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**In Brief**  
 Congress party committed religious harmony



**Hyderabad:** Senior Congress leader Jeevan Reddy has said that the Congress party is committed to religious harmony. Jeevan Reddy spoke to the media on Saturday. He said that if the late former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi was alive, the Ram temple would have been completed in Ayodhya, and the Ram temple was built as per the court verdict. He predicted that the Congress government will come at the center in the Lok Sabha elections. He expressed confidence that the India alliance formed under the leadership of Congress will succeed. Duyya said that Modi is inciting religious hatred. He said that the construction of Ram Mandira was delayed due to BJP's manner. They said that it was the BJP government that brought the bulldozer culture. Jeevan Reddy made it clear that he will respect the verdict of the people of Jagitya.

## 'DHAAKAD' Government Has Replaced Bomb In Pak Hands With Begging Bowl: PM

**Ambala:** Making a strong pitch for re-electing a "strong" government, Prime Minister Narendra Modi has said that bombs in Pakistan's hands have now been replaced by a "begging bowl". The PM's comments come in the wake of an old video of Congress leader Mani Shankar Aiyar surfacing in which he is heard saying India should give respect to Pakistan because it has an atom bomb, and a similar remark by Farooq Abdullah of the National Conference, which is also an INDIA bloc member. Addressing a rally in

Haryana's Ambala on Saturday, PM Modi said in Hindi, "When the country has a 'dhaakad' (strong) government, even the enemy thinks 100 times before doing anything. You can see that the same Pakistan which was troubling India for 70 years and held bombs in its hands, now holds a 'bheenk ka katora' (begging bowl). When there is a 'dhaakad' government, this is how the enemy trembles." Continuing in the same vein, PM Modi asked whether a weak government would have been able to change the situa-

tion in Jammu and Kashmir. "Think back to those days when there was a Congress government and courageous mothers in Haryana would remain worried all the time about an explosion being triggered by terrorists or a stone thrown (by protesters) injuring our soldiers. It's been 10 years now and, hasn't all this stopped," he asked the crowds, adding, "Modi's 'dhaakad' government demolished the wall of Article 370, and Jammu and Kashmir is now on the path of development. Article 370, which granted special status to Jammu and

Kashmir, was abrogated in 2019. In an old video that surfaced recently, Congress' Mani Shankar Aiyar had said, "India should give respect to Pakistan as it has an atom bomb. If we don't give them respect, they will think of using an atom bomb against India... You should talk to them. But, instead, we are flexing our military might." National Conference chief and former Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Farooq Abdullah had also said in the first week of May that Pakistan is not wearing bangles and could drop atom bombs on India.



## Deve Gowda breaks silence in Prajwal Revanna case

**Bengaluru:** Former Prime Minister H D Deve Gowda on Saturday said action must be taken as per the law against his grandson and JD(S) MP Prajwal Revanna over sexual abuse allegations. Deve Gowda, who is celebrating his 91st birthday on Saturday, told media persons that Prajwal Revanna should not be spared. However, he alleged that cases against Prajwal Revanna's father and JD(S) MLA H D Revanna were false. "H D Kumaraswamy has already spoken on many occasions on behalf of our entire family about Prajwal Revanna and H D Revanna. It is the responsibility of the government to take all possible steps against Prajwal Revanna under the purview of the law. But now the people also know that false cases were registered against H D Revanna," Deve Gowda added. Deve Gowda had not



stepped out of his Bengaluru residence since April 27. He had earlier campaigned for BJP-JD(S) alliance Hassan candidate Prajwal Revanna. On April 26, he cast his vote in Paduvalahippe village under Hassan district. The very next day, Prajwal Revanna left the country as the alleged sexual abuse videos started to emerge. On May 4, H D Revanna was arrested in a kidnapping case related to the

sexual abuse allegations against Prajwal Revanna. The former was released on bail on May 14. "None of us in the family have any objection over this (accusations against Prajwal Revanna)... Many people are involved in this episode and I don't want to take any names. All those involved must be punished and the women victims must get justice," Deve Gowda remarked.

## ARVIND KEJRIWAL AIDE BIBHAV KUMAR ARRESTED

**New Delhi:** Arvind Kejriwal's aide, accused of assaulting Rajya Sabha MP Swati Maliwal, has been taken in custody by Delhi Police in connection with the assault case filed against him. Ms Maliwal in her FIR had alleged that Bibhav Kumar, the Delhi Chief Minister's secretary, assaulted her when she visited Mr Kejriwal's residence on Monday. Mr Kumar was picked up from the chief minister's residence by a Delhi Police team around noon, a senior police officer said. He has been taken to the police station for interrogation. His lawyer said that they have not received any information yet from the police, despite sending an email to the authorities assuring full cooperation. "We've not received any information from the police

yet. We've sent them an e-mail that we will cooperate in the investigation," Bibhav Kumar's lawyer Karan Sharma



told news agency ANI. The incident has triggered a political storm. The BJP has heavily criticised Mr Kejriwal for his silence, with its spokesperson Gaurav Bhatia even going as far as labelling Mr Kejriwal the "main criminal" due to his apparent

inaction during the assault. It also accused the AAP of shielding Mr Kejriwal's personal secretary despite ample evidence against him. A video from the Delhi Chief Minister's house of the alleged assault incident is also doing rounds on social media in which an altercation can be seen taking place between the staff deployed in the CM's residence and the AAP Rajya Sabha MP. In the FIR, Ms Maliwal accused Mr Kumar of hitting her in the chest, stomach and the pelvic area with legs. "I felt absolutely shocked and was screaming for help over and over again. In order to protect myself, I pushed him away with my legs. At that time, he pounced on me, brutally dragged and deliberately pulled my shirt up," the FIR reads.

## Girls outperform boys in TS EAPCET 2024 Results



**Hyderabad:** Girls have outperformed boys in the Telangana State Engineering, Agriculture and Pharmacy Common Entrance Test (TS EAPCET) 2024 results that were announced here on Saturday. Girls recorded a qualifying percentage of 90.18 in the A&P stream, while the boys got 88.25 per cent. Similarly, 75.85 girls qualified in engineering stream as against 74.38 per cent of boys. S Jyothiraditya of

Srikakulam, Andhra Pradesh and Aloor Praneetha of Madanapalli, Andhra Pradesh, secured the first rank in the engineering and A&P streams respectively. In all 2,40,618 students who appeared for the engineering stream test held from May 9 to 11, 74.98 per cent qualified. As for the A&P, 89.66 per cent qualified out of 91,633 students who took the tests conducted on May 7 and 8. Releasing the results, Princi-

pal Secretary to Government (Education department), Burra Venkatesham said the government would shortly announce the admission counselling schedule and academic calendar. The process of granting affiliation to private engineering colleges was underway and would be completed before the web counselling, he said, adding that enough seats were available in the engineering programmes.

## CM Revanth Reddy to Embark on Field Visit to Kaleshwaram Project

**CORRESPONDENT Hyderabad -Telangana Capital:**

Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy along with some ministers will undertake a field visit of Medigadda, Annaram and Sundilla barrages of Kaleshwaram lift irrigation scheme (KLIS) to take a first-hand stock of the situation in light of an interim report submitted by the National Dam Safety Authority (NDSA) on monsoon protection measures at the barrages. Chairing a review meeting at the Secretariat on Saturday, where irrigation minister N. Uttam Kumar Reddy briefed the participants, the Chief Minister expressed the view that the subject needed to be discussed threadbare at

a Cabinet meeting. Though the plan was to do so on Saturday, with the proposed Cabinet meeting was postponed following denial of permission by the Election Commission, Revanth Reddy said that all options for interim monsoon protection, as well as long-term safety of the barrages, need detailed discussions, according to a press release from the Chief Minister's Office.

Revanth Reddy enquired about the recommendations made by the NDSA in the interim report on KLIS and the measures that were needed to be taken. NDSA has recently submitted an interim report on the repairs and temporary restoration of the damaged Medigadda and Sundilla barrages, considered the most im-

portant structures in the Kaleshwaram project. The NDSA had in 2019 cautioned about the threat to the barrages.

As the monsoon season will commence in a few weeks, the Chief Minister said that the measures to be taken in the meantime will have to be discussed in the cabinet meeting. The state government will take a decision on whether to repair the damaged structures or opt for alternative measures in consultation with the irrigation department. Meanwhile, it is learnt that irrigation department officials, who also attended the meeting, explained about NDSA's suggestions for a deeper study of the situation at the three barrages. The meeting was attended by ministers



Ponguleti Srinivas Reddy, Jupally Krishna Rao and Konda Surekha and CM's adviser Vem Narender Reddy. The irrigation department officials have been asked to initiate the process whereby CWPRS will take up a detailed study of the faults at the three barrages.

# New CCTV Footage Shows Swati Maliwal Walking Out Of Arvind Kejriwal's Home

**New Delhi:** A new video has emerged from Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal's residence which shows Swati Maliwal being escorted out by the police and security guards. The incident occurred on Monday, the same day that the AAP MP alleged being assaulted by the Chief Minister's aide Bibhav Kumar.

In her FIR, Ms Maliwal alleged that she was brutally assaulted by Bibhav Kumar when she went to the Chief Minister's residence. She alleged that she was kicked, punched and abused by Mr Kumar, who is the personal secretary to Mr Kejriwal. The 39-year-old also said that her clothes were torn, and she received severe injuries on her head and her leg during the assault. But in the new CCTV footage, Swati



Maliwal does not appear to have any injuries and is even seen trying to free herself from the policewoman's grip.

The Aam Aadmi Party and Swati Maliwal have been trading bitter barbs as each pushed back against the other over the latter's claims. AAP leader Atishi accused Ms Maliwal of

colluding with the Bharatiya Janata Party to discredit the party during the general election. "The CCTV footage from the gate of Arvind Kejriwal's residence shows that Maliwal was walking properly and pushed a female police official away. She can be seen walking properly. Her clothes are not

torn and she is not limping," Atishi said.

The incident has triggered a political storm. The BJP has heavily criticised Mr Kejriwal for his silence, with its spokesperson Gaurav Bhatia even going as far as labelling Mr Kejriwal the "main criminal" due to his apparent inaction during the assault. Mr Kejriwal deflected questions regarding the incident during a press conference in Lucknow yesterday, where he appeared alongside Samajwadi Party (SP) chief Akhilesh Yadav and AAP MP Sanjay Singh. Mr Singh, addressing the press, acknowledged Mr Kumar's misconduct and deflected criticism towards the BJP, demanding accountability for various women's issues under their governance.

# "If You Want To Give Quotas To Muslims...": Himanta Sarma To Lalu Yadav

**Siwan (Bihar):** Opposing the idea of providing reservations to Muslims, Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma on Saturday hit out at RJD chief Lalu Yadav over his advocacy for "complete reservation for Muslims" and suggested Lalu Yadav to move to Pakistan and then give reservations there. Addressing a public rally in Raghunathpur, Siwan, on Saturday, the Assam CM said that no reservations will be made on the basis of religion.

"Few days back I saw the statement of Lalu Yadav, where he said that 'Muslims should get reservations'. Do Hindus don't deserve to get reservations? Babasaheb Ambedkar gave us the Constitution. In the Constitution, it is mentioned that SC, ST, and OBC should get reservations. There will be no reservations on the basis of religion. I want to say this, Lalu

Yadav, if you want to give reservations to Muslims, then I will buy you the tickets to Pakistan, go to Pakistan and then give reservations there. It will never happen in India. There is no law on this. Yeh Sapna bhii aap mat dekho (don't dream of this)," Assam CM said. Citing examples from Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh, the Assam CM alleged that such measures came at the expense of other backward classes. "Karnataka's decision to grant reservations to Muslims was done after robbing the reservations of Backward classes," he said.

The Assam CM asserted that to bring the entire Jammu and Kashmir to India, the Bharatiya Janata Party needs 400 seats in the ongoing Lok Sabha elections. "One part of Kashmir is in Pakistan. Give 400 seats to Modi ji and we will get Kashmir from Pakistan. We closed

700 madrassas in Assam and no one raised their voice against it. Why? Because this is a new India...Aaj mullah banane ka dukaan khulne nahi dunga. Doctor, engineer, banane ka kaam karunga...We need 400 seats so that we can bring the Uniform Civil Code, construct the Krishna Janambhoomi temple, construct the Gyanvapi temple and stop reservation to Muslims. That's why we need 400 seats," he said. Earlier on May 7, former Bihar Chief Minister and RJD Chief Lalu Prasad Yadav came out in support of the Muslim quota, saying that they should get the reservation. Speaking to reporters, the former CM said, "Muslims should get reservations (reservation toh milna chahiye Musalmano ko, pura'...)." The 40 seats in Bihar are undergoing polls in all seven phases.

# Sandeshkhali BJP Worker Released A Day After High Court Grants Her Bail

**Kolkata:** A BJP worker of Sandeshkhali, Piyali Das, was released from a correctional home, a day after the Calcutta High Court granted her bail in a criminal case and ordered her immediate release on personal bond. A case was filed against Ms Das alleging that she got the signature of a woman of Sandeshkhali on a blank paper which was later filled up as complaints of sexual assault against TMC leaders. After Ms Das came out of Dum Dum Central Correctional Home near here on Saturday evening, BJP supporters greeted her with garlands and flower bouquets. "I will remain with the truth and continue to fight this con-



spiracy. It is now proven in the court that my arrest was illegal. I will continue to stand by suffering women of Sandeshkhali and fight against the ruling party's atrocities," Ms Das told reporters. Allegations of sexual abuse and land grab were leveled against TMC leaders of

Sandeshkhali. Ms Das also alleged that two Sandeshkhali TMC leaders including Dilip Mallick had tried to bribe her with ? 20 lakh in cash. Mr Mallick, however, rejected the charge. Following her surrender in Basirhat sub-divisional court on May 14, the additional chief judicial magistrate rejected her bail prayer and remanded her to eight days' judicial custody. Ms Das then moved the Calcutta High Court seeking bail. Her lawyer Rajdeep Majumder had submitted before the high court that IPC 195A (forcing a person to give false evidence), a non-bailable section, was added against her by the police after she surrendered before the lower court.

# Himanta Sarma vs Opposition Over Rahul Gandhi's Red Constitution Copy

**Dispur:** Is this the code red moment in the national polls? Himanta Sarma appears to suggest so. The Assam Chief Minister, a former Congress leader, has alleged that Rahul Gandhi, his former party boss, has been displaying the Chinese constitution at his poll rallies. Mr Sarma arrived at the conclusion based on the colour of the book - a deep red. "The original copy of the Constitution of India has a blue cover. The original Chinese constitution has a red cover. Does Rahul carry a Chinese Constitution? We will need to verify," Mr Sarma, 55, posted on X on Friday along with a picture of the Constitution, in what he calls the origi-

nal blue cover, and a Rahul Gandhi picture with the red one.

Reacting to the Chief Minister's post, several social media users said that the red-bound Constitution is a coat pocket edition, which has been presented to top Indian leaders, including the President, Prime Minister and the Union Home minister. Despite being called out on social media for the misleading post, the Chief Minister doubled down on his assertion. "Rahul is displaying a red Chinese constitution to the people attending his meetings. Our constitution, in blue, includes a chapter called the Directive Principles of State



Policy, which makes it a sacred duty to enact a Uniform Civil Code in our country; Rahul is now opposing this. That's why I am sure that the constitution in his hand must be a Chinese

one," he said in a post. An MLA belonging to the Badruddin Ajmal-led All India United Democratic Front (AIUDF) party pointed to the "red gamcha" worn by the Chief Minister.

# One Corrupt Party Covering Another: PM Modi's Swipe At Congress-AAP Alliance

**New Delhi:** Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday said opposition INDIA bloc can go to any extent in pursuing its "vote bank" politics, claiming that the then Congress government during the 2014 elections had handed over 123 properties spread across prime locations in Delhi to the Waqf Board for votes. In his first rally in the national capital for the 2024 Lok Sabha polls, PM Modi slammed the Congress-AAP alliance in Delhi as opportunistic, saying the world is watching how one corrupt party is covering for another corrupt party. PM Modi asserted that if he has any heir, it is the 140 crore Indians for whose bright future he has dedicated himself. His every moment is for the country and his life is dedicated to realising the dreams of its citizens, the prime ministers said while addressing the rally in North-East Delhi. Though he made no direct reference, PM Modi's remarks came amid repeated claims of Delhi Chief Minister and AAP supremo Arvind Kejriwal that he will make way



for Home Minister Amit Shah after he turns 75 next year. He has chosen Mr Shah as his successor, Mr Kejriwal has claimed, an assertion refuted by top BJP leaders who have said PM Modi will lead the party even after 2029. Listing several signature projects, including the new Parliament building and the war memorial, Prime Minister Modi asserted that he lives and works hard for democracy. It is Modi in whose heart democracy is alive, he said, noting that his government has built a museum dedicated to all the prime ministers.

This Congress-AAP alliance seems determined to destroy Delhi, he said, adding that its

leaders are responsible for fall in political standards and breaking people's faith.

Those who arrived to root out corruption are doing the rounds of jail in scams running into thousands of crores of rupees, PM Modi said in a swipe at Chief Minister Mr Kejriwal. The Congress, he said, would not tire of taking credit for exposing the AAP government's scams but its Delhi leaders were forced by the Gandhi family to join hands with the city's ruling party. Keeping up his attack on the opposition alliance for its alleged pro-Muslim politics, PM Modi said the Congress had joined hands with those advocating for "vote jihad" for its vote bank during the 2014 elections. It was agreed that they would vote for the Congress, and its government in turn handed over the country's properties to the Waqf Board, he said. These properties were spread across prime locations where a yard of land costs many lakhs of rupees, PM Modi said, claiming that the opportunistic opposition alliance can incite violence for its appeasement politics.

# "Will Go To BJP HQ With All AAP Leaders": Arvind Kejriwal's Arrest Dare

**New Delhi:** In his first reaction to the Swati Maliwal case - without naming the Rajya Sabha MP - Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal has hit out at the BJP government and accused it of picking out people from the Aam Aadmi Party one by one to arrest them, with the latest target being his personal assistant Bibhav Kumar.

A defiant Mr Kejriwal said the Aam Aadmi Party cannot be "crushed" and, throwing down the gauntlet, declared that he would go to the BJP's headquarters in Delhi with all his senior leaders at noon on Sunday, where the ruling party could arrest them all at once if it wanted to.

In a video message in Hindi on Saturday, Mr Kejriwal said, "You are seeing how these people have been after the Aam Aadmi Party. One after the other, they have been putting our leaders in jail. They jailed me, (former deputy chief minis-

ter) Manish Sisodia, (former minister) Satyendar Jain, (Rajya Sabha MP) Sanjay Singh, and now they have arrested my personal assistant today."

The Aam Aadmi Party chief, who is out on interim bail until June 2 for campaigning in the Lok Sabha polls, claimed that the latest target being his personal assistant Bibhav Kumar. A defiant Mr Kejriwal said the Aam Aadmi Party cannot be "crushed" and, throwing down the gauntlet, declared that he would go to the BJP's headquarters in Delhi with all his senior leaders at noon on Sunday, where the ruling party could arrest them all at once if it wanted to.

**'Hundreds Of Leaders Will Be Born'**

Repeating a charge he has made several times in the past, Mr Kejriwal said the AAP's only crimes were that it had built great government schools and mohalla clinics and provided free and uninterrupted electricity, which the BJP would not be able to do.

With folded hands, he said,



"I want to tell the Prime Minister: You are playing this game of arresting people one at a time. Tomorrow, I will go to the BJP headquarters at noon with all my senior leaders, MLAs and MPs. Jail whoever you want, do it all at once. You think you can crush the AAP by jailing its leaders. The party will not be crushed like this, try it if you want." "The Aam Aadmi Party is a thought that has found its place in the hearts of

people across the country. Hundreds of leaders will be born for every AAP leader you throw in jail," he added. Bibhav Kumar was arrested earlier on Saturday for allegedly assaulting Ms Maliwal at the chief minister's residence on Monday. The Rajya Sabha MP had alleged Mr Kumar had kicked her in the chest, stomach and pelvic area and had brutally "dragged her and pulled her shirt up".

# "Compromised Nation For Sake Of Vote Bank": BJP Chief On Mamata Banerjee

**New Delhi:** BJP President JP Nadda launched a scathing attack on West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee over 'vote bank politics' and said that the former is compromising with the nation for her vote bank. JP Nadda accused Mamata Banerjee of providing shelter to infiltrators and giving them ID cards and ration cards, making them voters, and

called such actions "anti-national". Answering the ways to stop violence in West Bengal, Mr Nadda said, "Law and order is a state subject, we (the centre) can support them but Mamata Banerjee's intentions are not clear. Her intention is dubious."

In an interview with news agency ANI, the BJP President slammed the West Bengal chief

minister over the alleged Sandeshkhali incident and raised questions about her silence. "She was silent on the case of Sheikh Shahjahan, the High Court had to give the enquiry to the Central Bureau of Investigation. Women were shouting and you even didn't bother," he said. Asked about the allegations of Mamata Banerjee that the Sandeshkhali

incident was a conspiracy of the BJP, Mr Nadda said, "Dishonest administrator, dishonest politician. If I'm the chief minister and a case like this comes to me, I'll say that I'll investigate into this. I'll go into the details of it. Why was she quiet at first and later she blamed the BJP." "She compromised with the nation for the sake of a vote bank. TMC is

providing shelter to infiltrators and giving them ID cards and ration cards, making them voters, this is anti-national activities. They also give protection to such people," Mr Nadda added. Sandeshkhali, a village in North 24 Parganas district, started hitting the headlines in February this year when villagers, mostly women, came out on the streets against the rul-

ing TMC and Shahjahan (the main accused in the incident). Women accused Shahjahan and his aides of perpetrating atrocities on them along with gobbling up their land. Multiple women on the island accused Shahjahan and his aides of "land-grab and sexual assault" under coercion. Meanwhile, the BJP President further accused Mamata Banerjee of "spread-

ing information" regarding the Citizenship Amendment Act and said, "She is spreading misinformation about CAA. She's doing anti-national things. CAA will not be given to someone who is coming from outside. Doesn't Mamata understand this, is she so illiterate? No. She understands everything. But she is trying to misguide the innocent people."

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# EDITORIAL

## Hurdles on the path to green growth — and how to remove them

The recent heatwave has reminded us of the stark risks posed by climate change and highlighted the criticality of the efforts taken by the Conference of Parties (COP). The World Meteorological Organisation has confirmed that 2023 was the warmest year on record. This has brought the focus back on sectors like power and industry, which account for the bulk of carbon emissions. India is the third-largest carbon-emitting country and sectors like power, steel, cement, chemicals, fertilisers, refineries are facing heightened scrutiny. The government has been supporting a shift to green energy with initiatives such as the PLI scheme in the renewable energy (RE) sector launched for manufacturing solar modules, viability gap funding schemes for offshore wind and battery storage projects, and the Faster Adoption & Manufacturing of Electric Vehicles (FAME) scheme. It has also launched the National Green Hydrogen Mission, made amendments to the Energy Conservation bill, launched green bonds, etc. Though it has not mandated the shift to green technology yet, some entities are taking voluntary steps and stakeholders have also started asking for the same. During the green transformation, an entity may face several transition risks like policy, regulatory, technology, market, reputation, legal, etc. The technological risk is the major risk entities will immediately face while taking voluntary steps for green technology. Fossil fuel-based power is the major source of carbon emissions in India. With the government's climate target of enhancing non-fossil power to 50 per cent by 2030, various schemes have been launched to boost renewable energy. ICRA projects India to achieve the climate goal with the share of non-fossil fuel-based installed capacity in overall installed capacity rising from 41 per cent in 2022-23 to 59 per cent by 2029-30. However, this transition will need huge investments. We project that India would need an estimated Rs 11-12 lakh crore of investments in RE power until 2030, along with over Rs 5-6 lakh crore towards investments in transmission infrastructure and storage capabilities. The availability of round-the-clock supply from RE sources remains important to achieve the targeted level of its share, given their intermittent generation. This can be made possible through the use of hybrid RE projects (wind and solar) complemented with energy storage systems. For hard-to-abate sectors like steel and cement, the government needs to explore more ways of carbon sequestration. Installation of carbon capture utilisation and storage (CCUS) will be inevitable. After water, concrete is the second-most used substance on Earth, in which cement is the main component. The cement manufacturing process is highly resource and energy-intensive. While producing one tonne of cement, an equivalent amount of carbon dioxide is released. As maximum emissions are generated while producing clinker, CCUS will reduce more than 60-70 per cent of the emissions in the process of cement manufacturing. Niti Aayog's report on CCUS estimates that the cement sector would need two million tonnes per annum CCUS capacity by 2030. Its capital cost will be Rs 1,600-1,800 crore.

Given the abundance of virgin iron ore and lack of domestic scrap, the domestic steel industry overarchingly uses coal as a reducing agent, leading it to remain high on the emission curve. However, following India's 2070 net zero target and policies on carbon tax implemented by some countries, domestic steel-makers have sharpened their focus on reducing their carbon footprint by as much as 25-30 per cent through various technological interventions by 2030. With the launch of the National Green Hydrogen Mission, Green Hydrogen usage is being planned in refining, chemical and fertiliser sectors along with transport. The capex for this will be about Rs 8-9 lakh crore. Many Indian entities have launched pilots/announced plans to set up production facilities for Green Hydrogen/Green Ammonia. Several entities in these high-carbon emitting sectors are taking voluntary steps to become more green. Nevertheless, the government's support will be critical to hasten the technology transition in these hard-to-abate sectors. Such support could come in the form of policy interventions, subsidies, duty exemption or tax benefits. Perhaps, this will form part of the policy agenda after the elections.

## Hyderabad enjoys pleasant weather conditions; Yellow alert in Telangana until May 21



**Hyderabad:** After an intense downpour accompanied by thunderstorms and gusty winds in Hyderabad on Thursday, city dwellers woke up to a refreshingly pleasant, with clear skies and comfortable temperatures. The city recorded a maximum temperature of 31 degrees Celsius, a four-degree drop from yesterday's temperature. According to Telangana State Planning and Development Society (TSPDS) data till 4 pm, temperatures across most parts of the city remained below 35 degrees Celsius. Asifnagar registered the maximum temperature at 35.9 degrees Celsius, followed by Shaikpet with 35.8 degrees Cel-

sius and Khairatabad at 35 degrees Celsius.

With scattered and moderate rains ahead, the temperatures are expected to be around 35 degrees Celsius in the city for the next four days. Yellow alert in Telangana until May 21: The India Meteorological Department (IMD) in Hyderabad has forecast thunderstorms, lightning, and squalls, across Telangana for the next five days and issued a yellow alert until May 21. On Friday, various districts in Telangana experienced isolated rainfall and according to TSPDS data, Jayshankar Bhupalapally received 43 mm of rainfall followed by Kamareddy and Karimnagar with 32 mm

each. For May 18 and 19, rainfall is predicted in Rangareddy, Hyderabad, Sangareddy, Medak, Siddipet, Hanamkonda, Jayshankar Bhupalapally, Vikarabad, Malkajgiri, Bhuvanagiri, Jangaon, Warangal, Mulugu, Mahabubabad, Mahabubnagar, Narayanpet, Jogulamba Gadwal, Wanaparthy, Nagarkurnool, Nalgonda, Suryapet, Khammam, and Kothagudem. Meanwhile, the Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC) has made toll-free numbers available to the public. For assistance from GHMC-DRF, one can call 040-21111111 or 9000113667. People are advised not to leave their houses unless necessary.

## Cyberabad Police Arrest Three Realtors for Rs 60 Crore 'Pre-Launch Offer' Scam in Kompally

**Hyderabad:** Three realtors who collected nearly Rs 50 crore to Rs 60 crore from investors under the pretext of 'pre-launch offers' with the false promise of constructing residential apartments in Kompally locality were arrested by the Cyberabad police.

The arrested included the Chairman of Bharathi Builders Dupati Nagaraju, MD of the company Mulpury Shivarama Krishna and CEO of the company Thoddakula Narasimha Rao an official press release said. Cases under sections 406 and 420 of the IPC and section 5 of the Telangana Protection of Depositors of Financial Establishments Act-1999 were registered against them.

Police said the company chairman Dupati Nagaraju and MD Mulpury Shivarama Krishna floated the company Bharathi Builders in 2021 and acquired 6.23 acres of land in Kompally and planned to construct residential apartments in the name



of "Bharathi Lake View". They collected huge deposits from prospective purchasers through a 'pre-launch offer' at a price of Rs. 3,200 per sq ft by publishing colourful brochures and conducting meetings at venture Kompally and at their office in Madhapur. The duo roped in Thoddakula Narsimha Rao as the CEO of the company to lure more buyers for which they offered huge commission

on the sale of flats. However, instead of constructing the apartments, they sold the entire land parcel to another party.

The Economic Offences Wing (EOW) of Cyberabad police registered a case after B.V.S Prasad Rao and about 350 others lodged complaints. The case is being investigated by Inspector J.Venkateswarlu under the supervision of DCP K. Prasad, the press release said.

## Coloured nail bands may signal cancer risk: Study Finds

**New Delhi:** A coloured band (usually white or red) along the length of the nail may indicate the risk of developing cancerous tumours of the skin, eyes, and kidneys, finds a study. Scientists at the US National Institutes of Health (NIH) discov-

**Warning issued in Telangana over counterfeit erectile dysfunction drug 'Pulmosil Injection' containing Fungus**

**Hyderabad:** Authorities in Telangana have cautioned public about availability and sale of a counterfeit version of Sildenafil, a drug supposed to cure erectile dysfunction. The Drug Control Administration (DCA) asked druggists to stop its sale notify its officials about this particular batch of injections being sold under the brand name of 'Pulmosil Injection' 10 mg/12.5 ml (with batch number KFA0300, Mfg Dt 06/23 with expiry date of 05/25) purportedly manufactured by the Sun Pharmaceutical industries in Turkapally village on Hyderabad city outskirts.



ered the presence of a benign nail abnormality known as an onychopapilloma. Besides the coloured band, it also comes with thickening of the nail underlying the colour change, and thickening at the end of the nail. This may lead to the diagnosis of a rare inherited disorder, known as BAPI tumour predisposition syndrome, that increases the risk of developing cancerous tumours, they noted. Mutations in the BAPI gene drive the syndrome, "which normally acts as a tumour suppressor, among other functions," revealed the findings published in JAMA Dermatology journal.

The condition typically only affects one nail. However, in the study of 47 individuals with

BAPI syndrome from 35 families, about 88 per cent presented onychopapilloma tumours in multiple nails. "This finding is rarely seen in the general population, and we believe the presence of nail changes that suggest onychopapillomas on multiple nails should prompt consideration of a diagnosis of BAPI tumour predisposition syndrome," said Edward Cowen, head of Dermatology Consultation Services at NIH's National Institute of Arthritis and Musculoskeletal and Skin Diseases (NIAMS). The team suggested that nail screening may be particularly valuable in a patient with a personal or family history of melanoma or other potential BAPI-associated malignancy.

## HMRL clears air, says no change in Metro timings in Hyderabad



**Hyderabad:** There is no change in the timings of Metro Services, the L&T Metro Rail (Hyderabad) Limited (L&TMRHL) said. Responding to reports in some sections of the media claiming extension in Metro service timings, the L&TMRHL clarified that the operating hours remain from 6 am to 11 pm. However, on a trial basis for the convenience of passengers, extended service hours were being facilitated only on Fridays and Mondays. On Fridays, the last train departs at 11:45 pm instead of 11 pm while on Mondays, the first train departs at 5:30 am instead of 6 am. This will offer an additional 30 to 45 minutes of service. A final decision is expected to be taken depending on the demand and feasibility of the maintenance schedule of track and trains.

## Tension flares as land encroachment attempt targets former Minister Malla Reddy's property



**Hyderabad:** Mild tension prevailed at Petbasheerabad when some persons tried to allegedly encroach upon a parcel of land belonging to former Minister C Malla Reddy. According to local reports, some people had erected a fence using fiber boundary sheets at a land parcel at Petbasheerabad on Friday night. On coming to know about it, Malla Reddy and his relatives along with party workers reached the spot. After interacting with the local police for a few minutes, the Minister asked his men to remove the fencing to which the police objected. Malla Reddy argued with the police stating that rowdy elements had gathered to kill them yet the police are not acting despite being informed about it. The police rushed additional forces to the spot and brought the situation under control.

## RPF Secunderabad excels in recovery of missing valuables



**Hyderabad:** The Railway Protection Force (RPF) of Secunderabad division excelled in 'Operation Amanat' aimed at enhancing passenger experience and security by restoring passenger valuables including luggage and mobile phones worth nearly Rs. 17.13 lakh this year. Under the ambit of 'Operation Amanat', the primary objective is the retrieval and restoration of passenger belongings and valuables, surpassing their conventional duties to assist passengers in need. In 2023, RPF Secunderabad retrieved and restored passenger luggage and valuables on 982 occasions, including items like laptops, purses, luggage bags, and mobile phones with an estimated worth of Rs. 1.97 crore. In the current year, 63 instances were recorded and properties worth Rs 17.13 lakh were restored. Senior Divisional Security Commissioner Debashmita Chattopadhyay Banerjee commended the prompt response of RPF staff in securing and retrieving valuable passenger belongings. She asked passengers to use toll-free railway helpline number - 139 to report any losses.

## TSCSB's Cyber Crime Helpline saves woman from losing Rs. 60 lakh

**Hyderabad:** In a swift action, the Cyber Crime Helpline at the TS Cyber Security Bureau (TSCSB) came to the rescue of a cyber fraud victim and managed to save her from losing a sum of Rs.60 lakh. On May 15 evening, the cyber fraudster, claiming to be an official of Maharashtra police, called the woman and charging her of involvement in a major money laundering offence, told her that a warrant was pending against her. The fraudster forced the victim to be on Skype video call throughout the night and kept threatening her of dire consequences. Scared by the threats, the victim ended up transferring Rs. 60 lakh to an account mentioned by the caller. However, after transferring the amount, she realised it to be a fraud and immediately called the cybercrime helpline number 1930. Responding immediately, the Cybercrime Helpline at the TS Cyber Security Bureau uploaded the transaction details on CFCFRMS portal, alerted SBI Bank, to which the amount was fraudulently transferred, and ensured that the entire amount of Rs. 60 lakh was put on hold within one hour. The police said the victim reporting the crime on 1930 within the golden hour and swift response of 1930 helpline staff in alerting the bank helped save the entire amount.

## Plea Seeks Turnout Data Within 48 Hours Of Poll Phases, Supreme Court Says...

**New Delhi:** The Supreme Court on Friday sought a response within a week from the Election Commission on a plea by a non-governmental organisation (NGO) seeking a direction to upload polling station-wise voter turnout data on its website within 48 hours of the conclusion of polling for each phase of the Lok Sabha elections. A bench comprising Chief Justice DY Chandrachud and Justices JB Pardiwala and Manoj Misra assembled at 6.30 pm to hear the plea of NGO Association for Democratic Reforms (ADR) on the issue. The Chief Justice said the poll panel should be given some reasonable time to respond to the plea and listed it for hear-



ing before an appropriate bench during the summer vacation on May 24, a day before the sixth phase of the seven-phase Lok Sabha polls.

Earlier in the day, advocate Prashant Bhushan mentioned the matter on behalf of the NGO and sought urgent list-

ing of the petition. Last week, the NGO filed an interim application in its 2019 PIL seeking directions to the poll panel that "scanned legible copies of Form 17C Part-I (Account of Votes Recorded)" of all polling stations be uploaded immediately after the polls.

## Maratha Quota Activist Manoj Jarange-Patil Falls Ill, Campaign Halted

**Chhatrapati Sambhajinagar:** Shivba Sanghatana chief Manoj Jarange-Patil, who embarked on a state tour to drum up support for the Maratha reservations cause, fell ill on Friday, following which he was rushed to a private hospital here. Jarange-Patil is currently undergoing treatment at the Galaxy Hospital, where he had been earlier admitted on a couple of occasions, said an aide. He is suffering from heat-related weakness and dehydration though his condition is reported to be stable, and he continues to be under medical supervision, the aide said. The development came a day after Jarange-Patil announced that he would launch a fresh hunger strike from June 4 - the day of the announcement of Lok Sabha election results - at his native village Antarvali-Sarati



in Jalna district. Besides the fifth round of hunger strike, he said he would take out a massive rally from Beed district on June 8. Jarange-Patil warned that Marathas would contest all the 288 seats in the Maharashtra Legislative Assembly elections due in October in case the ruling MahaYuti government failed to

concede all the pending demands of the Marathas. These include implementation of the draft notification of January 2024 giving benefits of the reservations to the 'sage-soyare' (bloodline), issuing certificates to Marathas under the OBC category to enable them get quotas, and other demands.

## Wipro COO Amit Choudhary To Step Down, Sanjeev Jain Named Successor

Wipro said today that its chief operating officer Amit Choudhary is stepping down, with Sanjeev Jain, current global head of business operations named as his successor with immediate effect. This is the second-level senior exit at the firm in less than a week. Amit Choudhary is leaving the company to pursue opportunities outside the organization, and May 31 will be his last day at the firm, it said in an exchange filing. His exit comes after Wipro's Asia Pacific, India, Middle East and Africa (APMEA) President Anis Chenchah stepped down last week. Both Anis Chenchah and Amit Choudhary were picked by



former CEO Thierry Delaporte as they worked together at French tech giant Capgemini. Amit Choudhary was the COO for Capgemini's financial services unit, while Anis Chenchah was the head

of its business service unit.

The exits could pose as a setback as CEO Srinivas Pallia said the company aims to win deals through artificial intelligence-infused consulting, and that it would prioritise growth in the fourth quarter post-earnings conference. In fiscal year 2024, Wipro's full-year IT services revenue slid 4.4% in constant currency terms, marking the first fall since 2021. Jain, who joined Wipro in April 2023, currently leads its global business operations, service delivery, information security, and enterprise risk management, and works closely with all business units, the company said.

## Congress govt in Telangana has nothing to boast of in 6 months, says Vinod Kumar

**Hyderabad:** BRS leader and former MP B Vinod Kumar said Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy, who completed six months in power, had nothing to claim as his flagship programme so far. Addressing a news conference at Telangana Bhavan on Saturday, he said farmers were the worst-hit because of the ill-advised moves of the State government. They were moving from pillar to post in the harsh summer in pursuit of crop investment from private sources to take up Kharif operations.

The State government failed to give timely crop investment assistance to Rabi farmers. Because of the unfulfilled promise of crop loan waiver, banks were also not coming forward to meet their credit needs. It would be a big solace for the

farmers if the government could implement Rythu Bharosa by extending crop investment assistance of Rs 7,500 per acre as promised well before the Kharif operations started in the



State, Vinod Kumar said. Highlighting the importance of fulfilling the farmers' need for crop investment assistance in time, he said

BRS chief K Chandrashekar Rao had introduced Rythu Bandhu being fully aware of the financial distress the farming community was undergoing in the State. Rythu Bandhu was replicated by many States and even by the Centre. In fact, Prime Minister Narendra Modi was also all praise for the initiative, which was the first of its kind in India, he said.

Vinod Kumar demanded that the Chief Minister ensure the Congress' promise of giving a bonus of Rs 500 per quintal of paddy be extended to all varieties grown in Telangana instead of restricting it to only to fine varieties. He wished that the government would be able to take the right decisions at the crucial Cabinet meeting being held on Saturday.

## Chabahar Port A "Landmark Deal" For India-Iran Economic Relations: Envoy

**Mumbai:** The signing of the Chabahar Port deal is a "landmark" in India-Iran economic relations and it offers various future investment opportunities, including the development of subsequent phases of the facility, a top Iranian diplomat said in a note. These opportunities include development of the second phase of Shahid Beheshti Port as well as the third and fourth phases on BOT model, among others, Davoud Rezaei Eskandari, Acting Consul General of Iran in Mumbai, said in the note shared with Press Trust of India. India on May 13 signed a 10-year contract to operate the strategic Iranian port of Chabahar that will help it expand trade with Central Asia.

The Chabahar Port on the Gulf of Oman - which New Delhi had proposed to develop way back in 2003 - will provide Indian goods a gateway to reach landlocked Afghanistan and Central Asia using a road and rail project called International North-South Transport Corridor, bypassing Pakistan.

The long-term agreement was signed by Indian Ports Global Limited (IPGL) and the Port & Maritime Organisation of Iran. It replaces an initial 2016 pact, which covered India's operations at Shahid Beheshti Terminal in Chabahar Port and had been renewed on an annual basis. "India and Iran are important trade partners. India has been among



Iran's five largest trade partners in recent years," Mr Eskandari said. "The signing of the 10-year contract for equipping and operating general cargo and container terminals at First Development Phase of Shahid Beheshti Port of Chabahar is a landmark in India-Iran economic relations," he said. As per the contract, India is committed to investing USD 120 million (through IPGL) for the necessary equipment and USD 250 million credit line for financing port development, taking the contract's total value to USD 370 million, he said in the note.

Also, the deal brings investment opportunities in petrochemical and related industries

as well as in the construction of LNG and LPG export terminals; besides development of mini refineries and petrochemical plants, as per his note. Chabahar Port, located outside the Strait of Hormuz, is the region's sole deep-water oceanic port, he said in the note adding that "it serves as India's vital conduit for accessing landlocked nations like Afghanistan and Central Asian countries".

Additionally, it offers an efficient and economical transit pathway for goods destined for Europe and serves as a pivotal stopover for vessels en route from India to the Persian Gulf and the Middle East, he noted. At the same time, Chabahar Free Zone offers numerous

benefits for foreign investors, including a 100 per cent ownership of companies by non-Iranian entities; waivers of custom duties, among others, he said.

Besides, there is exemption from customs duties for importing raw materials and industrial machinery and ore, flexible labour laws compared to mainland Iran, and enhanced banking services and easier foreign currency exchanges. Petrochemical sector, mining, pharma, agriculture, automobile industries as well as infrastructure development, information and communication and tourism and hospitality are some of the areas that offer business opportunities in Iran, he said.

## Rajasthan Minister Flags Rs.1,140-Crore 'Loss' In Project By Own Government

**Jaipur:** The six-month-old Bhajan Lal Sharma government in Rajasthan is facing its first major crisis, and a possible rift, with a cabinet minister flagging lapses in a housing project being handled by a department that comes under the chief minister. In a letter to Mr Sharma, senior BJP leader and Agriculture Minister Kirodi Lal Meena has said the way the project in Jaipur's upmarket area of Gandhinagar - which is home to senior judges and IAS officers among others - is being planned will result in a loss of Rs.1,146 crore to the state government. Mr Meena has also said that the General Administration Department (GAD), which is under the chief minister, is going ahead with the project without cabinet clearance and has urged Mr Sharma to stop it and recall the file.

In the letter, Mr Meena speaks about the planned redevelopment of the old MREC campus in Gandhinagar, where the GAD plans to demolish existing buildings and build multi-storey towers. The minister has said the area was valued at Rs.277 crore five years ago and a new assessment has put its value at Rs.218 crore.

The reserve price of the land, he claims, is also undervalued at Rs.8,000 per square foot against the current rate of Rs.25,000. This means, according to the letter, that the state government is incurring a loss of nearly Rs.17,000 per square foot. The government is also planning to give nearly 33% - or a third - of the flats to private players as part of a public-private partnership. All of these, Mr Meena said, add up to a loss of 1,146 crore to the state treasury. Claiming that the file for the project has not been cleared by the cabinet or the finance ministry, the minister has urged Mr Sharma to "immediately" recall it.

### Political Fallout

This is not the first time the senior minister has objected to decisions being taken by his own government. Last month, he had raised concerns about land being sold under the Eastern Rajasthan Canal Project and had also hinted at corruption, after which the chief minister took action. Before contesting the Assembly polls, Mr Meena was a Rajya Sabha member and had played a big role in the campaign. After the Ashok Gehlot-led Congress government was



defeated last year, the BJP sprang a surprise by making first-time MLA Bhajan Lal Sharma the chief minister, causing some consternation in the faction led by two-time former chief minister Vasundhara Raje. Mr Meena is also said to be unhappy with the portfolios he had been allotted and was reportedly seeking a ticket for his brother from the Dausa Lok Sabha constituency, but it was given to Kanhaiya Lal Meena. The minister has been saying he will resign if the Dausa candidate does not win the Lok Sabha election and there has been

speculation about whether this is a sign of confidence or a threat. The BJP had won 24 out of 25 seats in Rajasthan in the 2019 Lok Sabha polls, with the lone remaining seat also going to an NDA ally. It had also won all 25 seats in 2014, and both of these elections were fought under Vasundhara Raje. This year's Lok Sabha elections are being seen as a litmus test for the new dispensation and sources said if the BJP's seats go down even a few notches, Mr Sharma may have a tough time battling factions within his government and the party.

## At 47.4 Degrees Celsius, Najafgarh In Delhi Warmest In Country

**New Delhi:** A brutal heat wave swept swathes of north-west India, with maximum temperatures soaring to a scorching 47.4 degrees Celsius in west Delhi's Najafgarh, making it the warmest place in the country. The mercury breached 45 degrees Celsius at 19 places in Rajasthan, 18 in Haryana, eight in Delhi and two in Punjab. Conditions are expected to turn worse with the severe heat wave over the northwest Indian plains predicted to continue during the next five days. The threshold for a heat wave is met when the maximum temperature of a weather station reaches at least 40 degrees Celsius in the plains, 37 degrees in the coastal areas, and 30 degrees in the hilly regions, and the departure from normal is at least 4.5 notches.

A severe heat wave is declared if the departure from nor-

mal exceeds 6.4 notches. The maximum temperature surged to 47.4 degrees Celsius in Najafgarh and 47.1 in Haryana's Sirsa. According to India Meteorological Data (IMD) data till 7:30 pm, Najafgarh was the warmest place in the country. In Delhi, the mercury settled at 46.5 degrees Celsius in Mungeshpur, 46.2 degrees in Aya Nagar, 45.9 degrees in Pusa and Jafarpur, 45.8 degrees in Pitampura and 45.1 degrees in Palam. Severe heatwave conditions are very likely in some parts of Rajasthan, Punjab, Haryana and Delhi during May 18-21, the IMD warned. A fresh heatwave spell will commence over east and central India. The Met office issued a red alert for west Rajasthan, stressing the need for "extreme care for vulnerable people". It issued an orange alert for Haryana, Punjab, east Rajasthan, Delhi, Uttar Pradesh,



Bihar and Gujarat and emphasised "high health concern" for vulnerable people, including infants, the elderly and those with chronic diseases. It warned of an increased likelihood of heat-related illnesses in people exposed to the sun for prolonged periods or engaging in heavy work. The Met office had earlier predicted a higher-

than-normal number of heatwave days in the northern plains and central India in May. Normally, the northern plains, central India and adjoining areas of peninsular India experience around three heatwave days in May. April witnessed record-smashing maximum temperatures in east, northeast, and southern peninsular India.

## "DK Shivakumar Offered Me Rs.100 Crore To Defame PM": Karnataka BJP Leader

**Hassan, Karnataka:** Arrested BJP leader G Devaraje Gowda alleged that Karnataka Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar offered him Rs.100 crore to malign the names of former Chief Minister and JDS state President HD Kumaraswamy and Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Speaking to reporters from the police vehicle after being sent to judicial custody on Friday, Devaraje Gowda claimed that Mr Shivakumar even sent him Rs.5 crore as advance. "After I refused the offer, police cases were lodged against me and I was arrested. I am ready to expose him (DK Shivakumar) once I am released. The Congress government is going to collapse in Karnataka," he claimed. Devaraje Gowda added, "I was told to make a statement that it was HD Kumaraswamy who circulated the pen drives containing sex videos (involving Kumaraswamy's nephew Prajwal Revanna, the grandson of ex-PM HD Deve Gowda). But it was DK Shivakumar who obtained the pen drive from Karthik Gowda, who worked as a driver for Prajwal Revanna, and planned the entire episode."

A team of four ministers, including N Cheluvaryaswamy, Krishna Byre Gowda, and Priyank Kharge, was formed to



handle the developments relating to the sex video scandal, Devaraje Gowda claimed.

"They had planned in a big way to bring disrepute to Prime Minister Modi, HD Kumaraswamy, and the BJP. They offered me Rs.100 crore and sent Rs.5 crore as advance to Room No. 110 at Bowring Club. A local leader from Channarayana, Gopalaswamy, was sent to negotiate the deal," Devaraje Gowda claimed.

"DK Shivakumar made the Rs.100 crore offer to malign the name of Prime Minister Modi by linking him to the sex scandal. Shivakumar's main objective is to finish Kumaraswamy politically," he added. "When I refused to be a part of their plans, they first fixed me in an atrocity case, but couldn't find any evidence. Later, they fixed me in a sexual harassment case. When this ploy also failed, they lodged a rape case against me. I was interrogated for four days, but they couldn't get anything," he claimed.

"I have the audio recordings of Shivakumar's conversations. I will release them and the Congress government will collapse once I am out of prison," Devaraje Gowda claimed as the

police vehicle drove off. On May 6, Devaraje Gowda claimed that Shivakumar was behind the release of the pen drive containing videos of sexual assault. He also said that Prime Minister Modi was Congress' main target. "I do not trust the Special Investigation Team (SIT) probing the sex scandal. I will submit all the evidence to the CBI. The videos in my possession are different from those which have been released," he had claimed. Devaraje Gowda was arrested by the Karnataka police six days ago in a sexual harassment and atrocity case.

Devaraje Gowda claimed as the

police vehicle drove off. On May 6, Devaraje Gowda claimed that Shivakumar was behind the release of the pen drive containing videos of sexual assault. He also said that Prime Minister Modi was Congress' main target. "I do not trust the Special Investigation Team (SIT) probing the sex scandal. I will submit all the evidence to the CBI. The videos in my possession are different from those which have been released," he had claimed. Devaraje Gowda was arrested by the Karnataka police six days ago in a sexual harassment and atrocity case.

## Telugu Actor Chandrakanth Dies By Suicide Days After Death Of Co-Star Pavithra Jayaram

**Hyderabad:** Actor Chandrakanth, best known for working in daily soaps in Telugu, is no more. The actor allegedly died by suicide at his residence in Alkapur in Telangana on Friday. The news of his demise comes a few days after his co-star and close friend Pavithra Jayaram passed away in a car accident. As per Chandrakanth's father's statement recorded by the police, the actor was depressed for the past couple of days. Chandrakanth had been mourning Pavithra's loss deeply. He had penned down emotional tributes for his 'Trinayani' co-star. His last post on Instagram was also for Pavithra. The two were reportedly in a relationship. In one of the posts, he wrote, "He wrote, 'Papa netho digina last pic raa (cry emojis) not able to digest to left me alone, okasari mama aniii piluveee plsss @pavithrajayaram\_chandar. My Pavi is no more (cry and pray emojis) pls ra come back plsss. (This is the last picture



I took with you, I'm unable to digest you left me alone. Please call out for me once again. My Pavi is no more, please come back)." He also wrote on his Instagram sto-

ries, "Papa pls come back raaa. Pls nee mama kannilu aaplu. (Please come back and wipe my tears.)" The sudden demise of both actors has left the Telugu industry in shock.

## Visa-Free Travel Agreement Likely Between Russia And India By 2024-End

**Moscow:** Consultations between Russia and India on a bilateral agreement to ease travel will begin in June, a Russian minister has said, adding that Moscow and New Delhi were set to strengthen their tourism ties by launching visa-free group tourist exchanges.

"India is at the final stage of internal state coordination," Nikita Kondratyev, director of the Russian Economic Development Ministry's Department of Multilateral Economic Cooperation and Special Projects, was quoted by RT News as saying. The minister at the sidelines of the International Economic Forum "Russia - Islamic World: KazanForum 2024" in Kazan said the first discussion on a draft agreement was scheduled to take place in June, and a signing was expected by the end of the year. "Russia and



India are set to strengthen their tourism ties as they gear up for the launch of visa-free group tourist exchanges. The first round of consultations between the two nations is scheduled for June, with an aim to finalise a bilateral agreement by the end of the year," the minister said. Kondratyev said Russia planned to replicate the suc-

cess of visa-free tourist exchanges already established with China and Iran. Russia and China initiated their visa-free group tourist exchange on August 1 last year. Similarly, a visa-free group tourist exchange between Russia and Iran commenced on the same date, ushering in a new era of tourism cooperation.

## Fact Check: Was Arvind Kejriwal Slapped During 2024 Election Campaign?

A video is circulating on social media showing a man slapping Delhi Chief Minister and Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) chief Arvind Kejriwal during a roadshow. Those sharing the video claim the incident happened during the party's campaign during the ensuing 2024 elections after Chief Minister Kejriwal was released from jail on bail in the Delhi liquor policy scam case.

An X user shared the video on May 12, 2024, linking it to the ongoing elections.

Fact-checking website NewsMeter found that this video is from May 4, 2019, and is not related to the 2024 General Elections. They conducted a reverse image search of keyframes of the video and found it uploaded on the YouTube channel of Hindustan Times on May 4, 2019, titled 'Watch: Delhi CM Arvind Kejriwal slapped during a roadshow in Moti Nagar.'

According to the caption, the incident occurred during Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal's roadshow in the Moti Nagar area of Delhi during the campaign for the 2019 Lok



Sabha elections. Further, a keyword search led NewsMeter to a report from NDTV on May 5, 2019, titled 'Arvind Kejriwal Slapped During Roadshow In Delhi, AAP Blames BJP.'

The report stated that 'Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal was on Saturday slapped by a man during a roadshow in the Moti Nagar area. Mr Kejriwal, the Aam Aadmi Party chief, was

standing on an open jeep, canvassing in the New Delhi constituency, when the man jumped up and attacked him. He was identified as 33-year-old Suresh, a spare parts dealer. The AAP, meanwhile, has blamed the BJP for the attack.'

Additionally, Deccan Chronicle published a statement on May 10, 2019, from the attacker Suresh expressing re-

morse for his actions and stating that he did not understand why he had attacked the chief minister. We also found similar reports from The Indian Express, Business Standard, Firstpost and Times of India. The video in question is 5 years old and has nothing to do with Mr Kejriwal's election campaign in the 2024 Lok Sabha elections. The claim is misleading.

## "Swati Maliwal Claimed She Couldn't Walk, But CCTV Shows No Injuries": AAP

**New Delhi:** Arvind Kejriwal's aide and AAP MP Swati Maliwal have filed cases against each other with both accusing the other of abuse. Swati Maliwal first filed a case claiming that she was beaten and abused by Bibhav Kumar, the secretary to Mr Kejriwal, when she visited the Delhi Chief Minister's residence. In a counter FIR, Mr Kumar has alleged that Swati Maliwal entered Mr Kejriwal's residence without permission or an appointment. The Aam Aadmi Party has also issued a statement saying that the row seems to be a conspiracy by the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) to destabilise AAP amid the ongoing Lok Sabha elections. AAP leader Atishi claimed that Ms Maliwal did not follow the due process and had barged into the Chief Minister's resi-



dence. Both the AAP and Bibhav Kumar allege that the MP "trespassed" and hurled abuses when he and the security forces asked her to leave. Atishi, in a press conference today, pointed out a new CCTV footage which shows Swati Maliwal being escorted out of the Chief Minister's home. "Swati Maliwal wasn't injured

as per the footage, but she claims that she couldn't walk. But the footage clearly shows that Maliwal is fine while leaving Arvind Kejriwal's residence," the AAP leader said. She also accused Ms Maliwal of colluding with the BJP to discredit the party during the general election. The BJP, on the other hand, has criticised Mr

Kejriwal for his silence and called him the "main criminal" due to his apparent inaction during the assault.

"From corruption to misconduct to disinformation, standard operating procedure of Aam Aadmi Party, it has become their idea and etiquette to indulge in this kind of modus operandi. This incident happened with Rajya Sabha MP Swati Maliwal on 13th May. At first, they (AAP) remained silent, then after that a little bit acceptance (about the incident) was done by them, after that brazen defence of the accused was done," said BJP spokesperson Shehzad Poonawalla. "But they then changed their strategy and attacked the victim. Not just 'cheerharan' happened with 'Draupadi' but also character assassination," he added.

## Congress Candidate Kanhaiya Kumar Assaulted In Delhi, Ink Thrown At Him

**New Delhi:** In a shocking incident, Kanhaiya Kumar, the Congress' Lok Sabha candidate from North East Delhi, has been assaulted by seven to eight people and had black ink thrown at him while campaigning in the national capital. Videos of the assault, which took place in East Delhi's New Usmanpur area on Friday, have now gone viral. Two of the alleged attackers have also released videos boasting that they had thrashed the Congress leader and said they did so because he had raised slogans on breaking up the country and had spoken against the Indian Army. In a complaint, Chhaya Gaurav Sharma, the AAP councillor from Brahmapuri, said she and Mr Kumar were leaving the party's office in Kartar Nagar when seven to eight people garlanded Mr Kumar, threw ink on him and then thrashed him. She said three to four women were also injured, and a woman journalist fell into a drain.

Ms Sharma alleged the attackers also dragged her to a corner using her stole and threatened to kill her and her husband. Delhi Police officials confirmed that they have received Ms Sharma's complaint. They said they are verifying the videos and investigation has begun. In videos released after the incident, two of the alleged attackers - at least



one of whom can be seen holding a garland in the footage of the assault - showed their reddened hands and said they did what they did because Mr Kanhaiya had raised slogans saying the country would be broken into parts. This was a reference to the alleged slogans raised at the Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) in 2016, when Mr Kumar was the JNU Students' Union president. "Hamne chaante

ka jawaab diya hai (we have given an answer with our attack)," the two men said. Calling themselves 'Sanatani lions', they claimed Mr Kumar had also insulted the Indian Army and they had "treated" him. The 37-year-old Congress leader is contesting against the BJP's Manoj Tiwari, who is the sitting Member of Parliament from the constituency and also the lone Delhi MP who was not replaced by the party.

## "If You Were In Pak...": Cab Driver's Exchange With Woman Passenger In Canada Sparks Debate



A video capturing a terrifying exchange between a cab driver and a woman in Canada has sparked outrage and triggered a debate on social media. In the clip, shared on X (formerly Twitter), the cab driver, believed to be of Pakistani origin, suggested to the woman passenger that if this were in Pakistan, he would have kidnapped her. The incident took place in Toronto. The worrying exchange between the two started when the driver said, "If you were born in Pakistan...I'm from Pakistan, you would have been kidnapped by now".

The clip was shared on the microblogging site on Tuesday. "Toronto Uber driver tells passenger if they were in Pakistan he would k\*dnap her," read the caption of the post.

The date of the incident is not known. In the clip, when

the driver made the worrisome confession, the woman, seemingly shocked, asked, "I would have been kidnapped by you?" To this, the driver confirmed saying, "Of course! Because there's no other option to get you, right?... Since you are in Canada, I cannot say anything to you, I cannot touch you". As the conversation progressed, the woman passenger admitted, "That is not flattery, that is kinda scary".

The video has triggered a debate on the microblogging site. While several users called for the suspension and deportation of the cab driver, others supported the driver and suggested that the video had been edited and parts of it were missing.

"Arrest and Deport this creepy pakistani immigrant," commented one user. "Whoa, that's seriously messed up. If

that happened to me, I'd be reporting it to Uber and the cops ASAP. No one should be throwing around threats like that, joke or not," said another.

"Men should just shut their mouths and drive because what compelled him to say this?? Don't care if it was a miscommunication. Be quiet and get me to my destination," added another. However, one user wrote, "I feel like he's just preaching like what if right before he literally said 'fun fact, it's so messed up where I'm from that...' cause dam. So much shit goes on there and we don't EVER talk about it. It's sad".

"Looks like he has a broken english. He is trying to explain her that what could happen with her in Pakistan if she was out that late... we need to see the full video," said another.

"I'm giving the benefit of the doubt and thinking this was out of context because there's no way this would be said unprompted," expressed a third user.

"He could of been talking about how different and good it was to live somewhere else. I would lean more towards this women asking about his home country and why he left," wrote one X user. Since being shared, the video has surfaced on several social media platforms and garnered millions of views.

## Former PM Manmohan Singh, Other Leaders Vote From Home

**New Delhi:** Former vice president Mohammad Hamid Ansari, former Prime Minister Dr Manmohan Singh, former deputy prime minister LK Advani and former Union minister Dr Murli Manohar Joshi have cast their votes using the home voting facility, the Delhi poll body said. The office of the chief electoral officer (CEO) of Delhi on Thursday kicked off the home voting facility for elderly voters and persons with disabilities (PwDs) and it will go on till May 24. According to the data shared by the office, 1409 voters cast their ballots from the comfort of their homes across all seven parliamentary constituencies in Delhi on Friday, which was the second day of the facility being started.

The West Delhi constituency reported the highest number of home votes, with 348 voters participating. Among them, 299 were elderly individuals. With the completion of the second day, a total of 2,956 voters have exercised their right to vote from home, the CEO office said. "Former prime minister Dr Manmohan Singh and former Union minister Dr



Murli Manohar Joshi successfully cast their votes on May 17 from their home availing home voting facility in the New Delhi parliamentary constituency," the office said. Former vice president Mohammad Hamid Ansari cast his vote on Thursday, it added. Former deputy prime minister LK Advani cast his vote on Saturday, sources said. On the first day,

1,482 voters exercised their franchise from home. A total of 5,406 voters across Delhi -- elderly individuals and PwDs -- have filled out Form 12D to avail of the home voting facility in the 2024 Lok Sabha elections. This initiative ensures these voters can participate in the electoral process with ease and dignity, eliminating the need to visit polling stations. Delhi will go to polls on May 25.

## Heatwave Warning For Northwest India, Temperatures To Stay Over 40 Degrees

**New Delhi:** The weather department has issued a severe heatwave warning for northwest India during the next five days, and heat wave conditions will persist over central and east India over the next three days.

Warm winds and high temperatures have swept north India. Delhi's Najafgarh was the warmest place in the country after 47.6 degrees Celsius was recorded yesterday.

Rajasthan, Punjab and Haryana are marked in red in the India Meteorological Department's alert, asking people and authorities to take action. Meanwhile, parts of eastern Rajasthan and western Uttar Pradesh are in orange and people have been advised to stay alert and be prepared for high temperatures.

The mercury breached 45 degrees Celsius at 19 places in Rajasthan, 18 in Haryana, eight in Delhi and two in Punjab.

The threshold for a heat wave is met when the maximum temperature of a weather station reaches at least 40 degrees Cel-



sius in the plains, 37 degrees in the coastal areas, and 30 degrees in the hilly regions, and the departure from normal is at least 4.5 notches. A severe heat wave is declared if the departure from normal exceeds 6.4 notches. The temperature is expected to stay in the normal range in Jammu and Kashmir, Ladakh and Himachal Pradesh. Hot and humid conditions are expected in Uttarakhand. Meanwhile, in southern India, a heavy

to heavy rainfall alert has been issued till the 23rd, with extremely heavy falls during 19-21 May. The weather office said the southwest monsoon is very likely to advance into the south Andaman Sea, some parts of the Southeast Bay of Bengal and Nicobar Islands around May 19.

A group of leading climate scientists said similar heat waves could occur once every 30 years, and these have already become about 45 times more likely due to climate change. The scientists from the World Weather Attribution group emphasised that heat waves intensified by climate change are making life much tougher for people living in poverty across Asia. The IMD had earlier warned of extreme heat in India during the April-June period, coinciding with the seven-phase Lok Sabha elections that end on June 1.

## How Putin's Friends Are Helping Russia Upend the US-Led World Order

Vladimir Putin is wrapping up a trip to China, where his warm ties with President Xi Jinping have led to booming trade and increasing defense coordination. More than two years since his February 2022 invasion of Ukraine began, it's a far cry from efforts by the US and its Group of Seven allies to isolate the Russian leader. They imposed sweeping sanctions, froze Russia's foreign assets and kicked major Russian lenders off the SWIFT financial messaging system. A year later the International Criminal Court issued an arrest warrant for Putin, alleging war crimes. Moscow seemed cornered.

China's embrace is mirrored by a network of other states that have kept Russia from pariah status. Many join with Moscow to bolster joint interests at summits like the Group of 20 and to rival Western powers in clubs like the BRICS. Some are driven by pragmatic self-interest, focusing on energy, trade or economic considerations. For others, military cooperation or weapons lie at the heart of the entente. More often than not, they share a common outlook with Russia — a desire to supplant the post-Cold War, US-led world order.

**What Russia Gets:** China has been a diplomatic and economic lifeline for Moscow. Russia has been buying electronics, industrial equipment and cars, while selling its Asian neighbor oil and gas, even if — as with gas — it's at a discount to what it once earned from supplying Europe. Bilateral trade reached a record \$240 billion in 2023. But it's having a powerful partner that shares the Kremlin's goal of challenging the US-led order and shutting Washington-led alliances out of what they consider their sphere of influence that Moscow may prize most.

**What China Gets:** Beijing, too, relishes having another powerful authoritarian state by its side as it seeks to re-shape the international order. Russia and China have increasingly coordinated their positions at the United Nations Security Council, where both wield vetoes, and made common cause against the US. Military cooperation is deepening and Russia has sold China some of its most advanced weapons systems. A Russian victory in Ukraine would weaken US influence as China mulls its ambitions over Taiwan, which it claims as its own.

**Saudi Arabia**  
**What Russia Gets:** First and foremost, Russia helps shape the global oil market and maximize crucial revenue for the Kremlin through the OPEC+ alliance of crude-producing nations, which the two countries dominate. Saudi Arabia went out of its way in not condemning Russia after the start of the war. Putin also paid the Kingdom a visit in December in a rare foray abroad that demonstrated he was still welcome in some parts of the globe.

**What Saudi Arabia Gets:** Aside from the OPEC+ partnership, Saudi Arabia has benefited from Russian help in avoiding pariah status. Putin was one of the few leaders to embrace Crown Prince



Mohammed bin Salman with smiles and high-fives at a 2018 G-20 summit two months after agents from his country murdered Washington Post columnist Jamal Khashoggi. US President Joe Biden has since reversed course on an earlier vow to isolate Riyadh over Khashoggi's killing and sought to shore up the two countries' alliance. But as Saudi foreign policy is increasingly transactional and driven by economic interests, ties with Moscow are only likely to deepen.

**Turkey**  
**What Russia Gets:** Putin juggles geopolitical rivalry with Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan in places like Syria, Libya and the Caucasus region, while fostering trade to its third-largest export market last year. Turkey has also become a key hub for indirect imports of sanctioned goods that Russia seeks, and a help for Putin to keep his country's global ties.

**What Turkey Gets:** While siding with Ukraine in the war, Erdogan has refused to join sanctions on Russia which is a major gas supplier to Turkey and is constructing its first nuclear power plant. Turkey's tourism and agriculture industries rely heavily on the Russian market. Erdogan has positioned himself as a self-declared mediator between Ukraine and Russia, helping to broker deals on grain shipments and prisoner swaps.

**Iran**  
**What Russia Gets:** Russia turned to Iran for drones to aid its war in Ukraine and is building a trade route with Tehran connecting to India that may help weaken the impact of international sanctions. Russian and Iranian officials have discussed boosting financial and banking cooperation to ease sanctions pressure, as Moscow learns from Tehran's experience of decades in isolation.

**What Iran Gets:** Iran is looking to Russia for weapons including air-defense systems and fighter jets to replace outdated equipment. It also relied on Moscow to build its Bushehr nuclear power plant. Tehran joined with Russia to support President Bashar al-Assad in Syria's war and shares Moscow's hostility to the US presence in the Middle East.

**India**  
**What Russia Gets:** India, the world's third-largest crude consumer, has been a major buyer of discounted Russian oil since the invasion of Ukraine, but tighter enforcement of US sanctions that seek to choke off the flow of petrodollars to Kremlin

coffers is now disrupting supplies. The relationship with India confers legitimacy on Russia as it courts the so-called Global South.

**What India Gets:** Discounted oil, but Russia has also been a long-time and trusted supplier of weapons. Moscow has been willing to help the South Asian nation by using its veto power at the UN Security Council to back Indian interests. Strong ties with Russia also provide a counterbalance to other major global powers, helping India maintain strategic autonomy.

**Brazil**  
**What Russia Gets:** Russia benefits diplomatically from ties with Latin America's largest economy and the relative leadership it has in the region. Brazil is a founding member with Russia of the BRICS group of countries. Brazilian President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva has so far sought to position his country as a neutral nation that can maintain ties with both Russia and Ukraine and has repeatedly rejected calls to send arms to Kyiv, arguing that the US and European Union strategy is undermining the prospect of a negotiated solution.

**What Brazil Gets:** On the trade front, Brazil gets imports of Russian fertilizer, as well as diesel and oil products. More importantly, Brazil gets a partner in efforts to reshape the US-led global order; Lula has long pushed for reforms to global institutions like the IMF in order to make them more representative of the Global South. But even aside from Lula, Brazilian leaders have long found in Russia a safe and uncritical ally.

**Hungary**  
**What Russia Gets:** Prime Minister Viktor Orban's government has maintained close ties with Putin, with the Hungarian leader meeting his Russian counterpart in Beijing last October. That has provided Putin an ally within the EU who has variously held up financial aid for Ukraine, threatened to scuttle Kyiv's membership talks with the bloc and even delayed by more than a year NATO accession for Sweden.

**What Hungary Gets:** Energy. Hungary is one of the few EU nations still receiving Russian gas, and Russia's Rosatom nuclear corporation retains a lead role in expanding its sole atomic power plant. Meanwhile, Orban, who's declared a brand of "illiberal democracy," gets backing for his ideological alternative to the US-led international order.

**South Africa**

**What Russia Gets:** South African President Cyril Ramaphosa has refused to condemn Putin over the war, or back United Nations resolutions censuring Moscow for the invasion. The two nations are both members of BRICS and its forums have provided an opportunity for their leaders to regularly interact. Ramaphosa did persuade Putin to skip a BRICS summit in Johannesburg last year and participate virtually instead, sparing Pretoria from having to decide whether to arrest him under the ICC warrant.

**What South Africa Gets:** While trade between Russia and South Africa is negligible, they have long-standing historical ties that stem from the proactive stance the Soviet Union took against White-minority rule. A number of senior members of the African National Congress sought sanctuary and underwent military training in Russia during the apartheid era. Russian companies were in the running to build new nuclear power plants in South Africa during former President Jacob Zuma's tenure, although plans to issue a contract have been on ice since Ramaphosa took office in 2018 due to cost.

Russia has also sought to build good will in Africa through security assistance, arms and grain — food supplies that, in part, were cut off because its war in Ukraine threatened Black Sea shipping. In turn, Russia wants access to markets and new allies that can soften the impact of sanctions, and expand its military influence at the expense of Western powers.

A burgeoning friendship with Kim Jong Un has also benefited Russia. The US, South Korea and others allege that North Korea is sending massive amounts of artillery shells as well as short-range nuclear-capable ballistic missiles. In return, Russia is accused of providing Pyongyang with food, raw materials and parts used in weapons manufacturing. Russia also vetoed a UN Security Council resolution to extend a panel of experts that reports on North Korea's nuclear arsenal developments.

Other countries like the United Arab Emirates, where tens of thousands of Russians made a home after the outbreak of war, and Egypt as well as old allies such as Venezuela and Cuba have also maintained ties. For now, despite the best efforts by the US and its allies, Russia remains anything but isolated.

## Indian Students In Kyrgyzstan Asked To Stay Indoors Amid Mob Attacks

**New Delhi:** India has urged citizens in Kyrgyzstan to stay indoors amid attacks on foreign students. The advisory was issued after several Pakistani students were injured in mob violence in their hostel. "We are in touch with our students. The situation is presently calm but students are advised to stay indoors for the moment and get in touch with the Embassy in case of any issue. Our 24x7 contact number is 0555710041," the Indian Consulate said on X

(formerly Twitter). Foreign Minister S Jaishankar also advised students to stay in regular touch with the embassy.

"Monitoring the welfare of Indian students in Bishkek. Situation is reportedly calm now. Strongly advise students to stay in regular touch with the Embassy," Mr Jaishankar said.

While some posts on social media claimed that three Pakistani students were killed in the attack, the government has said that they

have not received a report of any death yet. Pakistan embassy said that the matter escalated after videos of a fight between Kyrgyz and Egyptian students on May 13 went viral online on Friday. The mob targeted hostels of medical universities in Bishkek, which are inhabited by students from India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh. No Indian students have been injured in the attacks. Pakistan's Kyrgyzstan consulate in a post on X wrote,

"So far, a few hostels of medical universities in Bishkek and private residences of international students including Pakistanis have been attacked. The hostels are inhabited by students from India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh. There have been reports of light injuries to several students from Pakistan." "Despite social media posts about alleged death and rape of Pakistani students, so far, we have not received any confirmed report," it added.

## SPORT

## IPL 2024: Jitesh Sharma To Lead Punjab Kings In Their Final Match Against Sunrisers Hyderabad

Punjab Kings (PBKS) on Saturday announced Jitesh Sharma as the captain for their final game of the ongoing Indian Premier League (IPL) season against the Sunrisers Hyderabad (SRH), set to take place at Rajiv Gandhi International Stadium on Sunday. Jitesh will take charge from Sam Curran, who has returned to England for international duty. Curran was named in England's five-match T20 series squad against Pakistan and will join the team for the first T20I, scheduled on May 22 at Leeds. Kings are already eliminated from the race to the Playoffs and are currently positioned at the ninth position of the points table. PBKS have only won five matches out of 13 games and will look to end their

## "Didn't Live Up To The Standard": Rohit Sharma Stinging Criticism In 1st Review Of MI's Horrible Show

India skipper Rohit Sharma acknowledged that he could not match the expected batting standards in the ongoing IPL but instead of indulging in over-thinking, his endeavour was to stay in the right zone and keep working on his flaws. The five-time IPL winning skipper endured a wretched form in the second-half of the season, struggling to cross even a score of 20 in six matches for Mumbai Indians. "As a batter, I know I didn't live up to the standard. But, after playing for all these years, I know that if I overthink, I won't play well," Rohit said on JioCinema Match Centre Live. He returned to form with a 38-ball 68 in their last match against Lucknow Super Giants but MI ended up on the losing side and finished the season at the bottom of the table.

"All I try is to stay in a good mindset, in the right zone, keep practicing, and improve on all the flaws in my game. That's all I kept doing. "Our season didn't go according to plan. We blame ourselves for this because we made too many mistakes during the season. We lost many



games that we should have won, but that's the nature of the IPL. You get a few chances and when those chances come, you must grab them." '70 per cent of T20 WC players had clarity' The Indian skipper said they knew what their the T20 World Cup-squad would be like and 70 per cent of the players had clarity about their roles going into the IPL. "We thought a lot about the team we ultimately selected for the World Cup. The spinners, seamers, batters, and keepers, we knew before the IPL who we would take to the World Cup. "The IPL per-

formances for everyone can be up and down, so we didn't focus too much on that. We needed to see the performances of certain players, but it was important for us to give everyone the clarity they needed.

"Everyone going into the IPL needed clarity of whether they would participate in the team and what their role would be so they could practice and play accordingly. All of these indicators we had shared with 70% of the team before the IPL."

India begin their T20 World Cup campaign against Ireland in New York on June 5.

## Rohit Sharma's Smashing Reply When Asked By Coach Boucher "What's Next?" On MI Future

After finishing the IPL 2024 season at the bottom of the points table, Mumbai Indians (MI) head coach Mark Boucher looked back and spoke his heart on a number of challenges the team faced over the last two months. After losing to the Lucknow Super Giants (LSG), Mumbai's Indian Premier League (IPL) 2024 season came to an abrupt end, finishing last in the IPL standings. As MI's disastrous season ended in the IPL 2024, Boucher was asked about the future of former skipper Rohit Sharma with the team and the head coach said that the opener is a master of his own destiny.

In MI's last match of the season, opener Rohit showed the erratic nature of T20I by going through a slump after a bright start to the season.

"For me, he is a master of his own destiny. It's a big auction next season who knows what's going to happen?" Boucher said in a post-match press conference. Talking about the former MI skipper's performance, Boucher said it was a season of two halves for the opener as he had a strong start to the season and hammered the ball well into the netting. The head coach also said that Rohit was headed in the right direction so that we could run some excellent races.

"I had a discussion with Rohit Sharma last night. We reviewed the season this year. After that, I asked him what's next? and Rohit said 'the World Cup', he added. In the Indian Premier League on Friday, Rohit broke a run of poor scores when he struck an incredible 68 off 38 deliveries in the Mumbai match against LSG. "It's almost a season of two halves for him. He started the season well and hit the ball



sweetly in the nets. He got a superb 100 against CSK as well. So we honestly thought he was on a great path for us to go out there and get some good runs," Boucher said.

In a season beset by controversy for the MI, Rohit's batting performance was as inconsistent. Rohit's fortunes collapsed after he made a promising start to the season with the bat, which featured a century against the Chennai Super Kings (CSK) but in his next six appearances, the opener was dismissed on four single-digit scores.

"Unfortunately, it's just the nature of T20 as well. He went out there trying to be aggressive, the new way of playing as an opening batter. He got a few low scores, which unfortunately didn't help us in that particular situation either. But tonight, he finished off with a

fantastic knock as well. So yeah, it is a season of two halves for him," he added.

MI fans had mixed emotions on a bittersweet evening at the Wankhede Stadium. While they were thrilled with Rohit's explosive fifty but also witnessed their team suffer their tenth loss of the year and drop to the bottom of the points table. Coming to the match, Rohit and Naman Dhir's fiery knocks went in vain as MI conceded an 18-run loss against LSG in the IPL 2024 match at the Wankhede Stadium.

After winning the toss MI sent LSG to bat first but that did not go in their favour as KL Rahul (55 runs from 41 balls, 3 fours and 3 sixes) and Nicholas Pooran (75 runs from 29 balls, 5 fours and 8 sixes) played a partnership of 88 runs. Naman Dhir's (62\* runs from 28 balls, 4 fours and 5 sixes) stunning knock in the later half of the run chase shed a ray of hope on the MI dugout as they thought the hosts could win the match but he failed to clinch a win in the end and conceded a 18-run loss.

Ayush Badoni (22\* runs from 10 balls, 1 four and 2 sixes) were the other standout batters for LSG as they propelled the visitors to 214/6. In the run chase, the hosts had a stupendous start while chasing a 215-run target but after the end of the fourth over, rain played a spoilsport for which the game was halted for a few minutes. However, that did not break the MI openers' momentum as Rohit Sharma (68 runs from 38 balls, 10 fours and 3 sixes) and Dewald Brevis (23 runs from 20 balls, 1 four and 2 sixes) played a partnership of 88 runs.

Naman Dhir's (62\* runs from 28 balls, 4 fours and 5 sixes) stunning knock in the later half of the run chase shed a ray of hope on the MI dugout as they thought the hosts could win the match but he failed to clinch a win in the end and conceded a 18-run loss.

## Virat Kohli's Edgy New Hairstyle Is Sure To Top The Table Of Summer 2024 Hair Trends

Cricket lovers in every corner of the world are waiting to witness the IPL game between Royal Challengers Bengaluru and Chennai Super Kings. The match will decide who will claim the last spot in the playoffs. Well, before that Virat Kohli gives his fans a stunning update with his new style. The cricketer got yet another stunning hairdo done to dish out some goals. His sharp, edgy hairstyle seems like a perfect choice for summer. Celebrity stylist Aalim Hakim shared an array of pictures that gave us a glimpse of Virat's new hairstyle. The crew hairstyle with a side cut is a classy choice to serve a statement. Sharing the pictures, Aalim wrote, "The One & Only King Kohli. We decided to keep an edgy, raw and grungy sharp haircut by doing a reverse graduation. The front hairline is sharp and crew, going gradually into the longer length at the crown to create texture and movement in the hair. Virat always dares to try something new with his haircuts and sets the trend on fire."

Guess what? The internet is already going gag over his new hairstyle. Many fans claim that Virat Kohli has got a new hairstyle for the upcoming T20 World Cup. A fan shared a video of Kohli, dressed in



RCB's jersey and laughing his heart out, on X (formerly Twitter). Along with the video, the fan wrote, "New hairstyle for T20 WC Virat Kohli."

Another wrote, "Virat Kohli's new Hairstyle... King looks good in all hairstyles." Virat Kohli looks dapper in any and every hairstyle and indeed, he is setting the goals right. Remember the time when Kohli's look was being

compared to Money Heist's Professor? This was after the cricketer carried a full moustache and beard and fairly long dark hair with lush curls. He teamed it with a bright yellow T-shirt and a pair of black rectangular spectacles. Netizens were quick to point out that his look has a striking resemblance with Professor, who is played by Spanish actor Alvaro Morte.

## Matthew Hayden's Daughter Enjoys 'Iconic' Hyderabad Biryani With SRH Fans

Former Australia batter Matthew Hayden's daughter, Grace, had a fun day out in Hyderabad feasting on local delicacies. Grace, who is a content creator by profession, is currently working as a presenter with Star Sports, the official broadcasters of the Indian Premier League (IPL). The 21-year-old visited the famous 'Paradise Biryani' joint and enjoyed some biryani and khubani-ka-meetha (a dessert prepared with dried apricots as the main ingredient). She had some SRH fans for company, who helped Grace identify Hyderabad's must-have delicacies. "Biryani in Hyderabad is an emotion! Experience the essence of Hyderabad with #GraceHayden as she indulges in the iconic Hyderabad Biryani alongside



passionate @SunRisers fans!," Star Sports captioned the video, which has gone viral, on their social media handles. A couple of weeks back, SRH captain Pat Cummins had a great outing

with his family as they enjoyed a Hyderabad biryani feast. Cummins and his family visited the Southern Mirchi restaurant, located in located in Banjara Hills, Hyderabad.

## "Cost Us Whole Season": Hardik Pandya's Honest Admission As Mumbai Indians Get Wooden Spoon

After his side's disappointing 18-run loss against Lucknow Super Giants (LSG) in the Indian Premier League (IPL) 2024 at the Wankhede Stadium, Mumbai Indians (MI) skipper Hardik Pandya said they did not play good quality cricket on Friday. Hardik scored 16 runs from 13 balls at a strike rate of 123.08 while chasing the 215-run target given by LSG. Speaking after the match, Pandya said his side failed to display a quality performance in the IPL 2024 and it cost them a season. He added it is too early to point out what went wrong for MI.

"Quite difficult. Did not play good quality cricket, eventually costed us the whole season. It's a professional world. Have to always come out and put our best foot forward. But yes, as a group we could not play quality cricket or smart cricket. Too early to point out what went wrong. The whole season kind of went wrong. We can pass this game as another one (that went wrong)," Pandya said.

Recapping the match, after

winning the toss MI sent LSG to bat first but that did not go in their favour as KL Rahul (55 runs from 41 balls, 3 fours and 3 sixes) and Nicholas Pooran (75 runs from 29 balls, 5 fours and 8 sixes) played a fiery knock in the first inning. Marcus Stoinis (28 runs from 22 balls, 5 fours) and Ayush Badoni (22\* runs from 10 balls, 1 four and 2 sixes) were the other standout batters for LSG as they propelled the visitors to 214/6. Piyush Chawla led the MI bowling attack as he picked up three wickets in his four-over spell. In the run chase, the hosts had a stupendous start while chasing a 215-run target but after the end of the fourth over, rain played a spoilsport for which the game was halted for a few minutes. However, that did not break the MI openers' momentum as Rohit Sharma (68 runs from 38 balls, 10 fours and 3 sixes) and Dewald Brevis (23 runs from 20 balls, 1 four and 2 sixes) played a partnership of 88 runs.

Naman Dhir's (62\* runs from



28 balls, 4 fours and 5 sixes) stunning knock in the later half of the run chase shed a ray of hope on the MI dugout as they thought the hosts could win the match but he failed to clinch a win in the end and conceded a 18-run loss on Friday. Naveen-ul-Haq and Ravi

Bishnoi led the LSG bowling as both of them picked up two wickets in their respective overs. After the win, LSG ended their IPL 2024 campaign in sixth place in the standings with 14 points. While MI had a season to forget as they finished at the bottom of the table with 8 points.

## BCCI Bans Hardik Pandya, Slaps Him With Hefty Fine For This Act

Hardik Pandya, the Mumbai Indians (MI) captain, was penalised Rs. 30 lakh after his team maintained a slow over-rate during their Indian Premier League (IPL) 2024 match against Lucknow Super Giants (LSG) at the Wankhede Stadium on Friday night. "As it was his team's third offence of the season under the IPL's Code of Conduct relating to minimum over rate offences, Pandya was fined Rs. 30 lakh and banned from playing the team's next match," the IPL statement read. "The rest of the members of the playing XI, including the Impact Player, were each individually fined either Rs.12 lakh or 50 percent of their respective match fees, whichever is lesser." Nicholas Pooran struck a sensational 28-ball 75 to help Lucknow Super Giants reach a challenging total before they came back after a 45-minute rain break to quell Mumbai Indians by 18 runs despite blazing half-centuries by Rohit Sharma and Naman Dhir.



# Becoming Fareedan: How Sonakshi Sinha Prepped For Heeramandi

Sonakshi Sinha is looking like a million bucks in Sanjay Leela Bhansali's Heeramandi: The Diamond Bazaar. In the Netflix show, Sonakshi plays Fareedan, a courtesan residing in Khwaabgaah. The actress shared a behind-the-scenes (BTS) video on Instagram, "The making of fiery Fareedan." The video shows her transformation journey, including makeup, costume, and hair. She says, "Hi guys. It's me, Sonakshi Sinha. And today I am getting ready for Heeramandi, which is possibly the most elaborate look I've ever done in my career." Seconds later, the actress asks her team, "Have we ever done a hairstyle like this?" To which, they reply, "No." The star continues, "And it's new and fresh. And I am very excited about this look." Talking about the director, Sonakshi Sinha adds, "Sanjay sir told me, my eyes are my best features. It is beautiful. It is simplistic. Of course, Sanjay sir completely visualised Fareedan in his own way." The video also includes a glimpse of Sanjay Leela Bhansali and Sonakshi reviewing a scene on camera post-



shooting, with Sanjay clapping and showing his appreciation with a flying kiss. After that, Sonakshi Sinha shows off all the "real" jewellery and shares,

"This is a paasa, which is a very elaborate piece of jewellery." She describes the jewels as "asli sona", which is also the name of her Instagram handle.

Then, we get a glimpse of Fareedan's costume. Sonakshi mentions that Sanjay Leela Bhansali likes the dupatta to be "supernatural, just like flowy, free." Towards the end of the video, Sonakshi appears fully ready as Fareedan, looking stunning. The clip concludes with her dialogue in the series, "Aaj ki baazi aapke naam, kal ki hamare naam hogi. Aap jaha aaj hai, kal hum honge. [Today's victory is yours, tomorrow's will be mine. Where you are today, I will be there tomorrow.]"

The side note read, "The making of fiery Fareedan. Getting into Fareedan's look was 90% of me getting into character. The elaborate costumes by Rimple & Harpreet, beautiful makeup by Heema Dattani, that amazing curly bob by Madhuri Nakhale and Sanjay sir's vision helped me embody the character of this feisty revenge seeker... who you all have loved so much Here's a little glimpse for you..." Manisha Koirala, Sanjeeda Shaikh, Sharmin Segal, Richa Chadha, and Aditi Rao Hydari also play pivotal roles in Heeramandi: The Diamond Bazaar.

## Pratibha Ranta On Shooting For Laapataa Ladies And Heeramandi Simultaneously: "Magical Experience"



Actress Pratibha Ranta, who is being lauded for her portrayal of Pushpa Rani/Jaya in the Kiran Rao directorial Laapataa Ladies, was also part of Sanjay Leela Bhansali's Netflix debut project Heeramandi. Talking to The Indian Express, the actress shared her experience about shooting for both the films simultaneously. She said, "It was a very magical experience. When I went to shoot for Heeramandi, I was able to experience a different world. There was a big

set in Heeramandi, and the approach of both characters was so different for me. Jaya is a little reserved. She thinks a lot before taking action. But she is watching. She has four eyes because she is doing something like this. So all that I used to keep in mind when I was preparing for Jaya's character." "But somewhere, in both, the bottom line, it was the same emotion to get that freedom that I have to do what I have to do," Pratibha added. For the unversed, in Laapataa Ladies, Pratibha played

Jaya - a young woman who's married off against her wishes while in Heeramandi, she played Shama, the daughter of a courtesan, played by Sanjeeda Shaikh. About her future aspirations, Pratibha expresses her wish to work with Sanjay Leela Bhansali again. "I really have to work more with Sanjay sir. Next time, I have to work on a big scale with Sanjay sir. I have seen Alia and Deepika. Oh my god, I like Ram Leela so much. I also have to dance. I want to dance with my heart open," she shared.

## Pawan Kalyan to decide on films after poll results

Since the polls ended, there has been speculation about the shooting dates for Pawan Kalyan's upcoming projects. However, according to our sources, Pawan Kalyan has made no commitment to any producer as of yet. The poll results will be announced on June 4th. The results will determine Pawan Kalyan's next course of action. Pawan Kalyan, the president of the Jana Sena party, will play a key role in the formation of the new government if the TDP-Jana Sena-BJP alliance wins a majority. He is confident that the alliance will win outright. As a result, if alliance parties form the government, he will find it difficult to return to film shootings.

If the ruling YS Jagan Mohan Reddy party retains power, Pawan Kalyan will have to consider his next steps in his political career. He may completely shift his focus on films. Overall, Pawan Kalyan is unlikely to return to the sets immediately.

### Multiple movies

Pawan Kalyan has several projects in the middle of production that need to be completed. "OG", a gangster drama,



can be completed quickly because the majority of the filming has already been completed. Then he will finish the

remaining portion of the first part of "Hari Hara Veera Mallu". Aside from that, he will need to work on Harish Shankar's

"Ustaad Bhagat Singh," which has just completed ten days of work. This one needs more days of his time.

## Sobhita Dhulipala impresses the Cannes film festival paparazzi

Telugu actress Sobhita Dhulipala recently made her Hollywood debut. She played the female lead in "Monkey Man". Continuing her efforts to gain more recognition in the film industry, she made her debut on the stage of the Cannes Film Festival. Sobhita Dhulipala, like Kiara Advani, attended the prestigious festival to promote a cosmetics brand and serve as a celebrity guest. She attended the Magnum party there. For them, this is their maiden Cannes attendance. Sobhita also posted pictures from her Cannes appearance. She looked ultra glamorous. Sobhita Dhulipala has recently gained popularity in Bollywood. She is now attempting to gain fame as a global celebrity.



## Chandini Chowdary's 'Santhama Prapthirasthu' launched

Producers Madhura Sreedhar Reddy and Nirvi Hariprasad Reddy are producing a new film titled "Santhana Prapthirasthu." The film's lead actors are Vikranth and Chandini Chowdary. The film's formal launch event was held today in Hyderabad. "Santhana Prapthirasthu", directed by Sanjeev Reddy, has screenplay written by Sheikh Dawood, who has previously worked on films such as "Venkatadri Express," "Express Raja," and "Ek Mini Katha." Director Sanjeev Reddy says, "The film is a musical family entertainer. We are addressing a current subject in an amusing way. The plot revolves around a Warangal girl and a Hyderabad guy, depicting a dilemma encountered by a newlywed couple." Producers Madhura Sreedhar Reddy and Nirvi Hariprasad Reddy expressed their delight during the official launch.



## Sreeleela attends events in the United States

Sreeleela's career may have slowed following recent flops, but her popularity and craze have not diminished. She continues to make money through brands, events, and appearances at various functions. She is currently on her way to the United States to attend several events as a celebrity guest, including the upcoming Telangana American Telugu Association (TTA) mega convention in Seattle. Last year, she attended the TANA convention. Meanwhile, she's in talks to star in a Tamil film. The actress has not announced a new film since the release of "Guntur Kaaram". Despite the fact that she is not shooting any films, the 22-year-old actress keeps herself busy with events and brand endorsements and also earning good money.

