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Porn-addicted man kills teenaged daughter for refusing sex, held

Hyderabad: A porn addict, who allegedly killed his teenaged daughter, after she refused to surrender herself to satiate his carnal desires, was nabbed by Telangana police on Wednesday. The killer, identified as Naresh of Nadigadda Thanda in Miyapur locality on Hyderabad outskirts, had attempted to mislead the police by lodging a false complaint of his daughter missing on June 7. Subsequently, the body of an unidentified girl was found in a forest area. Naresh and his wife had identified it as that of their daughter. It was at this stage, the Miyapur police intensified their investigations into the missing case that got turned into a kidnap-cum-murder.

Govt. takes steps to provide quality education in schools: Minister



GNS News Agency, June 19

Peddapalli: Industries and IT Minister D Sridhar Babu said the State government would take all steps to provide quality education to each and every student studying in government schools in the State. Participating in the Badi Bata programme held in Zilla Parishad High School, Manthani on Wednesday, the Minister said that right from the Collector to school staff, everyone should work to provide quality education to students in government schools, he said and instructed the collector Koya Sri Harsha to review the functioning of schools frequently. The government has constituted Amma Adarsha school committees along with women to provide school maintenance responsibilities to women since the latter would take care of the children. Stating that the government was taking initiatives to establish small and medium industries, he informed that Coca-Cola would establish its unit in Peddapalli. Local youth would get employment in the unit. A small IT company will also be established in Manthani, wherein 50 youth would get employment within one month. Besides announcing a job calendar, all vacant posts would be recruited and steps would also be taken to provide employment to youth in public and private companies, he said.

NSA detention of Khador Sahib MP-elect Amritpal Singh, 9 others extended by 1 year



Chandigarh, GNS News Agency, June 19

The detention of newly-elected MP from Khador Sahib, Amritpal Singh and nine others under the National Security Act (NSA) at Dibrugarh Central Jail in Assam was extended on Wednesday for a year. He has been in jail since March last year. The detention of Amritpal Singh, chief of 'Waris Punjab De', and three associates was set to expire on July 24, while the NSA detention for six other associates was to end on June 18. In his first electoral contest, Sikh radical Amritpal Singh, won the Khador Sahib seat by 1,97,120 votes over his nearest rival, Congress candidate Kulbir Singh Zira.

Arvind Kejriwal demanded Rs 100 crore bribe, ED tells court while opposing bail plea

New Delhi, GNS News Agency, June 19

Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal demanded a Rs 100 crore bribe from the South Group for his party, the Enforcement Directorate claimed on Wednesday while opposing his bail application in a money-laundering case linked to the alleged excise scam. The central probe agency told the court that if the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP), which has been arrayed as an accused in the case, commits a crime, the person in charge of the party will be held culpable.

The ED told the court that when former deputy chief minister Manish Sisodia was made an accused in the case, the AAP was not named as an accused. "Kejriwal demanded bribe. He asked for a bribe of Rs 100 crore. Kejriwal asked for funds for the AAP. Kejriwal demanded kickbacks from South Group. You can't say he is not guilty of offence. If AAP commits a crime, then every person in charge of the party will be deemed to be guilty," the ED told Special Judge Niyay Bindu.

Brain dead woman delivers healthy baby in Hyderabad, organs donated to Jeevandan

Hyderabad: A 27-year-old pregnant woman, who received grievous injuries in a road accident and was declared as brain dead delivered a healthy baby girl in Hyderabad. Later, her husband and relatives gave consent to donate her organs to needy patients, as part of State-run Jeevandan organ donation initiative.

On June 8, Maddikarla Sunitha (27), who was 9 months pregnant, was travelling with her husband on a two-wheeler when their vehicle collided with an auto. The housewife was seriously injured and was rushed to KIMS Hospitals, Secunderabad.

PM Modi to lead Yoga Day celebrations in Srinagar on Friday; launch projects worth crores

GNS News Agency, June 19

Srinagar: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on June 21 will lead the 10th International Yoga Day celebrations here at the Sher-e-Kashmir International Convention Complex (SKICC) situated on the banks of the renowned Dal Lake, besides inaugurating and laying foundation of several projects worth crores during his two-day (June 20-21) visit to Jammu and Kashmir, an official said on Wednesday. Around 9,000 people are expected to join the Prime Minister during the Yoga International Day celebrations. 'Yoga for self & society' is the theme message of this year's Yoga celebrations.

The Prime Minister's Office (PMO), in a statement, said that during his visit to Srinagar, PM Modi will address the gathering of participants on the occasion of International Yoga Day. Besides, PM Modi will participate in 'Empowering Youth, Transforming J&K' event at SKICC at around



6 p.m. on June 20 (Thursday). "PM Modi will inaugurate and lay the foundation stone of multiple development projects in Jammu and Kashmir. He will also launch Competitiveness Improvement in Agriculture and Allied Sectors Project (JKCIP)," the PMO statement said. This year's Yoga Day event underscores yoga's profound impact on young minds and bodies. The celebration aims to unite thousands in the practice of yoga, promoting health and wellness on a global scale. Since 2015, PM Modi has led the International Day of Yoga (IDY) celebrations at various iconic locations, including Kartavya

Path in Delhi, Chandigarh, Dehradun, Ranchi, Lucknow, Mysuru and even the United Nations Headquarters in New York. This year's theme "Yoga for Self and Society" highlights the dual role in fostering individual and societal well-being. The event will encourage grassroots participation and the spread of yoga in rural areas. 'Empowering Youth, Transforming J&K' event on June 20 is a pivotal moment for the region, showcasing progress and providing inspiration to young achievers, the PMO statement noted. On the occasion, PM Modi will also interact with the young achievers of

Jammu and Kashmir, and also inspect stalls. PM Modi will also lay the foundation and inaugurate 84 major developmental projects worth over Rs 1,500 crore. The inaugurations will include projects related to road infrastructure, water supply schemes and infrastructure in higher education etc.

Additionally, the Prime Minister will also lay the foundation for projects like improvement of Chenani-Patnitop-Nashri section, the development of Industrial Estates and construction of six government degree colleges. PM Modi will also launch the Competitiveness Improvement in Agriculture and Allied Sectors Project (JKCIP) Project worth Rs 1,800 crore. The project will be implemented in 90 blocks across 20 districts of Jammu and Kashmir, and will have the outreach of 3,00,000 households covering 15 lakh beneficiaries. M Modi will also distribute appointment letters to more than 2,000 people appointed in government service, the PMO statement said.

Gehlot asks Rajasthan govt to implement Right to Health in state



GNS News Agency, June 19

Jaipur: Former Rajasthan chief minister Ashok Gehlot has demanded the BJP government of the state to implement the rules of 'Right to Health' "as soon as possible". Gehlot has criticised some doctors for allegedly calling the ambitious 'Chiranjeevi Yojana' of the previous Congress government a failure. "Our government made a law of 'Right to Health' so that free treatment can be done in emergency situations. The present government should take the colleagues of the Doctors Association

into confidence and make and implement the rules of 'Right to Health' as soon as possible so that every resident of Rajasthan gets the right to treatment," Gehlot said on X.

According to media reports, some private doctors had criticised the previous Gehlot government's Chiranjeevi scheme in the pre-budget review with Chief Minister Bhajanlal Sharma. Countering this, the former chief minister wrote, "In the pre-budget discussion, a factually incorrect statement by a doctor on my operation has come to notice through media. My hernia operation was done in February 2019 while the Chiranjeevi scheme started from May 2021. "I was treated at SMS Hospital, Jaipur for blockage in my artery, fracture in toes and happy hypoxia after Covid, due to which I was admitted there for a few days and got treatment by taking advantage of government schemes," he said. Gehlot claimed that the Chiranjeevi Yojana has improved the lives of lakhs of people. If this scheme was not there, then who knows how many poor and middle class families would have sold their land and property for treatment, he said. "Some doctors of the private hospitals should avoid defaming a good scheme and a sacred medical profession by telling such lies," Gehlot said.

Kedar Badri Kartik (Murugan) Koil Yathirai Express train for Uttarakhand commencing from Madurai, Chennai on 20.06.2024.

3AC coach train named Kedar Badri Kartik (Murugan) Koil Yathirai will be operated jointly by Uttarakhand Tourism Department and IRCTC from Madurai, Chennai to Uttarakhand today on 20.06.2024.

Starting from Madurai, via Chennai, Vijayawada, Warangal, Nagpur, Bhopal, Jhansi, Gwalior, Agra etc., it will reach Yoganagari Rishikesh railway station in Uttarakhand on 23.06.2024.

IRCTC has made arrangements for hotels, buses, taxis etc. in the form of packages for all the tourists to visit Shri Kedarnath Dham, Shri Badrinath Dham and Shri Kartik Swami Temple located in Uttarakhand.

To promote tourism in Uttarakhand, Uttarakhand Tourism Development Board, in collaboration with IRCTC, is starting a tourist train named Kedar Badri Kartik (Murugan) Koil Yathirai to travel to Garhwal region, which will run today on 20.06.2024 with 165 passengers. The Train will leave from Madurai and reach Yoganagari Rishikesh railway station of Uttarakhand on 23.06.2024 via Chennai, Vijayawada, Warangal, Nagpur, Bhopal, Jhansi, Gwalior, Agra etc. In this journey of 12 nights/13 days, all the travellers will be taken to visit Shri Kedarnath Dham, Shri Badrinath Dham and Shri Kartik Swami Temple etc. Besides, Pahari dishes will also be served to all the passengers traveling in the train. Kartik Swami Temple is one of the holy tourist places in Rudraprayag district. According to mythology, Lord Kartikeya, son of Lord Shiva, came here angry with his parents and then he gave the bones of his body to his father and his flesh to his mother. These bones are still present in the temple,

which are worshiped by thousands of devotees. This is the only temple of Lord Kartikeya, known as Lord Murugan in South India, located in North India. Uttarakhand Tourism Development Board and IRCTC have jointly started this special tourist train named Manashkand Express to promote tourism at various major and lesser known places of Uttarakhand, the first journey of which was on 22.04.2024 and the second journey was on 22.05.2024. It was conducted successfully, in which tourists were taken to visit various major and lesser known tourist places of Kumaon division. Shri Sachin Kurve, Secretary Tourism/Chief Executive Officer, Uttarakhand Tourism Development Board said that after the success of the first and second journey of the train operated to visit various tourist destinations of Kumaon division, now Kedar Badri Kartik (Murugan) tourist train is being launched for the Garhwal region. After this, a plan is being made to operate the said train from Kerala and Andhra Pradesh in the month of July. Kurve said that this unique initiative of Uttarakhand Tourism Development Board is the first of its kind in India, in which efforts are being made to promote tourism in lesser known places through tourist train. The train journey will be 3AC, however, to increase the convenience of tourists, only four berths have been booked in a compartment of the train. The rich natural, cultural, architectural and spiritual heritage of Uttarakhand is displayed outside the train. The Pantry Car coach depicts various dishes of Uttarakhandi cuisine, one coach depicts various folk festivals, the other coach depicts people wearing various costumes of the state. Various temples and other important places are also depicted on the coaches.

Officials ignore protocol in Medak, BRS cadre protest



GNS News Agency, June 19

Medak: Bharat Rastra Samithi (BRS) leaders protested as officials failed to follow the protocol during a programme organised in Kulcharam mandal on Wednesday. As the officials did not arrange chairs for elected representatives of the BRS, MLA Vakiti Sunitha Lakshma Reddy raised the issue before Minister Konda Surekha.

The issue aggravated as Surekha and Sunitha also entered into an argument. During the Badi Bata programme at Kulcharam mandal headquarters on Wednesday, the BRS cadre protested accusing the officials of ignoring protocol as they did not arrange chairs for the BRS MPP and ZPTC on the stage. The BRS and Congress cadre raised slogans against each other while Surekha and Sunitha made them calm down. Later, they went on to inaugurate a newly built MPP office building in Kulcharam where Surekha gave the scissors to Congress leader Avula Raji Reddy to cut the ribbon. However, Sunitha confiscated the scissors from Raji Reddy which caused a heated argument between them.

Later, Surekha inaugurated the building. As the Minister went to participate in multiple programmes across the Narsapur constituency, such issues continued to crop up. When asked, Surekha said the BRS did not follow protocol when they were in power. The Minister went on to say that they would give due respect to Congress leaders even in official meetings even though they did not hold any official positions.

AP cabinet to meet on June 24



GNS News Agency, June 19

The Andhra Pradesh Cabinet meeting is set to take place on the 24th of this month, marking the first gathering under the leadership of Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu. The meeting, scheduled for 10 am at the Secretariat, will address various issues concerning the state.

In preparation for the meeting, all government departments have been instructed to submit proposals on the topics to be discussed. The Chief Minister's office has set a deadline of 4 pm on the 21st for the submission of these proposals. This Cabinet meeting comes after the recent formation of the new government in the state, and is expected to outline the agenda and priorities of the administration moving forward. Chief Minister Chandrababu is expected to preside over the meeting, which will bring together key officials and decision-makers to address pressing issues facing Andhra Pradesh.

J&K govt appoints two nodal officers for smooth conduct of Amarnath Yatra

GNS News Agency, June 19

Srinagar: The J&K government on Wednesday appointed two senior officers as nodal officers for the smooth conduct of Amarnath Yatra 2024.

A government order issued on Wednesday said, "It is hereby ordered that these two officers shall be the Nodal Officers for smooth conduct of Shri Amarnath Ji Yatra-2024 for the locations/axis. Shahid Iqbal Choudhary, Administrative Secretary, Department of Rural Development and Panchayati Raj shall be the nodal officer for Baltal Axis and Bhupinder Kumar, IAS, Administrative Secretary, Public Works (R&B) Department for Pahalgam Axis."

"The officers shall closely monitor and liaise with all concerned agencies involved in the conduct of Shri Amarnath Ji Yatra-2024, and shall report to Chief Executive Officer, Shri Amarnath Ji Shrine Board on a regular basis," the order said.

This year's 52-day-long Amarnath Yatra starts on June 29 and will conclude on August 19 coinciding with the Raksha Bandhan and Shraavan Purnima festivals.

Indian Chronicle

English Daily

NCERT row

PERIODIC revision of learning material is par for the course. How the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) is going about it is problematic, ill-advised and smacks of narrow-mindedness. It's not without reason that revisions in the Class XII political science textbook have led to a hue and cry. Questions are bound to be raised over the strange logic of whitewashing contemporary events, skipping uncomfortable moments in India's history and choosing to ignore incidents of violence and protest. Two political scientists have sought the removal of their names as authors, saying the textbooks are politically biased, academically indefensible and pedagogically dysfunctional. The NCERT has rejected accusations of saffronisation of school curricula, but the intent behind the changes must remain open to scrutiny. It's a bizarre argument, for instance, that teaching about riots can create violent and depressed citizens. Amid the ongoing row, the NCERT director has said the words 'Bharat' and 'India' could be used interchangeably in the textbooks. According to him, a discussion on the issue is useless. A panel had recommended replacing 'India' with 'Bharat' in all textbooks last year. The debate on the issue was triggered in 2023 when the G20 invites were sent in the name of 'President of Bharat'. The last word on the issue is yet to be heard. Not mentioning Babri Masjid but referring to it as a three-domed structure, pruning the section on Ayodhya, omission of the Gujarat riots — the tweaks in the textbooks violate the fundamental premise of education, which is to inculcate critical thinking. Denying essential reading material is a disservice to students. It's not just during the past 10 years that textbook revisions have sparked controversy. The difference now is the lack of informed and forceful debates on matters of such significance.

Digital boards now on Mumbai suburban coaches to aid passengers spot their train



GNS News Agency, June 19

Digital screens Mumbai local trainsAs the train guard gets into his cab at the originating station and feeds the Train Number, all journey details will be accurately shown on the side-mounted panorama digital displays. Western Railway, as part of providing improved train service to its passengers, has installed a panorama digital display outside local train coaches. Currently, one rake is equipped with these displays, and based on commuter feedback, more rakes will be fitted with similar digital boards in the near future. This feature will provide passengers with clear and immediate identification of the destination of the local train, which will ensure a more convenient and informed journey over the Mumbai Suburban network. As

the train guard gets into his cab at the originating station and feeds the Train Number, all journey details will be accurately shown on the side-mounted panorama digital displays. The digital displays will show Train Destination in English, Hindi and Marathi, with an interval of 3 seconds. Besides, these displays will also show whether it is a Fast or Slow (S) local or a 12-Car/15-Car EMU train.

- Display protected with toughened glass.
 - Optimum brightness and viewing angle which will help people view the code on the screens easily.
 - Screen display contrast are automatically controlled through sensors so that the text is clearly visible from a distance of up to 5 metres.
 - Mounted on in-house designed brackets
 - The display is protected with polycarbonate sheet of 5-mm thickness.
 - All nuts are locked with split pin arrangement to prevent the display from falling in case the nuts get loose due to vibration. Total Cost: Rs 14 lakh
- Official quote: Vineet Abhishek Chief Public Relations Officer, of Western Railway, said "As of now, one rake has been fitted with the display system on the sides with a total of eight digital displays with four on each side, providing a panoramic view of crucial travel information. The response from passengers has been positive and it is planned to fit on other rakes too in the near future. With this new addition, Western Railway is proud to continue its legacy of providing comfort and care to its Mumbai Suburban passengers on a daily basis."

NIA files chargesheet against 7 men in Ballari ISIS module case



GNS News Agency, June 19

NIA ISIS module case Earlier this year, following the March 1 blast at The Rameshwaram Cafe in Bengaluru, the NIA had taken Minaj, Shaikh, Hussain, and Sameer into custody for investigations. However, they were not arrested. The National Investigation Agency (NIA) has filed a chargesheet against seven people accused of being part of a Ballari unit of the 'ISIS anti-India module'. The seven accused have been charged under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act for recruitment and radicalisation of youths to operate terrorist sleeper cells.

"They were part of a bigger ISIS conspiracy to prepare 50 such sleeper cells in each district of India by 2025. The accused were also involved in the fabrication of explosives for furtherance of the ISIS goal to establish the Caliphate System in India," the NIA said in a statement. The Ballari module case was registered by the NIA in December 2023. The NIA investigations revealed that some of the accused had carried out a trial blast in Karnataka's Ballari. Six of the charge-sheeted accused had taken a pledge of allegiance to ISIS after the oath was administered to them by Md. Sulaiman alias Minaj, 26, the self-proclaimed Amir of the group, the NIA said in its statement. Minaj, Mohammed Muniruddin, 25, Syed Sameer, 19, and Md. Muzammil, 26, all residents of Karnataka; Anas Iqbal Shaikh, 23, a resident of Maharashtra; Mohd. Shahbaz alias Zulfikar, 23, of Jharkhand; and Shayan Rehman alias Hussain, 26, of Delhi have been charged by the NIA. Earlier this year, following the March 1 blast at The Rameshwaram Cafe in Bengaluru, the NIA had taken Minaj, Shaikh, Hussain, and Sameer into custody for investigations. However, they were not arrested. The cafe blast suspect whose trail was pieced together through CCTV footage was found to have travelled to Ballari before disappearing. The suspect, Mussavi Hussain Shazib, 30, and his associate Abdul Matheen Taha, 30, were later tracked down to Chennai and further to Kolkata on April 12 and were arrested by the NIA.

Delhi High Court seeks ED's stand in Chanpreet Singh's bail plea

GNS News Agency, June 19

The Delhi High Court Friday sought the Enforcement Directorate's stand in the regular bail plea of Chanpreet Singh — who allegedly managed 'funds' for the Aam Aadmi Party's campaign during the 2022 Goa assembly polls — in the excise policy case. A single judge bench of Justice Amit Sharma issued notice to the agency and listed the matter for July 2. Singh, who was arrested by the ED on April 12, moved the HC after the trial court denied him bail on June 6. He is presently in judicial custody.

Special Judge Kaveri Baweja of Rouse Avenue Courts while rejecting Singh's bail plea had said, "...the serious nature of allegations and role played by the applicant (Singh) as revealed during investigation, his connection with the activities relating to use of the alleged proceeds of crime within the meaning of Section 3 of the PMLA and the oral and documentary evidence collected in support of the same and as placed for perusal of the court, this court is of the considered opinion that even if the rigors and restrictions contained U/s. 45 of the PMLA are viewed and construed reasonably, the prosecution has still been able to show a genuine and prima facie case for involvement of the applicant in commission of the alleged offence of money laundering." Singh in his plea before the HC has said that the special judge dismissed Singh's bail application "without considering" that the predicate offence is weak, that there are similarly placed co-accused who were never arrested during the investigation, and no link has been established between Singh and the AAP, among other grounds. The arrest of the Petitioner (Singh) is based on the statements recorded by the investigation agency and there is no credible evidence or witness on whose instance even a prima facie guilt of the Petitioner/ accused can be established. That the witnesses whose statements have been recorded are themselves questionable as they are admittedly hawala operators..." the plea filed by advocates Chirag Madan and Ravleen Sabharwal submits. Singh has further alleged that the agency's whole case is based on the statement of witnesses who are his "seniors" by virtue of their age as well as in professional capacity. Singh has claimed that the statements of such witnesses are "not reliable at this stage" and will have to be tested during trial.

Singh has claimed that the agency has "erred" by following a "pick and choose method" while arresting the accused persons wherein no pattern/formula has been followed and the "hawala agents have been named as credible and reliable public witnesses on whose testi-



mony/ statement" Singh has been arrested. Singh was earlier arrested by the CBI in May 2023 for the predicate offence (criminal conspiracy under IPC and offence relating to public servants being bribed under the Prevention of Corruption Act). He was subsequently granted regular bail by the trial court on July 22, 2023, in the CBI case. The ED has alleged that the money reached Goa via a network of hawala transactions run by informal cash couriers — known colloquially as angadiyas — with alleged links to AAP functionaries, members of the South Group, and Chariot Productions Media Pvt Ltd, a firm engaged by the party for its election campaign in Goa. The ED has alleged that during the probe, it found that many vendors engaged for outdoor campaigns by Chariot Media made "part cash part bill" payments and the employee of an angadiya operator had delivered cash to them. After a raid by the Income Tax department in January 2022 at the Goa office of an angadiya operator, some "documents, chits and slips" were seized, which led the agency to conclude that approximately Rs 45 crore had been transferred through hawala transactions to Goa.

The ED said that in subsequent disclosures, an employee of an angadiya operator claimed that he handed over a large amount of cash to three people, including Singh. The ED said that as per the seized records, Singh collected Rs 17.38 crore over 18 occasions from the employee of an angadiya operator from August 2021 to January 2022. As per call detail records, calls on multiple dates exchanged between them match with the dates mentioned in the data seized by the IT department as the date of cash collection, the ED alleged. According to the ED, Singh had been an employee of Chariot since 2020 and later allegedly joined as a freelancer from May-June 2021 till March 2022 for AAP's election campaign in Goa.

Ahead of Jalandhar West bypoll, Jakhar to PM: Name Adampur airport after Guru Ravidas

GNS News Agency, June 19

Punjab BJP chief Sunil Jakhar Thursday wrote to Prime Minister Narendra Modi, urging him to name Adampur airport in Jalandhar after Guru Ravidas, the move coming a day before nomination process starts for July the bypoll to the Jalandhar West Assembly constituency slated for July 10. While none of the major political parties have announced candidates for the bypoll, necessitated by the resignation of Sheetal Angural, the lobbying for tickets has begun. Angural was AAP's Jalandhar West (SC) lawmaker. He resigned from the Assembly on March 28, a day after he and then-Jalandhar MP Sushil Rinku switched over to the BJP from AAP. Rinku contested the Lok Sabha polls as BJP nominee but lost to Congress candidate and former Chief Minister Charanjit Singh Channi. A buoyed Congress has set its sights on the Jalandhar West as Channi had secured a lead over his rivals in the Assembly segment. Previously, speculations were rife that someone from Channi's family may get the bypoll ticket. Channi, however, dismissed the rumours. Meanwhile, several local councillors and Congress leaders have expressed interest in contesting from here, with some already staking their claim. Party leaders have indicated that even a parachute candidate might be nominated if local leaders in the constituency are deemed lacking winnability. On the other end of the spectrum, the BJP is gearing up to reclaim the lost ground. The party trailed by a narrow margin of approximately 1500 votes in this Assembly segment. Within the BJP ranks, speculations were rife regarding their potential nominee, with many suggesting the name of Sunita Rinku, the wife of Sushil Rinku. Angural too is a potential candidate. Considering that Jalandhar West is a reserved Assembly constituency, the timing of Jakhar's letter to PM Modi has not gone unnoticed. The prime minister, during his last poll rally in Hoshiarpur on May 30, said it was his wish that the Adampur airport be named after

Guru Ravidas. Modi had then said the welfare of the poor was his government's top priority and in this Guru Ravidas is a big inspiration. The Adampur airport in Jalandhar serves Punjab's Doaba region. Modi had virtually inaugurated the Adampur airport's new terminal buildings on March 10. In his letter to PM, Jakhar said, "I take this opportunity to draw your attention towards two issues that have a deep emotional-spiritual bearing on the minds of people. These issues also find resonance with your commitment towards the society". "The renaming of the Adampur Airport after the 15th-century spiritual sage Guru Ravidas, as already expressed by you during your recent visit to Punjab, will go a long way to underpin the ethos of spirituality in the diversity that binds India. This has also been a long-pending demand from the people of Punjab," Jakhar wrote. He also requested Modi that since the Guru Ravidas temple in Tughlakabad in Delhi was to be rebuilt, it would be worthwhile to consider developing the area around the temple into a serene garden. "This will enhance the shrine's appeal without tinkering with the layout. This will inspire people from all over to soak in the egalitarian preaching of the revered saint," the Punjab BJP chief said. Guru Ravidas has a huge following in Punjab, especially Jalandhar and renaming the airport after him is an emotive issue that can have bearing on the bypoll. Meanwhile, from ruling AAP, several contenders have thrown their hat in the ring. The frontrunner is Mahinder Pal Bhagat, a seasoned campaigner with deep roots in the constituency. His father, Bhagat Chuni Lal, a three-time MLA from Jalandhar West was a former minister, and Mahinder is determined to carry forward his legacy. Additionally, names of Pawan Kumar Tinu and Dr. Kashmiri Lal are also being considered. With his selfless service during the Covid-19 pandemic, Kashmiri Lal earned admiration and respect from the local populace.

Candidates awaiting posting orders as teachers in Himachal primary schools, meet CM Sukhu



A delegation of candidates awaiting posting orders as elementary teachers or Junior Basic Training (JBT) teachers in Himachal Pradesh government schools called on Chief Minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu urging him to fulfill his poll promise of issuing them appointment letters.

GNS News Agency, June 19

Himachal CM Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu The delegation members under the banner of Unemployed JBT Union said that CM Sukhu had told them that the state government had sought permission from the Election Commission of India (ECI) to issue the appointment letters, as the Model Code of Conduct was in place in three districts due to the upcoming bye-elections. A delegation of candidates awaiting posting orders as elementary teachers or Junior Basic Training (JBT) teachers in Himachal Pradesh government schools on Thursday called on Chief Minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu urging him to fulfill his poll promise of issuing them appointment letters. The delegation members under the banner of Unemployed JBT Union said that CM Sukhu had told them that the state government had sought permission from the Election Commission of India (ECI) to issue the appointment letters, as the Model Code of Conduct was in place in three districts due to the upcoming bye-elections. There are 1,132 JBT teachers across 12 districts of the state who have been waiting for appointment letters since November 2023. But the appointment is getting delayed even after June 4 Lok Sabha election results as the Election Commission has announced bye-election in three Assembly constituencies — Dehra, Hamirpur and Nalagarh on July 10. The model code of conduct will be in place till July 16.

Karan Singh, secretary of Unemployed JBT Union, said, "Our counseling took place in November 2023. Later, the dilly-dallying tactics started. In March 2024, the Model Code of Conduct came into effect in the state. Throughout the campaign, CM Sukhu announced on various public stages that appointment letters to JBT teachers would be issued after the elections. Today, we came from almost all 12 districts of the state to meet CM Sukhu. Again, we got merely assurances." Although more than 60 unemployed JBT teachers from across the state came to the Himachal Pradesh Secretariat, only six people were allowed to meet CM Sukhu in his office. In Himachal Pradesh, JBT teachers are employed according to their batches. There were 1,161 JBT teachers to be enrolled in the state, but 29 of them were declared not eligible by the government. The 29 teachers had moved the Himachal Pradesh High Court, which directed the state to continue the hiring process for 1,132 JBT teachers even as the petition of the 29 candidates is pending.

Staying away from parents new fad of Pune youngsters



Snehal, a 27-year-old corporate professional, had to fight with her parents to move out two years ago but they have grown to understand and accept her decision.

GNS News Agency, June 19

Youngsters Pune leaving family home For other young people, moving out from their parents could also be the result of fundamental differences in worldview. From more privacy to learning independence, having the freedom to socialise and focusing better on work, youngsters in Pune are increasingly deciding to live separately from their families while still being in the same city. Omkar, a 26-year-old educator and social worker, moved away from his family home two years ago not only for more privacy but also to make more time for his work. "After my job, I teach kids of the community in my locality and sometimes it gets very late. It is not nice to disturb my parents every day for this. And secondly, there is much more privacy here and I can focus better on my work here. I can also socialise as I want here." With this, his younger sister also gets the freedom to come and stay over when she feels like it.

Living separately from their families while being in the same city was not a decision many of his friends or peers would make but he is glad the way it has worked out for him. For other young people, moving out from their parents could also be the result of fundamental differences in worldview. Rohit, a 29-year-old director and actor, moved out of his parents' house three years ago over several reasons. The major one of which was his choice of career. He said, "My work required me to watch, analyse and critique films but everytime I would open my laptop for the same, the taunts from my family would start. They had a very different background and did not understand what I was doing. They also wanted me to be very religious and the imposition was getting difficult for me"

Now he lives in a small apartment at Nal Stop with a couple of friends and colleagues. While the decision came with its own challenges and heartache, Rohit appreciates the space he has gotten. He said, "It was very important for me to get out of Shahu Vasahat because the environment in our 'basti' was not very good. Most of the boys were into drinking, gambling or other vices and eventually my parents also understood and accepted my decision. I go visit them twice a week." Parikshit, a 21-year-old living in Swargate says that though his main reason to leave his home was to make it work for college, the kind of environment that existed back at home had a very significant standing on it as well. "I had a little brother in my room who would keep peeping into my conversations 24x7. I could not invite people over, and I could not even play the music that I like. My parents, however, were supportive of my decision to move out, it worked for both of us in its own ways." He said, "I now take care of the electricity bill and cook three meals a day. It's empowering to understand that you are not their 'little kid' anymore and you have grown up to be your own person". Snehal, a 27-year-old corporate professional, had a fight with her parents to move out two years ago but they have grown to understand and accept her decision. She said, "I was tired of continuous pestering over my daily routine and schedule. I am an adult, a working professional but I was still being treated like a child so I decided to move out. In the beginning they were furious but because I am financially independent, they had no choice but to eventually accept my decision. I understand that these things were not very common in their generation and a lot of stigma was attached to this. People would expect a girl to move from her natal home only when she got married. But times are changing."

Swati Maliwal 'assault' case: Delhi HC seeks police stand on Bibhav Kumar's bail plea

GNS News Agency, June 19



Bibhav Kumar is alleged to have misbehaved with a lady member of the political party at the official residence of the Hon'ble CM, where not only the elected members of their political party could meet the Hon'ble CM but even the general public could go and meet the Hon'ble CM regarding their grievances. This creates fear and panic in the mind of the general public to meet their leader.

"Kumar, in his plea before the high court, has said that while passing the bail rejection order, the trial court failed to consider the fact that "all the evidence in relation" to the FIR had been collected by the investigating officer and "statements of the witnesses" had also been recorded; therefore, Kumar's custody was not required. Kumar had earlier moved a plea in the high court challenging his arrest in the case. On May 31, the high court had reserved its verdict on the maintainability of his plea.

"On the court's query as to how much time it will take for the completion of the investigation, the police counsel said, "The FSL (Forensic Science Laboratory) is pending with respect to the mobile phones and DVRs which have been seized." Kumar has been booked under various provisions of the Indian Penal Code, including sections 354B (assault or use of criminal force to woman with intent to disrobe), 506 (criminal intimidation) and 308 (attempt to commit culpable homicide), among others. While denying him bail on June 7, Special Judge Ekta Gauba Mann of Tis Hazari court had said, "...considering the fact that

'You have no role in this': Delhi court says ED can't object to Arvind Kejriwal's plea seeking relief in jail

GNS News Agency, June 19

Hearing a plea filed by Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal, a Delhi court on Friday told the Enforcement Directorate (ED) that it cannot object to his requests related to his medical checkup in Tihar jail. Kejriwal is currently in judicial custody in a money laundering case linked to the alleged Delhi excise policy scam. Accused (Kejriwal) is in judicial custody, not ED (custody). If he wants any relief, you have no role in this," Judge Mukesh Kumar told the central probe agency while directing the jail superintendent of Tihar jail to respond to Kejriwal's application for allowing his wife to join him via video conferencing while his medical checkups were going on. In his plea, Kejriwal had also requested to be allowed to provide his inputs regarding his health condition to the medical board which a Delhi court had in April directed AIIMS to constitute to examine Kejriwal to determine whether he needs insulin to control his sugar levels.

ED Special Counsel Zoheb Hossain requested the court to call for a report from the jail authorities about providing the video conferencing access to Kejriwal's wife. "Hum jail se reply manga lenge par aapka to koi role hai nahi isme (We will seek a reply from the jail but you have no role in this)," the court held. While Kejriwal's plea for regular bail will be heard on June 19, a Delhi court had earlier denied him interim bail noting that his extensive election campaigning indicated that he was not suffering from any serious or life-threatening ailment. The interim bail plea highlighted fluctuating sugar levels and increased ketone levels. Senior Advocate N Hariharan, representing Kejriwal, had earlier told a court that the increased ketone levels could be indicative of diabetic



ketoacidosis, a complication which could be fatal. The advocate also said tests such as PET scan, LFT, KFT, CBC and the 'Holter test' had to be conducted and these could cumulatively take as long as a week. The ED arrested Kejriwal on March 21 in the money laundering case linked to the alleged excise policy scam. The central agency had earlier said that Kejriwal was "directly involved in the formulation" of the now-scrapped excise policy, which was drafted "considering the favours to be granted to the 'South Group' — a group of individuals from the southern part of India. The ED claims the 'South Group' "secured uninhibited access, undue favours, attained stakes in established wholesale businesses, and multiple retail zones (over and above what was allowed in the policy)", and paid Rs 100 crore to AAP leaders in return. The agency also alleged that bribes received from the 'South Group' were funnelled into the AAP's Goa Assembly poll campaign in 2021-2022.

Elgar Parishad-Maoist links case: SC seeks NIA's stand on activist's plea seeking interim bail

George Masih posted the matter for hearing on June 21. "Funeral was on May 26 so what ceremonies are left? You have not given any details as to when they would be," the bench asked the counsel appearing for Raut.

Senior advocate Mihir Desai, appearing for Raut, submitted that this is an interim bail plea to go to Gadchiroli to attend the ceremonies after the death of his grandmother. The top court in September last year extended the stay granted by the Bombay High Court on the implementation of its verdict granting bail to Raut. The NIA had earlier challenged in the top court the September 21 order of the Bombay High Court granting bail to 33-year-old Raut, who was arrested in June 2018 and is presently lodged in judicial custody at the Taloja prison. After the high court had pronounced its verdict on September 21, the counsel representing the NIA had sought the stay on the operation of its order to enable the probe agency to challenge it before the Supreme Court. The case pertains to the Elgar Parishad conclave held in Pune on December 31, 2017, which according to the Pune Police was funded by Maoists. The inflammatory speeches made there led to violence at the Koregaon-Bhima war memorial in Pune the next day, police had alleged. The case was later probed by the NIA.

Delhi Police bust gang issuing caste certificates illegally, tehsildar held

GNS News Agency, June 19

The police arrested Chetan Yadav, a contract worker at the tehsildar's office, on May 14; Waris Ali, the driver of tehsildar Narinder Pal Singh, on May 22; and Narinder Pal Singh, the executive magistrate/tehsildar, on May 27. The police arrested Chetan Yadav, a contract worker at the tehsildar's office, on May 14; Waris Ali, the driver of tehsildar Narinder Pal Singh, on May 22; and Narinder Pal Singh, the executive magistrate/tehsildar, on May 27. The Crime Branch of the Delhi Police recently arrested four people, including an executive magistrate (tehsildar), for 'issuing' caste certificates (SC/ST and OBC) illegally to applicants from non-reserved categories.

More than a hundred illegal caste certificates were seized, some of which were fraudulently registered on the Delhi Government portal, the police said. The investigation began when Inspector Sunil Kumar Kalkhande received a tip-off about the racket. On March 13, a decoy applicant was sent to procure an OBC certificate. After paying Rs 3,500, the applicant received the certificate, which was later uploaded to the Delhi Government's Revenue Department website. Another decoy operation on March 20, saw a second applicant receive a similar certificate for Rs 3,000. Both payments were made online, which provided the police with the bank details of one of the accused.

Based on these findings, a specialised team was formed to trap and arrest the ringleader behind the fraudulent operations. On May 9, the team arrested one Saurabh Gupta from Sangam Vihar. A check of his phone revealed the chats he had with the two decoy applicants along with snapshots and PDF files of incriminating documents. When questioned, Gupta allegedly confessed to collaborating with Chetan Yadav, Waris Ali, and Narinder Pal Singh to issue certificates illegally through the Delhi Cantonment Branch of the Revenue Department. "On sustained interrogation, he broke down and admitted to having issued those OBC certificates to the decoy applicants from the office of the tehsildar in Delhi Cantonment," said DCP Crime Branch Rakesh Pawariya. A case was, therefore, filed against Gupta under IPC Sections 420 (cheating), 468 (forgery for the purpose of cheating), and 120B



(criminal conspiracy). Subsequently, the police arrested Chetan Yadav, a contract worker at the tehsildar's office, on May 14; Waris Ali, the driver of tehsildar Narinder Pal Singh, on May 22; and Narinder Pal Singh, the executive magistrate/tehsildar, on May 27. Interrogation revealed that Gupta met Yadav in January this year, and together with Ali and Singh, they orchestrated a scheme to issue certificates illegally and upload them to the official government website. "He used to apply for issuing certificates on behalf of the candidate on the Revenue Department's website and upload their fake documents like resident proof, caste certificate of any other member of the family or relative, and identity documents. Thereafter, he would share the details of each applicant and their application number, along with the money to Yadav," said DCP Pawariya. Yadav would then forward the details of each applicant to Ali, the tehsildar's driver, along with the money after deducting his share from it. Thereafter, Ali would approve the certificate using the tehsildar's digital signature and upload the certificate on the website after paying a cut of the money to Singh. The operation resulted in the police seizing a laptop and mobile phone from Ali, multiple hard drives and pamphlets from Gupta, additional hard drives, digital signatures, and over a hundred fraudulently obtained caste certificates from the tehsildar's office, and Narinder Pal Singh's mobile phone. Further investigations are underway to validate the authenticity of the 111 caste certificates issued during the period in question.

4 associates of former Karnataka CM Yediyurappa under probe for 'tampering with evidence' in POCSO case

GNS News Agency, June 19



Four associates of former Karnataka chief minister B S Yediyurappa are under investigation for alleged tampering of evidence in a Protection of Children against Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act case filed against the 81-year-old BJP leader by the mother of a minor victim in March this year. One of the associates is alleged to have visited the home of the victim after the incident and taken the victim and her mother back to the residence of the former CM where the mobile phones belonging to the victim and her mother were taken away by another associate. A video recording of the meeting with the former CM which was on one of the phones was allegedly deleted by one of the associates, a public prosecutor told a special POCSO court on Thursday while seeking an arrest warrant for Yediyurappa in the POCSO case. The CID unit of the Karnataka Police which is investigating the POCSO case against Yediyurappa, after it was initially registered by the Bengaluru police, has recovered the deleted video using digital tools, sources said. Tampering with evidence under Section 204 of the Indian Penal Code is a bailable offence with a maximum of two years imprisonment. In addition to tampering with evidence, the associates under probe also allegedly offered an amount of Rs 2 lakh to the victim and her mother in cash soon after the incident and forced them to take it, the public prosecutor argued while seeking the arrest warrant against the former CM. The victim's mother, who died on May 26 this year after a protracted battle with cancer, was told by the associates of the former CM to accept the money offered and to consider it as a loan that could be returned later. One of the associates is reported to have contested an assembly poll in Karnataka a few years ago. The alleged sexual offence occurred on February 2, 2024, when the mother of the victim took her to meet the former CM Yediyurappa to rally support for justice for her daughter in an earlier case of sexual assault on her by a relative in 2015. The woman filed a complaint against the former CM under the POCSO Act and IPC Section 354 A for sexual harassment on March 14, 2024, alleging that he had carried out sexual offences against her daughter during the meeting. A special court for POCSO cases in Bengaluru issued an arrest warrant for the former CM on Thursday in the wake of an application by the CID for custodial questioning of Yediyurappa after he sought time till June 17 to appear before the CID after a notice was issued by the CID on June 10 — for Yediyurappa's appearance before an investigating officer on June 12. The voluntary statements of the victim and her mother about the incident were recorded by a magistrate's court as part of the investigations. A voluntary statement has also been recorded of a witness familiar with the incident.

motivated and without prima facie evidence. He has sought a stay on the probe as an interim measure. The quashing petition is also scheduled to be heard on Friday afternoon. Offences under the POCSO Act are non-bailable although the charge against Yediyurappa is under Section 8 of POCSO for sexual assault — which entails a maximum imprisonment of five years. He is also accused of sexual harassment under Section 354 A of the Indian Penal Code which is bailable and entails imprisonment of up to three years.

Gurdas Maan case: Punjab and Haryana HC dismisses plea against trial court order accepting cancellation report

GNS News Agency, June 19

The Punjab and Haryana High Court has dismissed a criminal revision petition that sought to set aside a trial court order that accepted the cancellation report filed by the police in a case filed against Punjabi singer Gurdas Maan. He was accused of hurting the religious sentiments of the Sikh community. A bench of Justice Sandeep Moudgil dismissed the petition on Thursday. A detailed order is yet to be released by the high court. The case pertains to an August 2021 first information report (FIR) where Paramjit Singh Akali, a member of Sikh Youth Power of Punjab, alleged that Maan hurt the religious sentiments of a community while performing in the Urs of Sai Murad Shah Ji at the premises of Dera Baba Murad Shah Ji Trust. Maan was subsequently booked in the case. The criminal revision plea was filed by Harjinder Singh alias Jinda and others against a February 22, 2024 order passed by the sub-divisional judicial magistrate in Nakodar whereby the protest petition was dismissed and the cancellation report filed by the police after investigation was accepted. The petitioner had argued that Maan pointed towards Dera Mukhi during his performance whereas in Gurbani the word Satguru is used to refer to one pious God. Referring to Dera Mukhi as Satguru has hurt the sentiments of the Sikh community, the petitioner claimed.

Desilting of Delhi drains: Minister Bharadwaj asks Chief Secretary to file status report in 1 week



GNS News Agency, June 19

Pointing out that in the previous years, most of desilting works were only shown completed on papers but not on the ground, Bharadwaj said it was very important to verify the veracity of the claims of the agencies at the ground level. (File Photo) Pointing out that in the previous years, most of desilting works were only shown completed on papers but not on the ground, Bharadwaj said it was very important to verify the veracity of the claims of the agencies at the ground level. With monsoon round the corner in Delhi, Urban Development Minister Saurabh Bharadwaj has written to Chief Secretary Naresh Kumar seeking a status report on the desilting of various drains in the city within the next seven days, to prevent waterlogging incidents during the rainy season. In the letter to Naresh Kumar, Bharadwaj stated that the Public Works Department had claimed that about 61 per cent of drains extending to 1,293 km, out of 2,156 km have been completely desilted during the June 10 review meeting that was held to assess the work progress. Similarly, during the said meeting, the Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) had also claimed that 87.14 per cent drains under Phase 1 have been completely desilted, he wrote.

Pointing out that in the previous years, most of desilting works were only shown completed on papers but not on the ground, Bharadwaj said it was very important to verify the veracity of the claims of the agencies at the ground level. The minister has also asked the PWD

principal secretary and MCD commissioner to provide the exhaustive list of all the drains, which have been desilted completely by June 10, so that the random check can be done on the ground to verify the claims of the two departments. Bharadwaj also directed the chief secretary to submit the list of drains which have been desilted as on June 10, and also ensure that third party audit of these desilting work is conducted by independent agencies before June 30, before the monsoon arrives.

TGPSC announces 'edit option' facility for applicants of Group-II services recruitment

GNS News Agency, June 19 Hyderabad: The Telangana Public Service Commission (TGPSC) on Friday announced an edit option facility for candidates who applied for the Group-II services recruitment. The edit option will be available on the Commission's website <https://www.tspsc.gov.in> from 10 am on June 16 to 5 pm on June 20. Candidates have been asked to check every entry made in the online application for correctness and carry out corrections wherever required. The edit option given now will be final and no further requests to edit the application will be entertained, the TGPSC said.

"Candidates should show utmost care while using the edit option as this data will be considered for final selection," the Commission said. If candidates make corrections in their online application, they have to upload relevant certificates i.e., SSC, Aadhaar card etc. After editing the application, candidates have been asked to download their corrected application PDF and check for correctness of all entries and preserve the same for future reference.

Karnataka orders officials to seal nursing colleges that lack basic amenities



GNS News Agency, June 19

Karnataka Medical Education Minister Dr Sharan Prakash Patil on Thursday directed officials to conduct inspection and seal the nursing colleges that failed to provide basic infrastructure facilities to its students despite collecting huge fees. (Express photo)Karnataka Medical Education Minister Dr Sharan Prakash Patil on Thursday directed officials to conduct inspection and seal the nursing colleges that failed to provide basic infrastructure facilities to its students despite collecting huge fees. (Express photo)Karnataka Medical Education Minister Dr Sharan Prakash Patil on Thursday directed officials to conduct inspection and seal the nursing colleges that failed to provide basic infrastructure facilities to its students despite collecting huge fees from them and availing all benefits from the government.

Chairing the meeting with the members of the nursing college managements and medical education department officials at Vikasa Soudha, the minister said that he had received numerous complaints on the lack of infrastructure facilities in many nursing colleges. He instructed Director of Medical Education Dr Sujatha

Rathore, present in the meeting, to inspect and seal those colleges that have erred. Expressing displeasure against the managements of private colleges, Dr Patil said that the government went soft on the managements hoping that they would rectify their mistakes but to no avail. "Barring a few, most of the colleges lack facilities such as teaching and non-teaching staff, library and laboratory facilities, hygiene and other issues. They collect huge fees from students during admission but fail to provide facilities," the minister said.

He directed the officials to visit colleges before the admission and check if they are adhering to government rules and regulations and take strict action against those flouting norms. Karnataka Medical Education Minister Dr Sharan Prakash Patil on Thursday directed officials to conduct inspection and seal the nursing colleges that failed to provide basic infrastructure facilities to its students despite collecting huge fees from them and availing all benefits from the government. Rejecting the demand of nursing college managements to hike the fee structure by 20 percent, Patil said the government would always safeguard the interests of students. The fee for each student getting admission under government quota is ₹10,000 and ₹1 lakh under management quota and for non-Karnataka students it will be ₹1.40 lakh.

The minister suggested the managements to provide 40 per cent seats under government quota. There are 35,000 seats available in 611 nursing colleges. The managements fill 80 per cent while 20 per cent goes under government quota. "If the managements provide 40 per cent under government quota then it will greatly help poor students," Dr Patil said. The minister also instructed the officials to work out modalities to begin the admission process in July instead of September from the current academic year.

3 Punjab girls make it to Air Force Academy; training to begin in July

GNS News Agency, June 19

Kritee Bisht, Harnoor Singh, and Alisha will join the Air Force Academy and their training will commence from July 2024 onwards. (Express Photo)(From left to right) Kritee Bisht, Harnoor Singh, and Alisha will join the Air Force Academy and their training will commence from July 2024 onwards.

Three girl cadets of Mai Bhago Armed Forces Preparatory Institute (AFPI) for Girls, Mohali, have been selected for pre-commission training at the Indian Air Force Academy, Dundigal. Harnoor Singh, Kritee Bisht and Alisha will join the Air Force Academy and their training will commence from July 2024 onwards.

While Singh is the daughter of Vikram Singh Bains, a government school principal, and hails from Pathankot, Bisht is the daughter of Shakti Sharan Singh, a senior engineer in Punjab Alkalies and Chemicals Limited, Nangal. Alisha, already under training at the Indian Naval Academy, is the daughter of private school teacher Sunil Dutt and hails from Jalandhar. Congratulating the three cadets, Punjab Employment Generation, Skill Development and Training Minister Aman Arora said that their success will spur girls from Punjab's small towns and villages to explore opportunities in serving the nation as commissioned officers in the defence services. To



fulfil the aspirations of girls from the state who want to join defence services, the Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann-led Punjab government had approved an initiative to start an NDA preparatory wing for girls at Mai Bhago AFPI last year. The second batch has begun training from April 2024, Arora informed. Expressing happiness over the three alumni being selected to join the Indian Air Force Academy, Major General (Retd.) Jasbir Singh Sandhu, the director of Mai Bhago AFPI, said that this achievement will further boost their efforts of sending more girls from the state to the various armed forces pre-commission training academies.

In Punjab, snub for Patiala royals as Capt Amarinder Singh, kin pushed to sidelines

GNS News Agency, June 19

Amarinder did not participate in the election campaign this time citing illness. He did not even attend the PM Modi's rally in his Patiala. Amarinder did not participate in the election campaign this time citing illness. He did not even attend the PM Modi's rally in his Patiala. (By inducting former Congress MP Ravneet Singh Bittu, who lost the Lok Sabha polls from Ludhiana, in the Union Council of Ministers, the BJP seems to have all but sidelined the family of former chief minister Amarinder Singh, including his former union minister wife Preneet Kaur — both imports from the grand old party.)

While 82-year-old Amarinder, a former two-time CM, was once considered as one of the tallest leaders of Punjab and the Congress, his family held considerable clout in Patiala from where Preneet was elected an MP four times. Preneet, who switched over the BJP earlier this year, lost the seat to Congress Dr Dharamvira Gandhi. Despite her defeat, and given BJP's past history of accommodating losing party candidates from Punjab in the Union cabinet, it was expected that the saffron party will offer a role to Preneet.

The BJP had inducted Arun Jaitley, who was handed a humiliating defeat by Amarinder himself in Amritsar in 2014 Lok Sabha polls, in the Cabinet led Prime Minister Narendra Modi. In Modi's second term as PM, the BJP inducted Hardeep Puri as a minister. Puri lost the 2019 Lok Sabha polls, also from Amritsar, against Congress' Gurjeet Singh Auja. "By inducting Bittu instead of Preneet, the BJP has sent across a message that Ludhiana, an industry hub, is more important than Patiala in party's scheme of things so far as the 2027 state elections are concerned," said a senior BJP leader.

Amarinder did not participate in the election campaign this time citing illness. He did not even attend the PM Modi's rally in his Patiala. He also mostly remained silent on social media, barring a select few posts where he spoke about his illness and one where he thanked the people of Patiala for its "overwhelming love" for the PM's rally. The BJP, which for the first time contested from all 13 Lok Sabha seats in Punjab, managed to double its vote share. However, there is a feeling within the BJP that party candidates would've done much better had Amarinder campaigned. The BJP's campaign was marred by protests by farmers. Considering the soft stance that he took against the farmers during their agitation against the now repealed agri laws, it was believed that Amarinder could've eased the situation for BJP candidates. "The BJP is looking at 2027 elections and aims to strengthen its state unit. Amarinder is an important leader. They (BJP) may have some role for him and his family," said an aide of Amarinder. The former CM's daughter is the president of Punjab BJP's women wing. She has already stated that she would be contesting Vidhan Sabha elections from Patiala (urban), an Assem-



bly segment earlier represented by her father. Preneet has led from the segment in recent LS election

Flights from Hisar to Chandigarh, 5 other destinations from August: Haryana CM Nayab Singh Saini

GNS News Agency, June 19

People will soon be able to take flights from the Hisar airport as services from there to Chandigarh and five other destinations will commence in August, Haryana Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini said. According to an official statement, apart from Chandigarh, the scheduled flight routes from the Maharaja Agrasen Hisar Airport include flights to Ayodhya (Uttar Pradesh), Ahmedabad (Gujarat), Jaipur (Rajasthan), and Jammu. Speaking in Panchkula on Thursday evening, Saini said Prime Minister Narendra Modi's dream of making air travel accessible to the common man will be realized in Haryana as flight operations will start from the Hisar airport. Meanwhile, at an event in Karnal, Haryana's Civil Aviation Minister Kamal Gupta Thursday

said Karnal is set to become a hub for domestic air travel across India in the coming months. "Plans are afoot to upgrade Karnal aerodrome into a fully operational domestic airport," he said. Later in the evening, Kamal Gupta was also present at the Panchkula event.

Chief Minister Saini made this announcement about the flight operations from Hisar airport at an event in Panchkula, following the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the Haryana Government's Civil Aviation Department and Alliance Air Aviation Limited to promote air connectivity to regional airports under the Regional Connectivity Scheme (RCS), said an official statement. The MoU was signed by Satish Kumar Singla, Additional Director of the Civil Aviation Department, and Ranjan Kumar

Datta, CEO and Head of Network Planning for Alliance Air Aviation Limited, the statement said. It was signed in the presence of Saini, Kamal Gupta, and Haryana Assembly Speaker Gian Chand Gupta. The flight schedules under the Regional Connectivity Scheme will be outlined shortly, it said. Chief Minister Saini said that today is a significant day for civil aviation in Haryana.

"The signing of this MoU with Alliance Air has opened new opportunities to advance the broader objectives of making Hisar a comprehensive aviation hub. Air connectivity will boost the state's economy," he said. Earlier at the Karnal event, Minister Gupta discussed the proposal to build a domestic airport in Karnal with the officers of various departments in Karnal. Officers were provided with the nec-



essary guidance to expedite the implementation of this project, an official statement released here said. Gupta said that Nayab Singh Saini and Union Minister Manohar Lal Khattar are committed to enhancing convenience for Karnal residents through the domestic airport project. To facilitate this

initiative, Karnal aerodrome was thoroughly inspected, and officials were directed to address any existing challenges that may hinder the project's advancement. Gupta also examined the workshop, runway, and other key facilities at Karnal aerodrome during his visit, the statement said. The Haryana

minister stated that surveys are currently being conducted at Karnal, Ambala, Pinjore, Narnaul, and Bhiwani, where airstrips ranging from 3,000 to 4,000 feet are available. Under the Regional Connectivity Scheme, possibilities of establishing domestic airports are being explored based on these surveys.

Cop accuses seniors of putting pressure, later goes 'missing'



GNS News Agency, June 19

A 45-year-old head constable (HC), Jasveer Saini, posted at Kala Amb police station in Himachal's Sirmour district, has reportedly gone missing since his purported video clip accusing senior officers of pressuring him to add stringent charges in a road rage incident FIR went viral. In the purported video, lasting for over six minutes, the policeman, who has been missing since Tuesday evening, could be heard saying, "I will commit suicide. The victim is pressuring me. He is threatening me with suspension. I am being forced to add stringent charges of attempt to murder under Section 307 of the IPC to the FIR, even as the victim did not receive grievous injuries. I was humiliated so badly that I would commit suicide. Today, I was called to the office of SP Sahib in Nahan. I respect my SP, but I was pressured to add attempt to murder charges in the FIR."

Following a missing person complaint lodged by Jasveer's wife Anita Kumari at the Kala Amb police station, police registered the matter in their Daily Diary Report (DDR). DIG, Crime (CID), Mohit Chawla has been assigned the probe. Meanwhile, a video clip of the June 8 attack on a tractor driver in Kala Amb, an industrial town in Sirmour district, also went viral. In the clip, three men, including one turbaned, were seen beating a man with bamboo sticks. The viral video shows people who came

to rescue the victim being threatened by the assailants. Following the incident, an FIR under sections 341 (wrongful confinement), 323 (assault), 147 (rioting), 148 (armed with a deadly weapon), and 149 (unlawful assembly) of the Indian Penal Code (IPC) was registered at the Kala Amb police station. Police sources said Jasveer was last seen visiting the district police headquarters in Nahan and had been missing since Tuesday evening.

"Jasveer was called to the headquarters about the investigation into the attack on the tractor driver by six men riding in a Punjab-registered Scorpio near Kala Amb on June 8. How the video clip of Jasveer went viral is yet to be investigated, but it appears Jasveer made the video while driving his car back to Kala Amb from Nahan. Jasveer is a resident of village Nawada near Paonta Sahib in Sirmour," they said. When contacted, SP Meena said, "Jasveer was called to the headquarters to check the probe status into the gruesome attack on a tractor driver by six people from Punjab on June 8. The assailants not only assaulted the tractor driver with blunt weapons, but also did not spare his father who came to his rescue. Jasveer was the probe officer into the matter. The victim received multiple injuries. We only told Jasveer to take appropriate action without giving benefit to anyone. The probe officer simply let off the assailants, just giving them a notice to join the investigation. Senior police officers were informed about the entire incident. Sirmour district police reject the allegations of Jasveer that he was being pressured."

The incident has, however, taken a political twist with Himachal BJP president Dr Rajeev Bindal condemning the incident and targeting CM Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu who holds the Home Department portfolio. "The clip of Jasveer suggests how police personnel are being pressured in Himachal Pradesh. Yesterday, an IB officer was found murdered just 80 metres away from Kihar police station in Chamba. Moreover, illegal mining is rampant in the state," Bindal alleged.

Chadhda Punjab to Lehenda Punjab without a visa? Ludhiana man makes it possible, fulfils his dream with a theme park on Punjab's history

GNS News Agency, June 19

Seventy-five long years, but the pain of partition continues to pester Punjab, a state bisected into Chadha Punjab (East Punjab on the Indian side) and Lehenda Punjab (West Punjab on the Pakistan side). And as legendary Punjabi singer Gurdas Maan had put in his melancholic words: "Raavi ton Chanaab puchda, ki haal hai Sutlej da..." (The river Chenab flowing on the Pakistan side asks Raavi, which flows near the border, how is Sutlej on the Indian side). But can people visit both Punjab without a visa or border restrictions? A Ludhiana man has made it possible. Welcome to Jannat-e-Jarkhar, a unique theme park on the history of the united Punjab, created by Jagroop Singh Jarkhar (60) at his Jarkhar village in Ludhiana. Here no one needs to cross the border to reach Delhi from Lahore and vice versa, and can embark on a knowledge tour of the pre-partitioned Punjab to its current geography. The border Jarkhar has created in the park is not exactly a replica of the Attari-Wagah border, but symbolises the same.

Spread over two acres of his land, Jarkhar has attempted to create almost everything in the park that defines the history of pre-partitioned Punjab and India — "portraying and preserving Punjab's rich history and culture" and "telling the current generation about what the land of five rivers went through". From the Lahore Fort, Maharaja Ranjit Singh's Darbar-e-Khalsa to late Milkha Singh's ancestral home and the bridge over the Raavi near Kartarpur in Pakistan to the Red Fort in Delhi via border, the park summarises for children what a history textbook would do in several chapters. Speaking with The Indian Express, Jarkhar said it was his dream to create a place where people could visit both Chadha and Lehenda Punjab without any restrictions. "I started working on this project four years ago. It took time to create replicas of Red Fort, the border, Lahore Fort, etc."

"Both countries would have been one had there been no dirty politics. Our hearts and eyes still fill with pain



when we remember what people from both Punjabs had gone through when the country was partitioned based on religion. It was Punjab and its people who bore the maximum brunt of partition. But then, there has to be some place where our current generation can visit and learn about our history. One tour of this park will make them learn and grasp more than what a history book would teach in many chapters," says Jarkhar, who dons many hats — a sports enthusiast, a farmer and also the man behind the first hockey stadium with astro turf in his village. Showing the pain of partition that Punjabis went through in 1947, a statue of a turbaned man with his heart bleeding has been placed at the border created in the park. Jarkhar says he has been receiving an overwhelming response from the people visiting the park. "I have several friends in Pakistan, who also expressed their wish to visit here once. No one has given me any negative feedback till now. We have put flags of both India and Pakistan at the border in our theme park," says Jarkhar, who spent on the project from his pocket.

Punjab police launch 'Mission Nishchay' in border villages to gather intelligence about demand and supply of drugs



GNS News Agency, June 19

Punjab Police in association with the Border Security Force (BSF) and Village Defence Committees (VDCs) will carry out a one-week drive against drugs in Fazilka district during which they will reach out to residents of as many as 42 villages along the India-Pakistan border to gather actionable intelligence about the demand and supply of drugs. During the drive, named as 'Mission Nishchay', police officers will fan out in villages in Fazilka district from June 15 to 21 and interact with residents.

"The idea is to instil a sense of community participation among inhabitants of border villages as we make efforts to curb the menace of drugs. We will focus on youth and women to gather actionable intelligence about the demand and supply of drugs," Fazilka Senior Superintendent of Police Dr Pragya Jain told Fazilka police had last month arrested seven persons, including two

brothers, and seized around 5.5 kg of heroin being smuggled into India from across the border, six mobile phones and Rs 1.07 lakh drug money, and impounded a car and three motorcycles. Of the seven arrested persons, six were students, and five of them came in contact with each other at Jalalabad Sports Stadium where they used to prepare for army recruitment. It was during their interaction and preparations that they planned to smuggle heroin from Pakistan, police say.

Chairing a state-level review meeting with the state police brass, district police chiefs and Station House Officers in Chandigarh, on Thursday, Punjab Director General of Police Gaurav Yadav stressed the need to "control the drug supply at the point of sale by further intensifying the vigil around peddlers/smugglers". He also asked the officers to "identify big smugglers and take strict action against them to break the supply chain". During the review meeting, Special DGP, anti-drug Special Task Force (STF), Kuldeep Singh told the field officers that "a dedicated helpline is being set up enabling the general public to share information about drugs confidentially". During the meeting, Additional Director General of Police (Counter Intelligence) Amit Prasad stressed the need to "activate the good old human intelligence and asked officers to spend time in villages to gather information about criminal elements". DGP Yadav asked the officers to utilise the services of recently recruited domain experts in the field of finance to uncover the trail of drug money and make maximum use of section 68F of the NDPS Act to freeze illegally acquired property by drug suppliers.

Mason by day, cat burglar by night: How this serial thief struck homes across Delhi for over 20 years



GNS News Agency, June 19

Delhi robbery, Delhi thief, Delhi crime news, Delhi robber, delhi news, India news, Indian express, Indian express India news, Indian express India "Around 4 am, police received a tip about the thief's presence around Court Road. Around 4.30 am, a man who resembled the description of the burglar was stopped by the team led by sub-inspector Ashok," the police officer said. "The thief was finally arrested. Whenever this serial burglar would sneak into a house to commit theft, police knew what he would be wearing: two pieces of a torn bedsheet to hide his face, blue jeans, a worn-out T-shirt and white sports shoes. They had carefully analysed CCTV footage that captured him several times across Delhi's affluent neighbourhoods. But when police finally nabbed Mohamad Anwar, it was by sheer luck. His last attempt to allegedly burgle a businessman's family in North Delhi's Civil Lines wasn't successful. The house help had woken up, disrupting Anwar's plan. And as the help switched on the lights, Anwar jumped off the balcony and escaped — and landed in the police net.

Police claim Anwar committed 33 thefts in the last two decades and managed to escape without major consequences. "His modus operandi was unique. He was arrested many times but would get bail and strike again. He was careful not to get arrested by the same police officer or thana twice. In 2017, he was arrested for theft in Safdarjung Enclave. He then got out on bail and struck in the South Campus area," a police officer said. "He wasn't unknown to the police. But investigators had not connected the dots till now. It was only after he started targeting Civil Lines that we laid a trap." On the night of June 2, police said Anwar attempted to burgle three places. "He had already stolen cash and jewellery from two houses.

After the house help woke up at the third house and he ran, he was stopped at a naaka near Court Road (in Civil Lines). But he tried to scale up the terrace of a house to escape," the police officer said. "Constable Shiv Kumar ran after him and grabbed his foot. He tried to push him away but the constable didn't let go. Anwar was overpowered and arrested." A thief with a pattern Police said Anwar had a set pattern while carrying out thefts. "He would change his appearance completely. During the day, he would work as a mason. At night, he was a thief. He would hide his face and head with a bedsheet and leave only his eyes uncovered," the officer said.

"He would strike only at houses where he had already conducted a recce. He had a ritual too — he would only commit crimes between midnight and 4 am. He would scale up to the terrace of a house using the plumbing pipes. He would then jump onto the balcony. Then, he would knock on the door four times. If there was no response, he would take out masonry tools that he would carry in a haversack and force open the door. He would steal only cash and jewellery," claimed the officer. Police said his first theft was on June 5, 2004, at a house in Hauz Khas. "He snuck into a second-floor flat in a builder apartment from the balcony. That time, he had stolen some electronic gadgets like laptops," the police officer said. He struck again in the same area in August that same year. A week later, he was identified and arrested. "The crime was bailable so he got out immediately," another police officer said. "He was careful and didn't go back to Hauz Khas or adjoining areas. The next time, he struck in Nizamuddin where he stole jewellery. The modus operandi was the same." He was arrested again. Again, he changed the area. This cat-and-mouse game continued. This time too, police in Civil Lines didn't know the unidentified thief striking in their area was a serial burglar arrested multiple times across the Capital. He had committed four thefts, stealing cash and jewellery from various houses since last December," a police officer said. "This is why police were on high alert and had set up special teams to cordon off the area at night." On June 2, six teams, each comprising four police officers — a sub-inspector and three head constables — were on duty at different entry and exit points. "Around 4 am, police received a tip about the thief's presence around Court Road. Around 4.30 am, a man who resembled the description of the burglar was stopped by the team led by sub-inspector Ashok," the police officer said. "The thief was finally arrested."

Walk-in interviews on to recruit doctors: Minister

GNS News Agency, June 19

With government hospitals in Haryana facing a shortage of doctors, as nearly 25 per cent of posts lying vacant, and the Haryana Civil Medical Services (HCMS) Association seeking the intervention of state Health Minister Dr Kamal Gupta, the minister said the government have already launched a walk-in interview process to recruit doctors on contract basis apart from regular recruitments. According to the HCMS Association, a body of government doctors which has compiled data on vacancies in the state hospitals, nearly 1,000 out of the sanctioned 3,900 posts of medical officers are currently lying vacant in Haryana.

The association further said as many as 250 posts of Senior Medical Officers (SMOs) out of the sanctioned 636 posts were lying vacant. According to the association, even at the senior level, the department is facing a shortage with five out of the eight sanctioned posts of director-level officers lying vacant. "Due to such a shortage of doctors, patients have to stand in long queues for hours. Besides, overburdened doctors are also unable to deliver quality treatment as they are examining 2-3 times more patients going beyond the Indian Public Health Standards (IPHS) norms," the association said in a recent representation to the state government. "Many districts don't have specialist doctors. The association has been raising the matter before the authorities for years but unfortunately, no concrete steps have been taken to resolve it. Many districts are having acute shortages of specialties like gynae, paediatrics, dermatologist, radio, medicine and surgery. As a result, patients coming from far-flung areas have to go disappointed without getting specialist services. Not only this, the supervision of the National Health Programmes is also suffering due to the shortage of medical officers, SMOs and deputy civil surgeons," the association said.

A delegation of the association led by state president Dr Rajesh Khyalia and general secretary Dr Anil Yadav on Wednesday apprised the state health minister about the situation. The minister said a large number of



vacancies in government hospitals is a challenge for the department. "For immediate resolution of the issue, we have started walk-in interviews so that doctors may be recruited for hospitals temporarily. We have also initiated a process for regular recruitments of doctors," Gupta told The Indian Express.

Association members are not only upset with the large number of vacancies but also because of the delay in the promotions of medical officers to SMOs. An association officer bearer said, "The file related to the promotion of nearly 100 medical officers to the post of SMOs has been pending with the government for the past several months. Such delay discourages doctors in the government sector and sometimes forces them to opt for private practice." According to the association, there are very few promotional avenues for medical officers in the government sector in the state. "Nearly 95 per cent of the cadres gets only one promotion — medical officers to the SMO — and that too after 22 years of service," the association said. However, department officials are hopeful about the promotions of medical officers after the process of the parliamentary polls concluded. Officials said relevant proposals have already been sent to the government for the promotion of medical officers to different posts. Meanwhile, Additional Chief Secretary (health) Sudhir Rajpal has invited the association for talks on June 21.

Announcing candidates early on 25 'focus seats': Congress game plan for 2025 Delhi assembly polls

GNS News Agency, June 19

A Delhi Pradesh Congress Committee meeting to assess the current situation of the party's organisation on the ground across the city. (Credit: Congress) A Delhi Pradesh Congress Committee meeting to assess the current situation of the party's organisation on the ground across the city. After analysing the results of the Lok Sabha elections, the Congress has decided to step up its organisational game in around two dozen Assembly Constituencies, months before the race for the Delhi Vidhan Sabha is scheduled to begin.

Designated 'focus seats' — which the party either lost by slim margins or where it obtained "a significant chunk" of the SC/ST/OBC vote apart from that of minority communities — around 25 segments are likely to see the announcement of the candidates months before the Assembly polls. This is a departure from the party's traditional strategy of declaring candidates after the announcement of the polls.

Delhi Congress president Devender Yadav addressing an organisational meeting Delhi Congress president Devender Yadav addressing an organisational meeting. "The assessment of the Lok Sabha results is going on and we have identified around 25 Assembly seats where the party either lost with low vote margins or won by less votes compared to the 2019 results; these will be our 'focus seats' for the 2025 Delhi Assembly elections," a senior Delhi Congress leader said.

Since the results were announced on June 4, Delhi Congress president Devender Yadav, party sources said, has chaired several meetings to assess the current situation of the party's organisation on the ground across the city. Every seat, a senior Congress leader said, counted as much for the party at the Assembly level as it did nationally, given the prevailing political circumstances amid which the party senses "a vacuum" that it intends to fill both in Delhi as well as in the Rajya Sabha.

"We will not only strengthen the party's organisation, but also field candidates several months in advance on



After analysing the results of the Lok Sabha elections, the Congress has decided to step up its organisational game in around two dozen Assembly Constituencies, months before the race for the Delhi Vidhan Sabha is scheduled to begin.

these seats to secure them, given the relatively local nature of the Assembly elections," the leader added. In the Chandni Chowk Parliamentary constituency, while the Congress swept the eponymous Chandni Chowk Assembly, Matia Mahal and Ballimaran with a victory margin of over 15,000, 47,000 and almost 29,000 votes, respectively, it lost the Sadar Bazar seat by a little over 10,000 votes. On the North East Delhi Lok Sabha, the Congress won Seemapuri, albeit with a margin of just over 5,500 votes, swept Seelampur, Mustafabad and Babarpur with margins of more than 51,000, 25,000 and close to 16,000 but failed to pull through in Gokalpur by slightly above 10,500 votes.

'25-year-old ran back to rescue her infant son... never came out alive': Neighbours of Ghaziabad fire victims

GNS News Agency, June 19

On Wednesday evening, Shariq, 28, stepped out of his Ghaziabad home to fetch milk for his seven-month-old son Mohammad Sheesh. By the time he came back, his world had come crashing down. A fire that broke out at his house — the only two-storey house in the congested Behta Hajipur lane — had killed his wife, Farheen (25), and his child. When they brought Farheen's charred body out, she was holding her baby in a tight embrace. The smoke had suffocated them before the flames hit. A neighbour, Mohammad Rashid (32), said when the smoke jammed the door, the inhabitants of the house rushed to the terrace to escape. "Farheen was halfway up the stairs when she realised her son was sleeping in the room. She ran back and never came out alive," he told The Indian Express.

"Jab usko bahar nikala toh bachche ko seene pe rakha tha (When they took Farheen's body out, she had held her son close to the chest)," a woman wailed. Shariq's family comprised, besides Farheen and Sheesh, his partially paralysed father and his sister Uzma, 22. When the fire engulfed the house, his father was in a mosque nearby to offer namaz. Uzma is battling for her life at GTB hospital where doctors say she has suffered 80% burns. Shariq's sister — Nazira, 32, her husband Saif-ur-Rehman, 35, their daughter 7-year-old Ifra and their son 10-year-old Arsh were also inside the house. Only Arsh survived.

The suspected cause of the fire was a short circuit in the electric meter. A spark fell on a gunny bag, which contained foam cups purchased for Eid, kept on the ground floor, resulting in a fire that engulfed the house, said officials. The ground floor of the house was used as a garage where Shariq's Vitara Brezza car, a Pulsar motorbike and a scooter were parked. All the vehicles were burnt in the fire. Farhan, who stays next to Shariq's house, said he saw smoke coming out of the garage. "As I opened



the garage, the flames were all over my face," he said. "I screamed for help." Fighting back tears, Shariq, who works as a parking attendant, said: "I had gone to fetch milk. When I returned, I saw flames everywhere." Shariq's sister Nazira had come to his place with her children during their summer vacation. Her husband had come earlier in the day to stay for the night and take them home on Thursday. Shariq's other two sisters were inconsolable. "Ek aakhri baar goud mein le lene do mujhe bachche ko (Let me hold the baby for one last time)," Shariq's sister, who had come from Muradpur, said. Outside the burns unit at GTB Hospital in Delhi's Shahdara, Mohammad Faiz, 18, a relative, sat waiting. "The doctor told us she (Uzma) is on the ventilator and is critical. Her face and body have burnt completely. Doctor told us that the ICU ward has no space and if her condition worsens, we will have to take her to Safdarjung Hospital," said Faiz. A relative, Tehseen Khan, said he couldn't muster the courage to see the bodies. "They said it is all black bones, there is nothing left to see..." he added. There is another reason for the fire to have engulfed the entire house: The blaze started at 8 pm and for the next 42 minutes, people tried to douse the flames themselves before a neighbour, Ishiyaq Khan, dialed 112.

BJP, Congress make common cause in targeting AAP govt over DJB's functioning

GNS News Agency, June 19

BJP, Congress, Delhi Jal Board, Aam Admi Party AAP, Delhi water crisis, Delhi water supply, delhi news, India news, Indian express, Indian express India news, Indian express India Yadav, in his letter to the CVC, sought to point out that there had been a "significant uptick" in the volume of leakage of water in recent years, as indicated by government-provided data, with the figures climbing from 42% in 2019-20 to 58.28% in 2022-23. As the water crisis continued to strengthen its grip on the capital, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and the Congress questioned the role and working of the Delhi Jal Board (DJB) ever since the Aam Admi Party (AAP) government rose to power in the city. On its part, the AAP government continued to maintain that "insufficient water supply from Haryana" was to blame for Delhi's water crisis, adding that it was a BJP-ruled state that needed to provide sufficient water to Delhi to solve the problem.

In addition to announcing that the party would stage protests across the city against the AAP Delhi government over the issue, Delhi Congress president Devender Yadav wrote to the Central Vigilance Commissioner (CVC) seeking a probe into what he alleged was a "Rs 17,575 crore scam" in the DJB, a feature of which was leakage from its network that was being "diverted" for the "Tanker Mafia" to misappropriate.

BJP's New Delhi MP-designate Bansuri Swaraj demanded to know why the DJB was reeling under a loss of Rs 73,000 crore despite having operated at a profit of Rs 600 crore under the then-Sheila Dikshit Congress gov-

ernment even as she questioned the "dilapidated condition" of Delhi's water network leading to the wastage of more than 50% of the water it carried. Yadav, in his letter to the CVC, sought to point out that there had been a "significant uptick" in the volume of leakage of water in recent years, as indicated by Government-provided data, with the figures climbing from 42% in 2019-20 to 58.28% in 2022-23.

Delhi Congress has been raising the issue of tanker mafia exploiting Delhi's water resources for financial profit... the complicity of senior politicians from the ruling party at the Centre and in Delhi, along with colluding officials, cannot be overlooked... the CVC should make a thorough and unbiased investigation in this matter," he wrote. On her part, Swaraj alleged that the water distribution network in Delhi was "badly affected" by crumbling infrastructure. "The government should have paid attention to the infrastructure of the Jal Board... pipes should have been repaired, but no, this government, which is only doing politics instead of working, is cheating the public by promising to give free water," she alleged. Responding to the allegations, the AAP Delhi government, blaming "inadequate supply from Haryana", said the issue of water tankers in Delhi was "being politicised" and that Delhiites were at the receiving end. "If tankers are being filled in Haryana, then Haryana Police must stop them, if tankers are being filled in Delhi, then Delhi Police must stop them," it added, accusing the BJP-led governments in Haryana and the Centre, which exercises control over the Delhi Police, of "doing politics".

'I get in trouble when...': US official's banter on Pak upset at T20 World Cup



GNS News Agency, June 19

White House official Matthew Miller was asked to comment on the USA cricket team defeating Pakistan in the T20 World Cup. In a cheeky response, Miller said he would "get into trouble" if he spoke on matters that were not his area of expertise. US State Department spokesperson Matthew Miller was asked to respond to the USA cricket team's historic performance in the ICC T20 World Cup and the team's stunning win over Pakistan.

US State Department spokesperson Matthew Miller indulged in banter with a reporter when he was asked about the USA cricket team shocking Pakistan in the ongoing ICC Men's T20 World Cup. During a press briefing,

Miller was asked by a reporter to comment on the USA, an associate team, winning against Pakistan, a full-member team. In a cheeky response, the official said he would "get into trouble" if he spoke on matters that were not his area of expertise. "I often get in trouble when I try to comment on things beyond my area of expertise, and I would say Pakistan's cricket team is certainly in that category," Miller said. Miller's response underscores the fact that cricket, despite its global following, remains relatively niche in the US. Other sports like football, basketball or baseball are a rage in the country. However, with the US hosting a major cricket tournament for the first time, the ICC is hoping to gain more followers after the USA cricket team's historic showing so far. On June 6, the USA cricket team stunned Pakistan and registered its first-ever victory at the Grand Prairie Stadium in Dallas. The match went into a Super Over after both sides scored 159 runs. In a game which had loads of twists and turns, it was the USA that emerged victorious over a hapless Pakistani side, who were guilty of dropping catches and misfielding at critical junctures. This is the first time that the US is hosting a major ICC cricket tournament with the West Indies as its co-host. India is leading the table in Group A, followed by the USA in second place with four points after two wins and one loss. The USA will clash against Ireland in their last fixture in Lauderhill on Friday and will aim to secure a Super 8 spot for the first time ever.

US Supreme Court junks bid to prevent access to abortion pill mifepristone

GNS News Agency, June 19

The US Supreme Court judges ruled 9-0 to overturn a lower court's decision to roll back US Food and Drug Administration steps in 2016 and 2021 that eased how an abortion pill, called mifepristone, is prescribed and distributed. The US Supreme Court rejected a bid by anti-abortion groups and doctors to restrict access to the abortion pill, handing a victory on Thursday to President Joe Biden's administration in its efforts to preserve broad access to the drug.

The justices, two years after ending the recognition of a constitutional right to abortion, ruled 9-0 to overturn a lower court's decision to roll back US Food and Drug Administration steps in 2016 and 2021 that eased how the drug, called mifepristone, is prescribed and distributed. The decision was authored by conservative Justice Brett Kavanaugh. The pill, given FDA regulatory approval in 2000, is used in more than 60 per cent of US abortions. The justices ruled that the plaintiffs, who sued in Texas in 2022, lacked the necessary legal standing to pursue the case, which required that they show they have been harmed in a way that can be traced to the FDA. The Supreme Court, which has a 6-3 conservative majority, in 2022 overturned its 1973 Roe vs Wade precedent that had legalised abortion nationwide, prompting 14 states to enact measures banning or sharply restricting the procedure. Biden, a Democrat seeking a second term in office in the November 5 US election, took aim at Republican officials behind such bans, saying they want to outlaw abortion nationwide and that Thursday's ruling "does not change the fact that the fight for reproductive freedom continues".

"It does not change the fact that the Supreme Court overturned Roe v. Wade two years ago, and women lost a fundamental freedom. It does not change the fact that the right for a woman to get the treatment she needs is imperilled if not impossible in many states," Biden added. Kavanaugh wrote that even though the plaintiffs, led by a group called the Alliance for Hippocratic Medicine, do not prescribe or use mifepristone, they wanted the FDA to make it harder for other doctors to prescribe it and women to receive it.

"Under Article III of the Constitution, a plaintiff's desire to make a drug less available for others does not establish standing to sue," Kavanaugh wrote, referring to the constitutional provision laying out the authority of the US government's judicial branch. Kavanaugh rejected the argument made by the plaintiffs that the FDA's actions will force them to provide abortions, violating their consciences, because federal law already protects them.

A ruling in favour of the plaintiffs could have threatened the regulatory authority of the FDA over drug safety. The plaintiffs targeted FDA regulatory actions in 2016 and 2021, including allowing for medication abortions at up to 10 weeks of pregnancy instead of seven, and for mail delivery of the drug without a woman first seeing a clinician in-person. The suit initially had sought to reverse FDA approval of mifepristone, but that aspect was rebuffed by a lower court. Biden and other Democrats have sought to make abortion rights a central theme against Republicans in the election. Biden said he will continue to urge Congress to codify abortion rights in federal law. Biden noted that some state abortion bans include no exceptions for rape or incest.

"Women are being turned away from emergency rooms, or forced to go to court to plead for care that their doctor recommended or to travel hundreds of miles for care," Biden said. "Doctors and nurses are being threatened with jail time, including life in prison, for providing the health care they have been trained to provide. And contraception and IVF (in vitro fertilisation) are under attack," he added. The Supreme Court by the end of June is expected to rule on the legality of Idaho's strict Republican-backed abortion ban that forbids terminating a pregnancy even if necessary to protect the health of a pregnant woman facing a medical emergency. In the 14 states that have banned abortion with limited exceptions, medical providers cannot prescribe or dispense mifepristone under state law. Patients in those states might continue to take the legal risk of ordering the pills online from providers in other states or they might travel out-of-state to legally obtain the pills. THE FIGHT OVER MIFEPRISTONE Erin Hawley, a lawyer with the Alliance Defending Freedom, a conservative Christian legal group representing the plaintiffs, expressed disappointment with the ruling, but said it was on a "legal technicality" and not the merits of the legal arguments. The plaintiffs argued that the FDA acted contrary to its mandate to ensure that medications are safe when it eased restrictions on mifepristone. The plaintiffs accused the FDA of violating a federal law governing the actions of regulatory agencies. Hawley said she expected the litigation to continue given that three states - Idaho, Missouri and Kansas - already have intervened in it. "We are very hopeful that the federal courts will have a chance to hold the FDA accountable for its unlawful actions in removing these long-standing safeguards for women," Hawley



said. Mifepristone is taken with another drug called misoprostol to perform medication abortions. The FDA has said that after decades of use by millions of women in the US and around the world, mifepristone has proven "extremely safe," and that studies have demonstrated that "serious adverse events are exceedingly rare". Abortion rights advocates and Democratic lawmakers expressed mixed emotions concerning Thursday's ruling. "I have both relief and anger about this decision. Thank goodness the Supreme Court rejected this unwarranted attempt to curtail access to abortion medication, but the fact remains that this meritless case should never have got this far," Center for Reproductive Rights President Nancy Northup said. Former US President Donald Trump, the Republican candidate challenging Biden, pledged in April to disclose how his administration would regulate abortion drugs if he is elected, but has yet to do so. His campaign did not address the issue directly when responding to Thursday's court's decision. "President Trump has been very clear. He supports the rights of states to make decisions on abortion, supports exceptions for abortions in cases of rape, incest and life of the mother, and also strongly supports protecting access to contraception and IVF," said Trump campaign spokesperson Karoline Leavitt. US District Judge Matthew Kacsmaryk broadly sided with the plaintiffs in a 2023 decision that would have effectively pulled the pill off the market.

After the administration appealed, the New Orleans-based 5th US Circuit Court of Appeals did not go as far as Kacsmaryk but still ruled against the FDA's decisions in 2016 and 2021 widening access to the pill. The 5th Circuit's ruling was placed on hold pending Supreme Court review. In a May Reuters/Ipsos poll, 50 per cent of respondents said they supported an in-person doctor visit requirement for abortion medication, while 33 per cent said they opposed that rule. Some 57 per cent of respondents in the poll said abortion should be legal in all or most cases, up from 46 per cent in Reuters/Ipsos polls conducted a decade ago, while 31 per cent of respondents said abortion should be illegal in most or all cases, down from 43 per cent in 2014 polls.

North Korea calls Ukraine peace summit 'conspiracy gathering'

GNS News Agency, June 19

Seoul: North Korea on Friday strongly condemned the Ukraine peace summit to be hosted by Switzerland later this week, describing it as a "conspiracy gathering under the pretext of peace" to exclude Russia, according to the North's state media. The Summit on Peace in Ukraine is scheduled to run for two days starting Saturday, bringing together officials from nearly 90 countries and organisations to discuss a path toward ending the war that began nearly 28 months ago when Russia invaded Ukraine. Moscow will not be participating, reports Yonhap news agency. "The idea of discussing the Ukraine issue without including Russia, a key party in the conflict, is absurd," the Korean Central News Agency (KCNA) reported. The statement came amid increasingly close military ties between Moscow and Pyongyang, highlighted by the impending visit to North Korea by Russian President Vladimir Putin.

The US, South Korea and other countries have accused North Korea of supplying artillery, missiles and other conventional weapons to Russia in exchange for advanced military technology and economic aid. Both North Korea and Russia have repeatedly denied the allegations. North Korea slammed the US and Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, accusing them of using the summit to instigate war and confrontation. "It is only natural that the international community condemns this conspiratorial meeting, which is held under the guise of peace but aims to promote conflict and war," the KCNA added. In response, Seoul's Unification Ministry questioned whether North Korea is qualified to criticise the international community's efforts to resolve the Ukraine issue. "We must question whether North Korea, which has blatantly supported Russia's illegal invasion and disrupted international norms through illicit arms deals,

India's wholesale inflation rises to 15-month high of 2.61% in May



Wholesale price inflation (WPI) rose to 2.61 per cent in May, as against 1.26 per cent in April on a month-on-month basis (MoM), as per data released by centre on Friday (June 14). Marking third consecutive increase this year, this is the highest wholesale inflation India witnessed since February 2023. For the month of May, the elevated inflation is primarily due to increase in prices of crude petroleum and natural gas, mineral oils, food articles, manufacture of food products, among others, the release

said. Inflation in food articles rose 9.82 per cent in May, as against 7.74 per cent in April whereas inflation in vegetables was 32.42 per cent in May, up from 23.60 per cent in the previous month.

1. Primary Articles (weight 22.62 per cent): The index for this major group increased by 0.54 per cent to 187.7 (provisional) in May from 186.7 (provisional) for the month of April this year.

2. Fuel & Power (Weight 13.15 per cent): The index for this major group declined by 2.71 per cent to 150.6 (provisional) in May from 154.8 (provisional) for the month of April.

3. Manufactured Products (Weight 64.23 per cent): The index for this major group increased by 0.64 per cent to 141.7 (provisional) in May from 140.8 (provisional) for the month of April. The rise in May WPI is in contrast to the retail inflation data for the month which eased to 1 year low of 4.75 per cent in May. The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) mainly takes into account retail inflation while framing monetary policy.

Vodafone Idea to raise Rs 2,458 cr from Nokia, Ericsson and Networks India

Vodafone Idea, Vodafone Idea raise Nokia, Vodafone Ericsson, Vodafone Idea Networks India, Indian express business, business news, business articles, business news stories In the last 5 years, out of Rs 30,000 crore raised by the company, more than 75 percent has come from the two promoter groups. The latest fund raise has also seen an investment of over Rs 2,000 crore from the Aditya Birla group. After raising Rs 18,000 crore from the market in April this year, Vodafone Idea Ltd on Thursday said its board has approved a preference share issue to mop up Rs 2,458 crore from Nokia Solutions, Networks India Private Ltd and Ericsson India Pvt Ltd.

In a regulatory filing, Vodafone Idea said that it will allot 102.7 crore shares aggregating Rs 1,520 crore to Nokia Solutions and Networks India Private Limited, and remaining 63.37 crore shares aggregating Rs 938 crore to Ericsson India Private Limited.

The telecom company will issue equity shares of face value of Rs 10 each at an issue price of Rs 14.80 per equity share (including a premium of Rs 4.80 per equity share) to the three entities. Vodafone shares declined by 2.25 per cent to Rs 16.07 on the BSE on Thursday. Vodafone raised Rs 18,000 crore from the market through



a follow-on public issue (FPO) in April this year. It has proposed to use Rs 12,750 crore for expanding its network infrastructure by setting up new 4G sites, expanding capacity of existing 4G sites and setting up new 5G sites. In the last 5 years, out of Rs 30,000 crore raised by the company, more than 75 percent has come from the two promoter groups.

The latest fund raise has also seen an investment of over Rs 2,000 crore from the Aditya Birla group.

Suffer from high bp and blood sugar? You should avoid these 7 supplements

If you're managing high blood pressure (BP) and blood sugar, you're likely prioritising a healthy lifestyle. But what about those supplement bottles lining the shelves? While some vitamins and minerals can be beneficial, others can interact with medications or worsen your condition. Here's a guide to supplements you should avoid with high BP and blood sugar, according to Dr Srinivas Kandula, Consultant Endocrinologist, CARE Hospitals, Nampally, Hyderabad.

1. Sodium-Containing Supplements

– Why Avoid: Sodium can elevate blood pressure. Many supplements, especially those marketed for muscle building or hydration, may contain high levels of sodium, said Dr Kandula.

2. Licorice Root

– Why Avoid: Licorice can increase blood pressure and cause fluid retention, which is problematic for both high blood pressure and diabetes.

3. Caffeine and Stimulant-Based Supplements

– Why Avoid: Caffeine can increase blood pressure and cause rapid heart rates, which are detrimental for individuals with hypertension. Some weight loss and energy supplements contain high levels of caffeine or other stimulants, Dr Kandula explained.

4. Ephedra (Ma Huang)

hypertension Supplements can be a helpful addition, but they shouldn't replace proper medical advice or treatment. – Why Avoid: Ephedra is a powerful stimulant that can raise blood pressure and heart rate, posing risks for those with hypertension and heart disease.

5. Ginseng

– Why Avoid: While ginseng may have some ben-



efits, it can also interfere with blood pressure control and blood sugar regulation, leading to potential complications.

6. Calcium Supplements

– Why Avoid: High doses of calcium supplements have been linked to increased risk of cardiovascular events. It's better to get calcium from dietary sources under medical guidance.

7. High-Dose Vitamin D

– Why Avoid: While Vitamin D is important, excessively high doses can cause calcium buildup in the blood, potentially leading to heart and kidney problems. Always consult your doctor before starting any new supplement, especially if you have high BP, blood sugar, or take medications. This ensures they avoid potential interactions with their condition or medications and receive personalized advice based on their health needs. Focus on lifestyle changes like healthy eating, exercise, and stress management as the cornerstone of managing these conditions. Supplements can be a helpful addition, but they shouldn't replace proper medical advice or treatment.

How Korean food evolved in India 'beyond the initial popularity of ramen'

The Korean cultural phenomenon has been sweeping across India, captivating millions with its electrifying music, trendsetting fashion, and, of course, delicious food. Popularised mainly by Korean television series, also known as K-dramas, Korean food has enchanted Indians people with its unique taste, spiciness and fresh ingredients. What began as a niche interest has since blossomed into a full-fledged cultural phenomenon, with Korean food rapidly gaining mainstream acceptance throughout India. "The popularity of K-dramas in India has significantly increased the demand for Korean food, driven by the portrayal of Korean cuisine in these shows," says Garima Dev Verman, certified nutritionist and medical content analyst with The Healthy Indian Project (THIP). While ramen may have been the initial gateway to Korean cuisine for many Indians, lesser-known dishes like kimchi, spicy ramen, bibimbap, buldak and teokbokki have seen notable rise in popularity. "The global Hallyu wave, encompassing Korean pop culture including K-pop music, has further amplified interest in all things Korean, their food too," she said. At the forefront of this culinary revolution is the growing number of Korean restaurants, each striving to introduce authentic flavours and techniques to the Indian palate. Influencers and celebrities sharing their experiences with Korean cuisine "have also played a crucial role," according to Verman. She also said the availability of Korean ready-to-eat products in Indian supermarkets "has made Korean cuisine more

accessible." "While bibimbap and kimchi are now widely recognised and enjoyed, other dishes such as kimbap (Korean sushi rolls) and jjigae (Korean stews) are also gaining traction," notes Badal Saboo, partner at Gung The Palace, an authentic Korean restaurant in Noida. Banchan, a variety of small side dishes served alongside main courses, offers a diverse tasting experience. Japchae, made from sweet potato noodles mixed with vegetables and meat, provides a unique flavour profile that appeals to local palates. Samgyeopsal, grilled pork belly wrapped in lettuce leaves, has also found a niche among those who appreciate hearty and flavourful meals. These expanded offerings reflect the growing sophistication and curiosity of Indian consumers regarding Korean cuisine. Chef Dheeraj Mathur, cluster executive chef, Radisson Blu, Kaushambi, Delhi NCR, shares that nowadays, youngsters prefer healthy food even if they're eating out. Korean cuisine also typically incorporates dishes which have low-fat content. "Korean food has certain health benefits associated with it, use of ingredients such as tofu, a variety of micro-greens, and seafood ensures a good intake of vitamins, minerals, and proteins, and traditional Korean dishes like kimchi, a staple in Korean cuisine, is rich in probiotics which helps in easy digestion." Shriya Nayak, owner of Mamba Resto Bar in Thane, agrees. "The emphasis on seasonal foods and a variety of textures speaks to India's growing interest in plant-based diets and healthy eating."

Kudi Haryane Val Di movie review: A delightful romantic comedy



plays wrestling as a backdrop to the romance of Shivjot and Neelam, foregrounding mostly the entertaining elements of the sport. The pride and rivalry between various akharas in Haryana becomes a natural plotline to create tension. The differences in language, cultures and even food, make for some hilarious moments in the film, but the overall message is of being one entity. There is a scene with a discussion around saag with Punjabis thinking of it as one thing but the Haryanvis meaning another. In an interesting scene, Shivjot's mother tells veiled Haryanvi women about how she stopped bothering about wearing a veil soon after marriage.

Notably, both Haryana and Punjab share extremely patriarchal attitudes towards women and in a laudable move, the film advocates for women's rights. Neelam's father gives his assent to his daughter choosing her life partner, even though he does not belong to the same community. He highlights the need for her consent, telling her fiancé, "I can get my daughter married to you but you cannot settle your family without her consent." An important message for a state where the predominantly male Khap panchayats continue to dictate social norms, including rules for marriage.

Circling the periphery of the narrative is the almost unnecessary track of Jung Singh (Yograj Singh) looking for his daughter Laali, who has run away from her home to pursue her studies and avoid getting married off by her father. While there is a social message here as well, this avoidable track leads to a needlessly protracted ending. Along with a good pace and overall production quality, the music of Kudi Haryane Val Di does not disappoint as well. The foot-tapping title song "Ikk Hai Ikk Hai", which celebrates the two states, and "Jaatni" are upbeat dance numbers. Although formulaic in its unfolding of events and inevitable conclusion, the feel-good comedy keeps the momentum going, and the climax adds some surprise elements to keep one riveted till the end. Ammy Virk and Sonam Bajwa deliver good performances in the film. Bajwa's role as a Haryanvi kudi is a testimony to her talent, as she gets the accent down perfectly and effortlessly commands every scene. Yashpal Sharma ably represents the Haryanvi Jaat, and character artistes Honey Mattu, Hardeep Gill, Seema Kaushal, Mahabir Bhullar, and Yograj Singh bring levity and humour.

Kudi Haryane Val Di, the latest Punjabi language film starring Ammy Virk and Sonam Bajwa, is a fun entertainer where love unfolds in the wrestling arena. Written and directed by Rakesh Dhawan, who has collaborated with Virk on Annie Sea Muzak Ae (2023) and Raja Mexico Chaliye (2022), Kudi Haryane Val Di brings a freshness to Punjabi cinema with its exploration of cultural differences between the states of Haryana and Punjab. Dhawan brings together the cross-cultural theme with the backdrop of wrestling to create an enjoyable drama.

Shivjot (Ammy Virk) is the only son in a family of wrestlers but has no interest in wrestling. Carefree and lazy, he reads poetry in the hopes of finding a partner who will make his heart skip a beat. As luck would have it, his gaze falls across the wrestling arena, and he finds Neelam (Sonam Bajwa), the daughter of Mann Singh Dahiya (Yashpal Sharma), the proud owner of an akhara or wrestling ground. Unlike Shivjot, Neelam is passionate about all things wrestling, and in a turn of events, Shivjot finds himself as the coach of Mann Singh's wrestling team, just as a play to get close to her. But when Mann Singh's arch-rival Sheeshpal throws down the gauntlet, Shivjot must rise up to the challenge and prove himself to be worthy of Neelam's love.

Both Haryana and Punjab have traditionally been known for the sport of wrestling, with Haryana gaining fame for producing champion wrestlers in the country. But unlike the recent Hindi films Dangal (2016) and Sultan (2016), which examined the overall sport and the various issues that plague it, Kudi Haryane Val Di de-

Drashti Dhami, Niraj Khemka announce pregnancy with a fun video: 'A tiny rebel is joining our crazy tribe'



Drashti Dhami and her husband Niraj Khemka are expecting their first child after nine years of marriage. The couple, who tied the knot in 2015, recently took to their Instagram handles to share an adorable video announcing the news. The video also revealed that the couple is due in October 2024. On Friday, Drashti and Niraj shared a fun video featuring their family members. In the video, the couple can be seen holding a banner that reads, "Could be pink, could be blue. All we know is DUE! OCTOBER 2024."

that we are due. October 2024."

The couple twinned in stripped outfits for the video. They were seen holding a glass of champagne in one hand while the family members celebrated the occasion. Just before the couple could take a sip of the champagne, Drashti's sister-in-law replaces the glasses with milk bottles, and the entire family celebrates. Captioning the video, Drashti Dhami wrote, "In a galaxy not so far away, a tiny rebel is joining our crazy tribe." Drashti Dhami made her acting debut with the television series Dill Mill Gaye which ran from 2007 to 2009. In 2008, the actor also participated in the reality show Kaun Jeetega Bollywood Ka Ticket. In 2010, she rose to fame after starring in Geet-Hui Sabse Parayi, co-starring Gurmeet Choudhary. Later, from 2012-2014, she was seen playing the lead in the show Madhubala opposite Vivian D'Sena, which became a massive hit. Apart from starring in television series, the actor has also hosted shows like Jhalak Dikhlai Jaa 7. Later, in 2022, she moved to OTT and gained popularity for her performance in Duranga, opposite Gulshan Devaiah. She was also part of The Empire and I Don't Watch TV, among others.

Vijay Sethupathi fought with Vignesh Shivan during Naanum Rowdy Thaan: 'I told him not to teach me acting'

Vijay Sethupathi with Vignesh Shivan on Kaathuvaakula Rendu Kaadhala sets. Vijay Sethupathi recently opened up about how he used to have issues with Vignesh Shivan during the shooting of Naanum Rowdy Thaan, which became a watershed moment in the career of both the actor and the director. While talking about how he was shaped by many filmmakers in his 20-year career as an actor, Sethupathi recalled the many fights with directors.

The Maharaja actor said that he initially didn't get along well with Vignesh Shivan as the director was demanding something else from him. It took some days for them to understand what both were trying to do. He said, "After the first day of Naanum Rowdy Thaan shoot, I called Vicky and fought with him. I told him, 'You are trying to teach me acting. You haven't understood me.' After four days, Nayan(thara) asked me what's the issue between you two. I told her that he was asking me to do Paandi character with more hip."

Sethupathi added, "When Vicky narrated the script, it was lovely. I was actually trying to emulate Vicky only, but it took time for us to understand each other. I think it was Vishnu Vishal who rightly told me that it wasn't easy



to play that character. If he cries, everyone should laugh. He is a good guy, but a fraud. I didn't understand the character for the first four days, and in that time, I became very insecure." Vijay Sethupathi claimed that Vignesh Shivan is a special filmmaker, and he is the new-gen filmmaker. "We wouldn't even touch a subject like Kaathu Vaakula Rendu Kaadhala. Nobody understands him. If you trust him and go along, he will create a lot of magic inside. Like that, so many experiences have made me what I am today." Sethupathi is currently being praised for his performance in Maharaja, directed by Nithilan Saminathan. The film has garnered mixed reviews.

Action for sake of action is like an item number: Kabir Khan

New Delhi: When action is detached from sentiments, it only serves as a promotional tool in the movie, much like an item number, says filmmaker Kabir Khan, who has pulled off a pivotal eight-minute continuous war sequence in his latest Chandu Champion. The much-talked about shot highlights the "emotional drama" of the story instead of showing action for the sake of it, said Khan, adding that they shot it at 9,000 feet above sea level in Kashmir's Aru Valley. After four days of rehearsal, the section was filmed in one day which featured fighter jets, bomb blasts, and intense combat scenes. "I have always believed and done that even in my earlier action films — action for the sake of action never really works, then it's an item number. Action works when the emotional drama and arc of the story moves forward with the action," says Kabir. The start of the action and the end of the action has

to move and that in this film (Chandu Champion) is huge. It's one of the most pivotal points in the plot," the filmmaker says. Inspired by the life of India's first Paralympic gold medalist Murlikant Petkar, Chandu Champion stars Kartik Aaryan in the title role as a man across ages and phases, including being an Indian Army soldier, a wrestler, a boxer, a 1965 war veteran and a swimmer. Khan, known for directing Ek Tha Tiger, Bajrangi Bhaijaan, 83 and Kabul Express, said the underlying reason for shooting the eight-minute uncut sequence was to stay close to his protagonist and experience the events unfold through his eyes. "We are so used to doing things in films that if it's not happening, take two or take three or take four, and we can keep achieving. Here, we had no take two. It was only one take and we had to get it correct because a lot of big structures were going to crumble and fall and you cannot set it up all over again," he says.

Murlikant Petkar on the release of Chandu Champion on June 14: 'A perfect tribute to Sushant Singh Rajput'



It was the year 2020. Humans were confined to the four walls of their homes as a strict lockdown, owing to the COVID-19 pandemic outbreak, was implemented across the world. On the afternoon of June 14, Murlikant Petkar, who was enjoying his afternoon siesta, was woken up by his sons after they watched the news of actor Sushant Singh Rajput passing away on television. It was hard for Murlikant to believe Sushant was gone. Murlikant, India's first Paralympic gold medalist, who is also an ex-army officer, was shocked, devastated and hoped that the news was not true. After all, when Sushant last visited them in August of 2019, the Raabta actor looked optimistic and assured Murlikant that he would bring the athlete's untold story on the celluloid. He didn't know how to react to the news, and since the untimely demise of the actor, Murlikant hasn't spoken much about the late actor but says he is unable to forget the time he spent with Sushant.

"When I saw Kartik Aaryan play all the sports, which I played in my youth and won medals for, on-screen and nailing them so effortlessly, I saw myself in him. He took me back in time. I cried during the screening of the film. It was an emotional moment. Kartik has done a brilliant job in Chandu Champion," says Murlikant Petkar, who won gold medal in swimming in the 1972 Paralympics and is the inspiration behind Kartik's Chandu Champion which released in the theaters today (Friday, June 14).

From the time the trailer of the much-awaited Kabir Khan directorial dropped, fans haven't stopped complimenting Kartik for his portrayal of Murlikant, who despite his accolades, remained a forgotten hero until the announcement of his biopic. What many may also not know is that before Kabir Khan, Sushant Singh Rajput, inspired by the athlete's story of resilience, had already begun shooting his biopic. It came to a sudden halt after the actor's tragic death four years ago. Sushant Singh Rajput, Paralympic gold medalist, Pune news, Maharashtra news, Indian express news Sushant Singh Rajput with Murlikant Petkar and his son Arjun during one of their meetings in Thergaon, Pimpri-Chinchwad. Murlikant tells Indianexpress.com, "Before Kabir Khan, Sushant Singh Rajput, was making a film on my life and my journey as a Paralympian. He had already shot 10 to 15 per cent of the film. He was extremely passionate about telling my story and spent a lot of time with me to understand how I managed to win all those gold medals despite getting shot nine times and being in a coma." Unfortunately, the actor's sudden demise put a halt to the film until Kabir learnt about Murlikant's existence through a newspaper article and decided to make a film on him.

The war veteran suffered irreversible bullet injuries in the 1965 war against Pakistan, which forced him to give up his career in the Indian Army. He is still living with one bullet lodged in his spine. But his disability didn't stop him from chasing his dream of bringing gold for the country. Murlikant Petkar won an individual gold medal in the 1972 Summer Paralympics, in Heidelberg, Germany and set a world record in the 50 m freestyle swimming event, at 37.33 seconds. In the same games, he

participated in javelin, precision javelin throw and slalom. He was a finalist in all three events. Murlikant, who is currently living with his family in Thergaon, in the Pimpri-Chinchwad area, in Maharashtra, has fond memories of the late actor. "He would frequent my house to spend time with me. I also visited him at his Mumbai flat. He would sit down and hear my stories and get extremely motivated. He couldn't believe that I managed to bring all those gold medals despite my disability," recalls the 79-year-old. Sushant's admiration for Murlikant was reciprocated with the sportsman's fondness for the young artiste who managed to floor him with his simplicity, dedication and humility.

"He loved the humble Maharashtrian dish pithla-bhakri (creamy gram flour curry served with roti). Every time, he drove to my house, he would request for the dish and savoured it with the happiness of a child. His then girlfriend Ankita Lokhande would also accompany him at times," he adds. Chandu Champion The journey of Murlikant Petkar, who won gold in swimming in 1972 Paralympics, is the inspiration behind Kartik Aaryan-starrer Chandu Champion. The film released on June 14, 2024.

Sushant Singh Rajput, who had essayed the Indian cricketer Mahendra Singh Dhoni in MS Dhoni: The Untold Story, was keen on bringing the story of the physically challenged army man turned sportsman on to the big screen. In a Bollywood Hungama interview, an excited and wide-eyed Sushant, who wanted this forgotten hero's story to reach every Indian, young and old, said, "The minute I heard his story I was on. I wanted to do it without a second thought. What an inspiring story! After playing Dhoni, I'm looking forward to playing Petkar who never allowed his physical hurdles to stand in the way of his dreams. I like playing characters who dream big." Army felicitates Murlikant Petkar, Chandu Champion, first paralympics gold medalist, Indian Army's Corps of Electronics and Mechanical Engineers, Petkar journey, swimming gold in 1972 paralympics, indian express news Murlikant Petkar (right) with Southern Army Commander Lt Gen Ajai Kumar Singh.

Murlikant Petkar's son, Arjun Petkar, reminiscing about the time when Sushant Singh Rajput first came to their Thergaon residence, says they couldn't believe that the actor actually made an effort to find their abode to know about his father and his story of resilience. "He came to meet us when he was shooting MS Dhoni," he added. What took Petkar by surprise was that the actor had already done his homework and researched about his accomplishments before arriving at his door. He wanted to understand the man and his undaunting spirit behind those medals. "He wanted to know everything about me. Even the smallest of details so that he would play the character in the most realistic way. He glanced through the medals and was awestruck," he tells us, adding that there was a certain sincerity in the actor's eyes. The Paralympian says the actor was grateful to the family for not informing his neighbours about his arrival and for offering him a generous serving of poha. The Kai Po Che! actor later invited the Petkars for lunch at his Mumbai residence and also sent a special car for them. He not only spent quality time with them but also spoke fondly of Murlikant in front of his friends. The septuagenarian and his family were touched by the gesture and his generosity. "His sudden passing was very shocking. The loss feels personal. 14th of June.... the date is painful to remember. The release of Chandu Champion on this date is a tribute to Sushant who left this world so early. It is the perfect homage to the young talent who wanted to tell my story and play me on-screen but his story remained incomplete!" laments Murlikant Petkar.

Karishma Tanna gives a tour of her Mumbai house, expresses desire to work with Shah Rukh Khan: 'The way he is so humble, it is very inspiring'

Karishma Tanna, who last featured in the Hansal Mehta directorial Scoop, recently gave a tour of her house in Mumbai and it is all things regal. From showing off her long ceilings to customised curtains and her Marshall speaker, Karishma spoke in detail about every tiny thing she has kept in her home and the stories behind them. The actor has decorated her house in a white and grey theme and has kept many idols of Buddha, claiming both she and her husband love the religious teacher. She also gave a tour of her balcony, where she and her husband Varun Bangera enjoy barbecue nights during winters. In a recent interaction with Brut India, Karishma revealed her daily routine. The actor, who starts her day at 8 in the morning, does a little pranayam followed by drinking her detox water, meditation, and then workout session. Karishma said, "After my gym, I have coffee. I chill for some time and then I head out for my weight training."

Showing off her beautiful kitchen, Karishma revealed on Sundays, she and her husband often eat South Indian food. She said, "On Sundays, we have Idli and dosa. I love it because more than Varun,

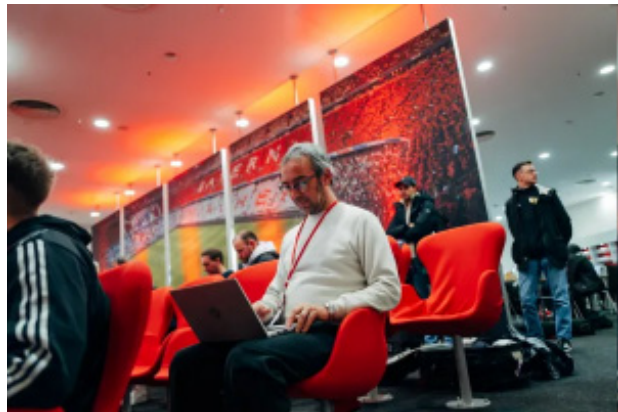


I am a South Indian. So every Sunday, I need it." The actor further revealed that even before her marriage to Varun Bangera, she only ate South Indian food on Sundays. In the same interaction, the Scoop actor talked about her Instagram addiction. She said, "Until last year, I used to be on Instagram a lot. If I open Instagram, I spend one good hour on it because there are so many funny reels and you laugh. And then you realise I have wasted my one hour. Now I have decided to spend more time doing other things like watching TV or play with my dogs and listen to informative videos." Karishma Tanna also tested her Gen Z lingo skills. While discussing the

word "Ghost", the actor confessed that she knows the word because she ghosts a lot of people. She said, "You have to ghost people. It's necessary for your mind to be sane." Karishma later took part in a small game where the host asked her, "If she ever had a chance to switch lives with a fictional character, who it would be?" Karishma replied, "Alexis Rose from Schitt's Creek. I would actually be both Moira Rose and Alexis Rose. I like the mixture of both because I am both." She added, "The moment I finished that show, I just wanted to be like her. And I feel that I relate to them because there are a lot of situations when I see, I am Moira, you know? And my

husband also tells me, 'Isn't this you? Like, did you just behave the same way?' It's weird." Karishma Tanna also recalled her passion for guitar. She said she wanted to learn to play guitar, but after her tutor told her that she will have to cut her nails, the actor decided to drop the idea. "I am like that's too much of effort. So I didn't do it. And also, it used to hurt my fingers. So I look at a good guitarist and I am like, 'Damn, I wish I could learn this.'" Toward the end of the interaction, Karishma expressed her desire to collaborate with Shah Rukh Khan. She said, "A, he is a gem of a person. B, he is extremely talented, very knowledgeable and I would get to learn so much from him."

Euro 2024: What made football Germany's antidote through World Wars, Nazi rule and Cold War



GNS News Agency, June 19

Jacob Sweetman, a German football historian and FC Union Berlin's media head, recalls the state of mourning his country was in when it lost one of its most loved sons back in January. Monickered The Emperor, Franz Beckenbauer's contribution to a nation scarred in the 20th century far outweighs his sporting laurels. When Beckenbauer managed West Germany to its third World Cup title in the summer of 1990, the Berlin Wall had fallen but the capitalist west and communist east were yet to be united. And yet, Deutschland celebrated as one.

"It was the first West German success that was seen as a unified German success before unification," Sweetman says. By 2006, when a unified Germany hosted the World Cup, it was the first time post-World War II that the Germans stopped fearing nationalism and waved the flag with pride. "Germany has always been very careful about flag-waving but 2006 is seen as the first time when Germans did so in public," Sweetman felt.

In 2024, as the country prepares for its biggest sporting summer in almost two decades, the reservations around overt nationalism have resurfaced. Football, once again, has been tasked with uniting Germany and portraying its best image, with the spectre of populist right-wing politics looming large. But it's not the first time the sport has been up against it. One often wonders how Germany's obsession with football survived the 20th-century horrors, or was it an antidote that helped it get through them? "I think that the sport was always a distraction from the miseries of the time," Sweetman believes. In post-World War I Berlin, during a severe economic collapse, amateur football leagues were run for the working class. "These were effectively communist leagues, strictly for amateurs, hence called workers' league." Euro 2024: Jacob Sweetman historian Jacob Sweetman is a Ger-

man football historian and FC Union Berlin's English press head. When the Nazi party came to power in 1933, football became a tool to tap into its ardent fanbase, despite their supreme aversion to the sport. "Hitler didn't like football; he only ever went to one game of football. And in that, Germany lost to Norway at the 1936 Olympics. But he was very careful to indulge football fans because he knew the importance of football to the country."

Sweetman, a Berliner, recalls the height of the Cold War in a city torn into two distinct halves. "On both sides, football was always used as a means of distraction from everyday b*****hit." While East Germany's win over West Germany at the 1974 World Cup – hosted by West Germany – was seen by the former "as a victory over a class enemy", the big club rivalry between the two regions paints a contrasting picture. Hertha Berlin (west) and Union Berlin (east) are bitter rivals in 2024 but back then, were almost friends. "They called themselves 'Freunde hinter Stacheldraht' (friends behind barbed wire). There was a longing for the day when we would be able to play each other again because that would mean that the Berlin Wall had come down and the city had been unified again."

It comes as no surprise then that the fans hold a crucial stake in German football. Courtesy of the 50+1 rule, they own their clubs. While elsewhere in Europe, foreign investment has been welcomed with open arms in hope of silverware, Germany remains ideologically rigid. "Success is great when it comes, but I don't think the fans here need it in a way English football fans do. When Saudi Arabia were taking over Newcastle United, their fans were overwhelmingly in support of selling this century-old great club, a community institution, to the crown prince of Saudi Arabia, because they thought that would bring success. That would not happen in Germany," Sweetman says. Even Bayern Munich, a club that was on a decade-long Bundesliga title run until last season and oozes corporate-like hunger for success, has to tread carefully to avoid the wrath of its fans. "The Bayern Munich Ultras are very political, actually left-wing. They are very critical of people who run the club because they see them as putting commercial interest ahead of community interest. Bayern used to have Qatar Airways on their sleeves and the ultras forced the club to rethink." It's for this power that it lends to its fans that Sweetman believes, "German football currently is the heartbeat of football fan culture in Europe." And it's some of that culture that visiting fans would hope to witness come the Euros. "In terms of PR for the country, the 2006 World Cup did more than almost anything else this century. Germany will certainly be hoping for more of that. What I think it will do best is introduce a lot of people to the idea of this being a multicultural and fascinating, multi-faceted country," Sweetman adds.

Two German youngsters to watch out for – why Jamal Musiala and Florian Wirtz could light up the tournament

Germany Youngsters Euro 2024A pair of 21-year-olds are entrusted with Germany's playmaking duties at Euro 2024. Jamal Musiala of Bayern Munich roaming on the right of the veteran Ilkay Gundogan, and Florian Wirtz of Bayer Leverkusen buzzing on his left. A pair of 21-year-olds are entrusted with Germany's playmaking duties at Euro 2024. Jamal Musiala of Bayern Munich roaming on the right of the veteran Ilkay Gundogan, and Florian Wirtz of Bayer Leverkusen buzzing on his left. Slotting two No 10s itself is a rare tactic in the modern game, deputing two raw youngsters for the role is rarer. It was not a strategy born out of necessity, but manager Julian Nagelsmann's conviction that the team should be built around them.



But these are not ordinary talents. Musiala, the youngest player to play a league game for Bayern aged 17 years 115 days, who became their youngest goalscorer 90 days later, has twinkling feet which he uses to weave and dribble past crowded backlines, make space in the most congested corners and accelerate without seeming so. A smooth passer, a smoother mover, he can create and score, sustain a press and snatch the ball from the opponent. He has mastered the elusively dark art of La Croqueta, the two-touch side-step, and has quickly become the attacking axis of Bayern Munich, scoring a dozen goals and assisting another eight for the Bavarians last season. Better finishing could make him a deadlier entity, but the legendary Lothar Matthaus has praised him effusively. "He can be the (Lionel) Messi of the future, he is excellent, he is doing the things that will make him a top footballer. He has great passing, he is clever with his thinking and he loves football."

Wirtz, the ticking brain of Bayer's triumphant season (11 goals and 12 assists), does not possess the stealthy feet of Musiala, but is faster and is a better finisher, a scorer of spectacular goals too, and recently authored the fastest-ever goal for his country. He can perform multiple roles, that of a conventional playmaker behind the striker, on the wings, or as a narrow number 10, as Nagelsmann often deploys him, and is exceptional in breaking the lines with clever passes. Another Messi comparison was inevitable. This time coming from one of the Argentine's La Liga rivals, and Leverkusen's manager Xabi Alonso. "Why is Messi so good? Because he knows how and when to play simple passes. Messi says: 'You're in a better position? Here, there you have the ball!' It's not always about making the most brilliant move, but the best and smartest. Florian can do that. That's why he's so good," the coach would say. But combining the two No 10s in one team, a Steven Gerrard-Frank Lampard quandary, had its challenges. The team could run the risk of two similar players operating close to each other in the area normally reserved for the sole No.10. But the coach solved the potential problem of similitude by knitting together a compact midfield three behind the false nine, Kai Havertz. Wirtz assumes a slightly withdrawn role, like a midfielder. Musiala lingers just behind Havertz. Wirtz would then emphasise on passing, whereas Musiala looks to spin inside the box.

A classic example was how they combined for Havertz's goal in a friendly against France. The moment he saw Wirtz in acres of space in the midfield, he began to sprint upfield, twisting into the right side of an isolated Lucas Hernandez. The long pass found Musiala inside the box. He slid to the right, dribbled past the goalkeeper Brice Samba and from the edge of the box, rolled a delicious cutback to Havertz, who found the back of the net. It was a lightning move, consuming only seven seconds. Both the midfielders interchange their positions,

pinging a flurry of short passes and building patiently to unlock low blocks and then attacking with explosiveness. Their communication is often telepathic, which Musiala attributes to "connection off the field." "It's not just football that connects us. We're the same age and have the same interests. He can play table tennis pretty well, but I've got more quality in basketball. We combine well together," he recently said in a press conference, sitting beside Wirtz. The latter would say: "We both want to win the title and we know we need each other for that. We have a lot of ideas in our gameplay and are always looking for solutions. It would not be healthy if we were trying to outdo each other. Personally, it doesn't matter to me who scores more goals." Together, they could be the most exciting pair of youngsters to watch out for at this Euros.

Indian Supercross Racing League season 2 starts January next year

GNS News Agency, June 19

Mumbai: After the resounding success of its inaugural season, the Indian Supercross Racing League (ISRL) has announced the season 2, slated to kick off in January 2025 and run until March. Recognised as the world's first franchise-based supercross racing series, ISRL is elevated the adrenaline-fueled action to new heights with an extended 60-day season. "Season 2 of the ISRL promises to be an exhilarating spectacle, with an increased number of races and new stadiums set to captivate motorsports enthusiasts across the nation. Rider registration for the upcoming season will be commencing by the end of June 2024, following a surge in inquiries from riders worldwide eager to compete in one of the most thrilling racing events on the Indian calendar. The rider auction for season 2 is scheduled for the month of October 2024," the organisers said in a statement.

"We are thrilled to announce the commencement of Season 2 of the Indian Supercross Racing League," said Veer Patel, Co-founder & Director of Indian Supercross Racing League. "After the phenomenal success of our inaugural season, the anticipation for the upcoming season is palpable. We have received overwhelming interest from riders across the globe, reflecting the growing popularity and prestige of the ISRL." Lakshmi Narayanan B, Chief Marketing Officer, added, "The excitement and enthusiasm generated in Season 1 were truly remarkable, creating a unique niche audience in India that never existed before. We are eagerly looking forward to an even bigger and more exciting Season 2."

Sameer Verma crunches former world champion Loh Kean Yew with his reflex defense



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Sameer Verma might easily be India's finest shuttler to never qualify for the Olympics. But every once in a while he pops up on the circuit, and plays an enchanting match like a dream, to rephrase that question – why has the freakishly talented Madhya Pradesh player never gotten into Olympic contention, surfacing at the Australia Open Super 500, Verma, known for one of the fastest defensive games, outgunned 2021 world champion Loh Kean Yew on the Singaporean's best quality – speed. The Dhar Knight with his bat-mobil blur-reflex limbs, won 21-14, 14-21, 21-19 in a 62-minute thriller where he was flying on court as if he was surfing off some golden beach, to make the quarterfinals. Loh prides himself on his fast-twitching speedy attack. But Verma beat him with pristine technique in strokes, often at double clip. The modestly built and perennially under-funded Verma, whose entire career has been a struggle to turn up fit, has always needed to work hard to make his game look effortless. He has lightning quick reflexes, but the results didn't fetch up quickly. In 2018 he beat Kento Momota on way to winning the Swiss Open title, and handed out defeats at Denmark to Shi Yuqi and Jonatan Christie, now Paris gold contenders. But that was six seasons ago, and he's spent a dozen of those being held back by crippling injuries at recurrent intervals. His game style – crackling but bruising reflex defense – takes a heavy toll on his body, but when he's fit like he was on the Melbourne Thursday, he can serve up a masterclass. His win over Loh is a perfect projection of where similarly-designed Lakshya Sen's current game ought to go. And India's other prom-

ising youngster, Priyanshu Rajawat vocally adores and idolises the humble Verma's oeuvre of stylised strokes. His patched back body never afforded him consistency, but Loh was reminded of just how dangerous Verma can be against top players. The former World No 14's vintage defensive style comprises whiplash wristy flicks from below the tape that travel deep into opponent courts. Verma also has some ridiculous body-defense parries and low sideways diving retrievals, and he was bouncing away against Loh in the opener, taking it 21-14. Sen makes these look spectacular, while Sameer, the OG, is just nonchalant. What helped Verma keep Loh, quite the hopping bunny himself, quiet on court, was taking the shuttle high and early. At the net, Loh was bogged, because Verma doesn't dribble tight angles. He imparts awkward spin spells on regulation hairpin net exchanges and floats the shuttle, and the taller Singaporean just couldn't flick it back, dumping it in the net. Loh would respond with his trademark down the line quick smashes and level the set scores, but he was struggling to plainly power past and hit through Verma.

The 29-year-old Indian fell behind 3-9 and 5-11 in the decider, and a nondescript outing loomed. But at change of ends, playing from the seemingly non-advantageous side, Sameer would ambush Loh for 7 straight points in a phase that witnessed supreme shot-making, tweaking the angles, varying the pace within a rally, while he glided around the court and cut off Loh's options of playing to the centre. Sameer Verma routinely logs some of the highest defensive winners that once stopped Momota's 60-match win streak. But against Loh, even after receding 14-16 down, he brought out the attacking verve with cross drops and smashes struck from the centre of the court. Loh can counter with power smashes, but Verma starved him off pace with clever lofted shuttles. It was his split-second defensive returns though that punctured Loh's confidence in his own quick smashes, and the Singaporean detests when his monster hits get retrieved. Verma was sending them back – quick and querulous. Down 18-19, Verma charged the net with a short smash and then played 2 exquisite points, prancing like he was a prodigious 19-year-old, not 29, to pocket a pretty win. Briefly, amidst his disappearing absences from international badminton, Sameer Verma showed there could be beauty in his game beyond the breakdowns.

Smriti Mandhana becomes first Indian woman to hit consecutive ODI hundreds, equals Mithali Raj's century tally

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Smriti Mandhana became the first Indian woman to record two consecutive ODI hundreds during the second ODI against South Africa at the M Chinnaswamy Stadium in Bengaluru. Following up on her 117 in the previous ODI against the Proteas, the highest by an Indian at home, Mandhana led the attack for India after South Africa opted to field. She strode to a 103-ball hundred, recording her second century in as many innings this series, on the back of 12 fours and two sixes.

Mandhana also equalled Mithali Raj for the most ODI centuries among Indian women with her seventh ton in the format. The left-hander put up firm stands with Shafali Vera and Dayalan Hemalatha before lifting the scoring alongside skipper Harmanpreet Kaur for the third wicket. The duo joined at 100 for two in 23 overs and doubled the score within the next 17 overs. She eventually fell on 136 her highest score in the format before Harmanpreet romped to an unbeaten 103. India finished on 325/3, their highest score against South Africa and



highest at home. Incidentally, Mandhana is the first Asian woman to compile consecutive ODI tons with New Zealand's Amy Satterthwaite leading the charts, having struck four successive centuries in 2016-17. Mandhana ranks sixth on the all-time run-getters list among women openers in ODIs. With her seventh ton, the 27-year-old jumped to joint-third in terms of centuries among openers in the format.

Rohit, Virat focus on batting vs spin as rain curtails India's practice



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India vs Afghanistan, Super 8s: The Indian team completed its final practice session ahead of their first Super 8s fixture against Afghanistan in Barbados. Virat Kohli, Rohit Sharma and Suryakumar Yadav were in focus, sharpening their skills against spin bowling.

Rohit Sharma, Virat Kohli and Suryakumar Yadav were in focus in India's final practice session ahead of their first Super 8 match in Barbados. On Wednesday, the Indian team sharpened their skills in the nets in Barbados ahead of their match against Afghanistan. India face Australia and Bangladesh in the other two matches of their Super 8 fixtures and are expected to be heavily challenged by spin in the low and slow conditions. Star Sports, who were in the stadium, reported that Rishabh Pant was the notable absentee from the session on the rain-curtailed day. The rest of the Indian team were seen doing match simulations - where the focus lay on Hardik Pandya and Ravindra Jadeja. India captain Rohit Sharma

and senior batter Virat Kohli were seen playing their sweeps and reverse sweeps, two shots that might come in handy in the conditions at Barbados. Kohli showed incredible intent with the bat once again in the nets, something that the fans have come to expect from him since the second half of the Indian Premier League 2024. Kohli has scored a total of 5 runs in the group stage but that has happened due to his ultra-aggressive nature in the powerplay.

Amongst the spin bowlers, Kuldeep Yadav bowled a lot of overs to Ravindra Jadeja as the all-rounder practised some match simulations in the nets. Jadeja's form with both ball and bat has been questionable in the group stages and the player would be hoping for a good show in the Caribbean islands. India head coach Rahul Dravid had a good look at the pitch and held a huddle with the Indian team. It is expected to be a good batting track for the majority of the innings, however, the Barbados wicket has shown signs of the wicket keeping low.