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## ICFAI Business School secures re-accreditation from AACSB

Hyderabad: ICFAI Business School (IBS), Hyderabad, secured re-accreditation from AACSB (Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business International). AACSB has 1,051 accredited institutions in over 68 countries and territories. Only 24 schools in India are accredited by the AACSB.

On this remarkable achievement, IBS Director Prof. KS Venu Gopal Rao said the School successfully received an extension of its AACSB accreditation for a period of six years after a positive recommendation from the peer review team and ratification by the AACSB Board of Directors.

## CBI arrests Income Tax Commissioner, 4 others in Rs 70 lakh bribery case

New Delhi: The CBI has arrested Commissioner Income Tax (Exemptions), Hyderabad, Jeevan Lal Lavidiya and four others in an alleged bribery case of Rs 70 lakh, officials said Saturday.

The CBI had received inputs about Lavidiya, a 2004-batch Indian Revenue Service officer, allegedly indulging in corrupt practices and seeking bribes following which an FIR was registered against him recently, they said.

## External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar confirms ceasefire

GNS News Agency, May 10

New Delhi: In a significant diplomatic development, India and Pakistan have agreed to a ceasefire, halting cross-border firing and military action. US President Donald Trump on Saturday claimed that India and Pakistan have agreed to a "full and immediate" ceasefire after talks mediated by the US. Confirming the same, External Affairs Minister Dr. S. Jaishankar took to social media and posted on his official X account stating, "India and Pakistan have today worked out an understanding on stoppage of firing and military action." India and Pakistan have today worked out an understanding on stoppage of firing and military action. India has consistently maintained a firm and uncompromising stance against terrorism in all its forms and manifestations. It will continue to do so.—Dr. S. Jaishankar (@DrSJaishankar) May 10, 2025 He reaffirmed India's firm and uncompromising stance against terrorism, asserting that India will continue to do so. This agreement comes in the wake of the deadly terror attack in Pahalgam, where 26 tourists were killed in an attack orchestrated by Pakistan-



based terror groups, triggered nationwide outrage. In response, India launched Operation Sindoor, a military offensive targeting terror launchpads and infrastructure across the Line of Control. The operation, which reportedly caused significant damage to militant camps, was widely viewed as a strong message against cross-border terrorism.

## Trump announces 'full and immediate ceasefire' between India and Pakistan

GNS News Agency, May 10

Washington: US President Donald Trump on Saturday announced a "full and immediate ceasefire" between India and Pakistan. Secretary of State Rubio said in a State Department statement that he and Vice-President J D Vance conducted these talks. "After a long night of talks mediated by the United States, I am pleased to announce that India and Pakistan have agreed to a full and immediate ceasefire," President Trump wrote on Truth Social, the social media platform he owns. "Congratulations to both Countries on using Common Sense and Great Intelligence. Thank you for your attention to this matter!" he added. Secretary of State Rubio said in a separate statement: "Over the past 48 hours, Vice President Vance and I have engaged with senior Indian and Pakistani officials, including Prime Ministers Narendra Modi and Shehbaz Sharif, External Affairs Minister Subrahmanyam Jaishankar, Chief of Army Staff Asim Munir, and National Security Advisors Ajit Doval and Asim Malik. "I am pleased to announce the Governments of India and Pakistan have agreed to an immediate ceasefire and to start talks on a broad set of issues at a neutral site. "We commend Prime Ministers Modi and Sharif on their wisdom, prudence, and statesmanship in choosing the path of peace."

In his conversations with the External Affairs Minister



and Ishaq Dar of Pakistan, Secretary of State Rubio offered US mediation without mentioning the word mediation, which President Trump went ahead and used in his post on Truth Social, for conflicts in the future. "Secretary Rubio emphasised that both sides need to identify methods to de-escalate and re-establish direct communication to avoid miscalculation," Tammy Bruce, the State Department spokesperson said in an early Saturday morning statement of the call between Rubio and Jaishankar. "He further proposed US support in facilitating productive discussions to avert future disputes."

## India to treat terror strike in future as 'Act of War'

GNS News Agency, May 10

New Delhi: India has decided that any future act of terror will be considered an 'Act of War' against the country and will be responded to accordingly, a decision which aligns with the Narendra Modi government's zero tolerance for terror, official sources said on Saturday. The decision holds a warning for Pakistan against backing terror strikes in the country and reminds Islamabad of a possible hit-back on the scale of 'Operation Sindoor' in case of any misadventure in the future. PM Modi's reported insistence to treat all future terror strikes as 'Acts of War' was endorsed by top military officials and Defence Minister Rajnath Singh during a meeting earlier in the day.

National Security Advisor (NSA) Ajit Doval, Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) General Anil Chauhan, the three service chiefs and chiefs of IB and RAW were also present to assess the success of the anti-terror 'Operation Sindoor' amid little signs of Pakistan trying to de-escalate tensions. Chiefs of the Intelligence Bureau (IB) and Research and Analysis Wing (RAW) shared details about the terrorists — including those wanted in the IC-814 flight's hijack to Kandahar in 1999 — killed in 'Operation Sindoor' so far. Interestingly, even the Council of Europe's human rights manual treats Acts of War and terrorism on an equal scale.

The COE's Manual for Human Rights Education with Young People states, "In many ways, war and terrorism are very similar. Both involve acts of extreme violence, both are motivated by political, ideological or strategic ends, and both are inflicted by one group of individuals against another. The consequences of each are terrible for members of the population — whether intended or not." In a related development, top global security analyst Michael Rubin told NDTV that India should adopt a tough stand against terror and take a leaf from Israel's book in its "war against terror". While agreeing that India must continue its military operation — Operation Sindoor — to respond to each of Pakistan's escalations and misadventures along the Line



of Control and International Border, Rubin said that in the long-run, PM Modi should consider what Israel's former PM Golda Meir had done after the 1972 Munich Olympic Games massacre. Israel, he said, "quietly, over subsequent years, went out anywhere in the world to eliminate the terrorists who were responsible for that massacre. It took them over seven years", but they were relentless in their pursuit and pledged to hunt down the terrorists and kill them. "I do think that Prime Minister Modi needs to take a playbook out of the late Golda Meir of Israel's hands," he said. The 1972 Munich massacre was a terrorist attack during the Summer Olympics in Munich, West Germany. The terror attack was a religiously motivated one against Jews. On September 5, 1972, eight members of the Palestinian terror group Black September invaded the Munich Olympic Village, taking 11 members of the Israeli Olympic team hostage. A failed rescue attempt the following day left all 11 Israeli athletes, five terrorists, and one German policeman dead. Israel vowed to eliminate the terrorists, no matter where they were in the world. Mossad covert operations followed. Operation Bayonet, also known as Operation Wrath of God, took more than seven years of worldwide covert operations to kill the terrorists and their backers.

## India hits Pakistani air bases in retaliation, after Pakistan strikes with a range of projectiles and fighters

GNS News Agency, May 10

The ongoing military exchanges between India and Pakistan saw a major uptick on Friday (May 9, 2025) night and Saturday (May 10, 2025) morning. Indian armed forces carried out precision attacks on military targets which included technical infrastructure, command and control centres, radar sites and weapon storage areas as also struck six air bases after Pakistan used Unmanned Combat Aerial Vehicles (UCAV), drones, long-range weapons, loitering munitions and fighter aircraft to target civilian areas and military infrastructure along the Western border. In addition, Pakistani military has been observed to be moving their troops into forward areas, indicating offensive intent to further escalate the situation, the Government said.

Along the international border and the Line of Control (LoC), air intrusions and several harassment attacks were also attempted from Srinagar till Naliya at more than 26 locations. Indian Armed Forces successfully neutralised these threats and majority of the vectors. However, limited damage was sustained to equipment and personnel at Indian Air Force (IAF) stations at Udhampur, Pathankot, Adampur and Bhuj, Wg. Cdr. Vyomika Singh said briefing the media around 10:30AM on Saturday. "There were also several high-speed missile attacks noticed subsequently after 0140 hours in the night at several air bases in Punjab." Indian armed forces reiterate their commitment to "non-escalation", provided it is "reciprocated" by the Pakistan military, the officer reiterated. In a swift and calibrated response, Indian armed forces carried out precision attacks "only on identified" military targets — technical infrastructure, command and control centres, radar sites and weapon storage areas, according to Wg Cdr Singh. "Pakistan military targets at Rafiqi, Murid, Chaklala, Rahim Yar Khan, Sukkur and Chuniyan were engaged using air-launched precision weapons from our fighter aircraft. Radar sites at Pasrur and Sialkot aviation base were also targeted using precision munitions. While carrying out these responses, India ensured minimum collateral damage." In Islamabad, in a very



early morning press conference, Pakistan Military's Director General of Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) stated that India has carried out missile strikes on three Pakistan Air Force (PAF) bases at Nur Khan in Rawalpindi, Murid (Chakwal) and Rafiqi. Detailing further, Wg. Cdr. Singh said that in a "deplorable cowardly" act, targeting of civilian infrastructure also had taken place where Pakistan attacked the medicare centre and school premises at the air bases of Srinagar, Awantipora and Udhampur, "yet again" displaying "irresponsible" targeting of our civilian infrastructure. The Government also "unequivocally" rejected "false narratives" being spread by Pakistan. A series of posts and videos have been circulating through the night and in the day, of several Indian jets show down and military bases hit. Pakistan has also attempted to execute a continued "malicious misinformation campaign" with claims of destruction of Indian S-400 system at Adampur, destruction of airfields at Suratgarh and Sirsa, BrahMos base at Nagrota, RT gun positions at Dehrangari and Chandigarh Forward Ammunition Depot; with heavy damages to other military stations being propagated on social media, Wg Cdr Singh observed. All through the night and much later in the day, there drones and missile strikes were reported from several locations which were promptly neutralised by air defence systems.

## Telangana HC hears PIL against private junior colleges for holding classes during summer break



GNS News Agency, May 10

Hyderabad: The division bench of the Telangana High Court's vacation bench comprising justices Surepalli Nanda and J Srinivas Rao on May 7 heard public interest litigation (PIL) against private junior colleges flouting guidelines pertaining to conducting classes during summer vacation and posted the case for next Wednesday. The vacation bench took up the PIL as lunch motion against private junior colleges in Telangana conducting physical and online classes during the summer vacation, violating the stipulated academic calendar announced by the Telangana Board of Intermediate Education (TG BIE). The PIL was filed by a practicing advocate and public-spirited person Bandela Kranthi Kumar, represented by his counsel CR Sukumar, seeking directions to the private intermediate colleges not to conduct classes, physical or virtual, during the holidays declared in the annual academic calendar issued by the TG BIE. The petitioner sought directions from the High Court to prevent the private junior colleges from conducting classes illegally during Sundays, public holidays and summer vacation. The vacation court bench heard the submissions of the petitioner's counsel and the Telangana government's counsel who sought time to file their counter. Special gov-

ernment pleader from the office of the Advocate General submitted to the court that no private junior college in the State was conducting academic classes during the summer vacation. However, he said the intermediate board will not have control over private educational institutions running tuitions and coaching classes during the summer vacation. The petitioner's counsel submitted to the vacation court bench that the intermediate board has through an academic calendar stipulated holidays to ensure holistic growth of students, preserve their mental health and allow them to rejuvenate between rigorous academic sessions.

## K Kavitha urges rescheduling of Miss World Pageant in view of global tensions

GNS News Agency, May 10

Hyderabad: As the world watches the prestigious Miss World Pageant getting off to a start in the State, BRS MLC K Kavitha has raised concerns over the timing of the event amid ongoing global crises. While acknowledging the significance of the event for the State's image and economic prospects, Kavitha has urged the government to consider rescheduling it to ensure the nation does not appear "non-serious" during turbulent times. Kavitha stated, "Miss World Pageant is being held by the Telangana government in the State, and the whole world is going to watch it. Amid the ongoing war-like situations, our image would not go well, and we would come across as a non-serious nation if it continues.

## Abu Jundal, terrorist who headed LeT HQs killed; what it means for India's war on terror



GNS News Agency, May 10

New Delhi: More than 100 hardcore terrorists belonging to Pakistan-based terror outfits, including Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) and Jaish-e-Muhammed (JeM), are said to have perished in the Indian military strikes on May 7. Mudassar Khadian Khas alias Abu Jundal, one of the infamous LeT commanders, turned out to be a high-value casualty for the Indian military, as the latter carried out precision strikes at five locations in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir and four inside Pakistan, in response to the savage terror attack in J&K's Pahalgam. Notably, Muridke and Bahawalpur were among the most prominent targets of the armed forces in their counter-terrorism operation. Muridke is the Lashkar Headquarters, while Bahawalpur served as the JeM nodal centre in Pakistan. Abu Jundal was the in-charge of the Markaz

Taiba in Muridke of Punjab province. This centre served as the hiring ground for new terror recruits and also doubled up as an indoctrination centre. The facility was earlier financed by Al-Qaeda's Osama Bin Laden and served as the mushrooming ground for the radicalisation of students to motivate them to join jihad. It was at this facility that the perpetrators of the 26/11 Mumbai attack, including Ajmal Kasab, were imparted intelligence training. Other conspirators like David Coleman Headley and Tahawwur Hussain Rana also maintained links with Muridke. India made Muridke camp one of its first targets and pulverised the base with targeted strikes on May 7, leading to the killing of Abu Jundal and many of his close associates. The LeT HQs chief also drew the wrath of the global community, even after his death. His 'state funeral' in Muridke, in the presence of top Pakistani military officers, sparked a wave of anger and outrage from across the globe. The Pakistani Army gave the dreaded terrorist a guard of honour, and also wreaths were laid on behalf of the Pakistan Army Chief and the Punjab Chief Minister, Maryam Nawaz, said reports. His funeral prayer was led by Hafiz Abdul Rauf of JuD (a designated global terrorist) in a government school, and this sent ripples in the global community, with many governments calling out Pakistan's brazen nurturing of terror elements on its soil. Abdul Rauf was seen in videos on Wednesday flanked by military officers. As the picture circulated on social media, many called for exposing Pakistan and its duplicity. Notably, out of the nine terror camps, Muridke and Bahawalpur always remained on the radar of India's intel and security agencies, but it was for the first time that the Centre targeted these terror hubs.

# Indian Chronicle

English Daily

## Sticking to facts

COUNTERING misinformation in the age of social media is vital. In times of conflict, the significance of debunking fabricated claims and false reports cannot be overstated. Fact-checking thus becomes a necessary tool to restore public trust. The heightened India-Pakistan tensions have brought to fore an incessant barrage of digital smear campaigns emanating from across the border. These social media accounts are meant to twist facts and weaponise public opinion on one side, and create panic on the other. In India, the Centre has been quick in putting out advisories and guidelines for both the mainstream and independent news-gathering platforms on what to desist from. The message is clear: stick to facts and verify before putting out any piece of information. Yet, in the eagerness to be the first to report, there have been instances of falling for and amplifying false claims and magery.

The dissemination and consumption of information responsibly are no easy tasks. These demand application of mind and a patient reading of what's being offered. Both seem to be in short supply as videos generated through artificial intelligence and misleading messaging are being lapped up. Confusion and hysteria are the byproducts. The Indian government has asked microblogging website X (formerly Twitter) to block over 8,000 accounts. In the wide web world, there is still ample scope of playing truant and exploiting vulnerabilities. That's why it becomes incumbent upon every information provider and of course its consumer to exercise restraint and not be taken in by anything and everything that comes their way. The joint press conference of the Foreign Secretary and two women military officers has set a benchmark of sorts — detailed, precise information on what the country, and indeed the world, needs to know. Let's stick to the facts.

## Manthani Rises in Patriotic Fervor: Massive Solidarity Rally in Support of Operation Sindhoor.



“PS Ashokan”Indian Chronicle“Manthani May, 10”“In a stirring display of national unity and unwavering patriotism, the citizens of Manthani town organized a grand solidarity rally on Friday, extending their resolute support to the Indian Armed Forces in the wake of Operation Sindhoor.

The rally commenced at Gandhi Chowk and advanced through Phule Chowrasta and Sripada Chowk, drawing participation from residents across Manthani and its surrounding areas. “With tricolours held high and voices echoing resolute anti-terror slogans, the rally was a clarion call against Pakistan’s continued patronage of terrorism. The participants vehemently condemned the heinous attack in Pahalgam, where innocent Indian civilians were mercilessly killed by Pakistani terrorists. This brutal act provoked deep anguish and anger among the people, who wholeheartedly endorsed the Indian Army’s retaliatory campaign under the codename Operation Sindhoor. “Addressing the gathering, community leaders and participants declared that the entire nation—cutting across political, regional, and social lines—stands firmly behind the Indian government and its armed forces. They commended the government’s decisive response and urged it to intensify efforts to dismantle terror networks nurtured by Pakistan. “We are 140 crore strong, and we stand as one behind our soldiers. We support every step our government takes to safeguard the sovereignty and dignity of our nation. Let this be a message to our enemies—India shall never bow to terrorism,” declared the rally’s speakers with fervent conviction. “Sripada Trust Chairman, Shri Duddilla Srinubabu, addressed the gathering, lauding the bravery of the armed forces and the unity displayed by the citizens. The rally witnessed the participation of prominent local leaders, including former Market Committee Chairperson Srirambatla Santosh, former Municipal Chairperson Pendri Ramadevi, Vodnala Pravalika, Marupaka Pavani, Niharika, Azeem Khan, Pentari Raju, Bejjanki Digambar, along with a large number of youth and residents from the town and neighboring villages. “This rally not only reflected Manthani’s patriotic spirit but also resonated as a powerful message of solidarity with the guardians of our borders.

## Karnataka cabinet approves BBMP rebranding as Greater Bengaluru from May 15



GNS News Agency, May 10

The Karnataka Government is set to enact the Greater Bengaluru Governance Act (GBGA), 2024, on May 15, initiating a major overhaul of the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP). This new legislation will replace the existing BBMP Act, 2021, effectively dissolving the current legal framework of the BBMP. However, a restructured civic body, likely retaining the BBMP name, will continue to manage Bengaluru’s governance. An administrator will be appointed to oversee the division of the BBMP.

Law and Parliamentary Affairs Minister H K Patil Friday announced that the GBGA notification, detailing the implementation process, will be issued on May 15. While he did not confirm the exact number of new corporations to be set up, the Act allows for up to seven. Senior government officials clarified that the restructured BBMP will operate under the new Act’s provisions, with the current commissioner continuing to lead the civic body during the transition. The Greater Bengaluru Governance Bill, 2024, received approval from Governor Thaawarchand Gehlot in April after he sought clarifications in March, following its passage in the House in the Budget session. The government addressed the concerns and resubmitted the Bill, which was subsequently approved.

According to officials, the Greater Bengaluru Authority (GBA), established under the Act, will govern an area not exceeding the current BBMP’s 709 sq km. Post-notification, the government will commence the process of splitting the BBMP into multiple corporations. The functions of GBA, chaired by Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, span administrative control, urban planning, coordination of public authorities, and execution of major infrastructure projects, including mobility plans. The GBGA also aims to empower ward committees and enhance political accountability. The Bill faced significant opposition during its passage in the Karnataka Legislative Assembly and Council. The BJP and Janata Dal (Secular) legislators staged walkouts, arguing that it violates the 74th Constitutional Amendment Act, which emphasises devolving power to urban local bodies. Critics also claimed the GBGA centralises authority under the state government, potentially undermining local self-governance.

The Congress government, however, justified the provision of breaking BBMP into smaller corporations for better management of civic services. Currently, one mayor oversees the entire city of Bengaluru. The Congress administration claimed multiple city corporations would empower more localised leadership. The Act also introduces heritage conservation regulations, categorising buildings into three grades, with different levels of protection. While the Act allows the establishment of ward committees and city corporations to have independent budgets, the state government retains the power to appoint or remove commissioners in these corporations. Meanwhile, Bengaluru Town Hall, a citizen advocacy group, said it was planning to challenge the Act in the Supreme Court, arguing that it contravenes the 74th Constitutional Amendment.

## 60-year-old shepherd gored to death by wild boar in Telangana's Adilabad

GNS News Agency, May 10

Adilabad: A shepherd was killed on the spot when a wild boar gored him at Chilatilguda hamlet under Dhodanda village in Indrevelli mandal on Friday evening. Forest officials said that Madavi Bojju (60) received serious injuries when the boar attacked him while he was grazing cattle in a forest, resulting in instantaneous death for him at around 6 pm. Some other cattle herders noticed his body and alerted his family members.

Bojju is survived by his wife and two sons. Based on a complaint received from his wife Tulasibai, a case was registered. The officials said that steps were being taken to extend compensation to the kin of the family of the shepherd at the earliest. Earlier, Bheema Bai from the village received minor injuries when the leopard attacked her at her cattle shed located on the fringes of a forest at Dedra village in Bazarhathnoor mandal on December 14.

On November 29, Morle Lakshmi (21) was mauled to death by a tiger while she was harvesting cotton crop at Easgaon village in Kagaznagar mandal of Kumram Bheem Asifabad district. The same tiger was suspected to have attacked Rauthu Suresh at Dubbagudem village in Sirpur (T) mandal on November 30. A wild elephant that drifted towards the wild of Telangana by crossing Pranahita river after getting separated from its herd in Maharashtra had trampled Alluri Shankar (50) of Burepalli village in Chintalmanepalli mandal and Karu Posham (65) from Kondapalli village in Panchikalpet mandal to death on April 3 and 4.

## Helmet Distributed to TTD Employees



“May 10, Indian Chronicle, Rayalaseema coordinator”TTD Chairman Sri B.R. Naidu distributed helmets among the TTD employees on Saturday morning at his camp office in Tirumala. “To ensure the safety of employees commuting between Tirumala and Tirupati, the TTD Trust Board Chief mulled this initiative. “Speaking to the media, the Chairman stated that the decision to distribute helmets was taken as a part of ensuring safety of TTD employees.

“He said that Sri Jaladi Raghuram from Guntur and Mr. Naveen, head of KCN Helmets from Delhi, have come forward to donate helmets for the cause. “As part of it, in the first phase, 555 helmets worth approximately Rs.5 lakh were donated. An additional 500 helmets are expected to be donated within 15 days. “If these are found satisfactory in quality and usage, another 5,000 helmets will be provided. “TTD Board Members Sri Shanta Ram, VGOs Sri Ram Kumar, Sri Surendra, and other officials participated in the program.

## Ensure Fair Compensation to Displaced Landowners Based on Eligibility” -- District Collector Koya Sri Harsha.



“PS Ashokan”Indian Chronicle“Manthani May, 10”“District Collector Koya Sri Harsha emphasized the need to provide just and adequate compensation to landowners displaced by national highway projects, strictly in accordance with eligibility norms. On Saturday, the Collector attended a meeting with displaced families at Puttapaka village in Manthani Mandal. The session was organized to address grievances related to the Warangal-Mancherial Greenfield Highway land acquisition. Speaking at the gathering, Collector Harsha stated that compensation must reflect not only the land value but also any structures and assets present on the acquired land.

These include wells, motors, pipelines, fruit-bearing and forest trees, and other improvements, which several displaced landowners reported were not fairly

compensated. “The Collector assured the attendees that all grievances submitted would be reviewed thoroughly. He directed officials to conduct detailed field inspections and verify claims. Based on their eligibility, appropriate proposals must be prepared to reflect the true value of assets lost due to land acquisition. He further added that compensation will be disbursed strictly as per government norms. Reports from field inspections will be consolidated and submitted to the National Highways Authority for necessary action and disbursement of compensation to affected individuals.

The Collector was accompanied by RDO Suresh, District Forest Officer Shivayya, R&B Executive Engineer Bhav Singh, Horticulture District Officer Jaganmohan Reddy, Tahsildar Kumaraswamy, and other relevant officials.

## MGNREGA Workers Struggling Amidst Confusion and Delay: Budida Ganesh.



Ps Ashokan”Indian Chronicle“Manthani May, 10”“Gummanur (Manthani Mandal), May 10: “The implementation of the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGA) is plunging into uncertainty, leaving rural workers in a state of confusion and distress, alleged Budida Ganesh, District Secretary of the Agricultural Workers’ Union. “During a visit to the ongoing employment works at Gummanur village on Saturday, Ganesh expressed concern over the workers’ plight, stating that they are not even aware of their daily wage rates. “This lack of clarity is creating anxiety and despair among the labourers,” he said, blaming the negligence of concerned officials for the situation. “In the past, workers used to receive payslips weekly, and payments were made promptly. Now, they are forced to wait for months to get their wages,” Ganesh added. He observed that previously, thousands of labourers participated in MGNREGA

works across villages, but the current turnout has drastically declined, with even 100 workers not showing up. “He criticized the central government for allegedly discouraging the poor from participating in the scheme by offering meagre wages and creating uncertainty. “There appears to be a deliberate attempt to gradually push the underprivileged away from the MGNREGA scheme,” he said. “Ganesh called on all workers to come together and fight to protect the integrity and future of the employment guarantee programme. The event was attended by K. Pocham and several local MGNREGA workers.

## West Bengal to open immigrant cell to address complaints of overseas workers, students

GNS News Agency, May 10

The West Bengal Government is set to open an immigrant cell to help migrant labourers working abroad, based on the advisory of the External Affairs Ministry and the Union Home Ministry to all states, officials said. According to the state administration, the primary job of the cell is to look into the complaints of labourers getting deceived by employers or agents. It will monitor agencies that recruit youths for overseas jobs, verify their authenticity and registration, and make periodic visits to the districts where the agents work. Besides, the cell will also look into the complaints of migrant students getting cheated. According to a source, a senior IPS officer would lead the cell that will comprise po-

## Blaze at six godowns of online company’s warehouse, bakery; no casualties

GNS News Agency, May 10

A fire broke out in one of the godowns of an online company’s parcel warehouse subsequently spreading to five more godowns and a bakery at Dabholi in Surat’s Ved Road area Friday night around 11.00 pm, said officials familiar with the matter on Saturday. The officials are trying to ascertain the reason behind the blaze but have not ruled out the possibility of a short circuit leading to the fire incident.

According to sources, the officials controlled the blaze in four hours, and no casualties were reported during the incident. Surat fire officials said that the control room received a call informing about the blaze Friday night. Following the call, 13 firefighting teams from different fire stations reached the spot, said the officials. A fire officer, on the condition of anonymity, said that several parcels were stored at the warehouse and the fire erupted in one of the warehouse godowns, extended to five other godowns and a nearby bakery. A police team also reached the spot after learning about the fire incident and managed the crowd. The fire was brought under control at 2:30 am on Saturday, and later, cooling activities were started, said an officer. Surat Fire Officer Ramesh Sailor said, “There were around 15 warehouses that housed packing materials and goods (sold online by various companies). The fire started from one godown and spread to five other godowns and a bakery, which was completely engulfed in flames. No casualties were reported during the incident. We are currently investigating the cause of the fire. While the exact cause remains unclear, we suspect it could be related to a short circuit.”

lice personnel. A senior government official said, “In the last one and a half decades, the number of migrant labourers has increased in the state. In many cases, the labourers who go abroad are being cheated on the pretext of high-salaried jobs. But on reaching the workplace, they are given a daily-wage job. They can complain at the window of the immigrant cell in the country. But that investigation is time-consuming as they have to handle a huge number of cases. So, the Central Government has asked the state government to open such cells to easily investigate such complaints.” He further said the cell will start functioning once the IPS officer is finalised. “Not only migrant labourers but a sizeable number of students are also going abroad for higher studies.

## Diamond Tilakam Offered to Goddess Gangamma



May 10, Indian Chronicle Rayalaseema co-ordinator "The Tataiahgunta Gangamma Jathara in Tirupati is being celebrated with great fervor. On Saturday morning, Sri Ramyananda Bharathi Swamini, the Peethadhipathi of Mantra Maheshwari Sri Shakti Peetham, offered sare (auspicious offerings) consisting of turmeric, vermilion, and silk robes to the Goddess. "The temple's Executive Officer, Mr. Jayakumar, and the temple priests welcomed the Swamini upon her arrival. Following this, Sri Ramyananda Bharathi Swamini had darshan of Gangamma. "Subsequently, she

offered a tilakam (forehead ornament) adorned with rubies and diamonds, worth two lakh rupees, to the Goddess. "On this occasion, she expressed her hope that with the blessings of Tirupati Tataiahgunta Gangamma, who fulfills the wishes of her devotees and is revered as a wish-fulfilling deity, the country would receive timely rains and prosper. She also prayed for the well-being of the soldiers fighting on the nation's borders, wishing them courage and protection from any loss of life or property through the abundant blessings of Gangamma.

## Srivaruru sends Sare to His beloved Sister

•Traditional Sare presented to Tataiahgunta Gangamma •



"May 10, Indian Chronicle Rayalaseema co-ordinator" TTD Chairman BR Naidu along with the EO J Syamala Rao presented the traditional Sare to Sri Tataiahgunta Gangamma in Tirupati on Saturday evening. "The Gangamma Jathara happens to be a famous folk festival in the pilgrim city of Tirupati which began on May 06 and will continue till May 13. "Initially, special prayers were offered to Sri Pundarikavalli Ammavaru in Sri Govindaraja Swamy temple in Tirupati, and then the Sare was taken out in a colourful procession amidst pomp and gaiety. "Speaking to the media on this occasion, TTD Chairman Sri BR Naidu said that Gangamma is believed to be the sister of Sri Venkateswara Swamy and that devotees offer worship to this folk Goddess with utmost devotion. "He said that the festival will be held in a unique way to reflect the customs and lifestyles of the people of Tirupati and surround-

ing areas. "The development programs of the Tatayya Gunta Gangamma Temple are being carried out on a fast pace with TTD funds and the same cooperation will be provided in the future. "Speaking on this occasion, TTD EO said that it is customary to offer Sare to the goddess on the fourth day of the festival every year in the month of Chaitra. "He said that arrangements have been made for the Gangamma Jathara with a cost of Rs. 60 lakhs and various development works with a cost of Rs. 3.50 crores will start soon. "He said that devotees from the surrounding areas of Tirupati as well as from the states of Telangana, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu visit during the Gangamma Jathara every year. "Local MLA Arani Srinivasulu, TTD Board Members G. Bhanu Prakash Reddy, Shantha Ram, Deputy EOs Smt. Shanthi, Lokanadham, VGO Sadalakshmi, AEO Muni Krishna Reddy and others participated.

## Sociology students protest at SPPU, HOD denies allegations of discrimination

GNS News Agency, May 10

The students have alleged 'caste based discrimination' and mental harassment by Savitribai Phule Pune University (SPPU) against Head of Department Professor Shruti Tambe. The students have alleged 'caste based discrimination' and mental harassment by Savitribai Phule Pune University (SPPU) against Head of Department Professor Shruti Tambe. Savitribai Phule Pune University (SPPU) Sociology Head of Department Professor Shruti Tambe on Friday denied allegations of caste-based discrimination made against her after a group of 20-30 students held a protest the same day. Tambe added that she has trust in the administrative process in resolving the issues with the students amicably. In a meeting with the HOD and faculty members on March 29, the protesting students alleged they raised issues of alleged discriminatory remarks, irregular attendance marking, mental harassment, and other issues. A document recording minutes of this meeting contained the signatures of 50 students. However after this, some students alleged their signatures were obtained improperly and they did not support the content of the document. On April 12, the group of students sent a written complaint to Vice-Chancellor Suresh Gosavi spelling out their complaints. The students said their concerns have not been addressed despite this. Abhijeet Vaidye, a second-year Master's student, said, "HoD Dr Shruti Tambe has been making repeated taunts during lectures and outside the classroom about student's attire, personal circumstances, and one's background, leading to mental distress and harassment as we experienced it being targeted at students from certain so called backward communities. Vaidye alleged that Tambe had used a particular slur against a group of students which "was disrespectful" and affected students'



mental health. Denying this allegation, Tambe said, "I have never ever used anything like that. Not even in my dreams. Forget about when I am in my senses. And 34 years I have been teaching. I have been writing, reading the Phule Ambedkarite Shahu tradition. I have never ever used such language to demean anyone." She further added, "The information of the students' sit-in has come to my notice. I have always tried to conduct myself in good faith and with empathy. I have trust in the administrative process and the student community and I believe that the issues will be resolved amicably very soon." Vice Chancellor Gosavi told The Indian Express that he was in Bangalore on the day of the protest and would address the issue after returning to Pune. A student, who alleged his signature was obtained improperly, backed Tambe and said, "I have not heard the alleged discriminatory statements being made or even heard from others that they were made by the HOD. I would have supported the protestors if I knew anything like this had happened. We had met with the HOD for a different issue in the department, but these unrelated issues were inserted in the document after we signed it."

## Emergency mock drills: 'Children can sense fear & anxiety... educators should explain what is going to happen, using simple and calm language'

GNS News Agency, May 10

Recent mock drills held at various schools in the Capital to prepare for emergencies have left many children anxious and stressed. Dr Bhavna Barmi, senior clinical psychologist at Fortis Escorts Heart Institute in New Delhi, speaks to The Indian Express, offering guidance for parents, teachers, and schools on navigating these turbulent times. Children often express stress through behavioural changes. Early signs include sleep disturbances – such as difficulty falling asleep, having nightmares, or frequently waking up – as well as physical complaints like headaches, stomach aches, or other unexplained symptoms. The signs also include change in appetite. Emotional outbursts may manifest as irritability, anger, or frequent crying, while regressive behaviours such as bedwetting, thumb-sucking, or clinginess can reappear in younger children. Withdrawal from previously enjoyed activities or social interactions, as well as academic issues – like a decline in school performance or reluctance to attend school – are also common.

How do younger children typically react during a conflict?

Young children are highly perceptive of the emotional state of adults around them. They can sense fear, anxiety, and tension. This can lead to increased fearfulness, related to safety, separation anxiety, or reluctance to be away from caregivers. Behavioural changes may include aggression, withdrawal, or regression in developmental milestones.

How are older children impacted?

Older children may understand the implications of conflict and experience concerns... they may feel compelled to take action or express opinions. These factors can lead to increased stress, anxiety, and a sense of helplessness. They may also encounter psychological pressures, including academic disruptions — such as challenges with remote learning or exam uncertainties — questioning beliefs and values in the context of conflict, and social media influence due to exposure to distressing content and peer pressure to engage.

How does social media affect children and teens during conflict?

Digital exposure can spread misinformation, leading to confusion and fear; desensitising them to violence through exposure to graphic content; and creating echo chambers that reinforce specific viewpoints without critical analysis. These factors can distort perceptions and increase anxiety. Several mental health risks are tied to misinformation or graphic content, including anxiety and depression resulting from exposure to distressing material; sleep disturbances due to screen time and emotional arousal; and impaired concentration, with difficulty focusing on tasks or studies. Managing digital consumption is crucial for mental health. I would recommend that parents and educators set boundaries to limit screen time and encourage offline activities; monitor content to ensure it is age-appropriate and accurate; discuss media with children to talk about what they see and hear online; and model behaviour by demonstrating healthy digital habits.



What about disruptions to routine, like school closures or blackouts?

Disruptions to routine can cause anxiety and uncertainty, particularly due to worry about the unknown and changes in daily life... Social isolation from peers and teachers, combined with academic challenges related to remote learning or lack of access to resources, can contribute to emotional distress and behavioural issues.

What is a trauma-informed approach in schools?

A trauma-informed approach in schools involves creating a safe environment by establishing predictable routines, building strong relationships to encourage trust between students and staff, and providing support through access to counselling services. Educators trained to recognise and respond to trauma-related behaviours are essential. Promoting resilience by teaching coping strategies and emotional regulation skills further supports students.

How should schools explain emergency drills to children?

Before the drill, educators should clearly explain what is going to happen, using simple, calm, and child-friendly language. For instance, one can say: 'Just like we practice for fire drills or games in PE class, we are going to do a practice round on how to stay safe in case something unusual happens. There is no danger, but we are learning to be smart and safe.' Avoid words like 'attack,' 'danger,' or 'terrorist'.

How to communicate difficult news to children?

Effective communication can provide reassurance, helping children feel safe and supported; clarify misunderstandings, preventing misinformation and fear; and encourage expression, allowing children to share feelings and ask questions. Strategies like using simple language to explain events, being honest without providing overwhelming details, and encouraging questions can work. Validating feelings... also helps children process information and emotions effectively. Common mistakes institutions make during emergencies include a lack of transparency, which can lead to rumours and fear; overloading with information, which can overwhelm children... Improvements can be made by developing clear communication plans to ensure consistent messaging, training staff to handle emotional discussions, and engaging with families to support children.

## Hours before India-Pak ceasefire call, Delhi CM meets depts to review emergency prep

GNS News Agency, May 10

Hours before US President Donald Trump claimed that New Delhi and Islamabad had agreed to a "full and immediate" ceasefire amid the ongoing tensions between India and Pakistan, Delhi Chief Minister Rekha Gupta Saturday chaired a high-level meeting with the heads of departments (HODs) to review and discuss emergency preparedness measures. The CM issued key directions to all departments to implement a multi-tiered, coordinated, and active strategy to address emergencies in the Capital. According to officials, this strategy involves various sectors such as health, transport, education, fire services, and workers' welfare, among others.

Gupta directed the health department to ensure hospitals are prepared and have ambulances on standby, adequate stock of medicines and consumables, electrical backup for Intensive Care Units (ICUs), and clear duty rosters for doctors and paramedical staff. Directions were issued to call off leaves of all medical personnel, and coordination with central hospitals like AIIMS was also emphasised, said officials.

The power department was directed to ensure prompt response in case of power outages and to provide backup electricity for essential services. The Delhi Jal Board (DJB) was instructed to safeguard the water supply network, deploy tankers, and ensure round-the-clock electrical backup for all pumping stations. The CM also asked the Revenue Department to immediately activate District Disaster Management Authorities (DDMAs), identify shelters, and ensure civil defence volunteers are ready for emergency deployment. "Special emphasis was placed on establishing coordination with the Armed Forces, Railways, and Airport authorities to enable swift and coordinated responses during any situation. Additionally, the Home and Police Departments were instructed to ensure 24x7 security of critical infrastructure sites and prioritise the safety of essential services' supply chains," said the Chief Minister's Office in a statement.

Directions were also issued to prepare for the implementation of the Essential Services Maintenance Act (ESMA), wherever it is deemed necessary, said officials. Meanwhile, the Food and Civil Supplies Department was directed to monitor adequate stock at ration shops, petroleum and cooking gas reserves, and keep the food supply chain operational. Other departments which manage roads, drains and infrastructure — like the Public Works Department, Municipal Corporation of Delhi and New Delhi Municipal Council — were instructed to maintain a list of contractors for emergency evacuation and reconstruction of damaged infrastructure, and to plan for the deployment of necessary machinery and equipment, including street cleaning, power supply, lighting, and other essential services.

Officials said the CM instructed the Delhi Transport Corporation and Delhi Metro Rail Corporation (DMRC) to prepare and finalise emergency evacuation plans. Both agencies were directed to prepare clear Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), route maps, and fleet management plans to ensure the safe and coordinated movement of people to secure locations during a crisis, added officials. The CM further asked the education department to prepare



schools and college campuses under its jurisdiction to be used as temporary shelters, coordinate with DDMA to ensure proper arrangements, such as food, medical assistance, and sanitation. The fire department has been directed to remain on alert at all times and coordinate closely with the Revenue and Police Departments for swift response and relief work in case of emergencies such as fires, explosions, or structural damage. Additionally, the Labour Department was instructed to ensure the safety, rehabilitation, and provision of necessary assistance to workers in the informal sector and migrant labourers. "This includes providing temporary employment support, ration distribution, and health services in relief camps," said officials. Assuring the people that the Delhi government stands with them, Gupta called on all departments to work together and ensure there is no lapse in serving the public.

## Multi-faith celebrations held on Buddha Purnima and Rabindranath Tagore Jayanti



GNS News Agency, May 10

Hyderabad: Multi-faith celebrations on the occasion of Buddha Purnima and Rabindranath Tagore Jayanti were organized by COVA Peace Network here on Saturday. The meeting at St Maria High School, Jangammet, also felicitated students and presentations were made on career options after 10th and 12th grades. Participating in the multi-faith event, Tashi Choedup, a Buddhist Monk detailed the four noble truths in lift taught by Lord Buddha while Sangamitra Malik of Apna Watan explained the poetry and philosophy of Rabindranath Tagore. Participants from different religions participated in the program.

## Congress leaders indulging in propaganda on IMF's bailout to Pakistan, alleges Himanta



GNS News Agency, May 10

Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma on accused Congress leaders, like Jairam Ramesh and Pawan Khera, of indulging in propaganda on the International Monetary Fund's (IMF) bailout to Pakistan. His allegation comes after India on Friday opposed the IMF's proposal to extend fresh loans of USD 2.3 billion to Pakistan, saying that the funds could be misused for financing state-sponsored cross-border terrorism. "Exposing the Misinformation: IMF, Pakistan, and India's Principled Stand once again, Congress leaders like Jairam Ramesh and Pawan Khera are indulging in reckless propaganda — twisting facts and misleading the nation over India's stand on the recent IMF bailout to Pakistan." "Contrary to what Congress wants the public to believe, the IMF does not have a system for casting a 'no' vote. The only legitimate way to register disagreement is by abstaining, which India rightly did," he said. The IMF Voting is weighted and not equal, he pointed out. Mr. Sarma said the IMF functions on a "proportional quota system, where voting power is based on each nation's financial contribution." "It is not a one-country-one-vote format like the UN General Assembly. India's abstention was a calibrated and strategic move within this frame-

work," he said. The Assam CM claimed that India's message was "loud and clear" as by abstaining, India "refused to endorse financial assistance to a nation that continues to export terrorism across our borders".

"This was a firm yet mature diplomatic signal, showing India will not support Pakistan's duplicity, but also will not disrupt global economic order rashly," Mr. Sarma said. The CM alleged that the Congress is "playing dangerous politics". "It is deeply unfortunate that leaders like Jairam Ramesh and Pawan Khera are politicising India's international diplomacy. Whether out of ignorance or intent, their narrative undermines national interest and falsely portrays India as weak, when in truth, India acted with both resolve and responsibility," he claimed. Mr. Sarma asserted that India's record speaks for itself, claiming, "under Prime Minister Modi, India has shown the world that it will respond to terror with strength — be it Uri, Balakot, or Operation Sindoor." "Our abstention at the IMF is a reflection of strategic statecraft, backed by clear-eyed national interest," Mr. Sarma added. Mr. Ramesh had, in a post on 'X', said that the Congress had demanded on April 29 that India vote against the IMF loan to Pakistan, which was considered by its Executive Board on Friday, but India abstained from voting. The IMF has just announced that its Executive Board is meeting on May 9th, 2025 to consider Pakistan's request for a new \$1.3 billion loan under the IMF's Resilience and Sustainability Facility. "The Modi government backed down. A strong 'NO' vote there would have sent a strong message," Mr. Ramesh said.

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) cleared a \$1 billion tranche for Pakistan as part of its \$7 billion Extended Fund Facility (EFF) lending programme, and \$1.3 billion tranche under the Resilience and Sustainability Facility (RSF) in its board meeting held on Friday. India abstained from voting in the meeting as it raised concerns over the efficacy of IMF programmes for Pakistan, given its "poor track record" and also on the possibility of "misuse of debt financing funds for state-sponsored cross-border terrorism", an official release by the Union Ministry of Finance said.

## Advisories issued as Pakistan continues shelling across LoC in J&K, drone attacks

GNS News Agency, May 10

As Pakistan continued heavy shelling across the Line of Control in Jammu and Kashmir, various District Administrations have issued guidelines for the residents to keep safe during the shelling. Since the commencement of Operation Sindoor on May 7, 2025, Pakistani troops have made several violations of the ceasefire along the Line of Control. On May 10, 2025, five persons, including a senior J&K government official and a two-year-old girl, were killed as intense mortar shelling and drone strikes by Pakistan hit Jammu region. Accordingly, the Deputy Commissioner of Poonch and the District Administration of Kathua have issued the following guidelines for people residing near the border. Stay on the ground floor to reduce exposure to direct hits. Upper floors are more vulnerable. Place sandbags or soil-filled bags on rooftops (especially of single-storey houses) and long walls to absorb the impact of shell fragments and reduce damage. Stay away from glass windows and doors to prevent injury from shattered glass. Turn Off Gas and Electrical Appliances. Prevent fire hazards by turning off cooking gas, heaters, and unnecessary electrical appliances. If caught outside, lie flat in a low-lying area and protect your head with your arms or a sturdy object. Include first aid, water, dry food, flashlight, battery-powered radio, and important documents.

Pakistan's shelling was accompanied by a wave of drone attacks targeting 26 locations in India — from Jammu and Kashmir to Gujarat — for the second night on Friday (May 9, 2025). Across the Western border, several States took to recovering the debris that had fallen following Indian interception of these drones and UAVs. In Punjab's



Ferozepur, a crashing projectile from the Pakistani drone destroyed by the air defense system landed at a house in Village Khai PHEME Ke, setting the structure and a car on fire and injuring three people. Accordingly, police in Faridabad issued a guide to "safety & sanity in air attack scenarios". Apart from other tips which included 4-4-4-4 box breathing to calm the nerves, and maintaining a normal routine for the family, it advised the following: Saving lives is the priority. Identify the safest room in the house (one that has no windows). If you are outside, lie down in a nearby strong structure or low place. Do not run outside to make an immediate recording or video. Keep an emergency kit ready. Keep identity card, essential medicines, water, dry food, mobile charger, flashlight kit in a bag that can be picked up quickly. Avoid rumours, trust only official information. Get updates only from credible sources like government apps (NDMA), AIR, and DD News. Verify news circulating on WhatsApp, Twitter or Facebook.

## Decoding the the link between summer and kidney stones

GNS News Agency, May 10

Although kidney stones can occur any time of the year, they often appear more commonly in the summer, particularly in tropical nations like India. Patients with severe flank or stomach discomfort, commonly from a ureteric stone, are common in emergency rooms in States including Maharashtra, which is part of the country's infamous 'kidney stone belt.' There is evidence that kidney stones and summer are linked. Warmer months are associated with a higher prevalence of renal colic, according to multiple studies conducted globally. This science is simple - high temperatures cause insensible water loss through sweat, often without the person realising it. And this leads to urine pH alterations, decreased urine production, and concentrated urine. These elements play a role in the development of crystallized salts, especially uric acid, which eventually



develop into kidney stones. Urinary colic is a severe, piercing pain when these stones block the ureter.

Smaller stones (<5mm) can commonly pass with medicine and fluids. However, many patients incorrectly believe that pain relief indicates the stone has passed. Such a mistake in perception can be costly, as seen in a recent case at our hospital. A 39-year-old homemaker had been suffering from a high-grade fever and right-sided flank pain for two weeks before visiting our emergency department. She had been diagnosed with an 8mm ureteric stone a year ago, but did not follow up, believing the stone had passed when her symptoms subsided. A CT scan revealed a grim picture: her right kidney was infected and had sustained near-complete destruction due to prolonged obstruction. To remove the infection and stabilise her, an emergency percutaneous nephrostomy was performed. Despite prompt intervention, additional tests revealed that the kidney was not functioning. The infected, non-functioning kidney was removed via a laparoscopic nephro-ureterectomy. She recovered quickly and was discharged within 48 hours following the minimally invasive surgery. This case highlights that the lack of pain is not proof of stone clearing. Timely follow-up, imaging, and confirmation of stone passes are important. Although kidney stones are common, ignoring them can have serious and irreversible repercussions.

## TOMCOM issues notification for cook, chef jobs in Germany

GNS News Agency, May 10

Hyderabad: Telangana Overseas Manpower Company Limited (TOMCOM) has notified that there are vacancies for chef/cook (Bachelors in Hotel Management or Hospitality with minimum of 2 to 5 years experience) in Germany. A registered recruitment agency under the Department of Labour, Employment Training and Factories, Government of Telangana, with a specific mandate to facilitate overseas placement to qualified skilled and semi-skilled workers from the State, TOMCOM in a press release said to apply for these job roles, candidates must be in the age group of 22 to 35 years with 2 to 5 years valid experience certificates.



## Eighty years on, 'never again' is sounding hollow



GNS News Agency, May 10

As conflict once again darkens horizons in the sub-continent, West Asia, North Africa and eastern Europe, Europeans are commemorating 80 years since the guns fell silent over Europe and the world's most destructive war began to wind down. On May 8, 1945, as news of Germany's surrender spread, crowds surged onto the streets of European cities in spontaneous gestures of thanksgiving and relief. In the decades that followed, that outpouring of relief has been commemorated as Victory in Europe (or VE) Day. Yet, Europe, though free, was shattered and bankrupt. After the war, the task of rebuilding Europe went hand in hand with efforts to prevent another war starting on the continent. 'Never again' was the watchword.

Eighty years on, 'never again' is beginning to sound somewhat hollow. The contrast in the way that this major anniversary of Nazi Germany's surrender is being commemorated in Russia and western Europe is telling. Indeed, the fact that the same event is celebrated on both sides of the former Iron Curtain on two different days suggests that the peace of May 1945 was tenuous. Tensions between the wartime allies of Britain, France and the United States on one side, and the Soviet Union on the other, meant that Stalin refused to accept the ceasefire signed by Germany in Reims on May 7 at the Supreme Headquarters of the Allied Expeditionary Force (led by General Eisenhower). This was to come into force at 11.01 p.m. the following day. Stalin instead insisted on a second, grander, surrender in Berlin (then under Soviet control) the following evening, by which time President Harry Truman, General Charles de Gaulle and Prime Minister Winston Churchill had already formally announced Germany's surrender. When this document was signed in Berlin, it was already May 9 in Moscow. Hence the discrepancy in dates over essentially the same surrender.

As with the difference with dates, so too with memory. It is an article of faith in Russia that the USSR's contribution to defeating fascism is discounted by its former allies. Estimates vary, but Soviet casualties are thought to be 26 million, including 11 million military deaths in what Moscow calls the Great Patriotic War. This was 10% of the entire Soviet population. Stalin was also bitter about the delay in opening a second front in the fighting against Germany to draw away some German troops after Hitler's invasion in 1941. Less often acknowledged in these accounts is that Moscow changed sides halfway through the war, when Hitler double-crossed Stalin. Germany and the Soviet Union signed a non-aggression pact on August 23, 1939, which contained a secret protocol dividing Poland and the rest of

## PKK militant group says it reached 'historic' decisions, without confirming disbandment

GNS News Agency, May 10

A militant Kurdish group announced on Friday (May 9, 2025) that it had made "historic" decisions during its long-awaited congress earlier this week. The group, however, stopped short of saying whether it had resolved to disband and disarm as part of a new peace initiative with Turkey aimed at ending the four-decade insurgency. The Kurdistan Workers' Party, or PKK, held a congress in two locations in northern Iraq between May 5-7, according to a statement carried by the Firat News Agency, a media organization close to the banned group. The PKK said the historic decisions taken during the congress would be shared with the public soon.

In February, the PKK's jailed leader, Abdullah Ocalan, called on his group to convene a congress to dissolve itself and disarm to end the conflict that has claimed tens of thousands of lives since the 1980s. The group, which is listed as a terrorist organization by Turkey and most Western states, announced a ceasefire days later but had set conditions to disband, including the establishment of a legal mechanism for peace talks. During the congress, statements by Ocalan outlining his "perspectives and proposals" were read, according to Firat news. Turkey's Haberturk broadcaster said the congress convened in Suleymaniya and Duhok, cities in northern Iraq where the PKK's leadership is thought to be based. Earlier, Turkey's pro-Kurdish party, DEM, which is involved in the peace effort, said the PKK could declare its decision "at any moment." "We, too, are awaiting this historic step, this historic decision," DEM party spokeswoman Aysegul Dogan said. In a later statement, the DEM party described the PKK's congress as a turning point toward peace, and paid tribute to all lives lost



during the conflict. The party also said Turkey's Parliament and other institutions would have significant role to play toward peace and democratization. "A new page is opening on the path to an honorable peace and a democratic solution," the party said. The statement added: "We believe that, following this historic turning point, all democratic political institutions — especially the Grand National Assembly of Turkey — must take responsibility for solving the Kurdish issue and ensuring Turkey's true democratization." The latest peace initiative was launched in October by Devlet Bahçeli, a far-right Turkish politician who suggested that Ocalan, who is imprisoned on an island off Istanbul, could be granted parole if his group renounces violence and disbands. The DEM party statement also honored Sirri Sureyya Onder, a party legislator who was a key figure in the latest effort of peace, and who died last week. Onder and other DEM party officials visited Ocalan on Imrali island where he is serving a life sentence several times, as part of the peace effort.

## In remains of 2004 flare, scientists find second natural source of gold

In a new paper published in The Astrophysical Journal Letters, a team of researchers led by Anirudh Patel of Columbia University has reported that the universe may have another way to produce the precious element gold — which scientists have so far believed has been produced only in the cataclysmic collisions of ultra-dense worlds called neutron stars. Knowing where different elements in the universe come from helps scientists understand how the universe's chemical makeup has changed through time. The early universe only had hydrogen, helium, and trace amounts of lithium. All other elements were created later in stars, cosmic explosions, and laboratory experiments. Mapping the sources tells us how galaxies, stars, and planets took shape over time. Understanding the sources can also reveal how often an element was produced and how the presence of an element influenced the source's own evolution. The team reported the first direct observational evidence of a process called r-process nucleosynthesis in a powerful flare emitted by a body called a magnetar in 2004. Almost a day after the flare, the magnetar emitted strong gamma rays, which NASA's Compton Gamma Ray Observatory recorded. Per the team, the delayed emission

was inconsistent with standard flare afterglows and contained evidence of radioactive decay from r-process nuclei. The energy levels in the delayed emission and how it changed in time were found to be consistent with the decay signatures of radioactive isotopes rich in neutrons produced in the rapid neutron-capture process, or r-process. The team used models to conclude that 1.9 septillion kg of r-process material ejected at close to the speed of light could explain the delayed emission. This means some magnetar flares can eject neutron-rich matter into space, where it goes through r-process nucleosynthesis to create heavy elements like gold. So far, physicists have believed that gold has predominantly been produced in mergers of neutron stars, which scientists study using space telescopes and gravitational wave detectors. Patel et al. also suggested that the universe may have had gold atoms sooner since the cosmos could have had magnetars before colliding neutron stars. The authors also considered some alternative explanations — including noise in the measuring instruments and instruments misreading the flare's afterglow — and ruled them out by comparisons with other data and detailed simulations.

## Road rage suspected behind lawyer's mysterious death on Bengaluru's NICE Road: police



GNS News Agency, May 10

Bengaluru While the police say they are investigating the case from all angles, they suspect Jagadish may have stepped out of his car after a road rage incident with a lorry. While the police say they are investigating the case from all angles, they suspect Jagadish may have stepped out of his car after a road rage incident with a lorry. Police investigating the mysterious death of a lawyer, whose body was found near his car on Bengaluru's NICE Road last week, suspect that he was hit by a lorry during a road rage incident.

The body of Jagadish H, 46, was found lying around

150 metres from his KIA Seltos, which was parked on the side of NICE Road, which is connected to major highways running around Bengaluru. The car was locked, its parking lights were on, and its body was damaged. The incident took place on the night of May 2. The Kengeri police registered a murder case on the basis of a complaint filed by the victim's brother, Dr Prabhanjan A, a medical professional.

While the police say they are investigating the case from all angles, they suspect Jagadish may have stepped out of his car after a road rage incident with a lorry. "The investigations suggest that a lorry passing by brushed Jagadish's car and he stopped the car. He stepped out to fight the lorry driver and there was an argument. Later, unknowingly, he stepped a bit far from the stationed lorry and another lorry may have hit him. This was the statement of the lorry driver who had picked up a fight with Jagadish," a police officer said. However, the police have not ruled out the possibility of murder. "If we are to believe the statement of the lorry driver, we need to catch hold of the lorry that hit Jagadish. We are yet to ascertain it and we will hand over the case to Kengeri traffic police only after we are convinced it was a road accident," the officer added. The police is investigating the murder angle as Jagadish's mobile phone is still missing and the postmortem report is yet to provide clarity on whether he was hit by the lorry or killed using weapons.

## 'Last chance': SC grants one-year extension to conclude trial in gangster Sandeep Gadoli 'fake encounter' case



GNS News Agency, May 10

The Supreme Court has given an extension of one year to conclude the trial in the case pertaining to the death of Haryana-based gangster Sandeep Gadoli in an allegedly fake encounter. Eight people, including five Gurgaon police personnel, were arrested in connection with the case during 2016-17 by the Mumbai police which claims that the encounter was staged on February 7, 2016, at a hotel near the international airport in Mumbai. The accused are facing charges including murder and criminal conspiracy. One of the accused had approached the Supreme Court for bail last year and the court had directed to expedite the trial.

"After perusal of the material placed on record, we grant

one year further time as a last chance to conclude the trial. The advocates of the parties shall cooperate during the trial," the Supreme Court bench of Justices J K Maheshwari and Aravind Kumar said in an order communicated to the trial court on April 30. Gadoli, a wanted gangster in Haryana, was in Mumbai with his girlfriend and friends on February 7, 2016, when the fake encounter allegedly took place. A team of the Gurgaon police claimed that they had barged into the hotel to arrest Gadoli but shot him in self-defence after he fired at them. Subsequently, a team of the Mumbai police claimed that the encounter was pre-planned and staged. The Mumbai police arrested five police personnel and three civilians — model Divya Pahuja, who was accompanying Gadoli; her mother Soniya; and alleged main conspirator Virendra Gujjar — claiming that the encounter was planned due to gang rivalry. Five of the accused — policemen Vikram Singh, Jitendra Yadav and Deepak Kakran, as well as Divya and Soniya — were granted bail citing long incarceration. Divya was murdered five months after she was granted bail in 2024.

Three accused — Gujjar, sub-inspector Pradyuman Yadav, and constable Paramjeet Ahlawat — remain behind bars. Citing the long incarceration, they had approached the Supreme Court for bail, which then expedited the trial. The trial is currently underway and over 40 witnesses have been examine

## Install mist sprays on electric poles in Delhi's pollution hotspots: Environment Minister Manjinder Singh Sirsa

GNS News Agency, May 10

manjinder singh sirsa According to Sirsa, another added advantage was that this would not require additional roadside infrastructure. Delhi Environment Minister Manjinder Singh Sirsa on Monday issued a directive to mandatorily install mist or water sprinklers on electric poles along road stretches and verges across identified pollution hotspots in the national capital. "Delhi Development Authority (DDA) and New Delhi Municipal Council (NDMC) have piloted such installation of mist spray system on electric pole along selected stretches," Sirsa said, adding, "... it was felt that the replication of such mist spray system as on large scale could have favourable impact on air pollution and is similar to water sprinklers and anti-smog guns which are being used."

According to Sirsa, another added advantage was that this would not require additional roadside infrastructure. A direction in this regard has been issued to all infrastructure and civic departments, including the public works department, central public works department, irrigation and flood control department, Delhi Development Authority, Municipal Corporation of Delhi, New Delhi Municipal Council, and National Highways Authority of India, making it mandatory for departments to deploy mechanical water sprinklers on electric poles and anti-smog guns at regular intervals along road stretches in pollution-prone areas. The action follows the identification of air pollution hotspots by the Delhi Pollution Control Committee and the Commission for Air Quality Management (CAQM), and forms part of the Graded Re-



sponse Action Plan (GRAP) implementation roadmap.

To ensure effective dust suppression, the environment department has specified the use of micro or mist-type jets with a droplet size of 50–100 microns and operating pressure between 0.45 to 0.65 MPa. The deployment is to be supported by the mechanised sweeping with integrated jetting systems, especially along high-traffic roads and urban construction corridors. Departments have been directed to ensure that central verges and intersections in the listed hotspot areas are kept dust-free through routine misting operations. The department also suggested the technical specifications for mist spray systems to customise based on operational needs. This included details on reverse osmosis system capacity, pre-treatment and filtration, automation and monitoring, installation and maintenance, etc.

## Accused of attempt to rape, AIIMS doctor found dead in Chandigarh hotel

GNS News Agency, May 10

The body of an All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) doctor was found hanging at a hotel room in Daria, Chandigarh on Sunday. The victim has been identified as Dr G Venkatesh, a senior resident at the AIIMS, Delhi. According to police sources, the victim had been facing an attempt to rape FIR, registered against him in Faridabad. Police have also recovered documents related to the FIR from the scene.

According to preliminary investigation, it has come to light that a female colleague of victim had filed a zero FIR against Venkatesh in March 2025, in Delhi, under charges of attempted rape.

According to the AIIMS staff and doctors residing in the Adarsh Nagar area of Faridabad, the case was later transferred to Adarsh Nagar Police Station. Despite efforts, the police had not been able to locate him. Authorities suggest that the ongoing investigation and legal trouble was troubling the deceased doctor. He recently applied for anticipatory bail from the Faridabad court, but it was rejected.

Police sources indicated this could have been a significant factor leading to his mental distress and eventual suicide. Venkatesh checked into Deep Hotel on April 30 and



was found dead shortly thereafter. Investigators say he used a bedsheet to hang himself inside the hotel room. A few days before the incident, Venkatesh had travelled to Chandigarh, reportedly to consult a local advocate through an acquaintance. Police sources said that the hotel room in which he was staying was broken and the body was seen hanging. The body was then brought down and sent to a government hospital for postmortem. A police official said that as per preliminary investigation, there appears to be no foul play. The postmortem was conducted and the body of the victim was handed over to his family.

## West Bengal higher secondary exam results to be announced tomorrow: Here's how to view yours

GNS News Agency, May 10

The West Bengal Council Higher Secondary Education (WBCHSE) announced that the Higher Secondary examination results for 2025 will be declared. Students will be able to view and download the results from various websites and apps, including result.wb.gov.in, results.digilocker.gov.in, and the WBCHSE Results app, which will be available on the Google Play store after 2 pm on the same day. Moreover, education.indianexpress.com will also host the WB results.

For hard copies of the marksheets and pass certificates, students will have to wait another day. They will be distributed to schools on May 8 from 10 am onwards at 55 distribution centres. The board has instructed school authorities to ensure the distribution of these documents to students on the same day. The results will be announced on May 7 at a press conference at 12.30 pm at Vidyasagar Bhavan, the Council's headquarters in Salt Lake. This year, around 509,000 students appeared for the higher secondary ex-



ams across 2,089 exam centres. The results will come 50 days after the completion of the examinations, which began on March 3 and concluded on March 18. This was also the final HS examination under the annual exam system, with next batches to follow a semester-based system starting from the academic year of 2025-2026.

## 'Packing up and leaving is not easy': As border tensions escalate, Punjab villagers on high alert

GNS News Agency, May 10

A chilling announcement pierced the quiet of Alam Shah village in Punjab's Fazilka district three days ago. "Assi suniya ki jung da mahaul hai...ko vi sham nu 6 vaje toh baad ghar toh bahar na niklo (We are hearing there is a possibility of war...no one should step outside their homes after 6 pm)," a voice streaming over a loudspeaker from the local gurdwara in the village that lies just half a km away from the Indo-Pak border said. With tensions soaring over India's possible military response to the Pahalgam terror attack and the Centre directing northern and western states and Union Territories to test and strengthen their civil defence mechanisms on Wednesday, the border villages along the Indo-Pak border are on the alert. "It was a call for unity," Sukhmander Singh Thind, a member of the Alam Shah village defence committee, said about the gurdwara announcement. "They asked every family to stay together and remain alert," he added. While some villagers are paying heed to the warning and returning home early, Thind admitted "not all" were as concerned.

Along several border villages in Punjab, fear is tempered by experience. Alam Shah, like many other villages along the border, has seen several evacuations—in 1965, 1971, 1999, and 2016. "Packing up and leaving is not easy. We will take a call only if we see something serious. In the past, when we left, our belongings were damaged or looted," Thind added. In Tindiwala village of Ferozepur, the last habitation before the zero line, villagers are more practical. "We have packed emergency kits: some clothes, savings, documents. If needed, we will leave via boat. It is a shortcut and safer than roads. Children and women will leave first; men

will be the last to exit," Parkash Singh said. Singh recounted the tales passed down by elders. "In 1971, Pakistani troops entered the evacuated villages. They looted everything—doors, windows, even bricks. They sprayed chemicals that killed our trees," he said. "Despite that, we will wait until it is absolutely necessary. We are ready," he added. As tensions escalate along the Line of Control, sarpanches in Punjab's border villages are also making lists of the number of houses, men, women, minors, total area under cultivation, etc, sources said, adding that such details have been shared with security forces too in many villages.

In Ferozepur, a blackout rehearsal was held on Sunday night. "Till last week, everything seemed fine. But now with blackout rehearsals, we are becoming more alert. We cannot afford complacency," Veer Singh from Muhar Jamsher village in Fazilka said. Further down in Bhakra Gatti Rajoke, another Ferozepur border village, preparations are more hands-on. "The Army is cleaning bunkers. We have kept candles, matchsticks, and water bottles ready, but we are still in the village," said Vanjar Singh. "It takes us only two hours to evacuate by boat. We grew up on the Sutlej—we are expert rowers," he added. Several villagers have packed their essentials like land documents, savings, and jewellery. "We have stocked up on potatoes, onions and garlic. Wheat and rice are homegrown. Pulses are yet to be added," said Thind. An old, unused Army hospital in Tindiwala has now been made operational. "We have been advised to switch off lights early at night, but few follow it. Interestingly, across the border, we see no lights at all. Possibly, they have already evacuated or follow blackouts strictly," Parkash Singh noted.

## From Dudh shukto to Hemkonikar payesh: Tagore's Thakurbari's recipes brought alive again in 3-day festival

GNS News Agency, May 10

Long before restaurant menus and fusion trends, Bengal's culinary identity was crafted in homes like that of Rabindranath Tagore. Dishes such as uchchhe bori diye dudh shukto, bhaja muger dal pora, hemkonikar payesh, and kochi pathar jhol once graced the poet's table and reflected a kitchen steeped in refinement and tradition. Now, in an effort to revive these lost flavours, the West Bengal Tourism Development Corporation (WBTDCL) is bringing back this rich gastronomic legacy through a three-day food festival titled "Banglar Shabekiyana Thakurbari Ranna (Bengal traditional cuisine of Tagore's family)" to be held from May 9 to 11. This festival, curated as a tribute to Bengal's timeless food heritage, will present four elaborate thalis each day. The vegetarian option, lovingly named "Chokher Bali," will serve up classics like fulko luchi, narkel kuchi diye cholera daal, bori diye uchey dudh shukto, kachalonka diye posto bata, bhaja muger dal pora, Thakurbari chana pulao, echorer kofta, kacha aamer chatni, papor, and end with sweets like shorbhaja, Hemkonikar payesh, and mishti paan. Alongside this are three non-vegetarian thalis, each representing a unique flavour palette. Like vegetarian thalis, non-vegetarian thalis are also named after Tagore's novels. "Ghare Baire" celebrates chicken preparations, including the legendary Goyalondo steamer curry paired with basanti pulao and traditional accompaniments. "Punoscho" is a seafood lover's delight with sorshey pabda and the rich Thakurbari chingri malaikari or doi katla, all thoughtfully paired with nostalgic sides. "Sesher Kobita," the mutton thali, features kochi pathar jhol, a delicate, flavourful curry of tender goat meat and potatoes, highlighting the depth of Bengal's slow-cooked traditions.



locations in Terminal 3. Once scanned, the map opens on a mobile device, offering step-by-step directions throughout the terminal.

Following the launch, DIAL is now expanding the service to cover all boarding gates and baggage belts at Terminals 1 and 3. This expansion ensures that passengers, especially first-time flyers, the elderly, women travelling with children, family, etc, will have a smart, self-guided way finding tool at every key point of their journey, further enhancing convenience and reducing stress, according to DIAL.

"The menus were selected from the tradition of Thakurbari. Thakurbari means not only Rabindranath Tagore. It's a long history from Dwarakanath Tagore to Devendranath Tagore, Rabindranath Tagore and Rathindranath Tagore. We tried to capture that tradition in food culture. Thakurbari has jamindari in Shilaidaha which was in East Bengal, but they also used to be interested in the food culture of Kolkata as well. On the other hand, the majority of wives of Thakurbari were from Jashore, which also belongs to East Bengal. So, there is a mixture of culture in food and we tried to explain that in this festival," said a senior official of the state Tourism department. Dudh Shuktani, for instance, is a mildly spiced medley of milk, bitter gourd, ridge gourd, sweet potato, and mustard seeds, infused with the distinctive aroma of panch phoron. Thakurbari aloo dum, cooked in ghee with a hint of hing and ginger paste, offers warmth and subtlety in every bite. Bhaja motor dal pora, made from roasted yellow split peas blended with mustard oil, green chillies, and onions, is shaped into crisp fritters that bring texture and heart to the plate. Each dish is rooted in the cultural fabric of Bengal, offering not just taste but also memory. What makes the experience even more inviting is its accessibility. Priced between Rs. 525 and Rs. 730, these generously portioned thalis are designed to be enjoyed by all. The festival will run in four locations simultaneously—Bolpur (Shantiniketan), Bankura (Bishnupur), Barrackpore (Mongolghara), and Bidhannagar (Udayachal)—with dining slots open from 12 pm to 3 pm and again from 7.30 pm to 10.30 pm. A senior official from WBTDCL noted that "this initiative serves a dual purpose, it honours the culinary traditions of Jorasanko Thakurbari while also showcasing the talent

## Raids on MRMC, Kalaburagi: ED probe reveals accused siphoned off Rs 30 crore from students' stipend amount



GNS News Agency, May 10

The probe was initiated on the basis of a First Information Report (FIR) registered with the Cyber, Economics and Narcotics (CEN) Cell, Kalaburagi. The probe was initiated on the basis of a First Information Report (FIR) registered with the Cyber, Economics and Narcotics (CEN) Cell, Kalaburagi. Raids conducted on the properties of key individuals linked to Mahadevappa Rampure Medical College (MRMC) in Karnataka's Kalaburagi have indicated that they siphoned off at least Rs 30 crore from the stipend amount allotted to postgraduate students, a statement from the

Bengaluru Zonal Office of the Enforcement Directorate (ED) said Monday. The ED had searched seven locations linked to MRMC on April 30, May 1 and 3, including the premises of Bhimashankar Bilgundi, former president of Hyderabad-Karnataka Education Society (HKE), Gulbarga; Dr S M Patel, former dean of MRMC; and accountant Subhash Chandra.

The probe was initiated on the basis of a First Information Report (FIR) registered with the Cyber, Economics and Narcotics (CEN) Cell, Kalaburagi, which alleged that Bilgundi, Patil, Chandra, and the manager of Canara Bank's MRMC branch misappropriated stipend amount of Rs 81.21 crore, which was released for 282 postgraduate students, between January 1, 2018, and March 1, 2024. "During the search operation, incriminating evidence in the form of electronic records containing Excel sheets reflecting the details of blank signed cheques received from PG Medical students and amount of cash withdrawn by the management from the bank accounts of students, have been found and seized," the ED statement said. The probe has indicated that from 2018-19 to 2023-24, the accused had collected the signed blank cheques from PG students of MRMC through coercion and used it to withdraw a major portion of the stipends from their bank accounts when it was credited, leaving a meagre amount for the students, the statement added.

## Delhi High Court seeks AAP MLA Amanatullah Khan's response in plea seeking cancellation of anticipatory bail

GNS News Agency, May 10

The Delhi High Court Tuesday sought a response from Aam Aadmi Party's (AAP) Okhla MLA Amanatullah Khan in a plea by the state seeking to set aside the anticipatory bail granted to him by a trial court in February. He has been accused of attacking police personnel and obstructing them from arresting an alleged proclaimed offender, Shahwez Khan, who was already on anticipatory bail granted by a court. Justice Ravinder Dubeja issued notice and kept the matter for consideration on August 27.



A Rouse Avenue court granted Amanatullah Khan anticipatory bail on February 26, with special judge Jitendra Singh recording, "The allegation in the FIR that the applicant (Khan)... came to the spot (where the police personnel had come) is not supported by the CCTV footage." When the police registered an FIR against the AAP MLA, the judge on February 14 granted him interim protection from arrest for 10 days, which was later extended by a day. At the time, the trial court judge also questioned the police over the attempt to arrest Shahwez Khan even as he had secured an anticipatory bail. Opposing the MLA's anticipatory bail, the prosecution argued that even if Shahwez Khan was on anticipatory bail, the AAP MLA had no right to interfere with the functioning of the police. Amanatullah Khan and his supporters were booked under sections 221 (obstruction of public servants while they are performing their duties), and

132 (criminal force or assault against a public servant while they are performing their duties) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS). On Tuesday, advocate Sanjeev Bhandari, appearing on behalf of the state, in the plea seeking setting aside the pre-arrest bail granted to the MLA, told Justice Dubeja, "Can a third person become a judge? A person cannot become a judge of his own area?" Bhandari further highlighted that Khan has 26 cases against him, adding, "Even in anticipatory bail, past criminal antecedents have to be considered." Of the 26 cases registered against the AAP MLA, he has been discharged or acquitted in 16. Five are pending trial, and investigation has yet to be completed in another five cases.

## Delhi HC stays interim injunction against PS-2 song 'Veera Raja Veera' use by AR Rahman

GNS News Agency, May 10

The Delhi High Court Tuesday stayed an interim injunction against music director A R Rahman and two production companies, under which Rahman and Madras Talkies and Lyca Productions were directed to credit celebrated Dhrupad exponents, the late Ustad Nasir Faiyazuddin and Ustad Nasir Zahiruddin Dagar, in a song in Ponniyin Selvan-2 (PS-2). An appeal was filed by Rahman against a single judge's order on April 25, and was taken up by the division bench of Justices C Hari Shankar and Ajay Dippaul. The single judge order had held that Rahman's popular composition Veera Raja Veera from the film PS-2 was musically "identical" to Shiva Stuti, a devotional piece composed and performed by Junior Dagar Brothers.



The court's ruling had come in a suit filed by Junior Dagar Brothers' heir, Padma Shri awardee Dhrupad vocalist Ustad Faiyaz Wasifuddin Dagar, alleging Rahman and others of copyright infringement. On Tuesday, while staying the interim injunction order, the High Court, however, directed Rahman and the producers to deposit Rs 2 crore as was directed by the single judge. The division bench's stay on the interim injunction implies that Rahman does not

have to pay damages of Rs 2 lakh as was directed on April 25, as of now, and he also does not have to give credits to Junior Dagar brothers for every play-out of the song, as was also directed. The division bench recorded in its order, "As the subject matter of the copyright in which the injunction has been granted has been in public domain since 2023, without prejudice to the rights and contentions of both sides and without intending the order to be any expression on cases of the parties before us, we stay the operation of the injunction granted by Ld. Single Judge till the next date of hearing," the Court ordered.

## 'Illegal immigration on rise': Punjab and Haryana HC upholds conviction of 74-year-old Bathinda woman in fraud case

GNS News Agency, May 10

Punjab and Haryana High Court on child Custody The case dates back to 1999 when Pritpal Singh and Jagjit Singh paid Rs 15 lakh to Charanjit, a native of Bathinda, through her relative and co-accused Gurlabh Kaur, after being promised Canadian visas. The Punjab and Haryana High Court recently upheld the conviction of a 74-year-old woman in a 25-year-old immigration fraud case, in which two men were duped of Rs 15 lakh under the pretext of being sent to Canada. Affirming the conviction, Justice Jasjit Singh Bedi reduced the sentence of the accused, Charanjit Kaur, from two years of rigorous imprisonment to one year of simple imprisonment, citing her age and the delay in trial. The case dates back to 1999 when Pritpal Singh and Jagjit Singh paid Rs 15 lakh to Charanjit, a native of Bathinda, through her relative and co-accused Gurlabh Kaur, after being promised Canadian visas. The complainants alleged they were made to wait in Bombay for 36 days with repeated assurances before being abandoned. When the accused failed to return the money, a case was registered in Bathinda in June 2000. A Phul court convicted both women in 2008 under Indian Penal Code (IPC) sections 420 (cheating) and 120B (criminal conspiracy), sentencing them to two years of rigorous imprisonment. The conviction was upheld by a Bathinda sessions court in 2009. Charanjit then filed a revision petition, which remained pending for over 15 years and was finally heard last month. Dismissing the petition, Justice Bedi said the testimonies of the complainants were "convincing and consistent", and dismissed the defence's argument that the liability was civil in nature. "It stands fully proved that the accused... defrauded an amount of Rs 15 lakh by making a false representation," the court noted. The judge also rejected arguments regarding delay in registering the First Information Report (FIR) and lack of documentary evidence, observing that "defect in the investigation by itself cannot be a ground for acquittal", quoting a 2010 Supreme Court ruling in C Muniappan versus the State of Tamil Nadu. While modifying the sentence, Justice Bedi imposed a fine of Rs 1 lakh per charge—totalling Rs 3 lakh—to be paid to the complainants as compensation. "Such offences of attempted illegal immigration are on the rise... Undue sympathy must not be shown," the judge observed. Gurlabh, the co-accused, was granted relief in a separate petition after she paid Rs 5 lakh each to the complainants.



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## Stamp vendor 'shoots himself' in Mohali; two suicide notes found: Cops

GNS News Agency, May 10

A stamp vendor (stamp seller) at the Mohali Tehsil Office located opposite Gurdwara Sohana Akal Ashram Monday reportedly committed suicide by shooting himself around 10 am. According to the employees present in the office, Navchetan Singh Rana had asked them to step outside, saying, "You all go out, I need to count the payment." Shortly after they left, a gunshot-like sound was heard. When they rushed back inside, they found Navchetan Singh with blood streaming from his head onto his shirt, and a revolver lying near his feet. Police immediately arrived at the scene and began investigating from all angles. The forensic team too reached the spot and collected samples of bullets, the revolver, and blood.

The police stated, "We are questioning family members and gathering eyewitness accounts and other evidence to thoroughly investigate the real reasons behind the suicide." So far, the exact reasons behind Navchetan Singh's suicide remain unclear, but family, financial, and mental health-related circumstances are being probed. The police claimed that once the coroner and forensic reports come in, the truth will be revealed.

When contacted, Sohana SHO Simran Singh said that after reviewing CCTV footage and statements from family members, they had registered a case under Section 108 (abetment of suicide) of the BNS. Rana left behind two handwritten notes, now in police custody, that provide crucial insight into his state of mind before the incident. According to police sources, one note read: "I don't owe money to anyone. Sandhu has two cheques and Amit Chhabra has one cheque." The second note stated: "Sunita, Phase-7, is responsible for my death." Based on the content of the notes,



the police registered a case against the named woman and begun a detailed investigation. The notes are being treated as a suicide note, and the individuals mentioned are now under scrutiny.

Navchetan's family told the police that he had left home after breakfast around 9 am, as usual, and headed to his office. About two hours later, they received a call informing them that he had died by suicide after shooting himself. The family members said, "His behavior at home was completely normal. There were no signs of distress or any indication that he was troubled."

## Uday Kotak buys sea-facing building in Worli for over Rs 400 crore, creates new property price record

GNS News Agency, May 10

The luxury real estate sector in Mumbai has hit a new high with billionaire banker Uday Kotak buying an entire sea-facing residential building in Worli for more than Rs 400 crore, creating a national record for residential property prices, as per details sourced through a real estate portal. Kotak, the founder of Kotak Mahindra Bank, has bought all 22 apartments in the three-storey (ground-plus-two) building, 19 Shiv Sagar, along Worli Sea Face's stretch. The latest batch of deals — 10 apartments bought between April 8 and April 21 — comes after the Kotak family bought 12 flats in the building between September 2024 and January 2025. With these recent deals, the family now owns the entire building.

The most recent apartments were purchased at a price of between Rs 12 crore and Rs 27.59 crore, taking the per square foot price to approximately Rs 2.75 lakh and almost Rs 2.90 lakh on a carpet area basis, the highest-ever price paid for housing property in India, as per documents accessed via property portal IndexTap. Even the smallest flat in the building, which was a mere 173 sq ft, commanded more than Rs 4.7 crore, while the largest, a 1,396 sq ft one, was sold at Rs 38.24 crore.

Earlier, between September 2024 and January 2025, the Kotaks bought 12 apartments in the building for Rs 202 crore. These early buys were already in the news, with the average price touching a whopping Rs 2.72 lakh per sq ft. The



building, 19 Shiv Sagar, is next to Champagne House, another high-end address on Worli Sea Face, which the Kotak family had purchased in 2018 from Ranjit Chougule, managing director of the defunct Indage Vintners, for Rs 385 crore. This new acquisition comes at a time when the Mumbai real estate sector is on a growth spree. Even with the increase in property prices and the recent rise in ready reckoner (RR) rates effective from April 1, the demand is unabated. Over 13,080 properties were registered in Mumbai in April 2025, accounting for more than Rs 1,114 crore in stamp duty for the state, the highest for any April ever recorded. The Kotak family's investment highlights the confidence of ultra-high-net-worth individuals in Mumbai's premium real estate, especially in iconic locations like Worli Sea Face, which continues to attract record-setting deals.

## How a 24-year-old spotted holes in India's digital transformation, and came up with solutions

GNS News Agency, May 10

Indian industry is digitising rapidly, but not uniformly — different sectors have shown unequal adaptability to digital modes. The India Digital Economy Report of January 2025 pointed out that the wholesale sector lags behind retail. In a single sector, such as banking, one can find that 95 per cent of payment transactions are digital, but processes like loans and investments remain largely offline and involve paperwork, with financial services generally less digitalised. Two years ago, Rushikesh Tanksale, 24, who was waiting out the six months before his MTEch studies started at COEP Technological University in Pune, came across companies stuck in a previous era. Tanksale's first experience was with a tractor manufacturer in Ranjangaon village with multiple electricity meters and transformers when he was 22. After every eight-hour shift, the staff would manually write down, using pen and paper, the readings from each of the meters.

"I learnt that a lot of industries hesitate to upgrade because it takes time and the return on investment is not immediate. The hierarchical nature of companies, powered by babus who passed out before the digital revolution, also makes the transition difficult. The long processing time means that money is stuck, the pipeline is dripping, and such companies become roadblocks in the economy," says Tanksale. He set up a startup with a bunch of interns, Two Registers, that creates customised automation software for mobile and web applications for organisations, institutions, and SMEs. For the tractor company, Two Registers developed a kit to digitise their meter reading and a few other processes. In another company, Two Registers saw that the task of getting work permits, such as for chimney cleaners to operate at heights, in a toxic environment and a high electricity area, was filled by hand using sheets of paper. "The appended forms go to the first plant head, the second plant head, the third and to the final authority before the first pass is generated. In case of changes, you need to start from scratch," says Tanksale.

Two Registers created a software that has brought down the three-week work permit process to a week. "They have a rotating holiday, so we cannot do much about reducing the time even further. The person who has to approve should be available," says Tanksale. Today, his startup has 45 interns working on seven to eight different projects — and the challenge still lies in bringing a mindset change in the industry. The industries they have worked with range from automobile and construction to real estate. The company does not make a general product, but tailors software to a client's specific demand. A publisher and library client asked for a web-based platform with a system for audiobooks that Tanksale and the team created. "There are opportunities in the market, but one just needs to have consistency and patience to look around. We try to focus on the smaller things that need attention rather than the bigger problems. This is what I have learned from my first two big projects. It is in the minor details that the Indian market



is still functioning like it did 60 to 70 years ago. If we can digitalise these, it is a better option. We would be taking many companies ahead into the paperless era," says Tanksale. Revenue is still in lakhs, and Tanksale aims to raise this to a couple of crores. "If we get into the US market or European market, then the dynamics will change. A lot of foreign countries have a higher adaptability to digitisation," he says.

## Farmers stage protests, demand officials to expedite paddy purchase in Telangana's Khammam

Khammam: Paddy farmers in Agriculture Minister Thummala Nageswara Rao's own district in Khammam were at the receiving end and were forced to take to the streets due to negligence of officials as well as exploitation of millers. A large group of farmers and farmers' association leaders staged a protest on Khammam-Kothagudem main road at Kallur demanding the officials to immediately purchase paddy brought to procurement centres. The farmers of Pullaiah Banjar in Kallur mandal complained that large quantities of paddy were deducted in the pretext of wastage (tarugu) while weighing the produce at procurement centres. They shouted slogans demanding action against the IKP officials. Vehicles were stopped on both sides of the road as farmers protested. The local police intervened and convinced the farmers to take their grievance to the Kallur revenue divisional officer. In a similar protest on Khammam-Kothagudem road farmers staged a dharna at Sujatha Nagar mandal headquarters under the aegis of CPI (M) Rythu Sangham. They demanded the government immediately start purchasing paddy at all the paddy purchase centres.

## Order by Hegseth to cancel Ukraine weapons caught White House off guard



NEW YORK/WASHINGTON - Roughly a week after Donald Trump started his second term as president, the U.S. military issued an order to three freight airlines operating out of Dover Air Force Base in Delaware and a U.S. base in the United Arab Emirates: Stop 11 flights loaded with artillery shells and other weaponry and bound for Ukraine. In a matter of hours, frantic questions reached Washington from Ukrainians in Kyiv and from officials in Poland, where the shipments were coordinated. Who had ordered the U.S. Transportation Command, known as TRANSCOM, to halt the flights? Was it a permanent pause on all aid? Or just some?

The Reuters Tariff Watch newsletter is your daily guide to the latest global trade and tariff news. Sign up here. Top national security officials — in the White House, the Pentagon and the State Department — couldn't provide answers. Within one week, flights were back in the air. The verbal order originated from the office of Pete Hegseth, the secretary of defense, according to TRANSCOM records reviewed by Reuters. The cancellations came after Trump wrapped up a January 30 Oval Office meeting about Ukraine that included Hegseth and other top national security officials, according to three sources familiar with the situation. During the meeting, the idea of stopping Ukraine aid came up, said two people with knowledge of the meeting, but the president issued no instruction to stop aid to Ukraine. The president was unaware of Hegseth's order, as were other top national security officials in the meeting, according to two sources briefed on the private White House discussions and another with direct knowledge of the matter. Asked to comment on this report, the White House told Reuters that Hegseth had followed a directive from Trump to pause aid to Ukraine, which it said was the administration's position at the time. It did not explain why, according to those who spoke to Reuters, top national security officials in the normal decision making process didn't know about the order or why it was so swiftly reversed.

"Negotiating an end to the Russia-Ukraine War has been a complex and fluid situation. We are not going to detail every conversation among top administration officials throughout the process," said Karoline Leavitt, the White House spokeswoman. "The bottom line is the war is much closer to an end today than it was when President Trump took office." The cancellations cost TRANSCOM \$2.2 million, according to the records reviewed by Reuters. In response to a request for comment, TRANSCOM said that the total cost was \$1.6 million — 11 flights were canceled but one incurred no charge.

An order halting military aid authorized under the Biden administration went into effect officially a month later, on March 4, with a White House announcement. The story of how flights were canceled, detailed by Reuters for the first time, points to an at-times haphazard policy-making process within the Trump administration and a command structure that is unclear even to its own ranking members.

The multiday pause of the flights, confirmed by five people with knowledge of it, also shows confusion in how the administration has created and implemented national security policy. At the Pentagon, the disarray is an open secret, with many current and former officials saying the department is plagued by internal disagreements on foreign policy, deep-seated grudges, and inexperienced staff. Reuters couldn't establish exactly when Hegseth's office ordered the freight flights canceled. Two sources said Ukrainian and European officials began asking about the pause on February 2. The TRANSCOM records indicate that there was a verbal order from "SECDEF" — the secretary of defense — that stopped the flights and that they had resumed by February 5. "This is consistent with the administration's policy to move fast, break things and sort it out later. That is their managing philosophy," said Mark Cancian, a retired Marine officer and defense expert with the Center for Strategic and International Studies think tank. "That is great for Silicon Valley. But when you're talking about institutions that have been around for hundreds of years,

you are going to run into problems." The stop in shipments caused consternation in Kyiv.

The Ukrainians quickly asked the administration through multiple channels but had difficulty obtaining any useful information, according to a Ukrainian official with direct knowledge of the situation. In later conversations with the Ukrainians, the administration wrote off the pause as "internal politics," said the source. Ukrainian officials did not respond to requests for comment. The shipping of American weapons to Ukraine requires sign-off from multiple agencies and can take weeks or even months to complete, depending on the size of the cargo. The majority of US military assistance goes through a logistics hub in Poland before being picked up by Ukrainian representatives and transported into the country. That hub can hold shipments for extended periods of time. It's not clear if the 11 canceled flights were the only ones scheduled that week in February, how much aid was already stockpiled in Poland and if it continued to flow into Ukraine despite the TRANSCOM orders. The revelations came at a time of upheaval in the department. Several of Hegseth's top advisers were escorted from the building April 15 after being accused of unauthorized disclosure of classified information. The secretary continues to face scrutiny, including from Congress, about his own communications. Previously he's attributed allegations of upheaval to disgruntled employees. The canceled flights contained weapons that had long been approved by the Biden administration, authorized by lawmakers on Capitol Hill. Reuters couldn't determine if Hegseth or his team knew how the order to TRANSCOM would play out or that the order would be a substantial change in U.S. policy on Ukraine. Three sources familiar with the situation said Hegseth misinterpreted discussions with the president about Ukraine policy and aid shipments without elaborating further.

Four other people briefed on the situation said a small cadre of staffers inside the Pentagon, many of whom have never held a government job and who have for years spoken out against U.S. aid to Ukraine, advised Hegseth to consider pausing aid to the country. Two people familiar with the matter denied there was a true cutoff in aid. One of them described it as a logistical pause. "(They) just wanted to get a handle on what was going on and people, as a result, misinterpreted that as: 'You need to stop everything,'" said one. According to two sources with knowledge of the meeting, Hegseth arrived at the January 30 Oval Office meeting with Trump with a memo drafted by some of his top policy advisers, advocating that their boss push the White House to consider pausing weapons deliveries to Ukraine to gain leverage in peace negotiations with Russia. The sources said the secretary attended the meeting with other top officials involved in Ukraine policy, including National Security Adviser Mike Waltz and Ukraine envoy Keith Kellogg. The group broadly discussed U.S. policy on Ukraine and Russia, including potentially tightening sanctions on Moscow. It's not clear the extent to which Hegseth proposed stopping aid during the meeting, but the idea came up in discussions, said one of the sources and another person familiar with the meeting.

Since the beginning of Russia's full-scale invasion in February 2022, the U.S. had approved billions of dollars worth of military aid to Ukraine. Most was delivered under the Biden administration. But a few shipments remained in the pipeline, scheduled into this summer. Trump had threatened to freeze aid repeatedly on the campaign trail, but had yet to do so. And during the meeting, he again declined to stop aid to Ukraine or order Hegseth to implement any policy changes when it came to sending equipment to Kyiv, the sources said. An order effectively freezing any military support for an ally would normally be discussed intensively among top national security officials and approved by the president. It requires the coordination of multiple agencies and often multiple freight companies. None of that discussion or coordination happened when Hegseth's office canceled the scheduled flights carrying American artillery shells and ammunition to Poland from Al Udeid military base in the United Arab Emirates and the Dover U.S. military base in Delaware, three of the sources said. The pause came as Ukraine's military was struggling to fend off Russian forces in eastern Ukraine and in the consequential battle for the Kursk region of Russia, where Ukrainian forces were losing ground and have since all but been expelled. Close Trump advisers got tipped off to the pause by Pentagon staffers and discussed with the president whether to restore the aid shipments, according to two sources. By then, TRANSCOM had canceled 11 flights, according to the records reviewed by Reuters. Some media outlets, including Reuters, wrote about the pause but Hegseth's role was previously unknown. It's unclear if Trump subsequently questioned or reprimanded Hegseth.

## What's in a papal name? An agenda for the Catholic Church



VATICAN CITY, GNS News Agency, May 10 - When Cardinal Jorge Mario Bergoglio emerged onto the balcony of St. Peter's Basilica after the conclave of March 2013, few outside his native Argentina knew who he was or what kind of pope he might be. When his papal name was announced, things became much clearer. The Reuters Tariff Watch newsletter is your daily guide to the latest global trade and tariff news. Sign up here. Taking the name of the 13th century St. Francis of Assisi, Bergoglio laid out a plan for his papacy.

St. Francis had rejected wealth and wanted to care for the poor. He had taken care of animals and the environment and appealed movingly against the wars of his time. These traits would become key themes of the 12-year papacy of Pope Francis. With 133 Catholic cardinals due to start their conclave on Wednesday to elect Francis' successor, the world awaits the moment when the new pontiff emerges onto that balcony. What name will be announced? What signal will it send? John, the most common name chosen by past popes and a name Francis often suggested as one for his successor, would evoke a major figure of the

1960s. Pope John XXIII (1958 to 1963) was known as a gregarious, smiling man, often referred to as "The Good Pope". He helped work behind the scenes to de-escalate the Cuban Missile Crisis and called the Second Vatican Council, a three-year assembly of the world's Catholic bishops that led to major reforms for the global institution. Choosing the name Paul could honour Pope Paul VI (1963 to 1978), who came after John XXIII and was widely seen as a more cautious figure. He is generally seen as a careful consolidator, who formed up some of John's reforms but also gave clear doctrinal answers.

Paul VI, for instance, was the author of a 1968 letter that broadly banned Catholics from using birth control. Some cardinals say quietly that after Pope Francis, a new Pope Paul is exactly what is needed. Francis, the first pope from the Americas, was not always focused on clear doctrine and even made controversial decisions like allowing priests to bless same-sex couples on a case-by-case basis.

### ANOTHER DOUBLE PAPAL NAME?

Other popular papal names have included Gregory, Clement, Leo and Pius. There is also Benedict, which could honour Francis' conservative predecessor, Benedict XVI. Or it could honour Benedict XV (1914 to 1922), who spent his papacy pleading with European leaders to end the bloodshed of World War One. A new pope could decide to be called Francis II, which would be taken as a clear signal that the new pontiff planned to continue with a similar agenda to the late pope. Cardinal Albino Luciani, elected pope in 1978, decided he could not pick just one name. He chose John Paul, to honour both of his immediate predecessors. When Luciani died only 33 days later, the next pope, Cardinal Karol Wojtyla, chose John Paul II (1978-2005), honouring all three most recent popes. The new pope could also choose a double name. Something like John Francis would evoke the reforms of the 1960s and the global attraction of Francis, whose funeral and burial procession brought out crowds in Rome of some 400,000.

## Israel may seize all Gaza in expanded operation, officials say

JERUSALEM, GNS News Agency, May 10 Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said on Monday an expanded offensive against Palestinian militant group Hamas would be "intensive" after his security cabinet approved plans that may include seizing the Gaza Strip and controlling aid. However an Israeli defence official said the operation would not be launched before U.S. President Donald Trump concludes his visit next week to the Middle East. The Reuters Tariff Watch newsletter is your daily guide to the latest global trade and tariff news. Sign up here.

The decision, after weeks of faltering efforts to agree a ceasefire with Hamas, underlines the threat that a war heaping international pressure on Israel amid dwindling public support at home could continue with no end in sight. A report by Israel's public broadcaster Kan, citing officials with knowledge of the details, said the new plan was gradual and would take months, with forces focusing first on one area of the battered enclave.

Netanyahu said in a video message the operation would be "intensive" and would see more Palestinians in Gaza moved "for their own safety". He said Israeli troops would not follow previous tactics based on short raids by forces based outside Gaza. "The intention is the opposite," he said, echoing comments from other Israeli officials who have said Israel would hold on to the ground it has seized.

U.S. envoy Steve Witkoff said Israel is a sovereign state that makes its own decisions, according to Axios, which also reported that he hopes for progress on a hostage and ceasefire deal before or during Trump's visit. The White House did not immediately respond to a request for comment. Israeli troops have already taken over an area amounting to around a third of Gaza, displacing the population and building watchtowers and surveillance posts on cleared ground the military has described as security zones, but the new plan would go further.

One Israeli official said the newly approved offensive would seize the entire territory of the Gaza Strip, move its civilian population southward and keep humanitarian aid from falling into Hamas' hands. The defence official said aid distribution, which has been handled by international aid groups and U.N. organizations, would be transferred to private companies and handed out in the southern area of Rafah once the offensive begins. The Israeli military, which throughout the war has shown little appetite for occupying Gaza, declined to comment on the remarks by government officials and politicians. Israel resumed its offensive in March after the collapse of a U.S.-backed ceasefire that had halted fighting for two months. It has since imposed an aid blockade, drawing warnings from the UN that the 2.3 million population faces imminent famine. The defence official said Israel would hold on to security zones seized along the Gaza perimeter because they were vital for protecting Israeli communities around the enclave. But he said there was a "window of opportunity" for a ceasefire and hostage release deal during Trump's visit. "If there is no hostage deal, Operation 'Gideon Chariots' will begin with great intensity and will not stop until all its goals are achieved," he said. Hamas official Mahmoud Mardawi rejected what he called "pressure and blackmail". "No deal except a comprehensive one, which includes a complete ceasefire, full withdrawal from Gaza, reconstruction of the Gaza Strip, and the release of all prisoners from both sides," he said. 'OCCUPATION'

Israel has yet to present a clear vision for post-war Gaza after a campaign that has displaced most of Gaza's population and left it depending on aid supplies that have been dwindling rapidly since the blockade. Ministers have said that aid distribution cannot be left to international organizations which it accuses of allowing Hamas to seize supplies intended for civilians. Instead, officials have looked at plans for private contractors to handle distribution, through what the United Nations has described as Israeli hubs.

On Monday, Jan Egeland, secretary-general of the Norwegian Refugee Council, said on X that Israel was demanding that the U.N. and non-governmental organisations shut down their aid distribution system in Gaza. The decision to expand the operation was immediately hailed by Israeli government hardliners who have long pressed for a full takeover of the Gaza Strip by Israel and a permanent displacement of the population, along the lines of the "Riviera" plans outlined by Trump in February. "We are finally going to conquer Gaza. We are no longer afraid of the word 'occupation'," Finance Minister Bezalel Smotrich told a pro-settler conference in an online discussion.

However, opinion polls show the Israeli public increasingly wants a deal to bring back the remaining 59 hostages still held in Gaza and there were angry scenes outside par-



liament with dozens of protesters scuffling with police. "All the families are tired," said Ruby Chen, whose son Itay was killed in the Hamas attack on October 7, 2023. "All the families have been scared about this new manoeuvring because there is no guarantee that it will get us to where the families want." With Israel facing threats from the Iranian-backed Houthis in Yemen, who on Sunday fired a missile that hit close to Ben Gurion Airport, an unstable Syria next door and a volatile situation in the occupied West Bank, the capacity for prolonged military operations also faces growing constraints. Israel's Chief of Staff Lieutenant General Eyal Zamir said on Sunday that the military has already begun issuing tens of thousands of call-up orders for reservists. A government spokesman said reserve soldiers were being called up to expand operations in Gaza, not to occupy it.

Zamir, who took office in March, has pushed back against calls by government hardliners who want to choke off aid entirely and has told ministers aid must be let in soon, according to Kan. The war was triggered by the Hamas October 7, 2023 attack on Israel that killed 1,200 people, mostly civilians, according to Israeli tallies, and saw 251 taken hostage into Gaza. Israel's ground and air campaign in Gaza has since killed more than 52,000 Palestinians, most of them civilians according to local health authorities, and left much of Gaza in ruins. Additional reporting by Emma Farge in Geneva, Nidal al-Mughrabi in Cairo, Dedi Hayun in Jerusalem; Editing by Jacqueline Wong, Michael Perry, William Maclean, Sharon Singleton and Lincoln Feast.

## Sri Lanka goes to local polls after 7-year gap, first under Dissanayake govt

Colombo: Sri Lanka on Tuesday held the local government elections, following a seven-year hiatus and the first of its kind conducted after National People's Power (NPP), led by President Anura Kumara Disanayake, came to power last year. Out of the total of 341 local bodies, the elections are being conducted for 339 bodies across the island nation, marking a significant milestone in the country's democratic process, according to local media reports. Sri Lanka's ruling party, the NPP, the main opposition Samagi Jana Balawegaya, the United National Party, and the Sri Lanka Podujana Peramuna are contesting the election. Over 65,000 Sri Lankan police officers have been deployed for election duties to maintain law and order. Local media reports further suggest that a record of 75,589 candidates, representing 49 recognised political parties and 257 independent groups are contesting in this year's elections. Additionally, a total of 17,156,338 registered voters are eligible to cast their ballots at 13,759 polling centres established nationwide. Disanayake, as the NPP leader, actively campaigned for the elections, hoping to break the grip of traditional parties at the local levels by taking control of the local bodies, according to local media reports. Last year, he achieved grand success in both parliamentary and presidential elections of the country, and therefore challenge for him in this local election would be whether he will be able to drive home the point that voters are still with him. Meanwhile, the main opposition Samagi Jana Balawegaya (SJB) is under fierce pressure to deliver better at this election, as they suffered defeat at the last two national elections. Another opposition party, the Sri Lanka Podujana Peramuna, led by Namal Rajapaksa, which was once the dominant political force in the country, also actively campaigned to bag as many votes as possible, Sri Lanka's leading newspaper, Daily Mirror, reported.

## Germany's Merz fails to be elected chancellor in unprecedented debacle

BERLIN, GNS News Agency, May 10, German conservative leader Friedrich Merz failed to secure enough parliamentary votes to become chancellor on Tuesday, throwing politics in Europe's largest economy into disarray as it seeks to emerge from recession and stem far-right extremism. Merz, 69, who led his conservatives to a federal election victory in February and signed a coalition deal with the centre-left Social Democrats (SPD), won just 310 votes in the lower house, the Bundestag, six short of an absolute majority. At least 18 coalition MPs failed to back him. The Reuters Tariff Watch newsletter is your daily guide to the latest global trade and tariff news. Sign up here.

While not a fatal setback, Merz's failure to win backing at the first attempt is a first for post-war Germany and an embarrassment for a man who has promised to restore German leadership on the world stage. Most immediately, it threw into doubt the trips Merz had planned to France and Poland on Wednesday as the new chancellor. "The whole of Europe looked to Berlin today in the hope that Germany would reassert itself as an anchor of stability and a pro-European powerhouse," said Jana Puglierin, head of the Berlin office of the European Council on Foreign Relations think-tank. "That hope has been dashed. With consequences way beyond our borders." Merz, visibly shocked, rose to confer with colleagues. It was not immediately clear who had failed to vote for him in the secret ballot and why. Party insiders on Monday said he would land a majority despite grumblings in both coalition parties about cabinet nominations, policy compromises and a huge borrowing package pushed through the old parliament in its final days. Kloeckner adjourned the sitting to allow the parties to confer. There was unlikely to be another vote on Tuesday but Merz was determined to stand again, party insiders said. A vote could take place on Wednesday or Friday. "He is still likely to be elected but this shows that the coalition is not united, which could weaken his ability to pursue policies,"



said Holger Schmieding, Chief Economist at Berenberg in London. The only winner of Tuesday's debacle was the far-right, anti-establishment Alternative for Germany (AfD), which came second in February and has topped some recent surveys, said Forsa pollster Manfred Guellner. "Trust in political institutions is being further damaged," he said. German shares extended their fall from the near-record levels they had reached on hopes of higher state spending and growth. His conservatives won February's election with 28.5% of the vote, leaving them in need of at least one partner to form a majority. They signed a coalition deal with the SPD, who won just 16.4%. The two parties have vowed to revive growth in an economy facing its third year of downturn amid a global trade war sparked by U.S. President Donald Trump's sweeping import tariffs. They have also promised to dramatically boost defence spending as the U.S. commitment to the NATO alliance weakens. But both have lost support since their already dismal performances in February — especially the conservatives, due in part to frustration with Merz's decision to loosen borrowing limits, despite campaign promises of fiscal rectitude."

## India needs to focus on pulmonary rehabilitation to combat post-TB lung sequelae: experts



Tuberculosis (TB) remains a significant global health concern, with 1.25 million deaths reported in 2023, according to the World Health Organization. India bears a substantial burden, accounting for 26% of global TB cases and 26% of TB-related deaths. According to the Indian Journal of Respiratory Care (2022) and studies by The Lancet journal, many TB survivors continue to suffer from long-term lung damage, including fibrosis (scarring of lung tissue that reduces elasticity and impairs breathing), cavitation (formation of hollow spaces in the lungs due to tissue destruction), and airflow obstruction, despite completing their treatment.

These post-TB complications often lead to chronic respiratory impairment, reduced quality of life, and economic hardships due to lost wages and ongoing medical expenses. Hence, this calls for a renewed focus on comprehensive care, including palliative care and rehabilitation. The second UN high-level meeting on TB in 2023 made commitments to address these long-term consequences of TB, recognising the critical need for post-TB care. The WHO, through its End TB Strategy, aims to eradicate TB by 2030, and India's National Tuberculosis Elimination Programme (NTEP) has laid out post-TB follow-up guidelines to diagnose and manage complications. However, the practical implementation of these guidelines remains inconsistent, leaving many survivors without access to proper rehabilitation.

What is pulmonary rehabilitation and its status in India? According to the American Thoracic Society (ATS) and the European Respiratory Society (ERS), pulmonary rehabilitation (PR) is a multidisciplinary intervention designed to improve both the physical and emotional well-being of patients with chronic respiratory diseases. It is widely recognised as one of the most cost-effective treatments for improving lung function and overall quality of life. The Indian Journal of Respiratory Care identifies PR as the most effective and evidence-based tool to manage post-TB sequelae, helping to prevent further morbidity and mortality while improving patient outcomes.

According to Sanjeev Nair, professor of respiratory medicine, Government Medical College, Thiruvananthapuram, PR encompasses various aspects, including physical exercise, breathing techniques, medication adherence, psychosocial support, nutritional counselling, oxygen therapy, smoking cessation, and occupational rehabilitation. Physical exercise plays a crucial role, incorporating upper and lower limb strengthening, treadmill exercises, and respiratory muscle training to enhance lung function. Additionally, breathing exercises such as diaphragmatic and pursed-lip breathing are essential in managing airflow limitations. Ensuring continued medication adherence is another key component, as many post-TB patients struggle with proper drug intake, which can lead to further health complications. Psychological support is also integral, as TB survivors often experience anxiety and depression due to stigma and the long-term effects of the disease. Nutritional support helps strengthen immunity, while oxygen therapy benefits those with severe lung damage. Occupational rehabilitation programs, such as those at Tambaram Sanatorium, train survivors in vocational skills, allowing them to regain finan-

cial independence. Dr. Nair points out that India currently lacks dedicated PR centres, with the Vallabhbhai Patel Chest Institute (VPCI), University of Delhi, Delhi, India being one of the few institutions offering structured programs. The Indian government has designated the Rajan Babu Institute in Delhi to focus on PR and Tambaram Sanatorium in Chennai for palliative TB care, but these initiatives remain under expert review and have yet to be fully implemented. Early detection in controlling post-TB lung sequelae

Shibu Vijayan, chief medical officer, Global Health, Cure.ai, emphasises that pulmonary rehabilitation in India is still in a research phase rather than an implementation phase. He highlights the importance of early detection in controlling lung sequelae and stresses that this requires greater attention in both global and national TB care strategies. While there have been efforts to develop guidelines, many hospitals have yet to implement structured rehabilitation programs. Dr. Vijayan points out that sequential X-rays and pulmonary function tests are critical diagnostic tools to assess structural lung damage post-TB treatment. He explains that the focus has now shifted to X-ray-based follow-ups, which allow healthcare providers to monitor lung damage more effectively. The government of India recommends a two-year follow-up for TB survivors, which includes baseline X-rays, intensive treatment X-rays, and pulmonary function testing. However, adherence to this protocol remains inconsistent across healthcare facilities. "Strengthening early detection methods and ensuring the widespread implementation of X-ray-based follow-ups could significantly improve long-term outcomes for TB survivors," he says. According to Dr. Nair, early detection can prevent further infection. Especially because studies, including one he was part of in Ernakulam, found that 25% of TB patients tracked had died within seven years. It is crucial to diagnose the lung damages early as it can otherwise lead to Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD), ongoing lung obstruction, and abnormalities that impair daily activities. Ganesh Acharya, TB survivor and activist, points out the ground realities of inadequate post-TB care facilities in hospitals across India. He emphasises that patients often struggle to find specialised care and are forced to seek out pulmonologists and TB specialists on their own. Having battled TB for years, Acharya continues to suffer from asthma attacks, which frequently force him to take breaks from his career. He explains that post-TB care needs to be implemented like active TB treatment, as survivors remain vulnerable to complications and reinfection. "We need structured care, not just for treatment but for recovery," he says. Due to his TB-related health issues, he underwent lung surgery, which further revealed the challenges of accessing quality post-TB medical support. Acharya criticises the gap between policy and implementation, noting that while post-TB and palliative care are widely discussed, patients often struggle to find these services in practice. Expanding post-TB care access is a major challenge as TB care in India is largely decentralised, with treatment provided at primary healthcare centres that lack rehabilitation facilities. As a result, access to PR remains limited, especially in rural areas. To improve post-TB care, Dr. Nair stresses the importance of expanding PR to primary healthcare centres, ensuring accessibility for all TB survivors. Kerala's (Step wise approach to Airway Diseases) SWAAS programmes serve as a model for integrating COPD and TB care at the primary level. The programme provides mini spirometers for lung function assessments, supplies essential medications locally, and train nurses and healthcare workers to guide patients in breathing exercises and nutrition. Additionally, the involvement of local government bodies (panchayats) ensure continued financial and social support for TB survivors. Experts urge that by adopting and scaling up PR models like these, starting from primary care centres, India can bridge the gap in post-TB care, reduce mortality rates, and enhance the overall well-being of TB survivors.

## Food from the woods: the forgotten link to climate resilience



Another International Day of Forests was observed on March 21, and beyond symbolic gestures, it is time to acknowledge the role of forests in mitigating the planetary polycrisis of the Anthropocene. Forests are often called the lungs of the planet, but they are also its hidden kitchens. Yet, across the world, indigenous food systems that once thrived within forests are rapidly disappearing. In this context, this year's theme, "Forests and food", could not be more relevant. Food systems account for a staggering one-third of global greenhouse gas emissions, while simultaneously fuelling deforestation, biodiversity loss, and land degradation. Yet, a key solution lies hidden in plain sight — reviving forest-based food systems as a low-cost, climate-resilient alternative. Our research on the indigenous Soliga community of the Biligiri Rangana Hills, or B.R. Hills, in Karnataka offers ample clues on how forests are intertwined with food, health, livelihoods, and the overall sense of well-being or "flourishing" of the community. For generations, the Soligas have depended on the forest's bounty such as wild berries, tubers, mushrooms, and small game, ensuring a varied and nutritious diet. Additionally, the practice of shifting cultivation, with millets, legumes, and vegetables grown in the forest environment, has been central to their food security. The recipes of traditional Soliga foods we collected bear testimony to this: their meals are dominated by locally foraged greens such as karavadi soppu (balloon vine), seegge soppu (dill), areage soppu (amaranth), and sasive soppu (mustard), along with legumes such as avarekulu (hyacinth beans), alasande (cowpea), and hurali (horse gram), and tubers. These ingredients are cooked using pepper corns and chilli, with little oil or fat. This way of cooking reflects the richness of the locally available bounty and their deep connection to the forest. However, many of these resources are now becoming scarce, or in some cases, completely lost, highlighting a fading way of life that once thrived in balance with nature.

Over the years, this forest-farm-forest connection has unravelled particularly because of conservation policies that have reshaped the socio-economic and environmental landscape of the region. One of the most significant changes came with the resettlement of the Soliga tribes to the periphery of the forest for designating the B.R. Hills as a protected area for wildlife conservation in 1974. This relocation has profoundly disrupted their ability to access wild food resources and maintain their customary food practices. Furthermore, conservation policies introduced a ban on traditional litter-fire practices, which the Soligas had historically used to manage their agricultural lands. This practice of controlled burning was not only important for maintaining the health of the forests but also for cultivating specific crops that thrive in nutrient-rich, fire-managed soil. With the prohibition of fire practices, the forests have undergone significant ecological shifts, including the spread of the invasive Lantana species which has choked the native flora and diminished the availability of traditional food and medicinal plants, as other ecological studies from BR hills

show. Our research also highlights the diminishing importance of forests as a source of food and income among Soligas. The introduction of cash crops such as coffee on farms located on the forest fringes has been one of the primary shifts in the community's agricultural practices. This shift towards cash crops is, in part, a response to the increasing crop raids by wildlife, which has made the cultivation of food crops such as millets and vegetables more difficult.

Tribal land rights and the location of settlements has played a crucial role in shaping the Soliga community's access to food resources. The allocation of land rights, often subject to government policies and regulations, has influenced the degree to which the Soligas can practise subsistence farming and gather forest produce. The location of settlements, especially with respect to forest types and proximity to roads and markets, has also been a critical factor in determining food security. Communities located closer to markets and transportation networks have greater access to external food sources, but this has also led to an increased reliance on external food markets, further eroding traditional food systems.

The changing dynamics of forest ecosystems, agricultural practices, and land tenure have collectively altered the Soliga community's food sovereignty and nutritional security. One of the significant transformations has been the increased reliance on the Public Distribution System, which provides subsidised food to low-income households. The PDS typically provides staples such as rice, wheat, and sugar, which, though essential for survival, are often nutritionally inadequate compared with the diverse and nutrient-dense foods traditionally gathered from the forest. The tragedy is not just nutritional — it is also cultural. As younger generations move away from traditional foods, lured by the convenience of market-sourced alternatives, the knowledge of forest-based diets is fading. This generational shift, fuelled by globalisation and urbanisation, threatens to sever the deep-rooted connection between indigenous communities and their ecosystems. But this is not just about the Soligas. The global environmental crisis demands a fundamental rethink on the way food is produced and consumed. Reviving forest-based food systems and securing land tenure for forest-dependent communities could be game-changers in the fight for climate resilience, biodiversity conservation, and nutritional security. In rural areas, agroforestry, integrating native fruit trees with traditional crops, can bolster rural food systems while providing income and strengthening livelihoods. Even in cities, a rethink is required. Urban greening initiatives under government programmes such as the Green India Mission and Smart Cities Mission provide an opportunity to create food forests in urban spaces — community-managed green zones incorporating trees, shrubs, vines, and other plants that produce fruits, nuts and other edible products that can nourish both marginalised communities and urban biodiversity. Initiatives such as Mission LIFE, which encourages the use of indigenous herbs and medicinal plants, must actively revalorise our forgotten food systems. If we are serious about tackling climate change, ensuring food security, and upholding social justice, then forests must be reimagined — not just as lungs of the planet but also as kitchens of resilience. Dhanya Bhaskar is Associate Professor of Ecosystem and Environment Management and Chairperson of Centre for Policy Studies at Indian Institute of Forest Management, Bhopal; Shreelata Rao Seshadri is Professor and Director, Ramalingaswami Centre on Equity and Social Determinants of Health, PHFI, Bengaluru; and Sheetal Patil is Lead, School of Environment and Sustainability, Indian Institute for Human Settlements, Bengaluru

## AI in beyond CSE: Why every field needs AI-savvy professionals

The yearly scramble to secure Engineering seats at prestigious universities has begun. The most sought-after courses are coveted by students and, more importantly, their aspirational parents. It should come as no surprise that B.E./B.Tech. programmes in Computer Science, particularly those with specialisations in Artificial Intelligence (AI) and, to a lesser extent, data, and analytics, are popular this season. Toppers who made it to CSE-AI are announced by coaching centers. Other Engineering specialties, such as Mechanical, Civil, Electrical, and Chemical, are also silently waiting in the background and are frequently disregarded. However, is this one-sided fixation on Computer Science warranted? Should only programmers be able to use AI? The answer is definitely no.

Story so far But let's take a look at the previous 20 to 25 years before continuing on this path. The dot-com boom sparked a craze for CSE and later IT programmes in Engineering. The less fortunate also had access to MCA and BCA. From the dot-com era to the present, the rush for CSE and Information Technology courses has continued, with software services companies becoming the go-to source for talent to satisfy their demand for youthful workers. The story has also turned several corners over the last 25 years. The current narrative unfolds as follows: In the 2000s, India was a comparatively less expensive source of IT services, and IT service providers were able to capitalise on the outsourcing trend. Now Indian tech firms moving up the value chain. Indian engineers are prepared to take advantage of the growing trend of generative AI. Along with their children's preference for this new trend, parents are also scurrying to find colleges that offer CSE with AI specialisation. However, this is something that all parents who pay fees should consider. First, it is a fact that as demand for seats increases, the cost of each seat in this highly sought-after programme rises every week. Is it something that all parents can afford? Indeed, there are only a certain number of seats available for deserving students. This implies that a greater portion of the demand can only be met by management quota. Before taking up the decision, one should consider if this discipline is the right fit for them. AI gives computing machines the training to think, learn, and make decisions like humans. But AI uses data and logic instead of emotions or instincts. At its core, AI is about teaching machines to recognise patterns, make predictions, and improve over time — in the same way, we learn from experience. So think of AI as Applied Mathematics with a brain. Every time an AI machine acts, it uses Algebra to handle data in rows, columns, and matrices; Probability to handle uncertainty; Calculus to help models minimise errors; Statistics to understand patterns in data; Geometry to recognise patterns in images, movement, and spatial data). In short AI is Mathematics in action, it brings equations to life by converting data into intelligence. That's why AI is not a specialisation, but a universal toolkit. It belongs everywhere and AI-powered professionals across all fields will rule the future, not just computer scientists. Re-

evaluating the rush Today, AI is transforming every part of our lives, including how we grow food, conduct banking, shop, receive healthcare, and construct infrastructure. A CSE degree is not necessary to study AI. Three fundamental areas of quantitative sciences are incorporated into AI: Statistics and Mathematics, Logic and programming, and domain expertise. The real power of AI lies in that third pillar, or domain knowledge. It's where actual problems are resolved by AI. AI requires engineers who comprehend context in addition to code, whether they are creating climate-smart infrastructure, managing crops, creating energy-efficient engines, or identifying cardiac disorders. How AI is already transforming conventional engineering domains Mechanical Engineering includes robotics, AI-driven design optimisation, smart manufacturing, and predictive machine maintenance. AI in Civil Engineering aids in the design of disaster-resistant structures, traffic flow optimisation, smart city management, and building health monitoring. In the domain of Electrical Engineering, AI plays a role in advanced control systems, power grid optimisation, and energy distribution. In Chemical Engineering, new material discovery, chemical process optimisation, and plant efficiency modeling are all being done with generative AI. In Biomedical Engineering, Artificial Intelligence (AI) is changing healthcare through robotic surgery, medical imaging, and personalised health analytics. In Agricultural Engineering, machine learning models power smart farming, drone surveillance, crop prediction, and soil health monitoring. The new reality of undergrad Parents usually wish for their child to thrive in a technologically advanced world. However, following a trend isn't the only way to succeed. Building long-term value and capability is the goal. AI is an enabler rather than merely a skill. And anyone who is prepared to solve problems, think critically, and never stop learning can master it. Avoid picking a branch based solely on its name. Make a decision based on your child's aptitude, interests, and vision. If your child enjoys building machines? Allow them to study AI while working as a Mechanical Engineer. If Environment and Sustainability appeal to them? Smart cities can be shaped by a civil engineer with AI expertise. If they have a strong interest in healthcare, an AI-savvy biomedical engineer could save lives. Hybrid thinkers — those who comprehend the issue and the technology — will be rewarded in the future. For instance, Electronics and Communication Engineering (ECE) is in a unique position to spearhead the AI revolution among all the branches. Why? Since ECE pupils are already aware of Systems that are embedded; Processing of signals; Protocols for communication; and control systems. These are the fundamental building blocks of real-time AI inference, edge computing, IoT, and AI chips — creating self-driving cars, smart cameras, voice assistants, and wearable health monitors are examples of ECE + AI in the modern world. Using a Raspberry Pi, ECE students are creating facial recognition models. AI is being used to optimise 5G networks. Microcontrollers are being used to implement ML models.

## Noida 'honour killing': A blue dupatta for a wedding and a strangulation

Neha Rathore, 23, wrote her father's and her name on the blue plastic entry door to their home, drawing flowers around it with chalk. A few weeks later, Neha was killed inside the house located in Bhangi mohalla (neighbourhood) of Uttar Pradesh's Greater Noida, allegedly by her father, Bhanu Rathore, 40; and her brother Himanshu, 19. On March 12, around 5.30 a.m., her family hurriedly cremated her, allegedly burning all the clothes she owned. The day before her death, she had married her boyfriend Suraj at an Arya Samaj temple. Neha was from the Teli community; her husband of a few hours was from the Jat community — an inter-caste marriage often frowned upon across India. She was strangled with the same blue dupatta she had worn for her wedding.

The Uttar Pradesh police have registered a case at Bisrakh police station under BNS sections 103 (murder) and 238 (destruction of evidence). Across north India, 'honour killings' are a subset of the crime against couples who choose to break with the tradition of marrying within their caste. Earlier in March this year, Balram, 20, and Srishti, 19, were allegedly killed by Srishti's parents in Baghat in 2025, because they were from different communities. In 2024, a man allegedly murdered his 18-year-old daughter right outside their house with an axe in Bahraich, because he felt she had ruined his reputation. In Gurugram, Haryana, Anjali, 22, was allegedly strangled to death by her parents and brother, for marrying a man from another caste, against her family's wishes in 2023. A house in the back lanes of Bhangi mohalla, in Chipiyana Buzurg village, are surrounded by upscale neighbourhoods with towering gated communities. The mohalla itself has houses that stick to each other for lack of space. Neha's house is quiet. It smells of dampness and cow dung. The walls are chipped and grey, covered with photographs of Hindu gods: Ram, Lakshman, Sita. Her sister-in-law carries her toddler around the house. Neha's mother, Nirmala, her head covered with a thick dupatta, fills a few containers with water. She has two sons and another daughter. At first, the women are hesitant to speak. "Whatever happened, happened. We don't care; she's dead and I feel bad. I wasn't at home; I had gone to graze my cows. When I returned, she was dead," Nirmala says. At first she says Neha had a fever that led to her death, then that she had a thyroid problem which caused her to die, then that Neha was weak. Finally, she blames it on "bad luck." She does not believe her husband and son killed Neha. "I remember my last conversation with her. She told me she was going to Lal Kuan to buy lining fabric. She even returned with a packet. I don't know what happened after that," Nirmala says. "We had to cremate her quickly because you know, people have theories. Whatever happened, happened." Nirmala isn't sure of her daughter's interests or what she did in her free time. What remains of Neha in her family home is only her name on the door. She stitched her life together

In Bhangi mohalla, where the lanes are so narrow only two people can walk side by side, residents stand in front of their doors, gossiping about what went wrong. She was full of life, her neighbours say. She made Instagram reels on the narrow street outside her house. Bhanu's food cart, just outside the house, stands empty and still. Anju Devi introduces her caste before she introduces herself. She is a Yadav, she says, adding that she is not from Neha's caste. She remembers Neha as being tall and underweight. "She liked watching TV serials, dancing, and stitching clothes. She would dance on Janmashtami (the day Krishna is believed to have been born)." Anju points to her red, rose-printed kurta, saying that Neha had stitched it, "But she never took money for it." This is a neighbourhood where most do not earn a minimum wage. Tulsi Chaudhary, who tries overhearing the conversation, too knew Neha and her mother well. "Neha wanted to study, but when her family returned to Noida from Hapur (where Bhanu had taken the family when he got a job), they stopped her studies for four years. She really wanted a job and wanted to take up stitching as a profession, but she never got the help and support she needed. She even wanted to become a police officer," Tulsi says, afraid Neha's family will know of this conversation. Neha Rathore's name in chalk on the entrance of the house, written by her with a flower drawn next to it. Suraj is tired and feels helpless, even as he continues working. He recalls when he met Neha in a Hapur school when they were about 16. Both families had found it difficult to make ends meet. While Suraj's father, Devender, worked as a farm labourer, Neha's father worked at a mill. He remembers her whispered calls, deleted messages, so her family would not find out they were in love. After school, Suraj found a job as a pick-up truck driver in Hapur, where he lives. He is rarely home, because his job demands that he's on the road. Suraj says he wanted Neha to study, to get a job, to make a life, to make things better for their family when they married. She had graduated from class 12, and he says she was a good student. She entrusted all her education documents to him, so he could pay her fees at a Ghaziabad college for BA in Sanskrit. "We took care of each other. Nobody in her family bothered to check if she had had food. I did. She told me we'd have a beautiful life together, that we'd travel. Now, she's just a contact in my phone, and a memory for me," Suraj says. When Suraj told his parents he wanted to marry Neha, he had just turned 25. A few weeks before March 11, the two decided to get married at an Arya Samaj temple, where the rituals are few. Suraj's family — his father and brother — rode on motorcycles to Ghaziabad. They picked Neha up from Chipiyana Buzurg village. Neha covered her face with a blue dupatta and reached the Ghaziabad court, to register their marriage. Suraj says, "We tried getting the registration done quickly, but we sensed somebody from Neha's family recognised her in the blue salwar-kameez."

## Joint pains, arthritis going up in India, says WHO study: Know what's causing them



den of arthritis in India. Our study is the best approximation but sufficient for public health and policy planning," he said. Roughly one-sixth of the Indian population suffers from musculoskeletal pain and several million from various forms of arthritis — 4.22 million from rheumatoid arthritis, 54.44 million from osteoarthritis and 17.24 million from soft tissue rheumatism. "The pain was mostly self-managed, and only those with moderate to severe intensity and experiencing difficulty in daily living and livelihood sought organized medical care. The findings should be considered as they make case for launching a national programme of arthritis," he added.

What's causing arthritis in India?

Some risk factors for rising numbers are a rapidly ageing population with degenerative joints, poor knowledge about pain management that delays diagnosis, chronic illnesses like hypertension and diabetes, autoimmune diseases and heavy manual work among those into hard labour. In cities, obesity, sedentary behaviour and poor lifestyle are triggers. "Several inflammatory forms of arthritis such as rheumatoid arthritis and lupus are autoimmune conditions and are easily triggered by mental stress and infections," said Dr Chopra. "Women also suffer more," Dr Chopra said, adding that an alarming proportion of rheumatoid arthritis was found in younger women under 45. While poor health literacy is a factor, women tend to overlook their symptoms. The survey also listed chikungunya arthritis, joint inflammation triggered by the chikungunya virus, which lasts months and years. The prevalence of musculoskeletal pain was higher in the rural population (20 per cent vs 10.3 per cent in urban areas). Meanwhile, rheumatoid arthritis was 0.34 per cent, undifferentiated inflammatory arthritis was 0.22 per cent, spondyloarthritis was 0.23 per cent, osteoarthritis was 4.39 per cent, gout 0.05 per cent and chikungunya arthritis 1.2 per cent. Non-specific arthralgias, soft tissue pains and degenerative arthritis were dominant disorders. Twelve per cent of respondents reported inflammatory arthritis. Anuradha Mascarenhas Anuradha Mascarenhas is a journalist with The Indian Express and is based in Pune. A senior editor, Anuradha writes on health, research developments in the field of science and environment and takes keen interest in covering women's issues. With a career spanning over 25 years, Anuradha has also led teams and often coordinated the edition.

Jamuna Patil, Ravindra Sharma, and Madhavi Kakade (names changed) suffered from severe aches, pains and swollen joints for years before they were diagnosed with arthritis or joint inflammation and pain. Worse, they were misdiagnosed and put on other therapies that did nothing but worsen their symptoms.

Patil, 44, was told her symptoms were indicative of menopause and found she had rheumatoid arthritis — a chronic, autoimmune disease that causes inflammation and pain in the joints — two-and-a-half years later. Sharma, 55, diabetic and overweight, was told he had gout when he suffered from severe knee osteoarthritis (when wear and tear breaks down cartilage in the joints) for seven years that required surgery. Kakade, 22, was treated for rheumatic fever by a local doctor. In three years, her knees deformed and she was finally diagnosed with rheumatic arthritis. She required early knee replacement surgery. These are just a few instances of musculoskeletal pains that the World Health Organisation (WHO) has found in the Indian population. As part of its community-oriented programme for the Control of Rheumatic Diseases (COPCORD), its survey has shown a strikingly high prevalence of musculoskeletal (MSK) pain and arthritis in the Indian population. Published in the International Journal of Rheumatic Diseases, the survey tracked 56,548 people and found that 16 per cent suffered from musculoskeletal pains, the rural population being affected the most. Women were found to be the worst sufferers.

Why is the study significant?

According to Dr Arvind Chopra, rheumatologist and lead author, "We did not have robust estimates of the bur-

## What is human coronavirus detected in a Kolkata woman? Here's all you need to know about this strain

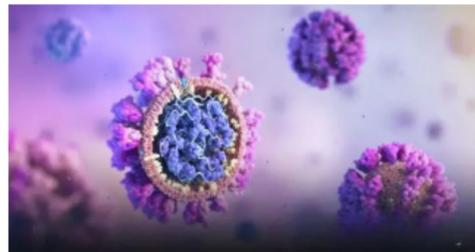
There have been reports of a woman in Kolkata suffering from a human coronavirus or HKU1, a species of coronavirus. However, HKU1 is generally linked to milder respiratory illnesses and is not of pandemic potential. According to reports, the Kolkata patient is now stable. "There are many kinds of coronaviruses. But unlike Covid-19, which was a novel virus when the outbreak happened, HKU-1 was first identified in 2005 as a rare isolate. So you cannot call it a novel virus. Evidence indicates it is evolving steadily in humans, probably the only known reservoir. Most people get infected with these viruses at some point in their lives and these last for a limited duration. So there is no need to panic over it," says Dr Suranjit Chatterjee, senior consultant, internal medicine, Indraprastha Apollo Hospitals, New Delhi. "This generally affects the upper respiratory tract, causing symptoms similar to those of the common cold and flu," he adds.

What are the symptoms of human coronavirus?

They are similar to regular flu symptoms. So there is malaise, persistent cough, runny nose or nasal congestion, blocked sinuses, sore throat, fatigue, headaches and fever, usually low grade. In severe cases, the infection can lead to pneumonia or bronchitis. Since it infects cells along the airways, it can descend to the lungs, potentially causing pneumonia.

Who is at risk?

The disease is self-limiting and resolves on its own. But vulnerable groups like the elderly, children, pregnant women, those with immuno-compromised conditions or with



co-morbidities need to be vigilant for severe manifestation of the disease. How does the human coronavirus HKU1 spread? It spreads like any other coronavirus. It is transmitted during direct contact with the infected person via respiratory droplets (coughing or sneezing), touching contaminated surfaces and then touching the face, mouth, or nose.

What are prevention methods?

Just revive the Covid time protocol. Which means follow strict norms of hand hygiene and wash your hands frequently with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Or sanitise them. This is something we have become lax about. Wear a mask in crowded or high-risk areas. Cover your mouth and nose when coughing or sneezing or stay away from social interactions when sick. Stay hydrated and get enough rest. There are no antivirals for this. Considering the self-limited course of infection, supportive care and symptomatic relief are sufficient.

## All about leptin resistance and how it affects your body



The secretion of the leptin hormone is a cue that your body is feeling full, and you should stop eating. However, many tend to overpass this, leading to chronic conditions like obesity, according to integrative health coach Dr Harshini Jain. "A lot of obese people are leptin resistant. They keep on hogging on food such that the body is not able to read the cue from the hormone," Dr Jain claimed on the 9& Beyond podcast. Dr Manjusha Agarwal, senior consultant, internal medicine, Gleneagles Hospital Parel Mumbai, said leptin resistance is seen when the brain becomes less responsive

to the leptin hormone, which is produced by fat cells. "This hormone helps regulate hunger and a person's energy spending. Regarding a healthy metabolic system, leptin signals to the brain that enough energy is stored in fat reserves, helping to control appetite and promote satiety after meals. However, ones with leptin resistance can have constant feelings of hunger and higher food intake, leading to piling up those excess kilos," explained Dr Agarwal.

How does it affect the body?

Leptin resistance has been linked to "various health issues including obesity-related inflammation and an increased risk for chronic conditions like type 2 diabetes and cardiovascular disease," noted Dr Agarwal. "Interestingly, factors such as sleep deprivation, stress, and diets high in processed foods can exacerbate the condition by contributing to systemic inflammation," said Dr Agarwal.

What can help? Dr Agarwal said that to deal with leptin resistance, avoid processed food, adhere to a well-balanced diet, exercise daily, get a minimum of 8-9 hours of sleep daily, and eat a protein-rich diet. "It is essential to take the help of an expert when it comes to diet and follow the guidelines to ensure you stay in top shape," said Dr Agarwal.

## Red wine not safer: Study links all alcohol to cancer risk

A new meta-analysis published in Nutrients has shattered the popular belief that red wine is a healthier alcoholic option. After analysing data from 42 studies, researchers found no significant difference in overall cancer risk between red and white wine — and no type of wine was shown to be "safe" when it comes to cancer prevention.

"Red wine's reputation for being healthier due to antioxidants like resveratrol doesn't hold up," said lead author Dr. Eunyoung Cho of Brown University. "We found no strong evidence that red wine lowers cancer risk." Interestingly, white wine was associated with higher cancer risk in women and a 22 per cent increased risk of skin cancer in some studies — though researchers noted that lifestyle factors like sun exposure could play a role.



When focusing on more reliable cohort studies, the link between white wine and increased cancer risk was stronger.

## Need obesity and weight loss surgery but worried about costs? Now insurance cover is easy



renal transplant surgeon at Manipal Hospital, Dwarka, who conducted Dr Pal's surgery in 2024, says the cut-offs need to go down. "Last year, the International Federation for Surgery of Obesity and Metabolic Disorders lowered the cut-off for BMI because there's so much evidence now about the safety and efficacy of surgery over other means. So international cutoffs are 30 and 35 but insurance companies here still follow old standards. They want to minimise the number of patients," says Dr Aggarwal. According to Dr Prasad, the IRDA (Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority) has given clear guidelines that help patients opt for life-saving surgeries. "Any patient who has an insurance over four years old and a BMI of 40 plus, is eligible for surgery," he says. Insurance doesn't cover surgeries done for cosmetic reasons. Insurance doesn't cover surgeries done for cosmetic reasons.

Why is claiming insurance a cumbersome process?

"I sent my test reports and my policy documents to the hospital. There was a lot of to and fro between my doctor and my insurance company for full approval. Most plans have an initial waiting period of around 30 days. If you have pre-existing conditions like I did, you may have to wait for one to three years. My surgery was slotted when the insurance company gave an approval for more than 50 per cent of costs. After the surgery, we submitted documents and I got almost Rs 4,08,000 as reimbursement. I had to pay only Rs 4,000 from my pocket," says Dr Pal. Dr Aggarwal says such scrutiny happens because bariatric surgeries in India are newer compared to the West. "Some insurance companies still have a waiting period of two to three years before they allow patients to be reimbursed. But some corporate insurance policies now cover it straight away," he says.

What are obstacles?

Dr Prasad, who has had to intervene in claims resolution, says, "The insurance companies raise a lot of questions and we have to literally fight, justifying why the patient needs it. Sometimes the insurance company asks the patient to pay up first and then claim reimbursement post-surgery." However, he's seeing things improving over the years. Most claims are rejected over eligibility issues. "Many insurers require specific pre-approval steps, such as documented weight-loss attempts by the patient, dietitian consultations or psychological evaluations. They want to be sure that the bariatric surgery is being done as a life-saving option. They need evidence that previous treatment plans had been followed but did not yield desired results," says Shrivastav.

Some insurers, while adhering to criteria like BMI and comorbid conditions, may factor in the patient's age. "Also bariatric surgeries are of various types like gastric bypass (reducing stomach size and connecting it directly to the small intestine, bypassing a portion of both) sleeve gastrectomy (removing a large portion of the stomach) and adjustable gastric banding (placing a silicone band around the upper part of the stomach to create a smaller pouch, limiting food intake and promoting weight loss). This variability means that each patient's coverage details need to be carefully reviewed and cross-referenced with insurer requirements," says Dr Aggarwal. Bariatric surgeries need pre-authorization, and the process involves gathering specific documentation, such as medical necessity forms and physician referrals. Any missing or inaccurate documentation can lead to delays or denials. "However, as people regain their health and quality of life, insurers are gradually easing barriers," says Shrivastav.

What are the conditions for coverage?

The patient should be at least 18 years old. The surgeon should confirm that the applicant has Class III Obesity (extreme obesity) with a BMI of 40 or a Class II Obesity with a BMI between 35 and 39 along with a co-morbidity. That could be uncontrolled diabetes, cardiovascular disease, history of coronary artery disease with a surgical intervention such as bypass or angioplasty, fatty liver and cardiopulmonary problems arising out of conditions like severe Obstructive Sleep Apnea (OSA). Insurance doesn't cover surgeries done for cosmetic reasons. Neither does it cover obesity due to psychiatric and eating disorders, obesity due to certain drugs and untreated hormonal imbalances.

Dr Sandeep Aggarwal, laparoscopic, bariatric, GI and

## Hina Khan ditches wig, sports real hair at award ceremony; asks: 'How do you guys like my new look?'



Hina Khan, who is battling breast cancer, recently attended OTTplay Awards where she walked the red carpet in a stunning black dress and sported her real hair. The actor, who has completed chemotherapy and is currently undergoing immunotherapy after surgery, while posing for shutterbugs, said, "Abhi itne hi baal aaye hai (Only so much hair has re-grown as of now)." (smiles). She also took to Instagram to share a heartfelt note about the recognition for her work on her latest serial, Grihalaxmi. "In all these 16 years of my career, I have won plenty of awards, but I have never posted a winning speech or a stage interaction after an award. But this one was very special. Because while shooting for Grihalaxmi, I was going through a very hard time, and a lot happened after it."

"How do you guys like my new look?" Hina added.

Notably, losing hair is one of the most visible and emotionally challenging side effects of cancer treatment, par-

ticularly chemotherapy. Recall that in 2024, Khan shared an emotional video of getting her head shaved, saying, "You can win this only if you embrace yourself, accept it, and I choose to accept my battle scars because I believe if you embrace yourself, you are one step closer towards your healing and I really, really want to heal." She then apprised her followers that she would sport a custom wig made with her hair. "The moment I was diagnosed, I knew I'd lose my hair. I chose to cut it off on my own terms while it was still healthy, long, and vibrant. I decided to make a wig of my OWN hair that would bring me comfort during this challenging time. And I must say it was an empowering decision, and I'm so proud of it," she captioned the post.

How long does it take for hair to grow back?

Hair regrowth after chemotherapy or immunotherapy in breast cancer cases may differ from person to person, said Dr Shareefa Chause, dermatologist, Dr Shareefa Skin Care Clinic, Mumbai. "It will vary based on the treatment type, dosage, and other factors such as health status. According to the studies and evidence available, hair starts to grow back about three to four months after the completion of chemotherapy, though the texture and colour may initially be different. After certain months, there can be noticeable regrowth," said Dr Chause. When it comes to immunotherapy, the impact on hair varies in each individual body, said Dr Chause. Scalp care, gentle hair products, and a nutrient-rich diet can support the process. It will be imperative for patients to consult an expert if there are any doubts. One should not get bogged down and embrace himself or herself. It is essential to adhere to the instructions given by the expert," expressed Dr Chause.

## Want to age healthy? Higher intake of these items may help

New Delhi: Want to age healthy? Higher intakes of black tea, berries, citrus fruits, and apples may help, according to global research. Researchers from Edith Cowan University (Australia), Queen's University Belfast (UK), and Harvard TH Chan School of Public Health (US), found that foods rich in flavonoids could help to lower the risk of key components of unhealthy ageing, including frailty, impaired physical function and poor mental health.

"The goal of medical research is not just to help people live longer but to ensure they stay healthy for as long as possible," said Dr Nicola Bondonno, Adjunct Lecturer at Edith Cowan. Previous studies have showed people who have a higher flavonoid intake tend to live longer, and they are also less likely to get any of the major chronic diseases such as dementia, diabetes, or heart disease. "Our research shows that people who consume more flavonoids tend to age better," Bondonno said.

The study, which analysed data from 62,743 women and 23,687 men over 24 years, found that women with the

highest flavonoid intakes had a 15 per cent lower risk of frailty, a 12 per cent lower risk of impaired physical function, and a 12 per cent lower risk of poor mental health compared to those with the lowest intakes. While fewer associations were observed in men, higher flavonoid intake was still linked to a lower risk of poor mental health. "Flavonoids are well known for reducing oxidative stress and inflammation, supporting blood vessel health, and even helping to maintain skeletal muscle mass — all of which are important for preventing frailty and maintaining physical function and mental health as we age," said Professor Aedin Cassidy from Queens. Further, the study showed that participants who increased their intake of flavonoid-rich food by three servings a day had a 6 per cent to 11 per cent lower risk across all three ageing outcomes in females, and a 15 per cent lower risk of poor mental health in males. "Overall, these findings underscore the potential for simple dietary modifications to impact the overall quality of life and contribute to the optimisation of healthy ageing," added Professor Eric Rimm from Harvard.



## Why India's doubles stars deserve more respect and recognition



Indian tennis is healthy. There are Indian players competing at all levels – from the \$15,000 tournaments on the professional circuit, to the ATP tournaments to the prestigious Masters events all the way up to the Grand Slam tournaments. Week in and week out there are Indians competing in the business end of competitions across the world, fighting against the best in the business.

There are nearly a dozen Indian players in the top-200 of world doubles rankings and five of them are in the top-100. Behind Rohan Bopanna, Yuki Bhambri and Sriram Balaji are 24-year-old Rithvik Bollipalli (76) and the 26-year-old Anirudh Chandrasekar (99), who have a bright prospect of making a mark at the Slam level. There is understandable anguish among tennis fans that India has only three players in the top-500 of singles. But doubles stars feel it is unfair to pit singles against doubles, and that they should complement each other.

"Whether singles or doubles, all of us need the tournaments at home to build the foundation in our professional career," said Jeevan Nedunchezhiyan, World No. 110 in doubles. "Yes, the leading doubles players compete all over the world. But even for singles, we do have players like Manas Dhamne, Aryan Shah, Karan Singh and Manish Sureshkumar to gain from the exposure. We all need more tournaments at all possible levels," Jeevan added. Trendsetter When Mahesh Bhupathi won the French Open mixed doubles title with Rika Hiraki of Japan in 1997, the first Grand Slam title for India, it was hailed as the big breakthrough. Leander Paes and Bhupathi, and later Sania Mirza and Rohan Bopanna, won dozens of doubles titles between them on the biggest stages at Wimbledon, Melbourne, Paris and New York, making everyone proud.

Bopanna and Sania were a set away from bagging an Olympic medal in Rio in 2016. It was Bopanna and Rutuja Bhosale who won the mixed doubles gold in the last Asian Games in Hangzhou. "There is no doubt that we need to strengthen our singles pipeline, but the repeated framing of doubles success as lesser or secondary is not only misleading, it is deeply disrespectful to the athletes who have carried India's name on the global tennis stage," said Bopanna, who won the admiration of the tennis fraternity across the globe last year by becoming the doubles World No. 1 at 44. "Let us be clear. Doubles is not a fallback. It is not a retirement plan. It is a different, highly tactical discipline that requires an equal amount of fitness, travel, training and mental resilience. India has had nine players in the top-150 in the world in doubles, and this is not a fluke. It reflects sustained hard work and excellence," Bopanna added. Bopanna stressed that the bigger question was not about more Indians succeeding in doubles, but why India had not built a system yet that allowed singles players to thrive. "You need funding beyond the junior level and transition support for 18 to 25-year-olds. You need structured competition calendars within India, professional coaching, sports science and long-term planning," he said.

Yuki Bhambri, who was once ranked as high as No. 83 in singles before switching to doubles because of injuries, credited the Doubles Dream of India project for the improvement in the fortunes of doubles players. "The current number of Indian players in the top-100 and 150 has not been the norm," he said. "It is a more recent phenomenon. It is in no small part due to the Doubles Dream project that has been providing us access to coaches, trainers and other resources.

"This access was previously not available. The recent increase in the number of players performing and the im-

provement in results is driven by support and hard work. It is not an indication of doubles being easy or unimportant," added Bhambri, who is now India's doubles No. 2 behind Bopanna. Bhambri, in fact, had displayed his doubles potential way back in 2014 when he made the third round of the Australian Open with Michael Venus of New Zealand. He was not swayed then to switch, for he knew his singles potential well.

"There is no doubt that singles tennis gets more eyeballs and money. No one is denying that," Bhambri stated. "I don't fault anyone for having personal preference or wanting to see more names in pro singles. But do we really have the infrastructure to support players, in line with such expectations?" The majority of my career has been in singles. I have switched to doubles relatively recently. I can assure you that the players in doubles are putting in the same hard work. It is a different skillset that is needed for doubles to perform consistently. It is not just "singles lite". "We need to celebrate the wins when we are getting them, and support the players when we have them. We can safely say that Paes, Bhupathi, Sania and Bopanna have made the country extremely proud," Bhambri added. Sriram Balaji, who at 35 has risen to No. 68 in the doubles rankings and played the Paris Olympics alongside Bopanna, said that his work ethic has remained the same, whether it was singles or doubles. "My dedication and work ethic have remained consistent throughout my career. The only difference now is that with age, my training methods have evolved. But the time and effort I invest remain unchanged," said Balaji. "We did have a period when we had about a dozen players in the top-500 of singles. There was no support from the system then. Now we have only three in the top-500 and the lack of support has remained the same! We need a structured system led by well-educated coaches who can guide not only the players but also the parents," said Balaji.

Long ago, in a discussion about balancing his singles and doubles careers, when he was extremely good in both, Bhupathi made a point by saying: "going for a Challenger for singles instead of competing in a big event in doubles is like taking a pay-cut". Professional players do play for monetary gain, but Jeevan pointed out that "everyone starts to play the game not for the money, but because of passion".

"A singles player ranked 300 in the world often struggles to break even with travel, coaching, equipment and physio costs," Bopanna said. "In contrast, a doubles player ranked in the top-75 can build a sustainable career while still representing the country at the highest levels." It may be noted that the four big stars – Paes, Bhupathi, Sania and Bopanna have together won about \$30 million in prize money. In contrast, the singles-only specialists Somdev Devvarman and Prajnesh Gunneswaran won about \$2.5 million between them. Sumit Nagal has won about \$1.5 million in prize money so far. While Sasikumar Mukund has won \$246,264 for his toil over the years around the world, both Balaji and Jeevan have won about a million dollars between them. Bhambri has won about \$1.7 million so far and Ramkumar Ramanathan about \$1.3 million. In the upper echelons of the game, Devvarman had a 62-81 win-loss record. Prajnesh was 11-28 and Nagal has a 15-38 record so far.

Compare that with the 528-395 win-loss record for Bopanna in doubles. Paes was 770-457, Bhupathi 687-364 and Sania 536-248 on the Tour. They were on court for long, competing hard at the highest levels for higher rewards. "When you pick up a tennis racquet, the motivation is always to compete at the highest level," observed Jeevan. "While passion is the spark that gets you started and keeps you glued to the game, it is the urge to compete in the Grand Slams that makes you train hard, and drives you through all the struggles. "Within the constraints of our system, we have found a pathway to do that in doubles. I want to compete in Wimbledon and the Grand Slams. No point in burning all the resources and playing in just about the entry-level events all your life just because you want to prove your singles prowess," Jeevan added. Doubles has given me the opportunity to redefine my career and not let an injury bring it to a halt," said Bhambri. "I am extremely grateful for the support of KPIT, Roundglass and the mentorship of Rohan.



quents who were robbing fans," he said. "Because I hadn't checked what was happening properly, which was my mistake, and because I gave in to preconceived ideas... the culprit was easy (to designate), and I apologise to Liverpool fans. Of course they were right to (feel upset)." In March, European soccer governing body UEFA lost its bid to throw out lawsuits brought by hundreds of Liverpool fans who attended the Champions League final for personal injuries allegedly caused in the chaos outside the stadium.

## French minister admits of inadequate security during 2022 Champions League final, apologises to Liverpool fans for blame

GNS News Agency, May 10

Gerald Darmanin, former interior minister of France, has apologised to Liverpool fans for blaming them for chaos at the Stade de France during the 2022 Champions League final in Paris. The 2022 Champions League final between Real Madrid and Liverpool was chaotic as fans were caught in dangerous crowd congestion outside the Stade de France before the match, which was delayed for over 30 minutes. French police were filmed using tear gas on fans, who complained of heavy-handed treatment as they were herded into pens outside the stadium. Earlier, Gerald's remarks blaming English fans for the chaos was carried out in English media. Terming it as a mistake, Gerald admitted that security arrangements for the final between Liverpool and Real Madrid were inadequate. Darmanin held a joint press conference with other French ministers two days after the match, and blamed the disorder on "English fans" and their possession of fake tickets. However, later he took an U-turn and called the night "the biggest failure" of his career in an interview on the French Legend show on YouTube. "What I did not appreciate that evening was that the real problem was not coming from English supporters, but from delin-

## Set back for HCA, Telangana HC sets aside crucial appointments

Hyderabad: In yet another serious setback to the top brass of Hyderabad Cricket Association, Justice Nagesh Bheemapaka of Telangana High Court has set aside the appointments including that of former India cricketer B.K. Venkatesh Prasad as Consultant for Cricket Operations and Game Development (HCA). This order was passed by the Justice after petitioners who included HCA vice-president Sardar Daljeet Singh, joint secretary T. Basava Raju, R.A. Swaroop and Vanka Roma Singh, ICA male and female representatives on HCA Apex Council, contended in a writ petition that the appointments were in violation of the rules and regulations. And more importantly, the Order stated since

the Respondent 2 (HCA) is discharging public functions and public funds are used and involved in day to day administration, amounts paid towards honorarium of Respondent No. 7 to 16 (who included which included Venkatesh Prasad, Himani Yadav, Mamata Kanojia, Arjun Hoysala, Sabyasaachi, Rajshakar Shanbal, Hyderabad Ranji coach Vineet Saxena, Shravanti Naidu, B.R. Suvama Laxmi) shall be recovered from Respondents No. 3 to 6 (HCA President, Secretary, Treasurer and the CEO), from their personal accounts and not from the account of the HCA (Respondent 2). On 30.08.2024, an agreement was entered into between HCA.

## Rohit Sharma nears record 300 maximums, Virat Kohli close behind



Most IPL sixes: Mumbai Indians stalwart Rohit Sharma is closing in on becoming the first Indian batter to hit 300 sixes in the Indian Premier League during the IPL 2025 season.

With three matches left in the group stage for MI, Rohit is three maximums short of etching his name in an exclusive club. The 38-year-old Rohit could then join West Indies

legend Chris Gayle, who remains the only batter to have slammed 300 maximums. In his illustrious IPL career, Gayle walloped a staggering 357 sixes in only 141 matches. Gayle also holds the record for the most sixes hit in a single season. Gayle smashed 59 sixes in 2013, bettering his 51 sixes from the previous edition in 2012. Interestingly, 127 of Gayle's sixes came at the M Chinnaswamy Stadium in Bengaluru.

Playing predominantly as an Impact Sub this season, Rohit has struck 17 innings in 10 matches while posing a 155-plus strike, the best for him in any season. Last year, Rohit smashed 23 sixes, the best for him since smashing 28 maximums in IPL 2013. Having made his debut in IPL 2008 with the now-defunct Deccan Chargers, Rohit amassed over 1000 runs for the franchise and smashed 51 sixes in three seasons before joining MI in 2011. Among active players, Rohit is followed by Virat Kohli and MS Dhoni. Recently, KL Rahul became the 11th entrant in the 200-sixes club in the IPL. Rahul also became the fastest Indian to hit 200 sixes in the IPL, bettering Sanju Samson.

## Rishabh Pant is stubborn; should open in white ball, says Ambati Rayudu

GNS News Agency, May 10

Rayudu said Rishabh Pant's future in white-ball cricket could be as an opener. (BCCI) Rayudu said Rishabh Pant's future in white-ball cricket could be as an opener. (BCCI) Former India batsman Ambati Rayudu has called on Rishabh Pant to not be stubborn and play as an opener in white-ball cricket as the wicketkeeper batsman continues to struggle for runs. With Lucknow Super Giants struggling to keep pace in the play-offs race, Pant's struggles this season has come to the forefront following another disappointing outing at Dharamsala against Punjab Kings.

And Rayudu has said that one of the reasons behind his "very, very bad patch" could be down to Pant's stubbornness. In 10 innings so far, Pant has made only 128 runs which includes one fifty and five single-digit scores. The costliest player in the IPL at Rs 27 crore, this has been Pant's poorest outing ever and Rayudu said time has come for the LSG captain to change his approach. "I think, at this point in time, I'm feeling very sorry for him because he's not been changing his batting order or his approach," Rayudu said on ESPNcricinfo's Time Out. "I think he's being pretty stubborn about how he wants to go about things. It's not working in his favour at the moment. It happens in this sport, to be very honest, and he is going through a very, very bad patch. It can happen to anybody. I just hope that he takes this learning and improves on it and doesn't become even more stubborn, but just accept the fact that he is struggling and start doing things a little differently and try and get better every day. That's all you can do," Rayudu said.



For a player who has been at home in Test cricket, the same cannot be said about white-ball formats. Though he was part of the T20 World Cup winning squad last year, he isn't a guaranteed of a place in the shortest format. And Rayudu said Pant's future in white-ball cricket could be as an opener. "I think more than anything it's just the clarity of what he wants to do because Pant ideally for me is an opener in white-ball cricket, because in the middle order he has not been great. I know he loves playing in the middle but he doesn't have the batsmanship that is required or the skill set. Maybe he has the skillset, but not the mindset to execute that," Rayudu added. With 10 points from 11 matches, Lucknow have a slim chance of making the play-offs as they have to win all their matches from here and hope other results go their way.

## 'Conditions weren't as we expected': SRH coach Daniel Vettori on IPL pitches in Hyderabad

SRH coach Vettori said the conditions at Hyderabad have been more bowler-friendly this time. (BCCI) SRH coach Vettori said the conditions at Hyderabad have been more bowler-friendly this time. (BCCI) It is a season where Kolkata Knight Riders, Chennai Super Kings and Lucknow Super Giants have openly spoken about the missing home advantage. And the latest to join that list is Sunrisers Hyderabad, with its head coach Daniel Vettori terming the conditions at their home Uppal stadium wasn't to their expectations as they became the latest side to be eliminated following their wash out against Delhi Capitals.

Hyderabad, finalists last year, came into the tournament with expectations sky high as their bold, aggressive batting being the talk of the town. Having retained the core and bringing in the likes of Ishan Kishan into the fold, Hyderabad once again adopted the same aggressive approach this season as well, but have managed only three win so far from 11 games. As their batting unit kept faltering, Vettori has insisted that they are not a team that backs only one style of play and he repeated it once again. "I definitely didn't say after every match I was backing an aggressive approach," Vettori said. "I said we're about assessing conditions and this year, the conditions weren't as we expected. If you look at last year, there were a lot of high-scoring games here. These surfaces in particular have been a little bit different. It has been tricky, it hasn't been easy for the batters. All we've talked about is assessing conditions, trying to read the game and understand what to do in certain situations. I think the guys are innately aggressive, but certainly, this season has been about trying to establish what's been re-



quired on the day."

Earlier in the season when they got off to a flying start in their opening fixture, high totals in excess of 250 seemed a par score at the Uppal stadium with many predicting that Hyderabad could breach the 300-run mark. But out of 11 innings here, teams have posted 200 or above only on four occasions. Last season, out of 12 innings, teams had 200 or above on seven instances. And Vettori said the conditions at Hyderabad have been more bowler-friendly this time. "There have been two surfaces that have been 250-plus, and there have been four here that have been probably more conducive for the fast bowlers. Not so much the spinners but new ball has been a little bit sticky, hard to hit, not coming onto the bat. The IPL has some of the best new-ball bowlers in the world and they were able to exploit those conditions," Vettori said.

## TFA complains to SCR against its erring players during Rahim League championship

GNS News Agency, May 10

Hyderabad: Telangana Football Association Secretary G P Palguna has complained to the General Manager of the South Central Railway regarding the "misbehaviour and rude language" by the SCR players during the TFA A-Division Rahim League championship match on April 22. "Vineeth John Rodricks was shown a red card for misconduct. Following this, Alfred Tennyson interfered in the matter for which he was also shown a red card," the TFA official wrote in the letter.

"Both the players behaved in an extremely disrespectful and unacceptable manner by insulting the referee in front of all the players and spectators present at the stadium. They used abusive and filthy language, made personal com-

ments and discriminated against the referee on the basis of colour," Palguna complained. "Alfred Tennyson also used unparliamentary language, further tarnishing the spirit of the game. This behaviour is highly disgraceful and not expected from players who represent reputed and respectable organisations," the TFA official stated. "Such actions set a poor example for young and aspiring players, who look up to these professionals as role models," he said. "The TFA has unanimously decided to suspend John Rodricks for the entire league and suspend Tennyson for the next six matches," Palguna said. "We respectfully request that the concerned departments also initiate appropriate disciplinary action against the two players to ensure such incidents are not repeated in the future," the TFA Secretary appealed.

## Sri Lanka ropes in former India fielding coach R Sridhar

GNS News Agency, May 10

Hyderabad: Former India fielding coach and ex-Hyderabad left-arm spinner R Sridhar has been roped in by Sri Lanka Cricket to conduct a comprehensive 10-day fielding program to elevate the fielding standards of Sri Lankan Cricketers. The specialised program will commence on May 7 and will involve men's and women's national squads,

Emerging squads, Premier Club players, and the National U19 team, and Women's 'A' team as well.

Sridhar, a BCCI Level 3 qualified coach, brings a wealth of experience, having served as India's fielding coach across more than 300 international matches from 2014 to 2021. Sridhar will begin the program with the Sri Lanka national men's team and subsequently train other squads,

## Sanjeev Kapoor tries to recruit Farah Khan's chef Dilip, says 'Tu inka channel chhod, mere channel par aa'



Ever since choreographer-director Farah Khan started cooking with her partner-in-crime and chef Dilip on her YouTube channel, the duo has delivered countless moments of laughter and joy. While the show follows a format similar to most celebrity cooking series, it's the chemistry between Farah and the refreshingly blunt Dilip that makes it truly entertaining. In a recent episode, the dynamic duo was joined by none other than celebrity chef Sanjeev Kapoor, who stirred up more than just food during his visit.

The moment Farah announced her latest guest, Dilip

sensed the threat of another chef stepping into his kitchen, and decided to raise the stakes. He suited up in a proper chef's coat and toque, ready to face off as Sanjeev Kapoor made his entrance. The chef called Dilip a 'hero' as Farah stood there surprised by her cook's new outfit. The trio then began prepping chicken wings, with Sanjeev offering Dilip a few slicing tips. But Dilip took back the knife and said, "Aap mereko mat sikhao, mujhe aata hai (Don't try to teach me; I already know how to do it)." Farah Khan questioned Dilip's sudden burst of speed and asked what was behind his newfound efficiency, to which he replied, "Mujhe Naukri bachane ka hai (I want to save my job)." Sanjeev then gave his two cents about the ingredients being used and said, "Whatever product does not have my picture, don't buy it." Dilip tried to hold his own with the veteran chef and pointed out that Sanjeev was already a famous chef and that he should now allow him to reach that same status. Seeing his opportunity, Sanjeev tried to steal Dilip from Farah and said, "You leave her channel and come work with me; I'll make you famous. On my channel, there are 50 chefs who come to cook for me; here only Madam (Farah) comes." Notably, this isn't the first time Dilip has received a job offer from someone else. In an earlier episode, he was offered a role by casting director Mukesh Chhabra, but Dilip said that he already had been hired by a different producer. Farah did not respond to this attempted coup and proceeded to focus on the dish. As they finished cooking, Dilip mentioned how he was a big fan of Sanjeev Kapoor and had seen all his videos available on the internet.

## Ishaan Khatter opens up on Martin Scorsese backing his film Homebound: 'It's a dream, it's surreal'

Having Martin Scorsese on board as an executive producer for "Homebound" is a dream-come-true moment, says actor Ishaan Khatter, who knew about the master filmmaker involvement with the Neeraj Ghaywan-directed movie for ten months but kept it a secret. Khatter plays the lead role in the movie, which will have its world premiere in the Un Certain Regard category at the Cannes Film Festival, which kicks off from May 13.

"When Mr. Scorsese came on board... I don't know whether I'm allowed to say, I've been sitting on this for 10 months. I can keep a secret. It was a lot of conversation and back and forth, etc. I'm just so proud and grateful that it's come to what it is. It's a dream, it's surreal. I'm very excited for Cannes. I always wanted to go with my own film. I'm happy my first time is with a movie," the actor told PTI in an interview. "Homebound" is Ghaywan's second full-length feature film. The director made his debut with "Masaan" in 2015, which also premiered in the same segment at Cannes.

Khatter praised filmmaker Payal Kapadia, who won the prestigious Grand Prix award at the festival last year for her movie "All We Imagine As Light", for bringing back the spotlight on Indian stories at Cannes. "The global spotlight, especially in the entertainment and cinematic industry, is on India in a very beautiful way that it hasn't been for many, many years. Kudos to Payal Kapadia and her film for paving the way, competing in the main competition after 30 years." She even said in her speech, "Don't let it be another 30 years before this happens again." I'm very proud, I believe we're the only Indian film in Cannes this year," the actor said. Khatter's enthusiasm for "Homebound" also



stems from the collaborative process with Ghaywan, a director he has long admired.

"Even without all of these labels attached. I was always very, very proud to be a part of this film... He's a deeply caring, sensitive filmmaker. It's a very special film," he said. "Homebound", backed by Dharma Productions, also features Vishal Jethwa and Janhvi Kapoor. It is produced by Karan Johar, Adar Poonawalla, Apoorva Mehta and Somen Mishra and co-produced by Marijke deSouza and Melita Toscan Du Plantier. Khatter is awaiting the release of his series "The Royals", which will stream on Netflix from May 9.

## Moushumi Chatterjee says daughter's body was kept in morgue as her in-laws didn't clear hospital bills, recalls husband facing 'humiliation': 'He'd wake up howling'

Veteran actor Moushumi Chatterjee and her husband Jayant Mukherjee lost their firstborn, Payal, in 2019. Payal passed away at the age of 45 after a prolonged battle with diabetes and remained in a coma for two years before her death. She was married to businessman Dicky Sinha at the time. In a recent interaction, Moushumi recalled memories of her daughter and shared how her family still hasn't been able to cope with the loss. Moushumi also opened up about her rift with former son-in-law Dicky Sinha. According to an earlier report by India Today, the two families had a fallout following a dispute over a business collaboration. In 2018, Moushumi filed a petition in the Bombay High Court, requesting to be appointed as Payal's guardian. She accused Dicky and Payal's in-laws of neglecting her medical needs. Moushumi also alleged that Payal's in-laws refused to pay her medical bills and prevented her from meeting her daughter during her illness.

"I don't think my husband has completely gotten over Payal's death. I am also not over it. This vacuum will be there throughout our lives," she said in an interview with Nayandeep Rakshit. Moushumi described the experience of having to go to court to meet her ill daughter as "torcher" and mentioned how the ordeal also affected her younger daughter Megha Chatterjee and her husband, who were allegedly 'humiliated' by Payal's in-laws. "We can't get over this grief. When a child dies, nobody can get over that. Payal was very motherly to Megha because they had an eight-year age gap," she said. Speaking about Jayant's emotional state after Payal's passing, Moushumi added, "Sometimes he would get up in the night howling Payal's name. These things you can't explain with words." She also spoke about the strength she has had to muster for the sake of her family. "I tell them, 'It has happened; you can't do anything about it.' I ask them to forget it," she said.

While Moushumi accused Payal's in-laws and husband of neglect, Dicky had earlier accused the veteran actor of not attending Payal's funeral or visiting her in the mortuary. In an earlier interview with SpotboyE, Dicky had said, "Moushumi did not even see Payal's face after she died. She wasn't at the funeral; she neither came to the mortuary." However, during her latest conversation, Moushumi refuted this and shared that she did, in fact, visit the morgue after Payal's death. She also revealed that Payal's body was kept in the morgue because the hospital bills were unpaid. "I went to the hospital when she was no



more. She was kept in a morgue because the hospital's bill wasn't paid. I took all that nonsense," she said. Moushumi added, "You learn from these things how many types of people are on this earth."

## Sree Vishnu's fun promotions steal the show ahead of 'Single' release

Hyderabad: Tollywood actor Sree Vishnu is grabbing everyone's attention with his unique promotional style for his upcoming romantic comedy Single, which is set to hit theatres this Friday, May 9. His quirky t-shirts with viral quotes and movie references have become the talk of the town, giving the film an extra dose of buzz before its release. One t-shirt reads "Eat, Sleep, Salaar, Repeat," while another features a QR code and the cheeky message, "Don't scan this if you're Single." The actor was recently spotted posing in these shirts alongside the film's heroines, Ketika Sharma and Ivana, making fans even more excited. These fun promotions match the vibe of the film's trailer, which is filled with hilarious dialogues and clever nods to popular culture. Directed by Caarthick Raju, Single has already struck a chord with audiences through its trailer, which quickly went viral after its release. The mix of comedy, romance, and relatability has created strong buzz around the film.

## Mika Singh gatecrashed Amitabh Bachchan's party, Big B was standing with Sachin Tendulkar, Ambani: 'He made me wait so...'



Apart from his catchy Bollywood tunes, singer Mika Singh always has a story to tell about his run-ins and experiences with the biggest stars of Bollywood. A recurring character in all these stories is none other than the stalwart Amitabh Bachchan, who the singer has talked about on many different platforms. In a recent interview, Mika revealed how Amitabh gave him some advice about the way he handles his social appearances and how the singer felt a little embarrassed after the conversation.

In an appearance on the Shubhankar Mishra podcast on YouTube, Mika revealed the embarrassing advice he received after he showed up at Amitabh's party uninvited. "I went to Amitabh Bachchan's house on Diwali, and I just drove my Hummer through the gate, without any invitation. I had a big car, and the guards must have opened the gates because they thought I was a big star. I drove the car around for two to three times, and then he told me to come into his house rather than doing this. I felt rather embarrassed after that," added Mika.

The singer shared his experience after he went into the part and how he was absolutely star-struck seeing the people there. "I went into the house, and big stars were all standing around waiting to meet him. Mr Ambani and Sachin Tendulkar were standing around him, and I felt out of place, so I started moving away. That is when he addressed me in front of everyone and told me to wait. He didn't need to do that, but he made me wait so that I could meet everyone." As mentioned before, the singer has talked about his favourite actors Shah Rukh Khan, Salman Khan and Amitabh Bachchan multiple times. He has praised their humility and how they have treated him throughout his time in the industry. To show his appreciation, Mika had even gifted a watch worth Rs 50 lakh to both Shah Rukh and Amitabh, and how the former even tried to return the ring, but Mika refused to take it back.

## Rajkumar Rao calls his wedding the 'best days of my life'; Wamiqa Gabbi says 'I have dreamt about eloping from my wedding'

Rajkumar Rao and Wamiqa Gabbi are all set to share screen space in the rom-com Bhoole Chuk Maaf. The film revolves around a couple who are all set to take the plunge, however, they get stuck in a time loop and eagerly wait for the D-day to arrive. Ahead of the film's release, Rajkumar and Wamiqa sat down for a fun chat with SCREEN, where they shared their thoughts on marriage. Wamiqa also opened up about a recurring wedding-day nightmare, while Rajkumar reflected on his own experience of tying the knot with Patralekhaa. Talking about weddings, Rajkumar said, "This phrase 'Shaadi Ka laddu jo khayee wo pachtayee aur jo na khayee wo bhi pachtayee' has been said by someone very unhappy with his marriage. I think everyone should get married if they find the right partner. Don't hurry. Be very sure about the partner, and don't get married under pressure."

Sharing the qualities she is looking for in a partner, Wamiqa said, "He should be an animal lover, take care of his health, and be kind and inspiring. It is very important for you to be inspired by your partner; it keeps the fire going. Also, if someone brings me food without me even saying, I would instantly fall in love with that person." Rajkumar Rao also looked back on his wedding, calling it one of the best times of his life. "Everything at my wedding was so good. We had lots of fun. It was one of the best times of my life. Even those who attended the wedding still talk about it. We had forgotten to arrange for a pagdi for me during the pheras, but it was later managed. Farah Ma'am had tied the pagdi for me. We were just partying in the winters of Chandigarh in November," he said.

Wamiqa, meanwhile, opened up about embracing the idea of marriage for the first time. She said, "This year, I



have gotten comfortable with the idea of marriage. All my life, I was never wanting to get married. I don't know why, but I never had that. Even with my former partners, whenever there were discussions about marriage and kids, I just couldn't talk about it. Now that I am doing what I wanted to do in my life, I feel secure with my career, I can see myself getting married." Wamiqa also shared a recurring dream she has about her wedding — that she runs away on the big day. "For the longest time, I have dreamt about eloping from my wedding, that too at the last minute. Somehow my father always understood when I was telling him, I can't do it, and he would say, 'I will manage. You go.' It is kind of a nightmare for me that I ran away on the day of my wedding." Lastly, Rajkumar shared his views on celebrities keeping their weddings a private affair. He said, "It's nice na. Why do you want so many people inside that you don't get to enjoy. It is a pious, intimate, and personal ceremony where you want only close ones and loved ones. It is not a professional event where you would call the paps."

## Priyanka Chopra and Nick Jonas call Met Gala their big night out as 'mom and dad': 'We are excited to jump back into where our story began'



Actor Priyanka Chopra and singer Nick Jonas arrived at the Met Gala in style, dressed in coordinated black-and-white outfits, which the couple swear was completely by chance. Amid the red carpet photo ops and interviews, the couple spoke about how stepping out for events and date nights has changed since becoming parents. While talking to Vogue, the couple revealed that they did not plan to wear matching outfits for Met Gala 2025. Chopra said, "We usually always co-relate our outfits, but surprisingly we didn't this time because we were coming with separate brands and people." Priyanka wore Balmain and Burberry, while Nick rocked an outfit designed by the English designer Bianca Saunders. Priyanka Chopra, who turned heads with their first Met Gala appearance back in 2017, also talked about how their relationship with each other has evolved since the arrival of their daughter, Malti Marie Jonas. "This is

our big night out as Mom and Dad, and we are excited to jump back into where our story began. We get ready in almost the same vicinity, and it is a bit different to go out after becoming parents. Our daughter is there, so we keep checking in on her while we are getting ready," said Nick. Shortly afterward, Priyanka shared with Nick the sweet demand their daughter made before they left for the event — one she couldn't help but give in to. "I might have told her that she can watch a movie tonight and we don't watch movies during the weekdays, but she said that Mama and Daddy are going to the ball like Cinderella, so can I watch Cinderella tonight?" In addition to their unplanned matching outfits, the couple was spotted socializing with singer Shakira and Diljit Dosanjh, who carpoled with the Latin icon. Some fans also noted that Priyanka Chopra and Shah Rukh Khan's outfits resembled their characters from the 2006 film Don.