telangana Bhavan today, he said that there is no system to monitor the agriculture sector. He said that the farmers in Kamareddy did not climb the roads. He said there is a shortage of porters. Since the elections are over, it is advised to focus on the purchase of grains. They are demanding that justice be done to the farmers without discrimination. He said that this is the situation in many places, not just one. He said that the farmers are protesting.

They said that they are not buying the grain they have brought for twenty-five or thirty days. KTR demanded that the government should buy the grain through FCI without getting wet and rotten. They said that till the time the government comes down.. Bonus per quintal.. Until the loan waiver is done, they will be with the farmers. He warned that if necessary, we will organize dharnas and initiations for the farmers, we will come on the roads.

He said that TRS had won the last 4 elections in Khammam, Warangal and Nalgonda MLAs. He said that we believe that the graduates of those districts will win. Educated and enthusiastic Rakesh Reddy has stood in the ring of KCR. Our appeal to the voters.. They have heard the deceitful promises of the Congress.. They have seen how they have been burned in five months of rule. He said that Mega DSC and Job Calendar did not keep



their word. If earlier the fee was 400 for Tet, it has been increased five times to 2000. BRS government has worked with commitment for government jobs and facilities, he said. He said he saw how the Congress cheated for five months. He reminded that there was not even a single medical college in Nalgonda. KCR brought it.

KTR said that the CM is saying that he has given 30 thousand jobs, he does not understand whether to laugh or cry. He said that the five-month term of this government has expired. How will two lakh jobs be given in another seven months? He asked. Rajesh Reddy wants you to win if you want a voice against the government. Congress candidate Block Meuler said that he does not know who he blames from time to time. If he wins, he will become another hero. They did not want to win another blackmail of blocking and threatening TV channels. Revanth Reddy is doing politics for petty politics.

KCR ran the government efficiently. He said that Revanth Reddy's face was not good and he broke the mirror. He said that the police was lathi-charged on

the teacher in Narayana Khed yesterday. Is it wrong to ask them to give them adequate remuneration for participating in elections? Said. The Center said that the state government's debt is only 3 lakh 89 thousand crores. He said that the Congress had campaigned that it would be seven lakh crores. Why are the Congress stalwarts, who propagated that debt is wrong, now incurring debt?

**Rahul ji... Is this what it means to spread love?**

"Rahul Gandhi! Is this what you mean by spreading love?" BRS Working President KTR asked this. RS Praveen Kumar alleged that the Congress cadres attacked the BRS leaders in Atchampet on Wednesday. He attached a video of the incident of Congress ranks attacking BRS leaders. "Look at the role of the local police in the attack by the Congress goons in Achampeta town yesterday," RSP tweeted, tagging the Telangana DGP. This was retweeted by KTR.

"Rahul ji, is this what you mean by 'increasing love'?" asked Congress leader Rahul Gandhi. To this extent, KTR posted a post on his official X

account. He criticized the Congress leaders for misusing their power and attacking their opponents. KTR said that it is a shame that the police are also involved in these attacks and abuses. They tagged the DGP of Telangana saying that if action is not taken against the goons who committed the attack and the police who acted as spectators, they will approach the Human Rights Commission. They said that they will definitely win justice.

# Revanth should focus on governance: Harish Rao

**Hyderabad:** BRS MLA Harish Rao vehemently condemned CM Revanth Reddy's failure to accept his government's failures in the matter of power cuts and heaping blame on all parties and electricity workers. He said that it is ironic to talk as if he is responsible for the failures of the power sector, and his attitude reminds us of the saying that women are old. Harish Rao responded on social media on Wednesday. He praised that the BRS government has built a robust system to provide continuous electricity supply for 24 hours with the cooperation of the electricity workers and made Telangana the only state without power cuts even for a blink of an eye. Duyyabhata said that the Congress government has demolished that system in just 5 months. Harish Rao pointed out that it is wrong for Revanth Reddy to make baseless accusations against the opposition parties



and electricity workers to cover up their own power that they have completely failed to supply sufficient electricity for household, agricultural and industrial needs.

In the Telangana movement, he criticized the electricity workers who played a vital role in the reconstruction of Telangana by blaming them and taking action to damage their self-esteem. He said that it is unfortunate that the Chief Minister does not have the

sincerity to rectify the power cuts except to make excuses on the electricity employees, and it would be better if the CM stopped such small-minded antics and supplied 24-hour electricity to all sectors as he did not blink an eye during KCR's regime. Harish Rao said that the CM is under illusions that everyone is involved in conspiracies like him and it would be better if they focus on their governance.

# If we give 400 seats we will merge PoK with India

**Rangarh (Jharkhand):** Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sharma on Wednesday announced that Pakistan Occupied Kashmir (PoK) will be merged with India if the BJP wins more than 400 seats in the Lok Sabha elections. Addressing an election campaign rally in Jharkhand's Rangarh, he said that the BJP needs more than 400 seats to implement the Common Civil Code (UCC) across the country. If BJP gets more than 400 seats in the Lok Sabha elections, PoK will be merged with India. BJP needs more than 400 seats to build Sri Krishna Janmabhoomi, Gnanavapi temple and implement UCC across the country. In 2019, we got more than 300 seats, so we were able to build the Ram temple in Ayodhya. Sharma said that Article 370 was revoked and CAA was implemented in Jammu and Kashmir. He alleged that Bangladeshi infiltrators are changing the face of Jharkhand like Assam and JMM and Congress are doing appeasement policies towards them.



# After Polls, Small Opposition Parties Will Merge With Congress, PM Claims

**New Delhi:** Prime Minister Narendra Modi warned voters about what he said was the dangers of going the Congress's way, citing the example of the Shiv Sena faction led by former Maharashtra Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray. Campaigning in Mumbai amid the hot and humid weather, with temperature reaching 38 degree Celsius, PM Modi said Shiv Sena founder Balasaheb Thackeray believed that the day the Maharashtra party starts to follow the path of the Congress, it would be the end of the Shiv Sena. "Maharashtra has made up its mind to punish the duplicate Shiv Sena, which has kneeled before the Congress," PM Modi said.

The Shiv Sena shattered into two factions after Sena leader

and the current Chief Minister Eknath Shinde revolted against the then alliance government with the Congress and the Nationalist Congress Party (NCP).



Mr Shinde managed to keep the name of the party started by Uddhav Thackeray's father, and formed government in a partnership with the BJP. "Smaller parties will merge with the Congress after the elections," PM Modi said. "Modi is the chowkidar of rights of

oppressed people. He won't let them be snatched away... Splitting Budget on religious lines is dangerous, but for the Congress, minority means its dear vote bank," the Prime Minister said.

PM Modi had defended himself against Opposition criticism that he is stoking divisions between Hindus and Muslims to win the national elections as he filed his nomination on Tuesday for re-election from Uttar Pradesh's Varanasi. "I believe people of my country will vote for me," PM Modi told CNN-News18 in Varanasi. "The day I start talking about Hindu-Muslim (in politics) will be the day I lose my ability to lead a public life," PM Modi. "I will not do Hindu-Muslim. That is my resolve," he added.

# Pak-American's Praise For PM Modi, And A Big Poll Prediction For 2024

**Washington:** Prime Minister Narendra Modi is a strong leader who has taken India to new heights and he will return as the country's PM for a third term, a prominent Pakistani-American businessman has said. Baltimore-based Pakistani American businessman Sajid Tarar said PM Modi is not only good for India but for the region and the world and hoped that Pakistan too gets a leader like him. "Modi is a remarkable leader. He's a natural-born leader. He is the one prime minister who has visited Pakistan in adverse circumstances and risked his political capital. I'm expecting that Modi ji will start dialogue and trade with Pakistan," Tarar told. "A peaceful Pakistan is good for India as well. It is written

everywhere that Modi ji will be the next prime minister of India," Tarar said in response to a question. Tarar moved to the US in the 1990s and is well-connected with the ruling Pakistani establishment. "It is nothing but a miracle that 97 crore people in India are exercising their franchise. India is the biggest and largest democracy. I'm seeing the popularity of Modi ji up there and the rise of India in 2024 is amazing. It's a story to be told. You will see it in the future that people will learn from Indian democracy," Tarar said. Responding to a question, Tarar said Pakistan is going through an economic crisis that has resulted in social unrest in many parts of the country including Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK).



"Pakistan is going through an economic crisis. Inflation is high. Petrol prices are high. The IMF wants to increase taxes. Electricity costs have gone up. We are not able to export," he said. The protest in PoK is mainly due to the increase in electricity bills, he said. He questioned the decision of the Pakistani prime minister to give financial aid to the

people of PoK. "Where is the money going to come from? It's discussing a new aid package from the IMF. Pakistan is going through a financial crisis," he said. "Regrettably, there is no effort to resolve the grassroots issues. How to increase exports. How to bring terrorism under control, and improve law and order.

# "Many Believe Special Treatment...": Amit Shah On Arvind Kejriwal's Bail

**New Delhi:** In a strong statement after Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal was granted interim bail to campaign for the Lok Sabha elections, Home Minister Amit Shah has said he does not see the Supreme Court's decision as a routine judgment and stressed that many in the country believe that "special treatment" was given. Mr Shah was asked about the AAP chief's claims that he would not need to go back to jail if enough votes were cast in the party's favour. The

home minister replied in Hindi, "I believe this is clear contempt of the Supreme Court. He is trying to say that if someone emerges victorious, the Supreme Court does not send them to jail even if they are guilty. The judges that granted him bail have to think how their judgment is being used or misused." To a poser on his take on the judgment, Mr Shah said, "The Supreme Court has the right to interpret the law. I believe this was not a normal or routine judgment. Many in the

country believe that special treatment has been given." Refuting Mr Kejriwal's claims that cameras were installed in Tihar Jail and a feed went straight to the Prime Minister's office as well, Mr Shah said the administration of the Tihar Jail is under the Delhi government, and accused him of lying. Taking a dig at the AAP chief, the home minister said Mr Kejriwal's party is contesting only 22 Lok Sabha seats and he is still making guarantees to the entire country. "Don't take him too

seriously. His party is fighting only 22 seats and he is guaranteeing that electricity bills will be waived for the entire country. You are fighting only 22 seats, how will you form the government," Mr Shah sneered. The BJP leader had also pointed out that the Delhi chief minister had not been given regular bail but only interim relief. "His plea was that his arrest was wrong. The Supreme Court did not accept that. Then he sought bail. The

court did not accept that either. Then he asked for permission to campaign. The Supreme Court set some conditions and granted him leave till June 1. He has to return to Tihar (jail) on June 2. How is this a ruling in his favour," he had asked. Mr Kejriwal, who was arrested by the Enforcement Directorate in the money laundering case linked to the alleged Delhi liquor scam, was granted interim bail on May 10 for campaigning in the Lok Sabha elections.



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# EDITORIAL

## Sushil Modi's life was a lesson in how to keep the nation first, the party next, and the self last

Very few leaders in contemporary India have enjoyed cross-party support, admiration, and respect. One such senior politician was Sushil Kumar Modi, who came from Bihar, the heart of India. A RSS swayamsevak from his childhood and then an ABVP member, he was a product of the J P Movement. He rose through the ranks after learning what it takes to be a student leader and then joined the BJP to fulfill his role in active politics. We will forever write and analyse his contribution in making the BJP one of the strongest poles in my state. What was it that made Sushil Modi different? He was incredibly passionate about making a difference to the lives of the people in Bihar and in ensuring that the voice of common Biharis reached the Parliament, the Legislative Assembly, and the Legislative Council. In order to do this, he felt that a strong political organisation for the BJP was a must. His life exemplified his tenacity, resilience, and remarkable desire to strengthen the BJP sangathan in the state. He served as the BJP's state president, national secretary, and national vice president. In his final speech at the Rajya Sabha when his term came to an end on February 9 this year, he recalled how he remained indebted to the BJP because the party had given him the opportunity to be at four important legislative bodies: The Lok Sabha, the Rajya Sabha, Bihar's Legislative Assembly, and the Legislative Council. What was poignant about his speech was that he mentioned how one could never be a life-long political worker but one could be a lifelong social worker. Thus, he resolved to continue working as a social worker till the last day of his life. During this speech, he also proposed that the government distribute handouts of the finance minister's annual Budget speech to all Rajya Sabha MPs as they currently only had access to it on TV. It would help facilitate a better understanding. This was quintessential Sushil Modi. During his tenure on the GST Council, he demonstrated exceptional preparedness and shrewdness in handling misinformation about the GST that earned him widespread recognition. In numerous interactions or interviews on GST, he consistently asserted that the states stand united with the Government of India when it came to the GST. According to him, in the GST Council, states could express their opinions, collaborate on implementation, and find solutions to any issues that came up. In his condolence message on X (formerly Twitter), Prime Minister Narendra Modi rightly emphasised the importance of Sushil Modi's "role in the passage of GST".

He was always well prepared and used to make detailed notes on issues, but he also wanted to learn from people. He was forthcoming in giving feedback so that we could continuously improve our writing and communication. "Please do not refer to me as Uncle; I feel old," he told me once during one of our customary chats on the phone on days my opinion pieces were published in this newspaper. Last year, I had penned a tribute to Padma Vibhushan Bindeshwar Pathak, founder of Sulabh International and the driving force behind the toilet revolution in India. Sushil Modi had highlighted specific aspects that I could have included. Never in my wildest dreams could I have imagined writing a similar tribute to him. His passion for international relations was equally strong. He led a delegation to Myanmar in 2014 as soon as Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the BJP-led NDA government came to power for the first time. He talked about how important historic and cultural relations were between India and Myanmar, as well as several innovative solutions to expand India's Act East policy. He referred to India's neighbourhood as a "Natural Economic Zone". In the inaugural speech that he gave, he also said, "Myanmar can get everything else from the world, but for Nirvana, they have got to rely on India (implying a connection with Lord Buddha)." His conversations, agreements, and disagreements with my father, Sanjay Paswan, will stay with me. Amidst all that I learnt from Sushil Modi, how to keep "the nation first, the party next, and the self last" is the foremost. An overview of his life will encourage party workers like me to resolutely serve the people and the nation's interests.

## RBI report proves Congress white paper is bogus, says KTR

**Hyderabad:** Punching holes in the Congress government's white paper on finance, BRS working president KT Rama Rao on Wednesday quoted Reserve Bank of India (RBI) reports that proved that Telangana's debts were Rs.3.89 lakh crore, and not Rs.7 lakh crore as the State government had claimed in its white paper tabled in the Assembly.

Coming down heavily on Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy and Deputy Chief Minister Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka for peddling false information against the previous BRS government using 'cooked up' white papers, he said their claims were laid bare by the latest RBI reports.

"The latest report by Reserve Bank of India pegged the State's debt at Rs.3.89 lakh crore. This exposes the false claims of the Congress leaders that the State debts had reached

Rs.7 lakh crore under the BRS regime. Both the Chief Minister and the Deputy Chief Minister must tender unconditional apologies for misleading the people of the State," he demanded at a press conference here. Rama Rao also wanted the Chief Minister to explain where the State revenue was being spent. He reminded that Telangana had recorded the country's highest per capita, which increased from Rs.1.14 lakh to Rs.3.57 lakh. The State had also registered the highest State owned Tax Revenue (SoTR), contributing about 80 per cent of the total State revenue.

"While the BRS government utilised loans for creating assets through completion of irrigation projects, improving power and drinking water supply among others, the Congress government is shamelessly claiming to be obtaining

fresh loans to repay existing loans and waive off crop loans," he said.

Earlier, pointing out that the Lok Sabha elections in the State were over, Rama Rao urged the Congress to set aside politics and focus on administration. He demanded that the State government expedite paddy procurement as farmers had commenced harvesting around 25-30 days ago and were waiting for procurement. Citing the ongoing protests by farmers across the State, Rama Rao demanded that the State government procure their paddy at the earliest. The government should also initiate measures to procure paddy without removing wastage of 3-3.5 kg per quintal and to ensure justice to farmers for their produce. "If the State government fails to respond, the BRS will stage statewide protests in support of farmers. We will

stand with the farmers until the State government procures the entire produce including rain-soaked paddy," he said.

Raising strong objection to Revanth Reddy's remarks blaming the field staff of power utilities for power cuts as well, Rama Rao said the Chief Minister was trying to cover up his inefficiency to ensure uninterrupted power supply in the State. He reminded that former Chief Minister K Chandrashekhara Reddy never made such remarks against government employees who were partners in the Telangana Statehood movement and also reconstruction of the State.

"At least now, Revanth Reddy should realise that he is the Chief Minister of the State, not an opposition leader. He must stop blaming others for his inefficiency and instead focus on administration," he said, also condemning the lathi-



charge against teachers in Narayankhed when they sought payments for poll duty. Responding to a question, Rama Rao stated that the BJP had different plans for Hyderabad and people of Telangana would understand its conspiracies after June 4.

## Failure to follow procedure: Why SC said Newsclick founder's arrest was illegal

**New Delhi:** Invalidating his arrest in a terror case, the Supreme Court ordered the release of Newsclick founder-editor Prabir Purkayastha. The reason the court gave: the Delhi Police failed to inform Purkayastha the grounds of his arrest before taking him into custody. The ruling by a Bench led by Justice B R Gavai is significant because it emphasises that proper procedure and due process are the guardrails against arbitrary action, even in stringent terror cases.

Purkayastha was arrested at about 6.30 am on October 3, 2023 by the Special Cell of the Delhi Police. Invoking the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, the Delhi Police alleged that Newsclick received money for pro-China propaganda. The FIR mentioned serious offences: Sections 13 (unlawful activities), 16 (terrorist act), 17 (raising funds for terrorist acts), 18 (conspiracy), and 22(C) (of-

fences by companies, trusts) of the UAPA, and Sections 153 A (promoting enmity between different groups) and 120B (criminal conspiracy) of the Indian Penal Code (IPC).

Purkayastha's case is that on October 4, 2023, without any prior notice, he was taken to the residence of a special judge at 6.30 am for his remand hearing. Purkayastha's lawyers claimed that on their client's insistence, around 7 am, they were informed about the proceedings over a phone call. In pleadings before the Delhi High Court, Purkayastha said that an unsigned copy of the remand application was sent by WhatsApp to his lawyers without mentioning the time of the arrest or the grounds of arrest. However, even as objections to the remand were filed before 8 am, Purkayastha's lawyers were told that the remand order had already been passed, and seven days of police custody had

been granted.

Crucially, official records show that the remand order was signed at 6 am, which is even before Purkayastha was produced before the judge or his lawyers were informed. Even the FIR in the case was made public only after a few days had passed after his arrest.

Purkayastha's case was essentially this: that his arrest was illegal as it did not follow due process. Article 22(1) of the Constitution, which is about protection against arrest and detention, reads: "No person who is arrested shall be detained in custody without being informed, as soon as may be, of the grounds for such arrest nor shall he be denied the right to consult, and to be defended by, a legal practitioner of his choice." Significantly, on October 3, 2023, the same day on which Purkayastha was arrested, the Supreme Court, in Pankaj Bansal versus Union of

India, held that to give true meaning to constitutional and statutory mandates, "it would be necessary, henceforth, that a copy of such written grounds of arrest is furnished to the arrested person as a matter of course and without exception". While the Pankaj Bansal case was regarding a money laundering offence under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA), the UAPA too contains a similar provision, which requires the grounds of arrest to be presented. Since both the laws are comparable, the ruling would be deemed to be applicable to UAPA as well.

This 'technicality' is crucial because the bar for granting bail in stringent special legislation such as PMLA and UAPA is very high, making it virtually impossible to get bail. Therefore, the protection against unlawful arrests is even more important in stringent offences. Solicitor Gen-

eral Tushar Mehta, who appeared for the Delhi government, had argued before the Delhi High Court that the offences alleged against Purkayastha "are very serious, and as such ought not to be interfered by this court on technical grounds". Mehta had invoked India's national security, the stability and integrity of the country, and cited email exchanges between Purkayastha and "other entities", which indicate "a deliberate attempt to show the state of Jammu and Kashmir and Arunachal Pradesh as disputed territories". "So much so that the words used for Arunachal Pradesh in particular are "Northern border of India" which, according to the learned SG, is generally used as a Chinese propaganda," the Delhi High Court had recorded in its order on October 13, 2023, upholding Purkayastha's arrest.

## Hyderabad's IT corridor goes from being hub of activity to deserted streets



**Hyderabad:** Over the past four days, the vibrant IT corridors of Hyderabad have transformed from bustling hubs of activity to eerily silent road stretches. It being an extended weekend complete with a holiday on Monday for Lok Sabha elections, a major chunk of the populace here appears to have vanished at the wave of a magic wand. Right from Friday, the buzz in the market here started to dissipate, apartment flats getting locked and paying guest accommodations emptied, as people hit the roads.

The corridor comprising Madhapur, Kondapur, Gachibowli and vicinities, and now stretching to Nallagandla and Tellapur, is primarily home for scores of IT and ITES companies apart from hotel, hospitality and financial sector. Amidst the sleek skyscrapers and state-of-the-art amenities that adorn the central IT hubs, a myriad of dining establishments, PG accommodations, hostels, and pubs have flourished, catering to the needs of the burgeoning IT workforce. The ever-evolving nature of the area is evident, with new establishments cropping up every few months, mirroring the dynamic industry itself. Like late last week, whenever an extended vacation comes up, it

prompts a mass exodus of the city's tech workforce, drawing IT professionals back to their hometowns or heading to different destinations. While the corridor with hotspots such as DLF, Nallagandla, Ayyappa Society and parts of Gachibowli, are abuzz with activity from dawn to dusk and late into the nights, extended holidays ends up metamorphosing it into a quiet and sedate corridor. "I went around for breakfast to my usual favourite spots yesterday only to realise that they all are shut. I had to drive around some time searching for an eatery in Gachibowli which I never had to before as the entire place is lined with choicest of eateries," said Rajita Nair, a software engineer. A noticeable lull is indeed experienced here during major festivals like Diwali, Sankranti and other extended holidays. "Youngsters in PG accommodations and young families from other districts of the State or from other States, just lock out and go travelling whenever they get a stretch of holidays," says a young software engineer, Tarun Chauhan. "IT areas often experience a significant decrease in activity during long weekends or holidays, leading to quiet corridors compared to the usual bustling environment and that's the reason you see food

vendors put up their stall in other areas as they lack both vendors and customers," said Reshma Shah, a senior analyst and risk officer. Garima Shama, a Research Analyst specializing in domain knowledge management points out that many companies have given a hybrid work model to the employees, hence the crowd is generally fluctuating. "During consecutive holidays, many opt for remote work or take leave, further contributing to the silence enveloping the IT corridors," she adds.

## Nehru Zoological Park mourns loss of Bengal White Tiger

**Hyderabad:** Ailing for last several months, Abhimanyu, the Bengal White Tiger of Nehru Zoological Park (NZP), has passed away due chronic renal failure. Born to Badri and Surekha/Sameera in the zoo premises, the nine-year-old male tiger was sick since April 2023 suffering with nephritis with 1st stage of renal problem.

Experts in the field of veterinary medicine, and experts from other zoos were consulted regarding the health of Abhimanyu. However, the big cat's condition deteriorated and was even unable to wake up or walk properly. With rheumatism and having gone off-feed, the tiger was critical for the past three days. Though fluid therapy along with medications was continued to revive the animal, Abhimanyu died in the enclosure at 2.15 pm, authorities said. The post-mortem was conducted in presence of veterinary experts from VBRI and CVSc, Hyderabad and the cause of death was inferred to be due to "chronic renal failure".



## Arrangements for MLC elections

**- The Model Code of Conduct should be strictly enforced - District Election Officer, Collector S. Venkatrav**

**Telangana Capital : Correspondent Suryapet :**

The District Election Officer, Collector S. Venkat rao said that the model code of conduct should be enforced in the MLC elections. Venkatarao said. Adanavu Collector C.H. Organized webex with Priyanka. On this occasion, the Collector said that since the election is on 27th of this month, strict measures should be taken in every division of the district to avoid the MCC violation and staff should be provided for the conduct of the election. It is suggested that the FST teams should increase surveillance and similarly check the facilities in 71 polling stations. Nodal officials are advised to attend the meeting to be organized on Thursday 16th on the conduct of MLC elections. In this program, ZPCE, O Apparao, RDO Suryapeta Venumadhav, Hujur Nagar Srinivas, Kodada Suryanarayana and others participated.



## No Unauthorised Ops By Indian Military Pilots In Maldives: High Commission



**Male:** India dismissed the claim made by Maldivian Defence Minister Ghassan Maumoon, alleging that Indian military helicopter pilots stationed in the Maldives carried out an unauthorised operation in 2019. In a statement, the High Commission of India in the Maldives asserted that Indian aviation platforms in the Maldives have always operated according to the "agreed procedures and with due authorisation." The clarification came days after India completed the withdrawal of 76 military personnel from the Maldives following a demand by President Mohamed Muizzu. Relations between India and Maldives deteriorated since Muizzu, a pro-China leader, came to power in November last year.

Muizzu had set May 10 as the deadline for the withdrawal of the Indian military troops from his country. Addressing a press conference here on Saturday, Defence Minister Ghassan said he knew of one of the aviation platforms undertaking an unauthorised sortie.

He narrated an incident where one of the two helicopters operated by Indian military personnel in the Maldives landed

in Thimarafushi, allegedly without permission - a case, which he said, was reviewed by the Parliament's Committee on National Security Services (241 Committee), when he was a lawmaker. However, the Indian mission dismissed the allegation. "Indian aviation platforms in the Maldives have always operated as per agreed procedures and with due authorisation from the Maldives National Defence Force (MNDF)," the High Commission of India said. Referring to the remarks by the Maldivian Defence Minister, the High Commission said the particular incident which saw an emergency landing at Thimarafushi on October 9, 2019, was "necessitated due to an unforeseen exigency." "The specific sortie on 09 October 2019 referred to at the press conference was also undertaken with the approval of MNDF.

The emergency landing at Thimarafushi was necessitated due to an unforeseen exigency, which was carried out after taking necessary on-ground approvals from the Air Traffic Control (ATC) to ensure the safety and security of the platform and crew," the High Commission asserted. According to local media reports, on May 11,

the MNDF revealed that the Indian military personnel who were previously operating the helicopters gifted to the Maldives by the Indian government had made a trip on the helicopter without notifying the Maldivian military during the administration of former President Ibrahim Mohamed Solih.

Incidentally, at the same press conference, Defence Minister Ghassan also confessed that the Maldives military still does not have pilots capable of operating three aircraft donated by India. The Indian military personnel were stationed in the Maldives to operate two helicopters and a Dornier aircraft gifted by India. The helicopters and the aircraft were used primarily for medical evacuations. The last batch of Indian military personnel were repatriated by Friday, as per the May 10 deadline set following an agreement between the two countries in February in New Delhi. 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.

## Name Of Indian Astronaut Set For Space Station? US Envoy To India Says...

**New Delhi:** An Indian astronaut is expected to reach the International Space Station (ISS) this year, US Ambassador to India Eric Garcetti told NDTV in an interview. Giving details of the space mission, Mr Garcetti said the Indian government has also suggested the name of the astronaut who will fly to the ISS on an American mission. He did not reveal the name though. "So the offer that was made by the President was to put an Indian astronaut on an American mission to go up to the space station this calendar year. And that's still the plan," Mr Garcetti told. "It's space, so you never know, can't guarantee that it will happen, but we do expect it to happen. The Indian government has indicated who that astronaut is. I'll let them, you know, announce that at the proper time," the Ambassador told. Mr Garcetti said the foundation behind cooperation on sending the Indian astronaut to the ISS is all about maintaining a bilateral relationship that extends from the "seabed to the stars".

"And that evidence will be seen this year, not just with an astronaut that we're going to



help put in space, an Indian astronaut, but also a satellite that we hope gets launched this year," Mr Garcetti said. "NISAR (the satellite) is a collaboration between NASA and ISRO. There is nothing that speaks more about the hopes and aspirations of our people, of our governments, and our relationship that our work together in the space?" Mr Garcetti said.

NISAR is a joint Earth-observing mission with the goal to make global measurements of the causes and consequences of land surface changes using advanced radar imaging, the mission's website says. As NASA and ISRO discussed the possibility of a joint radar mission, it became clear that this goal was of great interest to the ISRO science community. ISRO identified science and applications that were complementary to the primary mission objectives: agricultural monitoring and characterisation, landslide studies, Himalayan glacier studies, soil moisture, coastal processes, coastal winds, and monitoring hazards. A second radar frequency was added to the mission to better fulfil these science requirements. NISAR will be the first satellite mission to use two different radar frequencies (L-band and S-band) to measure changes in the planet's surface less than a centimetre across. The partnership with India has been key to preserving as much science as possible.

## Adani Stocks Surge - Adani Total, Adani Power, Adani Enterprises Up Over 5%

**New Delhi:** Adani group stocks were in the limelight on Tuesday, with Adani Enterprises, Adani Total Gas and Adani Power, surging more than 5 per cent each. Shares of Adani Enterprises, billionaire Gautam Adani-led group's flagship firm, rallied 5.43 per cent on the BSE. The stock of Adani Total Gas zoomed 5.50 per cent, Adani Power surged 5.49 per cent, Adani Green Energy jumped 4.34 per cent and ACC soared 4.17 per cent.

Shares of Ambuja Cements went up by 3.90 per cent, Adani

Energy Solutions advanced by 3.07 per cent, Adani Wilmar (2.20 per cent), Adani Ports (1.89 per cent) and (1.87 per cent). The combined market valuation of all the 10 listed firms stood at Rs.15,86,018.55 crore. In the equity market, the 30-share BSE Sensex climbed 328.48 points, or 0.45 per cent, to settle at 73,104.61. The NSE Nifty went up 113.80 points, or 0.51 per cent, to 22,217.85.

Adani Enterprises Ltd (AEL) that has interests spanning from new energy to airports and data centres, plans to spend ₹ 80,000

crore across businesses in the current financial year, a senior company executive said. A bulk of the capital expenditure planned for 2024-25 (April 2024 to March 2025) fiscal will be on new energy businesses and airports, said Saurabh Shah, AEL deputy chief financial officer, at an analyst call, a transcript of which was released by the company. "We are looking at a capex of about ₹ 80,000 crore in FY25, out of which a major part...will go in ANIL and airports business which take up about Rs.50,000 crore of capex," he said.

## In Amethi, Modi factor keeps Smriti Irani afloat, Gandhi hand steadies aide's boat

"Amethi ka vikas se kya vasta, aur yahan pratyashi se kya lena dena (What has Amethi got to do with development or who the candidate is)?" Raj Murti Singh, 68, an LIC agent, is not being ironic. The constituency which becomes the cynosure of all eyes come elections is aware of its "VVIP" status, right at the heart of the 2024 poll contest. There is a sense of disappointment that the fireworks which a repeat Rahul Gandhi vs Smriti Irani contest would have ensured are missing. But there is also resignation that once Amethi votes on May 20, and the cameras turn away, it will return to its state of gentle decay. At the same time, the contest has a new edge this time: of a fight between a so-called "chaprasi (peon)" and a Union minister.

Where K L Sharma is the faceless Congress poll manager who has spent 40 years managing the Gandhis' poll campaigns here, and thus been



and winning in 2019 by a margin of around 55,000. Says former Congress MLC Deepak Singh: "Irani is only giving the impression that she is a constant presence in Amethi. Instead, she comes only occasionally. Moreover, her own party leaders want her out. There have been instances

ferent. Shiv Pyare, who runs a shop selling tea and snacks, says that "the Congress will get theek (a good amount of) votes too". While it might have been different had a Gandhi family member been in the fight, as things stand, people may not be happy with "the behaviour of the local MP" but will keep their eyes on the bigger cause and not "spoil their vote (by picking Sharma)", Pyare says. "Vote candidate ko nahin, Congress yaa Modi ko dalega (The vote won't be for either candidate, but for the Congress or Modi)," Pyare says.

In its campaign, the Congress is citing projects started during the UPA regime in Amethi but blocked under the NDA - like 'Triple IIT', which closed in 2016 and shifted to Prayagraj; and 'Mega Food Park' and a paper mill, which never saw the light of day. Calling it "politics of vengeance", the party is telling voters about the projects that came up during Rajiv's era, like BHEL, HAL, an ordinance factory, a cement plant.

Irani talks about the new



dubbed "chaprasi" by the BJP. And where Irani is seen as the minister who fought her way into the limelight - and is happiest in it. If Sharma's Gandhi devotion is both his strongest - and weakest - points, BJP workers talk in hushed tones about Irani's "high handedness", and how it might cost them.

The BJP is hoping to override that anger by talking about development works like roads under "Modi and Yogi (the Prime Minister and Chief Minister)", and accusing Rahul of "abandoning" the constituency after his 2019 loss to Irani. The fact that even Priyanka Gandhi Vadra did not pick up the baton in Amethi is another proof of the same for the BJP. However, in this largely rural constituency, there doesn't seem to be any "vikas ka vote (vote of development)" or even a Gandhi family

The LIC agent who talked about how Amethi itself holds little stake in the election, says: "Amethi will remain where it is. We will vote for the country." Sitting with a group of friends, all in their 60s, at his small office in Gauriganj area of Amethi, Raj Murti says he would once talk with pride to relatives about his home town's "VVIP" status. "Now they mock me. Be it the UPA regime or the NDA, nothing has changed."

This is Irani's third election from Amethi, losing in 2014 to Rahul by about 1 lakh votes,

when she has scolded BJP leaders publicly or ordered them off the stage.

Admitting some resentment against Irani, a BJP supporter



urges voters to look beyond the candidate and vote for "Modi and Yogi". "K L Sharma is new, we have nothing against him, he has been made a bali ka bakra (sacrificial lamb) by the Gandhi family. Though he is giving a good fight, everyone knows who will form the government at the Centre. So why waste our vote?" he tells people. Even in the shadow of the Indira Gandhi National Udan Akademi, a flying school whose foundation was laid by former Prime Minister and ex-Amethi MP Rajiv Gandhi in 1985, the sentiments are no dif-

Coca-Cola bottling plant in Amethi, and seeks more time, citing that while the Gandhis have had "50 years", she has only had five. Both she and the BJP refer to the fact that Irani also owns a house in Amethi now; and are banking on a planned campaign visit by PM Modi soon.

Vote shares in the Amethi Lok Sabha constituency. Vote shares in the Amethi Lok Sabha constituency. On the other side, Priyanka has taken charge of both the Amethi and Rae Bareilly (from where Rahul is contesting) campaigns for the Con-

gress. Party workers say her entry has enlivened the Congress campaign, with Priyanka already having done over 15 "nukkad (corner) meetings" in Amethi with Sharma.

Priyanka constantly invokes her family's old connect with Amethi. Sharma, handpicked for Amethi by Rajiv, knows every lane of the constituency, Priyanka says. Also lending a shoulder to the Amethi fight is former Rajasthan chief minister and Congress veteran leader Ashok Gehlot. Sharma talks of himself as "a common worker" before adding what he brings to the table: "Gandhi parivar ka darwaza jaise pehle khula rehta tha, waise hi khula rahega (The doors of the Gandhi family will remain open to you, like in the past)."

Sharma is running his campaign from the Congress district office, helped by his wife Kiran Bala and daughter Anjali, unlike the Munshiganj Guest House, where the Gandhis used to be based in previous elections. And while he talks to the people about the "glorious" days of the Congress, he also assures them that he will

be there for the people irrespective of victory or loss.

That has been Amethi's biggest grouse against Rahul, that he did not return after the 2019 loss to try and woo back his family's turf. About 10 km away from Gauriganj town, a Dalit family says no one has come seeking their votes, from either party. While mother Krishnawati, 55, is hesitant to talk, daughter Rekha, 30, who says she dropped out of school after Class 8, is blunt: "Hindu hain, we will vote for the Hindu party." Krishnawati quickly hushes her.

## India's Cybercrime Watchdog Blocks Over 1,000 Skype Accounts

**New Delhi:** Over 1,000 Skype IDs run by cross-border cybercriminals engaged in online intimidation, blackmail, extortion and "digital arrests" have been blocked by the government, according to an official statement. Issuing a warning to internet users, Indian Cyber Crime Coordination Centre (I4C), set up under the Ministry of Home Affairs for coordination on activities related to combating cybercrime, said a large number of complaints are being reported where criminals posing as officials of regulators and enforcement agencies are

indulging in intimidation, blackmail, extortion and "digital arrests". The agency said a number of victims have lost large amounts of money to such criminals and urged the citizens to call 1930 or visit www.cybercrime.gov.in for assistance in such cases.

"This is an organised online economic crime and is learnt to be operated by cross-border crime syndicates," the statement from the Home Ministry said. Commonly known as 'parcel scam', the cyber criminals call victims informing about a parcel addressed to

them which contains contraband items like illegal goods, drugs, or fake passports, among others. In other cases, cyber fraudsters call to convey that a near or dear one of the victim has been found to be involved in a crime or an accident and is in their custody.

"A demand for money is made to compromise in the 'case'. In certain instances, unsuspecting victims are made to undergo 'digital arrest' and remain visually available over Skype or other video conferencing platform to the fraudsters, till their demands

are met. The fraudsters are known to use studios modelled on police stations and government offices and wear uniforms to appear genuine," the statement from I4C said. The Union Home Ministry is closely working with other Ministries and their agencies, RBI and other organisations to counter these frauds. "I4C is also providing inputs and technical support to Police Authorities of States/UTs for identifying and investigating the cases. I4C has also blocked more than 1,000 Skype IDs involved in such activities, in collaboration with Microsoft.

## Here's a look at INDIA bloc Chandigarh candidate Manish Tewari's assets

Chandigarh INDIA bloc candidate Manish Tewari and his wife Naznin Shafa have assets worth Rs 29.68 crore. The Congress leader filed his nomination for the Lok Sabha elections and documents revealed that the couple have immovable assets of Rs 20.87 crore and movable assets of Rs 8.81 crore. Of this, Tewari alone has total assets of Rs 16.15 crore, and his wife, Rs 13.52 crore. From agricultural land to residential plots, Tewari's immovable assets are worth about Rs 9.62 crore, the documents revealed. In the immovable category, he has a one-sixth share in a property measuring 13 bighas and 5 biswas in Himachal Pradesh's Sirmour. Tewari owns a house in Sector 4, Chandigarh, with an approximate market value of Rs 4 crore. He also co-owns a plot in The Foot Hills Residential Colony in New Chandigarh, Mullanpur, Punjab which is about 822.50 square yards, with his wife. The self-acquired plot was purchased on December 18, 2020, and has an approximate market value of Rs 3 crore (a 50 per cent share of Rs 6 crore). He has another 50 per cent share in a residential space in Delhi, a self-acquired property purchased in August 2021,



with his wife. The approximate market value is about Rs 2.5 crore (a 50 per cent share of Rs 5 crore). Shafa's immovable assets include a 302-square-yard house in Delhi (market value of Rs 5 crore) apart from the 50 per cent share in Tewari's Mullanpur and Delhi plots. She has also a half share in a Mumbai apartment (one-third self-acquired plus one-sixth inherited) with a market value (the half share) of about Rs 75 lakh. In the movable assets category, Tewari and his wife have 25 shares each in Reliance Power Limited. He also has 17 fixed deposits of different values. Tewari owns four

cars – two Honda Cities, a Honda Accord and a Maruti S Cross. Tewari also has a revolver inherited from his mother and Rs 25,850 cash in hand. Meanwhile, Shafa has 2,095 grams of jewellery worth Rs 1.11 crore, Reliance shares and Rs 40,800 cash in hand.

### Tewari's assets as declared in 2019

In 2019, when Manish Tewari filed the nomination from Anandpur Sahib, his movable assets were worth Rs 6.48 crore while Shafa had movable assets worth Rs 1.20 crore. Tewari and Shafa had immovable assets worth Rs 3.11 crore and Rs 3.55 crore, respectively.

## Neighbour Stabs Karnataka Woman, 20, To Death After She Rejects Advances

**Bengaluru:** A 20-year-old woman was stabbed to death in Karnataka's Hubballi, reportedly after she rejected the advances of a neighbour. Anjali Ambigera was sleeping early this morning when 21-year-old Girish Sawant entered her home and allegedly stabbed her repeatedly with a knife. Sawant is now on the run and police are looking for him. Girish, it is learnt, had been pestering Anjali to start a relationship with him, but she had refused. This triggered the attack. Cops visited the victim's home and recovered her body. Heart-rending visuals show her relatives wailing as the body is taken away for autopsy. Hubballi-Dharwad police chief Gopal Byakod said the murder was reported in Veerapur Oni village. "We have registered the



case and are investigating further to ascertain the motive behind this tragic incident. A team has been formed to apprehend the perpetrator," he said. This comes less than a month after Hubballi witnessed the shocking murder of 23-year-old Neha Hiremath by her former classmate Fayaz Khondunaik

on a college campus. Fayaz stabbed Neha multiple times on the campus. She was rushed to a hospital, but was declared dead. During interrogation, the attacker told police that he was in a relationship with Neha, but she had suddenly started avoiding him, a senior officer said.

## Mamata Banerjee Redefines INDIA Bloc, Says Will Provide "Outside Support"



**Kolkata:** Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee, who had put her membership of the INDIA bloc on hold after a tiff with the Congress on seat-sharing, appears to have thawed somewhat. The Chief Minister today said she would "provide outside support" to the Opposition bloc should it come to power after the general election. "We will provide leadership to the INDIA alliance, and help them in every way from outside. We will form a government so that in Bengal our mothers and

sisters never face a problem and those who work in the 100-days-job scheme, do not face problems," she said today. But she made her definition of the INDIA bloc clear -- it does not include the CPM or the Bengal Congress, led by arch-rival and senior Congress leader Adhir Chowdhury. "You must know this that the INDIA Alliance -- don't count the Bengal Congress and CPI(M), those two are not with us. Those two are with the BJP. I am talking about Delhi,"

she said. Mr Banerjee's partial capitulation comes as the election to 70 per cent seats of the country got completed. Three rounds of election still remain -- voting will be held in Bengal in every phase. The BJP, having saturated the Hindi heartland, is hoping to make up the deficit in 370 seats from the south and Bengal. As the election drags on in peak summer, Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Amit Shah have been regular visitors to the state, eye on its 42 Lok Sabha seats.

## 14 People Given Citizenship Certificates For The First Time Under CAA

**New Delhi:** The first set of citizenship certificates to 14 people was issued under the Citizenship (Amendment) Act or CAA today, nearly two months after the Centre notified it, initiating the process of granting Indian nationality to persecuted non-Muslim migrants from Pakistan, Afghanistan and Bangladesh. Under the CAA, the qualification period of citizenship application has been reduced from 11 to 5 years for undocumented non-Muslim migrants from Pakistan, Bangladesh and Afghanistan who came to India before December 31, 2014. Union Home Secretary Shri Ajay Kumar Bhalla handed over the citizenship certificates to the applicants in Delhi and highlighted salient features of the CAA. Secretary Posts, Director (IB), Registrar General of India and senior officers were also present during the interactive session.

The CAA was enacted in December 2019 to grant Indian nationality to persecuted non-Muslim migrants from Bangladesh, Pakistan and Afghanistan. These include Hindus, Sikhs, Jains, Buddhists, Parsis and Christians. The Act got the president's assent but



the rules under which the Indian citizenship was granted were issued only on March 11 this year after over four years delay. The ruling BJP, which committed to enacting the Citizenship Amendment Bill in its 2019 manifesto, said the implementation was delayed due to the pandemic. The notification drew sharp criticism from the opposition, which terms the move as discriminatory and motivated by the Lok Sabha elections. The Centre, however,

has maintained that the CAA "does not prevent any persecuted Muslim for practising their version of Islam, from applying for Indian citizenship under the existing laws".

Several parts of the country witnessed protests against the decision to implement CAA as some fear the law could be used to declare them illegal immigrants and take away their Indian citizenship. The government denies this and says the law

is needed to help minorities facing persecution in Muslim-majority nations as per the "evergreen generous culture of India to get Indian citizenship for their happy and prosperous future". "No Indian citizen would be asked to produce any document to prove citizenship", the Ministry of Home Affairs headed by Amit Shah had said, adding the Citizenship Act doesn't deal with the deportation of illegal immigrants.

## "J&K Faces Existential Threat": Omar Abdullah On Article 370 Scrapping

**Srinagar:** The people of Jammu and Kashmir face a "threat to our very existence because of the removal of Article 370 (J&K's special status was scrapped in 2019)", National Conference leader Omar Abdullah told, a day after voting in Srinagar in the fourth phase of the 2024 Lok Sabha election. Mr Abdullah - contesting from J&K's Baramulla seat, which votes next week - called the centre's scrapping of Article 370 an "existential challenge" to the people of the former state, and said, "This is an election after we lost our constitutional safeguards... we (now) face a threat to our very existence because the removal of Article 370 removed protections (regarding) our identity, land, and jobs."

Article 370, revoked by the Bharatiya Janata Party-led government at the centre, offered constitutional safeguards to J&K natives, including restrictions on jobs and sale of land. It was removed, the government argued in Parliament, to facilitate development in the former state.

"We have amongst the weakest domicile laws in the country. Ladakh (the union territory created after the bifurcation of the former state of J&K) has stronger domicile protection

today... If nothing else, we hope, when J&K is restored to full statehood, we will ensure land and job protection." "I am not trying to unnerve anybody on (the issue of) land and job rights in J&K. What I am saying is correct and based on reality. Today, or tomorrow, we will face a threat and you can't deny that!"

He also said the Supreme Court's December decision - a bench led by Chief Justice DY Chandrachud upheld the government's move to scrap Article 370 - is "not final and binding (for ever)". Six months ago, after the top court's ruling on Article 370, Mr Abdullah said he was "disappointed but not disheartened". "The struggle will continue," he said on X (formerly Twitter). Mr Abdullah, a former J&K Chief Minister, also pointed out "there will not always be a government at the centre that is unfriendly towards Jammu and Kashmir". He said the Congress-led INDIA bloc, which has united most of the opposition against the ruling BJP, supported the NC's stance on 370. "I am not talking about the INDIA alliance as a whole... but constituent parties have common cause with us on this issue," he said, referring to Tamil Nadu's ruling Dravida



Munnatra Kazhagam, the Trinamool in Bengal, and Left parties, which "have publicly endorsed what we have been saying".

"As time goes on, the number of our friends will grow," he said. Referring to his own election, Mr Abdullah - who faces Sajjad Lone of the Peoples Conference, jailed leader Engineer Rashid, and Fayaz Mir of ex-Chief Minister Mehbooba Mufti's Peoples Democratic Party - said, "Every opponent in this election is a challenge to me, not just one person. I will fight for the release of detainees who are young, voiceless and forgotten." On four (of seven) phases of polling so far, and buzz the BJP could be

headed to a surprise defeat, he said, "Part of me hopes that what we are hearing is true. But part of me is worried it might be wishful thinking. In 2019 there was euphoria (about) numbers going down but that didn't happen." "So far, based on the BJP's campaign, I would say they look nervous... whether that nervousness translates into less seats, we will have to wait for June 4 (when results will be declared)". This is the first major election in J&K since the Supreme Court's big ruling on Article 370, in which the court, crucially, also directed the conduct of Assembly elections latest by September this year. J&K has not seen a state election in six years.

## "Arrest Void": Supreme Court Orders Immediate Release Of NewsClick Founder

**New Delhi:** The Supreme Court has ordered the release of NewsClick founder Prabir Purkayastha, declaring that his arrest by the Delhi Police under the anti-terror law was illegal. A bench of Justices BR Gavai and Sandeep Mehta today said the remand copy was not provided in the case, which makes his arrest void. "There is no hesitation in the mind of the court that the grounds of arrest were not provided, which vitiates the arrest. The appellant is entitled to release from custody after the Pankaj Bansal case. The remand order is invalid," said Justice Mehta. The top court had held that grounds of arrest must be provided in writing to the accused in its March judgment in the Pankaj Bansal case.

The trial court will impose the

bail conditions on Mr Purkayastha. Additional Solicitor General (ASG) SV Raju, who argued in favour of the police, said while Mr Purkayastha's arrest has been declared void, it may not stop them from exercising their correct powers to arrest. Justice Gavai replied, "Whatever you are permitted to do under the law, you are permitted." The Supreme Court had on April 30 questioned the Delhi Police for hastily producing Mr Purkayastha before the magistrate without informing his lawyer after his arrest. The top court had also found it surprising that the remand order was passed even before his lawyer received his remand application. Senior lawyer Kapil Sibal, appearing for Mr Purkayastha, said he was arrested on October 3 and produced be-



fore the magistrate at 6 am the next day. Only legal aid lawyers and the additional public prosecutor were present, and Mr Purkayastha's lawyer was not informed, he said. When Mr Purkayastha objected to this, the investigating officer informed his lawyer through telephone and the remand application was sent

to him on WhatsApp, said Mr Sibal. The principles of natural justice require that Mr Purkayastha's lawyer be present when the remand order is passed, the bench had asserted. Mr Purkayastha was arrested on October 3 last under the anti-terror law, Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act.

## Influencer Says Students Should Choose Universities With Less Indians, Sparks Debate



A social media user has sparked a debate online after she said that Indian students who are planning to move abroad for higher education should not prioritise universities that have a higher number of Indian students. "Any Indian student planning to move abroad for higher education should check how many Indian students that university has. The more the number of Indian students, the lower that university should be on your list of places to join," Shreya Pattar wrote on X (formerly Twitter).

Discussing the reason, the CEO and Founder of Shreya Pattar Ventures, said that the community "comes with toxic Indian patterns" which include "too much drama, lack of professionalism, no good role models, no leadership or responsibility towards juniors, self-centred behaviour, "group-ism", backbiting, no seriousness towards the future." Ms Pattar added, "If you plan to move out of the country, make sure you are also stay-

ing away from that mindset, attitude, and nature of people. You shouldn't need such people around you to 'feel at home'. And if you DO, then might as well just not move abroad." Since being shared, the post has amassed a over eight lakh views online. While many users agreed with her, some criticised her post.

"Totally with you on this. The goal of studying abroad is to widen your horizons by interacting with diverse cultures and mindsets. Sticking to your comfort zone within a familiar community is counterproductive to that goal. It's about growing both personally and professionally," said a user. A second added, "I can not agree more with you. In 2011 I went to Australia to work in a hospital and there the most toxic people and most envious towards Indians were Indians only. It was a shock for me once I reach there and till the time I left Australia I could not come to terms with it." "You might not want to hear this, but this

is true! Having seen (and lived) this firsthand," said an X user.

"With due respect this comes from your lack of exposure to other cultures, choice of your company, environment and upbringing, and myopic mindset. To get into a Canadian or American university means grinding work that leaves no time for what you're talking about. Your success will depend on your own individual efforts and not the ethnicity or background of other people enrolled in that school," said a user. "Indian complaining another Indian about 'Indians not good other Indians,' commented a person.

Another added, "Same goes for people from any country doing the same thing. Thank you." "I respectfully disagree. Having a community of Indian students can provide a sense of familiarity and support, especially in a new country. It's about finding the right balance between comfort and exposure to diverse perspectives," wrote a person.

## Khalistan Terrorist Pannun Case Will Not Affect Ties With India: US Envoy

**New Delhi:** The issue of Khalistani terrorist Gurpatwant Singh Pannun will not affect India-US relationship, US envoy to India Eric Garcetti told. Calling the ties "the most consequential relationship" passing through a "historic era", he likened it to a marriage, with its inevitable fights and disagreements. "How we manage those moments defines the strength of a relationship," he said. And for naysayers who predict a roadblock, "I would say... our work every single day at the embassy, every single day at the Ministry of External Affairs, the Indian Embassy in Washington, has not slowed down one bit," he told in an exclusive interview. "It continues to accelerate because we want this relationship, we need this relationship, and we have this relationship," he said. In November last year, The US Department of Justice had alleged a foiled plot to murder Pannun, a US-based Sikh separatist. The state department had alleged that India was involved in the plot and accused an Indian government employee of being part of the conspiracy.

Asked what the US is doing to address concerns about anti-India activities by Khalistanis from foreign soil, Mr Garcetti cited diversity -- "religious, cultural or linguistic" -- and invoked the right to free speech in a democracy. "We also know we should be focusing on what people do when they cross the line legal behaviour. No matter what the source, there needs to be accountability. What people say can be disturbing. But it's what people do that breaks the law," he added. Asked about the recent controversy over a report of the US Commission on International Religious Freedom, Mr Garcetti also said democracy and diverse populations are "difficult things to manage", but living without them is not an option.

New Delhi had criticised the report, saying it comes from a "biased organisation with a political agenda". The report was also red-flagged by Russia, which said it was an example



of the US interfering in Indian affairs. The Commission, in the annual report, had criticised India for alleged violations of religious freedom and asked the US state department to declare it as a "Country of Particular Concern". "I know that America and that India are committed to managing the diversity, whether that's religious, cultural or linguistic of both of our countries, and showing that we live in democracies, not dictatorships, where we are free to speak not only those good moments, but also criticisms when necessary," Mr

Garcetti said.

The US, he suggested, remains on the side of caution -- a stance "that comes from a place of humility where we criticise our own selves and say, 'What would you do better' ". "So this independent commission looks all around the world at instances which might or might not be government generated. They might just be between communities, sometimes where we know prejudice exists between human beings and we highlight where those things are," he added.

### Fresh US Guidelines For H-1B Visa Holders Who Have Been Laid Off

**New Delhi:** The US Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) has announced fresh guidelines for H-1B visa holders who have been terminated from their jobs. Recently, major corporations like Google, Tesla, and Walmart have announced sweeping layoffs, affecting the lives of many immigrant workers on H-1B visas. The USCIS guidelines outline various avenues for these individuals, offering a chance to extend their stay. So what are the options beyond the 60-day grace period for someone on H-1B visa who has lost their job? Additionally, USCIS says the concept of portability, enables eligible H-1B nonimmigrants to transition smoothly to new employment opportunities. This flexibility allows individuals to begin work with a new employer as soon as a nonfrivolous H-1B petition is filed, without waiting for its approval. Workers who are eligible to apply for immigrant visas through self-petitioning can submit their petitions at the same time as they apply to adjust their status. While their adjustment applications are being processed, these workers can stay in the U.S. and acquire an Employment Authorization Document (EAD). In cases where individuals have been granted immigrant visa petitions based on employment and are facing significant challenges, they may be eligible for a one-year EAD.

## Amit Shah's Fresh Job At Mamata Banerjee Has A Satyajit Ray Twist

**Kolkata:** Legendary filmmaker Satyajit Ray would have called his iconic film, 'Hirak Rajar Deshe', "Hirak Rani" if it were made during Mamata Banerjee's tenure as Bengal Chief Minister, Union Home Minister Amit Shah said. The 1980 classic, starring stalwarts Utpal Dutt and Soumitra Chatterjee, is a dystopian fantasy film that revolves around a tyrannical, megalomaniac king crushes dissent and torments his subjects. "Satyajit Ray was a great artist. He made a movie - Hirak Rajar Deshe. When Mamata Banerjee's regime began, Satyajit Ray was not alive. Otherwise, he would have named the movie, 'Hirak Rani'. Mamata Banerjee is 'Hirak Rani'," Mr Shah said at a poll rally in West Bengal's Hooghly. "Violence, corruption, polarisation... Communists and Trinamool worked to finish nationalism from Bengal which gave us Vande Mataram, Jana Gana Mana and which played a key role in the freedom movement. They have snatched the rights of the poor, the backward and tribals and given them to infiltrators," Mr Shah added.

The Union Home Minister also said at the rally that Pakistan-Occupied Kashmir is a part of India and "we will take it". "After the abrogation of Article 370 by the government in 2019, peace has returned to Kashmir. But now we witness protests in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir. Earlier slogans of Azadi were heard here, now the same slo-



gans are heard in PoK. Earlier stones were pelted here, now stones are pelted in PoK," he said. Targeting the Congress over an old video of its senior leader Mani Shankar Aiyar, Mr Shah said, "Congress leaders like Mani Shankar Aiyar say it should not be done as they have an atom bomb. But let me say this, Pakistan-occupied Kashmir is part of India and we will take it."

The movie parallel, apparently made to paint Ms Banerjee as a tyrant, was also aimed at countering the Trinamool's "outsider" charge. The ruling party in Bengal has been targeting the BJP as a party of "outsiders" who don't understand Bengal's culture and heritage. Referencing an

iconic Satyajit Ray movie that most Bengalis would have grown up with is significant against this backdrop. Mr Shah's parallel between Hirak Raja and the Trinamool chief also comes weeks after a row over Kolkata Police's response to a meme featuring Ms Banerjee. Several social media users got notices from Kolkata Police over the meme that went viral. This had prompted several BJP leaders to question the freedom of expression in Bengal.

Not one to let such opportunities pass, Prime Minister Narendra Modi had promptly shared a similar meme that featured him, with the comment, "I also enjoyed seeing myself dance. Such creativity in peak poll season is truly a delight!"

The Hooghly district, where Mr Shah campaigned, has three Lok Sabha seats - Arambagh, Hooghly and Serampore. The Hooghly seat is set for a contest between two celebrities. The Trinamool has fielded actor and popular TV host Rachna Banerjee, who is up against BJP's sitting MP and actor-turned-politician Locket Chatterjee. The CPM, backed by Congress, has fielded Monodip Ghosh. In Arambagh, won by Trinamool in 2019, the ruling party's Mitali Bag is contesting against BJP's Arup Kanti Digar and CPM's Biplab Kumar Moitra. In Serampore, Trinamool's sitting MP Kalyan Banerjee is up against the BJP's Kabir Shankar Bose and CPM's Dipshita Dhar.

## Supreme Court's Tough Words For Centre, Uttarakhand Over Forest Fires

**New Delhi:** The Supreme Court has summoned the Uttarakhand Chief Secretary to explain the state's lackadaisical approach to handling forest fires. The top government official must appear before the court. The stern demand comes after the court this morning took the centre and state governments to task - asking searching questions over a lack of funding and the diversion of forest guards to election duties - as the hill state struggles to contain hundreds of active wildfires. The forest fires - over 1,000 have been reported across 1,145 hectares since November - have caused an estimated Rs.15 lakh in damages.

Slamming the "sorry state of affairs", which includes the state reportedly being granted only Rs.3.15 crore - against a demand of Rs.9 crore - to deal with the fires, the court also hauled up the centre for insisting forest officials be given election-related responsibilities. "Why have adequate funds not been given? Why have you put forest employees on poll duty amid fires?" the

court demanded.

Uttarakhand's five Lok Sabha seats voted in the first phase on April 19. Questions over the re-assigning of forest department officials to poll-related duties were asked earlier too; activists criticised the state of downplaying the serious nature of the wildfires, and claimed the few firefighters available often had to douse blazes without proper equipment.

In the last hearing, the under-fire state said forest officials assigned to polling booths had since been returned to their primary roles. "Chief Secretary instructed us not to put any forest officer to election duties anymore. We will withdraw the order now..." the state's legal representative said this afternoon.

An unimpressed top court shot back: "This is a sorry state of affairs. You are just making excuses," a bench of Justice BR Gavai, Justice SVN Bhatti, and Justice Sandeep Mehta declared. The court warned the state against further deploying forest officers or vehicles for

election duties. This is not the first time the Supreme Court has pulled up the state over its failure to combat forest fires.

Last week the court - hearing a petition seeking direction to the ruling BJP to do more to put out fires - said authorities could not "depend on rain gods or cloud seeding", or on the Air Force's firefighting efforts; earlier this month military choppers dropped 4,500 litres of water on the fires. The state has claimed that only 0.1 per cent of the total forest cover - which is an estimated 45 per cent of Uttarakhand's land area - has been affected by the fires. It has also claimed that forest fires are not an unheard of phenomenon in the state, and that it has short- and long-term plans in place. This, the state has said, includes bans on burning of solid waste near forests.

Officially, five people - including Savitri Devi, a 65-year-old woman who suffered fatal burn injuries while trying to save her farm - have been killed in the Uttarakhand forest fires. There was some respite last week after a cloud-

burst in Almora district extinguished some fires, although the rain also meant roads were flooded and blocked, and crops were destroyed. Uttarakhand Chief Minister Pushkar Dhama has said his government is committed to bringing the situation under control, and that action will be taken against those found starting such fires. "This is a big challenge for us. We are working on all possibilities... including taking help from the Army. We will take action against those involved in (starting) the fires. Our target is to bring the fires under control as early as possible," the Chief Minister said. Meanwhile, a case has been filed against four men - Piyush Singh, Ayush Singh, Rahul Singh and Ankit - under the Indian Forest Act for starting a fire in Pithoragarh district's Gangolihat forest range. Last month a fire broke out in a forest near Nainital and reached the doorsteps of a residential colony for High Court judges, prompting swift action from the Army and forest officials.

## Who Was Colonel Waibhav Anil Kale, Ex-Indian Army Officer Killed In Gaza

**Colonel Waibhav Anil Kale (Retd), the Indian national who was working with the United Nations (UN) as a security service coordinator, was killed after the vehicle he was travelling in came under attack in Gaza's Rafah region. Colonel Kale's killing marks the UN's first international casualty since the Israel-Hamas conflict began last year.**

The UN and Israel have both called for investigations into the incident. Colonel Kale, who retired from the Indian Army in 2022, is survived by his wife Amruta and two teenage children, son Vedant and daughter Radhika.

Here are some facts about Colonel Waibhav

### Anil Kale

1. Colonel Waibhav Anil Kale, 46, spent over two decades in the armed forces. He came from a family dedicated to military service, with his brother, Group Captain Vishal Kale, serving in the Indian Air Force, his cousin Colonel Amey Kale in the army, and his brother-in-law, Wing Commander Prasant Karde (Retd).

2. Colonel Kale was from Nagpur and he studied at the Somalwar high school. He later got a BA degree in Humanities from the Jawaharlal Nehru University, before getting a Diploma of Education in Senior Defense Management from Devi Ahilya Vishwavidyalaya, Indore, as per his LinkedIn.



3. In 2009, he completed a Certificate Program in International Humanitarian Law from the International Red Cross. In 2012, he finished another Certificate Program in Behavioural Science from the Indian Institute of National Integration.

4. Colonel Waibhav Anil

Kale joined the Indian Army in 1998. He commanded the 11 JAK Rifles in Kashmir, served as an instructor at the army's Infantry School in Mhow, operated in the northeast and the Siachen glacier, and actively engaged in counterintelligence and counterterrorism operations. He held various positions, including Battalion Commander and Rifle Company Commander, in the Indian Army. Col Kale retired from the Army permanently in 2022.

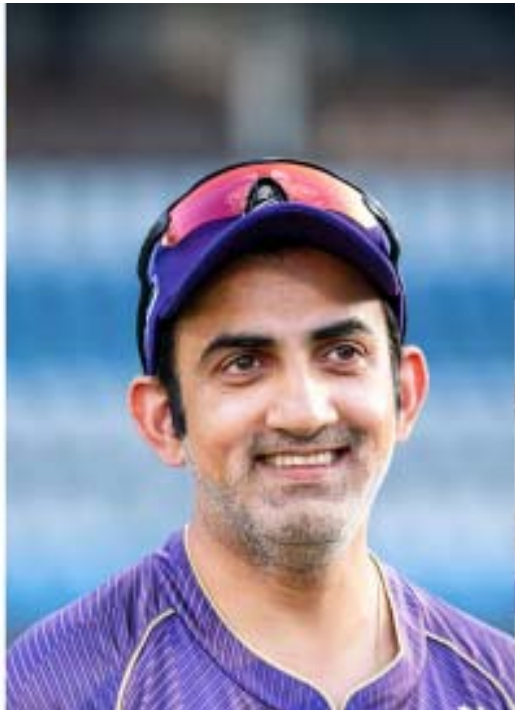
5. While in the Army, Colonel Kale served as a Contingent Chief Security Officer with the United Nations from 2009 to 2010. Just 5-6 weeks ago, he joined the UNDSS, this time as a Security Coordination Officer, officials said.

# SPORT

## CSK Break Silence On BCCI Approaching Stephen Fleming For India Head Coach Job

There has been a lot of chatter around BCCI potentially approaching former New Zealand captain Stephen Fleming as the Indian cricket team head coach. Fleming is currently the Chennai Super Kings head coach and during his tenure, the team has won a record-equaling five Indian Premier League (IPL) titles. The Indian Express reported that BCCI consider Fleming as a 'suitable candidate' due to his man management skills and pedigree. However, CSK have denied any such rumours and CEO Kasi Viswanathan said that there has been no such communication between Fleming and the franchise till now. "I have not heard anything like this. There has been no communication from Stephen Fleming to CSK either," CSK CEO Kasi Viswanathan told Sports Now. The required "qualifications, experience, knowledge and skills" for the position is well fitted for Fleming.

## Gautam Gambhir Responds After KKR Fan Girl's Viral Plea: "Will Not Propose..."



Gautam Gambhir must be a happy man. After he took over Kolkata Knight Riders as a mentor, the team has assured itself a top-two finish in the IPL 2024 points table. It will get two chances to qualify for the final. Under Gautam Gambhir, who had earlier guided KKR to an IPL win when he was the captain, the side has looked aggressive and much better than the rest. Only RR, so far, can come close to the balance and consistency shown by the side.

In the midst of this Gautam Gambhir got a strange request from a KKR fan. Her image went viral on social media. In the photo it can be seen that she is

holding a placard, with the line: "I will not propose my crush, until Gambhir smiles."

Gambhir posted the photo on his Instagram account, with his smiling photo and caption: "Here you go." Kolkata Knight Riders mentor Gautam Gambhir was not happy with the massive criticism that Hardik faced and he went on to say that both De Villiers and Pietersen's records as captain are also not impressive. Gambhir spoke specifically about De Villiers' failure to win an IPL title with RCB and said that except for his own scores, he has achieved nothing in the IPL.

"What was their own perfor-

mance like when they were the captain? I don't think, be it Kevin Pietersen or AB de Villiers, they had any performance in their career with leadership. Nothing. If you pick and see their records, I think they are worse than any other leader. I don't think AB de Villiers has achieved anything in the IPL apart from his own scores. I don't think he has achieved anything from a team's point of view, Hardik Pandya is still an IPL-winning captain. So you should only compare oranges to oranges. Not apple to oranges," Gambhir said in an interaction with Sportskeeda.

## Sanjiv Goenka's Reaction After KL Rahul's Dismissal vs DC In IPL 2024 Game Is Viral

KL Rahul's run of below-average scores in the IPL 2024 continued with the Lucknow Super Giants skipper falling for just 5 in a match against Delhi Capitals. Chasing 209, Rahul was a crucial cog in the wheel for LSG. His dismissal was a major blow, not just from the match's perspective but from LSG's playoff chances too. LSG now are all but out of the play-off race. Even if they win their last league game by a humongous margin, it still looks very unlikely that they will go through.

After KL Rahul's dismissal, LSG owner Sanjiv Goenka gave a very calm reaction. Earlier, Goenka's animated chat with KL Rahul after LSG lost to SunRisers Hyderabad by a big margin went viral. The two have since met and things seem normal now. Goenka even hosted Rahul for dinner on Monday. Then, Goenka even applauded a catch by KL Rahul during the match vs DC.

All that, however, did not stop social media users from having a go at Goenka for his reaction when Rahul was dismissed. After the loss vs SRH, not only KL Rahul, Goenka could be seen having an intense discussion with LSG coach Justin Langer.

Now, Justin Langer has



opened up on the subject. "I was so surprised by the reaction. It was incredible. I thought about it a lot for the last four days. There are not very many surprises in my life. I have had four surprises in my life. They were the four sexes of my daughter, when they were born, because I had no idea, and they kept coming out. I said, 'It's a girl!'. Four girls but we didn't know. It was a great surprise, as we did not know.

When I saw the reaction the other night, it was the fifth surprise of my life," said Langer to RevSportz.

"Anyone who knows Mr. Goenka or KL Rahul knows they are the calmest and most peaceful men on the planet. When I saw there were some arms going about, I thought, 'Woah, I have never seen this before.' When I listened to the conversation, it was just about where our plan went wrong in

the game, and it went wrong. "That is the funny thing about the aftermath of what happened. No one knew what was said. I am so surprised by the birth of my daughters because it was all about the plan of our game and where it went wrong. It was just cricket talk. We are just laughing about it, and it has been such an awesome relationship between Mr. Goenka, his son, KL, and myself," Langer added.

## IPL Coach Sends Message To BCCI As Board Begins Search For Rahul Dravid's Replacement

With Team India head coach Rahul Dravid's tenure set to end after the 2024 T20 World Cup, the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) has already rolled out the advertisement for the new coach. Though Dravid is also eligible to reapply for the role, BCCI secretary Jay Shah has also confirmed that the board is open to hiring a foreign coach too. One of the finest foreign coaches in the game, Justin Langer, who has also guided the Australian team in the past, has subtly thrown his hat in the ring. Langer confirmed that though he hasn't given serious thought to the India head coach role, the job would indeed be 'extraordinary and fascinating' for him. "Well, I am curious. I've never ever thought about it. I have deep respect for any international coach because I understand the pressure, but coaching the Indian team would be an extraordinary role. From what I've seen with the amount



of talent I've seen in this country, it would be fascinating," Langer said. The former Australian cricketer also took the deep dive into the mindset of a coach when asked about his mechanism of dealing with failures. "I'm sure individuals think about the fear of failure. I lived with it until I was 28 years old. And it is paralysing, the fear of failure. It can drive you, but living in a world of fear of failure is a dangerous world. We are human beings. I remember seeing

Steve Waugh suffer that. He was a run machine but had got a duck. He was going through a small run of failures. I remember he got out just before stumps in Johannesburg and got in the bus after that - he had his collar up, had his cap down and wore sunglasses. I went and sat with him. I said, 'How're you feeling, captain?' He goes, 'Pretty rubbish.' So, even the greats have doubts and insecurities. That's being human, right?," he replied.

## "Hopefully We Get Momentum At The Right Time": Phil Salt Ahead Of IPL 2024 Playoffs

Kolkata Knight Riders have been remarkable in the league phase of this IPL season and big-hitting opener Phil Salt is now hoping for the side to sustain the momentum and "put our best foot forward" in the play-offs. Two-time champions KKR are currently at the top of the pecking order with 19 points following nine wins and three losses in 13 matches. "It's about taking it day by day and hopefully we put our best foot forward and get the momentum at the right time," Salt said on KKR's Knights Dugout Podcast.

Salt has been one of the key players in KKR's impressive run to the play-offs, forming a formidable partnership with fel-



low opener Sunil Narine by taking the opposition bowling attack to the cleaners.

Left-arm pacer Mitchell Starc,

Salt's colleague at KKR, said the team is desperate to regain the trophy they won twice in the past.

The IPL 2024 Playoffs race now has five teams vying for two available slots. Kolkata Knight Riders and Rajasthan Royals have already sealed two spots. That leaves five teams - Chennai Super Kings, Royal Challengers Bengaluru, SunRisers Hyderabad, Delhi Capitals, and Lucknow Super Giants - fighting for the remaining two spots. Barring SRH, all the other teams have only one match remaining. It means that net run-rates will most probably come in to play to decide the final spot for the IPL 2024 playoffs.

According to IPL 2024's official broadcasters Star Sports, SunRisers Hyderabad have 87.3 percent chance to qualify. It is much more than Chennai Super Kings (72.7 percent) and Royal Challengers Bengaluru (39.3 percent). DC have 0.7 percent chance of qualifying while LSG have 0.2 percent chance of qualifying.

Chennai Super Kings - 14 points in 13 matches (NRR +0.528)

Matches remaining - 1 (vs RCB)

The Ruturaj Gaikwad-led Chennai Super Kings have a good chance. They have 14 points in 13 matches (NRR +0.528). If they beat RCB, they are through. A loss against RCB in the final league game won't knock the defending champions out either. They would then hope that RCB do

Sunrisers Hyderabad - 14 points in 12 matches (NRR +0.406)

Matches remaining - 2 (vs GT and PBKS)

Wins in the remaining two matches will guarantee a playoff spot for SRH. Even if they lose



not surpass them on NRR. If LSG win their last game (and reach 14), CSK will still be favourites to go through due to a much superior NRR. They would also hope SRH (14 from 12 games) lose both their matches, so that they have it easy.

Royal Challengers Bengaluru - 12 points from 13 games (NRR +0.387)

Matches remaining - 1

one of their matches, they will still go through. If they lose both their games, then it will all come down to net run-rate. If SRH lose both of their remaining matches while LSG and RCB win their last games, the Pat Cummins-led side will have to depend on the NRR to be in the top 4. If CSK beat RCB, and SRH lose both their games, they will hope to keep better run-rate than LSG and DC to grab that last play-off spots.

Royal Challengers Bengaluru - 12 points from 13 games (NRR +0.387)

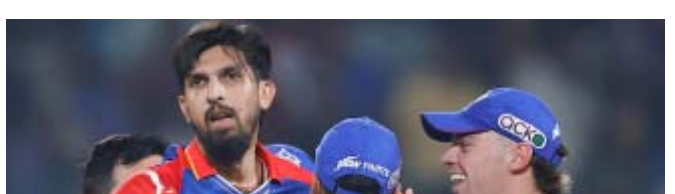
Matches remaining - 1

(vs CSK)

With a five-match winning streak, RCB have had a massive turnaround. They won only one out of their first seven games but since then it's a different side altogether. For RCB to qualify, they have to beat Chennai Super Kings to reach 14 points. They would then hope that their NRR is above the other sides vying for the fourth spot in the playoffs. They would also hope SRH to lose both their remaining games or LSG don't win their last match by a big margin.

## Delhi Capitals' Star Ishant Sharma Reveals Special Bond With Head Coach Ricky Ponting

Following the Delhi Capitals' (DC) final league game of the IPL 2024, which they won by 19 runs against the Lucknow Super Giants (LSG), India pacer Ishant Sharma revealed the special bond with DC head coach Ricky Ponting, saying the Australian is like his elder brother. Ishant was the star for Delhi on Tuesday night where anything less than a loss would have confirmed their elimination from playoff contention.



# 'Double iSmart' teaser: Mass and devotional elements are combined

'Ustaad' Ram Pothineni and director Puri Jagannadh have reunited for the sequel to their blockbuster, 'iSmart Shankar'. The makers released the teaser to celebrate Ram Pothineni's birthday. The teaser begins with a voiceover that uses filthy language to describe the protagonist, who is now in a lab in Hyderabad with some scientists surrounding him. Ram returns as Ustaad iSmart Shankar alias Double iSMART, and Kavya Thapar is introduced as the leading lady. Sanjay Dutt makes a powerful debut as Big Bull. After all of the mass dialogues, dance beats, and action stunts, the teaser concludes with a devotional fervor, adding a new dimension to the sequel. Ram's antics as a mass movie hero are highlighted in the teaser, which also includes Hyderabad slang dialogues. The teaser also features comedian Ali in a key role. Ram's energetic swagger and



on-screen charisma are the main draws. Charmme Kaur and Puri Jagannadh are producing the film. "Double iSmart" will be released in Telugu, Tamil, Kannada, Malayalam, and Hindi.

# Rashmika Mandanna's Colour Coordinated Cover Style Is A Respite From The Scorching Heat

Rashmika Mandanna is embracing the summer season in her style. Not even the scorching temperatures can diminish her spunk. As the cover girl of Travel + Leisure India magazine, she bowled us over with some killer sunny-inspired looks. First up was a collared orange shirt from AERON. It featured an oversized fit and baggy sleeves. Of course, airy outfits are a summer essential and Rashmika understands it too well. She teamed up the relaxed silhouette with matching cargo joggers. Adding a brush of sequinned hues was the diva's butterfly-shaped bralette from the Papa Don't Preach label. The multi-hued number delivered the perfect spice to amp up her monotone look. Funky floral accessories deserve a special mention too.

Florals are a staple summer selection. Hopping onto the trend, Rashmika Mandanna picked out a Lidee maxi dress. The floral-patterned pleats screamed vibrant from miles away. Did we hear tropical colour palette inspiration? Completing the outfit's allure was the asymmetrical hem, scooped neckline, and halter design. African-themed golden and purple bangles



were the x-factor.

Then, Rashmika Mandanna added a sporty element to her wardrobe. A ribbed halter-neck maroon top from Hermes paired with striped pyjamas from Lee Mathews put her beach look together. Yellow, green, and maroon-coloured streaks dominated the bottomwear. The flared fit served oomph. Rounding off her chic style was Rashmika's pearl-adorned bangles and a white crochet bag. Rashmika Mandanna signed off her photoshoot diaries with a through-and-through yellow colour code. The actress slipped into a Hunza G bikini top, comprising a twisted front and broad straps. The sweetheart neckline contributed to the charm. Ditching bikini bottoms or a sarong for that matter, Rashmika chose crochets to elevate her coastal vogue. Dotted with ample mini cutouts, the figure-hugging Akoi's skirt offered the finishing touches. Rashmika Mandanna is dishing out summer goals, and just like the blazing sunshine, we're soaking it all in.



# Buddy's debut single 'Aa Pilla Kanule' is out

Allu Sirish is coming up with a new film after a long gap. His new film titled "Buddy" has Gayatri Bharadwaj as the heroine. KE Gnanavel Raja and Adhana Gnanavel Raja produce the film under the Studio Green Films, while Sam Anton directs it. Neha Gnanavel Raja serves as the co-producer. The first track from the film, described as a youthful love entertainer, was released. The cheerful track called 'Aa Pilla Kanule' was composed by Hip Hop Tamizha, and this song captivates listeners with its lovely melody and enticing lyrics. This is second Telugu film for Gayathri Bharadwaj, following Ravi Teja's "Tiger Nageswara Rao". Gayatri and Allu Sirish look good as a pair.



# Devara's title song will be out NTR's birthday

Now it's time for "Devara" to start promoting the songs. The first single, called the title song of "Devara Part 1," will be released on May 20th, NTR's birthday. A video promo and announcement will be made within a day or two. Fans of NTR have been impatiently waiting for the songs to be released. They are also curious about what promotional material will be released on their favorite star's birthday. The answer is out. Anirudh Ravichander, the current top star of South Indian film music, is creating the soundtrack for this film. This is his first collaboration with NTR and director Koratala Siva. "Devara" will open in theaters in October.



# Mehreen slams media outlets over her 'pregnancy reports'

Actress Mehreen is extremely angry with specific media outlets that have published articles insinuating that she is attempting to conceive a child without being married. She identified two websites that allegedly published such articles. Additionally, she requested an apology from the journalists working for these media organizations. "It hurts that such irresponsible people who calls themselves "reporters" have stooped to such a low level. I demand a public apology," she wrote. Mehreen, known for her blockbuster films such as "F2", recently revealed to her social media followers that she underwent the process of cryopreserving her eggs in order to preserve them for future use and focus on her professional pursuits. In addition, she shared videos documenting her consultations with the doctors and the medical procedure. Apparently, some media outlets have speculated that she is currently pursuing artificial insemination in order to conceive.

