

INDIAN CHRONICLE

Eighty kg of ganja being smuggled to Karnataka seized in Sangareddy

Sangareddy: Sangareddy police seized 80 kg of dry ganja which was being smuggled to Karnataka in a car at Madgi under Chiragpally police station limits close to the Karnataka border on Tuesday evening.

Superintendent of Police Paritosh Pankaj said a police team led by SI Rajendar Reddy were checking vehicles at Madgi when they found the ganja inside a car. The driver was identified as G Tirupathi (25), a resident of Govindpur in Zaheerabad mandal. The police said the accused, who used to eke out a livelihood by driving a tractor, had accepted the contract of driving the car upto Bagdhal in Karnataka for Rs.50,000.

TTD chairman offers pattu vastrams to Simhachalam Appanna

Visakhapatnam, April 30 TTD Chairman B.R. Naidu offered Pattu vastrams to Sri Varaha Lakshmi Narasimha Swamy (Appanna) at the Simhachalam temple near here on Wednesday. Since 1996, TTD has been offering these robes every year during the Chandanotsavam festival. Simhachalam is one of the oldest Narasimha Swamy temples in India, and the idol here is believed to be self-manifested. The Chandanotsavam festival began in the early hours. The idol is usually covered with sandalwood paste throughout the year. Only on the auspicious day of Akshaya Tritiya, the sandal paste is removed for 12 hours so that the devotees can see the presiding deity in Nija Rupa (original form) clearly. Then, a fresh layer of sandal paste is applied again.

Telangana SSC Public Examination 2025 results announced



Hyderabad, April 30 The Telangana SSC Public Examination results 2025 were declared on Wednesday.Chief Minister Revanth Reddy, along with Deputy Chief Minister Bhatti Vikramarka and Transport Minister Ponnam Prabhakar and other senior officials, released the SSC results at Ravindra Bharathi in the city. The results showed a pass percentage of 92.78 percent. Girls also dominated in these results. While 94.26 percent of girls passed, 91.82 percent of boys passed. Gurukul schools recorded a pass rate of 98.7 percent, while private schools recorded a pass rate of 94.21 percent.A total of 5,09,403 students, including 2,58,895 boys and 2,50,508 girls, registered for the examinations that were conducted from March 21 to April 4. This time, students were awarded both marks and grades.The Director of Government examinations has listed the websites from where the students can access the results on these websites, including [https:// results.bsetelangana.org/](https://results.bsetelangana.org/) <https://results. bse.telangana.gov.in/> <https://bse.telangana.gov.in/> The SSC Board announced that the 10th class Advanced Supplementary Examinations will be held from June 3 to 13 and the examinations will be held from 9.30 AM to 12.30 PM. The last date for payment of fees has been fixed as May 16. Recounting and re-verification have been allowed till May 15.For this, one can apply for recounting by paying Rs. 500 per subject. One can apply for re-verification by paying Rs. 1,000 per subject. There are two schools where not a single student passed. Mahabubabad district recorded the highest pass rate of 99.23 percent, while Vikarabad recorded the lowest pass rate of 73.97 percent.

Bandi steps into mistakes in Group-1 Mains exam results



Hyderabad, April 30 Union Minister of State for Home Affairs Bandi Sanjay Kumar has stepped into the fray amid allegations of irregularities, corruption and serious mistakes in the Group-1 Mains examination results. Thousands of candidates have approached him to submit petitions against the Group-1 irregularities and have demanded that the State government cancel the appointments and conduct the exams again. Bandi Sanjay has prepared a letter to get information from the TGSPSC on the Group 1 exam results. To this end, he wrote a letter to TGSPSC Chairman Burra Venkatesam. In the letter, he stated the Group-1 candidates had repeatedly brought to his attention that there had been many irregularities and mistakes in the conduct of the Group-1 Mains examinations, evaluation process and results and added that there had been a violation of rules. He said it was the responsibility of the TGSPSC to clear the doubts of the candidates and the doubts of the public. He requested the commission chairman to provide the information he sought within a week. In that letter, he mainly mentioned the errors in the declaration of marks, violation of notification, evaluation of examination papers, and the top ranks of candidates, who wrote in Urdu medium. He asked the Chairman to send comprehensive information regarding these within a week. He asked the chairman to provide the complete list of marks, including names of all the 563 candidates selected on the UPSC pattern. He urged to provide the General Ranking List (GRL) and Provisional Marks List (PML) before recounting. He urged the chairman to provide the list of the marks obtained by the candidates medium-wise.

Ramakrishna Rao assumes charge as Chief Secretary of Telangana

Hyderabad, April 30 K. Ramakrishna Rao officially took on the role of Chief Secretary of Telangana at the Secretariat on Wednesday. He was joined by the outgoing Chief Secretary, Santhi Kumari, during the handover.

Ramakrishna Rao, a 1991 batch cadre, previously served as the Principal Secretary of the Finance department. It is reported that Chief Minister Revanth Reddy has appointed Ramakrishna Rao as the Chief Secretary in view of his long experience in the Finance department. However, Ramakrishna Rao will retire next August.

Revanth Reddy's fancy for Andhra officials in Telangana posts comes under fire

GNS News Agency, April 30

Hyderabad: Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy has once again appointed a retired Andhra Pradesh cadre officer to a key post in the Telangana government. The latest appointment of KS Sreenivasa Raju, a retired IAS officer from Andhra Pradesh, as Principal Secretary to the Chief Minister, has reignited the debate on Andhra dominance in Telangana administration ever since the Congress came to power.The appointment has drawn severe criticism over the Revanth Reddy administration's growing preference for Andhra Pradesh-based officials and political functionaries in key Telangana administrative roles, despite the State's bifurcation over a decade ago.Sreenivasa Raju, who earlier served in



Andhra Pradesh in various capacities including as Joint Executive Officer of TTD and retired from the Andhra cadre, was brought into the Telangana government last July as a government advisor on Infrastructure and Projects. But following the State government's decision to discontinue the services of retired officers, he is learnt to have been accommodated in the Chief Minister's Office and will continue to hold the position for next two

years.

This is not an isolated instance. An alarming trend has emerged under Revanth Reddy's tenure, with those said to be close to the Andhra Pradesh government or having roots in TDP, occupying influential posts in the Telangana government.Anila Vavilla was appointed Vice-Chairman and MD of TGREDCO; former AP Chief Secretary Adityanath Das is now advisor on irrigation; Ayyadevara

Prasanna Kumar is serving as Assembly advisor; and Nimmagadda Ramesh Kumar, former AP Election Commissioner, is also a government advisor.Even more striking, a former TDP leader from Andhra Pradesh has been appointed to the Telangana Public Service Commission (TGPSC), raising serious questions about the government's intent and commitment to Telangana's identity and autonomy.Despite a decade since bifurcation, Telangana's top posts continue to be handed to non-locals, fuelling discontent among local bureaucrats and Telangana activists alike. Critics argue that by sidelining capable local officers and experts in favour of Andhra cadre retirees and political appointees, Revanth Reddy is undoing the hard-won aspirations of Telangana's people.

Govt ready to spend over Rs.15,000 crore for paddy procurement: Uttam



Hyderabad, April 30 : The Telangana government is prepared to spend over Rs.15,000 crore to ensure the smooth and timely procurement of paddy during this Rabi season, in what is being described as one of the largest procurement operations in the country's history, said Civil Supplies Minister N Uttam Kumar Reddy.

Minister Uttam Kumar Reddy, along with Agriculture Minister Tummala Nageshwar Rao, held a high-level video conference with all District Collectors from here on Wednesday. On the occasion, he termed the paddy procurement programme the most important and prestigious initiative of the government for the next 15 to 20 days.With a record Rabi cultivation spread across 54.89 lakh acres and an estimated output of 127 lakh metric tonnes (LMTs), the state government has planned to procure nearly 70 LMTs of paddy through an extensive network of 8,381 procurement centres established across all districts. The video conference, held from the Civil Supplies department headquarters at Erramanzil Colony in Hyderabad, was hosted by Principal Secretary and Civil Supplies Commissioner D.S. Chauhan.

The meeting focused on reviewing procurement progress, pre-empting challenges, and ensuring rapid responses to unseasonal weather conditions and field-level logistical issues. Addressing the Collectors, Uttam Kumar Reddy said the state government is committed to ensuring smooth and dignified procurement, free from disruption or delay.He informed officials that more than Rs.15,000 crore is being allocated for procurement, including MSP and bonus payments. "We must ensure that once the procurement data from PPCs is uploaded, the payment reaches the farmers within 48 hours. I will speak to the Finance Department to ensure immediate release of the bonus amount," he added.The Minister reiterated that payments must be prompt, seamless, and error-free. In addressing logistics, Uttam Kumar Reddy said that in locations where godowns are not accessible, paddy must be shifted directly to mills with sufficient capacity. While intermediate godowns remain an option, he said priority should be given to timely lifting from PPCs to avoid backlogs or bad publicity. He directed the Civil Supplies Commissioner to make advance allocations of 10 LMT worth of storage space and intermediate godowns in districts where needed. Transportation and labour concerns were also raised. Uttam Kumar Reddy asked Collectors to coordinate with SPs and RTOs to mobilise private lorries and ensure timely transportation of paddy from PPCs to mills. Labour shortages must be managed locally, and harvester spacing and technical settings must be monitored to maintain quality, he directed.

Regarding gunny bags, the Minister clarified that Telangana has already positioned 13.71 crore bags and is mobilising another 3.79 crore. He instructed that gunny bags must only be issued after verifying moisture levels at PPCs, and not handed over directly to farmers in the field to avoid artificial shortages.

KCR spewing venom at Congress Govt: CM Revanth



Hyderabad, April 30 (NSS): Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy has accused former chief minister and BRS President K Chandrashekar Rao of expressing animosity toward the State government through both his words and demeanor.

During the celebration of Sri Mahatma Basaveshwara's birth anniversary at Ravindra Bharathi on Wednesday, Revanth Reddy criticised KCR for exploiting Telangana for a decade, asserting that he has no justification to criticize the Congress party. He emphasized that it is the KCR family that has suffered after losing power, not Telangana itself. The Chief Minister remarked that KCR's recent visit to Warangal resembled the notion of a cat going on a pilgrimage after consuming 100 mice. He suggested that while KCR might believe he was seeking redemption for his past wrongs, he only went there to spread falsehoods, further compounding his errors. Revanth Reddy pointed out that KCR even failed to mention his name dur-

ing the Warangal meeting. Revanth Reddy issued a challenge for the BRS leader to engage in a debate regarding various development and welfare initiatives, including Kaleshwaram, free transportation, loan waivers, Rythu Bandhu, 60,000 job opportunities, SC categorization, and the caste census."Which topics should we discuss on? KCR needs to clarify. I am open to a debate. Has Congress now become the antagonist for having created Telangana? The public is knowledgeable and understands our actions," stated Revanth Reddy. The Chief Minister further criticised the Opposition leader, K Chandrashekar Rao, for receiving a salary and allowances while remaining at his farmhouse and failing to fulfill his responsibilities."What law permits this? As Leader of the Opposition, he has received Rs. 65 lakhs in salary, along with vehicles and police protection. People are questioning why KCR chooses to reside in a farmhouse rather than perform his duties as Leader of the Opposition. What message does he intend to send to the public by staying at his farmhouse?" Revanth Reddy asked. He also criticised KCR for attributing the halt of welfare schemes to the Congress government. The Chief Minister challenged him to specify which programs, such as Rythu Bandhu, Aarogyasri, free electricity, Shaadi Mubarak, and Kalyana Lakshmi, have actually been discontinued. The opposition leader should consider whether he is in a sober state. The Chief Minister questioned the motives of opposition leader who resorts to making inflammatory remarks and inciting the people with their negativity"Our administration is dedicated to enhancing the state's revenue, inspired by the principles of Basaveshwara, and redistributing it to those in need.

KS Sreenivasa Raju appointed as Principal Secretary to Telangana CM



Hyderabad, April 30 : K.S. Sreenivasa Raju, a former IAS officer, has been appointed as Principal Secretary to the Chief Minister of Telangana, Revanth Reddy, for a term of two years.Chief Secretary Santhi Kumari issued the official orders appointing Sreenivasa Raju in this role. Originally from Andhra Pradesh, he has previously worked in a similar capacity as the Principal Secretary for the Telangana Roads and Buildings Department, where he served for nearly four years.Moreover, he held the position of Joint Executive Officer (JEO) at the Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams (TTD) for nine years. It is noteworthy that he is now making his return to Telangana.

Seven dead in wall-collapse in Simhachalam



Simhachalam, April 30 A tragic incident occurred during the Simhadri Appanna Swamy Chandanotsavam in Visakhapatnam district. Seven people died when a wall collapsed on devotees, who had come to see the true form of the Lord. Four other devotees were grievously injured. Three women and four men were among the dead.

Heavy rains lashed Simhachalam after midnight on Tuesday. As a result, a cement wall collapsed on the Rs 300 ticket queue at the shopping complex on the way up from Simhagiri bus stand. The NDRF personnel and officials immediately took up rescue operations. Home Minister Vangalapudi Anitha, Visakhapatnam District Collector Harendira Prasad, and CP Shankhabrata Bagchi reached the spot and supervised the rescue operations.The bodies of the injured have been shifted to Visakhapatnam KGH. The Collector said the injured were being treated at the hospital.The officials have identified that four of the deceased are from the same family. They were identified as Pilla Umamaheswara Rao and Shalalaja, her mother Pilla Venkataratnam, and her aunt Gujjari Mahalakshmi. All of them are from Visakhapatnam city. Those died are: Kumpatla Manikanta Eswara Sesha Rao son of Srinivasa Rao, aged 29 years, residing at Door No 2-130, Korlapativaripalem, Machavaram, Ambajipeta, Konaseema, Ambedkar District; Pathi Durga Prasad Naidu, aged 30 years, of Korlapativaripalem, Machavaram, Ambajipeta, Konaseema, Ambedkar District; Yedla Venkata Rao, aged 58 years, of Adivivaram Gurukul School beside, Mamidithota, Visakhapatnam; Pilla Mahesh, aged 30 years, of Chandrampalem, Madhurawada, Visakhapatnam; Pilla Sailaja, wife of late Mahesh, aged 27 years, of Chandrampalem, Madhurawada; Gujjari Mahalakshmi, wife of Prasada Rao, aged 65 years, of DNo.55-5-22/2, HB Colony and Pyla Venkata Ratnam, wife of Kanaka Rao, aged 45 years, of Uma Nagar, HB Colony. (NSS)

HC concludes hearing on IPS officers' petitions on land case

Hyderabad, April 30 : The Telangana High Court has concluded the hearing on the IPS officers' petitions filed urging it to withdraw its orders in the Bhoodan land case today. It refused to stay the orders given by a single judge bench to keep the Bhoodan lands in the prohibited list. It has been stated by the HC that a vacate petition can be filed in the same bench against the orders of the single bench. Several IPS officers purchased lands in Survey No 194 in Nagaram village of Maheshwaram mandal in Ranga Reddy district. A petition was recently filed in the High Court alleging irregularities in the purchase of the lands by the IPS officers. The court, which took up the matter on the 24th of this month, ordered that the lands belonging to 27 officers be placed in the prohibited list. It was stated that they were all the Bhoodan lands.The single judge bench of Justice Bhaskar Reddy issued the verdict to this effect. Challenging this verdict, some IPS officers recently approached the High Court. These officers include Ravigupta, Mahesh Bhagwat, Shikha Goyal, Tarun Joshi, Rahul Hegde, Swati Lakra, and Soumya Mishra. The IPS officers informed the High Court that the lands were not the Bhoodan lands, but patta lands.

Indian Chronicle

English Daily

Carney's Canada

THE election of Mark Carney as Canada's Prime Minister offers a much-needed opportunity to reset the strained ties between Ottawa and New Delhi. Relations had hit a nadir under Justin Trudeau, particularly after his 2023 allegations linking Indian agents to the killing of Hardeep Singh Nijjar — claims India strongly denied. The diplomatic fallout severely disrupted political, economic and people-to-people exchanges. Carney's rise may mark a course correction. Unlike his predecessor, he is pragmatic, globally respected and more measured in tone. His message of 'Canada Strong, Canada Free' suggests a desire to reinforce domestic stability while restoring international relationships. That could bode well for India, which is a key trade, strategic and people-link partner. Carney's experience as a central banker and investment leader with exposure to Indian markets positions him well to re-engage. His stated intent to "rebuild the relationship with India" must translate into action — especially in resuming CEPA trade talks, facilitating student visas and stabilising immigration policies. Prime Minister Narendra Modi's congratulatory message to Carney on his election, too, reflects hope for a strengthened partnership.

The uncertainty in recent years has affected thousands of Indian students and immigrants in Canada. Visa delays, post-study work anxieties and a perceived hostile environment have undermined Canada's image as a welcoming destination. Carney's administration must act quickly to reassure this vital constituency, which contributes billions to the Canadian economy and adds to its skilled workforce. India, for its part, must be prepared to move beyond recent hostilities. However, it will be watching how Ottawa handles sensitive issues like Khalistani extremism and diaspora-linked radicalism. With the global order shifting and US politics growing unpredictable, deeper India-Canada engagement in climate action.

INTERNATIONAL WORKERS' DAY: A LEGACY OF LABOUR, PROTEST, AND PROGRESS“



“PS ASHOKAN“INDIAN CHRONICLE“MANTHANI MAY 1““May 1, globally recognised as International Workers' Day or May Day, honours the struggles and victories of workers worldwide. While most nations mark it as a holiday, the United States observes it differently, naming the day “Loyalty Day.”““Roots in the Haymarket Tragedy““Though the origins of May Day span many regions, the 1886 Haymarket Affair in Chicago stands out. On May 1, thousands of American workers began a protest demanding an eight-hour workday. A few days later, a peaceful rally at Haymarket Square turned violent after a bomb explosion led to police firing, killing workers and officers alike. This incident sparked a global labour movement.”“Global Momentum““In 1890, nearly 300,000 workers gathered in London's Hyde Park demanding better work conditions. The eight-hour day slogan spread across Europe, with countries holding massive rallies. Over time, many nations adopted May 1 as an official labour holiday.”“During World War I, it became a symbol of anti-war protest, and after the war, socialist movements used the day to highlight workers' rights. Even totalitarian regimes reacted—Hitler, Mussolini, and Franco either rebranded or restricted May Day, though post-WWII Europe firmly established it as a holiday.”“May Day in the United States““Although the movement began in America, the government distanced itself from May Day's socialist overtones. Instead, Labour Day in September was declared the national workers' holiday. Still, the eight-hour workday demand was finally acknowledged in 1916.”“The Indian Experience““India officially celebrated May Day in 1923, in Chennai. But as early as 1862, workers at Howrah Station had protested for fair hours. The establishment of trade unions in 1920 sparked widespread awareness.”“However, after 1985, economic reforms under liberalisation, privatisation, and globalisation (LPG) made it difficult to enforce labour laws—especially in the unorganised sector.”“Today, trade unions across India mark the day with rallies, dharnas, and campaigns, demanding better wages and work conditions. In different states, it is known as:““Kaamgar Din” in Hindi““Karmikara Dinacharane” in Kannada““Kamgar Divas” in Marathi““Sromik Dibos” in Bengali““A Global Observance““Over 80 countries observe International Workers' Day. The International Labour Organization (ILO), founded in 1919, continues to uphold workers' rights, establish global standards, and promote decent work.”“May Day is not just a remembrance—it is a powerful reminder of the value and dignity of labour. It is a call for justice, equality, and the protection of workers' rights across the world.

YS Jagan sore over devotees' deaths at Simhachalam temple

Tadepalli, April 30 : Former chief minister and YSR Congress Party president YS Jagan Mohan Reddy expressed deep shock and sorrow over the tragic deaths of devotees at the Simhachalam Sri Lakshmi Narasimha Swamy Temple during the Chandanaotsavam celebrations. He was deeply saddened to learn that several devotees lost their lives after a wall collapsed on the Rs 300 ticket queue line due to heavy rains. Calling it a heart-breaking incident, he said it was extremely painful that devotees who had come to witness the divine form of the Lord had to lose their lives in such a tragic manner. YS Jagan urged the government to ensure the best possible medical treatment for those injured in the accident. He also appealed to the authorities to extend all necessary support and assistance to the families of the deceased

Sandisk Introduces WD Blue® SN5000 NVMe™ SSD for Content Creators and Professionals for Effective Workflow in India



Hyderabad:Content creators are captivating audiences across platforms with immersive stories, stunning visuals, and high-quality videos. To keep up with the demand for premium content, they need substantial storage capacity as well as faster and more efficient workflows. To meet the needs of content creators and professionals, Sandisk is introducing WD Blue® SN5000 NVMe™ SSD. This next-generation storage is designed for content creators and professionals with demanding workflows involving multi-stream 4K video, images, and audio. Specifications, features and availability:

- The device accelerates workflows and boosts productivity with PCIe® Gen4, offering speeds of up to 5,500MB/s2read speeds (4TB1 model) - a 24% improved performance over the previous generation.
- With its M.2 2280 form factor, the WD Blue® SN5000 NVMe™ SSD can help consumers expand PC storage capacity, harness AI, and streamline creative workflows.
- The drive features Sandisk nCache™ 4.0 technology for blistering fast folder and file copies and helps make multitasking heavy projects smoother with NVMe™.
- The WD Blue® SN5000 NVMe™ SSD comes in capacities ranging from 500GB to 4TB, with price starting from INR 3,199.
- Available at leading IT resellers and ecommerce channels across the country.

As the content creator economy continues to expand in India, consumers can take advantage of high performance and higher capacity data storage with the WD Blue SN5000.

1. 1GB = 1 billion bytes. 1TB = one trillion bytes. Actual user capacity may be less depending on operating environment.
2. 1 MB/s = 1 million bytes per second. Based on internal testing; performance may vary depending upon host device, usage conditions, drive capacity and other factors.

Amazon launches the all-new Kindle Paperwhite in India—its fastest Kindle yet

Hyderabad:Amazon, today, announced the launch of its all-new Kindle Paperwhite in India. This is the company's fastest Kindle to date, and also the best-performing and thinnest Kindle Paperwhite yet. It has the largest display of any Paperwhite at 7 inches, a lightweight design, and a battery life of up to 12 weeks with just a single charge. Customers can purchase the all-new Kindle Paperwhite in Black colour at ₹16,999 on Amazon.in: www.amazon.in/all-new-kindle-paperwhite.

“Kindle Paperwhite has been a popular choice among readers for years, and we're excited to launch the all-new Kindle Paperwhite with upgraded features that our customers will value. Its fast performance, with 25% faster page turns, ensures customers never have a slow moment while reading. Its largest-ever display provides added reading comfort and its lightweight design makes it convenient to carry and read on-the-go,” said Dilip R.S., Director and Country Manager, Amazon Devices India. “We look forward to our customers unlocking stories from a vast selection of Indian and international titles available on Amazon with this latest Kindle.”Built for better performance

The new Kindle Paperwhite comes with a powerful dual-core processor that offers smooth and fast performance with 25% faster page turns on the device. It also has improved keyword touch-response, that allows customers to seamlessly navigate their Kindle device and easily browse through their libraries. With just a single charge via USB-C, customers can enjoy up to 12 weeks of battery life on their device. Largest Paperwhite display and improved portability

The new Kindle Paperwhite features a 7-inch waterproof display—the largest for a Paperwhite—and narrower borders, offering a larger screen-to-body ratio for an enhanced reading experience. Its display uses an oxide thin-film transistor, which gives it the highest contrast ratio of



any Kindle Paperwhite, so text and images pop off the screen. It is also the thinnest Paperwhite yet and its lightweight design makes it convenient to carry anywhere. Its 300 ppi glare-free display reads like paper, even in bright light. With adjustable warm light and dark mode, readers can customise the display to their preference and comfortably enjoy reading their books, whether they're out and about in sunlight or in a dimly-lit space. Also, its 16GB storage capacity ensures customers have enough room to store and access thousands of books on-the-go.

Statewide Reach Grows as TGIC Signs MoUs With Additional 9 Colleges in Phase 2 of TGIC Hosts Initiative



Hyderabad: TGIC has successfully completed Phase 2 of its MoU signings, adding 9 more colleges across the state, one from each district on Wednesday, 30 April, 25 at T-Hub. This follows the initial MoU signings with 18 colleges, with Phase 2 formalizing partnerships with the additional 9 colleges. The MoUs were exchanged in the presence of CEO, Meraj Faheem. Through these TGIC Hosts, TGIC has solidified their roles as key drivers for the grassroots initiatives of TGIC. The initial Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) exchange program held at T-Hub, with participation from representatives of 18 colleges across the state, was complemented by a Phase 2 signing ceremony that further extended the collaborative network. As part of this strategic initiative, TGIC Hosts will establish Innovation and Entrepreneurship Cells within each of the selected colleges. This will cultivate vibrant ecosystems for both student and local entrepreneurship, ensuring the effective dissemination and maximized impact of TGIC programs and initiatives across the now 30 districts of Telangana.

“The TGIC Host initiative is proving to be a resounding success,” said “Meraj Faheem, CEO of TGIC”. “With the completion of Phase 2, we have significantly expanded our reach, ensuring our programs are accessible and impactful across the entirety of Telangana. This collaborative effort with academic institutions is crucial for fostering a thriving innovation ecosystem. We are one step closer to the innovators across the State and will make sure everybody gets the platform.” The MoU signing ceremonies formalized the roles of the colleges as designated TGIC Hosts. These institutions will receive comprehensive support from TGIC, including assistance in acting as local entrepreneurship cells. In return, they will serve as the primary points of

contact for TGIC programs in their districts, organizing awareness sessions, facilitating industry engagement, and empowering students and local innovators.

Jayesh Ranjan assumes charge as CEO of Telangana Industry & Investment Promotion Cell

Hyderabad, April 30 : In a gesture of deep appreciation and longstanding respect, Sundeep Kumar Makthala, Chairman of Tconsult, met Jayesh Ranjan, IAS, to congratulate him on his appointment as CEO of the Industry & Investment Promotion Cell in the Chief Minister's Office (CMO), Telangana. Jayesh Ranjan, one of the most respected bureaucrats in India, now leads this newly established role, where he will drive large-scale investment strategies and oversee the SPEED (Smart Proactive Efficient and Effective Delivery) initiative — a critical step toward transforming Telangana's investor facilitation framework and accelerating its economic trajectory. Accompanied by his wife Bhagya Makthala, Sundeep conveyed heartfelt gratitude for Ranjan's transformative leadership during his impactful tenure as Principal Secretary, IT & Industries, under which Telangana rose as a leading hub for innovation, startups, and emerging technologies. During the interaction, Ranjan acknowledged the key role played by diaspora networks and enabler platforms in Telangana's investment journey.

OPPO F29 Series records strong market response; achieves 28% sales growth from Hyderabad during first sale



Hyderabad: OPPO India is thrilled to announce the remarkable success of its newly launched F29 Series, which has received an outstanding market response. During its first 21-day sale period in Hyderabad, the F29 Series experienced a 28% sales growth over the OPPO F27 Pro+, underscoring its growing popularity and strong demand in the region.

OPPO F29 Series: Designed for India, Built for Tough Challenges

The OPPO F29 Series is crafted for India's growing gig economy, catering to drivers, delivery partners, home-service professionals, and small business owners. Combining military-grade toughness, advanced connectivity, and long-lasting battery power, the F29 Series is engineered to take on any challenge in a slim, stylish design. Engineered for India, Tested for India. The F29 Series offers industry-leading dust and liquid protection, tested in India's diverse climates, from Kerala's monsoons to Rajasthan's heat. With IP66, IP68, and IP69 ratings, it withstands powerful water jets, submersion in water, and high-pressure, high-temperature water exposure—making it ideal for industrial workers and those in extreme weather conditions. After water exposure, it even emits a pulsating sound to drain water from the speaker. Tested in India by SGS (Société Générale de Surveillance), Bengaluru, against the highest IP66, IP68, and IP69 standards, the F29 Series is the toughest smartphone in its segment. The F29 Series takes liquid resistance even further to offer enhanced protection against heavy rain, river water, hot springs, daily spills from juice, tea, milk, coffee, beer, household liquids such as steam, dishwasher, detergent, and even exposure to ice water, cleaning foam, and muddy water. And after submersion, it emits a unique pulsating sound to drain water from the speaker. Additionally, when it comes to network, the OPPO F29 Series has also set a new benchmark in network connectivity, verified by Jio, to showcase one of the best 5G performances. Based on Jio's testing, OPPO F29 series has stood out as one of the best devices for network in the INR 20K – INR 30K price segment.

KAKATIYA STUDENTS EXCEL IN SSC RESULTS – 100% SUCCESS“— Principal Pradeep Reddy“



“PS ASHOKAN“INDIAN CHRONICLE“MANTHANI MAY 1““The SSC (Secondary School Certificate) examination results, conducted in March, were officially declared today. Kakatiya High School, Manthani, has once again demonstrated academic distinction, achieving an impeccable 100% pass rate. All 42 candidates who appeared for the examination were declared successful.”“Durgam Treksha emerged as the topper of the Mandal, attaining an extraordinary 579 out of 600 marks, a testament to her unwavering diligence and scholastic excellence. Close behind, Bhassani Siri Varshini secured an impressive 567 marks, earning the second highest rank in the institution. Notably, 22 students surpassed the 500-mark threshold, underscoring the school's enduring commitment to academic rigor and holistic education.”“Principal Mr. Pradeep Reddy extended his heartfelt congratulations to the meritorious students and expressed immense pride in the institution's sustained performance. He remarked that Kakatiya High School has consistently retained its status as a premier academic institution in Manthani Mandal over the past four years, owing to the concerted efforts of its faculty, students, and parents.”“He further acknowledged the unwavering support of parents and the relentless dedication of the teaching staff. Directors Mr. Ravi Kiran Reddy, Mr. Shravan Reddy, Ms. Sravanthi, and Ms. Pavani also conveyed their profound appreciation to the students and faculty for upholding the school's legacy of excellence.

AKSHARA HIGH SCHOOL, MANTHANI, CELEBRATES STELLAR ACHIEVEMENT WITH 100% SSC RESULTS“

“PS ASHOKAN“INDIAN CHRONICLE“MANTHANI May 1““In a moment of immense pride, the students of Akshara High School, Manthani, Peddapalli District, have secured a remarkable 100% pass rate in the SSC examinations held today.”“Headmistress Mrs. Bindu Ashok extended her heartfelt congratulations to all the students for their dedication, perseverance, and academic excellence. She also expressed her sincere gratitude to the parents for their unwavering support and cooperation, which significantly contributed to this outstanding accomplishment.

SV University Vice Chancellor participates in national workshop“



“April 30, Indian Chronicle Rayalaseema co-ordinator” Sri Venkateswara University Vice Chancellor Acharya C. H. Apparao clarified that students should be provided with skills that match the future job requirements. On Wednesday“He participated in the PM-USHA National Workshop that began in New Delhi and delivered a speech on the topic “Job Future & Courses in New Sectors”. He was appointed as the coordinator on behalf of SVU during the event, which is being organized by the Union Education Ministry for two days (April 30 and May 1).“Bengaluru, Lucknow, Punjab Veer Narmad South Gujarat and Shaheed Mahendra Karma Universities participated in this session. “ In his speech, the Vice Chancellor explained the need to bring new courses in areas like new technology, data science, artificial intelligence, cyber security, biotechnology, and to work towards providing students with skills that meet future job requirements.”“He said that by increasing the connection between education and industry, designing courses together with industries, conducting internships and projects, students will gain practical experience. He mentioned the issues of teacher training, use of digital media, and taking steps to ensure that every student gets quality education.”“RUSA Coordinator Acharya Ramasri, RUSA CEO Vamsi Rayala also participated in the program. They played a key role in preparing the exhibition on behalf of the cluster universities.”“The exhibition was well received by officials of the Union Ministry of Education, UGC members, and representatives of other universities.

Success of 'Disney Land' students in SSC results ...



““Damera, April 30 (Indian Chronicle) :““Disney Land High School students in Hanumakonda district Damera Mandal of Oglapur village have been successful in the tenth class results.

For the 20th consecutive year, they hoisted their success. The students Banoth Srman and Thuturu Harshini

MARY MEDITRICKS SCHOOL, MANTHANI MAKES AN UNPRECEDENTED MARK WITH EXEMPLARYSSCRESULTS “Headmistress Suni Sebastian.”“

PS.ASHOKAN“INDIAN CHRONICLE“MANTHANI May 1”““In the SSC results released on Wednesday, Mary Meditricks School in Manthani has once again demonstrated unparalleled academic excellence. Syed Jasmeen ascended to the pinnacle with an exceptional 577 marks, securing the coveted first position. Following her remarkable achievement, Velidi Poorvi clinched the second position with an impressive 566 marks, while Varahala Rishi Bhadraraj earned the third position with a commendable 565 marks. Gundeti Laharik completed the top echelon with an outstanding 561 marks, securing the fourth position.”“The school not only achieved a flawless 100% pass rate, but also witnessed 33 students surpass the formidable 500-mark threshold, a testament to the institution’s rigorous academic standards and unwavering commitment to scholastic excellence. The school management, in a heartfelt gesture, extended its profound congratulations to all students for their



extraordinary accomplishments, reaffirming the institution's legacy of fostering academic brilliance.

Second day of Diamond Jubilee celebrations of ANGRAU held

Hyderabad, April 30 The second day of the Diamond Jubilee celebrations of Acharya N. G. Ranga Agricultural University (ANGRAU) was attended by Lavu Srikrishnadevarayalu, Member of Parliament, Palnadu along with Julakanti Brahmananda Reddy, MLA, Macheral. Vice Chancellor Dr R. Sarada Jayalakshmi Devi presided the meeting.

Dr Chintal Govind Rajulu, former chairman, NABARD, former vice chancellors of ANGRAU Dr S Raghuvardhan Reddy and Dr V. Damodara Naidu, Sri Venkateswara veterinary university VC, Dr J V Ramana, Dr YSR Horticulture University VC Dr B Gopal, Dr T Suguna, OSD Andhra Pradesh Fisheries University, former MP and board member of ANGRAU Yelamanchili Shivaji and former University officers were attended. The chief guest Lovu Srikrishna Devarayulu addressed the gathering and said the University is a world class institution, but coordination and collaboration between departments is much more established to reach farmer grassroot level. Scientists must do research on doubling of farmers income by reducing the cost of cultivation. The guest of honour Julakanti Brahmananda Reddy explained the challenges faced by the Palnadu farmers, especially in Redgram, cotton, and chilli and mentioned

the need for alternate crops, in particular Horticulture crops should be introduced to stabilize the former income.

TFMC with aid of CtrlS donates 50 laptops to AP Cyber Police

GNS News Agency, April 30In a significant step toward strengthening cyber security infrastructure, the Telangana Facility Management Council (TFMC), with support from CtrlS, has donated 50 laptops to the Andhra Pradesh Cyber Police under the Suraksha Initiative. These laptops will be used to train staff and support operations in the ongoing fight against cyber crime.

The laptops were formally handed over to Harish Kumar Gupta, IPS, Director General of Police, Andhra Pradesh. S.V. Raja Sekhara Babu, IPS, Commissioner of Police, Vijayawada was also present on the occasion. The handover took place under the leadership of Rajiv Trivedi, IPS (Retd), Director at Hyderabad-based CtrlS Datacenters Ltd and Satyanarayana Mathala, President of TFMC.

IDEATHON-2025 held at Competitions “at Sri Padmavati Mahila University (SPMVV)““



April 30, Indian Chronicle Rayalaseema co-ordinator” Sri Padmavati Mahila University, Tirupati organized an innovation demonstration competition on the theme “IDEATHON-2025 “Innovations for a Sustainable Environment” under the auspices of “PM-USHA, Activity-24” in collaboration with (TOCIC) (DSIR-PRISM), New Delhi. (TOCIC) (DSIR-PRISM) Coordinator Prof. P. Josthna and Co-Coordinator Prof. D. Sujatha were the organizers of this program“The program was inaugurated by Prof. H.N. Chanakya, Principal Scientist, Centre for Sustainable Technologies, IISc Bangalore. They were Delivered a motivational keynote address on sustainable resource utilization for conservation. His speech inspired the young talents to think about technological solutions with a scientific focus.”90 participants, formed into 51 teams from various departments of various educational institutions across the country, participated. To make the competition more targeted, the teams



were divided into three categories: Life Sciences, Multidisciplinary and Engineering.“A panel of eminent judges was formed to evaluate the competition: Dr. Mamilla Ravishankar (IIT Tirupati), Dr. Ambarish Saxena (IJER Tirupati), P. Shivaji (Environmental, Tirupati), Prof. J. Katayani, Prof. M. Vidyavati, Dr. J. Surya Kumar (CEO TBI, Tirupati). The teams’ innovations were evaluated on the criteria of innovation, feasibility and social impact.“ The top three teams in each category were awarded cash prizes — ₹10,000 for first prize, ₹6,000 for second prize and ₹3,000 for third prize. In addition, a special judges’ prize of ₹1,000 was also presented at the valedictory function. The function was presided over by Prof. N. Rajani, Registrar, SPMVV.““Ideathon-2025” was a dynamic platform to develop creativity, interdisciplinary coordination and entrepreneurial thinking among young innovators. The university is committed to supporting such sustainable, scientific and socially responsible initiatives in the future.

Operation Kagar should be stopped immediately “–

Peace measures should be taken with the Maoists

– Spokesperson of the United Forum of Tribal, Tribal and Public Associations, Tudumbe State President Vattam Upender “



“Mulugu, Mahipal, Indian Chronicle : Spokesperson of Tribal, Tribal and Public Associations, Tudumbe State President Vattam Upender demanded that the Central Government immediately stop Operation Kagar on the Telangana -Chhattisgarh border and take steps to ensure peace in the green forests by holding talks with Maoist representatives. He said that killing innocent tribals in the agency in the name of Maoists is a heinous act. A huge peace rally was organized by tribal associations on Wednesday from the DLR Function Hall in Mulugu to the Collectorate via the National Highway, demanding that Operation Kagar be stopped. They protested in front of the Collectorate, raising slogans against the central government. Later, they handed over petitions to Collector Diwakara TS and Minister Seethakka at the camp office and demanded that they report to the state government. Speaking on this occasion, Tudumbe State President Vattam Upender asked for a stop to the war in Karregutta under the name of Operation Kagar, the withdrawal of central forces, and peaceful action with the Maoists. He said that the central and state governments are jointly implementing a military operation under the name of Operation Kagar to eliminate Naxalites in the tribal areas of Chhattisgarh, and due to this, the tribals are facing many difficulties. He said that many people from the villages have had to flee to the lowlands due to fear of the police. He said that many youths have migrated to other areas and are living a miserable life without basic living facilities. He said that there is a situation where children die due to lack of drinking water during the summer. The Maoist party has announced that it is ready for talks for the development of Chhattisgarh, and he asked the government to come forward and hold talks and provide security to the



tribals. For this, he asked the Telangana state government to also take the initiative and work to solve the problem. He requested that pressure be brought to bear on the central government to stop Operation Kagar. Minister Seethakka also responded positively and said that he would discuss with the government and write a letter to the center. On this occasion, he handed over a petition with several demands. He asked the government to take steps to stop the combing of central police forces in the border villages of Telangana, to take initiatives to provide employment, food security and medical facilities to the people of the tribal villages in the low-lying areas of the border, and to take steps to prevent internal migration to solve the hunger problem of the people there. The program was attended by Thudum Deba National Convener Ramanala Lakshmaiah, Gor Sabha National President Jai Singh Rathod, Thudum Deba State General Secretary Kabbaka Shraavan Kumar, Pesa Discussion Committee Member Soma Ramamurthy, Mulugu District Sadhana Samiti President Munjala Bhikshapati, Tribal Democratic Federation State President Uday Singh, Thudum Deba State Vice President Gumpidi Venkateswarlu, LHPS State General Secretary Sammayya Rathod, MRPS National Leaders Nemali Narsayya, Indian Constitution Preservation Leaders Jannu Ravi, Medaram Trust Board Chairman Arrem Lachu Patel, ASU State President Koppula Ravi, Irpa Sunil, Thudum Deba State Vice President Vattam Kannaya, State Secretaries Chinta Krishna, Poonem Balakrishna, New Democracy Mulugu In-charge Kodi Somanna, Mulugu, Bhadradi and Kothagudem district presidents Vattam Janardhan, Duggarap Veerabhadram and others participated.”[6:40 pm, 30/4/2025] +91 98485 52224:

Retirement is natural for government employees

“– Services rendered will remain with the people“

– State Minister Seethakka at the SI retirement program“– SP Shabarish felicitated four retired police officers““



who have completed their service, their experience and services will remain very inspiring for future generations. He wished that he would spend his future life happily with his family members after retirement. Congress District President Paidakula Ashok, District Library Chairman Banoth Ravichander and leaders participated in this program. ““– SP bids farewell to retired police employees““District SP Dr. P. Shabarish felicitated four police officers who retired from the Mulugu District Police Department on Wednesday after completing their service. SI P. Lakshma Reddy, ASI B. Ravinder, who is working at PCR, AR Head Constable S.D. Kaja Moinuddin, who is working at AR Headquarters, and Head Constable V. Rama Rao, who is working at Eturu Nagaram PS, were felicitated with felicitates by the SP. He said that they have worked with dedication in their job and have earned the respect of everyone. He said that the service of the personnel who have served in the police department for a long time and retired should not be forgotten, and that those who have retired can contact him if they have any problem in the police family.

CID, TG apprehends accused in Multi-Level Marketing fraud

Hyderabad, April 30 : The facts of the case are that on the complaint of one Kodala Bhadraraj resident of Chital (V) & (M) of JS Bhupalipally that one Lalith Mohan Varma, Chairman & Managing Director of Maya Care Welfare Society of Uttar Pradesh started online web Multi-Level Marketing business in the name of Maya Care Welfare Society under binary system and induced around 400 innocent people and unemployed youth and collected around Rs five crore on the promise of high returns and cheated them. Based on the complaint, a case Cr.No.04/2021 U/s 420,IPC, Sec. 3/r/w 4 and 5 of Prized Chits and Money Circulations (Banning) Act, 1978 of PS CID, Telangana State, Hyderabad was registered and investigated into.

GOVERNMENT SCHOOL STUDENTS IN MANTHANI MANDAL SET NEW BENCHMARKS IN SSC RESULTS.



“ “ P S ASHOKAN “INDIAN CHRONICLE“MANTHANI MAY 1.”“In a remarkable display of academic excellence, students from government schools across Manthani Mandal have achieved exceptional results in the recently declared SSC (10th Class) examinations.

Their stellar performances have set a new benchmark for educational achievement in the region.”“The top scorers include:”“Boys’ High School, Manthani”“Suthari Sathvik Raj – 562/600”“Bera Aditya Tej – 561/600”“Girls’ High School, Manthani”“Avadhanula Sanjana – 561/

520/600”“ZPHS Arenda High School”“Bandari Siri – 510/600”“Jangaon High School”“Ch. Ran – 503/600”“These outstanding achievements reflect the unwavering commitment to excellence displayed by the students, the dedicated faculty, and the strong support from the parents. The results are a testament to the high standards of education maintained in government schools across the Mandal. The exceptional performance of these students has not only brought pride to their respective institutions but has also set a new standard for academic success in Manthani Mandal.

600”“Eklaspur High School”“N. Lakshmi Prasanna – 544/600”“N. Indu – 530/600”“B. Sneha – 521/600”“B. Akshaya – 509/600”“Gunjapadugu High School”“K. Rishitha – 530/600”“U. Ravikumar – 528/600”“Kannala High School”“K. Charan Teja –

Shine Educational Institutions secured 100% results in SSC“““* Chairman Kumar Yadav honored students““



Hanumakonda, April 30 (Indian Chronicle)::”“Shine Educational Institution students scored 100% results in SSC public examinations. Students have shown their best talent in the ten results released today and that Shine is not just IIT, but we have once again proved that we will once again prove that we will be ahead of all sectors. Kumar Yadav said that the highest in the district is 588 Aditya Dixit, 580 Gana Deep, 579 Hassini, Manikantha, Rincha Jainab, 578 Sai Sri, 577 Mani Chandana, 576 Karthika, Trishika Patel, 575 Sampri, 574 Rajesh and 23 students in 570 studentsIt



is said that they are in the front row. Kumar Yadav, Chairman of Shine Educational Institutions, congratulated the student. Directors P Rajendra Kumar and Mukula Rama said that there are sign students in every prestigious college in the country and that the new community is the goal of building a new community by providing personal attention to every student. IIT Coordinator Mukula Ramesh and Shine Erragattu Gutta Chairman J. Srinivas, Principals G. Raj Kumar, P. Vishal, Pragati Reddy, Kavitha Rani, Teachers' Team, Parents of Students, Students and others participated.

Mulugu district rank 8th at the state level in 10th results “– Students who passed 97.64 percent



“Mulugu, Mahipal, Indian Chronicle: 10th class results were announced on Wednesday and Mulugu district stood at the 8th position at the state level with a pass percentage of 97.64 said DEO G. Panini. On this occasion, he congratulated the students who achieved the best results. It was revealed that 3060 out of 3134 students passed for the 2024-25 academic year.

District Education Officer Panini expressed happiness over standing at the eighth position and congratulated the officers, principals and teachers who worked hard to achieve the best results. Meanwhile, S. Varshit, a student of Jakaram Social Welfare High School in the district, secured 575/600 marks and stood first in the district, said MEO Vajja Tirupati. It was revealed that Jangalapally Brahmani School student Chela Gautham scored 571 marks and KGBV student Nandini scored 562 marks.”[7:33 pm, 30/4/2025] +91 98485 52224:

Trivi High School students secured best ranks in SSC results“



“Warangal Bureau, April 30 (Indian Chronicle) :”“Trivi' High School students in the tenth results secured best scores. Trivi High School students have achieved their best results in tenth grade results. They have proved their success. The student Ayesha Taharin were ranked first in the school with 579 marks. S Praveen Kumar - 561, B. Sai Akhil - 556, M. Lasya - 552, E. Niharika - 546, D. Abhinaya - 536, P. Rudwik - 527, KPrem Sounds - 525, CH. Varsha - 518, N. Varun Teja - 518, K. Bhavani - 516, CH. Mani Chandana - 515, K Dinesh - 509, A. Swetha -505 achieved. Along with them, 30 students have scored in first grade marks and 100% have passed school directors said. School ownership and parents congratulate the students who have achieved amazing achievements.

IMD Hyderabad issues thunderstorm warning for next five days in Telangana

GNS News Agency, April 30

Hyderabad: Amidst searing temperatures in the State, the Indian Meteorological Department (IMD) Hyderabad on Wednesday issued a thunderstorm warning accompanied by gusty winds over the next five days. However, an orange heat wave alert was also issued for 17 districts which are expected to experience temperatures between 41 degree Celsius and 44 degree Celsius.Between Tuesday and Wednesday, intense heat wave like conditions prevailed in most parts of Telangana. A day temperature of 45.2 degree Celsius was recorded at Adilabad and several parts of Jagtial, Nizamabad, Nirmal, Karimnagar and Peddapalli, recorded temperatures between 44 degree Celsius and 44.9 degree Celsius.In Hyderabad, the maximum temperature hovered between 41 degree Celsius and 41.9 degree Celsius. However, Hyderabad, Medchal-Malkajigiri and Rangareddy districts will get some reprieve due to thunderstorms and windy conditions.The five-day thunderstorms warning has been issued for Adilabad, Kumram Bheem Asifabad, Mancherial, Nirmal, Nizamabad, Jagtial, Rajanna Sirsilla, Karimnagar, Peddapalli, Jayashankar Bhupalapally, Mulugu, Bhadradi Kothagudem, Khammam, Nalgonda, Suryapet, Mahabubabad, Warangal, Hanamkonda,



Jangaon, Siddipet, Yadadri Bhuvangiri, Rangareddy, Medchal Malkajigiri Rangareddy, Hyderabad, Medchal Malkajigiri, Vikarabad, Mahabubnagar, Nagarkurnool, Wanaparthi, Narayanpet and Jogulamba Gadwal.

The districts that will, however continue to witness intense heat wave like conditions include Adilabad, Bhadradi Kothagudem, Jagtial, Jangaon, Jayashankar Bhupalapally, Kamareddy, Karimnagar, Khammam, Kumaram Bheem Asifabad, Medak, Mulugu, Nalgonda, Nirmal, Nizamabad, Peddapalli, Rajanna Sirsilla and Suryapet.

International recognition for Telangana Civil Supplies Corporation

Hyderabad, April 30 : The Telangana State Civil Supplies Corporation has received international recognition for delivering better services in the public distribution system.The international organisation HYM, recognising the decisions taken by Departmental Principle Secretary D.S. Chauhan in providing services to the public by adhering to quality standards, has certified the State Civil Supplies department as meeting international standards and awarded it the ISO certificate. The revolutionary fine rice distribution programme, unprecedented across India, was launched by the Telangana government and delivered to beneficiaries through the public distribution system. The organisation, after studying several reforms brought by the Corporation and its adherence to quality standards, recognised it and awarded the State Corporation the ISO 9001 certificate with a five-star rating. Accordingly, in a special program held at the Civil Supplies Central Office in Erramanzil Colony on Wednesday, Minister for Irrigation and Civil Supplies Uttam Kumar Reddy handed over the certificate to departmental

Principle Secretary D.S. Chauhan.The State Civil Supplies Corporation has achieved this rare certificate in the public distribution system, which no other state in India has obtained.The Minister congratulated Chauhan for shaping the Civil Supplies Corporation to function in a manner that is valid and accepted anywhere in the world. He stated that this is recognition for the collective efforts of the Civil Supplies department staff.

Along with the ISO (9001:2015) certificate, the Corporation achieving a five-star rating reflects the department's performance at an international level, said Principle Secretary D.S. Chauhan.Chauhan stated that this achievement by the Corporation, which is providing excellent services in the public distribution system, will remain a milestone in the history of Telangana Civil Supplies department. He mentioned that it is the policies implemented with commitment by the Corporation that have today received international recognition.

Operation Karregutta: Security forces take control of Dhobey hills in Chhattisgarh's Bijapur

GNS News Agency, April 30

Kothagudem: In a significant development in Operation Karregutta, security forces have taken control of Dhobey hills near Karregutta in Bijapur district of Chhattisgarh.It might be noted that Chhattisgarh's Bastar Fighters, District Reserve Guard, CoBRA and CRPF forces have launched a major offensive as part of Operation Kagar against Maoists on the information that the naxals took shelter on Karregutta hills on the Telangana-Chhattisgarh border.On the ninth day of the anti-naxal operation on Wednesday an Indian Air Force helicopter landed on Dhobey hills where it was planned to establish a base camp for the security forces.Video clips of a helicopter landing on the hills and security personnel waving Indian flags in a celebration akin to capturing a foreign territory were released by the Chhattisgarh Police. Senior officials were said to have reached the spot to take stock of the situation.

The security forces were said to have claimed control of Neelam Saray hills near Karregutta hill range a few days ago. It was said that top Maoists such as Hidma, who leads PLGA battalion No. 1, was among those who took shelter on Karregutta hills. He managed to escape from the area

on learning about the operation.According to sources, Operation Karregutta was planned on the lines of 'Operation Octopus', launched by the CRPF and Jharkhand Police in 2022 to gain control over the heavily mined Burha Pahar hill range in Garhwa district of Jharkhand. In an interesting similarity, CPI (Maoist) Venkatapuram-Wazedu Area Committee secretary Shanta earlier in April claimed that they had planted IEDs on Karregutta hills.It might be recalled that the security forces treading the treacherous Karregutta found a cave, described as the naxals' cave, on the sixth day of the operation. The cave was said to be big enough to give shelter to a thousand persons, but no traces of naxals taking shelter were found in it, except for a Shiva Linga, reportedly worshiped by the local tribal people.In the wake of Operation Karregutta, several political parties as well as people's organisations, besides the CPI (Maoist) appealed to the State and Central governments to declare ceasefire and to hold peace talks. Unmindful of such appeals the government was moving ahead with its anti-naxal offensive.In a recent statement, Maoist Central Committee spokesperson Abhay claimed that as many as 10,000 security personnel surrounded Karregutta and six Maoists were killed in the operation.

100 years of Art Deco Style of architecture celebrated at Raj Bhavan

Hyderabad, April 30 : Raj Bhavan, Hyderabad, in association with Architecture and Design Foundation (India) organized an event on Tuesday evening in Durbar Hall of Raj Bhavan celebrating 100 years of Art Deco Style of architecture.

Raj Bhavan was chosen as a preferred venue, as the Governor's residence itself, is designed in Art deco style, by architect Eric Marrett and was built in 1936. The event commenced with architect Srinivas Murthy, President of Architecture and Design Foundation, conducting the Governor through an exhibition showcasing a detailed documentation of Art Deco architecture of many prominent private and public buildings of the city, including the Raj Bhavan.

Governor Jishnu Dev Varma inaugurated the event with the launch of a special logo symbol for the yearlong celebrations. The symbol, graphically represents the grand staircase of the Main House, which is the official residence of the Governor. This was followed by two presentations by architect Srinivas Murthy, showcasing architecture of Raj Bhavan and other Art Deco buildings of the city, to the invited guests.The keynote address was delivered by

Mumbai-based architect Abha Narain Lambah, presenting her work or documenting the Art Deco Precincts of Mumbai, which enable them getting the coveted World Heritage Listing. She also highlighted the need to prepare and submit Telangana State's nomination for Golkonda-Qutub Shahi Tombs and Charminar precincts to be listed as World Heritage Site.

Speaking on the occasion, the Governor appreciated the work done by the foundation and Abha, in documenting details and importance of such architectural styles and emphasized on the need to preserve and protect such buildings and precincts for prosperity. He said architecture is a unique subject which a culmination of arts as science, mentioned in our ancient texts as combination of Gyan-Vigyana.Special Chief Secretary Jayesh Ranjan (YAT&C Department and Director, Archaeology) and M. Dana Kishore, IAS, Principal Secretary to Governor (FAC) spoke on the occasion. The event was attended by members of arts and cultural fraternity, owners of Art Deco Styled Buildings, students of Architectural Institutions and some prominent architects of the city.

KCR, KTR extend greetings to people for Basaveshwara Jayanti

Hyderabad: BRS chief and former Chief Minister K Chandrashekhra Rao extended greetings to the people of Telangana on the occasion of Basaveshwara Jayanti. He paid rich tributes to the 12th-century social reformer and founder of the Veerashaiva Lingayat tradition.

In a statement, Chandrashekhra Rao remembered Basavanna as a visionary who challenged caste, colour, and gender discrimination through his teachings and actions. He praised Basaveshwara as a revolutionary who worked for social equality and public welfare through spiritual discourse and progressive governance. “His ideals are timeless and serve as a guiding light for all generations,” he said.BRS working president KT Rama Rao also extended wishes to people and remembered Basaveshwara as a pioneer of social justice. He cited Basavanna's famous principle that “the body is the temple and there is no God greater than work.” He said Basaveshwara's teachings on equal-



ity, honesty, and dignity of labour should continue to inspire efforts toward building a just and inclusive society. He urged citizens to draw inspiration from Basavanna's ideals and work collectively to eliminate discrimination and inequality.

Delhi Police bust interstate gang involved in ATM, mobile phone thefts



GNS News Agency, April 30

The Delhi Police have busted an interstate gang involved in a string of high-profile ATM and mobile phone showroom thefts. In a special operation, the police arrested two men, including the kingpin, Farman, and his close associate Asif and confiscated a stolen ATM machine, and a car, along with tools, and fake number plates used in the thefts, the police said. The police launched an investigation following the theft of an ATM machine from a Kotak Mahindra ATM booth in Govindpuri on March 27. Through extensive CCTV footage analysis and deployment of local informers, the team identified the prime suspects — Farman and Asif. A special force tracked the movements of the accused in several states and nabbed the accused following raids in Joya Amroha in Uttar Pradesh and areas of Delhi.

During interrogation, the duo allegedly confessed to the ATM theft, apart from their involvement in several other burglaries in Chhawla, Ghazipur, and Faridabad, where mobile phones worth approximately Rs 1.8 crore were sto-

len, said the police. They would then sell the stolen phones to another person, said the police, adding that they are working to track the receiver. "The gang, led by Farman, was highly organised and strategic in its criminal operations. The accused would typically operate during late night hours, targeting isolated ATM kiosks located in low-surveillance areas. They would arrive in a stolen vehicle with fake number plates to avoid detection and facilitate escape post-crime," Ravi Kumar, Deputy Commissioner of Police, South East. The officer said the suspects use specially procured tools to remove the ATM machine from the site and then cover it with black polythene sheets to avoid detection during transit. They had a well-coordinated strategy and used swift execution to evade capture, Ravi Kumar said. The gang operated across multiple jurisdictions, including Govindpuri, Chhawla, Ghazipur (Delhi), and Faridabad (Haryana), making it difficult for police to connect cases initially, he said. They avoided staying in one location for long to evade arrest and confuse law enforcement agencies.

According to the police, Farman who initially ran a scrap shop has a criminal history dating back to 2004. He turned to organised crime and has since been involved in at least 25 cases, including murder, attempted murder, burglary, and arms-related offences across Delhi, UP, Rajasthan, and Haryana, the police said. In 2017, Farman along with his associates abducted and murdered one of his gang members and in 2018 opened fire on UP Police in Noida during a police encounter in which he sustained a bullet injury. His accomplice, Asif was formerly a cab driver before joining Farman in 2014. He has been involved in five criminal cases, including murder and burglary, and shares a history of violent crime and theft, the police said.

Officials debunk viral video of ‘scuffle’ at Punjab’s Lalru college, reassure students

GNS News Agency, April 30

"We urge students and the general public not to circulate unverified videos or make speculative statements," said Mohali SP (Headquarters) Ramandeep Singh, addressing concerns after a video from Universal College in Lalru went viral. "There was no communal or regional angle involved. It was a minor scuffle between students during a sports match, and the matter was resolved amicably on the spot." To reassure Kashmiri students in Punjab, SP (PBI) Deepika Singh and DSP Kharar Karan Singh Sandhu visited Rayat Bahra University under the direction of SSP Mohali, Deepak Pareek. The officers assured students of their safety and urged them to contact the 112 helpline for immediate assistance.

In an official statement, SSP Mohali emphasized the administration's commitment to student welfare. "We have reached out to college administrations and students to assure them of their security. PCR vehicles have been stationed around campuses and in areas with private PGs and hostels. Our officers have personally met students to provide support. Dedicated WhatsApp groups have been created for the quick reporting of incidents, along with the 112 helpline, which is active 24x7. No one will be allowed to take the law into their hands," the press note stated. Meanwhile, the video from Universal Group of Institutions in Dera Bassi, which went viral and fueled speculation linking the altercation to recent terror attacks on tourists in Kashmir, has been officially debunked. Authorities confirmed it was merely a brief misunderstanding during a cricket game and was not related to any communal or political issue. According to officials, the incident occurred on



Wednesday evening during a friendly match at the Universal College hostel campus in Lalru. A verbal disagreement between students, including some from Kashmir, escalated into a short-lived physical altercation. The situation was quickly brought under control, and all students involved later reconciled.

To address public concern and curb misinformation, a joint video statement was issued by the college administration, SP Headquarters Ramandeep Singh, and the students involved. In the statement, they clarified that the scuffle had no communal or political motivation and was simply a misunderstanding among peers. Nasir Khuehami, national convener of the J&K Students Association, also appealed for calm. "We have advised students to stay composed and avoid sharing or reacting to unverified content," he said. He urged Kashmiri students to refrain from engaging in online debates that might fuel tension or hurt sentiments.

Delhi HC pulls up Delhi govt for delaying release of finances for judicial officers’ quarters

GNS News Agency, April 30

delhi hc, rabbies, indian expressThe bench of Chief Justice D K Upadhyaya and Justice Tushar Rao Gedela expressed its displeasure at the government's "procrastination" in releasing the funds despite budgetary approval. The Delhi High Court on Thursday pulled up the Delhi government for delaying the release of finances for providing judicial officers with residential accommodation, and recorded that it expects the "government officials to realise the need for decent living conditions and view the same with some sensitivity". The bench of Chief Justice D K Upadhyaya and Justice Tushar Rao Gedela expressed its displeasure at the government's "procrastination" in releasing the funds despite budgetary approval. The court was dealing with petitions highlighting the shortfall in residential flats for members of Delhi's district judiciary. As of November 2024, against the total sanctioned strength of 897 judicial officers, the number of residential flats available at various places was 348, with a deficit of over 500 flats. In March, the Delhi government had told the court that a parcel of land measuring 1 hectare at CBD Ground, Shahdara, has been offered for allotment, but the court was also told by the counsel for the Delhi High Court that on account of the non-release of requisite funds, the construction of the residential flats there has not commenced yet.

The court also recorded that while a proposal for a residential complex at Dwarka is several years old, no decision has been made to ensure the finances. The court also requested that the Delhi Development Authority (DDA) examine if there are flats available with it or with other authorities that could be allotted for use by the judicial officers in the meantime. The bench on Thursday noted the "procrastination in taking decisions for release of funds" despite budgetary allocation being made. Sameer Vashisht, representing the state government, informed the bench that so far as the release of funds for the Dwarka project is concerned, certain construction was made in 2014, but for some reason it was found faulty and was demolished. Vashisht further stated that the issue was deliberated by the government, and it wanted an inquiry into why the demolition had to be undertaken and to fix responsibility on the officers concerned.

Not accepting the argument, the bench on Thursday recorded, "We are unable to comprehend such an approach by the state government. ... Release of funds has nothing to do with the intended inquiry into the earlier construction. Both can go simultaneously as fresh construction in no manner will be any kind of deterrence into inquiry for faulty old construction." The court went on to direct the Delhi government to convene a meeting, granting it three weeks, and to take a "positive decision". It also directed the director of the Institutional Land branch of the DDA to remain present be-



fore the court on the next date of hearing, scheduled for May 29.

Two brothers attacked at Mohali's Kumbhra village over street vendor dispute

GNS News Agency, April 30

Based on the statement of one of the injured victims, the Phase-8 police registered a case of attempt to murder against five individuals, including one identified as Rubal, a neighbour of the victims. Based on the statement of one of the injured victims, the Phase-8 police registered a case of attempt to murder against five individuals, including one identified as Rubal, a neighbour of the victims. A violent clash over setting up a vegetable cart escalated into a murderous attack at Kumbhra village, Mohali, where two brothers were seriously injured. Based on the statement of one of the injured victims, the Phase-8 police registered a case of attempt to murder against five individuals, including one identified as Rubal, a neighbour of the victims. The remaining four attackers were yet to be identified. According to the police, the case was registered under multiple sections of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), including Section 115(2) (voluntarily causing grievous hurt), Section 118 (intentional attack with deadly weapons), Section 109 (attempt to murder), Section 191(3) (participation in a riot), and Section 190 (unlawful assembly for assault). The shocking incident occurred around 7:30 pm in Sector 68, when Kamalpreet Singh, a vegetable vendor, was attacked with sharp-edged weapons by Rubal and his four associates. Kamalpreet, a resident of Kumbhra village, stated that he was setting up his usual vegetable cart while his elder brother Kamaljeet Singh was stationed 200 metres away with his fast food stall.

Suspended Punjab Agri University staffer reinstated; his wife dies of heart attack



GNS News Agency, April 30

The Punjab Agricultural University (PAU), Ludhiana, on Thursday, reinstated a suspended junior lab assistant, days after the campus saw heavy deployment of a police force to thwart a peaceful agitation by employees. Amrik Singh was suspended after he allegedly objected to a ruling Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) leader's presence in the university's parking area in late hours, as "rules don't permit an outsider on the campus". However, days later, on March 27, the employee was suspended "without any explanation".

An order issued by the Registrar on Wednesday reads:

2 schemes, 2 yrs and counting: How Punjab forgot to start crop diversification projects it announced

Even as Punjab seeks to diversify from its paddy-wheat cycle and promote high-value horticulture crops, two key schemes announced by the state government to support this transition remain unimplemented, months and even years after funds were allocated for the same. In its 2024-25 budget, the government announced the Punjab Horticulture Advancement and Sustainable Entrepreneurship (PHASE) scheme with an allocation of Rs 5 crore. In its earlier budget, (in 2023-24), the government had proposed a price risk mitigation scheme titled Bhav Antar Bhugtan Yojana to cushion horticulture growers against market price fluctuations. However, neither has any work started on the ground for the two schemes nor has there been any mention of the two in the recent budget. In 13 years, area under horticulture crops nearly doubled. In 13 years, area under horticulture crops nearly doubled. While the PHASE scheme, launched on March 17, 2024, aimed to encourage entrepreneurship and investment in the horticulture sector and support for small and marginal farmers willing to shift to fruit and vegetable cultivation, the Bhav Antar Bhugtan Yojana promises compensation to farmers when sale price of their produce drops below Minimum Support Price (MSP) or the price fixed by the state.

As part of PHASE, the department announced the formation of a chilli cluster in Ferozepur with the goal of increasing efficiency in the value chain, improving marketing, and encouraging crop diversification. It is learnt that department officials held a few meetings with chilli farmers in Ferozepur, but no significant progress has been made since. Officials have also not been able to clarify a timeline for its implementation. Government sources said that a committee was to be formed to study PHASE scheme, however, to date, no such committee has been constituted. A senior officer in the horticulture department said, "Chilli growers in Punjab have been doing well on their own with minimal government support, but this scheme could have been implemented earlier. The government seems more focused on paperwork than addressing hurdles on the ground."

While Minister for Horticulture Mohinder Bhagat could not be contacted, farm expert Ramandeep Singh said that it seems the government has made it a mandate to announce one such programme in every budget only to forget about it later. "The government has been announcing one 'jumla' after another in the name of diversification, but real diversification remains a distant dream. It's one thing to announce schemes and quite another to deliver them on the ground. Proper implementation needs timely clearances and structural readiness," Ramandeep added. Director of the Horticulture Department Shalinder Kaur said that they are doing their best to implement PHASE scheme as soon as possible. "Several processes are involved, and we are clearing them one by one," she said. Under the Bhav Antar Bhugtan Yojana, crops such as potato, cauliflower, tomato,



and capsicum were shortlisted for MSP coverage, but it was never officially announced. Sources said that the department despite operating at just 25 per cent of its sanctioned strength is pushing farmers for diversification. Over the past decade, the area under horticulture in Punjab has expanded by 42 per cent from 2,78,583 hectares (6.88 lakh acres) in 2011-12 to 482,000 hectares (11.91 lakh acres) in 2023-24.

Horticulture currently accounts for only 6.16% of Punjab's gross cropped area, which stands at 7.826 million hectares. Yet its economic contribution is disproportionately high. According to the state horticulture department, the value of horticultural produce reached Rs 26,580.38 crore in 2023-24, comprising 17.03% of Punjab's agricultural GDP, which totals Rs 1,56,068.46 crore. Despite the rising demand and profitability of fruits, vegetables, and flowers, diversification efforts have consistently been hampered by price volatility, lack of storage and processing infrastructure, and the absence of assured procurement — precisely the challenges the delayed PHASE and Bhav Antar Bhugtan Yojana schemes were designed to address.

Both schemes had offered a ray of hope for farmers battling sudden price crashes. But without timely implementation, their very purpose is defeated, said an officer. As the next paddy season approaches, all eyes are on the government. Stakeholders are keenly awaiting clarity on whether these long-promised schemes will finally see the light of day. Apart from horticultural schemes, a senior official in the Punjab Agriculture Department revealed that the government had also planned to announce MSP for Basmati at Rs 2,625 per quintal. Under this plan, procurement would begin only if market rates fell below the announced MSP. However, despite having drawn up the proposal, MSP was never formally declared. Meanwhile, farmers and agricultural experts are expressing growing concern that repeated delays in implementing such schemes are discouraging farmers from pursuing diversification — a shift considered crucial to tackling Punjab's groundwater crisis and agrarian distress.

Punjab CM Mann switches off day power to farms getting canal water

GNS News Agency, April 30

The agriculture fields, which get canal water, would not be given power for running tubewells during the day-time, Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann Thursday said. Mann, who is facing criticism for advancing the paddy sowing schedule, also expressed dismay over farmers pumping out underground water even when they were being supplied canal water. "Those getting canal water would not get power supply during the day. The farmers get canal water and at the same time switch on their tubewells. You cannot be using both canal and tubewell waters," Mann said.

The CM made the announcement at a state level function while addressing the sarpanchs to honour the panchayats for exemplary works in various fields, in Chandigarh. "Canal water has minerals. It also carries soil. It helps fertility of land. I have now learnt that the they (farmers) switch on the motor even when the canal water is irrigating the fields. Sometimes, even when it rains, the motors are switched on. Now, we have decided that wherever there is canal water supply, power supply would be given only at night. If any part of the field is left for irrigation, the farmers can then irrigate it with tube well water," the CM said. The Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) government had, after coming to power in the state, ensured that eight hours of uninterrupted supply was given to the fields during the day time. Earlier, the power was supplied at night time also. The day-time supply had received accolades from the farmers for the government. CM Mann had earlier announced that the transplantation of paddy would be advanced from June 10 to June 1 in the state. The government has already issued a schedule for this. In Faridkot, Bathinda, Ferozepur, Muktsar, Fazilka, the transplantation will begin from June 1; in Gurdaspur, Pathankot, Amritsar, Tarn Taran, Rupnagar, SAS Nagar, Fateh Garh Sahib, Hoshiarpur from June 5; Ludhiana, Malerkotla, Mansa, Moga, Patiala, Sangrur, Barnala, Kapurthala, Jalandhar and Shaheed Bhagat Singh Nagar from June 9. Several renowned agricultural experts, including Dr SS Johal, Dr GS Khush, and Dr BS Dhillon, have criticised the decision and warned of



environmental consequences.

The Punjab Water Regulation and Development Authority (PWRDA) had recommended delaying paddy transplantation this year. It had set up a research committee headed by Dr Dhillon, which consulted leaders. Suggestions were sought from all government institutions, including PAU, IARI and ICAR. The committee's interim report strongly recommended aligning paddy transplantation with the monsoon, with June 30 being the ideal start date and June 23 being the first step towards that adjustment. Former agriculture secretary Kahan Singh Pannu had said that government's insistence on early transplantation, despite scientific advice, was a "painful" move that was leading Punjab towards desertification. Towards conserving the environment, Mann said that they were working on rejuvenating 15,000 ponds in 12,500 villages. This water would be treated and supplied to the fields to reduce burden on underground water. Mann said that at the time when he had assumed the charge of office only 21% canal water was being used in the state for irrigation purposes. However, he said that it is a matter of great pride and satisfaction that today 75% of the canal water is being used for irrigation purposes. The CM said that it also reduces the burden on the power sector thereby enabling the state government to provide uninterrupted electricity to every sector.

Under scanner for parking violations, GMADA to issue final notices to private hospitals, allotments may be cancelled



GNS News Agency, April 30

The Greater Mohali Area Development Authority (GMADA) is preparing to issue final notices to several private hospitals in Mohali for violating basement parking regulations. According to officials, these hospitals were allotted basement space specifically for parking, but instead, the areas have been repurposed for commercial activities, resulting in overcrowded streets and significant parking chaos outside hospital premises posing serious safety hazards.

These notices are being issued under Section 45(3) of the Punjab Regional Town Planning and Development Act, 1995. Despite already receiving three warnings, the responses submitted by the hospitals have failed to satisfy GMADA officials. This issue was also raised by Mohali MLA

Kulwant Singh during a legislative Assembly session. He pointed out that while hospitals were given permission to create basement parking, they flouted the rules by turning the space into commercial use, pushing vehicle parking onto public roads and creating severe traffic disruption.

The GMADA's estate officer (housing), Shivraj Singh Bal, stated that prominent hospitals such as Fortis, Max, Ivy, Indus, Mayo, and Grecian have all been served notices. "Though we've received varied responses from these institutions, none has been satisfactory. We are now moving towards issuing final notices. If compliance is not ensured, GMADA will initiate proceedings to cancel their allotments," he said. In a separate development, Cheema Medical Complex, located in Phase 4, Mohali, has also received a notice for violating building bylaws.

According to GMADA's building branch, the hospital constructed a basement without having the layout map approved. It also encroached on the green belt and constructed a gate in violation of rules. Reports reveal that rooms were illegally built in the basement, the rear area was covered, and even parts of the designated parking and green space were encroached upon. The notice mandates that the unauthorised construction be removed immediately and GMADA be informed. Failure to comply will result in legal proceedings under applicable regulations. Shivraj Singh Bal also confirmed that a reminder has been sent to the District Town Planning Office to obtain zoning details of the hospital, following which further action will be determined.

Punjab Sikhya Kranti plaques ‘fiasco’: AAP govt corrects course — one plaque for all works

GNS News Agency, April 30

From viral photos of ministers and MLAs inaugurating plaques for repaired toilets in government schools to Opposition parties and social media users uploading memes and reels dubbing the "Sikhya Kranti" campaign as "Udghatan Kranti" (inauguration kranti) — the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) government in Punjab has finally made some course correction in its "education revolution" drive. Teachers in several districts received fresh orders on their official WhatsApp groups, stating that from now on, only one inaugural plaque/stone will be installed in each school, even if multiple works have to be inaugurated.

Since its launch on April 7, the 54-day drive has been mired in controversies from day one for different reasons. During this period, the AAP government has to inaugurate at least 25,000 big/small development works in over 12,000 government schools of Punjab and Education Secretary Anindita Mitra ordered a separate plaque for each work. "Separate inaugural plaques are required to be made for each completed project, i.e. separate for boundary wall, separate for classroom, etc..." The size of the plaque shall be 30"×24" and shall be made of granite. Further, it is required to be ensured that the inaugural plaque is placed/fixed at a place where it is properly visible e.g. plaque of the boundary wall shall be fixed near the gate on the outer side, the plaque of the classroom/laboratory/toilet shall be placed on its wall where it is prominently visible," reads Mitra's April 3 order.

However, as soon as the drive started on April 7, and the photos of plaques crediting Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann and Education Minister Harjot Bains for repaired toilets went viral, it drew flak from several quarters, including the public, and came a fresh order that teachers should not get plaques installed for toilets. Senior SAD leader Bikram Singh Majithia posted a photo of a plaque and wrote, "Is the renovation of toilets an educational revolution? Punjabis will always remember this education revolution in the future." The inauguration functions, inviting MLAs and ministers as chief guests, cost at least Rs 20 crore to the government. Of the total budget, Rs 12 crore was estimated to be for plaques alone. BJP leader and Union minister Ravneet Singh Bittu posted on X: "Where the national home is meant to be written with pride, AAP shamelessly put an inauguration plaque instead. This isn't just disrespect- it's a stain on our national identity. Bhagwant Mann and Kuldeep Dhaliwal must



apologise first. The nation comes first."

The government was severely criticised for plaques installed for repaired toilets went viral; in a school in Amritsar district, a plaque was installed covering the national anthem on the wall; in Ludhiana, MLA Madan Lal Bagga inaugurated repaired toilets where curtains were installed to hide incomplete work; and, in Bathinda's Maur, villagers did not allow the local MLA to inaugurate a boundary wall, which they alleged was "four years old", among others. In Government Primary School, Beed Talaab Basti 4-5 in Bathinda district, an inaugural plaque for a new classroom was plastered on a notice board. Photos of AAP leader Navdeep Singh Jeeda, also the chairman SUGARFED, unveiling a plaque plastered on the school's green notice board, went viral on social media, drawing flak from the Opposition and others. As videos of ministers and MLAs inaugurating even up to five plaques in one school went viral, social media users slammed the AAP government for spending crores on plaques alone, even for repairing toilets, boundary walls, etc.

Congress MLA and leader of the Opposition Partap Singh Bajwa said, "Punjab's Sikhya Kranti reeks of a plaque scam. Welcome to 'ribbon kranti' where political photo-ops shine brighter than classroom lights... when nameplates outnumber notebooks and inaugurations outshine infrastructure." Confirming that a fresh order has been received to install just one plaque from now on, a teacher from Ludhiana said, "Had this been done earlier, the education department would not have become a subject of mockery. The damage has been done, and the effort behind the entire drive goes in vain owing to this plaque fiasco."

Bodyguard arrested in case of firing at former underworld operative Muthappa Rai's son Ricky Rai near Bengaluru

GNS News Agency, April 30

A personal security guard has been arrested in connection with the April 19 firing at the car of deceased Bengaluru don Muthappa Rai's son Ricky Rai, 35, outside his farmhouse in Bidadi on the outskirts of Bengaluru. A senior police official in the Ramanagara region said that Vittal Monappa, 45, a gunman in the security detail for Ricky Rai, had been placed under arrest for the firing in what is alleged to be an attempt to murder Ricky Rai. "We have found evidence to link the suspect to the firing. We are yet to ascertain the motive for the firing," a Ramanagara police official said. Sources termed the attack as a fallout of disputes over properties amassed by Muthappa Rai during his lifetime. Incidentally, Ricky Rai was shot near the farmhouse he inherited from his father. Ricky Rai suffered injuries to his nose and right shoulder after bullets fired from what is suspected to be a shotgun pierced through the front door beside the driver's seat of his Toyota Fortuner car. Ricky Rai was reportedly sitting in the rear seat behind the driver.

After the firing incident, the police had seized all the weapons available with the security entourage of Ricky Rai. The investigations have revealed that the gunshots were fired from a shotgun used by one of the guards. Sources said that the police were investigating whether rivals of Ricky Rai had penetrated his security entourage to shift loyalty and execute the shooting. Ricky Rai's driver, Basavaraju, who filed the complaint with the Bidadi police after the shooting incident, alleged that Muthappa Rai's second wife, Anuradha Muthappa Rai, his former associate-turned-foe Rakesh Malli, and real estate businessman Nitesh Shetty were behind the firing incident.

On April 22, the Ramanagara police questioned Rakesh Malli, who is now a Congress leader, in connection with the firing. Malli had a falling out with Muthappa Rai prior to Rai's death over properties held by the underworld



"We have found evidence to link the suspect to the firing. We are yet to ascertain the motive for the firing," a Ramanagara police official said.

operative. Meanwhile, Anuradha Muthappa Rai, 52, approached the Karnataka High Court this week after she was named as an accused in the alleged firing at the car of Ricky Rai. The high court in an interim order on Tuesday said the police can "proceed with the investigation in accordance with law and shall not summon the petitioner without following due process of law." The high court also said that the police "shall not take any coercive action" against Anuradha Muthappa Rai till the next date of hearing if she co-operates with the investigation. In her writ petition, Anuradha Muthappa Rai has sought the quashing of the First Information Report registered against her at the Bidadi police station over the firing at Ricky Rai.

To earn more revenue, DDA to turn to licence model of land disposal



GNS News Agency, April 30

land disposal, model of land disposal, DDA, Delhi Development Authority (DDA), recurring income, delhi news, India news, Indian express, current affairs The government agency attributes the increased demand for housing inventory to reforms such as undertaking a first-come-first-served model, scrapping ownership restrictions, and launching a professional marketing strategy. With available land parcels at its disposal shrinking rapidly, the Delhi Development Authority (DDA) is turning to a license-based model for land disposal. This model allows the agency to retain land ownership and is being posited as a more sustainable source of recurring income, said the DDA in a statement.

the land-owning agency approved its annual budget, which projected that it would receive Rs 9,560 crore and spend Rs 8,720 crore in the financial year (FY) 2025-26. This is a surplus of Rs 840 crore, an increase of more than 125% from last year's surplus of Rs 340 crore. The DDA also expects to earn Rs 4,000 crore from house sales in 2025-26 — a massive six-fold increase from Rs 664 crore

in 2022-23, and a 26% rise over the Rs 3,176 crore it earned in 2024-25 from selling flats. The government agency attributes the increased demand for housing inventory to reforms such as undertaking a first-come-first-served model, scrapping ownership restrictions, and launching a professional marketing strategy. Meanwhile, new projects announced in the Budget include a sports complex in Narela worth Rs 250 crore and a multi-level car park at Netaji Subhaji Place worth Rs 38 crore. Around Rs 100 crore will also be spent on the ongoing construction of Bharat Vandana Park in Dwarka. Rs 35 crore has been set aside for in-situ slum rehabilitation projects, out of the Rs 4,140 crore earmarked for capital expenditure. Thursday's meeting was chaired by L-G V K Saxena, who is also the DDA chairman. "The L-G said the Authority will undertake several developmental projects during the current financial year... that will focus on better housing, aesthetic upgradation of the landscape, and restoration and preservation of the Capital's heritage," a statement from the DDA noted.

These are to be developed on a licence-fee basis. The DDA has set an ambitious target of Rs 1,000 crore in licence fee collections for 2025-26 — a sharp jump compared to past financial years. Other decisions taken in the meeting include approval of a 10% hike in land rates for leasehold-to-freehold conversion of commercial, industrial, and multilevel parking properties for 2025-26 and raising the pre-determined rates (PDRs) for plot and flat allotments in developed areas by 10%. In another move, the DDA cleared the change of land use for a 1.41-hectare area at Minto Road from 'Recreational' to 'Residential' for a MCD staff quarters. Additionally, it extended the timeline for layout plans and approvals for industrial cluster redevelopment in non-conforming areas, with the final redevelopment deadline now set for July 31, 2029.

Minister's move to curb waterlogging in Delhi: Ready suspension orders of PWD engineers, issue them in case of lapses

GNS News Agency, April 30

PWD Minister Parvesh Sahib Singh Thursday directed the department to prepare suspension orders in advance for 335 assistant and junior engineers, to be issued if, during monsoon, waterlogging occurs in areas where these officials have been appointed as local in-charges. The minister issued the direction after a high-level meeting held by Chief Minister Rekha Gupta on monsoon preparation. "Freeing Delhi from waterlogging is not just a goal, it is our responsibility. We've made engineers accountable at every point, and we have clearly instructed them that any negligence will result in suspension," Singh said.

"A total of 335 waterlogging hotspots have been identified and engineers have been appointed as local in-charges of these sites. I have directed the department to prepare their suspension orders in advance... if any official is found not doing his work or waterlogging occurring in his area, the official will be suspended immediately," he added. "These engineers are responsible for monitoring water drainage systems, equipment availability, site supervision, and emergency response. They are tasked with ensuring all necessary preparations are completed well before the monsoon." According to PWD, 308 waterlogging points were identified in 2023, which had dropped to 194 in 2024. As per the traffic police's data this year, 445 waterlogging points have been identified across the city. Besides, there are seven critical hotspots, which will be directly monitored by the engineer-in-chief. Singh further said a project engineer has been designated as the "review officer" who will oversee the entire system and compile reports. Additionally, pump operators will be deployed in three shifts, 24X7, at



each waterlogging-prone area. "Temporary accommodation will be arranged for these operators near the waterlogging-prone area during monsoon so that they can take immediate action when needed," he added.

The CM, in the high-level meeting, directed all nodal officers appointed at each waterlogging point to submit concrete action plans for their respective areas within a week. The PWD was also directed to conduct a comprehensive survey. "The Delhi government has already initiated preparations on a war footing before the monsoon. Intensive cleaning of drains, repair and reconstruction of the drainage system, and monitoring arrangements — the government is working on every necessary aspect. The government's key aim is to ensure the public does not face any inconvenience this monsoon," Gupta said. On desilting of drains, officials added that 50 km of drains have been desilted and the rest will be completed by May 31.

50% of 7,600 potholes repaired across Delhi, work to finish by May end: PWD

GNS News Agency, April 30

Work to repair broken and pothole-riddled roads — a key promise made by the BJP during the run-up to the Delhi Assembly polls — is in full swing across the Capital. Till April 23, government data shows, the Public Works Department (PWD) has repaired 50% — or 4,003 — of the 7,678 potholes identified on roads under its jurisdiction. Data also shows that a large number of potholes were identified in the East Zone at 3,213; the North Zone at 2,310; and the South Zone at 2,155. In these three zones, there are 17 road divisions under the PWD. Of the total road divisions, the largest number of potholes has been identified in Shahdara (1,196), followed by Central and New Delhi road divisions at 710, Shahjahanabad Redevelopment Road Division 1 at 650, and South Road 2 at 527. In the East Zone, 1,074 potholes are yet to be repaired. The figure is 2,228 in the North Zone and 1,130 in the South.

A senior PWD official said, "Both the Chief Minister and PWD Minister have given strict instructions to repair potholes before the BJP government in Delhi completes 100 days in power... The department has been asked to submit daily reports on the repair of roads and potholes... We

have different target dates for repairing potholes in each area. For instance, the targeted date to repair roads in Southwest, Northwest, and West Delhi is May 5... Repairs in other road divisions are to be finished by May 15 and May 31... Before the end of May, all potholes will be repaired." The PWD is also working on a war footing to carry out patchwork — laying a new layer of bitumen — on 6.19 lakh sqm of damaged and broken roads and pavements. According to data from the PWD, a total area of 3.59 lakh sqm of broken and damaged roads that needed patchwork was identified. Of this, 40,824 sqm has been repaired.

Data shows that a large number of poor roads were identified in the East Zone, followed by the South

and North zones. "Work on some of these stretches has been completed... Divisions where work is yet to start have been directed to expedite the process and are awaiting approval... All patchwork will be done by May end," said officials. The BJP government also has a target to repair 101 stretches, spread across 250 km of key arterial roads, before monsoon. Some key roads, like Noida Link Road, which connects Central Delhi and Noida, have been repaired. Work on other key stretches, such as the Akshardham flyover, R K Puram, and Vikas Marg, among others, is in progress. The state of city roads was one of the major issues raised by the residents during the Assembly polls. During campaigning,



Amidst regional ferment, Kurds' quest for statehood



primarily because several of the original circumstances that prevailed when the treaty was formed had changed. Among them were, changes in the population structure, water requirements, the threat from climate-related cataclysms and 'cross border terrorism' were among the reasons India cited to renegotiate the six-decade-old treaty. Under the terms of the IWT, India cannot create significant hydropower storage on the Western rivers – Indus, Jhelum, Chenab – and must maintain water levels at prescribed levels, to ensure that no untoward flooding or disruption of Pakistan's agriculture happens. Its prominent hydropower projects on these rivers such as the Kishenganga project, Baglihar project are run-of-the-river, meaning diverting the flow of the river to generate electricity. These projects do not halt the flow of the river via creating storage structures, though in nearly all of the disputes over the years regarding developing hydropower projects, Pakistan has accused India of modifying the design of structures to be able to perniciously control the flows of the rivers with India then clarifying that its intentions were purely to keep the projects running in optimal conditions. "For India to weaponise the waters of the Indus, it has to completely ignore the IWT. Under the current terms of the treaty, this can't be done," a scientist affiliated to the Central Water Commission. Following the Pahalgam attack, sources have told The Hindu that India will explore "options that it has never considered" under the Indus Waters Treaty (IWT). This could include withdrawing from talks around evolving a new 'Dispute Resolution Mechanism,' change the design of its hydropower electric projects to allow it to store greater quantities of water and deploy 'draw down flushing' of its reservoirs.

India may be first to sign trade deal, says US Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent



India-US Trade Agreement: US Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent has said that India is likely to become the first nation to finalise a bilateral trade agreement with the US — a development that would help New Delhi sidestep the 26 per cent reciprocal tariffs that have been paused till July.

According to a New York Post report, Bessent told a group of journalists on Wednesday that trade talks with India are “very close” to reaching a successful conclusion as it doesn’t have “so many high tariffs.” “India also has fewer non-tariff trade barriers, obviously, no currency manipulation, very, very little government subsidies, so reaching a

deal with the Indians is much easier,” he said. A bilateral trade agreement (BTA) between India and the US, proposed during Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s meeting with US President Donald Trump in Washington in February, seeks to more than double trade to \$500 billion by 2030 from over \$190 billion at present.

The first in-person meeting between the chief negotiators of India and the US got underway in Washington on Wednesday, after the finalisation of the terms of reference for the BTA. Both sides are seeking to iron out issues for a faster deal over three days. The Indian team led by chief negotiator Rajesh Agrawal left for the US earlier this week. Both sides are attempting to cover as much ground as possible to reach some kind of an interim trade agreement or understanding with the US before the 90-day pause on the 26 per cent reciprocal tariffs expires in early July. India, along with other nations, continues to face a 10 per cent tariff under the prevailing US trade policy. Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, who was in the US earlier this week, said India hoped to “conclude positively” the first tranche of the BTA with the US by the fall of this year. “We are one of the countries which actively engaged with the new administration in the United States of America to see how best we can get a bilateral trade agreement done,” she said, addressing the Indian diaspora in San Francisco.

Pakistan airspace closure to hit Indian carriers as flight durations, fuel burn, cost for west-bound flights set to jump

India-Pakistan News: With Pakistan closing off its airspace to Indian carriers on Thursday, airlines now face longer durations and higher fuel burn for westward international flights taking off from north India — factors that could lead to a hike in airfares. The Indian Express’s review of recent flight paths of numerous international flights departing from the Delhi airport suggests Pakistan’s retaliatory action will affect Indian carriers’ flights to Central Asia, the Caucasus, West Asia, Europe, the UK and North America.

According to industry insiders, while it is still too early to assess the impact, the airlines’ costs are bound to rise and could translate into higher airfares. Additionally, as airlines from other countries can continue to overfly Pakistan, they may get a cost advantage over Indian airlines on the affected routes. The last time Pakistan closed its airspace for an extended period — in 2019, following the Balakot airstrikes — Indian airlines lost around `700 crore owing to higher fuel expenses and operational complications that came with the longer routes.

Air India was the worst-affected Indian carrier at the time, as it operated more west-bound international flights than other airlines. It was and continues to be the only Indian airline that operates long-haul and ultra-long-haul flights to Europe and North America. “Due to the announced restriction of Pakistan airspace for all Indian airlines, it is expected that some Air India flights to or from North America, UK, Europe, and Middle East will take an alternative extended route. Air India regrets the inconvenience caused to our passengers due to this unforeseen airspace closure that is outside our control. We would like to reiterate that at Air India, the safety of our customers and crew remains top priority,” the Tata group airline posted on X. Due to the announced restriction of Pakistan airspace for all Indian airlines, it is expected that some Air India flights to or from North America, UK, Europe, and Middle East will take an alternative extended route. Air India regrets the inconvenience caused... In its initial reaction, India’s largest airline, IndiGo, issued a travel advisory to passengers. Over the past two years, IndiGo has rapidly expanded its international network by launching flights to Central Asia and the Caucasus region bordering Europe — with several places in these regions turning into popular tourist destinations for Indians. “Due to the sudden announcement of air space closure by Pakistan, a few of our international flights are being impacted. We understand the inconvenience this may cause and our teams are doing their best to help you reach your destination at the earliest. We encourage you to check the latest flight status. If your flight is impacted, please explore flexible rebooking options, or claim a refund through



our website,” IndiGo said. IndiGo extended the duration of its Thursday evening flights from Delhi to Baku and Tbilisi by around one-and-a-half hours, and cancelled its Delhi-Almaty flight.

Indian carriers have so far not commented on the likely financial impact of Pakistan’s move. According to sources, the airlines are in the process of assessing the initial impact and are currently focused on realignment of the routes that will be hit. Airlines from airports in north India, including Delhi, Lucknow and Amritsar, will now likely have to take a detour to Gujarat or Maharashtra and then turn right for Europe, North America or West Asia. A clearer picture of the impact — financial as well as operational — will likely emerge over the next few days. All major Indian airlines operate international flights to destinations to the west of the country, and many of these flights routinely overfly Pakistan.

Air India operates flights to West Asia, Europe, the UK and North America, while IndiGo operates flights to West Asia, Turkey, the Caucasus and Central Asia. Air India Express, Akasa Air and SpiceJet’s west-bound international flights are to destinations in West Asia. Following the Indian Air Force’s airstrikes in Balakot, Pakistan had fully closed its airspace on February 26, 2019. It eventually fully opened its airspace for overflying in July 2019. By June, Indian airlines’ collective loss due to the airspace closure was pegged at more than `550 crore, according to data furnished by the Ministry of Civil Aviation at the time. The figure, according to industry insiders, was around `700 crore till mid-July of that year, when Pakistan completely removed the restrictions. In 2019, due to Pakistan’s closure of routes, most flights saw their durations rise by at least 70-80 minutes. Air India’s flights from Delhi to Chicago had to stop in Europe for refuelling. Further, IndiGo’s flight from Delhi to Istanbul, which was then being operated by narrow-body aircraft, had to make a refuelling stop at Doha.

Attari border closure to hit Rs 3,800 crore India-Pakistan trade: Why Punjab’s economy could be impacted disproportionately

India’s decision to close the Integrated Check Post (ICP) at Attari with immediate effect, in the wake of the Pahalgam terror attack, is set to halt cross-border trade worth Rs 3,886.53 crore between India and Pakistan. Bilateral trade had already been in decline since India imposed a 200 per cent duty on Pakistani goods in 2019, following the Pulwama terrorist attack, data from the Land Ports Authority of India shows. According to official data, India exported items such as soya bean, poultry feed, vegetables, red chillies, plastic granules, and plastic yarn, while importing goods including dry fruits, dates, gypsum, cement, glass, rock salt, and herbs from Pakistan via the Land Port at Attari. The port, spread over 120 acres, assumes significance since it has direct access to National Highway 1. How mutual tensions impacted trade via Attari border over the years Tensions between the two countries — particularly following the Pulwama attack — reduced trade between India and Pakistan from Rs 4,370.78 crore in 2018–19 to Rs 2,257.55 crore in 2022–23. However, trade rebounded to Rs 3,886.53 crore in 2023–24, the highest in the past five years. Notably, total cargo movement also dropped from 49,102 consignments in 2018–19 to just 3,827 in 2022–23, the data shows. In dollar terms, total India-Pakistan trade has shrunk to about \$2 billion annually over the past five years, a small fraction of the \$37 billion trade potential estimated by the World Bank. India’s overall goods trade stands at \$430 billion, while Pakistan’s is approximately \$100 billion. Pakistan’s economic woes The aid-dependent Pakistani economy has also faced recurring bouts of high inflation following the Covid-19 pandemic and widespread social unrest. In May last year, violent street protests in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK) left one police officer dead and over 90 injured, according to Pakistani media reports.

The violence erupted after around 70 members of the Joint Awami Action Committee—a traders’ organisation—

were arrested during a strike protesting against the rising costs of food, fuel, and utilities. The economic crisis and inflation in Pakistan have created hardships for its citizens, with some traders further affected by the cessation of trade with India. Additionally, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) on Tuesday revised Pakistan’s growth forecast downwards to 2.6 per cent, citing the impact of US tariffs, — now at 100-year highs — and warning that increasing global trade tensions would further hamper growth. Trade experts noted that India-Pakistan trade via the Attari border had created a significant economic ecosystem in Punjab, particularly in and around Amritsar as well as Attari. The trade provided direct and indirect employment to thousands, including transporters, porters, shopkeepers, and workers in related industries. A number of political parties particularly the Congress, the Shiromani Akali Dal and Aam Aadmi Party had demanded opening trade via the ICP during the last few years due to demands by traders in Punjab and nearby areas. However, trade is often the first casualty when tensions escalate between India and Pakistan, and the Wagah-Attari land route is no exception, the Chandigarh-based Centre for Research in Rural and Industrial Development (CRRID) said in a research report. “Although trade restrictions adversely affect all stakeholders in India involved in Indo-Pakistan trade, the impact is far more severe in Punjab, as most of the trade through this route originates from the state, along with some from neighbouring north-western states,” the report noted. Straw reapers and cotton yarn are among the major export items from Indian Punjab via the Wagah-Attari land route. “Straw reapers, manufactured by various small-scale units in Punjab, are a significant export to Pakistan through the ICP at Attari. Between 2016–17 and 2018–19, the number of straw reapers exported ranged from 846 to 1,110 units, with export earnings between Rs 1,844 lakh and Rs 2,488 lakh,” the report said. “Due to trade restrictions.

Mati Carbon, winner of \$50million XPRIZE, has been helping smallholder farmers leading fight against climate change



Mati Carbon, an Indian-led climate initiative has secured the \$50 million grand prize in the XPRIZE Carbon Removal competition, outshining over 1,300 teams from 112 countries. Their model seems simple, but is quite complex. Mati Carbon uses an Enhanced Rock Weathering (ERW) model, which captures carbon dioxide (CO2) while boosting crop yields for smallholder farmers. This offers a rare synergy of environmental and social impact. Mati operates in India, Tanzania, and Zambia, and has partnered with over 16,000 farmers since 2022. They aim to reach 30,000 by year-end, with a bold vision to impact 100 million by 2045. As India grapples with climate-induced agricultural stress and a nascent carbon market, scaling this solution faces formidable hurdles. In an exclusive interview with The Indian Express, Shantanu Agarwal, Mati Carbon’s founder and CEO, and Jake Jordan, chief science officer, outlined their mission. “This XPRIZE win validates our science and commitment to smallholder farmers who bear the brunt of climate change,” Agarwal said. “But scaling in India, with its fragmented landholdings and uneven infrastructure, is a massive challenge.”

How enhanced rock weathering works Mati’s ERW process involves spreading pulverised basalt—a volcanic rock—on farmlands, accelerating a natural weathering process that captures atmospheric CO2 and stores it as bicarbonate in groundwater and oceans for over 10,000 years. “The process forms a weak acid from rainwater and CO2, breaking down the rock faster than natural weathering,” Jordan explained. “It’s like dissolving powdered sugar versus a sugar cube.” The basalt also releases nutrients, enhances soil fertility and results in healthier crops and better yield. The rigorous Monitoring, Reporting, and Verification (MRV) framework, developed with IIT Kanpur, Yale University, and the University of Sheffield, ensures precise carbon quantification, earning trust from buyers like Shopify, Stripe, and H&M.

Smallholder farmers, cultivating 47 per cent of India’s farmland, are uniquely vulnerable to climate change. The 2024 Monsoon Report by the India Meteorological Department noted eight per cent above-average rainfall, yet flooding and crop losses disproportionately affected smallholders. Mati’s model addresses this by improving soil health and incomes. Agarwal shared the story of a Chhattisgarh farmer with two acres whose rice yield surged from 2,500 to 3,500 kilos—a 70 per cent increase—after basalt application. “He paid off debts because it’s free. We deliver and spread the basalt; he farms as usual,” Agarwal said.

Mati targets climate-vulnerable regions like northern Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, and Jharkhand, often hours from airports. “We focus on small farmers in backward areas,” Agarwal explained. “We analyse crop types, soil compatibility, and basalt composition to ensure viability.” The Deccan Traps’ vast basalt supply—capable of removing all anthropogenic CO2 with just one per cent of its reserves—makes India an ideal hub. Mati piggybacks on existing rock-crushing for construction, minimizing environmental impact. Farmers also report a 65 per cent reduction

in pesticide use, as nutrient-rich soils yield healthier, disease-resistant crops. “It’s like humans eating vitamins for better immunity,” Agarwal said. “Healthy plants don’t get sick.” This organic, nature-driven approach aligns with India’s push for sustainable agriculture under the National Mission for Sustainable Agriculture. Mati’s ambition to reach 100 million farmers by 2045 is daunting. “Farmers dependent on a few acres are risk-averse,” Agarwal noted. “Explaining that we remove invisible CO2 for distant buyers sounds dubious.” Mati overcomes this through demonstration: trials in the first season, 10-20 per cent adoption in the second, and overwhelming demand by the third. “They see yield increases and lower pesticide needs with their own eyes,” he said.

Logistics in remote areas pose another hurdle. Transporting basalt to villages and training farmers across India’s diverse agro-climatic zones is costly. Mati’s proprietary platform, matiC, uses AI to streamline operations, from farmer engagement to carbon verification, but scaling to millions requires more. “Our tech stack enables farmer-entrepreneur partners to deliver our model regionally,” Agarwal said, emphasizing a franchise-like approach to achieve the “unreasonable” 100-million-farmer goal.

The carbon market, where Mati sells credits to fund its free basalt applications, is another challenge. Currently priced at \$300-\$400 per ton, credits are bought by net-zero-focused firms like Shopify, Stripe, and H&M. “These buyers support our scaling to hit \$100 per ton in five to seven years,” Agarwal said. However, India’s carbon market is nascent, with prices volatile (\$10-\$30/ton globally in 2024, per the World Bank). Convincing Indian unicorns to buy removal credits as part of corporate social responsibility (CSR) requires education. “Indian companies with net-zero goals should include removal in their portfolios to mitigate past emissions,” Agarwal urged. Mati has garnered local support from district magistrates, agriculture officers, and Krishi Vigyan Kendras (KVKs). “They love our technology and collaborate closely,” Agarwal said. Studies with government universities, like IIT Kanpur, provide years of data to prove ERW’s efficacy. Yet, national-level adoption could unlock greater impact. “Subsidies for basalt transport or carbon credit incentives would accelerate scaling,” Agarwal suggested, aligning with India’s net-zero-by-2070 goal.

Jordan emphasized ERW’s fit for India’s agriculture-heavy economy. “Governments serve farmers, a key constituency. Our yield increases and climate benefits are a strong match for national priorities,” he said. However, policy inertia and the need for extensive proof points slow progress. “We’re building scientific momentum with Indian research to convince policymakers,” Agarwal said. Mati’s focus on removal doesn’t negate the need for emissions reduction. “We need both,” Jordan stressed. “Reduction stops new CO2; removal balances unavoidable emissions, like agriculture’s residual CO2.” India, the world’s third-largest emitter, relies heavily on coal, complicating its net-zero path. Mati’s ERW, with its permanence, offers a robust tool, but it’s not a panacea. The Global South’s degraded soils make it ideal for ERW, unlike chemically optimized farms in the US. “Skeptics in the West question small farms’ scalability, but their yield gains drive adoption,” Jordan said. This economic incentive positions India as a leader in inclusive climate solutions. Mati’s XPRIZE win and \$50 million prize provide a springboard to scale its smallholder-focused model, sustained by carbon credit sales. Its partnerships with IIT Kanpur, Yale, and the University of Sheffield ensure scientific rigor, while local collaborations amplify reach. Yet, success hinges on overcoming logistical, market, and policy barriers. As India navigates climate change and food security for 1.4 billion people, Mati’s model—rooted in nature and farmer empowerment—offers a blueprint. Whether it can scale to 100 million farmers remains a test of innovation, collaboration, and political will.

Global weakness, policy uncertainty: Why World Bank slashed India’s growth forecast to 6.3% for FY26



The World Bank has cut India’s growth forecast by 0.4 percentage points to 6.3 per cent from 6.7 per cent for the current financial year 2025-26, citing global economic weakness and policy uncertainty. It is seen slowing from 6.5 per cent growth estimate (7.0 per cent earlier) in FY25, the Bank said in its latest South Asia Development Update. “In India, growth is expected to slow from 6.5 per cent in FY25 to 6.3 per cent as in FY26 as the benefits to private investment from monetary easing and regulatory streamlining are expected to be offset by global economic weakness and policy uncertainty,” the World Bank said.

The downgrade in India’s growth projections by the Bank comes just a day after the International Monetary Fund (IMF) also cut the growth forecast for India. The IMF had lowered India’s growth estimate by 0.3 percentage points to 6.2 per cent from 6.5 per cent for FY26 and by 0.2 percentage points to 6.3 per cent from 6.1 per cent for FY27. The estimates are lower than the 6.5 per cent growth projection by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) for FY26. As per the RBI, the real GDP growth for India for FY26 is seen to be lower than the earlier projection of 6.7 per cent, with Q1 growth seen at 6.5 per cent; Q2 at 6.7 per cent; Q3 at 6.6 per cent; and Q4 at 6.3 per cent.

“Multiple shocks over the past decade have left South Asian countries with limited buffers to withstand an increasingly challenging global environment,” said Martin Raiser, World Bank vice-president for South Asia. “The region needs targeted reforms to address vulnerabilities such as fragile fiscal positions, backward agricultural sectors, and the impact of climate-related shocks.” Growth was affected in the previous financial year 2024-25 due to slower pace of private investment and public capital expenditure falling short of targets set by the government, the Bank said. The government has announced fiscal consolidation but also tax cuts to support private consumption and regulatory streamlining to spur private investment, it said. However, the ben-

efits to private investment from monetary easing and regulatory streamlining are expected to be offset by global economic weakness and policy uncertainty, it said. “Private consumption is expected to benefit from tax cuts, and the improving implementation of public investment plans should boost government investment, but export demand will be constrained by shifts in trade policy and slowing global growth,” the Bank said.

The World Bank also made a mention of the rapid rise in India’s equity markets in recent years, in terms of both listings and valuations, that has attracted significant, although volatile, net inflows. Noting that India’s number of initial public offerings (IPOs) was second only to the US in the value of new listings in 2024, Bank said the equity correction could dampen consumption. “Equity derivatives markets have grown particularly quickly, prompting interventions from regulators concerned about investor protection. Since peaking late last year, however, stock market valuations have undergone a correction. For now, this has not had broader ripple effects, but the decline in equity prices could dampen private consumption or investment over the medium term,” it said.

Commenting on the debt position in South Asia, the Bank said governments in India, Maldives, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka are already liable for above-average net interest payments relative to GDP, and will seek to finance fiscal deficits of between 7-17 per cent of GDP in 2025. “In some countries, growing debt service pressures could generate cycles of rising risk premia and debt distress,” it said. Overall, growth in South Asia is expected to soften to 5.8 per cent in 2025, 0.4 percentage point below October forecasts before rising to 6.1 per cent in 2026. The region’s economies face heightened downside risks, including from a highly uncertain global landscape, it said. Growth is projected to be slower for India’s neighbours such as Bangladesh, where the growth is seen slowing to 3.3 per cent in FY25 amid political uncertainty and persistent financial challenges, and then a pickup to 4.9 per cent in FY26. In Bhutan, the growth forecast for FY25 has been downgraded to 6.6 per cent due to weak agriculture sector growth but upgraded in FY26 to 7.6 per cent due to expected strength in hydropower construction.

Pakistan’s economy is expected to grow by 2.7 per cent in FY25 and 3.1 per cent in FY26. In Sri Lanka, the government has made further progress with debt restructuring, and a projected rebound in investment and external demand is expected to lift growth in 2025 to 3.5 per cent, after which it is seen moderating to 3.1 per cent in 2026, the Bank said.

Why this kolaveri over Dhoni's Chennai Super Kings?



GNS News Agency, April 30

On the Bells Road and Wallajah Road that run adjacent to the MA Chidambaram Stadium, some unfamiliar scenes are unfolding at the conclusion of every Chennai Super Kings fixture here this season. Every time YouTubers and vloggers thrust their microphones in front of fans, it has invariably led to meltdowns that have gone viral by the next morning. With the franchise in the middle of their worst-run ever, not even MS Dhoni – Thala himself – has been spared. It has been that sort of a season for Chennai and its loyal fan base. While the common mood over the last few seasons has been to have the 'Thala dharshan', this season, even some of the diehards have started to question whether he has carried on longer than he should have. The kind of emotional investment Chennai and Tamil Nadu have in their franchise is unparalleled. Why this cricketing kolaveri over CSK?

We turn to Perumal Murugan, an award-winning writer, poet and scholar, who is critically acclaimed for his insights into Tamil culture, to understand why CSK moves Tamilians so much. "For whatever reasons, people have been able to identify CSK as something that represents Tamil Nadu even though players keep changing over the years," Murugan tells The Indian Express. "They see it (CSK) as our identity – it doesn't matter how many Tamil players are there, who is managing them... for people these things are irrelevant.

"To create that identity, I firmly believe it is the media that has played a big role. There is a concentrated effort to place them as their team and an aura has been created around Dhoni. An entire narration is also being built to make this team as the one that everyone identifies with." CSK players led by MS Dhoni walk off the pitch during an IPL 2025 match against the Kolkata Knight Riders at the MA Chidambaram Stadium in Chennai. (PHOTO: Sportzpics for IPL) CSK players led by MS Dhoni walk off the pitch during an IPL 2025 match against the Kolkata Knight Riders at the MA Chidambaram Stadium in Chennai. Given its success-rate, CSK gives Tamil Nadu an identity it is proud of. "Tamils are always on the lookout for a separate identity. That is what our politics is also based on and this also should be looked at the same way. They saw Dhoni as an ordinary person, just like one of them. They connected instantly. In Tamil culture, sport has always been part of life. Jallikattu (bull-fighting) happens for four months. Kabaddi also has a mass connect. It is part of our festivals. The Tamil community always had space for sports. Since the Sangam era, sport has been integral, so supporting a team is a natural thing," he says.

While the Tamil population is no stranger to celebrating movie stars and politicians, not until the arrival of CSK did athletes and a sports team enjoy this kind of ardent following among the masses. If attending the first-day, first-show of a Rajinikanth movie or a Carnatic music show was part of the rituals, in the summer months, getting a ticket into the MA Chidambaram Stadium has also become one.

Even in households, watching CSK on match-days has become part of a routine. "As far as Tamil Nadu is concerned, the number of middle-class families has increased.

And so have upper middle-class families. They need entertainment and CSK provides it without affecting their actual work life. The middle-class has a lot of time – weekends and their evenings are also free. But they don't have enough means to find entertainment in the evenings. CSK and IPL provide them an entertainment package. For two months, you plan a lot around it. Have discussions, then watch it as a group," Murugan says.

The entertainment quotient that Murugan mentions isn't one to be overlooked. According to Thenmozhi Somasundaram, who retired recently as the head of the department of psychology at Madras University, it is a reflection of Tamil society. "If you look at the present generation as well as the middle-age group who are the majority in Tamil Nadu, there are not many options for entertainment. So because of that, the collective consciousness is picking up. When people are feeling lonely and bored, they go back to this collective consciousness and be with people who accept their likes and dislikes," she says. "If you look at CSK fans, it is not just young people. It also includes many middle-aged and older people. Social media isn't accepted entertainment. It has always been disregarded in our society. It is not respectable entertainment. Watching IPL is meaningful entertainment." Unlike the period between the 1970s and early 2000s, when film stars like MG Ramachandran and Rajinikanth enjoyed superstardom, these days fandom levels have gone down a bit. Unlike in the past, when film icons seamlessly transitioned into politics, that luxury is not there now. Instead, a society that puts education high on the priority list now also seems to put sports and athletics on the same pedestal. "In Tamil Nadu we have never had a huge name in cricket who clicked with the masses. And suddenly, you have a team that has someone like Dhoni and is winning. There is a pride factor that is always associated with Tamizhs. There was a time when cinema meant everything, but in our households people always disliked it. But it isn't the same with sports. Right now, sports is at par with academics," Thenmozhi observes.

While Royal Challengers Bengaluru (RCB) also enjoy a close affinity with its fans, in Karnataka it is often seen as a team of the urban population. CSK, in contrast, has managed to strike a chord all over Tamil Nadu and beyond. Divya Dovania, assistant professor, department of psychology at Women's Christian College, reckons this is a sign of social contagion. "When an entire group is celebrating and supporting a team, I also incline towards it. It just spreads around it. That is why there is a lot of excitement when they play, especially at Chepauk. If you are at the ground, you won't know if they are losing or not. The excitement is always at its peak. These things also happen because I want to conform with people around me and be one of them," she says.

Last domestic season, as R Sai Kishore spelt out his wish-list as Tamil Nadu captain, he mentioned the need to establish a similar bond with the fans. Though cricket is the most popular sport in the state, the Tamil Nadu Ranji players don't enjoy a fandom like their Mumbai and Karnataka counterparts. "I want to create a similar bonding with the fans like how CSK have managed. We also play and represent Tamil Nadu, but a very few take interest in us. I want a similar following for this team (TN Ranji) – where we are also able to establish a strong emotional bond with fans. It will happen when we play good cricket," Kishore would say.

That Tamil Nadu, despite being a powerful state unit, has managed just a couple of Ranji titles, may reflect on the fan following they enjoy. CSK, by contrast, won titles in its formative years and remain the joint-most successful franchise in the IPL with five crowns. That they also had four titles (IPL + Champions League T20) before they were suspended in 2015 have also helped their legend grow.

Arshad Nadeem's name missing, Sri Lanka's Rumesh Pathirage added to elite field

GNS News Agency, April 30

File image of Tokyo Olympics champion Neeraj Chopra (right) with 2016 Olympics gold medalist Thomas Röhler and 3-time Olympic champion Jan Ľešný in Turkey. (Instagram) File image of Tokyo Olympics champion Neeraj Chopra (right) with 2016 Olympics gold medalist Thomas Röhler and 3-time Olympic champion Jan Ľešný in Turkey.

The javelin throw field for the Neeraj Chopra Classic 2025 was announced on Thursday with Pakistan thrower Arshad Nadeem's name missing. Instead, Rumesh Pathirage from Sri Lanka has been added to the elite field of international throwers. While the seven javelin throwers from abroad have been named, the Indian throwers are yet to be revealed. Two-time Olympics medalist Neeraj Chopra has already confirmed that he will be competing at the event. The field also includes Rio Olympics gold medalist from Germany Thomas Röhler besides former world champion Julius Yego. The event will be held in Bengaluru. The Neeraj Chopra Classic 2025, scheduled for May 24, will have the status of a World Athletics Gold Label event. It is being jointly organised by Olympic Champion Neeraj Chopra and JSW Sports, in association with the Athletics Federation of India and World Athletics.

Anderson Peters (Grenada): Two-time World Champion (2019, 2022) and reigning Pan American Games gold medalist, known for his explosive throws beyond 90m, a personal best of 93.07m Thomas Röhler (Germany): 2016 Olympic Champion and one of the sport's all-time greats,



with a personal best of 93.90m Julius Yego (Kenya): Yego is a World Champion (2015) and Olympic silver medalist (2016), trailblazing javelin's rise in Africa. His personal best: 92.72m

Curtis Thompson (USA): Top-ranked American javelin thrower, Pan American Games champion (2023), and a consistent performer on the Diamond League circuit with a personal best of 87.76m Genki Dean (Japan): Asian Games 2023 bronze medalist, Dean brings strong credentials from the Asian circuit, a top-10 world ranking and a personal best of 84.28m Luiz Mauricio da Silva (Brazil): A South American powerhouse with multiple podium finishes at the South American Athletics Championships. His personal best: 85.91m Rumesh Pathirage (Sri Lanka): A rising star from the subcontinent, Pathirage enters the field with a personal best: 85.45m



Brazil, the South American powerhouse with multiple podium finishes at the South American Athletics Championships with a personal best of Pakistan's Arshad Nadeem pulls out of Neeraj Chopra Classic event amid visa row.

Well-known cricket commentator Harsha Bhogle with HCA curator YL Chandrasekhar



GNS News Agency, April 30

Hyderabad: For long, YL Chandrasekhar, BCCI curator from Hyderabad, has been acknowledged as one of the best in India by some of the cricketing greats like Sunil Gavaskar, who is also incidentally the curator's favourite cricketer. And, so when fellow Hyderabad and commentator Harsha Bhogle walked across, as he always does, to share a few thoughts in appreciation after an IPL game, his

joy knew no bounds. In a way, it was a reunion of two personalities who take pride in being Hyderabadis with a common passion – cricket.

"I love catching up with Chandu, or Chandrasekhar, whenever I do a match in Hyderabad. Simple, quiet groundsman who produced excellent tracks," well-known commentator and Hyderabad Harsha Bhogle posted on his Instagram about the curator of Rajiv Gandhi Stadium (Uppal). "I try to learn a bit more about turf pitches, I was overjoyed to discover that he has just installed turf pitches in my school (HPS Begumpet), so different from the one matting pitch we had," Bhogle said. "Both of us played league cricket in Hyderabad years ago. People like him do such good work in Indian cricket. Talking of which, I haven't met Tapash, another of my curators, for a while," the genial commentator said.

For his part, Chandrasekhar, who is into the job now for close to 30 years, led ICRISAT for 20 years as an opening all-rounder and now consultant chief curator of HCA taking care of all the grounds which host the leagues, assisted by a full team including Mukesh Kumar, Pranisha, junior and senior Mallesh, said HPS was a full-fledged cricket ground and it was always a great feeling to meet someone. It is not for nothing that Chandrasekhar has been adjudged 'Best Curator' in IPL four times and has been invited by many other State Cricket Associations to prepare turf wickets. In a way, he owes his credibility and reputation to the "complete effort" of his entire, dedicated groundstaff of about 20 at Uppal. In fact, he summons other staff from NFC-ECIL for the big matches so that nothing goes wrong. In a task which is never easy as it is the pitch which stays in focus for any result for any team including Mukesh Kumar, Pranisha, the two Malleshs' and others and to his credit Chandu, has carved a niche for himself as he is very articulate and good in communication having worked in ICRISAT.

RCB coach Andy Flower's rich praise for Devdutt Padikkal's knock and partnership with Virat Kohli vs RR: 'Genuinely outstanding...'

GNS News Agency, April 30

One of the under-rated aspects of Royal Challengers Bengaluru's solid season so far in the Indian Premier League has been the resurgence of Devdutt Padikkal, but it is not lost on head coach Andy Flower. The Karnataka batter started off his IPL career with RCB, having an impressive couple of wins, but his stints with Rajasthan Royals and Lucknow Super Giants didn't go well. He was picked up at the recent auction by RCB once again and after 8 matches so far, he has scored 230 runs with a couple of half centuries to his name. The standout aspect has been Padikkal's strike rate this year, scoring at 156.46 so far, much higher than his IPL strike rate of 126.61.

Padikkal continued his good form on Thursday night against his former employers RR, scoring a 27-ball 50 at a strike rate of 185.18, bettered only by Jitesh Sharma's cameo lower down the order. Flower, speaking after RCB's first home win of the season in four attempts, said Padikkal's knock was outstanding, and praised his partnership with Virat Kohli for taking their side to a winning total. "In the in the first three (home) games, I thought our bowlers and fielding unit did outstanding work to keep us in the game as long as they did, because all three totals were a bit below par," the former Zimbabwe cricketer said. "So watching our guys adapt to the conditions today was really gratifying. ?I was really proud of the way that they battered. Dev was sensational to score 50 off 27 balls like that without ever slogging. I thought that was a genuinely outstanding innings. We say a lot about Virat, but his 70 or 42 balls and that partnership with Dev really gave us a platform on a pitch that wasn't



that easy, I didn't think. ?I thought that was an above-par total, to be honest. And so that class of thatting and thinking that went into it from those guys, I thought was genuinely outstanding." Padikkal, speaking in the mid-match interview, said it was pleasing to be in this form after having a tough few seasons in the IPL and appreciated the inputs he has been receiving from RCB's new batting coach Dinesh Karthik. "I have put in lot of hard work, the last couple of years haven't been great, I really struggled and it felt like nothing was going my way," Padikkal said. "I really worked hard on myself, not just mentally, but also tactically to be at my A-game this season. Of course, you know, having DK and Andy around this season has been really great to be honest. The amount of work I've done with DK over the last couple of months has been tremendous and the amount of knowledge and tactical insight that he has, has really helped me this year."

Neeraj Chopra issues statement after 'integrity questioned' and his 'mother targeted' by trolls over invite to Arshad Nadeem

GNS News Agency, April 30

Neeraj Chopra issued a strong response to the online abuse for inviting Arshad Nadeem to the NC Classic amidst the Pahalgam terror strikes. Neeraj Chopra issued a strong response to the online abuse for inviting Arshad Nadeem to the NC Classic amidst the Pahalgam terror strikes. Neeraj Chopra said that the invitation to Arshad Nadeem for participating in NC Classic – javelin event to be organised in Bengaluru next month under the name of India's Olympic champion – was extended before the events in Kashmir. Neeraj, who said he and his family have been subject to hate and abuse, said Arshad's participation in the event was 'completely out of the question' after the events of the last 48 hours in Pahalgam, a terror attack which left 26 dead and several others injured.

"There has been so much talk about my decision to invite Arshad Nadeem to compete in the Neeraj Chopra Classic, and most of it has been hate and abuse," Neeraj said through a statement posted on his social media channels. "They haven't even left my family out of it. The invitation I extended to Arshad was from one athlete to another – nothing more, nothing less. The aim of the NC Classic was to bring the best athletes to India and for our country to be the home of world-class sporting events. Invites had gone out to all athletes on Monday, two days before the terrorist attacks at Pahalgam. After all that has taken place over the last 48 hours, Arshad's presence at the NC Classic was completely out of the question." Earlier this week, Neeraj had addressed a press conference where he confirmed the initial list of participants in NC Classic, also confirming that the event had been moved to Bengaluru from his home state in Haryana. During the conference, he had said invitations had been sent out to many top javelin throwers and Paris Olympic champion Arshad too was invited, although he hadn't confirmed his participation then. Last night, the organisers confirmed the final list of international participants and Arshad's name was absent.

Neeraj Chopra Classic 2025: Arshad Nadeem's name missing, Sri Lanka's Rumesh Pathirage added to elite field" usually am a man of few words, but that doesn't mean I will not speak up against what I think is wrong. More so when it comes to questioning my love for our country, and the respect and honour of my family," Neeraj said. "My country



Neeraj Chopra said that the invitation to Arshad Nadeem for participating in NC Classic – javelin event to be organised in Bengaluru next month under the name of India's Olympic champion – was extended before the events in Kashmir

and its interests will always come first. To those that are going through the loss of their people, my thoughts and prayers are with you. Along with the entire nation, I am both hurt and angry at what has taken place. I am confident that our country's response will show our strength as a nation and justice will be served," he added. Neeraj, who is among India's all-time great sportspersons already having won a gold and silver at the Olympic Games, also said that it was disappointing to see his integrity questioned. "I have carried my country with pride for so many years now, and so it hurts to see my integrity being questioned. It pains me that I have to explain myself to people who are targeting me and my family, with no good reason. We are simple people, please don't make us out to be anything else. There are so many false narratives that certain sections of the media have created around me, but just because I do not speak up, it doesn't make it true." "I also find it difficult to understand how people switch opinions. When my mother – in her simplicity – had made an innocent comment a year ago, there was an outpouring of praise for her views. Today, the same people haven't held back from targeting her for that very same statement. I, meanwhile, will work even harder to ensure that the world remembers India and looks at it with envy and respect for all the right reasons," he signed off.

Jewel Thief Movie Review: Lazy and banal Saif Ali Khan-Jaideep Ahlawat heist thriller has zero sparkle



Jewel Thief Movie Review: Can a film featuring Saif Ali Khan and Jaideep Ahlawat and a diamond bigger than the Ritz turn out to be a shockingly banal bauble? That's not a trick question. It is something I've been asking myself since I finished watching 'Jewel Thief A Heist Begins', a face-off between a too-cool-for-school jewel thief (Saif Ali Khan), and a nattily-turned out mobster (Jaideep Ahlawat) who has a thing for pulping humans with his bare hands. Given that heist films are a dime a dozen, the least one can expect when you've got these two leads, fully capable of generating fizz, is to give us flash and pizzazz and non-stop thrills, because that's what the best high-stakes, high-on-adrenaline 'heere-ki-chori' films are about.

But this film is so lazily constructed that it doesn't even bother thinking of a new or even a new-ish title. It borrows the name from one of Hindi cinema's most iconic heist movies of the same name, throwing in a tagline for a differentiator, and then proceeds to cobble together a plot in which every scene and sequence has been done to death, with twists you can see coming even before they start. Jaideep Ahlawat plays Rajan Aulakh, a rich art collector who has his fingers in many dodgy pies, and when he is

not using them to count filthy lucre, he is wiping blood off them. Saif Ali Khan is Rehan Roy, the whip-smart thief who strolls around Budapest, draping sparklers around his chosen lady for the night and shooting off groaningly cheesy lines. He's a perfect fit for mature classy, but smirky cheese doesn't suit him anymore: 'haan main... magar woh... suno toh' is close to 25 years behind him. Now when he says 'churayenge red sun in the gagan', it's just cringe.

There's also the Istanbul-based menacing overlord type called Moosa (Loitongbam) who has history with Aulakh, and who keeps sending him threatening messages. Moosa's favourite line is: see you on the other side. And you know exactly how this will be used, and who will do the using when tables are being turned later in the film. There's also a misunderstood 'baap-beta' angle featuring Saif and Kulbhushan Kharbanda, the latter sleepwalking as the straight-arrow father. If you thought you would never again hear that most 'ghisa pita' lines in all Hindi moviedom — 'aapne mujhe samjha nahin' — you thought wrong. There's an earnest younger brother (Gagan Arora), swinging between the estranged bada bhai and daddy-o, with nothing else to do.

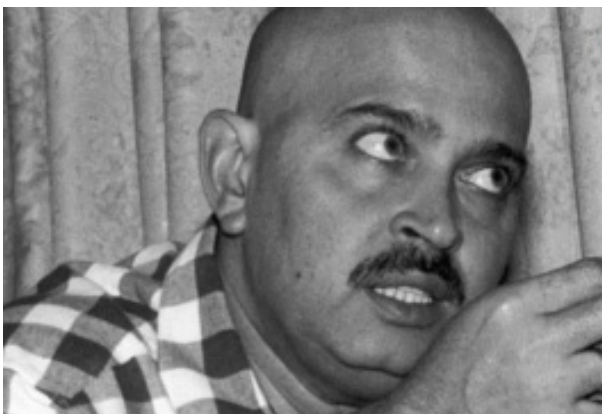
Nikita Dutta, as the woman in the eye of both men, wears a sad face and long gowns, and talks about 'majboori'. Kunal Kapoor has the even more thankless part of the cop fruitlessly on the tail of his much smarter target. And everyone gets a chance to show off their gleaming, chiselled bobs in swimming pools. You feel for Ahlawat, tagged out in designer top-to-toe, cigar, sharp suits, golden highlights in hair, light contact lenses, sitting around in throne-like chairs and gesturing at his underlings to do bad things. He is trying for suave, but emits zero sparkle, just like the movie. Jewel Thief movie cast: Saif Ali Khan, Jaideep Ahlawat, Nikita Dutta, Kunal Kapoor, Kulbhushan Kharbanda, Sumit Gulati, Paayal Nair, Gagan Arora, Dorendra Singh Loitongbam. Jewel Thief movie directors: Kookie Gulati, Robbie Grewal. Jewel Thief movie rating: 1 star

Rakesh Roshan took on immense financial burdens to launch Hrithik Roshan, never told family he'd 'mortgaged his house, cars, office': Daughter Sunaina recalls

Filmmaker Rakesh Roshan went from strength to strength after transitioning from acting to direction. His children, Hrithik Roshan and Sunaina Roshan, have attempted to take their father's legacy forward in their own respective careers. But as highlighted in the Netflix documentary The Roshans recently, he faced difficult times as a director as well. In a recent interview, Sunaina recalled how her father persevered through these difficulties, and the huge bet he was willing to take on Hrithik ahead of his acting debut.

In an interview with News18, Sunaina Roshan shed light on her father's journey as a director and producer and also the financial struggles he endured. "We were very young to understand, especially when Dad started his acting career. As a producer, he had mortgaged his house twice, and the cars, and the office during Kaho Na Pyaar Hai and Khudgarz. He gambled with his life a lot, but he was fearless in doing so." She was too quick to point out that her father never brought his work home with him, and that the kids had no idea what was going on in his life. "We never knew that side of him because he never showed us what we were going through. I and my brother both had a very peaceful childhood," Sunaina added, "We never had to deal with people talking about our backgrounds because times were very different back then. There was no social media, thankfully, and Dad himself didn't make it that big."

Both Hrithik and his dad have previously talked about the financial struggles that Rakesh went through. In a conversation with Mid-Day, he said, "Hrithik never knew, I never told him. Only my wife knew about it. I said I am mortgaging the house, maybe if I require, I will take money, otherwise I will try to manage. But it so happened that I



managed it in the funds I had. Had the film not done well, then I would have to shift somewhere else or... but I took that chance." In the documentary The Roshans, Hrithik reflected on the moment he found out what was at stake for his family. He said, "I always saw the glass half-full. I had not colour-corrected in two or three scenes, because I was handling that. And the overseas prints had already been sent. So, I came to my dad, really upset that, 'How could you let that go?' And I think that was the first time that my dad gave it back to me. He gave it back to me in my face. He turned to my mom, and he said, 'I am doing everything for him, and he's sitting here and he's complaining'. And that's the night I found out, my mom told me, that the house was mortgaged, the cars were mortgaged... I realised how much was at stake."

Archana Puran Singh gasps 'pol khol di' as son says they take bribes to give good reviews to restaurants



Archana Puran Singh's quest to find Mumbai's best food continued in her latest vlog. As usual, she was accompanied by her husband, Parmeet Sethi, and their two sons, Aaryamann and Ayushmaan. Together, they went on an adventure to discover the city's best kufli shop, and stopped at three shortlisted establishments. They decided that they will only try the basic version at every shop, and not the one with all the bells and whistles. This didn't stop them from checking out a special mango kufli at one place, and a 'zafran rogan' variety at another. At the first venue, they spoke about the coincidence that the first place they visit often ends up being the best. Archana says what usually happens is that they are quite full by the time they hit the final spot, but insisted that they give honest reviews of every restaurant they go to. Then, one of her sons joked

about taking bribes to give good reviews to restaurants. "Basically jahan zyada paisa milta hai woh jeetta hai (Whoever gives the most money wins)," he said, and Archana pretended to be scandalised. "Pol kho di (You've let the cat out of the bag now)," she said.

They enjoyed the two kulis they had at Parsi Dairy Farm, and left for New Kufli Centre. On the way, Archana and Parmeet's sons made fun of his quirks. "He goes to bed at 8:30 pm and sleeps with his hands on his chest. 'Get out now, I'm going to sleep', he says in his voice. Then he wakes up at 4:30 am, because that's when 'the best script ideas' come to him," said Ayush, while everyone laughed. The family then hit their final spot of the day, Baba Kufli, but they weren't very impressed. They walked a little way away from the shop to share their review.

Shah Rukh Khan refused to pull up Abhishek Bachchan, Vivan Shah despite Farah Khan's complaint: 'Inke baap Amitabh Bachchan, Naseeruddin Shah inhe nahi sikha paaye toh...'



Shah Rukh Khan shared the screen space with Abhishek Bachchan and Vivaan Shah, son of Amitabh Bachchan and Naseeruddin Shah, respectively, in Farah Khan's film Happy New Year. Farah, known to be a taskmaster, apparently had a tough time with Abhishek and Vivaan on the sets, and even complained to the film's lead and producer, Shah Rukh. An old video from Shah Rukh, Farah, Abhishek and Vivaan's visit to the hit quiz show Kaun Banega Crorepati has SRK sharing about the incident and what refrained him from pulling up the two actors post Farah's complaint. In 2014, during the Happy New Year's promotions, the cast visited the Kaun Banega Crorepati set. An old video shared online has Shah Rukh Khan reminiscing about an incident when filmmaker Farah Khan requested him to reprimand Abhishek Bachchan and Vivaan Shah. SRK told Amitabh Bachchan, "Farah kabhi complain nhi karti as Farah khud hin bht tandarust hai. Sab ko tik kar leti hai set ke upar (Farah never complains. Farah herself is very healthy. She takes care of everything on her own on the set)."

"Ek baar isne (Farah) mujhe bahut complain kiya. Isne kaha ki Abhishek aur Vivaan jo hai dono ke dono bahut pareshan kar rahe hain, distracted rehte hain, baat cheet

kar rahe hain, tang kar rahe hain. Baar baar meri photo leke Twitter pe daal rahe hain. Bahut tang karte hain Abhishek aur Vivaan isko, toh tum jaake unse baat karo. (Once she complained to me that Abhishek and Vivaan are troubling her, they are distracted, keep chatting, take her pictures and upload them on Twitter. They irritate me a lot so you go and talk to them)," added SRK. SRK added, "Maine kaha nahi Farah bacche hai yaar, aese thode hi na hota hai yaar, ho jayega (It's ok they are children). 'No, today I'm very angry. You go and talk'. Toh Sir, main bada aese kamar kas k pahuch gaya. Main bolne ko shuru hua phir mujhe dimaag m aya ki Abhishek Bachchan ke jo daddy hai woh Mr Amitabh Bachchan hai. Phir aya ki Vivaan ke jo daddy hai woh Mr Naseeruddin Shah hai. Phir mere dimaag me aya ki agar inke baap inko nahi sikha sake toh main kya sikhaunga (I said Farah they are just kids, it's not like that, it will be fine. But she said, 'No, today I'm very angry. You go and talk to them.' So sir, I went there with determination... I started to speak, and then it hit me that Abhishek Bachchan's father is Mr. Amitabh Bachchan. Then I realized that Vivaan's father is Mr Naseeruddin Shah. And then it struck me that if their fathers couldn't teach them, what could I teach them)?"

Sidharth Malhotra gifts mom-to-be Kiara Advani a new luxury car worth Rs 1.12 crore; Ajay Devgn, Aishwarya Rai, Akshay Kumar are also proud owners

Actors Sidharth Malhotra and Kiara Advani tied the knot on February 7, 2023, two years after they started dating while working together in Shershaah (2021). The couple is now expecting their first child together. As a gesture of love, Sidharth has just gifted a luxury car worth Rs 1.12 crore to the soon-to-be mom Kiara. The car in question is a Toyota Vellfire, which is a multipurpose vehicle and gives more of the rich suburban working partner vibe than anything else. The Vellfire has made a place in the hearts of many Bollywood stars, such as Ajay Devgn, Anil Kapoor, Aishwarya Rai, Kriti Sanon, Akshay Kumar and Aamir Khan. The car is part of Toyota's premium line of cars, which also includes cars like the Camry, Land Cruiser and Prado.

Much to the joy of friends, family and fans, a month ago Kiara and Sidharth announced on Instagram that they were expecting their first child. The caption of the post read, "The greatest gift of our lives, coming soon."

As mentioned before, the couple had been linked together much prior to their wedding, with both of them dodging questions regarding the other in interviews and press conferences. Like many others in the industry, such as Ranveer Singh-Deepika Padukone and Virat Kohli-Anushka Sharma, the couple decided to get married in an intimate setting with not more than 100 people attending the ceremony. Celebrities such as Karan Johar, Manish Malhotra (who designed wedding outfits for both bride and



groom), Isha Ambani, and Shahid Kapoor with wife Mira Rajput attended the main ceremony, with stars like Kareena Kapoor Khan, Alia Bhatt, Neetu Kapoor, Ranveer Singh, Vicky Kaushal and Ananya Panday seen attending the reception.

Sidharth is currently working on a film called Param Sundari, in which he stars alongside Janhvi Kapoor, and he is also being linked with Saif Ali Khan for Race 4. Meanwhile Kiara will be seen in Hrithik Roshan and N.T Rama Rao's upcoming film War 2, and will also be making her Met Gala debut this year.

Shah Rukh Khan offered a job to Wasim Akram after his stay at rehab for cocaine addiction: 'It made me volatile, deceptive'

Shah Rukh Khan bought his cricket team, Kolkata Knight Riders, in 2008 and after three IPL wins, he continues to own one of the most popular teams of the country. During its initial seasons, Shah Rukh Khan's team offered an "attractive job" to cricketer Wasim Akram as the bowling coach of the team. But, just before Wasim found this job, which was his "first senior coaching role anywhere", he was at a rehabilitation centre for drug addiction in Lahore.

In his memoir titled Sultan, Wasim opened up about this chapter of his life and said that the excessive partying, after his career as a cricketer was over, took a toll on him and he "developed a dependence on cocaine." "It started innocuously enough when I was offered a line at a party in England, but my use grew steadily more serious, to the point that I felt I needed it to function. It made me volatile. It made me deceptive," he wrote. Wasim recognised that his wife Huma was "often lonely" at this time and expressed her desire to move to Karachi to be closer to her family, as they were spending majority of their time in Manchester and Lahore, but Wasim wouldn't let her as he would go to Karachi on the pretext of work, and spend days partying.

When Huma caught Wasim with cocaine, she told him to go to a rehabilitation centre and in his words, he "tried." "Movies conjure up an image of rehab as a caring, nurturing environment. This facility in Lahore was brutal: a bare building with five cells, a meeting room and a kitchen," he



wrote. Wasim realised that the doctor was a "con man who worked primarily on manipulating families rather than treating patients" and was charging over Rs 2 lakh per week. Wasim said that he stayed there for seven weeks to keep his end of the bargain and by this time, even his wife could see that the doctor was a "scam artist." Once he was out, his life started to change after he got a job offer from Shah Rukh Khan. "Once out, I tried to keep calm, to get centred. Shah Rukh Khan offered me an attractive job as the bowling coach at Kolkata Knight Riders —