

TOP NEWS OF J&K

JAMMU, MONDAY, AUGUST 19, 2024

Daily Evening Newspaper



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BRIEFLY

LG Sinha greets people on Raksha Bandhan

JAMMU, Aug 19: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Monday greets people on the occasion of Raksha Bandhan.

In a post on X, LG Sinha wrote, "Greetings and good wishes to all on the auspicious occasion of Raksha Bandhan."

Cop dies of cardiac arrest in Eidgah Srinagar

SRINAGAR, Aug 19 (Agencies): A police man died in Eidgah, Srinagar, after suffering a cardiac arrest on Monday morning, officials said.

Quoting an official, news agency KNC reported that a policeman, who was reportedly the PSO of a retired police officer, died on Monday morning after suffering a heart attack at his home in Saidapora, Eidgah, Srinagar.

He added that the cop was shifted to SMHS Hospital, where doctors declared him dead on arrival.

The police have initiated an investigation, said the official.

Notorious drug peddler held with contraband in Ganderbal: Police

SRINAGAR, Aug 19 (Agencies): Continuing its unwavering efforts to eradicate the menace of drugs from the society, Police on Monday arrested a notorious drug peddler along with contraband substance in central Kashmir's Ganderbal.

A police spokesperson said that Ganderbal Police received information through reliable sources that one person namely Omer Fayaz Bhat S/O Fayaz Ahmad Bhat R/O Shaltang Srinagar who was working as Private Driver with SSB 03CC at Rakh Harran Forest Protection Unit Ganderbal has concealed Contraband Brown Sugar like Substance in a forest Hut at Rakh Harran with an intention to sell it to the local youth. Acting Swiftly on the directions of SSP Ganderbal, a

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"Candidates names will be finalised soon": Kishan Reddy ahead of J&K Assembly Polls

JAMMU, Aug 19 (Agencies): Ahead of the upcoming Jammu and Kashmir Assembly elections, Union Minister and Telangana BJP president G Kishan Reddy on Monday said that under the leadership of party National President and Union Minister JP Nadda, the names of the candidates will be finalised soon.

On the BJP Election Committee meeting at the party office, Reddy said that the final decision on the candidates will be of the national election committee.

"The final decision will be of the national election committee.



The state election committee will recommend the names, then we will recommend a panel from that. Finally, under the leadership of BJP National President and Union Minister JP Nadda ji, the names of the candidates will be

finalised...As the last date for nomination is August 27, it will be announced this week only," he added.

He further said that the party's main aim is to protect Jammu and Kashmir from terrorism, nepotism and corrup-

tion. "Our party works in unity. We have to protect Jammu and Kashmir from terrorism, nepotism and corruption. The anti-development forces should not get into power again...Brotherhood and peace prevails in J-K after the abrogation of Article 370," he added.

BJP Kavinder Gupta said that the party's focus is on development and stopping the anti-development forces in Jammu and Kashmir. "The BJP has the points of infrastructural development and peacekeeping in Jammu

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Women tie Rakhi to Army personnel serving on LoC, Celebrate Raksha Bandhan in Uri



BARAMULLA, Aug 19 (Agencies): Celebrating the festival of Raksha Bandhan, women tied Rakhi to Indian army personnel in Soni Village along Line of Control (LoC) in the Uri sector of Jammu and Kashmir on Monday.

Women called the soldiers their brothers and showed gratitude towards them for protecting the borders. In return, the soldiers pledge to protect and safeguard the residents from any harm.

Seerat Bano, a local

woman, said, "We sisters have tied Rakhi to our brother for protecting us across the borders."

Raksha Bandhan is a traditional Hindu festival dedicated to the love and bond between brothers and sisters. On this day, sisters tie Rakhi around their brother's wrists. In return, brothers offer gifts as a symbol of love and care for their sisters. Nazir Ahmad, another local villager highlighted the significance of the Raksha Bandhan and described it as a festival of peace and harmony.

"This festival gives the message of peace and

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Former Indian Army chief General S Padmanabhan passes away at 83



NEW DELHI, Aug 19 (Agencies): Former Indian Army Chief General Sundararajan Padmanabhan passed away in Tamil Nadu's Chennai, the Indian Army said on Monday.

Commissioned into the Regiment of Artillery, General Sundararajan Padmanabhan assumed charge of the Indian Army, as the 20th Chief of Army Staff, on

September 30, 2000. Born in Trivandrum, Kerala on December 5, 1940, he is an alumnus of the prestigious Rashtriya Indian Military College (RIMC), Dehra Dun and the National Defence Academy (NDA), Khadakwasla in Pune.

He was commissioned into the Regiment of Artillery after graduating from the Indian Military Academy (IMA) on December 13, 1959.

His illustrious career included several prestigious command, staff and instructional postings, besides having participated in numerous operations. He was a graduate of the Defence

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After 52 days & over five lakh pilgrims, Amarnath Yatra concludes today



SRINAGAR, Aug 19 (Agencies): After it continued smoothly and peacefully during the last 52 days with nearly five lakh Yatis having 'darshan' inside the cave shrine, the annual Amarnath Yatra will conclude on Monday.

'Chhari Mubarak' (Silver robbed Lord Shiva's Mace), carried by Mahant Swami Deepen-

dra Giri started the last leg of its journey from Panchtarni to the holy cave this morning.

The Yatra started this year on June 29 and will end Monday after 52 days amid high-security arrangements.

The ubiquitous presence of police and the CAPFs all along the Yatra route from Jammu to the two base camps of

Baltal and Nun (Pahalgam), highly professionally and technologically equipped security at the transit camps and above all, the total cooperation of the local people made the incident-free conduct of the Yatra possible this year.

Accompanied by Sadhus and devotees chanting 'Bum Bum Bhole' and Vedic hymns in praise of Lord Shiva, the final journey of Chhari Mubarak started from Panchtarni, the last halting camp, towards the cave shrine situated 3888 metres above the sea-level in Kashmir Himalayas.

The cave shrine houses an ice stalagmite structure that wanes and

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Brief rains, thundershowers to continue in J&K parts till Aug 31: Weatherman

SRINAGAR, Aug 19 (Agencies): Meteorological Centre Srinagar Monday predicted brief spell of rain and thundershower in few parts of Jammu and Kashmir till end of the ongoing month. However the officials said that J&K may witness rise in day temperatures from August 23rd onwards.

It also said that there is a possibility of intense showers for a brief period and heavy rainfall in Jammu division which may lead to flash floods, landslides, mudslides and shooting stones over vulnerable parts of J&K during August 19 and 20.

"From August 19th to 20th there is a possibil-

ity of brief spell of light to moderate rain/thundershower towards late night/early morning at many places, while brief spell of showers at few places is also expected towards late afternoon," a MeT official informed.

He said from August 21st to 22nd, there is a possibility of a brief spell of rain/thundershower at few places during day time and light to moderate rain/thundershower at scattered places of J&K towards late night/early morning.

From August 23rd to 31st nothing significant weather activity for Kashmir division is expected except brief showers at few places.

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MBA MOTORS

MERCEDES - BMW - AUDI

DEALS IN SALE, PURCHASE, REPAIRING AND SERVICING OF USED CARS AND ORIGINAL SPARE PARTS

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Final Electoral Rolls for JK likely to be published on Tuesday

SRINAGAR, Aug 19 (Agencies): The final electoral rolls for Jammu and Kashmir will be published on August 20, coinciding with the issuance of the first notification for Assembly elections, Daily Excelsior reported.

The number of voters is expected to approach nine million. Currently, Jammu and Kashmir has 8.7 million registered voters, with the updated figure projected to be between 8.8 million and 8.9 million following the publication.

The Special Summary Revision will conclude with the release of these rolls, which include details of voters segmented by Assembly constituencies. The revised boundaries of many constituencies,

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AIIMS Jammu conducts workshop on 'Genetic Counselling and Prenatal Diagnosis'

Top News Report

JAMMU, Aug 19: In a significant stride towards Prenatal diagnosis and genetic counselling, AIIMS Jammu hosted the "First Workshop on Genetic Counselling and Prenatal Diagnosis" on 17th-18th August, 2024.

This workshop was conducted in collaboration with the National Academy of Medical Sciences (NAMS).

The course featured Prof Narinder Kumar Mehra (Former Dean of AIIMS New Delhi & Emeritus scientist of ICMR), Dr Babu Rao Vundinti (Scientist G, National Institute of Immunohaematology, ICMR Mumbai), and Dr Usha Dutta, PhD, FTAS, Diagnostic Division, Centre for DNA Fingerprinting and Diagnostics, Hyderabad.

Cytogenetic diagnostics involves the study of chromosomes, the thread-like structures containing genetic material whereas Prenatal diagnostics (window into the womb) encompasses various tests conducted during



pregnancy to detect potential health issues of the unborn baby.

The workshop was conducted under the visionary leadership of Prof (Dr) Shakti Kumar Gupta, the Executive Director & CEO of AIIMS Jammu. The workshop was inaugurated by a lamp-lighting ceremony, followed by the Saraswati Vandana, which set a reverent tone for the event.

In his inaugural address, Prof (Dr) Shakti Gupta highlighted the role of AIIMS Jammu as a leader in medical education and research, emphasizing the Institution's commitment to providing cutting-edge training and fostering an envi-

ronment of continuous learning. He lauded the collaborative efforts of the Department of Obstetrics & Gynaecology and the Department of Anatomy.

He further stressed the necessity of such future workshops in equipping the medical professionals throughout the entire Union territory of Jammu & Kashmir to equip them with the skills required to manage complex genetic disorders.

Over 50 faculty members and residents from various Medical Colleges of different States participated in the Workshop. It featured a series of in-depth sessions, each designed to provide participants with a robust

understanding of genetic disorders, their diagnosis, and the intricacies of genetic counselling.

Participants engaged in practical exercises under expert supervision to refine their skills in taking detailed family histories—a critical component of effective genetic counselling. Dr Babu Rao provided a comprehensive guide on the infrastructure, equipment, and personnel needed for an effective lab setup, along with essential quality control measures to ensure the accuracy and reliability of genetic tests.

The fusion of cytogenetic and prenatal diagnostics heralds a new era in reproductive health-

care, offering expectant parents unparalleled insights into their child's health. By embracing these innovations, families can make informed choices, fostering a future where every individual receives the best possible start in life.

By bringing together leading experts and fostering hands-on learning, the event significantly enhanced participants' proficiency in genetic counselling and prenatal diagnosis.

AIIMS Jammu remains dedicated to supporting the development of medical professionals and advancing healthcare through innovative training initiatives.

Open to alliance with all like-minded parties: Newly appointed JKPC Chief Karra

Top News Report

SRINAGAR, Aug 19: Jammu and Kashmir Pradesh Congress Committee (PCC) chief Tariq Hameed Karra Monday said that the Congress party was open to forge alliance with like-minded people or parties and that the National Conference has approached the Congress Central leadership for a pre-poll alliance.

"As far as the alliance, we are open to like-minded people or the parties to forge an alliance with them," Karra said addressing a gathering at PCC headquarters in



Srinagar after his return from New Delhi, as per news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO). He was recently appointed as the J&K PCC chief by the party high command in Delhi.

About NC, he revealed that the party leadership

has approached central leadership in Delhi for a pre-poll alliance. "If parties are of the ideas that we have to defeat divisive forces and BJP, they will definitely ally with the Congress. And we will definitely succeed," Karra said.

J&K Elections | Omar Abdullah to release National Conference manifesto

Top News Report

SRINAGAR, Aug 19: The National Conference will release on Monday its manifesto for the assembly elections in Jammu and Kashmir.

The document will be released during a press meet by party vice-president Omar Abdullah in the presence of senior leaders, including members of its manifesto committee.

The three-phase elections to the 90-member Jammu and Kashmir Assembly will be held on September 18, Sep-



tember 25 and October 1. The results will be declared on October 4.

The National Conference had formed a committee led by former Jammu and Kashmir finance minister and senior leader Abdul Rahim Rather to draft the

manifesto. The committee also included other senior leaders, including the party's Srinagar MP Aga Syed Ruhullah Mehdi.

The party had sought suggestions from the people for the manifesto, saying their submissions would be discussed and incorporated in the final document.

Mehdi had said the biggest issues for the party were the political and constitutional statuses of Jammu and Kashmir and the restoration of the guarantees "snatched" from the people.

All J&K Dr. Ambedkar Welfare Forum to participate in Bharat Bandh Call on Aug 21



Top News Report

JAMMU, Aug 19: All J&K Dr. Ambedkar Welfare Forum held a Press Conference at Guru Ravi Dass Complex, Rajpura Mangotriam, Jammu.

While addressing the media persons Dev Raj Angral, President of the Forum announced that our Forum would also participate in the Bharat

Bandh Call on 21st August, 2024 given by the different organizations of the SC/STs communities.

Dev Raj Angral and Tarsem Lochan urged the Central Govt. to revoke the recently Supreme Court judgment of Reservation within Reservation and Creamy Layer of SC/STs by passing a bill through Parliament.

Rashpal Digra, Romesh

Angurana, Mangal Dass, Tarsem Lochan, Vijay Kumar Loach, Bachan Lal, Gouri Lal, Dalip Thapa, King Kumar, Raman Thapa, Mohan Lal Baboria, Des Raj Langleh and others were present in the meeting.

Dev Raj Angral, President thanks all the Press Media persons for their support and attending the Press Conference.

Man held for harassing female doctor at hospital in Rajouri

Top News Report

JAMMU, Aug 19: A man was arrested for allegedly creating a ruckus and harassing an on-duty female doctor inside a hospital in Jammu and Kashmir's Rajouri district early Monday, officials said.

The accused Gurpreet Singh's unruly behaviour at the sub-district hospital in Nowshera sparked a protest by doctors and the paramedical staff, they said.

The ruckus erupted around 12.45 am when Singh accompanied a patient to the hospital and allegedly indulged in hooliganism without any provocation, the officials said. The accused allegedly smashed a windowpane and also abused a female doctor who tried to intervene before fleeing the scene.

Dev Raj Angral, President thanks all the Press Media persons for their support and attending the Press Conference.

Following the ruckus, the doctors and paramedics of the hospital suspended their work and staged a protest, demanding stern action against the accused and adequate security at the hospital premises.

However, the protest was called off when senior civil and police officials reached the scene and informed the doctors about Singh's arrest and registration of a case under relevant sections of the criminal law against him.

Block Medical Officer Iqbal Malik said the accused ransacked the hospital property and harassed a female doctor on duty without any provocation.

"Police have arrested the accused following which the hospital staff resumed their duties," Malik said.

Un-identified male body found

Top News Report

JAMMU, Aug 19: On August 16, 2024, at approximately 1820 hours, the dead body of an unidentified male, aged about 50-55 years, was found near 89 KM, Beat No. 3, within the jurisdiction of PP GRP Bari Brahmana.

The deceased, who was wearing only a Grey and Blue/White striped T-shirt, stood approximately 5' 6" tall. The body has been transferred to the mortuary room of GMC Jammu for postmortem and identification.

Anyone with information regarding the identity or residential details of the deceased is urged to contact GRP Jammu at Telephone Nos. 0191-2474946 and/or Mobile Nos. 6005784806 / 7889418075.



IGNOU extends last date for admission and re-registration till Aug 31, 2024 on public demand

Top News Report

JAMMU, Aug 19: Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU) has extended the last date of admission as well as re-registration for the July 2024 admission cycle till 31st August, 2024 on public demand. IGNOU Offers UG, PG, Diploma, and Certificate programmes. The minimum eligibility criteria for UG courses is that students must have passed 10+2 from a recognized board and for PG courses, candidate must be a graduate from a recognized university.

Seeking applicants can access the admission portal at the front page of the National website www.ignou.ac.in or directly follow the link https://ignoadmission.samarth.edu.in. IGNOU offers admission to various UG, PG, Certificate, Diploma, PG Diploma programmes in distance learning and online education mode.

As per the new UGC guidelines, candidates can now study two online or offline programmes at the same time.

Before filling the admission form online, a candidate needs to create a User ID and Password on the SAMARTH portal and be ready with a Mobile No., Email ID, properly scanned academic documents, photograph and Bank Debit /Credit/Net Banking for payment of fee.

Learners seeking admission must provide their own email ID and mobile number at the time of registration even if they are submitting their admission forms online from a Cyber Cafe. Learners must exercise caution and be vigilant while submitting their admission forms. They must note their User ID and Password for future use.

It is pertinent to mention here that IGNOU has launched 52 new programmes in Open

Distance Learning mode and 5 new programmes in Online mode in the year 2023-24 which include Four-year undergraduate programmes (FYUP) in Commerce, Economics, History, Political Science, Public Administration, Sociology, Anthropology, Hindi, Sanskrit, Urdu, Social Work, Philosophy, Journalism & Digital Media, Biochemistry, Facilities and Service Management.

"Dr. Jai Prakash Verma, Regional Director, IGNOU RC Jammu informed that the University has further extended the last date of admission for the ongoing July 2024 admission cycle till August 31, 2024 keeping in view the interest of students as there were many representations from the aspiring learners to further extend the last date in view of the onset of monsoon and incessant rains resulting in internet and other disruptions across the country.

Manjit Singh asks people to strengthen democracy in J&K

Top News Report

SAMBA, Aug 19: Apni Party Provincial President, Jammu, and Former Minister, Manjit Singh has appealed to the people to participate in large numbers in the scheduled legislative assembly elections of Jammu and Kashmir to strengthen the democratic roots.

"The Apni Party is committed to empower the people with the strengthening of the democratic institutions which were compromised in the last several years in Jammu and Kashmir," said S. Manjit Singh, addressing a meeting here at Vijaypur in Samba District.

The meeting was part of the political campaign launched in the wake of the recently announced legislative assembly elections in Jammu and Kashmir.

He said that the people



of Jammu and Kashmir were deprived of their democratic right to elect their Govt because the Election Commission of India delayed the assembly elections without citing valid reasons.

"There is resentment among the people as the bureaucracy was not listening to the people but implementing the authoritarian decisions without against the will of the

people," he stated.

In the meantime, he said that Jammu has also faced deliberate ignorance from the authorities that has given rise to frustration among the young generation with little scope for employment in private and Govt sectors.

"The recruitment, whichever were conducted, came under the scanner, after allegations of nepotism and biased

approach of the authorities. Hence, many of them were cancelled. Hence, those who were aspiring to get employment in their Govt departments of their choice were left helpless, and many became over-aged while waiting for the decisions on the alleged scammed recruitment in J&K," he said.

He said that if the Apni Party forms the Govt in J&K, they would adver-

tise all the vacant posts, and a transparent recruitment process would be conducted across all the regions.

"We will not promote any kind of regional or religious divide because we believe in harmony and peaceful coexistence. Our agenda is to bring the people of two regions together, and fight against the divisive forces to create a cordial atmosphere," he added.

He further educated the people about welfare schemes, and developmental policies that would be implemented in J&K, if the Party forms the next Govt.

He also demanded restoration of statehood in J&K and restoration of all the powers to an elected Govt while questioning the extra powers to the Lt Governor of J&K that would undermine the elected Govt.

Abhay Bakaya commends Administration, Security Forces for successful managing Shri Amarnath Ji Yatra – 2024

Top News Report

JAMMU, Aug 19: Apni Party General Secretary Youth Wing, and Spokesperson of the Party, Abhay Bakaya has commended the administra-

tion and security forces for their exceptional efforts in successfully managing the Shri Amarnath Ji Yatra 2024.

As per a press release, Abhay said that the administration along

with the security forces have successfully managed the Shri Amarnath Ji Yatra, which saw a record-breaking attendance of over 500,000 pilgrims.

He highlighted the

seamless coordination and safety measures that ensured a smooth pilgrimage experience for all devotees.

On this auspicious occasion with Raksha Bandhan, Bakaya

extended his warm wishes to the people, emphasizing the spirit of togetherness, celebration and bonding between the communities, during this festive time.

EDITORIAL

OFFBEAT
COURSES

If you have completed your twelfth standard but have not yet been able to choose a career, then now is the time for you to take the right decision and move forward in that direction. While choosing a career, the most important thing is to identify your interest and ability and prepare yourself for success. Generally, parents push their children towards becoming doctors, engineers, lawyers etc. after twelfth, but seeing the tough competition in these fields, they are now ready to take the risk of choosing an offbeat career alternative.

They are giving priority to the hobby and interest of the students in these courses. If you are also looking for new alternatives in a field full of possibilities, then know about offbeat courses. Cinematography Cinematography is literally defined as recording motion. Every scene that appears on the screen is the result of cinematography. A cinematographer brings reality to any scene imagined by a film director or script writer. A genre made up of art and technology, cinematography is a separate part of film making It plays an important role in his success. Job opportunities There are opportunities to work as cinematographer, video editor, director and photography, cameraman, videographer etc. in this field. Cinematographers have excellent job opportunities in TV and web series, filming units, film studios, video businesses, etc. Course You can do one year PG certificate course in electronic cinematography, two year PG diploma in cinematography for EDM, three year PG diploma in cinematography. You from the twelfth After graduation in any subject, you can take admission in these courses by passing the entrance exam. Some institutes offer BSc in Cinematography, Advanced Diploma in Cinematography, PG Diploma in Cinematography along with Film Making. Advertising is a great way to promote anything. It is the preferred alternative chosen by companies and brands to market their products/services. Therefore, today advertising is a big industry in the country, which is always profitable is After digitalization, this sector has expanded further and new opportunities have been created in it. If you have the ability to do something creative and think differently, then you can advance yourself in this field. Work opportunities You can work in this field as a copy writer, creative director, art director, production manager, media planning manager, PPC etc. You can work in any advertising company. It also has the option of working as a freelancer.

Course with graduation in any subject after twelfth By improving communication skills and English, you can enter this field by doing diploma or post graduation diploma courses in Advertising and Communication, Marketing and Advertising, Advertising Management, Advertising and Public Relations. Interior designing It is currently one of the most attractive career options. Be it home or office, hotel or mall, interior designers play an important role in making it colorful and beautiful. Job opportunities Architectural firm, construction firm, real estate company for interior designer There are opportunities to work in Town and City Planning Bureau, Design Studio, Hotel and Restaurant, Design Institute. You can get a job in a firm by working as an interior designer. This field gives an opportunity to work independently and create an identity. Course After 12th you can do Bachelor of Interior Designing or B Sc in Interior Designing.

Graffiti art cheers post-riots London; Edinburgh is back, but with 'warnings'

By: Kishwar Desai

After a summer of the worst riots ever, it was a time to introspect and think about who lights these sudden fires. And how quickly the social fabric of a stable nation can be torn down. People were still in shock and mourning over the deaths of the girls in Southport and then the egregious violence which followed made everything so much worse: largely due to falsehoods being spread on social media. Also Read - Sanjaya Baru | Bangladesh's Yunus can 're-earn' his Peace Prize Advertisement Thus, we needed some diversion — and it came in a form of a bit of playful intervention from the artist, Banksy, who has remained a mysterious commentator on our times and on the art world. Banksy, in the last week or so has unveiled a series of graffiti — animal themed "artworks" all over the city. Perhaps to remind us of the wonder of the natural world — even as we struggle to deal with the trauma of the real, conflicted world. So he has spray-painted on the walls and buildings all over the city — monkeys, pelicans, rhinos, gorillas, elephants, cleverly merging real objects into the art giving it a very unique 3-D effect, which is his trademark. Thus, upon two real bricked up windows in a house, he has painted two elephants seem-

ingly entangled in a trunk call. Then over a parked car on a street he has drawn a leaping rhino, and my favourite — painted on shutters — depicts a gorilla lifting a carpet to release butterflies. All the art works are simple and yet very clever. Also Read - Anita Katy | Phogat vs Saina in Haryana polls? Sonia, Jaya seen mending fences But not everyone has followed the Banksy principle of making art accessible. While a few artworks have been vandalised with counter graffiti — a rather clever Banksy graffiti which had a wolf painted on a satellite dish was stolen within hours of being set up. Perhaps that sly comment on the television networks really hit hard! No one knows the identity of the artist who remains shrouded in mystery — but one can only be grateful to him for changing the discourse from a very difficult and depressing time — to something rather more intriguing, and thoughtful. Also Read - Krishna Shastri Devulapalli | Hey, let's make some better things worse * Undoubtedly it has been a very tough time for the new government. Even before they could settle down came the Southport stabbings and the need to clamp down on the ultra-right-wing rioters and looters who took advantage of the febrile situation. Thus, we have even seen children in their teens appearing in court

and being convicted. Even though the prisons are already overcrowded everyone felt the time had come to lock up the looters. Fortunately for all, the new Prime Minister, Sir Kier Starmer, had dealt with such situations in his previous avatar — especially when riots had broken out in 2011, and he has been able to bring some peace into our lives. Also Read - Pavan Varma: Long way to go to make India a sporting nation Also what was very heartening for so many of us was sight of many "right thinking" (not ultra-right) citizens who came onto the streets and fearlessly confronted the thugs who thought that they could capitalise on the anti-migrant sentiments that they were trying to whip up. The pro-unity demonstrations were truly reassuring for so many who make up the rich multicultural fabric of the country today — and for those who come from diverse backgrounds and are of all colours and races. It was great to see that the majority of people in the country are anti-racist and hold the "right" values. And they were unafraid to come onto the streets to show their solidarity with people of other races and religions — and even asylum seekers. It was very touching for many — and let us hope that this peace between the communities holds firm. * It is summer time and so festivals are

the talk of the town. The Edinburgh Festival has now become a globally attractive event. From humble beginnings, now it attracts so many participants that choosing between events is a challenge. The only annoyance nowadays is the number of mandatory "trigger warnings" that come before performances, in case people are offended or become unwell due to what they have been exposed to. Today's audiences are apparently so sensitive that they have to be alerted about all possible reactions. Thus, in a stand-up comedy show, they are even warned about the likelihood of "audience participation". Other performances warn the audience to be prepared for "surprise entrances" or that there may be actors "with marginalised genders". Even in a Shakespeare comedy where Falstaff figures you are warned that some dialogue involves "body shaming". There are warnings about adult themes such as "heavy drinking". You wonder what sort of delicate souls go to watch these shows. But they still go by the scores so I am sure Edinburgh Festival is well worth a visit. Thus if you just want a straightforward joyful show, just go to Regents Park theatre in London and watch Fiddler on the Roof, the classic musical which will lift your spirits with its lively songs and comic turns.

Bangladesh's Yunus can 're-earn' his Peace Prize

By: Sanjaya Baru

Democratic institutions ensure that a nation state renews its legitimacy within civil society. When those who take control of the State subvert and delegitimise the institutions of democracy, this renewal ceases to happen. Regular and transparent elections to the legislature, that represents civil society, enable the State to renew legitimacy through a popular mandate. When this fails, ceases or is subverted, then a revolution is the only means by which civil society regains control of the State. Also Read - Kishwar Desai | Graffiti art cheers post-riots London; Edinburgh is back, but with 'warnings' Advertisement This is precisely what is happening in Bangladesh. The government of Sheikh Hasina lost its legitimacy because of the manner in which it chose to govern and sought to renew its mandate. A democratically elected government had subverted the institutions of democratic governance to the point that democracy itself was under threat. The State in Bangladesh could have sustained itself through increasingly authoritarian, if populist, governance. That story has played itself out in many countries around the world. Also Read - Anita Katy | Phogat vs Saina in Haryana polls? Sonia, Jaya seen mending fences In the end, so bankrupt had Sheikh Hasina's democratically elected regime become that an upsurge of youth ensured its exit. What is interesting about Bangladesh is that this body of youth, that had spontaneously come together and battled for change, was able to find a leader who had independently secured the support of civil society through his life and work. The popularity and social standing of Muhammad

Yunus had nothing to do with the movement of the youth. The two came together the day Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina escaped to exile. Also Read - Krishna Shastri Devulapalli | Hey, let's make some better things worse Bangladesh is fortunate to have had Mr Yunus. What could have happened without a Yunus around is what we saw in Sri Lanka in 2022. A popular uprising forced President Gotabaya Rajapaksa and Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa to eventually step down. However, the Sri Lankan Parliament remained in place and soon a new government was formed under the leadership of Ranil Wickremesinghe. An entrenched political elite ensured regime continuity by merely replacing individual leaders. Also Read - Pavan Varma: Long way to go to make India a sporting nation In Bangladesh, the youth wanted more. They sought real regime change. As events unfolded in Dhaka, many analysts had forecast a familiar scenario. A military takeover. In the event, Bangladesh witnessed a civil society takeover. In a remarkable turn of events a group of respected and highly qualified citizens came together to form a government under the leadership of Mr Yunus. His individual social and global standing, as a Nobel Peace Prize-winning social activist who has empowered millions of the poor, has for the moment restored a semblance of stability. Regime change can be noisy, dirty and bloody. Hence, and understandably, there have been reprehensible and regrettable events ranging from attacks on religious minorities to the physical hammering of the statue of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rehman. These are tragic events. They have tarnished what was essentially a youth revolt against repression and injustice. They

will cast a dark shadow on what was essentially a movement for freedom and self-respect. But such is the nature of any revolt. Revolution is not a dinner party, said Mao Zedong famously. One has to break an egg to make an omelette, was an earthy metaphor of R.L. Stevenson. It remains to be seen in which direction Bangladesh will move. Will communal forces overwhelm a State in disarray? Will big power rivalry impact the future course of events? Can the interim government put Bangladesh back on the course it was set barely a decade ago, as a bright spot in South Asia? Sri Lanka's precedent suggests that while political stability can be restored, a corrupt elite who ran the country down may yet return to once again dominate the institutions of the State. Restoring democracy after an authoritarian regime has been dislodged requires enormous patience and wisdom on the part of civil society leaders. India had Jawaharlal Nehru and Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel in its early years and South Africa had Nelson Mandela. Bangladesh is fortunate to have Mr Yunus around as it seeks to renew its democracy. Whatever the future holds for Bangladesh, the representatives of civil society who are now functionaries of the State can play a historic role by revitalising the social and political foundations of Bangladesh that attracted global attention not long ago. Nelson Mandela, like Mahatma Gandhi, eschewed power and facilitated the transfer of power. Muhammad Yunus too could play such a facilitating role, ensuring that a modern, secular and forward-looking leadership is once again empowered. For its part, the political leadership in India can play a significant role by supporting such a transition in Bangladesh rather than use

the divisions within that country to further stoke divisions within ours. In the long term, India has the obligation and the opportunity to empower plural and secular democracies all across South Asia. If India chooses to secure short-term gains by exploiting the divisions within the region, it will pull the entire region down. One of Mr Yunus' first statements after he returned home to take charge was to seek the revival of Saarc — the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation. There was a time in the early 2000s when I too joined the ranks of Saarc sceptics. However, over the years I have realised that our sub-continent requires an institution that facilitates regional cooperation and trust building. Over the past decade New Delhi has turned its back on Saarc and has tried hard to breathe life into Bimstec — the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation. While Bimstec has been viewed as a bridge to Asean (Association of Southeast Asian Nations), it has not been able to entuse its membership in the manner that Saarc once did. Saarc was in fact originally a Bangladeshi initiative taken in the early 1980s. It was formally established after a summit of South Asian heads of state and government that met in Kathmandu in December 1985. A half century later, Bangladesh once again has the opportunity to revitalise Saarc. By setting an example of good governance in South Asia, by reconnecting civil society across the sub-continent, and by revitalising Saarc, Mr Yunus can stabilise the neighbourhood and once again earn his Nobel Peace Prize. Mr Yunus today has the stature across the region that would enable him to take that initiative. He should do that.

PSAJK Kulgam holds second annual conference in Aharabal

President Var advocates for academic calendar reforms and embracing AI in education

Top News Report

SRINAGAR, Aug 19: The Private Schools Association of Jammu & Kashmir (PSAJK) District Kulgam hosted its Second Annual Conference at Aharabal, Kashmir. This significant event brought together key stakeholders, including school administrators, educators, and community leaders, to address the pressing issues facing private schools in the region.

The conference was graced by the presence of G N Var, President of PSAJK, who served as the chief guest. The event was meticulously organized by the district body of PSAJK, led by Waseem Sidique, (District President) and supported by other key figures such as Ghulam Hassan Rather (Patron), Jahangir Ahmad Bhat (Chief Organizer) Farooq Ahmad Naik (District Vice President), Arshid Ahmad Bhat (District Secretary) and Aabid Hussain Lone (District Treasurer) etc. "The primary focus of the conference was to



address the diverse challenges faced by private schools, particularly the growing complexities of integrating artificial intelligence into educational practices. Participants also reflected on the procedural requirements set by government regulations, which, while well-intentioned, can sometimes present obstacles to innovation and limit students' access to cutting-edge educational opportunities. The discussion highlighted the need for a more collaborative approach in shaping policies that allow private schools to effectively implement AI technologies while ensuring com-

pliance with regulatory standards."

PSAJK President G N Var, emphasized the importance of addressing these issues "The March session has not been productive for the students of Kashmir Valley. It is imperative that we re-evaluate our academic calendars to ensure that our students receive the best possible education without any disruption. The issues facing our private schools are not just administrative; they directly impact the quality of education our children receive. In addition, the rapid advancements in artificial intelligence are transforming the

educational landscape, presenting both opportunities and challenges for our schools. We must work together to integrate these technologies effectively, ensuring our students are equipped with the skills they need for the future. Reform is necessary not just for today, but to prepare our children for the world they will inherit."

PSAJK District President Waseem Sidique voiced his concerns regarding the challenges faced by private schools "The private education sector in Kashmir is under constant pressure from policies that do not align with the needs of our students. Our schools are not just institutions; they are lifelines for the future of our children. We demand that these unjust challenges be addressed immediately. Our commitment to providing quality education will not waver, but it is time for the authorities to support, not hinder, our efforts."

Chief Organizer PSAJK, Shah Gulzar also addressed the gathering, highlighting the achieve-

ments and ongoing efforts of the association "The progress we have made so far is commendable, but there is still much work to be done. We must continue to strive for excellence in education and ensure that every child in our valley has access to quality schooling. This conference is a testament to our commitment to these goals."

Besides the central body office bearers such as Faisal Islam Mir, General Secretary, Shah Gulzar, Majid Bhat, Bilal Bhat, Tahir Wagay and others participated in the event. The guests of the occasion spoke and highlighted some of the main achievements and issues related to private schools. The event concluded with a renewed pledge by all members to continue advocating for the rights and interests of private schools in the region. The PSAJK reaffirmed its dedication to addressing the challenges faced by its members and ensuring that private education in Kashmir reaches new heights.

Awareness Lecture On Agniveer Scheme By ARO Jammu



Top News Report

NAGROTA, Aug 19: The Agniveer Scheme has been designed to enable a youthful profile of the Armed Forces. It provides an excellent opportunity to the Youth who are keen to don the uniform. To make

the cadets aware of this Magnificent scheme, an informative and educative Lecture was organised by the ARO, Jammu for 540 NCC Cadets at NCC Training Academy Nagrota on 19 Aug 2024. The NCC Cadets exhibited keen interest and cleared many of their doubts.

In addition to the Agniveer Scheme, NCC Cadets were also made aware of the various types of entries existing to join the Armed Forces as Officers and Jawans and the benefits especially for the NCC Cadets given by the Central Government.

Water shortage hits Kulgam villages, 300 households suffering

Top News Report

KULGAM, Aug 19: Residents of Derapora, Sempora, Sehpora Rampathriand Tantary Pora Behibagh area in South Kashmir's Kulgam district, have been enduring a severe shortage of potable water for the past months.

Today, locals accused the Jal Shakti Department of neglecting their plight and demanded immediate redress of their grievances. Residents said that the water scarcity has persisted for last few Months, with no action taken by the authorities to address the issue.

A local resident highlighted that over 300 households are currently without access to

drinking water, causing significant hardship for the community. "We are being deprived of water, and despite repeated requests, neither the concerned department nor the administration has taken any steps to resolve our problems," said another resident.

Residents have appealed to the Deputy Commissioner (DC) Kulgam and other relevant officials to address and rectify the issue as soon as possible.

When Contacted Assistant Executive Engineer (AEE) Jal Shakti department Kulgam, Javid Ahmad Mir acknowledged that "water scarcity hits these villages he said that issue would be sorted out within 10 days.

Ajeet Bhagat congratulates people on Raksha Bandhan

Top News Report

KISHTWAR, Aug 19: J&K National Conference Sr. Leader and Spokesperson of Chenab Valley Zone, Ajeet Bhagat has expressed his best wishes to the people of Chenab Valley Zone on the auspicious occasion of Raksha Bandhan.

He said that Raksha Bandhan is a unique representation of India's cultural values, symbolizing the special bond between brothers and sisters and hoped that the festival will bring peace, harmony prog-



ress and prosperity to Jammu and Kashmir. A new era will begin.

Bhagat said that on this festival we should dedicate ourselves for the honour and dignity of women.

Celebration Of Raksha Bandhan at Metra, Ramban

Top News Report

RAMBAN, Aug 19: As part of its efforts in being the bellwether of communal harmony, Indian Army at Metra celebrated Raksha Bandhan with the local populace with great fervour and gaiety. The aim of the event was to foster a spirit of Brotherhood and national integration. Huge response was seen amongst the local populace of the region who thronged as a show of solidarity and respect to the Soldiers deployed in Harsh Conditions. The Rakhis were accepted with warmth and compassion by the soldiers. A total



of 40 women gathered which was followed by exchange of sweets and gifts between Soldiers and the women who attended, the festival has served as a means for Communal harmony across all communities and reaffirms the bond of affection between a Brother & Sister.

Martyr captain Tushar Mahajan Memorial Trust honours meritorious students

Top News Report

UDHAMPUR, Aug 19: Martyr Captain Tushar Mahajan Memorial Trust today awarded 50 meritorious students of Udhampur for their exceptional performance in board and University examinations at Sher -i- Kashmir Police Academy Udhampur.

On this occasion, Arun Joshi Editor in Chief JK News Today and Former Sr Editor Tribune & Deputy Editor Hindustan Times was the chief guest while Zorawar Singh Jamwal Vice President Press Club Jammu and Chairman Team Jammu was guest of honor. Beside others trust Secretary chairman trust Dev Raj Gupta Shewatketu Singh, members Ranjit Parihar, Satish Chopra, Advocate Karun Raina, Deepankar Gupta, Suriyansh and Shivansh Parihar, Asha Gupta, Kalpana Jamwal, head of educational institutions prominent citizens attended the function.

Programme started by lighting of traditional lamp and paying floral tribute to Martyr Tushar by chief guest and guest of honor. Various activities being carried out by trust and a video on the life of martyr was picturized on the occasion.

In all 50 meritorious students who had shown their exceptional perfor-

mance in Board and University examinations in Udhampur district were honoured by the Trust on the occasion. They were presented a memento and shawl. Sunil Sharma a renowned artist also paid tribute to martyr by singing patriotic song on flute which enthralled audience. A Dogri folk dance was also presented by students of Happy Model school on the occasion.

Speaking on the occasion Chief guest Arun Joshi and Zorawar Singh Jamwal Chairman team Jammu While paying tribute to martyr Tushar Mahajan appealed people to always remember the sacrifices of martyr. They said that such events will not only solve the purpose of remembering contributions of the martyr but also bond people their sacrifices. They said that people of Jammu should feel proud that Dogras have sacrificed their lives for the dignity and honour of Mother India.

He said that supreme sacrifice of martyr Tushar will be remembered for coming centuries and Nation will forever remain indebted to soldiers like captain Tushar and others who fought valiantly, upheld highest traditions of our armed forces and nation. "Today, martyr he is not with us, but he will always remain alive in the hearts and a role model for

younger generation," they added. Speakers exhorted the students to work hard in their new fields to brighten their future. He advised the students to be close to their roots and participate in the civil service examinations as to be the part and parcel of their motherland.

Termining drug abuse as one of the dangerous and threatening challenges before humanity, chief guest sought the support of every section of the society to eradicate this menace. Seeking support of the civil society to eradicate menace of drug abuse, he further said that cooperation of every section of the society is must to liberate our younger generation from the yoke of drug addiction. A memento was also presented to chief guest and guest of honor by chairman trust and its members as token of love.

Trust also felicitated educationists Chairperson BBSVP School Udhampur Didi Chinmaya Jyoti, Retired joint director S.K Gandotra, Dr Vikram Gulati, Vice Principal Happy Model School, Retd Lecturer Ashok Kumar, Anchor Kamlesh Gupta and artist Sunil Sharma, Dev Raj Gupta chairman of the Trust presented the vote of thanks. And programme concluded with national anthem sung by all

Lecture Cum Interactive Session On Artificial Intelligence Enlightens 500 NCC Cadets



Top News Report

NAGROTA, Aug 19: In a bid to enrich the minds of the next generation, a captivating lecture cum interactive session on Artificial Intelligence (AI) was conducted at NCC Training Academy Nagrota. The event, orchestrated by three brilliant students, Sourav Saini, Aashray Gupta and Aayush Gupta from the esteemed IIT Jammu illuminated and inspired

500 NCC Cadets.

The session, meticulously crafted by the three IITians delved into the fascinating realm of Artificial Intelligence, exploring its applications, implications, and potential impact on various sectors. Through engaging discussions, interactive demonstrations, and real-world examples, the students provided a comprehensive overview of AI technology, catering

to the diverse interests and backgrounds of the young cadets.

"We are thrilled to have had the opportunity to share our passion for Artificial Intelligence with the young minds of the NCC Cdts "Remarked Sourav. "It was inspiring to witness their enthusiasm and curiosity, and we hope that our session has sparked a lasting interest in AI among the cadets," added Aashray and Aayush.

Former Jammu and Kashmir CM Mehbooba Mufti's daughter Iltija Mufti to make electoral debut from Bijbehara

SRINAGAR, Aug 19 (Agencies): Former Jammu and Kashmir chief minister Mehbooba Mufti's daughter, Iltija Mufti, will contest the upcoming assembly polls from the Bijbehara constituency.

Iltija's name appeared in the list of eight candidates released by the Peoples' Democratic Party (PDP) on Monday. She gained prominence during the time her mother was detained following the revocation of Article 370. It is reported that Mehbooba Mufti will not contest the assembly polls, and her daughter Iltija, 37, will be the party's face in South Kashmir. Mehbooba Mufti had also made her electoral debut from Bijbehara in 1996, a constituency known as a stronghold of the Mufti family.

In mid-August 2019, amidst a complete communication blackout and lockdown, she wrote a letter to Union home minister Amit Shah, questioning the reasons behind her detention at her Srinagar residence.

Iltija was granted permission to leave the Valley and sought the



Supreme Court's approval to visit her mother, which was ultimately approved.

Following Mehbooba's release, Iltija regularly accompanied her during media interactions and meetings. In June 2022, she started a fortnightly video series on X called "Aapki baat Iltija ke saath" (conversations with Iltija), aimed at discussing issues and decisions that impact the people of Jammu and Kashmir.

A political science graduate from Delhi University, Iltija earned her master's degree in international relations from Warwick University in the UK.

Mehbooba Mufti's uncle to contest from Devsar. Among the other candidates, the party has fielded senior leader Abdul Rehman Veeri from

Anantnag East and Mufti's uncle Sartaj Ahmad Madani from Devsar.

Former Lok Sabha MP Mehboob Beg will be contesting from Anantnag, Ghulam Nabi Lone Hanjura from Charar-i-Sharif, and Ghulam Mohiuddin Wani from Watchi.

The party's youth leader, Waheed Para, who contested the recent Lok Sabha elections from the Srinagar constituency and lost to the National Conference's Aga Syed Ruhullah Mehdi, has been fielded from Anantnag. The party has also nominated Rafiq Ahmad Naik from Tral.

The elections to Jammu and Kashmir assembly will be held on September 18, 25 and October 1. The counting of votes will take place on October 4.

Celebration of Raksha Bandhan With The Girl Students at Pallanwala, Akhnoor

Top News Report

AKHNOOR, Aug 19: The Indian Army celebrated Raksha Bandhan with the girl students of New Light Public School, Naraina, Pallanwala on August 19, 2024. More than hundred students participated in the celebration. The girls students celebrated the festival of Raksha Bandhan with the warriors of our Nation by taking initiative to express the sense of gratitude and pride towards the Indian Armed Forces. The students tied Rakhi to the Indian Army soldiers with a message to their own "You're not just my mother & protector, but also protector of all of our sisters in the nation. I'm so proud that you are my brother". This celebration reflected the commitment of the Indian Army in recognition of their selfless service



towards the Nation. The active participation of the students in this Holy Festival of Trust and Bond further witnessed the collective oath by all to protect, serve and support the Nation. This overwhelm-

ing gesture of locals was appreciated by the Indian Army troops deployed on Line of Control. The Indian Army remains dedicated to fostering a sustainable and harmonious relationship between the communities.

The connecting THREAD

From virtual celebrations to elaborate family gatherings, here's what celebs are doing this Raksha Bandhan

Distant bonding
Prince Dhiman

I am going to miss my sister as she lives in Germany. Rakhi will be celebrated virtually. Every Raksha Bandhan is special. I remember when I was 12 or 13 years old, I got a three-piece suit as gift for Raksha Bandhan. I was so happy.

Missing Delhi days
Rohit Bakshi

I don't have a real sister, my masi's daughter and bua's daughter are like sisters to me. During our childhood in Delhi, they would tie rakhis on my wrist. We would have lunch together and eat sweets. Now that I'm in



Mumbai, they make it a point to send me a rakhi and tikka every year. I

apply the tikka myself. I miss them dearly during Raksha Bandhan.

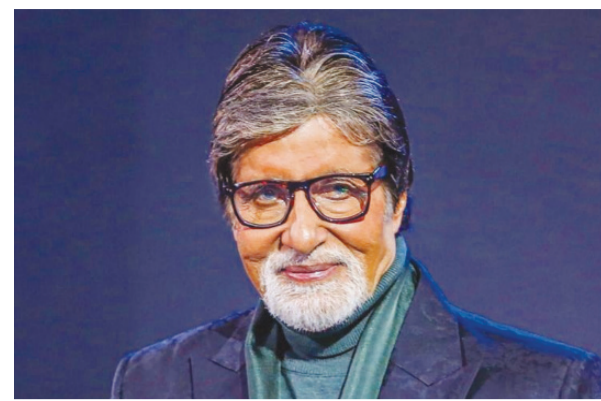
Together at last
Hansa Singh
Since my brother lives

in Dubai, it's been often virtual celebrations. But this year, my brother is in India and we get to celebrate in person. For me, this is as epic as it gets. Even though he is younger, Rakhi means that he has to give gifts.

Food and more
Nitin Goswami

Since I've been in Mumbai for the past 11-12 years, I haven't been able to go home during Raksha Bandhan. My sister, Nidhi Goswami Manoja, always sends me a rakhi by post. When it comes to gifts, I know she likes dresses. She also sends me diet foods that I enjoy.

Big B opens up on working at 81



Bollywood icon Amitabh Bachchan, who was recently seen as Ashwatthama in Nag Ashwin's Kalki 2898 AD, has finally responded to people's query about him working at the age of 81.

Big B took to his blog, and penned a long note in which he addressed the query as to what's the need of working at this age when he practically has everything in

this world.

The actor said he doesn't have any concrete answer to the question, but he shared that he looks at work as an opportunity with childlike enthusiasm. He wrote, "They keep asking me on the sets the reason for me to be working.. and I have no answers for this, except it's another job opportunity for me... what else could possibly be the

reason... others have their own assessment of occasions and conditions, and often like to exercise their model to be prime... wear my shoes, and find out... maybe you are right, and maybe not... you have the liberty to have your conclusions and I have the liberty of my work." He added, "And the 'impotency of content' compels you to build your own sand castles and enjoy its manufacturing... in time sandcastles fall down... may you that build them, find a measure of permanency/... if it has been built for you and your business... mine is done and it stands still - I work.. period... got a problem with that? well then... get to work and find out".

I want to quit films, says Aamir Khan on Rhea Chakraborty's talk show

It seems like Bollywood superstar Aamir Khan is currently at that stage in his life where he does not want to actively work in the film business.

Actor Rhea Chakraborty unveiled a teaser of the upcoming episode of her podcast 'Chapter 2'. The promo shows Aamir Khan in a candid conversation with Rhea.

From talking about his stardom to discussing films in detail, Aamir can be seen pouring his heart out on several subjects while speaking with Rhea.

The promo begins with Rhea showering praise on the superstar for his good looks. Aamir Khan says, "Hrithik is handsome, Salman is handsome, Shah Rukh is really handsome but me..."

Rhea says, "You are also handsome. I think the whole country will agree with me for once."

In the clip, Aamir also revealed that he wanted to disassociate himself from films.

"Mujhe filmo se hatna hai," Aamir said. In response, Rhea said, "Jooth". Aamir replied, "Nahi main sach bol raha hoon."

At one point, Aamir even got emotional. He can be seen shedding tears and taking a pause before saying something. He can be heard saying, "From there my chapter 2 began..."

In 2022, post the failure of his film 'Laal Singh Chaddha', Aamir announced a break from acting.



Speaking at an event in Delhi, Aamir mentioned that he was supposed to shoot for one of the films after 'Laal Singh Chaddha' but instead he decided to take a break.

"When I am doing a film as an actor, I get so lost that nothing else happens in my life. I was supposed to do a film after 'Laal Singh Chaddha' called 'Champions'. It's a wonderful script, a beautiful story, and it's a very heartwarming and lovely film. But I feel that I want to take a break and be with my family, my mom, and my kids," he said.

Sharing the teaser of the episode featuring Aamir, Rhea on her Instagram wrote, "I'm thrilled to welcome Aamir Khan, a true star and a genuine friend. Stay tuned for a deep dive about his experience with stardom, parenthood, grief, and more." The full episode will be out on August 23.

Raksha Bandhan special| Esha Gupta on her elder sister Neha Gupta: I have another mother in her

While actor Esha Gupta is the younger sibling, her elder sister, fashion designer Neha Gupta has one complaint from her this Raksha Bandhan: "Esha is very disciplined but at times, she forgets that I am the elder sister." The younger sibling reasons by saying, "It's because she is never on time. But I am lucky that I have another mother in her form. I have two mothers and one father."

Reflecting on their bond growing up, Neha says that they were raised to be "very strong and independent kids, and we had a great friendship with each other". Esha adds to it, saying, "We never fought and more than friends, we were just sisters. She was the nicer one amongst us. I remember she'd hide her report cards, and I would find them and show them to mom and dad. I used to blackmail her but now that we've grown up, it's both of us against the world. I see my mom and maasi talking and I tell her, it's going to be us in 5-10 years."

Professionally too, Neha is glad to have Esha as her sister



as she became her muse. "I had a mannequin at home with me to try on my clothes. She was the perfect model for my garments and my forever encourager," Neha says, while the actor adds, "More than a model, I was always her free client and still am. She is too nice to say no. Even when I am 80, I'll still be the baby to her."

Even though Neha was the elder sister, she admits that Esha used to be her "protector" in school. Relating to it, Esha shares quite a fascinating incident: "Neha di had a stalker in

college. There was one physical altercation between them and there were cops involved. I called up my cousin and his friends on my own. Soon, there were 10 cars, and all these people had come with hockey sticks, rackets and bats."

But even Neha self-admittedly is "overly possessive" about her sister. "I don't like it when she isn't able to answer my calls because she is maybe busy chatting with her friends. I want to know everything about her," she says.

Esha is currently dating entre-

preneur Manuel Campos Gualtar and is quite happy about the equation he shares with Neha. "Spanish families are a lot like Indian families. They know what the other member is doing at all times. Neha di and Manual have a great, trustworthy relationship. If I am not picking up the call, she'll call him and vice versa. And I have the same equation with his sister," the actor shares.

Recalling their Raksha Bandhan memories, Esha shares, "When we were young, we had cousins, and it used to be a full family celebration. But it was five years back or so when we started tying each other rakhi. It's out of awareness and realising that we are there for each other. It's about whoever protects you. When we actually did that and posted about it, no actress or influencer had done that before." Even with both of them tying rakhi to the other, who ends up gifting whom? "I only have to land up giving the gift on any occasion. It's because there I become the elder one," Neha says cheekily.

'Hope National Awards look kindly on Amar Singh Chamkila': Imtiaz Ali after win at Indian Film Festival of Melbourne

Imtiaz Ali's Amar Singh Chamkila was named 'The Breakout Film of the Year' at the 15th Indian Film Festival of Melbourne and the director hopes the movie continues its winning spree at other awards, including the National Awards which bestowed 'Gulmohar', a direct-to-digital release, with three honours.

What Imtiaz said after the win

Amar Singh Chamkila, a biopic on the slain Punjabi singer who was known as the 'Elvis Presley of Punjab', was released directly on Netflix on April 12, 2024. It marked the filmmaker's feature film debut on a streamer. At the 15th Indian Film Festival of Melbourne awards gala, held, the movie was announced as 'The Breakout Film of the Year'.

"There was confusion about whether films that are released direct-to-digital will be allowed to participate in National Awards but I think there's a verdict on that now which is in favour of direct-to-digital films. I'm hoping the National Awards will look kindly on Amar Singh Chamkila," Ali told agency in an interview from Mel-

bourne.

More details

Gulmohar, a film about a family getting ready to say goodbye to their ancestral home, won three National Awards for the year for 2022 for best Hindi film, best dialogue writing for director Rahul V Chittella and special mention for actor Manoj Bajpayee. It released on Disney plus Hotstar in 2023.

Ali described Amar Singh Chamkila, fronted by Diljit Dosanjh, a people's film.

"What I personally liked about the film is that it is made out of metros and mini-metros, and it goes into the heartland of India, where most of the country lives. I'm hopeful that the population of the country will appreciate that," he said when asked if the movie would go on to win a National Award next year.

Receiving 'The Breakout Film of the Year' at the IFFM for his film means a lot to Ali, he said.

"The validation that I seek is the warmth and popularity among the audience as a filmmaker. It does make me feel happy to receive an award. I hope the popularity of the film is reflected in the awards



as well. I'm sure everyone in the unit will be happy about the awards. Hopefully, the 'Breakout Film' award will start a trend."

Besides "Amar Singh Chamkila", another film with an Ali connec-

tion is currently in the spotlight. The 2018 film 'Laila Majnu', which has gained cult status over the years after receiving a lukewarm response at the box office, re-released in theatres last week.

The filmmaker, who presented and co-wrote the movie with director-brother Sajid Ali, said he is grateful to the audience for giving so much love to "Laila Majnu".

"I'm glad that people can return to my films whenever they want just as I return to many of my favourite films by other filmmakers again and again. It was almost a paradox that after the movie runs for its first run in the theatre and then it goes out of the theatre it usually never makes it back, so you always miss watching the film on the big screen.

"The only choice is to watch it on a platform. But the ability to watch it on the big screen is remarkable and I feel a lot of gratitude towards the audience because this is a people-led movement. People first asked for 'Rockstar', and then 'Laila Majnu'," he added.

Ali is already working on a number of scripts, but he is yet to decide which one would catch the flight first.

"There's going to be a man-woman relationship but it is not in the expected route. There will be something new as well for me in the film that I'm planning now."

Kangana says 'everybody should have companion' as she talks about marriage plans



Kangana Ranaut has spoken about marriage and why she thinks that 'everybody should have a companion'. Speaking with agency, the actor-politician was asked if she wants to marry and have a family of her own with kids. Kangana said 'ya of course'.

Kangana talks about having a 'companion' Kangana was asked if it is compulsory to marry. She replied, "Controversial. I think everybody should have a companion. It's difficult to be without a companion, it's not easy to be without a companion. Everybody should

have a companion, it's important. It is difficult with a companion also, more difficult without a companion. You don't have to find the right person. That is another thing that needs to go. It completely needs to go. If you find your own partner, that's the biggest disaster that can happen to you. It will come along, no timelines."

Kangana opens up on marriage "The older you get it gets more difficult for you to adjust with each other. If you get married at a young age, it's much easier for you to

adjust. In villages, they are marrying at a very young age. Besides, your passion is so high at that time that it's very good to get direction for your passion. It's much easier when you are younger," she added.

What Kangana earlier said about marriage

In 2021, speaking with agency, Kangana had said, "I definitely want to be married and have babies. I see myself as a mother five years down the line and as a wife... There is no such place in love but yes, kind of. Let's move on. You will know. Very soon." Last year, speaking with the news agency ANI, Kangana had said "There's a time for everything and if that time has to come in my life then it will come. I do want to get married and have my own family... but, at the right time it will happen."

She will be next seen in Emergency, which she has helmed. The film is set to hit theatres worldwide on September 6, 2024. It has been produced by Zee Studios and Manikarnika Films. Emergency stars Anupam Kher, Mahima Chaudhary, Milind Soman, Shreyas Talpade, Vishak Nair, and the late Satish Kaushik in pivotal roles.

PM Modi's "Special" Raksha Bandhan celebration with his "young friends"

Raksha Bandhan, commonly known as Rakhi, is a traditional Hindu festival dedicated to the love and bond between brothers and sisters.

NEW DELHI, Aug 19 (Agencies): Prime Minister Narendra Modi celebrated Raksha Bandhan with his "young friends" at his official residence in Delhi today.

Raksha Bandhan, commonly known as Rakhi, is a traditional Hindu festival dedicated to the love and bond between brothers and sisters.

Taking to his X (formerly Twitter) account, he shared pictures from the "special" celebration with school girls at 7, Lok Kalyan Marg, the official residence of the Prime Minister.

"Happy to have marked



Raksha Bandhan with my young friends," he wrote. "Here are glimpses from a

special Raksha Bandhan celebration at 7, LKM," he wrote in another post.

Earlier today, he greeted people on the occasion and prayed for everyone's happiness and prosperity.

"Best wishes to all countrymen on the occasion of Raksha Bandhan, a festival symbolizing the immense love between brother and sister. May this holy festival bring new sweetness in the relationships of all of you and happiness, prosperity and good fortune in life," he wrote on X.

On this day, sisters tie a rakhi around their brothers' wrists. In return, brothers offer gifts as a symbol of love and care for their sisters.

Lateral entry attack on Dalits, OBCs, adivasis: Rahul Gandhi



NEW DELHI, Aug 19 (Agencies): Upping the ante over the lateral entry issue, Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi on Monday called it an attack on Dalits, OBCs and adivasis, and accused the BJP of seeking to snatch reservations from 'bahujans'.

The Congress has strongly criticised the government after the Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) on Saturday issued a notification for recruiting 45 joint secretaries, directors and deputy secretaries through lateral entry -- referred to as the appointment of specialists (including

those from the private sector) in government departments.

"Lateral entry is an attack on Dalits, OBCs and adivasis," Gandhi said on X.

"The BJP's distorted version of Ram Rajya seeks to destroy the Constitution and snatch reservations from bahujans," the former Congress chief said.

Government sources have said the concept of lateral entry was first introduced under the Congress-led UPA regime and was strongly endorsed by the Second Administrative Reforms Commission established by it in 2005.

Also, Information and Broadcasting Minister

Ashwini Vaishnaw has said the Congress's criticism of the lateral entry system in senior bureaucracy shows its "hypocrisy", and asserted the BJP-led NDA government has created a transparent method to implement the concept developed by the UPA dispensation.

In a post in Hindi on X on Sunday, Gandhi had termed the government's move of recruiting public servants through lateral entry an "anti-national step", alleging that the reservation for SCs, STs and OBCs is being "openly snatched away" by such an action.

"Reservation of SC, ST and OBC classes is being openly snatched away by recruiting through lateral entry on important posts in various ministries of the central government," Gandhi had said.

The INDIA bloc will strongly oppose this "anti-national step" that hurts both the administrative structure and social justice, Gandhi had said.

"Privatisation of the IAS is Modi's guarantee for ending reservation," he had said.

Smuggler attacks BSF jawan with dagger along India-Bangladesh border, flees leaving behind 6 kg gold

NADIA, Aug 19 (Agencies): A man with 6 kg of smuggled gold attacked a BSF jawan with a dagger upon being intercepted along the India-Bangladesh border here on Monday, official sources said.

While the jawan survived the attack, the smuggler managed to escape leaving behind the gold, they said.

The incident took place at around 9 am near a banana and bamboo orchard at Vijaypur in the border district of Nadia in West Bengal.

The smuggler was carrying 22 gold biscuits and eight gold bars weighing around 6 kg in

a belt tied around his waist, sources said.

He was intercepted by the Border Security Force jawan but the smuggler attacked the security personnel with a 'dah' (large knife) and fled, they added.

The jawan's uniform was slit around the shoulder area. The BSF personnel belonging to the 32nd battalion of the force fired a round from his rifle but the smuggler escaped, they said.

The jawan did not fire more bullet rounds as farmers were working nearby. The seized gold will be handed over to the Customs and



Directorate of Revenue Intelligence authorities by the BSF, they said.

Dalit nurse raped by doctor in UP hospital, 3 held

MORADABAD, Aug 19 (Agencies): A Dalit nurse was allegedly raped by a doctor after being held hostage inside a private hospital, police said on Monday.

According to the complaint filed by the victim's father, the incident occurred around midnight on Sunday.

Three people were arrested in the case, Superintendent of Police (Rural) Sandeep Kumar Meena said.

On Saturday evening, the victim (20) went to the hospital for her duty at 7 pm. She had been working there for the last seven months.

Late night, another nurse, Mehnaz, asked



her to meet Dr. Shahnawaz in his room.

When she refused to do so, Mehnaz and a ward boy, Junaid, forcibly took her to a room on the top floor of the hospital and locked it from the outside, Meena said.

Later, Dr Shahnawaz entered the room and raped her after holding her hostage, Meena added.

He also threatened to kill her and also hurled casteist slurs.

While police arrested the three accused, on the instructions of Chief Medical Officer Dr Kuldeep Singh, the hospital was sealed after inspection by the health department team on Sunday evening.

Further investigation is underway, the SP said.

'I only pay attention to what Mahayuti leaders say': Maharashtra Deputy CM Ajit Pawar

MUMBAI, Aug 19 (Agencies): Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar on Monday said he was not bothered by criticism by others and was only concerned about what the leaders of the ruling Mahayuti alliance said.

Pawar's remarks came a day after a group of BJP workers led by the party's Junnar chief, Asha Buchake, waved black flags at his convoy.

"I have nothing to do with what other people say. I pay attention to the key people -- CM Eknath Shinde of Shiv Sena; Chandrashekhar Bawankule; and Devendra Fadnavis of the BJP," Pawar told reporters



during his Jan Sanman Yatra in Mumbai.

The Nationalist Congress Party, led by Pawar, had demanded that Fadnavis, who also hold the Home portfolio, clarify whether he

approved of the behaviour of his BJP workers.

Asha Buchake had claimed that the NCP was trying to promote its candidate for the Junnar seat for the forthcoming assembly polls.

"They are trying to strangle us. Therefore, we have adopted an aggressive stand," she told reporters after the protesters raised slogans against Pawar.

An official meeting was organised on tourism development in Junnar on Sunday; however, the BJP was not invited for it, she said.

"If we are part of Mahayuti, why were the pictures of CM Shinde and Deputy CM Fadnavis not put up in the meeting hall?" she added.

Asked if he will get a 'Rakhi' tied on his wrist from estranged cousin Supriya Sule on Raksha Bandhan, Ajit Pawar said, "I will do it if she is

in Mumbai today."

Pawar last week expressed his regret for making his wife Sunetra Pawar contest against his cousin Supriya Sule in the 2024 General Election. Sule won the election.

Pawar had accepted that he made a mistake and said, "I love all my sisters. No one should allow politics to enter homes. I made a mistake in fielding Sunetra against my sister. This should not have happened. However, the Parliamentary board of the NCP took the decision, and I followed it. Although now I feel it was wrong."

Piyush Goyal celebrates Raksha Bandhan with Pak-Hindu women refugees

NEW DELHI, Aug 19 (Agencies): Union Minister Piyush Goyal on Monday celebrated Raksha Bandhan with Pakistani Hindu women refugees residing in Delhi and said that the Citizenship Act would provide safety and security to these nationals who have migrated from the neighbouring countries.

Ahead of the Lok Sabha election, the Centre had announced the implementation of the Citizenship (Amendment) Act 2019 for granting citizenship to undocumented non-Muslim migrants from Pakistan, Bangladesh and Afghanistan who came to India before December 31, 2014.

These migrants include



Hindus, Sikhs, Jains, Buddhists, Parsis and Christians.

"The Citizenship (Amendment) Act has provided respect and safety that is your right," he said, adding "this is one of the best

Raksha Bandhan celebrations of my life".

He said that due to the strong will of the Modi-government, all these Pakistani Hindu women refugees have been able to get

Indian citizenship under CAA.

All these women tied rakhi to the Union Minister.

The festival celebrates the brother-sister relationship and falls on the last day of the holy Hindu month of Sawan.

On the rape and murder of RG Kar hospital's trainee doctor in Kolkata, the minister said it is "very unfortunate... I am sure that this will awaken the spirit and the conscience of the nation. It's really a dastardly act".

The body of the doctor was found inside a seminar hall of the hospital on August 9. A civic volunteer was arrested the next day for his alleged involvement in the crime.

Have committed no wrong in my political career, says Siddaramaiah



BENGALURU, Aug 19 (Agencies): Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah on Monday said his energy gets pumped up during political battles as he appeared unfazed by Governor Thaawarchand Gehlot's order giving sanction for investigation against him in connection with irregularities in the allotment of alternative sites by the Mysuru Urban Development Authority (MUDA).

"My conscience is very clear," declared Siddaramaiah, hours

after filing a writ petition in the High Court challenging the order, adding, Supreme Court lawyer Abhishek Manu Singhvi would argue his case in the high court.

"I have faith in judiciary. I have total confidence of getting relief from court because I have not committed any wrong," he told reporters on the sidelines of a function here.

The Chief Minister recalled that he first became a minister 40 years ago -- on August 17, 1984 -- and there

has not been a "single black spot" in his political career.

"My political life is an open book. I have committed no wrong, will not commit any wrong. Using Raj Bhavan, the BJP and JD(S) have hatched a conspiracy to tarnish my image," Siddaramaiah said.

Terming the order "politically motivated", he said he would counter it politically and legally.

"We will wage a legal fight also; we will wage a political fight also. I get more 'josh' (enthusiasm, passion) during political fights. I have been doing it continuously. I have done it before, doing now and will do in future," the Chief Minister said.

To a question, Siddaramaiah said the opposition in the state is under the illusion that if he is finished politically, the entire Congress would also "get finished". "It (their game plan) will not be realised."

Telangana woman goes into labour on bus, conductor helps deliver baby

HYDERABAD, Aug 19 (Agencies): A Telangana State Road Transport Corporation (TGSRTC) bus conductor helped deliver a baby on board a bus on Monday morning after the woman went into labour.

The woman, identified as Sandhya, was travelling to Wanaparthy in Mahabubnagar district to celebrate Raksha Bandhan with her family. As the bus approached Nachahalli, she suddenly went into labour.

G Bharathi, the woman conductor, stopped the bus near Nachahalli when she noticed Sandhya in pain. With the help of a nurse, who was also on the bus, Bharathi assisted in the delivery of a healthy baby girl.



Both mother and child were taken to a nearby hospital by ambulance and are reported to be in good condition.

TGSRTC officials praised Bharathi for her quick thinking and actions.

South Korea, US begin military drills; North calls it 'practicing invasion'

SEOUL, Aug 19 (Agencies): US and South Korean troops kicked off a large-scale exercise Monday aimed at strengthening their combined defence capabilities against nuclear-armed North Korea, which again accused the allies of practicing an invasion.

The annual summertime exercise comes amid heightened tensions on the Korean Peninsula as the pace of both North Korea's weapons demonstrations and the US-South Korea combined military exercises have intensified in a cycle of tit-for-tat.

The exercise began hours after North Korea's Foreign Ministry issued a statement repeating the North's contention that such exercises are "provocative war drills for aggression." It said the North's nuclear ambitions are thus justified, adding that it is crucial to "constantly maintain the balance of power for preventing a war by stockpiling the greatest deterrence."

The United States and South Korea described their joint drills as defensive in nature and have been expanding and upgrading their training in recent years to cope with the North's evolving threats.

The US and South Korean militaries did not immediately



react to the North Korean Foreign Ministry statement.

The Ulchi Freedom Shield drills, which continue for 11 days, through August 29, include both computer-simulated war games and more than 40 kinds of field exercises, including live-fire drills. The allies said this year's program is focused on enhancing their readiness against various North Korean threats, including missiles, GPS jamming and cyberattacks and will also reflect lessons learned from recent armed conflicts.

About 19,000 South Korean military personnel will participate in the drills, which will be held concurrently with civil defence and evacuation drills from Monday through Thursday that will include programs based

on North Korean nuclear attack scenarios.

The US military has not confirmed the number of American troops participating in the drills or said whether they will involve US strategic assets. The United States in recent months has increased its regional deployment of long-range bombers, submarines and aircraft carrier strike groups to train with South Korean and Japanese forces.

The drills could trigger a beligerent response from North Korea, which has been flaunting its growing weapons program and issuing verbal threats of nuclear conflict against Washington and Seoul.

Earlier this month, North Korean leader Kim Jong Un staged a huge ceremony in the

country's capital, Pyongyang, to mark the delivery of 250 nuclear-capable missile launchers to frontline military units and called for a ceaseless expansion of his military's nuclear program.

The event added to concerns about Kim's weapons program as he demonstrates an intent to deploy battlefield nuclear weapons along the North's border with South Korea and claims that his military could react with preemptive nuclear strikes if it perceives the leadership as under threat.

Analysts say Kim may seek to dial up pressure in a US election year as he advances his long-term goals of forcing Washington to accept the idea of the North as a nuclear power and negotiate economic and security concessions from a position of strength.

During last year's Ulchi Freedom Shield exercises, North Korea conducted ballistic missile tests that it described as simulating "scorched earth" nuclear strikes on South Korean targets.

The North in recent weeks has also flown thousands of balloons carrying trash toward the South in a psychological warfare campaign that has further deteriorated relations between the war-divided rivals.

Philippine vessel 'deliberately collided' with Chinese ship, claims Beijing



BEIJING, Aug 19 (Agencies): China's Coast Guard said a Philippine vessel that had ignored its repeated warnings "deliberately collided" with a Chinese vessel in an "unprofessional and dangerous" manner in the disputed South China Sea, according to statements on Monday.

A short video of the incident posted on China Coast Guard's social media showed the collision happened around 3:24 a.m. on Monday (1924 GMT on Sunday) and labelled the Chinese vessel as a coast guard vessel.

In one of the statements, China's maritime security said the same

Philippine vessel then entered waters near Second Thomas Shoal after being prevented from entering Sabina Shoal waters.

Two Philippine Coast Guard vessels "illegally intruded" into waters adjacent to Sabina Shoal without permission in the early hours on Monday, according to the China Coast Guard spokesperson Gan Yu.

"The Philippines has repeatedly provoked and caused trouble, violated the temporary arrangements between China and the Philippines," Gan said, referring to Philippines' supplies missions to a vessel grounded on Second Thomas Shoal. A Philippines Coast

Guard spokesman did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

China's Coast Guard said it took control measures against the Philippine ships in accordance with the law in the incidents early Monday, and warned the Philippines to "immediately stop infringement and provocation" or "bear all consequences".

China and the Philippines reached a "provisional agreement" in July after repeated altercations near the Second Thomas Shoal. China has been sharply criticised by Western nations for aggression in blocking Philippine efforts to resupply troops aboard a navy ship it intentionally grounded 25 years ago.

Beijing claims almost all of the South China Sea, including both shoals, rejecting a 2016 ruling by the Permanent Court of Arbitration in The Hague that Beijing's expansive claims had no basis under international law.

Hezbollah claims attacks on Israeli troops for "infiltrating" Lebanese border

BEIRUT, Aug 19 (Agencies): Hezbollah on Monday claimed attacks on troops and military positions in northern Israel, including a drone strike on a base and an assault on soldiers allegedly "infiltrating" near the Lebanese border.

The Iran-backed group has exchanged regular cross-border fire with the Israeli army in support of ally Hamas since the Palestinian group's October 7 attack on Israel sparked the Gaza war.

Fears of a major escalation skyrocketed after an Israeli strike last month on Beirut's southern suburbs killed Fuad Shukur, one of Hezbollah's top commanders, hours before an attack in Tehran, blamed on Israel, killed Hamas's political leader

Ismail Haniyeh.

Iran and Hezbollah have vowed to respond.

Hezbollah said Monday it launched a "simultaneous air attack" with "explosive-laden drones" on two Israeli military positions -- a barracks near the border and a base near the coastal town of Acre, around 15 kilometres (10 miles) from the frontier.

It said it came "in response" to an Israeli "attack and assassination" in south Lebanon's Tyre area.

A fighter from the group was killed in an Israeli strike in the area on Saturday.

The Israeli military had said its aircraft "eliminated" a Hezbollah operative in the Tyre area, describing him as a "commander" in the group's elite Radwan

force.

Overnight, Hezbollah said its fighters targeted a group of Israeli soldiers "infiltrating" near the border and confronted them "with rocket weapons and artillery, forcing them to return".

Also Monday morning, Hezbollah claimed a rocket and artillery attack on another Israeli barracks in stated retaliation for "Israeli enemy attacks".

The cross-border violence has killed some 582 people in Lebanon, mostly Hezbollah fighters but including at least 128 civilians, according to an agency tally.

On the Israeli side, including in the annexed Golan Heights, 22 soldiers and 26 civilians have been killed, according to army figures.

Joe Biden Accused Of "Impeachable" Offence Ahead Of Democratic Convention

It was not clear if Republican House Speaker Mike Johnson would schedule a vote to impeach Biden in the weeks leading up to the Nov. 5 election, in which Republican Donald Trump is locked in a tight battle with Vice President Kamala Harris.

WASHINGTON, Aug 19 (Agencies): US House of Representatives Republicans issued a report on Monday alleging Democratic President Joe Biden committed impeachable offences, but it was unclear whether they would push for a vote following a probe the White House has long dismissed as politically motivated.

A 291-page report by three House committees alleged that Biden profited from an influence-peddling scheme to enrich himself and members of his family through foreign business dealings beginning in 2014 when Biden was vice president.

"The committees present this information to



the House of Representatives for its evaluation and consideration of appropriate next steps," the report said.

It was not clear if Republican House Speaker Mike Johnson would schedule a vote to impeach Biden in the weeks leading up to the Nov. 5 election, in which Republican Donald Trump is locked in a tight battle with Vice President Kamala Harris.

A similar House impeachment against Biden's top border official, Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas, was put to a swift end by the Senate in April.

The House investigators claim that Biden used his influence to benefit the business dealings of his son, Hunter Biden, with partners from Ukraine, China, Russia and other countries.

Hunter Biden has been convicted on charges that he lied about his illegal drug use to buy a gun and is awaiting trial on charges of tax evasion, including an allegation that he accepted payments from a Romanian businessman who sought to influence U.S.

government agencies in connection with a criminal probe in Romania.

The impeachment inquiry, which lawmakers formally authorized last December and has been carried out by the House Oversight, Judiciary and Ways & Means Committees, has been criticized by members of both parties for failing to produce hard evidence of wrongdoing by Biden.

Democrats have disparaged the effort as retribution for Trump, who was impeached twice by a Democratic-controlled House and acquitted each time by the Senate. The first impeachment alleged that Trump pressured Ukraine President Volodymyr Zelenskyy to help smear Joe Biden in return for US aid.

Leaders of China and Vietnam pledge to strengthen political and economic ties

BEIJING, Aug 19 (Agencies): The leaders of China and Vietnam pledged to further their economic ties and gave a nod to their shared communist ideology during the first visit by Vietnam's new president to Beijing on Monday.

To Lam, who took office in May, made China the destination of his first state visit, signaling the continuing importance the Southeast Asian nation places on its giant neighbor despite ongoing territorial frictions in the South China Sea.

Chinese President Xi Jinping and his wife, Peng Li Yuan, hosted a ceremony for Lam and his wife, Ngo Phuong Ly, at Beijing's vast Great Hall of the People, replete with flags, flowers and a marching band.

Xi remarked on the "deep friendship" between Vietnam and China and said Viet-

nam was a priority for Beijing's "neighborhood diplomacy."

"As two ruling Communist parties in the world today, the two parties of China and Vietnam should ... continue their traditional friendship ... and jointly promote the development of the world's socialist cause," Xi said. "I believe that our road will expand wider as we walk further."

Lam's three-day visit to China comes about two weeks after he was confirmed as general secretary of Vietnam's Communist Party, the country's top political position.

He succeeded Nguyen Phu Trong, who died last month after 13 years as leader.

Lam told Xi the relationship with China was the top priority of Vietnam's foreign policy.

"As a brother, we always observe every step of China's development, and we are happy

for the achievement that the party and the government and the people of China have made under your leadership," Lam said in his opening remarks before meeting with Xi.

The two leaders oversaw the signing of 14 cooperation agreements in areas such as political education, infrastructure, health care and banking. China is Vietnam's largest trading partner, with total bilateral trade of \$172 billion last year.

Lam said Vietnam supported China's claim over self-ruled Taiwan, known as the "One China" principle, and that any issues pertaining to Hong Kong and the regions of Tibet and Xinjiang constitute China's internal affairs.

Lam is expected to continue his predecessor's strategy of balancing ties with China, the United States, Russia and others.

The U.S. and its ally

Japan have been developing closer ties with Vietnam's communist government — America's former foe in the Vietnam War — as they seek partners in a growing economic and strategic rivalry with China.

When Xi visited Vietnam in December, the two countries announced they would build "a shared future that carries strategic significance." The agreement, which Chinese state media has described as an elevation of ties, was seen as a concession by Vietnam, which had resisted using that wording in the past.

Russian President Vladimir Putin met Lam in Vietnam in June after visiting North Korea on a rare overseas trip for the Russian leader, who has been ostracized by many countries because of the 2022 full-scale invasion of Ukraine.

Lam began his China trip on Sunday in

Guangzhou, a major manufacturing and export hub near Hong Kong. He also visited sites in the southern city where Vietnam's former communist leader Ho Chi Minh spent time in the 1920s and '30s.

Although both are one-party communist states, Vietnam and China have sparred repeatedly over territory that both claim in the South China Sea. China also briefly invaded parts of northern Vietnam in 1979.

A Vietnamese coast guard ship recently took part in joint drills in the Philippines, which has had a series of violent encounters with China over contested territory in the South China Sea. Still, Vietnam has benefited economically from investment by Chinese manufacturers, which have moved production to the Southeast Asian country in part to skirt U.S. restrictions on solar panels and other exports from China.

Blinken says Gaza talks 'maybe the last' chance for truce



TEL AVIV, Aug 19 (Agencies): US Secretary of State Antony Blinken, in Israel to push for a Gaza truce, said on Monday ongoing negotiations were "maybe the last" chance to reach an agreement to end the war.

"This is a decisive moment -- probably the best, maybe the last, opportunity to get the hostages home, to get a ceasefire and to put everyone on a better path to enduring peace and security," Blinken said as he met Israeli President Isaac Herzog. The top US diplomat

said President Joe Biden had sent him "to get this agreement to the line and ultimately over the line".

"It is time for it to get done. It's also time to make sure that no one takes any steps that could derail this process," Blinken said.

"We're working to make sure that there is no escalation, that there are no provocations, that there are no actions that in any way could move us away from getting this deal over the line, or, for that matter, escalating the conflict to other places,

and to greater intensity." Blinken, on his ninth visit to the Middle East since Hamas's October 7 attack on Israel, is scheduled to meet later on Monday with Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

The visiting secretary of state said it was a "fraught moment" in Israel and warned against any moves that could heighten regional tensions, following threats from Iran and Lebanese armed group Hezbollah to avenge the recent killings of two militant leaders.

Herzog, who holds a largely ceremonial role, said Israelis wanted to see the return "as soon as possible" of hostages still held in Gaza since the October 7 attack that triggered the war.

"There is no greater humanitarian objective, and there's no greater humanitarian cause, than bringing back our hostages," Herzog told Blinken.

Medical Camp Organised at Baba Banda Singh Bahadur Gurudwara, Naushera

Top News Report

NAUSHERA, Aug 19: On Rakshabandhan Medical screening and health awareness campaign was organised as part of Operation Sadhbavana and AWWA activity at Baba Banda Singh Bahadur Gurudwara by Indian Army on 19 Aug 2024. The aim of the medical camp & health lecture was to create awareness of general health among the people. Provide general health care services and counsel them on basic health and hygiene. A total of 30 civil (women) participated and were felicitated. Medical team comprising of Doctor and Nursing



Assistant from Advanced Dressing Station (ADS), Naushera helped in the smooth conduct of event.

Amity Meeting at Tirkana, Poonch



Top News Report

POONCH, Aug 19: Indian Army organised an Amity Meeting with the local residents of Tirkana, Poonch District. This initiative was part of the ongoing effort to extend the area of domination patrols and address local concerns. The meeting

served as a platform for informal interaction, helping to ease local tensions and discussing the prevailing security situation. It provided residents with an opportunity for residents to openly address various issues they face living in the remote region of Tirkana. The role of Army and Awam to fight

together against terrorism in the region was the key highlight during the meet. Attendees appreciated the Indian Army's efforts to reach out to the locals. A total of 18 locals got benefited from this initiative. They commended the initiative as a valuable confidence-building measure.

BJP ally Chirag Paswan opposes Modi government's lateral entry move: 'Wrong'

NEW DELHI, Aug 19 (Agencies): The recruitment of 45 bureaucrats via the lateral entry route has not gone down well with the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party's ally, Chirag Paswan. The union minister said his party wasn't in favour of the government's decision.



Chirag Paswan said his party had always been in favour of reservation to backward classes and castes and the government's move was "completely wrong". He said he would raise the matter with the BJP-led government. "My party's stance on such appointments is absolutely clear. Wherever there are government appointments, the

provisions of reservation must be followed. The way this information has come to light is also a matter of concern for me because I am a part of this government and have the platform to raise these issues. Speaking on behalf of my party, we are absolutely not in favor of this. This is completely wrong, and I will raise this matter before the government," he said.

The Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) on Saturday issued a notification for the recruitment of 45 joint secretaries, directors and deputy secretaries through lateral entry.

Meanwhile, government sources told ANI that the concept of lateral entry was first introduced under the Congress-led UPA regime and strongly

endorsed by the Second Administrative Reforms Commission established by it in 2005.

The government has historically inducted outside talent into its higher tiers, typically in advisory roles but occasionally even in key administrative assignments, they said.

For instance, the chief economic advisor is traditionally a lateral entrant who, according to the rules, must be below 45 years of age and is invariably an eminent economist, they said.

Information and Broadcasting Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw said the Congress' criticism of the lateral entry system in senior bureaucracy shows its

"hypocrisy".

Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge admitted that his party's government had introduced the lateral entry system to appoint experts. However, he said, the Narendra Modi government has made it a tool to snatch the rights of Dalits, tribals and backward classes.

Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi said the government's move of recruiting public servants through lateral entry was an attack on Dalits, OBCs and adivasis. He said the "BJP's distorted version of Ram Rajya" seeks to destroy the Constitution and snatch away reservations from "Bahujans".

Shri Rajnath Singh to also hold a bilateral meeting with Japanese Defense Minister Mr Kihara Minoru

Top News Report

NEW DELHI/JAMMU, Aug 19: Raksha Mantri Shri Rajnath Singh and External Affairs Minister Dr S Jaishankar will host Japanese Minister of Defense Mr Kihara Minoru and Minister of Foreign Affairs Ms Yoko Kamikawa for the 3rd India-Japan 2+2 Ministerial Dialogue in New Delhi on August 20, 2024. On the sidelines of the 2+2 dialogue, a bilateral meeting will be held between the Raksha Mantri and his

Japanese counterpart. During the bilateral talks and 2+2 meeting, the Ministers will review the bilateral cooperation and explore new initiatives to further strengthen the engagements between the two countries. They will also exchange views on regional and global issues of mutual interest. India and Japan share 'Special Strategic and Global Partnership' based on the shared values of democracy, freedom and rule of law. Defence has emerged as one of the

most important pillars in this relationship. Strengthened India-Japan defence partnership is vital for ensuring a free, open, inclusive and prosperous Indo-Pacific in the prevailing global environment. This visit will further deepen defence cooperation and bring greater depth to the Special Strategic and Global Partnership between the two countries. The second India-Japan 2+2 dialogue was held in September 2022 in Japan.

4 children dead, 24 hospitalised due to alleged food poisoning at Andhra orphanage

NEW DELHI, Aug 19 (Agencies): Four children died and 24 others hospitalised due to suspected food poisoning at an orphanage run by a minority organisation at Kailasapatnam village of Kotauratla block in Andhra Pradesh's Anakapalli district on Monday morning, officials said. The deceased children have been identified as Jashuva, Bhavani, Nitya and Shradha, all in the age group of 8-9 years.

"While seven children are undergoing treatment at Narsipatnam area hospital, another 17 children were admitted to the government hospital at Anakapalli. Four of them are being shifted to King George Hospital, Visakhapatnam for better treatment," Anakapalli district collector Vijaya Krishnan told reporters. The incident happened at the hostel of the orphanage run by Aradhana Trust, a minority institution, where around 86 children, most



of them being orphans and others with single parents, are staying. Narsipatnam rev-

enue divisional officer H Jayaram said these children were served biryani, samosa and chocolates

on Saturday night after a prayer meeting. Some of them had apparently eaten stale biryani on Sunday morning as well. This is believed to have caused food poisoning. On Sunday evening, many students complained of vomiting and uneasiness. They were shifted to hospitals in Anakapalle and Narsipatnam, where three of them died in the morning," Jayaram said. The fourth girl, whose condition was critical, died

while being shifted to KG Hospital in Visakhapatnam. Andhra Pradesh chief minister N Chandrababu Naidu expressed shock over the incident and directed the district collector to see that the children undergoing treatment at various hospitals be provided with better treatment. He also asked the collector to submit a detailed report on the cause of the tragedy. State home minister Van-

galapudi said the government has instructed police and medical and health department officials to conduct a comprehensive probe to ascertain the exact reasons behind the incident. YSR Congress party president and former chief minister Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy expressed deep sorrow and urged the authorities to provide the best medical facilities to the students currently receiving treatment and called for

immediate support for the families of the deceased students. He strongly criticised the negligence of the government, stating that this tragedy was a clear example of poor supervision and such incidents highlight the gaps in the existing monitoring systems. Jagan asked the government to focus on improving the system and taking steps to prevent such incidents from happening again.

FROM PAGE 1

"Candidates names will be finalised soon": Kishan Reddy ahead of J&K Assembly Polls

and Kashmir. We finished stone pelting, terrorism, extremism, separatism and nepotism here. A new era of industrialisation and corporate has come here... The delimitation has been done... There is development in every sector. The BJP will go forward with these points... Some seats have been reserved for SC/ST and the candidates will be changed on them... The BJP will contest on all 90 seats on its own," Gupta said. BJP leader Jugal Kishore Sharma said that the Bharatiya Janata Party will win the elections with full majority. "The people of Jammu and Kashmir had been waiting for the election announcement... Now the people and the party workers are enthusiastic about the elections and making an elected government... The BJP is ready for this and we will win by a huge margin... The BJP will contest alone and win in Jammu and Kashmir," Sharma said. Former J-K Deputy CM and BJP leader Nirmal Singh said that the BJP is preparing for the elections. "There have been meetings with all fronts of the party... The manifesto is almost complete... This is a turning point for J&K. After 5th August 2019, we are seeing a new Kashmir. There is peace, and terrorism and extremism have stopped. The youth here now wants employment. They will get employment in the upcoming projects coming here... Jammu and Kashmir has a lot of potential," Singh said. The polling in the UT will be held in three

phases on September 18, 25, and October 1, as per the Election Commission of India. The counting of the votes will take place on October 4.

These are the first elections to be held in Kashmir after the abrogation of Article 370.

Women tie Rakhi to Army personnel serving on LoC, Celebrate Raksha Bandhan in Uri

brotherhood. We live on the border and we stand by our Indian army who protect us. This festival represents the same brotherhood," he said.

Former Indian Army chief General S Padmanabhan passes away at 83

Services Staff College (DSSC) at Wellington in 1973 and the National Defence College (NDC) at New Delhi. He commanded an Independent Light Battery from August 1975 to July 1976 and later on commanded the Gazala Mountain Regiment from September 1977 to March 1980. This mountain regiment is one of the oldest artillery regiments of the Indian Army and has participated in several wars. He served as Instructor Gunnery at the School of Artillery in Deolali, was a Brigade Major of an infantry brigade on its raising and served as Colonel General Staff of a Mountain Division from January 1983 to May 1985, where he was awarded the

Vishisht Seva Medal (VSM). He has also spent two tenures as an Instructor at the IMA.

Within army circles, he is affectionately known as Paddy. He commanded an Independent Artillery Brigade and a Mountain Brigade before attending the prestigious NDC course at Delhi. He commanded an Infantry Brigade from December 1988 to February 1991 at Ranchi, Bihar and Punjab and was then appointed as the General Officer Commanding of an Infantry Division in Punjab from March 1991 to August 1992. He served as Chief of Staff, 3 Corps from September 1992 to June 1993. After his promotion to Lieutenant General, he was commander of the 15 Corps in the Kashmir valley from July 1993 to February 1995.

It was during his tenure as the 15 Corps Commander, that the Army made big gains over the militants in Kashmir and could even scale down its operations.

He was awarded the Ati Vishisht Seva Medal (AVSM) for his services as the 15 Corps Commander.

General Padmanabhan held the appointment of Director General Military Intelligence (DGMI) after the successful culmination of which, he took over as the GOC of the Northern Command at Udhampur on 01 September 1996.

Before being appointed as the Chief of Army Staff, he was the GOC of Southern Command. He retired on 31 December 2002, after completing more than 43 years of distinguished military service.

After 52 days & over five lakh pilgrims, Amarnath Yatra concludes today

waxes with the phases of the moon. Devotees believe the stalagmite structure represents the mythical powers of Lord Shiva. Yatra will conclude on the occasion of

'Shravan Purnima' coinciding with the Raksha Bandhan festival.

Amid traditional 'puja' and rituals, day-long prayers will be offered for world peace and prosperity of mankind after which the Chhari Mubarak will return to Panchtarni on the way to Pahalgam.

Chhari Mubarak left its seat at Dashnami Akhara temple in Srinagar on August 14. After paying obeisance at various temples en route, it stayed at Pahalgam for two nights before starting its onward journey to the cave shrine on August 16.

Swami Deependra Giri, the custodial of Chhari Mubarak, expressed satisfaction over the improved arrangements made by the Shri Amarnathji Shrine Board (SASB) headed by Lt Governor Manoj Sinha and the union territory administration for the pilgrims.

Swami Giri said with the increased facilities, including the widening of the track to the cave shrine the influx of pilgrims has increased.

He said the Chhari Mubarak would make special prayers for the peace and prosperity of the mankind at cave shrine. Prayers will also be specially offered for peace and prosperity of the country, including J&K, considered to be the abode of Lord Shiva and Goddess Parvati.

Brief rains, thundershowers to continue in J&K parts till Aug 31: Weatherman

the official said and added, "Light to moderate rain/thundershower towards late night/early morning over Jammu division is expected". The official warns that intense showers (brief period) and heavy rainfall (in Jammu

division) may lead to flash floods, landslides, mudslides and shooting stones over vulnerable places of Jammu & Kashmir during August 19th and 20th.

He added that there may be a rise in day temperature from August 23rd onwards.

Final Electoral Rolls for JK likely to be published on Tuesday

resulting from the Delimitation Commission's work after the increase in seats from 83 to 90, add further significance to this exercise. Key voter statistics include 4.44 million males, 4.26 million females, 169 transgender individuals, and over 3.7 lakh first-time voters. There are 11,838 polling stations across the region, with an average of 735 voters per station.

The first notification for the three-phase Assembly elections covers 24 constituencies. Candidates can file nominations until August 27, with voting for the first phase scheduled for September 18.

Notorious drug peddler held with contraband in Ganderbal: Police

special Police team was constituted led by SHO PS Ganderbal reached on the spot & during the search of the aforementioned hut, Contraband Brown Sugar like substance was recovered and seized in presence of Executive Magistrate 1st class & the accused was arrested. He said a case under FIR No. 210/2024 under relevant sections of NDPS Act stands registered at Police Station Ganderbal, while as further investigation has been taken up.

'Whoever Goes Out...': Jay Shah's No-Nonsense Verdict On Injured Stars Eyeing Return

BCCI Secretary Jay Shah opened up on the criteria players must follow if they want to make a comeback into the team after getting injured.

NEW DELHI, Aug 19 (Agencies): Top Team India stars will feature in the Duleep Trophy, with the tournament set to mark the start of the 2024/25 domestic season. With the Indian team's next assignment scheduled in late September, the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) announced the four squads for the upcoming Duleep Trophy tournament, which will be played between September 5 and 24 in Anantapur. Top stars, minus Virat Kohli, captain Rohit Sharma, pacer Jasprit Bumrah and veteran spinner Ravichandran Ashwin, will feature in the first round of the tournament.

Shubhman Gill, Abhimanyu Easwaran, Rituraj Gaikwad and Shreyas Iyer have been assigned as captains for the tournament.



In a recent conversation, BCCI Secretary Jay Shah opened up on the absence of Rohit and Virat from the Duleep Trophy. Shah said that forcing Rohit and Virat to play domestic cricket makes no sense, citing workload concerns.

However, Shah insisted that anyone who got injured and eyes a comeback into the

national side will have to go through domestic cricket to climb the ladder.

Shah pointed out an incident from 2022 when all-rounder Ravindra Jadeja got injured, and only returned to the team after featuring for his domestic Saurashtra.

"We have been little strict. When Ravindra Jadeja had

got injured, I was the one who called him and asked him to play a domestic game. It's certain now, whoever gets injured and goes out, can only come into the Indian team after proving his fitness in domestic cricket. But it doesn't make sense to add to Virat and Rohit's load by asking them to play domestic cricket. They run the risk of getting injured. You also need to look at England and Australia. None of their top players play domestic cricket. We must treat our players respectfully and not treat them like servants. If you look Duleep Trophy squad, apart from Rohit and Virat rest are going to play," Shah told Times of India.

Rohit and Virat will now feature in the upcoming home Test series against Bangladesh next month.

Deepti shines as London Spirit lift maiden women's Hundred title



LONDON, Aug 19 (Agencies): India all-rounder Deepti Sharma played a crucial role with both bat and ball as London Spirit lifted their maiden Women's Hundred title, beating Welsh Fire by four wickets in the final at the Lord's here.

Deepti snapped a wicket giving away 23 runs and then smashed a run-a-ball 16, including the winning six off Hayley Matthews, as the Indian and England's Charlie Dean

jumped into each other's arms in celebration.

Two years ago, Deepti had controversially dismissed Dean after running her out at the non-striker's end during the third ODI against England in 2022, triggering a debate over the spirit of the game.

It was ecstasy for Deepti and despair for Dean that day but here the two were on the same side, engineering the maiden victory after chasing down a victory

target of 116 in 98 balls. Besides Deepti, Eva Gray (2/26) and Sarah Glenn (2/17) snapped two wickets each, while Tera Norris (1/18) also chipped in with a wicket to restrict Welsh Fire to 115 for 8 in stipulated 100 balls, which was mainly built on the 41-ball 54 by Australia's Jess Jonassen.

In reply, Georgia Redmayne anchored the chase with a 32-ball 34.

Heather Knight (24) and Danielle Gibson (22) also chipped in with useful contributions even as Shabnim Ismail threatened to derail the chase with figures of three for 24 in her 20 balls.

But Deepti then took the onus on herself and produced the only maximum of the match in the nick of time to take her team home.

Shami likely to play in one of Bengal's first couple of Ranji Trophy games

NEW DELHI, Aug 19 (Agencies): Senior speedster Mohammed Shami, who is undergoing rehabilitation after an ankle surgery, is likely to make a comeback to competitive cricket for his domestic side Bengal in the Ranji Trophy, and a potential international appearance later in one of the Test matches against New Zealand.

It is understood that Shami will play either one or both of Bengal's opening away Ranji match against UP on October 11 and the next one in Kolkata against Bihar on October 18.

Since there will be only a two-day gap between both the games it is unlikely that he will play both.

The New Zealand Test series starts from October 19 in Bengaluru followed by Tests in Pune (October 24) and Mumbai (Nov 1). Shami is expected to play one of those games before embarking on the big tour to Australia.

The 34-year-old Shami, one of India's



greatest fast bowlers, last donned the national colours during the ODI World Cup final against Australia in Ahmedabad on November 19, last year.

Since then Shami hasn't played any competitive games having undergone an ankle surgery in the United Kingdom in February this year and was in any case ruled out for a minimum period of six months.

While there are Instagram videos of Shami starting off with his RTP routines (Return To Play) at the National Cricket Academy (NCA) in Bengaluru, bowling with low intensity short-

ened run-up, there were reports that he could be available for the Duleep Trophy.

However, it has been learnt that there was no chance of him getting fit during the Duleep Trophy and the selectors don't want to take any chances by rushing him earlier than required.

The priority is to have India's top three pacers -- Jasprit Bumrah, Mohammed Shami and Mohammed Siraj -- fit for the five Tests in Australia.

Shami has so far taken 229 wickets from 64 Tests with six five-wicket hauls and 12 four-wicket hauls.

Border-Gavaskar Trophy: Nathan Lyon seeks England spinner Hartley's 'inputs' to tame Yashasvi Jaiswal

SYDNEY, Aug 19 (Agencies): Ace off-spinner Nathan Lyon has started his homework on the rising batting sensation Yashasvi Jaiswal with inputs from England spinner Tom Hartley's on the southpaw safely stored in his memory bank ahead of the five-Test Border-Gavaskar series between India and Australia, starting from November 22.

Jaiswal, who scored a century on his debut in the West Indies last year, scored an astounding 712 runs in the five Test series against England at home earlier this year. But the pace and bounce on offer on Australian tracks will pose a different challenge for the Mumbaikar.

"I haven't come across him (Jaiswal) yet, but that will be a massive challenge for all us bowlers," Lyon was quoted as saying, by ESPNcricinfo. "The way he played against England, I watched that quite closely, and thought it was quite amazing."

"I had some really good chats with Tom



Hartley (England left-arm spinner) about different ways he went about it to different guys which I found quite interesting."

Lyon had a stint in English county with Lancashire and had the opportunity to share notes with Hartley, who had 20 wickets in four Tests against India. "He is someone who has first-hand knowledge of Jaiswal's exploits," he said.

The 36-year-old Lyon, who has 530 wickets from 129 Tests, feels that with so much information "floating around," Aussies have the best chance to accomplish the "unfinished business" against India.

"I love talking about

cricket, so if I can talk to someone who has played Test cricket, I might be able to pick up on something I'm not aware of. There's so much knowledge floating around this game that we can always tap into."

Since winning the 2014-15 Border-Gavaskar 2-0, Australia have lost the next four series against India — two to Virat Kohli's side (2016-17, 2018-19), one to Ajinkya Rahane (2021) and one to Rohit Sharma (2023).

Along with Lyon, Josh Hazlewood is another survivor of the 2014-15 series and conceded Australia's recent results against India present a significant hole in their

record.

"It's been ten years of unfinished business, it's been a long time, and I know we're extremely hungry to turn things around, especially here at home," Lyon said.

"Don't get me wrong, India is an absolute superstar side and extremely challenging but I'm extremely hungry to turn things around and make sure we get that trophy back," he said.

Lyon feels that this Australian team under Pat Cummins is slightly different compared to Tim Paine's team that lost back-to-back series against India at home.

"I feel like we are a different team than a couple of years ago. We are on a journey of becoming a great Australian cricket team. We're definitely not there, but we are along that journey and have been playing some decent cricket."

Beating India in a Test series could tick a box in many players' CV, reckoned Hazlewood.

"There are quite a few players who have never beaten India in

a Test series. It's quite astounding to say that," he said.

"That's one we need to tick off, definitely, in particular at home. We should pretty much win every series here at home," adding that, "That last series we obviously bowled them out for 36 in Adelaide and we thought here we go, (we are) back at home (and) confident on these grounds."

"People say we played India B in that last Test, but they can sometimes be stronger than the best team. They've got unbelievable depth in all formats and we are starting to see that now," he said.

Hazlewood said while winning back the Border-Gavaskar trophy was the top priority, the Aussies would also keep an eye on the World Test Championship points table.

"It's always in the background, we have the table up, to see where we are sitting and what we need to tick off. For me, it's a big one because I didn't get to play the last one in England," he said.

Pakistan drop Aamir ahead of Bangladesh series due to back-injury



KARACHI, Aug 19 (Agencies): Pakistan fast-bowler Aamir Jamal has been pulled out of the side's upcoming series against Bangladesh by the Pakistan Cricket Board due to a pre-inflicted back-injury. According to a statement released by PCB on August 19, Jamal has been directed by the board to focus on regaining his fitness at the National Cricket Academy in Lahore.

Initially, Pakistan were looking at but likely to feature a pace heavy attack in the Bangladesh Test, which is set to start with the first match at the Rawalpindi Cricket Stadium on August 21. With the likes of Shaheen Afridi and Naseem Shah already keeping the pace attack studded up, Jamal was expected to further bolster the Pakistan's bowling options for the series. Pakistan will be looking to get over their

dismal 2024 T20 World Cup campaign, and the Bangladesh series gives them the best opportunity to make amends.

"Right-arm fast bowler Aamir Jamal has been released from the Test squad ahead of the series against Bangladesh. Aamir, who was earlier included in the squad subject to fitness clearance, has been advised to work on his fitness at the National Cricket Academy in Lahore. Aamir is recovering from a back injury which he sustained while playing county cricket this year," the statement read.

Jamal has been one of the most promising pace options in the Pakistan Test side, ever since his debut in their away series against Australia in 2023. Jamal opened his account with a 7-wicket-haul in the very first Test, followed by a 5 wickets the second, and 6 in the third. All of these stats had only backed him up as one of the names to look out for in Pakistan's crucial series against Bangladesh.

Pakistan squad for Bangladesh Test series:

Shan Masood (captain), Saud Shakeel (vice-captain), Abdullah Shafique, Babar Azam, Khuram Shahzad, Mir Hamza, Mohammad Ali, Mohammad Hurrara, Mohammad Rizwan (wicket-keeper), Naseem Shah, Saim Ayub, Salman Ali Agha, Sarfaraz Ahmed (wicket-keeper) and Shaheen Shah Afridi.

MS Dhoni "not my friend, elder brother...": Indian cricket star on former captain

NEW DELHI, Aug 19 (Agencies): MS Dhoni, despite having retired from international cricket in 2020, continues to inspire generations of cricketers. Dhoni last played in the IPL 2024 and speculation continues to be there over his future. One thing that his co-players vouch for Dhoni is his immaculate game sense. From behind the stumps, Dhoni has been known to orchestrate his troops to some great results. Left-arm pacer Khaleel Ahmed is one of the admirers of Dhoni. Khaleel, who has played 11 ODIs and 18 T20s, was recently interviewed by former India opener Aakash Chopra. He showed Khaleel a photo of MS Dhoni giving him a bouquet of flowers and asked him the story behind it. "This photo was taken in New Zealand. We were going to the practice ground from the main ground. Mahi bhai was given flowers by his friends. I was walking with him. He passed me the flowers. Mahi bhai is not my friend, not my elder brother, he is my guru," Khaleel said on Chopra's YouTube channel.

"Since my childhood, I wanted to become the bowler who took the first over from India since I had watched Zaheer Khan growing up. In the Asia Cup, Mahi bhai, asked me to bowl the first over. I ran so hard, away from the huddle thinking that if I give it time he might change his mind. I think the most important player of a team gets to bowl the first. Meanwhile, Chennai Super Kings (CSK) CEO Kasi Viswanath has denied the reports that the franchise asked the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) for a reintroduction of a now-scraped rule to rope in MS Dhoni for a lower price. Earlier in IPL, an international player after five years of his retirement would be named in the 'uncapped' category.

However, this rule was abolished after IPL 2021. Several reports stated that CSK want that rule to back as it would help them retain Dhoni as an 'uncapped' player, which means at a price as low as Rs 4 crore. The franchise had retained Dhoni for a price of 12 crore in 2022. However, CSK CEO Viswanath has refuted the rumours that the franchise made any such request.

India to open campaign against West Indies in 2025 Women's U19 T20 World Cup

DUBAI, Aug 19 (Agencies): Defending champions India will open their campaign against the West Indies in the second edition of the ICC U19 Women's T20 World Cup to be played in Malaysia from January 18 to February 2 next year.

India have been clubbed alongside hosts Malaysia, West Indies and Sri Lanka in Group A.

India defeated England to win the inaugural edition of the tournament in South Africa last year. England, neighbours Ireland, Pakistan and the USA are placed in Group B.

South Africa, along with New Zealand, new entrants Samoa and a qualifier from Africa will form Group C, while Group D comprises

Australia, Bangladesh, Scotland, and a qualifier from Asia.

Each team will play the other sides in the round-robin phase, making for three games each in the group stage.

The top three sides from all four groups will then progress to the Super Six stage.

The bottom-ranked sides from Groups A and D, and B and C will contest in last place play-off on January 24.

The 12 sides in the Super Six stage are further divided into two groups, with the top three teams from Groups A and D making up Group 1, and those of Groups B and C making up Group 2.

In this stage, each side will carry forward the points, wins and NRRs (Net Run Rate) they

secured against fellow Super Six qualifying sides.

side will contest two fixtures in the Super Six, against opponents of corresponding groups that finished at different group positions.

The top-two sides from each group will qualify for the semifinals to be held on January 31, with the final slated for February 2.

The semifinals and final will all be played at Bayuemas Oval. If India qualify for the semifinals, they will play semifinal 2, which will take place on January 31.

There are reserve days for both the semifinals and final. While February 1 is a reserve day for the semifinals, February 3 has been kept as a reserve day for the summit clash.

Jammu NGO's organises solidarity March for Dr. Moumita Debnath

Top News Report

JAMMU, Aug 19: In a moving display of unity and solidarity, a mourn meet and candlelight vigil was held today in Jammu to honour the memory of Dr. Moumita Debnath, a young doctor who tragically lost her life in a recent incident at RG Kar Medical College in Kolkata. The event brought together healthcare professionals and community members to stand against the growing violence faced by doctors in India.

The vigil was marked by heartfelt speeches and moments of silence. Director and CEO of People's Hut Foundation delivered a poignant address, expressing the collective grief and anger of the Social workers community.

At the designated time, different social workers



and social activists began their march from the NBF office, carrying placards with powerful messages demanding justice and calling for improved legislation.

The slogans included "We want justice," "Justice delayed is justice denied," "Mard Padhao Beti Bachao," "Azadi hai par aadhi hai," among other calls for action. Tarun Uppal who is the Chairperson of Nirbhay Bharat Foundation addressed the issue of sexual violence in

India, citing recent cases and calling special attention to cases from marginalized communities.

Senior Leader VHP Rajan Gupta stressed the need for equitable justice and called on everyone to support and advocate for the safety and rights of all victims.

The demonstration continued with chants and a two-minute silence in honor of Dr Debnath.

Stand with Humanity Foundation Chairperson Manik Uppal and Presi-

dent Akhil Kapoor added "The march was more than just a gathering; it was a powerful manifestation of our collective outrage, our pain, and our demand for justice.

KIRF Chairman Dr. Imran Khan noted that the event was not merely a response to one tragedy but a stand against the pervasive culture of violence and oppression. S. Amardeep Singh Chairman Diva international Foundation added it was heart-warming

to see our community come together, not just in anger, but in solidarity and hope. Suresh Kumar Director Resolvio Foundation emphasized that the march was a call to action for all women, promising that this is only the beginning. "We are committed to continuing this fight, both within our campus and beyond, until every woman feels safe and respected."

Divyansh Baba, Social Activist, said that the protest marked a significant moment showcasing the Jammu NGOs and Social Workers strong stance on women's rights and their commitment to advocating for justice. This event was not only a tribute to Dr. Debnath but also a powerful statement in support of all women and girls in India, emphasizing the urgent need for safety and justice.

Nighat Mir demands death penalty for rapists in wake of Kolkata tragedy

Top News Report

SRINAGAR, Aug 19: Social Activist Nighat Mir has expressed strong support for the demands of the medical community in the wake of the recent tragic rape and murder incident in Kolkata.

In a statement released today, Nighat Mir condemned the brutal crime and called for the strictest possible measures against those responsible. Highlighting the severity of the situation, Nighat Mir emphasized the need for immediate and harsh legal action to ensure justice for the victim and to act as a deterrent to future crimes.

"The heinous act committed in Kolkata is a stark reminder of the urgent need for stringent



measures against perpetrators of such barbaric crimes," said Nighat Mir. "The rapists must face the death penalty to ensure that justice is served and to send a clear message that such violence will not be tolerated."

Nighat Mir also expressed solidarity with

the medical professionals advocating for justice and stressed the importance of a robust legal framework to protect victims and hold offenders accountable. Nighat Mir has called for the enactment of a Central Protection Act for healthcare workers, as advocated by the medical professionals. This legislative measure is aimed at ensuring the safety and security of those in the healthcare sector who are increasingly facing violence and threats.

"The pain and suffering inflicted on the victim and her family are beyond words," Nighat mir added. "We must come together as a society and demand that our legal system acts decisively and with the utmost severity in cases of sexual violence."

J&K win national tapeball cricket championship



Top News Report

ROHTAK/JAMMU, Aug 19: The two-day 1st National Tapeball Cricket Championship, organized by the Haryana Tapeball Cricket Association under the aegis of the Tapeball Cricket Council of India, concluded today at the Red Ball Cricket Ground, Rohtak. Over 100 players from the top 8 teams across the country participated in the championship.

Nirangen Baniwal, XEn Horticulture of M.D. University, graced the ceremony as the Chief Guest, with Uday Singh Phogat as the Guest of Honor. Chief guest praised the young talent and lauded

the Tapeball Cricket Council of India and the Haryana Tapeball Cricket Association for their commitment to channeling the energy of youth in a positive direction for the nation's benefit.

In the final match of the championship, the J&K team set a target of 65 runs for the loss of 5 wickets in their allotted 8 overs. Haryana's response fell short as they scored 41 runs for the loss of 6 wickets, leading to a 23-run defeat. J&K emerged victorious, securing the championship title.

Noushad Ahmad was named Man of the Match for his excellent performance.

The matches were officiated by Ranjeet Singh, Aman, and Binu. During the prize distribution ceremony, both the winner and runner-up teams were awarded trophies, medals, and cash prizes of Rs 3,100 and Rs 2,100, respectively.

Ashok Singh Jamwal hosted the ceremony with his melodious voice.

Other dignitaries at the event included Munishwar Singh, Raman Sharma, Sunny Nanda state secretary J&K Sports Speed ball Association, K.L. Rathore, Mukund, Kumar Singh, Anil Dahiya, Nitin Rathore, as well as players and parents of the local teams.

Doctoral Degree awarded to Suhail Gupta in School of Business, SMVDU

Top News Report

JAMMU, Aug 19: Suhail Gupta, son of Lt. Jagdish Gupta and Arti Gupta has been declared for the award of degree of Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) in the School of Business by Shri Mata Vaishno Devi University (SMVDU) Katra.

The candidate has worked on the topic "An Empirical Study on the Adoption of Digital Transactions among Rural Consumers in Jammu Region" under the supervision of Dr. SyedaShazia Bukhari, Assistant Professor, School of Business, SMVDU, Katra.

Suhail Gupta has published his research work in various reputed high-impact factorABDC/SCI/SCIE and Scopus journals, and also presented



papers in international conferences.

The candidate thanked Shri Mata Vaishno Devi University for granting all the necessary support and facilities for carrying out the research work.

Prof. (Dr.) Pragati Kumar (Vice-Chancellor, SMVDU), Dr. Ashutosh Vashista (Dean Faculty of Management), and Dr. Syeda Shazia Bukhari (Supervisor, SOB) and other committee members congratulated the candidate and wished him a bright future ahead.

Dr Amit Chandel is Best Dentist in our Surya Vihar Bohri, says Kaith

Top News Report

JAMMU, Aug 19: The most important qualities the dentist Dr Amit Chandel possesses are that he is knowledgeable, expert in his field, and above all trustworthy. He has excellent communication skills and is compassionate.

Moreover he is local and operates convenient clinic hours, said one of the residents of Surya Vihar Bohri Mr R.L.Kaith retired from the University of Jammu as Assistant Registrar.

Adding further Kaith said once there was a problem in my mouth. The doctors filled it with filling. Then after filling, it would start bleeding. Lastly, I consulted Dr Amit Chandel, he took x-ray of my teeth and said rct should have been done instead of filling.

He said the only way now is to uproot the teeth and put on a cap. He prescribed some medicine and told me to take whenever it bleeds and advised me to take



this till the time it doesn't stop. And then he will go for uprooting my teeth. Now more than ten years have passed but it didn't bleed from my mouth, he added.

Civil Defence organises Awareness-cum-demonstration programme

Top News Report

JAMMU, Aug 19: One day Awareness-cum-demonstration programme held at NCC Camping Ground Nagrota Jammu, which was organized by Civil Defence Jammu under the supervision of Dy.SP Anita Pawar, Dy. Controller Civil Defence Jammu.

In the awareness Camp NCC cadets were made aware about the knowledge of First Aid, CPR, Chocking, Fire fighting, Flood Rescue and other Emergency rescue methods alongwith demonstration by the Civil Defence Instructors.

The programme was organised in the premises of NCC Camp, Nagrota where 500 NCC cadets have participated the said programme. Camp Commander Col. R.S Jasrotia & Adm. Col. Yash Chibber NCC camping ground Nagrota appreciated the role of Civil Defence organisation and thanked the Civil Defence team for organising such important awareness-cum-demonstration programme.

R Vijay Magotra, Dy. Chief warden Civil Defence, Jammu SI Ram Dayal, in charge Trainings, Civil Defence Instructors Jammu & staff of NCC Nagrota also present on the occasion.

JDU leader Vivek Bali visits Kulgam, interacts with locals

Top News Report

KULGAM, Aug 19: Janata Dal (United) State General Secretary Vivek Bali on Monday visited various areas of Gundipora, Devsar constituency in Kulgam to interact with the locals and address their issues.

Vivek Bali met locals and Delegations of the village and listened to their grievances and assured action for early resolution of grievances and matters of public importance especially public raised the issue of road connectivity, electricity and drinking water which were long pending demands of the area.

Bali assured them that he will take up the matter with administration on

priority. Vivek Bali said, "We are here to listen to the people and understand their issues. The JD(U) is committed to ensuring that the voice of the people is heard and their grievances are addressed."

The Vivek Bali also urged the locals to work together towards the betterment of the area and to maintain peace and harmony in the region.

Interacting with the people, Bali assured them JD(U) leadership is concerned about their grievances and will take all measure necessary for the welfare of general public.

While speaking to media he said, JDU is ready to fight assembly elections in J&k and in

upcoming days party will announce the candidates, he further said Government should give another chance to stone pelters so that they can start their new life & live with peace and prosperity "it's in our manifesto to revoke the cases of stone pelters" he said "People have now reposed their faith in JD(U) and with every passing day scores of people are joining the party fold which is an ample proof that our Party is here to stay and serve the people," Bali said.

On this occasion, Chairman Sikh community Dilawar Singh, Bashir Ahmed shah sr leader Jdu, and other party workers and leaders were present.

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