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The Researchers

NEWS BOX

'Injustice corrected':
Supreme Court overturns
Richard Glossip's death
sentence in landmark ruling

WASHINGTON. The Supreme Court on Tuesday
threw out the murder conviction and death penalty
for Richard Glossip, an Oklahoma man who was
found guilty in the killing of a motel owner but has
steadfastly maintained his innocence and averted
multiple attempts by the state to execute him.

Glossip's wife, Lea, called the decision "an answered
prayer." Prosecutors' decision to allow a key witness
to give testimony they knew to be false violated
Glossip's constitutional right to a fair trial, the
justices ruled in a case that produced a rare alliance
of his lawyers and the state's Republican attorney
general in support of a new day in court for
Glossip. Glossip is entitled to a new trial," Justice
Sonia Sotomayor wrote for five justices. Thomas
wrote that the majority had "cast aside" the interests
of victim Barry Van Treese's family. The victim's
relatives had told the high court that they wanted to
see Glossip executed. A message left with Van
Treese's brother, Ken Van Treese, was not
immediately returned Tuesday.

Don Knight, Glossip's attorney, said the court was
right to overturn the conviction because prosecutors
hid critical evidence from the defense team. "Today
was a victory for justice and fairness in our judicial
system," Knight said in a statement. "Rich Glossip,
who has maintained his innocence for 27 years, will
now be given the chance to have the fair trial that he
has always been denied." Glossip's wife wrote in a
text to The Associated Press, "Rich and I opened the
decision together on the phone this morning,
knowing it would be a life-changing moment. To say
that we are overcome with emotion is an
understatement. We are deeply grateful. Today is
truly an answered prayer." Glossip, who currently is
housed at the maximum-security Oklahoma State
Penitentiary in McAlester, is expected to remain in
prison, at least until the state decides whether to retry
him, said Phil Bacharach, a spokesman for
Oklahoma Attorney General Gentner Drummond.

'The fall changed her whole
life': Jury awards \$7.25
million to woman injured on
Harry Potter ride

LOS ANGELES. A federal jury has awarded \$7.25
million to a 74-year-old Arizona woman for a spine
injury she suffered in a fall while exiting the Harry
Potter and the Forbidden Journey ride at Universal
Studios Hollywood. Pamela Morrison was getting
seated on the popular attraction with her grandson in
September 2022 when she was asked to exit after her
harness failed to secure properly. Morrison slipped
and fell when stepping from a moving walkway onto
solid ground, according to her lawsuit.

Her attorney, Taylor Kruse, argued that Morrison's fall
—which caused a spinal compression fracture — was
due to employees' failure to halt the moving walkway
and allow the woman to exit safely. "It would have cost
them four seconds to stop it, but instead they wanted to
keep the ride moving no matter what, to make its quota
of 1,800 riders per hour," Kruse said Tuesday.
Lawyers for Universal Studios Hollywood argued that
Morrison was focused on her grandson and not on
where she was stepping, so the fall was her fault.
After a three-day trial, the California jury deliberated
for four hours on Feb. 14 before finding the theme
park responsible for creating the dangerous
conditions that led to Morrison's accident. She was
awarded \$250,000 for future medical expenses, \$2
million for past pain and suffering, and \$5 million for
future pain and suffering, Kruse said.

Iran denounces new US sanctions
as 'sign of hostility'

TEHRAN. Iran on Wednesday condemned a new
round of US sanctions as a "clear sign of hostility"
after Washington blacklisted more than 30 people
and vessels linked to its oil trade.

Washington announced the measures on Monday,
targeting the head of the national oil company and
others accused of brokering oil sales. It was the
second wave of sanctions in less than a month since
US President Donald Trump reinstated his
"maximum pressure" policy on Tehran.

The sanctions were a "clear sign of the hostility of
American policymakers towards the welfare,
development, and happiness of the great people of
Iran", said foreign ministry spokesman Esmail
Baqaei. In a statement, he called the measures a
"wrongful, unjustified, illegitimate act that violates
the human rights of the Iranian people", and held
Washington responsible. Since returning to the White
House in January, Trump has called for dialogue
with Iran, saying he wants it to be a "great and
successful country." On Monday, Iranian Foreign
Minister Abbas Araghchi dismissed the possibility
of direct negotiations with Washington on his
country's nuclear programme under "pressure, threat
or sanctions." During Trump's first term, which
ended in 2021, Washington withdrew from the
landmark 2015 deal that imposed curbs on Iran's
nuclear programme in return for sanctions relief.

After the Trump administration reimposed sanctions
in 2018, Tehran gradually rolled back its nuclear
commitments. Iran held fresh nuclear talks on
Monday with Britain, France and Germany
following renewed engagement in November.
Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister Kazem Gharibabadi
said Tuesday that another round of talks with the
Europeans was expected within three weeks.

South Korea's birthrate rebounds after 8 years of decline

South Korea's birthrate rose in 2024
for the first time in nine years, driven
by government policies, corporate
incentives, and a post-pandemic
marriage surge. However, experts say
sustained growth requires further
reforms to support freelancers,
temporary workers, and broader
societal shifts.

childbirth that is providing huge help," said
Nam, whose employer - Booyoung -
started to give out 100 million won
(\$70,000) from last year to its employees
for childbirth bonus. That shift in societal
norms could prove pivotal in a country that
over the past decade has seen its
birthrate plummet to the lowest in the
world, as women prioritised career
advancement over marriage or
parenthood due to the rising cost of
housing and raising a child.

policies are having an effect.
Quarterly data showed the number of second
newborns, such as Nam's, jumped 12% in
the second half of 2024, versus an 11% rise
in first-born babies.

support. Interviews conducted by Reuters
over the past week with policymakers,
industry experts, economists and Korean
mothers credited the government's policy
support - in three areas of work-family
balance, childcare and housing - and a
campaign to encourage business to
incentivise employees on parenthood
for the positive turn. The government
plans to spend 19.7 trillion won
(\$13.76 billion) in the three focus areas
this year, up 22% from 2024. "Korea
faces some of the world's most
challenging demographics. The
government didn't overstate the case
when it declared a national
demographic emergency in June," says
Kathleen Oh, Morgan Stanley's chief
Korea and Taiwan Economist. "The
good news is that the sense of urgency
appears real, with authorities moving
toward structural reforms and away from
short-term fixes." Policy changes over the
last year include employees being paid
100% of their salary for a maximum of six
months, if both parents take parental leave,
compared with a maximum of three
months earlier. Additionally, the maximum
period was extended to 1-1/2 years, from 1
year, if both parents take leave.



Seoul South Korea's birthrate, the lowest in
the world, rose in 2024 for the first time
in nine years, as more couples tied the knot
after pandemic delays, and as policy efforts
to incentivise companies and Koreans to
embrace parenthood start to pay off. Nam
Hyun-jin, 35, who had her second daughter
last August, said she has seen a social shift,
driven largely by the government's
broadened policy support and more
companies joining the efforts. The society
as a whole is encouraging childbirth more
than five years ago when we had our first
child," Nam said. And, more importantly,
"it's the company culture of encouraging

The stakes are high, as the
demographic crisis has become the
biggest risk to growth in Asia's
fourth-largest economy and its social
welfare system, with the country's
population of 51 million on track to
halve by the end of this century.
In 2024, however, the glum statistics
on South Korea's fertility rate turned a
corner. It rose to 0.75, still a global record-
low, from 0.72 in 2023, after eight
consecutive years of declines from 1.24 in
2015 despite billions of dollars spent by the
country to try to reverse the trend. While
the rise mostly reflected an increase from
pandemic-disrupted marriages, other
numbers suggest it could be more than just
a COVID blip and that government

"There is a high possibility of further rises (in
fertility rate) in coming years, and we are
right at the inflection point," You Hye-mi,
presidential secretary for population
policy, told Reuters. Last year, now-
impeached President Yoon Suk Yeol
proposed a new ministry devoted to
tackling the "national demographic crisis",
aiming for a broader approach from earlier
years of less-effective cash-fostered

Trump proposes fines, jail time for illegal
immigrants who fail to register

Washington. Immigrants in the US
illegally who fail to register with
the federal government could face
significant fines, potential
imprisonment or both, according
to a directive issued by the
Department of Homeland
Security on Tuesday.
"The Trump administration will
enforce all our immigration laws.
We will not pick and choose which
laws we will enforce," a
department spokesperson said. "We
must know who is in our country for
the safety and security of our homeland
and all Americans." All immigrants
over the age of 14 who were not
fingerprinted or registered when
applying for a US visa and who remain



in the US for 30 days or longer are
required to register and be
fingerprinted, according to the US
Citizenship and Immigration Services
website, where immigrants can
register.
Once an immigrant has registered and

been fingerprinted, the Department
of Homeland Security will issue
evidence of registration, which must
be carried by immigrants over the age
of 18 at all times, according to the
website.
On his return to office last month,
President Trump declared illegal
immigration at the Mexico border a
national emergency and directed the
department to ensure that immigrants
register with the federal government.
The administration has sought to shut
down the previous Biden
administration's CBP One entry
programme, which had allowed
hundreds of thousands of migrants to
enter the US legally by scheduling an
appointment on an app.

White House says Amy
Gleason, not Elon Musk, is
heading Trump's DOGE

Washington,UPDATED After weeks of refusing to
answer the question, the White House on Tuesday
revealed the identity of the Department of Government
Efficiency's acting administrator, a little known former
healthcare technology consultant named Amy
Gleason.
The Trump administration has been repeatedly pressed
to name the individual formally in charge of DOGE
after saying in a court filing this month that billionaire
Elon Musk, whom President Donald Trump has said is
in charge, has no authority over the cost-cutting
program. Musk's role is an issue in lawsuits
challenging the legality of DOGE's moves including
its access to sensitive government payment
systems. Gleason, also a former official at the US
Digital Service, served in the first Trump
administration. After Trump's Jan. 20 inauguration, the
Digital Service was renamed DOGE and is radically
downsizing the federal government, including
thousands of job cuts. A White House official said
Gleason has acted as a liaison with other agencies. It
wasn't immediately clear if Gleason was just named to
the role or has held it for some time. Her LinkedIn

Bangladesh 'at risk' from infighting,
warns army chief amid surge in crime

The South Asian nation has
been struggling to stem a
surge in violent crime, with
the security forces
arresting thousands this
month, targeting gangs
allegedly connected to the
party of ousted Prime
Minister Sheikh Hasina.

without singling out any group by
name. "Since stakeholders are busy
accusing each other, miscreants find the
situation favourable. They believe they
can get away with anything," he said at
an army memorial event.
Bangladesh has been riven by a surge of
crime, as well as protests this month
when crowds smashed buildings
connected to Hasina's family.

TRAPPED IN THE SAME CYCLE
Bangladesh has a long history of military
coups. While it was Waker who took
charge after Hasina fled by helicopter
to India on August 5, he also urged the
people to back Nobel Prize-winning
microfinance pioneer Muhammad
Yunus. Yunus, 84, vows to institute far-
reaching democratic reforms and hold
general elections in late 2025 or in early



2026, and Waker has sworn in
the interim government. "At
the beginning, I said it would
take 18 months to hold an
election," Waker said. "We
are on that path. Professor
Yunus is doing his best to
keep us united. Let's help
him." Key student protest
leader Nahid Islam resigned
on Tuesday from the
government cabinet, where
he headed the telecom
ministry, ahead of the
expected launch of a new political party
on Friday. Yunus has said he inherited a
"completely broken-down" system of
public administration and justice that
needs a comprehensive overhaul to
prevent a future return to autocracy.
Waker said security forces accused of a
raft of allegations "of enforced
disappearances, murder, and torture
must be investigated." "Punishment
must be ensured," he said. "Otherwise,
we will be trapped in the same cycle."

Dhaka. Bangladesh's army chief on
Tuesday blamed infighting for
deteriorating law and order, warning
that the gains of the student-led
revolution that toppled the
government last August were at risk.
The South Asian nation has been
struggling to stem a surge in violent
crime, with the security forces arresting
thousands this month targeting gangs
allegedly connected to the party of
ousted prime minister Sheikh Hasina.
"If you can't move beyond your
differences and continue meddling and
fighting among yourselves, the
independence and integrity of the
country will be at risk -- I warn you,"
said General Waker-Uz-Zaman,



profile says she has worked as a senior adviser since
last month. Gleason did not immediately reply to a
message sent via the site. A former USDS staffer told
Reuters that Gleason returned to the agency ahead of
Trump's inauguration as part of an effort to smooth the
transition. The executive order establishing DOGE
said the administrator reports to White House Chief of
Staff Susie Wiles.
Gleason's LinkedIn profile also shows she has worked as
an independent consultant and product officer at a
healthcare venture capital firm and a rural healthcare
organization. In a court filing earlier this month, the
White House said Musk was a White House employee
and senior adviser to the president. The administration
has said Musk is an unpaid "special government
employee," which means his role is temporary.

Russian news website claims 95,000
troops killed in Ukraine, Kremlin silent

Mediazona published on Monday, the
third anniversary of the offensive, an
infographic with images and official
reports of the deaths of soldiers from
various sources, including social
media, news reports and obituaries.

thousands of photos of soldiers
forming an image of a famous
1871 painting by Russian artist
Vasily Vereshchagin called "The
Apotheosis of War", depicting a
huge pile of skulls. Each entry
includes accessible information
on the soldier, including age and
date of death, region and unit and
photograph in some cases.
The online list at 200.zona.media
currently stands at 95,300.
Mediazona and the BBC have
been updating the list since the
offensive began. Kremlin spokesman
Dmitry Peskov told AFP on Tuesday he
was not aware of the publication and
neither confirmed nor denied the toll. "I
don't know if it's true or not," he said,
calling information on death tolls "the
exclusive prerogative" of the defence
ministry. Russia rarely gives casualty
figures for the conflict. The Defence
Ministry said in September 2022 that 5,937



soldiers had been killed in combat. At the
end of 2024, then-US Defence Secretary
Lloyd Austin spoke of 700,000 Russian
soldiers who were killed or
wounded. Mediazona was founded by
Russian opposition activist Pyotr Verzilov,
who helped form the Pussy Riot punk
group and has fought on the side of
Ukraine. The site has been declared a
"foreign agent" by Russia and Verzilov has
been put on a list of extremists and

convicted in absentia for allegedly
distributing false information about the
army. The platform puts the Russian
death total so far this year at 393, while
it lists 26,102 death reports for 2024. But
it says the real number of Russian
deaths in the offensive must be much
higher, since not all deaths are reported
publicly.
In conjunction with the independent news
site Meduza, it estimated this week that
165,000 Russians had been killed,
based on its own list and an official
register of inheritance
proceedings. Ukraine President Volodymyr
Zelensky told US broadcaster NBC this
month that more than 46,000 Ukrainian
soldiers had been killed and around
380,000 wounded, while other estimates
have been much higher.
Independent Ukrainian war correspondent
Yuri Butusov said in December that his
army sources estimated 70,000 dead and
35,000 missing.

Maha Kumbh 2025 Concludes with Record-Breaking 66.21 Crore Devotees Attending Sacred Event

Prayagraj: The Maha Kumbh Mela, the world's largest spiritual and cultural gathering, has officially concluded today, coinciding with the auspicious occasion of Mahashivratri. Pilgrims from across India gathered at the Sangam and other ghats for their final holy dip, marking the end of this monumental event. The six-week festival, which began on January 13, attracted a record-breaking 66 crore 21 lakh devotees, surpassing previous attendance numbers and reaffirming its status as the largest human gathering globally. This year's Kumbh Mela holds added significance due to a rare celestial alignment, a once-in-144-years phenomenon, elevating its spiritual importance.



Local authorities made extensive preparations to manage the influx of visitors, ensuring safety and smooth movement at major locations, including railway stations and roads. Special

traffic regulations were enforced to prevent congestion, while visitors were advised to keep moving after their holy dip. Security was a top priority, with personnel from

the NDRF, SDRF, Home Guards, and local police ensuring safety at the ghats and fairgrounds. Aerial surveillance also monitored the event. To keep devotees informed

and prevent misinformation, loudspeaker announcements and radio broadcasts were made throughout the event. In light of the surge in pilgrim numbers, transpor-

tation was enhanced with 4,500 buses operating every 10 minutes, along with 750 shuttle buses. The railways also played a crucial role, operating over 243 outward trains on Mahashivratri evening to help over 11.50 lakh passengers return home. Special trains and extra rakes were stationed near Prayagraj to accommodate the high demand. Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw and Railway Board Chairman Satish Kumar oversaw the operations. The successful completion of Maha Kumbh 2025 has left an indelible mark on the spiritual and cultural landscape, offering a memorable experience to millions of devotees from around the world.

CAG Report Reveals AAP's Liquor Policy Led to Rs 2,000 Cr. Loss for Delhi Government



New Delhi: A report from the Comptroller and Auditor General of India (CAG) has revealed that the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) government's liquor policy caused a staggering loss of over Rs 2,000 crore to the Delhi government's exchequer. According to the CAG's findings, the cumulative losses incurred by the Delhi government due to the 2021-2022 excise policy amount to more than Rs 2,000 crore. The audit uncovered several discrepancies in the implementation of the AAP government's liquor policy, which governed the supply of alcohol within the National Capital Territory of Delhi. The CAG report, tabled in the Delhi Assembly yesterday by the BJP government led by Rekha Gupta, highlights concerns over the financial management of the policy. The controversial excise policy, which has since been scrapped, was a major topic during the recently concluded Delhi Assembly elections. Allegations of corruption and irregularities surrounding the policy were central to the political debate. This report on the Delhi Excise Policy is part of a broader set of 14 pending CAG reports that assess the performance of the previous AAP government in various sectors.

Mahashivratri Chhau Dance Festival 2025 Shines at Sangeet Natak Academy



Bokaro: The Mahashivratri Chhau Dance Festival 2025 was held with grandeur at the Sangeet Natak Academy Chhau Center, Chandankyari, continuing the tradition from last year. The event was organized by the Chhau Center under the Ministry of Art and Culture, Government of India. The festival was inaugurated by Haradhan Mahato, a member of the Chhau Advisory Committee, alongside Dilip Jena, Vijay Kumar, Ashutosh Kumar, and Chhau Guru Rakho Bauri. The program featured performances from teams representing Saraikela, Purulia, and Chandankyari, who presented captivating dance sequences based on the Shiva-Parvati marriage theme, showcasing various forms of Shiva. The event was coordinated by Dr. Sanjay, with valuable contributions from the center's staff and participants, ensuring its success.

Indian Government Plans 'Universal Pension Scheme' for All Citizens

New Delhi: The Indian government is in the process of introducing a 'universal pension scheme' aimed at providing financial security to all citizens, including those in the unorganised sector, according to media reports. Currently, people in the unorganised sectors lack access to large government-run savings programs. The proposed scheme will be available to both salaried and self-employed individuals, offering the option to contribute on a voluntary basis. However, the government will not be making any contributions to the fund. The new initiative, referred to as the 'New Pension Scheme' for now, aims to simplify and streamline the country's pension and savings system. It is expected to integrate some of the existing pension schemes into this universal framework, making it a safer and more accessible option for citizens, reported media. The scheme will not replace the National Pension Scheme (NPS), another voluntary pension option currently available. Once the proposal document is finalized, stakeholder consultations will begin to shape the final details of the plan.

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IIT-ISM Dhanbad Hosts Keynote on Waste-to-Wealth Initiative

Dhanbad: IIT-ISM Dhanbad's Department of Environmental Science and Engineering, in collaboration with the Society of Environmental Science and Engineering, hosted an insightful keynote lecture on Wednesday, as part of the Mission LiFE: Lifestyle for Environment Lecture Series 2024-25. Dr. Partha Chakravarty, MD of Rigel Bioenviron Solutions Pvt. Ltd., Kolkata, delivered the lecture titled "Waste to Wealth Initiative: Converting Waste Organics to Valuable Polyhydroxyalkanoates (PHAs) Bio-plastic, Bio-CNG, Bio-derivatives via Cost-Effective Techniques." Dr. Chakravarty discussed sustainable waste management, focusing on converting organic waste into valuable products such as PHA bioplastics, biofuels, and bio-derivatives. His presentation highlighted innovative techniques to reduce bioplastic costs, minimize import dependency, and promote biofuels as affordable alternatives to fossil fuels. The lecture was followed by a hands-on lab demonstration where Dr. Chakravarty showcased the bio-plastic production process from sludge, offering practical insights into biotechnological advancements. The event, supported by IIT-ISM Dhanbad's distinguished faculty, including Prof. Alok Sinha, Prof. S.K. Maiti, Prof. S.K. Gupta, and Prof. Suresh Pandian, was sponsored by the Ministry of Environment, Forest, and Climate Change (MoEF&CC), underscoring IIT-ISM Dhanbad's dedication to promoting sustainable environmental solutions.

IIT-ISM Dhanbad Alumnus Sambeet Parija's 73 Strings Raises \$55 Million in Series B Funding

Dhanbad: IIT-ISM Dhanbad proudly announces that 73 Strings, an AI-driven financial intelligence platform co-founded by Sambeet Parija, a 2014 B.Tech Mining Engineering alumnus, has raised an impressive \$55 million in its Series B funding round. The investment round was led by Goldman Sachs, with additional contributions from Blackstone, Golub Capital, Hamilton Lane, and Broadhaven Ventures. Sambeet Parija, Co-Founder and Chief Product Officer of 73 Strings, shared his excitement about the achievement, stating, "This \$55 million funding will fuel innovation at 73 Strings. Our AI-based solutions are revolutionizing private capital markets, particularly in valuation monitoring and data extraction, and we are building the most adaptive tools in the industry." Specializing in AI-powered data collection, monitoring, and valuation services, 73 Strings aims to enhance efficiency and accuracy in asset management for clients within the private capital market. Ashok Kumar, a distinguished IIT-ISM alumnus and General Secretary of PanIIT Alumni India, extended his congratulations to Parija, emphasizing, "This achievement is a proud moment for IIT-ISM Dhanbad. It highlights the innovation and leadership that the institute nurtures in its students." The success of 73 Strings further underscores IIT-ISM Dhanbad's commitment to fostering innovation and entrepreneurship, reinforcing its position as a leading hub for business leaders and industry trailblazers worldwide.

CBI Seizes Cryptocurrencies Worth Rs 24 Crore in GainBitcoin Scam



New Delhi: The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) has seized cryptocurrencies valued at nearly Rs 24 crore in connection with the infamous GainBitcoin scam. In a statement, the CBI confirmed that its teams had conducted coordinated searches across more than 60 locations

nationwide, including major cities like Delhi, Pune, Nanded, Kolhapur, Mumbai, Bengaluru, Chandigarh, Mohali, Jhansi, and Hubli, as part of the ongoing investigation. During these searches, CBI officials uncovered cryptocurrencies worth Rs 23.94 crore, alongside multiple

hardware crypto wallets, documents, 34 laptops, hard disks, and 12 mobile phones. The seized materials are currently being analyzed to uncover further details about the misappropriation of funds and potential international transactions tied to the scam. The GainBitcoin scheme,

which operated under fraudulent promises, was launched in 2015 by the accused. Investors were lured with the assurance of 10% monthly returns on Bitcoin investments over an 18-month period, which ultimately led to significant financial losses for numerous individuals.

Mithila Society Celebrates Mahashivratri with Grand Worship of 1.25 Lakh Earthen Shivalings

Bokaro: On Mahashivratri, the Shivshakti Bolbam Samiti organized a grand celebration at the Shiva temple in Kali Mandir, Sector-2D, marking the 15th Pratishthapana Divas of Baba Ambikanath Mahadev. The event featured the making and worship of 1.25 lakh earthen Shivalings by the Maithili community. Maithili women began crafting the Shivalings from Gangot (soil from



the Ganga river) in the morning, and the worship continued until late evening. The ritual, held at Maithili Kala Manch, was attended by a large number of devotees, including

those from neighboring areas, who participated in bhajan-kirtan and devotion. Pandits Yogendra Mishra and Chanchal Jha performed the puja with Ve-

dic chants, while the area resonated with the sounds of "Har Har Mahadev" and "Devi Jagdamba." The success of the event was attributed to the efforts of key committee members and volunteers, including Sardar Krishna Chandra Jha, President Harivansh Jha, General Secretary Vijay Kumar Mishra, and many others, as well as the contributions of temple priests and trustee members.



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Tamil Nadu won't lose a single seat: Amit Shah rejects Stalin's delimitation charge

Home Minister Amit Shah dismissed Tamil Nadu Chief Minister MK Stalin's claim that the state would lose eight Lok Sabha seats due to delimitation, asserting that no southern state would see a reduction.

New Delhi. Union Home Minister Amit Shah has dismissed Tamil Nadu Chief Minister MK Stalin's claim that the state would lose eight Lok Sabha seats if delimitation is carried out based on the population census. Shah asserted that Tamil Nadu would not lose a single parliamentary seat, rejecting concerns over the potential impact of the process. "Prime Minister Narendra Modi made it clear in the Lok Sabha that even after delimitation, the seats of none of the states of the south will be

decreased," Shah said, addressing the controversy. The delimitation exercise, expected next year, involves redrawing parliamentary constituencies based on population levels and could alter the proportion of Lok Sabha MPs from southern states. The issue has become a major flashpoint between the ruling DMK in Tamil Nadu and the BJP-led central government.

Chief Minister MK Stalin has called for an all-party meeting on March 5 to discuss the implications of delimitation, warning that Tamil Nadu is at a critical juncture where it must protest to protect its rights. He described the process as a "sword hanging over southern states" and insisted that it would weaken Tamil Nadu's representation in Parliament despite the state's success in population control measures. "Our representation in Parliament will be reduced...Tamil Nadu's voice is being stifled. This is a matter of

Tamil Nadu's rights. All political parties should speak across party lines," Stalin said. He announced that 40 political parties registered with the Election



the Lok Sabha delimitation exercise based on the 2026 Census is extremely dangerous. Southern states like Tamil Nadu have done a great job in controlling population growth. But if that is the reason why our strength in Parliament will decrease, if it can suppress our voice, how can it be justified?" Stalin wrote in a post on X.

He emphasised that Tamil Nadu would not compromise on its parliamentary representation and called for a fair and transparent process that upholds federalist principles. Urging political unity across party lines, he said, "To protect the future of our motherland, Tamil Nadu, let us unite as one, transcending party differences! Let us overcome the surrounding danger with our unity!" Earlier, BJP Tamil Nadu chief K Annamalai had criticised Chief Minister MK Stalin for his remarks on delimitation, accusing him of "fear-mongering" and spreading "imaginary fears and stupid arguments".

Commission had been invited to the meeting to deliberate on the issue. Apart from delimitation, the meeting will also address concerns related to the three-language formula and the National Eligibility cum Entrance Test (NEET), both of which have been contentious issues in the state. "As the Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu, I bring to everyone's attention that

Actor Vijay mocks DMK-BJP clash over Hindi: Sounds like LKG, UKG kids fighting

New Delhi. Actor-politician Vijay waded into the ongoing language row between the DMK-led Tamil Nadu government and the BJP-led Centre, criticising both sides over their stance on the imposition of Hindi. Speaking on the clash, he accused the state and central governments of misleading the people of Tamil Nadu while pretending to be at loggerheads over the issue. Taking a swipe at the Centre's recent stance on the National Education Policy (NEP), Vijay mocked the government's move to withhold funds from states that refuse to implement it. "There is a new issue that has started. The Union government says funds won't be given if NEP is not implemented. This sounds like LKG, UKG children fighting," he remarked, likening the political wrangling to a petty squabble.

The actor also dismissed the social media battles waged by both the DMK and the BJP over the language debate, calling them insincere. "They are playing on social media with hashtags. They are pretending to fight on social media and expect us to believe it. What bro, it's very wrong bro," he quipped.



Mocking the two parties, Vijay remarked, "They are like fascism and 'paayasam'." A statement that he has previously used to attack both the state government and the Centre. He had said, "They go on about fascism, fascism, fascism. And what are they? Payasam?" Payasam is a sweet dish made of rice or vermicelli and milk, a staple dessert in Tamil Nadu. His comment implied that the DMK, despite its rhetoric against the BJP, was no different. Reiterating his firm opposition to the imposition of Hindi, Vijay asserted that he would continue to resist any attempt to force the language upon Tamil Nadu. However, he also accused both the Centre and the DMK of being "hand in glove" while deceiving the public with their staged confrontations. Vijay described the ongoing hashtag campaigns as something that "LKG, UKG kids" would do, branding the entire exchange as "silly and facetious".

"Who Was He Insulting": Akhilesh Yadav Slams Yogi Adityanath For Pig Remark

Yogi Adityanath strongly defended the arrangements for the Maha Kumbh and criticised the opposition, especially the Samajwadi Party.

Kannauj (Uttar Pradesh). Responding to Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath's "Pigs, Vultures" remarks, Samajwadi Party (SP) Chief Akhilesh Yadav hit back and questioned who the Chief Minister was insulting with his "Giddh" (vulture) remark.

Speaking to reporters in Kannauj, Akhilesh Yadav asked, "...Who was he (UP CM Yogi Adityanath) insulting through his 'Giddh' remark? The people who were looking for the missing members of their families?... He is speaking of 'suar'. None of us said that the quality of water of river Ganga is bad, Central Pollution Control Board said that... So, who was the govt calling 'Suar'?"

He further added, "I think, in the fight between Delhi and Lucknow, they are abusing each other. If the Uttar Pradesh Pollution Board is saying that the water is clean and Delhi's Pollution Board says that the water is bad, it means 'Lucknow' was calling 'Delhi' 'Suar.'" On Monday, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath strongly defended the arrangements for the Maha Kumbh and criticised the opposition, especially the Samajwadi Party.



He said, "Anti-Sanatana people only set their eyes on the dirt. One got what one had pursued in the Maha Kumbh. Vultures only got dead bodies. Pigs got dirt. Sensitive people got a beautiful picture of relationships, devotees got blessings." Meanwhile, Chief Minister Yogi on Tuesday lashed out at the SP and stated that the party had left no stone unturned to defame Prayagraj. Speaking in the State Assembly during the UP budget session, the Chief Minister said, "They (Samajwadi Party) left no stone unturned to defame Prayagraj. You were spreading propaganda about Prayagraj... As someone has rightly said, 'Jiski jaisi drishti waisi uski srishiti'... They were finding ways to defame Prayagraj. Some people were saying in Parliament that thousands of people have died in Maha Kumbh but 28,000 people were reunited with their families during Maha Kumbh."

India calls out any attempt to normalise terrorism: S Jaishankar

New Delhi. There is a clear and urgent need for a new multilateral system that reflects contemporary global realities as past few years "exposed" the "stark inadequacies" of the existing structures, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar has said.

In a virtual address at the 58th Session of the UN Human Rights Council in Geneva, he also asserted that India will always advocate "zero tolerance" for terrorism and call out any effort to normalise it.

Delving into geo-political turmoils in various geographies, Jaishankar said the world continues to grapple with conflicts and it is growing more fractured, uncertain, and unstable in the face of emerging challenges.

"There is a clear and urgent need for a multilateral system that reflects

contemporary global realities, one that is better equipped to respond to modern challenges, and, in essence, one that is fit for purpose," he said. "The past few years have exposed the stark inadequacies of existing multilateral structures. When the world needed them the most, they were found wanting," he said.

Jaishankar said India has always played an active role in the global promotion and protection of human rights. "Our approach has been centred on building capacity and strengthening human resources and infrastructure in alignment with the priorities of our partners -- always upholding the principles of fiscal responsibility, transparency, and sustainability," he said. Jaishankar



said India's development partnerships with countries across the world reflect this commitment.

"At the same time, we have been firm and uncompromising in combating terrorism. India will always advocate zero tolerance for terrorism and call out any effort to normalise it," he said. "We do not merely speak of Vasudhaiva

Kutumbakam -- the world as one family; we live by it. And today, more than ever, this perspective is urgently needed," he said. "The world continues to grapple with conflicts and crises, growing more fractured, uncertain, and unstable in the face of emerging challenges, even as it struggles to recover from the recent ones," he added.

The external affairs minister further said India remains ready to support and lead efforts toward reforms.

"Let me conclude by reaffirming India's steadfast commitment to the global promotion and protection of human rights and to ensuring their full realisation for all people," he said.

BJP's Mithun Chakraborty Reacts To Mamata Banerjee's Maha Kumbh Remarks

Mithun Chakraborty's response came after Mamata Banerjee claimed that the Maha Kumbh occurring after 144 years was untrue.

Kolkata. Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leader and actor Mithun Chakraborty has strongly responded to West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee's remarks regarding the Maha Kumbh and said that her statements are inaccurate as 70 crore people attended and took a holy dip at the Triveni Sangam that proves the immense influence of Sanatana Dharma. "What she is saying is wrong. 70 crore people have come here and taken a holy dip, is that incorrect? People have seen the power of Sanatan Dharma," Mr Chakraborty said.

His response came to Ms Banerjee's Tuesday claim that the Maha Kumbh occurring after 144 years was untrue. "After 144 years, Mahakumbh will come. This is not right. If I'm wrong, correct me. As per my knowledge, the punya snan (holy dip) system comes every year.



Actually, we organise the Gangesagar Mela. That's why I know about the holy dip," she had said.

Ms Banerjee had dubbed Maha Kumbh as "Mrityu Kumbh" after a deadly stampede, though she had

said she respects the festival. "This is 'Mrityu Kumbh'. I respect Maha Kumbh, I respect the holy Ganga Maa. But there is no planning. How many people have been recovered?" she said. On Tuesday, Ms Banerjee clarified that she was talking about the preparations for the grand event and people would suffer if there was no planning.

She has also demanded the Uttar Pradesh government, led by Yogi Adityanath, to compensate the families of those who died in the stampede.

"I never said (anything) about the pilgrims who took a holy dip in Mahakumbh, I respect them. I'm talking about the system and the preparation there. If there is no planning, people will suffer. I appeal to the Yogi government to give compensation to those who died in the Mahakumbh 2025 stampede," she said.

Rift with Congress, BJP buzz, second marriage? Shashi Tharoor spills the beans

Shashi Tharoor finds himself at the centre of speculation - his words and actions dissected for clues. Is he leaving Congress? Warming up to the BJP? Considering remarriage? The Thiruvananthapuram MP, known for defying the party line, has set the record straight.

New Delhi. Shashi Tharoor has been in the eye of political speculation, with his every remark scrutinised, and his actions dissected for hidden meanings. Is he on his way out of Congress? Is he warming up to the BJP? And what about his personal life - will he consider remarriage? The Congress MP from Thiruvananthapuram, who has often defied the party line, has now addressed these swirling questions.

"Some in my own party oppose me, but I speak for India and Kerala's future," Tharoor said, dismissing the idea that he is about to switch allegiances. He reaffirmed his loyalty to Congress but was candid about the internal resistance he faced. "If the party wants to utilise my strengths, I'll be there. If not, I have other options," he said.

His remarks come at a time when murmurs of a rift within Congress are growing louder. His recent selfie with Union Minister Piyush Goyal created a stir, adding to the speculation about his political future. The photo, showing the two smiling together, came as a surprise, especially since Goyal

had previously mocked Tharoor's "foreign accent". This, coupled with his appreciation of the Pinarayi Vijayan-led Left government's economic policies and his praise for Prime Minister Narendra Modi's meeting with Donald Trump, has not gone down well with Congress leaders.

Reacting to the controversy, Tharoor clarified his stance. "At the national level, the BJP has shown the ability to put forward a strong organisation which we haven't been able to replicate in many states. In Kerala, the CPI(M) has shown similar strength in the last two elections, and I don't see anything wrong in pointing that out. Congress lacks organisational strength at the booth level. We are not a cadre-based party; we have many leaders, but we lack workers. But I am against the plan of changing India into a 'Hindu Rashtira.' This is against our Constitution," he said.

His remarks have caused unease among party leaders, particularly in Kerala, where his



comment on the "absence of a leader" in the state unit sparked a backlash.

The growing speculation about his standing in the party prompted a closed-door meeting between Tharoor and Rahul Gandhi, though the details of their discussion remain undisclosed.

While Congress has downplayed the tensions, Tharoor's assertion that he has "options" if the party does not require his services has only added to the uncertainty.

"If the party wants me, I will be there. If not, I have my own things to do. You should not think I don't have any options," he reiterated.

PERSONAL LIFE, PUBLIC SERVICE AND EVERYTHING IN BETWEEN

Tharoor has long been a maverick within Congress. He was part of the group of 23 leaders who, following the 2019 Lok Sabha election debacle, had called for an overhaul of the party leadership. His independent views on various issues have often put him at odds with the party's official stance. "I have expressed opinions on several issues that were not liked by Congress in the past, and I have been facing this situation for a long time," he said. "I opposed Nehru's panchayat raj, I opposed BJP's Hindutva and communal agenda, I oppose Left ideology. I opposed the Emergency; it was wrong and suspended our liberties and freedom of expression. I have criticised everyone at some point. I have opinions, and sometimes they are not liked by my party."

Universe: Kartikeya of Punjab, and the southern Kartikeya

In the state of Punjab stands the temple of Achaleshwar Mahadev at Gurdaspur, while in nearby Haryana is the temple of Pehowa at Kurukshetra. What connects these two sites is their association with Kartikeya, the mighty son of Shiva and Parvati. Kartikeya is no longer a widely worshipped deity in North India, but he remains extremely popular in Tamil Nadu, where he is venerated as Murugan, Subramanyam, or the bright jewel. The earliest depictions of Kartikeya in history appear on the coins of the Yaudheyas, a warrior clan that once controlled the Punjab region, which are over 2,200 years old. Kartikeya was also seen on the coins of Audumbara kings, who controlled the hilly parts of Punjab, near Pathankot, 2,100 years ago. This suggests that Kartikeya was among the earliest deities worshipped in the Punjab region, dating back to Mauryan times. He was called Mahasena, the great divine commander of divine armies, and much admired by soldiers of the region.

In Mahabharata, composed 2,000 years ago, Kartikeya was produced by the collaboration of many gods to kill the demon Taraka. He was called the son of the hermit-god Shiva and his consort, Shakti. Later, in Puranic times, 1,500 years ago, the elephant-headed Ganesha also came to be identified with Shiva and Shakti. In artworks, from 1,000 years ago, we find Shiva's family depicted on temple walls: Shiva, Shakti and their two sons — Kartikeya, with his spear and peacock, and Ganesha with his stylus made of tusk and his inkpot, later linked to sweets (modak).

But there was strife in this family. The athletic Kartikeya was overshadowed by his corpulent and cerebral younger brother. In stories, in the race to go around the world three times, Ganesha won, as he smartly went around his parents, declaring they were spiritually his whole world. Kartikeya, who flew around the material realm of three worlds, was sidelined. Wives were given to Ganesha. Ganesha's name began to be taken first in rituals, since he was seen as the embodiment of smart work, one who removes obstacles.

Kartikeya was angry with his father, and left Mount Kailash. Kartikeya was also angry with his mother. When he killed all the demons, and helped Indra regain control over paradise (Swarga), all women went to Shakti and expressed their fear of Kartikeya's violent masculine energy. He was seen as the embodiment of fiery Mars. He was the creator of martyrs and widows. The women feared he would, like a marauding conqueror, disrespect them. So, to protect themselves, whenever Kartikeya approached, they would acquire his mother's face. So all women appeared like Shakti to Kartikeya. He realised he could never see any woman erotically or romantically. So, he could never marry. Furious, he left Kailash, refusing to meet his mother. Kartikeya tore away his skin and burnt it atop a mountain (Krunach, in Uttarakhand). Having burnt his skin, Kartikeya suffered. At the Achaleshwar lake, he bathed. At Pehowa, he stands in a temple where no woman is allowed; and oil is poured on his image.

Shiva tried to pacify him at Achaleshwar, but failed. Shakti tried to pacify him at Pehowa, but failed.

Kartikeya became the first woman-shunning Hindu ascetic, a Nath, who smears his body with ash to reduce the pain of burning skin. He stays eternally a boy (Kumara). This is why some people in Himachal and Punjab equate the peacock-riding boy-god Kartikeya with the peacock-riding boy-god, Balak-nath. In Tamil Nadu, the mountains of Palni are said to have been brought from the North by Rishi Agastya, with the help of the Asura Hidimba, on the orders of Parvati, who wanted to ensure her son did not miss his mountain home. In Tamil temples, Kartikeya is called Murugan. He is a warrior god and a romantic god, with two wives: Devasena, daughter of the celestial Indra, and Valli, daughter of a local mountain tribe. In Tamil temples, Ganesha is not married. He is the scribe of sages, interested in intellectual matters. So the Northern Kartikeya, though related, is ritually and narratively very different from Southern Murugan. In the Deccan regions.

India vs Pakistan, matchless

Just like life itself, a sporting contest between the neighbours cannot be seen in a vacuum



It is that time once again when you are asked to make sense of an India-Pakistan cricket encounter. It is a question that challenges your understanding of history, politics, nationalism, commerce and yes, of the sport itself. No matter how much you try to look at the Champions Trophy clash between the two nations — torn apart by a bloody partition more than seven decades ago — as just another cricket match, you can't. Just like life itself, a sporting contest between any two countries cannot be seen in a vacuum. In this case, the two nations have fought three violent wars, politically fought at every international forum and after 2007, never played a bilateral cricket series against each other, with India refusing to visit Pakistan for almost two decades now. Yet, cricket they must play, even if it means playing at a neutral venue, as the refusal to do so could invite sanctions when it comes to an International Cricket Council (ICC) event. In the changing times when India holds unchallenged control over international cricket politics because of the money it generates from the game, it can get away with any breach of rules. It is so powerful that it forced the ICC to take an unprecedented decision to let India play all its Champions Trophy matches at Dubai, though Pakistan are the hosts of the tournament. The cricketing world order today has no space for Pakistan's protest and all the time to address India's concerns. When money, sorry India, speaks, the world listens. In similar situations in the past, nations had to forfeit their matches and concede points when they refused to play another country in ICC tournaments. In the 1996 World Cup, which India and Pakistan co-hosted with Sri Lanka, teams from the West Indies and Australia had to concede their matches against Sri Lanka as they refused to play in that country due to political reasons. Ironically, India and Pakistan made a joint team to play Sri Lanka in solidarity with their island nation neighbours. That was a bygone era of cricket politics when the world had just begun to realise the money-making potential of the game in India because of live television and India's opening up of its economy. Pakistan may have still been an enemy nation but in international cricket politics, it was India's friend and a strong ally. Unlike today, India's cricket board was not an extension of the government and had the courage to take many decisions that the Indian state may not have liked.

From a purely cricketing perspective as well, times have changed. India are the powerhouse of skill as well, especially in the shorter format, and Pakistan are struggling to stay afloat. To put it simply, Pakistan are no match for India and if one were to predict an Indian defeat on Sunday, even Pakistanis would express disbelief and a section of Indians will dub you anti-national. In this world of hyper-nationalism and social media troll army, nostalgia for those rich and rewarding past encounters between the now nations would be a dangerous territory to touch. When politics prevented the two nations from playing in each other's country, a neutral venue in Sharjah was found in the 1980s to milk the money-

making opportunity the cricketing rivalry offered. Sharjah, a tiny dot on the map of the United Arab Emirates, became a breeding ground for the jingoistic crowd of expats from the two countries to express visceral hatred for each other, but cricket rivalry created many new icons and thrilling finishes. In my own memory, some of the best moments of my reporting days are the three visits I made to Pakistan — 1997, 2004 and 2005. The vast army of cricket fans that visited Pakistan will bear testimony to the love and affection which people

showered on us. Lahore was more Punjabi than the Amritsar I had lived in during my school and college days. Its generosity was touching and the desire for peace with India heartwarming. The positive impact of people-to-people contact, which the then Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee encouraged in 2004, when telling the Indian team to "sirf match hi nahin dil bhi jeet ke aana" (not just matches, win people's hearts as well), was evident anywhere one went in Pakistan. At the Lahore stadium where India lost the Test match, many Pakistani spectators were holding Indian flags and cheering the Indian team. One had been witness to similar scenes in Chennai in 1999 when Wasim Akram's Pakistan beat India and then took a victory lap while the packed stadium gave them a standing ovation. In the past many years now, India and Pakistan have only played each other in ICC tournaments, encounters which are few and far between. Pakistan is no longer the team it once was and India look near invincible in their dominance of the cricketing field. Many fans believe that India-Pakistan matches are now nothing but overhyped contests, though there is little doubt they still generate television revenues, media frenzy and a lot of ammunition to social media warriors and the flag-waving, chest-thumping nationalists.

Bumblebee, buzzing against the odds

There's a quiet magic in watching Himalayan meadows bloom, as flowers of myriad colours and shapes sprout up on the green grass once the snows relent. It is within this endearing tapestry of natural beauty that one can make an acquaintance with bumblebees, flitting restlessly between blossoms, their fuzzy bodies dusted in golden pollen, defying the thin air and cold with a fervour that belies their gentle appearance. Bumblebees are vital pollinators in the Himalaya and the Northern Hemisphere as a whole, especially for wild flowering plant species in higher elevations where other pollinators cannot survive. These industrious insects exhibit remarkable adaptations that enable them to thrive in cold, high-altitude environments. One of the most intriguing aspects of bumblebees is their ability to fly despite having a large body mass relative to their wing size. This apparent paradox is resolved through their unique flight mechanics. By rapidly flapping their wings in a figure-of-eight pattern, they create little pockets of air, or vortices, that generate lift, which allows them to hover and navigate efficiently in the thin air. Their thick, insulating body hair, known as 'pile', helps conserve heat and increases the surface area for pollen to stick to their bodies as they travel across nearly 6,000 flowers on a favourable day. Additionally,

they possess the ability to shiver their flight muscles and generate body heat, an important pre-condition for many insects to be able to fly. Bumblebees are among the most effective pollinators in the sub-alpine and alpine ecosystems. Their robust bodies and long tongues enable them to access nectar from a variety of flowering plants, including those that other pollinators cannot reach. Species such as the Himalayan blue poppy and Rhododendron rely heavily on bumblebee pollination for reproduction. Today, bumblebees face severe threats from climate change and human activities. Rising temperatures are altering flowering times and shrinking their suitable habitats, while the pervasive use of pesticides threatens their populations by directly causing mortality or impairing foraging and navigation skills. Their activity not only supports plant biodiversity, but also sustains the livelihoods of local communities. Consider the case of apple plantations, where bumblebees, along with other species like honeybees, are important pollinators. As the populations of these species decline, farmers in some regions of China, and even in the Western Himalayan regions of Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand, have been forced to pollinate the crops by hand, a time-consuming and labour-intensive process.

Centre vs Tamil Nadu

Unsavoury row over three-language formula

The Assembly elections in Tamil Nadu are still over a year away, but the political slugfest between the BJP and the ruling DMK has already reached fever pitch. A no-holds-barred verbal duel is in progress over the three-language formula, which figures prominently in the National Education Policy (NEP), 2020. The formula is ostensibly aimed at promoting multilingualism, but Deputy CM Udhayanidhi Stalin has termed it the Centre's ploy to impose Hindi on the southern state. He has also accused the BJP-led Union Government of not releasing funds for the NEP's implementation in Tamil Nadu. Hitting back at the state government, Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan has urged the DMK to prioritise the interests of young learners and rise above political differences. The obvious victims of this unsavoury confrontation are the students, who are facing uncertainty and confusion over the languages they can learn besides their mother tongue. As education is on the Concurrent



List, it requires concurrence between the Centre and states to ensure the success of various schemes. The Centre is rightly laying stress on the NEP, which is an overarching and holistic document, but it must give freedom to the states to proceed in accordance with their specific requirements. A one-size-fits-all approach undermines India's rich linguistic diversity. Moreover, political affiliations and considerations should not come in the way of release of funds for the education sector. No state should be subjected to discrimination if it decides not to implement the NEP in toto.

The Tamil Nadu government is not helping matters by laying bare its aversion to Hindi. It should not force students to opt for one language over another. Parents and teachers have a key role to play here as they can help learners make an informed decision. The Centre and the state must try to reach common ground for the sake of the children's future — and the nation's too.

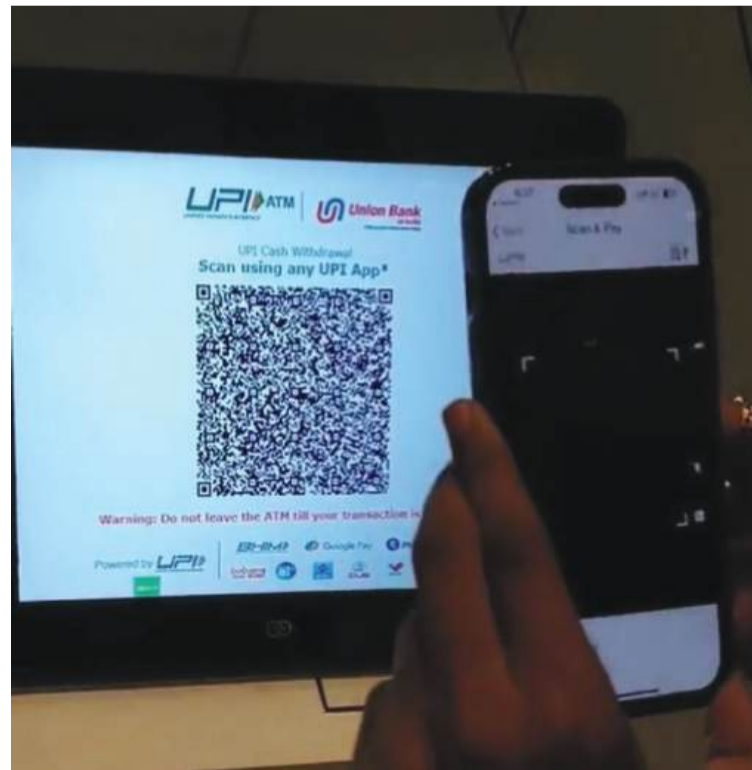
Don't choke education budget to enforce NEP

Sorting out issues constitutes my daily nightmare, of the digital kind

Unlike our Prime Minister or Mr Narayana Murthy, I do not labour for 18 hours a day; in fact, I don't labour at all — having toiled for 35 years, I have now left it to others to clear out the mess I've created during that period. But this doesn't mean I don't put in many productive hours every day — for, as the L&T chairman never said: "They also serve who only stand and stare." Deleting the hours I spend in sleeping, and staring at Neerja, I do work for about four hours every day at my office table, which I picked up at a Delhi chor bazaar just before someone nicked my wallet. But — and here's my grouse and the trigger for this piece — about two of these hours are spent sorting out issues with my banks.

This constitutes my daily nightmare, of the digital kind. All banks have now gone online and that has its advantages, especially in the matter of withdrawing cash through ATMs, making payments, opening FDs, etc, through net-banking. Beyond these, however, if you have an issue like change of phone number or address, or suspect credit or debit, or closing an account, and need to contact the bank or its manager, or do a KYC, then you need to gird up your loins, prepare for a few frustrating weeks and long for the old days when you could drop in at the branch to have a cup of tea with the Branch Manager while your issue was sorted out in a cordial manner. Not anymore. These days, you have to deal with an anonymous, faceless, algorithmic monster called Customer Service, legal fiction which you are led to believe exists (like God) but actually doesn't (again, like God). I have accounts in four banks, having decided to spread the risks when they start collapsing whenever Mr Adani decides to buy Cyprus or St Kitts and move there with his trillions. But, since it's now quite clear that he is happy to stay in India and buy this country instead, I decided to close two of these accounts before dementia catches up with me and I forget about all of them. I've

been waging a battle with one of these banks for the last month to close one account. A Speed Post letter to the BM has elicited no acknowledgement — I suspect he is also legal fiction and doesn't exist. Three emails to Customer Service ("we value our relationship with you") have elicited three identical responses, saying it can't be done online and that I should visit the branch with as many papers as I carried to my UPSC interview 50 years ago. I pointed out that I am a senior citizen and should not be expected to physically go to the branch which is 20 km away: no response from the bot at the other end, but I thought I could hear a snicker from the bank's URL. The account is still not closed. I think I shall bequeath it in my will to someone I detest, preferably a 'bhakt', or some dandy from St Stephen's College (do I need to tell you that I'm from Hindu College?) There are other missiles in the armoury of Customer Service which they unleash in the wee hours of the night. One morning you'll be suddenly informed that your basic savings account has been upgraded to Burgundy or Platinum or Super Value, which requires you to maintain a few lakhs in your account at all times, on pain of penalty charges. In return, you will get your own Relationship Manager, free access to an Indigo airport lounge and a discount on meals at a five-star restaurant. I've tried telling them that I can manage my own relationships, thank you, and don't need help in managing them; that I wouldn't fly even if God gave me wings; that it makes no sense to have biryani in a hotel



where Ms Sitharaman takes 28 per cent of the food off the plate even before I've had the first bite and Service Charge takes 15 per cent of what's left. The algorithms are designed not to take no for an answer. And then there is the bane of our digital lives — the KYC. Every once in a while we are asked to re-verify our mug shots, fingerprints, addresses and telephone numbers. The

public sector banks, those remnants of the dinosaurs, insist that you physically visit their branches to do so, even if you are on the International Space Station with Sunita Williams. (Incidentally, you now have to do this also for your FASTag, gas connection, insurance policies, mutual funds, etc). It doesn't matter a whit that you've had an account with the bank for 40 years, or that it's a pension account verified by the AG himself, or that you've never, ever, defaulted on a loan or a credit card payment, or ever had any dealings with Suresh the Con-man, or Mallya or Choksi or Nirav Modi. While people like these gentlemen are siphoning off thousands of crores from the banks, we cannot touch our own moneys. One can't help but feel that we are rushing too fast into wholesale digitalisation without adequately preparing our personnel, processes and culture for it, just like Mr Gadkari with his expressways and Ms Sitharaman with her GST. Sometimes, one longs for the older ways. I recollect my dad, after retirement in Kanpur, used to visit his bank branch two or three times every week, have a gossip session with the BM, get tips on investments, encash a cheque or two over tea and aloo ki tikki, and return home a satisfied customer. He died of old age, not the effects of dealing with Customer Service and Digital India. Me, I'll probably die of an embolism caused by a Customer Service algorithm.

I'm considering closing all my bank accounts, withdrawing the funds and going into partnership with my village moneylender; he's promised me an annual return of 8 per cent (no TDS, of course), which is more than what these banks give. Problem is, he wants me to do a KYC too!



खु

शबू का इतिहास कितना पुराना है ये तो नहीं कहा जा सकता लेकिन फूलों का वर्णन तो धार्मिक ग्रंथों में भी है। माँ लक्ष्मी कमल पर विराजती है तो भगवान ब्रह्मा का प्रिय पुत्र ब्रह्म कमल को माना जाता है। ये अनुमान लगाया जा सकता है कि जितना पुराना इतिहास फूलों का है उतना ही पुराना इतिहास सुगंध का भी है। राजा-महाराजाओं के काल से विभिन्न प्रकार के इत-सुगंधादि के उपयोग किए जाने के प्रमाण हैं। मुगल शासन में तो रानियां अपने सनान के पानी में भी इतर या इसी तरह के

अर्रेंज, लेमन, कपूर, नेरोली, यांग-यांग, बर्गामोट।
सामान्य त्वचा- पामारोज, गाजर, जिरेनियम, लेवेण्डर, कुसुम, चमेली, नेरोली, यांग-यांग, लोबान, चंदन, पेचौली।
असामान्य त्वचा- जिरेनियम, लेवेण्डर, कुसुम, कपूर, यूकेलिप्टस थाइम गंधरस।
संवेदी त्वचा- जिरेनियम, लेवेण्डर, कुसुम।
स्कीन के लिए खूबसूरत फेशियल आइल्स सामान्य त्वचा- बेंजोनिन, गाजर, कुसुम, लोबान, सीप्रेस, जिरेनियम, चमेली, जूनिपर, लेवेण्डर, लेमन, माजोटम, अर्रेंज, पामारोज, पेचौली, पिपरमिंट, पेप्टी ग्रैन, रोजमैरी, यांग-यांग।
सूखी त्वचा- बेंजोनिन, गाजर, कुसुम,

खूबसूरत और महकती त्वचा

सुगंधित चीजों का उपयोग करती थी। केसर, गुलाब, केवड़ा, मोगरा, चमेली, चंदन तथा लोभान आदि सुगंध न सिर्फ तरोताजगी से भर देते हैं बल्कि इनके द्वारा रोगों का उपचार भी किया जाता था। इन्हीं प्राचीन उपचार पद्धतियों को आजकल फिर से अपनाया जा रहा है।
सूखी त्वचा- बेंजोनिन, पामारोज, पेचौली, गाजर, जिरेनियम, पेप्टी ग्रैन, लेवेण्डर, कुसुम, गुलाब, चंदन।
आइली स्कीन - लेवेण्डर,

जिरेनियम, हीसोप, लेमन, नेरोली, पामारोज, पेचौली, गुलाब, रोजमैरी, चंदन।
शुष्क त्वचा- गाजर, जिरेनियम, लेवेण्डर।
नम त्वचा- गाजर, सीप्रेस, जिरेनियम, हीसोप, लेवेण्डर, लेमन, पामारोज, पेचौली, गुलाब, चंदन।
संवेदी त्वचा- गाजर, कुसुम, जिरेनियम, लेवेण्डर।
असामान्य त्वचा- गाजर, कुसुम, लोबान, जिरेनियम, हीसोप, जूनिपर, लेवेण्डर, लेमन, पेचौली, पामारोज, चंदन।

गर्मियों में त्वचा को दें राहत

गर्मियों के दौरान सफेद चंदन या चंदन चूर्ण को पानी में मिलाकर इस्तेमाल किया जा सकता है। यह एंटी बैक्टीरियल होता है जिससे त्वचा साफ-स्वच्छ और शीतल बनती है। इसी तरह नीम, तुलसी, गुलाब की पंखुड़ियों और चंदन (बराबर मात्रा में) में कच्चा दूध मिलाकर तैयार लेप का प्रयोग करने से त्वचा में उजलापन आता है और मुँहासों से भी राहत मिलती है। इस लेप को कम से कम एक घंटे तक लगाए रखें और फिर पानी से धो दें। इस उपचार से आपकी त्वचा मुलायम और नरम बनेगी। 10 ग्राम सूखे नीम के पत्तों और सात काली मिर्च का चूर्ण बनाकर मिलाएँ और इसमें पानी मिलाकर इसे छान लें। घर में तैयार इस टॉनिक के सेवन से त्वचा संबंधी कई विकारों से राहत मिलती है। एक सप्ताह तक इस नुस्खे को आजमाएँ और खुद ही फर्क देख लें।

पीरियड्स के दौरान कौन सी एक्सरसाइज करें

अक्सर स्त्रियों को इस बात का भ्रम होता है कि पीरियड्स के दौरान होने वाली समस्याओं से बचने के लिए ज्यादा काम या एक्सरसाइज नहीं करनी चाहिए। ऐसा आपने अक्सर बड़ी उम्र की स्त्रियों से सुना होगा कि उन दिनों में एक्सरसाइज करना नुकसानदेह होता है। जबकि ऐसा सोचना गलत है, पीरियड्स के दौरान एक्सरसाइज करने से न सिर्फ आपकी बॉडी शेप में रहती है बल्कि उस दौरान होने वाले दर्द (बैक पेन और एंडोमिनल क्रैम्प) से भी छुटकारा मिलता है।
 एक्सरसाइज मेटाबॉलिज्म को मजबूत करती है और आपको एनर्जी प्रदान करती है। यह आपके उन दिनों के लिए बहुत ही जरूरी है, क्योंकि तब आपको अतिरिक्त शक्ति और ऊर्जा की जरूरत होती है। एक्सरसाइज करने से एंडोटीक्सिन बाहर निकालती है।



एक्सरसाइज से हमारे शरीर में एक प्रकार का नैचुरल पेनकिलर विकसित होता है जो पीरियड्स के दौरान होने वाले दर्द और मूड के बदलाव को ठीक करने में मदद करता है। यहां तक कि वर्कआउट से पेट की सूजन भी कम होती है। यहां हम आपको कुछ ऐसी एक्सरसाइज के बारे में बता रहे हैं जिन्हें आप पीरियड्स के दिनों में आसानी से कर सकती हैं। हालांकि जो युवतियां शुरू से लगातार एरोबिक्स करती रही हैं उन्हें उन दिनों में किसी प्रकार की मनाही नहीं होती। बस एक बात का ध्यान रखना महत्वपूर्ण है कि लोवर बॉडी पार्ट की एक्सरसाइज न की जाए।

1. अगर आप कार्डियोवैस्कुलर एक्टिविटी करना चाहती हैं तो बेहतर होगा कि आप जस्त से ज्यादा मूवमेंट जैसे जमिंग, रनिंग या किकिंग हाई न करें। दरअसल, उन दिनों सहनशक्ति का स्तर कम हो जाता है, ऐसे में हलकी-फूलकी एरोबिक्स करने से मूड भी अच्छा होगा और आपको एनर्जी भी मिलेगी। लेकिन बहुत ही नियंत्रित और संतुलित मूवमेंट अपनाएं जिसमें आपके आर्मस और अपर बॉडी की एक्सरसाइज हो।
2. कार्डियोवैस्कुलर की सबसे अच्छी एक्सरसाइज है 30-40 मिनट टहलना। बिस्कि तथा वॉक ज्यादा तेज करते हैं तो यूटस की बाहर की लाइनिंग जो पीरियड्स के दौरान बहुत संवेदनशील हो जाती है, उस पर बहुत दबाव पड़ सकता है। इस कारण पीरियड्स का फ्लो ज्यादा हो सकता है या फिर बिलकुल ही बंद हो सकता है

इसलिए बिस्कि वॉक की जगह हमें नॉर्मल वॉक करना चाहिए।

3. कोशिश करें कि सीधे जमीन पर न बैठकर वजासन लगाकर बैठें ताकि आपके यूटस और ओवरी को कोई हानि न पहुंचे और साथ-साथ उनकी टोनिंग भी हो जाए।

4. इस दौरान ठंडी चीजें जैसे कोल्ड ड्रिंक्स वगैरह कम से कम लें। ठंडी चीजें खाने से ओवरी पर सूजन आने की संभावना रहती है।

5. योग में नौकासन, हलासन बिलकुल न करें। गोमुख आसन या फिर धनुरासन कर सकती हैं। इस दौरान प्राणायाम बहुत उपयोगी रहेंगे। प्राणायाम में अनुलोम-विलोम, शीताली, शितकारी, भ्रामरी करने से उस दौरान चिड़चिड़ापन और मूड खराब होने जैसी समस्याओं से निजात मिलेगा।

6. इस बात का ध्यान रखें कि वर्कआउट्स करने के बाद अच्छी तरह स्ट्रेच करें।

7. पीरियड्स के दौरान जिम में लोवर एंडोमिन की एक्सरसाइज बिलकुल न करें। अपर बॉडी एक्सरसाइज कर सकती हैं।

8. जो भी एक्सरसाइज करें उसमें कंधों का प्रयोग हो। लाइट वेट्स का इस्तेमाल करें। वह भी सिर्फ अपर बॉडी के लिए।

9. जिम जाकर मशीन का प्रयोग बिलकुल न करें। अपने शरीर की सुनें

अगर आपको पीरियड्स के दौरान बहुत ज्यादा पीठ का दर्द या क्रैम्प नहीं पड़ते तो एक्सरसाइज करने से हिचकिचाएं नहीं। सबसे महत्वपूर्ण यह है कि आप अगर उन दिनों काम करना चाहती हैं, तो आराम से कर सकती हैं। लेकिन इस बात का ध्यान रखें कि बहुत ज्यादा दबाव आपके शरीर के निचले हिस्से या पेल्विक पर न पड़े। अपने शरीर की सुनें जितना काम हो सकता है करें, जब तक कि आपको किसी प्रकार की दिक्कत न हो। यह बात अपने जेहन में डाल लें कि पीरियड्स के दौरान अस्सी प्रतिशत स्त्रियों को हलका-फूलका पेट दर्द और कमर दर्द होना एक आम समस्या है। इसका यह मतलब कतई नहीं है कि आप घर पर बैठकर आराम करें। खुद तय करें कि आप कुछ कर सकती हैं।

प्रेग्नेंसी में रखें खान पान का ध्यान

प्रेग्नेंसी में क्या खाएं, क्या ना खाएं खान-पान पर दें विशेष ध्यान। प्रेग्नेंसी के दौरान महिलाओं को विटामिन, प्रोटीन, आयरन रिच भोजन लेना चाहिए। हरी पत्तोदार सब्जियां, दूध, फल, जूस का सेवन नियमित रूप से करना चाहिए। ऐसे समय में फास्ट फूड, आइली, स्नाइसी फूड अवाइड करना चाहिए। इस दौरान फोलिक एसिड, डीएचए टेबलेट भी अनिवार्य रूप से लेना चाहिए।

सावधानी जरूरी : अधिक उम्र में प्रेग्नेंसी में महिलाओं को विशेष सावधानी रखनी चाहिए। ऐसे समय में थाइराइड, ब्लडप्रेसर, शुगर का रेग्युलर चेकअप कराते रहें। बच्चे के डेवलपमेंट की जानकारी के लिए समय-समय पर सोनोग्राफी अवश्य कराएं। कोई भी सम स म स य। आने

पर तुरंत डॉक्टर से संपर्क करें। इस दौरान जितना हो सके ज्यादा दूरी के सफर से बचना चाहिए।

बेजिटेबल : आठ से नौ सप्ताह में शिशु की आंख का विकास होता है, इसलिए इन्हें भोजन में प्राथमिकता दें। इसमें पाए जाने वाले विटामिन ए और सी के साथ अन्य विटामिन्स, मिनरल्स और फाइबर कांस्टिपेशन को दूर करने में मददगार होते हैं। विटामिन सी युक्त जैसे गोभी, ग्रीन बीन्स और टमाटर बॉडी को कैल्शियम एब्जॉर्ब करने में हेल्प करते हैं।



NEWS BOX

Jos Buttler takes a dig at India for only playing in Dubai: It's a unique tournament

New Delhi. England captain Jos Buttler has taken a sly dig at India's advantage in the ongoing ICC Champions Trophy 2025, who're playing all of their matches at the same venue in the tournament. After denying to travel to the host country, Pakistan, India are playing all of their matches at the Dubai International Cricket Stadium in Dubai, where the pitches are heavily favouring their spin-heavy attack. Recently, Buttler was asked about India's advantage in playing at one venue and the England captain called it a 'unique tournament' where one team is playing its matches outside of the official host country. He also said that he isn't worried too much about it and is only thinking about the game against Afghanistan. "Not really. I think it's a unique tournament already, isn't it, with being hosted here with one team playing in a different place but that's not something I'm sort of worried too much about at the moment. I've got all my focus on preparing well tonight and our game tomorrow," said Buttler in the pre-match press conference ahead of the Afghanistan game.

In two matches played so far, Indian spinners Kuldeep Yadav and Axar Patel have picked up three wickets each, while Ravindra Jadeja



has claimed one scalp. Speedster Mohammad Shami is the leading wicket-taker with five wickets, followed by Harshit Rana (4 wickets) and Hardik Pandya (2 wickets). The Men in Blue have already qualified for the semi-finals of the tournament following clinical victories against Bangladesh and Pakistan by six wickets. They will face New Zealand in the third and final group fixture on March 2. India will play their semi-final on March 4 in Dubai and will also play the final of the competition in Dubai, provided they qualify for the same.

Meanwhile, England will face Afghanistan in a must-win encounter after losing their first match against Australia. The Hashmatullah Shahidi-led side stunned them with a defeat during the ODI World Cup 2023 and will hope for the same in the upcoming fixture as well.

Lakshya Sen's age fraud case explained: Here's what we know about controversy

New Delhi. Lakshya Sen has found himself at the centre of a court case accusing the badminton star of age fraud. Lakshya, who has been one of India's finest badminton players in recent times, along with his brother Chirag, parents and coach U. Vimal Kumar found themselves at the centre of the controversy.

The case, which dates back to 2022, quickly caught fire in recent days with the Karnataka High Court dismissing the petition from the badminton star and ordering further probe and investigation into the matter. Thankfully for Lakshya, the Supreme Court of India stepped in and ordered a stay on the order from the Karnataka High Court, meaning that no further investigation will be done into the matter. With a lot of details involved in the case, we have a look at some of the key points of the controversy.

What is the case all about?

A criminal case was registered against Lakshya, his brother Chirag Sen, their father Dhirendra K. Sen, mother Nirmala D. Sen,



and coach U. Vimal Kumar for allegedly fabricating the birth certificates of the Sen brothers. It was alleged that the ages of Lakshya and Chirag were lowered by 2 and a half years to allow them to compete in junior tournaments.

Who filed the complaint against Lakshya?

The case against Lakshya was based on a private complaint filed by Nagaraja M.G., and this led to an FIR being registered in December 2022 following a directive from the metropolitan magistrate.

What was the evidence presented?

Nagaraja submitted the documents which he obtained through the Right To Information (RTI) act, which also included an inquiry report by the Ministry of Youth Affairs, which apparently found evidence of Lakshya's father committing forgery.

What was Lakshya Sen's petition?

In response to the allegations, Lakshya, along with his family and coach, claimed that the allegations were baseless and the case built on personal grievances rather than factual evidence.

AFG vs ENG: England, Afghanistan in deep water in race for semi-final

← Afghanistan will face England on February 26

← There is a slight chance of rain on Wednesday

← Afghanistan are placed at the bottom of the table in Group B

New Delhi. England and Afghanistan have found themselves in a rabbit hole ahead of their Group B clash in the Champions Trophy on Wednesday, February 26. On Tuesday, Rawalpindi witnessed its first washout of the tournament, with not a single ball bowled in the match between Steve Smith's Australia and Temba Bavuma's South Africa.

With the Aussies and Proteas now at three points each, they remain favourites to advance to the semi-finals from Group B. Following Wednesday's abandoned clash, England and Afghanistan find themselves in deep trouble, as the loser will crash out of the tournament. However, if rain prevents play,

both teams will still have a slim chance of qualifying for the semi-finals.

Champions Trophy: Full Coverage | Points Table

Lahore's weather on Wednesday isn't overly bad, but there is a slight chance of rain, with persistent cloud cover keeping the groundstaff on their toes. There's even a scenario where all four teams could end up with three points each at the end of the group stage. Can Afghanistan Repeat Their 2023 Heroics?

Hashmatullah Shahidi's Afghanistan entered the Champions Trophy as dark horses. After defeating the Proteas last year in a bilateral series in Sharjah, they were expected to perform strongly at Karachi's National Stadium. However, a 107-run loss left them at the bottom of the table with a net run rate of -2.140. Despite this setback, Afghanistan still has a decent chance to turn things around. Shahidi's men can draw inspiration from their stunning 69-run victory over England in the 2023 World Cup at the Arun Jaitley Stadium in New Delhi. Back then, Rahmanullah Gurbaz smashed 80 runs, while Mujeeb Ur Rahman and Rashid Khan



picked up three wickets each. During the ODI World Cup, Afghanistan defeated England after recovering from back-to-back losses to Bangladesh and India. Skipper Shahidi believes his team can repeat that feat against the Three Lions but acknowledges that England won't be an easy opponent. "I think we all know that England is one of the best teams, so it's a tough challenge for us. But we are ready for any challenge, and we worked hard to reach this level. We will take confidence from what happened in the 2023 World Cup, but at the same time, tomorrow is a new day, and we will try our best to beat them again," Shahidi

said in the pre-match press conference.

England Under Pressure

England, meanwhile, have struggled in recent matches. After a 0-3 series loss to India on Indian soil, Jos Buttler's men suffered a five-wicket defeat to Australia at the Gaddafi Stadium in Lahore. Ben Duckett registered the highest individual score in Champions Trophy history with a stunning 145, guiding England to 315 for eight. However, Josh Inglis' unbeaten 120 off 86

balls—featuring eight fours and six sixes—powered Australia to the highest successful run chase in ICC ODI tournament history. England's pace trio of Mark Wood, Jofra Archer, and Brydon Carse conceded runs at an alarming rate. To make matters worse, Carse has been ruled out due to a recurring left toe issue, with Rehan Ahmed replacing him in the squad. Having lost four consecutive matches, England are in poor form, giving Afghanistan a real opportunity to capitalise. Shahidi's men have never reached the semi-finals of an ICC ODI event, but this is their chance to make history.

England greats accuse ICC of favouritism: India playing in Dubai 'undeniable advantage'

← Nasser and Atherton believe India benefits from playing all matches in Dubai

← They highlighted India's travel-free advantage over other teams

← Pakistan travelled to Dubai for India clash, suffered six-wicket loss

New Delhi. Former England cricketers Nasser Hussain and Michael Atherton believe that India holds a significant advantage in the ongoing Champions Trophy due to playing all their matches at a single venue in Dubai. Unlike other teams that must travel between Pakistan and Dubai, India has the luxury of consistency in conditions, a factor both Hussain and Atherton feel gives them an upper hand in the competition.

India's fixed venue resulted from the tournament's hybrid model, introduced after India refused to travel to Pakistan, the original sole host. The International Cricket

Council (ICC) responded by restructuring the schedule, ensuring all of India's games were played in Dubai. Speaking to Sky Sports, Hussain and Atherton highlighted how this eliminates the fatigue and logistical challenges that other teams face



while adjusting to different pitches and climates. "About the advantage India have in playing in Dubai, only in Dubai, which seems to me to be a hard-to-quantify advantage but an undeniable advantage...They are playing at just one venue. They do not have to travel between venues or, you know, between countries as a lot of other teams have to do," Atherton

said. "It is an advantage. For the best team in the tournament to have that advantage...I saw a tweet the other day: Pakistan - host nation, India - home advantage. That sort of sums it up, really...They are [India] in one place. They are in one hotel. There is no travel. They are in one dressing room. They know the pitch. They picked for that pitch. When they selected, they were very smart. Even in India's highly anticipated clash against arch-rivals Pakistan on February 23, the co-hosts had to fly to Dubai for the game, which they lost by six wickets. Hussain and Atherton pointed out that India's ability to build their team strategy solely based on Dubai's conditions has been a crucial advantage, allowing them to prepare without any travel-related disruptions.

India has already secured their place in the semi-finals after dominant victories over Bangladesh and Pakistan. Their final group-stage match against New Zealand on March 2 will decide their positioning, but their seamless run so far has only strengthened claims that playing in a single venue has worked in their favour.

Pakistan Cricket Board beefs up ground security after pitch invasion in Rawalpindi

New Delhi. Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) has said that it's working on reinforcing the security at all the venues of the ongoing Champions Trophy 2025 after a fan invaded the pitch in Rawalpindi. A fan breached the security during Match 6 of the tournament between New Zealand and Bangladesh at the Rawalpindi Cricket Stadium as he came running onto the field to hug Rachin Ravindra. The fan went up close to the New Zealand batter and hugged him before the security personnel came onto the pitch and took him away. Following the incident, the PCB stressed upon ensuring the safety of players and match officials and stated that it has decided to reinforce their security around the field of play at all venues. "The PCB has taken serious note of the security breach that occurred yesterday when a spectator entered the field of play. Ensuring the safety of players and officials remains our top priority. As a responsible



organisation, we have engaged with local security agencies, who have committed to increasing security personnel around the field of play at all venues and strengthening access control measures," said the PCB in a media release. Furthermore, the PCB also revealed that the fan who invaded the pitch was arrested and presented before a court, and has been banned from entering any cricket venues in Pakistan.

"The individual involved was arrested and

presented before a court of law today (Tuesday). In addition, he has been permanently banned from entering all cricket venues in Pakistan. To prevent such incidents in the future, the PCB is working closely with security agencies and venue authorities to review and reinforce security protocols," they added.

India, New Zealand qualify for semi-finals

It was the first such incident of a security breach during the ongoing Champions Trophy 2025. Meanwhile, the tournament has confirmed its first two semi-finalists following New Zealand's clinical five-wicket win over Bangladesh courtesy of a match-winning century by Rachin Ravindra. Following their win, New Zealand for the semi-final from Group A along with India, who've also won both of their matches so far.

Champions Trophy: Dysfunctional Pakistan need counselling, not surgery

← Pakistan have been knocked out of the Champions Trophy

← The team seems to be playing an outdated template of cricket

← Pakistan needs to stop hack jobs in the name of surgery

New Delhi. Our performance is at its lowest. Improving the team's performance is our biggest challenge," said Mohsin Naqvi after Pakistan lost their group-stage match against India in the T20 World Cup 2024. The Pakistan Cricket Board chairman had bold words reserved for the side right after the marquee clash. Naqvi said that he would do major surgery on the cricketing ecosystem of the country and get the side back on pace in international cricket. Eight months later, after those bold remarks, Pakistan has once again

lost to India in yet another ICC tournament. What's worse is that, at least in 2024, Pakistan at least looked competitive, but in 2025, there wasn't a speck of fire in the Mohammad Rizwan-led side.

The notable difference between the two matches? This time, Mohsin Naqvi kept quiet. Champions Trophy: Full Coverage | Points Table Pakistan's recent loss against India once again puts the focus on their team and the cricket board, who have refused to change with the pace of the game. In T20Is, Pakistan plays run-a-ball cricket, like they should in ODIs. In ODIs, they bat like a Test side, at a time when 330-350 runs have become par in the 50-over game. And in Tests, oh yes, let's talk about Tests. In Tests, Pakistan decided to make rank-turners after overseas sides kept hammering them in red-ball cricket. The decision spectacularly backfired against Bangladesh (0-2) and West Indies (1-1), who beat them at home on



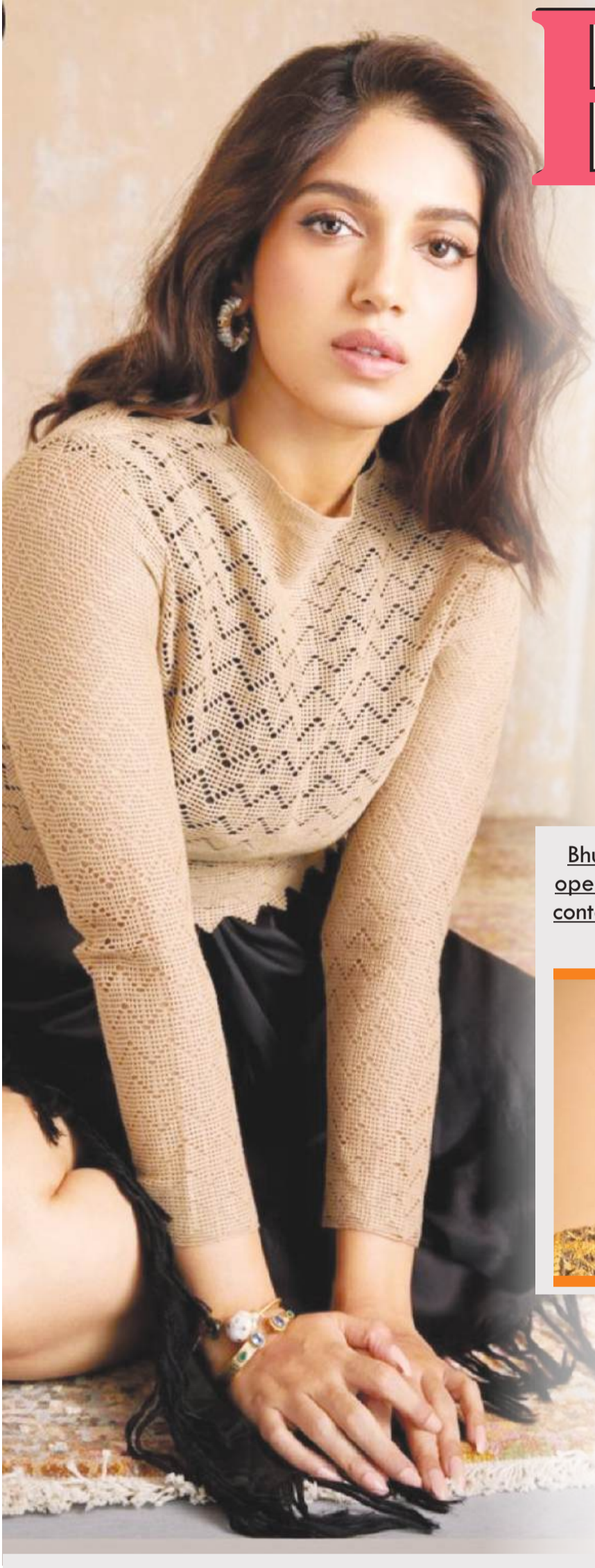
tracks that turned from Day 1. HIRING AND FIRING ATTITUDE ADVERTISEMENT

Since the ODI World Cup 2023, which essentially started the downfall of Pakistan cricket, they have changed coaches thrice. After Mickey Arthur's exit, Mohammed

Hafeez was handed the reins of the team. Hafeez was sacked before the T20 World Cup, and Pakistan brought in World Cup-winning coach Gary Kirsten, along with former Australia fast bowler Jason Gillespie, who had done well in the Australian domestic circuit. Kirsten, who won the ODI World Cup in 2011 with India and the Indian Premier League 2022 as a mentor, was forced out of the side without coaching in a single ODI game. Kirsten led amidst growing differences with the PCB after he was not allowed to select his preferred set of players for the ODI and T20I teams. Gillespie met the same fate, less than a year into his appointment as the coach of the Test team. "You want to be able to have clear communication with all stakeholders, with selectors, for instance, knowing what the team is as head coach well before the game, or at least the day before the game," said Gillespie on the ABC Grandstand show.



was due to be involved with The Hundred at the beginning of the competition so it's great to finally be able to make it to Wales," Smith said. New Zealand's left-arm speedster Trent Boult has also secured a contract, joining Birmingham Phoenix, further boosting their pace attack. The men's competition saw several other high-profile signings, with Marcus Stoinis heading to Trent Rockets and Kane Williamson joining London Spirit, adding both experience and stability to their respective sides. The Hundred's women's competition also saw major signings, with Australian legend Meg Lanning set to don the Oval Invincibles jersey. South African batting powerhouse and skipper Laura Wolvaardt will be turning out for Southern Brave Women, while New Zealand all-rounder Amelia Kerr has been snapped up by Manchester Originals Women, ensuring the tournament is packed with top-tier international talent. While The Hundred continues to attract global superstars, Stokes' absence is notable, especially considering his leadership role in English cricket.



Bhumi Pednekar

Says She Is 'Very Possessive' In Relationship: 'I Believe In Monogamy'

Bhumi Pednekar is gearing up for the release of her next film, Mere Husband Ki Biwi. In an exclusive chat with News18 Showsha, she admits to ending up doing a series of films that sees her husband falling in love with another woman, rather serendipitously, and Mere Husband Ki Biwi is one of them. In this romantic-comedy co-starring Arjun Kapoor and Rakul Preet Singh, Bhumi plays Arjun's old flame, who returns to his life as he falls for someone new.

Reacting to playing the other women onscreen, she quips, "I don't know what is it about me and the roles I do (laughs)! I keep attracting the women towards my men." So, what's her take on real-life love triangles? "But in real life, I'm very possessive in a relationship. I completely believe in the institution of monogamy. So, there's no chance that I can tolerate a love triangle," she states. Interestingly, despite one single conjecture, Bhumi has always managed to keep her personal life shielded from the public eye.

Bhumi Pednekar says while she's open to falling in love, she's just as content and fulfilled without a man in her life.



And while she's open to the idea of falling in love, she tells us that she'll be comfortable with the idea of not having a man in her life. Sharing her stance on her version of an ideal relationship, Bhumi remarks, "If I fall in love, then great. Even if it doesn't happen, I'm okay with it. When you're so happy in life, you feel complete on your own. But what I look for in a relationship is comfort. I want a relationship where I can just be myself with the person. Ease is really important."

The one relationship, however, that holds a lot of meaning in her life is that of sisterhood. The actor, who didn't have qualms about sharing screen space with her female contemporaries, stresses on the importance of women supporting women. "As women, we all have shared experiences. We all, in a larger bracket, fall towards the same end. And those shared experiences automatically create a lot of empathy for each other. There's this unsaid sisterhood where we know that we've each other's back through thick and thin. We may not be the best of friends but in certain situations, I'll always have their back," she shares.

In Bhumi's words, her role in Mere Husband Ki Biwi maybe best described as the 'Biwi No 1 of this generation'. At the trailer launch when she was asked if she's living her Karisma Kapoor – an actor she took references from for her role in Pati Patni Aur Woh – era, she said, "It's a very big compliment. I grew up on films like Biwi No 1 and I was truly inspired by the female actors of that era. I got the chance to play such characters twice, thanks to Mudassar (Aziz; director) sir. Usually, women today don't get to play comic roles in films. I love being a part of comedy films. In this film, both me and Rakul got to do front-footed comedy, like we used to see in the 'No 1' film series."

Harshvardhan Rane Plans To Stand Outside Sanam Teri Kasam Producer's Office For Sequel: 'No Awkwardness'



Soon after the re-release of Harshvardhan Rane and Mawra Hocane starrer Sanam Teri Kasam on February 7, director duo Radhika Rao and Vinay Sapru announced its sequel. While it may have piqued the curiosity and excitement of several fans, it didn't particularly sit well with producer Deepak Mukut. Speaking to Bollywood Hungama, he said that the intellectual property rights of the film lie with him and that the directors don't have the authorisation to announce a second part to Sanam Teri Kasam. Further, according to him, the director hasn't been finalised and he hasn't had a discussion with Vinay and Radhika yet.

In September last year, Deepak and Harshvardhan announced the sequel but the news had no mention of Vinay and Radhika or any other director. And recently, in an exclusive chat with News18 Showsha, Harshvardhan revealed that a director is yet to be locked. "I'm just a channel here. I'm looking for an association to happen. It's said that with great power comes great responsibility. And with love comes even greater responsibility. It's like if a girl loves you, you need to make sure that you give her the best treatment and place her on a pedestal over your head," he told us.

Hoping for the sequel to happen soon, the Taish and Tara vs Bilal actor further added, "I think this is the same responsibility that the producer is also feeling towards the audience. We've to be extremely responsible and diligent when it comes to the sequel because there's so much more riding on us this time around. We're all working towards it. I hope everything falls into place."

Harshvardhan, in fact, wouldn't even mind gathering his fans and hold up placards outside the producer's office to speed up the process. "Step one was me posting on social media for Sanam Teri Kasam to get re-released. Step two was, standing below Deepak sir's office. Step three was getting the film finally re-released. Step four was the desire to see a house full board outside cinema houses because that's something that I've never seen in my career. And the final step is the fifth one where you'll find me standing below his office once again, requesting him to make part two. I've no awkwardness about it. I'm ready to do it," he remarks.

Tara Sutaria's Ex Aadar Jain Says He Has Done 'Timepass' For 4 Years: 'I've Always Loved Alekha'



Aadar Jain and Alekha Advani recently celebrated their mehndi ceremony surrounded by close friends and family. The event, attended by Rima Jain, Ranbir Kapoor, Alia Bhatt, Soni Razdan, Karisma Kapoor, Kareena Kapoor, and others, was filled with emotional moments, including a heartfelt speech from Aadar.

In a video shared online, Aadar professed his deep love for Alekha, saying, "I have always loved her and I have always wanted to be with her. So she sent me on this long journey of 20 years through time-pass. It was worth the wait because I get to marry this beautiful, beautiful woman, who looks like a dream. I love you, and it was worth the wait. It's a secret, I have always loved her. I have done time pass for four years of my life. But now I'm with you, baby."

The couple's wedding celebrations have been the talk of the town, with glimpses of their ceremonies surfacing online. In early 2024, Aadar and Alekha tied the knot in a dreamy white wedding in Goa. The intimate affair was attended by their families and close friends, with the duo sharing multiple stunning pictures from the ceremony.

Aadar and Alekha got engaged in September 2024, making their relationship official with a heartfelt social media post. Aadar had written, "My first crush, my best friend & now, my forever." Their love story has been closely followed by fans ever since.

Before finding love with Alekha, Aadar was in a relationship with Bollywood actress Tara Sutaria. The two frequently made public appearances together and attended Kapoor family gatherings, including Christmas celebrations and Armaan Jain's wedding. However, their relationship ended in 2023.

Interestingly, Alekha and Tara shared a friendly equation. The two reportedly had a close bond and even followed each other on social media. Alekha once posted a picture with Aadar and Tara, jokingly calling herself the "third wheel." Reports suggest that Alekha even joined the ex-couple on a trip to Paris in 2022. Aadar Jain, son of Rima Jain and grandson of Bollywood legends Raj Kapoor and Krishna Kapoor, made his Bollywood debut in 2017 with Qaidi Band and was last seen in Hello Charlie.

Arjun Kapoor

Opens Up About 'Ideal Relationship' After Breakup: 'Love Doesn't Mean Staying...'

Arjun Kapoor and Malaika Arora, reportedly, began dating in 2018. The former lovebirds rarely shied away from sharing pictures together from their vacations. They were often captured by the shutterbugs as they got spotted in and around the city, hand in hand. Last year, however, they called it quits, the reason of which remains unclear. Following many weeks of speculation, Arjun finally revealed that he is single at Raj Thackeray's Diwali party, which also saw his Singham Again co-stars Ajay Devgn, Tiger Shroff and director Rohit Shetty in attendance.

Now, in an exclusive chat with News18 Showsha, Arjun opens up on what his idea of an ideal relationship is. "Jo de uska bhi bhala, jo na de uska bhi bhala," he quips. Talking about his expectations from his future relationship and stressing on the importance being comfortable in each other's silences, he tells us, "What I want from love today is someone to share my silences with and that's very important. Even if you're in two different spaces, you can still be connected without having to speak all the time. The idea is to share things without even realising it."

According to the Ishaqzaade and Ek Villain Returns actor, love between two people doesn't need to be spelt out in so many words. "There has to be comfort and ease. You should've to look forward to going back and spending time with your person after finishing the day. Love doesn't mean staying together with the person all the time. You should be wanting to genuinely building your life with them. It's necessary for two people to understand each other's professions too," he says.

In fact, at the trailer launch of his upcoming film Mere Husband Ki Biwi, he spilled the beans on his marriage plans. "If there is anything, I will let you all know. Today is about discussing the film and celebrating it. And I have to talk about the film. I think I have allowed enough conversations and chatter about my personal life whenever I've been comfortable, and when the time was right. For me, right now, let me celebrate being my husband's wife. And when the time comes to talk about my wife, we will talk about it at the right moment," he shared.

As for Mere Husband Ki Biwi, the film will mark his return to the romantic-comedy space – which he refers to as his 'old friend' – after many years. Speaking about it, he had said, "I've always loved stories that bring warmth, laughter and love to the screen, and this film does exactly that. I've been fortunate that the audience has loved and accepted me in the romance genre in films like 2 States, Ki & Ka, and other films. It's good to be doing something in the light-hearted zone. I hope the audiences shower me with the same kind of love and acceptance for Mere Husband Ki Biwi."

Arjun Kapoor talks about the importance of not talking always and but being comfortable in 'shared silences' in relationships

