

Union Cabinet to meet on April 30, first since Pahalgam attack

GNS News Agency, April 29

The Union Cabinet will be meeting on Wednesday (April 30, 2025) for the first time since the April 22 terror attack in Pahalgam that left 26 people dead. The meeting under the chairmanship of Prime Minister Narendra Modi will be convened at 11 a.m. on Wednesday. There was no meeting of the Union Cabinet last week and only the Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS) had met on April 23 and had condemned the terror attack. After the CCS meet-



ing, India had announced a number of measures, including downgrading diplomatic ties with Pakistan. Among other

measures, India announced expulsion of Pakistani military attaches, suspension of the over six-decade-old Indus Water

Treaty and immediate shutting down of the Attari land-transit post in view of the cross-border links to the Pahalgam terror attack.

CM Revanth reviews arrangements for Miss World Pageant-2025

Hyderabad, April 29 : Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy on Tuesday reviewed arrangements for Miss World Pageant -2025 which begins May 10 in Hyderabad. Officials briefed the Chief Minister about the elaborate arrangements being made for the Miss World competition. On the occasion, Revanth Reddy ordered the authorities to make foolproof arrangements ensuring no inconvenience to the participants in the prestigious competition in the city. Police officials have been asked to provide tight security at the Airport and Hotels where the guests from across the world stay and also at the venue of the international event.

Revanth Reddy instructed the officials to make special arrangements for a visit to historical monuments and tourist places by the guests in the Telangana State. He stated that special officers should be appointed to supervise the arrangements department-wise and directed authorities to complete pending beautification works in the city at the



earlies The Chief Minister also instructed the officials to prepare a comprehensive plan and make adequate arrangements for the smooth conduct of the entire Miss World competition.

Several celebrities wish KTR to get well soon from his injury



Hyderabad, April 29 Many celebrities, BRS party leaders and BRS working president KTR's fans today wished him to get well soon from his injury caused to him during a workout session in gym. KTR revealed about his injury in his official X handle. "Picked up a slip disc injury during a gym workout session. Have been advised a few days of bed rest and recovery by my doctors. Hope to be back on my feet soon," he said. Union Minister Bandi Sanjay took to his handle on the X-platform and prayed to the goddess that KTR recovered quickly and regain good health and strength. Responding to Bandi Sanjay's post, KTR replied, "Thank you Bandi Sanjay garu." AP Deputy CM Pawan Kalyan also took to his X-platform and wished KTR to recover quickly and take adequate rest as per the doctors' instructions. Stating that he is saddened to know that KTR has been injured, AP Minister Nara Lokesh wished KTR to take rest and recover quickly as per the doctors' instructions. Former AP CM YS Jagan Mohan Reddy also took to his handle on the X-platform and prayed for KTR to recover quickly. KTR replied to all their tweets and thanked them for their concern.

Kashmir Closes 48 Tourist Sites After Terror Threat Alert

GNS News Agency, April 29

The Jammu and Kashmir administration has shuttered 48 of 87 tourist destinations throughout Kashmir following intelligence warnings of imminent terror threats in the wake of last week's deadly attack in Pahalgam. Security agencies have intercepted communications confirming that sleeper cells across the valley have been activated and instructed to begin operations. Intelligence reports obtained by India Today state, "Reliable inputs indicate militant organizations are actively planning attacks targeting security forces and non-local individuals in the coming days." The intelligence also suggests Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) is orchestrating targeted strikes against non-locals, Criminal Investigation Department personnel, and Kashmiri Pandits, particularly in Srinagar and Ganderbal districts.

Sources reveal ongoing intelligence reports indicate terrorists operating across North, Central, and South Kashmir are planning targeted killings and a larger, more significant attack in retaliation for the destruction of terrorists' residences following the Pahalgam incident. Security agencies have also warned of possible attacks on railway infrastructure and personnel, advising railway security staff to remain within designated camps and barracks. In response to these threats, authorities have deployed specialized anti-fidayeen squads from the Special Operations Group of the Jammu and Kashmir Police to vulnerable tourist locations including Gulmarg, Sonamarg, and areas around Dal Lake, significantly enhancing overall security measures. The April 22 attack saw Pakistan-based terrorists open fire on vacationers in Pahalgam's Baisaran Valley, killing 26 people, predominantly tourists. This tragedy triggered a massive tourist exodus from Kashmir, with the latest security warnings coming just as visitors had begun returning to the region. Security forces have launched extensive counter-terrorism operations across the state, conducting coordinated raids and detaining hundreds of suspects and terror sympathizers in the search for those responsible for the Pahalgam attack, which reportedly involved a local terrorist collaborator.



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PEOPLE'S GOVERNMENT: PATH TO PROGRESS AND WELFARE FOR ALL



Issued by: Special Commissioner, Department of Information and Public Relations, Government of Telangana.

Indian Chronicle

English Daily

J&K stands united

THE Jammu and Kashmir Assembly has sent out a strong message of peace and communal harmony in the wake of the Pahalgam terror attack. During a special House session, it unanimously passed a resolution condemning the massacre that has shocked, angered and saddened not only J&K but the entire country. The horrifying incident has come just six months after the Omar Abdullah-led government took charge following peaceful and highly participative elections in the state-turned-UT. Right now, the biggest challenge for the CM is to ensure that the gains from the revival of the democratic process are not frittered away.

Omar sees a ray of hope for Kashmir in the spontaneous outrage and grief, "coming straight from the hearts of the people", after the massacre. "Every mosque observed silence (in memory of the victims)," he noted. Indeed, this heartwarming sign indicates that all is not lost. The welcome spirit of unity, compassion and resilience can counter the disruptive elements who want to push a resurgent J&K back into that nightmarish era of the early 1990s.

Omar has candidly admitted that he failed in his responsibility of sending tourists safely back home. Refusing to exploit the tragedy for political ends, he has declared that he will not use this moment to seek statehood. It's inevitable that J&K's UT status will not end as long as terrorism keeps rearing its ugly head. However, the wholehearted involvement of Kashmiris and their elected representatives in the fight against terror can make a visible difference on the ground. A lot will depend on the support provided by the Centre and various states to the beleaguered UT. Helping Kashmir pick up the pieces after a devastating blow should become a national priority.

Ullas, New India Literacy should be implemented in the district"—

District Collector Divakara TS—
Review with district officials



"Mulugu, Mahipal, Indian Chronicle : Collector Divakara TS has ordered the officials to implement Ullas, New India Literacy in the district. On Tuesday, the Collector held a meeting with the officials of various departments in the district in his chamber. Speaking on the occasion, the Collector said that the DRDA, School Education Department, Intermediate Education Department, Telangana Open School Society, Medical and Health Department, Women and Child Welfare Department and Panchayat Raj Departments in the district should coordinate and work to increase the literacy of adult women and men. He said that under the auspices of DRDA, the female illiterate members of women's groups in the district should be identified and details should be collected, and similarly, the adult illiterate persons under the jurisdiction of various departments should be identified and details should be provided to the Education Department in a timely manner. Later, it was suggested that volunteers should be formed voluntarily and literacy programs should be implemented as per the schedule. Additional Collectors Mahender Ji, Sampath Rao, DEO G. Panini, DMHO Dr. Gopal Rao, DWO Sirisha, DPO Devaraj, DIO Chandrakala, Adult Education District Nodal Officer Venugopal, Principal Venugopal on behalf of ITDA, Open School Society District In-charge Appani Jayadev, Samagra Shiksha Coordinator Gullapelli Sambaiah, and officials of various departments participated in this program. [6:35 pm, 29/4/2025] +91 98485 52224:

Cancer Care Center in Every District"- DMHO Dr. Gopal Rao"



Mulugu, Mahipal, Indian Chronicle: The state government has prepared plans to set up a Cancer Care Center in every district center and provide chemotherapy and radiotherapy to cancer victims, which will be available to the people of the district soon, said District Medical Officer Dr. N. Gopal Rao. On Tuesday, a one-day training camp on non-communicable diseases was organized at the R&B Guest House in Mulugu for PHES medical officers, Ayushman Arogya Mandir mid-level health providers, RBSK doctors, supervisors and health workers in the district. Speaking on the occasion, DMHO said that 65 percent of deaths occur due to non-communicable diseases such as diabetes, heart disease, paralysis, cancer and kidney-related chronic diseases without showing symptoms early. It was stated that the state government has ordered the 4th phase of screening tests to be conducted from May 1 to March 30, 2026, to identify people with such chronic non-communicable diseases in advance. Every medical officer should conduct awareness programs at the field level about the importance of this screening, and public representatives, leaders, Anganwadi teachers, teachers, and Panchayat secretaries should participate in this program. It was suggested that the Ashalu and ANMs in PHC should go door to door and conduct screening and achieve 100 percent targets. World Health Organization observer Dr. Satyendranath, District Deputy Medical and Health Officer Dr. Vipin Kumar, District Program Officers Dr. Pawan Kumar, Chandrakant, Srikanth, Randhir, Demo Sampath, NCD Coordinator Venkat Reddy, Monitoring Supervisor Suresh Babu, and others participated in this program.

India's IT sector in critical situation..

“:Chittoor MP Daggumalla Prasada Rao“



"April 29, Indian Chronicle Rayalaseema coordinator" Chittoor MP Daggumalla Prasada Rao expressed concern that the IT sector, which has given a boost to the Indian economy, is currently facing difficult conditions.

"Chittoor MP Daggumalla responded from Delhi on Tuesday on the questionable state of the IT sector. "He said that India's IT sector is the engine of growth in the global economy. Currently, the country's IT industry is a critical country facing unprecedented disruption. "He said that it will face shrinking client budgets. He said the acceleration of automation, intensifying geopolitical headwinds, and the sector giants - Infosys, TCS, Wipro - are issuing caution signals, which are worrying developments. "Once synonymous with growth, the industry is seeing a setback, with zero growth forecasts, slashed stock prices and widespread hiring curbs. "He cited the industry as an example, saying that the Bangalore skyline, shaped by the aspirations of this once-booming sector, reflects an uncertain future. "Chittoor MP Daggumalla Prasada Rao, who said the India IT index has fallen by nearly 20% this year, in stark contrast to the relatively stable Nifty 100, said this was undermining confidence in the sector's resilience. "He said the resurgence of protectionist policies, including the imposition of tariffs, under US President Donald Trump has further damaged bilateral trade relations. Industries like manufacturing and retail have responded with budget cuts and project cancellations, while Indian IT firms, which once enjoyed a boom, have been left with a shaky environment. "However, pockets of resilience remain. "The banking and financial services domain has continued to exhibit relative stability, he said. It provides a thin thread of continuity, the MP said. "The global demand landscape is evolving rapidly, but "now demands expertise in artificial intelligence, cloud technologies and cybersecurity. "There is no need for bulk manpower for coding, and hence it needs to evolve from a volume-driven delivery model to one rooted in high-value innovation. Chittoor MP Daggumalla suggested that the Indian should implement a strong claim on the use of this domain or risk. Only then will the Indian IT sector regain its position as a global leader.

KCR'S INSPIRING SPEECH IGNITES ENTHUSIASM ACROSS ALL SECTIONS; PUTTA MADHUKAR EXPRESSES GRATITUDE TO CITIZENS FOR RESOUNDING SUCCESS OF SILVER JUBILEE GATHERING.

"P.S.ASHOKAN"INDIAN CHRONICLE"MANTHANI APRIL,30" "As the TRS party, which emerged from the Telangana movement, completes 24 years and steps into its 25th year, a grand silver jubilee celebration was organized at Elkathurthy in Warangal district. Former Chief Minister and TRS President K. Chandrashekar Rao delivered a powerful and motivational speech that energized people across all sections of society, said former Manthani MLA Putta Madhukar. "Despite various challenges, a large number of leaders, activists, workers, farmers, agricultural laborers, auto drivers, and citizens from diverse backgrounds voluntarily traveled from different mandals of Manthani constituency—Kamanpur, Ramagiri, Mutharam, Manthani, Malhar, Kataram, Mahamuttaram, Mahadevpur, and Palimela—to attend the event. Their spirited participation played a key role in the success of the gathering. "Putta Madhukar extended his heartfelt appreciation to everyone who contributed to mobilizing people from rural areas and ensuring the event's effective organization. He emphasized the need for all participants to deeply reflect on KCR's message and move forward with renewed determination and clarity of purpose. "He also acknowledged the presence and support of farmers, workers, intellectuals, party cadres, and citizens from across the state who made the silver jubilee celebration a memorable and impactful occasion.



Award presentation ceremony Grandly held at Sri Padmavati Mahila Vishwavidyalaya



"April 29, Indian Chronicle, Rayalaseema coordinator" "The award presentation ceremony was held on Tuesday under the auspices of Sri Padmavati Mahila Vishwavidyalaya, Tirupati NSS. Registrar Acharya N. Rajani participated as the chief guest and presented the awards. School of Science Dean Acharya T. Sudha, S.S.S.H&M In-charge Dean Acharya P. Vijayalakshmi, Nursing College Principal Dr. B. Ganga Bhavani, College of Engineering and Technology Director Acharya P. Mallikarjuna, NSS Program Coordinator Acharya I.V. Lalitha Kumari participated in the

program and presented the awards. The Best Program Officer Award was presented to Dr. D. Yuvasri, Dr. K. R. Padma, the Best Unit Award to Dr. S. Vajihabanu and Dr. K. Rukmini.

The Best PO Second Runner-up was presented to Dr. B. Hemavati, the Second Runner-up Best Unit to Dr. R. Bharathi, and the Appreciation Award to Dr. Y. Anitha. Along with M. Ramya as the Best NSS Volunteer for the entire university, appreciation awards were presented to 22 volunteers from 22 units.

R.V. Karnan takes charge as GHMC Commissioner

Hyderabad, April 29 R.V. Karnan assumed charge as the Commissioner of Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC) on Tuesday. As part of the recent reshuffle of IAS officers conducted by the State government, R.V. Karnan has been appointed as the new Commissioner of the Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC). R.V. Karnan officially took charge from the outgoing Commissioner K. Ilambarthi. Previously, R.V. Karnan served as the Director of the State Health and Family Welfare department, where he conducted extensive raids on food establishments such as restaurants, pubs, and ice cream parlors that violated hygiene standards, thereby raising public awareness about food safety. K. Ilambarthi, who served as the GHMC

Commissioner, undertook several programmes during his tenure to enhance urban development, expand basic amenities, and improve citizen services. He has now been transferred as the Secretary of the AYUD (Area Urban Development) under the Hyderabad Metropolitan Development Authority (HMDA). On the occasion, the GHMC officials and staff congratulated the new Commissioner and the outgoing Ilambarthi together



Vice-Chancellor and Academic Dean of NSU Participated in YUGM Programme Organized by the Ministry of Education, Government of India, and the Vidwan Foundation."



"April 29, Indian Chronicle Rayalaseema coordinator" Vice-Chancellor Prof. G.S.R. Krishnamurthy, Academic Dean Prof. Rajanikanth Shukla, and former In-charge Registrar Prof. R.J. Ramashree of National Sanskrit University participated in the YUGM programme held at Bharat Mandapam Convention centre, New Delhi, under the auspices of the Ministry of Education, Government of India, and the Vidwan Foundation. "The programme focused on how to implement innovative initiatives and advanced developments within the university. "On this occasion, Vice-Chancellor Prof. Krishnamurthy stated that this programme served as a guide for creating new trends in the field of Sanskrit and expressed his happiness, describing the experience as both inspiring and instructive. Faculty and officials of the university congratulated Vice-Chancellor Prof. Krishnamurthy, Academic Dean Prof. Rajanikanth Shukla, and former In-charge Registrar Prof. R.J. Ramashree on their participation in the event.

SVU receives huge income tax refund"



"April 29, Indian Chronicle, Rayalaseema coordinator" Registrar Acharya M. Bhupathi Naidu informed that Sri Venkateswara University has received a huge amount of income tax refund for the financial year 2023-24. He said that it is a joy to see such a large amount of money returned from the Income Tax Department in the history of the university and to have it credited to the university's account. Dr. Falguna Kumar, a former student of Commerce of the university, along with his team, worked for two months to calculate the income tax returns due to the university for the last financial year and made efforts to refund Rs. 1,03,84,000/- from the money paid to the Income Tax Department on deposits without charging any fee, as a result of which the money was deposited in the university's account today. He also said that Falguna Kumar has submitted a calculation to the Income Tax Department to repay approximately Rs 8.75 crore from the income tax paid by SVU in the last 5 years, and that money is also likely to come to the university. On behalf of the university, the Vice-Chancellor of the university, Acharya Appa Rao, and Registrar, Acharya M. Bhupathi Naidu, expressed special gratitude to Dr. Falguna Kumar, who has been a partner in the development of the university as an alumnus of this university, and asked him to provide his services to the university in the future.

Govt encouraging youth to establish MSMEs: Sridhar Babu

Hyderabad, April 29 In an effort to further industrialise Telangana, Minister for IT and Industries Sridhar Babu has announced that industrial parks adhering to international standards will be established in every constituency. He stated that these parks will focus on promoting the establishment of Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs), with a particular emphasis on encouraging young entrepreneurs from Telangana. Sridhar Babu on Tuesday laid the foundation stone for the "Mobility Valley Park," to be developed under the aegis of TGILC at Yenkaithla village in Mominpet mandal of Vikarabad district, with an investment of Rs. 44.3 crore. Speaking on the occasion, the Minister said that the park, spread over 862 acres, is expected to generate employment for nearly 10,000 youth. He emphasised that industrial development should not be confined to Hyderabad alone and that the government is actively encouraging industrialists to invest across various regions of the State. The State government remains fully committed to supporting MSMEs and has introduced a dedicated policy aimed at strengthening this sector," he said.

The Minister also addressed ongoing misinformation campaigns against the government, stating that while many industrialists are showing interest in investing in Telangana, some vested interests are deliberately spreading false propaganda. He urged such elements to refrain from obstructing the state's progress. The event was attended by Assembly Speaker Prasad Kumar, Chevella MP Konda Vishweshwar Reddy, MLC Mahender Reddy, MLAs Rammoan Reddy and Manohar Reddy and TGILC Chairperson Nirmala Jagga Reddy, among others.



COURTESY MEETING WITH BJP STATE PRESIDENT AND UNION MINISTER KISHAN REDDY BY PARTY LEADERS AT STATE OFFICE.



“PS ASHOKAN”INDIAN CHRONICLE“MANTHANI APRIL,30.”“In a respectful and cordial gesture, BJP State General Secretary Dugyala Pradeep, accompanied by District President Karre Sanjeeva Reddy and senior leader Sunil, paid a formal visit to BJP Telangana State President

and Hon'ble Union Minister for Coal and Mines, Shri G. Kishan Reddy at the State Party Headquarters today.”“The leaders engaged in a meaningful exchange, reaffirming their commitment to the party's vision and ongoing efforts to strengthen grassroots presence across the state.

Steps should be taken to ensure justice for complainants“– District SP Dr. Shabarish“–



SP who conducted monthly crime review“Mulugu, Mahipal, Indian Chronicle: District SP Dr. P. Shabarish has suggested that police officials should take steps to ensure speedy justice for complainants in thefts and financial crimes. The monthly crime review meeting was held at the district police office conference hall on Tuesday. On this occasion, the SP inquired about the details of the cases registered this month, police stations wise, and issued orders to complete the investigation of the cases expeditiously. Speaking on this occasion, the SP directed that the investigation of the cases should be intensified and efforts should be made to ensure that the lost cash and goods are returned to the victims. He said that the progress in the investigation of old cases should be reviewed and the investigation should be completed expeditiously and justice should be done to the victims. He suggested that awareness should be created among the people to take safe measures as there is a high chance of thefts during the



current summer season when people go on vacation. He suggested that efforts should be made to create awareness among the people about the installation of CCTV cameras and to install new CCTV cameras. He said that awareness should be created among the people about road accidents and appropriate measures should be taken to prevent road accidents. He said that appropriate steps should be taken to investigate and solve crimes against women as soon as possible. He issued orders to organize awareness seminars at police stations so that the youth do not fall into the trap of online betting and take strict action against anyone who promotes online betting as per the law. In this program, Eturnagaram ASP Shivam Upadhyaya, Mulugu DSP Ravinder, DCRB DSP Kishore Kumar, SB Inspector Shankar, CIs Srinivas, B. Kumar, Ravinder, SIs Satish, Kamalakara, Srikanth Reddy, Tajuddin, TVR Suri, Raj Kumar, Krishna Prasad, Tirupati, Venkatesh, DCRB SI Jagadish, and others participated.

Race heats up for top cops’s Post, Govt sent six IPS officers’ names to UPSC

Hyderabad, April 29 Telangana DGP Dr Jitender will retire in a few months. Against this backdrop, the State government has completed the process of finding a new police chief. There are eight senior IPS officers in the race for the post of the DGP. The state government has sent eight names to the Union Public Service Commission. The commission will send three names from the list of the eight officers based on their qualifications to the State government for its final decision. Dr Jitender, who is currently the DGP, will retire on September 6 this year.

The State government has sent the names of eight senior IPS officers to the UPSC like Ravi Gupta, CV Anand, Dr Jitender, Apte Vinayak Prabhakar, Kothakota Srinivas Reddy, B. Shivdhar Reddy, Dr Soumya Mishra and Shikha Goyal. The new boss of the Telangana Police Department will be known in a few days. The government will appoint

one of the three officers recommended by the UPSC and the DGP. Senior IPS officer Kothakota Srinivas Reddy, who also worked as the Hyderabad CP, will retire on August 5 this year, and Ravi Gupta on December 19 this year. Similarly, CV Anand will retire on June 2028, Apte Vinayak Prabhakar in October 2029, B. Shivdhar Reddy on April 28, 2026, Dr Soumya Mishra on December 30, 2027, and Shikha Goyal will retire on March 31, 2029. However, the police sources say CV Anand, Shivdhar Reddy, and Soumya Mishra have emerged as strong contenders for the DGP post. If all the equations are correct, it is not surprising if Soumya Mishra gets the opportunity to become the first woman DGP in the State.

However, according to the political and institutional equations, it is known that CV Anand and Shivdhar Reddy are likely to get the post of the DGP.

Job fair in Mulugu on May 6

“Mulugu, Mahipal, Indian Chronicle : District Collector Divakara TS has announced that a job fair will be held on May 6 under the auspices of the District Employment Department in Mulugu. Credit Access Grameen Limited has 50 trainee manager posts, and youth aged 18 to 28 with Inter, ITI, Degree, JOC qualifications are invited to apply. They should have a bike license, and the salary will be from Rs. 12,250 to Rs. 16,269. Similarly, MRF Company has 300 NAPS apprentices, and youth who have passed or failed 10th class, Inter, ITI and are between the ages of 18 to 25, and only men are invited to apply. The salary will be Rs. 17,500. A fair will be organized for these jobs on May 6th at 11 am. For jobs in Credit Access Grameen Limited, candidates should contact Sankshema Bhavan in Mulugu and for jobs in MRF Company, candidates should contact Girijana Bhavan on Bandarupalli Road. For complete details, candidates should contact the District Employment Officer.”[7:17 pm, 29/4/2025] +91 98485 52224:

HYDRAA urged to stop unauthorized & politically motivated misuse of its name

Hyderabad, April 29 Today, on behalf of the Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS), we submitted a formal complaint to HYDRAA Commissioner Ranganath, IPS, regarding the unauthorized and politically motivated misuse of HYDRAA's name and the government emblem on various social media platforms.

Ashish Kumar Yadav, Abhilash Rangineni and Goverdhan Reddy have said unverified accounts falsely posing as official HYDRAA handles, have been disseminating politically charged content, violating the neutrality expected from a law enforcement agency. These actions not only breach public trust but also appear to contravene

Rule 5 of the AIS (Conduct) Rules, which prohibits civil servants from engaging in political activity. “We request immediate and strict action, including filing criminal cases against individuals operating these unauthorized accounts; initiating a cyber crime investigation to expose those behind these operations; publicly disassociating HYDRAA from such unlawful and biased conduct. The integrity of enforcement agencies must remain above politics. Any attempt to weaponize their image for political gain is dangerous and unacceptable. We urge the Commissioner to uphold the dignity of the service and restore public confidence through urgent corrective measures”, they added.

GITAM celebrates Achievers’ Day

Hyderabad, April 29 GITAM Deemed to be University, Hyderabad, celebrated Achievers' Day with great enthusiasm, acknowledging the remarkable accomplishments of its students in placements and higher education. Organized by the Career Guidance Center (CGC), the event showcased the university's dedication to academic excellence, career readiness, and holistic student development. This year, GITAM attracted participation from 270+ companies during its recruitment season, and 40+ companies will be visiting GITAM in another two months. Students from a wide range of disciplines secured prestigious job offers across leading firms, while many others gained admissions to renowned universities in India and abroad. Notably, several students also converted internships at top-tier companies into full-time positions with attractive salary packages.

In a significant milestone, PSU Bharat Electronics Limited (BEL) selected three students from GITAM for the first time as Fixed Term Engineers (E-II Grade). The majority of eligible students from programs including B.Tech, M.Tech, BBA, B.Com, MBA, B.Pharmacy, B.Sc., M.Sc., and B.A. have been successfully placed in diverse sectors such as IT services, product development, core engineering, pharmaceuticals, and more. Placement highlights include highest package (Technology): 1.4 crore PA, Management: 10 LPA, Science: 16.42 LPA, Humanities: 8.5 LPA, Pharmacy: 6 LPA. Average CTC: 6.00 LPA (GITAM School of Technology), 7.5 LPA (School of Business).

Top recruiters offering lucrative salary packages in-

cluded- Amazon – 1.4 crore PA, Atlassian – 60 LPA, Microsoft – 51 LPA, Virtusa International – 47.9 LPA, Silicon Labs – 30.6 LPA, Federal Bank – 216.42 LPA, Thoughtworks, Oracle, Deloitte, HSBC, Deliveroo, among others. Major recruiters in terms of numbers: Accenture – 91 offers, Tech Mahindra – 87, Rinex Technologies – 70, Ernst & Young GDS – 54, TCS – 34, Cognizant – 27 each. The Achievers' Day ceremony commenced at 9:30 AM and was graced by distinguished industry leaders Dr K. Suresh Kumar, Associate President - HR & COE, Aurobindo Pharma Ltd.; Padma Duddu, Director – Human Resources, Inovalon; and Karthik Yalamanchili, Senior Director & General Manager, India Tech., Accurate. In their

inspiring addresses, the guests of honor emphasized the importance of lifelong learning, urging students to remain curious and committed to continuous growth in their personal and professional journeys. Prof. D.S. Rao, Pro Vice-Chancellor, and Prof. V.R. Sastry, Director-GST and Dean of Core Engineering, congratulated the achievers and expressed appreciation for the dedication of faculty members in shaping future leaders. They highlighted the role of purpose-driven education in attaining meaningful success. The event witnessed the presence of proud parents, faculty members, and department heads including Prof. G. Siva Kumar, Dr. Divya Kirti Gupta, Dr. Motahar Reza, Dr. Bandan Kumar Mishra and Pradeep Kote. Dr. K. Mamatha, Director – CGC, delivered the welcome address, while Prof. P. Trinatha Rao, Assistant Director – GST, proposed the vote of thanks.

IQAC holds Faculty Development Programme on “Outcome Based Education”

Hyderabad, April 29 A one-week Faculty Development Programme on the topic “Outcome Based Education” was organized by Internal Quality Assurance Cell (IQAC) of Andhra Mahila Sabha Arts and Science College for Women from April 21 to 26. Eminent Resource Persons from various institutions graced the occasion and delivered informative lectures. Prof. B. Sireesha, Director, IQAC, Osmania University was the chief guest for the Inaugural Session. The FDP was focused on the topics including Outcome based curriculum design, pedagogy and assessment strategies by Prof BV Appa Rao, NIT Warangal “Educator's Guide to OBE: Bloom's Taxonomy and CO-PO Mapping for Effective Teaching – Learning” - Prof Lakshmi Pathy, Director, Methodist College of Engineering and Technology. Employability Skills and OBE - Prof Rajshekhar, Hyderabad Central University CO-PO Mapping & Calculation of Attainment

levels - Prof Anupama, RBVRR College Measuring of PO-CO Attainment - Mrs. Nagalaxmi, St. Pious X Degree and PG College Outcome Based Education- Empowering the faculty of Undergraduate Courses- Dr. J. Madhavi, Arts College Osmania University Dr. GLK Durga, Executive Member, DDMS, Ch. V. Sai Prasad, Hon. Secretary and Correspondent, AMSASCW graced the valedictory.

The programme was made successful with the encouragement and guidance of college management. D. Chakrapani IAS., Retd, Chairman, AMSASCW, Ch. V. Sai Prasad, Secretary and Correspondent, AMSASCW. Dr. Karuna Devi Principal, Dr. Y. Vasundhara Vice Principal, Dr. A. Pramila IQAC Coordinator, Dr. K. Kiranmai Controller of Examinations along with the faculty from AMS and other colleges actively took part in the Faculty Development Programme.

IPS officers approach HC against its orders in Bhoodan land issue

Hyderabad, April 29 Several IPS officers have approached the Telangana High Court over its adverse orders in the Bhoodan land issue. The court, which took up the matter on April 2, ordered that the lands belonging to 27 officers be placed in the prohibited list. A single judge bench of Justice Bhaskar Reddy issued a verdict to this effect. Challenging the verdict, some IPS officers have approached the High Court. These officers include Mahesh Bhagwat, Swati Lakra and Soumya Mishra.

Birla Mallesh of Maheshwaram Mandal filed a petition in the High Court seeking an investigation by the CBI and ED. He alleged that although he complained to the higher officials of the State government about the irregularities in the Bhoodan land case, no action was taken by the au-

thorities in the issue. Justice C. V. Bhaskar Reddy took up the matter on April 24. The bench, after hearing the arguments of the petitioner's counsel, clarified that a preliminary examination of the records shows that the lands in survey numbers 181, 182, 194, and 195 in Nagaram belong to the Bhoodan Board. It was stated that there was a possibility of misuse of power for their own interests in the context of serious allegations made against the higher officials in the petition. The High Court, in its discretion, as part of the protection of public property, has issued orders to include the lands in those survey numbers in the prohibited list until the hearing on this petition was concluded. The respondents were directed not to make any changes or additions to those lands until further orders and no alienation was allowed.

ED searches five locations in city under PMLA



Hyderabad, April 29 Directorate of Enforcement (ED), Hyderabad Zonal Office, has conducted search operations at five locations in Hyderabad on April 28 under the provisions of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA), 2002 in connection with an ongoing investigation regarding alienation of Government land for personal gains.

ED initiated investigation on the basis of FIR registered by Telangana Police against private persons and Government officials regarding illegal sale of Government Land involving forgery of documents and manipulation of Government Revenue Records. ED investigation revealed that Government land / Bhoodan land situated in Nagaram Village, Maheshwaram Mandal was falsely claimed by Khaderunissa as her ancestral property, that revenue records were fraudulently mutated and the land was sold to various entities in association with several middlemen. These middlemen, in connivance with Government officials, forged the documents and changed the land revenue records resulting in de-notifying the said land from the prohibited list and its subsequent sale to some private parties.

The searches were conducted at the residences & farmhouses of Khaderunissa, Mohd Munawar Khan, Mohd Lateef Sharfan, Mohd Akhtar Sharfan, Mohd Sukoor and

resulted in the seizure of incriminating documents related to fraudulent sale & purchase of Government land, Indian currency of Rs 23 lakh, foreign currency of 12000 UAE Dirham. Forty five old & used cars, including several vintage cars were also seized from the farmhouse premises of Mohd Munawar Khan.

GHMC corporators pay tributes to Pahalgam terror attack victims

Hyderabad, April 29 Protesting the terrorist attack on tourists in Pahalgam of Jammu and Kashmir on April 22, GHMC corporators from BRS party today paid tributes to the victims of the attack at the Martyrs' memorial in the city.

Speaking on the occasion, the GHMC corporators warned that the traitors of Pakistan should be buried immediately. They urged the Prime Minister to save the country by killing the terrorists. They strongly condemned the brutal attacks on the tourists in Pahalgam. They demanded that the Indian government punish the terrorists severely so that such attacks do not happen again.

They also said there was a great need for the people of the country to unite beyond caste and religion to defeat terrorism and protect the sovereignty of the country. They urged the Central and State governments to stand by those, who died in terrorist attacks



Hyderabad, April 29 The Telangana Human Rights Commission (TGHRC) strongly condemned the barbaric terrorist attack that took place in Pahalgam, Jammu & Kashmir, resulting in the tragic loss of some 26 innocent civilian lives, including one Nepali national. The brutal act stands as a grave violation of peace and human dignity and is an affront to the values of humanity. As a mark of respect to the departed souls, the TGHRC observed two minutes of silence at 1.20 pm across its premises.

Dr Justice Shameem Akther, Chairperson; Sivadi Praveena, Member (Judicial); and Dr B. Kishore, IAS (Retd), Member (non-judicial), along with Commission staff, parties, and visitors, stood in solemn silence at their respective court halls. Simultaneously, gazetted officers, supporting staff, and police personnel of the Commission observed the silence at the auditorium hall. This gesture reflected the

Sanjay Colony razed, admn reclaims Rs 250-crore land for development



GNS News Agency, April 29

In a move aimed at making Chandigarh slum-free, the UT Administration Wednesday demolished Sanjay Colony, a slum cluster located in Industrial Area Phase-I. Nearly 1,000 jhuggis were removed, and around 6 acres of prime government land, valued at approximately Rs 250 crore, were reclaimed during the four-hour operation, officials said. Officials said the demolition was carried out by the Estate Office with the help of eight earth-moving machines and heavy police deployment, beginning at 7 am and concluding by 11 am. The site has now been handed over to the Engineering Department for future development. "Originally surveyed in 2006 under the Chandigarh Small Flat Scheme, 242 eligible dwelling units were identified for rehabilitation.

However, in the following years, illegal encroachments multiplied on the land. Despite earlier attempts to clear the settlement in 2022, a stay by the Punjab and Haryana High

Court had delayed action. The final go-ahead came in November 2024 after prolonged legal proceedings involving both the High Court and the Supreme Court," an official said. Meanwhile, the Administration had issued a one-week eviction notice to the colony's residents and conducted a special verification camp to assess their eligibility under the rehabilitation scheme.

While the demolition was conducted peacefully, many residents were left distraught. Several claimed they had valid documents but were excluded from the Central Government's Affordable Rental Housing scheme. With nowhere to go, some expressed fear of being forced onto pavements. Aadeb Ahmad, a daily wageer, who had lived in the colony for the past two decades, said that he had documents which would verify his legality for being considered under the housing scheme, but received no response from the Administration. He said that he would now have to shift to a rented accommodation in Hallomajra, further reducing his already limited income. Sunita, a resident of Sanjay Colony accused politicians of making empty promises and failing to ensure proper housing for the poor.

This is the latest in a series of demolitions carried out by the UT Administration aimed at clearing encroachments on public land. In May 2022, Colony No. 4 was razed to reclaim 65 acres, though that land remains undeveloped. The Administration now plans a similar demolition in Janta Colony, Sector 25 — home to over 10,000 people — next week. That land, spanning 10 acres, is estimated to be worth around Rs 350 crore and has been earmarked for community development projects, including a dispensary, school and shopping area.

Pedalling through challenges: SmartBike and its 5,000 users

GNS News Agency, April 29

Launched in 2020 with the vision of providing an affordable, eco-friendly and sustainable mode of transportation, SmartBike was expected to revolutionise urban mobility in Chandigarh. However, five years into its operation, the service faces a shift in user demographics, financial strain and operational challenges. While SmartBike aimed to reduce vehicular pollution, curb traffic congestion, and encourage a cycling culture, its ridership of approximately 5,000 active users per month has not fully met the goal of reducing car usage. A notable shift in user demographics shows that a growing number of delivery personnel now rely on the service due to its cost-effectiveness, with over 60 per cent of users aged between 20-30 years, using the bikes more for professional purposes than casual commuting.

Aditya Shukla, a delivery personnel, explains, "I, along with many others, rely on SmartBikes because not everyone can afford to buy a bike, handle paperwork, or spend on fuel daily. These cycles allow people like me to work and earn a living." Similarly, Pankaj Jha, another delivery personnel, says, "Many of us from underprivileged backgrounds use this service to generate income for our families."

However, college students, one of the primary target groups, are not fully utilising the service due to the ongoing trend of taking cars to college. While a small portion of students from government colleges still rely on SmartBikes as their mode of transport, their counterparts in private colleges rarely use them. Dhruv Brar, a student at UIET, PU, highlights the potential of SmartBikes for students but points out key issues, "In a city like Chandigarh, where almost 200 kilometres of cycle tracks have been laid down, one should definitely consider commuting by bicycles. The only challenges are the availability of bikes and creating aware-



ness about the service among young people."

Financial and infrastructural challenges further hinder SmartBike's sustainability, with losses amounting to Rs 3.6 crore due to theft, vandalism and encroachments at docking stations. Copper wires from several docking stations have also been stolen. Around 1,100 bicycles have severely been damaged, over 350 stolen, and docking stations frequently obstructed by private vehicles. Vikas Sangwan, a student at CCET and a daily user, shares his frustration, "Most of the time, it's challenging to find a well-maintained bicycle at the stands. The company should ensure the timely maintenance of these bicycles." Tourists, too, face difficulties in accessing the service. Arunima Singh, a frequent visitor to Chandigarh, notes, "Whenever I visit Chandigarh, I prefer commuting by bicycle, but I often face difficulties finding charged e-bikes or even regular cycles at docking stations." The service is also exploring the reintroduction of e-bikes, previously withdrawn due to theft concerns. As the service navigates financial and operational hurdles, sustained government support and public cooperation will be crucial to ensuring its long-term success as an affordable and sustainable urban transport solution.

From Pahalgam to Palestine, spirit of student politics marks presidential debate

GNS News Agency, April 29

As dusk gave way to darkness Wednesday, the air over Delhi's Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) grew thick, not just with dust kicked up by dancing feet and ceaseless drum beats, but with tension, slogans, and the spirit of the Students' Union elections. This year, amid tensions on the campus over the delay in releasing the final list of nominations, the election process for the JNU Students' Union (JNUSU) polls was suspended indefinitely last week. The suspension followed back-to-back incidents of violence and vandalism for two straight days. In a notice issued last Friday, the Election Committee (EC) cited a "major lapse of security" and an "environment of hostility, fear, and insecurity" as the reason for halting the process.

Under yellow lights strung across the campus lawns and amid rising chants that echoed from hostels to the Ganga Dhaba, the JNUSU election slated for Friday, April 25, unfolded with its most awaited ritual — the presidential debate. The Election Committee, ahead of the debate, requested a two-minute silence to mourn the killing of tourists in Pahalgam, Jammu and Kashmir, that took place Tuesday, which took the lives of at least 26 civilians. And so, in a rare moment of unity, student leaders, candidates, and hundreds in the crowd bowed their heads even as Palestinian keffiyehs and Israeli flags fluttered from opposite ends of the audience. This year, the rupture between the Student Federation of India (SFI) and All Indian Students Association (AISA) meant that for the first time in several election cycles, the "red" wasn't a unified bloc. Instead, its fragments sat scattered across the grounds, leaving enough gaps for the saffron to march through. And the Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad (ABVP), sensing this split, seized the moment. For the first time in nearly a decade, the once-unified Left has splintered, with the SFI and the AISA fielding separate candidates after a breakdown in alliance talks. The fallout, primarily over disagreements on the presidential nominee and the inclusion of the Birs Amdedkar Phule Students' Association (BAPSA) in a coalition, has not only fractured the traditional Left Unity but also opened the door for the ABVP to potentially increase its vote share. As speeches began, slogans collided. AISA and SFI activists chanted over the ABVP's candidate. ABVP volunteers banged dhoklas and metal plates when Left-backed speakers took the stage. The most dramatic interruption came during Choudhary Tayyaba Ahmed's speech, standing as the face of the SFI-BAPSA-All Indian Students' Federation (AISF)-Progressive Students Association (PSA) alliance, she was forced to pause for at least 10 minutes as ABVP supporters clanged metal lids. "JNU is broken, and this debate shows who broke it, I am not afraid of you. I will keep standing right here until you let me finish," Choudhary said

when she finally resumed. "This is the ABVP that held the EC hostage, and yet here we are. Still standing." During her speech, Choudhary called out what she called "Sanghi forces" for targeting marginalised groups and invoked the dismantling of the Gender Sensitisation Committee Against Sexual Harassment (GSCASH) during earlier BJP regimes. "They don't want us to speak. They don't want us to study. But we are still here, for gender and social justice." Pradeep Dhaka, the Congress-backed National Students' Union of India (NSUI) candidate, theatrically held up a copy of the Constitution, and declared: "This country will be run by Ambedkar's words, not by Nagpur or the politburo."

He cast a wide ideological net: condemning US President Donald Trump, Tesla CEO Elon Musk, Prime Minister Narendra Modi, industrialist Gautam Adani; standing in solidarity with Palestine, Yemen, and Rohingya Muslims. "They say 'Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao', but let's not forget Hathras, Manipur, Bilkis Bano. Rapists are called 'sanskari' in this government's India," he said, prompting cheers and drumrolls from the back rows. Arvind Kumar, representing the Samajwadi Chattr Sabha, the student party of the Samajwadi Party focused on minority rights, arguing that "the worst state of affairs is that of minority students on this campus. Reservations for them must be implemented immediately." He too critiqued both ABVP and the Left, calling them "equal culprits in bringing JNU to this state." On the other side of the ideological divide, Shikha Swaraj, ABVP's candidate for president, roared into the mic: "Did the terrorists in Kashmir not ask the victims' religion before killing them?" She called the Left "an alliance of opportunity" and added, "ABVP gave this campus many things, and we always stood by this campus when it needed us. If anyone will raise the tricolour here, it's us." We've seen the Left bend its knees to the administration — because they're afraid of fines, being imposed if they protest," she said, invoking the university's recent crackdown on protest culture. "If you want a union that fights, look at ABVP." "I am very glad to see a broken Left. This is the time that the ABVP will rise," Swaraj said. Nitish Kumar of AISA went local and technical, detailing the deteriorating state of JNU's labs — "no chemicals, no instruments" — and how dissenters were being punished across campuses from the University of Hyderabad to Jamia Millia Islamia. "We won and brought back the OBC reservations on this campus, and we will fight for the reinstatement of the Maulana Azad Fellowship fund for students. We will not stop because of UAPA threats which have been imposed on this campus' students in the previous years of this regime." As many as 13 candidates are now in the fray for the JNUSU president's post, and with the red now split, and the saffron emboldened, the ballot on April 25 may tell a very different story from years past.

Karnataka HC dismisses plea challenging CM Siddaramaiah's election from Varuna constituency



GNS News Agency, April 29

The Karnataka High Court has dismissed a petition challenging Chief Minister Siddaramaiah's election from the Varuna Assembly constituency, alleging that the 'five guarantees' promises in the Congress's manifesto were corrupt practices under the Representation of People (RP) Act.

"The 'guarantees' which are promised freebies in the manifesto cannot be considered to constitute a corrupt practice under Section 123 of R P Act in light of the law laid down by the apex court...in the case of legislators belonging to the Indian National Congress Party who had contested elections for Karnataka Legislative Assembly for the term 2023 to 2028, identical allegations have been made in

election petitions filed against them," a single-judge bench of Justice Sunil Dutt Yadav said on Tuesday. The election petition was filed by K Shankara, a voter in the Varuna constituency, who argued that the election results should be declared void on account of corrupt practices under the Act. He argued, amongst other contentions, that the 'five guarantees' in the election manifesto amounted to a corrupt practice and those whose photos appeared on those manifestos, like Siddaramaiah, would be liable.

Siddaramaiah's counsel argued that the allegations of corruption were not substantiated, with the policies in the manifesto being welfare schemes and not corrupt practices. It was also pointed out that, as per the Supreme Court case of S Subramaniam Balaji v State of Tamil Nadu and Others, promises in a manifesto would not count as corrupt practices. The Karnataka High Court agreed with the contention that the Supreme Court had dealt with the question of manifestos, observing that similar petitions against other Congress leaders had also been dealt with. Siddaramaiah's counsel had also pointed out certain errors and repetitions from similar petitions. The high court stated that this indicated a "very casual attitude" in drafting an election dispute. "It must be noticed that an election petition has serious repercussions and by law it is mandated that an election petition requires careful drafting and the present petition does not evidence attention to necessary details and is drafted in a very casual manner," the high court said.

Bengal Education Department questions maintainability of contempt petition

GNS News Agency, April 29

West Bengal Education Department, Bengal Education Department, Calcutta High Court, contempt petition, Indian express news, current affairs Justice Basak counter questioned, "...Leaving aside the admissibility, we want to see what steps have been taken." The matter will be heard The West Bengal Education Department on Wednesday questioned before the Calcutta High Court the maintainability of a contempt petition that claimed non-compliance of its order regarding 26,000 school jobs in the state. The West Bengal School Service Commission (SSC) and the secondary education Board raised questions about the admissibility of the case before the division bench of Justice Debangshu Basak and Justice Shabbat Rashidi.

The petitioners, complaining of violation of the judgment passed by the Calcutta HC on April 22, 2024 and "as modified" by the Supreme Court on April 3 and on April 17 this year, moved the contempt petition before the HC. They claimed that the education department has not uploaded OMR sheets, available in three hard disks on the SSC website and that these be made available to the public for viewing as was ordered by the HC. The division bench asked what has been done to comply with the order. "They want uploading of sheets, recovery of salaries of the tainted candidates and you are the authority to make the recovery.



Uploading of OMR remains untouched, you are presently responsible for the recovery of money.. What have you done," the court observed. The education department's counsel submitted that since the SC had modified some of the directions of the HC, a contempt application can be moved before the top court only. "The HC orders have been modified by the Supreme Court. The HC order ceases to exist due to modifications. The contempt has to be heard by the last court which passed the order," SSC counsel submitted. The SSC counsel further said that some parts of the verdict have been revised and the rest dismissed and therefore, the court cannot hear this case.

Govt plans to replace traditional hoardings with electronic ones

GNS News Agency, April 29

The Department of Urban Development of the UP government has proposed to replace traditional methods of advertising such as flex banners, posters, and painted hoardings, with digital and electronic signages. As per the draft of the new Advertising Policy-2025, which is set to be presented to the Cabinet, the focus on digital medium is aimed at enhancing revenue generation while promoting environmentally sustainable advertising practices across the state. "These modern advertising mediums will be gradually installed across all districts, ensuring that advertisements are broadcast in compliance with established regulations. This initiative is expected to serve a dual purpose—significantly increasing departmental revenue and contributing to cleaner, greener, and visually appealing urban spaces. By replacing traditional methods such as flex banners, posters, and painted hoardings, which contribute to non-biodegradable waste and environmental degradation," an official involved in drafting the new advertising policy said. Officials said that digital and electronic hoardings minimise environmental pollution and offer advantages like reduced production costs and energy consumption—up to 70% less than conventional lighting systems. These LED-based displays will enable the broadcasting of high-quality while enhancing the aesthetic appeal of public spaces, they added. The policy also includes standardized guidelines for advertising durations and rates. A provision has been made



to reserve five minutes per hour of advertising for government and municipal social messages. Additionally, one day each month (up to 12 days a year) will be allocated for the free broadcasting of public interest messages.

In emergencies, provisions under the Disaster Management Act 2005 will enable timely dissemination of essential information. In terms of revenue, the department has set a target to double its advertising income over the next five years. In 2024-25, advertising generated Rs 78.9 crore, which is projected to rise to Rs 158.7 crore by 2029-30. "Digital advertising is expected to be key in achieving this milestone by reducing operational costs and streamlining ad deployment through an updated rate list and improved regulatory framework," an official said.

Threat emails to Zeeshan Siddique traced to server near US: Police

GNS News Agency, April 29

THE MUMBAI police, probing the threat emails received by former MLA and NCP leader Zeeshan Siddique, have been traced to a server located in a country near the US. The sender of the mails claims to be linked to fugitive gangster Dawood Ibrahim's 'D Company'.

Police said prima facie the person sending the mails doesn't appear to be linked to any gang. Police are, however, conducting further technical probe to confirm the server they have tracked down is the one used by the accused and not one obtained via Virtual Private Network (VPN). In the threat mails that Zeeshan received over two days, the person demanded Rs 10 crore as ransom failing the sender threatened he would meet the same fate as his father Baba Siddique, who was gunned down in October last year allegedly by members of the Bisnoi gang. The sender sent him reminder emails every six hours, which prompted him to approach the Bandra police who registered an FIR against unidentified persons. A police source said, "The server from which the email was sent has been traced to a country near America. It appears to be the actual server from which the mail was sent and not one obtained through VPN though we are still reconfirming that."

When asked if the sender was linked to any gang, the officer said prima facie he does not appear to be linked to any gang or organisation. However, we are not taking any chances and have reviewed the security of Zeeshan in light of the threat, the officer added. Last year, threat mails sent to actor Salman Khan were found to have originated in the UK. In that case, the police had found it was an Indian stu-



Police said prima facie the person sending the mails doesn't appear to be linked to any gang. Police are, however, conducting further technical probe to confirm the server they have tracked down is the one used by the accused and not one obtained via Virtual Private Network (VPN).

dent who had gone to the UK to study, who sent the mail as a prank following which a Look Out Circular (LOC) was issued against him. The moment he lands in India, the police will be alerted and the person will be arrested. The officer said, "On several occasions people based abroad, especially those of Indian origin, feel if they send an email from another country, they will not be traced or land in trouble. It is, however, not true and we take proper legal action to ensure that whenever the person tries to move out of that country, they are detained at the airport."

Medanta Hospital gets show cause notice in rape case



GNS News Agency, April 29

Medanta Hospital, Medanta Hospital rape case, Hospital rape case, show cause notice in rape case, delhi news, India news, Indian express, current affairsA technician of the hospital has been arrested in the case. The woman has alleged that she was admitted to Medanta Hospital on April 5. The Haryana government has issued a notice to the Medanta Hospital in Gurgaon, seeking its reply on the alleged violation of human dignity and privacy after a flight

attendant claimed she was sexually assaulted while on ventilator support at the facility.

The show cause notice to the medical director of the hospital was issued by Gurugram Civil Surgeon Dr Alka Singh on the directions of Haryana Health and Family Welfare Minister Arti Singh Rao. Officials said the hospital has been directed to submit its reply within five working days. A technician of Medanta Hospital has been arrested in connection with the sexual assault. The incident came to light after the 46-year-old flight attendant lodged a complaint on April 14. The woman alleged that she was admitted to Medanta Hospital on April 5 for some treatment. The next day, a man carried out digital rape on her in the hospital ICU room, where two other nurses were also present who did nothing to stop him, she has claimed. The show cause notice stated that according to the Charter of Patients' Rights and Responsibilities under Section 6 of the Clinical Establishments (Registration and Regulation) Act, confidentiality, human dignity and privacy have to be observed during treatment. Under Section 7 of the Act, the presence of a woman has to be ensured by the male doctor during the physical examination of a female patient, it said.

Al Qaeda-inspired terror module: How Jharkhand-based group was planning terror attacks in India

GNS News Agency, April 29

Al Qaeda, Al Qaeda-inspired terror module, PM Kisan scheme, funds for jihad, jihad, Delhi Police, delhi news, India news, Indian express, current affairsOfficers said the chargesheet has alleged that the accused stayed at a rented accommodation at Bhiwadi on the Rajasthan-Haryana border. On August 21, last year, they received "dummy weapon training". Regular discussions on mob lynchings of Muslims across India and communal riots, leading them to procure arms and ammunition to prepare for "jihad"; accumulating "funds for jihad" through PM Kisan scheme; encouraging youngsters to "avenge atrocities" on Muslims; conducting a physical training programme in Uttar Pradesh; and preparing local bombs – This was how an Al Qaeda-inspired terror module, set up by a "radicalised" Jharkhand-based group, allegedly planned terror attacks across India, a chargesheet filed by the Delhi Police Special Cell before a court in February has said, it is learnt.

According to officers, the Special Cell has claimed that two persons who were a part of the module were "beneficiaries of PM Kisan" scheme and had used the money to purchase arms for terror activities. From alleged weapon procurement in Ranchi to receiving physical training at Bulandshahr in Uttar Pradesh and weapons training at Bhiwadi on the Rajasthan-Haryana border, the Special Cell chargesheet has outlined how 11 people from different villages of Ranchi allegedly got together to plan a pan-India terror conspiracy, they added, the Special Cell filed a supplementary chargesheet in the case. "Requisite sanction (under Section) 7 of Explosive Substances Act against accused persons... has been filed by way of supplementary chargesheet," stated the April 21 order of Additional Sessions Judge Hardeep Kaur of Patiala House Court. "The same is taken on record and be tagged with main chargesheet... So far as sanction (under Section) 45 of UAPA is concerned, learned Additional Public Prosecutor for state submits that all steps to obtain sanction under Section 45 of UAPA have been taken... but the sanction is still awaited," ASJ Kaur added.

The accused in the case have been identified as Anamul Ansari (32), Shahbaz Ansari (32), Altaf Ansari (35), Hasan Ansari (32), Arshad Khan (26), Umar Farooq (20), Dr Ishtiyaq Ahmad alias Captain (49), Mohd Rizwan (40),



Moti-Ur-Rehman (40), Mohd Rahmantulla (30) and Faizan Ahmad (47). Ishtiyaq Ahmad was radicalised in his college days, said police. "In 2021, he came in contact with a person on Telegram, using the ID 'Big Cat'. They shared the same ideology regarding Jihad and believed that atrocities are being done on Muslims in India and wanted to avenge the same. 'Big Cat' asked Ahmad through chat to prepare more people physically and mentally to fight for Jihad," the chargesheet alleged, said officers.

The Special Cell has relied on the statements of protected witnesses, one of whom had said that they were given "physical training" by the accused who were preparing youngsters for Jihad, they added. The Special Cell has claimed that the accused would build shelters in secluded places to train young Muslims without being noticed by the police. It added that during the training at Bulandshahr, Ahmad met 'Big Cat' in Delhi and discussed procuring weapons. "The 'Big Cat' sent an arms dealer to Hazaribagh for a meeting. Accused... finalised the purchase of AK-47 at Rs 5-6 lakh," it alleged, said officers. According to the officers, the chargesheet has alleged that the accused stayed at a rented accommodation at Bhiwadi on the Rajasthan-Haryana border. On August 21, last year, they went to a nearby forest where they received "dummy weapon training". They were arrested a day later, the police said, adding that bullets, hand grenades, pistols, rifles and bomb-making material were found on them. "Local bombs" prepared by the accused with "the help of gunpowder" were also found, the officers said.

Amid growing demand for its housing schemes, DDA records Rs 1,371-cr surplus in year 2024-25



GNS News Agency, April 29

DDA, DDA housing draw, DDA flats, DDA housing, Delhi Development Authority (DDA), delhi news, India news, Indian express, current affairsKey reforms undertaken by DDA included shifting to a first-come-first-serve model, scrapping ownership restrictions, and launching a professional marketing strategy. The Delhi Development Authority (DDA) has posted a record surplus of Rs 1,371 crore in financial year 2024-25 – primarily owing to a growing acceptance of its housing schemes – marking an increase of 169% over last year's surplus of Rs 511 crore, a statement issued by the DDA said on Wednesday. This is the second consecutive year when DDA has recorded surplus revenue under the General Development Account (GDA), reversing the revenue-deficit trend of 12 consecutive years, the statement added. The surplus was largely driven by the sale of over 8,500 housing units, generating a revenue of more than Rs 3,100 crore in 2024-25, it said.

The DDA said the turnaround began under the guidance of Lieutenant Governor V K Saxena. Saxena, who is the chairman of the DDA, took charge in May 2022 at a time when the DDA was incurring "huge losses" mainly due to a large number of unsold inventory of flats, the statement said. In 2022-23, the GDA was in a substantial loss of Rs 1,304 crore. It, however, registered a significant surplus of Rs 511 crore in 2023-24 for the first time in 12 years, it added. According to the data up to March 31, DDA has registered a steep and steady upward trend in the actual surplus in the GDA. In 2024-25, the total receipts under the GDA stood at Rs 3,477 crore, while the total expenditure was Rs 2,106 crore.

"The growth in GDA is primarily on the back of rising

trajectory of the housing receipts, from Rs 665 crore in 2022-23 to Rs 2,398 crore in 2023-24, which is an upswing of about 260% in the total housing collections," the DDA said. Key reforms undertaken by DDA included shifting to a first-come-first-serve model, scrapping ownership restrictions, and launching a professional marketing strategy. Narela, where many unsold flats were located, has seen renewed interest with proposed Metro connectivity and civic projects in the pipeline, it added.

Minister asks DJB to conduct third-party audits of all 37 STPs in Delhi, flags sewage entering Yamuna

GNS News Agency, April 29

Delhi Water Minister Parvesh Sahib Singh on Wednesday directed the Delhi Jal Board (DJB) to conduct a third-party audit of all 37 sewage treatment plants (STPs) in the Capital. Noting that "a substantial amount of untreated sewage is still entering the Yamuna", the Minister said, "We have directed the DJB to carry out a third-party audit of all the STPs to get more clarity on the installed treatment capacity and the actual treatment being carried out... The Delhi government is committed to reducing this pollution load through comprehensive interventions. The audit is one such step — once the reports are in, further directives will be issued to improve and expand the sewerage treatment network." The DJB officials also noted that 30 out of the 37 STPs are operated by private companies under outsourcing arrangements. To this, the Minister instructed all such operators to ensure compliance with installed capacity and quality standards. During a recent review meeting, the Minister was apprised of the current sewage treatment capacity and status of ongoing rehabilitation and upgradation works of the STPs, according to an official statement by the Minister's office.

From Nov 1, no entry in Delhi for transport vehicles flouting norms amid CAQM clampdown



GNS News Agency, April 29

CAQM clampdown, delhi transport vehicles, transport vehicles, BS-VI, CNG, LNG, or EV electrical vehicle, delhi aqi, Delhi air pollution, Delhi air quality, air pollution, air pollution level, Delhi severe air quality, delhi news, India news, Indian express, current affairsEarlier, the BJP government had planned to stop giving fuel to old vehicles by April 1, but pending structural changes at a few fuel stations delayed the implementation, said officials. Come November 1, all transport or commercial goods vehicles not compliant with BS-VI, CNG, LNG, or EV (electrical vehicle) standards will be banned from entering Delhi, unless the vehicles are registered in the Capital, the Commission for Air Quality Management (CAQM) has directed. As the CAQM issued fresh directives on Wednesday to curb the menace of polluting vehicles, it also cited "limited progress" in impounding end-of-life or overaged vehicles across Delhi-NCR.

The decision to restrict the transport vehicles, as per the directive, was made "considering the high pollution load from commercial vehicles and the associated ill effects of emissions owing to such vehicles entering Delhi..." From July 1, fueling of identified overaged vehicles will be banned across all fuel stations in the city, among other stringent measures announced by the CAQM. This ban will extend to five high vehicle density (HVD) districts — Gurugram, Faridabad, Ghaziabad, Gautam Buddha Nagar, and Sonapat — from November 1, and across the rest of NCR from April 1, 2026, as per the CAQM directive. Diesel ve-

hicles, older than 10 years, and petrol vehicles, older than 15 years, are not allowed to ply in the Capital. Over the last two years, the government has resorted to seizing these vehicles and scrapping them, if necessary. The Commission noted that despite several past orders, action on the ground has been sluggish. Delhi has been piloting a solution involving Automated Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) camera systems, now being installed at all 520 fuel stations in the city. These systems capture and display vehicle registration details in real-time. These are integrated with the centralised VAHAN database to identify EoL vehicles and those lacking a valid Pollution Under Control Certificate (PUCC), and relay audio alerts when a non-compliant vehicle is detected.

All fuel stations in Delhi are required to install these systems, as per the Commission's latest directive, by June 30, 2025; by October 31 in the five HVD districts; and across the rest of NCR by March 31, 2026. "We will strictly follow the CAQM directions... 95% of the work is complete to install the ANPR cameras. The identification of polluting vehicles at the border entry points will also be intensified," said Delhi Environment Minister Manjinder Singh Sirsa on Wednesday. Earlier, the BJP government had planned to stop giving fuel to old vehicles by April 1, but pending structural changes at a few fuel stations delayed the implementation, said officials. With respect to the restrictions on transport vehicles, exceptions will be made for vehicles carrying essential goods or services, but only until October 31, 2026, after which only CNG, LNG, EV or BS-VI diesel vehicles will be permitted. BS-VI, or Bharat Stage VI, is the latest set of emission standards in India for vehicles, which came into effect on April 1, 2020. For liquidation of the large fleet of overage vehicles, the Commission directed that traffic surveillance cameras installed on major roads and the Integrated Command Control Centres for traffic management also need to be used for taking action against plying overaged vehicles. The CAQM has said that the action based on the overaged vehicles needs to be reported by the agencies concerned to the Commission on a monthly basis, and quarterly action taken reports need to be furnished on action taken against polluting vehicles that enter Delhi.

Revise CLAT UG 2025 entrance exam marksheet, list of selected candidates in 4 weeks, HC tells Consortium of NLUs

GNS News Agency, April 29

CLAT UG 2025, CLAT UG 2025 entrance exam, CLAT UG 2025 entrance exam marksheet, delhi news, India news, Indian express, current affairsIn the second question, the Consortium said "that an error had crept into the various sets handed over to the aspirants". After examining 17 disputed questions in the Common Law Admission Test (CLAT) undergraduate entrance exam, the Delhi High Court on Wednesday directed the Consortium of National Law Universities (NLUs) to revise its marksheet and renotify the final list of selected candidates within four weeks. In effect, of the 17 questions, candidates stand to benefit the most from the revised answer to four questions.

The division bench of Chief Justice DK Upadhyaya and Justice Tushar Rao Gedela was dealing with a batch of petitions where the aspirants had disputed the answer key published by the Consortium. While the bench accepted some objections, it also rejected some. The final answer key for the CLAT UG 2025 entrance exam for four paper sets was published on December 7, 2024, after the test was held on December 1, 2024. Initially, a provisional answer key was published on December 2, 2024, and candidates had time to file their objections until 4 pm the next day. Of the 17 questions the bench examined, it ruled that one was out of the syllabus and held that it be treated as excluded and withdrawn. In two other questions, the Consortium admitted that it had erred. It said that it had given the wrong option as an answer to one of the two questions without correction or review. It further stated that "no fault can be found with the candidates for giving correct or incorrect answers," conceding that consequential benefits may be granted to all the candidates who had attempted this question. In the second question, the Consortium said "that an error had crept into the various sets handed over to the



aspirants". To this end, the bench directed that all the CLAT candidates who were handed the three sets, which had error, "shall, as a consequence, be granted the marks indicated against the said question." Answers to three of the 17 questions were reviewed by an oversight committee and the bench upheld the answers declared by the oversight committee. In another question, the bench refused to interfere "for the reason that the petitioner-in-person never objected at all when the respondent (Consortium) had provided a window for raising such objections post publication of the provisional answer key." "This lacunae or default propels this Court to not interfere in the final answer key as declared by the respondent or Consortium, lest it may have a deleterious effect and work to the disadvantage of the candidates who may have attempted and given the correct answers," the bench said. The bench differed from the Consortium's answer for only one of the 17 questions, and held another option as the correct one. CLAT determines admissions to undergraduate and postgraduate law courses in national law universities in the country. Earlier, the Supreme Court on February 6 had transferred all the petitions over the issue to the Delhi High Court for a "consistent adjudication".

Delhi Pension Scheme to Women in Distress: WCD dept identifies 25,000 ineligible women receiving aid

GNS News Agency, April 29

Women and Child Development, financial assistance, women financial assistance, Delhi Pension Scheme, Delhi Pension Scheme to Women in Distress, delhi news, India news, Indian express, current affairsNow, an adult beneficiary receives Rs 2,500 for her whole life. In its March Budget, the Delhi BJP government had allocated Rs 1,000 crore for the scheme.

As part of an ongoing verification process, the Women and Child Development (WCD) department has identified around 25,000 ineligible women receiving financial assistance under Delhi Pension Scheme to Women in Distress, said officials. Under the scheme, the government provides a monthly financial assistance of Rs 2,500 to widows, as well as divorced, separated, abandoned, deserted, and destitute women who are 18 years old and above. Around 3.5 lakh beneficiaries are currently registered under the scheme, said officials.

The department had started the process last October to check for duplicity and verify the eligibility criteria of beneficiaries. "The drive was started to ensure that only eligible women from poor families, especially those who genuinely need the money, avail the financial assistance," said an official. Officials said that so far, around 60% of the beneficiaries have been verified and the process is ongoing. "During the verification process, we found around 25,000 women who did not meet the criteria and were availing the scheme illegally. They have now been removed from the list of beneficiaries," the official added. "This is one of the reasons why there has been a delay in disbursing money under this scheme for the last two months. The department has now released the money to three districts and funds will be released to the remaining in a few days following the verification process," said the official. The AAP has accused the BJP government of halting the payment of pension under



the scheme and demanded that Speaking to media persons on Tuesday, AAP Delhi convener Saurabh Bharadwaj has said, "It has been over two months since the BJP government took over the administration in Delhi, yet the most vulnerable sections of society — particularly destitute women — are being neglected. These include widows, women abandoned by their families, or those who are otherwise helpless. Their pension has not been released for the last two months." He alleged that he has received information that the government intends to discontinue the scheme. "If you stop a widow's pension, how is she expected to run her home or manage her basic needs? It will become nearly impossible for her to survive..." he said. The scheme was launched in 2010 with women in the 18 to 60 age group scheduled to get a financial assistance of Rs 1,500. In 2017, the eligibility criteria was changed. Now, an adult beneficiary receives Rs 2,500 for her whole life. In its March Budget, the Delhi BJP government had allocated Rs 1,000 crore for the scheme. The financial assistance is transferred directly to the beneficiary on a monthly basis through Electronic Clearing Service (ECS) under Reserve Bank of India (RBI) or Public Financial Management System (PFMS).

China says 'door open' to trade talks after Trump signals tariffs will fall



GNS News Agency, April 29

China said on Wednesday the door was "wide open" for trade talks with Washington, a day after U.S. President Donald Trump signalled the possibility of a "substantial" lowering of tariffs on Beijing. Bringing further relief to global markets spooked by his aggressive trade policies, Trump also said on Tuesday he had no intention of firing U.S. Federal Reserve Chair Jerome Powell. Since returning to the White House in January, Trump has imposed additional tariffs of 145% on many products from China. These include duties initially imposed over China's alleged role in the fentanyl supply chain and later over practices Washington deemed unfair. Beijing has responded with sweeping counter-tariffs of 125% on US goods, but reiterated on Wednesday that it was willing to engage in trade talks.

"China pointed out early on that there are no winners in tariff wars and trade wars," Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Guo Jiakun told a daily news conference in Beijing. "The door for talks is wide open." Chinese President Xi Jinping also warned on Wednesday that trade wars "undermine the legitimate rights and interests of all countries, hurt the multilateral trading system and impact the world economic order", state media said. The reiteration from Beijing comes after Trump acknowledged that 145% was a "very high" level and that will "come down substantially". "They will not be anywhere near that number" but "it won't be zero", he said. "Ultimately, they have to make a deal because otherwise, they're not going to be able to deal in the United States." Those comments came

after Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent told a closed-door event on Tuesday that the tariffs amounted to a reciprocal trade embargo. Bessent said he expected a de-escalation in the near future, according to a person who was in the room. Such a development should bring markets some relief, he added at the JPMorgan Chase-hosted event, which was not open to the press. Trump's recent tirades against Powell had fanned fears of an ouster, sending jitters through markets already spooked by the aggressive trade policies. The Republican had criticised Powell for warning that the White House's sweeping tariffs policy would likely reignite inflation. "I have no intention of firing him," Trump said on Tuesday. "I would like to see him be a little more active in terms of his idea to lower interest rates -- it's a perfect time to lower interest rates. Wall Street's major indexes jumped after a report on Bessent's trade comments, which came on the sidelines of the International Monetary Fund and World Bank's Spring Meetings. Asian markets rallied across the board on Wednesday. The main indexes in Hong Kong and Tokyo were both up around two percent, while gold fell back a day after hitting a record high as investors sought their traditional safe haven. Bessent said there was much to be done at the end of the day with Beijing but he noted the need for fair trade and said China needed to rebalance its economy.

The Treasury chief stressed that the goal is not to decouple with China, noting that container bookings between both countries have slumped recently as trade tensions heated up. White House Press Secretary Karoline Leavitt also told reporters that Washington was "doing very well in respect to a potential trade deal with China". Global finance ministers and central bankers will converge on Washington this week, with all eyes on the progress of trade talks on the sidelines as countries grapple with Trump's new and wide-ranging tariffs. China's foreign minister Wang Yi also held phone calls with his British and Austrian counterparts on Tuesday, urging the UK and the European Union to work with Beijing on safeguarding international trade. Japan was also reportedly eyeing a second visit to Washington by tariffs envoy Ryosei Akazawa next week, with local media reporting Tokyo was considering concessions to assuage Trump.

Trump says Zelenskyy is prolonging war in Ukraine by resisting calls to cede Crimea to Russia

GNS News Agency, April 29

President Donald Trump on Wednesday (April 23, 2025) lashed out at Ukraine's President, saying Volodymyr Zelenskyy is prolonging the "killing field" after pushing back on ceding Crimea to Russia as part of a potential peace plan. Mr. Zelenskyy on Tuesday (April 22, 2025) ruled out ceding territory to Russia in any deal before talks set for Wednesday in London among U.S., European and Ukrainian officials. "There is nothing to talk about. It is our land, the land of the Ukrainian people," Mr. Zelenskyy said. During similar talks last week in Paris, U.S. officials presented a proposal that included allowing Russia to keep control of occupied Ukrainian territory as part of a deal, according to a European official familiar with the matter who was not authorized to comment publicly and spoke on condition of anonymity. Mr. Trump called Mr. Zelenskyy's pushback "very harmful" to talks. "Nobody is asking Mr. Zelenskyy to recognize Crimea as Russian Territory but, if he wants Crimea, why didn't they fight for it eleven years ago when it was handed over to Russia without a shot being fired?" he wrote on social media. Russia annexed Crimea in 2014 after sending troops to overrun it. Weeks later, Moscow-backed separatists launched an uprising in eastern Ukraine, battling Kyiv's forces.

Mr. Trump also asserted they were close to a deal and that Ukraine's leader can have peace or "he can fight for another three years before losing the whole Country," adding that Mr. Zelenskyy's statement "will do nothing but prolong the 'killing field,' and nobody wants that!" Wednesday's meeting was pared back at the last minute, while Vice President J.D. Vance said negotiations are reaching a moment of truth.

"We've issued a very explicit proposal to both the Russians and the Ukrainians, and it's time for them to either say 'yes' or for the United States to walk away from this process," Mr. Vance told reporters during a visit to India. He said it was "a very fair proposal" that would "freeze the ter-



ritorial lines at some level close to where they are today," with both sides having to give up some territory they currently hold. He did not provide details. A senior European official familiar with the ongoing talks involving the American team said a proposal the United States calls "final" was initially presented last week in Paris, where it was described as "just ideas" — and that they could be changed. When those "ideas" surfaced in media reports, Ukrainian officials were surprised to find that Washington portrayed them as final, according to the official, who was not authorized to comment publicly and spoke on condition of anonymity. Mr. Zelenskyy said Wednesday that Ukraine is ready for any format of negotiations that might bring a ceasefire and open the door to full peace negotiations, as he mourned nine civilians killed when a Russian drone struck a bus earlier in the day.

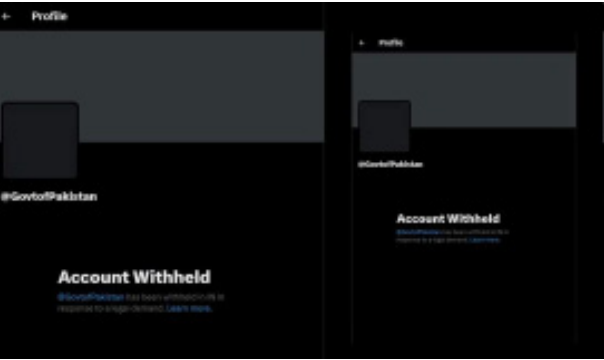
"We insist on an immediate, complete and unconditional ceasefire," Mr. Zelenskyy wrote on social media, in accordance with a proposal he said the U.S. tabled six weeks ago. Ukraine and some Western European governments have accused Russian President Vladimir Putin of dragging his feet on that proposal as his army tries to capture more Ukrainian land. Western analysts say Moscow is in no rush to conclude peace talks because it has battlefield momentum.

Pakistan government's official X handle withheld in India

GNS News Agency, April 29

Hyderabad: Pakistan government's official X (formerly Twitter) handle, @GovtofPakistan has been withheld in India. The move comes amid heightened tensions that escalated between India and Pakistan over terrorist attack in Jammu and Kashmir's Pahalgam that took place on Tuesday, April 22, 2025. Around 26 persons were killed in the attack which is said to be carried out by Pakistan-based The Resistance Front. If Twitter users in India were to search for Pakistan Government's account, a display message would pop up stating, "Account Withheld @GovtofPakistan has been withheld in IN in response to a legal demand. https://Learn more." However, people outside India can access the twitter account. It is not for the first time that Pakistan's twitter got banned in India. Earlier it was withheld in 2023 and also in July and October 2022.

In response to the heinous attack, the Indian government, on Wednesday, suspended the Indus Water Treaty and also summoned top Pak diplomat in India. The Central



government has announced that Pakistani citizens will no longer be allowed entry into India under the SAARC Visa Exemption Scheme (SVES). All previously issued SVES visas to Pakistani nationals have been revoked, and those in India under the scheme have been given 48 hours to leave.

foreign ministry summoned China's envoy in Kyiv, Ma Shengkun, over the accusations and produced "evidence" to back the claims, the ministry said late Tuesday. Deputy Foreign Minister Yevhen Perebyinis stressed that the participation of Chinese citizens in hostilities against Ukraine on the side of the aggressor state, as well as the involvement of Chinese companies in the production of military products in Russia, are of serious concern and contradict the spirit of partnership between Ukraine and China," said a ministry statement. "Evidence of these facts was passed by the Ukrainian special services to the Chinese side," .

Indus Water Treaty suspended: India has many options, says expert



GNS News Agency, April 29

India has said the Indus Water Treaty (IWT) of 1960 with Pakistan will be held 'in abeyance' with immediate effect, until Islamabad credibly and irrevocably abjures its support for cross-border terrorism. The move on Wednesday (April 23, 2025) after the killing of 26 persons, including tourists, in Pahalgam in Jammu and Kashmir on Tuesday (April 23, 2025).

What could be the impact of this move?

The Indus system of rivers comprises the main river — the Indus — along with its five left bank tributaries, namely, the Ravi, the Beas, the Sutlej, the Jhelum and the Chenab. The right bank tributary, the Kabul, does not flow through India. The Ravi, the Beas and the Sutlej are together called eastern rivers while the Chenab, the Jhelum and the Indus main are called as western rivers. Its waters are critical to both India and Pakistan. Pradeep Kumar Saxena, who served as India's Indus Water Commissioner for over six years and has been associated with work related to the IWT, said India, as an upper riparian country, has multiple options. "This could be the first step towards the abrogation of the treaty, if the government so decides," Mr. Saxena told PTI on Wednesday (April 23, 2025). "Although there is no explicit provision in the treaty for its abrogation, Article 62 of the Vienna Convention on Law of the Treaties provides sufficient room under which the treaty can be repudiated in view of the fundamental change of circumstances which has occurred with regard to those existing at the time of conclusion of the treaty," he said. Last year, India sent a formal notice to Pakistan, seeking the "review and modification" of the treaty. Listing out the steps India could take, Mr. Saxena said in the absence of the treaty, India is under no obligation to follow the restrictions on the "reservoir flushing" of the Kishanganga reservoir and other projects on western rivers in Jammu and Kashmir. The Indus Water Treaty currently prohibits it.

Flushing can help India desilt its reservoir but then fill-

With Hasina gone, BNP is torn by internal clashes

GNS News Agency, April 29

Lablu Mia, a 50-year-old local leader of the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP), was known as a devoted activist in Badarganj upazila of Rangpur district. But on April 5, his loyalty to the party meant nothing when rival BNP factions turned on each other in a vicious clash over control of a business near the upazila central Shaheed Minar. Stabbed repeatedly in the clashes, Mia became the latest casualty in a growing wave of internal clash tearing through the BNP. The clash, which left at least 15 injured — nine critically — spiralled so out of control that police and army personnel had to be deployed to restore order. The BNP swiftly suspended eight of its leaders, including a former MP, in connection with the incident, but the damage was already done.

Mia's death is not an isolated incident. Since the fall of Sheikh Hasina's government on August 5, 2024, the BNP, arguably the most dominant political force in the country, has been torn by internal divisions. With the Awami League's influence diminished, BNP factions are now frequently locked in clashes for influence. Just two days after Mia's killing, another deadly clash erupted in Raipur Upazila of Lakshmipur district, between rival BNP factions. Two activists were killed, and 15 others were hospitalised with stab wounds.

According to the Human Rights Support Society (HRSS), a rights organisation in Bangladesh, at least 23 people were killed and 733 more injured in over 97 incidents of political violence across the country in March. Of the deaths, 17 occurred in 64 clashes between rival factions of the BNP. These incidents left 502 others injured. The rights body said that most of the violence was driven by efforts to establish dominance, political vendetta, extortion, and the occupation of various facilities. Although the number of political violence incidents slightly decreased last month, from 104 in February — the number of deaths more than doubled from nine. Of them, five died as result of infighting between BNP factions.

January also witnessed alarming levels of political violence, with at least 15 people killed and 987 injured in 124 incidents. The bloodshed predominantly stemmed from internal party conflicts, particularly within BNP, which accounted for 68 violent incidents resulting in 677 injuries and five deaths. However, inter-party clashes between BNP and Awami League activists turned deadly in 22 instances, leaving 106 wounded and four dead, while three confrontations between BNP and Jamaat-e-Islami supporters saw 60 casualties and one fatality. According to data from Ain o Salish Kendra, another rights organisation, at least 36 people have been killed in political violence over the past three months, including 24 who were killed in infighting between the BNP and its affiliated organisations. Besides, at least 1,415 people were injured in clashes between BNP members and their affiliated wings during the period, while 189 were injured in clashes between the BNP and the Awami League, and 262 in clashes involving the BNP and Jamaat-e-Islami. In 2024, following the fall of the Hasina-led government, violence within BNP circles intensified, leading to at least 1,697 injuries and 31 deaths. While the BNP has long positioned the Awami League as its primary rival, after Ms. Hasina's fall and the Awami League's political decline, internal instability appears to be the BNP's most pressing challenge.

Although the BNP's top leadership has consistently warned its leaders and activists of stern action if found involved in wrongdoings, including extortion, such warnings have largely gone in vain. Suspension orders are frequently issued when allegations surface against party members; however, these measures have failed to prevent the recurrence of such incidents. Asked how the BNP sees the infighting, party organising secretary Shama Obaid told The Hindu that internal competition is common in big political parties. However, BNP Acting Chairman Tarique Rahman has instructed party leaders and activists to always stand

ing the entire reservoir could take days. Under the treaty, reservoir filling after the flushing has to be done in August — peak monsoon period — but with the pact in abeyance, it could be done anytime. Doing it when sowing season begins in Pakistan could be detrimental, especially when a large part of Punjab in Pakistan depends on the Indus and its tributaries for irrigation. According to the treaty, there are design restrictions on building structures like dams on Indus and its tributaries. In the past, Pakistan has raised objections over the designs but in future it will not be obligatory to take the concerns onboard. In the past almost every project has been objected to by Pakistan. Notable are Salal, Baglihar, Uri, Chutak, Nimoo Bazgo, Kishenganga, Pakal Dul, Miyar, Lower Kalnai and Ratle. After the Pulwama terror attack in 2019, the government cleared eight more hydropower projects in Ladakh. The objections may no longer be applicable for the new projects. There are also operational restrictions on how reservoirs are to be filled and operated. With the treaty in abeyance, these are no longer applicable. Mr. Saxena said India can stop sharing flood data on the rivers. This could also prove detrimental to Pakistan, especially during the monsoon when rivers swell. India will now have no restriction on storage on western rivers, particularly the Jhelum, and the country can take a number of flood control measures to mitigate floods in the Valley, he said. The tours of Pakistan side to India, which are mandatory under the treaty, may now be stopped. At the time of Independence, the boundary line between the two newly created independent countries — Pakistan and India — was drawn right across the Indus Basin, leaving Pakistan as the lower riparian and India as the upper riparian. Two important irrigation works, one at Madhopur on the Ravi river and the other at Ferozepur on the Sutlej river, on which the irrigation canal supplies in Punjab (Pakistan) had been completely dependent, fell in the Indian territory.

A dispute thus arose between the two countries regarding the utilisation of irrigation water from existing facilities. Negotiations held under the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (World Bank) culminated in the signing of the Indus Water Treaty in 1960. According to the treaty, all the waters of the eastern rivers — Sutlej, Beas, and Ravi with an average annual flow of around 33 million acre feet (MAF) is allocated to India for unrestricted use while the waters of western rivers — Indus, Jhelum, and Chenab with average annual flow of around 135 MAF is allocated largely to Pakistan. However, India is permitted to use the waters of the western rivers for domestic use, non-consumptive use, agricultural and generation of hydro-electric power. The right to generate hydroelectricity from western rivers is unrestricted subject to conditions for the design and operation of the treaty. India can also create storages up to 3.6 MAF on western rivers, the pact states.



by the people. When asked about the deaths reportedly caused by infighting within the BNP over the past three months, Ms. Obaid said, "Each incident needs to be examined individually to determine whether it was truly an internal conflict or part of a conspiracy against the BNP. In many cases, members of the Awami League and their fascist collaborators infiltrate the BNP to create unrest and sabotage the party from within. These isolated incidents are often the result of such conspiracies." "While competition exists in large political parties, it doesn't usually lead to these many deaths. These fatalities are happening because outsiders are orchestrating plots and blaming the BNP for the consequences," she added. Amid such incidents, politicians from different parties have called on BNP Acting Chairman Rahman to take decisive action against leaders involved in extortion and violence.

Ariful Islam Adib, senior joint convener of the Nationalist Citizens' Party (NCP), a newly formed political party of students who led the anti-Hasina protest, said: "I urge Tarique Rahman to take immediate action not only within the party but also through legal means against those involved in extortion and criminal activities. Merely expelling them from the party is not enough. If these individuals are not dealt with firmly, they won't just target opposition activists—they will eventually destroy the BNP from within." The law-and-order situation in the country is yet to be fully restored, as incidents of extortion and deadly violence occur unabated. However, Home Affairs Advisor Jahangir Alam Chowdhury warned that strict action will be taken against police officials who fail to maintain law and order. "Clear and firm instructions have already been issued to law enforcement agencies to further strengthen control on the ground. If any police officers fail to bring the situation under control, they will face severe consequences," he said. According to the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR), a total of 390 individuals involved in various criminal activities — including robbery, extortion, kidnapping, and fugitives with multiple arrest warrants — were arrested across the country between April 10 and April 17 during joint operations conducted by the Bangladesh Army and other law enforcement agencies. Advocate Saidur Rahman, chief executive of the Manabdhikar Shongskriti Foundation (MSF), told The Hindu that although the BNP has been out of power for nearly two decades, in the changed and favourable situation its leaders and activists are now involved in extortion. "When they were completely out of power, we didn't see such infighting among them. But now, driven by financial motives, they are clashing internally. When one faction tries to take control of an area, another group wants to dominate the same territory, leading to violent confrontations," he said. "We rarely see any concrete action from the government (against such incidents). Authorities seem to treat these internal fights as outside their jurisdiction. Even the police, despite being aware of the potential for violence, often refrain themselves from intervening out of fear for their own safety. There's also a clear lack of coordination among different ministries; they don't know what the others are doing. The government has largely taken a hands-off approach, as if to say, 'Let the BNP fight among themselves; we don't need to get involved'," added Mr. Rahman.

What beauty pageants tell us about power and priorities



GNS News Agency, April 29

The 72nd Miss World beauty pageant is scheduled to be held in Hyderabad from May 7 to May 31, 2025. The Telangana government is hosting the event. It aims to promote tourism under the banner of 'Telangana Zaroor Aana (Come to Telangana definitely)'. The announcement has triggered strong protests from women's organisations across the country — and for valid reasons. The controversy surrounding beauty pageants is not new. From Bangalore in 1996 to Mumbai in 2024, every edition held in India has invited public resistance. While organisers have tried to rebrand these events as platforms for female empowerment and global recognition, the questions they raise are far more layered and deserving of deep reflection. At the heart of the critique is the uneasy alliance of capitalism and patriarchy. While the format of the pageant has evolved over time — from swimsuit rounds to question and answer segments to 'beauty with purpose' initiatives — the fundamental act of evaluating women in a competitive format based on physical appearance remains troubling. These are, after all, stylised performances, with bodies and personas trained and tailored for consumption, both by audiences and the marketplace.

Yet, we cannot dismiss the voices of the participants themselves. For many young women, especially from countries such as India where female visibility in public life is still

fraught with challenges, participating in a global pageant is aspirational. It brings validation, exposure, and often an entry point into larger opportunities — be it in the media or in public life, or to promote social causes. The fact that India's own winners, such as Aishwarya Rai, Priyanka Chopra, and Manushi Chhillar, have become household names and even global ambassadors for various causes makes beauty pageants seem like empowering launchpads. However, this duality cannot be ignored: even as pageants present themselves as empowering, they continue to package women's bodies for public consumption and corporate sponsorships. What is termed 'confidence' is often curated conformity. The empowerment here is conditional — contingent upon a very narrow, appearance-centric template of success. The second and perhaps more critical concern lies with the governments — both State and Central — that actively court such events. Why is a beauty pageant preferred over international forums on women's health, employment, innovation, or rural development? Why are resources being allocated to host an event that primarily enhances visibility in foreign markets, rather than address the urgent developmental needs of local populations? These choices reflect patriarchal mindsets where women's value is still often linked to how they look rather than what they contribute. This is not to undermine the participants or their ambitions. It is to question the framework in which such ambitions are fostered and rewarded.

True empowerment is not about how confidently a woman walks a ramp, but how safely she walks her neighbourhood. Not about global visibility alone, but about everyday dignity, access, and agency. The conversation around events such as Miss World should therefore not be polarised into binaries of 'for' or 'against.' It must become an opportunity to interrogate our collective values — about who gets to represent the country, what messages we amplify to the world, and how we define empowerment in the 21st century. As women's groups continue to raise their voices, it is not merely in protest of a pageant — but in defence of a broader vision where women are not celebrated for how they look, but for who they are and what they do.

Generative AI and copyright conundrum



GNS News Agency, April 29

A store selling Studio Ghibli products in Kyoto, Japan. ChatGPT is able to generate images on request in a particular style because it has been trained on that style by its creators, and hence it is a violation of the copyright law, if done without permission. The celebrated legal academic and copyright law scholar Paul Goldstein, in his copyright treatise, argues that there are two types of copyright law experts: "the copyright optimist" and the "copyright pessimist". The optimist views the copyright's glass as half full and argues for additional rights to fill the cup to its brim. The pessimist views it as half empty and argues for satiating the copyright owner/creator with sufficient rights to protect the creative interest, while also arguing for a larger public domain that inspires and facilitates the future of creativity.

The copyright law was created to equip publishers with rights that evolved with the creation of the printing press. The copyright owner is bestowed with ownership over the work for a limited number of years. This is done with the intention of helping the owner to reap the rewards that are offered by the market. Once the ownership period ends, the work enters the public domain, whereby it becomes common for all to use so that the creative sea never dries. This premise had been challenged by disruptive technologies several times in the past, and the copyright law has adapted to the challenges posed by technology. The law provides certain exceptions to infringement such as private use and non-commercial use. This is again an area where the copyright optimist and the pessimist differ. The pessimist argues for user right and the optimist opposes it. For instance, when the photocopying machine was invented, it was a common fear among the creative community that copying would become rampant and the law-given monopoly would no longer remain meaningful. Similarly, when the Internet boom occurred, it was again felt that the creative works were open in the virtual space that enabled people to have access to

copyrighted work by bypassing the legal route. In all these instances, the status quo of the law was maintained, and it did not challenge the fundamental norms of the copyright law. It pertained only to tailoring the copyright law's exceptions. In the recent past, this notion has been categorically challenged by generative AI. The previous technological development(s) only enabled third parties to have access to the copyrighted content, but generative AI models threaten to replace the human author, as AI does the creative hat now. Open AI, a forerunner in the generative AI field, faces legal challenge for falling foul of the copyright law. It has especially been accused of training the AI platform on copyrighted content without permission. This is a novel argument in copyright law, as contended by experts and generative AI companies that copyright law should operate on the "creation" part and not on the "means to creation". If the means to creation is stopped, it would dry the creative pool.

Further, these models are educated on a vast trove of materials available on the Internet, and it would be difficult to "pinpoint the exact occurrence of infringement", as the platform learns the nuances from the existing creation and creates based on prompts given by the user. This is like any creative work made by humans — even Mozart and Beethoven heard classical piano before they began to play it (this argument's legal validity is yet to be decided by courts across the world including India). Last month, the Studio Ghibli trend began to surface on the Internet, with Internet users engaging ChatGPT to create their images in the animation style of the studio based in Japan. The users might have had an amusing experience in styling their image in Ghibli style for free, but it sparks a serious copyright concern. The platform is able to generate images on request in a particular style because it has been trained on that style by its creators, and hence it is a violation of the copyright law, if done without permission. Even if the Ghibli style images are created for non-commercial private use of the users, it is still a derivative work of the copyright owner, a work based on the copyrighted works of Studio Ghibli. This instance nullifies the previous argument of the generative AI companies before the courts that it is almost impossible to trace the exact work of infringement. The platform is virtually trained on all materials from the Internet, and the generative AI work is nothing but a complex mixture of its learnings and is not particularly similar to one style. This argument may not be true in the current instance, as the AI is able to generate images in a particular style, in this instance, Studio Ghibli. It nudges one to think about the specific training that the AI has received from these works. It also raises another concern that the AI begins to act as a potential market substitute for Studio Ghibli's works, leading to a possible market loss for it. Tomorrow, for a commercial use in a movie or in a newspaper article, the AI generated work could be preferred to the studio's original work, which is a lost economic opportunity for the company. This trend could dilute and effectively run contrary to the norms and theories of the copyright law. It runs the risk of throwing the cup with the water.

Who are 'VTubers' taking content creation space by storm? YouTube's 'Culture & Trends Report - 2024' explains

Hyderabad: The online creator landscape is witnessing a new shift, with a new kind of a star emerging as a popular alternative to humans on YouTube. 'VTubers,' or 'Virtual YouTubers' are now becoming some of the most popular and influential online voices on the video and streaming platform, according to a report published by YouTube on the annual trends. According to YouTube's 2024 Trends Report, a sample of just 300 virtual creators generated over 15 billion views in 2024, with 1 billion of those views coming from the U.S. alone. These animated avatars, often inspired by anime or gaming aesthetics, are redefining how audiences connect with creators — offering a unique blend of performance, anonymity, and authenticity.

Unlike traditional influencers, VTubers don't appear as themselves. Instead, they perform through computer-generated avatars that allow for greater creative freedom and a

layer of separation from real-life identity. This new medium is particularly popular among younger audiences and emerging creators who may feel more comfortable expressing themselves behind a virtual face. Citing a creator as an example, the report highlights the popularity of Hatsune Miku — a Vocaloid character and symbol of fan-driven content — exemplifies this evolution. With over 5.5 billion views in 2024 alone, Miku represents how virtual performers can dominate even long-established online spaces. Similarly, creators like @Neurosama and @SakuraMiko have cultivated massive followings, showing the potential of virtual identities to draw real engagement. The phenomenon isn't just limited to anime-style VTubers. Platforms like Roblox and VRChat are enabling more casual virtual content creation, while hyper-realistic avatars like @LiMiquela and @CodeMiko push the boundaries of what's digitally possible.

Responding to the terror attack in Pahalgam



GNS News Agency, April 29

The terrorist attack in Pahalgam in Jammu and Kashmir is not just an act of brutality; it is a calculated political signal, carefully timed and deliberately chosen to inflict not only human casualties, but cause strategic disruption. Coming days after the Kashmir Valley had begun welcoming tourists as part of a fresh season, and while U.S. Vice-President J.D. Vance tours India, this is not a random or desperate strike. It seems to be the continuation of a long-standing pattern of cross-border terrorism, directed and sustained by the Pakistani military-intelligence establishment. At a time when Pakistan had faded from India's diplomatic radar and foreign policy imagination, it is back: threatening to disrupt much of what we hold dear. The attack took place in Baisaran, an alpine meadow which is often described as 'mini Switzerland'. The very setting — a site of picnics, pony rides, and often school excursions — make the images all the more harrowing. Videos of terrified tourists scrambling for safety, and bloodstained trails in a place known for its serenity, have left an indelible mark on public memory. It was not just a strike on innocent tourists; it was a deliberate assault on the idea of Kashmir as a safe and even sacred tourist space. It also reflects a massive intelligence failure, and a lowering of the security vigil, which is deeply troubling. Pahalgam is a tourist hub; a gateway to the Amarnath shrine. The forces and agencies should have been on their guard. The drones and electronic surveillance infrastructure that India has invested in also seems to have been absent. While the intelligence failure may appear to not have been as colossal as it was in Kargil, it will have as deep a societal impact. The responsibility for the Pahalgam attack has been claimed by The Resistance Front, a proxy outfit with clear operational links to the Lashkar-e-Taiba — deeply embedded within the network of Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI). The pattern is now familiar: inflict pain on India, sow uncertainty in Kashmir, and provoke reaction — all while maintaining a thin veneer of deniability. That such operations continue despite decades of global scrutiny reveals the strategic environment in which they thrive. It is one in which Pakistan has too often acted without paying a proportionate cost. That must change.

If India is to meaningfully alter the calculus in Rawalpindi, it must also develop the institutional memory and policy continuity to respond across political administrations. Terrorism cannot be treated episodically. A long-term approach to deterrence must involve political consensus, sustained intelligence capability, and the diplomatic stamina to persist with pressure even in the absence of major attacks. Strategic patience, not short bursts of retaliatory energy, is what Pakistan's playbook is least equipped to handle. India's response to the Pahalgam massacre must be rooted not just in outrage, but in strategy. Condemnation is necessary but insufficient. The imperative now is deterrence — not in the abstract, but as policy. Deterrence, in classical strategic theory, is not the threat of punishment alone. It is the imposition of credible, visible, and cumulative costs that alter the behaviour of the adversary over time.

The difficulty, of course, lies in crafting a response that deters without destabilising. But India's continued restraint — save notable exceptions such as responses after the terrorist attacks in Uri and Pulwama — in the face of repeated provocations has often been interpreted in Rawalpindi as hesitation and even weakness. To alter that perception, we must embrace a framework of escalatory credibility — not escalation for its own sake, but the ability and willingness to impose pain through diplomatic, economic, and covert means when red lines are crossed. This includes sustained efforts to diplomatically isolate Pakistan on platforms where it seeks legitimacy; the careful reconsideration of trade and water-sharing mechanisms that Pakistan

depends on; and the expansion of covert and intelligence-based capabilities to disrupt terrorist infrastructure across the Line of Control (LoC). These options are neither reckless nor novel. They are tools of statecraft that have been successfully used by others — including by those who lecture India on proportionality.

To understand why Pakistan resorts to such acts, we must look at the internal dynamics of the state. Pakistan today is deeply unstable. It is economically paralysed, politically rudderless, and socially fraying. In this context, adventurism in Kashmir becomes a political instrument — a way for the military establishment to reassert authority and deflect domestic discontent. Unlike his predecessor, the quietly pragmatic General Qamar Javed Bajwa, the current Army Chief, General Asim Munir, known for his aggressive posture and appetite for risk, appears to be reviving the doctrine of 'managed escalation' — a strategy that sees value in carefully calibrated acts of violence under the nuclear threshold. A former ISI chief and deeply embedded within Pakistan's military-intelligence nexus, Mr. Munir has revived a rhetoric that blends ideological grievance with strategic opportunism. His frequent references to Hindu-Muslim relations in Manichean terms and his recent description of Kashmir as Pakistan's "jugular vein" reinforces the 'old' doctrine that sees Kashmir as a perpetual battleground and not as a site for peace. The recent escalation in ceasefire violations across the LOC, in violation of the ceasefire 'agreement' in operation since February 2021, is further evidence of the reckless approach being pursued by him. This is not without precedent. Each phase of heightened internal unrest or civil-military imbalance in Pakistan has historically coincided with escalatory behaviour towards India — and Kashmir has been the primary theatre. The Kargil conflict in 1999, launched under the leadership of General Pervez Musharraf during Nawaz Sharif's civilian government, remains a stark example of the military's willingness to bypass its own civilian leadership to provoke confrontation. The Parliament attack in 2001, the Mumbai attacks in 2008, the Uri attack in 2016, and the Pulwama suicide bombing in 2019 — all bear the hallmarks of a strategy designed to trigger a response from India while keeping Pakistan's involvement deniable. These incidents were not isolated acts of terrorism; they were episodes in a sustained campaign of asymmetric warfare.

This is why deterrence must be re-established. India cannot afford to allow its adversary to believe that it can continue with such attacks without serious consequences. This is not merely a matter of honour or public expectation; it is one of long-term strategic stability. The choice of targets in Pahalgam is telling. Tourism has become a symbol of tentative recovery in Kashmir. It offers livelihoods to ordinary Kashmiris and represents the reweaving of ties between the Valley and the rest of the country. Attacking tourists, therefore, is not only an act of terror, but an attempt to sabotage the very idea of normalcy. To cut off the Valley from its visitors is to deepen the isolation that terrorist groups rely on.

It is important to say this clearly: the people of Kashmir are not complicit in this violence. On the contrary, they are its first victims. The younger generation in the Valley is looking for opportunity, not militancy. They want better education, better jobs, and a future beyond conflict. The narrative that Kashmiris harbour sympathy for terrorists is both factually wrong and strategically dangerous. It alienates the very population whose inclusion is essential to any durable peace. India's internal response, then, must be as resolute as its external one — but not in the language of repression. Instead, it must be expressed through sustained economic investment, political engagement, and continued efforts at social integration. This is not only the right thing to do, but also the strategically smart thing to do. The timing of Mr. Vance's visit to India offers a moment of diplomatic opportunity. Washington understands the long shadow that state-sponsored terrorism casts over democracies. India must press for clearer public language from the U.S. and its allies, and for sustained pressure on Pakistan's support networks. Sympathy after attacks is welcome; action before them is what matters more. There are no easy solutions. But clarity must precede action. The Pahalgam massacre is not simply another tragedy to be absorbed into the long ledger of terror. It is a reminder that ambiguity emboldens the aggressor. The only language that has ever constrained Pakistan's adventurism is the language of credible consequence. This is the time to speak it again.

All stress and no play making children anxious, with fragile mental health

It has been clear for some years now that a section of teenagers across the world are going through a period of considerable anxiety. This phenomenon had been developing even before the COVID-19 years; however, the pandemic made the mental health crisis more acute. Added to this is the increased stress among teenagers about their livelihoods and their lives against the looming threat of climate change.

Children today have far less time for free play and wholesome interaction. Recess or break-time at school is often used to prepare for some test or the other. Added to this is the intense pressure around high-stakes entrance examinations that are more a filtration mechanism than a real test of aptitude. Not only teenagers but even pre-teens find their school day lengthening inexorably into tuitions and special classes for selective tests, leaving little or no time for that basketball game or for just fooling around with friends. And certainly, interactions with friends on social media cannot replace in-person time. Social psychologist Jonathan Haidt links the mental health crisis among teenagers to the disappearance of free play in childhood and the increased use of smartphones, leading to sleep deprivation and addiction. According to him, digital technologies are a Pandora's box rewiring children's brains. Parents find it difficult to put limits on their children's use of technology. Mr. Haidt writes about the "constant conflict" story: "Parents try to lay down rules and enforce limits, but there are just so many devices, so many arguments about why a rule needs to be relaxed, and so many ways around the rules, that family life has come to be dominated by disagreements around technology." Mr. Haidt recommends four reforms: no smartphones before high school; no social media before the age of sixteen; phone-free schools; and far more unsupervised play and childhood independence.

As a parent of teenagers, I find this rather drastic. Certainly, more play and wholesome interactions in childhood. But on the proposed embargo on phones and social media, I would say two things: one, hasn't that ship sailed already? And two, surely it's not as bad as all that, because it is indeed possible to talk to teenagers, and not only about the hazards of overusing their devices, but to be present in

their lives. Which means treating them as thinking individuals, sharing family time with them, modelling the responsible use of technology — and trusting teenagers to make good decisions. At the happier end of the spectrum of recent books about childhood is Sam Leith's The Haunted Wood: A History of Childhood Reading. This journey through children's literature serves as both cheerful counter and antidote to the crisis of childhood anxiety. Reading opens windows and doors to other worlds; it grows a child's imagination; it teaches empathy. Childhood reading is also the first step in a lifelong journey of reading. Mr. Leith writes that it is "the platform on which everything else is built. It's through what we read as children that we imbibe our first understanding of what it is to inhabit a fictional world, how words and sentences carry a style and tone of voice. What we read in childhood stays with us." Which is why, perhaps, the answer to the problem of the smartphone is to get children to pick up a book. The earlier the better. Picture books which contain diverse stories of interest to children are the key to building a lifelong love of reading. For infants and toddlers, one should start with wordless picture books. For teenagers, anything they like, including comics and graphic novels. Albert Einstein is reported to have said: "If you want your children to be intelligent, read them fairy tales. If you want them to be very intelligent, read them more fairy tales." Fairy tales contain all the material that helps to grow emotional intelligence: innocence, love, honesty, and kindness, but also cruelty, sorrow, and sacrifice. The boy who sells his mother's cow for a handful of magic beans. The miller who tricks a king into believing his daughter can spin straw into gold. The little mermaid who willingly gives up her underwater life to gain a human soul. No wonder that Mr. Leith remarks on the presence of grief in children's literature: "A surprising constant in a literature associated with ideas of freedom and innocence is grief. Many of the most enduring and most moving of these stories have a pulse of sadness in them or behind them. To be a child is to know that you have to grow up." Children's Books: An Indian Story, a collection of thoughtful essays edited by Sandhya Rao and Shailaja Menon, is a timely survey of the landscape of children's literature, which is coming of age in India.

How India shut down and opened gradually to battle a pandemic



“If we are not able to adhere to this lockdown sincerely for 21 days, believe me, India will go back 21 years,” warned Prime Minister Narendra Modi on March 24, 2020, as India registered 10 deaths due to the spread of Coronavirus (COVID-19). Implementing a total lockdown where in all government offices, educational institutions, places of worship, private offices, establishment were shut down, Mr. Modi allotted ₹15,000 COVID-19 fund for purchase of personal protection equipment (PPEs), setting up testing labs, quarantine centres and expanding hospital facilities to tackle the rising cases. Five years have passed since India implemented the strictest lockdown, saw the steepest rise in COVID-19 cases and fatalities, a steep dip in its economic growth before it gradually loosened its lockdown restrictions as cases receded. As the first few cases of COVID-19 began in India, its virulent nature forced India to begin screening, isolating, quarantining the affected persons and tracing their contact history. In a bid to give India’s healthcare system, medical professionals, sanitation workers, scientists and others time to prepare for the rising COVID-19 cases, restrictions on assembly of people were first imposed in Kerala, Delhi and Maharashtra. Denying any ‘community transmission’ of COVID-19, Centre first imposed a 14-hour lockdown called ‘Janata Curfew’ on March 22, 2020 to break the spread. However, within two days, it was evident ‘Isolation is India’s best weapon’, as opined by then-ICMR chief Dr. Balram Bhargava.

After Janata Curfew, renowned Indian economist Jean Dreze warned, “A double crisis looms over India: a health crisis and an economic crisis,” in The Hindu’s column. “Migrant workers, street vendors, contract workers, almost everyone in the informal sector — the bulk of the workforce — is being hit by this economic tsunami,” he explained, urging Centre and States to make good use of existing social-security schemes to support poor people, creativity in shutting public services to limit economic damages and warning “sectors of the economy will soon be lobbying for rescue packages”. “Draw a Laxman Rekha outside your house door and do not step outside of it. Stay where you are,” instructed Mr. Modi in his televised address on March 24, 2020, announcing a full lockdown for 21 days. Shops providing essential products like food, groceries, dairy, fruits and vegetables, meat, fish; banks, media houses, telecom services, medical shops, petrol pumps, power services, cold storage and warehouses were the only ones which remained open. Strict curfew timings were put on movement of people and only essential workers — medical workers, sanitation workers, power, telecom, post, food delivery workers, media and emergency response workers were allowed to venture out.

Dr. Dreze’s warning came true within days of the total lockdown. Ahead of the swift imposition of lockdown on March 21, 2020 in Mumbai, hundreds of migrants thronged Lokmanya Tilak Terminus, attempting to board trains travelling back to their homes in Uttar Pradesh, Bihar. “Visuals of hundreds of workers wearing gamches, carrying heavy backpacks and wailing children, and walking on national highways, boarding tractors, and jostling for space atop multi-coloured buses became defining images for days to come in India,” reported The Hindu, as total lockdown forced migrants to trudge back home on foot. As lockdown was imposed, 4,500 people who had attended a convention of a conservative Islamic organisation – Tablighi Jamaat – at its headquarters in Delhi, had travelled across India. With most travellers testing positive for COVID-19, police was tasked with tracing their contacts, isolate them and treat them. The convention became India’s first ‘COVID-19 cluster’ as several thousand travellers were stuck in Markaz, necessitating their safe evacuation, screening, isolation and treatment. As Muslims across India faced the ire on social media over the Tablighi Jamaat incident, Maharashtra CM Uddhav Thackeray promised strict action against those spreading communal violence. The 21-day lockdown was extended as COVID-19 infection spread across India with the Centre announcing a ₹1.7-lakh crore stimulus package, free gas cylinders, increase in MGNREGA wages, cash stimulus of ₹1,500 via Jan Dhan accounts. “Top 1% of India held 62% of all currency in circulation,” opined economist Appu Esthose Suresh in The Hindu, stating that a targetted ₹2.5 lakh-crore cash transfer was necessary to the cash-striven citizens. “₹1.34 lakh crore will be for the poorest 500 million Indians, whereas ₹1.2- lakh crore will replenish the reduced cash reserves of the rest”.

Trans sceptic arguments are incoherent

The U.K. Supreme Court has ruled that the Equality Act, 2010, will not treat trans women as women. In doing so, it drastically curtails the rights and protections that trans women can avail under the law. Effectively, the ruling undermines the U.K.’s Gender Recognition Act, 2004. In January, U.S. President Donald Trump passed an executive order declaring that his government recognises two sexes — male and female. He said that the order “restores sanity.”

Two days ago, I saw a social media post by a leading member of the U.K.’s oldest South Asian and Black feminist group welcoming the Supreme Court ruling for upholding “common sense” and protecting safe same-sex spaces for “biologically” female women while also, according to her, protecting trans women’s rights. The Labour Party too welcomed the verdict, saying that it “clarifies” the issue. Why are people who see themselves as opponents to far-right politics welcoming a ruling that is being celebrated by the far-right internationally as a triumph? Perhaps this is because the campaign for trans exclusion has framed itself as feminist.

J.K. Rowling, who fronted and funded the campaign that resulted in the ruling in the U.K., declares that the verdict will keep women and girls “safe” from trans women. Fear-mongering about women’s “safety” (from predatory Muslims, Mexicans, or trans women) and immigration are the most potent ingredients of global far-right discourse today. Muslim men are accused of masquerading as Hindus

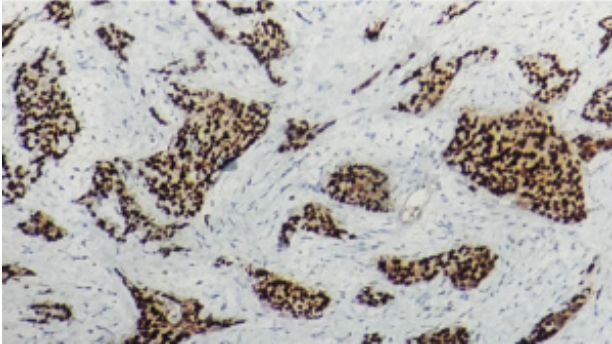
On extension of lockdown, the southern States — Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Kerala and Karnataka — opted to undergo massive testing to aide better contact tracing and isolation. The States also expanded the number of beds available in COVID-19 centres, offered cash transfer for poor families, farming families, daily wagers — all who had lost jobs and incomes. Meanwhile, Punjab and Haryana, which was experiencing a bumper crop in April-May, faced a dearth of labourers due to lockdown. With the closure of all transport facilities and most migrant labourers gone back home, farmers lost most perishable crops and struggled to store foodgrains. In the third phase of lockdown, metro, rail and air services remained shut, educational institutions, social gatherings remained banned. However, buses, autorickshaws and cabs were allowed to ply and shops, restaurants outside containment zones were opened up. States had more autonomy to decide on infection zones. Capping strength in offices to 33%, interstate transport was allowed (mutually agreed upon by states) and online delivery of goods was allowed again. As the Centre plied ‘Shramik trains’ to allow migrants return home, states began opening up their borders and issued guidelines for opening up various businesses, establishment, offices. By the end of May 2020, lockdown had been extended for the fourth time, but not for the complete nation. Focusing on 13 cities which had recorded 70% of the total COVID-19 cases, Centre imposed strict curbs on Mumbai, Chennai, Delhi, Ahmedabad, Thane, Pune, Hyderabad, Kolkata, Indore, Jaipur, Jodhpur, Chengalpattu and Thiruvallur. However, States were allowed what could remain open in the remaining areas, except metro trains, restaurants and malls which continued to remain shut. Exceptional success stories emerged from across India in containment during the lockdown. Rajasthan’s ‘Bhilwara model’ inspired the Centre’s cluster containment model which involved effectively sealing the district from other areas. Bhilwara officials had isolated the initial 26 cases reported and placed the hospital along with its staff in lockdown, halting the virus’ spread to nil by end of April. In contrast, in Dharavi — Asia’s largest slum, home to 3.6 lakh people per sq. Km, social distancing was not feasible. The municipal authorities undertook the most rigorous testing, contact tracing exercise to curb its spread. Dharavi managed to beat the COVID-19 curve by end of July due to its strict containment measures, testing and isolation. However, loopholes in various’ States testing and contact tracing methodology emerged by May. ICMR found that Kerala was testing 40 contacts per confirmed COVID case, while Maharashtra was testing only eight contacts. Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Goa, Odisha, Chhattisgarh, Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand had tested atleast 75% of the contacts of every COVID-19 case, while Rajasthan, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Haryana, Delhi were among those with less than 50% contacts tested. Unlocking of the country began during these months in phases. Buses, trains, metro trains became fully operational as did shops, businesses, agricultural and trading activities. The first wave of COVID-19 appeared to be declining as the country opened up.

However, by July, Kerala once again started recording a spike. While the State had successfully curbed its initial cases leveraging its epidemic management skills due to two Nipah outbreaks, cases began to rise as curbs relaxed and public movement increased. With people violating social distancing curbs, community transmission of the virus began in pockets of Thiruvananthapuram, reported The Hindu. Fearing another lockdown, people grew restive until the State government announced relief measures dipping into emergency funds. The Centre was still maintaining that community transmission was not prevalent across India. Another State which lost its control of its COVID-19 strategy was Telangana. Then CM K. Chandrashekhara Rao had initially downplayed the virus’ infection rate, not allowing private testing centres or private hospitals to treat cases. As citizens moved courts seeking relief, Mr. Rao imposed the toughest lockdown measures. However, lack of transparency in testing, screening, contact-tracing and even reporting fatalities, punched holes into Telangana’s COVID strategy as cases began rising.

By the end of the year, Centre began celebrating that ‘India had triumphed over COVID’ as two vaccines gained authorisation for public roll-out. While several States, medical officials begged people to maintain social distancing and use masks, pre-emptive celebrations of ‘normalcy’ were witnessed across India. Minimal lockdown was imposed across India and guidelines to safely reopen schools were being framed. Five States were scheduled to go to polls in April-May 2021 — Tamil Nadu, Assam, Kerala, West Bengal and Puducherry. As healthcare and other frontline workers began receiving their first dose of the COVID-19 vaccine, political campaigning began with full vigour. Large rallies where social distancing norms were not being followed, roadshows with thousands in attendance, unmasked crowds standing in close quarters became a regular spectacle. Top leaders including PM Narendra Modi, party chiefs Mamata Banerjee, M.K. Stalin, E Palaniswami and others were seen holding such rallies across cities where COVID-19 cases were rampant.

to seduce Hindu women; trans women are accused of being men masquerading as female to rape women. Alexandr Dugin, the guru of the global far-right, says LGBTQIA+ rights, like all human rights, are symptoms of kaliyuga — i.e., caste/race/gender mixing (varnasamkara, miscegenation), pollution, and confusion of natural categories and hierarchies. Trans exclusion today is the last socially acceptable bigotry — and thus the portal through which other bigotries slide back into “common sense.”Billionaires such as Ms. Rowling and Elon Musk have the wealth and power to shape “common sense”, policy, and judicial opinion. They have the approval of Mr. Trump and Russian President Vladimir Putin. Yet they claim to be victimised by trans women’s posts on social media. Seen through the refracting lens of far-right ideology, power arrangements appear inverted. Minorities menace majorities, threatening them with elimination and extinction. Generally, democratic people recognise that there is no evidence to support the ‘Great Replacement; idea: i.e., the far-right claims that whites are being demographically “replaced” by non-whites or (in India), Hindus by Muslims. But the same people are often ready to accept (without a shred of evidence) that women are being replaced by trans women in sports. Take a closer look at trans sceptical arguments and their appearance of “common sense” begins to come apart, revealing a fundamental incoherence. Ms. Rowling had said she was worried that in a patriarchal society, girls would be tempted to become male.

Advances in diagnostic pathology pave way for personalised cancer therapy in women



The landscape of women’s health is constantly evolving and one of the apparent changes has been the major surge in the incidence of cancers in females. The most common cancers diagnosed in females are breast, endometrial (the lining of the uterus) ovarian and cervical cancers. Pathological diagnosis, the cornerstone of accurate diagnosis and treatment is based on histopathologic analysis - the microscopic examination of tissues obtained from tumour samples. By precisely defining tumour type, grade of the tumour, and extent of invasion, involvement of lymph node etc, histopathologic examination guides critical decisions that impact course of treatment and overall prognosis. However, despite its established role, histopathology faces limitations in early cancer detection, quality variation seen in tissue samples, and limited information for beginning therapy. The recent years have witnessed a remarkable evolution of newer technological advances fuelled by the use of molecular pathology, liquid biopsies, digital pathology, and other innovative technologies. These transformative technologies have revolutionised our understanding of cancers and paved the way for personalised diagnostics and therapeutics.

Breast cancer is the most common cancer among women and the diagnosis of breast cancer is made by analysing core biopsy tissue using radiologic imaging. However, currently this information is not sufficient to plan therapy. This is because all breast cancers are not the same entity and differ in protein expression. Therefore, further testing is very essential to identify the specific molecular type of breast cancer. Diagnostic tests known as immunohistochemistry (IHC) help detect the presence of estrogen and progesterone receptors, guiding the use of hormonal therapies such as tamoxifen or aromatase inhibitors. These therapies block hormone signals that stimulate cancer cell growth and aid in killing of cancer cells. Tumour expressing Her3 Neu receptors (cell surface receptors) will benefit from Herceptin and these tests help in guiding treatment decisions allowing the use of targeted therapies. If these markers are not expressed, the subtype is termed Triple negative breast cancer type, in which case the patient is not given hormone-based therapy and chemotherapy is administered. This major technological advancement has caused a paradigm shift in treatment and promotes cancer specific therapy.

In addition, advanced molecular based assays also help in predicting disease progression and recurrence. Molecular pathologists perform genomic assays which help determine the risk of recurrence and guide decisions about chemotherapy. For example, in a low-risk breast cancer in a woman with hormone receptor positive may avoid chemotherapy in favour of hormonal therapy. Women with inherited mutations such as BRCA1 or BRCA2 genes have a significantly higher risk of developing breast cancer. Finding out whether they are carriers is important, so that they can be on close follow up; or be advised to consider prophylactic surgeries (like mastectomy) to reduce cancer risk. Genetic testing helps identify these mutations, and these patients may benefit from PARP inhibitors. Improved understanding and treatment outcomes in ovarian cancer

Ovarian cancer is often diagnosed at an advanced stage but key advances in pathological testing have significantly helped better understanding and improved patient

outcomes. Advanced IHC techniques are used to identify specific markers that help classify ovarian cancer into different subtypes. For example, biomarkers such as WT1, p53, and others are used to differentiate between high-grade serous carcinoma and other subtypes and therapy is designed accordingly. The use of next-generation sequencing (NGS) and other high-throughput technologies has allowed for deeper genetic analysis of ovarian tumours. This has helped identify specific mutations (BRCA1/BRCA2, TP53, and others) which significantly impact ovarian cancer treatment. New drugs like PARP inhibitors are used in patients with BRCA mutations, improving survival rates by inhibiting the DNA repair in cancer cells. Cancers are known to produce new blood vessels for their survival and therefore newer treatments targeting blood vessels such as Bevacizumab, are used to inhibit the formation of new blood vessels that tumors need to grow. It is commonly used for advanced ovarian cancer to slow tumour growth and improve survival rates. Effectively targeting the increasing incidence of endometrial cancer Endometrial cancer which is the cancer of the uterine lining, has shown increasing trend in the past decade. However pathological techniques have effectively been able to classify the more aggressive tumours from indolent tumours and this has shown promising results with personalised therapy. Treatment is tailored based on molecular classification of endometrial cancer in the biopsy tissue. For hormone receptor-positive endometrial cancers, progesterone therapy can be used as a treatment option, especially for patients who wish to avoid more aggressive treatments like surgery or chemotherapy. Monitoring high-risk HPV type for cervical cancer Cervical cancer is often caused by HPV (Human Papillomavirus) infection and HPV DNA testing is used to identify women at risk for cervical cancer. This can effectively guide the decision for surveillance or intervention. Women with high-risk HPV types which can be identified by molecular testing can undergo more frequent screening or be offered prophylactic vaccines like Gardasil.

Specific testing for immunotherapy response Pathology offers a new testing technique the PDL1 testing which is done on the biopsy tissue to help predict which patients are most likely to respond to immune checkpoint inhibitors, such as pembrolizumab or nivolumab. These drugs help boost the ability of the immune system to fight cancer. Liquid Biopsy is an emerging area in cancer diagnostics which can detect genetic mutations and tumour markers from blood samples. This is becoming popular as it is a non-invasive approach and can help in monitoring therapy response and detecting any residual disease after completion of therapy. Proteomics and metabolomics as diagnostic tools help assess changes in protein expression and metabolic pathways within cancer cells. These insights could lead to new targeted therapies and better biomarkers for early detection and treatment efficacy. Artificial Intelligence (AI) powered analysis using AI models have demonstrated exceptional accuracy in analysing histopathological images and integrating histologic and molecular data. These models offer deeper insights into tumour types, behaviours, and potential responses to treatment. Advances in AI-driven digital pathology enable the extraction of genomic, transcriptomic, proteomic, and metabolomic biomarkers from routine hematoxylin and eosin (H&E) stained images. Recent technological advancements in diagnostic pathology, including molecular testing, genomics, and immunotherapy targeted testing, are empowering personalised cancer treatment for women with cancers like breast, ovarian, endometrial and cervical cancers. By tailoring treatment to the individual molecular profile, the likelihood of treatment success increases, and side effects may be minimised. Personalised medicine is paving the way for a future where cancer treatment is more precise, effective, and patient centered. Dr. Sandhya Sundaram is professor, former head and senior consultant, Department of Pathology and Molecular Pathologist, Sri Ramachandra Medical College & Hospital, Chennai. She can be reached at sandhyas@sriramachandra.edu.in

Why activists are worried about Section 44(3) of new data protection law

data protection law, Data Protection Act, Digital Personal Data Protection Act, DPDP Act, Jairam Ramesh, Aruna Roy, Nikhil Dey, Prashant Bhushan., Indian express explained, explained news, current affairs A general rider to the exemptions in Section 8(1) says that any information “which cannot be denied to the Parliament or a State Legislature shall not be denied to any person”. The government wants to use the Digital Personal Data Protection Act, 2023 (DPDP Act) to curtail access to public information on the pretext of safeguarding privacy. Leader of Opposition in Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi said on Tuesday (March 25). A group of activists, researchers, journalists, and experts met Rahul and Wayanad MP Priyanka Gandhi Vadra in the Parliament complex to discuss a change made to the Right to Information Act, 2005 (RTI Act) by the DPDP Act. The delegation said the change will adversely impact the ability of people to access information. Congress leader Jairam Ramesh wrote to Minister for Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) Ashwini Vaishnaw on March 23 demanding the repeal of Section 44(3) of the DPDP Act, which he said would “destroy” the RTI Act. RTI activists Aruna Roy, Nikhil Dey, Prashant Bhushan, and Anjali Bhardwaj addressed a press conference last week to oppose the impending change to the RTI Act in line with the DPDP Act.

Section 44(3) of DPDP Act The DPDP Act received the President’s assent on August 11, 2023, and will come into force after the Rules under the Act are notified. In January, Vaishnaw’s ministry invited feedback and comments on the draft Digital Personal Data Protection Rules, 2025. The window for comments on the draft Rules closed on February 18. The DPDP Act is intended to “provide for the processing of digital personal data in a manner that recognises both the right of individuals to protect their personal data and the need to process such personal data for lawful purposes and for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto”. Section 44(3) of the DPDP Act mentions a change that will be made in Section 8(1)(j) of the RTI Act. This change, RTI activists say, will greatly reduce the amount of information that government agencies are obligated to disclose under the 2005 Act. This section states: “...There shall be no obligation to give any citizen...information which relates to personal information the disclosure of which has no relationship to any public activity or interest, or which would cause unwarranted invasion of the privacy of the individual unless the Central Public Information Officer or the State Public Information Officer or the appellate authority...is satisfied that the larger public interest justifies the disclosure of such information.” Section 44(3) of the DPDP Act shortens this clause in the RTI Act to broaden the scope for denying in-



formation. It says: “In section 8 of the Right to Information Act, 2005, in sub-section (1), for clause (j), the following clause shall be substituted, namely: — “(j) information which relates to personal information”. Why the change matters

The potential conflict between a citizen’s right to information and the privacy of the subject of that information where the greater public interest is involved, has been discussed widely. Over the years, several orders of the Central Information Commission and state Information Commissions on the disclosure or denial of information have been based on the interpretation of Section 8(1)(j) of the RTI Act. During the discussions that preceded the passage of the RTI Bill by Parliament, the Bill was examined by a Group of Ministers headed by Pranab Mukherjee. Section 8(1) of the Bill was about “Exemption from disclosure of information”, and sub-sections 8(1)(a) to 8(1)(j) spelt out those exemptions. A general rider to the exemptions in Section 8(1) says that any information “which cannot be denied to the Parliament or a State Legislature shall not be denied to any person”. Activists point out that a lot of personal information about public servants such as their assets and liabilities are published because it is seen to serve a public purpose. The blanket exemption now granted to all “information which relates to personal information” could be used to deny the public their right to know, they say. Shyamal Yadav

Shyamal Yadav is one of the pioneers of the effective use of RTI for investigative reporting. He is a member of the Investigative Team. His reporting on polluted rivers, foreign travel of public servants, MPs appointing relatives as assistants, fake journals, LIC’s lapsed policies, Honorary doctorates conferred to politicians and officials, Bank officials putting their own money into Jan Dhan accounts and more has made a huge impact. He is member of the International Consortium of Investigative Journalists (ICIJ). He has

After Ola, Ather eyes Rs 3,000 crore IPO as Bajaj, TVS tighten grip on India’s electric scooter market



Bengaluru-based electric two-wheeler maker Ather Energy is set to raise Rs 2,981 crore through an initial public offering (IPO) next week, aiming for a valuation of around Rs 12,000 crore. The Hero Motocorp-backed firm’s IPO will break a nine-week dry spell in the primary equity market and follows rival Ola Electric’s IPO in August last year. Ather’s public issue comes at a time when India’s electric two-wheeler (E2W) market is consolidating rapidly in favour of legacy players like Bajaj Auto, TVS Motor, and Hero Motocorp—where EVs make up only a small fraction of overall sales.

Ola, a pure EV player, saw its market share dip from 34 per cent to 30 per cent in FY25 as it ceded ground to Bajaj and TVS, while continuing to post losses. Ather held steady at 11.6 per cent market share, making it the fourth-largest player in the country, with sales concentrated in South India. The IPO proceeds will be used to build a new manufacturing facility in Maharashtra (Rs 927 crore), fund R&D (Rs 750 crore), and support marketing efforts (Rs 300 crore). Ather holds ground as legacy giants circle Ola

In FY25, the top five players in India’s E2W market—Ola, TVS, Bajaj, Ather, and Hero—together accounted for 86 per cent of total vehicle registrations, up from 79 per cent the previous year, reflecting a sharp rise in market concentration. Bajaj, buoyed by its Chetak electric scooter range, nearly doubled its share from 11 per cent to 20 per cent. TVS edged up from 20 to 21 per cent, driven by its iQube lineup. Hero’s Vida scooters helped the company double its market share from 2 to 4 per cent, according to data from market intelligence firm JMK Research. This consolidation has coincided with strong overall growth in the segment, still supported by government subsidies. E2W registrations touched around 12 lakh units in FY25, a 20 per cent increase from FY24. EV penetration in the two-wheeler category also rose, from 5.2 per cent to 6 per cent, and E2Ws now account for over half (55 per cent) of all EV registrations in India.

Still, for legacy manufacturers, electric models account for only a small share of their overall two-wheeler sales—11 per cent for Bajaj and 8 per cent for TVS, according to JMK. And, with strong brand equity and healthy cash flows from other segments, they are better placed to navigate the

evolving market. For pure-play EV firms like Ola and Ather, the challenge will be holding on to market share as competition intensifies. Ather bets big on electric bikes, R&D

To stay competitive, Ather is doubling down on better technology and brand visibility. Of the Rs 2,981 crore it plans to raise through its IPO, the company will channel Rs 750 crore into R&D and Rs 300 crore into marketing. In FY24, Ather spent 13 per cent of its revenue on R&D—led by a team of over 700 on-roll employees, including design engineers, research scientists, industrial designers, data scientists and others. A key R&D priority for Ather going forward will be to develop an electric motorcycle platform, a segment the company sees as both underserved and promising. This will add to its existing Rizta and 450 series of scooters. “Additionally, we will work on leveraging technological advancements across various platforms such as powertrain, battery and software and electronics in our products to make our products more appealing to customers while improving our unit economics,” Ather said in its final red herring prospectus (RHP) filed with market regulators on April 22. The company is also evaluating a new battery platform based on lithium iron phosphate (LFP) chemistry, which is less mineral-intensive and could bring down costs compared to its current use of nickel manganese cobalt (NMC) batteries. In parallel, Ather is exploring motor technologies that do not rely on rare-earth metals or magnets—aiming to cut costs and insulate its supply chain from geopolitical shocks. From the IPO proceeds, Ather will allocate Rs 927 crore to set up a new E2W factory in Maharashtra’s Chhatrapati Sambhaji Nagar district, which, along with its existing Hosur facility, will nearly triple production capacity. While the Maharashtra plant could help Ather expand in the northern and western markets—where it has less of a stronghold—utilisation at its Hosur unit remains modest, at just 40 per cent. “We manufacture battery packs in-house using lithium-ion cells procured from suppliers and outsource the manufacturing of all other vehicle components... to third-party suppliers,” the company stated in its RHP. Barring the lithium-ion cells sourced from China and South Korea, Ather claims significant local value addition through domestic suppliers. Complying with local content norms is critical for securing subsidies under the Centre’s Electric Mobility Promotion Scheme (EMPS). In FY24, subsidies accounted for 16 per cent of Ather’s revenue from operations. “Reduction, elimination or ineligibility for government incentives... could reduce the demand for E2Ws and potentially result in us becoming less price competitive compared to conventional ICE 2Ws,” the RHP noted. Ather’s IPO, opening April 28, comprises a fresh issue of 8.18 crore shares worth Rs 2,626 crore and an offer for sale of 1.11 crore shares worth Rs 354.76 crore. The company is targeting a valuation of Rs 12,000 crore—roughly half of Ola Electric’s current market cap of Rs 23,200 crore. The outcome of Ather’s offering is likely to influence the timing of competitor Greaves Electric Mobility’s IPO, which filed its draft RHP in December.

Is your dementia risk linked to your alcohol habit today? A new study has answers



Researchers found that heavy drinkers were specifically at a 133% increased risk of thicker and narrowed blood vessels in the brain. Researchers found that heavy drinkers were specifically at a 133% increased risk of thicker and narrowed blood vessels in the brain. Did you know that you might raise the risk of dementia — a progressive decline in mental abilities that affects your memory, thinking and reasoning — by drinking alcohol heavily in your younger years? A Brazilian study has shown that moderate, heavy and former heavy drinking can impact cognitive abilities and lead to dementia. This was a cross-sectional population-based autopsy study with brain samples taken from the Sao Paulo Autopsy Service and part of the Biobank for Aging Studies. It specifically excluded brain samples where someone died due to trauma. Researchers classified one dose of alcohol as 14 grams. Moderate drinkers had up to seven doses of alcohol in a week, heavy drinkers had eight or more doses and former heavy drinkers were those who had ceased drinking up to three months before they died. These samples were compared to samples of non-drinkers.

Researchers found that heavy drinkers were specifically at a 133% increased risk of thicker and narrowed blood vessels in the brain. Heavy and former heavy drinkers were also at an increased risk for protein tangles that disrupt the communication between neurons. Former heavy drinkers

had lower brain weight. They had slightly higher average clinical dementia rating scores compared to non-drinkers. According to Dr PN Renjen, neurologist at Indraprastha Apollo Hospitals, Delhi, alcohol use disorder, characterised by compulsive drinking despite negative consequences, does damage to the brain. “Some brain changes may be reversible with months of abstinence but full recovery is not guaranteed,” he says.

How does alcohol consumption affect the brain?

Alcohol interferes with the brain’s communication pathways, affecting balance, memory, speech, and judgment. Long-term heavy drinking causes alterations in neurons, reducing their size and brain tissue, particularly in areas involved in memory. This can lead to memory gaps, difficulty walking and poor judgment. The impact on brain development can be particularly detrimental in late teens, potentially resulting in lasting changes. Impact on weekly and occasional drinkers Drinking moderately, such as weekly or once/twice a month, may not significantly impact cognitive abilities for most people. However, individual tolerance and drinking patterns play a significant role. Binge drinking, even if infrequent, can still cause harm. Impact on heavy drinkers Heavy drinkers, who consume alcohol daily or every alternate day, are at a higher risk of cognitive decline and dementia. Chronic heavy drinking can lead to significant changes in brain structure and function, impairing cognitive abilities. Heavy alcohol use is associated with an increased risk of all types of dementia, including Alzheimer’s disease and vascular dementia. Reducing heavy alcohol use may be an effective dementia prevention strategy. Heavy drinkers should seek professional help to address addiction and minimize long-term consequences. Alcohol consumption is not only linked to dementia but also to other neurological diseases. These include: “Wernicke-Korsakoff Syndrome: A brain disorder caused by thiamine deficiency, often associated with heavy drinking.” Alcohol-Related Brain Damage: Heavy drinking can lead to changes in brain structure and function, affecting cognitive and motor skills.

Is your mango artificially ripened? Here’s what it does to your gut and brain

mangoes, brain and gut health, health and wellness, indian express Mangoes can be exposed to ethylene gas, which results in changes in the fruit, softening it, changing its colour and flavours. (Source: Pexels)

A young professional came to see us the other day, saying that her stomach had bloated and she felt nauseous although she was very strict about having home food and carrying her own water bottle. She even said that she made her own mango salad and took it for her lunch break at work. She had made a small portion that morning from a fresh mango that she had picked up on her way back from a run. What was in it? We picked up a sample, did a lab test and found that it had been artificially ripened with calcium carbide, a banned substance by the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI). In fact, when the demand is high in mango season, many growers artificially ripen the fruit and violate the bans. Such chemicals can impact your health over both the short and long terms.

How are mangoes ripened artificially?

This can be done by using chemicals like calcium carbide or through ethylene treatment, a process that involves exposing the fruit to ethylene gas. Calcium carbide, when exposed to moisture, produces acetylene gas, which accelerates the ripening process. This gas can contain harmful traces of arsenic and phosphorus. Mangoes can be exposed to ethylene gas, which results in changes in the fruit, softening it, changing its colour and flavours.

What is the nutritional value of an artificially ripened mango?

There is a marked decline in nutritional value. The fibre quotient goes down as do levels of vitamins and minerals. The levels of ascorbic acid (vitamin C), citric acid, and malic acid dip sharply. While naturally ripened mangoes have higher levels of essential minerals like iron, zinc, and copper, artificially ripened mangoes have diluted amounts. Folate and trace elements have a poor quality.

How do chemically ripened mangoes harm you?



When used over a long time, they impact the nervous system, making you dizzy and susceptible to headaches and mood disturbances. The acetylene gas produced by calcium carbide can affect your upper respiratory tract, causing throat irritation, coughing and difficulty in breathing. Prolonged exposure to arsenic and phosphorus from calcium carbide can lead to dehydration and an increased risk of cancer and skin lesions over time. Mouth ulcers are common.

I have seen a lot of skin breakouts and an overall weakening of the gut, leading to vomiting, stomach pains and diarrhoea. Sometimes, even your blood pressure goes down.

How to consume mangoes safely?

There is no foolproof way to identify artificially ripened mangoes unless you do a lab test. Though some say they float on top in water unlike naturally ripe mangoes, have white patches around the pedicel, with which each fruit attaches itself to the stem, a mild flavour and a shorter shelf life, none of these markers is guarantee enough. Therefore, soak your mangoes in water for some time, say 10 minutes. Then wash the skin thoroughly under running water and peel off. Do not use the fruit and vegetable washes that we had gotten used to during COVID. They also contain chemicals.

‘Trump has killed the WTO; mounted a challenge to rule-based international trading’: Former FM Yashwant Sinha

US President Donald Trump has sparked off a global trade war by raising tariff walls on imports. While we are in the middle of a 90-day pause on the implementation of reciprocal tariffs where other countries are concerned — except a universal 10 per cent import duty rate — the US has imposed up to 245 per cent tariff on China with immediate effect. The latter retaliated by imposing 125 per cent tariff on US imports.

Trump’s decision to replace a rule-based global trading regime that was put in place with the setting up of the World Trade Organization by a regime of bilateral trade negotiations will be damaging for the American and the world economy, Former Union Finance Minister Yashwant Sinha, who held the post when BJP’s Atal Bihari Vajpayee was Prime Minister, said in an interview with Vikas Pathak. Dissatisfied with India’s attempt to strike a trade deal with the US, Sinha says India should have gone to the WTO, talked to like-minded countries and resisted Trump’s unilateralism. How do you view the reciprocal tariffs that US President Donald Trump is imposing on nations? While other countries await the end of the 90-day pause for tariffs to become operational, apart from a universal 10 per cent duty, the trade war is already here with the US imposing up to 245 per cent tariffs on China with immediate effect. China retaliated by imposing a 125 per cent tariff on US imports. Do you think what Trump is doing is sound policy for the US?

It’s certainly not a good policy either for the US or the world. It was after a great deal of effort that the international community agreed to a proper rule-based international trading order. For six years, trade talks went on between the countries of the world under the Uruguay round and after that there was a meeting of all the countries in Marrakesh, where the decision was taken to form the World Trade Organization (WTO). Before that there was GATT, or General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade, which was also continuously trying to make the international trading order as rule-

based as possible. There were difficulties, especially between the developed and the developing countries, where the demands were dissimilar and there was conflict of interest on various issues — and mainly on agriculture and intellectual property rights. It was after a great deal of effort that the world was able to agree on a workable solution. This was finally arrived at in Marrakesh in Morocco in 1994, and the decision was taken to form the WTO. This agreement came into effect from January 1, 1995, as far as I remember. After that, all the trade disputes were being referred to the WTO, and the adjudicating body of the WTO used to decide the matter. Now, the first challenge that Trump has mounted is to this rule-based international trading arrangement. For all practical purposes he has killed the WTO, which is playing no role. And all countries of the world, in particular the major trading partners of the US, are either negotiating a trade deal with the US at a bilateral level, like India is doing, or standing up to this unilateral action, like China or Canada. So, Trump has made a major mistake by challenging a global order that has been in existence for 30 years or more. He is out to make the international order based on consensus a thing of the past and believes in unilateralism. He is looking at bilateral trade balance. When you are trading with the whole world, you can’t say that I must have a bilateral balance with every country in the world. You lose some here, and gain some there, and then look at the final picture.

What do you think were the advantages of the rule-based global trade order? How will its undoing play out nationally and globally?

The whole world was busy lowering tariffs. As Finance Minister, I said in Parliament that we will bring tariffs down to Asean levels. I said this because if you raise tariffs you are making imports more expensive, and that will add to the cost of production in your country, which will raise prices and make your exports more costly. Domestic prices will also go up.

HoABL enters vertical realty business, to invest Rs 2,500 crore

House of Abhinandan Lodha, HoABL, House of Abhinandan Lodha, HoABL vertical real estate, vertical real estate sector, Indian express news, current affairs The Chowpatty (South Mumbai) project, which has a development potential of around 50,000 sq ft, will be a premier residential project. The House of Abhinandan Lodha (HoABL), a leading land developer, has officially announced its strategic entry into the vertical real estate sector with an investment of Rs 2,500 crore.

“Marking this foray are three marquee projects located across the length of Mumbai—American Culture Centre in Marine Lines, a project overlooking Chowpatty beach and a joint development agreement (JDA) with Mittal Builders in Naigaon,” the company said in a statement. “With a collective development potential of 3.1 million sq ft, the company expects to generate revenue of Rs 3,500 crore, with a total investment of Rs 2,500 crore. All three projects are expected to be launched from Q2 of FY 2025–26 and would be completed over the next five years,” it added.

The funding would be through mix of internal accruals and debt for working capital and pre-sales, said Abhinandan Lodha, Chairman of HoABL. “With our big bang



foray into vertical development — from South Mumbai to North MMR — we aim to address gaps in vertical real estate through multiple projects,” he said. Acquired in December 2024, the American culture centre project has a development potential of approximately 60,000 sq ft and is being developed as a commercial property. The Chowpatty (South Mumbai) project, which has a development potential of around 50,000 sq ft, will be a premier residential project.

Inflation will be well aligned to the target during FY26: RBI Governor

The decline in crude oil prices amid heightened trade related uncertainties will ease pressure on domestic inflation, which is likely to align to the target during the current financial year (FY26), RBI Governor Sanjay Malhotra said at the Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) meeting held on April 7-9, the minutes released on Wednesday showed. The government has mandated the MPC to maintain consumer price index (CPI) inflation at 4 per cent within a band of +/- 2 per cent.

Malhotra said the imposition of tariffs will have two implications on inflation — On the upside, uncertainties may lead to possible currency pressures resulting in imported inflation, and on the downside, slowdown in global growth will further soften commodity and crude oil prices, which would ease the pressure on inflation. “Overall, favourable factors for the inflation outlook outweigh those with possible adverse impact and should drive further disinflation in the headline CPI. It is expected that inflation will be well aligned to the target during the current financial year,” the RBI Governor wrote.

In the April meeting, the six-member MPC unanimously decided to reduce the repo rate by 25 basis points to 6 per cent and also decided to change the monetary policy stance from ‘neutral’ to ‘accommodative’. One basis point (bps) is one-hundredth of a percentage point. This was the second consecutive policy when the MPC had slashed the repo rate by 25 bps. “When consumer price inflation is decisively around its target rate of 4 per cent and growth is still moderate and recovering, monetary policy needs to nurture domestic demand impulses to further increase the growth momentum,” Malhotra said. The retail inflation, or CPI, declined to 3.3 per cent in March 2025 from 3.6 per cent in February, marking the fourth consecutive monthly decline and the lowest reading since August 2019. The governor said the Indian economy remains relatively less exposed and better placed to withstand spillovers from global growth slowdown, with its growth driven largely by domestic demand. “Nevertheless, we are not immune to the after-



shocks and ripple effects associated with global disturbances,” he said. MPC external member Saugata Bhattacharya said inflation in India is likely to remain moderate over FY26. “This forecasted moderate inflation path opens up more space for “good news” policy easing,” he said. He, however, said if the trade tariff actions are not significantly diluted — global trade and hence growth will slow down materially, likely spilling over into India via external channels, further decelerating India’s growth. RBI’s Deputy Governor M Rajeshwar Rao said while the exact impact of US tariffs on India is not certain, with the US being India’s largest export destination, it could weigh on trade, financial markets, and domestic economic activity through both direct and indirect channels. “Assessing the overall situation, we find that while inflation outlook remains benign, GDP growth could face a downward pressure. The recent waves of global uncertainty demand decisive policy support to growth,” said Rao. MPC member and the RBI’s Executive Director Rajiv Ranjan said even as India remains essentially domestic demand driven, the drag to growth may come from the global front, through lower external sector contribution and high investment uncertainty. MPC’s external member Ram Singh said though the outlook for food inflation has turned decisively positive, concerns about lingering global market uncertainties and the recurrence of adverse weather-related supply disruptions pose upside risks to the inflation trajectory.

Faith Kipyegon will make bid to become first woman to run a mile under 4 minutes



GNS News Agency, April 29

Faith Kipyegon poses after winning the women's 1500 meters during the Diamond League Golden Gala Pietro Mennea athletics meet at the Stadio Olimpico in Rome, Aug. 30, 2024. (AP Photo) Faith Kipyegon poses after winning the women's 1500 meters during the Diamond League Golden Gala Pietro Mennea athletics meet at the Stadio Olimpico in Rome, Aug. 30, 2024. Three-time Olympic champion Faith Kipyegon will attempt to become the first woman in history to run a mile in under four minutes at a special event titled "Breaking4: Faith Kipyegon vs. the 4-Minute Mile" at the Stade Charléty in Paris on June 26 this year. Besides winning the Olympics gold three times, Kipyegon is also a four-time world champion, and two-time

world record-holder.

Global Sports Communication, the agency which manages Kipyegon, said in a statement that the event will happen at a "time and location specifically selected to align with her training schedule and maximize her performance." "Kipyegon will attempt to shave at least 7.65 seconds off her world record time of 4:07.64, set in 2023, to become the first woman to break the threshold Roger Bannister first surpassed roughly 70 years ago. Since then over 2,000 others — all of them men — have followed in his footsteps. "I'm a three-time Olympic champion. I've achieved World Championship titles," the 30-year-old Kipyegon said in a statement. "I thought, 'what else? Why not dream outside the box?'" "I want this attempt to say to women, 'You can dream and make your dreams valid,'" said Kipyegon in the statement. "This is the way to go as women, to push boundaries and dream big." "Faith has come a long way as an athlete. From youth, to juniors, to seniors. From a Commonwealth medal to world championship titles, Olympic titles, and even world records. She has also grown a lot as a human being. Understanding the sport more deeply, becoming a mother, and building meaningful relationships both within and beyond the sport," said Valentijn Trouw, Performance Director at Global Sports Communication. "The Breaking4 project is the culmination of all these elements coming together: chasing the unthinkable in the sport while inspiring millions around the world with her personality and enthusiasm."

'We dropped our standards': Mikel Arteta laments Arsenal slip as Liverpool close in on title

GNS News Agency, April 29

Arsenal manager Mikel Arteta didn't mince words after his side's title hopes took a heavy blow in a dramatic 2-2 draw against Crystal Palace on Wednesday, admitting his team "dropped our standards" in a result that could all but hand Liverpool the Premier League crown. The draw means that Liverpool only need a draw against arch-rivals Tottenham Hotspur on Sunday and the title could be decided before the Gunners next kick a ball in the league. Jakub Kiwior gave Arsenal a dream start with a thumping third-minute header, but the early dominance didn't last long. Eberechi Eze pulled Palace level with a sublime volley in the 27th minute, connecting sweetly with Adam Wharton's whipped corner. Leandro Trossard briefly restored the home crowd's optimism just before halftime, finishing coolly after a slick passing move. But it was Crystal Palace who had the final say, as substitute Jean-Philippe Mateta punished a rare William Saliba error in the 83rd minute, latching onto the loose ball and lofting it past David Raya from 30 yards out. Arteta, visibly frustrated post-match, acknowledged the missed opportunity.

"We dropped our standards today and credit to Crystal Palace," he said. "We struggled to find consistency in the game. We gave the ball away in simple ways and we were late in everything we did. I am disappointed." Forward



Leandro Trossard echoed his manager's disappointment while shifting the focus ahead to a crucial week in Europe. "The quality today wasn't there compared to our last game," said Trossard, referencing their recent 4-0 rout of Ipswich. "We were nowhere near that and we got punished. We need to raise the level with our big game coming up." That game is the first leg of their UEFA Champions League semifinal clash against Paris Saint-Germain on Tuesday, a match that now carries even more weight, as Arsenal look to salvage their season with continental glory. "It will be good to have six days now and prepare for this (PSG) game with 100% focus," Trossard added. "It will be a different performance."

Ahead of 2026 FIFA World Cup, Jose Mourinho linked to Portugal job and possible reunion with Cristiano Ronaldo



GNS News Agency, April 29

The Portuguese football federation officials have 'established contact' with Jose Mourinho and made him their top candidate to coach the national team at next year's FIFA World Cup. Mourinho is currently the manager of Turkish club Fenerbahce, who are locked in an intense title battle. His side trails Galatasaray by just three points with seven matches left to play. According to CNN Portugal, the country's football federation is willing to pay Fenerbahce the release clause fees, which would allow Mourinho to replace the current Portugal manager, Roberto Martinez. Goal,

meanwhile, reported that the deal is 'close' to being finalised.

If successful, this could lead to a possible reunion of Mourinho and Cristiano Ronaldo. The duo led Real Madrid to great heights during their three seasons together from 2010 to 2013 but had a bitter fallout at Manchester United. However, months after the rumours of Ronaldo making a shock move from the Saudi league to Fenerbahce died down, it now emerges that the pair could once again work together with the national team. Portuguese media reported that the national team's march to the UEFA Nations League semifinals, where they will face Germany on June 4, has not hampered the talks. Mourinho, it is reported, is expected to take over the national team immediately after the Nations League, giving him an entire year with Portugal before the World Cup begins in USA, Canada and Mexico. Mourinho has never hidden his desire to coach Portugal and in 2019, he said: "It's something I'd like to do before I finish (my career), but since I still have a long way to go, it won't happen now—and we'll see if the opportunity comes or not." In his storied career as a manager, Mourinho has coached teams like Porto, Chelsea, Inter Milan, Real Madrid, Manchester United and Tottenham Hotspur. However, he has never coached a national team so far.



GNS News Agency, April 29

Mumbai Indians skipper Hardik Pandya lauded his team after a comfortable seven-wicket win over a reeling Sunrisers Hyderabad in the Indian Premier League 2025 match at the Rajiv Gandhi International Stadium in Hyderabad on Wednesday. He said Mumbai will be a completely dominating side once everyone starts clicking.

"Good to have wins behind our back. Glad the boys are taking the momentum in the right way. I've felt, once everyone starts clicking in this team there will be domination. Deepak, Boult set it up; Rohit, SKY (Suryakumar) finished it. Overall, a wonderful win," said Pandya after the match. Chasing just 144, opener and former MI skipper Rohit Sharma scored 70 before Suryakumar Yadav took Hyderabad bowlers to the cleaners with ease by hitting 40 of just 19 as MI beat SRH by seven wickets with 26 balls remaining. Hardik also said that captaincy is sometimes about instincts and innovation rather than just sticking to stereotypical roles. He introduced Deepak Chahar right away and bowled him for four straight overs, and the new ball specialist returned with exceptional figures of 4-0-12-2, picking two big wickets of Ishan Kishan and Nitish Kumar Reddy.

"Realised that captaincy sometimes is about instincts.

How 'free-spirited' Koneru Humpy lost and found motivation to play top-level chess: "I've started feeling the buzz again"



GNS News Agency, April 29

You could be someone that dreams in black-and-white checks since forever that you can remember and go onto very close to World No 1 in women's chess. But one sleepless night with mosquitos swarming the hotel room of the event you are competing in can still throw all plans into disarray. Good thing then that Koneru Humpy has enough experience in swatting away such irritants and keeping her poise. Fighting from extremely precarious situations in the penultimate round to hold onto a draw after blundering, the 38-year-old, did well to secure a Knight-ending against Nurgul Salimova and finished tops jointly with Chinese Zhu Jiner on 7/9 points. A better tie-break score however gave India's finest women's chess player, the title win at Pune's Women's Grand Prix.

5.6 million tuned in on the live online broadcast over the 9 rounds — a record for any women's Grand Prix, but the chess chatrooms crescendoed with over 1000 on the FIDE feed as Humpy rode a rollercoaster to ensure the win. Zhu Jiner had won her final game earlier, which meant Humpy had to tie up the decisive result against the Bulgarian, and she kept it clinical. While the Candidates spot wasn't sealed, Humpy reckons she has rediscovered her sharpness in the classical format, which had gone missing last year. "It's been a long time since I did well in classical. I had struggled the whole of last year, losing heavily, so I was happy to improve in that format," she said. "The upturn started after winning the Rapid world title," she added. She was top of the charts at the Monaco Grand Prix too, ringing in 2025.

At 38, stringing together wins is not as breezy or stomping as it used to be. But the Rapid world title ignited a spark that had been dulling, as her confidence slowly transferred to the longer format. She wasn't unaware of the fading light, the flagging motivation, which is why she saw each win over younger, snappier opponents as a stride forward in rediscovering her verve, finding her groove. "After the second rapid title, I felt motivated to play again. Chess wasn't

Rohit Sharma joins Virat Kohli in select run-scorer's list during half century in SRH vs MI game

GNS News Agency, April 29

Rohit Sharma of Mumbai Indians plays a shot during match 41 of the Indian Premier League season 18 (IPL 2025) between Sunrisers Hyderabad and Mumbai Indians held at the Rajiv Gandhi International Stadium, Hyderabad on the 23rd April 2025 Photo by Vipin Pawar / Sportzpics for IPL. Rohit Sharma of Mumbai Indians plays a shot against Sunrisers Hyderabad. Mumbai Indians talisman Rohit Sharma crossed the elusive 12,000 runs mark in the shortest format of the game in the Indian Premier League clash against Sunrisers Hyderabad as the five-time champions Mumbai Indians were set a target of 144 runs. Coming in as an Impact Player for Mumbai in the final overs the SRH innings, Rohit opened the innings for Mumbai with Ryan Rickelton.

Rohit was eventually dismissed in the 15th over for 70 off 46 balls with Mumbai almost near the finish line: they needed 14 runs off 32 balls with seven wickets in hand. The Sunrisers Hyderabad vs Mumbai Indians match on Wednesday saw Rohit become only the second Indian



player after Virat Kohli to reach the milestone of 12,000 runs in the shortest format. He is also the eighth batter overall to go past the 12000-run mark in T20s. After a couple of wretched games with the bat, Rohit his form in the previous game against the Chennai Super Kings at the Wankhede Stadium. He had scores of 0, 8, 13, 17, 18 and 26 at the start of the season for Mumbai.

Mumbai playing nicely at the right time: Boult

GNS News Agency, April 29

HYDERABAD: "I think it was a good wicket, obviously one which Sunrisers knows very well. A heaven for big scores. But, I think it played a little bit differently than a lot of people expected," Mumbai Indians star pacer Trent Boult said after the team outplayed Sunrisers Hyderabad on Wednesday night here. "Son, nice to see any team kind of 4 or 5 down in the power play. It was a good feeling and is the wish of any team really," Boult said. "We know what early wickets do in the power play. Puts pressure on oppositions. I thought Klaasens batted very nicely. Obviously got them into a good position to get a respectable position. But, if you told us we were going to keep them to 144 as we got off the bus, I think any team would have taken that," Boult explained. "I think the whole side, the whole Mumbai Indians squad possesses some world-class players and obviously Rohit needs no introduction in that regard," Boult said on the kind of impact batting performances from Rohit Sharma has on the team. "I'm sure everyone wants to be contributing at some point but Rohit's doing a fantastic job of late and playing nicely just at the right time. So, he's going to play a huge role for us in the remaining part of the season," Boult, who was 'player of the match', said.

On bowling upfront against Sunrisers compared to previous stints in the middle or slog overs, Boult said he just needed to be prepared for any role. "I've been lucky enough to play 10 IPL seasons where it hasn't always been the same recipe every time. So I think the first thing is you've got to always want the ball," Boult said. "I think having that mindset of wanting the ball and wanting to take on the big players is always a good start. Like I said, I think we expected it to be a high-scoring match. It looked like a good surface with not much grass on it. Quite a dry wicket but. I think the new ball stood up a little bit for both teams in the power play," he explained about the pitch.

On winning four games in-a-row, Boult said momentum wasn't on their side but to turn it around to have four consecutive wins in a row was the focus, just to get a bit of momentum, a bit of rhythm. "We're not going to look too far ahead. It can quickly change. Looking forward to getting back home, playing in some conditions that we know pretty well, but there's a long way to go in this tournament," he



said. On Hardik Pandya's captaincy, Boult said he hadn't played under his captaincy for five years. "He is a passionate cricketer, obviously very skillful. A great leader, leads from the front, enjoying the experience of playing under him. And Hardik is a great communicator and one of my favourite Indian cricketers," he said.

Five Indian Boxers enter semis at Asian U-15, U-17 Championship in Amman

Hyderabad: Five Indians, including three boys and two girls, moved into the semi-finals of the Asian Under-15 and 17 years boxing championship in Amman on Thursday.

From the under-15 men's category, Nelson Khwairakpam (55 kg) secured an RSC win in the first round over Chinese Taipei's Wang Sheng-Yang, while Abhijeet (61 kg) and Lakshay Phogat (64 kg) cruised to 5-0 victories against opponents from Kyrgyzstan and Jordan, respectively.

In the women's category, Princi (52 kg) delivered a strong 5-0 result over Ukraine's Yeva Kubanova. Samruddhi Satish Shinde (55 kg) wrapped up her bout with an BSC in the third round against Ukraine's Kseniia Savina.

Ranbir Kapoor ‘bas baap acha hai,’ says Alia Bhatt’s half-brother Rahul Bhatt: ‘I don’t care what’s an actor, who is Animal, who is Kapoor’



Rahul Bhatt, son of Mahesh Bhatt from his first wife Kiran, recently shared details about his dynamics with his siblings and their partners, among other things. While speaking about Ranbir Kapoor, Rahul Bhatt repeatedly shared that he is a great father to his daughter Raha but refused to acknowledge his acting skills. “Bas baap acha hai (He is just a good father),” said Rahul Bhatt. In a conversation with Hindi Rush, Rahul Bhatt called Ranbir a great father. He shared, “I think I respect him for that. I don’t know much about his acting though.” Rahul, who is a fitness trainer,

dodged questions about Ranbir Kapoor as an actor and quickly shared, “I don’t care what is acting, who is an actor, who is Animal and who is Kapoor. Bas baap acha hai (He is a nice father). He loves his daughter a lot and nothing more matters to me.” He explained, “All the fame, money, success will come and go, but when it comes to him as a person, he is a great father, he respects my step-sister and that’s about it. Everything else is all supplemental.”

When asked if the actor ever approached him while training for Animal, Rahul Bhatt said, “He trains himself. He did approach me once to ask about training to fire a weapon in the film. He is very sincere and curious about human condition. He asks a lot of good questions.” Rahul, who is a year older to 42-year-old Ranbir Kapoor, shared he knows the actor since they were kids. Between all his talks about the actor, Rahul repeatedly mentioned how Ranbir is a great father. “That tops it all as nothing else matters.” In the same interview, he also spoke about his sister Alia Bhatt, who he called talented but shared, “She is not even half of what my real sister Pooja Bhatt was once upon a time. Be it talent, looks, or sexiness, she is like pani kam chai compared to my real sister.” Mahesh Bhatt was married to Kiran Bhatt before he tied the knot with Soni Razdan. Mahesh Bhatt has a daughter, Pooja Bhatt, and a son, Rahul Bhatt from his first marriage. From his second marriage, he has two daughters: Alia and Shaheen Bhatt.

Fight or Flight movie review: Josh Hartnett brings the ‘josh’ in glorified Ajay Devgn actioner

The thing about movies that are easy to pitch is that they’re also highly unoriginal. You could imagine the writers of Fight or Flight strolling into an executive’s office and giving them an animated breakdown of the story, describing it as ‘Speed meets Bullet Train’, and promptly being given a green light. Directed by James Madigan and starring Josh Hartnett, Fight or Flight borrows liberally from B-movies past, struggling and failing to come up with something novel. It isn’t a long movie, but it doesn’t feel as short as its 90-minute run-time might suggest either.

Hartnett plays Lucas Reyes, a mercenary who is hiding out in Bangkok after a job gone wrong. He is awoken from a liquor-induced slumber one morning by his ex, who operates some sort of shady organisation dedicated to world peace or something. Lucas is instructed to hightail it to the airport and board a flight bound for San Francisco. Aboard the flight is a mysterious, high-value target known only as ‘The Ghost’. Needless to say, Lucas isn’t the only person after them.

He discovers mere moments after boarding the flight that virtually every other ‘passenger’ is an assassin of some kind, determined to identify and eliminate The Ghost. It’s like when the High Table put out an open hit on John Wick at the end of the second movie. It became a free-for-all. But while the John Wick movies grew in scale with every passing instalment, Fight or Flight takes place entirely aboard a plane. This would push a brighter creative team to devise ingenious ways to keep the story moving, but the folks behind Fight or Flight fail to weaponise these restrictions to their advantage. The Brad Pitt-starrer Bullet Train took off from the exact same premise, confining a cast-full of colourful assassins inside a high-speed Japanese locomotive. It made for a mildly diverting time at the movies, struggling to do justice not only to a star of Pitt’s magnetism, but also old-school B-movies. Fight or Flight is an even smaller project, bound together by the most fragile of scripts. It takes off, so to speak, only when the plane does.

It doesn’t take Lucas too long to identify The Ghost, but circumstances force them to team up. Allies are revealed to be adversaries, and adversaries are transformed into allies. Because the movie doesn’t exactly need to flesh its characters out, it conveniently coasts by on autopilot. But, after a point, even a movie as ridiculous as this needs some sort of emotion to ground it. Hartnett is a committed performer; he projects ‘has-been’ really well on screen. But perhaps this has something to do with the comeback that he is trying to mount. Lucas appears to be rather lackadaisical at the beginning of the movie, but it is soon revealed



that his proactive sense of justice is what got him exiled to Bangkok in the first place. To be clear, he isn’t an entirely amoral person. And this itch to do the right thing compels him to guide The Ghost towards safety. Fight or Flight is standard-issue fare, but it comes alive in the action scenes. Thankfully, they aren’t edited to within an inch of their life, which is something that the Karan Johar-produced action film Kill was guilty of doing. That movie was geographically incomprehensible, which was a huge issue because understanding the lay of the land is critical to a viewer’s enjoyment.

Plus, Hartnett is a far more charming actor than Lakshya. Bridgerton’s Charithra Chandran, on the other hand, plays a stewardess who may or may not have a secret up her sleeve. The others, including the two pilots, are reduced to comic relief. Fight or Flight finds an audaciously lazy excuse to keep the flight airborne despite an incident that, in real life, would’ve forced governments to scramble jets and shoot it out of the sky. The only reason why the pilots don’t ground the plane immediately is because they sense that the hijacking could get them a movie deal. “I like Hanks,” one of them tells the other, making a reference to Clint Eastwood’s Sully. But the movie isn’t quite as straight-faced as the John Wick films, nor is it as tongue-in-cheek as the stuff inspired by them. Barring the action scenes, which are admittedly done rather well, Fight or Flight struggles to smoothen out some of its budget-related restrictions. The lighting is flat, supporting performances are stilted, the whole thing has a distinct ‘Direct-to-DVD’ vibe. Fittingly, it’s the kind of movie that you’d discover aboard a flight, only to swiftly fire up your favourite Friends episode instead.

Penn Badgley says it was a ‘struggle’ to date Blake Lively during their Gossip Girl days: ‘I’ve been on one date in my life’

Joe Goldberg, aka Penn Badgley, is returning to the Big Apple after three seasons of globetrotting in Netflix’s YOU. The fifth and final instalment of the hit psychological thriller starts streaming from April 24. Badgley, who is currently packed with promotional events, had earlier revealed how he was happy with the show finally ending and the struggle of playing a dark character that came with it. For Badgley, this isn’t the first time a popular franchise has made him feel that way. In a recent interview with Alex Cooper on Call Her Daddy, the actor discussed his famous romance with Gossip Girl co-star Blake Lively and how the character one portrays on screen starts impacting them in real life, and how it can also impact their love life.

Badgley and Lively started dating when their on-screen characters, Dan and Serena, also began romancing on the show. When asked about his relationship with Lively and if he was “able to separate” his “actual job from reality,” Badgley responded, “I mean, that’s a great question because it was the struggle.” The actor explained, “When you do a television show, you’re doing it constantly, because of the nature of that show and the celebrity culture at the time.” Badgley revealed how he was frequently interviewed about his dating life back in the day.

He then admitted, “I think I’ve been on one date in my life,” revealing that he either was always in a relationship or completely out of the scene. He remembered constantly feeling unsure, always needing to prove himself. “Even though no one may be actually asking you to do this, you feel like you’re constantly needing to prove yourself in some manner. Otherwise, what are you doing?” “What starts to happen when you’re in this one role for a long time, you’re seen as this person, you’re called their name out on the

street. You also constantly have to be that person at work,” he said. For him, the existence of Dan became exhausting and overwhelming. Badgley was just 12 when he started in the entertainment industry. According to him, he was “financially independent” when he reached 15. But the achievement came with a cost. While speaking to Cooper, the actor said that he was quite young and emotionally unprepared during this time. “I didn’t have the emotional maturity to understand, to differentiate myself just in terms of self-worth,” he shared. He didn’t lose himself completely, but it took a mental toll. “What people seemed to think of Dan seemed to be what people thought of me, it bothered me.” Badgley and Lively were in a relationship from 2007 to 2010, while Gossip Girl ran from 2007 to 2012. Even after their breakup, they stayed professional and kept things drama-free on set. “I’m pretty sure we were exes for nearly half of the run of the entire series,” he said on his Podcrushed podcast last year. “We were always very professional... Having a fake marriage by the end of it. I don’t even think, in my memory, there was not one bit of strangeness. It wasn’t even a thing.” Lively is now married to Deadpool star Ryan Reynolds, while Badgley got married to Domino Kirke. In 2023, Penn admitted in an interview with Variety that his sudden rise to fame came mostly because of Gossip Girl and his relationship with the actor. “Beyond our relationship, I don’t think anybody was going to be interested in me publicly,” he said. No, the fifth season of YOU will close the book on Joe Goldberg. The new season picks up three years after Joe and Kate (Charlotte Ritchie) left London for New York City to live a happily ever after, only to be haunted by Joe’s shady past. Speaking about the show, Badgley said in a recent Tudum interview in New York, .

Satya, Gangs of Wasseypur, Aligarh and The Family Man: How Manoj Bajpayee has quietly remained ‘Mumbai ka king’



A look at Manoj Bajpayee’s career and the phrase “success isn’t linear” rings remarkably true. The actor was content doing theatre for almost a decade before a life-changing encounter with Shekhar Kapur, who persuaded him to move to Mumbai and try his hand at films. Manoj began his cinematic journey with Shekhar’s National Award-winning Bandit Queen (1994) and went on to star in films that not only transformed his career but also helped redefine Hindi cinema. However, not all of these films were commercial hits. There were phases when he delivered back-to-back flops, and many thought his career was over. But like a seasoned boxer, every time he was knocked down by the weight of setbacks, he rose and punched back – one performance at a time. “I never let my wants increase so much so that I lose the freedom to do projects that I like,” he said in an interview with Samdish Bhatia.

Today, on the occasion of Manoj Bajpayee’s birthday, we take a look at the films through which Manoj, 56, punched back at critics and doubters, reclaiming his throne as one of the finest performers in Hindi cinema.

“Mumbai ka king kaun?” After starring in Shekhar Kapur’s Bandit Queen, Manoj Bajpayee made history by playing one of the most influential characters in Hindi cinema, Bhiku Mhatre, in Ram Gopal Varma’s Satya. The film released in the same year that Karan Johar made his directorial debut with Kuch Kuch Hota Hai, marking the beginning of a partnership with Shah Rukh Khan that would go on to shape mainstream Bollywood for years to come. Meanwhile, Manoj and RGV were quietly building their own cinematic universe and their own iconic partnership. While KKKH catered to the masses, the gritty world of Satya spoke to an audience that would remain loyal to the film even 27 years after its release. Satya was Manoj’s career-defining performance and his career had just begun.

Following the success and acclaim of Satya, Ram Gopal Varma and Manoj Bajpayee teamed up once again for a tightly packed, nail-biting thriller — a film that would eventually serve as a handbook for future thrillers. Kaun had all the elements that could’ve led to its failure: a low budget, a single location, no costume changes, and just three characters — Manoj, Urmila Matondkar, and Sushant Singh. But like Satya, Kaun was an anomaly for its time. It released in the same year as family dramas like Hum Saath Saath Hain, Biwi No. 1, and Hum Dil De Chuke Sanam ruled the box office, yet Kaun quietly found its audience and went on to become a cult classic. RGV had a specific vision for Manoj’s character, but Manoj pushed back. Without fearing his director, he insisted on playing the role his way. He infused his character with a leech-like quality, something both eerie and repulsive, making him unforgettable.

Shool (1999)

Recently, RGV and Manoj Bajpayee announced their reunion for a horror comedy titled Police Station Mein Bhoot, and fans couldn’t keep calm. One of the standout results of the same partnership was the National Award-winning Shool. Set in his home state of Bihar, Shool saw Manoj play an honest cop battling a corrupt system. Unlike today’s cop dramas that rely on over-the-top action and theatrics, Shool delivered a raw, gritty portrayal of systemic decay. It wasn’t a film that turned Manoj into a commercial star, but it established him as a serious actor. “The character I played in Shool had a deep impact on my subconscious. My life was imbalanced. I had to seek a psychiatrist’s help. I was also advised to stay away from acting for a few years,” Manoj Bajpayee revealed in the book Manoj Bajpayee: The Definitive Biography.

Nushrrat Bharuccha says she wasn’t cast in Frieda Pinto’s role in Slumdog Millionaire because makers said she was ‘too pretty to play a slum girl’

Nushrrat Bharuccha could’ve made her film debut with Danny Boyle’s Slumdog Millionaire in 2008. She auditioned for the female lead of Latika, a slum girl eventually played by Freida Pinto. However, Nushrrat didn’t bag the part because she was told by the makers that she’s “too pretty” to play a slum girl. “That’s so interesting. Look at the world we’re in. Just look at this field of films,” said Nushrrat. “When I was told this on the phone, I wasn’t understanding what it meant. But I said, ‘Okay,’ because they’re people working at a different level and their thought is very different. Maine kaha theek hai hoga bhai kuchh, kuchh toh socha hoga aapne (There must be something there, they must have thought of something). No problem, sure. But ya, it was a little difficult to hear ki ye kya hota hai, ye kya hai (what kind of a reason is that),” she added.

In the interview with Bollywood Bubble, Nushrrat confessed that she understood the reasoning of the makers behind not casting her in that part once she watched the film. “There was no way I’d have been able to play that. Jo do chhoti bachchiyan hi thi, aap logic hi nahi bitha sakte ki wo grow kar ke ye banengi (you can’t find it logical that the two little girls shown in the film would grow up to become me),” said Nushrrat.

Slumdog Millionaire, a British film set in India, was adapted from Vikas Swarup’s novel Q & A. It revolved around a boy Jamal (Dev Patel) explaining to the police how he managed to answer the coveted Rs 1 crore question in the Indian quiz show, Kaun Banega Crorepati. A sleeper hit, Slumdog Millionaire went on to win three Oscars the next year, for Best Picture, Best Director, and Best Adapted Screenplay. Besides Dev Patel and Freida Pinto,

Pinjar (2003)

The early 2000s weren’t the best years of Manoj Bajpayee’s career in terms of commercial success, but he still delivered some truly impactful performances in films like Dil Pe Mat Le Yaar, Zubeidaa, and Aks, which was his first major project alongside Amitabh Bachchan. Following these, he starred in Pinjar, which earned him his second National Award after Satya. Like some of his earlier films, Pinjar didn’t fare well at the box office, but it gave Manoj the opportunity to portray a deeply complex character, a cruel man who gets a redemption arc. Set against the backdrop of Partition, Pinjar told a harrowing story of Partition while also advocating for cause of humanity over religious biases. It is one of those films that would be difficult to imagine being made today.

Gangs of Wasseypur (2012)

The book Manoj Bajpayee: The Definitive Biography also notes that the critical acclaim of Pinjar didn’t immediately translate to roles being offered to Manoj. Despite delivering a powerful performance, he remained unemployed for months after the film’s release and was mostly offered villainous roles. While a few projects came his way, none truly stood out, until Prakash Jha’s Raajneeti (2010) happened. However, being a multi-starrer, the film’s success wasn’t solely credited to Manoj, with much of the spotlight falling on Ranbir Kapoor and Katrina Kaif. If Satya catapulted Manoj Bajpayee to fame, Anurag Kashyap’s Gangs of Wasseypur brought him back to that very peak. Anurag — who had penned Satya, Shool, and Kaun, the very films that helped establish Manoj in the industry — had a fallout with the actor, and the two stopped speaking for years. But one night, around 10 pm., Anurag called Manoj, choosing to bury the hatchet and offer him the role of Sardar Khan, a part that would not only resurrect Manoj’s career but also redefine modern Bollywood and the portrayal of gangsters in Hindi cinema, much like what Bhiku Mhatre had done in the late ’90s.

Aligarh (2016)

Manoj Bajpayee refuses to be typecast, he keeps surprising audiences with every role. After the success of Gangs of Wasseypur, he appeared in several films, but it was his restrained, deeply moving and pathbreaking performance in Hansal Mehta’s Aligarh that left a lasting impact. Much like Gangs, Aligarh also marked a reunion, this time with director Hansal Mehta, with whom Manoj had stopped speaking after the box office failure of Dil Pe Mat Le Yaar. “We didn’t talk to each other for six years. Our relationship was so strained that if we ever crossed paths, we would look the other way,” Hansal admitted. Their collaboration was rekindled with Aligarh. The film remains one of Manoj’s finest performances. He portrayed Dr. Shrinivas Ramchandra Siras, a homosexual professor at Aligarh Muslim University who was harassed for his sexuality. According to Manoj’s biography, his performance moved his theatre guru Barry John to tears who himself had faced harassment. The excerpts of the book read, “Barry himself is a part of the marginalised community and the film probably brought out the pain and indifference he had been facing all his life.” The Family Man (2019)

While Manoj Bajpayee has long been a critics’ darling, he truly captured the imagination of a younger audience with his streaming debut, The Family Man. At a time when the OTT space in India was just beginning to take shape, Manoj took a leap of faith — and nailed it. The decision wasn’t easy. His wife, Shabana Raza, was initially against the idea of him starring in what she perceived as a “serial.” But Manoj had the foresight to recognize that streaming was going to be the next big thing. He once recalled, “Shabana was not happy with me working on OTT. I convinced her how it was different. She questioned if it was about money, and why do I need to jeopardize my career? She probably didn’t realize the strength of OTT till she watched the first season.” Manoj Bajpayee brought his signature depth and spontaneity to The Family Man, often improvising on set and helping make it one of the biggest shows on the streaming platform. Lauding his commitment, the show’s creators Raj and DK shared, “He can be seen cracking jokes with others on the sets. The director would wonder if he is even prepared, but the first take itself reveals how over-prepared he is.” T.” With The Family Man 2 becoming an even bigger success, Manoj not only cracked the streaming space — he truly owned it.



Slumdog Millionaire also stars Anil Kapoor as the quiz show host and Irrfan Khan as a police officer among others. Initially, Shah Rukh Khan was offered Anil Kapoor’s part, and Amit Sial was supposed to play Irrfan’s, but those didn’t materialize. Meanwhile, Nushrrat made her breakthrough with Dibakar Banerjee’s 2010 anthology Love Sex Aur Dhokha. She followed it up with sleeper hits in Luv Ranjan’s 2011 romantic comedy Pyaar Ka PUNCHnama and Luv’s 2018 buddy comedy Sonu Ke Titu Ki Sweety. She also starred in Raaj Shaandilyaa’s 2019 blockbuster comedy Dream Girl. Her most recent film was Vishal Furia’s horror flick Chhorii 2, a sequel to her 2021 film Chhorii, which released on Prime Video India.