

leisure



LOPEZ LOVED IDEA OF FLIPPING GENDER ROLES

Singer-actress Jennifer Lopez, whose film *Shotgun Wedding* is directly heading to the OTT bypassing its Indian theatrical release, has shared that she liked the idea of flipping the gender roles in the film. Written by Mark Hammer, the film captures an extravagant destination wedding on a tropical island being hijacked by criminals.

RICHARD E GRANT TO HOST BAFTA FILM AWARDS

Actor Richard E Grant is set to host the 2023 BAFTA Film Awards ceremony, the awards body announced Monday. Presenter Alison Hammond will host a new BAFTA Studio to offer viewers at home experience and insights from the ceremony.



FORTUNE FORECAST

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ARIES
You may take a holiday today to be with your family, and perhaps go to meet your relatives who live nearby. It will make your kith and kin very happy. They will be surprised and Ganesh gives you the thumbs-up.

TAURUS
The planets are not well disposed towards you today, fears Ganesh. There are strong chances of crossing swords with someone, getting into a serious personality clash. Not good is come out of it. You may simply end in alienating those who are otherwise well disposed towards you.

GEMINI
You will neglect your daily routine and indulge in fun and frolic with your family members today. Friends and family will probably accompany you to lunch or dinner to your favourite restaurant. You will feel at ease and will feel the stress slipping out of your system. Wait for a couple of days before proposing to that special someone, says Ganesh.

CANCER
Swiftness of your work will mesmerise people. They will make comparisons with you. Yet they can-not catch up with you. You are not at all greedy, nor do you make any needless demand any time.

LEO
An auspicious and favourable day awaits you, says Ganesh. You will be able to complete all tasks at work. You will be able to make beneficial changes at home. You will be able to buy new things for home. Financial gains are possible. Youngsters may find love.

VIRGO
An outspoken discussion with a loved one is on the cards today. Work hard to complete the work that you have been procrastinating for a long time, says Ganesh. A holy place is beckoning you. However, Ganesh advises you to evaluate all your options while taking your decisions.

LIBRA
Ganesh says today is a good day for you. The ladies in your life will prove to be beneficial to you. You will be able to progress in your office because of your skills and abilities. You will be closer to your beloved today. You will show more interest in new topics and ideas.

SCORPIO
Your kids are your pride, especially today when they come out with flying colour in their academics. It's a favourable day to invest your money in home or land. In the evening, you may just feel like going to a secluded place and enjoy the twilight.

SAGITTARIUS
Today, your actions are definitely going to be louder than your words, predicts Ganesh. Your focus today would be on personality development and self-improvement, and you succeed to achieve what you want, to some extent. Good luck!

CAPRICORN
You bring perfection to the table and it impresses your colleagues to a great extent. When the deadlines are tight or situations get complicated, people look up to you for directions, and to nobody's surprise, you live up to their expectations. Your efficiency will not go unnoticed as the bosses will acknowledge and reward your efforts, says Ganesh. You will wind up an exhausting day on a happy note.

AQUARIUS
Mark this date on the calendar, as it may turn out to be the most important day in your life. A windfall is expected make your day brighter, says Ganesh. Good luck will follow you through out the day, as your hard work will be paid off with rewards and awards at work. Enjoy the good times, as every day is not the same day.

PISCES
Today is likely to be an extremely competitive and demanding day for you. You need to be extremely careful in how you go about doing your tasks, so as to not give anyone a chance to pick out mistakes in your work.

RRR does a double at CCA-2023

Rajamouli invokes 'Mera Bharat Mahan' and gets surprised by 'Avatar' director James Cameron, when the latter said that he had seen 'RRR' twice



Cameron speaking to Rajamouli

Los Angeles: After winning a Golden Globe for *Naatu Naatu*, SS Rajamouli's epic drama *RRR* won Best Foreign Language Film and walked away with the Best Song trophy for the number that has made the world fall in love with the Ram Charan-NTR Jr hook step at the 28th Critics Choice Awards, which took place Sunday night (US Pacific Time) at the Fairmont Century Plaza here.

The event also saw Rajamouli invoke *Mera Bharat Mahan* and get taken by surprise by James Cameron, the creator of *Avatar*, when he said that he had seen *RRR* twice.

Talking about other awards, Indie production house A24's *Everything Everywhere All at Once* won Best Picture. Brendan Fraser won Best Actor for A24's *The Whale* and Cate Blanchett took Best Actress for Focus Features *Tar*, *Everything Everywhere... came into the ceremony with a leading*



14 nominations and left leading all films and TV shows with five trophies, including Best Director for Daniel Kwan and Daniel Scheinert, the duo who are better known as the Daniels.

On the TV side, FX's *Breaking Bad* prequel *Better Call Saul* won Best Drama Series for its sixth and final season, and its star Bob Odenkirk won Best Actor in a Drama. And Zendaya picked up more Best Actress hardware for HBO's *Euphoria*.

Mumbai: Former Miss India International and aspiring actress Ayeesha S Aiman from Patna is making waves in the industry. Apart from working with the superstars of the industry like Shah Rukh Khan, and Mahendra Singh Dhoni in commercials, the former aeronautical engineer has now made her way to the film industry.

Ayeesha's candid confessions

She made her big acting debut with the critically acclaimed film *India Lockdown* where she played the character of a sex worker in the film. She has been making waves in the industry with her strong performance in recently released films and has been appreciated by her peers of the industry.

Ayeesha follows in the footsteps of Meena Kumari and Madhubala, two eminent actresses who left a legacy behind. "I wish to act like Madhubala and Meena Kumari ji. I am a big fan of Madhubala ji in films like *Mughal-e-Azam*, *Kala Pani* and *Mahal*. I have seen Meena Kumari ji in *Pakeezah*, *Sahib Bibi Aur Ghulam*. Watching them, I get fascinated and mesmerised. They both were iconic heroines of their time and their beauty left audiences mesmerized," she said.

"I so wish to recreate the magic of these legends on-screen. Every time I watch these films, I get motivated and tell myself, 'I want to perform like them'," added the 26-year-old.



Disha Patani, Sriya Lenka; 'two favourites in a frame'

Bhubaneswar: Disha Patani recently caught up with India's First K-Pop Idol Sriya Lenka. The two not only spent time together but also posed for pictures.

The occasion was the second edition of .Fest at Bhubaneswar of Odisha where the duo performed. A couple of days ago, they also performed at Barabati Stadium of Cuttack of the state during the opening ceremony of hockey World Cup-2023.

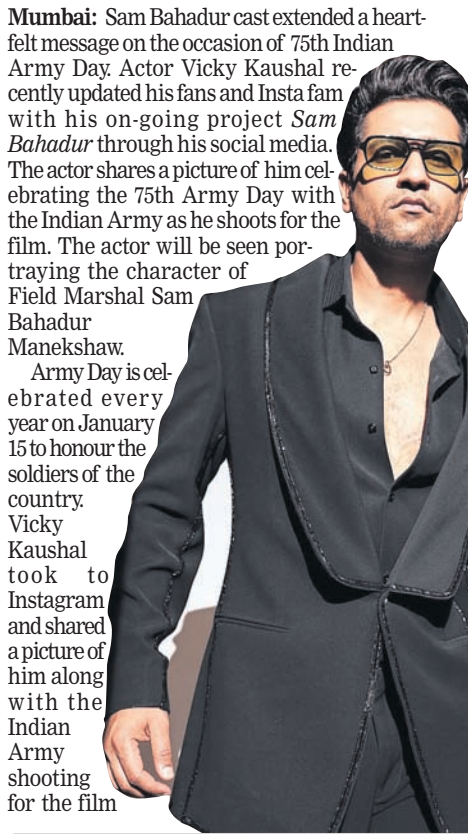
Sriya took to her Instagram handle to share some pictures of them together with her fans and her followers just can't have enough of the two divas.

The gorgeous ladies were all smiles for the camera. Sriya captioned the clicks, "Look who is here. One of my favorite actresses @dishapatani You are such a beautiful soul, so nice to meet you di."

Disha Patani also commented on the post and wrote, 'You're beautiful.' While one of their fans wrote, 'Two favourites in a frame', another one added, 'Aw...you both look pretty di.'

Sriya became the first K-pop artist from India last year when she was selected as a member of the South Korean band Black Swan.

Vicky Kaushal shoots with Indian Army



Mumbai: Sam Bahadur cast extended a heartfelt message on the occasion of 75th Indian Army Day. Actor Vicky Kaushal recently updated his fans and Insta fam with his on-going project *Sam Bahadur* through his social media. The actor shares a picture of him celebrating the 75th Army Day with the Indian Army as he shoots for the film. The actor will be seen portraying the character of Field Marshal Sam Bahadur Manekshaw.

Army Day is celebrated every year on January 15 to honour the soldiers of the country. Vicky Kaushal took to Instagram and shared a picture of him along with the Indian Army shooting for the film



on the occasion of 75th Army Day. Sharing the photo, he wrote, "Shooting on #ArmyDay with the Army. Warmest wishes on the 75th Army Day to All Ranks from Team #SamBahadur!". In the picture, Vicky can be seen posing with the Army.

Director Meghna Gulzar shared the same picture with the caption, "Warm wishes on the 75th Army Day to All Ranks from Team #SamBahadur".

Produced by Ronnie Screwvala, Meghna Gulzar directorial *Sam Bahadur*, featuring Vicky Kaushal in alongside Sanya Malhotra, is all set to release in cinemas December 1, 2023. The film also stars Fatima Sana Shaikh as former Prime Minister Indira Gandhi.

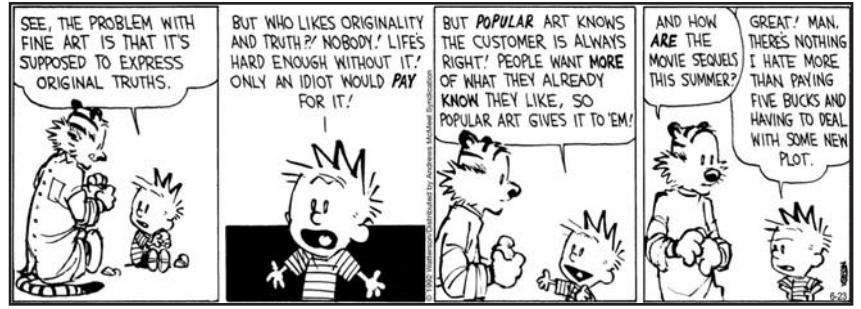


FUN post

PEANUTS



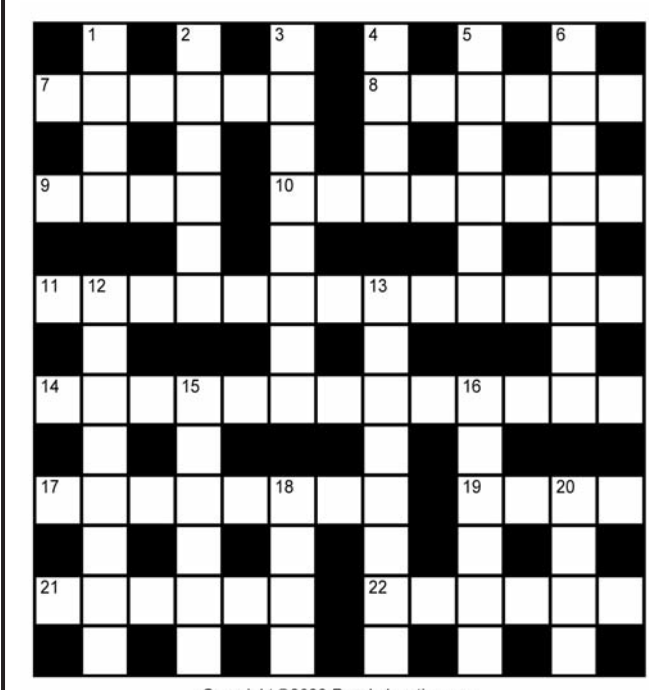
CALVIN AND HOBBS



BREVITY



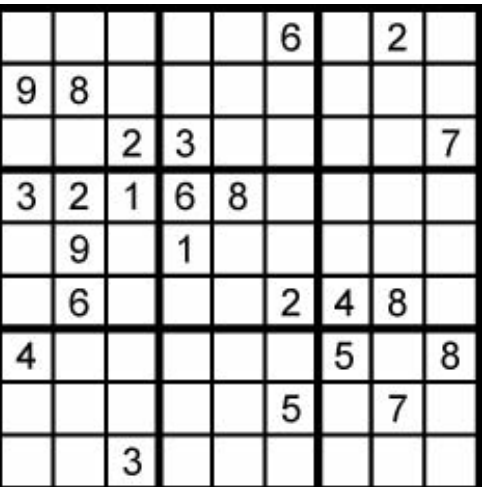
CROSSWORD



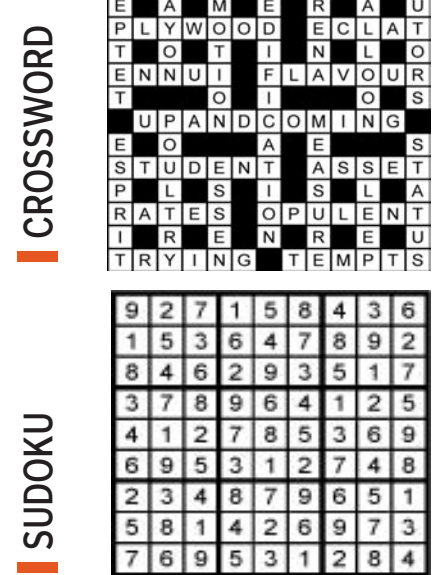
- Across**
- 7 Cask
 - 8 Break in the action
 - 9 Clothed
 - 10 Samurais, e.g.
 - 11 Bidding card game (7,6)
 - 14 Secretly imprisoned
 - 17 Splendour
 - 19 Chess piece
 - 21 Professional clown
 - 22 Fancy dog breed
- Down**
- 1 British peer
 - 2 Accounting entry
 - 3 Lightning bug
 - 4 Blacken
 - 5 Polynesian island
 - 6 Shocked and angered
 - 12 Disconcerted
 - 13 Insolvent
 - 15 Flowery
 - 16 Root vegetable
 - 18 Slips up
 - 20 Oleaginous

SUDOKU

To solve the Sudoku puzzle, fill in the boxes in such a manner that every row, column and 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9, without repeating any.



SOLUTIONS



CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

international



Korea has ... Declared its 2050 carbon neutrality goal. To achieve this goal, we are working to rapidly restore the nuclear power system, which supplies carbon-free electricity
YOON SUK YEOL | SOUTH KOREAN PRESIDENT

SHOCKING REVELATION

A London police officer Monday admitted raping and sexually assaulting a dozen women over a 17-year period, in what prosecutors described as one of the most shocking cases involving a serving police officer



of the day quote

Loans is not a solution to the economic challenges facing the country as they would be returned
SHEHBAZ SHARIF | PAKISTAN PM



The 13th Amendment, which was proposed to devolve power and solve the ethnic problem between the majority Sinhalese and the minority Tamils, would be implemented not only in the war-ravaged North but in the Sinhala majority South as well
RANIL WICKREMESINGHE | SRI LANKA PRESIDENT



We are in the grips of a profound disagreement that is tearing our nation apart
ISAAC HERZOG | ISRAEL'S PRESIDENT



SHORT TAKES

Five killed in China explosion

Beijing: A massive explosion at a chemical plant in northeastern China killed at least five people and left eight missing, state broadcaster CCTV said Monday. More than 30 other people were injured in the explosion on Sunday on the outskirts of the city of Panjin in Liaoning province east of the capital, Beijing. News releases from the local government showed photos of flames and thick black smoke rising from the complex of chemical processing machinery, pipes and storage containers.

Israeli army kills 14-year-old

Jerusalem: Israeli security forces fatally shot a 14-year-old Palestinian during an early morning raid on Monday into a refugee camp in the occupied West Bank, Palestinian health officials said, the latest incident in weeks of surging violence. The Palestinian Health Ministry identified the deceased teenager as Omar Khmour and said he died after being struck in the head by a bullet during an Israeli military raid into Dheisha refugee camp near the city of Bethlehem.

19 dead in road crash

Dakar: A bus swerved to avoid hitting a donkey and collided with a truck, killing at least 19 people and injuring dozens of others in Senegal Monday, authorities said. The collision happened near Ngeun Sarr in the country's north, President Macky Sall tweeted. "Yet another fatal accident on our roads," he said. "My heartfelt condolences to the bereaved families. Speedy recovery to the injured." The crash involved a public bus and a transport truck, the fire department said. The bus was apparently trying to avoid hitting a donkey, local fire department commander Lt. Ousseynou Ndiaye said.

Indian student dies in car crash

Melbourne: A 21-year-old student, who had moved to Australia eight months back from Punjab's Ferozepur, died on the spot after his car collided with a truck in Canberra, a media report said. Kunal Chopra was returning from work when his Hyundai Getz collided head-on with a concrete pumping truck on William Hovell Drive last week, SBS Punjabi, a multicultural and multilingual broadcaster in Australia, reported. The Australian Capital Territory Ambulance Service paramedics declared Chopra dead on the scene. The driver of the concrete pumping truck was taken to a hospital for mandatory drug and alcohol testing, according to the report.

Ukraine strike deaths hit 40

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Kyiv, Jan 16: The death toll from a weekend Russian missile strike on an apartment building in the southeastern Ukrainian city of Dnipro has risen to 40, authorities said on Monday, as Western analysts pointed to indications the Kremlin was preparing for a drawn-out war in Ukraine after almost 11 months of fighting.

About 1,700 people lived in the multi-story building, and search and rescue crews have worked non-stop since Saturday's strike to locate victims and survivors in the wreckage. The regional administration said 39 people have been rescued so far and 30 more remained missing. Authorities said at least 75 were wounded.

The reported death toll made it the deadliest single attack on Ukrainian civilians since before the summer, according to The Associated Press-Frontline War Crimes Watch project. Residents said the apartment tower did not house any military facilities.

The European Union's foreign policy chief, Josep Borrell, called the strike, and others like it, "inhumane aggression" because it directly targeted civilians. "There will be no impunity for these crimes," he said in a tweet on Sunday.

Asked about the strike on Monday, Kremlin spokesman



Emergency personnel evacuate a woman at the site where an apartment block was heavily damaged by a Russian missile strike, amid Russia's attack on Ukraine in Dnipro

About 1,700 people lived in the building, and search and rescue crews have worked non-stop since Saturday's strike to locate victims and survivors in the wreckage

The regional administration said 39 people have been rescued so far and 30 more remained missing

Authorities said at least 75 were wounded

Dmitry Peskov said the Russian military doesn't target residential buildings and suggested the Dnipro building was hit as a result of Ukrainian air defense actions. The strike on the building came amid a wider barrage of Russian cruise missiles across Ukraine.

Donetsk and neighbouring Luhansk province make up the Donbas, an expansive industrial region bordering Russia that Russian President Vladimir Putin identified as a focus from the war's outset

fighting continued to rage on Monday in Ukraine's eastern Donetsk province, where military analysts have said both sides are likely suffering heavy troop casualties. No independent verification of developments was possible.

ASSASSINATION ATTEMPT ON IMRAN

3 more suspects arrested

The three new arrested suspects were presented before an anti-terrorism court that granted them into the custody of the Joint Investigation Team for a three-day physical remand

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Lahore, Jan 16: Three more suspects have been arrested in a case related to a failed assassination attempt on Pakistan's ousted prime minister Imran Khan during his party's rally last year, police said on Monday.

"Two PML-N activists - Mudassar Nazir and Ahsan Ali - have been arrested from Gujranwala division for their social media posts," police said. Another suspect, Tayyab Butt, was taken into custody for his alleged involvement in helping the main suspect, Muhammad Naveed, in acquiring the weapon used in the attack, they said.

Khan, the chairman of the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI), suffered bullet injuries in the right leg on November 3 when gunmen fired a volley of bullets at him and others standing on a container-

mounted truck in the Wazirabad area (some 150-km from Lahore), where he was leading the long march to press for snap polls.

Police earlier arrested prime suspect Muhammad Naveed who opened fire on Khan along with his cousin Waqas. Naveed is on judicial remand while Waqas is in JIT's custody on physical remand. The three new arrested suspects were presented before an anti-terrorism court that granted them into the custody of the Joint Investigation Team (JIT) for a three-day physical remand.

Khan recently alleged that the JIT members are being pressured to distance themselves from the findings of its investigating assassination plot against him. "The powerful quarters were behind the assassination attempt on me," Khan reiterated. His party has claimed that "three shooters" were sent to kill Khan.

It said police arrested one shooter and are still looking for the "two others".

According to a forensic laboratory, Khan was hit by three bullets from the gun of Naveed. Khan, 70, had blamed Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, Interior Minister Rana Sanaullah and Major General Faisal Naseer of ISI for hatching a plot to assassinate him.



A woman walks on stairs covered with snow in Ljubljana, Slovenia

REUTERS

Germany's defence minister quits

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Berlin, Jan 16: Germany's much-criticized defence minister announced her resignation on Monday, as her department steers the massive project of modernising the country's military and oversees expanding weapons deliveries to Ukraine.

Christine Lambrecht said in a written statement that she had submitted her resignation request to Chancellor Olaf Scholz, adding that "months of media focus on my person" had stood in the way of a factual debate about the military and Germany's security policy. "The valuable work of the soldiers and many people



difficult and challenging times," Christiane Hoffmann told reporters in Berlin. She said a replacement would be announced "soon." Hoffmann added that it was important to Scholz to ensure gender parity among ministers, but declined to comment on a possibility of a wider Cabinet reshuffle. The 57-year-old Lambrecht has been defence minister since Scholz became chancellor in December 2021.

Critics have long portrayed her as out of her depth. But Scholz stood by her, describing her last month as "a first-class defence minister." Pressure on her mounted recently after an ill-judged New Year's video message.

TRAGIC TWIST OF FATE

Nepalese pilot couple killed in crash nearly 16 yrs apart

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kathmandu, Jan 16: Anju Khatiwada, the co-pilot of the crashed Yeti Airlines' aircraft, joined Nepal's aviation sector after the death of her husband who was killed while flying a small passenger plane of the same domestic airline in 2006.

Nearly 16 years later, the 9N-ANC ATR-72 aircraft - co-piloted by Anju - crashed on the bank of the Seti River near Pokhara's new airport on Sunday, with 72 people on board. Sixty-nine people were confirmed dead in Sunday's crash while three others are still missing. Anju is believed to be among the victims.



Anju was married to co-pilot Deepak Pokharel, who used to fly helicopters of the Nepal Army. After a few years of their marriage, Deepak, who became a pilot of Yeti Airlines, died in a Twin-Otter crash in Jumla district in 2006.

She used the money she received as an insurance claim after her husband's death to undertake aviation course, according to Sudarsan Bartaula, a spokesperson of Yeti Airlines. Anju studied a pilot course in the US and joined the aviation industry.

She joined Yeti Airlines in 2010 and became a captain fulfilling her dream. But nearly 16 years after Deepak's death, Anju seems to have lost her life as no survivors have been found so far after Sunday's crash.

According to the airlines' sources, Anju, who completed her school at St. Joseph's School in Biratnagar, had flown 6,396 hours in Kathmandu, Bhadrapur, Biratnagar, Dhangadhi and other airports.

After the death of her son-in-law, Anju's father wanted to send her to India to study, but she did not agree. Grieving the loss of her husband, she went to study a pilot course in the US. In 2006, nine persons were killed after the Yeti Airlines plane crashed in a remote mountainous district of Western Nepal.

All nine people on board, including six passengers, two pilots and a flight attendant were killed when the Twin-Otter crash in Jumla district.

Ex-SCBA president shot dead inside Peshawar High Court

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Islamabad, Jan 16: In a shocking incident of targeted killing, former president of the Supreme Court Bar Association (SCBA) and senior lawyer Latif Afridi was shot dead inside the Peshawar High Court (PHC) bar room.

As per details, the shooter entered the bar room and opened fire, hitting Latif Afridi with at least six bullets.

Latif Afridi was rushed to the Lady Reading Hospital, where he succumbed to his injuries during treatment.

"Latif Afridi was sitting with the other lawyers in the PHC bar room when a gunman opened fire at him. The police have arrested the gunman who has been identified as Adnan Afridi. The attacker is related to Latif Afridi," said senior Superintendent of Police, Kashif Abbasi.

"A small weapon, an identity card and a student card have been recovered from the attacker. We suspect that the attack was carried out because of personal enmity," Abbasi said.

The killing of Latif Afridi is not a first in his family. His cousin Aftab Afridi, who was an anti-terrorism judge in Swat, Khyber Pukhtunkhwa (KP), was also killed in a firing incident in 2022.

In that case as well, family members were held accused, who were later acquitted by the anti-terrorism court in Swabi.

Monday's incident has sent shockwaves among the lawyer community, who have expressed serious concerns over the security arrangements in the Peshawar High Court.

Sreejesh lauds strategy for goalies



PRSS TRUST OF INDIA

Rourkela, Jan 16: Veteran PR Sreejesh feels that his fellow India goalkeeper Krishan Bahadur Pathak substituting him in alternate quarters in the ongoing hockey World Cup matches was a good strategy from the coach.

Head coach Graham Reid used Sreejesh and Pathak in alternate quarters in the two Pool D matches played so far – against Spain and England. Sreejesh has manned the Indian goal in the first and third quarters while Pathak has done the same in the second and fourth quarters of a match.

“We wanted to prepare together for the next stages of the World Cup. If anything happens to one of the goalkeepers, the other will have to be on his toes. So, that is a good strategy,” Sreejesh said.

“We are exchanging in quarters. He is getting exposure while I have got enough experience. It is a good thing for the future,” said the experienced campaigner who has played matches for India.

Both India and England created chances but could not score off them. England got eight penalty corners and none could be converted. India also failed to score from the four PCs they got.

“Somewhere, we need to look into that, where we can, what changes we can make in penalty corners or other goal-scoring opportunities. We must learn from

the England match and prepare for the next game. Wales are a very good side, they gave a good fight against Spain. We will analyse their game and plan accordingly.”

Asked why England dominated early in the match, Sreejesh said, “We had a very slow start that is why England capitalised on that in the first quarter. From the second quarter onwards we put pressure on them, we bounced back and created opportunities. In our pool, every match is crucial.”

Former captain Manpreet Singh feels India do not need to do anything differently to score more goals against Wales in their last Pool D match Thursday. “We will just need to play our game and execute our plans. If we play our normal game, I feel goals will come,” said Manpreet.


England and India are now on four points each from two matches and who top the group and qualify directly for the quarterfinals will be decided Thursday when India play Wales and England take on Spain. Both the matches will be played at Kalinga Stadium in Bhubaneswar.

When two teams are on equal points and have won the same number of matches, the side with better goal difference will be ranked higher. England have a goal difference of plus five after beating Wales 5-0 in their opening match as against plus two of India who emerged 2-0 winners against Spain.


BROTHERS IN ARMS: SIBLING SUPPORT IN TIMES OF HARD DAYS

PRSS TRUST OF INDIA


Rourkela, Jan 16: There’s a saying that ‘a brother is better than 1000 friends’ and that is reflected in the Cunill siblings in the Spanish team which is battling to remain in contention for a quarterfinal berth in the ongoing hockey World Cup here.



Pau Cunill and Pepe Cunill are providing each other with emotional support after Spain slumped to 0-2 defeat to India in their opener last week.



The same is the case of the siblings in the Wales team – Gareth Furlong and Rhodri Furlong, who lost their second match Sunday to be virtually out of the tournament.



In Bhubaneswar, the Grambusch brothers – Mats and Tom – are in a better position as their German team beat Japan 3-0 in their campaign opener.

“To have someone from your family playing alongside you during such a big tournament like the World Cup is a big support emotionally and otherwise. You can rely on him for anything, for moral support or boosting confidence,” Pau said.

The 23-year-old Pau is one-and-half years older than Pepe and they have been inseparable since their childhood. They also play together for the same club in Spain – Athletic Terrassa.

In fact, one of their cousins – Gerard Clapes – is also in the Spanish team for the ongoing World Cup here. “Both my father and mother played hockey. Our grandfather also played hockey. So, you can say that ours is a hockey family,” Pau said with 21-year-old Pepe nodding with a smile.

“Everyone (in the family) talked about hockey, and everyone is a

hockey player. Our parents are very proud of the two of us playing for the national team together.”

Pau and Pepe have been playing together for Spain since January last year and were a part of the team that played Pro League matches against India at Kalinga Stadium in February and October-November.

“We played together for the Spanish team for the first time in a Test match against the Netherlands in January last year,” Pau said.

In the team set-up, the two brothers cannot be together all the time and they have to be with their own groups at times.

“At home, we share a room but in the national team, we cannot be like that. We have to mix up with others. We don’t care whether we are together or not,” said Pau. “Of course, before matches, we talk to each other, try to boost confidence and support each other. It’s always an honest discussion. If I make a mistake, he will point out to me, and vice versa.”

Pau said there is also a healthy competition between them, trying to do better for the team. He said he found hockey in India to be in “another level.”

“It is crazy, hockey in India is at another level, the infrastructure, the love of the game here, it is at another level. No wonder, India is currently doing very well.”

Dutch virtually seal quarterfinals berth

ARGENTINA, AUSTRALIA PLAY OUT THRILLING 3-3 STALEMATE AT KALINGA STADIUM

AGENCIES

Rourkela, Jan 16: The Netherlands registered yet another 4-0 victory, this time against New Zealand, in their second Pool C match of the FIH Men’s Hockey World Cup at the Birsamunda International Hockey Stadium here, Monday.

Thierry Brinkman struck a brace, while Koen Bijen and Tjep Hoedemakers struck once each to help the Dutch team virtually seal a berth in the quarterfinals. The Dutch are on top of Pool C after the second round of group matches having won both the games four-goal margin. Even if they lose their last group match, the goal difference is too much to make a difference.

They have six points from two wins while New Zealand and Malaysia, who defeated Chile 3-2 earlier in the day, have three points each from two matches. Chile have lost both their matches so far and are yet to open their account.

Both the goals of Brinkman came via field goals in the first quarter – in the 2nd and 12th minutes. Bijen (19th minute) and Hoedemakers (54th) scored the third and fourth goals for the Netherlands who had won the title in 1973, 1990 and 1998.

Clash of titans

The last match on the day witnessed World No.1 Australia and World No.7 Argentina – two among the title favourites – play out a

thrilling 3-3 draw at the Kalinga Stadium in Bhubaneswar.

Argentina dominated the proceedings, but the Aussies slowly got into the rhythm and drew the first blood in the ninth minute, when Jeremy Hayward found the target from a penalty corner.

Argentina levelled the score three minutes into the second quarter through Tomas Domene via a PC before the Kookaburras restored their lead a minute from the halftime break through a field goal by Daniel Beale.

Argentina restored parity through a field goal by Maico Casella two minutes into the second half as the teams entered the fourth quarter of the match 2-2.

Argentina finally took the lead – first time in the match – when Martin Ferreiro found the target from a field goal three minutes into the final quarter of the match. However, Blake Govers saved Australia’s day with a field goal three minutes from time.

Earlier, Victor Charlet’s brace helped France beat South Africa 2-1, with all the goals coming from penalty corners. Charlet opened the scoring for France in the seventh minute. Connor Beauchamp equalised for South Africa in the 15th minute. Charlet once again made the difference, perfectly placing a low drag flick into the bottom corner to give France the lead with less than four minutes left.



The Netherlands players celebrate a goal against New Zealand at the Birsamunda International Hockey Stadium in Rourkela, Monday

Nadal struggles past Draper

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Melbourne, Jan 16: Rafael Nadal never truly seemed in danger of becoming the first Australian Open defending men’s champion to lose in the first round since his current coach, Carlos Moya, managed to beat Boris Becker a quarter of a century ago.

Still, this was not a vintage performance by Nadal, who came into Monday’s matchup against 21-year-old Jack Draper with an 0-2 record in 2023 and six losses in his past seven outings overall. After nearly two hours of so-so play, Nadal found himself even at a set apiece.

He appeared to be pulling away, taking advantage of his opponent’s bout with cramps on an afternoon with the temperature at about 85 degrees Fahrenheit (30 Celsius), when suddenly Draper went up by a break in the fourth set. From there, though, Nadal would not drop another game, beginning his pursuit of a record-extending 23rd Grand Slam championship with a 7-5, 2-6, 6-4, 6-1 win that took more than 3 1/2

hours in Rod Laver Arena.

The 36-year-old from Spain was not in peak form. All in all, it was a bit of a struggle. He tried to put a silver-lining spin on things, nonetheless, given his recent track record and knowing that he tore an abdominal muscle twice in the past six months.

Both men are left-handers, but that is pretty much where the similarities end, whether in terms of style or age or experience or accomplishments.

Nadal, who is seeded No.1 because top-ranked Carlos Alcaraz is sidelined with an injury, is appearing in his 67th Grand Slam tournament. Draper, ranked a career-best No.38 this week, was making his fourth trip to a major and his best showing was getting to the third round at the US Open last September.

Draper also has faced problems dealing with steamy conditions: In his ATP Tour debut at the Miami Open in March 2021, he collapsed on court and needed to stop playing after one set.

This time, signs of trouble showed up early, and Draper was



PHOTOS SAY IT ALL

- 1 Fans enter the stadium after going through their security check ups
- 2 A couple poses for a photo showing their support for South Africa
- 3 A girl takes a selfie with her mother in Kalinga Stadium, Monday

BARCA CLAIM FIRST TITLE UNDER XAVI

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Madrid, Jan 16: Barcelona’s title drought with coach Xavi – and without Lionel Messi – is finally over: Barcelona beat Real Madrid 3-1 Sunday to win the Spanish Super Cup at Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, and give its fans reasons to celebrate again after a revamping process that began following Messi’s departure for Paris Saint-Germain and the arrival of former player Xavi as coach in 2021.

Barcelona had not lifted a trophy since the 2021 Copa del Rey under former coach Ronald Koeman. That was Messi’s 35th and final title with Barcelona before leaving amid the club’s financial struggles.

Robert Lewandowski, Gavi and Pedri scored a goal each in the final

at King Fahd Stadium to give Barcelona its first Super Cup trophy since 2018 – and its 14th overall – and the first since the tournament began being played in a Final Four format in 2020 in a lucrative deal for the Spanish soccer federation.

Gavi opened the scoring in the 33rd minute from close range after a pass by Lewandowski, who doubled the lead after an assist by Gavi in a breakthrough just before the end of the first half. Gavi also set up Pedri’s close-range goal in another breakthrough in the 69th. Karim Benzema scored for Madrid late in stoppage time.

Madrid were trying to win their second consecutive Super Cup title in Saudi Arabia, and equal Barcelona’s record of 13 Super Cup trophies.

Madrid beat Barcelona 3-1 at home in the first “clásico” of the season at the Santiago Bernabéu Stadium in the Spanish league in October. It trails Barcelona by three points in the league this season.

The Super Cup used to be played between the Spanish league champion and the Copa del Rey winner. Now the runners-up in both competitions also participate. Madrid played as the league champion and Barcelona as the league runner-up. Betis won the Copa title over Valencia last season.

