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# The Researchers'

## NEWS BOX

### Biden says US support for Israel is 'ironclad' as Iran launches attack

**World** The United States stands by Israel and will "support their defense" as Iran launched attack that's expected to 'unfold over a number of hours', the White House said on Sunday. "Iran has begun an airborne attack against Israel, and it is likely to unfold over several hours," the White House said. "President Biden has been clear: Our support for Israel's security is ironclad," National Security Council spokesperson Adrienne Watson said in a statement. "The United States will stand with the people of Israel and support their defense against these threats from Iran," it stated. Meanwhile, Iran also warned the US to 'stay away' from conflict with Israel.

Joe Biden, who warned Iran against attacking Israel after saying such a scenario appeared imminent, was kept regularly updated, and his team was in "constant communication" with the Israelis and other allies, Watson said. Biden was due to meet in the White House's heavily secured situation room with his top officials, including Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin, Secretary of State Antony Blinken and CIA chief Bill Burns, the White House added. Iran had vowed retaliation after a presumed Israeli strike on April 1 leveled an Iranian diplomatic building in Damascus, killing seven members of the elite Revolutionary Guards, including two generals. Israel's army had said earlier that Iran had launched direct drone strikes at it. Iran's Revolutionary Guards later confirmed that an attack was underway and Iranian state TV said it involved "drones and missiles."

### Joe Biden says US helped Israel take down nearly all Iranian drones, missiles

**World** Iran launched drones and missiles at Israel directly from its territory on Sunday, marking a major escalation in the shadow war between the two nations. Israel's military said more than 100 drones were launched from Iran, with security sources in Iraq and Jordan reporting dozens seen flying overhead. US President Joe Biden said America helped Israel take down "nearly all of the incoming drones and missiles", according to the White House. His statement came after Biden and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu held a phone conversation following the Iranian attack.

In a statement, Netanyahu said Israel has a clear principle, "whoever harms us, we will harm them". "We will defend ourselves against any threat and will do so level-headedly and with determination," the Israeli PM added. The Israeli military claims that over 100 explosive drones have been launched by Iran so far, news agency Reuters reported. Two security sources in Iraq said dozens of drones had been spotted flying from Iran towards Israel over Iraqi airspace in what Iranian Press TV called "extensive drone strikes" by the Revolutionary Guards. Iranian Defence Minister Mohammad Reza Ashtiani warned that Tehran will firmly respond to any country that "opens its airspace or territory for attacks on Iran by Israel", news agency Reuters reported.

### Won't Hesitate To...": Iran After Launching Missile Barrage At Israel

**Jerusalem.** Iran today fired armed drones and missiles against Israel, marking a new volatile phase of the Middle East conflict. The attack, in retaliation for a strike in Syria that killed top Iranian military officers, was the first time Iran has struck Israel from its soil.

In a statement, Iran said that the attack was carried out in self-defence against the Israeli military's "aggression". It said the action was a "legitimate" defensive response to the strike in Damascus — which Israel hasn't acknowledged carrying out — and suggested it was a warning. It also warned the US to stay away from the conflict. "On 14 April 2024, the Islamic Republic of Iran's armed forces have carried out a series of military strikes on Israeli's military bases in response to, and in exercise of its inherent right of self-defence as recognized under Article 51 of the Charter, against Israel's recurring military aggressions, resulting in the martyrdom of the Iranian military advisors present in Syria." Iran's mission to the United Nations said in its statement. The Islamic Republic of Iran reaffirms its commitment to the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and international law, while reiterating its determination to forcefully defend its sovereignty, territorial integrity and national interests against any unlawful use of force and aggressions," it added. The country also reiterated that it would launch more attacks if Israel does not cease their actions. "The Islamic Republic of Iran would not hesitate to take further necessary defensive measures to protect its legitimate interests against any act of military aggression or unlawful use of force," Iran said. Sirens wailed and Reuters journalists in Israel said they heard distant heavy thuds and bangs from what local media called aerial interceptions of explosive drones. Authorities said a 7-year-old girl was critically injured.

### Solomon Islands readies for election in shadow of China's influence

**HONIARA.** Solomon Islanders will head to the polls this week, voting in an election that promises to bolster or blunt China's regional ambitions, with security consequences that will ripple far beyond the Pacific nation's palm-fringed shores. The archipelago, one of the world's least-developed countries, is the unlikely focal point of a diplomatic scramble pitting a rising China against Western rivals. Solomon Islands has veered into China's orbit under Prime Minister Manasseh Sogavare, who inked a secret security pact with Beijing in 2022. Sogavare has vowed to deepen these bonds if re-elected. His challengers, meanwhile, are deeply sceptical of Beijing's influence in the archipelago, known as the Pacific's "Hapi Isles". "Everyone knows this election is going to be very closely watched by the United States, by China, and by other Pacific island countries," said Solomon Islands expert Anouk Ride from Australian National University. The former British colony gained independence in 1978, establishing diplomatic relations with Taiwan as one of its earliest foreign partners. But those long-standing ties were abruptly junked in 2019, when a freshly installed Sogavare gave his full-throated backing to Beijing's "One China" stance. A wave of Chinese aid and investment followed, including tens of millions of dollars for a state-of-the-art medical centre and a 10,000-seat athletics stadium.

## Iran launches drones, missile attacks on Israel in retaliation; UN calls for emergency meeting

**RNS:** Iran carried out a significant drone and missile strike on Israel following threats of retaliation for an attack on a Syrian consulate building. Reports indicate that Iran deployed over 200 drones and missiles, while its allies also launched coordinated attacks on Israeli targets. An Israeli army official described the attack as a "massive swarm" of killer drones, ballistic missiles, and cruise missiles. Iran justified its actions as self-defense after its diplomatic station in Damascus was targeted. Iran expressed hope that these measures would de-escalate tensions, considering the matter concluded. However, the attack has raised fears of further escalation and a potential regional conflict.

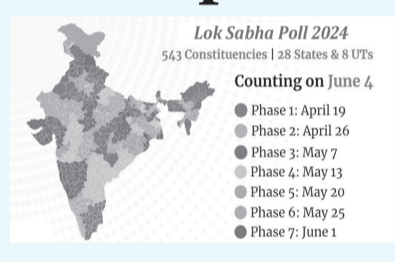


US President Joe Biden condemned the attack and reiterated the United States' unwavering support for Israel. He discussed the situation with his national security team and pledged to work with G7 leaders to formulate a united diplomatic response.

In response to the Iranian assault, US forces reportedly shot down drones targeting Israel and remain prepared to provide additional defensive support in the region. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu stated that Israel has been prepared for an Iranian attack and will respond defensively and aggressively. The Israeli military detected drones flying from Iran over Syria and Jordan, some of which were intercepted. The UN has called an emergency meeting to address the escalating situation, which could potentially lead to a broader conflict in the region.

## Fifteen nations accept BJP's invitation to observe LS poll campaign

**New Delhi:** The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) has extended invitations to diplomats from 25 nations and political parties from around the world to observe its campaign for the upcoming Lok Sabha elections. The general election in India will take place in seven phases starting April 19, with vote counting scheduled for June 4. In a move to counter the narrative and allegations raised by Congress leader Rahul Gandhi, who has claimed during his speeches abroad and in India that democracy in India is under threat, the BJP has invited political parties from 25 countries to witness firsthand its campaign and election management strategies during the 2024 Lok Sabha elections. According to media reports, 15 countries have accepted the invitations, including Nepal, Bangladesh, Mauritius, Sri Lanka, and several African nations, who will observe the BJP's campaign. According to the media reports, the



BJP is planning a special briefing for representatives of political parties from different countries, followed by several groups of four to five leaders traveling during the third and fourth phases of the election. These visits will last for three days, during which the leaders will attend rallies, meet with BJP booth workers, and observe the party's operations, as per the report by the media. "This is the first time in Indian electoral history that the BJP has invited international political parties to experience its campaign. We have invited more than

25 political parties, and 15 have confirmed their participation, mostly from neighboring countries but also from countries in the Far East and Africa," reported NDTV, quoting the BJP's Foreign Affairs Chief. Despite concerns among Indian voters regarding unemployment and inflation, a Lokniti-CSDS study highlighted by the Hindu suggests that Prime Minister Narendra Modi's strong leadership and India's increasing global significance will likely contribute to his re-election. "The objective is to showcase the breadth and depth of the BJP's campaign, which has led to its victories in consecutive Lok Sabha elections. We are eager for their visit to India. They will travel across the country to witness the BJP's campaign firsthand," the report added. It is worth noting that the BJP secured 303 out of 543 seats in the 2019 general election and is aiming for a third consecutive term in office.

## 174 stranded after deadly Turkey cable car accident rescued after 23 hours

**Istanbul, Turkey.** The last of 174 people stranded in cable cars high above a mountain in southern Turkey were brought to safety Saturday, nearly 23 hours after one pod hit a pole and burst open, killing one person and injuring seven when they plummeted to the rocks below. Interior Minister Ali Yerlikaya announced the successful completion of the rescue operation on X Saturday afternoon. A total of 607 search and rescue personnel and 10 helicopters were involved, including teams from Turkey's emergency response agency, AFAD, the Coast Guard, firefighting teams and mountain rescue teams from different parts of Turkey, officials said. Helicopters with night-vision capabilities continued rescuing people throughout the night. The stranded people had been stuck on the Tuntektepe cable car, just outside the Mediterranean city of Antalya, since 5:30 p.m. on Friday, when the accident occurred. Istanbul resident Hatice Polat and her family were rescued seven hours into the ordeal. Speaking to the Anadolu agency, she said the power went out, and the pod flipped four or five times. "The night was awful, we were very scared. There were children with us, they passed out," she said. "It was torture being up there for seven hours. It is swaying every second, you're constantly in fear. ... It was very traumatic, I don't know how we'll get over this trauma."

State-run Anadolu Agency identified the deceased as a 54-year-old Turkish man. Those injured included two children and there were six Turkish citizens and one Kyrgyz national. They were all rescued by Coast Guard helicopters soon after the crash and sent for treatment. Images in Turkish media showed the battered cable swaying from dislodged cables on the side of the rocky mountain as medics tended the wounded. Yerlikaya also announced that 13 people rescued from other cars were also taken to hospitals for checkups. Friday was the final day of a three-day public holiday in Turkey marking the end of the Muslim holy month of Ramadan, which sees families flock to coastal resorts. The cable car carries tourists from Konyaalti beach to a restaurant and viewing platform at the summit of the 618-meter (2,010-foot) Tuntektepe peak. It is run by Antalya Metropolitan Municipality. The cable car line was completed in 2017 and receives a major inspection around the beginning of the year, as well as routine inspections throughout the year. Antalya Chief Public Prosecutor's Office has launched an investigation. An expert commission including mechanical and electrical engineers and health and safety experts was assigned to determine the cause of the incident.

## Hamas junks Israel's truce proposal, remains adamant on main demands

**Cairo,UPDATED.** Palestinian terror group Hamas has rejected an Israeli ceasefire proposal, saying on Saturday (local time) it had handed to mediators in Egypt and Qatar its response to the proposal it had received on April 1. After more than six months of war with Israel in Gaza, the negotiations remain deadlocked, with Hamas sticking to its demands that any agreement must end the war. We reaffirm our adherence to our demands and the national demands of our people, with a permanent ceasefire, the withdrawal of the occupation army from the entire Gaza Strip, the return of the displaced to their areas and places of residence, intensification of the entry of relief and aid, and the start of reconstruction," Hamas said. Israel wants to secure the return of hostages seized by Hamas in its October 7 attack that triggered the



war, but says it will not stop fighting until Hamas is destroyed as a military force. It also says it still plans to carry out an assault on the southern Gaza city of Rafah, where more than a million civilians have taken refuge. Hamas said on Saturday it was ready to conclude a prisoners-for-hostages swap deal with Israel that would see the release of 133 hostages still believed to be held in Gaza in return for hundreds of Palestinians jailed in

Israel. There was no official Israeli comment on Hamas's response. The Hamas's statement came a few days after Israel killed several members of the family of the group's chief Ismail Haniyeh in Gaza, raising fears among the families of hostages that it would derail efforts to secure their release from Gaza. Speaking to Reuters in Qatar a day after the killing, Haniyeh said his group still sought a deal but accused Israel of procrastinating and evading a response to the group's demands. Global calls for a ceasefire have been growing as the war has entered its seventh month, but there has been little sign of progress in the talks. Hamas is demanding an end to the Israeli offensive, a withdrawal of Israeli forces, and permission for Gaza's displaced Palestinians to return to their homes.

## Iran wouldn't have attacked Israel 'if I were President': Donald Trump

**Former US President Donald Trump has slammed Iran's attack against Israel and said "this would never have happened if I were President".**



**World** Former US President Donald Trump has slammed Iran's retaliatory attack against Israel and said "this would never have happened if I were President". He also claimed that President Joe Biden's address to the nation on the unprecedented attack was "taped". In a post on his Truth Social app, the Republican presidential candidate said, "ISRAEL IS UNDER ATTACK! This should never have been allowed to happen - This would NEVER have happened if I were President!" Trump's post came shortly after Iran on Sunday launched a barrage of drones and missiles directly towards Israeli territory in retaliation against the April 1 airstrike on its consulate in

Damascus that killed seven Revolutionary Guards, including two commanders, and six Syrian civilians. Israel, however, has not acknowledged the airstrike. The Israel Defense Forces claimed that more than 200 missiles and drones were fired and that it intercepted the "vast majority". The military also

said that a number of "small hits" were recorded in southern Israel, with minor damage to infrastructure. In response to the attack, President Biden said the US's support for Israel's security is "ironclad" and Washington "will stand with the people of Israel and support their defence against these threats from

Iran". But, Donald Trump also criticised Biden's address to the nation on the Iranian attack, saying it was "taped". In another post on Truth Social, the former President criticised his successor, saying "this is no time for taped speeches". Trump further claimed that after reading his Truth Social post, "Biden's handlers convinced him not to release his taped speech". "He'll (Biden) now attempt to do it live, probably tomorrow. He doesn't want to leave his house, with the Corvette, in Delaware!!!" According to reports, Biden had been called back to the White House on Saturday night from his residence at Rehoboth Beach in Delaware where he had flown in for a weekend getaway. Meanwhile, the former President also reiterated his backing for the Jewish nation, saying "America supports Israel". "I want to say God Bless the people of Israel. They're under attack right now! It would not have happened if we were in office," he added.

## Bengali Welfare Committee Rings in Bengali New Year with Festive Prabhat Pheri

**RNS I Dhanbad:** The Bengali Welfare Committee ushered in the Bengali New Year—1431 with a colorful and vibrant celebration. To mark the occasion, the committee organized a grand Prabhat Pheri, a traditional procession, which saw the enthusiastic participation of approximately 500 individuals.



The Prabhat Pheri kicked off from JC Mallick Road and made its way to Hari Mandir, passing through Manish Medical, Park Market, Hirapur Market Committee, and Shakti Medical. The procession was filled with the melodious tunes of Bengali songs and captivating dance performances, adding to the festive atmosphere.

talents like Master Kushan Sengupta, Master Arijit Banerjee, Master Nirjhar Bakshi, and Anushree Banerjee, showcased their musical skills with enchanting performances.

Renowned music artists from Dhanbad, such as Indrajit Chatterjee, Arun Banerjee, Shyam Banerjee, Kumkum Banerjee, along with young

The event also featured performances by children from 8 dance schools in Dhanbad, who captivated the audience with their graceful moves. Mentors from these dance schools, including Sanchita

Bakshi, Samridh Choudhary, Ankita Banerjee, Shampa Banerjee, Aarti Sao, Saswati Sen, and Sartoswini Roy, were honored by the committee for their contributions.

Dr. Sujatha Chatterjee and Sujit Roy's recitation of Kavriguru Rabindranath Tagore's poem "Abhisar," and Jolie Ghosh's organic rendition of the same, received applause from all attendees. The talented craftsmen were also

recognized and honored with mementos by the committee members.

Special guest Veena Aggarwal commended the committee's efforts and extended her wishes for a joyous New Year. The event was made possible by the collective contributions of all members of the Bengali Welfare Committee, with women dressed in traditional red and white sarees and men in kurta pajamas.

## "Chinmay Smile Back"— A Unique initiative of Chinmay Alumni Association

**RNS I Bokaro:** Chinmay Vidyalaya Bokaro, as part of the Chinmay Smile Back program initiated by the Chinmay Alumni Association, organized a talent nurturing competition examination aimed at assisting bright students from economically disadvantaged backgrounds. The competition saw enthusiastic participation from students in classes 7th to 10th from both government and private schools in Bokaro district.



Dr. Amarendra Narayan Bharat, the program coordinator, explained that the initiative is designed to support talented students from deprived sections living below the poverty line. The program is structured in two phases: first, 80 students who excel in the written examination will be selected, and then, after an interview, 40 of the best students will be awarded.

imbursed along with Rs 500 in cash, for class 9th a cash incentive of Rs 6000 and Rs 600, and for class 10th a cash incentive award of Rs 7000 and Rs 700. The bill should be for purchasing study material or for joining a class.

For successful students in class VII, an assistance of Rs 4000 will be provided upon submission of a bill for study material purchase, along with an additional Rs 400 in cash. Similarly, for class 8th, a bill of Rs 5000 will be re-

Dr. Bharat explained that the objective of the program is to fuel the aspirations of children and ensure that financial constraints do not hinder their education. More than 600 students from economically weaker sections studying in various schools of Bokaro Ispat Nagar and its surrounding areas participated in the written examination.

After the first phase's interviews with the 80 successful students, the 40 best students will be selected. All 40 successful students will be honored on the auspicious occasion of Chinmay Avtaran Diwas on 8th May, which marks the birthday of Most Revered Gurudev Swami Chinmayanand Maharaj. School Principal Suraj Sharma commended the humanitarian initiative of the Chinmay Alumni Association, stating that it will prove to be a milestone in assisting the bright students of society. He emphasized the importance of giving back to society and helping those in need.

Vice Principal Narmendra Kumar, along with Dr. Amarendra Narayan Bharat, Sanjeev Mishra, Dr. Roshan Sharma, Lalita Oraon, Pan-kaj Mishra, Sanjeev Singh, Preeti, Srishti, Ran Vejay Ojha, Rajneesh, Amit, and other teachers, were present at the program.

## Government Directs E-commerce Platforms to Remove Bournvita from 'Health Drink' Category



**RNS I New Delhi:** The Ministry of Commerce and Industry has instructed e-commerce companies to reclassify Bournvita and similar beverages, clarifying that they should not be labeled as health drinks on their platforms. This directive comes as the Food Safety and Standards Act (FSS Act 2006) does not provide a definition for 'health drink'. In a letter dated April 10, the Ministry ordered e-commerce companies to remove

## BJP's Manifesto Aims to Propel India Towards Development: Sanjay Seth

**RNS I Ranchi:** BJP Ranchi Lok Sabha seat candidate Sanjay Seth is confident that the party's resolve letter will answer India's demands and accomplish the goal of a developed India.



Seth said the letter, issued under Prime Minister Narendra Modi's assurance, addresses many national issues, including those affecting Jharkhand. The resolution promotes tourism and homestays in Jharkhand, especially Ranchi, recognising its potential. Seth believes homestays will encourage tourism, employ tribal families in rural locations, and showcase local culture to guests.

The resolution also emphasises the BJP's commitment to encouraging women in sports, which might boost Jharkhand's female athletes' prospects and bring Ranchi and the state international exposure.

In response to paper leaks in competitive exams, which have lowered youth morale in Jharkhand, the resolution calls for stricter regulations to protect young aspirants.

Seth stressed the BJP's longstanding commitment to "One Nation, One Law," which is part of its manifesto to promote equality across. Resolutions like "One Nation, One Election" would also save government costs.

The resolution addresses healthcare for women with cancer and connecting over-70s to Ayushman Bharat. The resolution also protects de-

posits for both groups. The resolution also emphasises the BJP's commitment to encouraging women in sports, which might boost Jharkhand's female athletes' prospects and bring Ranchi and the state international exposure.

various health benefits of the beverage. The NCPCR's action was initiated after a video surfaced highlighting the beverage's high sugar content, contradicting its previous marketing as a "health drink."

Following a complaint that Bournvita promotes itself as a health drink despite its high sugar and other contents, the NCPCR has requested a comprehensive explanation or report from the company.

Following a complaint that Bournvita promotes itself as a health drink despite its high sugar and other contents, the NCPCR has requested a comprehensive explanation or report from the company.

## First Home Treatment for Ear Disorders Introduced in Ranchi



**RNS I Ranchi:** Ranchi: In a pioneering move, Paul Opticals on Kanke Road in Ranchi, the capital of Jharkhand, has introduced a revolutionary service that allows for the treatment of ear disorders from the comfort of one's home. The new service, called "EarCart Omni," was launched to mark the occasion of Bengali New Year.

With over thirty years of experience, Paul Opticals Director Sanjay Paul said that his company is the first in the city to offer international-level eye exams, scientific ear exams, and hearing treatments. For three months, Paul Opticals is conducting free "EarCart Omni" hearing tests for hearing-impaired people as part of its second anniversary. Paul Opticals is pioneering home delivery with Earkart, the nation's largest enterprise.

Paul stated that Paul Opticals is the first store in Jharkhand to offer free hearing aid, eyeglasses, and glasses insurance for a year, with Essilor Luxottica covering damages. To help the poor, he promised free services.

Paul Opticals, the city's only Essilor Expert store, offers cutting-edge eye care. Jharkhand's first Essilor Expert Store is Paul Opticals on Kanke Road, Ranchi, beside Gokul Sweet.

Earkart's "EQFY" 16-channel digital hearing aid is cutting-edge and Bluetooth-connected. This sleek, handy rechargeable device reduces battery changes and follows recent fashion trends. The device can be programmed using a mobile app without human modifications.

Earkart's "Listening Ear" Centre also provides audio stimulation for congenital deaf youngsters to improve speaking.

## Fire Safety Training Conducted at Wellmark Hospital Bokaro

**RNS I Bokaro:** Wellmark Hospital Bokaro, a prestigious NABH recognized hospital, remains committed to enhancing its quality standards through regular training programs. Today, a mock drill for fire safety training under Code Red was conducted at the hospital, led by BH Coordinator Aritro Chattopadhyay. The training demonstrated the immediate steps to control fire during an accidental outbreak. An artificial fire was created, and hospital staff showcased the proper use of fire extinguishers, guided by Chattopadhyay. The training emphasized the importance of quick and efficient response to fire emergencies. Earlier, on April 4, 2024, a workshop was organized by Dr. Tirtho Mukherjee, a specialist from Mission Hospital Durgapur, focusing on rapid treatment for heart attack patients.

## Devotees Flock to "Lakshmi Narsingh Narayan" Mahayagna in Gaya, Delha Area Resonates with Vedic Mantras



by Suresh Pd Nikhar

**Gaya:** The premises of ISKCON Ram Janaki Thakurbari near the Delha flyover in Gaya district have been bustling with thousands of devotees who have been arriving daily to participate in the four-day Lakshmi-Narsingh Mahayagna. The atmosphere in the area is filled with Vedic mantras as devotees perform the pavilion circumambulation as part of their religious observance. According to religious beliefs, men, women, and children gather at the Yagya site early in the morning for the

circumambulation ritual. The Mahayagna has created such a devout atmosphere in the area that even those who have other commitments, such as work, farming, or labor, first pay their respects and circumambulate the Yagya Mandap before attending to their duties.

The infusion of religious fervor and good conduct has led people from various communities to participate in the Mahayagna activities. Pradhan Sevak Radha Kripa Das Ji Maharaj noted that on the first day of the Mahayagna, a large number of devotees from the area visited the

Yagya site for darshan. Throughout the day, devotees gather to witness the "Havan" ceremony, which continues from morning till late evening, and inhale the sacred smoke, believing it to be purifying.

As evening approaches, the atmosphere becomes even more spiritual with kirtan, katha, drama, cultural programs, and aarti ceremonies of various deities. Both the residents and the acharya actively participate in these programs. The entire area resonates with religious songs and mantras played through loudspeakers, and

bhajan kirtans continue late into the night.

Pradhan Sevak emphasized the significance of circumambulating the yagya mandap, stating that according to Hindu scriptures, it is believed that one's wishes are fulfilled by doing so. He highlighted the transformative power of satsang, where one gains wisdom, fame, and goodness. Listening to satsang with an open heart and mind can lead to a change in one's thoughts, actions, and conduct, ultimately transforming one's entire life.

## Ways to protect yourself from Dengue



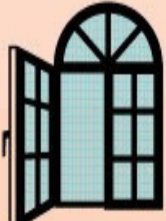
Remove mosquito habitats



Use mosquito repellent



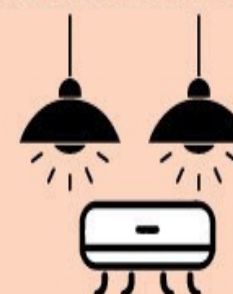
Keep your home clean



Use netting for windows and gaps



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### Does Congress, Mallikarjun Kharge Not Like 'Bharat Mata ki Jai' Chant? Karnataka MLA's Request Sparks Row ?

New Delhi. Just days before the first phase of voting for the Lok Sabha elections, Congress MLA from Athani, Laxman Savadi found himself at the centre of controversy as he requested permission from Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge before chanting 'Bharat Mata Ki Jai.' This incident occurred during an election rally in the Kalaburagi area of Karnataka, where both leaders were in attendance. The

#### BJP Reacts

The remarks have prompted outrage in the BJP ranks with RP Singh dubbing it a pitiful situation for the Congress party. He said that "Congress does not seek permission to chant 'Pakistan Zindabad' in the parliament but to say 'Bharat mata ki Jai', they seek permission from the party president."

Leader of Opposition R Ashoka took a jibe as he said on 'X', "MLA Laxman Savadi understood the true ideology of the Congress party after seeing the action of Minister Priyank Kharge who advocated on behalf of those who shouted the Pakistan Zindabad slogan. He was very scared of raising the 'Bharat Mata Ki Jai' slogan within the Congress party and asked permission from Mallikarjun Kharge." (roughly translated from Kannada).

Earlier Controversies During Congress' Nyay Yatra on March 3, party leader Rahul Gandhi mentioned that if we chant "Bharat Mata ki Jay," we should also express the same sentiment for the remaining 73% of the Indian population. Last year, on August 10, Rahul suggested that 'Bharat mata ki jai' seems to be 'unparliamentary.'



remark has sparked anger among BJP members inviting a fresh set of jibe exchanges. Savadi had switched from the BJP to Congress before last year's Assembly elections.

During the public address, Laxman Savadi spoke to the audience, saying, "I hope Kharge Sahab doesn't misconstrue this. I want to say this to all of you. I will say 'Bolo Bharat mata ki Jai,' and you all should repeat it after me with tight fists."

# BJP manifesto titled 'Modi ki Guarantee' released by PM

**Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday released the BJP's manifesto titled 'Modi ki Guarantee' for the forthcoming Lok Sabha elections. Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, Union Home Minister Amit Shah, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman and BJP National President JP Nadda were present with PM Modi on stage.**



New Delhi. Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday released the BJP's manifesto for the upcoming Lok Sabha elections. Titled 'Modi's Guarantee 2024', the manifesto - also known as 'Sankalp

Patra' - consists of 14 promises and focuses on women empowerment, upliftment of youth and the poor. The manifesto targets GYAN - which are schemes for the 'Gareeb' (poor), 'Yuva' (youth), 'Annadaata'

(farmers), and 'Nari' (women). It also focuses on making India prosperous, strengthen its international relations, and foster the development of the country's heritage, among others.

## "BJP Govt Working For Few Businessmen In This Country...": Rahul Gandhi

**Congress leader Rahul Gandhi said that the Bharatiya Janata Party-led Centre is working towards benefitting selected businessmen in the country adding that key public infrastructure in the country has been handed over to them to make profits.**



New Delhi. Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Saturday said that the Bharatiya Janata Party-led Centre is working towards benefitting selected businessmen in the country adding that key public infrastructure in the country has been handed over to them to make profits. Addressing an election rally in Bhandara, Rahul Gandhi said, "This BJP and PM Modi is running government for few businessmen in this country. One of them is

Adani...go home and google what is the price of Adani shares. In this country, 22 people have as much wealth as 70 crore people. PM Modi's only job is to divert attention and Adani has only job to take money out of your pockets." On the Congress manifesto for Lok Sabha polls, Rahul Gandhi said that a lot of consultation and feedback was taken from the public during the drafting process. "We made our manifesto thoughtfully. It was not made in a closed room. It was made after talking to

thousands of people. This is the people's manifesto," he said. Earlier, Congress leader Rahul Gandhi highlighted the promises made by the Congress party in its poll manifesto and said that they would remove the poverty from the country by transferring Rs 1 lakh into the account of one female from a poverty-stricken household, which comes out to Rs 8,500 per month. "The Congress Government will transfer Rs 1 lakh (in a year) to the bank account of one woman of every poor household in the country...If you are below the poverty line then every year, Rs 1 lakh (Rs 8,500 per month) khatakhat khatakhat aata rahega aur ek jhatke se hum Hindustan se gareebi ko mita denge," Rahul Gandhi said addressing a poll rally in Rajasthan. The Congress party released its manifesto for the 2024 Lok Sabha Elections in Delhi on April 5. Party chief Mallikarjun Kharge, former party chief Sonia Gandhi, and Congress MP Rahul Gandhi were also present at the event.

### Centre's Achievements In Last 10 Years Result Of Clear Mandate: BJP Chief

**BJP chief JP Nadda listed out construction of village roads, toilets, lifting 25 crore people out of poverty as some of the achievements of the government led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.**

New Delhi. BJP president J P Nadda on Sunday said the government's achievements over the last 10 years, such as the abrogation of Article 370 of the Constitution and the women's reservation law, were made possible due to the clear mandate given to the party by people.

"The achievements of the last 10 years are a result of a clear mandate," Nadda said at a function here to release the Bharatiya Janata Party's (BJP) manifesto for the upcoming Lok Sabha polls. He listed out construction of village roads, toilets, lifting 25 crore people out of poverty as some of the achievements of the government led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.



Nadda said in 2029, 33 per cent of the Lok Sabha members will be women. He said the BJP has followed the ideals of social justice laid down by Babasaheb Ambedkar and the manifesto is being released on his birth anniversary. Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh and other senior leaders were present at the function at the BJP headquarters here.

### Iran attack on Israel 'foiled', says Israeli army

**JERUSALEM.** Iran's unprecedented overnight attack on Israel has been "foiled", the Israeli military said Sunday, with hundreds of missiles and drones intercepted with the help of the United States and allies. The attack which began late Saturday marks a major escalation of the long-running covert war between the regional foes, and comes against the backdrop of the ongoing war between Israel and Palestinian militant group Hamas in the Gaza Strip.



Iran's proxies and allies also carried out coordinated attacks on Israeli positions as sirens sounded in many places and AFP correspondents heard blasts in the skies above Jerusalem early Sunday. Iran had repeatedly threatened to retaliate against Israel for a deadly April 1 air strike on its Damascus consular building, and Washington had warned in recent days that the reprisals were imminent.

### Lok Sabha Election 2024: Relief To Couples In Govt. Job, EC Exempts One Spouse From Election Duty

**The directive states that if both spouses are in government service, they will not be assigned duty in both elections; only one of them will be assigned duty in the Lok Sabha elections.**

New Delhi. The Election Commission of Uttar Pradesh has provided a sigh of relief to the couples who are employed in government jobs. According to the election commission's directives, if both spouses are in government service, only one of them will be assigned election duty in either of the elections. For this, they will have to submit a request letter to their district election officer.



#### Lok Sabha Elections 2024

In the Lok Sabha elections 2024, directives regarding government employees' duty have been issued. This directive has been issued by the main office of the Chief Electoral Officer of Uttar Pradesh. The directive states that if both spouses are in government service, they will not be assigned duty in both elections; only one of them will be assigned duty in the Lok Sabha elections. For this, a request letter must be submitted to the district election officer, and based on this, the district election

officer will decide to exempt one of the spouses from duty.

According to the office of the Election Commission in Uttar Pradesh, all district election

officers/assistant district election officers have been requested to direct one of the spouses to be exempted from election duty based on the request letter.

The Election Commission of Uttar Pradesh has sent copies of its directive to the United Teachers Association, Ministerial Collectorate Employees Association, and United Teachers Association.

#### Longest-Running General Election In India

This time, elections will be held in 7 phases across the country, and the counting will take place on June 4, 2024. This will be the longest-running general election in India, lasting for 44 days. In Uttar Pradesh, voting will take place in 7 phases for its 80 seats. In the first phase (April 19), voting will take place in Saharanpur, Kairana, Muzaffarnagar, Bijnor, Nagina, Moradabad, Rampur, and Pilibhit constituencies.

## India calls for immediate de-escalation after Iran launches air attack on Israel

**India on Sunday called for an "immediate de-escalation" in the wake of Iran attacking Israel with missiles and drones.**

New Delhi. India on Sunday called for an "immediate de-escalation" in the wake of Iran launching a direct attack on Israel by firing a barrage of missiles and drones. It also expressed concerns at the escalation of hostilities between Israel and Iran that threaten "peace and security in the region".

In response to the Iranian attack, the Ministry of External Affairs said in an official statement, "We are seriously concerned at the escalation of hostilities between Israel and Iran which threatens the peace and security in the region." "We call for immediate de-escalation, exercise of restraint, stepping back from violence and return to the path of diplomacy," it added. The Ministry also said that it was "closely monitoring the evolving situation".

"Our Embassies in the region are in close touch with Indian community. It is vital that security and stability are

maintained in the region." According to the Israel Defense Forces (IDF), Iran fired more than 200 missiles and drones directly towards Israeli territory in the early hours of Sunday.

Iran's unprecedented attack was in retaliation against the April 1 airstrike on its consulate in Damascus that killed seven Revolutionary Guards, including two commanders, and six Syrian civilians. Israel, however, has not acknowledged the airstrike.

The IDF also said that the forces intercepted the "vast majority" of the missiles and drones, while adding that a number of "small hits" were recorded in southern Israel, with minor damage to infrastructure.

In response to the attack, US President Joe Biden said Washington's support for Israel's security is "ironclad" and his country "will stand with the people of Israel and support their defence against these threats from Iran".



- ▶ India expresses concern over escalating hostilities between Iran and Israel
- ▶ Urges restraint, end to violence and return to diplomacy
- ▶ Closely monitoring the evolving situation

## Hope for a change of heart

SADANAND Date of the Maharashtra cadre of the Indian Police Service (IPS) is easily one of the brightest gems the IPS has produced over more than seven decades of its existence. He has functioned as a senior police officer in very difficult times, when loyalty to the party in power takes precedence over loyalty to the Constitution and the law. My generation of officers were not asked to do that. The community to which he belongs was known for its adherence to truth and justice, for its value system, for a simple living but high thinking. Sadanand has encompassed in his personality all those traits. He overcame poverty as a child and cracked the Union Public Service examination to enter the august portals of the IPS.

The residents of Mumbai would have been truly blessed if he had been appointed Commissioner of Police. But those in the know ruled this out as Sadanand was incapable of saying 'yes' to irregular requests. So, it was nothing short of a surprise when it was announced that he was to succeed Dinkar Gupta of the Punjab cadre as Director General of the National Investigation Agency (NIA).

In a recent article, 'The Back-Room Mischief Makers', Mathew John, a former IAS officer, has castigated the bureaucracy, especially the IPS and IRS officers in charge of Central investigative agencies, of "crawling when asked to bend" before "the brute power of a political executive". The Enforcement Directorate (ED), an IRS-led agency, was, of course, mentioned, but so were two IPS-led agencies, the CBI and the NIA.

Another excellent officer of Maharashtra's IPS cadre, Subodh Jaiswal, was picked to head the CBI three years ago. He kept a low profile during his tenure. That he did not get an extension or a post-retirement sinecure is a tribute to his integrity. It is an acknowledged fact that those who toe the line are handsomely rewarded. Obviously, Subodh toed nobody's line.

I am absolutely sure that the Sadanand-led NIA is not going to dabble in any form of injustice even if the pressure becomes intolerable. He is a man who must have spelt out his terms even before honouring the trust placed in him. If Sadanand has done that, which I am sure he has, the NIA is one agency that the likes of Mathew will have to eliminate from their list of Central agencies which have turned into appendages of an overbearing political executive.

Mathew has categorised the ED, the CBI and the NIA as 'back-room mischief makers'. Actually, these agencies are essentially the visible 'front' of politicians who want "corruption to be abolished from the Opposition ranks". What is even more relevant is that these 'corrupt' Opposition leaders should be shown up as such and incarcerated just before the Lok Sabha elections. Only the sins of those who cross over to the ruling party before the polls are forgiven. Incidentally, Mathew will forgive me if I point out that many among the 'back-room' collaborators are members of his service! Secondly, Mathew should keep in mind that our successors in the premier civil services are operating in infinitely more difficult and dangerous times than we did. When well-meaning citizens hail me and want me to come back as the policeman in charge of the city, I immediately admit that I would not be able to handle the present dispensation.

The choice is between conforming and quitting. Not many are in a position to quit when they are approaching 50 or have crossed that landmark. An officer of the calibre of Sadanand should have been appointed Police Commissioner of Pune, Thane or Nagpur three years ago. The people of those cities and the cops keeping order there would have benefited from his integrity and competence. But those in power are not comfortable with such officers. This is the reality.

Newspapers say that the great majority of would-be first-time voters have not cared to register themselves for that duty. Is that surprising? If you mention the name of Rahul Gandhi to them, loud guffaws follow. And after Narendra Modi's cameo in Ayodhya for the Ram Temple's inauguration and his dive into the sea off Dwarka, guffaws are heard, though not so loud. Students are clearly disappointed with the 'mother of democracy' in action.

## Need to carry out deeper research into ayurvedic medicines

While modern medicine investigates and diagnoses the disease before treating it, ayurveda relies more on treating the symptoms.

THE Supreme Court has pulled up Patanjali Ayurved for its advertisements against allopathy and for making false claims about its own ayurvedic medicines. The court had earlier restrained Patanjali from advertising its products as a "permanent relief" for hypertension, asthma and heart disease, among other health issues. The Drugs and Magic Remedies (Objectionable Advertisements) Act, 1954, prohibits advertisements for 54 such diseases. Patanjali has also been questioned over its claim about Coronil, its product that was touted as a cure for Covid-19. There are two issues that arise from this controversy. The first one is unsubstantiated claims about ayurvedic medicines. There has been limited research into such medicines. Unlike the stringent criteria of clinical trials for modern medicines governed by the Drug Controller General of India, the norms for other medical systems are lax. The second is the occurrence of adverse effects due to ayurvedic drugs. If proper scientific clinical trials (Phases 1, 2 and 3) and post-marketing surveillance are carried out, the reporting of adverse effects is already incorporated into them.

It is important to differentiate between herbal and dietary supplements and complementary and alternative medicine (CAM). The former are defined by the US FDA (Food and Drug Administration) as "products taken by mouth that contain a dietary ingredient intended to supplement the diet", for example, vitamins, minerals and herbs. On the other hand, CAM therapies are based on principles derived from ancient texts and traditional beliefs, such as the Chinese, ayurvedic and unani medicines. Ayurveda is an ancient medicine system that originated in India. It is believed to owe its existence to Hindu god Dhanvantari and is detailed in Sushruta Samhita and Charaka Samhita. Ayurveda is based on the premise that diseases are the result of an imbalance between doshas, vata, pitta and kapha. The vast majority of ayurvedic medicines are plant-based or herbal. The addition of minerals or metals like gold, arsenic, lead and sulphur to herbal medicines is called rasashastra.

In contrast, allopathic medicine is described by the WHO as "the broad category of medical practice that is called Western medicine, evidence-based medicine or modern medicine". While modern medicine first investigates and establishes the diagnoses and then treats them, ayurveda relies more on treating the symptoms. Because of the widespread use of allopathic medicines in the Western world, there has been much scientific investment in the understanding of disease causation and its treatment. Consequently, we know the chemical

structure of each medicine, the exact site of its action and its side effects. The same can't be said about ayurvedic medicines. Till the beginning of the last century, most medicines used the world over were plant-based or natural products. There was widespread use of heavy metals like gold, mercury and silver. Modern medicine has been in existence for the past 80 to 90 years, with antibiotics having been first used during World War II. However, since then, there have been rapid strides in the discovery of new treatments. New drugs acting at



specific receptors or targeting precise disease-causing mechanisms are being developed. Some genetic disorders can now be treated with gene-editing. This requires enormous funding and the corresponding infrastructure.

However, knowledge about ayurveda has not progressed at the same pace. We know that the bark of the arjuna tree can be useful in treating hypertension, high cholesterol and heart diseases, but there is not enough scientific evidence on the exact mechanism, how it helps, its dose and the duration of treatment. Reserpine, an alkaloid from the plant Rauwolfia serpentina, was earlier used to treat hypertension in allopathy. Though it is no longer in use in allopathy because of its side effects, it continues to be used in ayurveda. Similarly, a number of natural substances like tulsi and ashwagandha have been used widely but without diligent documentation and validation. There are ayurvedic medicines for diabetes mellitus too that have shown promise. There is a need to investigate ayurvedic medicines with modern

technology to explore the active ingredient, mechanism of action, drug interactions and adverse effects. Equally important are regulatory mechanisms for good manufacturing practices, quality control and standardisation. The government recently gave a push to alternative medicines by opening an Ayush (ayurveda, yoga, naturopathy, unani, sidha and homoeopathy) unit in all new AIIMS campuses. But much more needs to be done. What can be done is exemplified by an anti-malarial drug of Chinese origin. A Chinese traditional herb, qinghao (Artemisia annua or sweet wormwood), was in use for over 2,000 years to treat fever caused by malaria. Its anti-malarial principle, qinghaosu, was discovered by Chinese scientist Tu Youyou in 1971. Its chemical structure was deciphered in 1976, leading to the development of its more effective derivatives. Currently, artesunate is used all over the world for falciparum malaria.

Ayurvedic medicines are not always safe and have also attracted attention because of their side effects. The common belief is that they are safe since they are based on natural ingredients. However, their formulations are not standardised, and they may contain impurities. A study by the PGIMER, published in the journal Toxicology Research (Cambridge) on 43 commonly used ayurvedic over-the-counter medicines found metal content above permissible limits for zinc, mercury,

arsenic and lead in most of the formulations. In an earlier study from Boston, US, among the 230 ayurvedic medicines investigated, the prevalence of metals was equal in the US-manufactured and India-manufactured drugs (approximately 20 per cent each). The most common metals detected were lead and mercury, and the metal content was higher in rasashastra medicines than in non-rasashastra ones. There are increasing reports of CAM (including ayurvedic drugs) causing severe side effects, such as liver disease, kidney damage and skin reactions. There is a need to carry out research into those ayurvedic medicines that are in common use for their constituents, active ingredients, efficacy and adverse effects. A multidisciplinary approach incorporating modern scientific armamentarium is called for. We need well-reasoned clinical trials based on valid hypotheses from thorough pre-clinical studies and objective outcome measures. Regulatory provisions should also be tightened and enforced diligently.

## Righting a grave wrong

SC rules in favour of Delhi Metro corporation

SETTING aside its own 2021 judgment, the Supreme Court has ruled that the Delhi Metro Rail Corporation (DMRC) is not obliged to pay Rs 8,000 crore to the Delhi Airport Metro Express Private Ltd (DAMEPL), a Reliance Infrastructure firm, in pursuance of a 2017 arbitral award. The court observed that its previous verdict had caused 'grave miscarriage of justice' to a public utility, which was saddled with an exorbitant liability. Stating that the award had 'suffered from the vice of perversity and patent illegality', the court has ordered that the amount already paid, if any, by the petitioner (DMRC) as a result of coercive action should be returned to it.

Commendably, the apex court has admitted that it had erred in interfering with the 2019 decision of a Division Bench of the Delhi High Court. The case has had its fair share of twists and turns. The arbitral award had been upheld by a single-judge Bench of the HC in



2018, only to be struck down by the Division Bench. The Anil Ambani-owned Reliance Infrastructure then approached the SC against the Division Bench's order. A two-judge Bench of the top court restored the award. The

DMRC's plea seeking a review of the 2021 judgment was dismissed, forcing it to file a curative petition. In 2008, the DAMEPL had entered into a contract with the DMRC for running the airport Metro line till 2038. However, the private entity stopped operating the Metro on the airport line, presumably over safety concerns; it invoked an arbitration clause, alleging violation of the contract, and sought the termination fee. The DMRC bore the brunt of the DAMEPL's 'illegal' decision to terminate the concessionaire agreement. The apex court has finally righted a huge wrong and also demonstrated its ability to do self-correction. This augurs well for India's justice delivery system. The judiciary at all levels should treat this judgment as a benchmark, especially in commercial matters where corporates browbeat public utilities.

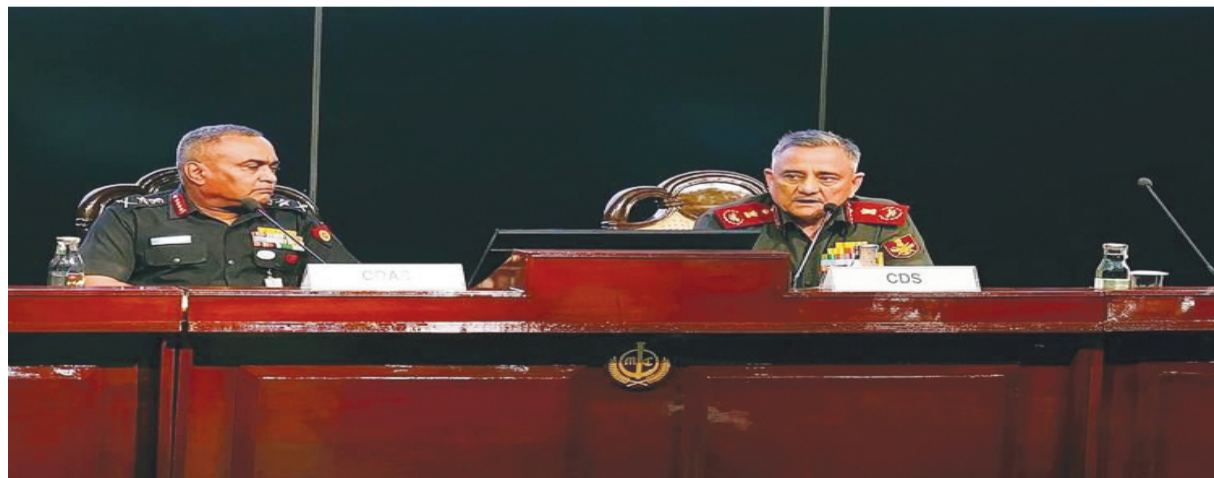
## Knotty issues delaying integrated theatre commands

The CDS's remit includes enabling and augmenting jointness, prioritising materiel buys, forces' modernisation and giving impartial advice to the govt

THE recent Parivartan Chintan (contemplation regarding change) related to the long-planned creation of integrated theatre commands (ITCs), presided over by the Chief of Defence Staff (CDS), Gen Anil Chauhan, was yet another instance of the military top brass examining extant proposals but expecting vastly different results. According to the government, the day-long 'brainstorming' session on April 8 in New Delhi, attended by senior officers from the three services, highlighted the need to adopt a 'de novo' (fresh) approach towards developing operational 'jointness' in the armed forces. It was mentioned that these deliberations underlined the necessity of augmenting interoperability and 'jointness' to enhance the Indian military's overall efficiency and war-fighting prowess.

The takeaways from the Parivartan Chintan, however, remained nebulous, except to confirm that the ITC matter remained unresolved and that the 2022 deadline declared by Gen Chauhan's predecessor Gen Bipin Rawat for their creation was long past. Numerous ITC models had been prepared by the Department of Military Affairs (DMA), which the CDS heads, that broadly envisage fashioning three tri-service commands — one each for the country's northern and western borders and an overarching maritime or peninsular command, alongside options for 'additional others', but these, it now appears, are seemingly inadequate.

All three provisional ITCs had been tentatively designated their headquarters — Lucknow, Jaipur and Karwar (Karnataka). But a cross-section of veterans claim that numerous challenges persist for the DMA, pending the ITCs' final endorsement by the Cabinet Committee on Security headed by the Prime Minister. The foremost is the issue of the ITCs' overall operational command and control that was inherently 'hobbled' by hierarchical inter- and intra-service rivalries, conflicts of interest and ambitions of personnel involved in this planned revised military architecture. By virtue of his employment charter, the CDS himself is not part of this operational equation, despite being India's seniormost military



officer. Under his terms of appointment, the CDS exercises no direct operational military command, including that over the three service chiefs. His remit, among a host of myriad responsibilities, includes enabling and augmenting jointness, prioritising materiel buys, forces' modernisation and giving the government impartial military advice.

Recent media reports and analyses by security experts indicate that the role of the three four-star service chiefs, in a revised ITC setting, would be limited to recruiting and training manpower and logistically supporting it. This reportedly 'miffed' the individual chiefs and possibly the Parivartan Chintan debated a more proactive operational role for them than merely a supportive one. Besides, in consonance with the US theatre command model, on which the Indian ITC template is largely believed to be patterned, the chain of military command flows from the President to the Secretary of Defence and onto the theatre commanders and back. The latter were overseen by another four-star

officer, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, who, like India's CDS, performed an advisory role to the US political leadership.

If localised, this concept, centred on US expeditionary doctrines, would incorporate ITC commanders reporting directly to the Defence Minister, who, like the US Secretary of Defence, would then be the deciding operational authority, but obviously in the Indian context with no military or battleground experience. To overcome this handicap, a former Indian Navy chief of staff had in a recent seminar suggested appointing someone with deep knowledge of military affairs with multi-party consensus as Defence Minister.

The other, more critical issue, and one that reportedly dominates discussions within the services and the DMA over delays in confirming the ITCs, is the parity in status and seniority of officers presently heading the 17 single-service geographical and functional commands. The Army and the Indian Air Force had seven such commands, and the Navy had three.

And, with these 17 commands to be eventually subsumed into three, four or even five ITCs, one immediate fallout would be the 'placation' of some 13-14 three-star officers in a rank-conscious environment. Overnight, these officers would be 'dispossessed' of not only their elevated statuses, but also of their numerous perquisites, including the use of aircraft and rotary assets.

Additionally, some 10-odd Principal Staff Officers at the respective service headquarters, three vice-chiefs of staff and the Integrated Defence Staff (IDS) head would also need to be 'adjusted' without further engendering disaffection or any loss of their sheen in the revised ITC setting. The numerous three-star heads of directorates at each of the three service headquarters would need to be similarly accommodated in this massive revamp guaranteed to radically alter the Indian armed forces' structure. Other related measures that were believed to be delaying the ITCs' formation included the appointment of a Vice CDS and Deputy CDS to oversee assorted 'verticals' in military planning, like intelligence gathering, procurements and joint training.

Presently, India has two tri-service commands — the Andaman and Nicobar Command (ANC) to safeguard India's strategic interests in the Indian Ocean Region and the Strategic Forces Command tasked with ownership of the country's nuclear assets, deliverable by land-based mobile platforms, by air and via underwater assets. These came into being soon after the recommendations of the Group of Ministers in 2001, following the 1999 Kargil War, and were placed under the IDS with the express intent of crafting a future blueprint for ITCs, which, a section of former service chiefs claim, has been bypassed. In conclusion, the onus of validating the ITCs, especially their operational command and control framework, is on the DMA and the CDS, not on the political leadership, which green-lighted the project and now awaits its outcome.





NEWS BOX

Rule of the Subs: How usage of Impact Players has evolved in 2024

CHENNAI. When the Impact Player (IP) rule was introduced in the 2023 Indian Premier League, something fundamentally changed with the way teams operate. For starters, there was a predominant need to be proactive as a batter because teams have that extra batter who could potentially come into play. The perfect example is someone like Ruturaj Gaikwad. The Chennai Super Kings opener had a 590-run season at a strike rate of 147.5, but in the 15 innings he batted, Gaikwad had just four fifties. Gaikwad was the enforcer at the top for CSK, coming in and scoring the quickfire 30s — something that is unlike for a batter like him. But he had made peace with it because of the IP rule. "With the impact player rule, you have to make sure you don't hold yourself back," he had said when asked about not converting the starts into big scores. It is just one side of the cause and effect, and it has remained the same in 2024 as well. However, there is something else that has changed. When the IP rule came into play months before the IPL season, initially, people needed some time to understand how it works. How it fundamentally changes the way the game is played. It is no more a 11 vs 11, but a 12 vs 12. Teams had already been formed and to put it simply, last year the emphasis was on adding the extra 20-odd runs. While some teams had a consistent use of IP rule for specific players, it was not the case for all. CSK, for example, kept Ambati Rayudu as IP substitute on most occasions irrespective of the situation while a team like Rajasthan Royals were using Dhruv Jurel as the extra batter in the lower-order because of their long lower-order (read bowlers). This year, however, it is a lot different. Knowing that the rule will be in place, teams seem to have constructed their squads in such a way that they can have ultra-specific roles for certain players. For CSK, Shivam Dube has become the IP player, Mohit Sharma for Gujarat Titans, Khaleel Ahmed for Delhi Capitals and Arshdeep Singh for Punjab Kings. While it might seem like they all have a fixed role to play for their respective teams — and they do — there is more to it. Although, they are the go-to IP subs for their respective teams, who comes in for them, how and when changes according to various factors from toss to opponent to conditions. This is not just about being proactive and going for the extra 20 runs, but also about maximising the strengths as much as they can.

Ruud finally beats Djokovic and Tsitsipas downs Sinner to set up Monte Carlo Masters final

MONACO. Casper Ruud finally got the better of Novak Djokovic, beating the top-ranked Serb 6-4, 1-6, 6-4 on Saturday to set up a Monte Carlo Masters final against two-time champion Stefanos Tsitsipas. Tsitsipas won the earlier semifinal against a tiring Jannik Sinner 6-4, 3-6, 6-4 to hand the Australian Open champion only his second defeat of the season. Djokovic double-faulted on match point in his first career defeat in six matches against Ruud. He had never even taken a set off Djokovic before, including at last year's French Open final. Djokovic trailed 4-1 in the deciding set but held his nerve and broke a nervous-looking Ruud's serve to love to pull back to 4-3. At 15-15 in the eighth game, Djokovic turned and shouted an expletive toward someone in the crowd. Chair umpire Mohamed Lahyani urged fans not to call out during a rally, but did not issue a verbal warning to Djokovic despite the loudly audible expletive, which was followed by an angry glare. A sloppy 10th game in the deciding set saw him trailing love-40 on serve, and the eighth-seeded Ruud received the victory on his third match point. Ruud and the 12th-seeded Tsitsipas are chasing their first titles of the year and 11th overall.

The record 24-time men's Grand Slam champion Djokovic still hasn't won a title this year, and remained on 98 in his glittering career. Sinner, who has three titles in 2024, looked in control in the deciding set when he led Tsitsipas 4-3 with a service game to follow. But he called for a medical timeout during the changeover and a trainer massaged his right knee and thigh. Although a smiling Sinner shared a joke with the trainer, things got more serious in the next game when Tsitsipas broke his serve at the fifth attempt to level the score. Sinner limped a little at the end of the next game and clutched the hamstring area of his left leg, then had both legs massaged. His movement was restricted in the ensuing game, and Tsitsipas clinched victory on his first match point when Sinner's backhand from the back of the court went long as he struggled for balance. "He is one of the toughest opponents I have faced so far and to find ways when there weren't that many, I am proud of that," Tsitsipas said. American actress Zendaya, British actor Josh O'Connor and other cast members from the tennis movie "Challengers" were among the crowd enjoying the sunshine at Monte Carlo Country Club. Italian fans crossing the nearby border made Sinner feel at home, but Tsitsipas enjoys strong support here after winning in 2021 and 2022.

IPL 2024, MI vs CSK: MS Dhoni set for potential Wankhede Stadium farewell

- Eoin Morgan said that Arshdeep Singh is as good as Bhuvneshwar Kumar
- PBKS pacer Arshdeep Singh impressed with a four-wicket haul against SRH
- Arshdeep Singh moved to 3rd spot in Purple Cap list with 8 wickets

New Delhi. There will be a sea of yellow at the Wankhede Stadium when MI host CSK in the first and only El Clasico of IPL 2024 league stage on Sunday. It might turn out to be a momentous occasion at the iconic venue as MS Dhoni is set to likely walk out for one last time at the Wankhede Stadium as a professional cricketer. CSK and MI only meet once in the league stage of IPL 2024 and the playoffs and the final have also not been scheduled in Mumbai. The man, who oversaw one of the most glorious chapters of Indian cricket history when he hit the World Cup-winning six on April 2, 2011, has

enjoyed incredible support nationwide over the last two seasons even as speculation about his IPL future has been rife. And Mumbai will roar for the former India captain for probably one last time in what promises to be a blockbuster contest on Sunday, April 14.

Memories must have gushed back when MS Dhoni was spotted posing with the World Cup 2011 trophy on the eve of the IPL 2024 match. As the former India captain walked out for training, he made sure he got a glimpse of the World Cup trophy at the BCCI headquarters at the Wankhede Stadium. Dhoni was even seen presumably adjusting the position of the trophy on the trophy cabinet in his own inimitable style. Dhoni has played 13 matches for India at the Wankhede Stadium, the most by any player from the country. And the one that stands out is the big World Cup final 13 years ago. Promoting himself to No. 4, one of his many masterstrokes as captain, Dhoni hit a match-winning 91 off 79 balls in a sensational partnership with Gautam Gambhir to help India chase down 275 against Sri Lanka. And he finished it with that iconic six. Dhoni has seats named after him as the Mumbai Cricket Association, in



before, during and after the IPL 2024 contest. MS Dhoni has not yet opened up about his future in the IPL. Even when he spoke after lifting the trophy last year, the 42-year-old said he would want to return to play the IPL for "at least one more season" as a return gift to his fans. However, there are enough suggestions that IPL 2024 might be his last as a player in the league. The 5-time champion handover of captaincy to Ruturaj Gaikwad on the eve of their opening match in Chennai, hinting at the start of a transition period. Also, the vintage long hair does hint at an imminent big call from the superstar cricketer.

2023, immortalised the part of the Wankhede Stadium where his winning six landed on that fateful evening.

In the IPL, Dhoni has played 27 matches at the Wankhede Stadium, hitting 392 runs with a fifty. He has hit 17 sixes at the iconic venue and has struck at 116.37 for the Super Kings.

LAST DANCE AT WANKHEDE?

MS Dhoni might be calm and composed on the outside, but the CSK superstar will have trouble handling his emotions if he gets an opportunity to walk out to the middle at the Wankhede Stadium with the bat on Sunday. Regardless, the decibel levels are going to go through the roof whenever he is spotted

from the superstar cricketer. Dhoni has looked fitter and leaner when compared to last year. The wicketkeeper-batter underwent surgery to treat a long-standing knee issue after having managed throughout last season. Dhoni has been nearly flawless with the gloves. Dhoni has gotten opportunities to bat only thrice in the season and he took fans down memory lane during his whirlwind knock of 37 off 16 balls in Visakhapatnam. CSK fans cheered even when the team lost as they were thrilled at the sight of Dhoni smashing them into the stands.

Jitesh Sharma not PBKS vice-captain? Coach Bangar clears confusion after RR loss

- Sam Curran led PBKS in the match against RR
- Bangar has revealed that Jitesh isn't the vice-captain of PBKS
- RR defeated PBKS by 3 wickets on Saturday

New Delhi. PBKS coach Sanjay Bangar has cleared the air regarding the confusion surrounding Jitesh Sharma being vice-captain of the side, as Sam Curran led them during the loss to RR on Saturday, April 13. Curran, who had led Punjab last year during the IPL, stepped in to fill for Shikhar Dhawan after the PBKS skipper had to miss the home match on Saturday due to an injury. Jitesh had appeared for the captain's seminar meeting and many assumed that he had been given the role of being the deputy to Dhawan for the 2024 season. However, seeing Curran leading the team against RR

left a lot of fans stunned as they wondered what had happened to the PBKS wicketkeeper and his position as the vice-captain of the side. Coach Bangar revealed during the post-match press conference that



Jitesh isn't actually the designated vice-captain of the team.

Though was always Sam Curran as PBKS vice-captain, Bangar went on to say that people may have got the impression that Jitesh was the deputy as he had attended the captain's seminar meeting. The PBKS coach

said that the thought was always that Curran would be the vice-captain of the team as he had led the side in IPL 2023. "Jitesh Sharma is not the designated vice-captain of the Punjab Kings. The impression might have been that due to the captain's seminar meeting at the start of the IPL. But the thought was always that since Sam Curran had led the team in the previous season, he would be the vice-captain.

Why did Curran not attend the captain's seminar instead of Jitesh?

Bangar would also reveal that Curran didn't attend the captain's seminar in Chennai ahead of the IPL as he had arrived late from UK and they wanted to have a few sessions with him.

Sam was late to arrive from UK and we wanted to have a few sessions with him and so we could not send him to Chennai for the inauguration of the season," said Bangar. Curran's return as skipper of PBKS was a sour one as RR would beat them in the final of the game by 3 wickets to hand Punjab their 4th loss of the campaign.

Bruno Fernandes double earns unconvincing Manchester United 2-2 draw vs Bournemouth

Manchester United needed two penalty decisions to salvage a 2-2 draw at Bournemouth in the English Premier League on Saturday, although the point did little to boost its chances of Champions League soccer next season. United was largely outplayed and trailed 2-1 when a shot by Kobbie Mainoo from outside the area was deflected onto the arm of Adam Smith. Referee Tony Harrington pointed to the spot even though the ball was traveling away from the goal and the Bournemouth player had little time to react. Bruno Fernandes converted the 65th-minute penalty for his second goal of the game to secure a point for United, but it was another unconvincing performance from Erik ten



Hag's side that is unlikely to quell speculation about the manager's future. Harrington initially awarded Bournemouth an injury-time penalty when Ryan Christie collided with United defender Willy Kambwala as he was running into the box, but a VAR review ruled the foul happened just outside the area. United still has a slim chance of securing Champions League qualification but couldn't take full advantage of fifth-placed Tottenham's loss at Newcastle earlier. United is 10 points behind fourth-placed Aston Villa and Tottenham with six rounds to go. The Champions League's new format next season means five teams from the Premier League could qualify for the competition. Dominic Solanke gave Bournemouth the lead after shrugging off Kambwala to break into the area and then slotting a low shot past André Onana.

Fernandes equalized by volleying in his second effort from close range but it took only Bournemouth five more minutes to restore its lead as Justin Kluivert was allowed to waltz into the United area unchallenged and beat Onana at his near post. Milos Kerkez had a great chance to make it 3-1 before halftime but headed against the crossbar, and United was then on the right side of the two penalty decisions in the second half. Bournemouth were in 12th place, safe from relegation but seemingly with little chance of earning European qualification.

MI vs CSK: Toss will play massive advantage in 'battle of nerves', says Robin Uthappa

NEW DELHI. MI and CSK will face each other in the group stage of the Indian Premier League on Sunday, 14 April. MI are slowly getting back in the groove and have won two back-to-back matches in the competition. CSK on the other hand, are coming off a victory at home against KKR, but have been poor while travelling away from home.

Speaking ahead of the game former India cricketer Zaheer Khan felt that MI could be threatening due to the momentum they have found in the last two matches of the Indian Premier League. In their previous game of the IPL, MI thrashed RCB by chasing down 197 runs in just 15.3 overs with 6 wickets in hand. Every MI batter slammed the RCB bowling, with Suryakumar Yadav being the standout of them all - batting at a SR of 273+. No fan will want to miss this game since they are only playing once in the league phase. MI have shown how threatening they can be with the momentum that they have. CSK are always up for a challenge," Khan said on Jio Cinema.

There will be nerves during MI vs CSK: Uthappa

Former cricketer Robin Uthappa, on the other



hand, felt that MI vs CSK could turn out to be a battle of nerves as the one winning the toss might have a massive advantage in the fixture. "I think there will be nerves, but both teams have played in Wankhede quite a bit. The one who wins the toss will have a massive advantage, whoever chases in the



game will have the upper hand," Uthappa concluded.

CSK are currently in the 3rd position in the points table with 3 wins from 5 matches, while MI sit at the 7th spot with 2 wins. A win for MI on Sunday will drastically change the complexion of the points table.

Blessing and curse: Hetmyer on double-edged finisher's role in IPL 2024

Shimron Hetmyer saved Rajasthan vs PBKS

- Hetmyer wins the POTM award for his 10-ball 27\*
- RR return to winning ways in the IPL.

Mullanpur Rajasthan sneaked past PBKS in a final over thriller at the Mullanpur Stadium on Saturday, 13 April. RR were saved by Shimron Hetmyer's 27\* off just 10 balls, where the batter kept his nerve and chased down 10 runs in the final over against Arshdeep Singh. Hetmyer won the player of the match award for his terrific innings which brought Rajasthan back to winning ways in the Indian Premier League 2024

Speaking after the game, Hetmyer said that it was a blessing and curse to be a finisher in the tournament as things were so unpredictable



in the final few overs of the game. On the day, Hetmyer was under pressure after missing the first two balls of the final over but managed to pull off a terrific victory for the Jaipur-based franchise.

"I practice hard. I try to back myself for batting

in these situations in the nets. I try as much as possible in the nets. I try my best to hit sixes. Sometimes, it comes off; sometimes, you can't. Happy to pull off a victory for my team tonight," Hetmyer said in the post-match presentation ceremony.

At one point in time, it seemed like RR had made a mess of a simple 149-run chase after they opened with uncapped Mumbai spinner Tanush Kotiyan. Kotiyan, who plays as a spin bowling all-rounder for Mumbai in the domestic circuit looked out of his depth and was only able to score 24 off 31 balls. Things got quite tricky for the RR finishers in the final over, but two cameos from Rovman Powell and Shimron Hetmyer was able to give them the edge that they needed to win the game. "After missing a couple of deliveries first up in the final over, Boult came to me and said you have got this, mate. Yeah, definitely. I would have taken a single if it was there on offer with two needed off two. We (Boult and me) spoke about it. Single or double whatever was offered at that stage, we were going for it. A full toss came my way, and I was like (chuckles), backed myself and went for the six," concluded the ever-smiling Hetmyer. With the win, Rajasthan remained at the top of the table with 10 points from 6 games.

# Ketika Sharma

Keeps It Stylish In Blush Pink Chikankari Kurta



Actress Ketika Sharma needs no introduction. She works primarily in Telugu films and has won millions of hearts with her exceptional acting abilities. Apart from this, she is also known for her outstanding fashion choices. She constantly manages to steal the spotlight whenever she steps out for an event or shares stills from her photoshoots on social media. Ketika Sharma recently shared a few images of herself and wished her fans a happy Ugadi. In the latest photos, Ketika slayed in a pink and white chikankari kurta set. She teamed it with matching leggings. She chose minimal makeup including perfectly-drawn eyebrows, brown eyeshadow, mascara-laden eyes, and a nude lip shade. She left her wavy hair open and rounded off her look with a pair of statement earrings, which perfectly suited her outfit. Sharing the stunning photos, she wrote, "Ugadi subhakankshalu and happy Navratri to everyone. Offering prayers on this auspicious occasion for a year filled with joy, love, compassion, kindness, and harmony for all of us." The pictures went viral in no time. Many fans showered compliments in the comment section. One of the users commented, "Happy Ugadi to you and your family." Another one added, "Nice." Many dropped red heart emojis. Ketika, who is quite active on social media, shared a couple of glamorous pictures from her photoshoot session earlier. She looked drop-dead gorgeous in a red outfit. Ketika was seen enjoying some alone time in a swing at a scenic location in Goa, amidst the green nature. She paired her red dress with white sneakers. She chose for a total makeup-free look and kept her hair open, giving it a slightly bold look. She added a heart and butterfly emoticon in the caption.

Ketika Sharma was last seen in the Telugu-language supernatural fantasy comedy film Bro, theatrically released in 2023. The movie is directed by Samuthirakani and features Sai Dharam Tej and Pawan Kalyan as the main leads, along with Ketika Sharma, Rohini, Priya Prakash Varrier, in the supporting roles. The project is backed jointly by People Media Factory and Zee Studios. It is a remake of the director's own 2021 Tamil film, Vinodhaya Sitham.



## 'Lakshman' Tusshar Kapoor And Shreyas Talpade's Golmaal Reunion Is Pure Joy



Film producer Anand Pandit hosted a grand reception party for his daughter Aishwarya and son-in-law Sahil. The ceremony was indeed a star-studded reception, drawing celebrities from the film industry and television. While Bollywood superstar Shah Rukh Khan made a stunning entry at the reception party, the event also saw a few epic reunions including Golmaal stars Shreyas Talpade and Tusshar Kapoor. In a video going viral, the actors were seen posing happily for the media as the paps requested the two "Lakshmans" to come together. Shreyas and Tusshar shared a warm hug before posing for pictures. While Shreyas Talpade was the first one to enter the venue with his wife Deepti, he was later joined by Tusshar Kapoor, who gave him a warm hug.

Tusshar Kapoor was dressed in a black suit, while Shreyas Talpade chose a purple kurta pyjama. Videos and pictures of the duo are going viral on social media, with fans loving their chemistry. In the meantime, the reception party also saw old co-stars Emraan Hashmi and Mallika Sherawat's heartwarming reunion at the venue. The actors who reportedly had a fallout during the shoot of their 2004 film, Murder, seem to have buried the hatchet as they met each other and also posed for pictures. Mallika looked gorgeous in a pink outfit, while Emraan looked dapper in his black suit. Many others including Shah Rukh Khan, Manoj Bajpayee, Abhishek Bachchan, Taapsee Pannu, Adah Sharma, Suniel Shetty, Ayushmann Khurrana, Rajkumar Rao and others also attended the event. Shreyas Talpade And Tusshar Kapoor To Reunite For Horror-Comedy Having already entertained audiences with their outstanding comic timing in the Golmaal series Shreyas Talpade and Tusshar Kapoor are all set to reunite for Sangeeth Sivan's upcoming horror-comedy film, Kapkapiii.

## Karan Johar Calls Akshay Kumar-Tiger Shroff's Bade Miyan Chote Miyan A 'Must-Watch'



Akshay Kumar and Tiger Shroff starrer action thriller film Bade Miyan Chote Miyan opened to mixed responses from the audience and the critics. Bollywood celebs including director Siddharth Anand and actress Genelia D'Souza recently heaped praises on the film. Now, filmmaker Karan Johar also joined in and showered appreciation on the Akshay-Tiger starrer, calling it a "must watch". Jo shared a poster of the film Bade Miyan Chote Miyan on his Instagram story and captioned it, "A must watch festive bonanza! With action on the highest and the hugest level. The 2 miyas make for a rocking duo!!! @akshaykumar @tigerjackieshroff." Helmed by Ali Abbas Zafar, the film also starred Prithviraj Sukumaran, Manushi Chhillar, Sonakshi Sinha and Alaya F in pivotal roles.

Produced by Vasu Bhagnani and Jackky Bhagnani, Bade Miyan Chote Miyan has minted Rs 36.33 crore worldwide on its opening day. While announcing the film's first day collection, Jackky shared a post captioning, "#BadeMiyanChoteMiyan conquering your hearts and te box office in true REAL ACTION style". The film marked the first on-screen collaboration of Akshay and Tiger and faced a big Bollywood clash with Ajay Devgn's sports biopic, Maidaan. Talking about their upcoming projects, Akshay will be next seen in Sarfira. It is an official Hindi remake of the National Award winning film Soorai Pottu, which starred South actor Suriya in the lead role. Apart from this, the Khiladi actor also has Sky Force, Khel Khel Mein, Housefull 5, Singham Again and the multi-starrer Welcome..To The Jungle in his kitty. Tiger, on the other hand, will be next seen in the fourth instalment of his hit franchise Baaghi, and he will also be seen joining director Rohit Shetty's cop universe, Singham Again. Talking about KJo, his last directorial was Rocky aur Rani Kii Prem Kahaani, which starred Ranveer Singh, Alia Bhatt, Jaya Bachchan, Dharmendra and Shabana Azmi in the crucial roles. While the film received good responses from the audience, the director is yet to announce his upcoming project.

# Malaika Arora

Flaunts Ample Cleavage As She Steps Out In Town



Malaika Arora is the epitome of fashion and fitness. The stunning model and dancer is known to exude glamour with her immaculate sense of style. She was recently photographed in around Mumbai oozing effortless charm and hotness in a white dress, showing off her curves. A paparazzi account posted a video of Malaika today and it went viral in no time. The actress looked glamorous in a white dress. She completed her look with a black bag and bold red lipstick. She also opted to wear a statement necklace. Malaika Arora also accessorised her look with a pair of statement black sunglasses. She looked radiant as she smiled at the paps while they took her photos.

Earlier this month, the actress made headlines when she recreated her iconic Munni Badnam song at an event recently and the internet cannot handle how gorgeous she looked. Malaika recently took the stage at an event with singer Shibani Kashyap. Shibani sang the iconic song from Salman Khan's Dabangg and Malaika recreated her catchy hook steps. Malaika looked gorgeous in a white, fitted gown.

She paired the outfit with statement earrings and tied her hair in a neat bun. The video was shared by a pap account on Instagram today and it went viral in no time. Malaika made a cameo appearance in Salman Khan's Dabangg as a dancer. The film was made by her ex-husband Arbaaz Khan. Malaika Arora is one of the biggest names in the entertainment world today. She is known for her killer dance moves and her impeccable style. The Bollywood star has us in awe of her appearance—from her gorgeous complexion and thick hair to her envied abs and toned body.

