

**6** WORLD  **Rise in UK knife attacks leads to a crackdown and stokes public anxiety**

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**Odisha to go to twin polls for 4 LS seats, 28 assembly segments today**

**Hope there is resolution of remaining issues: Jaishankar**

## Voting for 96 LS seats in 10 states/UT; 175 assembly seats in Andhra today Fate of several top leaders to be sealed

**AMRAVATI/LUCKNOW, May 12:** The electoral fate of several prominent candidates like Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav, Union minister Giriraj Singh, TMC's firebrand leader Mohua Moitra and AIMIM's Asaduddin Owaisi will be decided on Monday when polling will be held in 96 Lok Sabha constituencies across 10 states and Union Territories in the fourth phase of the general elections.

Voting will simultaneously be held in all 175 Assembly seats in Andhra Pradesh, which is witnessing a triangular contest involving ruling YSRC, the Congress-led INDIA bloc and the NDA, comprising the BJP, Chandrababu Naidu-led TDP and Pawan Kalyan-led Jana Sena Party (JSP).

As many as 28 legislative assembly seats of Odisha are also going to polls in this phase.



A total of 1,717 candidates are in the fray in the Lok Sabha seats and more than 19 lakh polling officials have been deployed at 1.92 lakh polling stations for the over 17.70 crore eligible voters, including 8.73 women, in this round of the seven-phase polls.

Among the keenly watched con-

tests are those involving former Uttar Pradesh chief minister Akhilesh Yadav (Kannauj, UP) and Union ministers Giriraj Singh (Bengaluru, Bihar), Nityanand Rai (Ujjain, Bihar) and Raosaheb Danve (Jalna, Maharashtra).

Congress leader Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury and former cricketer Yusuf Pathan of TMC (both from Baharampur, WB), BJP's Pankaja Munde (Beed, Maharashtra), AIMIM president Asaduddin Owaisi (Hyderabad, Telangana) and Andhra Pradesh Congress president YS Sharmila (Kadapa) are among the prominent candidates.

Union minister Ajay Kumar Mishra Teni, whose son is an accused in the 2021 Lakhimpur Kheri violence case, is eyeing a hat-trick from Kheri (UP), while TMC's Mahua Moitra, who was expelled from Lok Sabha in the wake of cash-for-query allegations, is seeking re-election from Krishnanagar in West Bengal.

Film star-turned-politician Shatrughan Sinha is seeking re-election from Asansol where he is pitted against BJP's veteran leader S S Ahluwalia. BJP's former West Bengal (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

## 2,480 illegal immigrants detected in Manipur in 2023: CM Biren

**IMPHAL, May 12:** Manipur chief minister N Biren Singh on Sunday said 2,480 illegal immigrants were detected in the northeastern state in 2023 but the campaign was cut short after violence broke out on May 3 last year.

Addressing a press conference Singh said concerned with increasing deforestation and setting up of new villages by illegal immigrants, a Cabinet sub-committee was formed in February 2023 after a cabinet meeting attended by two Kuki ministers Letpao Haokip and Nemcha Kipgen. Haokip was made the head of the sub-committee to identify illegal immigrants.

"We are not biased against anybody but against illegal immigrants. It was a decision taken by the state cabinet," Singh said. "Biometrics were taken in ten villages of Chandel during which 1,165 illegal immigrants were found, 1,147 illegal immigrants were found in 13 villages of Tengnoupal district, 154 illegal immigrants in Churachandpur and rest were found in Kamjong district," Singh said.

These figures are not inclusive of the additional 5,457 illegal immigrants who entered Kamjong district, Singh said, adding biometrics of 5,173 people have been taken while 329 have returned back voluntarily after situation improved in the neighbouring country.

"The detection of illegal immigrants was not limited



to one community but was to cover the entire state of Manipur. They were found after visiting villages," Singh said. "The campaign for identifying illegal immigrants was, however, cut short just after a month it started and had to be stopped after violence broke out on May 3," Singh said.

Singh expressed strong disappointment with the Geneva-based International Court of Jurists (ICJ) which had recently ordered Indian authorities to stop deportation in Manipur. (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

**HT BRIEF**

**Moukonwari competition**

**DEMOW:** An all Assam based prize money Moukonwari competition will be organised in AEROCITY resort Rajmai near Demow on May 14, 2024. To participate in the competition it will be free. The Farmers and the People associated with Handicrafts will be felicitated. In the Moukonwari Competition, there will be first, second, and third prizes, seven competitors will be given consolation prizes and all the participants will be given certificates. Interested participants can contact the following contact numbers- 9101012536, 8136069051.

## Sonia Gandhi spent more than 70 pc of MP funds on minorities, says Shah

**RAEBARELI/PRATAPGARH (UP), May 12:** Union home minister Amit Shah on Sunday launched a blistering attack on senior Congress leader Sonia Gandhi, accusing her of "spending more than 70 per cent of her MP funds on minorities" and the Gandhi family of being experts in lying.

Rahul Gandhi is fighting the Lok Sabha elections from Raebareli the seat held by his mother Sonia Gandhi for the last two decades. She recently moved to the Rajya Sabha. Rahul Gandhi has also been fielded from Wayanad in

Kerala. Congress leader Priyanka Gandhi Vadra addressed a rally in support of her brother Rahul Gandhi in Raebareli and accused Prime Minister Narendra Modi of never visiting any village in his Varanasi constituency.

Raebareli will vote in the fifth phase of the Lok Sabha elections on May 20. Shah also addressed an election rally in Pratapgarh where he said that Rahul Gandhi can be scared of Pakistan's atom bomb but the BJP is not; Pakistan-occupied Kashmir belongs to India and "we will take it". (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

## KAAC assures financial support for CUET exam applicants

**HT Bureau**

**DIPHU, May 12:** Richard Tokbi, the education in-charge, stated on Sunday that the Karbi Anglong Autonomous Council (KAAC) will provide all necessary support to students appearing for the Common University Entrance Test (CUET).

He informed that all expenses, including travel, food, and lodging, for students from both Karbi Anglong and West Karbi Anglong, who have already passed their HS final year examination and are seeking post-graduate courses, will be covered by the KAAC relief fund.

"We have received information about the difficulties facing students appearing for the CUET exam as there are no examination centres here in Karbi Anglong right now. Our CEM, Tuliram Ronghang Sir, has assured us that he will support all those students appearing for the CUET exam for their entire expenses, including travel,




food, and lodging," stated the EM during a press conference. The EM also shared that in Karbi Anglong district alone, there are 4,572 students in the Arts stream, 492 students in Commerce, and 770 in Science streams preparing to appear (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

## 8 police personnel fall ill after consuming wild mushrooms


**NORTH LAKHIMPUR, May 12:** At least eight Assam Police personnel fell ill after consuming wild mushrooms in Dhemaji district on Sunday, a senior officer said.

The personnel belonging to the 22nd battalion were posted at Panbari near Gogamukh along the interstate border with Arunachal Pradesh, he said. "The eight jawans consumed wild mushrooms for lunch on Sunday. After around 30 minutes of finishing their lunch, they fell ill and experienced dysentery and vomiting, following which they were (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)




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# Body of woman found in Nagaon

**HT Correspondent**  
**NAGAON, May 12:** The body of a woman was found in a house at Salna Simonabasti in Nagaon on the morning on Sunday.  
 The victim has been identified as Maiya Koruwa, who lived along with another woman in a house at Salna Simonabasti. Her companion, Babita Bhumiz was also rescued from the house with grievous injuries, sources said.  
 Senior police officials rushed to the spot and began investigations into the incident.  
 However, the police are yet to determine what had led to the death of the victim and how her companion sustained grievous injuries.

Cut marks were visible on the body of the deceased and her companion, police sources said.  
 According to some locals, both the women had been living together in the house for over years. But when the front door of the house remained closed till late in the morning, one neighbour entered into the house and found Maiya Koruwa lying dead, while the other inmate Babita Bhumiz was lying with severe wounds inside the house.  
 Meanwhile, the police have sent the body of the deceased to the hospital for autopsy, while the injured woman was immediately rushed to a local hospital for treatment.

# Governor attends Narayan Seva Sansthan's artificial limb camp

*Human service is the best religion: Kataria*

**HT Bureau**  
**GUWAHATI, May 12:** Governor Gulab Chand Kataria on Sunday said that service is an expression of sacrifice and is the way to transform oneself from Nar to Narayan.  
 Kataria said this while attending the Narayana Artificial Limb Measurement Camp held in Paltan Bazar in the city on Sunday. The free camp was organized for the differently-abled individuals.  
 Kataria commended Narayan Seva Sansthan for its longstanding commitment to this cause and congratulated its founder, Kailash Manav and president, Prashant Agarwal for their humanitarian services.  
 Governor Kataria said, "Serving humans is one of the best services one can do. Narayan Seva Sansthan is a sacred institution of selfless service. With the basic mantra of Nar Seva Narayan Seva,



this institute has been working for the welfare of the poor, needy and disabled people. Since its establishment 39 years ago, this institute has been engaged in the dedicated service to humanity."  
 The Governor also said that one should not keep any thought of discrimination in one's mind while rendering services. One should do service with a selfless spirit just to experience happiness. He also reiterated Swami Vivekananda's lines who had said that only those who are living for others are truly human beings. Therefore, there should be a feeling of service among the people.

In his speech, the Governor said that Narayan Seva Sansthan has been working tirelessly for the upliftment of the differently-abled individuals and hailed the Sansthan for its nationwide outreach programme. He also assured Raj Bhavan's support for expanding the organisation's services. He also extended his best wishes for the well-being of the differently-abled individuals and their families who attended the camp.  
 The camp saw the participation of over 1000 disabled individuals and representatives from more than 30 local organisations. The Governor distributed 11 wheelchairs and also inquired about the experiences of individuals with disabilities, who benefited from artificial limbs. Over 500 differently-abled individuals attended the camp, where a 20-member team from the Sansthan provided services. Measurements were

taken for fitting artificial limbs on 205 people and calipers on another 80. Additionally, over 130 patients were selected for free surgeries in Udaipur. Beneficiaries from states like Nagaland, Manipur, Arunachal Pradesh and Mizoram also attended the camp.  
 The programme was attended by the first Lady of Assam, Anita Kataria, director of Narayan Seva Sansthan, Vandana Aggarwal, former DGP Umesh Kumar, Vinod Lohia of Purbottar Pradeshiya Marwari Sammelan, Mahaveer Prasad Jain of Digamber Panchayat Bhavan Trust, Ramesh Goenka of Marwari Hospital, Ratan Lal Sharma of Brahmin Sabha, director of Narayan Seva Sansthan Vandana Agarwal, Barjang Lal Surana of Shwetamber Jain Terapanth Sabha and Kailash Lohia of Guwahati Gaushala along with a host of other dignitaries.

# Centenary celebration of Bibar Laisi held at Kokrajhar Govt College



**HT Correspondent**  
**KOKRAJHAR, May 12:** The centenary celebration of 'Bibar Laisi', the first Bodo journal was organised at the Mahini Mahan Brahma Hall of the Kokrajhar Government College here on Sunday.  
 The event was organised by the Kokrajhar Government College to mark the 100 years of the Bodo journal.  
 The Bibar Laisi was published in 1924 with Satish Chandra Basumatary, the eminent writer and social thinker as its first editor. It was published by the then Bodo Students' Union, known as the Bodo Satro Sonmilan in 1924. It was published in eight volumes. The era from 1920 to 1937 is called Bibar Mooga in Bodo literature.  
 Assam cabinet minister, Urkha Gwra Brahma, Bodo Sahitya Sabha president, Surath Narzary, former secretary of Sahitya Akademi, Kolkata region, Ram Kumar Mukhopadhyay, Sahitya Akademi award winner, Gobinda Boro, Krishna Gopal Basumatary, director of UN Academy Kokrajhar, principal of Kokrajhar Government College, Dimacha Dwibrang Mvchahary were present on the occasion.  
 Minister Brahma also unveiled a souvenir 'Thajjiri' on the occasion. He said that the Bibar Laisi is regarded as the first journal in the Bodo language, which is a torch bearer of the Bodo literature world. He has recalled contributions of leading persons who were prominently involved while its publication.  
 "Today, I am very much happy to be part of the centenary celebrations of the Bibar Laisi. The first Bodo journal has completed 100 years. I am happy to inaugurate the souvenir commemorating the day," Brahma added.

# Cancellation, rescheduling of trains in hill section

**HT Bureau**  
**GUWAHATI, May 12:** In view of the ongoing track repairing works at KM - 110/6-7 between Jatinga Lampur and New Harangajao under Lumding division of the Northeast Frontier Railway, a few trains have been cancelled or rescheduled.  
 The Guwahati - Silchar - Guwahati) Express scheduled to depart on May 13 from their respective destinations will remain cancelled. The Silchar - Naharlagun - Silchar Special scheduled to depart on May 13 and 14 from Silchar and Naharlagun respectively will remain cancelled.  
 On the other hand, the Agartala - Anand Vihar Terminal Tejas Rajdhani Express commencing on its journey on May 13 is rescheduled to depart from Agartala at 23:10 hrs. The Silchar - New Delhi Poorvottar Sampark Kranti Express commencing on its journey on May 13 is rescheduled to depart from Silchar at 23:45 hrs.

# Workshop on solid waste management held

**HT Correspondent**  
**NAGAON, May 12:** The Assam Science Technology and Environment in collaboration with Eco Club of the Dhing College has organised a day-long workshop on solid waste management at the college premises here.  
 It was organised with special support of Union ministry of environment, forest and climate change.  
 The primary aim of the workshop was to educate students and provide them with holistic understanding on solid waste management (SWM) issues, ill effects of wrong practices of SWM, best practices of SWM, importance of proper sanitation, sowing awareness of good practices on solid waste management, wastewater treatment, livelihoods, and public-private partnerships to gain knowledge in sustainable waste and environmental management system.  
 It also focused on different types of waste, their handling, storage, disposal requirements and their potential effect on the environment.  
 The workshop was inaugurated by Biman Hazarika, principal of the college.

# Mother's Day celebrated in Hojai

**HT Correspondent**  
**HOJAI, May 12:** The Hojai Public Senior Secondary School celebrated the 'Mothers' Day' at their school auditorium at Pachim Nandapur in Hojai on Sunday with pomp and gaiety.  
 The school invited all the mothers of the students. Madhabi Lata Devi, principal of the school inaugurated the 'Mothers' Day' function. Devi along with the teaching staff felicitated all the mothers with the traditional phulam gamocha.  
 Speaking on the occasion, the principal offered warm greetings to all the mothers, thereby expressing her deep love and respect for their incredible roles, heartfelt sacrifices, rendering continuous efforts, assistance and dedicating their precious lives in making their ward a responsible citizen, who can contribute in the upliftment of the nation. She further advised all the students to respect their mothers and follow their valuable advice, without which they can't achieve a bright future.  
 She also added that the blessings of their mothers will bring them successful accomplishment. At the end of her speech, she expressed sincere gratitude to all mothers for their heartfelt presence in the function. Also, a cultural programme was organised where all the mothers and children performed.

# Dibrugarh University confers D Lit on Padmashree Imran Shah

**HT Correspondent**  
**SIVASAGAR, May 12:** The Dibrugarh University has formally conferred the Doctorate of Literature degree on Padma Shri Imran Shah in his residence at Dhai Ali in Sivasagar.  
 A group of professors led by the university's registrar, Paramananda Sonowal and former president of Asom Sahitya Sabha, Prahlad Tassa handed him the degree at his residence on Saturday. The certificate and citation was handed over to the literature professor and head of the department of sociology, Deva Kumar Chakravarty, deputy registrar, Arijit Hazarika, Rohini Borgohain and former secretary general of Sahitya Sabha, Jagadish Patgiri. The meeting held on the occasion was presided over by Jyoti Prasad Saikia, professor of the department of sociology.  
 Shah expressed his gratitude on receiving the highest degree from the university. He said that their generation had put in a lot of effort to produce literary works to enrich Assamese literature. The present generation, he said, has already an enriched environment and their job is to create more and scale higher on literary echelon.

# Book on mental health released

**HT Correspondent**  
**TEZPUR, May 12:** 'BORNOFIT-Healthy Lifestyle is your Birth Right', a book on mental health and healthy lifestyle was released in Tezpur on Sunday. The book has been written by software engineer, Deba Jyoti Das, who is working as a programme manager in a software company in Bengaluru.  
 Das addresses the pressing issue of mental health and well-being among students and middle-aged individuals navigating the competitive landscape of self-reliance through his book.  
 The book serves as a guide to reverse one's biological age and stay young throughout their lifespan.  
 It offers practical strategies for reclaiming control of one's life and healthy habits. It has also received acknowledgment from many renowned artists and celebrities. The book has also managed to become Amazon's no 1 best seller in recent times.  
 Das, who had been brought up



in Tezpur city and graduated from the Darrang College, pursued mechanical engineering from the Assam Engineering College. He then earned his M. Tech degree from the national Institute of Technology, Trichy having experience of working in various fields of different multi-national companies including Metafusion, Netkraft, software companies like MindTree, Wipro, CISCO etc.  
 Speaking to The Hills Times, Das said, "The recent statistics from India's education ministry in the Rajya Sabha underscored the severity of the issue with 77 students tragically losing their lives to suicide in higher educational institutions between 2019 and 2023.  
 A significant number of such cases have been reported from prestigious institutions such as IITs, IIMs, AIIMS, and major engineering institutions.  
 The ministry also reported a concerning number of dropouts (33,979 students) from these institutes during the same period, highlighting the urgency of addressing the underlying factors contributing to student distress.  
 The major causes of these distressing statistics are multifaceted and include academic pressure, career uncertainty, low self-esteem, relationship issues, perfectionism, and unrealistic expectations, among other deeply rooted social issues.  
 "It is essential that we collectively address these challenges for our students."  
 'BORNOFIT' aims to address these crucial problems among students and middle-aged individuals to build strong characters and improve emotional and physical health." Das said, adding this endeavour aims to raise awareness and initiate positive change in addressing mental health and well-being in our community.

# SSB organises blood donation camp in Gossaigaon

**HT Correspondent**  
**GOSSAIGAON, May 12:** The 31st battalion of Sashastra Seema Bal (SSB) has organised a voluntary blood donation camp at its battalion headquarters in collaboration with RNB Civil Hospital.  
 A medical team led by Muklasur Rahman from RNB Civil Hospital conducted a check up of donor Sh. Ranjeet Singh, assistant commandant (communication) and 30 other officials thoroughly.  
 During the blood donation camp, approximately 30 units of blood were donated by the SSB personnel, which can be used for different life-saving purposes.  
 Sh. Parag Chaturvedi, second-in-command of the 31st battalion, after donating blood asserted that the donated blood will help to meet many medical needs, providing a critical transfusion to someone in need of blood or restoring the strength of a cancer patient.  
 He again said that sympathy alone cannot save people in chronic conditions, but blood can. He appealed to all the Jawans of the battalion to come forward and donate blood regularly. Regular blood donation is linked to lower blood pressure and a lower risk of heart attacks.

# Consecration ceremony of Gautam Buddha statue held

50 Tamang Buddhist monks hailing from various parts of country participated



**HT Correspondent**  
**MARGHERITA, May 12:** A three-day-long consecration ceremony of a statue of Gautam Buddha at the newly inaugurated Gompa in Bargolai Bashbari playground in Margherita in Tinsukia district concluded successfully on Sunday.  
 Situated within the confines of the Bargolai

playground this event marked a momentous occasion for devotees and participants alike. The final day of the unveiling programme commenced amidst great anticipation and spiritual fervour.  
 A grand religious procession was taken out on Sunday along the National Highway 315 in Bargolai, which saw the participation of a large number of devotees from the Tamang Buddhist community, with more than 5000 individuals congregating to partake in the festivities.  
 Moreover, 50 esteemed Tamang Buddhist monks hailing from various regions across the country further enriched the cultural and spiritual significance of the occasion.  
 A notable highlight of the ceremony was the esteemed presence of the venerable Archarya Khem Rimborji Sangey Ludu, the highest-ranking Buddhist monk from Jaigaon in West Bengal to preside over the proceedings.  
 On Sunday, amidst an aura of reverence and solemnity, Sangey Ludu unveiled the newly constructed Gautam Buddha Gompa, symbolizing the culmination of meticulous planning and devout dedication.  
 The solemn observance spanned three consecutive days that began on May 10 and concluded Sunday with the final day of the festivities.  
 As devotees and participants bid farewell to this momentous event, the resounding echoes of spiritual chants and prayers reverberate throughout the Bargolai Banbhari playground, leaving an indelible mark on the hearts and minds of all those in attendance.

# Padma Shri Jatin Goswami Gurudev honoured with 'Kushilaba Kala Nidhi' title



**HT Correspondent**  
**MORIGAON, May 12:** Sangeet Natak Akademi awardee, Padma Shri Jatin Goswami Gurudev on Sunday was honoured with the 'Kushilaba Kala Nidhi' (Treasure of Art) title for his immense con-

tribution to the field of Sattriya Sangeet during a function held at the District Library in Morigaon.  
 Gurudev has been presented the title 'Kushilaba Kala Nidhi' on the occasion of the annual function of the Sankari Sangeet function of the organisation. Moreover a song 'Tejare Kamalapati' composed by Janardan Kalita was formally inaugurated by Padma Shri Jatin Goswami. Later Krishna Bora provided the vote of thanks in the programme.







*On May 4 last year, the school, its buildings, its legacy and its mission were burnt, destroyed and lost forever*  
**School poised for 25 years celebrations, now abandoned, out-of-bound for Kuki owners**

**IMPHAL/CHURACHANDPUR, May 12:** Razed buildings and burnt furniture. These are what remain of the St. Peter's School in Manipur's Imphal after a year of violence in the state between Kuki and Meitei ethnic groups.

"We were preparing to celebrate its silver jubilee year in 2023. But then the clashes broke out. They burnt everything," said principal Khupkhoman, a Kuki who has since moved to Churachandpur from the Meitei-dominated Imphal Valley region.

Now an abandoned structure, the Manipur Board-affiliated St. Peter's School had more than 800 students till Class 10 pre-May 3, 2023, the day reports of incidents of clashes started pouring in from many parts of the northeastern state, prompting the closure of educational institutions, offices and businesses.

"Its one day at a time for us. The situation remains unpredictable and we don't plan anymore. The crisis continues, and there is nothing to look forward to or look back upon," Khupkhoman, 62, who moved with her family to the hills of Churachandpur, said.

The school, built by Khupkhoman and her late husband over 25 years, also had her residence on its premises. She now lives with her family in a rented accommodation, displaced like more than

60,000 others from both communities. But Khupkhoman has not stopped calling families living around the school to take updates about her Meitei students, the Kuki's have moved out.

"They have joined other schools, some have dropped out," she told PTI. Recalling the preparations for the silver jubilee year celebrations, Khupkhoman said practice for dance and singing performances were underway. There was a lot of activity but then, within a night, it was all over, she said with tears in her eyes.

The institution was attacked in the early hours of May 4 by a mob. "The school was everything we had, we had built it step by step, it was where we lived for years... Over 800 students had their hopes attached with our vision and within a night everything was gone. At first, I had thought that this will be over in a week's time and I was already making plans about what all needs to be done before we resume classes again," Khupkhoman said.

"Suddenly, I was left jobless, homeless, hopeless...lost everything," she said.

Unsured about the school's future, its management had moved the Supreme Court in November last year, seeking a direction to the Manipur government to compensate for the losses suffered and the state's failure to launch an investi-



gation to arrest the perpetrators.

On May 4 last year, the school, its buildings, its legacy and its mission were burnt, destroyed and lost forever. A day before, some families rushed to the school for safety when a violent mob began attacking churches, homes and other establishments of Kuki-Zo tribals," Khupkhoman's daughter-in-law Nianghthianvung, 37, said.

"By midnight, about 34 people were inside the school complex (to seek shelter). To make matters worse, electricity to the school and its nearby areas was cut off...a mob then entered the school complex and burnt down classrooms, offices, hostels and residences. The school's football turf was also set ablaze," she added.

On May 5 last year, Nianghthianvung, took a flight to Guwahati in Assam with her two sons while Khupkhoman stayed in a relief camp for a week. Her husband, a banker, was in Hyderabad for training then.

Later, they all travelled to Churachandpur using different routes, first living with relatives and then renting an accommodation for themselves.

This PTI reporter visited the school in the Imphal Valley and the family in the hills of Churachandpur earlier this month. The two regions since May 3 last year stand divided with Kukis residing in the hills and Meiteis in the valley. Clashes have claimed more than 200 lives.

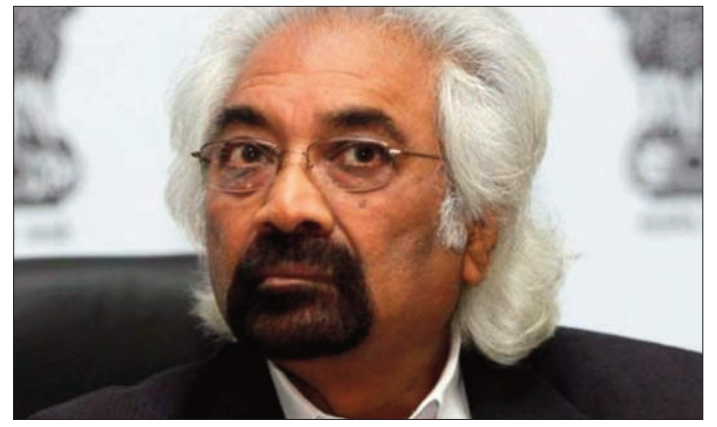
Niangthianvung said, "We have no such information about students. We keep getting calls and that is how we know (about them)." "When we realised there is no going back, we called a few neighbours to request if they could keep some of our belongings. Many of them were afraid to be seen as being in touch with us while few who went (to the school) said there is nothing left," Nianghthianvung said.

Niangthianvung's sons, 7 and 5 years old, were students of St. Peter's School. Now they study in a school in Churachandpur.

"It does not feel the same, they often complain about the school, the house and everything, but they are too young to understand, and maybe by the time they grow up, they will have no memory about how their home once looked like," she said.

In their submission to the Supreme Court, the school's management has put the loss of movable and immovable properties at an estimated ₹ 14 crore. The amount includes loans and personal borrowing by the family to improve the school's infrastructure, including construction of a new library and a recreational room. Having experienced the "horrors of the carnage", the family has also demanded compensation for mental trauma. (PTI)

**NPCC echoes AICC stance on Pitroda's analogies**



**HT Correspondent**  
**DIMAPUR, May 12:** Echoing the stance of the AICC in rejecting the analogies given by Sam Pitroda to illustrate India's diversity, the Nagaland Pradesh Congress Committee (NPCC) on Sunday said the unacceptable and unfortunate analogies were drawn by him in his personal capacity and has nothing to do with the Congress Party, as has been clearly communicated through appropriate party channels.

"We reaffirm our utmost respect for the rich diversity of India and our unwavering commitment in upholding the interests of all sections of society, irrespective of colour or creed," the NPCC in a release issued by its communication department said.

However, despite the Con-

gress' clear stance, the BJP's attempts to politicise the issue are regrettable and an indicator of their utter desperation in the face of an impending electoral rout, the Pradesh Congress said.

"BJP's hypocrisy and the irony of the situation is not lost on the nation considering the several instances in the recent past where BJP leaders have been involved in comparatively worse cases without any proportionate official censure from the party," it said.

The NPCC added that racially loaded statements from Union minister Giriraj Singh in 2015, former BJP MP Tarun Vijay in 2017, and former national vice president of BJP's youth wing Santosh Ranjan Rai in 2021 are a few of the cases in point.

**Manipur Lok Adalat settles 177 cases worth ₹ 1.82 crore**



**HT Bureau**  
**GUWAHATI, May 12:** The Manipur State Legal Services Authority (MASLSA), in collaboration with the High Court and District Legal Services Authorities (DLSAs), successfully resolved 177 cases during the second National Lok Adalat of 2024 held on Saturday, May 11.

These cases, encompassing civil matters, compoundable criminal offenses, bank recoveries, motor accident claims, and more, resulted in a total settlement amount of ₹ 1,82,83,801.

Around 2,000 pre-litigation and pending cases were listed for the state-wide Lok Adalat. Justice A Bimol Singh, Judge of the High Court of Manipur and Executive Chairman of MASLSA, along with Justice Golmei Gaipulshillu, Judge of the High Court, visited the Lok Adalat proceedings at Lamphel Court Complex.

Highlighting the benefits of Lok Adalat, Justice Singh informed the media that the next such events will be held on September 14th and December 14th, 2024.

He said that Lok Adalat decrees are equivalent to those of civil courts and are final, with no further appeals possible. This forum offers a faster and more cost-effective way to settle disputes through mutual agreement.

Justice Singh encouraged parties interested in resolving their cases through Lok Adalat to approach MASLSA or DLSAs for inclusion in upcoming hearings.

The three Lok Adalat benches at Lamphel Court were presided over by N Lanleima (Presiding Officer, MACT), Monalisa Maibam (Special Judge, ND&PS (FTC)), and Dr Laishram Rina Devi (Civil Judge (Sr Division), Imphal East).

**Drugs worth over ₹9 cr seized**

**AIZAWL, May 12:** Drugs worth Rs 9.3 crore have been seized in Mizoram's Champhai district along the India-Myanmar border, Assam Rifles said in a statement.

Acting on a tip-off, security forces raided Zokhawthar village on Saturday and seized 3.1 kg of crystal methamphetamine concealed in tea packets, it said. The seized consignment was handed over to the state police, it added. (PTI)

**Manipur police foil kidnapping bid, nab 6 KCP-PWG cadres**

**HT Bureau**  
**GUWAHATI, May 12:** A Manipur police commandos and Imphal East district police in a joint operation rescued two kidnapped youths and apprehended six cadres of the outlawed Kangleipak Communist Party, People's War Group (KCP-PWG) on Friday night.

Acting on intelligence inputs, the joint team launched a targeted operation around 10 pm at a suspected location in Kshetrigao Yumkhaibam Leikai, Imphal East district.

The operation led to the safe rescue of Irom Anand (24) and Ngangom Rohit Singh (24), both residents of Kongpal under the Porompat police station.

The successful rescue came after complaints were filed by Irom Kunjeshor and Ng Iboncha, fathers of the kidnapped youths, at Porompat police station. Their sons were reportedly abducted by armed men from Thambaokhong Sabal Leikai in the same district on Wednesday.

The operation also resulted in the arrest of six KCP-PWG cadres identified as Chingkhani Sanajaoba (23), Soibam Sital (24), Maibam Naresh (24), Ningthoujam Ajit (26), Ching-subam Thongamba Meitei (30), and Wahebam Premjit (40).

**Respite for Tripura as fuel train arrives, easing supply woes**

**HT Bureau**  
**GUWAHATI, May 12:** After nearly two weeks of grappling with a fuel shortage, Tripura finally receives a sigh of relief as a freight train carrying crucial fuel supplies arrives in the state. The train successfully navigated the critical Jatinga Lumpur - New Harangajao section in Assam's Dima Hasao District, overcoming challenges posed by a recent derailment.

Sabyasachi Dey, the Chief Public Relations Officer of North Eastern Frontier Railway, confirmed that a convoy of 49 Bogie Tank wagons for petroleum products (BTPN) departed from Assam and safely navigated the challenging Jatinga Lumpur area.

"The train, carrying 19 wagons of High-Speed Diesel (HSD) and 30 wagons of Motor Spirit/Petrol (MS), completed its journey through the Jatinga Lumpur - New Harangajao section at 10:41 am today. It has now reached Dharmanagar, Tripura," announced the official.

The train's arrival at the Dharmanagar depot offers a much-needed solution to the state's fuel shortage.

Tripura's chief minister, Manik Saha, expressed his gratitude on a social media platform. "Today marks a significant milestone. This is the first successful passage of a POL (Petroleum, Oil, and Lubricants) train through the landslide-affected stretch between Jatinga and Haranga since April 26th.

"I express my sincere appreciation to Union Railway Minister Shri Ashwini Vaishnaw for his prompt action, the dedicated NFR officials and workers for their tireless efforts, and the people of Tripura for their patience and cooperation. This train will be a beacon of relief, effectively mitigating the fuel crisis in our state," said the chief minister.

**ZSUM expresses deep sorrow over demise of triballeader**

**IMPHAL, May 12:** The Zeliangrong Students' Union Manipur (ZSUM) has expressed deep sorrow over the demise of RK Ajin, s/o of Late. Lungsubing from C. Centre Tamenglong ward No 7, Tamenglong district, Manipur, on Friday at Max Super specialty Hospital, Saket in New Delhi. He is survived by his beloved wife, two sons, two daughters and a granddaughter.

Ajin was a serving president of All Manipur Tribal Union (AMTU) "which organization had defended the rights of the tribal people tooth and nail and it had filed a litigation to the High Court of Manipur because the Meiteis are advanced community who have outgrown the status of ST, therefore, their demand is both legally and constitutionally not



tenable," ZSUM said in a statement.

On this day of mourning over the loss of "our great soul, we, the Zeliangrong Students' Union Manipur and former leaders have jointly shared this painful moment together with the bereaved

family members, and prayed to God Almighty to grant him eternal rest in the heavenly abode".

ZSUM also said it fondly remembers his great contributions towards our Zeliangrong community, who had served in the Zeliangrong Students' Union Manipur (ZSUM), in the year 1987-1988. ZSUM further said Ajin's humility and "uncountable sacrifices" rendered during his tenure as a student leader will always remain as a remarkable example for "our younger generations in the days to come".

ZSUM further said RK Ajin's zeal to spread unity and brotherhood amongst "our community will never be forgotten even though he is no more with us here today". (N.NN)

**Manipur CM calls for calm amidst deportation of 'illegal' Myanmar nationals**

**HT Bureau**  
**GUWAHATI, May 12:** Manipur chief minister N Biren Singh urged for understanding and restraint as relief efforts are extended to illegal Myanmar nationals seeking shelter within the state's borders on humanitarian grounds.

Emphasizing adherence to the nation's legal framework, the chief minister reiterated that illegal migrants would undergo due process and be deported in accordance with established laws.

Central to his address was the assurance of safeguarding the indigenous populace and curbing illegal migration, a pivotal concern amidst an estimated 12,000 illegal Myanmar nationals currently residing in Manipur.

Expressing dismay over recent assertions by the International Committee of Jurists (ICJ), the chief minister underscored the organization's purported lack of comprehension regarding the ground realities in Manipur.

Refuting claims of normalcy in the immigration scenario, he highlighted the existential threats posed to Manipur's demography, history, and identity, citing the imperilled status of its indigenous community.

Asserting the paramountcy of protecting indigenous interests, both at the central and state levels, Singh reaffirmed the commitment to continue deporting illegal immigrants. He also condemned the involvement of purported rights activists and social workers in fostering discord and hostility within the state.

**Brainstorming of ideas to develop tourism in NE in Delhi**

**HT Bureau**  
**GUWAHATI, May 12:** The fifth meeting of the Task Force for the Development of Tourism in Northeast states was convened at Vigyan Bhawan in New Delhi recently.

In the meeting, the discussion centred on different strategies for capacity building, training poli-

cies, marketing and promotion efforts for the development of tourism in Northeastern states.

Attendees included officials from the eight Northeastern states of Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Meghalaya, Manipur, Mizoram, Nagaland, Sikkim and Tripura.

The event also had representatives from various ministries, i.e.

*Ceremony commenced with a poignant tribute to the gallant soldiers with wreath laying at the war memorial*

**Sainik School Punglwa, Nagaland celebrates 17th founders' day**

**HT Bureau**  
**GUWAHATI, May 12:** Sainik School, Punglwa Nagaland (SSPN) commemorated its 17th Founders' Day recently. A series of events were held to commemorate the event. Uniel Kichu, IPS, DIG (Range/NAP) Nagaland Police HQs, was the chief guest on the occasion.

The ceremony commenced with a poignant tribute to the gallant soldiers with wreath laying at the war memorial, followed by a Guard of Honour by the cadets.

The programme unfolded with the symbolic lighting of the Lamp and release of the Half Yearly Newsletter, 'Voice of the Young Warriors of Morung' (VYWOM). Principal of the School, extended a warm welcome to the distinguished gathering whereas the Vice-Principal presented the an-



nual report. The cultural extravaganza presented by the cadets showcased their multifaceted talents, encompassing cultural dances, group and solo performances, blending entertainment with education seamlessly.

Acknowledging the excellence, the felicitating ceremony recognized the outstanding cadets. Best Cadet in Academics and Sports was awarded to Cadet Mastufa



**BSF apprehends duo with B'deshi currency in Meghalaya**

**HT Bureau**  
**GUWAHATI, May 12:** The Border Security Force (BSF) arrested two men from the international border in East Khasi Hills, Meghalaya with a huge amount of Bangladeshi currency notes.

As per officials, the two men were residents of Meghalaya and were found carrying a significant amount of Bangladeshi currency. They were found with 3.40 lakh taka, which is roughly equivalent to Rs. 2.42 lakh.

The officials said that acting on a tip-off, the BSF conducted a special operation in the vicinity of the Nayabazar border outpost.

During the operation, BSF personnel spotted two Indian nationals behaving suspiciously near the border. Upon searching them, the BSF recovered a bag containing Bangladeshi taka notes in denominations of 500.

The two men were subsequently taken into custody.

Preliminary questioning re-

vealed the identities of the individuals as Balanus Mawroh from Nongjri Wahsir and Enterness Khongnsi from Nongjritluh.

According to a BSF press release issued today, the large sum of Bangladeshi currency was likely intended to be used for illegal activities across the border.

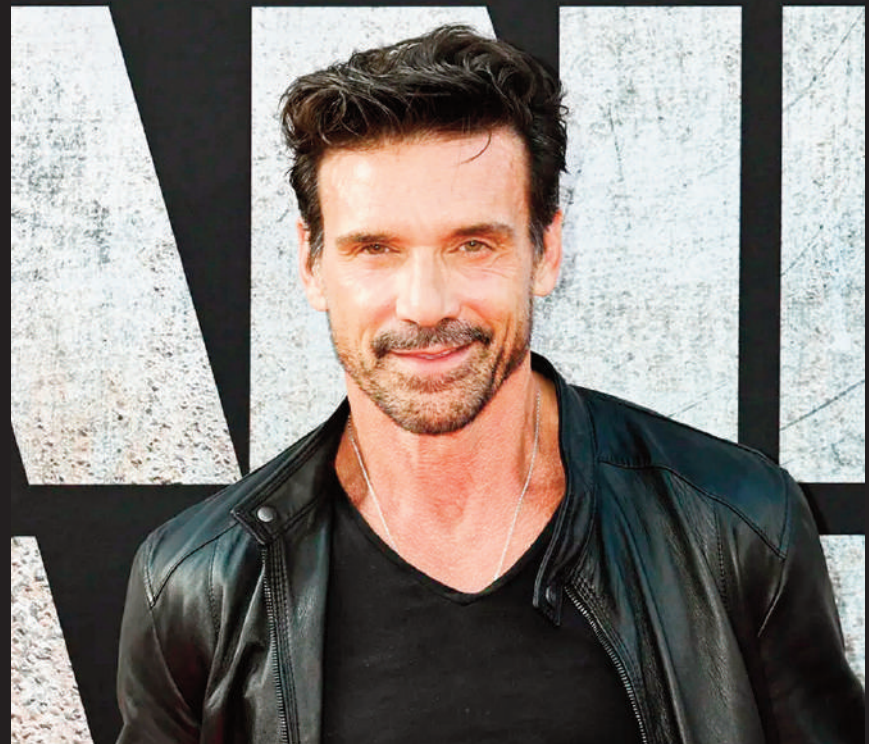
The apprehended individuals along with the seized Bangladeshi taka have been handed over to the Pynursla police station for further investigation and legal proceedings.







## Frank Grillo To Portray Rick Flag Sr In 'Peacemaker 2'



**LOS ANGELES, May 12:** Actor Frank Grillo has joined the upcoming season two of the DC series "Peacemaker", creator James Gunn has announced. In the HBO Max show, Grillo will portray the role of Rick Flag Sr, the father of Suicide Squad member Rick Flag Jr. (Joel Kinnaman). He will also voice the character in the animated series "Creature Commandos".

Gunn confirmed the news in a post on Threads on Friday.

"Pleased to announce the great Frank Grillo will be reprising the role of Rick Flag, Sr — the role he'll first play in animated form in 'Creature Commandos' — throughout season 2 of 'Peacemaker', Christopher Smith and Rick Sr have a little unfinished business to take care of," the filmmaker captioned a series of pictures.

"Peacemaker" is a spin-off to Gunn's 2021 movie "The Suicide Squad", in which John Cena played the title role. The series is fronted by Cena, who will reprise his role of the jingoistic mercenary Christopher Smith aka Peacemaker.

The production for the upcoming season of "Peacemaker" began last month, with Gunn directing some of the episodes alongside other three directors.

The first season released in 2022 and also starred Jennifer Holland, Alison Araya, Danielle Brooks and Lochlyn Munro. (PTI)

## Never imagined life would flower into this phase: Manisha Koirala on cancer recovery, turning 50



**MUMBAI, May 12:** Actor Manisha Koirala says she was still recovering from cancer when she was about to start shooting for Heeramandi: The Diamond Bazaar, in which she plays one of the lead characters, an opportunity seldom offered to female artistes in their 50s.

The 53-year-old actor is receiving good reviews for her role as the mercurial matriarch Mallikajaan in Sanjay Leela Bhansali's debut web series Heeramandi, currently streaming on Netflix.

In a lengthy note on Instagram, Koirala on Sunday chronicled her journey of resuming work after battling ovarian cancer, portraying an important character in the lavish period drama, and getting her due as a female actor thanks to streamers and evolving taste of the audience.

"I could never have imagined that after cancer and turning 50, my life would flower into this other phase," she wrote, as she went on to enumerate the two reasons.

Calling Heeramandi a significant milestone, Koirala said: "As a 53-year-old actor who has bagged an important role in a high-profile web series, I am overjoyed that I'm not stuck playing insignificant peripheral roles, thanks to OTT platforms and changing audience profiles."

"Finally, female actors, technicians, and other professionals have started getting the long overdue and well-deserved good quality of work and respect in a professional environment. I am fortunate to be a part of this evolving era," she added.

Secondly, she recalled feeling plagued with "doubts and anxiety" ahead of beginning shooting for the series amid recovery from cancer. She was diagnosed with ovarian cancer in 2012 and was deemed 'cancer-free' in 2014.

Since her return, the actor has starred in films such as Dear Maya (2017), Sanju, Lust Stories (both 2018), and last year's Shehzada.

"Would my body be strong enough to deal with the intense shooting schedules, heavy costumes, and jewelry, and perform a role requiring so much nuance and effortless effort?" she wrote.

Koirala said a key scene in Heeramandi, which required her to be immersed in a water fountain for over 12 hours, tested her resilience.

"The fountain sequence proved the most physically challenging... Even though Sanjay had thoughtfully ensured that the water was warm and clean, over the hours, the water turned muddy, (because my team members, the cinematographer, and the art director's team were getting into the water to work around the scene.)" Every single pore of her body was soaked in muddy water, she wrote.

"Even though I was beyond exhaustion by the end of the shoot, I felt a deep happiness within my heart. My body had taken the stress and remained resilient. I knew I had passed a critical physical test," she said. (PTI)

## Feel like an actor on film sets, not heroine: Madhoo

**MUMBAI, May 12:** Actor Madhoo says she has moved on from the age-old thought process of being a heroine on film sets and embraced her role as a collaborator in the process of filmmaking. Known for hit 1990s films such as "Roja", "Phool Aur Kaante", "Yodha" and "Gentleman", the actor recently starred in the ZEE5 series "Fireflies: Parth Aur Jugnu" and "Sweet Kaaram Coffee", a Prime Video show.

This is an amazing time to be an actor, said Madhoo, who will next be seen in psychological thriller film "Kartam Bhugtam".

"Back in the day, I was a part of a culture where it was like 'I'm the hero, I'm the heroine'. But now, it doesn't feel like that... "I have moved on from that thought process and that's something the (OTT) content has done for me. It feels like I'm an actor on the movie set... You just feel that we are all collaborative and making one story..." she told PTI.

The 55-year-old actor said, unlike the '90s, she no longer cares about being typecast in a certain role as she believes it's difficult to be stereotyped in the era of content boom.

"I used to think I would be typecast. But now I don't care because there is so much content. So, how many times will you cast me as a mother or grandmother of one type? Back in the day, when actors played the role of a mother, it used to be a (big deal) thing. (PTI)



## Vicky wraps shooting of 'Chhava', calls working on film a 'dramatic journey'

**MUMBAI, May 12:** Actor Vicky Kaushal announced the wrap of the shoot on his upcoming film "Chhava", directed by Laxman Utekar of "Mimi" fame.

"Chhava" is reportedly a periodic drama based on the life of Maratha warrior Chhatrapati Sambhaji Maharaj and is produced by Dinesh Vijan of Maddock Films.

Kaushal, who headlines the film alongside Rashmika Mandanna, shared the movie update on his Instagram Stories on Saturday.

In his post, the National Award winner described working on the movie as an "incredibly passionate and dramatic journey".



"... 'Chhava' couldn't have ended without some drama. The rain Gods really put up a show today immediately after we rolled our final shot," he captioned a video of the film set as it poured.

"There's so much I wish to say, there's so little I'm able to convey about this journey right now... May be in a few days when it all sinks in. All I can say now with a heart full of gratitude, love and contentment is that. It's a wrap," he added.

"Chhava" marks the second project for Kaushal and Utekar, who previously collaborated on 2023's hit family comedy "Zara Hatke Zara Bachke". Mandanna's upcoming films include "Pushpa: The Rule" and "The Girlfriend". (PTI)

## Took inspiration from Amitabh, Shatrughan Sinha for 'Bhaiyya Ji': Manoj Bajpayee

**MUMBAI, May 12:** Actor Manoj Bajpayee says he drew inspiration from the mega star Amitabh Bachchan as well as his contemporaries Shatrughan Sinha and Vinod Khanna to play a massy hero in his upcoming film "Bhaiyya Ji".

The revenge action film is directed by Apoorva Singh Karki, who earlier directed the actor in the critically-acclaimed movie "Sirf Ek Banda Kaafi Hai". In the movie, the actor is playing the titular role, a man out to avenge his brother's death.

"I grew up watching commercial films and all the big stars of that time, they were all my inspiration, be it Shatrughan Sinha, Vinod Khanna ji, Amit ji (Amitabh Bachchan) or Jeetendra Sahab and all of them. It happened subconsciously. I knew that I had to do certain things to make him look attractive on screen. So that

everyone would like to be a figure like Bhaiyya Ji. "He is an inspirational force. The audience should look up to him. So that is why I got all of those mannerisms in playing Bhaiyya ji," Bajpayee told PTI in an interview.

As a child, the actor said, whenever he watched a mainstream action film, he used to feel like a hero. "This is what a commercial film does to the audience. The adrenaline rush, the excitement, the energy flow. Everyone starts feeling like a hero when they come out (of a theatre). This is the purpose of a good commercial film," he said.

When it comes to labels like superstar or action star, Bajpayee said he considers himself a "desi actor". "I am definitely a desi actor... I desire our culture, villages and the story of our soil should come in the mainstream cinema. Our heroes should look like us, not from some western country. We need to

make good films with good stories and that need to be rooted in our culture," he added. Bajpayee said he has done majority of the action sequences and credited action choreographer Fefsi Vijayan for pushing him as an artiste.

"It has been a very difficult film to shoot because most of the action scenes are done by me. Fefsi Vijayan, who is such a legend from the Tamil industry, is the one who was a tough taskmaster. He wanted Manoj Bajpayee to do all the actions and he was not ready to compromise at all... I'm so happy that he pushed me hard because everything is looking so amazing on the screen."

"Bhaiyya Ji" is the 100th film of Bajpayee's career, which is filled with some of the most critically-acclaimed movies of the last two decades -- "Satya", "Shool", "Raajneeti", "Gangs of Wasseypur", "Aligarh", "Gali Guleyan", "Bhonsle", "Sonchiriya" and

"Joram". An "item song" is often considered an important ingredient of a commercial movie but Karki was against the idea of having one in "Bhaiyya Ji", the actor revealed.

"We don't have any item songs. There are many stereotypes that we are breaking. Most of the commercial films and mainstream films, women don't have much to contribute. The women of this film are as strong as Bhaiyya ji. They are not your usual heroes and heroines. And the mothers on the screen, they are very different," he added.

Reaching the 100 film milestone is nothing short of a miracle for Bajpayee, the 55-year-old actor said.

"I never counted as I don't believe in it. But somehow Apoorva found out and the producers tried to make it an occasion. 30 years and 100 films, that too in the lead roles or as second lead, it has been quite a feat for me. (PTI)



# Rory McIlroy pulls within shot of Xander Schauffele in Wells Fargo Championship

**CHARLOTTE (NORTH CAROLINA), May 12:** Xander Schauffele has gone 38 tournaments without a win on the PGA Tour.

Rory McIlroy is doing his best to make sure Schauffele's painful drought continues.

McIlroy shot a bogey-free 4-under 67 on Saturday on fast greens to pull within a stroke of Schauffele with 18 holes remaining in the Wells Fargo Championship.

Schauffele, who entered the day four shots ahead of McIlroy and Jason Day, scraped and clawed his way to a 70 to get to 12-under 201 as he looks to avenge last year's runner-up finish here at Quail Hollow.

"I'm going to have to earn it tomorrow," Schauffele said. "I've got Rory breathing down my neck. I'll look at the leaderboard here shortly, but yeah, I think if I strike the ball they way I did today off the tee and just a little more focus coming into the greens, picking the spots and then going through my process a little better, should be in a good shape."

He will be again paired with the steady McIlroy, who has shot 67-68-67.

Sungjae Im was four shots back after holing out from bunker on No. 18 to save par and shot 69. Sepp Straka matched McIlroy's low round of 67 for the day and was alone

in fourth at 7 under, while Day was fifth at 5 under — making five bogeys in a 73.

McIlroy birdied Nos. 9 and 10 to pull within two shots, then got to one when Schauffele bogeyed the 12th.

The crowd began chanting "Rory! Rory!" as the star from Northern Ireland stepped to the 13th tee.

Seizing the momentum, McIlroy rolled in another birdie putt on No. 14 to move into a tie, but Schauffele matched that with a long birdie putt of his own moments later. Schauffele fought off McIlroy the rest of the way to maintain the lead despite finding the sand eight times in the third round. He had



five sand saves.

McIlroy caught a break on the difficult par-4 18th when his tee shot somehow avoided the creek on the left side of the fairway and came to rest sitting up in the tall grass. With a good lie, he found the edge of the green and two-putted for par to become the only player to not have a bogey Saturday.

"Two straight bogey-free rounds, this is what it must feel like to be Scottie Scheffler," McIlroy joked of the world's No. 1 player and recent Masters champion, who is not playing this week.

Schauffele maintained the lead on the 18th when he got up-and-down from a bunker.

"Some sleepy wedges in there unfortunately, some really good up-and-downs, kind of a mixed bag," Schauffele said. "Definitely made it harder on myself is what it felt like from being in some good spots in the fairway. McIlroy averaged 338 yards off the tee on Saturday, outdriving Schauffele' by an average of 23 yards."

"The driving is more just me committing to most of the time hitting that little cut that I've been hitting off the tee, and then having the freedom to just, every time I hit a good tee shot, the more confidence I get and then the more I want to just keep hitting it," McIlroy said. (AP)

# Praggnanandhaa beats Carlsen but remains third in Superbet chess

**WARSAW, May 12:** India's R. Praggnanandhaa scored yet another victory over world number one Magnus Carlsen of Norway to keep himself afloat even as Wei Yi of China stretched his lead to a massive 2.5 points in the Superbet rapid and blitz chess tournament, a part of the Grand Chess Tour.

With nine rounds still to come in the blitz event, Wei Yi has amassed 20.5 points with seven wins on the first day of blitz. Ending the day with 7.5 out of a possible nine, Yi, seems like a man possessed and unless a hurricane hits him, is poised to win the first leg of the Grand Chess Tour. Carlsen, on 18, is a distant second at this point and the main reason behind that is Praggnanandhaa, who has been beating the world number one often these days in the faster version of the game.

Praggnanandhaa, however is far behind the leaders with 14.5 points which makes it literally a two-horse race for the title.

In fourth spot is Arjun Erigaisi on 14 points while Duda Jan-Krzysztof of Poland is right behind him on 13. Nodirbek Abdusattorov of Uzbekistan stands sixth on 12.5, a full point clear of Vincent Keymer of Germany and the eighth spot is now taken



by early leader Kirill Shevchenko of Romania with 11 points.

Anish Giri of Holland improved a little to be ninth on

10.5 while the blitz remained a cause for worry for world championship challenger D. Gukesh who is languishing at the last spot with 9.5 points in the USD

1,75,000 prize money tournament.

Carlsen notably mentioned that his nervous system had collapsed following his second-

round loss against Praggnanandhaa. The world number one ended with six points out of nine, which is by all standards a decent result but following his loss to the Indian he blundered again and went down to Abdusattorov from a winning position.

Wei Yi started the day with a loss against Gukesh but recovered in quick time to only concede a draw to Carlsen while winning the rest of the seven games.

For Gukesh, it was a tough day despite a great start against the tournament leader as the Indian could only score 2.5 points in all.

With victories over Praggnanandhaa and Gukesh, Arjun ensured he remained in contention for a podium finish.

Losing to Wei Yi and Carlsen, Arjun scored five wins and two draws in his other games and will be optimistic on the final day of the event.

Final results rapid: 1. Wei Yi 20.5; 2. Magnus Carlsen 18; 3. R. Praggnanandhaa 14.5; 4. Arjun Erigaisi 14; 5. Duda Jan-Krzysztof 13; 6. Nodirbek Abdusattorov 12.5; 7. Vincent Keymer 11.5; 8. Kirill Shevchenko 11; 9. Anish Giri 10.5; 10. D. Gukesh 9.5. (PTI)

# Zimbabwe win final T20 by eight wickets to avoid series sweep against B'desh



**DHAKA, May 12:** Zimbabwe avoided a series clean sweep by beating Bangladesh by eight wickets in the fifth and final Twenty20 match on Sunday.

After being put in to bat, Bangladesh made 157-6 but Brian Bennett's 70 off 49 balls, with five fours and as many sixes, set the platform of Zimbabwe's victory with nine balls to spare. Skipper Sikandar Raza finished with 72 off 46 balls and combined with Bennett for a 75-run stand for the second wicket after Shakib Al Hasan struck early to dismiss Tadiwanashe Marumani for 1.

Unlike the past four matches, Zimbabwe was able to resist a top order collapse as Raza and Bennett dealt with Bangladesh's bowling with a good balance of caution and attack.

Bennett raised his maiden fifty off 36 balls, nudging Mustafizur Rahman to long-on for a single.

Pacer Mohammad Saifuddin had him caught by Rishad Hossain at long-on with a short ball

in the 16th over but Zimbabwe were well already in control at 113-2.

Raza, who hit six fours and four sixes for his 14th T20 fifty, then expertly led the tourists to victory and deny Bangladesh its first five-match series clean sweep.

Put into bat first, Bangladesh rode on Mahmudullah's 44 ball-54 after a top order collapse had left them at 15-3.

Fast bowler Blessing Muzarabani (2-22), claimed the in form Taznid Hasan Tamim's wicket for two with a short ball in the second over.

Off-spinner Bennett (2-20) then struck twice to remove Soumya for 7 and Towhid Hridoy for 1 as the hosts slipped early.

Mahmudullah and Najmul Hossain Shanto (36) combined for a 69-run partnership to bring Bangladesh back into the game and after Wellington Masakadza removed Shanto, Mahmudullah added 39-run with Shakib (21) to lift the hosts past 150. (AP)

# Deeksha sets new Indian record in athletics meet in LA

**NEW DELHI, May 12:** Indian track athlete K M Deeksha set a new national record in the women's 1500m while Avinash Sable finished second in men's 5000m event at the Sound Running Track Fest in Los Angeles.

The 25-year-old Deeksha finished third in the final on Saturday after running the distance in 4:04.78, bettering the previous record of 4:05.39 set by Harmilan Bains in 2021 at the National Open Athletics Championships in Warangal.

Deeksha's previous personal best was a 4:06.07 set in the final of the National Inter-State Athletics Championships at the Kalinga Stadium in Bhubaneswar in 2023, where she upstaged Bains to win gold.

Deeksha who is from Amroha, UP has been part of the MP Athletics academy for the last five years training under coach S K Prasad.

Parul Chaudhary ran a 15:10.69s in the women's 5000m to finish fifth. Parul narrowly missed out on improving her national record while compatriot Ankita ended 10th with a time of 15:28.88.

Sable finished second in the men's 5000m with a time of

13:20.37 and not his pet 3000m steeplechase event, and in the same event, Gulveer Singh ran a 13:31.95.

Sable's 5000m national record time is 13:19.30.

Kartik Kumar ran the last lap in 62sec in the men's 10000m but that could only fetch him a second-place finish. He

clocked 28:07.66s.

This is a World Athletics Continental Tour bronze level event. (PTI)

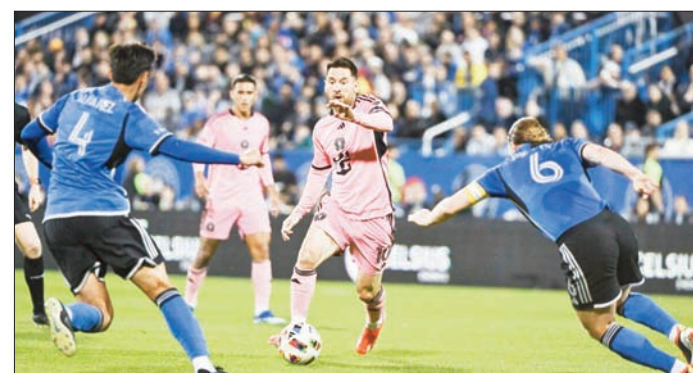


# Messi plays through a scare, Inter Miami rallies past Montreal 3-2 for fifth straight win

**MONTREAL, May 12:** Lionel Messi played the entire game despite a first-half injury scare, Benjamin Cremaschi broke a tie in the 59th minute and Inter Miami overcame an early two-goal deficit to beat Montreal 3-2 on Saturday night for its fifth consecutive Major League Soccer victory.

Luis Suarez got his 11th goal of the season for Inter Miami, and Matías Rojas scored off a free kick. Jules-Anthony Vil-saint and Bryce Duke scored for Montreal (3-5-3).

Inter Miami (8-2-3) extended its unbeaten streak to seven matches (5-0-2) despite Messi being held without a goal or an assist for the first time in his nine MLS appearances this season. Inter Miami is 7-0-2 in those nine games; one of its



losses came against Montreal in March, a game where Messi didn't play.

Playing in Canada for the first time, Messi briefly left late in the first half after some sort of issue with his left knee after being fouled by defender George Campbell. The eight-

time Ballon d'Or winner as the world's best player went down immediately, holding his knee and writhing in pain.

Inter Miami's medical staff went onto the field to treat Messi, who got up after about two minutes and walked to the Miami sideline. He was not

subbed out, which allowed him a chance to return moments later. And for whatever reason, the match changed in that moment. Inter Miami was down 2-0 when Messi got hurt; it was 2-1 when he returned and tied moments after he got back onto the field. Rojas scored off a free kick — one that Messi would have ordinarily taken — to get Inter Miami on the board, and Suarez tapped in a goal off a corner kick late in first-half stoppage time.

Suarez became the third player in MLS history to score 11 goals in his first 800 minutes of a season, joining Mamadou Diallo (11 in 2000) and Ola Kamara (11 in 2021).

The go-ahead goal came when Rojas sent a ball into open space and Cremaschi ran

it down — then made a second effort to nudge the ball just clear of two defenders and into the net for a 3-2 lead. Messi had two chances in the final minutes to extend the lead, both narrowly missing.

Hundreds of fans greeted Inter Miami when the team arrived at its hotel Friday night and Montreal, in part because of Messi joining Major League Soccer last summer, sold out its 15,000 season tickets for the first time since the club joined MLS in 2012. Messi has scored in 31 countries.

An announced sellout crowd of 19,619 spectators — including one dressed in a Messi tracksuit and wearing a goat mask in a nod to Messi as the Greatest of All Time — attended the match. (AP)

# Downs scores late to keep Cologne up and defer Bundesliga relegation decisions to final day



**BERLIN, May 12:** Damion Downs scored in injury time to keep alive Cologne's Bundesliga survival hopes Saturday with a 3-2 home win over Union Berlin, which dropped into the relegation zone with one round remaining.

Cologne had to win to have any hope of escaping the drop, and the team came from two goals down to defer its fate until next weekend.

It was the first time Union ever lost a Bundesliga game after enjoying a two-goal lead. And it came despite the club firing Nenad Bjelica as coach on Monday and reappointing Marco Grote as interim coach.

"The path hasn't changed. It's clear that it hasn't gotten any easier because we lost," Grote said.

Mainz capitalized on Union's defeat by beating Borussia Dortmund 3-0 in the late game to leave the relegation playoff spot.

Dortmund started with 10 changes to the team that defeated Paris Saint-Germain in their Champions League semifinal on Tuesday, and few were able to make their case to play in the final against Real Madrid on June 1.

Mainz raced into a three-goal lead and could have scored more. Dortmund coach Edin Terzic made three changes at the break.

In contrast to Mainz, Union was unable to build on its early dominance. Steffen Tigges equalized in the 87th minute for Cologne, then Downs

headed the winner in the third minute of stoppage time.

"The three points are super important, and now we have a final on the last day," said Cologne's Timo Hübers, whose team faces promoted Heidenheim away next weekend.

Union was just three points above Cologne, in the relegation-promotion playoff spot, while Mainz moved two points clear after its eighth straight game without defeat. Union hasn't won any of its last seven.

"We have to look ahead. It only works together," Union captain Christopher Trimmel said.

Also, Freiburg drew with Heidenheim 1-1 in Christian Streich's last home game in charge after more than 12 years as the Freiburg coach.

"Congratulations to Heidenheim for the draw," Streich said. "If again we can't win a game at home, my favorite for it to happen against is Heidenheim."

Streich is the Bundesliga's longest-serving coach but he said in March he will step down at the end of the season. His final game is at Union Berlin next weekend.

Leipzig drew with Werder Bremen 1-1, as did Borussia Mönchengladbach and Eintracht Frankfurt.

Holstein Kiel clinched its first ever promotion to the Bundesliga after drawing at home with Fortuna Düsseldorf 1-1. (AP)

# CSK humble RR by 5 wickets to brighten play-offs prospects

**CHENNAI, May 12:** Chennai Super Kings stayed in contention for a place in the IPL play-offs with a five-wicket win over Rajasthan Royals after pacer Srimangal Singh exemplified the home team's discipline with the ball with career-best figures of 3/26 here on Sunday. In a low-scoring match which had its share of drama with Ravindra Jadeja being given out for obstructing the field, CSK chased down a target of 142 with 10 balls to spare on a tricky surface.

Skipper Rituraj Gaikwad was the star for CSK with the bat, remaining unbeaten on a 41-ball 42.

Rachin Ravindra (27 off 18 balls) and Gaikwad managed a 32-run stand before the former was dismissed by Ravichandran Ashwin in the fourth over.

However, that did not have any impact on Gaikwad and Daryl Mitchell (22 off 13 balls) as they maintained a run rate of over nine and ended the power-play at 56 for one.

Pacer Sandeep Sharma was the most expensive bowler for the visitors during this phase and was hammered for 23 runs. Mitchell appeared to be the man on a mission, but his stay was cut short by spinner Yuzvendra Chahal, who trapped him leg-before wicket in the eighth over to end a 35-run partnership with Gaikwad.

Moeen Ali (10 off 13 balls) came in next, but he holed out to Nandre Burger



in the 12th over.

With the score reading 92 for three in the 13th over, Shivam Dube decided to have a go at Ashwin in his final over.

While Dube hammered Ashwin for a six and two fours in the over, the veteran had the last laugh, which also turned out to be his 50th IPL wicket at this venue.

Also, Jadeja (5 off 6 balls) survived a scare in the subsequent over after Jos Buttler dropped him off Chahal at long-

on. Rookie Sameer Rizvi then hit an eight-ball 15 not out with three fours to end the game in a jiffy after Jadeja became the third batter in IPL history to be adjudged out for obstructing the field after miscommunication with Gaikwad, who refused to go for a second run even as the all-rounder was halfway down the pitch.

The third man hurled it to Sanju Samson, who aimed the ball at the bowler's

end but the throw hit Jadeja. RR appealed, and the third umpire was convinced that Jadeja knew in which direction the ball was heading.

CSK needed 21 off the final four overs, and the duo of Gaikwad and Rizvi got the job done. The win took CSK to the third spot on the points table, while RR suffered their third straight defeat but remained in second position.

Earlier, Srimangal dished out his best performance in the IPL while helping CSK restrict RR to a modest total.

For the visitors, the in-form Riyan Parag top-scored with a 35-ball unbeaten 47 on a slow wicket.

Opting to bat, the RR openers were off to a cautious start. After RR ended the powerplay at 42 for no loss, the 26-year-old Srimangal made the first breakthrough in the seventh over, getting rid of Jaiswal (24 runs off 21 balls).

Srimangal came up with the second breakthrough in the ninth over, with Jos Buttler (21 off 25 balls) departing.

Samson failed to get going, and it was Srimangal again who grabbed the prized wicket of the RR skipper, ending his 42-run partnership with Parag.

Deshpande, bowling the final over, got rid of Jurel and Shubham Dube (0 off 1 ball) in consecutive deliveries. Eventually, the visitors didn't get a big enough total on the board. (PTI)

# GT face formidable KKR in must-win IPL game



**AHMEDABAD, May 12:** Shubman Gill's return to form will provide a big boost to Gujarat Titans as they square off against table-toppers Kolkata Knight Riders in their must-win IPL game here on Monday.

Gill roared back into form with his fourth IPL hundred to keep GT's slim playoff hopes alive with a comfortable win against Chennai Super Kings at home in their last outing.

Gill and Sai Sudharsan's twin centuries were the cornerstone of the hosts' huge total and their role will be crucial once again as they face KKR, which has become the first team to qualify for the play-offs. As many as seven teams are still in the race for the playoffs. While Rajasthan Royals (16) and Sunrisers Hyderabad (14) are well-placed at second and third position, three teams -- CSK, Delhi Capitals and Lucknow Super Giants -- are at 12 points each.

GT and Royal Challengers Bengaluru are at 10 points and can reach a maximum of 14 points.

With a negative net run-rate, GT's chance are the least and it will take a miracle for the former champions to sneak into the top four.

However, one thing is clear, GT will once again have to play out of their skin and register big wins to keep their mathematical chances alive.

GT's bowling has lacked teeth this season with the pacers inconsistent and spinners leaking runs. But the bowlers did manage to snap three CSK wickets in the first three overs in their last outing.

Mohit Sharma's variations and knuckle balls were effective and Rashid Khan's guile also stood out and they would hope for another good outing.

But it will again boil down to the top-order batting, which has failed to fire in the last few games before Gill and Sudharsan came up with sensational tons en route a record 210 opening stand.

KKR, on the other hand, need just one win in their remaining two games to seal a top-two finish after they qualified for the playoffs with an 18-run win over

Mumbai Indians in a rain-hit game last night. Sunil Narine (461 runs & 15 wickets) has carried the team with his all-round brilliance, while fellow West Indian Andre Russell has been another impactful player with 222 runs and 15 wickets this season.

Leg spinner Varun Chakaravathy with 18 wickets in his kitty has been in a good rhythm. Phil Salt too has given the team sensational starts but has been off the boil a bit in the last three innings.

Others such as Angkrish Raghuvanshi and Ramandeep Singh were also stepped up when needed as the two-time champions emerged as the most consistent team this season.

The venue has proved to be batter-friendly and has witnessed some high-scoring games.

GT has beaten KKR twice in the last three meetings but the hosts can't lower their guard as it was here where Rinku Singh had given them a nightmare when he slammed Yash Dayal for five successive sixes in the final over last year.

**Teams (from):**

**Kolkata Knight Riders:** Shreyas Iyer (c), KS Bharat (wk), Rahmanullah Gurbaz (wk), Rinku Singh, Angkrish Raghuvanshi, Sherfane Rutherford, Manish Pandey, Andre Russell, Nitish Rana, Venkatesh Iyer, Anukul Roy, Ramandeep Singh, Varun Chakaravathy, Sunil Narine, Vaibhav Arora, Chetan Sakariya, Harshit Rana, Suyash Sharma, Mitchell Starc, Dushmantha Chameera, Sakib Hussain, Mujeeb Ur Rahman, Gus Atkinson, Allah Ghazanfar and Phil Salt.

**Gujarat Titans:** Shubman Gill (c), David Miller, Matthew Wade, Wriddhiman Saha, Kane Williamson, Abhinav Manohar, B. Sai Sudharsan, Darshan Nalkande, Vijay Shankar, Jayant Yadav, Rahul Tewatia, Noor Ahmad, Sai Kishore, Rashid Khan, Joshua Little, Mohit Sharma, Azmatullah Omarzai, Umesh Yadav, Shahrukh Khan, Sushant Mishra, Kartik Tyagi, Manav Suthar, Spencer Johnson, Sandeep Warrier and BR Sharath.

**Match starts:** 7.30pm. (PTI)

## We win together, we lose together: Rana reveals KKR's winning mantra



**KOLKATA, May 12:** The key to Kolkata Knight Riders' success this season lies in their players' newfound ability to support each other through highs and lows, something that was "missing" over the past two years, feels the team's vice-captain Nitish Rana.

The two-time former champions became the first team to seal the playoff berth with a facile 18-run win over Mumbai Indians in a 16-over rain-interrupted IPL match at Eden Gardens on Saturday. This was the first time since 2021 that KKR made the last four stages.

"We win together and we lose together; that's the dressing room environment we have. It's very important to place hands on each other's shoulders, and I feel it was missing for the last one to two years," Rana said in the post-match media interaction here.

With this win, they have consolidated their position atop the standings with 18 points. With two games to go, KKR are now well-placed for a top-two finish.

The big reality check for KKR had come against Punjab Kings who smashed South Africa's record of the highest successful run-chase by gunning down 262 with eight balls to spare in an IPL fixture at Eden Gardens on April 26.

"We felt really bad that day. I was witness to the

## KKR's Varun Chakaravathy made things difficult for MI batters: Brett Lee

**KOLKATA, May 12:** Varun Chakaravathy's ability to be consistently among wicket-makers for Kolkata Knight Riders drew praise from former Australian tearaway bowler Brett Lee, who said he made life difficult for Mumbai Indians batters in a rain-shortened low-scoring game. Chakaravathy bowled miserly and took two wickets for 17 runs as KKR won by 18 runs to become the first team to seal an IPL playoff berth on Saturday. Chakaravathy (18 scalps) is the third-highest wicket-taker so far

this season behind MI's Jasprit Bumrah and PBKS's Harshal Patel, both of whom are on 20 wickets. "He bowled beautifully. He made efforts to pick the hard length, he banged the ball short in the wicket which did not allow the batsmen to get underneath the ball and made the cross-bat shots difficult," Lee told JioCinema on Sunday. Former Royal Challengers Bengaluru high-performance director Mike Hesson said KKR batter Venkatesh Iyer seems to be relishing punishing the Mumbai Indians bowlers. Venkatesh

has struck two half centuries this season and came close to striking a third before he was dismissed on 42 (21 balls) as he emerged the highest run-getter on both sides at the Eden Gardens on Saturday. "He seems to love playing against Mumbai Indians. He got hit on the knee earlier but that did not seem to stop him. He timed everything beautifully, batted with a strike rate of over 200 and when everybody else was struggling because of the seaming ball, he played a match-winning hand," said Hesson. (PTI)

## Pranavi finishes tied 7th with strong finish in Korea



**SEOUL, May 12:** Pranavi Urs produced a strong finish with three birdies in a four-hole stretch on the back nine for a top-10 finish at the Aramco Team Series Korea.

Pranavi shot rounds of 69-77-69 for a 1-under 215 and was tied-seventh at the end of the competition. This was the second top-10 finish in six starts this season for the Mysuru girl, who has been an 'Order of Merit' winner in the Hero Women's Pro Golf Tour, before earning a status on the Ladies European Tour. The other two Indians, the Olympic-bound Diksha Dagar (79-72-71) shot 6-over to finish tied 37th while Vani Kapoor (77-74-77) had a below-par 12-over and tied 60th rank. Korea's Hyo-Joo Kim lived up to her billing as the home favourite to win by three shots in Seoul.

Leading by two shots heading into the final round, the Major winner held off Charley Hull's Sunday surge carding a round of 68 (-4) to end the week on 10-under par. Pranavi had a sedan front nine with a birdie on the sixth and a bogey on the ninth. She birdied three times on 14th, 16th and the 17th with no bogeys for a 69. Diksha trying to force things had five birdies along with four bogeys for a 71. (PTI)



Mawlai SC winner of the Shillong Premier League title by defeating Rangdajied United FC 1-0 in the final of SPL 2023 at SSA Stadium Shillong on Sunday. UB photos

## Sai Sudharsan feels better game awareness and execution has led to remarkable consistency

**NEW DELHI, May 12:** His talent has always been unquestionable but what has stood out for young Gujarat Titans southpaw Sai Sudharsan in this IPL is his impressive game awareness and decision making, traits he picked up during his maiden India stint in South Africa last year.

The 22-year-old, who proved his worth at the highest level with two ODIs fifties in his debut series in South Africa last December, has shown remarkable consistency for Titans in the top-order.

With 527 in 12 games at a decent strike rate of 141.28, the Tamil Nadu batter finds himself among the top-five run getters at this stage of the competition. He season was going solid but it took a special hundred on Friday night for the cricketing world to take notice of his T20 skills.

The joint highest 210-run opening stand between Sudharsan and Shubman Gill kept Titans alive in the tournament.

The southpaw was picked by Titans for his base price of his Rs 20 lakh ahead of the team's debut season in 2022 but came of age the following year. He has now taken his game to the next level.

"There's not much change in my bat-

ting (compared to last season), but yes the decision making, the game awareness or knowledge of the game has improved. So that is helping me a bit to (stay consistent)," Sudharsan told PTI in an exclusive interview on Sunday.

Power hitting is a pre-requisite in the modern T20 game but Sudharsan relies on his timing to get the job done. Compared to last year, he is being able to put himself in better positions against world class bowlers.

"My batting is all about timing and (stable body) position. I've tried to hold on to both. So, I feel that execution part has got better because I got so much insights and knowledge from last year."

"I was finding it difficult to dominate each and every bowler (last year) so that gave me an opportunity to get better in my batting."

Back to back fifties in his debut series for India and that too in South Africa also gave him tons of confidence. He is not part of India's T20 plans at the moment but could be an integral part of the ODI squad going forward.

"It was very special for me, playing for the country against South Africa and it became a memorable game as well. So



yes, it has given me like knowledge about how international cricket works and where you have to improve as a batter, otherwise you cannot sustain yourself," he said.

In a season, where power hitting has been redefined with the likes of Travis Head, Abhishek Sharma and Sunil Nar-

ine striking in the 200 range, Sudharsan is comfortable in his skin.

"The way the game is going strike rate is definitely important but what I believe is we have had 160 (total) games, we have had 140 (total) games, we have had 170 (total) games. So I think the main goal is to cross that line.

"If we are chasing 240 or 250, the requirement is more. Reacting well to the situation is key. If we think about the strike rate in advance, we won't be able to play the situation well," felt Sudharsan.

Sudharsan also revealed that a chat with superstar Virat Kohli on the sidelines of Titan versus RCB game also provided him clarity.

"I had a conversation with Virat Kohli and Mahi Bhai (Dhoni) after the last game. With Virat, it was not so intricate. I spoke about the Power play with him. How to take on the bowler with minimal risk. "With Mahi bhai, I spoke about how to manage when we don't score runs and when we score runs, how to be the same."

During his sublime ton against CSK on Sunday, the lofted extra cover drive off Shardul Thakur on bent knee stood out. "I really enjoyed that shot over extra cover. But what I enjoyed the most was that intensity and the intent in which me and Shubman played," said Sudharsan whose hundred celebration was rather subdued compared to Shubman's with the skipper having a point to prove after being left out of the T20 World Cup

squad. How was it like to be part of a record partnership that night?

"I've been playing with Shubman for the past three years now, so we've been had many partnerships, we've been having many conversations off the field about cricket as well. He is a very, smart and skillful cricketer."

"The last game against CSK he was something else. He had that fire in his eyes. I could see the difference from ball one where he wanted to prove a point."

Sudharsan was part of Surrey's Championship winning side last season and he is looking forward to another season in the UK post the IPL.

"They've (Surrey) asked me for my availability. If we don't have anything in that bracket (schedule in India), I will definitely go for the same county team this year as well.

"It was a great experience to be honest because it was a new set-up, new conditions, different wickets, different balls. It was my second time in the UK but first time for red ball also. I had conversations with batters there on how we can play the red ball better when it's swinging," Sudharsan concluded. (PTI)