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# The Researchers'

## NEWS BOX

### How mute button will work at tonight's Biden-Trump debate

**World.** Joe Biden and Donald Trump will clash with each other at the much-awaited first presidential debate on CNN Thursday. This is the first time that there will be no live audience to cheer or boo the speakers. There will also be a mute button -- which was introduced in 2020 from the second debate after Trump and Biden talked over each other in the first debate. CNN's debate night control room will mute the microphones of candidates when it is not their turn to speak.

How will the mute button work?  
Behind the podiums, there will be two green lights which are a signal that his microphones are on. When the lights are off, the microphone is mute. CNN showed how the mute button will work and how will viewers see it on their screen. When a candidate speaks, the microphone of the other remains off and at that time if the second one interrupts the first one, his voice will not reach the viewers -- he will only be seen miming.

— CollinRugg (@CollinRugg)

But as they are standing at lecterns that are only 8 feet apart, they will hear each other, even if on mute.

In the demo video, CNN reiterated that both the campaign agreed to abide by these rules. "By agreeing to participate in this debate, both campaigns and candidates have also agreed to abide by these rules," CNN said. The 90-minute debate will include two commercial breaks, and campaign staff cannot interact with their candidate during the break, the network said. The second debate between Biden and Trump is slated for September on ABC.

CNN moderators Jake Tapper and Dana Bash, already accused by Trump's campaign of spreading fake news against Trump, will use "all tools at their disposal" to ensure a civilized discussion. The debate starts at 9 pm and will continue for 90 minutes -- with only two commercial breaks. This is a normal length for a presidential debate, but the commercial breaks are noteworthy: General-election debates in past cycles, sponsored by the Commission on Presidential Debates rather than an individual news organization, did not have them. The candidates will not be allowed to talk to their aides during the commercial breaks, but they will have time to take a breather and collect themselves in a way they would not have in past years.

### Le Pen threatens to challenge Macron's control on military



**World.** With just three days to go until France's landmark legislative election, far-right politician Marine Le Pen on Thursday raised the question of who would be in charge of the military if her party takes over the govt after the two-round balloting.

The early elections are plunging France into uncharted territory, and political scientists are scrambling to interpret how exactly Prez Macron and a PM who is hostile to most of his policies will share power if Le Pen's National Rally wins majority in the National Assembly. Macron has three years to serve out his term as prez. Le Pen has repeatedly said that Jordan Bardella, her protégée, will lead France's next govt if their party wins. She suggested in an interview that Bardella, 28, will also take over at least some decisions on France's defence and its armed forces. "Serving as a commander-in-chief of the armed forces is an honorary title for the president since it's the PM who actually pulls the strings," she said. France's constitution states that "the President of the Republic is the head of the armed forces". However, the constitution also states that "the PM is responsible for national defence." Constitutional experts say the exact role of PM in foreign policy and defence appears to be subject to interpretation. Historian Jean Garrigues said "the president is the head of armed forces, (but) it's the PM who has the armed forces at his disposal". In practice, he said this means that "if the prez decided to send troops on the ground to Ukraine, the PM would be able to block this decision."

### Elon Musk's SpaceX gets \$843m to help discard ISS around 2030

**WASHINGTON.** Nasa awarded SpaceX \$843m to build a vehicle capable of pushing the International Space Station into Earth's atmosphere for its planned destruction around 2030, it said on Wednesday, a task originally meant for Russia's thrusters.

Under its new Nasa contract, SpaceX will build what the space agency called the US Deorbit Vehicle to deorbit the ISS and avoid risks to populated areas, with Nasa taking ownership of the craft and handling the deorbiting operation. The football field-sized research lab, led primarily by the US and Russia, has been continuously staffed with govt astronauts during its some 24 years of operation, but its aging components have led Nasa and its foreign partners to set 2030 as a planned retirement date. The first segment of the ISS was launched in 1998. Weighing 430,000kg, ISS is by far the largest single structure ever built in space. Based on past observations of how other stations such as Mir and Skylab disintegrated on atmospheric re-entry, Nasa engineers expect the orbital outpost to break up in three stages. First, the massive solar arrays and the radiators that keep the orbital lab cool will come off, then individual modules will break off from the truss.

## Russian satellite breaks up in Space, forces ISS astronauts to shelter

**World.** A Russian Earth observation satellite, RESURS-P1, which was declared dead in 2022, has disintegrated into more than 100 pieces of debris in orbit. The break-up occurred on Wednesday, near the International Space Station (ISS), causing the astronauts on board to take shelter in their spacecraft for about an hour as a precautionary measure. US Space Command stated that there was no immediate threat to other satellites.

The cause of the satellite's break-up is currently unknown, and Russia's space agency, Roscosmos, has not provided any comments on the incident. LeoLabs, a US space-tracking firm, detected the satellite releasing fragments until 6 pm Mountain Time. US Space Command confirmed that the event generated "over 100 pieces of trackable debris." Large debris-generating events in orbit are uncommon but are becoming a growing concern as space becomes increasingly crowded with vital satellite networks. In 2021,

Russia faced strong criticism from Western countries when it destroyed one of its defunct satellites using a ground-based anti-satellite (ASAT) missile, creating thousands of pieces of orbital debris. While the RESURS-P1 passed over the Plesetsk rocket site during the initial break-up window, there was no immediate indication that Russia had launched a missile to strike the satellite.

When satellites reach the end of their operational life, they either remain in orbit until they eventually descend into Earth's atmosphere and burn up, or they are moved to a "graveyard orbit" 36,000 km from Earth to minimize the risk of colliding with active satellites. Roscosmos decommissioned RESURS-P1 in 2021 due to onboard equipment failures and had been lowering its altitude for an eventual atmospheric reentry.

The incident highlights the growing need for an international mechanism to manage space traffic and address the risks



associated with satellite collisions and space warfare. Space advocates and lawyers have been calling for countries to

establish such a system, which does not currently exist, to ensure the safe and sustainable use of space for all.

## Bolivians show solidarity with President Luis Arce amid self-coup allegations

**La Paz, Bolivia** Supporters of Bolivia's president rallied outside his palace on Thursday, giving some political breathing room to the embattled leader as authorities made more arrests in a coup that shook the economically troubled country a day earlier. Bolivia's government announced that a total of 17 people had been arrested for their alleged involvement in the attempted government takeover.



bewilderment on Wednesday as military forces appeared to turn on the government of President Luis Arce, seizing control of the capital's main square with armoured vehicles, repeatedly crashing a small tank into

the presidential palace and unleashing tear gas on protesters. Senior Cabinet member Eduardo del Castillo did not elaborate on the other 15 people who were arrested on Thursday other than to identify one civilian, An-bal Aguilar Gomez, as the "mastermind" of the thwarted coup. He said the alleged conspirators began plotting in May.

Riot police guarded the palace doors and Arce — who has struggled to manage the country's shortages of foreign currency and fuel — emerged on the presidential balcony to condemn Z'ñiga and declare that "no one can take democracy away from us".

## Russian pranksters release clip of hoax video call with UK's David Cameron on Ukraine

**Shamnaz Saleem, who was a state minister at the Environment Ministry, her ex-husband Adam Rameez, who was serving as a minister at the President's Office, and two others were arrested, local media said quoting the police**

**Male, Maldives.** Maldives police have arrested two serving ministers for allegedly performing black magic on President Mohamed Muizzu, local media reported on Thursday.

Shamnaz Saleem, who was a state minister at the Environment Ministry, her ex-husband Adam Rameez, who was serving as a minister at the President's Office, and two others were arrested, local media said quoting the police, which, however, declined to share any information about the reasons or the alleged performance of black magic. "Shamnaz, alongside two other individuals, was arrested on Sunday. All three of them have been remanded in custody for seven days. She was suspended from her post on Wednesday as per the Environment Ministry," news portal Sun.mv reported, adding, Rameez

## US SC blocks opioid settlement that gave immunity to Purdue co's Sackler family

**Washington.** The US Supreme Court on Thursday blocked OxyContin maker Purdue Pharma's bankruptcy settlement that would have shielded its wealthy Sackler family owners from lawsuits over their role in the nation's deadly opioid epidemic. The 5-4 decision reversed a lower court's ruling that had upheld the plan to give Purdue's owners immunity in exchange for paying up to \$6 billion to settle thousands of lawsuits accusing the firm of unlawful misleading marketing of OxyContin, a powerful pain medication introduced in 1996.

Justice Neil Gorsuch wrote the ruling, which was joined by fellow conservative Justices Clarence Thomas, Samuel Alito and Amy Coney Barrett, as well as liberal Justice Ketanji Brown Jackson. "The

fellow conservative Chief Justice John Roberts, and liberal Justices Sonia Sotomayor and Elena Kagan. "The decision is wrong on the law and devastating for more than 100,000 opioid victims and their families," he said.



The ruling represented a victory for Prez Biden's administration, which had challenged the settlement as an abuse of bankruptcy protections meant for debtors in financial distress, not people like the Sacklers who have not filed for bankruptcy. Conservative

Sacklers haven't filed for bankruptcy and have not placed virtually all their assets on the table for distribution to creditors, yet they seek what essentially amounts to a discharge," he wrote. Justice Brett Kavanaugh wrote a dissenting opinion that was joined by

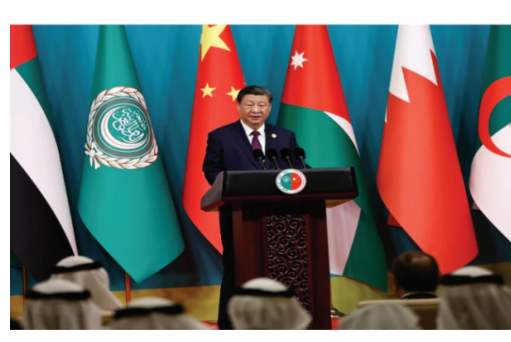
thousands of lawsuits alleging that OxyContin helped kickstart an opioid epidemic that has caused more than half a million US overdose deaths over two decades. At issue in the case was whether US bankruptcy law lets Purdue's restructuring include legal protections for members of the Sackler family, who have not filed for personal bankruptcy. The decision has broader implications for other bankruptcy settlements involving claims of mass injury.

## China: In a First, Two Former Defence Ministers to Be Tried for Corruption, Expelled from Communist Party

**Beijing, China** Two former Chinese defence ministers, Wei Fenghe and his successor Li Shangfu, who worked under President Xi Jinping's watch were on Thursday expelled from the ruling Communist Party and are set to be prosecuted in what was regarded as the worst scandal to hit the People's Liberation Army. The Communist Party headed by Xi, has expelled Gen. Wei, 70, and Gen. Li, 66, for alleged corruption and launched prosecution proceedings against them after investigations reportedly found both of them indulged in corruption, separate official announcements said. The year 2023 will also go down as the worst year for Chinese ministers as three of them including former Foreign Minister Qin Gang besides Wei and Li disappeared from public view. Li, who went missing last year following an investigation into alleged corrupt practices, was expelled from the party on Thursday for serious violation of Party discipline and the law, the state-run Xinhua news agency reported. A similar announcement said Wei too was expelled from the party and to be prosecuted. Wei served as Defence Minister from 2018-23 and Li barely served a few months as his successor. Li, a Chinese aerospace engineer who headed

the People's Liberation Army's all-important Rocket (Missile) Force and was personally picked up for the top defence post by Xi himself, went missing last year, sparking speculation that he was being investigated for corruption and indiscipline. Both served as State Councillors, the top post in the party and as a member of the Central Military Commission (CMC), the overall high command of the PLA headed by Xi.

Both were deprived of their qualification as a delegate to the 20th CPC National Congress, according to a meeting of the Political Bureau of the CPC Central Committee. His sacking followed a major shakeup in the PLA Rocket (missile) Force in which its commander Li Yuchao and political commissar Xu Zhongbo along with others, were replaced without any official explanation. Their summary dismissals sent shockwaves among the Chinese officialdom besides raising questions over the process of selection of officials for key jobs by Xi.



improper benefits in personnel arrangements for themselves and others, took advantage of their posts to seek benefits for others, and accepted a huge amount of money and valuables in return. Media reports here last month said Wei, whose prolonged absence from the public has sparked speculation about his fate, was reported to be politically safe after his name figured in the tributes paid to a senior Chinese legislator who passed away. But not so as the party came down heavily on him too saying that a disciplinary and supervisory probe launched against him found that he had seriously violated party discipline and indulged in corruption. The

announcement said as high-ranking officials of the Party and the military, both lost faith and loyalty. Their actions failed the trust of the Party Central Committee and the CMC, and severely contaminated the political environment of the military, bringing enormous damage to the Party's cause, the development of national defence and the armed forces, as well as the image of senior officials. Xinhua reported. Wei's violations are extremely serious, with a highly detrimental impact and tremendous harm, according to the investigation findings. The Political Bureau has decided to forward their suspected criminal case to procuratorial organs of the military for examination and prosecution. Li and Wei are just the latest senior PLA officers to be brought down in the ongoing anti-graft campaign. Nine generals, including previous and serving commanders of the PLA Rocket Force and the Air Force as well as several CMC officials with the Equipment Development Department, were dismissed from the National People's Congress in December.

## India successfully conducts developmental trials of high-speed expendable aerial target 'Abhyas'

**RNS I Odisha:** The Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) of India has successfully completed six consecutive developmental trials of the High Speed Expendable Aerial Target (HEAT) 'Abhyas' at the Integrated Test Range (ITR) in Chandipur, Odisha. These trials featured an improved booster configuration, marking a significant milestone for the project. "With this, Abhyas has successfully completed 10 developmental trials, demonstrating the reliability of the system," the Indian government stated. The recent trials included enhancements in Radar Cross Section, Visual, and Infrared augmenta-



tion systems. Key mission objectives, such as the safe release of the booster, launcher clearance, and endurance performance, were successfully validated. Notably, two launches were conducted back-to-back within a 30-minute interval, showcasing the system's operational efficiency with minimal logistics. The flight trials were observed by representatives from the Services.

Designed by DRDO's Aeronautical Development Establishment in Bengaluru, Abhyas was developed with the collaboration of Hindustan Aeronautics Limited and Larsen & Toubro. The system provides a realistic threat scenario for weapon systems practice and is designed for autonomous flight, featuring an auto-pilot system, a laptop-based Ground Control System for air-

craft integration, pre-flight checks, and autonomous flight. Additionally, it includes a feature to record data during flight for post-flight analysis. The booster was designed by the Advanced Systems Laboratory, and the navigation system was developed by the Research Centre Imarat. With identified production agencies, Abhyas is now ready for mass production. Indian Defence Minister Rajnath Singh praised DRDO, the Armed Forces, and the industry for the successful developmental trials of 'Abhyas'. He remarked, "The successful tests are a noteworthy testimony to the synergy between scientists and industry."

## Hemant Soren walks out of Birsa Munda Jail

**Ranchi:** Hemant Soren today came out from Birsa Munda Central Jail after the High Court accepted his bail plea and granted him bail, marks the end of his judicial custody. Soren had been incarcerated for 148 days on charges related to a land scam. He deposited two personal bonds of Rs 50,000 each at the Ranchi PMLA special court as per the court's directives before his release. Notably, Hemant Soren's bail was secured with the personal guarantees of his brother and state government minister Basant Soren, along with Kumar Saurav. The High Court, presided over by Justice Rangon Mukhopadhyay, had reserved its decision after concluding arguments from both the Enforcement Directorate (ED) and the defense during a hearing on June 13. The verdict was awaited and finally delivered today, allowing



Soren to bail out. The release of Hemant Soren has sparked positive reactions among his supporters and political allies, marking a significant development in the ongoing legal proceedings related to the case. Jharkhand Congress celebrated the bail of JMM leader Soren as a victory for justice. State Congress President Rajesh Thakur expressed satisfaction with the judiciary's decision, emphasizing public confidence in the judicial process despite challenges and conspiracies.

## IIM Jamshedpur Chapter Felicitates Awardees; hosts AGM



**RNS I Jamshedpur:** The Indian Institute of Metals (IIM), Jamshedpur Chapter organized a felicitation program to honor the achievers of the IIM ATM and NMA 2023 awards. The event took place at Beldih Club, Jamshedpur, starting from 6:30 pm onwards. Prior to the felicitation, the Chapter held its Annual General Meeting (AGM) at the same venue. Professor Ashok Kumar from the MME Department, NIT Jamshedpur, and Chairperson of IIM Jamshedpur Chapter, delivered the welcome address. The ceremony commenced with the felicitation of the awardees, who were recognized for their outstanding contributions: V. V. Mahashabde, Chief R&D and Product Technology, Tata Steel Ltd. - IIM Fellow Membership; Dr. T. Bhaskar, Chief Technology Officer, Tata Steel Ltd. - IIM Essar Gold Medal 2023; Prem Kumar Ganesh, Head, Venture, Tata Steel Ltd. - IIM Certificate of Honor; Dr. Sushil Kumar Giri, Tata Steel Ltd. - Poster Presentation Award; Ravi Golani, Tata Steel Ltd. - Poster Presentation Award; Nemi Gorain, Tata Steel Ltd. - Oral Presentation Award; Dr. Sanjay Agarwal, CSIR-NML - Oral Presentation Award; Dr. Ammasi A. and Dr. Prem Kumar M., CSIR-NML - M S Khan Memorial Award. Dr. A. N. Bhagat, Head, Surface Engineering, Tata Steel, graced the occasion as the Guest of Honour and delivered a brief speech. He was presented with a memento in appreciation of his presence. The event also featured the prestigious M.S. Khan Memorial Lecture, dedicated to the late M.S. Khan, a former Honorary Secretary of IIM Jamshedpur Chapter. Professor Goutam Sutradhar, Director of NIT Jamshedpur, delivered the lecture on Mg-WC Metal Matrix Nano-Composites, covering various aspects such as methodology, alloy selection, fabrication techniques, and the role of graphite nano-particles in these composites. Dr. Sandip Ghosh Chowdhury, Director of CSIR-NML, and other esteemed metallurgical experts from CSIR-NML, Tata Steel, and NIT Jamshedpur graced the occasion. The event gathered around 100 professionals from academia, industries, and R&D establishments in and around Jamshedpur.

## Hindi is the Mother of All Languages: Thakur

**RNS I Bokaro:** A one-day official language workshop was successfully held at Tejas Bhawan of Damodar Valley Corporation (DVC) Chandrapura Thermal Power Plant (CTPS) at Bokaro today. The event was inaugurated by Senior General Manager and Project Head, Manoj Kumar Thakur, along with other senior officers of DVC, through a traditional lamp-lighting ceremony. In his address, Thakur emphasized the significance of the Hindi language, calling it the "mother of all languages" in India. He stressed the importance of maintaining the pride and respect of Hindi, noting that language is deeply connected to a country's culture. He urged everyone to pledge to preserve and honor Hindi for future generations. Senior General Manager Rampravesh Sah advocated for granting Hindi the status of the national language and encouraged its use in all spheres of work. He pointed out that many developed nations have achieved their status by embracing their native languages, implying that adopting Hindi could similarly



contribute to India's progress. The event was moderated by Hindi Officers Ravi Kumar Sinha and Sanjeev Kumar. It also featured speeches from General Manager Avijit Ghosh, Trainer Dr. Sanjay Kumar Jaiswal, Dr. Madhu Singh, Deputy General Manager (Administration) Dilip Kumar, among others. The workshop saw participation from several attendees, including Dr. P.K. Ghosh, Rajiv Ranjan Ojha, Hari Mukund

Prajapati, Parvint Kumar, Raj Kumar Chaudhary, Satyendra Narayan Singh, Vinod Kumar, Basanta Kumar Mohapatra, Sujit Kumar Thakur, Babul Kumar, Sohit Singh, Satyanarayan Singh, Rajiv Ranjan Kumar, Rajan Kumar, Pawan Kumar, Sudama Kumar, Jai Dev Sarkar, Pintu Kumar, Akshay Kumar, Rajesh Kumar, Raman Haldar, Braj Vibhuti Vilochan, Suku Lal Kisku, Golam Mahiuddin, R. Ravindra, the charge d'affaires of India's Permanent Mission, handed over the cheque to Ian Phillips, the director of the News and Media Division of the UN's Department of Global Communications (DGC), for the 'Hindi @ UN' project. India has partnered with the DGC since 2018, when

## India Contributes \$1.16 Million to UN for Promotion of Hindi



**RNS I New York:** India has contributed \$1.16 million to the United Nations to promote the use of Hindi within the global organization. This initiative aims to spread greater awareness about global issues among millions of Hindi-speaking people around the world. The United Nations produces a weekly audio news bulletin in Hindi on matters relating to the organization. Additionally, the UN maintains social media accounts

on X, Instagram, and Facebook in Hindi, along with a dedicated news website. While there has been a push to increase the UN's multilingualism, financial constraints remain a challenge, which India's contribution aims to address.

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## India Becomes World's Third-Largest Domestic Aviation Market

**RNS I New Delhi:** India has become the world's third-largest domestic aviation market after the U.S. and China. According to data compiled by aviation analytics firm Official Airline Guide (OAG), India is now third in the aviation market after airlines such as IndiGo and Air India have expanded their fleet size to cater to the surge in air passengers. The data show India's domestic airline capacity doubled in the last 10 years from 7.9 million seats in April 2014 to 15.5 million in April 2024. India has replaced Brazil, which now stands at the fourth place with 9.7 million airline seats followed by Indonesia in fifth rank with 9.2 million. India has also posted the highest annual average capacity growth rate of 6.9 per cent over the last decade among the top five countries, followed by China at 6.3 per cent and the US at 2.4 per cent.

# "Digital House Arrest": Ranchi CID Nabs Cyber Criminal Mastermind

by Ashis Sinha

**Ranchi:** In a major breakthrough, the Criminal Investigation Department (CID) in Ranchi, Jharkhand, has successfully apprehended a notorious cyber criminal linked to two significant cases of 'Digital House Arrest'. The arrests, documented under case numbers 145/24 dated May 29, 2024, and 161/24 dated June 19, 2024, highlight the sophisticated operations of cybercrime networks. Cops arrested Pankaj Kumar, aged 39 a resident of Sonpur district, Bihar; identified as the mastermind. He operated under the guise of his firm, Dikship Enterprises, and collaborated with international criminal syndicates via associates in Surat, Gujarat, and Patna, Bihar. During the arrest, authorities seized mobile phones and SIM cards crucial to the

crime, along with WhatsApp chat histories related to the exchange of corporate internet banking credentials, informed the officials. According to the CID officials, in both the cases, victims were threatened via WhatsApp by individuals posing as rep representatives from FedEx Courier Service, Mumbai Branch. They were informed about a fabricated case registered at the Mumbai Crime Branch related to objectionable items allegedly found in a courier registered using their Aadhaar card and mobile numbers. The victims were then placed under surveillance and subjected to digital arrests at their homes, being coerced to deposit money into various bank accounts to settle the fictitious case in this manner, the victim of case 161/24 was duped of Rs. 1.78



crores, while the victim of case 145/24 was defrauded of Rs. 11 lakhs. The arrested individual collaborated with international accomplices based in China through his associates based in Surat, Gujarat and Patna, Bihar and opened a Private Ltd. Company against which Corporate Bank accounts were opened in HDFC, ICICI, AXIS and INDUSIND Bank. **Mastermind Identified** Pankaj Kumar, a 39-year-old resident of Sonpur district, Bihar, has been identified as

the mastermind behind the scams. Operating under the guise of his firm, Dikship Enterprises, Kumar collaborated with international criminal syndicates through associates in Surat, Gujarat, and Patna, Bihar. During his arrest, authorities seized mobile phones and SIM cards crucial to the crime, along with WhatsApp chat histories related to the exchange of corporate internet banking credentials. **Modus Operandi** The CID revealed that in both cases, victims were contacted

via WhatsApp by individuals posing as representatives from FedEx Courier Service, Mumbai Branch. They were informed of a fabricated case registered at the Mumbai Crime Branch involving objectionable items allegedly found in a courier registered using their Aadhaar card and mobile numbers. The victims were then coerced into depositing money into various bank accounts to settle the fictitious case. **Case 161/24: The victim was defrauded of Rs. 1.78 crores. Case 145/24: The victim was defrauded of Rs. 11 lakhs.** Kumar's network involved international accomplices based in China and local associates in Surat and Patna. They opened corporate bank accounts under a Private Ltd. Company in multiple banks including HDFC, ICICI,

AXIS, and INDUSIND Bank. **Detailed Fraud Operation Initial Contact via WhatsApp:** Victims were first contacted by someone impersonating a Telecom Regulatory Authority of India officer, falsely claiming illegal activities linked to their mobile numbers. **Threatening Calls:** Subsequently, victims received calls from individuals posing as Indian Police Service (IPS) and Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) officers, threatening legal action unless money was deposited into specified bank accounts. **Extorted Payments:** Under duress and threat of arrest, victims deposited money into multiple bank accounts over a span of 12 days as instructed by the scammers. Following the arrests, CID has issued a public advisory to prevent further incidents

of cybercrime. Citizens are urged not to trust WhatsApp or Skype calls from individuals impersonating government officials. **The advisory includes the following key points:**

- Always verify contact details from official government websites.
- Refrain from sharing personal financial information with unknown individuals without proper verification.
- Report any suspicious cyber activities to the authorities promptly.
- Use the National Cyber Crime Reporting Portal or contact 1930 to report cybercrimes.

This arrest underscores the importance of vigilance against cyber fraud and highlights the coordinated efforts of law enforcement agencies to combat such criminal activities.

**Digital House Arrest** 'Digital House Arrest' is a scam where cybercriminals trap victims in their homes to defraud them. The perpetrators use audio or video calls, often impersonating law enforcement officials with may be AI-generated voices or videos, to instill fear. They falsely accuse the victims of offenses related to their Aadhaar or phone numbers, creating a sense of imminent arrest to force money transfers. In a common scenario, cybercriminals contact potential victims, claiming they have sent or received parcels containing illegal items like drugs or counterfeit passports. They might also falsely inform the victim's relatives or friends about their involvement in a crime or accident, generating a sense of urgency.

## IIT-ISM hosts National Conference on Modelling, Analysis, & Simulation in AI, ML, IoT

**RNS I Dhanbad:** A three-day National Conference on Modelling, Analysis, and Simulation kicked-off at IIT -ISM Dhanbad on Friday. Over 150 scientists, faculty members, and research scholars from various technical and academic institutes across India convened at IIT (ISM) for conference. The event organized by the Department of Mathematics and Computing, delved into diverse topics such as Machine Learning Applications, Applied Mathematics in Defence R&D, and Modelling of Infectious Diseases. The inaugural day of the con-

ference commenced at the Golden Jubilee Lecture Theatre of IIT (ISM), inaugurated by Professor SK Tomar, Vice Chancellor of JC Bose University of Science and Technology, YMCA, Faridabad, as the chief guest. Professor Sukumar Mishra, Director of IIT (ISM), presided over the function. Distinguished speakers from renowned institutes including IIT Guwahati, IIT Ropar, IIT Delhi, IIT Mandi, and several top-ranking NITs addressed the gathering. Topics ranged from the Theory of Light Wave Propagation in Optical Fibers

to AI's Role in Precision Agriculture. During his keynote address, Professor SK Tomar emphasized the importance of focused teaching in mathematics and urged scholars to prioritize depth of understanding over sheer volume of publications. Professor Sukumar Mishra highlighted the critical role of simulation in engineering, citing the extensive simulation conducted before the Chandrayaan-2 mission's launch. Professor RK Upadhyay, Head of Department of Mathematics & Computing, introduced the conference's significance, while



Professor SA Sahu detailed participation and the event schedule. Professor AK Verma, Organizing Secretary, concluded with a vote of thanks. The conference aims to foster

discussions and advancements in modelling and simulation across disciplines, underscoring their pivotal role in contemporary research and development.

## IIT-ISM hosts 'Leadership Program' to empower faculty with key skills

**RNS I Dhanbad:** The five-day Nurturing Future Leadership Program, held under the Malviya Mission Teacher Training Programme (MMTTP), concluded today with a valedictory ceremony at the MMTTC Centre, I2H Building of IIT-ISM. The program, aimed at developing leadership skills among faculty members of higher educational institutions (HEIs), saw the participation of 18 faculty members from across the country. The event was graced by Professor Somnath Chattopadhyay, Professor in Charge of the Online Continuing Education Programme (OCEP), and Professor Md Irfan, Coordinator of the program. Professor Irfan highlighted the enthusiasm and passion of the participants, stating, "Their enthusiasm and passion have been instrumental in fostering a culture of leadership within the academic community." He also praised the resource persons for their expertise, noting, "Their expertise has helped conduct the program successfully, which was meant for aspiring leaders in the academic arena." He further added, "The program not only equipped participants with essential leadership skills but also instilled a sense of responsibility and purpose among them. The impact of the Nurturing Future Leadership Program extends far beyond the confines of this institution, as participants return to their respective institutions empowered to effect positive change and foster a culture of excellence and innovation." Professor Mrinalini Pandey, Co-coordinator of the program, expressed her gratitude to all participants, faculty members, and staff for their dedication and commitment throughout the program.

# Opposition jabs PM Modi over Delhi airport roof collapse: Incomplete inauguration

**Opposition leaders slammed PM Narendra Modi over the collapse of a portion of a roof at Delhi airport's Terminal 1, which was inaugurated by him in March, and accused him of "hurriedly inaugurating" an "incomplete terminal" for poll campaigning.**

**New Delhi:** Opposition leaders slammed Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday over the collapse of a portion of a roof at Delhi airport's Terminal 1 amid heavy rain that killed one person. Terminal 1, which was recently expanded to accommodate more passengers, was inaugurated by PM Modi in March. On March 10, PM Modi inaugurated or laid the foundation stone of 15 airport projects across the country which are worth more than Rs 9,800 crore. Among these projects, the expanded Terminal 1 of Indira Gandhi International Airport in Delhi was inaugurated. The Opposition leaders accused PM Modi of "hurriedly inaugurating" an "incomplete terminal" to campaign for the Lok Sabha elections. Congress chief Mallikarjun Kharge accused the Modi government of "corruption and criminal negligence" in infrastructure projects in the last 10 years. Corruption and criminal negligence is responsible for the collapse of shoddy

infrastructure falling like a deck of cards, in the past 10 years of Modi government," he said. "On March 10, when Modi ji inaugurated the Delhi Airport T1, he called himself 'doosri mitti ka insaan'. All this false bravado and rhetoric was only reserved for quickly indulging in ribbon-cutting ceremonies before elections! Our heartfelt condolences to the victims of the Delhi airport tragedy. They bore the brunt of a corrupt, inept and selfish government," Kharge added. Senior Congress leader Jairam Ramesh tweeted, "On March 11, 2024, as part of his election campaign, if I recall during his inauguration spree." National Conference (NC) leader Omar Abdullah took a dig at PM Modi's inauguration of the expanded Terminal 1 of Delhi airport, saying it was "incomplete". "Incomplete terminal 'inaugurated' before the model code was imposed earlier this year starts falling apart before it's even completed, what a surprise!!" Abdullah



tweeted. Trinamool Congress leader Saket Gokhale alleged that PM Modi "hurriedly inaugurated" the expanded Terminal 1 for election campaigning. "Shocking and tragic news this morning. The roof at Delhi Airport's has T1 collapsed this morning and,

until now, three people are reported dead. For election campaigning, Modi had hurriedly 'inaugurated' T1 in March even while it was under construction. Why shouldn't PM Modi be charged with culpable homicide? He's directly responsible for the death of three people

who lost their lives because Modi was desperate to campaign," he tweeted. Responding to the Opposition's allegations, Union Minister of Civil Aviation Ram Mohan Naidu said, "We are taking this incident seriously. I want to clarify that the building inaugurated by PM Modi is on the other side and the building that collapsed here is an old building and was opened in 2009." The Ministry of Civil Aviation said all flights to and from Terminal 1 were closed till further notice following the roof collapse. Flight operations in Terminal 2 and Terminal 3 are normal. "Heavy rain in early morning today has resulted in the collapse of the canopy of #DelhiAirport Terminal 1. As a result of which flights to and from Terminal 1 have been closed till further notice. Alternate arrangements are being made for the smooth operation of the flights," the ministry tweeted.

## Rahul Gandhi's mic muted as he raised NEET issue in Lok Sabha, claims Congress

**New Delhi:** The Congress on Friday claimed that Leader of Opposition Rahul Gandhi's mic was turned off as he raised the NEET paper leak issue in the Lok Sabha. The Congress shared a video on X, showing Rahul Gandhi requesting Speaker Om Birla for access to a microphone. Rahul Gandhi sought a debate on the NEET controversy and demanded a statement from the government. In response, Speaker Om Birla clarified that he does not switch off the microphones of MPs and has no such control. "The discussion should be on the President's address. Other matters will not be recorded in the House," Birla said. While on one hand, Narendra Modi is not saying anything on NEET, opposition leader Rahul Gandhi is raising the voice of the youth in the House. But, on such a serious issue, a



conspiracy is being hatched to suppress the voice of the youth by doing cheap acts like switching off the mic," Congress tweeted, sharing a video of the same. The NEET-UG 2024 examination for

undergraduate medical programs has stirred a row amid claims of a question paper leak and has triggered nationwide protests from students. As the proceedings began, Congress MP KC Venugopal submitted an adjournment motion in the Lok Sabha to discuss the case of paper leaks. However, the Speaker said the House would discuss the Motion of Thanks to the President's address to Parliament. As a ruckus erupted in the Lok Sabha, the Speaker adjourned the House till July 1. Government sources said there was no tradition of bringing an adjournment motion during the Motion of Thanks to the President's address. "The opposition is making an unnecessary demand. The government is very much ready to speak on the issue of NEET," a source said.

## Asaduddin Owaisi Alleges His Delhi Residence Vandalised

**New Delhi:** All India Majlis-e-Ittehadul Muslimeen (AIMIM) MP Asaduddin Owaisi on Thursday alleged that some "unknown miscreants" vandalised his Delhi residence with black ink. The AIMIM MP shared this claim on his X handle and wrote, "Some 'unknown miscreants' vandalised my house with black ink today. I have now lost count the number of times my Delhi residence has targeted." He further claimed that upon asking about the incident, the Delhi Police expressed their helplessness on this incident. When I asked @DelhiPolice officials how this was happening right under their nose, they expressed helplessness. "Mr Owaisi further asked Union Home Minister Amit Shah and Speaker of Lok Sabha Om Birla on the safety of MPs and wrote, "@AmitShah this is happening under your oversight. @ombirlakota, please tell us if MPs' safety will be guaranteed or not." Mr Owaisi, in his post, regarded this attack as "Savarkar-type cowardly behaviour" and wrote, "To the two-bit goons who keep targeting my house: this does not scare me. Stop this Savarkar-type cowardly behaviour and be men enough to face me. Do not scurry away after throwing some ink or pelting a few stones."



Earlier, on Thursday, Asaduddin Owaisi attacked the central government led by the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), claiming that the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) leaders did not resist the Emergency, rather they wanted the ban on the organisation to be lifted. The RSS is the ideological parent of the BJP. In a post on 'X', Mr Owaisi wrote, "Speaking of emergency, what was the Sangh Parivar up to? Following the great tradition of Sorryvarkar's mercy petitions, RSS was eager to please Indira Gandhi." "RSS leaders did not resist, they just wanted the ban on RSS to be lifted," he added. The 21-month-long period of emergency, which was imposed by the then Congress government led by Prime Minister Indira Gandhi in 1975, has been in the limelight again as this year marks the 50th anniversary of the emergency, which is considered one of the most controversial periods in India's political history. The RSS was banned during the period of emergency by the then-government. Earlier today, President Droupadi Murmu, addressed the joint sitting of the Parliament and criticised the imposition of 'Emergency'.

## In Scam Involving Ajit Pawar, Cops Versus Probe Agency On Closure Report

**Mumbai:** In a development concerning the alleged ₹ 25,000-crore Maharashtra State Cooperative Bank (MSCB) scam, the Mumbai police and the Enforcement Directorate (ED) are at loggerheads over the closure report filed before a court here. The Economic Offences Wing (EOW) of the city police on Thursday opposed the central agency's plea against closing the case, citing that the apex cooperative bank did not suffer any unfair loss due to the purported fraud. Deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar was named as an accused in the original case registered by the EOW. While the police sought to close the case as they found no significant loss to the bank, the ED intervened, expressing concerns that accepting the closure report would impact their ongoing money laundering investigation linked to the scam. The ED has already filed prosecution complaints and supplementary chargesheets in the case, emphasising the interconnected nature of the investigations. The EOW filed a written submission in the court in which they rebuffed the ED's intervention,

noting that a similar plea had been rejected previously by a special court for cases involving MPs and MLAs. The timeline of events includes the police filing a closure report in September 2020, which was



initially accepted by the court. However, further investigation was initiated in October 2022 based on protest petitions and the ED's involvement. The EOW moved to close the case again in March this year, asserting that no unfair losses were incurred by the bank due to the

alleged fraud. The FIR, which followed a High Court order in August 2019, alleged that loans of several thousand crore rupees obtained by sugar cooperatives, spinning mills and other entities from district and cooperative banks were diverted and not repaid. Lodged under various sections including criminal breach of trust and cheating, the FIR named NCP leader Ajit Pawar as an accused with over 70 others, who served as directors of the bank during the relevant period. The allegations outlined a loss of ₹ 25,000 crore to the Maharashtra government between 2007 and 2017, pointing to violations of banking regulations and RBI guidelines in loan disbursements to sugar mills and the undervalued sale of defaulting businesses' assets. A former judge, appointed as an authorised officer by the cooperative commissioner, concluded "there was no unfair loss to the bank due to the loans given to the factories (sugar mills)," and "the bank was recovering the amount from the factories by legal means", the closure report said.

## Ex-Jharkhand Chief Minister Hemant Soren Granted Bail In Land Scam Case

**Hemant Soren Case: Mr Soren resigned as Chief Minister on January 31, hours after the ED began a marathon questioning session and then informed him he would be arrested.**

**Ranchi:** Ex-Jharkhand Chief Minister Hemant Soren has been granted bail by the High Court. "Bail is granted. The court held, prima facie, Hemant Soren is not guilty, and there is no likelihood of the petitioner committing an offence on bail," Mr Soren's counsel Arunabh Chowdhury, told news agency PTI. Given there are no other cases against him at this time, Mr Soren may be released soon. Bail was reportedly granted on payment of two sureties of ₹ 50,000 each. The Jharkhand Mukti Morcha leader was arrested by the Enforcement Directorate on January 31 on money laundering charges. The ED has accused him of running a scheme to manipulate records, via fictitious transactions and forged documents, and acquire 8.86 acres of land in

Ranchi worth crores. Mr Soren has repeatedly denied the charges against him, and has accused the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party of



framing his arrest - which was weeks before the Lok Sabha election - to derail the

opposition. The bail order today comes after setbacks last month. That was followed by the High Court rejecting a plea to quash his arrest. The court pointed to an "abundance of documents that lay foundation for the arrest and remand of petitioner". Mr Soren was also told he could not "wiggle out of the mess he created for himself", following that the Supreme Court also refused interim bail; this was sought on grounds Mr Soren needed to campaign for his party, and the Congress-led INDIA opposition bloc, in the Lok Sabha polls. In that hearing the ED argued Mr Soren had tried to subvert the investigation by "misusing state machinery" and so opposed his "special prayer" for

interim bail to campaign in the Lok Sabha polls. That setback meant Hemant Soren - unlike his Delhi counterpart Arvind Kejriwal, arrested by the ED in the alleged liquor policy scam but given interim bail by the top court - could not campaign. Mr Kejriwal had been granted bail by the top court to campaign for the AAP. The Jharkhand leader was forced to withdraw another Supreme Court plea - challenging his arrest - after tough questions over non-disclosure of facts; the focus was on not revealing that the special court - which hears money laundering cases - had taken cognisance of the complaint against him. Hemant Soren resigned as Chief Minister on January 31, hours after the ED began a marathon questioning session and then informed him he would be arrested. Mr Soren, however, refused to accept the arrest memo till he had quit his post, in order to avoid being the first sitting Chief Minister to be arrested.

## India must remain ahead of the curve

THE din of the Lok Sabha elections is over. A duly elected government is in place and it is gearing up to face both domestic and external challenges. Some of these challenges are not new, though they have a different scale and dimension. But some will be novel and unexpected. On balance, the domestic landscape remains relatively more stable. There may be a coalition government at the Centre, but the BJP remains its largest constituent. Prime Minister Narendra Modi may have been politically diminished by the election results, but he remains the most popular and powerful leader. Temperamentally, he is unlikely to significantly alter the modus operandi he has relied upon during the past decade. He is more likely to double down in implementing his political, ideological and economic agendas than in stepping back into a more consensual mode. To the extent that political stability and policy continuity will matter in a world where even the more powerful countries, including the US, are descending into a period of mounting uncertainty, political polarisation and even fragmentation, India will be seen as a more stable and reliable anchor in the international system. That will be an asset it can leverage to advance its interests. If India is able to sustain its current rate of GDP growth of around 7 per cent per annum over the next decade, as it seems likely to do, that, too, will make it an outlier among major emerging economies. The Modi government has been unusually business-friendly and this has improved the investment environment for domestic and foreign entities. It must now shift from a business-friendly to a market-friendly strategy which creates an enabling environment for all businesses to flourish. If it does, the economic transformation of India will become the great story of the next several decades. This could potentially expand the country's diplomatic space. Foreign policy should be harnessed to promoting the interests of Indian businesses rather than those of a few chosen entities.

Unlike the domestic space, the external space will be far more challenging and India's vulnerabilities will be greater. In a rapidly changing and fluid geopolitical landscape, the uncertainties unleashed by continuing and escalating wars in Europe and West Asia and the prospects of dramatic and deeply disruptive departures in the foreign policies of major powers as a fallout of impending elections will require an extraordinary agility and skilful diplomacy on the part of India. There seems to be an assumption that India's value as a countervailing and constraining power vis-à-vis China would not only persist but also be enhanced. But as we had witnessed during the Cold War, the dominant powers often temper their confrontation with significant measures of détente and even collaboration at the cost of those allied or aligned with them. One should not rule out such strategic re-ordering of relations between the US and China which may shrink India's own strategic space and heighten its vulnerability to Chinese pressure. It is also possible that in meeting the China challenge in the Indo-Pacific, the US may attach greater value to its alliance systems and operational arrangements with other partner countries in the region. The US has worked hard to create a truly trilateral military alliance with Japan and South Korea, helping overcome the historical antipathy between Japan and South Korea. The three countries are now sharing intelligence, conducting military drills and coordinating their postures towards China and the region and this is becoming the core of American Indo-Pacific strategy instead of the Quad (India, Japan, Australia and the US). The AUKUS, comprising Australia, the UK and the US, which is a military alliance based on a substantial nuclear submarine force, will also gain in importance as it begins to be rolled out. The revival of the US-Philippines military alliance and the US gaining access to key bases in that country are another link in the American security chain.

## Rollout of new criminal laws will be beset with challenges

Alternatives to exams like NEET and NET can evolve only if we are honest and bold enough to realise that what prevails is wrong, academically as well as ethically.



THE three new criminal laws, namely the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS) and the Bharatiya Sakshya Adhiniyam (BSA) would come into effect on July 1. Chief Justice of India DY Chandrachud has hailed the new laws aimed at digitalising the criminal procedure and called them a significant step towards modernising the Indian justice system. A cross-section of the legal fraternity — including senior advocate Indira Jaising — has, on the other hand, raised serious concerns about the constitutionality of some of the provisions in these laws. Opposition leaders, including Mamata Banerjee, are demanding that the new legislation be kept in abeyance until the newly elected members of the Lok Sabha approve them, arguing that the laws were passed in haste without a meaningful debate in Parliament, as a majority of the Opposition members were under suspension at the time. Expressing concern regarding the validity of the new criminal laws at such a belated stage amounts to nothing more than a statement of missed opportunities. The laws were enacted after a three-year-long consultation process and wide-ranging deliberations with the stakeholders, followed by a thorough examination by the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Home Affairs. Suggestions were also invited from the masses through public notices on two occasions. The government, which is not yielding to any of these demands, seems determined to enforce the laws.

Concerns about the unconstitutionality of the new provisions do not hold water in view of the fact that changes in the BNS are mainly a reflection of the

Supreme Court directions in the cases of Navtej Singh Johar vs Union of India (2018), Joseph Shine vs Union of India (2018) and P Rathinam vs Union of India (1994) as well as the Centre's undertaking in the apex court in response to a petition challenging the sedition law, besides addressing long-pending national security issues. The objections to modifications in the BNSS and BSA also appear to be misplaced, as the amendments basically inhere digitalisation of the criminal proceedings and incorporate victim- and people-centric provisions, in addition to re-orienting the criminal procedures to meet the demand of quality investigations and speedy justice. Notwithstanding the different opinions of informed stakeholders, implementation of the new statutes won't be easy, as it involves creating a variety of infrastructure, imparting training, laying down rules and operating procedures, revising standard forms and inter-agency coordination to iron out operational issues. At the same time, what inspires confidence that the laws will be rolled out on time is the existence of an experienced and time-tested criminal justice system that has the tenacity to adapt to and adopt any change and find workable solutions to any problem with limited resources.

Another sign that the new laws would come into force as per the schedule is the fact that the police, prosecutors and the magistracy have undergone massive capacity-building training programmes, which are being sponsored and monitored by the Centre.

However, former law enforcers and adjudicators are sceptical. They argue that many crucial areas pertaining

to the successful enforcement of the new laws are yet to be addressed. There are several mandatory procedures in the BNSS, including videography of all searches, seizures and scenes of crimes and photography of case properties, that would require the use of electronics and digital technology at the outset. On the other hand, the investigators and adjudicators are yet to be equipped with appropriate gadgets and trained to use them to generate, secure and store the required digital outputs uniformly and in an admissible form. Additionally, there are many other procedures — such as e-court proceedings and serving of summonses/notices through electronic means — that would need massive digitalisation of the courts, police stations and prisons, standardisation of protocols, recruitment and training of technical and support staff, financial resources and inter-agency coordination. The ground reality is that nothing substantial seems to have been done in this direction so far in most states. Community service has been included in the list of punishments under the BNS. The eventuality of awarding this sentence to petty offenders may arise even on the very first day of the laws coming into force. However, no identified apparatus is in place to execute it. The agencies are not yet clear on the jurisdiction to give effect to this sentence.

In the absence of essential operational protocols, it would be difficult to enforce some important provisions of the BNSS, including those related to witness protection, trial in absentia, serving summonses/notices through electronic means, seizure of the proceeds from a crime and its distribution to victims, a time-bound disposal of case properties and videography of various stages of an investigation, despite the clear mandate of the law for the states to frame rules instantly. All wings of the justice delivery system need to identify areas where operational protocols and rules are to be framed urgently. Recruitment and training of a large number of technicians, law officers and support staff cannot wait further. The upgradation and updating of the Crime and Criminal Tracking Network and Systems and other software having an interface with different wings of the justice delivery system and governance have not been completed so far. This cannot be accomplished by the states on their own, as it would require a lot of know-how and coordination with Central agencies.

It is a given that states cannot walk the tricky road of implementing the new laws without the crutches of the Central Government. They would need hand-holding, support and monitoring at every stage. The Central agencies are expected to take the initiative and coordinate with the states, as in ensuring a successful rollout of the laws lies at stake the credibility of the Centre.

## Assange released

Wikileaks founder's long ordeal ends

WIKILEAKS founder Julian Assange's release from prison marks the culmination of a long-running saga of international intrigue. An Internet publisher with disdain for government secrets, he gained massive attention for the 2010 release of classified documents relating to the US wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. The material, published on his website, included a video showing civilians being killed by fire from a helicopter in Iraq. One of his collaborators, US Army intelligence analyst Chelsea Manning, was sentenced to 35 years in prison before then President Obama commuted the sentence. His plea deal with the US comes as a relief for 52-year-old Assange, who has spent the last five years in a British jail, fighting extradition. Earlier, facing charges of rape in Sweden, which he denied, he spent seven years in refuge in Ecuador's London embassy.

Assange's activism made his case a cause célèbre among press freedom advocates, who insisted his work



in exposing US military misconduct is exactly what journalists are expected to do. His supporters see him

as a champion of free speech, exposing abuses of power and hypocrisy. In the US, he's projected as a villain for recklessly endangering national security. The British government signed an extradition order in 2022. Last month, two judges said Assange could appeal to address the question of whether, as a foreigner on trial in the US, he would enjoy the protections of freedom of speech under the First Amendment.

Under the plea deal, Assange will plead guilty to a single charge of breaching the espionage law and travel home to Australia, which Canberra has been pushing for. It's difficult to predict how the saga would play out in the coming US presidential elections. In 2016, a Russian hand was suspected when Wikileaks released emails that potentially harmed the electoral prospects of Hillary Clinton and boosted Donald Trump. Ironically, Trump went after Assange.

## Transformative defence reforms must have clarity

Two drafts of the National Security Strategy are with the NSA; they only need to be updated.

ON taking charge for the second time as Defence Minister, Rajnath Singh announced his first 100 days' action plan: welfare of veterans, atmanirbharta and increasing defence exports to Rs 50,000 crore by 2028-29. There was no mention of theatreisation, even though he had said last month that it was "progressing, with consensus emerging among the three services". In its election manifesto, the BJP made a commitment to implement theatreisation — without specifying a timeline. On May 10, the Inter-Services Organisation (Command, Control and Discipline) Act was promulgated through a gazette notification. The then CDS, Gen Bipin Rawat, told me days before his death in a helicopter crash in December 2021 that he was tasked to prepare a blueprint for theatreisation in three years, coterminous with his tenure. Gen Anil Chauhan, who was appointed CDS in September 2022, was also given a three-year term and has made progress on theatreisation with a refined Integrated Theatre Command (ITC) plan. The CDS has become synonymous with theatreisation. At a book release event last month, Gen Chauhan said the National Security Policy/Strategy was not needed in a written form, adding that "we have policy processes, otherwise how did we resolve Article 370, did Balakot, handle Covid..." This is the first time anyone from the establishment has said that a written National Security Strategy (NSS) is not needed. The IAF considers the NSS a prerequisite for theatreisation. Early this month, Lt Gen Virendra Vats, Commandant, Defence Services Staff College (DSSC), Wellington, addressing the 80th Staff Course, explained the nuts and bolts of the NSS as a key ingredient of national security. The DSSC is training 40 triservice officers for ITCs and a one-star-rank officer has been posted to an ITC, the location of which is not known. Last week, Gen Chauhan released the triservice Joint Doctrine for Cyberspace Operations.

In April, a triservice conference was organised for "generating fresh ideas, initiatives and reforms for propelling jointness and integration". A triservice



brainstorming session was held in May in the Old War Room, South Block, to assess the state of a transformed theatreised force capable of multi-domain operations. Twelve sub-committees made presentations on ITCs. On May 21, speaking at the United Service Institution of India's annual Maj Gen Samir Sinha Memorial Lecture on 'Jointmanship: The Way Ahead' in New Delhi, Gen Chauhan stated that Operation Tiranga had helped in ironing out differences with service Chiefs over 11 meetings, each three to four hours long.

He spoke about joint culture 2.0 distilled from the best in each service. Operational commands will be independent of administrative functions of 'raise', 'train' and 'sustain', the residual functions of service Chiefs. He said the ITC would lead to the next step in defence reforms like cyberspace, space and artificial intelligence. He noted that there were differences over reforms, without specifying any, but emphasised that

theatreisation was 'imminent'. Some wrinkles have to be ironed out. On the operational side, it's the merging into ITCs of two Integrated Battle Groups created in 9 Pivot Corps and five IBGs (integrated battle groups) in 17 Mountain Strike Corps, raising a new Corps in the Central Command which will be absorbed in the China-specific ITC at Lucknow against the PLA Western Theatre Command, fixing operational ORBAT (order of battle) of the Pakistan-specific ITC at Jaipur, and allotting naval and air assets to the Integrated Maritime Command at Visakhapatnam or Karwar. The IAF's resistance to the division of air assets persists. Following revocation of their operational command, the role of service Chiefs will be limited to training, morale and logistics. Reducing the existing 17 single-service three-star commands into three- or four-star ITCs will require locating eminent slots for the dispossessed. Giving one land-based ITC to the IAF will restore some of its

assets. The CDS is currently wearing multiple hats — Chairman, Chiefs of Staff Committee; Adviser, National Command Authority; Secretary, Department of Military Affairs; single point of advice to the Defence Minister; head of all triservice institutions and unified commands like the Strategic Forces Command and the Andaman & Nicobar Command; and lead member of the Defence Acquisition Council. He will require a Vice CDS and additional deputies if he is also to figure in the command chain of the ITCs. Significantly, theatreisation will require political guidance, conspicuously absent from the Indian military system. Leave alone any NSS or White Paper, a political directive to the Chiefs of Staff Committee or service Chiefs has rarely been issued. The then Defence Minister's operational directive of 2009 was prepared by the Director General of Military Operations. In his yet-to-be-published memoirs, former Army Chief Gen MM Naravane has reportedly narrated an incident during Operation Snow Leopard on the intervening night of August 29-30, 2020, when he asked the Defence Minister, External Affairs Minister, the National Security Adviser (NSA) and the CDS for clarification on orders to open fire (he was told by the highest authority not to be the first to open fire) against Chinese tanks approaching Kailash heights. No one responded, till two hours later he was informed by the Defence Minister that the PM had said that since it was a military situation, he should do what he thought best. This exemplifies the bane of unwritten operation orders.

It is quite inconceivable that transformative defence reforms are in the pipeline without even a Strategic Defence and Security Review and an NSS/NSP. Recently, former NSA Shivshankar Menon said an NSS was prepared not once but thrice during the UPA rule, but was never released due to a lack of political will. Even now, two drafts of the NSS, one prepared by the Integrated Defence Staff and the other by the National Security Council Secretariat in 2021-22, are with the NSA; they only need to be updated.





चित्रकूट का अर्थ है कई 'आश्चर्यों का पर्वत'। विंध्य पर्वत श्रृंखला में फैला चित्रकूट दो भागों में बंटा हुआ है। एक भाग मध्यप्रदेश के सतना जिले का चित्रकूट है, जो कि एक तहसील है और दूसरा भाग उत्तरप्रदेश का चित्रकूट जिला है।

एक भाग मध्यप्रदेश के सतना जिले का चित्रकूट है जो कि एक तहसील है और दूसरा भाग उत्तरप्रदेश का चित्रकूट जिला है। महर्षि वाल्मीकि रचित रामायण के अनुसार भगवान श्रीराम ने अपनी पत्नी सीता और माई लक्ष्मण के साथ अपने चौदह वर्ष के वनवास में से साढ़े ग्यारह वर्ष का समय यहां पर व्यतीत किया था।

# श्रीरामजी की भूमि चित्रकूट



भारत में कई ऐसे स्थान हैं, जो कि ऐतिहासिक होने के साथ ही साथ धार्मिक रूप से भी महत्वपूर्ण हैं। ऐसे ही स्थानों में से एक चित्रकूट है, भगवान श्रीराम का वनवास स्थल। चित्रकूट का अर्थ है 'कई आश्चर्यों का पर्वत'। विंध्य पर्वत श्रृंखला में फैला चित्रकूट दो भागों में बंटा हुआ है। एक भाग मध्यप्रदेश के सतना जिले का चित्रकूट है जो कि एक तहसील है और दूसरा भाग उत्तरप्रदेश का चित्रकूट जिला है। महर्षि वाल्मीकि रचित रामायण के अनुसार भगवान श्रीराम ने अपनी पत्नी सीता और माई लक्ष्मण के साथ अपने चौदह वर्ष के वनवास में से साढ़े ग्यारह वर्ष का समय यहां पर व्यतीत

किया था। इसी कारण से चित्रकूट पर्यटन स्थल होने के साथ ही साथ एक आध्यात्मिक महत्व भी रखता है, एक ऐसा स्थान जहां के कण-कण में श्रीराम बसते हैं। इसके साथ ही चित्रकूट कई महान ऋषियों की कर्मभूमि भी रही है, जैसे, अत्रि, सती अनुसूया, दत्तात्रेय, मार्कण्डेय, सरभंग, सुतीक्ष्ण। इसके साथ ही चित्रकूट रामचरितमानस के रचयिता संत तुलसीदास की जन्मभूमि भी रही है, जिनका जन्म चित्रकूट के राजापुर नामक गांव में हुआ था। संत तुलसीदास द्वारा लिखित रामचरितमानस आज भी उनके वंशजों के पास यहां सुरक्षित रखी है।



## क्या देखें

वैसे तो पूरा चित्रकूट ही घूमने लायक है, लेकिन अगर आप चित्रकूट जा रहे हैं, तो किस भी हालत में इन स्थानों पर जाना न भूलें।

## रामघाट

अगर आप चित्रकूट जा रहे हैं, तो रामघाट में खान करना न भूलें, जिसके लिये यह माना जाता है कि अपने वनवास के दौरान चित्रकूट आने पर इसी स्थान पर श्रीराम, सीता और लक्ष्मण ने मंदाकिनी नदी में स्नान किया था। साथ ही ऐसा भी माना जाता है कि चित्रकूट के इसी घाट पर बैठकर संत तुलसीदास ने भगवान राम से चंदन लगवाया था, और फिर हनुमान ने उनका परिचय देते हुए कहा था कि: चित्रकूट के घाट में भई संतन की भीर। तुलसीदास चंदन घिस लिलक देत रघुवीर।। रामघाट के पास कुछ अन्य महत्वपूर्ण स्थान भी हैं, जैसे कि, राघव प्रयाग घाट, मरगजेंद्रेश्वर स्वामी, पाम कुटी और यज्ञ वेदी।

## कामदगिरि

कामदगिरि चित्रकूट का मुख्य दर्शनीय स्थल है। कामदगिरि एक संस्कृत शब्द है, जिसका अर्थ है 'सभी इच्छाओं से परिपूर्ण पर्वत'। ऐसा माना जाता है कि वनवास के दौरान राम, सीता और लक्ष्मण इसी पर्वत पर रहते थे। कामदगिरि और चित्रकूट के भगवान कामतानाथ का मंदिर भी यहीं स्थित है, जहां से कामदगिरि की 5 किलोमीटर लंबी परिक्रमा आरंभ होती है। परिक्रमा के इस पथ का निर्माण सन् 1725 में बुंदेल के महाराज छत्रसाल की पत्नी रानी प्रताप कुंवारी द्वारा करवाया गया था। परिक्रमा पथ के दौरान कई अन्य मंदिर भी स्थित हैं, जैसे, भारत मिलाप जहां पर भरत की मुलाकात राम, सीता और लक्ष्मण से हुई थी।

महाजेंद्रेश्वर स्वामी: यह मंदिर रामघाट पर स्थित है। पुराणों के अनुसार इस स्थान पर सतयुग में भगवान ब्रह्मा ने तपस्या की थी और फिर शिवलिंग की स्थापना की थी। यहां पर मंदिर की स्थापना पन्ना के महाराज अमन सिंह के द्वारा की गई थी।

## जानकी कुंड

जानकी का अर्थ है राजा जनक की पुत्री अर्थात् सीता। ऐसा माना जाता है कि

वनवास के दौरान सीता जी इस कुंड का प्रयोग स्नानागार के रूप में करती थी। जानकी कुंड के आसपास कई शैरिटेबल संस्थाएं स्थित हैं, जैसे कि जानकी कुंड नेत्र चिकित्सालय, ब्लाड स्कूल आदि।

## अत्रि-अनुसूया आश्रम

यह आश्रम रामघाट से 15 कि.मी. की दूरी पर स्थित है। ऐसा माना जाता है कि सती अनुसूया ऋषि अत्रि के साथ यहीं रहती थी और इसी आश्रम में उन्होंने त्रिदेवों को बालकों के रूप में परिवर्तित कर दिया था। इसी आश्रम के पास राममहंस आश्रम भी स्थित है।

## हनुमान धारा

हनुमान धारा रामघाट से पूर्व की ओर 4 किमी की दूरी पर विंध्य के आरंभ पर स्थित एक अत्यंत रमणीय स्थल है। ऐसा माना जाता है कि लंका दहन करने के कारण अयोध्या लौटने तक हनुमान जी के शरीर में जलन हो रही थी। भगवान राम को अपनी यह समस्या बताने पर उन्होंने उन्हें चित्रकूट के इस पर्वत पर जाने के लिये कहा और यह भी कहा कि यहां पर उनपर ढंडे जल की एक धारा प्रवाहित होगी, जिस कारण से उनकी जलन समाप्त हो जाएगी। आज भी हनुमान जी की मूर्ति पर यह धारा प्रवाहित होती है और उसके बाद कहां अदृश्य हो जाती है, यह पूर्णतः रहस्य है। गुप्त गोदावरी: चित्रकूट के दक्षिण-पश्चिम में करीब 18 कि.मी. की दूरी पर एक पहाड़ पर स्थित यह स्थान अत्यंत रमणीय और रहस्यमय है। गुप्त गोदावरी का आचर्य यहां पर स्थित दो गुफाएं हैं।

## रामशर्या

सीतापुर से चलने पर भरत कूप से पहले एक और दिव्य स्थल है, जिसे रामशर्या कहते हैं। इस स्थान को परिक्रमा मार्ग से भी देखा जा सकता है। यह एक चट्टान है, जिसके लिये यह माना जाता है कि वनवास के दौरान राम और सीता इस चट्टान पर आराम करते थे। एक बड़ी सी शिला पर दो चिन्ह भी बने हुए हैं, जिनका निर्माण राम और सीता के लेटने के कारण हुआ था। इनके अतिरिक्त भी चित्रकूट और इसके आसपास के क्षेत्र में कई दर्शनीय स्थल हैं, जैसे कि, राघव-प्रयाग घाट, यज्ञ वेदी, स्फटिक शिला, मयूरध्वज आश्रम, लक्ष्मण चौकी, वाल्मीकि आश्रम, भरत कूप, लक्ष्मण पहाड़ी, सुतीक्ष्ण आश्रम, गणेश बाग, कालिंजर दुर्ग आदि।

## कैसे पहुंचें

सड़क द्वारा: मध्यप्रदेश से चित्रकूट के लिये रीवा, सतना, पन्ना, मैहर, सागर, छतरपुर आदि स्थानों से और उत्तरप्रदेश से मिर्जापुर, इलाहाबाद, बांदा, कानपुर, लखनऊ, महोबा, अतरा, नरैनी, झांसी से निरंतर बस सेवाएं उपलब्ध रहती हैं। रेल द्वारा: निकटतम रेलवे स्टेशन चित्रकूट धाम कर्वा है, जो कि मानिकपुर-झांसी रेलवे लाइन में स्थित है। वायुयान द्वारा: चित्रकूट के लिये निकटतम एयरपोर्ट खजुराहो है, जो कि चित्रकूट से 175 कि.मी. की दूरी पर स्थित है।

## आइस स्कीइंग के लिए मशहूर

# खूबसूरत औली

बद्रीनाथ धाम के निकट नंदा देवी राष्ट्रीय उद्यान के पास स्थित है गढ़वाल का मशहूर औली क्षेत्र। यहां पर घने जंगलों के साथ ही खूबसूरत पहाड़ तथा मखमली घासों से ढंके हुए मैदान फैले हुए हैं। देश का सबसे नया आइसस्कीइंग केंद्र भी यहीं पर मौजूद है। यहां पर आप बर्फ पर फिसलने का भरपूर आनंद उठा सकते हैं। बर्फ की चादरों से ढंकी यहां की खूबसूरत ढलानें एशिया की खूबसूरत ढलानों में भी गिनी जाती हैं। यहां से आप नंदा देवी, हाथी गौरी पर्वत, ऐरावत पर्वत तथा नीलकण्ठ पर्वत का नजारा भी खूबी देख सकते हैं।

सबसे पहले भारत-तिब्बत सीमा पुलिस ने इसे आइसस्कीइंग खेल मैदान के रूप में तलाशा था फिर गढ़वाल मंडल विकास निगम ने स्कीइंग को बढ़ावा देने की मंशा से यहां स्कीइंग केंद्र को स्थापना की। यहां पर रोपवे भी है जोकि औली के आकर्षण में अनूठा साबित हुआ है। रोपवे की रोमांचक यात्रा सैलानियों को आनंदविभोर कर देती है। जब पर्यटक इसमें बैठकर जंगल, खेत और गांवों के ऊपर से गुजरते हैं, तो उनका मन झूम उठता है। दर्शनीय स्थलों की बात करें तो आप सबसे पहले गुरसौं बुयाल देखने जा सकते हैं। ओक और कोनिफर के जंगलों से घिरा हुआ और खूबसूरती से भरपूर यह मैदान सैकड़ों मीलों तक फैला हुआ है। औली से तीन किलोमीटर की दूरी पर स्थित गुरसौं बुयाल में गर्मियों के मौसम में अस्ख फूल भी खिलते हैं।



आप क्वारी बुयाल भी घूमने जा सकते हैं। यह एक मनोरम स्थल है। यहां पर दूर-दूर तक फैली हुई खूबसूरत ढलानें देखते ही बनती हैं। इन ढलानों पर ट्रेकिंग का आनंद भी लिया जा सकता है। जोशीमठ भी औली के सर्वश्रेष्ठ दर्शनीय स्थलों में शुमार है। औली से लगभग 12 किलोमीटर दूर

स्थित जोशीमठ में आप मठों, स्मारकों के दर्शन कर सकते हैं। यहां पर ऐतिहासिक, सांस्कृतिक तथा पौराणिक महत्व के कई सारे मठ व मंदिर मौजूद हैं साथ ही आप यहां पर्वतारोहण भी कर सकते हैं। इस स्थान की सबसे खास बात यह है कि इसे बदरीनाथ और फूलों की घाटी का

प्रवेशद्वार भी माना जाता है।

सेलधर तपोवन को देखने का अपना अलग ही मजा है। क्योंकि यहां पर गरम पानी के अनेक सोते हैं, जिन्हें देखते ही बनता है। यहां पर आप अधिक उबलते गरम पानी के फव्वारे और सोते को देख कर दंग रह जायेंगे। इसी प्रकार चिनाब झील भी देखी जा सकती है। यह झील प्राकृतिक सौंदर्य से भरपूर जगह जोशीमठ के पास स्थित है। लेकिन कठिन चढ़ाई होने के कारण अभी इस स्थल का पर्याप्त विकास नहीं हो सका है।

वंशीनारायण कल्पेश्वर भी देखने योग्य जगह है, खासकर गर्मियों में। क्योंकि गर्मियों में यह पूरी घाटी फूलों से ढंकी हुई नजर आती है। इस मनोरम दृश्य को देखकर सभी पर्यटक आकर्षित हुए बिना नहीं रहते। यदि आप औली की यात्रा करने का मन बना चुके हैं तो आपको बता दें कि यहां तक आपको सौधी रेल सेवा नहीं मिल पाएगी। यहां से निकटतम रेलवे स्टेशन ऋषिकेश है। आप ऋषिकेश से औली के लिए बस ले सकते हैं। ऋषिकेश से औली लगभग 253 किलोमीटर की दूरी पर स्थित है।

चाहें तो ऋषिकेश से जोशीमठ तक के लिए बसों तथा टैक्सियों व जीपों का भी प्रयोग कर सकते हैं और जोशीमठ से औली तक की यात्रा रोपवे से भी तय कर सकते हैं। जहां तक बात यहां पर उठने की है, तो आपको बता दें कि औली में आपको गढ़वाल मंडल विकास निगम द्वारा बनवाए गए हट्स और फाइबर हट्स में रहने की सुविधा आराम से मिल सकती है।

## NEWS BOX

## IND vs ENG: RCB poke fun at Jofra Archer on old tweet after India seal T20 WC final berth

**New Delhi.** RCB poked fun at England fast bowler Jofra Archer after India made their way through to the final of the T20 World Cup 2024. On Thursday, June 27, India beat the Three Lions by 68 runs in the semi-final at the Providence Stadium in Guyana. With the win, India also qualified for their third final in the history of the mega event after the ones in 2007 and 2014. When the Men in Blue were closing in on victory, RCB took it as a chance to troll Archer.

## IND v ENG, T20 World Cup Semifinal: Highlights

The IPL team dug out an old tweet from the English speedster from March 2013 that read, "Run Out". England suffered 2 run outs of Liam Livingstone and Adil Rashid in the semis. Referring to the same, RCB replied to Archer and wrote, "Run Outs". Archer had a decent day with the ball after he got the wicket of Suryakumar Yadav to finish with figures of 4-0-33-1. Thereafter, he scored 21 off 15 balls with 1 four and 2 sixes, but his effort went in vain. Chasing 172, England were bowled out for 103 in 16.4 overs. After the game, Rohit said that the victory over England was 'satisfying'. The Indian skipper said that his team has adapted well to the playing conditions in the West Indies and the USA. "Very satisfying to win. Worked very hard as a unit and it was a great effort from all. We adapted really well, conditions were challenging. That's been the success story for us so far. If bowlers and batters adapt, things fall in place," Rohit said in the post-match presentation ceremony. India's final against South Africa is on Saturday, June 29 at the Kensington Oval in Bridgetown, Barbados. Both teams are unbeaten until now in the tournament

## Well-played boys, goodnight in-laws: Yuvraj Singh's cheeky tweet after IND's win vs ENG

**New Delhi.** Former India cricketer and ambassador of the T20 World Cup 2024 Yuvraj Singh put up a cheeky tweet on 'X' after India's win in the semi-final match over England. The 2007 T20 World Cup winner Yuvraj took to 'X' to congratulate the Indian team and took a sly dig at England as he said "goodnight in-laws". Yuvraj is married to Hazel Keech, who is an actress and model who was born and brought up in Britain and hence, Yuvraj has connections with England. However, Yuvraj was elated with India's win as they knocked England out to storm into the final of the T20 World Cup 2024.

India managed to avenge the loss of the T20 World Cup 2022 semi-final as they beat England by 68 runs at the Providence Stadium in Guyana on June 27, Thursday. It was payback time and the Indian team delivered and how? It was a one-sided affair in the semi-final as India put up a dominating show with the bat as well as the ball.

## Yuvraj Singh's tweet

After putting to bat first, India's batting stepped up as a unit as they scored 171 runs on the board. The batting was led by Indian captain Rohit Sharma, who scored 57 runs from 39 balls and Suryakumar Yadav steadied the ship with a 47-run knock. Hardik Pandya, Ravindra Jadeja alongside Axar Patel provided India with a strong finish. England's batting succumbed to the Indian spinners as Axar Patel and Kuldeep Yadav picked three wickets each to bundle England out for 103 runs. Rohit found the semi-final win to be really pleasing and mentioned that the Indian team really put in a lot of hard work.

## Scheduling of T20 World Cup under scanner

**GEORGETOWN.** The wait kept getting longer. The world's eyes were on the weather radar and as the clouds seemed to keep moving away, the smiles were back on the faces of the fans who have been trooping into Guyana from across the United States and other parts of the world. The toss got delayed, the super-soppers were on, but nothing mattered more than the hot sun that was burning in full glory after morning showers.

But as the teams got on to the field and started to prepare themselves for a long day, quite a few questions about how the tournament has been scheduled surfaced.

To start with, there is no reserve day between games in the knock-out stage, which is beyond belief for anybody who is associated with cricket in this part of the world. To compensate for that, the rule of the tournament was amended at the 11th hour, with two days to go for the match, allowing four hours of extra time.

Pakistan, who had been knocked out in Lauderdale because their game could not be started despite a hot sun blazing through the day, are justified to ask a few questions after rules got amended before the semis.

While that's one issue, the fact that India knew way before the World Cup started that their semifinal would be played in Guyana has also come up for discussion. India captain Rohit Sharma tried to shut it down saying that "it's the same for all teams" and that "England have enough experience of playing in these conditions", the theory that India got a bit of unfair advantage cannot be disputed.

Former England captain Michael Vaughan didn't mince his words when he said that the T20 World Cup is "purely set up for India" and ICC should have been a bit more "fairer" to other countries because this is not a bilateral event. "Well, it's their tournament isn't it? Literally it's that. You know that. They get to play whenever they want, they know where their semifinal is, they play every single game in the morning so people can watch them at night, obviously in India on TV," Vaughan said during a podcast with Australian great Adam Gilchrist on the YouTube channel Club Prairie Fire.

## Guyana pitch his best friend, Axar Patel slows things down to decimate hapless England

← **T20 World Cup 2024: India decimated England in the semi-final of the T20 World Cup 2024. Axar Patel was key to India's success as the spinner ran circles around the England batters, helping India beat the opposition by a massive margin of 68 runs.**

**New Delhi.** India all-rounder Axar Patel was the star of the show on Thursday, 27 June, as India decimated England in the semi-final of the T20 World Cup 2024. India exacted revenge on the English side with a stunning 68-run win over the defending champions. It was England who had knocked India out in a show of domination back in the semi-final of the ICC tournament. On Thursday, India paid that back with some interest as the bowlers ran riot against the famed England line-up at Providence Stadium in Guyana. Axar Patel, the third-choice spinner in the side behind Ravindra Jadeja and Kuldeep Yadav, showed his worth in the slow and low pitch in Guyana, bowling a sensational 3-wicket spell. Coming into the tournament, many believed that Axar was the best all-rounder that India had, due to his



pro prowess with the new ball and his range-hitting capabilities. However, after he did not bowl in the powerplay in the first two matches of the tournament, many questioned the rationale behind him playing in the XI. Axar was handed the new ball today and he showed his cricketing intelligence to eke out three wickets on the track. Against a strong opening partnership of Phil Salt and Jos Buttler, Axar used the angles in his crease to get the wicket of Jos Buttler. Trying to sweep

Axar, Buttler top-edged the ball into the hands of Rishabh Pant, which turned out to be a massive psychological boost for the Indian team. Axar then picked up the wickets of Moeen Ali and Jonny Bairstow to break the back of the England batting line-up.

Speaking at the post-match presentation ceremony, Axar said that he knew that he needed to bring the pitch into play get wickets. "I have bowled in the powerplay in the past, so I had to bowl in the powerplay.

That was the plan. The wicket was stopping and keeping low, so tried to bowl in the right areas. The wicket was slow, so I tried to bowl slower in this match, it worked for me. Wouldn't have worked had I bowled quicker, would have been easier for their batters," Axar Patel said in the post match presentation ceremony.

"Our batters told us that the wicket wasn't easy, so 160 was a good total according to us. That partnership (between Rohit and SKY) was magnificent, they scored the occasional boundaries and rotated the strike. Not thinking about Barbados at the moment, will celebrate this player of the match award first," Axar concluded. If India are to win the T20 World Cup 2024, Axar Patel has to fire, just like he did in the semi-final of the tournament. Bowling in the powerplay and the ability to float throughout the batting order, Axar Patel has acted like a crisis man for Rohit Sharma in this tournament. Whenever India have been put in trouble - be it the top-order collapse against Pakistan, or today in a high pressure situation against England, Axar has not only taken the job, but has also tried his best to level the game. On Thursday, what India saw from Axar would give the team a lot of confidence, not only for the final on Saturday, but also in the near future as the Indian team transitions into a new era.

## England bowled without luck: Jos Buttler reflects on defeat to India in semi-final



**New Delhi.** Skipper Jos Buttler said that England did not have luck going in their favour while bowling in the powerplay during the T20 World Cup semi-final against India. Buttler suggested that had some 'close calls' gone in favour of the Three Lions, it could have been a different story altogether. After opting to bowl first at the Providence Stadium in Guyana, England's bowlers bowled their hearts out,

but India put up a formidable score of 171 for 7. Thereafter, the Brits could only manage to score 103 in 16.4 overs and lost the match by 68 runs. Buttler also said that England could have used Moeen Ali early in the match when the pitch showed signs of indifferent bounce.

"A little bit of both. I thought they played well as well. I thought we bowled a little bit without luck in the power play, a few close

calls there. But, yes, I think the benefit of hindsight and reflecting, I would have got Moeen [Ali] in the game of course. So, yes, bits and pieces here and there," Buttler said in the post-match press conference. Lots of challenges and adversity'

Buttler said that he was proud of England making their way through to the semis. In the Group stage, England were in danger of getting knocked out, but they showed grit to advance in the tournament. The captain praised his team for showing a lot of character through "adversity and challenges". "Yes, I think reaching a semi-final of a World Cup is an achievement. We wanted to obviously go all the way. That was what we came here for. We faced lots of challenges and adversity throughout the whole tournament and we've stuck together well and played well enough to get to this stage. But unfortunately, at this stage, we've fallen short," Buttler added.

After their exit from the T20 World Cup, England will lock horns with the West Indies in a 3-match Test series, starting July 10 at the iconic Lord's Cricket Ground in London.

## T20 World Cup: Captain Rohit Sharma scales new peak, gifts himself redemption chance

**New Delhi.** Unbeaten India are back in a men's T20 World Cup final after a 68-run mauling of defending champions England in a lopsided semi-final in Guyana. India's pursuit of an ICC title appears on track after Rohit Sharma and his men bowled England out for 103 after first posting 171 for 7 in Providence, Guyana. The mismatch from Adelaide 2022 was turned on its head and the title clash against a formidable South African team presents an opportunity for India to break their ICC trophy drought.

India faced a daunting challenge batting first in the semifinals, having previously lost all five ICC tournament encounters under similar circumstances since 2021. However, crucial contributions from Rohit Sharma (57), Suryakumar Yadav (47), and a stellar

performance by Axar Patel with three early wickets ensured India's comprehensive victory over England by 68 runs. Rohit-led India also achieved a remarkable hat-trick, reaching the final of all three major ICC tournaments in one year: the World Test Championship, the ODI World Cup, and the T20 World Cup. With this achievement, Rohit Sharma also tags along with former New Zealand skipper Kane Williamson in the elite club of captains, who have led their national cricket teams to ICC Finals across all formats—Tests, ODIs, and T20Is.

## CAN ROHIT ACHIEVE REDEMPTION?

The Indian fans had to suffer twin heartbreaks at the hands of Australia, first in the WTC final in England and then the 2023 World Cup final at home. But now, the unbeaten

run presents Rohit an opportunity to finally redeem himself after losing two ICC finals albeit in different formats. When asked about the title drought, Rohit has vowed to bring the trophy home, expressing confidence in his team's ability to deliver a strong performance in the upcoming final. "It is a very satisfying win. Everybody worked incredibly hard, and we adapted well to the conditions, which has been our recipe for success. When you play according to the conditions, everything falls into place. Initially, we aimed for 140-150 runs, but as partnerships developed, we pushed for 20-30 runs more. Our bowlers were exceptional, executing their plans effectively, particularly our spinners who capitalized on the conditions by targeting the stumps."

## Rohit Sharma deserves to win T20 WC: Shoaib Akhtar praises 'selfless' India skipper

**New Delhi.** Former Pakistan pacer Shoaib Akhtar backed Rohit Sharma to win the T20 World Cup 2024 title. On Thursday, Rohit's India upped their game and booked their berth in the final of the mega event in the West Indies and the United States. The Men in Blue defeated Jos Buttler's England by 68 runs at the Providence Stadium in Guyana to advance to their third final after 2007 and 2014. Akhtar said after missing out on winning the World Test Championship and the ODI World Cup last year, Rohit deserves to win the T20 World Cup. The Rawalpindi Express praised Rohit for his mindset of putting his best foot forward and wanting to win. He also hailed Rohit as a 'selfless' skipper for putting the interests of his team ahead instead of personal goals.

"I was always in favour of India winning the tournament. I was hurt last year when India



could not win the World Cup as they should not have lost it because they deserved to win," Akhtar said on his official YouTube channel.

Rohit Sharma has repeatedly said he wants to make an impact and win the trophy and so, deserves to win the cup. He is a big player, and it should end on a big note. He is a selfless captain, plays for the team and is a complete batter," Akhtar added.

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Apart from being a successful skipper, Rohit has also been India's standout batter in the tournament. In 7 games, he has scored 248 runs at an average of 41.33 and a strike-rate of 155.97 with 3 half-centuries and a top score of 92 against Australia to his name.

Rohit will be looking to carry his form when India face South Africa in the final on Saturday at the Kensington Oval in Bridgetown, Barbados.

## 'Talk logic, not nonsense': Harbhajan Singh slams Michael Vaughan over Guyana pitch claim

**T20 World Cup 2024: Harbhajan Singh slammed Michael Vaughan over his claims regarding Guyana pitch favouring India. The former India cricketer asked Vaughan to talk logically and accept England's defeat over India.**

**NEW DELHI.** Former India cricketer Harbhajan Singh has slammed Michael Vaughan for his constant remarks regarding pitch bias towards India. India thrashed England in a one-sided affair by 68 runs at the Providence Stadium in Guyana on June 27, Thursday. The men in blue stormed into the final of the T20 World Cup 2024 as they had a perfect payback against England. Vaughan took to 'X' to yet again call out the venue bias for India after they beat England. He claimed that the Guyana pitch was the most suitable for the Indian team. Harbhajan gave a befitting reply by retweeting his post



and asked Vaughan to talk logic and not nonsense. In a fiery remark, he asked Vaughan to accept that England were outplayed by India and move on. Vaughan made headlines for claiming that the ICC has a bias towards the Indian team and wrote after semi-final 1 that "Surely this Semi



should have been the Guyana one... but because the whole event is geared towards India it's so unfair on others." This remark came after Afghanistan suffered a 9-wicket loss against South Africa in Trinidad. Vaughan's complaint regarding India bias

He continued taking indirect digs at the Indian team and tweeted, "India thoroughly deserve to be in the final... The best team in tournament so far... Was always going to hard for England on this pitch... India just so much better on lower slower spinning pitches... A user on 'X' was unhappy with Vaughan's comments and tweeted that "Now you won't cry about the ICC giving semis to India in Guyana." However, Vaughan remained firm on his stance and mentioned that England would have won the semi-final had they played at the Brian Lara Stadium in Trinidad and that Guyana was a "lovely venue pick for India."

## Harbhajan throws fire-ball at Vaughan

The Providence Stadium is known to be a slow track and despite winning the toss, England captain Jos Buttler opted to bowl first. Meanwhile, Indian captain Rohit Sharma had mentioned at the toss that they wanted to bat first only. Despite the multiple rain delays, there was nothing on offer for the spinners and slowly it became clear that the pitch was suiting the spinners. The Indian spinners gave England a run for their money as they exploited the conditions really well and helped India win the match.



# Richa Chadha

## To Shoot Comedy Movie After Welcoming Baby: 'I Can Handle Both Duties Effectively'

Actress Richa Chadha is set to challenge traditional norms as she embraces the dual roles of working as a professional and mother. While many actresses in the industry choose to take a hiatus from their careers to focus on motherhood, Richa is determined to continue her work without interruption. The actress has already signed her next, and the work on the untitled film is set to begin soon. The script of the film which is a comedy genre is already ready and has been written by Amitosh Nagpal, and is set in North India. Commenting on her work had maternity break, she shared, "While I can't speak for all women, because it depends on each individual what their journey is like, I am determined to get back to work as soon as possible, and not take a long break, as I have pending commitments." She further added, "I take immense inspiration from my own mother, who managed both roles with grace and efficiency. I believe I can handle both duties effectively as well, because it depends on the kind of support system you have around you and how hands-on your partner is. In my case, I feel blessed to have both those things figured out. I also don't think it is out of the ordinary. I have seen the badass women of Mumbai take local trains well into their 9th month, heading to work, looking perfectly groomed with their gajras intact. I am very inspired by the average Indian woman and don't want this to be treated as a medical condition, it is not. It is a natural part of life".



The source close to the production of the film, said, "Richa has loved the script and it's a really fun concept. The pre production work is set to take place in August and will go on floors in October. The film is meant to be shot at the brink of winters in the north". As Richa prepares for this new chapter in her life, she remains dedicated to her upcoming projects, assuring her fans that her passion for acting and storytelling will not waver.

### Telugu Actress Sreelu Serves Back-to-back Stylish Looks In Black Dresses



Actress Sreelu has made her debut in Telugu cinema with this year's film Kotha Rangula Prapancham, directed by her father and actor Prudhvi Raj. Besides her debut project, Sreelu has also hit the headlines for her impeccable sartorial choices. Some photos of Sreelu treating her followers to her pictures in different outfits are going viral on the internet. In one of these photos, she can be seen flaunting her toned figure in a black strappy mini dress. Opting for open hair and glowy makeup, Sreelu looked stunning in the photo. In another set of images, Sreelu strikes a pose and can be seen donning an embellished black bodycon dress. She looks like a sight to behold with her well-sculpted legs. Sreelu aced her fashion game in a saree as well and looked glamorous, while posing for the cameras. Her makeup and statement jewellery added further allure to the photo. Sreelu is about to tie the knot soon, as revealed by Prudhvi Raj during the interview. According to reports, in this interview, one of the reporters asked some questions related to Sreelu's personal life. The reporter asked whether his daughter was in love with anyone. Answering this question, Prudhvi said that Sreelu is soon to tie the nuptial knot and will become the daughter-in-law of a star's house. The veteran actor also revealed many aspects of her daughter's life, while Sreelu was embarrassed by this question. After this news went viral, social media users were curious to know with whom Sreelu was going to tie the knot. As of now, there are no reports regarding whom Sreelu will marry. Information regarding Sreelu's other projects is not known in the public domain. Meanwhile, she keeps sharing videos on Instagram on different popular tracks. Sreelu's latest video is a track from the film Kundanapu Bomma, directed by Vara Mullapoodi. She looks drop-dead gorgeous in a red saree which she paired with a velvet blouse. She accessorised her looks with heavy jewellery, red lips and glowy makeup with black eyelashes and pink eyeliner. Social media users showered heart emoticons in the comment section, signifying their appreciation for Sreelu's outfit.

### Meet Vikram Singh Rajput, A Salman Khan Fan Who Shares Uncanny Resemblance With His Idol



For the last 3 decades, Salman Khan has been one of the leading names in Bollywood, amassing such fame that many could even dream of. So, such a famous face is bound to have lookalikes. This is about a huge fan of the superstar, who also happens to be his doppelganger, Vikram Singh Rajput. Vikram Singh Rajput is a popular name on social media, who regularly gains attention on the internet for his uncanny resemblance to Salman Khan. In each of his videos, he sports a similar expression and even style to the superstar, which is loved by the netizens.

The young man is adored by an impressive 194,000 followers on his Instagram handle. One of his most recent videos shows him enacting the small gestures of the superstar, unsurprisingly popular among his fans. The clip shows Vikram capturing himself sporting stylish shades and a yellow shirt. He shows off his shockingly similar looks to Salman Khan. Especially his eyes, which look almost exactly like the actor's. Users react to the video in the comment section, with most of them flooding it with heart and fire emoticons. While a user wrote, "Wow superhero." And another shared, "Wow Stunning Expression." An active user of social media, Vikram Singh Rajput's videos frequently go viral among the fans, amassing thousands of likes and views. His idol Salman Khan is busy the shooting of his upcoming film, titled Sikandar. Back in April, the actor announced the film through his official Instagram handle, with a post. He wrote in the caption, "Iss Eid Bade Miyan Chote Miyan aur Maidaan ko dekho aur agli Eid Sikandar se aa kar milo.... Wish you all Eid Mubarak! (This Eid watch Bade Miyan Chote Miyan and Maidaan, in the next come and meet Sikandar)." As per the information, the film is being helmed by AR Murugadoss, who is also its writer. The cast of the film also includes Rashmika Mandanna, Suniel Shetty and Prateik Babbar. It is being produced by Sajid Nadiadwala.

# Aishwarya Rai

## AVOIDS Cameras, Zooms Past Paparazzi As She Steps Out in Mumbai

Bollywood actress Aishwarya Rai was spotted out and about in Mumbai but it seems like she did not want to be photographed. Paparazzi spotted Aishwarya in Mumbai's Bandra area, running an errand. The actress was spotted stepping out from the building she was visiting and diving into the car instead of photos for the cameras. As she exited the venue, she did not stop for the paparazzi. Despite her efforts of not getting clicked, the paparazzi managed to get a glimpse of her in the car. Aishwarya was seen wearing a white outfit and even turning her face away when the cameras photographed her. Check out the photos below: Aishwarya Rai is not known to make often media appearances. The last time she was spotted out and about was earlier this summer



when she attended the Cannes 2024 film festival. She sported a sling, with a white cast visible around the wrist. Despite her injury, she aced her style game. Although Aishwarya has been tight-lipped about her injury, Mid-Day revealed she injured herself when she was at home. The incident took place on May 11. Aishwarya reportedly fractured her wrist after she had a bad fall at her Mumbai residence. The report added that she decided to complete her work assignments while the wrist swelling reduced. Once she is cleared by the doctors, she is expected to undergo surgery. "Two days after her fall, she did her costume fittings with her designers, and only requested that they ensure that the venue was spacious and comfortable so that she could avoid another injury. The brand was thankful and appreciative that she met her share of the deal despite being in pain," a source told Mid-Day. Her doctors had stated that she could undergo surgery after the swelling had subsided, and had granted permission to travel for the festival. She is likely to be seen in a splint for a month, and will subsequently undergo physiotherapy to regain her strength," the insider added. On the work front, Aishwarya was last seen in Ponniyin Selvan 2 in 2023. She hasn't announced a film since

