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Hits Kanchanjunga Express

Wrong to tar a community with the same brush

Bangladesh advance to Super 8 after
fending off feisty Nepal

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Ranchi | Tuesday | June 18, 2024 | Page 08 | Daily | Volume - 09, Issue - 127

RNI Regn No. JHAMUL/2016/75465

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The Researchers'

NEWS BOX

New Zealand Prime Minister's plane breaks down on way to Japan

Wellington The New Zealand defence force plane flying New Zealand's Prime Minister Christopher Luxon to Japan broke down on Sunday, forcing the Prime Minister to take a commercial flight, his office confirmed on Monday.
Luxon is spending four days in Japan, where he is expected to meet with Japan's Prime Minister Fumio Kishida and spend time promoting New Zealand business. New Zealand media reported that the Boeing 757 broke down during a refuelling stop in Papua New Guinea, leaving the business delegation and journalists stranded in Port Moresby, while Luxon flew commercial to Japan. The New Zealand Defence Force's two 757s are more than 30 years old and their age has made them increasingly unreliable. New Zealand Defence Minister Judith Collins told radio station Newstalk ZB on Monday that the consistent flight issues were "embarrassing" and that the ministry was looking at flying Luxon and his delegation commercially from now on. New Zealand's defence force is struggling with ageing equipment and retaining sufficient personnel. The government has said it would like to spend more on defence but is also trying to reduce spending as the country faces economic headwinds.

California wildfire forces evacuation, high temperature hampers dousing efforts

UPDATED. A wildfire burning northwest of Los Angeles on Sunday has forced the evacuation of over 1,000 people from a popular outdoor recreation area and burned over 12,000 acres, authorities said.
Some 400 firefighters armed with 70 firetrucks and two bulldozers are battling the Post fire, which is just 2% contained, according to Cal Fire. It is burning south of Gorman, California, about 60 miles (96.5 km) northwest of Los Angeles. The fire, which started Saturday afternoon, is moving to the southeast, toward Pyramid Lake, Cal Fire said. Some 1,200 people have been evacuated from the Hungry Valley recreation area, which has trails for motorcycles and off-road vehicles, since the fire broke out. Two structures have been destroyed so far. Cal Fire said that efforts to contain the wildfire are being hampered by high temperatures, low humidity and strong winds, forecast to continue through Sunday night.
Water-dropping aircraft are working to halt forward progress of the fire, while firefighters are constructing perimeter fire lines in an effort to get the blaze under more control.

Indian accused in Pannun killing plot extradited to US from Czech Republic

Indian national Nikhil Gupta accused in Khalistani terrorist Gurbatwant Singh Pannun murder plot, has been extradited to the US from Czech Republic, news agency Reuters reported.
World Indian national Nikhil Gupta, who has been accused in the murder plot of Khalistani terrorist and US citizen Gurbatwant Singh Pannun on American soil, has been extradited to the United States from the Czech Republic, news agency Reuters reported, citing the Federal Bureau Prisons website and a source familiar with the matter.
A search on the Bureau of Prisons website by inmate name showed on Sunday (June 16) that Gupta, 52, is being held at the Metropolitan Detention Center, Brooklyn, a federal administrative detention facility. Furthermore, a source independently confirmed to Reuters, on condition of anonymity, Gupta's extradition and his detention in Brooklyn. Last month, a Czech court rejected Nikhil Gupta's petition to avoid being sent to the US, paving the way for the Czech



justice minister to extradite him. Gupta was arrested in the Czech Republic on June 30 last year, based on US allegations of his involvement in a conspiracy to commit the killing. According to US federal prosecutors, Gupta was implicated in a plot to hire a hitman to kill a US citizen, purportedly under the direction of an Indian government official. The target was identified as Pannun.
Nikhil Gupta's extradition comes ahead of US National Security Advisor Jake Sullivan's visit to New Delhi for the annual ICET dialogue. The matter is expected to be raised by Sullivan before his Indian counterpart Ajit Doval. India has denied its involvement in the Pannun murder plot and has constituted a probe committee to investigate the US's allegations.
Nikhil Gupta too, through his attorney, has denied the charges and has said he has been "unfairly charged".
Gurbatwant Singh Pannun holds dual citizenship of the US and Canada, and is wanted in India on terror charges. He has been designated a terrorist by the Union Home Minister under the stringent anti-terror law Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act.

Afghan Taliban agree to attend UN's Doha conference

The Taliban government's participation in the conference of foreign special envoys to Afghanistan had been in doubt after it was not included in the first round and then refused an invitation to the second round in February.



Kabul, UPDATED Taliban authorities will attend the third round of United Nations-hosted talks on Afghanistan in the Qatari capital, a government spokesman said on Sunday, after snubbing an invitation to the previous round. The Taliban government's participation in the conference of foreign special envoys to Afghanistan had been in doubt after it

was not included in the first round and then refused an invitation to the second round in February. "A delegation of the Islamic Emirate will participate in the coming Doha conference. They will represent Afghanistan there and express Afghanistan's position," Zabihullah Mujahid told AFP. The talks in Doha are scheduled to be held on June 30 and July 1.
Mujahid told Afghan media on Sunday that a delegation — yet to be announced — would attend because the agenda of the talks appeared "beneficial to

Afghanistan". The agenda includes "topics such as aid for Afghanistan and creating opportunities for investors in Afghanistan, which are important", he said. Civil society groups that included women were invited to the February talks but the Taliban government refused to participate unless its members could be the sole representatives of Afghanistan.
It also requested to meet UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres. Guterres said in a statement after the February talks the set of conditions to participate "were not acceptable", but that delegates hoped for Taliban officials to attend future meetings. Diplomatic sources told AFP there were plans to consult with civil society groups before and after the third round. The sources said the talks were due to cover finance and economic issues, as well as counternarcotics efforts. Several civil society groups have also urged the UN to prioritise issues involving women's rights at the meeting.

Netanyahu opposes Israeli military's tactical pauses to allow aid in Gaza

Benjamin Netanyahu says IDF's tactical pause plan is "unacceptable" to him IDF says normal operations would continue in Rafah
Netanyahu's reaction highlights political tensions over the issue of aid coming into Gaza

eight soldiers were killed on Saturday. The reaction from Netanyahu underlined political tensions over the issue of aid coming into Gaza, where international organisations have warned of a growing humanitarian crisis. National Security Minister Itamar Ben-Gvir, who leads one of the nationalist religious parties in Netanyahu's ruling coalition, denounced the idea of a tactical pause, saying whoever decided it was a "fool" who should lose their job.
DIVISIONS BETWEEN COALITION, ARMY
The spat was the latest in a series of clashes between members of the coalition and the military over the conduct of the war, now in its ninth month. It came a week after centrist former general Benny Gantz quit the government, accusing Netanyahu of having no effective strategy in Gaza. The divisions were laid bare last week in a parliamentary vote on a law on conscripting ultra-Orthodox Jews into the military, with Defence Minister Yoav Gallant voting against it in defiance of party orders, saying it was insufficient for the needs of the military. Religious parties in the coalition have strongly opposed conscription for the ultra-Orthodox, drawing widespread anger from many Israelis, which has deepened as the war has gone on. Lieutenant-General Herzi Halevi, the head of the military, said on Sunday there was a "definite need" to recruit more soldiers from the fast-growing ultra-Orthodox community.



Jerusalem Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu criticized plans announced by the military on Sunday to hold daily tactical pauses in fighting along one of the main roads into Gaza to facilitate aid delivery into the Palestinian enclave. The military had announced the daily pauses from 0500 GMT until 1600 GMT in the area from the Kerem Shalom Crossing to the Salah al-Din Road and then northward.
"When the prime minister heard the reports of an 11-hour humanitarian pause in the morning, he turned to his military secretary and made it clear that this was unacceptable to him," an Israeli official said. The military clarified that normal operations would continue in Rafah, the main focus of its operation in southern Gaza, where

Xi Wishes Muizzu on His Birthday; Emphasises Importance of Strategic Ties Between China, Maldives

Male, Maldives . President Xi Jinping has emphasised the importance of China-Maldives relations and reiterated his strong support for strengthening the bilateral strategic partnership, as Beijing steps up its influence in the Indian Ocean archipelagic nation.
President Xi conveyed this message to his Maldivian counterpart Mohamed Muizzu on his 46th birthday, the president's office said here in a statement on Saturday. Interestingly, Xi also celebrated his 71st birthday on Saturday. China's Ambassador to the Maldives, Wang Lixin, paid a courtesy call on President Muizzu, known for his pro-China leanings, at his official residence and presented a congratulatory letter from President Xi

to his Maldivian counterpart on the occasion of his birthday, the statement said. In the letter, President Xi expressed his sincere greetings and best wishes to President Muizzu. He also emphasised the importance of China-Maldives relations and reiterated his enthusiasm for strengthening the China-Maldives Comprehensive Strategic Cooperative Partnership and jointly building a China-Maldives community with a shared future, the statement said. President Muizzu expressed gratitude to Ambassador Wang for personally delivering Xi's letter and stated that it was a tremendous pleasure to receive it. The President had also written a congratulatory message to President Xi Jinping, who celebrates his birthday on the same day, the statement said.
The discussions between Muizzu and Wang further focused on enhancing collaboration and improving bilateral relations between the Maldives and China, it said. They also discussed future agreements and forthcoming collaborative initiatives for development. Additionally, the Chinese Ambassador stated that China is determined to assist with the Maldives' economic development and inquired about areas where the Maldivian Government requires additional assistance.
Since he assumed office in November last year, President Muizzu has taken several steps to bolster Male's ties with Beijing.

At least 14 Hajj pilgrims die from heatstroke in Mecca

World At least 14 people from Jordan have died in extreme heat during the Muslim haj pilgrimage in Saudi Arabia, South China Morning Post, quoting officials, reported. A further 17 people are missing, the Jordanian foreign ministry said on Sunday, according to the state agency Petra. The ministry had initially confirmed the deaths of six Jordanian pilgrims who had suffered heatstroke. The Jordanian Foreign Ministry has posted a message on microblogging site Platform X stating that the Directorate of Operations and Consular Affairs, and the Consulate General of the Kingdom in Jeddah, is following up with the relevant Saudi



authorities on the procedures for burying pilgrims and transporting the bodies of those whose families wish to be transported to the Kingdom as quickly as possible.
Ambassador Dr. Sufyan Al-Qudah, expressed his sincerest condolences and sympathy to the families of the deceased pilgrims.
A search is under way for the 17 missing people.
The pilgrimage began in Mecca on Friday evening in blistering heat. News of the deaths comes as pilgrims gathered atop Mount Arafat on Saturday, marking the main event of the pilgrimage, with the niece of one of the deceased telling CNN Arabic that her aunt had died on Mount Arafat and was buried in Saudi Arabia.
More than 1.8 million people are taking part in Hajj this year, according to the Saudi General Authority for Statistics, CNN reported.
The Hajj is one of the biggest religious gatherings in the world and the largest annual event in Saudi Arabia.

In A Video Message, Israel Warns Of Escalation Due To Hezbollah's Cross-Border Fire From Lebanon

Israeli military warns of heightened tensions due to Hezbollah's cross-border attacks from Lebanon, risking regional escalation

devastating consequences for Lebanon and the entire region," Israeli military spokesperson Rear Admiral Daniel Hagari said in a video statement. "Israel has a duty to defend the people of Israel. We will fulfill that duty." The US and France are working on a negotiated settlement to the hostilities along Lebanon's southern border. Hezbollah says it will not halt fire unless Israel stops its military offensive on Gaza. "Israel will take the necessary measures to protect its civilians — until security along our border with Lebanon is restored," Hagari said. Two UN officials in Lebanon warned there was a "very real" risk that a miscalculation along Lebanon's southern border could trigger a wider conflict. The Times Of Israel reported. In a statement, the UN special coordinator for Lebanon, Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert, and the head of UN peacekeeping forces in Lebanon, Aroldo Lazaro, said that they were "deeply concerned" about the escalation along Lebanon's border.



World In a video message on Sunday, the Israeli military warned that intensified cross-border fire from Lebanon's Hezbollah movement into Israel could trigger serious escalation amid the ongoing war in Gaza. Hezbollah last week unleashed its most extensive barrage yet of rockets and drones in the ongoing eight-month conflict with the Israeli military, running parallel to the Gaza war. Following the heavy exchanges over the past week, Sunday saw a marked drop in Hezbollah fire. The Israeli military said that it had carried out several air strikes against the group in southern Lebanon. Hezbollah's increasing aggression is bringing us to the brink of what could be a wider escalation, one that could have

to try to put a lid on the escalation. "UNACCEPTABLE TO HIM" This escalation comes as the Israeli military announced the daily pauses in the area from the Kerem Shalom Crossing to the Salah al-Din Road and then northwards. Meanwhile, US officials were also

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu criticised plans announced by the military to hold daily tactical pauses in fighting along one of the main roads into Gaza to facilitate aid delivery into the Palestinian enclave. "When the prime minister heard the reports of an 11-hour humanitarian pause in the morning, he turned to his military secretary and made it clear that this was unacceptable to him," an Israeli official said. The military clarified that normal operations would continue in Rafah, the main focus of its operation in southern Gaza, where eight soldiers were killed on Saturday. The reaction from the Israeli PM hints towards political tensions over the issue of aid coming into Gaza, where international groups have warned of a growing humanitarian crisis. Israeli National Security Minister Itamar Ben-Gvir, who leads one of the nationalist religious parties in Netanyahu's ruling coalition, denounced the idea of a tactical pause, saying whoever decided it was a "fool" who should lose their job.

8 Dead, 25 Injured After Goods Train Hits Kanchanjunga Express In Bengal

Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee has said doctors and disaster response teams have been rushed to the spot.

Kolkata: Eight people, including three Railway employees, have died and about 50 others injured after an express train collided with a goods train in Darjeeling district of West Bengal this morning. Kanchanjunga Express was travelling from Silchar in Assam to Sealdah in Kolkata when a goods train hit it from behind near Rangapani station, close to New Jalpaiguri. Three coaches of Kanchanjunga Express were derailed in the crash. One factor which limited casualties in the accident is the fact that the rear part of Kanchanjunga Express comprised of the cargo van and the guard's coach and the passenger compartments

were further ahead. Railway Board chairperson Jaya Verma Sinha told the media that the accident took place around 9 am. "The rescue work is complete. The injured have been shifted to the North Bengal medical college and they are being provided the best possible treatment," she said. The unaffected front portion of Kanchanjunga Express, she said, will resume its onward journey soon so that the passengers can reach their destination.

Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee has said doctors and disaster response teams have been rushed to the spot. "Shocked to learn, just now, about a tragic train accident, in Phansidewa area of Darjeeling district. While details are awaited, Kanchanjunga Express has reportedly been hit by a goods train. DM, SP, doctors, ambulances and disaster teams have been rushed to the site for rescue, recovery, medical assistance. Action on war-footing initiated," she posted on X. The Kanchanjunga Express is a daily train that connects Bengal with the Northeastern cities of Silchar and Agartala. This route is in the Chicken's Neck corridor, which connects the Northeast with the rest of the country. The accident on this line can potentially impact the movement of several



other trains.

The Kanchanjunga Express is frequently used by tourists to travel to Darjeeling. The accident comes at a time when Kolkata and neighbouring south Bengal are reeling under a sultry summer and many are travelling to the hill station for some relief. According to the information so far, the goods train overshot the signal and crashed into the Kanchanjunga Express. Teams of the National Disaster Response Force and ambulances have been rushed to the spot.

The Railways have released helpline numbers on which people could seek information about the situation. The numbers are 033-23508794 and 033-23833326 (Sealdah) and 03612731621, 03612731622 and 03612731623 at Guwahati.

Railways Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw has left for the accident spot. He has said in a post on X that rescue operations have started on a war footing. "Unfortunate accident in NFR zone. Rescue operations going on at war footing. Railways, NDRF and SDRF are working in close coordination. Injured are

being shifted to the hospital. Senior officials have reached site," he said. The Railway minister added that the ministry will give compensation of ₹ 10 lakh each to the families of the victims, ₹ 2.5 lakh for grievous injuries and ₹ 50,000 for minor injuries. Sabyasachi De, CPRO of Northeast Frontier Railway, said no notification about diversion or cancellation of other trains on the route has been issued yet. "We will try to complete the rescue operation as soon as possible," he said, adding that an accident relief train is on its way.

President Droupadi Murmu said the news of loss of lives in the train accident is "deeply distressing". My thoughts and prayers are with the bereaved families. I pray for the speedy recovery of the injured and success of relief and rescue operations," she said in a post on X. Prime Minister Narendra Modi expressed his condolences for the families of those killed in the accident. "The railway accident in West Bengal is saddening. Condolences to those who lost their loved ones. I pray that the injured recover at the earliest. Spoke to officials and took stock of the situation. Rescue operations are underway to assist the affected. The Railways Minister.

Eknath Shinde slams Opposition amid EVM tampering row: 'Spreading misinformation'

Mumbai: Maharashtra Chief Minister Eknath Shinde on Sunday said that the allegations of an EVM being tampered with by the relative of a Shiv Sena MP were wrong and that the Opposition was trying to spread misinformation. Shinde's remark came amid Shiv Sena (UBT) candidate Amol Kirtikar's allegations of foul play in Mumbai North West constituency where Shiv Sena candidate Ravindra Waikar won by just 48 votes and an FIR against Waikar's relative for using a mobile phone at a counting centre in Goregaon on June 4. As per the rules, the use of mobile phones is restricted at counting centres. The truth is people of the constituency have taken the decision to make Ravindra Waikar win the election. Out of 19 per cent of Shiv Sena's vote share, we got 14

per cent. People voted for bow and arrow. UBT has a winning strike rate of 42 per cent, and we have a strike rate of 48 per cent. So they have lost their confidence and are making false allegations," Eknath Shinde said. Shinde claimed that his party bagged two lakh more votes than the candidates of the Opposition bloc Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA), of which Sea (UBT) is a part, in Mumbai. Meanwhile, Vandana Suryavanshi, returning officer of Mumbai North West Lok Sabha constituency, refuted the report saying EVM was a standalone system with "robust administrative safeguards" to protect it from any kind of manipulation and that there was no need for an OTP to unlock it. "It is not programmable and has no wireless communication



capabilities. It is a complete lie being spread by a newspaper. We have issued a notice to mid-day newspapers under sections 499, 505 of the Indian Penal Code for defamation and spreading false news," Suryavanshi said at a press conference on Sunday. Waikar's brother-in-law Mangesh Pandilkar was booked on Wednesday under IPC section 188 (disobeying official order) for allegedly using a mobile phone at a counting centre in Goregaon on June 4, when

results of the general elections were announced. Speaking at the press conference, Suryavanshi said the personal mobile phone of one Dinesh Gurav, the data entry operator of Jogeshwari assembly constituency, was found in the hands of an unauthorised person and action is being taken in this regard. "Some people are trying to spread misinformation about the tampering of the EVM, which is completely lie and police will give explanation about it. The opposition won so many seats, but there is no problem. Why are questions being raised about the outcome of only Mumbai North West constituency and not any other result in the state? Is it because my candidate, Waikar, won and the Opposition lost?" Eknath Shinde asked.

Assam Government Officials To Pay Power Bills From July 1: Himanta Sarma

Guwahati, Assam: In a bid to end the 'VIP culture', Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma on Sunday announced that ministers and government officials will have to pay for their electricity consumption.

"We are ending the VIP Culture rule of paying electricity bills of Government officials using tax payer money. Myself and the Chief Secretary will set an example and start paying our power bills from July 1 onwards. Beginning July 2024, all public servants will have to pay for their own electricity consumption," Assam Chief Minister wrote in a post on X. Additionally, the chief minister emphasized the state's commitment to energy conservation, explaining that they have



launched a program to automatically disconnect electricity at all government offices, except for the Chief Minister Secretariat, Home, and Finance Departments, at 8 PM. This initiative aims to reduce electricity consumption, and it has already been implemented in 8,000 government offices, schools, and other institutions throughout the state. Our aim is to gradually move all Govt establishments to solar power and we are exploring beginning this work from our Medical Colleges and Universities across the State," Assam Chief Minister added. The Assam Chief Minister launched the Janata Bhawan Solar Project during a ceremony at the state Secretariat Complex on Sunday. This initiative aims to further the state's efforts in promoting renewable energy, featuring a 2.5-MW capacity grid-connected solar PV system installed on rooftops and ground surfaces. This project would yield an average of 3 lakh units of electricity monthly and the investment amount of ₹ 12.56 crore is projected to be recovered within 4 years, with monthly savings standing at about ₹ 30 lakh. The launch of the solar power project today has led to the Assam Secretariat Complex becoming the first-ever civil secretariat in the country that relies entirely on solar-generated electricity for daily consumption.

Parliamentary Affairs Minister Kiren Rijiju Meets Congress Chief Kharge



New Delhi: A week ahead of the first session of the new Lok Sabha, Parliamentary Affairs Minister Kiren Rijiju met Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge on Sunday. Rijiju met Kharge at the Congress chief's 10, Rajaji Marg residence in

what was said to be a courtesy call. The minister later shared a picture of the meeting in a post on X. "I had a pleasant courtesy meeting with Leader of Opposition in Rajya Sabha and Congress party president Shri Mallikarjun Kharge ji. He shared

with me about many valuable experiences of his life. Together, we all will work for the nation," he said in the post.

Assuming charge of the ministry last week, Rijiju had said there was no need for the government or the opposition to pull each other down on the basis of numerical strength and asserted that he would reach out to everyone for smooth functioning of Parliament.

The first session of the 18th Lok Sabha will begin on June 24 during which new members of the Lower House will take oath and the speaker elected. President Droupadi Murmu will address a joint sitting of the Lok Sabha and the Rajya Sabha on June 27 and is likely to outline the new government's roadmap for the next five years. The session will conclude on July 3. The first three days of the session will see the newly-elected MPs taking oath and electing the speaker of the Lower House. Both Houses of Parliament are expected to reconvene in the third week of July for the presentation of the Union Budget.

"Fight Against Terror In Jammu And Kashmir In Decisive Phase": Amit Shah

New Delhi: The recent terror attacks in Jammu and Kashmir show that terrorism has been forced to shrink to a proxy war from highly organised acts of violence, Union Home Minister Amit Shah said at a high-level meeting to take stock of the situation. The minister said the fight against terror in the Union Territory is in its decisive phase. In Sunday's meeting at the North Block, which was attended by National Security Advisor Ajit Doval, Lieutenant Governor of Jammu and Kashmir Manoj Sinha and Army Chief Manoj Pande among others, Mr Shah also directed security agencies to replicate the successes achieved in Kashmir valley through the area domination and the Zero Terror Plan in the Jammu division as well. The recent attacks, in which nine pilgrims and a CRPF personnel were killed, had taken place in Jammu. Reiterating the zero-tolerance policy against

terrorism, Mr Shah asserted that the PM Narendra Modi-led government will leave no stone unturned in rooting out terrorism from Jammu and Kashmir. The home minister directed security agencies to work in mission mode and ensure quick response in a coordinated manner while identifying vulnerable areas and addressing security concerns there. Pointing out the changes that have come about in the Kashmir Valley, the minister said the efforts of the government of India have yielded positive results with a significant reduction in terror-related incidents and this is reflected in the record flow of tourists in the Kashmir Valley. He also appreciated the role of the security agencies and the Jammu and Kashmir administration for the successful conduct of



the Lok Sabha elections, which witnessed a record voter turnout in the Union Territory. Officials said the home minister was given a thorough briefing on the situation in Jammu and Kashmir as well as the places where security forces plan to intensify counter-terrorism operations in

the coming days. Mr Shah's meeting came three days after the Prime Minister held a similar stock-taking exercise and directed officials to deploy the "full spectrum of counter-terror capabilities".

Terror Attacks

Terrorists struck four places in the Reasi, Kathua and Doda districts of Jammu and Kashmir in as many days last week, killing nine pilgrims headed to a temple as well as a CRPF personnel. Seven security personnel and several others were injured. Two suspected Pakistani terrorists were also killed in an encounter in Kathua. On June 9, terrorists opened fire on a 53-seater bus carrying pilgrims when it was en route to the Mata Vaishno Devi shrine in Katra from the Shiv Khori temple. The bus, which had pilgrims from Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan and Delhi, plunged into

a gorge, killing nine people and injuring 41 others. On June 11, terrorists fired at a joint checkpoint of the Rashtriya Rifles and police at Chattergalla in Bhandarwah while a search party in the Gandoh area of Doda district was attacked the next day, resulting in injuries to seven security personnel, including a policeman.

Security For Amarnath Yatra

In another meeting, the home minister reviewed the preparations for the annual Amarnath pilgrimage and said the government's priority is to ensure the smooth conduct of the yatra so that pilgrims don't face any difficulties. The yatra begins on June 29 and Mr Shah instructed to ensure sufficient deployment of personnel. Under the leadership of PM Modi, the government is committed to ensure a convenient and hassle-free experience for devotees and adopt eco-friendly measures in management of the Amarnath pilgrimage.

China-Pak roadblock looms large

WHILE there are critics of India's economic policies, it is now internationally recognised that the country's growth rate increased rapidly with the advent of economic liberalisation and the end of what was known as the 'Licence, Permit, Quota Raj'. The principal architect of these reforms was Manmohan Singh, who served as the Finance Minister and later became the Prime Minister. India is now the fastest-growing major economy in the world. Even as India moves to attain higher rates of growth, it must be borne in mind that its position and influence in the world will be determined largely by its economic and technological progress. Given these imperatives, India has no choice but to strengthen its ties in its immediate neighbourhood to ensure security and peace in the area extending from the Red Sea and the Persian Gulf to its West to the Straits of Malacca to its East. The main challenges India faces beyond its borders arise from the expansionist ambitions and policies of China.

India has also for long sought to develop closer ties with the oil-rich Gulf region, comprising Iran and the Arab states, where around six million Indians live. India has built good ties with Saudi Arabia, while simultaneously reinforcing its already strong relationship with the UAE. India also played an important role in restoring a cordial working relationship between the US and Saudi Arabia after intertempore comments made by President Biden about the Saudi monarchy were deeply resented by the Saudis. The UAE's National Security Adviser (NSA), Sheikh Tahnoun bin Zayed Al Nahyan, also participated in talks between his US counterpart Jake Sullivan and Saudi Arabia's Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman. The talks were facilitated by India's NSA Ajit Doval. An agreement for promoting cooperation between the UAE, US and India was also finalised and signed shortly thereafter. The stage is set for India to play an increasingly positive and cooperative role across the western shores of the Indian Ocean, together with Gulf nations. India-US relations have grown significantly after Washington decided that Delhi can and will endeavour to balance the growth of Chinese power across its Indian Ocean neighbourhood. Despite pretensions of friendship, China's policies remain committed to limiting and containing Indian influence. China continues to strengthen Pakistan's missile and nuclear weapons' capabilities. It also works in close collaboration with Pakistan along and across India's western borders with Afghanistan. New Delhi's recent moves for strengthening ties with Iran, including the construction of the strategic Chabahar port, give it increasing economic and maritime access to Central Asia and limit space for Pakistan to hinder India's access to Afghanistan. While the US had objected to India's growing ties with Iran, it now appears reconciled to Delhi going ahead with the project for a transport corridor linking India to Afghanistan and Iran. Predictably, Pakistan is not pleased with this transportation corridor, as it prevents Rawalpindi from hindering India's access to Afghanistan, Iran and Central Asia. This corridor, therefore, becomes a key gateway for India's access to the International North-South Transport Corridor, which, in turn, would go on to link India to Central Asia and Russia, and ultimately to Europe by sea, rail and road.

One important factor that has cast a shadow on India-US relations is the constant criticism of the alleged curtailment of the freedom of speech in India by the US media. There is a widespread feeling that this media flak enjoys the support of the Biden administration. There is also a feeling that such criticism may be muted should Donald Trump, who has been friendly to India, emerge victorious in the presidential elections later this year. India may be among the few countries whose leadership and people found Trump friendly and blunt during his visit to India. Trump has no illusions or expectations about China and has little inclination to even think about Pakistan.

Unlike the Biden administration's practice, then President Trump delivered no sermons about democracy in India. Nevertheless, relations with the US have grown steadily, with considerable cooperation for strengthening maritime links. This has been an important development amid the tensions and piracy in the high seas across the Indian Ocean that have accompanied.

Empower the poor to mitigate effects of climate change

The present model of economic development perpetuates inequalities and fails to reallocate and redistribute resources.

ENVIRONMENTAL conservation and climate issues were consigned to oblivion by various political parties in the recent Lok Sabha elections, despite a heatwave sweeping through many parts of the country. Delhi is making headlines over its drinking water crisis. The AAP government has claimed that the Capital is facing a water shortage of 50 million gallons per day. The most polluted capital city in the world is struggling to cope with the heatwave. The weather conditions have hit poor people the hardest; they lack access to basic needs, such as food, water, health, housing and electricity, to fight or adapt to heatwaves. The impact of climate change is not the same for the rich and the poor. Societal inequalities exacerbate the effect of heatwaves on the poor, whereas the rich can afford to adapt to them. Over 80 per cent of the street vendors surveyed in Delhi reported a decline in customers amid the heatwave in April and May, and around 50 per cent experienced significant income loss, according to a report by think tank Greenpeace India and the National Hawker Federation.

While the rich contribute to climate change, it is the poor that suffer its negative effects, such as high temperatures or heatwaves. Rising temperatures cause a multitude of problems, such as health issues, water scarcity and food adulteration. Heatwave-related morbidities like dehydration, weakness, restlessness, headache, diarrhoea, skin rashes, heatstroke and sleeplessness continue to affect people, especially children, the elderly, women and those with comorbidities.

Climate change has adversely affected the adequacy, accessibility and affordability of drinking water, with an increase in demand for it in Delhi. Residents, especially those in slums, continue to grapple with water shortage. The fundamental right to access clean water is denied even as the government proclaims the success of the Jal Jeevan Mission for an assured supply of rural drinking water and the Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation for the universal coverage of drinking water supply in urban areas. Further, the past two months have seen a high demand for climate adaptation appliances like fans, air coolers, air conditioners and refrigerators in India. And there has been a huge surge in the consumption of electricity. Frequent incidents of fire



are reported amid high temperatures and a corresponding increase in the consumption of electricity to ward off the heat. The NCR has around 750 slum settlements, housing 3,50,000 families with a total population of 20 lakh. Poverty, sweltering heatwaves and an inadequacy of water have worsened the living conditions of slum-dwellers. With limited economic resilience, the poor are unable to adapt to the climate. The poor seek relief from the excessive heat inside their homes — which have plastic and asbestos roofs — in open spaces like footpaths, parks and the areas under flyovers. Children, the elderly and women remain the hardest hit. The rich, on the other hand, can adapt to the heatwaves, as they have access to water and air conditioners. These unsustainable human lifestyles and the extractive and exploitative use of common property resources can create problems for the common man in India. Governments are hardly prepared to face the greater developmental challenges posed by climate change. There is an urgent need to economically empower the poor to battle climate change. Sunstroke is not treated as a natural disaster in policy forums, and there are no rehabilitation centres or livelihood support for the poor who suffer because of heatwaves. There is an

urgent need to assess urban climate risks for each city for a holistic climate resilience policy in India. The urban climate risk and vulnerability assessment — in terms of the number of people vulnerable to climate-related disasters, the damage to humans and infrastructure and the financial support needed to rebuild — is important for climate resilience. The system requires three kinds of resources to fight climate change at the city level: natural (forest and water), man-made (infrastructure) and human (technology and employment). Without them, an individual's capacity for climate resilience is highly limited. Climate resilience largely relies on the sustainable development of cities through practices like rainwater harvesting, replenishing groundwater and the conservation of urban forests, land, biodiversity, lakes, rivers and trees. Indian cities lack modern and sustainable infrastructure. Most of the infrastructure is old, and it cannot support the growing demands, for example, multimodal public transport, 24x7 water supply, sewage and solid waste management, green energy, urban housing and public hospitals and schools.

It is also imperative to improve the human capital through education, technology, health, jobs and a decline in poverty and income inequality. Inclusive development, such as social protection, acts as an insurance against climate change. The poor need financial, technical and institutional support in the form of poverty reduction programmes, social security schemes, etc, to improve their quality of life and develop climate resilience. Indian cities need to have institutional capacity to adapt to climate change. Systemic wealth and income inequalities have exacerbated the impact of climate change on the poor. The present model of economic development perpetuates inequalities and fails to reallocate and redistribute resources. Economic inequality and climate change are intricately linked to an unequal distribution of income and resources, limiting the economic resilience of the poor to fight climate change. Therefore, there is an urgent need to restructure economic and environmental governance systems to achieve inclusive development and strike a balance between ecological and economic stability to tackle climate change in India.

J&K terror attacks

India's response must be firm and forceful

A series of terror attacks in Jammu and Kashmir has prompted Prime Minister Narendra Modi to tell officials to deploy the 'full spectrum of counter-terror capabilities'. Terrorists have struck in Reasi, Kathua and Doda districts within a week, killing nine civilians and a CRPF jawan. The Reasi incident, in which gunmen opened fire on a bus carrying pilgrims when it was en route to the Mata Vaishno Devi shrine on Sunday, coincided with the swearing-in ceremony of the new government at the Centre. The worrisome security situation poses a big challenge to the Modi dispensation, which is planning to hold Assembly elections in the state-turned-UT later this year. The Centre has also promised to restore J&K's statehood and consider the withdrawal of the Armed Forces Special Powers Act.

The encouraging turnout in Kashmir in the recent Lok Sabha elections has sent out a clear message that the people of the trouble-torn Valley have faith in the



democratic process. However, terrorists and their handlers are unleashing violence in a bid to undermine the

turnaround. Accusing Pakistan of trying to disturb peace in the UT through its mercenaries, J&K DGP RR Swain has asserted that the country's security forces would give a befitting reply to the enemy. He has also warned local agents of the hostile neighbour not to support militancy. It's this local assistance that is spurring infiltrators from across the border to execute terror strikes with apparent ease.

Amid these attacks comes the reappointment of Ajit Doval as National Security Adviser. He played a key role in two major counter-terror operations — the surgical strikes in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir after the Uri attack of 2016 and the Balakot airstrikes in the wake of the Pulwama suicide bombing in 2019. Doval will be called upon to help the PM deal with the current situation in a firm and forceful manner. All eyes will be on India's military and diplomatic response.

Wrong to tar a community with the same brush

India is too big a country to tolerate parochial thinking. Magnanimity will take the nation forward.

A CISF constable, Kulwinder Kaur, slapped newly elected BJP MP Kangana Ranaut at the Chandigarh airport last week. The constable was upset over controversial remarks made by the actor-turned-politician about the women who had participated in the farmers' agitation at Delhi's borders in 2020-21. Punjab's farming community had spearheaded the year-long stir against the three farm laws, which were eventually repealed by the Centre. Soon after the recent incident, Kangana expressed concern over a 'shocking rise in terror and violence in Punjab'. Misconduct by an on-duty uniformed officer can neither be defended nor justified. It's a case of gross indiscipline deserving the due process of legal action. Whatever the grievances or grudges of any Indian in any state, no one can be allowed to resort to an act which demoralises his/her unit, force and those whose duty it is to ensure that safety and security in sensitive operational areas are not breached. Unfortunately, the keepers of the law brazenly failed to do that. Having said that, let us dispassionately and objectively go beyond the 'slapgate' and dig deep into history and polity to remember not to repeat the mistakes of the past. Brutal facts of Indian history are often forgotten or ignored. Bengal in the east and Punjab in the north-west were the two biggest provinces of British India. Had India not been partitioned in 1947, both Bengal and Punjab would have sent more than 100 MPs each to the Lok Sabha, far more than Uttar Pradesh's 80.

Ironically, the two 'biggest' provinces were dismembered. To the misfortune of post-1947 Punjab, a reorganisation took place in 1966. The shrinking of territory, however, was followed by epochal events which created chronic problems. It happened due to the lapses of India's ruling class, which, in turn, contaminated the psyche of a sizeable proportion of the people. The latter, though apolitical, were nevertheless lured into harbouring animosity towards Bengalis from the 1960s and then Punjabis (particularly Sikhs) since the 1980s. Seeing is believing, it's rightly said. The Mao Zedong-led Communist Party of China and the People's Liberation



Army did not stop their machinations even after invading India in October 1962. First, they penetrated the entire North-East and followed it up with an assault on the truncated state of West Bengal, which witnessed the Naxalbari firing on May 24, 1967. A few thousand Hindu Bengalis, 'brainwashed' by leftist ideology and unscrupulously nurtured by local traders, politicians and intellectuals as well as propped up by Chinese money, caused untold damage to the eastern state for over 10 years. The result — it gave birth to 'racial/ethnic profiling', an 'effective' way to prevent even the best and the brightest minds from moving forward. Virtually

every Bengali was a 'communist' in the eyes of all outside the state, especially in the national capital. In March 1972, this author was asked by a UPSC member: 'Oh, you are a Bengali! Are you a Naxalite?'

After the Bengali 'racial/ethnic profiling' came the turn of Sikhs in the 1980s amid the Khalistan movement. The vilification was also seen during the 2020-21 farmers' agitation, when some political leaders branded protesters as Khalistanis and anti-nationals. Since one has had the experience of gross humiliation and the choicest of unprovoked abuse on several occasions, including in an office of the Government of India at least

twice in 35 years, one has invariably taken pains to ensure that the ignominy one faced without any reason must not be inflicted on our countrymen from Punjab for the fault of a few. 'Ethnic profiling' and reckless public abuse of a community must be eschewed by all, however high or mighty. Else, anything can happen, as witnessed at the Chandigarh airport.

Indeed, one must never forget that 1.4 billion Indians constitute a bewildering variety of people. Hence, there is a need for circumspection, sensitivity, understanding and empathy. Ignorance cannot be an excuse for an Indian even if he/she is not conversant with the language of a state where his professional work takes him/her. It's time to make efforts to identify oneself with the people of the state where one works, and vice versa. Thus, every non-Punjabi in Punjab would be a Punjabi; every non-Tamil in Chennai a Tamil; every non-Marathi in Mumbai a Marathi; and every non-Bengali in Kolkata a Bengali. It's axiomatic that people en masse learn to respect fellow Indians from other states and avoid making unprovoked remarks dripping with communal venom.

The point is simple: The Constitution needs to be thoroughly studied to understand the spirit and ethos of the country. This nation can never be governed by anyone on the basis of a make-believe scenario. Every province/state is unique and different from others. Hence, a few or one individual's crime or error doesn't make the entire state a den of criminals. And such mistakes are creating and increasing tension, animosity and hatred in the society and polity of India.

It's time to learn lessons from historical blunders to avoid recurrence of the Chandigarh episode. If one uniformed officer is charged with dereliction of duty, that does not give anyone the licence to tar an entire state or community with the same brush. It happened in Chandigarh. It could easily have been Kanpur, Kolkata, Kannur, Jammu, Jodhpur or Delhi. It's time for justice, fair play and objectivity, not impulsive provocation. India is too big a country to tolerate parochial thinking. Magnanimity will take India forward.

NEWS BOX

SL vs NED: Sri Lanka snap winless run as Netherlands bow out of tournament

New Delhi. Sri Lanka ended their winless run in the T20 World Cup 2024 with an 83-run win over Netherlands in St. Lucia on June 17, Monday. Charith Asalanka and Kusal Mendis scored 46 runs each as Sri Lanka posted 201 runs in their innings, becoming only the second team to post a 200-plus score in this year's tournament. Netherlands had come into the contest with a slim hope of making it to the Super 8s but their fate also depended on the Bangladesh vs Nepal clash. The Netherlands, after winning the toss and opting to bowl first, got off to the perfect start when Kingma was able to dismiss Pathum Nissanka for a duck in the very first over. The Dutch were hoping to pile on the pressure but Kamindu Mendis and Kusal Mendis steadied the ship with a 39-run stand before the former was dismissed for 17. Kusal and Dhananjaya de Silva then took the scoring rate up during their partnership. Kusal scored 46 off 29 balls before he was dismissed in the 12th over, but the platform was set. Dhananjaya and Asalanka continued the onslaught as the former scored 34 off 26 balls before heading back to the pavilion. Asalanka looked to be in fine nick as he scored 46 off 21 balls and hit 5 sixes in his knock as the Dutch bowlers struggled to stop the run flow.

Van Beek provided some respite with two wickets off consecutive deliveries to end Asalanka's stay and dismiss Shanaka for a duck. But, Angelo Mathews and skipper Wanindu Hasaranga ensured Sri Lanka had a big finish. Hasaranga hit 20 off 6 balls as the Netherlands were given a target of 202. However, they needed to win the game in quick time to stand any chance of qualifying. There was added pressure as Bangladesh were dominating Nepal with the ball after posting just 106 runs.

Michael Levitt was aggressive from the start and scored 31 off 23 balls with a couple of boundaries and 3 sixes. But wickets kept tumbling for the Netherlands as they looked to chase the target in record time. The bowlers led by Hasaranga chipped away the wickets and by the 9th over, the dreaded news came in for Dutch fans. As Sybrand Engelbrecht departed, Bangladesh in St. Vincent secured a 21-run win against Nepal and secured passage into the Super 8s and knocked out the Netherlands. The Dutch were left playing for pride but none of the batters could hold fort and were reduced to 99 for 8 in the 15th over. Captain Edwards provided some resistance with 31 runs in the end, but the innings came to an end at 118 in the 17th over. Pathirana was the pick of the bowlers with 2 wickets for 12 runs in his 3 matches. For Sri Lanka and Hasaranga, the match was the end of a wretched campaign in all respects. The team didn't perform well with bat and ball in the matches against South Africa and Bangladesh, something Mahesh Theekshana alluded to.

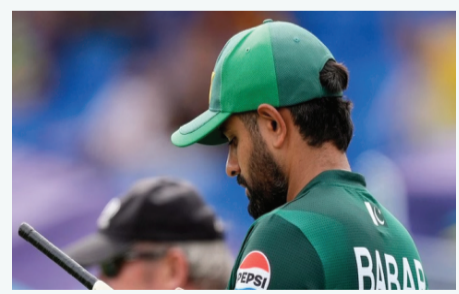
I cannot play in every player's place: Babar Azam says Pakistan failed as a team

New Delhi. Pakistan skipper Babar Azam claimed that the players failed as a team and that's the reason behind their flop show in the T20 World Cup. Pakistan, who were knocked out before reaching the Super 8s, got a consolation win against Ireland in Florida on June 16, Sunday. However, they were made to work hard for the win as the batting once again failed to impress.

Speaking after the win at the press conference, Babar said Pakistan's poor show isn't down to one person and claimed he cannot be playing in the place of everyone else. The Pakistan skipper said they haven't been able to apply, follow and finish things and have to accept that they failed as a team in the end.

PAK vs IRE: HIGHLIGHTS

Sir, as I have said earlier, everyone is sad. As a team, we did not play. I told you that we did not lose this because of one person. We are losing as a team. I am not saying this because of one person. You are pointing out that because of the captain, I cannot play in every player's place. There are 11 players and each of them has a role. That's why they came here to play the World Cup. I think we as a team have not been able to apply, follow and finish things. We have to settle down and accept that we didn't play well as a team," said Babar.



Will give my feedback

Famously, after losing to India, PCB chairman Mohsin Naqvi said that Pakistan cricket needs a surgery. Babar was asked about this and he once again reiterated that they didn't do well as a team and he would head back and give his feedback to the board.

"As you said earlier, we have played the Asia Cup final, the World Cup final, and the semi-final as well. But we were not able to finish. But we should also see that we have achieved those things. Unfortunately, we didn't achieve it this time. We didn't qualify. We accept it as a team. We are not saying that we don't accept it. I as a captain and as a team accept that we didn't play the same cricket. We couldn't perform the same way. The expectations that we had made of the team, the way our senior players were, we didn't execute."

BAN vs NEP: Bangladesh advance to Super 8 after fending off feisty Nepal

T20 World Cup 2024: Tanzim

Hasan Sakib picked up 4 wickets as Najmul Hossain Shanto's Bangladesh beat Nepal by 21 runs to make their way through to the Super 8.

New Delhi. Bangladesh went through to the Super 8 of the T20 World Cup 2024 after beating Nepal by 21 runs on Monday, June 17 at the Arnos Vale Ground in Kingstown, St Vincent. After running Aiden Markram's South Africa close, Nepal tried their hearts out to secure victory against a Test playing nation in the history of the mega event, but fell short yet again. The Tigers, in the meantime, finished second in the table with 6 points and a net run rate of -0.333 thanks to wins in 3 out of 4 games.

BAN vs NEP, T20 World Cup Highlights

Bangladesh also set the record of defending the lowest score in the T20 World Cups. Against Nepal, Bangladesh did not make the



best of starts as Tanzim Hasan Tamim gave his wicket away to Sompal Kami on the very first ball of the innings. Najmul Hossain Shanto's disastrous campaign with the bat continued after Dipendra Singh Airee dismissed him. Litton Das tried to put his head down before getting out on 10. Towhid Hridoy, Bangladesh's standout batter this season, got out cheaply as well. Shakib Al

Hasan, Jaker Ali Anik and Mahmudullah Riyad got starts with knocks of 17, 12 and 13 respectively, before departing. It was Rishad Hossain's cameo of 13 off 7 and Taskin Ahmed's unbeaten 12 that helped the Tigers post 106 on the board in 19.3 overs. For Sadeep Lamichhane, it was a memorable day after he became the second-fastest to the landmark of 100 T20I wickets.

Lamichhane finished with figures of 4-1-17-2. Sompal Kami, Dipendra Singh Airee and skipper Rohit Paudel picked up 3 wickets apiece.

Tanzim Hasan rattles Nepal

Bangladesh seized the initiative right from the word go after a brilliant spell of bowling from Tanzim Hasan Sakib. The speedster leaked a boundary early, but then bowled 21 dot balls to finish with figures of 4-2-7-4. Tanzim picked up the wickets of Kushal Bhurtel, Anil Sah, Rohit Paudel and Sundeep Jora, who had replaced Karan KC in the XI. Aasif Sheikh, who played a handy knock against the Proteas, scored 17 runs off 14 balls with 4 fours before Mustafizur Rahman dismissed him. From there on, Kushal Malla and Dipendra Singh Airee took Nepal forward and brought up their 50-run partnership off 53 balls. But Mustafizur separated them after dismissing Malla, who scored 27 runs off 40 balls. Bangladesh also made the record of defending the lowest score in T20 World Cups. Against Nepal, Bangladesh did not make the best of starts as Tanzim Hasan Tamim gave his wicket away to Sompal Kami in the very first ball of the innings.

BAN vs NEP: Najmul Hossain Shanto urges Bangladesh batters to buckle up in Super 8

New Delhi. Najmul Hossain Shanto said that he was delighted after Bangladesh made their way through to the Super 8 of the T20 World Cup 2024. However, the skipper also admitted that the Tigers have not been up to the mark as far as their batting is concerned. On Monday, Bangladesh beat Nepal by 21 runs at the Arnos Vale Ground in Kingstown, St Vincent after defending the lowest score (106) in the history of the mega event. Defending the modest score, they bowled Nepal out for 85 in 19.3 overs. Concerns remained with their batting as Shanto, Litton Das and Tanzim Hasan Tamim kept struggling in the top order. Shanto said that the Tigers are confident of defending low scores, but urged the batters to step up with tough matches coming up in the Super

To see West Indies at No.3 in T20I rankings a pleasing feeling: Rovman Powell

New Delhi. West Indies captain Rovman Powell said he is happy to see the side go third on the ICC T20I team rankings ahead of their clash against Afghanistan on June 18, Tuesday. The 2-time champions were in a tight spot some time ago and in need of a revival as they had missed the ODI World Cup last year and the T20 World Cup in 2022. Under Powell's captaincy, they have enjoyed a resurgence and climbed to the third spot.

Speaking ahead of their top of the table Group C clash with Afghanistan, Powell said they go have pressure playing a World Cup at home but it is all about managing it in the end. The batter was pleased to see West Indies continue their rise up the rankings after being in the bottom half when he took over and feels it is special to be in a side that is ranked top 3 in the world at the moment.

"I think pressure is always there, especially when you're at home, especially when you're playing a World Cup at home. Pressure is



always there, but it's for us as individuals to manage those pressures. And I think for me as captain, when I started this journey 12 or 14 months ago, when I took over as captain, we were at eight or nine in the ranking." To see us at number three now in the world is a pleasing feeling. And it shows that not just myself, but the players are coming together and we're doing something right. I've never played in a West Indies team that is ranked number three in the world. So that for me is something special and hopefully, just

hopefully, we can continue to climb those rankings," said Powell at the press conference.

Good practice before Super 8

West Indies and Afghanistan have been dominant in their group and Powell feels their opponents on Tuesday have a lot of match winners in their lineup. The West Indies skipper feels that his side will have to be at the top of their game to beat them and the match will be good practice before heading into the Super 8 matches.

"Obviously, it's a top of the table clash. Afghanistan have been playing good T20 cricket and consistent T20 cricket. They have a lot of match winners. So, it's something that we have to come with our best game. As I said before, they're playing good T20 cricket. So, it's an opportunity for us to play against another world class side. Very good practice going into the Super 8 games," said Powell.

T20 World Cup 2024: Full Super 8s schedule confirmed as India start on June 20



New Delhi. The Super 8 fixtures for the T20 World Cup 2024 has been set as Bangladesh were able to beat Nepal to secure their passage from Group D. Najmul Shanto and Co. needed a win against the resilient Nepal team and was facing pressure from the Netherlands, who were facing Sri Lanka in St Lucia. Bangladesh were made to work hard to get the win by Nepal, who bundled

them out for just 106 runs. However, the bowlers stepped up to the plate for Bangladesh, with Tanzim Hasan picking up 4 wickets for just 7 runs and Mustafizur Rahman got 3. Shakib Al Hasan added the finishing touches as Bangladesh won the match by 21 runs. The Netherlands, on the other hand, lost their game to Sri Lanka by 83 runs and were knocked out of the

The Super 8s are set, and the full fixtures have been revealed as Bangladesh qualified after beating Nepal on June 17, Monday. India's schedule has been revealed as they start their Super 8 campaign on June 20.

tournament. With that, the Super 8 of the tournament was confirmed and with that, the fixtures for the next phase as well. The 8 teams to qualify are India (Group A), USA (Group A), Australia (Group B), England (Group B), Afghanistan (Group C), West Indies (Group C), South Africa (Group D) and Bangladesh (Group D). The 12 matches will take place in the West Indies, with Antigua, Barbados, St Lucia, and St Vincent serving as the hosts.

Super 8: India's full fixtures

India will begin their campaign on June 20, against Afghanistan at Barbados. Then they head to Antigua to face Bangladesh, two days later before ending the Super 8 stage with a mouthwatering clash against Australia at St Lucia on June 24. All of India's matches will start at 8 PM IST.

Jonathan Trott says exposure in IPL has made a difference to Afghanistan cricket

Pakistan were knocked out of the T20 World Cup 2024 in the group stage. While many blamed captain Babar Azam and the senior members of the team, the real fault possibly lied with the Pakistan Cricket Board, who sabotaged the whole campaign.

New Delhi. Head coach Jonathan Trott reckoned that taking part in the Indian Premier League (IPL) and other franchise tournaments have helped Afghanistan cricket grow big time over the years. The Afghans have had a dream run in the T20 World Cup 2024, having already made their way through to the Super 8 on the back of 3

wins in a row. Rashid Khan, Mohammad Nabi, Azmatullah Omarzai and Noor Ahmad were amongst the Afghan cricketers who took part in the previous edition of the IPL.

Trott said he notices changes in the players whenever they return from playing in domestic leagues around the world. Trott expressed his thoughts prior to Afghanistan's last Group C match against the West Indies on Tuesday, June 18 at the Daren Sammy National Cricket Stadium in Gros Islet, St Lucia.

"Boys take a lot of pride" "Well, I think the more exposure players have got to the IPL and different franchises where there's pressure all the time in this format of the game, I think that'll only do us well and serve us well going forward. I know that the players - and we had a lot of players at the



IPL every time they come back, I can see a little bit of a difference or a change every time they go away to franchise good and bad changes," Trott said in the pre-match press conference. T20 World Cup Coverage | Points Table | T20 World Cup 2024 Schedule

| Player Stats

"It's just about you know holding on to those good ones and you know making sure that we address things that need to be addressed. So, the guys are ready we just had a really good training session there was a lot of focus there. I know the boys take a lot of pride in representing their country. So tomorrow, we'll be on it," Trott added.

In the Super 8, Afghanistan will be up against India, Australia and Bangladesh on June 20, 22 and 24 respectively. But as of now, Rashid's men will look to stay unbeaten and finish the group stage on top of the table. They began their campaign with a 125-run over Uganda, after which they beat New Zealand by 84 runs. Thereafter, the Afghans got the better of PNG to win 3 matches in a row.



Shama Sikander

Leaves Fans Jaw-Dropped With Her Hottest Ever Photos



Hotness Alert! Shama Sikander never fails to impress all with her gorgeous looks. Each time the actress drops her photos online, she leaves everyone completely stunned. On Saturday afternoon too, Shama took to her Instagram handle and shared a series of pictures, which are now setting fire online. In these latest clicks, Shama Sikander was seen posing in a cheetah-printed monokini. She was seen flaunting her curves as she posed in the backdrop of a swimming pool.

Needless to say, Shama's photos left her fans jaw-dropped. Soon after the pictures were shared, fans rushed to the comments section to compliment the actress for her looks. "Tujhe sooraj kahu yaa phir chand Tere chehre mee dono dikhai dete hai ♥️", one of the fans wrote. "Uff Bs kro ab Hotness Overload ♥️", added another. "You deserve to be on the cover of a magazine!", a third comment read. "Extremely Lovely – Fantastic Looks ♥️", wrote another user.

Meanwhile, on the work front, Shama Sikander has worked in several shows including Baal Veer, Ye Meri Life Hai and Maaya: Slave of Her Desires among others. Even though she has been away from television screens for quite some time now, she often stuns fans with her impeccable fashion sense. Previously, in an interview with News18 Showsha, Shama shared that she wants to work in web series and films only now and does not want to return to television. She revealed that she has not watched TV shows for over six years now and added, "I'm looking at only web series and feature films. I believe in doing different kinds of cinema, stories that matter. I want to do characters on screen that can add to people's lives. I feel that content can be used for great purpose for the well-being of everyone in all its art and glory. So I want to do meaty roles, and powerful performances as I am a performer and I deserve the best," she told us.

When Arjun Kapoor Revealed Why His Relationship With Sonakshi Sinha Didn't Last: 'Some Equations...'



If you saw the All India Bakchod (AIB) roast, you probably noticed the jokes aimed at Arjun Kapoor and Sonakshi Sinha as a couple. It seemed that sparks flew between the two during the filming of Tevar, but they reportedly ended their relationship soon after the movie wrapped up. When interviewed by Mumbai Mirror, Arjun was asked about what went wrong with Sonakshi. He responded, "Some equations last. Others don't go beyond the making of a film because after it is over, people go their separate ways. I am still really fond of her as an individual. Unfortunately, it is always made to seem like we do not acknowledge each other at parties, which is not the case. We always make it a point to greet each other. There is no pressure on either of us to maintain an equation beyond a certain amount of time." According to a report in DNA, a fundamental difference in their personalities was the main reason for their split. A source mentioned, "Sonakshi is a very emotional girl. She doesn't hide her feelings for those she cares about. Arjun, on the other hand, is more low-key. He obviously couldn't handle her strong emotions." "Sonakshi, like most girls, wanted to be around him all the time. He was feeling a little stifled by the constant togetherness and the calls. It was just happening all too fast for him. You can't blame either for this split," another source quipped. Sonakshi Sinha will tie the knot with her longtime beau, Zaheer Iqbal on June 23, 2024. Recently, their wedding invite also went viral on social media. Recently, Sonakshi's 'mama' Pahlaj Nihalani, who is very close to the Sinha family and has been friends with Shatrughan Sinha since 1977, also confirmed the wedding. "I'm Sonakshi's mama. All my blessings to her and Zaheer. They are finally getting married. I send them all my good wishes," he told Zoom. Prior to this, veteran actress Poonam Dhillon also confirmed receiving Sonakshi's wedding invite when told Instant Bollywood. "Boht pyara invite bheja hai usne. I have known her since she was a little girl, uski poori journey dekhi hai toh bhagwaan kare boht khush rahe."

Dalljiet Kaur Reacts As Karishma Tanna Slams Nikhil Patel: 'This Man Has Done Wrong To Her...'



Amidst the ongoing turbulence in the relationship between Dalljiet Kaur and her estranged husband Nikhil Patel, the couple has consistently made headlines. Dalljiet's social media posts have been rife with accusations of infidelity against Nikhil, while he has publicly acknowledged the end of their relationship and has also issued a legal notice to her. Though Dalljiet has refrained from making an official statement concerning the rumored separation, fresh reports indicate that she has now taken legal action against Nikhil Patel. The stay order filed by Dalljiet prevents Nikhil from forcing her to leave their shared residence or disposing of her belongings. This development has created a significant buzz online today. In a show of solidarity, actress Karishma Tanna took to Instagram to express her unwavering support for Dalljiet. Sharing the news on her Instagram story, Karishma called out Nikhil for his alleged wrongdoing and reassured Dalljiet of her steadfast loyalty. She wrote, "Whatever happened shouldn't have happened. My full support is with my dearest friend @kaurdalljiet. This man has done wrong to her and I will stand by her till the end. Strong women do not seek revenge. They move on and allow karma to do the work!!" Reposting Karishma Tanna's supportive message on her Instagram Stories, Dalljiet Kaur expressed her gratitude towards the actress. She wrote, "One day as it comes, KT. Thank you!"

Amid Dalljiet Kaur's cryptic posts on her Instagram, Nikhil Patel gave an interview to ETimes, offering his perspective on the situation. He clarified that their marriage, conducted according to Hindu rituals, held cultural but not legal significance. Nikhil further explained that Dalljiet struggled with his lifestyle in Kenya, leading to numerous cultural clashes that strained their relationship. He noted that Dalljiet's return to India marked the end of their marriage. Recently, Dalljiet had shared a screenshot of one of Nikhil's gym posts in her Instagram Stories, pointing out the

Rashmika Mandanna

Shares Vijay Deverakonda's Dear Comrade Post, Calls The Film 'Super Special'

Actor Vijay Deverakonda posted a throwback photo with actress Rashmika Mandanna from the sets of 'Dear Comrade' on his official Instagram. The post commemorated the film's big achievement – that of surpassing 400 million views on YouTube. Despite its underwhelming box office performance, the movie garnered a large audience on YouTube. Sharing the news with his fans, Vijay wrote, "400 million of you saw it. Dear Comrade – from the sadness we felt on the day of release in 2019 to the immense love we have for the film till today. Dear Comrade is a film I loved making, a story I loved telling."

And now, the film's female lead and Vijay's rumored girlfriend Rashmika Mandanna has reacted to it. Re-sharing the photo, she wrote, "400 mil love. Dear Comrade was and will always be super special to me!!" Check out the post here: Recently, Rashmika Mandanna called Vijay Deverakonda's younger brother, actor Anand Deverakonda, her "family" during an event. They were seen having a candid conversation during the pre-release event of Anand's film 'Gam Gam Ganesh'. He asked Rashmika about her favourite co-star. To which, Rashmika jokingly answered, "Anand, you are like family to me; how can you put me on the spot like this?". Later, Rashmika said that her favourite co-star is Vijay Deverakonda. She called him the "Rowdy Boy."



After the video went viral, fans commented that with this "family" statement, Rashmika Mandanna has confirmed her wedding rumours to Vijay Deverakonda. Previously, rumours about Vijay Deverakonda getting engaged took the internet by storm. However, he denied the speculation by saying, "I'm not getting engaged or married in February. It feels like the press just wants to get me married every two years. I hear this rumour

every year. They're just walking around waiting to catch me and get me married. In April this year, Vijay and rumored girlfriend Rashmika Mandanna reportedly celebrated her birthday together in Abu Dhabi. Even though the actors did not confirm their vacation,

same location from where Rashmika also shared her pictures."

