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Terror strikes IAF convoy in J&K, one soldier dead

MOHIT KANDHARI ■ JAMMU

In a stark reminder to the security personnel in February 2019 ahead of the Lok Sabha polls, an Indian Air Force (IAF) vehicle convoy was attacked in the similar fashion by terrorists in the Poonch district of Jammu and Kashmir late Saturday evening in which one soldier was killed and four seriously injured. The attack occurred near Shashidhar when the convoy vehicles were moving towards Sanai Top in the district's Surankote area.

The local military units launched cordon and search operations to capture the terrorists behind the strike, the IAF statement read. This is the ninth major attack on security personnel since October 2021 in the region including this which comes right in the midst of 2024 General Elections. A similar terrorist strike took place in the Poonch district on December 21, 2023. Four Army personnel sacrificed their lives and three others received critical injuries after their vehicles were ambushed by the hiding foreign terrorists in the general area of Dera ki Gali in the Poonch district. Five Indian Army personnel including two officers were "killed in action" in the Kalakote forest area of Rajouri on November 22. Meanwhile, the audacious strike has once again raised question marks as none of the terrorists



Security personnel stand guard after a militant attack on army vehicles, in Poonch district on Saturday. A search operation is going on in the woods amid inputs about the presence of the militants

were neutralised. The attack comes three weeks ahead of polling in Anantnag-Rajouri Lok Sabha constituency. Poonch is part of Anantnag-Rajouri parliamentary constituency which is going to polls in the sixth phase on May 25. The border district of Poonch along with adjoining Rajouri has witnessed some of the major terrorist attacks over the past two years, signalling return of terror activities to the region, which was once cleared of terrorism and remained peaceful between 2003 and 2021. The officials said five security personnel were injured, two of them critically, when terrorists opened fire on two vehicles,

including one belonging to the IAF, near Shashidhar in the evening. The vehicles were moving towards Sanai Top in the district's Surankote area, they said, suspecting the involvement of the same group of terrorists who carried out an ambush on the troops in adjoining Buziaz on December 21 last year, that left four soldiers dead and three others injured. The Army truck bore the major brunt of the firing by the terrorists who were armed with AK assault rifles and are believed to have fled into the nearby forests, the officials said. Sources said reinforcements from the Army and police have been rushed to the area and a

massive search and cordon operation was launched to track down and neutralise the terrorists. Police assisted by paramilitary forces carried out searches in Poonch town since Friday following inputs about movement of suspected persons. However, no one was arrested during the operation, said officials. The latest incident in the Pir Panjal region followed the killing of a Government employee Mohd Razaq, brother of an Army personnel, by terrorists at village Kunda Top in Rajouri's Shadra area on April 22 and a village defence guard Mohd Sharief in Basantgarh area of Udhampur on April 28.

Police have released pictures of two Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) terrorists, including suspected Pakistani national Abu Hamza, involved in the murder of Razaq and announced a cash reward of Rs 10 lakh on his head.

The Buziaz ambush in December last year came weeks after a major gunfight in the Dharsmal belt of Bajimaal forest in Rajouri that left five Army personnel, including two captains, dead a month earlier.

Two terrorists, including a top commander of LeT identified as Quari, were also killed in the two-day long gunfight. Quari was said to be the mastermind behind several attacks, including the killing of 10 civilians and five Army personnel in the district.

The stretch between Dera Ki Gali and Buziaz on the boundary of Rajouri and Poonch is densely forested and leads to Chamrer forest and then Bhata Dhurian forest, where five soldiers were killed in an ambush on an Army vehicle on April 20 last year. In May last year, five more Army personnel were killed and a major-rank officer was injured in Chamrer forest during an anti-terrorist operation. A foreign terrorist was also killed in the operation. In 2022, five Army personnel were killed when terrorists carried out a suicide attack on their camp at Pargal in Darhal area of Rajouri district. Both the terrorists involved in the attack were eliminated.



Former Delhi Congress president Arvinder Singh Lovely along with three former MLAs — Rajkumar Chauhan, Naseeb Singh, Neeraj Basoya — and Delhi youth Congress chief Amit Malik join the BJP in presence of BJP leaders Hardeep Puri, Vinod Tawde and Delhi BJP chief virendra Sachdeva, in New Delhi on Saturday

Capital gains for BJP at Cong's expense/cost

RAJESH KUMAR ■ NEW DELHI

Turmoil within the INDIA bloc continued in the ongoing Lok Sabha polls as former Delhi Congress president and senior leader Arvinder Singh Lovely along with former Delhi Minister Raj Kumar Chauhan, former MLAs Neeraj Basoya, Naseeb Singh and Delhi youth Congress chief Amit Malik joined the BJP on Saturday. This will be the second innings of Lovely and Chauhan in the BJP while Basoya and Naseeb join the BJP first time. The development will boost the BJP prospects as these leaders will help to consolidate votes in Sikh, Dalit and Gurjar communities in the seven seats in Delhi which go to polls on May 25. The shock resignations of Lovely, Chauhan, Basoya and Naseeb came as a major blow to the party in the Capital. All the former Congress leaders slammed the Opposition party's

alliance with the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) in Delhi for the Lok Sabha polls as they joined the BJP in the presence of Union Minister Hardeep Singh Puri and party general secretary Vinod Tawde. Puri praised these leaders and said the BJP will utilise their services effectively. Delhi Congress' interim chief Devendra Yadav on Saturday described former party unit president Lovely, who joined the BJP, as an "opportunist". The Congress does not care about such people. It was strong before and will remain strong in the future, he said. Reacting to Lovely joining the BJP, Yadav said, "I put Arvinder Singh Lovely in the category of an opportunist person. This is not the first time that he has tried to sabotage the Congress." "The party does not care much about such people. The Congress was strong before and will remain strong in the future as well.

Priyanka's 'Shahenshah' retort to 'Shehzada' jibe

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI/DARBHANGA (BIHAR)/ LAKHANI (GUJARAT)

The continuous jibe by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Congress leader Rahul Gandhi by terming him "shehzada" (prince) reached a new zenith on Saturday with the latter's sibling and a general secretary in the grand old party, Priyanka Gandhi, calling the PM as "Shehanshah" (monarch). At the Lok Sabha poll rallies in Bihar and Jharkhand, Modi also used the term shehzada along with Rahul for the RJD leader and former Deputy Chief Minister Tejaswini Yadav. "There is a shehzada in Delhi (Rahul) and one in Patna (Tejaswini), both of whom think of the country as their fiefdom (jaagir)." While addressing a rally in Gujarat, Priyanka called Modi a "Shahanshah" who lives in a palace but is cut off from the public. It was her first response to the PM's 'shehzada' jibe for her brother Rahul. Asserting that India wants a strong leader at the helm to ensure security, Modi said his Government's surgical and air strikes had shaken Pakistan, and the neighbouring country's



Prime Minister Narendra Modi being felicitated during a public meeting for Lok Sabha polls, in Palamu, on Saturday

leaders are now praying that the Congress 'shehzada' becomes India's Prime Minister. "The new India knows how to enter enemy territory and strike... Shaken by the surgical and air strikes, leaders in Pakistan are now praying that the Congress 'shehzada' becomes Prime Minister of India... But, our strong nation wants a strong Government and leader," Modi said at the rally to campaign for BJP candidate from Palamu, V D Ram. While addressing a rally at Lakhani in Gujarat's

Banaskantha Lok Sabha constituency to canvass for her party candidate Geniben Thakor, Priyanka accused Modi of using the people of Gujarat for power and then forgetting them. "He calls my brother 'shehzada'. I would like to tell him that this shehzada walked for 4,000 kilometres from Kanyakumari to Kashmir to listen to your (people's) problems, met my brothers and sisters, farmers and labourers and asked how we can resolve their problems," she said.

Troubles mount for Revannas

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ BENGALURU/NEW DELHI

Former Karnataka Minister and Holenarsipura MLA HD Revanna was arrested from his father and former Prime Minister HD Deve Gowda's residence in Padmanabha Nagar on Saturday evening. The arrest came minutes after his anticipatory bail plea was rejected by the special court for elected representatives, Bengaluru. Meanwhile, a day after former Congress President Rahul Gandhi wrote to Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah requesting to extend all possible support to the

victims of sexual abuse allegedly by JDS MP Prajwal Revanna, the Karnataka Government on Saturday said there is a possibility of the CBI issuing a "Blue Corner Notice" against the Hassan MP, who is said to have left the father, HD Revanna is brother of Prajwal. High drama ensued as SIT teams, who had intelligence that MLA Revanna was at Gowda's residence, reached former Prime Minister's residence. The gates were not opened for them and even as the team was contemplating breaking in when Revanna opened the door of the house and walked out and gave himself up. Deve



Gowda was also in the house even as high drama ensued outside the gates. Revanna has been taken to the SIT office, in the CID headquarters in the city. Revanna has been arrested in an abduction case booked against him in KR. Nagar Police Station, Mysuru District on May 2. A victim of sexual abuse, who is seen in a video pleading to spare her but was raped, was allegedly abducted on the night of April 29, at the behest of Revanna allegedly to prevent her from testifying against his son. The victim's son had lodged a

complaint with KR. Nagar Police based on which a FIR was registered against Revanna and his close associate Satish Babu, who was arrested on May 3. Earlier in the day, the abducted woman was rescued by the SIT, hours before the court turned down the anticipatory bail plea of Revanna. She was allegedly held captive at the farmhouse of one Rajshankar, a close associate of Revanna, in Kalenahalli, Hunsur Taluk, Mysuru district. "Now we will proceed for arrest of Prajwal with appropriate measures. There is a possibility of CBI issuing a Blue Corner Notice" said State CMO.

India's first female wrestler on new ground

ARCHANA JYOTI ■ NEW DELHI

Hamida Banu, an "Amazon of Aligarh", whose legacy as a renowned India's first professional woman wrestler transcends the confines of the wrestling ring triumphing in over 300 matches mostly against male wrestlers, was honoured by Google doodle on Saturday with Google celebrating her achievements with online users. The US tech giant put up a colourful doodle of her image created by an Indian artist Divya Negi on its homepage. May 4 was chosen by Google as this was a special day in the life of Hamida in 1954 when she faced off against the well-known male wrestler Baba



Pahalwan, defeating him in a match lasting just one minute and 34 seconds. As Hamida emerged victorious, Baba Pahalwan deemed fit to retire from the wrestling profession as was declared by him. This victory solidified Hamida's status as a trailblazer in the world of wrestling.

Born into a family of wrestlers in Uttar Pradesh's Aligarh in the early 1900s, she defied societal norms and pursued her passion for wrestling during a time when women's participation in sports, particularly in wrestling, was strongly discouraged in India. Her journey is a testament to

her exceptional skill and determination with which she broke the male dominated field. Throughout her career in the 1940s and 1950s, Hamida competed in over 300 wrestling competitions, astonishingly against both male and female wrestlers. Her prowess in the sport earned her widespread recognition, both nationally and internationally. She even earned the nickname "Amazon of Aligarh" due to her remarkable performances. Notably, Hamida also competed against Russian woman wrestler Vera Chistilin and emerged victorious in a bout lasting less than two minutes, further

showcasing her exceptional talent and skill. Despite her success in wrestling, Hamida faced challenges, including attempts to dissuade her from pursuing her dreams. Her coach once reportedly beat her severely to prevent her from going to Europe for wrestling competitions, causing injuries that took years to heal. Hamida's journey, although marked by extraordinary triumphs and accolades, tragically ended in poverty. Despite her groundbreaking achievements as India's first professional woman wrestler, she faced financial struggles in her later years.

Puri Cong nominee takes Surat route out of party

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ BHUBANESWAR/NEW DELHI

Yet another Congress candidate this time for the Puri Lok Sabha constituency Sucharita Mohanty, has declined to contest the elections and returned the party ticket alleging lack of funding from the party. Mohanty, daughter of former Congress MP Brajmoohan Mohanty in a mail to AICC general secretary (organization) K C Venugopal on Friday claimed that her campaign in the Puri Lok Sabha constituency has been hit hard because the party has denied funding. She alleged that AICC Odisha in-charge Ajoy Kumar "categorically" asked her to fight from her own resources. Elections to the Puri Lok Sabha constituency will be held on May 25. She is third contestant of the Congress who backed out with first from Surat, Nilesh Kumbhani, who withdrew his



Congress's Puri candidate Sucharita Mohanty, ex-Indore candidate Akshaya Karanti Barn, and ex-Surat nominee Nilesh Kumbhani nomination enabling the BJP's Mukesh Dalal's unanimous win and the second was last week Akshay Bam of Indore who first withdrew his nomination as Congress candidate and then joined the BJP. "Surat marked the beginning of BJP's victory. In Indore, the Congress candidate came out in support of BJP," Defence Minister Rajnath Singh said on the withdrawal of nominations by Congress candidates.

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PUBLIC NOTICE: I, Dheeraj Mittal, S/O Sh. Jagdish Rai Mittal, resident of B-19, Lane-4, Phase-1, Sector-2, New Shimla(H.P.) declare that the conveyance deed No. J.R.1 dated 13.01.1986 in favor of Sh. J.R. Mittal, executed & registered before the Sub-registrar, Kasauli (H.P)...

Public Notice: I Meana Rani & Sushma Kumari resident of Ward No. 15 Gushalga Colony, Mar Mandi (Bathinda) inform that I have declared on 24.04.2024 at Police Station Mar Mandi...

COURT NOTICE: Kaura Judicial Magistrate First Class-13, Jalandhar. PRINCE METAL INDUSTRIES Vs. R.K. ENGINEERING. NACT/2334/2019. Publication issued to: R.K. ENGINEERING R/O 468/10, BEHIND BHAVANI KANTA, NAGARAM MAIN ROAD, HYDERABAD THROUGH SH. MAHESH MURARI SHETTY...

Public Notice: I, Sushma Kumari, W/O Sh. Kanwar Pal, R/O House No.746, Near Kanwar Dairy, New Prakash Nagar, Panipat, declare that my husband's name is Vasika No. 470 dated 19.04.1988...

Public Notice: I, Sushma Kumari, W/O Sh. Kanwar Pal, R/O House No.746, Near Kanwar Dairy, New Prakash Nagar, Panipat, declare that my husband's name is Vasika No. 470 dated 19.04.1988...

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BANK OF BARODA MSME Ludhiana Branch. See Rule 8(1) POSSESSION NOTICE (For Immovable Property). Whereas, the undersigned being the Authorized Officer of the Bank of Baroda under the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002...

Table with 5 columns: Name of Borrower/Guarantor, Description of the Immovable Property, Date of Demand Notice, Date of Possession, Amount as per Demand Notice. Includes entries for M/s Mahvir International and M/s Kavita Gupta.

Public Notice: I, Sushma Kumari, W/O Sh. Kanwar Pal, R/O House No.746, Near Kanwar Dairy, New Prakash Nagar, Panipat, declare that my husband's name is Vasika No. 470 dated 19.04.1988...

Table with 5 columns: Name of the Branch, Borrowers/Guarantors/Partners/Mortgagor, Description of Property/ies, Date of Non-Performing Asset (NPA), Date of Demand Notice, Amount Outstanding. Includes entries for Kesar Gani, Sunder Nagar, and Sunder Nagar.

Public Notice: I, Sushma Kumari, W/O Sh. Kanwar Pal, R/O House No.746, Near Kanwar Dairy, New Prakash Nagar, Panipat, declare that my husband's name is Vasika No. 470 dated 19.04.1988...

Bank of Baroda: Gole Digi Bathinda Branch B.S. N. L. Building Bathinda Punjab-151001. See Rule 8(1) POSSESSION NOTICE (For Immovable Property).

Table with 5 columns: Name of Borrower/Guarantor, Description of the Immovable Property, Date of Demand Notice, Date of Possession, Amount as per Demand Notice. Includes entries for M/s Shri Ram Impex, M/s Shikha, and M/s Vishwakarma.

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SWAMI DEVI DYAL INSTITUTE OF ENGG. & TECHNOLOGY. Village- GOLFURA, Tehsil- BARWALA, Distt.- PANCHKULA. Website: www.sddgpi.com. Faculty Requirement table.

OFFICE OF THE RECOVERY OFFICER - I/II DEBTS RECOVERY TRIBUNAL CHANDIGARH (DRT 3) Ground Floor SCO 33-34-35 Sector-17 A, Chandigarh. FORM NO. 14. By Regd. A/D, Dasti failing which by Publication.

Central Bank of India Versus SHIVA ENTERPRISES. (CD) SHIVA ENTERPRISES A PROPRIETORSHIP CONCERN OF SH. SHIV DUTT H NO 4236-2, S/O N. 2, GURU ANGAD ST GILL ROAD LUDHIANA. ALSO AT: B-21-4236/3, GURU ANGAD STREET, (ABADI SHIMLA PURI) NEW JANTA NAGAR GILL ROAD, LUDHIANA-141003.

Central Bank of India Versus SHIVA ENTERPRISES. (CD) SH. SHIV DUTT S/O SH. TRILOK MANI, PROPRIETOR M/S SHIVA ENTERPRISES, H/O NO. 4236/2, ST. NO. 2, GURU ANGAD ST, GILL ROAD, NEW JANTA NAGAR LUDHIANA (PUNJAB). 2ND ADDRESS:- R/O HOUSE NO. 1883, STREET NO. 1, JANTA NAGAR GILL ROAD, LUDHIANA (PUNJAB). 3RD ADDRESS:- B-21-4236/3, GURU ANGAD STREET, GILL ROAD, LUDHIANA-141003.

Central Bank of India Versus SHIVA ENTERPRISES. (CD) SMT. ARCHANA W/O SH. SHIV DUTT, R/O HOUSE NO. 4236/2, ST. NO. 2, GURU ANGAD ST, GILL ROAD, NEW JANTA NAGAR LUDHIANA (PUNJAB). 2ND ADDRESS:- R/O HOUSE NO. 1883, STREET NO. 1, JANTA NAGAR GILL ROAD, LUDHIANA (PUNJAB). 3RD ADDRESS:- B-21-4236/3, GURU ANGAD STREET, GILL ROAD, LUDHIANA-141003.

SALE NOTICE: The under mentioned Assets will be sold through auction on "AS IS WHERE IS BASIS" and "AS IS WHAT IS BASIS" for recovery of dues as per court orders, in the following cases-

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Government lifts ban on onion exports

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The government on Saturday lifted the ban on onion exports subject to a minimum export price of USD 550 per tonne, a decision that can help boost income of a large section of farmers and comes ahead of the Lok Sabha polls in key producing regions including Maharashtra. The government has imposed a minimum export price (MEP) of USD 550 per tonne (around Rs 46 per kg) as well as 40 per cent export duty. Taking duty into account, the shipments will not be allowed below USD 770 per tonne (around Rs 64 per kg). On December 8 last year, the Centre had banned onion exports in early December to control retail prices amid concerns over likely fall in production. During the last 4-5 years, the country annually exported between 17 lakh and 25 lakh tonnes of onions. Consumer Affairs Secretary Nidhi Khare said the lifting of the ban would not lead to any price rise in retail markets. "Prices will remain stable. If at all there is any increase, it should be very marginal," she said, while asserting that the government is committed to protect the interests of both consumers and farmers.

Earlier in the day, the directorate general of foreign trade (DGFT) said in a notification that "the export policy of onions is amended from prohibited to free subject to MEP of USD 550 per metric tonne with immediate effect and until further orders." Last night, the finance ministry imposed a 40 per cent export duty. The decision assumes importance as it comes before the crucial Lok Sabha polls in key onion belts like Nashik, Ahmednagar and Solapur in Maharashtra. Farmers of this region have been demanding a lifting of the ban so that they can get a better price for their produce. Explaining the rationale behind the decision, Khare said the "ban on onion exports has been removed from today (Saturday) because the supply situation is comfortable and prices are stable in both mandies as well as retail markets." The modal price at Lasalgaon mandi in Nashik was Rs 15 per kg in April. She said the decision has been taken after considering the latest estimates of onion production in rabi season at 191 lakh tonnes, which is comfortable. Availability and



prices of onion in global markets were also factored in while taking this decision. The secretary said the monthly domestic demand of onion is around 17 lakh tonnes. "Lifting of the ban would also encourage the farmers to put more area under onions. The monsoon forecast is above normal," Khare said. The secretary noted that the decision has been taken after wider discussions with stakeholders. A high-level team also visited key onion producing belts in

Maharashtra to assess the ground situation. Khare also pointed out that the shelf life of onions is less and therefore a need was felt to export onions. The secretary said that the government is procuring 5 lakh tonnes of onions as buffer stock, so that it can intervene in the market in case of price rise. "We are continuously monitoring the prices of all essential food items. We will continue to keep a watch on the availability and price situation," she said.

A senior government official explained that there is an inter-ministerial committee (IMC) which reviews the prices, production, availability and exports of essential food items including onions. "So do not think of this as an isolated instance of decision making by IMC," the official said, when asked whether the decision has been made in view of general elections. The official said the IMC has been taking a series of steps in various commodities including wheat and rice to

boost domestic supply and keep prices under check. In March, the Union Agriculture Ministry released the data for onion production. As per the data, onion production in 2023-24 (First Advance Estimates) is expected to be around 254.73 lakh tonnes compared to around 302.08 lakh tonnes last year. This is due to a decrease of 34.31 lakh tonnes output in Maharashtra, 9.95 lakh tonnes in Karnataka, 3.54 lakh tonnes in Andhra Pradesh and 3.12 lakh tonnes in Rajasthan, the data showed. Last month, in an official statement, the Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution said the government has allowed export of 99,150 tonnes of onion to six neighbouring countries of Bangladesh, UAE, Bhutan, Bahrain, Mauritius and Sri Lanka. The Congress last month accused the Narendra Modi government of "callously neglecting" Maharashtra's onion farmers affected due to the ban on onion exports and said that its manifesto promises a predictable import-export policy to prevent such catastrophic last-minute policies being imposed on farmers.



NCLT registers 43 per cent jump in debt resolution cases: IBBI

PTI ■ KOLKATA

Among several bottlenecks, the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Board of India (IBBI) declared 2023-24 as a landmark year, with the National Company Law Tribunal achieving a significant 43 per cent increase in resolutions, jumping from 189 cases last year to 270 this year. The IBBI is expected to submit a report to the government over the next 2-3 months for including "mediation" in the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC), which is currently under discussion and scrutiny. The regulator is also working on prepackaged insolvency for large corporate cases, which is only allowed in MSME cases as of now. For the first time in a year, the number of outputs has increased from the number of inputs, reducing the pendency across India, said Sudhaker Shukla, an IBBI whole-time member, while addressing the CII organised 7th Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code conclave. He said that despite bottlenecks in the last seven years, resolution of 3.5 lakh crore was achieved, and 27,000 applications worth Rs 10 lakh crore were withdrawn, making the IBC a powerful tool for debt resolution in the country. Shukla stated that the law has evolved over time and that the interventions to improve it have been remarkable. "In 2023-24, around 12 amendments and 86 interventions have been made in the IBBI within a single year. This portrays that we are responding to market requirements to bridge the

gaps," he said. He further added that a sectoral approach has been adopted to address unique problems for a speedy resolution, like in real estate. "We are trying to follow the sandbox approach. The recent amendments were made on real estate where project-wise resolution was made, keeping the allotted houses from liquidation was a big step forward in a sectoral approach," Shukla said. Speaking about the demand for mediation and prepacks for insolvency for large accounts, Shukla said it was currently under scrutiny and in the next 2-3 months, it will be submitted to the government. He further said prepacks for large accounts were also under consideration as they aim for speedy resolution. Prepackaged insolvency involves negotiating and agreeing on a resolution plan between the debtor and its creditors before going into formal bankruptcy. P Santhosh, Managing Director of NARCL, the government-backed bad bank, asserted that a delay in resolution will deteriorate the quality of the asset, making revival difficult. "There are multiple factors contributing to this delay, and to avoid it, coordination with financial creditors is crucial. The concept of Prepack insolvency is yet to be adopted. However, many practitioners have discussed that this is one of the tools that can be extended to larger corporate disputes. Initially, there could be a promoter-led resolution plan, which can be improved over time," he said.



Air India reduces cabin baggage allowance to 15 kg for lowest fare segment

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Loss-making Air India has reduced the free cabin baggage allowance to 15 kilogram from 20 kilogram for the lowest economy fare segment on domestic flights. The changes have been made in the menu-based pricing model fare families that were introduced by the Tata Group-owned Air India last August, with the airline saying that a one-size-fits-all approach is no longer ideal. There are three fare families - Comfort, Comfort Plus and Flex -- that offer different levels of benefits and fare restrictions at various price points, an airline spokesperson said on Saturday. With effect from May 2, the free cabin baggage allowance for the 'Comfort' and 'Comfort Plus' categories has been reduced to 15 kg from 20 kg and 25 kg, respectively. Prior to the introduction of the fare families concept, passengers on Air India's domestic flights were allowed to carry 25 kilograms of cabin baggage free of any additional charge. "On domestic routes in Economy Class, both 'Comfort' and 'Comfort Plus' fare families now provide 15 kg baggage allowance, while 'Flex' provides 25 kg allowance. "The Business Class baggage allowance on domestic routes ranges from 25 kg to 35 kg.

The free baggage allowance on international flights varies from market to market," the spokesperson said. In other domestic airlines also, passengers are allowed to carry 15 kg of cabin baggage without additional charge. The Air India spokesperson said the fare families are designed to let passengers choose the kind of fare and services that best suit their requirements, given that travellers today have varied preferences, and a one-size-fits-all approach is no longer ideal. Elaborating on the proposition, the spokesperson said that for example, the price difference between 'Comfort Plus' and 'Flex' fares would typically be around Rs 1,000 in a domestic sector like Delhi-Mumbai, with the 'Flex' fare providing the value of nearly Rs 9,000, including 10 kilograms extra baggage and zero change or cancellation fees. The introduction of fare families is in response to customer feedback and Air India's own comprehensive study. It is also benchmarked against the offerings of relevant competition in each of the markets we have introduced it in, the spokesperson added. Tata Group has embarked on an ambitious plan to revive the fortunes of the loss-making Air India, which it had acquired from the government in 2022.

JK Bank reports highest ever annual profit of ₹1,767 crore for FY24

PTI ■ SRINAGAR

Jammu and Kashmir Bank on Saturday reported its highest-ever annual profit at Rs 1,767 crore for 2023-24. Its Managing Director and CEO Baldev Prakash said the net profit surged 48 per cent compared to the previous fiscal. "Beating its own highest-ever record of profits achieved only last year, the net profit surged in fiscal 2023-24 by 48 per cent to achieve its record profit figure of Rs 1,767 crore," Prakash told PTI after the bank's annual results for FY 2023-24 were released bank here. He said the bank will be sharing the historic profits with its shareholders by



making the highest dividend payment of around Rs 236.75 crore this year. The bank witnessed a 10 per cent increase in its total income to Rs 6,029.17 crore

from Rs 5,502.09 crore. It had posted a profit of Rs 1,197 crore last fiscal, which was the highest profit till last year. Prakash said the bank's asset

quality has improved by bringing the gross non-performing assets to a decadal low of 4.08 per cent, while the net non-performing assets to 0.79 per cent. With a provision coverage ratio (PCR) at 91.58 per cent, J&K Bank has reiterated its commitment to prudential provisioning and risk mitigation. On the business growth, Prakash said the bank's total deposits rose 10.44 per cent year-on-year to Rs 1,34,774.89 crore as of March 31, 2024, from Rs 1,22,037.74 crore recorded a year ago. Its net advances rose 14 per cent to Rs 93,762.51 crore in Q4 for FY2023-24 from Rs 82,285.45 crore a year ago.

Tata Renewable signs pact with SJVN for 460 MW clean energy project



PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Tata Power Renewable Energy Ltd (TPREL) on Saturday said it has signed an agreement with state-owned SJVN Ltd to set up a 460 MW Firm and Dispatchable Renewable Energy (FDRE) project. An FDRE plant enables supply, assisting power

distribution companies (discoms) in fulfilling their Renewable Purchase Obligations (RPOs) and Energy Storage Obligations (ESOs). "The plant, designed to meet the 460 MW FDRE requirement, integrates solar, wind, and battery storage technologies to ensure efficient energy dispatch during peak hours, thereby stabilizing the grid," it said.

The plant is expected to generate nearly 3,000 million units (MUs) of power and offset 2,200 million kgs of CO2 emissions annually, TPREL said in a statement. "This partnership with SJVN Ltd will witness the deployment of sustainable energy solutions from TPREL. It will go a long way in meeting the green energy objectives of SJVN Ltd," said Deepesh Nanda, CEO and Managing Director, Tata Power Renewable Energy Ltd. With this addition, the total renewables capacity of TPREL has reached 9,421 MW (PPA capacity is 7,978 MW) including 4,906 MW projects under various stages of implementation. The company's operational capacity stood at 4,515 MW, which includes 3,485 MW solar and 1,030 MW wind power.



CDSL Q4 profit doubles to ₹129 crore

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Leading depository CDSL on Saturday said its net profit doubled to Rs 129 crore for the three months ended March 2024. It had posted a net profit of Rs 63 crore in the same quarter a year ago, Central Depository Services (India) Ltd (CDSL) said in a statement. Total income rose 86 per cent to Rs 267 crore in March quarter 2023-24 from Rs 144 crore in the year-ago period. For entire financial year 2023-24, the depository clocked a net profit of Rs 420 crore,

marking a surge of 52 per cent from the preceding year. Total income stood at Rs 907 crore in FY24, a growth of 46 per cent. CDSL had over 11.56 crore demat accounts in March this year. "We remain committed to empowering market participants with digital services like ASBA, e-AGM, eDIS, and Margin pledge mechanism. These tools enhance capital market efficiency and security, and our sustained business and financial growth is a result of the trust placed in us by the

stakeholders of the capital markets," Nehal Vora, MD & CEO said. The board also recommended a final dividend of Rs 19 per equity share for FY24, subject to approval of shareholders. Additionally, a special dividend of Rs 3 per equity share was recommended, bringing the total dividend payout to Rs 22 per equity share. This is subject to approval of shareholders. CDSL facilitates holding and transacting in securities in the electronic form and settlement of trades on stock exchanges.

BUSINESS BRIEF

DR ACHARYA TAKES NSIC CMD CHARGE
Dr. Subhansu Sekhar Acharya took over the charge of Chairman-cum-Managing Director (CMD), The National Small Industries Corporation Ltd. on May 2, 2024. Prior to his present assignment, Dr. Acharya was the Chief General Manager, Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI), New Delhi. Dr. Acharya is a Ph.D in Management, Post Graduate in Science (M.Sc.), a Post Graduate in Business Administration (MBA) and a Certified Associate of Indian Institute of Banking & Finance (CAIIB). He has experience of over 3 decades in various facets of MSME Financing and Development including Credit, SME Rating, Risk Management, Bills Financing, New Product Development, Business Planning, Entrepreneurship Development, Innovation financing, Micro-Finance, Start-Up mentoring etc.

TATA POWER-DL ANNOUNCES WINNERS OF 'GREEN WARRIORS 2.0'
Tata Power Delhi Distribution Limited (Tata Power-DDL), a leading power utility supplying electricity to a population of 8 million in North Delhi has announced the winners of "Green Warriors 2.0", - a sustainability awareness initiative. The first edition of the "Green Warriors" campaign focused on inspiring young minds on environmental conservation and saw an amazing response. In line with Tata Power-DDL's commitment to fostering sustainable practices, this campaign series is aligned with the "Urja Arpan" initiative and was run from December 2023-January 2024. The initiative is aligned with India's ambitious goal of reaching Net Zero emissions by 2070 and 50 per cent of electricity requirements from renewable energy sources by 2030.

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Indian paper industry has urged the government to provide degraded land on a long-term lease to paper mills for pulpwood plantation to address raw material shortage and boost rural employment. The industry has highlighted that a large chunk of degraded land is available in the country, and even if a small fraction of that is allotted on lease to paper mills for pulpwood plantation, it can be a game changer for industry growth and greening of India. The paper industry has faced shortage of wood, the key raw material, and it is the biggest concern for mills in India, the Indian Paper Manufacturers Association (IPMA) said in a statement on Saturday. While the paper industry is continuing with agro forestry efforts, pulpwood plantations need to be enhanced rapidly to meet the requirements of domestic industry, the IPMA

Paper industry urges Government to allot degraded land for pulpwood plantation

stated. "Even if a fraction of the degraded land available in the country is provided on lease to the industry for pulpwood plantation, the same can be a game changer for growth of domestic manufacturing, rural empowerment and greening of India," it said. "We have been trying to convince the government that this land can be given to the paper industry on long-term lease. It will provide the desired quantity of wood not only to paper mills, but to several wood-based industries while generating a huge amount of rural employment," IPMA President Pawan Agarwal said. If domestic agro forestry is



not encouraged, import of wastepaper and wood pulp will have to be further increased causing heavy strain on the industry and

economy, Agarwal added. The IPMA also said that for procurement of wood, the industry has worked incessantly with over 5 lakh

marginal farmers over the last several years and has successfully brought over 12 lakh hectares of largely degraded land under

plantations through agro forestry. The IPMA estimates a growth of 6-7 per cent per annum in paper consumption in the country for many years. Suitability of paper as biodegradable and sustainable material for packaging, especially for replacing single-use plastic is boosting the usage of paper across different sectors of the economy, IPMA mentioned. It stated that the move will also help reduce carbon footprint of the country. India needs to bring an additional 25-30 million hectares of degraded land under forest and tree cover to create an additional carbon sink of 2.5-3 billion tonne of carbon dioxide equivalent by 2030, it added.



ROHIT TO LEAD INDIAN JUNIOR MEN'S HOCKEY TEAM FOR EUROPE TOUR

PTI ■ NEW DELHI
Defender Rohit has been named captain of the Indian junior men's hockey team, with Shardanand Tiwari as his deputy in a 20-member squad which will tour Europe from May 20-29. India will play five matches across three nations -- Belgium, Germany and the Netherlands -- during the tour, as part of Hockey India's initiative to help the team gain exposure and experience. "We have been training hard at

our camp and have developed an understanding of each other's gameplay," said captain Rohit in a Hockey India release. "It will be wonderful to play together against teams from other nations to help us build on our game and get better through this kind of exposure." India will play their first match on May 20 against Belgium in Antwerp, before playing the same opponents in Breda, Netherlands on May 22. India will then play the Netherlands' Club team Bredase Hockey

Vereniging Push in Breda on May 23, followed by a game against Germany on May 28 in Germany. They will then return to Breda to play Germany once again on 29th May in their final match of the tour. India vice-captain Shardanand Tiwari said, "This will be a wonderful experience and will go a long way in evaluating where we stand as a team and as individual players. "It will be a great way to figure out our strengths and what areas we would need to touch upon."

SQUAD:
Goalkeepers: Prince Deep Singh, Bikramjit Singh.
Defenders: Shardanand Tiwari, Yogember Rawat, Anmol Ekka, Rohit, Manoj Yadav, Talem Priyo Barta.
Midfielders: Ankit Pal, Roshan Kujur, Bipin Billavara Ravi, Mukesh Toppo, Manmeet Singh, Vachan H A
Forwards: Sourabh Anand Kushwaha, Arshdeep Singh, Gurjot Singh, Mohd. Konain Dad, Dilraj Singh, Gursewak Singh.

Savanier scores sweet volley, then gets red card as Montpellier beats Toulouse

AP ■ PARIS
Teji Savanier scored a goal-of-the-season contender and was sent off as Montpellier won at Toulouse 2-1 in the French league. The veteran midfielder caught a cross from the left with the sweetest of volleys to put the visitor ahead after 26 minutes. Thijs Dallinga equalized for Toulouse with a powerful header seven minutes later and Savanier's sending off 20 minutes into the second half looked to have swung the game in the direction of the home team. However, Khalil Fayad scored the winner with 10 minutes left when he slipped between Toulouse defenders to rifle home.



A minute later, Toulouse center back Rasmus Nicolaisen was red-carded for a second bookable offense. The win extended Montpellier's unbeaten run to seven games and lifted it into 10th

place, above Toulouse on goal difference. **LENS BEAT LORIENT:** Lens deepened Lorient's relegation worries after winning 2-0. Lens remained in sixth spot and in contention for a European place next season. Lorient was second to last, one point ahead of Clermont and three behind Metz, both of whom have a game in hand. The bottom two clubs are relegated and the third to last goes into a playoff. The first goal came from a woeful lapse in concentration by Lorient's Tiemoué Bakayoko. The former Chelsea midfielder was caught in possession just yards from goal and Elye Wahi made no mistake with only the goalkeeper to beat.

Williams brothers star for Athletic Bilbao in win over Getafe

AP ■ MADRID
Brothers Iñaki and Nico Williams combined twice to give Athletic Bilbao a 2-0 victory over Getafe in the Spanish league. Nico got an assist in each half and Iñaki scored twice before the team was reduced to nine men and coach Ernesto Valverde was red-carded, too. Athletic closed the gap to three points behind fourth-placed Atletico Madrid. The top four in La Liga go into the Champions League. Atletico has five games to play, including at Mallorca on Saturday. Athletic has four



games remaining. As has happened so often this season, the Williams brothers stood out for the Basque club. With 26 minutes gone, Niko played a short pass to Iñaki and from 20 meters out he curled the ball in. Six minutes into the second period, Nico played a defense-

splitting pass to his brother who swept the ball home with aplomb. Athletic was then punished for indiscipline. Yeray Alvarez was sent off for handball after 58 minutes and fellow defender Aitor Paredes joined him 11 minutes from time. Getafe threw men forward and was awarded a penalty with two minutes remaining but Mason Greenwood, one of the home side's stand-out performers, saw his spot kick saved by the outstanding Unai Simón. Athletic coach Valverde was shown a red card for protesting the spot kick decision.



Jordan Spieth got elbowed back in fairway, but missed cut at hometown Nelson

AP ■ MCKINNEY (US)
Jordan Spieth got elbowed back into the fairway on the 16th hole Friday, and still missed the cut in his hometown tournament. Spieth's wayward drive at the 495-yard par 4 went well right into the trees before suddenly rolling back into the fairway. The ball had ricocheted off the arm of a male spectator sitting with a group under the trees. After getting to his ball in the fairway 223 yards from the hole, Spieth took out another ball that he signed and walked over to the spectator who had a significant welt just above his right elbow. Even after that fortunate

bounce, Spieth's approach shot landed on the left fringe and he ended up with a bogey that dropped him to 4-under par. He parred his last two holes for a 1-under 70 at the CJ Cup Byron Nelson, and finished at 4-under 138, two strokes below the cut line. It was only the second time in his 12 Nelson starts that Spieth missed the cut. Before not playing last year because of a wrist injury, Spieth was the runner-up to K.H. Lee in 2022, and had his only other top-10 finish the previous year. His other missed cut was 2017. The Dallas native made his first PGA Tour start at the Nelson as a 16-year-old amateur in 2010, when he finished tied for 16th.

Mohammedan SC's David, Aizawl's Lalrinzuala among 26 India probables for World Cup qualifiers

PTI ■ NEW DELHI
Four I-League players were among a 26-member probables list announced on Saturday by India coach Igor Stimac for the FIFA World Cup 2026 Preliminary Joint Qualification round two matches against Kuwait and Qatar. Mizoram's 23-year-old forward David Lalhlansanga, who played a key role in Mohammedan Sporting's I-League triumph and securing a promotion to the top-tier ISL, has found his name in the forward lineup boasting the talismanic Sunil Chhetri.

Aizawl FC's forward Lalrinzuala Lalsakania was also included alongside Real Kashmir defender Muhammad Hammad and Inter Kashi midfielder Edmund Lalrindika. With Mohun Bagan and Mumbai City FC playing the ISL final, players of the two ISL heavyweights are expected to be named in the second list of probables to be announced "in a few days", the AIFF stated. India will begin training camp in Bhubaneswar on May 10. The Blue Tigers will take on Kuwait in Kolkata on June 6 before travelling to face Qatar in Doha on June 11 in their last



two matches of Group A. India are currently placed second in the group, with four points from as many matches. The top two teams in the group will qualify for round three of the FIFA World Cup Qualifiers and also book their berth at the AFC Asian Cup Saudi Arabia 2027.

INDIA PROBABLES:
Goalkeepers: Amrinder Singh, Gurpreet Singh Sandhu.
Defenders: Amey Ganesh Ranawade, Jay Gupta, Lalchungnunga, Muhammad Hammad, Narender, Nikhil Poojary, Roshan Singh Naorem.
Midfielders: Brandon Fernandes, Edmund Lalrindika, Imran Khan, Isak Vanlaluatfela, Jeakson Singh Thounaojam, Mahesh Singh Naorem, Mohammad Yasir, Nandhakumar Sekar, Rahul Kannoly Praveen, Suresh Singh Wangjam, Vibin Mohanan.
Forwards: David Lalhlansanga, Jithin Madathil Subran, Lalrinzuala Lalsakania, Parthib Gogoi, Rahim Ali, Sunil Chhetri.

Asian U-22 & Youth Boxing: India pugilists confirm record 43 medals

PTI ■ ASTANA (KAZAKHSTAN)
Akash Gorkha, Vishvanath Suresh, Nikhil and Preet Malik advanced to the U-22 men's finals as Indian boxers confirmed an unprecedented 43 medals across categories at the ASBC Asian U-22 & Youth Boxing Championships here on Saturday. Senior national champion Akash extended his dominating run in the 60kg category with a 5-0 win over Ilyasov Sayat of Uzbekistan in the semi-finals. Reigning youth world champion Vishvanath (48kg) won 5-2 against Baricuatro Bryan of Philippines after the bout was reviewed. The other two semi-finalists, Nikhil (57kg) and Preet (67kg) also won their bouts with a similar 5-2 scoreline after a review against Mongolia's Dorjnyambu Ganbold and Almaz Orozbekov of Kyrgyzstan respectively. Meanwhile, it was a heartbreak for M Jadumani Singh (51kg), Ajay Kumar (63.5kg), Ankush (71kg), Dhruv Singh (80kg), Jugnoo (86kg) and Yuvraj (92kg) as they ended their campaigns with bronze medals following their losses in the U-22 semis. Nine women boxers, including Olympic-bound Preeti (54kg), will be in action in the U-22 semi-finals. The U-22 finals will be played on Tuesday. In the youth women's semi-finals played on Friday night, reigning junior world champion Nisha (52kg) and Asian youth champion Nikita Chand (60kg) along with five other boxers entered the finals. Lakshay Rathi (92+kg), Annu (48kg), Yatri Patel (57kg), Parthavi Grewal (66kg), Akansha Phalasalwal (70kg) and Nirjhara Bana (+81kg) were defeated and ended their campaigns with bronze medals in the youth category. The youth finals will now have 14 Indian pugilists with seven each in both men's and women's category fighting for the gold. The finals for the youth category will be played on Monday. Overall, Indian boxers have secured 43 medals in the prestigious tournament, which has been witnessing high-voltage action with the presence of 390-plus boxers from more than 24 countries, including strong boxing nations such as China, India, Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan fighting for the medals across 25 weight categories.

IOC imposes 15 years ban on former Olympic power broker Sheikh Ahmad of Kuwait

AP ■ GENEVA
The International Olympic Committee has suspended former Olympic power broker Sheikh Ahmad of Kuwait for 15 years after his conviction for forgery was upheld on appeal this year at a Swiss criminal appeals court. Sheikh Ahmad al-Fahad al-Sabah's sanction for "a betrayal of his IOC Member's oath, as well as the seriousness of the damage to the IOC's reputation" was approved by the Olympic body's executive board in a decision seen by The Associated Press. The 15-year suspension starts from the date of his previous ban for a separate issue of unethical conduct, in an Olympic Council of Asia election. That was a three-year sanction imposed on July 27 last year. The sheikh, who turns 61 on the day after the Paris Games close in August, will be 74 when the latest punishment expires. Under IOC rules his membership ends at age 80. However, the Olympic Charter allows the annual meeting of IOC members to expel a colleague for betraying their oath. Sheikh Ahmad led the Olympic Council of Asia, created by his father in Kuwait, before joining the IOC in 1992. He was a longtime close ally of current IOC president Thomas Bach, whose election in 2013 he campaigned for. The Kuwaiti royal "self-suspended" as an IOC member after being indicted in Geneva in 2018. He also stepped aside as leader of the global group of national Olympic bodies, ANOC. In January, Sheikh Ahmad, his English



former lawyer, a Kuwaiti aide and a lawyer based in Geneva had their convictions from September 2021 upheld on charges linked to orchestrating a sham arbitration case a decade ago. The appeal court judges in Geneva changed the sheikh's prison sentence to a suspended sentence of two years deferred for a probationary period of three years. In 2013, he presented video footage to Kuwaiti authorities alleging to show a former prime minister, Sheikh Nasser al-Mohammed al-Sabah, and a former speaker in parliament, Jassim al-Kharafi, discussing a coup. They could have faced

Chawrasia slips to tied 24 at Maekyung Open

PTI ■ SEOUL
SP Chawrasia carded a sloppy 2-Over 73 to slip down to tied 24th at the GS Caltex Maekyung Open here on Saturday. In the third round of the Asian Tour event, he is now 1-under 212 and 10 behind leader Junghwan Lee after being tied 13th a day earlier. Other Indian player Ajeetesh Sandhu who made the cut was tied 51 after 74 on the par-71 course. Lee birdied three of the last five holes to take the third-round lead to give

himself a chance of improving upon his joint second place finish here last year. The Korean, whose nickname is 'Ironman' because of his strong iron play, carded a five-under-par 66 to lead on 11-under at the Namseoul Country Club by a shot from Chonlatit Chuenboonngam, the leader at the start of the day, who returned a 70. Canadian Richard T Lee (69) and Hongtaek Kim (71) from Korea are another two strokes back - in the sixth event of the Asian Tour's season.



This year's Asian Tour Qualifying School winner Kristoffer Broberg (71) from Sweden and Korean Kyunnam Kang (73) are an additional two shots behind. The 32-year-old Lee started the day three behind the leader Chonlatit and trailed the Thai for much of the day. However, Chonlatit, who had a two-shot lead after nine, made a costly double bogey on the par-four 16th - where he left a chip short and failed to get up and down - while Lee was able to take to the front thanks to birdies on 14, 15 and 17.

Haryana, Madhya Pradesh win in National Women's Hockey League

PTI ■ RANCHI
Haryana and Madhya Pradesh beat Bengal and Maharashtra respectively at the National Women's Hockey League 2024 (Phase 1) here on Saturday. While Haryana defeated Bengal 4-3 in a thriller to register their third consecutive win, Madhya Pradesh got the better of Maharashtra 2-1 in another match. In the opening match of the day, Bengal was off the blocks and running in no time with Silbiya Nag (2nd minute) converting a penalty corner early in the game. Selestina Horo (19th) then doubled their lead with a penalty corner conversion in the second quarter. Haryana captain Neelam (20th) quickly retaliated with a penalty corner conversion to reduce the deficit as Bengal led 2-1 at halftime. Nandni (41st) converted another penalty corner for Haryana to level the scores before Shashi Khasa (43rd) converted yet another penalty corner to help Haryana take the lead. Pinki (46th) scored a field goal early in the final quarter to take



Haryana to a 4-2 lead. Shanti Horo (51st) scored a field goal for Bengal to create a possibility of a comeback but Haryana held onto their lead to emerge winners. In the day's second showdown, Madhya Pradesh defeated Maharashtra 2-1. After a quiet first half without any goals, Madhya Pradesh broke the deadlock late in the third quarter with a field goal from Aanchal Sahu (45th) to take the lead. Maharashtra captain Ashwini Kolekar (50th) scored a field goal in just under five minutes into the final quarter to level the scores. However, Swati (54th) put Madhya Pradesh back in the lead with a field goal. Thereafter, Madhya Pradesh played a tight defence game to retain their one-goal lead. Later in the day, Mizoram will take on Manipur, while Jharkhand will lock horns with Odisha.

Maharashtra captain Ashwini Kolekar (50th) scored a field goal in just under five minutes into the final quarter to level the scores. However, Swati (54th) put Madhya Pradesh back in the lead with a field goal. Thereafter, Madhya Pradesh played a tight defence game to retain their one-goal lead. Later in the day, Mizoram will take on Manipur, while Jharkhand will lock horns with Odisha.



CSK EYE PAYBACK IN SECOND SUCCESSIVE CLASH AGAINST PBKS

PTI ■ DHARAMSALA

Defending champions Chennai Super Kings will look to set their house in order and get back to winning ways when they face an upbeat yet unpredictable Punjab Kings for the second time in a row in the IPL here Sunday. Just three days back, PBKS outclassed CSK by seven wickets at Chepauk, considered their fortress. The two losses in the last three games at home have put Chennai in a spot. They are placed fifth on the table with 10 points and the five-time champions will hope the change of venue would bring a change in fortune as well with just four games to go to seal their place in the knockout stage. CSK's failure to push the pace in the middle overs against the spin duo of Harpreet Brar and Rahul Chahar saw them post a below-par score of 162-7. Their batting has become too dependent on skipper Rituraj Gaikwad and six-hitting machine Shivam Dube and the moment one of them fails, it puts the pressure on others who have not been consistent in bailing out the team.

While Gaikwad hit his fifth 50-plus score of the season to hold it together, veteran batter Ajinkya Rahane once again failed to capitalise on the starts, while Ravindra Jadeja and Sameer Rizvi struggled against spin. CSK also has been hampered by the health and fitness concerns of their pacers, including Deepak Chahar, who limped off holding his hamstring after bowling just two balls and is likely to miss the reverse clash against PBKS. The absence of their frontline bowlers, Matheesha Pathirana (niggle) and Tushar Deshpande (flu), also didn't help matters the other day. Add to that the dew factor which took the spinners out of the equation and PBKS romped home comfortably. While Richard Gleeson made his IPL debut in the last match, CSK might bring back Mukesh Choudhary. Punjab Kings, on the other hand, have seen a resurgence as they registered back-to-back wins to re-ignite their playoffs hopes. En route to their win over CSK, Punjab became the second team after Mumbai Indians to beat the defending champions five times in a row and they



will fancy their chances. Punjab remains an unpredictable side as although it notched up wins over Gujarat in Ahmedabad, Chennai at Chepauk and also chased down a T20 record score against KKR, it has struggled at home against RR, SRH and Gujarat. With back-to-back wins, PBKS climbed to seventh spot with 8 points and will need to carry the momentum to salvage their slim hopes. Jonny Bairstow, who made a hundred against KKR, will be their go-to man, while Rilee Rossouw, Shashank Singh and Prabhsimran Singh too have to raise their hands. PBKS' bowling department has experienced names such as Kagiso Rabada, Harshal Patel, Arshdeep Singh and Sam Curran and they need to be consistent. Rabada was brilliant the other day but others have gone for runs. If PBKS has to repeat their performance against CSK then the spinners -- Harpreet Brar and Rahul Chahar - will have to deliver once again. Interestingly, the first IPL match in Dharamsala stadium was a clash between Chennai and Punjab in 2010. The venue offers a lot of runs and dew remains a factor, making it an enticing contest.

TEAMS (FROM):
CSK: Rituraj Gaikwad (c), MS Dhoni (wk), Aravelly Avanish, Ajinkya Rahane, Shaik Rasheed, Moeen Ali, Shivam Dube, RS Hangargekar, Ravindra Jadeja, Ajay Jadav Mandal, Daryl Mitchell, Rachin Ravindra, Mitchell Santner, Nishant Sindhu, Deepak Chahar, Tushar Deshpande, Mukesh Choudhary, Mustafizur Rahman, Matheesha Pathirana, Simarjeet Singh, Prashant Solanki, Shardul Thakur, Maheesh Theekshana and Sameer Rizvi.
PBKS: Shikhar Dhawan (c), Matthew Short, Jonny Bairstow (wk), Prabhsimran Singh (wk), Jitesh Sharma (wk), Sikandar Raza, Rishi Dhawan, Liam Livingstone, Atharva Taide, Arshdeep Singh, Nathan Ellis, Sam Curran, Kagiso Rabada, Harpreet Brar, Rahul Chahar, Harpreet Bhatia, Vidwath Kaverappa, Shivam Singh, Harshal Patel, Chris Woakes, Ashutosh Sharma, Vishwanath Pratap Singh, Shashank Singh, Tanay Thyagarajan, Prince Choudhary, Rilee Rossouw.



Hardik Pandya looks flattened, drained and under pressure: Aaron Finch

PTI ■ MUMBAI

India vice-captain Hardik Pandya looks drained, flattened, under pressure and Mumbai Indians looks like a confused unit under him, reckons former cricketers Aaron Finch and Graeme Smith as five-time champions continue to struggle in the IPL. Pandya once again walked out to loud boos around the Wankhede Stadium here on Friday during Mumbai Indians' yet another disappointing outing, which they lost by 24 runs to Kolkata Knight Riders. Mumbai Indians had begun the contest on a positive note by snaffling five quick wickets to leave KKR reeling at 57 for five, but the visitors fought back to post 169 on the board. In reply, Mumbai crashed out for 145 in 18.5 overs despite Suryakumar Yadav's 56. Pandya lasted only two

deliveries as Mumbai's batters once again cut a sorry figure on a two-paced track to succumb to their eighth defeat in 11 matches this season. "He just looks really flattened at the moment, he looks really drained and someone who is feeling the pressure. I feel for him; I have been in that situation myself where everything that you're trying personally doesn't seem to be working," Finch was quoted as saying by Star Sports. "When the team isn't performing as well, that is a very difficult place to be. It one thing where you're not performing and the team is winning — that is something you'd take as a captain. You bear all responsibility as captain for the team's performance and that is an incredibly hard place to be, particularly in this competition where it's so brutal," Finch added.



The former Australia opener conceded Mumbai Indians should have got over the line chasing 170 at a ground considered a haven for batters. "You would expect them to chase 170 with the dew falling at the Wankhede stadium. It's a beautiful place to bat, generally. Yes, it was a bit uncharacteristic in the way it turned a bit more two-paced

than what we have seen in the past," Finch said. South Africa's legendary captain Graeme Smith said MI have been a 'confused team' under Pandya with plenty of changes being made with the personnel. "Hardik has really struggled, he's looked like a man under pressure. That has created a little turmoil in the air, who

knows how that has affected the people. But even the batting lineup, they look like they're confused," he said. "Tilak Varma and Naman Dhir were fighting in the middle order, Dhir was batting at No 3, and Hardik moving all over the place. They should have had Tilak at (No) 3, Sky at (No) 4, and Hardik batting at (No) 5 throughout the season, with David at (No) 6. Then, figure out your bowling units," he said. "All over and all around, they've been a very confused team this season and it's been hugely disappointing from one of the mega franchises of the IPL. A lot of people in the MI fanbase and camp will be very sore," Smith added. Former Australia vice-captain Shane Watson was also critical of Pandya's captaincy calls, saying MI allowed KKR back into the game by not deploying their best bowler when they

were 57 for five. "To keep bowling Naman Dhir when it was so critical (KKR were at 57-5), it was a big mistake from the leadership of the Mumbai Indians, whether it was Hardik Pandya making the decisions or information coming from the sideline," Watson told Jio Cinema. "(Jasprit) Bumrah had bowled only one over at that stage, so (they needed to) get him in the game again to try and break the partnership of Venkatesh Iyer and Manish Pandey, but they didn't. They just let them cruise and build momentum in the partnership." "Before you know it, they hadn't played a shot in anger and that built the partnership to a point where it was too late when he came in. There were a lot of baffling decisions from the Mumbai Indians' leadership, which is going to be hard to explain," Watson added.

IPL playoffs hopeful LSG wary of dominant KKR's all round firepower

PTI ■ LUCKNOW

Lucknow Super Giants will have to bring their 'A' game forward to prevail against a dominant Kolkata Knight Riders when the two teams, marching towards IPL playoffs, clash here on Sunday. With an all-round win by 24 runs over Mumbai Indians propelling the second-placed KKR to 14 points - one more step closer to qualification - the pressure will be on KL Rahul's LSG to find a way past the threat that Shreyas Iyer's side poses. Lucknow Super Giants are placed just one rung below KKR at number three with 12 points from 10 matches with six wins and four defeats. With a rampant Sunrisers Hyderabad (12 points) hot on their heels at fourth, followed by the dangerous Chennai Super Kings (10 points) and Delhi Capitals (10 points) on the points table, LSG will be under pressure to avoid getting into a mid-table battle as the race for the final-four has intensified. LSG were far from convincing in their previous assignment at Ekana Stadium here as they were made to work hard in a modest 145-run chase by Mumbai Indians, winning by just four wickets in the last over. Skipper Rahul and all-rounder Marcus Stoinis have been the key players for LSG and it remains to be seen if South Africa veteran Quinton de Kock is brought back in place of young Arshin Kulkarni, who opened the innings in the last game. Even though he has gone without a fifty since the first game, Nicholas Pooran has consistently notched up crucial scores but LSG's overall finishing skills is under question following their struggles against Mumbai Indians. LSG seemed to have made

heavy weather towards the end giving MI a real sniff by losing wickets in a flurry and completing their modest chase with some stutter. Ayush Badoni has had a subdued run in this IPL and the uncapped Indian player would be keen to shrug off the rustiness. LSG's bowlers will also face a stern test with none of them making a real dent with individual brilliance in this IPL. LSG are also likely to be without express pacer Mayank Yadav. Having lost only three of their 11 matches so far, it has taken something out of the ordinary to stop KKR in their tracks. CSK used a spin-friendly surface to eke out a win in Chepauk, while RR's all-round class helped them pip KKR in a high-scoring thriller. If anything, KKR's bowling woes were exposed when Punjab Kings recorded IPL's highest chase ever against them, but Iyer's side has emerged strongly from that setback with two impressive wins. However, having trumped MI on a sluggish wicket which exposed their batting frailties, KKR will aim for a much improved performance with the bat. For the second time in this IPL, KKR batters struggled when the ball did not come on to the bat and they were forced to change gears in order to build a strong target. KKR slipped to 57 for five at one stage and ran the risk of being shot out for a paltry total, but Venkatesh Iyer (70) and Manish Pandey (42) came to the rescue with a fine 83-run stand. Iyer and Pandey were forced to soak pressure, curb their attacking game and look to farm the strike to build a recovery path for their side before the bowlers carried out a perfect job to secure a 24-run win.

Size of stadiums not relevant in modern day cricket: Ashwin



PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The evolution of batting in modern day is such that incredible power-hitting is slowly rendering the size of cricket stadiums irrelevant, world's premier off-spinner Ravichandran Ashwin said on Saturday, fearing that the trend could make the game pretty one-sided. Ashwin's comment have come in the context of unreal totals being put up by teams in this year's IPL. Sunrisers Hyderabad posted totals of 277 and 287 while scores of 250 have been surpassed by teams this season with liberal help from the extra batter in the form of Impact Substitutions. "The stadiums built back in the day are not relevant in the modern day. The bats that were used back then were also used for gully cricket. With LED boards of the sponsors being used, the boundary has come in by 10 yards," Ashwin, one of the leading voices in global cricket, said during a promotional event for his IPL

team Rajasthan Royals. Ashwin feels that if the trend continues, the game will become very one sided in coming times. "It is tilting too far on other side, which will make someone's misery your great time. Bowlers will need mental boost," the straight-talker said. However Ashwin also firmly believes that a good bowler will find his footing and stand out among the pack with his innovations. "Game shifts balance and you have to find answers. There's clear window to differentiate yourself," Ashwin said. He is happy that Rajasthan Royals' bowling attack hasn't suffered a lot unlike some of the other teams even though he marvels at the ball striking abilities of the batters over time. "If you look at the Industrial rate (average runs conceded by teams in IPL), we have gone for less. We defended 180 in Jaipur in one game which was huge," he said "But you are certainly marvelled at ball-striking. At

the end of the day spectators come to watch fours and sixes," said India's second highest wicket-taker in Tests. For someone with a very sharp sense of humour, Ashwin had a hilarious take on size of boundaries this season. "The ground in Jaipur, the boundary is huge. When I saw that, Dhruv Jurel said: 'Bhaiyya this is so big' and I told him 'Dhruv, atleast let it be somewhere'. Watching that, I felt at this stage of my career, I would need a bicycle to reach the (Sawai Man Singh) boundary. "Then in the next stadium, I felt I could walk and the next I could run and then in one I felt if I spit my Chewing gum, it will cross the boundary rope for a six," said Ashwin. The Royals' bowling coach Shane Bond summed it up aptly. "For bowlers now, if you can bowl well, you can make a lot of money. Batting has evolved and bowling is catching up," the former New Zealand speedster said.



Mild back stiffness forced Rohit Sharma to play as impact sub in MI, KKR clash

PTI ■ MUMBAI

India captain and Mumbai Indians opener Rohit Sharma was forced to play as an impact sub in the IPL clash against Kolkata Knight Riders due to a "mild back stiffness," said leg-spinner Piyush Chawla. Playing as an impact sub, Rohit managed just 11 runs in 12 balls in the second innings during their 24-run loss against KKR, which has nearly put the five-time champions out of the IPL this year. "He just had a mild back stiffness so it was just a precautionary thing," Chawla told the media after the match here at the Wankhede Stadium. Mumbai's defeat was their eighth in 11 matches, essentially shutting the doors on the Hardik Pandya-led side and Chawla too conceded that it is only "pride" that they are left with to play for. "For the pride and the reputation, because sometimes when you enter on the field, you don't think whether you are going to qualify or you are not going to qualify," he said. "You have to play for your name and that's what we are playing for," he added. Chawla pointed MI's inability to attain momentum at any stage in this IPL as the reason behind their poor performance. "You must have often heard about that T20 is all about momentum and just that we didn't get that momentum going this season and it can

happen to any team," he said. "It's not like it's happening to us for the first time or any other team for the second time. It can happen to anyone and it's just that that momentum was not our way." The 35-year-old Chawla became IPL's second leading wicket-taker when he went past Dwayne Bravo on Friday to take 184 wickets. "It has been a beautiful journey because IPL started 17 years back and at that time nobody gave that much preference to the spinners, but now if you see that in top few wicket takers in India, especially all the spinners, Ashwin, Yuzhi, myself (are there), so it's a good feeling," he said. Chawla also praised Manish Pandey for delivering in a pressure situation while playing his first game this season. Pandey (42) added 83 runs for the sixth wicket with Venkatesh Iyer (70) as KKR posted 169 all out in 19.5 overs. "It was a good partnership and credit has to go to them because they batted beautifully. Well, T20 is something in which experience plays a big role, (which is) what we saw today. "When Manish walked in, maybe if somebody walks in who must have played few games, he would have panicked that runs are not coming. "But he read the situation and the way he handled the situation because if you see in starting, he was hardly going at run a ball. But later on, he knew that he has to stand there with Venky."

A NIGHT IN OSTELLO BELL

SHARED STORIES, SHARED SPACES



BY PAWAN SONI

After watching Kangana Ranaut's film, Queen which includes a scene where she stays in a hostel, I was intrigued and mentally noted to experience it at least once. This opportunity arose when I was traveling alone for work in Milan for a few days. Since my wife is not keen on such experiences, I could only do it while traveling solo. I myself was a bit hesitant and booked the hostel room for only one night post which I booked a luxury hotel room.

Staying in a hostel room with bunk beds shared by eight tourists from different countries and continents was an eye-opening experience. As someone accustomed to the privacy of hotels, the idea of sharing a room with strangers was initially daunting. However, the warmth and friendliness of my fellow travelers quickly put me at ease. Additionally, in India, we would never think of sharing a room with both guys and girls. Here, we were six guys and two girls sharing the dormitory room.

One of the most memorable aspects of my stay was the interactions with my roommates. Despite our diverse backgrounds, we found common ground in our love for travel and adventure. Each person had a unique story to share, from their reasons for travelling to their favourite destinations. I learned about different



cultures, traditions, and ways of life, broadening my perspective and igniting my curiosity about the world.

The hostel's facilities played a significant role in fostering a sense of community among guests. The small locked storage below the beds ensured that our belongings were safe, while the charging points were necessary for



the phone charging, individual reading lights provided convenience without disturbing others. The common bathroom, although shared, was always clean and well-maintained, a testament to the hostel staff's commitment to guest comfort and roommates ensuring to leave the washroom with the same hygiene level

they expected from others. The common kitchen was a hub of activity, with guests preparing meals and sharing recipes from their home countries. It was a delightful experience to taste dishes from around the world, each one infused with the flavours and spices of a different culture. The complimentary

fruits and groceries added a thoughtful touch, making us feel at home in this foreign environment. Beyond the practical amenities, the hostel's vibrant atmosphere made it a memorable stay. It served as a meeting point for young travellers, where friendships were formed over shared meals and late-night conversations. The hostel also organised social events, such as pub crawls and city tours, allowing guests to explore the city together and create lasting memories.

(Author is a food critic and founder of the Big F Awards. He can be reached at Pawan.Soni@indianfoodfreak.com)

EXPERIENCING CULTURE ONE COURSE AT A TIME

POP-UP DINNERS

The industry's evolving nature is fostering a culture of shared knowledge, with chefs and restaurants collaborating more than ever. While the permanence of specific formats, like pop-ups, remains uncertain, the spirit of collaboration is undoubtedly a mainstay. It's a dynamic era where working together isn't just a trend; it's a fundamental shift shaping the future of the culinary landscape.

BY RUPALI DEAN

Pop-up restaurants are like culinary jazz performances, where chefs create impromptu meals in unconventional settings, such as dining rooms or even courtyards. These temporary dining experiences allow chefs to experiment freely with their cooking skills within a confined timeframe and for a select audience. For example, Chef Vladimir Mukhin recently hosted famous Chef Joan Roca from El Celler De Can Roca at Krasota restaurant in Dubai. They worked together to create a unique culinary experience, exploring the deep stories behind well-known dishes. By combining different textures, ingredients, and flavours, they presented a special event in Dubai that highlighted the perfect blend of artistry in both appearance and taste. Roca's 'Memories of a Neighbourhood Bar' paired with Deyneka's 'The Light of The Past' set the scene. This dish, from El Celler de Can Roca's cookbook, honours the family's legacy. The three brothers learned cooking early at Can Roca, perfecting their skills. Inspired by Roerich's 'Himalayas,' Mukhin's Artichoke Curry and Coconut Rice reflect the painting's colours. The Black Cod with Plum and Fig drew from Aivazovsky's art, symbolizing a shipwreck survival. Five Senses Bon Bons by Jordi Roca at Casa Cacao concluded the feast magically, blurring reality and fantasy.

THE WORLD IS GETTING SMALLER AND MORE INCLUSIVE

Engaging in pop-up events presents chefs with a valuable chance to acquire new skills and engage in the exchange of culinary knowledge amongst peers in the industry. "Pop-ups are a great platform of exchanging ideas and sharing our cooking philosophies and techniques. It's a true example of how the world is getting smaller and more inclusive. It's a sense of pride when I get an opportunity to cook Indian food for an audience that may not be well educated about Indian Cuisine, or when Chefs of the most renowned restaurants around the world join us at Trésind Studio to share their cooking philosophy with our guests. In the end it's a celebration of culture and creating new friendships. The ideas and brainstorming during pop ups sometimes create dishes that eventually



CHEF JOAN ROCA WITH CHEF VLADIMIR MUKHIN AND HIS TEAM AT KRASOTA, DUBAI



CHEF JOAN ROCA AND VLADIMIR AT A POP-UP COLLABORATION IN KRASOTA, DUBAI



CHEF HIMANSHU SAINI AND CHEF JITIN JOSHI

become part of our menu", says Chef Himanshu Saini of Trésind Studio (1 Michelin star), Dubai. Traditionally, pop-ups served as a stepping stone for aspiring restaurateurs to showcase their cooking prowess and test new concepts. However, nowadays, some chefs view pop-ups as standalone ventures, using them to delve into and share their cultural culinary heritage. "I myself have been doing pop up around the globe as a guest chef and this year I would be hosting a guest chef every month in our Private room at the Crossing Dubai. I think it is a great way to show a different and unique style of food philosophy with another chef in the same kitchen. It's not only a great showcase of talent, but also a great learning for the team. I don't think this trend will pass soon and personally would like to see more chefs collaborating and coming together", adds Jitin Joshi Director of Culinary, Lemon Butter, Dubai, U.A.E

THE LEARNING MUST NEVER STOP

These gatherings often feel like a blend of educational sessions and personal memoirs, weaving intimate tales through cherished recipes and unique ingredients. "As a chef, it's important to never stop learning. We love inviting chefs from various backgrounds into

our spaces for 4-Hands collaboration events. It's an excellent way for us to learn from each other and discover new possibilities. We've been fortunate to have the opportunity to travel overseas and meet fantastic people, learning and experiencing entirely new cultures, cuisines and ingredients. I always try to bring a few of my team with me on these trips, I believe that travel helps to widen one's perspective and encourage accelerated growth. It's fulfilling for me to groom and provide opportunities for my team to learn", says Julien Royer Chef Owner- Odette (3 Michelin stars), Singapore. These modern chefs charge for their dinners, yet none are earning vast fortunes from them. They often promote their events on Instagram and sell tickets digitally. Regardless of the practical details, pop-up dining enables them to innovate and test ideas with a small group of guests, fostering a fleeting sense of community. In a time where personal narratives hold greater significance in art and conversations, pop-ups provide chefs with a platform to express, through cuisine, "This is my heritage. This is my identity."



"Disease is an experience of a so-called mortal mind. It is fear made manifest on the body"
— Mary Baker Eddy



Amid mounting concerns regarding Covishield's safety and the acknowledgment of potential adverse effects by its maker UK giant AstraZeneca, public unease is on the rise, with calls for accountability, says **ARCHANA JYOTI**

COVISHIELD'S SHIELD IN QUESTION

My CT scan result showed that they (doctors) had never seen anything like this before. Numerous blood clots were removed through surgery from my legs and lower abdomen, Alex Mitchell, a key litigant in the legal proceedings in the UK against British pharma giant AstraZeneca told a news channel in India about the side effects that he suffered after receiving the COVID vaccine.

Mitchell is not the only one who has been reeling under the side effects due to the COVID jab and taken up a legal battle against AstraZeneca over allegations linking its vaccine to fatalities and severe adverse effects.

The firm is facing at least 51 such cases and has recently conceded that its vaccine could, albeit exceedingly rarely, induce Thrombosis with Thrombocytopenia Syndrome (TTS), a medical condition characterized by abnormally low levels of platelets and the formation of blood clots.

With this admission by the UK pharma giant, in India, the Serum Institute of India (SII), headquartered in Pune, which was a licensee to AstraZeneca's vaccine formula may too find itself mired in potential legal ramifications with the parents of a young woman who died purportedly due to complications arising ten days post her inoculation with the vaccine in 2021 said that they are contemplating legal action against both SII and AstraZeneca.

Though a section of legal experts say that



BIG NUMBER

India's vaccination campaign began on January 13, 2021, administering Covaxin and Covishield. Covishield received approval for use in 49 other countries. As of April 29, 2024, India has administered 1,749,417,978 doses of Covishield, making it the world's largest vaccination program. India's vaccine arsenal during the pandemic included Covaxin, Covishield, Sputnik-V, Covovax, Corbevax, and ZyCoV-D, among others. Worldwide, 13.5 billion COVID-19 vaccines have been administered since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, according to science research organization Our World in Data. Around 71% of the world's population has received at least one dose of a Covid vaccine.

GLOBAL INSIGHT

According to global data on TTS available in the public domain, as of January 5, 2024, Canada had reported 89 cases of TTS, of which 56 cases were reported following vaccination with AstraZeneca's Vaxzevria/Covishield COVID-19 vaccine, and 24 cases were reported following vaccination with Pfizer-BioNTech's Comirnaty COVID-19 vaccine. Eight cases were also reported following vaccination with Moderna's Spikevax COVID-19 vaccine. In the U.K., 122 instances of TTS following the administration of the AstraZeneca vaccine have been reported as of November 2023.

OPP MAKES A GIBE

Where is the Thank You Modi ji banner now? Why are the PM and Health Ministry silent? Is this the reason why deaths due to heart attack at young age occur? Was this the reason why BJP took electoral bonds worth Rs 50 crore from Serum Institute? This issue is not a matter of politics but of safeguarding people's lives." Srinivas Bhadravathi Venkata, the National President of the Indian Youth Congress in a post on X.

monitoring and reporting of adverse events. Another netizen Parikshit Suri has emphasized on the rigorous testing and transparency in vaccine development and echoed widespread calls for accountability and scrutiny in the approval process.

Dr. A Rajkumar Sreenivasan's plea for informed consent highlighted the ethical dimensions of healthcare decision-making, emphasizing the need for individuals to have agency and autonomy in vaccination choices. Michelle Zeh's skepticism about vaccine necessity and safety shed light on broader concerns surrounding pharmaceutical influence and the importance of evidence-based decision-making.

Manish Kumar's observation of increased heart attacks post-vaccination prompted calls for comprehensive investigation and surveillance to ensure the ongoing safety and efficacy of vaccination programs. While many doctors have said that benefits outweighs the downsides Dr Sankha Shubhra Chakrabarti, Head-Geriatrics, IMS-BHU posted on X, @these genius Indian doctors who are self consoling by saying it occurs within few weeks and cannot after 3 years probably do not know how the AdenoV delivery system is designed to work.

Amidst these concerns and controversy over the safety aspects of the Covishield vaccine, the matter has now reached the Supreme Court on May 1, 2024, with a petition led by advocate Vishal Tiwari adding a layer of complexity and urgency to the discourse. Tiwari has sought the constitution of an expert medical panel to study the risk factors.

"More than 175 crore doses of Covishield have been administered in India. After Covid 19 there has been an increase in deaths due to heart attacks and sudden collapse of persons. There have been several cases of heart attack even in youngsters. Now after the document filed in UK court by the developer of Covishield, we are compelled to think on the risk and hazardous consequences of Covishield vaccine which have been administered to the citizens at a large number," the petition filed by advocate Tiwari says.

The plea points out that AstraZeneca, the company that developed the vaccine, has said that its AZD1222 vaccine against Covid-19, which was made under license in India as Covishield, could cause low platelet counts and the formation of blood clots in rare cases.

The petition says the medical panel should

be headed by an expert from AIIMS and supervised by a retired Supreme Court judge.

Tiwari has further sought directions to the Centre to establish a 'Vaccine Damage Payment System' for citizens or families who have suffered debilitating health setbacks or even deaths after taking the vaccine.

The plea has also called for strict action against the circulation of spurious Covishield, an offshoot of the AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccine, which underwent extensive administration across India.

However, SII, conspicuously headquartered in Pune, has remained reticent in response to the looming specter of legal action. Equally intriguing is the silence maintained by the Union Health Ministry, notwithstanding mounting apprehensions and criticisms voiced by recipients of Covishield on various social media platforms.

Delhi Health Minister Saurabh Bharadwaj has already raised the Centre's attention to these links, saying that it should work to urgently address the alleged side-effects of the Covidshield vaccine as millions of people in India were administered the shot during the Covid pandemic. Bharadwaj expressed concern over the alleged link between the vaccine's side effects and a series of sudden deaths in India, claiming that Covidshield was banned in several European countries, including Germany, France, Spain, Finland, Norway, and Denmark.

Despite the government's formation of a national committee to probe such occurrences, the determination of insufficient evidence linking her demise to the vaccine underscores the intricate challenge of establishing causality in rare adverse events. However, the narrative shared by individuals such as Govindan underscores the exigency for robust surveillance, reporting mechanisms, and support infrastructure to address post-vaccination complications comprehensively.

Against the backdrop of Covishield's legal conundrum, SII's competitor Hyderabad-based Bharat Biotech, has underscored the efficacy of its jab, Covaxin, saying that it was meticulously evaluated and efficacy trials were held within India.



Study confirms higher risk of very rare clot with AstraZeneca Jab

The Global Covid Vaccine Safety Project conducted an extensive analysis of adverse events associated with COVID-19 vaccines across multiple regions, including Argentina, Australia (New South Wales and Victoria), Canada (British Columbia and Ontario), Denmark, Finland, France, New Zealand, and Scotland. They employed a method called observed versus expected (OE) ratios to compare the number of adverse events reported with the expected baseline rates.

In simple words, this means first healthcare providers have a baseline 'expectation' of how many adverse events are likely given a certain number of vaccinated people, and compare it with the number of events reported to health systems. Expectations are formed based on experience with the rates of vaccination, and reactions observed historically. However, COVID-19 vaccination was an outlier event that saw billions of vaccines administered over a relatively short span. OE ratios greater than 1.5, indicating 50% more adverse reactions than expected, were identified as potential safety signals requiring thorough investigation. Notable findings included elevated OE ratios for Guillain-Barré syndrome and cerebral venous sinus thrombosis following the first dose of the ChAdOx1 vaccine. Additionally, acute disseminated encephalomyelitis showed a high OE ratio following the first dose of the mRNA-1273 vaccine. Increased OE ratios for myocarditis and pericarditis were also observed following vaccination with BNT162b2 (Pfizer/BioNTech), mRNA-1273 (Moderna), and ChAdOx1 (AstraZeneca/Serum Institute of India) vaccines.

In India, as of December 6, 2022, a total of 92,003 Adverse Events Following Immunisation (AEFI) were reported, accounting for approximately 0.009% of the population vaccinated against COVID-19. However, it's essential to note that the strength of adverse event reporting systems can vary

"There have been studies that show the baseline rate in European states (adverse events related to COVID-19 vaccines) is higher than Asia. This is a combination of both a better reporting system as well as physiological factors. Studies done in one country may not easily translate to another."
— CHANDRAKANT LAHARIYA
Physician and health policy expert

significantly between countries, influencing reported incidence rates. The study also highlighted differences in adverse event reporting rates between regions. For example, the affidavit submitted by the Indian government to the Supreme Court cited higher AEFI rates in the United States (0.2%) and the United Kingdom (0.7%) compared to India. These variations may be influenced by reporting system robustness and physiological factors. Despite confirming previously identified rare safety signals associated with COVID-19 vaccination, the study emphasized the need for further investigation to confirm associations and evaluate clinical significance. An affidavit by the government to the Supreme Court claimed that compared with India, nearly 0.2% of the people in the United States who received COVID-19 vaccines showed AEFI, as did 0.7% in the U.K.

These ratios are, however, significantly influenced by the strength of the adverse event reporting system in countries. This can significantly vary among countries. "While our study confirmed previously identified rare safety signals following COVID-19 vaccination and contributed evidence on several other important outcomes, further investigation is warranted to confirm associations and assess clinical significance," the study by the Global Covid Vaccine Safety Project said.

DOCTORS SPEAK

TTS is a very rare condition resulting from an abnormal immune response. While it has several causes, it has also been linked with adenovirus vector vaccines. The WHO has deemed the vaccine safe and effective for all individuals aged 18 and above. ...We are yet to fully understand the impact of coronavirus on people, also called long



Covid. The difficulty is to distinguish between the complications that are caused by Covid itself or the vaccine. That remains debatable. People who are vaccinated have an overall lower risk of complications such as post-Covid heart attacks and strokes among others.
— DR RAVI WANKHEDEKAR, Former national president of the IMA

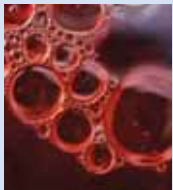
"Like many things in medicine, the exact mechanism for this is also unknown. It is an unusual immune reaction to a particular vaccine genre which is called as adenovirus vector vaccine. Adenovirus vectors are not disease-causing viruses but these are artificially fitted with the spike of the virus that



our immune system needs to fight. In the case of AstraZeneca's adenovirus vector vaccine, a chimpanzee adenovirus - ChAdOx1 - has been modified to enable it to carry the Covid-19 (SARS-CoV-2) spike protein injected into the muscles of humans."
— DR RAJEEV JAYDEVAN, Co-Chairman, IMA Covid-19 task force

Symptoms of TTS

A rare condition associated with Covishield, include severe headaches, abdominal pain, leg swelling, or shortness of breath, usually appearing two weeks post-vaccination. Timely identification and intervention are crucial in mitigating severe consequences.



SII may get clean chit in the case given it was a mere manufacturer of the jab, Venugopalan Govindan, bereaved father of the deceased Karunya has expressed profound dissatisfaction with AstraZeneca's belated admission, lamenting its timing vis-à-vis the lives already lost. He also castigated SII for its failure to suspend vaccine distribution following the restriction imposed by 15 European nations due to reported incidents of blood clot-related fatalities in March 2021.

Govindan has also implicated governmental agencies, regulatory bodies, and other stakeholders in the unfortunate demise of his daughter and numerous others post-vaccination. His sentiments have reverberated across social media platforms following AstraZeneca's acknowledgment of its COVID jab's potential to precipitate blood clotting.

Govindan spearheaded a petition titled 'Post-vaccination side effects - Blood clots, MIS-A, etc. Awareness was required' shortly after his daughter's tragic demise in 2021. As the petition gained traction, it served as a platform for individuals to share their own experiences, concerns, and opinions regarding COVID-19 vaccines.

For instance, one Shikha Bhalla, a netizen, has given her account of losing vision in her left eye due to a rare side effect underscoring the importance of thorough

The Japanese celebrate the Hanami, the festival of Spring, with as much gusto as we Indians do. SHOBORI GANGULI participates in the gastronomical delights accompanying this ancient ritual at Guppy right here in Delhi

CHERRY BLOSSOMS, CHEER AND CAMARADERIE



This week I had the great fortune to partake of the Hanami festival at one of Delhi's finest Japanese restaurants Guppy (part of the Olive Chain). This is cherry blossom season of spring in Japan, a time to mark the Hanami festival — a unique cultural tradition of viewing flowers in full bloom, an ancient ritual which serves as a Japanese reminder of the transience of nature, the blossoms a metaphor for life, draped in the immortal philosophy of hope and renewal.

And no festival in the world is complete without its attendant share of feasts and festivities. Guppy, in an earnest attempt to keep this old Japanese heritage alive and robust in a faraway land from Japan, in the very heart of India in Delhi, laid out a sumptuous fare of what would typically be a part of a Hanami dining spread.

Among the salads on offer — Artichoke & Melon, Acvocado, Beet & Edamame and Chicken, Avocado & Greens — my friend and I settled for the first one which was a refreshing mix of



marinated artichoke, grapes, and seasoned melon served atop crisp rocket leaves and greens in a spicy Japanese wofu dressing. This salad was truly refreshing and welcome on a hot summer day working in perfect symphony with our Shinzuku Sour cocktail of Gin, fresh gooseberry, peach soju and stillabunt.

Skipping the Sushi selection, which we Indians are now quite familiar with, we opted for the translucent Tobanjan-spiced Chicken Steamed Dumplings, the filling a burst of minced chicken in a Japanese spicy tobanjan chili paste served with a ponzu dip.

Perhaps it is me and my changed taste buds over the years or a conscious attempt by Japanese kitchens based out of India, the element of spiciness has notched up a bit from what was often termed as a "bland" taste emanating from traditional kitchens, which may suit the Japanese palate even today, in Japan and elsewhere in the world, but were not embraced with the same degree of enthusiasm one has watched with Italian, Spanish, Chinese, West Asian and Mediterranean spreads across continents.

The fact that Guppy was brimming with people, almost all tables occupied, on a busy working week day, is perhaps testimony to the fact that Japanese cuisine has certainly found an innovative way to work around the Indian palate and its natural inclination for well-spiced food.

From their Small Plates offering we went past the vegetarian Stuffed Tofu Katsu to the Crisp Chicken Parcel, an oven-baked phyllo parcel with ginger flavoured chicken accompanied by soy apple salsa and a yuzu miso sauce.

For the Mains, while my friend settled for the undoubtedly healthy and delicious Grilled Yuzu Khoso Fish, marinated in Jaenese yuzu khoso and herb salsa, grilled and served with lemon butter soy, I ventured into the now universally forbidden territory of red meat. The Grilled Marinated Lamb Chop came with seasonal vegetables and was served with red wine miso. I must admit that while the flavours of the grill settled rather smoothly on my palate, the meat itself was on the rare side and a tad stringy. Red meat requires adequate time to be rested in its marination for it to step delicately away from the bone. In my opinion, the Lamb Chop needed some more attention.

That said, the experience was a rather cheerful one, given that the Japanese dedicate as much time to the aesthetics of the inanimate as to the animate. Guppy is that cheerful, pretty, comfortable Japanese place one would like to hang around at, with friends or family. Here's wishing everyone a happy Hanami, the Japanese spring festival so similar to our own spring festival of Basant Panchami.

Gurugram's latest Culinary Contender



BY **PAWAN SONI**

Nestled between two established dining spots at Two Horizon, Marieta emerges as Gurgaon's newest culinary contender, overtaking the space vacated by well-regarded Italian eatery Artusi. Although the name "Marieta" which is a popular female name hails from Greece, the restaurant's global menu lacks prominent Greek offerings.

The start was a bit of a let down. Not being served a hard copy of the menu and asking diner to scan a barcode for the digital menu at a fine-dine restaurant with an excuse that they are new doesn't go well with me. May be I am an old timer who doesn't like reading the menu on mobile's small screen. The manager quickly impro-

vised and offered to share a b&w printed menu with which I was okay but it never came. However he later shared his laptop with me to read the menu. For a classy looking restaurant they can easily do with few Ipads if even after a month of their opening they are finding it difficult to get the printed menu.

I am here with my wife and like most men opt for "The Second Date". Don't get me wrong. It is a tequila and sake based cocktail with a bit of lychee and Jasmine tea. Its delightful aroma and soothing taste set a pleasant tone for the evening. As I perused the drinks menu, I noticed a variety of tequila and mezcal cocktails, signaling an interesting trend. Just as gin has surpassed vodka in popularity for cocktails, it seems tequila-based cocktails might be the next big trend.

While the food initially took some time to arrive, once it did, the dishes came out in quick succession. Most of the dishes we ordered were impressive. The Mushroom and Cream Cheese (Rs495), encased in crispy kataifi on a cauliflowerer sauce base, was particularly exciting. Similarly, the Habanero Butter Shrimp (Rs750), served with airy sourdough bread, was noteworthy, although I expected a bit more heat from the habanero, making the dish's name somewhat misleading.

The Avocado Cream Cheese Uramaki (Rs750) sushi roll was

enjoyable, with the added crunch of fried sweet potato crisps on top. However, the Spicy Sweet Potato Soft Shell Taco lacked the necessary spiciness to balance the sweetness of the potato. Adding a bit of spicy sauce on the side made it more enjoyable for me.

The only disappointment was the Neapolitan Margherita pizza, which fell short on the dough, kneading, and rolling. The edges didn't rise properly, the center wasn't thin enough, and the sauce was mediocre. However, the chef acknowledged the issue without making excuses, which in my view was commendable. Since we had no room for a main course, we opted for desserts directly. The Vanilla Bean Panna Cotta (Rs595) was exceptional, perfectly set and delicious. Topped with figs and caramel sauce, this dessert, an Artusi recipe, is reason enough to visit Marieta.

We arrived early for a Monday dinner and found the music to be too loud for an empty restaurant. However, as more guests arrived, the sound was absorbed, creating a more enjoyable ambiance. The tables in alfresco settings are a bit small for four people; fitting more than two people would be a challenge. Despite minor initial hiccups, the service was good and well-informed. Overall, Marieta is worth a try, especially for the panna cotta.

(Author is a food critic and founder of the Big F Awards. He can be reached at Pawan.Soni@indianfoodfreak.com)

FACT SHEET

Sector 43, Gurgaon
Phone: 8800186953
Cuisine: Global with focus on Mexican

RATINGS

Food: 3.5/5
Drinks: 4.0/5
Service: 3.75/5
Ambience: 3.5/5
Overall: 3.5/5





YOUR WEEK AHEAD

MADHU KOTIYA



ARIES March 21-April 19

This week may fall short of your expectations, particularly regarding financial aspects. You may find yourself unable to make decisive choices at work, leaving tasks incomplete and your workspace disorganized. You might even delay important activities or travel due to uncertainty. However, as the week progresses, you'll discover a more stable approach to managing your responsibilities. Connections from distant locations could prove advantageous. Your team will look to you for more active involvement, and you'll rise to the occasion, regaining confidence and engaging more with your social circle. Despite these improvements, the week might conclude on a challenging note, with domestic tensions or significant health issues within your family demanding both your time and financial resources, which could indirectly affect your professional commitments.

Lucky number 7 | Lucky colour Teal
Lucky day Friday



LEO July 23-Aug 22

This week presents a challenging phase marked by a strong drive and assertive demeanor. Your focus is solely on your professional commitments, often at the expense of your emotional well-being. The overwhelming workload might lead to frustration as you struggle to see tangible outcomes in the distance. Midweek, expect a significant change in your social or professional circle, either through an unexpected arrival or a departure. This may cause a temporary spike in your temper, urging you to make impulsive decisions amidst confusion. While travel might be forthcoming, it's crucial to take moments for reflection to maintain your composure and gain clarity. Despite these testing times, your ability to remain objective during tough decisions shines through, though caution is advised to avoid rushed judgments.

Lucky number 17 | Lucky colour Indigo
Lucky day Sunday



SAGITTARIUS Nov 22-Dec 21

This week emphasizes the need for organization, focus, and self-discipline. A sense of uncertainty pervades, creating misunderstandings between partners. A situation arises where clarity and honesty are available, yet you may find yourself turning away from these truths due to a fear of worsening circumstances. Around midweek, expect challenges related to legal matters or external inquiries that could lead to disappointment. It's a good time to monitor your health and manage how you express yourself; resisting the urge to engage in conflicts with those who challenge you can be beneficial. Consider this period an opportunity for solitude, allowing for reflection and reassessment of your objectives. Healing and rejuvenating yourself during this time will prepare you to tackle upcoming challenges with renewed vigor. Patience is key, as the difficulties you face are only temporary.

Lucky number 12 | Lucky colour Fuchsia
Lucky day Saturday



TAURUS April 20-May 20

This week is set to be filled with abundant blessings. Your long-standing projects are likely to come to a successful conclusion, and there could be exciting developments regarding your living situation, such as moving into a new home through a fortunate opportunity. Expect heartwarming gatherings with family and friends that enhance your sense of community. You'll find yourself surrounded by a positive energy that boosts your confidence and inspires others. With your strong communication skills and magnetic personality, you naturally attract people who seek deeper, cooperative connections with you. Your leadership qualities shine brightly this week. As the week winds down, you'll be drawn towards spiritual practices. Engaging in these reflective activities will deepen your connection to the spiritual realm and spark your creativity. Enjoy every moment of this enriching week.

Lucky number 8 | Lucky colour Olive
Lucky day Tuesday



VIRGO Aug 23-Sep 22

This week promises significant growth in your financial status, accompanied by joy and fulfillment. At work, you exhibit remarkable expertise and apply your vast knowledge in practical ways. Your approach is disciplined, with a keen adherence to schedules and procedures, which contributes to a strong financial foundation, security, and comfort. Additionally, there's potential for receiving substantial financial gains, possibly from unexpected sources. Opportunities for advancements and salary increases might arise, boosting your self-confidence. You may encounter new opportunities such as a job offer, project, or assignment. Utilize your resources judiciously and nurture a keen interest in acquiring and implementing new knowledge professionally. The vibrant energy of youthful colleagues at work also plays a crucial role in driving successful outcomes and bringing joy to your life.

Lucky number 9 | Lucky colour Coral
Lucky day Thursday



CAPRICORN Dec 22-Jan 19

This week marks a period of significant achievement following your persistent efforts and meticulous attention to detail. As the days unfold, you'll find yourself immersed in challenging tasks that require your full concentration and commitment. Your dedication to enhancing both your professional skills and personal growth will be evident. Despite the obstacles, the hard work will enrich your experience and knowledge, paving the way for notable successes. By the week's end, you will have every reason to feel proud and fulfilled. Additionally, this is an ideal time for deep spiritual rejuvenation and strengthening your connection with the divine. The week concludes with powerful transformative energies, fostering personal healing and possibly leading to meaningful relationship advancements, including new commitments or deepening existing bonds.

Lucky number 13 | Lucky colour Maroon
Lucky day Monday



GEMINI May 21-June 20

This week ushers in a spectrum of experiences encompassing deep emotions and spiritual growth, as well as an aggressive pursuit of prosperity. As the week begins, your financial endeavors start to bear fruit, leading to an increase in profits as the days progress. Your caring nature allows you to live lavishly, and your balanced, generous approach at work fosters a harmonious environment. Travel may be on your agenda, possibly including international journeys or leisure cruises with loved ones. Midweek brings a focus on home life, where you adeptly manage the demands of both your professional and personal spheres. As the week draws to a close, you will savor the rewards of your hard work, enjoying robust health and a burst of creativity.

Lucky number 19 | Lucky colour Golden
Lucky day Sunday



LIBRA Sep 23-Oct 22

As the week begins, you embark on a journey of discovery, seeking paths to resolve final challenges effectively. You are on the verge of completing a significant chapter, facing hurdles that you will navigate through successfully. Midweek brings a wave of affection and quality moments with your significant other. As the week draws to a close, conditions become favorable for making investments in real estate or similar significant acquisitions. This period marks a fortunate phase with exceptional opportunities enhancing your overall well-being. You are energized, spirited, and buoyant, surrounded by the warmth of family support that uplifts your confidence. The weekend is perfect for enjoying memorable times with your family and friends, celebrating the joys of togetherness.

Lucky number 2 | Lucky colour Beige
Lucky day Tuesday



AQUARIUS Jan 20-Feb 18

This week heralds a time of fulfillment and joy, as an abundance of blessings enriches your life across multiple fronts. Expect a surge of positivity that enhances your capacity for organization and sharpens your intuition. Harness this vibrant energy to boost your cognitive abilities. It's a rewarding period, both financially and emotionally, offering deep spiritual growth and emotional satisfaction. Relationships take center stage, enhancing connections and aligning closely with your aspirations. Opportunities in your professional life, such as new roles or ventures, are likely to materialize, positioning you favorably in your career path. Your overall vitality is robust, complemented by effective communication and leadership skills, setting the stage for a successful and harmonious week.

Lucky number 13 | Lucky colour Turquoise
Lucky day Friday



CANCER June 21-July 22

This week brings surprising shifts that may leave you feeling both proud and empowered to face the world's challenges. You find yourself unexpectedly stepping into a realm of success, particularly in areas you once thought were beyond your reach. Recognition and envy from others mark your newfound status, though those who truly support you will celebrate your accomplishments. This is a time of significant progress, aligning closely with your true interests. You've surpassed difficult obstacles, and your achievements are now publicly recognized and applauded. A sense of joy emerges, rooted in past experiences. As the week closes, you'll find comfort in cherished memories, reconnecting with the joys of childhood and enjoying moments with younger companions and old friends.

Lucky number 11 | Lucky colour Lavender
Lucky day Wednesday



SCORPIO Oct 23-Nov 21

This week, your focus is primarily on professional endeavors. Embracing risk now may lead to significant financial gains due to your exceptional performance. You possess an abundance of creative energy, enabling you to overcome any barriers with bold confidence. A daunting challenge has captured your attention, but you have the capacity to master it with flair. Midweek, anticipate a period of stringent guidance from a senior female relative. Heeding her wisdom and suggestions will prove advantageous. Enhance your cognitive abilities by engaging with intellectually stimulating activities like reading substantive literature and tackling challenging puzzles. Such pursuits might also lead you to profound revelations in your spiritual journey.

Lucky number 18 | Lucky colour Amber
Lucky day Sunday



PISCES Feb 19-March 20

Success this week seems highly linked to collaboration and teamwork, enhancing both productivity and rapport in your professional environment. You're stepping into a phase where self-respect becomes a cornerstone, fueling both your career and lifestyle with vibrant, innovative ideas. The horizon appears promising, with current ventures showing signs of prosperity and the potential for exciting job opportunities on the near horizon. Effective communication and mutual support are crucial right now, paving the way for fruitful negotiations. A sense of spirituality infuses your endeavors, adding a layer of depth to your pursuits. Joyous family developments, such as the anticipation of a new child, bring happiness and a sense of fulfillment. Your visionary outlook and proactive confidence empower you to explore new territories fearlessly.

Lucky number 1 | Lucky colour Ivory
Lucky day Wednesday

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ASTROTURF
BHARAT BHUSHAN PADMADEO

Mother teaches how to make life better



Carrying over from the previous issue, it is important to note that negative memory implants in our minds and the preconditioning thereof, can act a great devil for the self and those around. So, they will also come under the category of demonic forces. Such negative tendencies often foray into uncontrolled and fanciful inconsequential thoughts. They overtake our mind and distract our attention from priority preferences. We, thus, often misdirect our energies towards unproductive ends. In the process, our creative potential gets restricted from blooming out in full. Trapped into such unproductive voluminous thoughts, we are hardly left with mind-space necessary to invoke our faculty of discrimination. We, thus, lose our sense of reasons and direction, and thereby objectivity. Therefore, it becomes imperative upon us to consciously strike upon such unbecoming tendencies, for which we are very much capable. Otherwise, they will keep chasing us from within to our detriment. The question now is: how to figure out

true intent and character of varied demonic presences in disguise, well in time? And then, identify the most appropriate weapon to checkmate their assault? Evidently, it calls for being on full mental alert all the time. That alone can facilitate identifying right weapon for the right occasion. Mother's 10 arms also correspond to the positive and negative implications of man's sensory organs – 5 of perception and 5 of action. Experience suggests that in our usual flow of life, more often our sensory perceptions get stuck to the illusionary glare and glitter of the seeming world. Ego, further driving one's mind, makes one believe that what is apparent is to be taken as absolute truth. In the process, one forgets the necessity of invoking the indwelling faculty of discrimination necessary to figure out the underlying truths. True picture thus missing, one may inadvertently respond unintelligently on instinctive judgment. By the time one realises, the danger would have caught us unaware. It, therefore, becomes incumbent upon us to be on full

mental alert to figure out one's own limitations of mind in time, work upon them aggressively, and ensure being in full control of the self. Now, why a Lion as Mother's mount? Remember, a lion is known to be a

very intelligent animal and supposedly the king of jungles. When a lion goes for a hunt in search of its feed, it moves strategically, carefully, cautiously, without wasting much of its energy, but with its eyes fixed on its

prospective kill. It ensures not being noticed by the kill, till it is ready for its final assault. However, once the prey comes within its reach, it extols all its energy and pounces upon it. But then the lion does not go for its next kill till it has become hungry once again after exhausting its feed. The killing too is, therefore, need based and not out of greed. In fact, in nature's scheme of things, there exists a food chain. It is so made out as that there exists a predator to check the outgrowth of any creature. Bacteria in a drain treats the night soil. But its excessive presence will make living inhabitable. So, to keep their outgrowth in check, there exist other creatures. This way nature's biodiversity is kept in equitable balance. Here again, the animals, unlike human beings, invariably live in their present moment. They do not dwell on their past nor do they care for future. They are not tempted to encroach upon other's share to secure their future concerns either. Human beings, on the contrary, recalling their unpleasant memories of the past invite sense of fear. They also keep dreaming about

making a better future. In the process they dissipate their energies and mind space towards unproductive ends. Consequently, they are hardly left with enough to do justice to the callings of the present. What we forget that the seed planted today will turn into a fruit bearing tree tomorrow. Accordingly, we need to shed the past that has become history and forget about future that is uncertain. Following which we can put in our whole into present, which alone will prepare the ground for a better tomorrow. If the above inputs are made to sink in deep in one's mind through continued reflection, it will induce a person to act accordingly, which one could carry on effortlessly. Following which, one may be able to successfully steer life with ease and comfort, despite all oddities and hazards coming in the way. Life will then turn into a beautiful experience. The writer is an astrologer, vastu consultant and spiritual counsellor. Connect with him at Tel: 91-11-9818037273/9871037272 Email: bharatbhushanpadmadeo@gmail.com