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## Mega job mela in Nampally on May 17

Hyderabad: A mega job mela is being organised on Saturday, May 17, from 8 am to 1 pm, at Red Rose Palace Function Hall, Nampally, Opposite Public Gardens.

In a press release, the organiser, Mannan Khan Engineer, said many companies will be participating in the job mela and offering jobs in various positions in pharma, health, IT & ITes firms, education, banks and others. Work from Home options will also be provided by a few companies.

Qualification of candidates should be above SSC and preliminary interviews will be conducted at the venue.

The entry to the program is free. Interested job-seekers can contact 8374315052 for further details.

## Telangana students excel in CBSE Class X results, girls outdo boys

Hyderabad: Telangana students have come out flying colours in the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) Class X exams results, registering a staggering 99.83 percent of passes.As per the press release issued by the CBSE on Tuesday, a total of 51,604 Class X students from Telangana registered for exams, 51,521 appeared and 51,433 passed.Like in the Class XII results, girls have outperformed boys in the Class X results as well. As many as 22,960 girls students who appeared for the exams recorded a pass percentage of 99.86, whereas 28,561 boys secured 99.80 percent of passes.

## I came for 'darshan' of heroes: PM Modi salutes Indian armed forces



GNS News Agency, May 13

New Delhi: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday morning visited the Adampur Airbase in Punjab, where he met with Indian armed forces personnel and saluted their courage, declaring that he had come to have the "darshan of the heroes" who defended the nation with fearlessness and dedication.Addressing the soldiers amid chants of 'Bharat Mata ki Jai', PM Modi said, "This slogan is not just a proclamation but a vow of every soldier who is willing to give his life to protect Maa Bharti. This is the voice of every citizen who wants to serve the country. This voice resonates both in the field and in the mission."

"When our forces blow away the threat of nuclear blackmail, then only one thing resonates from India -- Bharat Mata ki Jai. You have made every Indian proud; you have created history. I am here early morning to have your 'darshan'. When the feet of heroes touch the ground, the ground becomes blessed. When we get the opportunity to have darshan of these heroes, our lives get blessed, and hence I am here today," he added."I salute the Indian Army, Air Force, Navy, and the Border Security Force personnel for their courage," PM Modi said.Commending the precision of the Indian strikes, the Prime Minister said, "I can proudly say that all of you reached your target with perfection. In Pakistan, it was not just the terrorist camps and

their air bases that were destroyed, but their nefarious designs and audacity were also defeated."The visit comes days after India and Pakistan agreed to a ceasefire, following the execution of 'Operation Sindoor', a major Indian military operation that targeted key terror hubs in Pakistan and Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK).The operation was hailed as a defining moment in India's counter-terrorism approach.During his interaction with the troops, the Prime Minister praised their courage and professionalism.

Soldiers present at the airbase described the visit as a significant morale booster, saying that the Prime Minister's presence and words uplifted their spirits. Many were seen smiling in their combat gear, a reflection of their preparedness and pride.Sharing his experience on social media, PM Modi wrote, "Earlier this morning, I went to AFS Adampur and met our brave air warriors and soldiers. It was a very special experience to be with those who epitomise courage, determination, and fearlessness. India is eternally grateful to our armed forces for everything they do for our nation."The Adampur Airbase was among the locations that came under attempted attack from Pakistan on the night of May 9-10.Pakistani drones and missiles, launched in retaliation after Operation Sindoor, were successfully intercepted and neutralised by India's air defence systems, showcasing the operational readiness and efficiency of the Indian forces.The visit also follows PM Modi's recent national address, in which he saluted the armed forces, intelligence agencies, and scientists for the successful execution of Operation Sindoor.He said the mission was dedicated to the spirit of the nation, particularly the women of India, whose dignity and safety were central to the operation's objectives.Reiterating India's firm resolve against terrorism, PM Modi described Operation Sindoor as the beginning of a new chapter in the nation's counter-terror strategy -- one that is relentless, precise, and uncompromising.He underlined that India had conducted highly targeted strikes against terrorist hideouts in Pakistan to protect its citizens and uphold national values.



GNS News Agency, May 13

New Delhi: Prime Minister Narendra Modi's address to the nation on Monday drew widespread praise from BJP leaders and NDA allies, who said his speech sent a clear and firm message to both the global community and India's adversaries.The address, which came in the wake of 'Operation Sindoor' and the ceasefire understanding with Pakistan, underscored India's uncompromising stance on terrorism and reiterated that any dialogue with Pakistan would be restricted to issues concerning terrorism and Pakistan-occupied-Kashmir (PoK).In his remarks, PM Modi firmly stated that "Nuclear blackmail" will not deter India from taking resolute action against terrorism anywhere in the world.Outlining a three-pronged "new normal" in India's anti-terror doctrine, the Prime Minister said India is committed to tracking and eliminating terror threats globally, and that state-backed terror operatives will be treated at par with their masterminds.

He stressed that India's responses will not be curbed by Nuclear threats and that the country reserves the right to act decisively against any terror attack.Leaders, speaking to IANS, called PM Modi's address "highly commendable" which they said, shows India's response against terrorism will be decisive.BJP MP Praveen Khandelwal praised the address, and told IANS, "PM Modi clearly outlined India's priorities to the world. He made it clear what India's terms are, and if anyone attempts an invasion or a terrorist at-

tack, India will respond decisively."He further added that 'Operation Sindoor' is not over but merely suspended, and any future provocation would invite a strong Indian response.Highlighting the effectiveness of indigenous weapons, Khandelwal noted, "The precision with which our indigenously made missiles hit their targets is a matter of pride for every Indian."Speaking to IANS, BJP National General Secretary Tarun Chugh said, "Prime Minister Narendra Modi's address is the united voice of 140 crore citizens of India. This is a new India that desires peace but will go to any extent to destroy terrorism."

"PM Modi has given a clear message to the world. We will not tolerate Nuclear blackmail, there will be no talks with terrorists, and there will be no trade with terrorism (sponsoring nations). Blood and water will not flow together. If talks happen, they will only be about terrorism and PoK," he said.Maharashtra Minister Uday Samant also lauded the Prime Minister, urging all political parties to support national security matters without indulging in divisive politics."Even when something good is done, Congress plays politics and tries to provoke citizens. This is not right, especially in matters related to national defence," the Shiv Sena professed to IANS.He echoed the pride in India's indigenous Defence manufacturing, saying, "It's a matter of pride that weapons made under 'Make in India' have caused significant damage to the enemy."BJP leader Dilip Ghosh commented on the significance of PM Modi's address in clarifying India's position."There were many comments and speculations after the temporary pause in the conflict. The Prime Minister's clear explanation has now removed all confusion," he said, adding, "Operations are ongoing, and India remains vigilant."Speaking to IANS, Shiv Sena leader Raju Waghmare called the Prime Minister's statement "highly commendable," and reiterated support for PM Modi's clarity on key issues."The PM clearly said that apart from terrorism and PoK, there will be no talks with Pakistan. If Pakistan commits any act of terrorism, India will respond accordingly, even with military action if needed," Waghmare told IANS.He also emphasised that PoK remains an internal matter for India and no third party will be allowed to interfere.

## At least 13 killed in explosion during disposal of expired ammunition in Indonesia

GNS News Agency, May 13

An explosion during the disposal of expired munitions in Indonesia's West Java province on Monday (May 12, 2025) killed at least 13 people, including four soldiers, Military officials said.The cause of the blast was not immediately clear.Members of the Indonesian Army were carrying out the disposal of unusable and expired ammunition — which had been stored in a Military warehouse centre — in an environmental conservation area in Sagara village of Garut district.The initial explosion was shortly followed by another blast, said Major General Kristomei Sianturi, the Indonesian Military spokesperson.Nine civilians and four Army members were killed, Major General Sianturi said, adding that several other people were being treated for various injuries.

The cause of the incident is still being investigated, with a focus on whether the standard procedure for ammunition disposal was followed, Major General Sianturi said.The location — vacant land under the management of West Java's Natural Resources Conservation Agency — is far from residential areas and often used for muni-



tions disposal.However, such activities often attract the attention of nearby residents, who often take metal fragments, copper or scrap iron from grenades and mortars, Mr. Sianturi said, "And there might be an unexpected second explosion after that." Local television footage showed an explosion lighting up the sky and thick black smoke, followed by a second blast a few minutes later. Another video showed ambulances evacuating the injured victims and the dead.

## U.S. to cut 'de minimis' tariff on China shipments to 54% from 120%



GNS News Agency, May 13

The move comes several hours after Beijing and Washington announced a truce in their trade war, with both sides agreeing to unwind most of the tariffs imposed on each other's goods since early April.The de minimis exemption, for items valued at up to \$800 and sent from China via postal services, was previously able to enter the United States duty free and with minimal inspections.In February, President Donald Trump ended the de minimis exemption by imposing a tax of 120% of the package's value or a planned flat fee of \$200 — set to come into effect by June — after it was heavily used by companies such as Shein, Temu and other e-commerce firms as well as traffickers of fentanyl and other illicit goods.The number of shipments entering the U.S. through the tax-free channel exploded in recent years with more than 90% of all packages coming via de minimis. Of those, about 60% came from China, led by direct-to-consumer retailers such as Temu and Shein.Temu, Shein and Amazon did not immediately respond to requests for comment.In Monday's (May 12, 2025)

order, the White House said it was amending 120% to 54% with the changes to take effect by 12:01 a.m. (0401 GMT) on May 14, 2025 (Wednesday).The plan for a \$200 flat fee duty rate would also be shelved, it said, keeping it at \$100.The U.S. de minimis rule, which dates back to 1938, has been the target of growing criticism from both Democratic and Republican lawmakers.Some have derided it as a loophole that allows cheap Chinese products to flood into the United States and undercut American industries, while also serving as cover for smuggling contraband such as illegal drugs and their precursor chemicals.

## KTR raises alarm over closure of children's ward at Fever Hospital

Hyderabad: BRS working president KT Rama Rao has raised alarm over closure of the children's ward at the government fever hospital in Hyderabad. He lashed out at Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy for prioritising beauty pageants over governance, after reports emerged that the children's ward at the hospital has remained shut for over a year due to lack of paediatricians."The Chief Minister is busy running after the Miss World contest, but has no time to think of children's health. Children and parents are left to suffer for over a year," Rama Rao remarked on X (formerly Twitter). He questioned the government's inaction in appointing paediatricians ahead of the monsoon and rising seasonal health risks.

## Harish Rao rubbishes rumours, reaffirms loyalty to KCR and BRS

GNS News Agency, May 13

Hyderabad: Senior BRS leader and former Minister T Harish Rao on Tuesday dismissed reports suggesting internal rifts within the party and speculation about his possible exit, calling them utterly baseless. He urged people not to believe in the false propaganda against him, asserting that he remained a loyal soldier of BRS and party chief K Chandrashekhhar Rao.He reminded that he had already condemned the false propaganda, while party leaders Dasoju Sravan and Errolla Srinivas had filed a police complaint regarding the matter on his behalf. "I have also requested the DGP to take immediate action against those spreading fake news," he stated.Harish Rao reiterated his loyalty to Chandrashekhhar Rao and BRS. "I have said it hundreds of times — K Chandrashekhhar Rao is our leader, and I am a disciplined worker who strictly follows his directions," he remarked.On speculation about leadership changes within the party, he declared that if Chandrashekhhar Rao



decides to hand over the reins of the party to KT Rama Rao, he would follow that decision unconditionally. "My loyalty to Chandrashekhhar Rao and the party is undisputed," he declared.Rejecting rumours of defection, he asserted that he was neither quitting the BRS, nor joining any other party.

## Pakistan says 11 military personnel killed, 78 others injured during military confrontation with India



GNS News Agency, May 13

Islamabad: Pakistan on Tuesday said that 11 military personnel were killed and 78 others injured during the recent military confrontation with India.In a statement, the military also claimed that 40 civilians died and 121 others were injured in the "unprovoked and reprehensible dastardly attacks" by India on the night of May 6-7.

India and Pakistan reached an understanding on Saturday to end the conflict after four days of intense cross-border drone and missile strikes. While defending the motherland, 11 personnel of Pakistan's armed forces were killed and 78 others were wounded, the Pakistan military said.The victims from the Pakistan Air Force include Squadron Leader Usman Yousuf, Chief Technician Aurangzeb, Senior Technician Najeeb, Corporal Technician Farooq and Senior Technician Mubashir, it said.

Naik Abdul Rehman, Lance Naik Dilawar Khan, Lance Naik Ikramullah, Naik Waqar Khalid, Sepoy Muhammad

Adeel Akbar and Sepoy Nisar were among the army personnel killed in the strikes, it added.

The Pakistan Armed Forces "mounted a resolute response under the banner of 'Marka-e-Haq', delivering precise and notch-up retributive strikes through Operation Bunyanum Marsoos," the statement said.The military also claimed that 40 civilians, including seven women and 15 children, were killed and 121 others injured in strikes by India on the night of 6-7 May.

## Three terrorists killed in J&K gunfight

Srinagar: Three terrorists were killed on Tuesday in a gunfight with the joint forces in Keller area of Jammu and Kashmir's Shopian district.V. K. Birdi, IGP (Kashmir), told reporters that three terrorists have been killed."Terrorists are yet to be identified, and a search operation is still going on there," he said.Joint forces had launched a Cordon and Search Operation (CASO) in the Shukroo Keller area of Shopian district after intelligence inputs said that a group of terrorists was hiding there.When challenged, the terrorists fired, after which an encounter started during which three terrorists were killed. The operation is continuing in the area, police said.As per sources, two to three terrorists were believed to be trapped in the area.The Indian Army, in a statement, said that based on specific intelligence about the presence of terrorists in Shoekal Keller, a search and destroy Operation was launched.



# Indian Chronicle

## English Daily

### Calling Pakistan's nuclear bluff

A new doctrine, unveiled by India, on dealing with Pakistan-sponsored terrorism marks a major shift from decades of strategic restraint. Prime Minister Narendra Modi, in his 22-minute-long address to the nation, outlined this policy shift in a clear, blunt and unambiguous manner. 'Operation Sindoor', a measured and precise military strike targeting terror infrastructure deep into Pakistani territory, is the new normal for India, redrawing the rules of engagement. The era of caution is over. From now on, no distinction will be made between state and non-state actors. New Delhi will no longer play by the old rules where diplomacy coexisted with terrorism, or where international pressure blurred accountability. As the Prime Minister put it, "Terror and talks cannot go together, terror and trade cannot go together, and water and blood cannot flow together". This message, resonated deeply with the nation's sentiments, was not just aimed at Pakistan but also at the international community which has traditionally taken a hyphenated approach towards India and Pakistan and sought to paint the two nuclear-powered South Asian neighbours with the same brush. The Prime Minister sent a tough message by asserting that India will no longer be held hostage by Pakistan's nuclear deterrent in the face of cross-border terrorism. This marks a tectonic strategic shift in New Delhi's posture, historically restrained by Islamabad's nuclear threshold doctrine. The era of nuclear blackmail is finally over. It must be pointed out that Pakistan has been using its nuclear arsenal as a political cover for fomenting terrorism across the border. It was intended to prevent any Indian conventional military response to cross-border provocations.

In many ways, 'Operation Sindoor' has reset the red line and made it clear that any future terror attack on Indian soil will be treated as an act of war. The Prime Min

## Punjabi film industry slams anti-India remark by Pak actor Iftikhar Thakur: 'This may shut doors for other performers too'



GNS News Agency, May 13

Reacting sharply to a recent statement against India by Pakistani actor Iftikhar Thakur, who is known for his roles in Punjabi films, various people from the state film industry said they will not collaborate with him again. "I condemn the recent statement by Iftikhar Thakur. Yes, we have worked together on many projects, but... a person who talks like this against our country should not be entertained at all," actor Binnu Dhillon recently told reporters. "The one who is against our country is our enemy too. I guarantee that I will not work with him." Addressing Indians directly on a Pakistani TV show on May 2, days after the Pahalgam terror attack, Thakur had said: "Fizaon se aaoge toh hawa mein uda diye jaoge. Samandar ke paniyon se aaoge toh dubo diye jaoge. Zameeni raston se aaoge toh dafna diye jaoge. (If you come through the winds, you will be blown away in the air. If you come through the waters of the ocean, you will be drowned. If you come through the land routes, you will be buried.)" Expressing his disappointment, Gurpreet Singh Ghuggi, another prominent face in Punjabi cinema, told The Indian Express, "It is a really unfortunate state-

ment. Artists are meant to spread love and unity even when situations are tense. Everyone has the right to support their nation, but literary figures and artists should always make efforts to unite. His statement is highly condemnable." "I don't think any director or producer from Indian Punjabi cinema will ever work with him again. He has worked in many Punjabi movies which were appreciated by the masses. So it means that he is also directly targeting his audience based in India... By this one statement, he has closed the doors for many other Pakistani actors who have been working in Punjabi movies," Ghuggi said. Dhillon said it is unlikely that future collaborations with Iftikhar will be allowed to release in India "Those who are serious about this issue will definitely not work with him now." Singer, music director and lyricist Ravinder Singh Ranguwal, who founded the Punjab Cultural Society, said many Pakistani actors earn their living by working in Indian Punjabi cinema. "Hence, such hateful talk is very unfortunate and highly condemnable. After hearing this, I don't think anyone will cast Thakur in more movies. We have enough talent here," he stated. Ranguwal is known for directing the music video Punjab De Puttar, featuring Pakistani singer Akram Rahi and Indian singer-songwriter Pammi Bai, as part of efforts to bring together artistic talent from across the border. Iftikhar Thakur played major roles in Punjabi films such as Chal Mera Putt (2019) and its two sequels released in 2020 and 2021. He was also part of movies like Sidhus of Southall, Anni Dea Mazaak Ae, and Ma Da Laadla, all of which were shot abroad, mainly in the UK. Pakistani actors, including Nasir Chinyoti, Naseem Vicky, and Zafri Khan, have also been seen in Punjabi films, appearing only in scenes shot outside India. Since the 2019 Pulwama attack, Bollywood has imposed an unofficial ban on Pakistani actors but the Punjabi industry in the country has continued to offer them roles that are mostly shot outside India.

## Chandigarh Administration to increase air raid warning systems



GNS News Agency, May 13

To strengthen the civil defence system, the Chandigarh Administration has planned to increase the air raid warning systems from 20 to 50. The decision has been taken a day after blackout rehearsal took place in Chandigarh. Meanwhile, the administration has also decided that satellite phones will be used in case of communication breakdown. Also, more volunteers are being planned to be enrolled, as presently 300 civilians and 600 NSS volunteers have been trained in civil defence. The administration also plans to give uniforms to civil defence personnel. Meanwhile, a civil defence mock drill was conducted at Neelam Theatre, Sector 17 in the presence of UT Administrator Gulab Chand Kataria on Thursday. The exercise aimed to assess and strengthen the city's emergency response preparedness. The mock drill commenced around 12 noon with a simulated fire outbreak scenario. As part of the exercise, the building was promptly evacuated and various emergency protocols were enacted. The operation was jointly conducted by the State Disaster Management Authority (SDMA), District Disaster Management Authority (DDMA), and key departments of the Chandigarh Administration, including the Chandigarh Police, Civil Defence, Fire Department, Engineering Department, Education Department, Health Department, Municipal Corporation, and other supporting agencies.

The National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) demonstrated specialised rescue techniques during the drill, highlighting advanced methods for managing emergency situations. Approximately 100 'Apda Mitra' volunteers, 500 NSS cadets, 100 NCC cadets, 100 home guards, and several other volunteers participated in the exercise. The drill simulated a high-intensity emergency scenario, focusing on evaluating coordination, response time, and operational efficiency of the various teams involved. "Every kind of preparation is necessary for the nation to be prepared for any situation... I believe preparing for everything is necessary for the safety of the nation," Kataria said. He also highlighted the "enthusiastic involvement" of youth volunteers in such exercises as it "greatly enhances the community's resilience and contributes to national security".

## Attempted takeover of ancient temple sparks outrage in Punjab's Dera Bassi village



GNS News Agency, May 13

A controversy has erupted in Sundra village near Dera Bassi over an alleged attempt to illegally seize control of the ancient Sheetla Mata Temple. Villagers have filed a written complaint with the Deputy Commissioner (DC) and Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) of Mohali, alleging that on May 4, a group of armed individuals attempted to take over the temple premises.

According to local residents, the intruders took advantage of the absence of most villagers from the temple and tried to assert unauthorised control over the holy site. The complaint stated that the attackers attempted to intimidate and evict the temple priests, whose family has been serving the temple for over 150 years. Villagers further reported that the armed men entered the temple grounds wearing shoes, an act considered deeply disrespectful and offensive to religious sentiments. This incident has deeply hurt the faith of the devotees. Temple caretaker Nathuram, in a statement, said he had visited the temple at the request of the village sarpanch's son and was unaware of any planned attempt to seize the temple. "I was shocked when I found out the truth. I have no connection to this dispute," he clarified.

## Mohali civic body cracks down on food waste mismanagement

GNS News Agency, May 13

In a move to tackle sewer overflow and rainwater drain blockages, the Mohali Municipal Corporation has intensified its campaign against food businesses that are irresponsibly dumping waste into the city's drainage systems. Officials have warned that if hotels and restaurants fail to install grease traps and maintain hygiene, the corporation may recommend cancellation of their property rights to GMADA. Two days ago, the municipal team disconnected water connections behind eateries at Phase 5 market as part of an emergency operation. However, these connections were restored the very next day, raising questions about the intent and effectiveness of the action. "If the connections were to be restored, why were they cut in the first place?" residents asked, hinting at possible political pressure behind the hasty reversal. According to sources, most markets across Mohali house numerous eateries, dhabas, and showrooms. Many of these lack proper grease traps, leading to food waste being dumped into both sewer and rainwater drainage lines. This malpractice has resulted in frequent sewer overflows, especially in residential areas adjacent to commercial blocks. The Phase 5 operation was limited to one block where residents had been struggling with dirty water flooding their doorsteps due to recurring sewer back flow. However, questions are now being raised as to why action was not extended to other affected areas, including another block in the same Phase, where similar violations and filth on the streets have been reported.

## In Delhi-NCR, few private schools stay shut, others continue with offline classes

GNS News Agency, May 13

Delhi schools online classes amid India Pak tensions. The majority of schools across Delhi-NCR, however, remained operational, choosing to continue offline classes while implementing necessary safety precautions. From closing campuses on Friday to shifting classes online and continuing with regular classes backed by emergency preparedness protocols, private schools across Delhi-NCR have adopted a range of responses in the backdrop of India beginning a counter-offensive after Pakistani drones and missiles attempted to hit military facilities in Indian cities on Thursday.

However, government schools across Delhi-NCR have remained open, with no formal directions issued by the respective state governments. A senior official from the Delhi education department explained that authorities chose not to order closures, considering that schools are already scheduled to shut for summer vacation starting May 11. The Delhi Public School (DPS) branches in R K Puram, East of Kailash, and Vasant Vihar were among the first to announce a complete closure on Friday, citing precautionary measures. The management directed staff across academic and non-academic departments to remain alert and keep their teams informed. Additionally, Indraprastha World School confirmed that it would continue operations in online mode only for the day.

Pathways School Noida, a prominent private school catering to Delhi-NCR students, also announced it would shut on Friday. The majority of schools across Delhi-NCR, however, remained operational, choosing to continue offline classes while implementing necessary safety precautions. These include Amity International Schools, Birla Vidya



Niketan (BVN) in Pushp Vihar, Queen Mary's School (QMS) Northend, Salwan Public School in Mayur Vihar, Maharaja Agrasen Model School (MAMS) branches and Apeejay School branches. ITL Public School, Dwarka, chose to work in offline mode "to not create any panic", and attendance is more than 90 per cent, Principal Sudha Acharya said. Schools in South Delhi and Pitampura were reportedly open. Mamta Modern Senior Secondary School in Vikasपुरi also remained open, though it rescheduled its unit cycle tests, Principal Pallavi Sharma confirmed. Similarly, DLF Foundation Schools in Gurgaon stayed open, with chairperson Ameeta Mulla Wattal saying,

"The schools are not closed since the drills are in place." On Wednesday, mock drills were conducted at 55 locations in Delhi, including over 500 schools, simulating blackouts and evacuation scenarios following instructions from the District Disaster Management Authority.

## PGIMER sends five ambulances with first-aid kits to AIIMS Vijaypur, Jammu



GNS News Agency, May 13

In view of the rising tensions on the Indo-Pak border, PGIMER, in an emergency response to its role in regional disaster preparedness, has sent five ambulances to AIIMS, Vijaypur, in Jammu, equipped with first-aid kits and essential medical supplies. The effort is also a backup measure in case of need and to ensure medical response in high-risk zones. "As a tertiary care institute, it is our responsibility to extend support during this hour, and we will rise to the occasion. It is also our national duty, and we are all working as a team, GMSH-16, GMCH-32, in a coordinated way, and we all must be prepared," said Prof Vipin Koushal, medical superintendent, PGIMER, adding that the institute would be informed of more requirements. A meeting of PGI's Disaster Management Committee was held at 11 am to assess the current situation, to implement more security measures and guidelines, and to send the five ambulances of its fleet of 11 to Jammu is a step in this direction. "We are equipped to meet any contingency here, as per the standard operating procedures of the Government of India. Being the largest government medical facility, we are aware of the ongoing situation and responding to it," added Dr Koushal.

In response to the recent acts of terrorism and in support of the stance of the Indian Armed Forces, PGI Thursday launched a campaign to establish an emergency blood reserve. This initiative calls upon the public to come forward and donate blood as a powerful, united act of defiance against terrorism and those who support it. "Terrorists spill innocent blood to divide us," emphasised Prof Vivek Lal, Director, PGIMER. "We will give our blood to save lives and show them that humanity triumphs over hate. That is the strongest message we can send right now." He elaborated on the importance of preparedness: "This blood donation drive is not just about saving lives; it is about assert-

ing that India's spirit cannot be shattered by acts of terror." Prof Lal underscored the importance of proactive readiness, stating, "Preparedness is not panic, it is protection. We must be a step ahead of any crisis in our preparedness to meet it head-on. Having a sufficient blood supply is a crucial part of this readiness." To this end, the PGIMER is taking strategic steps to establish a 'dedicated emergency blood reserve'. This reserve will serve as a vital buffer, ensuring that critical blood supplies are readily available. The success of this initiative hinges on the unwavering support of voluntary donors, whose regular contributions will help maintain and replenish this reserve continuously.

Prof Rati Ram Sharma, head, Department of Transfusion Medicine, PGIMER, appealed to every segment of society. "We are calling upon students, professionals, workers, and volunteers — every citizen — to stand with us. Currently, we specially urge O Group donors to come forward, as O Group blood is the universal donor and can be used efficiently in any emergency. Your support now can help us respond swiftly and effectively to any crisis." The Blood Transfusion Centre at PGI's Nehru Hospital operates from 9:00 am to 5:00 pm, but now the time has been extended to 8 pm, with 24x7 emergency arrangements in place to facilitate urgent donations. The institute is launching a sustained public awareness campaign emphasising that "Donate Today, Store Hope for Tomorrow. Let Terror Know We Are United". "As our Armed Forces stand firm on the borders, we stand united in heart and action. Every donation is a testament to our collective refusal to bow to hate and violence. Our strength lies in our unity and readiness. Let us come together and make our resolve visible — each drop of blood a symbol of hope and resilience. Join us in this vital movement.

## Jagtiyal man dies of ill-health in Bahrain

Jagtiyal: Popula Naresh, 23, a native of the district, who had gone for work to the Gulf, died of ill-health in Bahrain on Thursday. A resident of Mallapur mandal, Naresh had gone to Bahrain in search of employment. He developed a severe health problem early Thursday morning. His roommates tried to shift him to the hospital. However, he died on the way to hospital. Family members have requested the government to take steps to bring his body to India as early as possible.

## Despite colleges getting shut, amid India-Pak tensions, Chandigarh's GMCH-32 goes ahead with convocation



GNS News Agency, May 13

Despite the worsening tensions between India and Pakistan, the Government Medical College and Hospital, Sector 32 (GMCH-32), along with the Chandigarh Administration, will hold its 11th convocation. The decision comes even as schools and colleges will remain closed in the Tricity region on Friday and Saturday. According to the official schedule of the event, Anupriya Patel, Union Minister of State for Health and Family Welfare, Government of India, will be the chief guest and will deliver the address on the day of convocation. The event will also see Rajeev Verma, chief secretary, Chandigarh; while Ajay Chagti, secretary, Medical Education and Research; and Harpreet Kaur Babla, Mayor, Chandigarh; will also attend the event. The event will begin at 10.15 am and conclude at 12.20 pm. Meanwhile, there is resentment among the faculty and staff of the institution for holding the convocation amid a tense environment. A faculty member of GMCH-32, on the condition of anonymity, said that few faculty members and staff had approached the senior authorities, for postponing the convocation. According to sources, it is expected that the event will hold a gathering of nearly 250-300 people, including the whole faculty, students of the GMCH, and the alumni, in the college auditorium. While the GMCH-32 authorities and the Chandigarh Administration are preparing for the event, which was confirmed by the director-principal and faculty of the institute, an alumni dinner planned on May 9, has been cancelled.

"Due to the evolving national security situation and in consideration of hospital preparedness at this time, it has been decided to cancel the alumni dinner planned for May 9. Refunds of contributions made toward the event will be processed in due course. Inconvenience caused is regretted," a note on cancellation circulated among the alumni of the GMCH-32, by the GMCHAA executive body mentioned. Meanwhile in view of the Indo-Pak tensions, the summer vacations of the GMCH-32 staff and faculty has also been postponed. An order of medical superintendent, GMCH-32, issued on May 8 mentioned that "as per discussion with director principal, it has been decided that in the present emergent scenario, the summer vacations may be postponed as the hospital services come under essential services maintenance act. In view of this, it is advised that faculty may not plan their vacations till the situation becomes peaceful and the vacations may be allowed in due course of time". The order also requested all the heads of the departments to sanction leaves to staff and faculty only in case of dire emergency. "Similarly, station leave of any kind should also be discouraged as it is expected that in this situation of exigency, any official should be contactable during non-working hours and should be reporting to the hospital on the request by the authorities without any delay... This may be treated as most urgent for strict compliance by all employees of GMCH," the order read. The passed-out students of GMCH-32, who are to receive their degrees on the convocation, are coming from Shimla, Delhi, Jammu, Himachal Pradesh as many of them are currently employed in other states. "These students who are also on their duties, have their station leaves cancelled from their concerned departments, so how will they come for the convocation? And with the situation worsening, who shall be held responsible, if any untoward incident takes place," asked an official from GMCH-32. Meanwhile, A K Attri, director-principal, GMCH, said that Union Minister Anupriya Patel has confirmed her presence as the chief guest at the convocation on May 10, which suggests that the government has no objection to the convocation plan. "The convocation is a very pious event, and with the grace of God, it will be held and go very smoothly.



# World beauties' visit to Ramappa must be a success—

Arrangements to uphold culture and traditions— Collector Divakara TS in review with officers— Security with a thousand police personnel—



Mulugu, Mahipal, Indian Chronicle : District Collector Divakara TS has instructed the officers to give a grand welcome to the world beauties coming to visit the historic UNESCO-recognized Ramappa Ramalingeswara Swamy temple and make the program a success. On Monday evening, District SP Dr. P. Shabarish and Additional Collector Mahender Ji conducted a review with officers of various departments at the Mulugu Collectorate. Speaking on the occasion, the Collector said that arrangements should be made so that the world beauties, who have come to participate in the Miss World 2025 competition being held in Hyderabad, will visit Ramappa on the 14th of this month. He suggested that elaborate arrangements should be made to avoid any problems. He said that appropriate security arrangements should be made and police teams should thoroughly inspect the areas as per the route map. He said that about 35 Miss World contestants will reach Ramappa directly from Hyderabad in AC buses titled Telangana Zaroor Aana. He said that no inconvenience should be caused while visiting the Kakatiya temple and appropriate precautions should be taken. He ordered that tight security arrangements should be made at the places where the respective

programs are held and special surveillance arrangements should be made in the areas surrounding the temple. He said that the officials should not act negligently. He suggested that special officers should be appointed to supervise the arrangements in the respective departments. He said that the officials should act responsibly and effectively perform the duties assigned to them in a coordinated manner. He said that the tour of the beauties should be successful. He ordered that all the work undertaken on this occasion should be completed promptly. The District Collector suggested that the visit to the Ramappa temple should be a sweet memory for the Miss World contestants and that the officials should make all arrangements to that extent. He said that the officials should sit in the seats allotted to them in advance. On this occasion, SP Dr. P. Shabarish said that tight security measures are being taken in the wake of the visit of the Miss World. He said that one additional SP, ASP, two DSPs, 14 CIs, 43 SIs, 127 ASIs, head constables, 360 constables, 160 women constables, 54 home guards, 113 TGSP constables, 125 special party constables, a total of one thousand officers and staff are maintaining heavy security. District officials participated in this program.

## Gundala Raghu appointed as Mulugu District Convener of Ambedkar Youth Association—



Mulugu, Mahipal, Indian Chronicle: Gundala Raghu from Kasindevipet village has been appointed as the Mulugu District Convener of Telangana Abendkar Youth Association. A meeting was held in Hyderabad on Sunday under the chairmanship of State President CH Ayilaiah to select

the constituency conveners of the association's 33 districts. Founder President Dr. JB. Raju participated as the chief guest and handed over the appointment papers to the constituency conveners of the 33 districts. Speaking on the occasion, Raju called for the election of Ambedkar Youth Association Mandal Committees and for the committees to continuously work for the upliftment of SC, ST, BC and minority communities. On this occasion, Gundala Raghu was unanimously elected as the Mulugu District Convener. He expressed special gratitude to the state leadership, joint district president Middepaka Yellaiah, Mulugu District president Nakka Bikshapati, and state campaign secretary Dikonda Kantarao for entrusting him with the responsibility. He said that he would work for the strengthening of the association and the upliftment of the weaker sections on his part. Mulugu District leaders Janagaon Ravinder, Dulagonda Sambasiva Rao, Gangili Bharat, and others participated in this program.

## Edify School Students Shine in CBSE Grade 10 and Grade 12 Results—



“\*\*\* District Toppers Emerge from the School”\*\*\*100% Pass Percentage in Both Grade 10 and Grade 12\*\*\*May 13,Indian Chronicle Rayalaseema co-ordinator\*\*\*Students of Edify School, Tirupati, have once again demonstrated their academic excellence. In the CBSE Grade 10 and Grade 12 results announced on Tuesday, the school achieved a remarkable 100% pass percentage.“Sai Harsh. G of Grade 10 secured an impressive score of 494 out of

500 marks, while Tejas. K of Grade 12 (PCM stream) achieved 482 out of 500 marks, both securing the top positions within the district.“In light of this outstanding achievement, Edify School Director, Mr. Praneeth Penumadu, congratulated the high-achieving students. He further encouraged them to reach even greater heights in their academic pursuits in the future. He also lauded the school's teachers and staff for their dedicated efforts in achieving these exceptional results.”

## Maharashtra Cabinet approves mobile outreach units for rehabilitation, overall development of street children

GNS News Agency, May 13

In a significant move aimed at rehabilitation and social integration of street children, the Maharashtra cabinet on Monday approved the implementation of ‘mobile outreach unit’ scheme across the state for upholding child rights in the state. The initiative is expected to benefit thousands of children living on the streets by providing them access to education, healthcare, safety, and opportunities for a better life. The decision was taken during a cabinet meeting chaired by Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis. According to a government official, a total of 31 mobile outreach teams will be deployed—one each in 29 municipal corporations, and two in Mumbai city (for eastern and western suburbs respectively) under the scheme — and its scope will be widened in future. The official said that the objective of the programme is to identify street children—particularly orphans, runaways, and those in vulnerable situations—and connect them to mainstream education, health services, and government welfare schemes through targeted rehabilitation. Special child-friendly vans will be operated by select NGOs. Each van will include a four-member team comprising a counsellor, a teacher, a female staff member, and a driver. The vehicles will be fitted with GPS tracking systems and CCTV



cameras to ensure safety and transparency. A social investigation report will be prepared for each child, based on which an individualized rehabilitation plan will be developed. The services will include school enrolment or admission to anganwadis depending on age, health check-ups, vaccination, nutritional support, hygiene education, medical care, and addiction counselling, if required. “Children will also be encouraged to participate in art and educational activities to aid their overall development,” said the official. As part of the programme’s performance benchmarks,

## All set for Miss World Ramappa visit—



— Tourists and people should cooperate —— Mulugu District Collector Divakara “Mulugu, Mahipal, Indian Chronicle: Misses from all over the world who have come to Hyderabad to participate in the 72nd Miss World - 2025 competition will visit the UNESCO-recognized Ramappa historical temple in Palampet, Venkatapur mandal, Mulugu district on the 14th of this month at 4:30 pm, Mulugu District Collector Divakara TS said that all arrangements have been completed. About 35 beauties will leave Hyderabad and reach Haritha Hotel in Mulugu, from where they will visit the Ramappa temple in traditional costumes. Later, they will watch cultural programs in the temple premises. In this context, various arrangements have been made along with cultural programs to explain the features of the historical Ramappa. He said that all facilities have been made to avoid any problems during this visit, which is being organized under the name of Telangana Zaroor Aana..., and that there will be heavy police security to prevent any untoward incidents. He said that all the officials have completed the work assigned to them in coordination. In the wake of the Sundarimani's visit, visitors are not allowed to visit the Ramappa temple, and devotees and the public are requested to cooperate. For security reasons, it has been



completely banned to fly drone cameras within five kilometers of Ramappa. The Collector appealed to everyone to cooperate for the success of the program. Meanwhile, as part of special security arrangements, security measures are being taken with a thousand police officers, staff, special and AR police, SP Shabarish revealed.”

## Devotees Offer Pongal to Goddess Virupakshi with Reverence



“May 13,Indian Chronicle Rayalaseema co-ordinator\*\*\*Women offered Pongal and Ambali (a traditional drink) to Goddess Virupakshi as they fulfilled their vows.

The Gangamma Jathara (village fair) was celebrated with great enthusiasm on Tuesday in Harijanawada, located in front of the village tank in Kaveti Gari Palli Panchayat of the Punganur constituency.“The festivities began with special prayers offered to the village deity Gangamma. Following this, women, accompanied by the rhythmic beats of drums, carried Pongal (a dish made of rice and lentils) to Irupakshamma, the village goddess. There, they offered small lamps, Chalividi Muddalu (a traditional offering), and jaggery as Naivedyam (offering of food) to the goddess and fulfilled their vows.“On this occasion, village elders stated that offering Pongal to the village deity every year ensures timely rains and the prosperity of the village with abundant crops and livestock. A large number of youth and women participated in the event.

## Disparity in scholarships promoting private schools in Gujarat, alleges govt school teachers’ body

GNS News Agency, May 13

Gujarat government scholarship schemes, privatisation of education Gujarat, government school scholarship disparity, Government or grant-in-aid schools with such residential facilities are not covered under these schemes, alleged Gujarat Rajya Nagar Prathmik Shikshak Sangh. The association of government school teachers have alleged that several scholarship schemes recently implemented by the Gujarat government helped in promoting privatisation of education, while urging the state government “to review these schemes” at the earliest.

Gujarat Rajya Nagar Prathmik Shikshak Sangh or Gujarat association of primary government teachers in urban areas in a written representation to Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel and Education Minister Kuberbbhai Dindor have stated that based on the Common Entrance Test (CET), the amount of scholarships offered to students of private schools is “four times higher” than the government schools.

“Due to this, a student is encouraged to shift to a private school. Further, with Gyan Shakti Residential Schools, Gyan Setu Day School, Raksha Shakti Schools running on PPP mode... (they) are promoting these private schools,” said the organisation’s representation to the CM.“Government or grant-in-aid schools with such residential facilities are not covered under these schemes. This if continued for a long period will lead to closing of government schools,” alleged Gujarat Rajya Nagar Prathmik Shikshak Sangh. The State Examination Board has been organising CET for students of Class 5 every year from 2023-24. Around 6 lakh students from all districts across the state participated in the CET examination for 2025-26 session. Chandrakant Khakhariya, president of Gujarat Rajya Nagar Prathmik Shikshak Sangh, told The Indian Express, “This is a sheer attempt to promote private schools by the state government. If the state government wants to improve the standard of learning of government or grant-in-aid schools then the scholarship amounts should be at par with the private schools not four times higher. Not only this disparity... the clause of an annual hike of 7 per cent in the scholarship schemes for residential schools that are being run on PPP mode is nothing more than injustice to government school students.” The association further alleged, “In this way we are sending meritorious students of government schools to private schools. Ultimately, in the long run this will badly impact the result of the government and grant-in-aid schools.” Meanwhile, Education Minister Dindor told The Indian Express that the schemes are already under a review. “We are planning to form a committee to review these schemes. We are considering setting up a common scholarship plan for government and private schools,” the Education Minister said. The government school teachers have also alleged that management of residential schools after declaration of result “contact parents directly and misguide them to leave government schools and take admission in residential schools” running on PPP mode with private hostel facilities. The list of scholarships against which the asso-



ciation has submitted a representation includes Mukhya Mantri Gyan Setu that has earmarked 30,000 students of Class 6-12 annually. Under this, against an annual scholarship from Rs 5,000-7,000 per student in government and grant-in-aid schools the private school student gets Rs 20,000-25,000. Similarly, under Mukhya Mantri Gyan Sadhana scheme for Classes 9 till 12, against Rs 6,000 and Rs 7,000 annual scholarship per child in a government or grant in aid school the private school student gets Rs 22,000-25000. For Gyan Shakti and Raksha Shakti Residential schools, a student gets Rs 60,000 and Rs 75,000 respectively with a clause of a hike of 7 per cent annually. As per the Education Department records, a total of 45,816 students have been allotted admission or scholarship assistance in residential schools for the academic year 2025-26 through CET.

## Munugode plagued with power issues, says Rajgopal Reddy

Hyderabad: In sharp contrast to the State government’s claims of quality power being supplied to different categories, Congress MLA Komatireddy Rajgopal Reddy said his constituency Munugode was plagued with several power-related issues. The people in Munugode were facing many problems due to low voltage, insufficient transformers, lack of required substations, dangling power lines and other issues, he told TGSPDCL CMD Musharraf Faruqui here on Tuesday. The Munugode MLA along with leaders from the constituency held a meeting with TGSPDCL officials. During the meeting, Rajgopal Reddy said the Congress government would bring in many reforms to ensure supply of quality power to all consumers. These reforms should be launched from Munugode constituency, he insisted. To address different power related issues in Munugode, about Rs.34 crore was required. Under special consideration, these funds should be released and works should be taken up at the earliest, he appealed to the TGSPDCL CMD.



# Central Railway services hit between Thane and Airoli due to girder glitch, commuters stranded



GNS News Agency, May 13

A Central Railway spokesperson clarified the situation, saying the rail traffic was stopped from 7.10 am out of caution to sort out a technical glitch.A Central Railway spokesperson clarified the situation, saying the rail traffic was stopped from 7.10 am out of caution to sort out a technical glitch. Thousands of passengers and office-goers using the Central Railway’s trans-Harbour line and main line were stranded on Friday morning due to the sudden suspension of services following a “technical fault” at the Mumbai Metropolitan Region Development Authority (MMRDA) bridge between Thane and Airoli.While the trains running on the main line were delayed by more than 30 min-

utes, the Trans-Harbour line services were stopped after 8 am, authorities said.

The Central Railway confirmed that the services would return to normal by 10 am. Authorities informed that safety inspections were in progress and services would be resumed only after clearance from structural experts.Office-goers were annoyed at the sudden station announcements regarding the suspension of services on the Trans-Harbour corridor, connecting Navi Mumbai and Thane.“There was no information on the app or any prior alert. I waited for almost an hour before learning about the suspension. If such technical work is scheduled overnight, authorities should ensure it doesn’t affect peak-hour travel. It is very frustrating,” said Harshal Joshi, a regular commuter from Vashi who was late to his office in Marol A Central Railway spokesperson clarified the situation, saying the rail traffic was stopped from 7.10 am out of caution to sort out a technical glitch. “MMRDA had held a block between 1 am and 4 am for launching girders between Airoli and Thane. However, afterwards it was noted that the launched girders were inclined,” the spokesperson said.However, no estimated time was released for service restoration at the time of filing this report. The railway authorities have requested the passengers to monitor updates through authorised means and assured that work on restoration was being undertaken with priority.

# PIL seeks ban on opinion trading platforms; Punjab and Haryana HC issues notice to Centre, RBI and SEBI

GNS News Agency, May 13

The Punjab and Haryana High Court Thursday sought the Centre’s response on a PIL seeking a ban on opinion trading alleging that it promotes online betting.A bench of Chief Justice Sheel Nagu and Justice Sumeet Goel issued notices to the Union of India, Reserve Bank of India and Securities and Exchange Board of India, Enforcement Directorate, State of Haryana and others.Former Punjab Advocate General Atul Nanda appearing for Advocate Anuj Malik, who has filed the PIL, said the platforms were permitting betting.He referred to a platform that pays money to users for guessing the outcome of cricket matches.Nanda, assisted by his Advocate wife Rameeza Hakeem, contended that state governments and authorities like SEBI have to write to the Centre to take down these sites.The petitioner who is also a member of the New India organization sought relief/ action against the continued and unchecked operation of certain online platforms that, under the guise of opinion trading, are engaged in illegal betting and gambling activities.

These platforms permit users to bet/wager on the outcome of uncertain and speculative events such as cricket wins and losses, election results bitcoin/market movements and current affairs which are nothing but games of chance.“Such activities are a violation of the Public Gambling Act 1867, the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita 2023 Section 112 and state specific legislations including Haryana Prevention of Public Gambling Act 2025 and the Information Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code Rules 2021, as amended in 2023 which lay down express



obligations to restrict such content and platforms,” read the PIL.The seriousness of this issue is also presently engaging the attention of other high courts in this country including ones that are pending before the High Court of Gujarat and the Bombay High Court, it added.Further these entities thrive on surrogate advertising celebrity endorsements and manipulative digital marketing to target impressionable users particularly the youth despite a legal statutory bar and repeated regulatory advisories from the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology, the petition contends.The Petitioner has sought appropriate directions to secure the enforcement of existing legal and regulatory frameworks and to protect the public , particularly youth and vulnerable persons from the harm caused by these platforms.He has sought prohibition on promotion, advertisement, operation, and facilitation of such illegal betting platforms.

# BJP suspends VMC corporator Ashish Joshi, days after mothers of Harni boat tragedy victims questioned CM at Vadodara event

GNS News Agency, May 13

The Bharatiya Janata Party Thursday suspended Ashish Joshi, a Vadodara Municipal Corporation (VMC) corporator from Ward 15, from the party for “damaging image of the party”. Joshi’s suspension came after the mothers of two students killed in the Harni boat capsize were allegedly detained by the Vadodara police for interrupting Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel during his speech at an event in the city on May 2.Joshi has been supporting the victims of the Harni boat tragedy by raising the issue on the floor of VMC since the day of the accident on January 18, 2024. He is the corporator of the VMC ward where the New Sunrise School is located, and from where most of the deceased studied. in a letter to Joshi, the BJP said it had taken the step to suspend him, considering the “repeated reminders to mend ways” had gone unheeded. The suspension letter, signed by BJP Vadodara unit chief Jayprakash Soni, states, “Time and again, you have been reminded to maintain discipline in writing as well as through verbal communication... On several occasions, your behaviour and conduct have damaged the image of the party. You were also served a show-cause notice in this regard, but no improvement has been seen in your conduct.”

“It has come to our notice that you have joined in damaging the image of the party in several instances... The same has been proven adequately by way of social media posts as well as newspaper reports... Considering these factors, as per the directions of the State party President, you are suspended from the party’s active and primary membership.”The suspension comes two days after Joshi said in an interview on a social media channel regarding the two mothers questioning CM Patel, and spoke about justice being denied to the families due to the delay in adding officials of VMC as accused in the case.

In March this year, days after Soni was appointed as the city unit president, the BJP issued a show cause notice to Joshi to “explain repeated indiscipline”, just two days after Joshi got into a bitter argument with the then municipal commissioner Dilip Rana in the General Board meeting of the civic body over the cleaning of stormwater drains in his ward. In February, Joshi left the BJP embarrassed during the annual budget sessions when he “voted against” the party’s whip on a question related to the compensation for victims of the Harni boat tragedy.Based on a proposal before the Congress party as part of its budget recommendations, VMC held a vote to decide whether the civic body should award the families of 14 victims of the Harni tragedy a compensation of Rs 25 lakh. While all other BJP corporators voted against the suggestion, Joshi, along with seven Congress corporators, voted in favour.Joshi has been supporting the families of the 14 victims, including 12 students and two school teachers who were killed in the boat capsize. He has been demanding exemplary compensation from VMC for the victims of the Harni boat tragedy, and also forged a bond Raksha Bandhan last year when the mothers of deceased students Roshni Shinde and Alishba Kothari tied rakhis on his wrist.Joshi, who is the corporator



of the VMC ward where the New Sunrise School is located and from where most of the deceased belong, publicly said following the tragedy he “felt guilty being part of the system” that could “not provide a safe picnic spot to the innocent”. A first-time corporator, Joshi said VMC officials, who should have been responsible for checking the fitness certificate of the boats and other safety measures, should be suspended.

# Peddapalli Collector assures support to destitute children

Peddapalli: Collector Koya Sree Harsha promised that the district administration would extend all kinds of support to the children who lost their parents.Collector participated in the destitute children protection programme organised by the Women and Child Welfare department at the Collectorate meeting hall on Thursday.

Speaking on the occasion, he assured that the government would solve all the problems of children and ICPS staff would always be available to children.

Advising the children to excel in studies, he said that students should continue their studies by leaving their problems to the administration.Every month, the government would provide Rs 4,000 to each child, he informed and instructed the child protectors to take care of children as their own wards.Advising the children to dial 1098 if they have any problem, Collector said that their staff would respond immediately and solve the problem.

# Ration card, bank details, caste & religion: Delhi govt to compile citizen data for ‘unified’ portal



GNS News Agency, May 13

Names of residents, their addresses, caste, educational qualifications, number of children, vehicles owned, bank details: These are among several details of Delhiites that will be collected and soon be available in a single space on the Delhi government’s upcoming unified data platform.The Information Technology (IT) department has floated tenders requesting proposals to implement the platform. Officials said the selected bidder will have to submit the proposal within 180 days.On Tuesday, The Indian Express reported that the government is planning to create a first-of-its-kind ‘Unified Data Hub (UDH)’, which will consolidate data from various departments, to ensure only eligible people avail of the benefits of its welfare schemes.

The core objective of UDH is to create “golden records” of beneficiaries — single, verified, and unified data profiles of citizens — by resolving data duplication and inconsistencies across existing departmental systems, said officials.Details that will be collected include personal and household data of citizens from all departments: ration details from the Food and Civil Supplies Department; registered household details from Delhi Jal Board, Power Department, Trade and Taxes Department; birth and death details, caste and religion information from the MCD; and others. It will also getAll this will be integrated into one platform to create a single repository, said officials.A senior government official said, “Presently, the government uses an e-district portal to transfer benefits and subsidies of various social welfare schemes directly into the bank account of beneficiaries. But, there is no platform wherein data is readily available to plan schemes or to identify beneficiaries.”Officials said to an extent, Aadhaar card de-

tails can help in ensuring that nobody else claims the share of benefits by impersonating a beneficiary.“However, there are still some challenges with the process employed by the e-district/ department portal at present. For example, it primarily caters to scholarships. A 360-degree view of both the beneficiary and the state social benefit system is not available. There is no facility to collect data effectively for planning and administering social benefit schemes. It also does not maintain historical data or support household-level analysis of payouts made before Aadhaar linkage,” said the officials.

Officials said the portal has records of only registered citizens — not an exhaustive database of all eligible residents of the state — primarily pertaining to individuals and not families.“As integrated registries are not available, onboarding of new schemes is time-consuming... All services are application-based, and a complete view of the services availed by citizens is not available. Due to this, the government has to document and collect fresh data every time a social welfare scheme or policy is being developed... For instance, the government does not have a consolidated data of women in Delhi who are eligible for the Mahila Samridhhi Yojana,” said an official.Officials said once the hub is developed, the government will provide a unique identification number to all citizens.“Through this, whenever a new scheme is implemented, the government will have readily available data to identify beneficiaries and decide eligibility criteria for implementing new welfare schemes... It can also monitor individual beneficiaries for inclusion into or exclusion from a particular scheme based on social and financial status,” said the official.

Officials said the data will also help the government plan and improve utilisation budgets across schemes.Officials said the unique ID number will also help citizens while registering vehicles, applying for passports, getting a water connection, or changing their address.Officials said a Project Monitoring Unit (PMU) is being set up to facilitate the creation of the hubThey said the IT department has selected the Food, Civil Supplies & Consumer Affairs, WCD, Social Welfare, Revenue, and Labour departments, and the MCD on a pilot basis. It has directed these departments to nominate a nodal officer and a technical team lead of the respective departments on priority, so that the PMU may start functioning in accordance with the creation of the UDH.

# Will make Delhi Fire Services one of the best in the world: CM announces budget for more equipment

GNS News Agency, May 13Delhi Fire Services, Quick Response Vehicles, fire Quick Response Vehicles, Rekha Gupta, delhi news, India news, Indian express, current affairsThe CM also declared that soon, 100 of these mini quick-response fire vehicles will be deployed specifically for narrow-lane operations.Reiterating the government’s commitment to making the Delhi Fire Services (DFS) ‘one of the best in the world’, Chief Minister Rekha Gupta Thursday assessed the two QRVs (Quick Response Vehicles), which are specialised compact fire-fighting vehicles designed to maneuver with ease in congested areas.

A demonstration of the QRVs was held at the Delhi Secretariat. Speaking on the occasion, the Chief Minister announced a Rs 504-crore budget for the DFS, with Rs 110 crore reserved for procuring advanced fire-fighting equipment. Some of them would be automated water tower vehicles, a 32-metre turntable ladder, mini fire-fighting robots, and QRVs.“Our aim is for the Delhi Fire Services to become not only the most advanced in the country but among the best in the world,” she said.Explaining the advantages of a QRV, the CM said the sleek vehicles are equipped with fire suppression systems, a water mist, and foam systems, which can douse small to medium-scale fires. Rescue equipment like cutters, spreaders, and fire extinguishers is also loaded in the vehicle. For life-saving support, it has a stretcher and a first aid kit.Its quick move-



ment will allow it to penetrate the Capital’s more congested areas, such as slums and markets.The CM also declared that soon, 100 of these mini quick-response fire vehicles will be deployed specifically for narrow-lane operations.For safe firefighting in higher-risk areas, AWT vehicles — fully remote-controlled and equipped with thermal and optical cameras — will also be deployed. Two of them are already stationed at the Connaught Place and Laxmi Nagar fire stations.A new 32-metre turntable ladder, which can rotate 360 degrees to douse fires on high rises, would also be mounted onto fire tenders.Delhi Cabinet Minister Ashish Sood also promised the procurement of 100 new fire tenders that will be stationed in several parts of the capital.

# Cleaning Yamuna will require more than money, it will need a plan: CSE

GNS News Agency, May 13

Cleaning Yamuna, Centre for Science and Environment, yamuna, Yamuna Action Plan, Yamuna cleaning, Yamuna clean-up, delhi news, India news, Indian express, current affairsA polluted Yamuna.Lack of data on wastewater generation, direct discharge of faecal sludge from desludging tankers into rivers or drains in several locations, and mixing of treated and untreated sewage in the drains — these are some of key reasons for pollution in Yamuna, Delhi-based Centre for Science and Environment (CSE) stated in an assessment released on Thursday.

Sunita Narain, director general of CSE — a research and advocacy organisation — told mediapersons: “The focus of Yamuna Action Plan 2025 has been to build STPs (sewage treatment plants) so that domestic wastewater is intercepted and treated; improve the quality of treatment; build interceptor sewers to tap drains and divert sewage; lay sewage pipeline in unauthorised colonies and treat industrial waste in common effluent treatment plants...”“All are good ideas... all needed. Then why is the Yamuna still polluted?” she asked.She went on to say, “We do not know how much wastewater is generated by Delhi... as there is no clear data on Delhi’s population in the absence of a regular census or on the amount of unofficial water (groundwater and water supplied by tankers) that residents use... Without the data on wastewater, we must rework the plan.”The report, titled ‘Yamuna: The Agenda for Cleaning the River’, noted: “...it is clear that cleaning the river will require more than money. It will need a plan, which recognises the reality that Delhi, like many other cities of India, is a city where the bulk of its people live in unauthorised areas, where sewage is not intercepted and therefore, not treated.”

Maintaining that there is a need to intercept the sewage and not release it back into the drains that carry untreated sewage, the report stated that it must also be ensured that the 22 drains opening to Yamuna are releasing only clean water.As per the report, the focus of official actions, while “commendable”, has failed to address the issue of pollution because of concerns like — there is no dissolved oxygen in the river beginning from ISBT; Yamuna becoming polluted at Palla, an area located within a few km of the river entering Delhi; and no visible improvement in



the river’s quality.On how the Delhi government has been trying to curb pollution in Yamuna, the report noted a few measures — enhancement of sewage treatment capacity and its utilisation, tighter discharge norms, laying of sewage pipelines in unauthorised colonies, and controlling industrial pollution.While the government has 28 “approved” industrial areas — effluents from 17 of these are treated in common effluent treatment plants — the report noted that “the quality of treatment is a matter of concern”. There is also a lack of clarity on the discharge locations post-treatment of these effluents, it added. The CSE recommended a 5-point action agenda in order of priority:– Ensure all faecal sludge is collected from non-sewered areas and treated. “The state does not have to invest in building and refurbishing costly sewage pipelines. The strategy for faecal sludge management through tankers is faster and more cost-effective,” Narain said, emphasising the need to ensure that all desludging tankers are registered and their movement monitored.– Ensure that treated water is not discharged into drains, where it gets mixed with untreated wastewater.– Ensure full utilisation of the treated wastewater so that they do not add to the pollution load. At present, only 331-473 MLD is reused, which is between 10-14% of the treated wastewater.– Plan upgrade of the STPs based on the reuse of treated water plan and redesign the effluent standards.– Rework plan for the two major drains — Najafgarh and Shahdara. Stating that these contribute to 84% of the pollution load in Yamuna, the report stressed that the government’s interceptor drain plan has not been working.



## Right to Information applications remain pending in Telangana



GNS News Agency, May 12

Hyderabad: The Congress Government's claims of delivering governance transparently and accountability is coming under the scanner with many Right to Information (RTI) applications remaining pending in different departments. Though officials are tight-lipped on the number of pending applications, it is learnt that a considerable number of applications are kept pending for processing. The Information Technology Electronics and Communications department has directed all the departments to clear the pending applications. The Head of Department and District Collectors have been instructed to ensure timely verification and disposal of all RTI applications received through the online portal. "It has been observed that a number of applications are still pending action. Instruct the designated Public Information Officer and other concerned officials to

regularly access the RTI portal, promptly review and process pending applications," the IT department said in a circular to all departments. It also wanted the departments to give replies to the applications within the prescribed time. This was being done as per the Supreme Court directions to provide RTI services through electronic mode. The RTI applications are being submitted and registered via online portal developed for the purpose.

Apart from the inordinate delay in processing the RTI applications, complaints are being lodged by different sections over the State Government's failure to upload Government Orders online. Last month, the Forum for Good Governance had appealed to the Chief Secretary on the need to upload the Government Orders on the State government website. At present, the Government website contains all routine GOs like sanction of leave for government servants etc. If all the GOs issued by the government were uploaded in the government website, civil societies, media and citizens would be saved from the bothering of filing RTI applications or running around the concerned sections of Secretariat to obtain copies of GOs, Forum for Good Governance president Padmanabha Reddy had urged to the Chief Secretary. Meanwhile, the State Government appointed G Chandrashekhara Reddy as the State Chief Information Commissioner after approval from the Raj Bhavan. There were reports that the State Government had named eight individuals, including CPRO to the Chief Minister, B Ayodhya Reddy, for posts of Information Commissioners and the same was sent to the Raj Bhavan for approval. However, these appointments are still pending, triggering apprehensions.

## Bhakra Beas Management Board chief 'locked up' inside resthouse, stopped from releasing water to Haryana

GNS News Agency, May 12

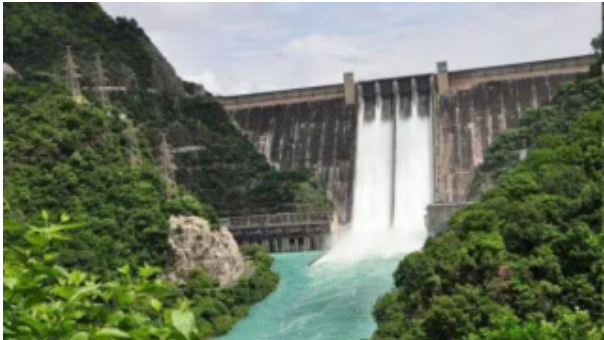
High drama unfolded at the Nangal Dam in Punjab on Thursday with Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) workers led by Cabinet minister Harjot Bains staging a dharna at the approach road to the dam, stopping Bhakra Beas Management Board (BBMB) chairperson Manoj Tripathi from releasing water to Haryana, and later locking him up at the board's resthouse. Tripathi was later 'rescued' in a police vehicle and moved out. The development came a day after the Punjab and Haryana High Court restrained the state of Punjab and its functionaries, including police personnel, from interfering in the day-to-day functioning, operation, and regulation of the Bhakra Nangal Dam.

Tripathi had reached the regulatory end of the dam on Thursday morning. However, AAP workers gathered at the spot did not allow him to release water. Later, he left for Sutlej Sadan, the BBMB's rest house in Nangal. After Bains reached the spot, the main gate of the rest house was locked, with Tripathi inside. Talking to The Indian Express, Bains said that Tripathi reached the dam in the morning and tried to release the water to Haryana. "We did not allow it. We are sitting on a dharna outside," Bains said.

Amid the tension at the border after India launched Operation Sindoor against Pakistan, Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann also arrived at Nangal from Chandigarh. Sources said he was accompanied by Advocate General Maninderjit Singh Bedi. "Taking immediate and firm action at Nangal Dam — we have successfully stopped BBMB's illegal attempt to release Punjab's water without state consent. Until Hon'ble CM @BhagwantMann ji arrives at Nangal, no further movement will be allowed. Punjab's water is not negotiable," Bains wrote in a post on X.

Later, Punjab Police personnel led by Ropar Range DIG Harcharan Bhullar reached the resthouse and got the main gate unlocked. "The agitating public had locked the gate. We spoke to them, asked them to open the gate, and said they should not take the law into their own hands. He has now been allowed to go," Bhullar told the media. AAP MLA from Chamkaur Sahib, Dr Charanjit Singh, who was at the spot, said that locals from the district had gathered there as they were upset at water being released. Bains said that Tripathi was allowed to leave after an assurance that he would leave Punjab. "You can see how people are angry. The chairman was allowed to go after assurance by BBMB that he would leave Punjab," Bains said. Union minister Ravneet Singh Bittu on Thursday demanded that an FIR be registered against the Punjab CM Bhagwant Mann and Education Minister Harjot Bains for illegally detaining the government official and chairman of BBMB and acting against national interests.

"The country is going through tough period and the CM is worried about his media space," Bittu said. "BBMB chairman can go to his office or rest house... Will the chairman himself open or close the gates of the dam? Already the matter is pending in high court and Supreme Court, and already it is clearly said that not a single drop of water will



be given to any state... then why the Punjab CM and AAP are politicising the issue?" he asked. Bittu said BBMB chairperson Manoj Tripathi went to oversee the security of the dam because of the present situation (heightened tensions along the Indo-Pak border following Operation Sindoor). "Dams are the most vulnerable and if anything happens to the dam, Punjab will be the most affected... I have been MP from Sri Anandpur Sahib. I appeal to the people of Ropar to stop listening to the AAP leadership because they play divisive politics," Bittu added.

Punjab and Haryana have been squabbling over water, with Haryana seeking an additional 4,500 cusecs of water from Punjab, citing a shortage of drinking water. Already, 4,000 cusecs has been flowing to Haryana every day. Punjab, however, refused to release extra water, saying the neighbouring state had already exhausted its quota in March. Yet, it was being given 4,000 cusecs daily since April 3. The high court had directed Punjab to comply with the central government's decision to release additional water to Haryana, which was made during a meeting chaired by the Union home secretary on May 2. The Centre had asked BBMB to hold a meeting with both Haryana and Punjab and sort out the issue. It had also told Punjab to consider giving 4,500 cusecs of extra water to Haryana for drinking purposes, and the neighbouring state can return this water during the dam filling season. While both Punjab and Haryana called all-party meetings on the issue, Punjab decided that it would not give an extra drop to Haryana. After the May 2 meeting, the BBMB had called a meeting of partner states on May 3. Punjab, however, boycotted it, saying it was not legal and the BBMB needed to give seven days' notice before calling the meeting. On Monday, the Punjab Vidhan Sabha passed a resolution in a special session saying that it would not give a drop extra to Haryana. CM Mann announced on the floor of the House that water would not be given till May 20, when the yearly cycle of water comes to an end. He said that from the intervening night of May 20 and 21, they would release water to Haryana from their quota. On Wednesday, the high court sought a resolution of the matter immediately. After the high court direction, it is learnt that the issue was put up to the chief minister. He, however, did not take any decision and asked the officials concerned to defer it.

## Jaipur woman travels to Mumbai to kill 'lover' in hotel room, arrested after wording in 'suicide note' puts her in dock

GNS News Agency, May 12

The Dindoshi police Tuesday arrested a 44-year-old Jaipur woman who allegedly travelled to Mumbai, killed her "lover" in a Malad hotel room, put a misleading message on the family's WhatsApp group showing that he died by suicide, and then travelled back home the same night.

Barkat Rathod had allegedly been in an extramarital affair for the last two years with her husband's brother-in-law Imamuddin Ansari, a Malad-based interior decorator businessman living in Mira Road near Mumbai. The police said Barkat's husband left her after discovering her affair with Ansari and that she had been living with her mother at her place in Jaipur for the past two years. Barkat allegedly strangled Ansari in the Malad hotel room in Mumbai on May 4 and put out a message from his phone on the family WhatsApp group saying that he was taking the drastic step due to harassment from his wife, who suspected that there was an extramarital relationship between him and Barkat. The message further stated that there was no affair between them and that the allegations were merely rumours deliberately spread by Ansari's wife, the police said. Barkat then travelled to Surat and moved to her mother's place in Jaipur, said the police. After Ansari's family saw the message on the family WhatsApp group, they became suspicious about the language used as he was illiterate. The family subse-



quently informed the Naya Nagar police in Mira Road. After discovering that Ansari's mobile phone's last location was Malad in Mumbai, his 23-year-old son went there and started enquiring about him at nearby hotels, showing his photo. At the Shalimar hotel near the Malad railway station in Mumbai, a staffer identified Ansari as a guest who had checked in the hotel along with a burqa-clad woman. The staffer presented copies of the two Aadhaar cards submitted by Ansari and "his wife". Ansari's son identified the burqa-clad woman from the CCTV footage at the hotel as his relative Barkat, said the police.

## LG Electronics begins work on Rs 5,000-crore plant in Andhra Pradesh



GNS News Agency, May 12

Sri City (Andhra Pradesh): LG Electronics on Thursday began the construction work on its Rs 5,000-crore home appliance factory here, its third plant in India, as part of a broader push to strengthen its presence in one of the world's fastest-growing consumer markets. The South Korean giant's investment in the rising industrial corridor in Andhra Pradesh is the largest single stage electronics investment in South India.

Slated for completion by the end of 2026, the plant spread across 1 million square metres will roll out 8,00,000 refrigerators, 8,50,000 washing machines, 1.5 million air conditioners, and 2 million air conditioner compressors annually. A groundbreaking ceremony at the construction site was attended by Andhra Pradesh's Minister for Human Resources Development Nara Lokesh and senior LG Electronics India Ltd (LGEIL) officials, the company said in a statement. Production is expected to begin at the end of the next year, starting with air conditioners, followed by washing machines, refrigerators and compressors through 2029. The unit will be the Korean tech giant's third facility after existing factories at Noida, near Delhi, and Pune. Once the new site becomes operational, LG's combined annual capacity in India will rise to 2 million televisions, 3.6 million refrigerators, 3.75 million washing machines and 4.7 million air conditioners. It is the first large manufacturing complex to commence work under the new Andhra Pradesh government's electronics manufacturing policy. The Andhra Pradesh cabinet gave nod for the unit in November 2024 and work commenced in record time of less than 6 months. As many as four suppliers of LG Electronics are coming to India for the first time. They have also confirmed their investment of Rs 839 crore into the same area (Sri City premises). The government of Andhra Pradesh has provided 247 acres of land at Sri City to LGEIL for the new plant that is expected to generate around 1,900 direct and indirect jobs.

"We are delighted that LG Electronics has chosen Sri City for its third manufacturing facility in India. This is a testament of LG Electronics' commitment to India and I am confident that this expansion into Andhra Pradesh will ad-

dress the potential growth in demand for LG products across India," Naidu said.

The plant is expected to cover a site area of 1 million square metres, with a total floor area of 2,20,000 square metres. LGEIL's investment in this facility will be to the tune of USD 600 million (Rs 5,001 crore) over a period of four years and brings with it the potential to bring ancillaries to the region, thereby creating an ecosystem for white goods manufacturing in the State of Andhra Pradesh. Besides serving India's vast consumer base, the products from the Sri City factory will also be exported to neighbouring markets such as Bangladesh and countries across the Middle East. For the firm that entered the Indian market with its first plant in Noida in 1997, the Sri City plant marks a critical step in localising supply chains and scaling up output to meet soaring demand for modern home appliances among India's rapidly expanding middle class. As global companies reassess supply chains amid shifting geopolitical and economic currents, LG's investment also signals confidence in India's manufacturing infrastructure and its role as a production base for the broader region. India's current household penetration rate for washing machines is at 30 per cent and for air conditioners at just 10 per cent, suggesting major growth opportunities. The new facility will mainly produce high-end lines, such as French door refrigerators and front-loading washing machines. LG has already introduced India-specific models, such as convertible refrigerators tailored for vegetarian diets and washing machines with a dedicated cycle for traditional clothing like sarees. LG is looking to list its Indian unit, in a bid to tap into the country's bustling capital market. The IPO, which was valued at around Rs 15,000 crore, was initially expected to be in May, but has been delayed due to market volatility sparked by the US tariff uncertainty.

Earlier on December 6, 2024, LG Electronics India Ltd, a subsidiary of the South Korean chaebol LG, had filed preliminary papers with Sebi for an initial public offering, wherein the parent company will sell over 10.18 crore shares amounting to 15 per cent stake. The proposed IPO is entirely an offer-for-sale (OFS) of 10.18 crore equity shares by promoter LG Electronics Inc with no fresh issue component, according to the draft red herring prospectus (DRHP). Its South Korean parent company LG Electronics Inc will sell 10,18,15,859 equity shares of face value of Rs 10 each, according to the DRHP. Since the public issue is completely an OFS, LG Electronics India will not receive any IPO proceeds. The funds raised will go to the South Korean parent. LG Electronics India is a leading player in major home appliances and consumer electronics. The company's products are sold to both B2C (business-to-consumer) and B2B (Business-to-Business) customers in India and internationally. It also provides installation, repair, and maintenance services for all its products. LG Electronics India's revenue from operations was Rs 64,087.97 crore for the financial year ended March 31, 2024.

## 'This is unsustainable': Delhi irrigation department contractors protest 2-year payment delay

GNS News Agency, May 12

Scores of contractors associated with Delhi's Irrigation and Flood Control (I&FC) Department staged a protest at the LM Bunder office complex in Shastri Nagar Wednesday, demanding immediate payment of dues pending for nearly two years. Organised under the banner of the Delhi Region I&FC Contractors Awareness Association, the protest was led by association president Arun Sharma. Protesters alleged that despite completing departmental works, they have not been paid for over 24 months. They also claimed that the department continues to push contractors to undertake new assignments without settling existing bills. "This is unsustainable. The department forces us to pursue work without payment," said association president Tinu Sharma, who added that thousands of labourers depend on timely contractor payments for their livelihoods. A senior I&FC official responded to the protest, assuring that pending payments would be processed within a week. However, trust among contractors remains low. The department, which plays a crucial role in maintaining Delhi's stormwater drainage and flood-prevention infrastructure, had earlier issued a circular stating that the timely release of salaries to contractual workers is under active monitoring by the chief secretary. It also said that officials of ISCIL, the agency responsible for disbursing payments, have been sensitised to ensure timely salary release. However, ISCIL claimed delays were due to non-receipt of staff attendance from re-



spective divisions.

All 24 of Delhi's major drains that outflow into the Yamuna river come under the Irrigation Department. A contractor said the work stoppage by contractual employees can disrupt the pre-monsoon desilting and flood-preparedness projects. On April 8, 2024, the Delhi High Court directed the Delhi government to ensure that desilting of the drains was completed by December, with the desilting of the Najafgarh drain to be completed by June 30, 2025. Following this, during the 17th meeting of the Integrated Drain Management Cell, it was decided that the responsibility for all the open drains, which open into Yamuna, be handed over to the Irrigation Department.

## 'One of the last remaining spaces of hope': Ex-CJI N V Ramana says 'unwarranted attacks' on judiciary impact people's trust

GNS News Agency, May 12

The judiciary is "one of the last remaining spaces of hope for the common man," former Chief Justice of India N V Ramana said on Wednesday, adding that "unwarranted attacks on this institution affect the very foundation of people's trust". Justice (retd) Ramana made the remarks while speaking at the release of his book titled Narratives off the Bench — A Judge Speaks, a compilation of his speeches, at the Delhi High Court. When the rank and file of the judiciary are assured that the highest judicial institution stands firm to safeguard their rights and redress their grievances, they are less likely to seek support from other sources such as political and executive powers," he said. "As elder brothers and sisters in the judicial family, the honourable judges of the Supreme Court have a moral and institutional duty to look after all the judges of the country... the SC must ensure that the judges feel supported and secure in their roles. The higher judiciary must lead with care and compassion while nurturing a judicial culture rooted in dignity, integrity, and solidarity," he added. CJI-designate B R Gavai and Justices Vikram Nath and Surya Kant were also present at the book release function.

Justice Kant emphasised that public engagements by judges reinforce judicial accountability and shape and influence public opinion. "When judges share their insights and opinions in public forums, they perform a vital democratic function. From the dais, they demystify the law, however, in public forums or public engagements, judges actually engage with the public on their concerns and pressing issues that may not have reached the courtrooms, but which



still impact the entire nation. In these moments, the public sees them not only as arbiters of disputes but as the true custodians of the Constitution," Justice Kant said. Emphasising the need for such public engagement, Justice Kant added, "Public engagement by judges reinforces judicial accountability. The challenges confronting our judicial system — from case backlogs to infrastructure deficiencies — are not abstract policy concerns, they are real problems which impact the daily lives of our citizens. When judges speak candidly about these systemic hurdles, their voices lend weight to the calls for reform, their voices inspire action, not only in the legal community but across the border and larger fabric of the society." "The old adage that 'judges speak only through their judgments', in my opinion, is perhaps only partially true in today's world... speaking about issues such as the value of education, judicial reforms and rights of marginalised communities, judges can pave the way for change in societal outlook.



# How an orange scarf led Mumbai police to garment factory employee who raped and killed teenage coworker in 2010



, a 19-year-old woman, who worked at a garment factory unit in Mumbai, volunteered to participate in a polio drive on her day off from work. She left home around 9 am and returned at 5 pm, and left again within a few hours. Around 10.30 pm, her brother and father, with whom she lived, called her on her mobile phone, but it was switched off.They began looking for her and went to her factory but found the unit locked. They approached the police the next day. Around the same time, workers at the unit reached the factory one by one but found the place locked. They eventually called a keymaker who opened the door, and they found the teenager’s body.

The workers found an orange gamcha (cotton scarf), a green and white dupatta and a string tightened around her neck. They alerted the police and the girl’s family members. The workers identified the gamcha to be that of their coworker who lived in the unit after working hours.They also tried to contact him when they found the room locked, as he usually opened the doors. But his phone remained switched off. The police then began looking for the man. Based on call data records and his cell phone location, the police traced him to his village in Uttar Pradesh and arrested him.During the trial before a Mumbai sessions court, the accused claimed he was falsely implicated, was on leave, and was not present in the room. He raised doubts over the evidence submitted by the police and claimed that there was a delay in recording the statement of a witness who claimed to have last seen the accused and victim together on the day of the crime.The court based its decision on witness statements and circumstantial evidence. It emphasised the fact that the accused left the city on the Kushinagar Express from Lokmanya Tilak Terminus (LTT) to Kanpur, which departs at 11.45 pm. The court noted that police investigations revealed he purchased the tickets at 11.19 pm and could not satisfactorily explain why he hurriedly left the city.While the defence claimed that it was not possible to have murdered the victim and reach LTT, the court said that the murder had taken place between 8 pm and 10 pm, leaving enough time for the accused to take a train to LTT.

# IIM-Mumbai, CAG offers short course on capacity building programme on Oil and Gas supply chain auditing

IIM Mumbai partners with CAG office to host capacity building programme on Oil and Gas supply chain auditingThe programme brings together over 30 government auditors from across the country and also features sessions led by academic and industry experts. The Indian Institute of Management (IIM) Mumbai, in collaboration with the Office of the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) of India, flagged off ‘Auditing Lens: Oil & Gas Sector’, a week-long capacity building programme focused on auditing inventory, logistics, and supply chain management in the oil and gas sector.The programme aims to strengthen institutional expertise in auditing logistics and supply chain systems within the oil and gas sector, one of India’s most critical sectors. It brings together over 30 government auditors from across the country and also features sessions led by academic and industry experts.



played a key role in shaping its curriculum, ensuring a rigorous and relevant academic framework. Shri Vijay Kothari, Principal Director of Audit (Shipping), was also instrumental in curating the programme with precision and sectoral relevance.The inaugural day saw participation from esteemed dignitaries and expert faculty. The first day of sessions included a lecture by Prof. Tiwari on oil and gas value chain, focusing on logistics complexities and key audit touchpoints.This was followed by an address from Deepak Shetty, IRS (Retd.), Former Director General of Shipping, who provided global insights into maritime trade regulations, port logistics, and audit considerations in international shipping.

# ‘Ready for emergencies’: Kolkata airport on alert, officials ask passengers to verify flight status after 12 flights get cancelled in 24 hours



After the temporary closure of 18 airports across seven states in India after a recent airstrike on a Pakistan terrorist setup, authorities at Kolkata’s Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose International Airport are urging passengers to verify their flight status before heading to the airport. 12 flights were cancelled at the Kolkata airport, comprising six departures and six arrivals. Affected flights included IX 1522 from

Ghaziabad, BS 0202 from Dhaka, BS 0208 from Chattogram, 6E 0874 from Chandigarh, and IX 2509 from Srinagar, among others.Despite these cancellations, the airport did not report any significant chaos or large crowds.

“Flights have been cancelled. We conducted a mock drill yesterday (Wednesday). We are totally prepared. Our airport security is in place and ready to handle emergency situations,” Kolkata Airport Director Dr Pravat Ranjan Beuria told Meanwhile, the Travel Agents Federation Of India (TAFI) has issued a travel advisory in light of the recent developments. The advisory acknowledges flight schedule disruptions caused by temporary airport closures across the country and advises passengers to stay informed through official channels and exercise caution while planning or undertaking travel.The Federation also expressed solidarity with the armed forces and the government’s measures against cross-border terrorism.“Passengers are strongly recommended to follow government advisories and consult with their tour operators or travel coordinators for any safety-related concerns,” said Anil Punjabi, a National Committee member of TAFI.

# Fearing water shortage, PCMC announces emergency measures. Here’s what they are

The population of Pimpri Chinchwad has doubled from 17 lakh in 2011 to 35 lakh today, while the increase in water supply has been only 35 per cent.The population of Pimpri Chinchwad has doubled from 17 lakh in 2011 to 35 lakh today, while the increase in water supply has been only 35 per cent.



With the demand for drinking water rising and the threat of water scarcity looming large, the Pimpri Chinchwad Municipal Corporation (PCMC) on Thursday announced a series of urgent measures to ensure uninterrupted supply of potable water to citizens until the arrival of monsoon.“Considering the city’s growing population, the PCMC remains committed to supplying safe drinking water to all residents. Citizens must avoid water wastage, especially during the summer, and cooperate with the administration,” said Pradip Jambhale Patil, acting PCMC Commissioner.

Civic officials said current water reserves in the dam are only expected to last until July. Groundwater levels have dropped significantly, many borewells have dried up, and water tanker prices are soaring, officials further said, adding that inactive sewage treatment plants, rising unauthorised water connections, and the misuse of drink-

ing water for washing vehicles, etc, were adding to the problem.Urging citizens to use water judiciously until monsoon arrives, Ajay Suryawanshi, Joint City Engineer, PCMC, said, “Strict action will be taken against those wasting water or using it through unauthorised means.”The population of Pimpri Chinchwad has doubled from 17 lakh in 2011 to 35 lakh today, while the increase in water supply has been only 35 per cent.Despite this, the PCMC said, it has been consistently providing water throughout the year. However, due to unauthorised usage and high summer demand, the supply has been strained.

# The 1971 War: When people vacated Fazilka in two hours



During the Bangladesh liberation war of 1971 when the Pakistan Army tried to establish a bridgehead in Fazilka to launch their Army Reserve South to capture Bathinda, nearly 30,000 residents vacated Fazilka town on bicycles, rickshaws, carts, buses and whatever mode of travel they could get within two hours of ensuing action by the Indian Army on the Indo-Pak border, recounted Swaran Singh Boparai, a Punjab cadre IAS officer who was posted as deputy commissioner of the border district of Ferozepur during the war, as people in some border villages of Ferozepur district on Wednesday begun moving to safer areas amid soaring tensions between India and Pakistan.

The Indian armed forces early Wednesday carried out missile strikes on nine terror targets in Pakistan and Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK), including the Jaish-e-Mohammad stronghold of Bahawalpur and Lashkar-e-Taiba’s base in Muridke. In the retaliatory action, Pakistan targeted the civilian population residing near the Line of Control, killing at least 11 people and leaving 40 injured.“Amazingly, they all packed their belongings in two hours and none of them was to be seen, except for 70 odd people who gathered at the Sadar police station,” said Boparai, who was conferred with the Padma Shri for his distinguished contribution to helping the Indian Army during the 1971 war.Boparai camped in Fazilka, then part of Ferozepur district, for three days during the Indian Army’s counteraction on the border despite the then Punjab chief secretary’s orders to return to the Ferozepur district headquarters. “I stayed put to help the Indian Army. I did not return. They feared an Indian DC would be a prized catch for the enemy.”

During the Indian Army’s counteraction against the Pakistan Army, which took over the Beriwalla bridge, GOC-in-charge Major General Ram Singh suffered three bullet

injuries. “We took him to the local hospital where he was operated upon. He was a brave man. After coming out of the operation theatre, he got up from the bed. The doctor asked him to lie down. But the officer told the doctor, ‘I followed your orders in the OT.’ He then left the hospital and went to the war zone, injured. He told me that it was important to boost the morale of his troops.”

As blackouts were ordered in the border districts of Punjab on Wednesday evening brought back memories of the 1971 war, Boparai, then a young IAS officer, recalled that blackouts were ordered from December 3 to 17, 1971. “The civilians were asked to switch off their lights or put thick and heavy curtains on the windows or cover them with blinds. This was done to prevent aircraft from passing over unloading ammunition,” he said.Noting that people are always advised to follow the government advisory, Boparai said, “It is not a favour that one is doing. It is a favour that one is doing to oneself. It is not for national security but for their own safety. I presume there will not be a war this time, but if the situation escalates, I advise people to follow the advisory. They can sit inside their homes and work, but follow the advisory.”

Boparai further recounted that he was unable to sleep for the first 36 hours. “I was running around day and night, and could sleep for only 1 hour and 30 minutes the next day. I am good at catching sleep. We were so tired, but had to manage with scant sleep. The SSP at that time told me that he didn’t sleep at all.”It was after his being at the forefront of the war zone, helping the Army, providing medical services, langar and other amenities by staying put at the Fazilka border that earned him the Padma Shri. “When I look back, I find it was a great time. India won the war. It was a great contribution of the Army. Those two days were very satisfying. The Army invited me for their 50th year celebrations of the 1971 war, and I participated.”Praising Punjabis, he said, “The way they are ready to help soldiers by providing them with all kinds of help, it is amazing. When one is fighting in Punjab, it becomes a cooperative movement. People are so cooperative and helpful.”The former IAS officer hailed the Indian armed forces’ “Operation Sindoor”, but hoped the situation would not escalate further. “A war is not in the interest of either of the two nations. I am not in favour of war. For us, it is not a good time to go to war. We have not made many good friends in the neighbourhood. Since both countries are nuclear powers, the cost of war will be too high for the region. It is in the interest of both countries that this does not turn into a full-fledged war.”

# ‘We can’t be divided as south or north cinema’: Karan Johar

“We are collectively making Indian cinema, and we can’t be divided as south or north cinema. We can’t be broken. We stand tall and we are together,” said director-producer Karan Johar on Thursday at WAVES 2025. He was moderating a panel discussion on ‘Cinema: The Soft Power’ which has actors Kareena Kapoor and Vijay Deverakonda as speakers.Talking about the integration of Indian cinema, Johar said, “The majestic crossover of south Indian cinema started with SS Rajamouli-directed Baahubali: The Beginning (2015).”



While Baahubali set the stage for Indians watching more and more south Indian language movies, Rajamouli’s RRR (2022) boosted global positioning of Indian cinema, stated the Khabhi Khushi Kabhie Gham director.Seconding that, Deverakonda said, “Today, actors and producers based in Mumbai and those working in south Indian industries share a close relationship. We should work together to increase distribution of cinema.”Speaking about the global impact of Indian films, Kapoor recounted how once a cab driver in London sang to her songs from the movies made by her grandfather, legendary Raj Kapoor, beautifully. “Films helped India build cultural relations,” she said.

Suggesting ways of consolidating the power of Indian cinema, Deverakonda said: “If we have to take on the giants of the world, we have to be united. The collection of Shah Rukh Khan’s Jawan (2023) crossed Rs 1,000 crore.

# State-of-art disaster control room coming in Pune, to play key role during attacks

disaster management control roomA dedicated team of 50 people will be deputed round the clock to keep a check on activities in the city through a large wall TV display having live feed from the CCTV installed across the city, the officer said. Pune city will soon have its own state-of-the-art disaster management control room for tackling any possible disasters, including situations arising from terrorist attacks or those from external elements, and ensuring public safety.The facility will be operational on the second floor of the Pune Municipal Corporation (PMC) main building within a few months.“The work on establishing the control room of the disaster management cell has already started and it will be completed in a couple of months. The state-of-the-art control room will improve the handling of disaster situations in the city,” said Ganesh Sonune, civic disaster management officer.The control room will be spread in a 7,400 sq feet area and would include a conference room, advanced control room, server room, advisory room and restrooms for staff along with latest telecommunication facilities, he said.A dedicated team of 50 people will be deputed round the clock to keep a check on activities in the city through a large wall TV display having live feed from the CCTV installed across the city, the officer said.The control room will also have a telecommunication system to take up citizen’s complaints and direct it to quick response teams for swift action.“The mock drill that was carried out in the city on Wednesday gave us a glimpse of the operations. The disaster management cell plays the most crucial role of coordinating between various agencies for fast rescue operations. The civil defence officers have advised us to introduce additional features for more efficient functioning of the disaster management cell and effective outcome,” he said.The control room designed on the lines of the one set up by the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) will help in handling any situation of terrorist attack or attack from outside forces, fire incidents, flooding, earthquake, accidents or any other disaster situation, Sonune said.Rashmee Lokhande, Chief Officer of Disaster Management Department of BMC, said that their control room has been effective during many situations, including Mumbai terrorist attacks, flood situations and other disasters.“The



PMC approached us to set up a state-of-art disaster management control room and we have provided them with all possible guidance. This will help them handle situations effectively in time of need in Pune,” she said.The BMC control room has two different telecommunication systems as an alternative, Hotline to authorities concerned, faster internet connectivity, TV wall with live feed of CCTV installed and plan to procure satellite phones.

# UNIX launches drake tower speaker for home entertainment, priced at Rs 6,000

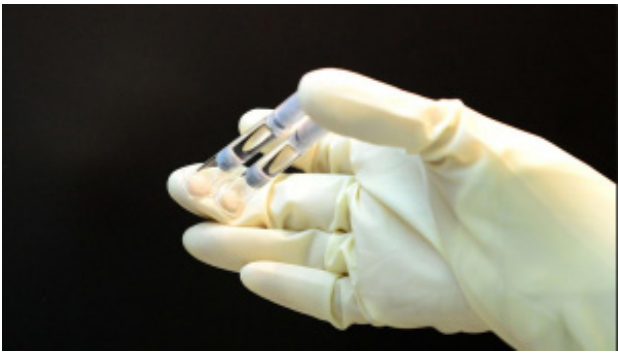
Hyderabad: UNIX, one of the top Indian homegrown tech brands, launched the Drake Tower Speaker, which stands as a cutting-edge addition to the audio portfolio. Priced at Rs. 6,000, this speaker entertains the thought of home entertainment and is presently available on the UNIX India website and all prominent retail outlets of the country.The Drake Tower Speaker balances performance and style, supplied with 60W of RMS power output from a disciplined 5.25-inch subwoofer. Casts of deep-thirty sound and engrossing impressions suitable for parties, movie nights, or mellow casual listening.







# Biosimilars and the need for a policy prescription



To understand the class of drugs known as biosimilars, it is first necessary to understand the class of drugs described as biologics. Traditionally, biologics were derived through natural processes from living organisms. For example, one of the earliest biological drugs dating back to the 19th century was the anti-diphtheria serum, which was manufactured from the serum extracted from horses that contained antibodies to the disease. The biotechnology revolution spurred by the invention of gene-splicing technology by Cohen-Boyer opened the door for the creation of more effective biologicals like trastuzumab, which revolutionised the treatment of a specific type of breast cancer by targeting cancerous cells. The more recent biologicals, starting with trastuzumab, typically contain monoclonal antibodies which are manufactured in the cells of genetically-modified organisms. These monoclonal antibodies are adapted with the help of biotechnology to target specific types of cells associated with cancer or other diseases for which these drugs are developed. Given the complexity of developing and manufacturing biologicals, especially monoclonal antibodies, it is no surprise that biologicals are astronomically priced. Countries around the world have been keen to ensure more competition in the market by allowing competitors to manufacture and market copies of biologicals. These copies are called biosimilars. There is plenty of empirical evidence demonstrating that increased competition in the case of small molecule drugs leads to significant price erosion, thereby improving accessibility and reducing costs to patients. These small-molecule drugs, unlike biologicals, are not manufactured in living organisms and therefore, it is easier to control their manufacturing process. Countries like India have an abundance of talent with the skills to reverse-engineer these drugs to manufacture generic copies of novel small molecule drugs (for e.g. paracetamol) leading to more competition and reduced prices. Replicating the success story of generic small molecule drugs in India will be tougher in the context of biosimilars for many reasons. To begin with, competitors who do not have access to the original cell lines of the innovator have to develop their own. This is far more complicated than reverse-engineering small molecule drugs. Given the uncertainty associated with the manufacture of biosimilars, the legal requirements to secure regulatory approval are more complicated and expensive than they are for small molecule drugs. A competitor seeking to introduce a generic version of a small molecule drug can avoid replicating clinical trials in virtually all jurisdictions as long as they can submit proof of bioequivalence, for which data can be generated through relatively inexpensive bioavailability studies. However, in the case of biosimilars, because of the science involved, competitors have to repeat clinical trials for their product to prove safety

and efficacy. This can be an expensive exercise. The cost, uncertainty and risk associated with clinical trials will typically be reflected in the cost of a biosimilar. Combine this with the fact that only a few companies have the capability to develop biosimilars — it is unlikely that any country will see the same degree of price erosion as was the case with small molecule generics.

Given these complexities surrounding the regulation and pricing of biosimilars, it is vital that countries put in place well thought-out policies with the twin objectives of first, building the confidence of the medical community in the safety and efficacy of biosimilars and second, towards ensuring greater competition. Unfortunately, that has not been the case with India. Countries such as the United States have been debating and legislating on this issue for more than a decade now, with laws such as The Biologics Price Competition and Innovation Act which was enacted in 2009. In India, however, for a little over a decade now, since Indian pharmaceutical companies first began introducing biosimilars into the Indian market, there have been several controversies related to the regulatory process for the approval of biosimilars. For example, in 2015, an Indian manufacturer of a biosimilar for Razumab, used to treat macular degeneration, had to recall the biosimilar from the market after doctors prescribing the drug reported that it caused serious adverse events amongst some patients. The issue received barely any attention from the Indian media and the Indian drug regulator was, as usual, opaque in its handling of the issue. To date, there has been no clarity on what went wrong with that biosimilar. Equally worrying have been tactics used by Swiss pharmaceutical company, Hoffmann La Roche, which has litigated extensively against Indian pharmaceutical companies introducing biosimilars that are copies of Roche's products. Breaking from the usual strategy of suing for patent infringement, Roche has complained to the drug regulator about the safety and efficacy of biosimilars – these complaints were then amplified by the press and likely undermined the credibility of the biosimilars in question. The Indian drug regulator has done little to rebut the issues raised by Roche, despite the fact that these biosimilars have been approved by the regulator. On another occasion, Roche sued Indian pharmaceutical companies launching biosimilars for its blockbuster drug Herceptin for breast cancer, claiming misrepresentations about their biosimilars being as effective as Roche's drug. This, despite the fact that the competing biosimilars had been approved by the drug regulator. These scare tactics likely impacted the credibility of the biosimilars in the eyes of doctors who prescribe these drugs. At the core of the problem is the fact that India does not have a well thought-out regulatory law for biosimilars. As of today, biosimilars are approved under certain guidelines formulated by the drug regulator and the Department of Biotechnology, except that these non-binding guidelines do not have the force of the law. Even if these guidelines were backed by the force of law, the situation would not be remedied because these guidelines are poorly drafted. Law aside, there are also doubts about whether the Indian drug regulator has the expertise and the technical capabilities to regulate the exceptionally complicated biotech sector. It is crucial that the government gives this issue urgent attention because in a country like India, where much of healthcare costs are met out of pocket, the cost of medicine has a direct impact on the accessibility of medicine.

# The 9 terror camps in Pakistan, PoK, struck in Operation Sindoor

Two weeks after Pakistani terrorists gunned down 26 civilians near Pahalgam in Jammu & Kashmir, India responded on Wednesday (May 7) with airstrikes on nine locations in Pakistan and Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK). Codenamed Operation Sindoor, these strikes targeted the terrorist infrastructure across the border and the Line of Control (LoC).“Over the last three decades, Pakistan has systematically built terror infrastructure. It is a complex web of recruitment and indoctrination centres, training areas for initial and refresh of courses, and launch pads for handlers,” Wg Cdr Vyomika Singh said during a press briefing on Wednesday morning. The targets were chosen “based on credible intelligence inputs” and so as to “avoid damage to civilian infrastructure and loss of any civilian lives”, Singh said.

The Markaz Taiba in Muridke in Pakistan's Punjab province is the headquarters of the Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT), and its front, the Jamaat-ud-Dawa (JuD). Besides being a site of training and recruitment, the sprawling 200-acre campus serves as the ideological nerve centre of the LeT. It is here that all key terror attacks of the Lashkar are planned and directed, sources said. The facility lies 18-25 km away from the international border (IB), the Army said on Wednesday, adding that terrorists involved in the 2008 Mumbai attacks — including Ajmal Kasab and David Headley — were trained here. The Markaz Taiba, as it stands today, was set up in 2000, with Osama bin Laden providing a Rs 1 crore donation for a mosque and a guest house within the campus. The complex includes multiple mosques, residential complexes (including the residence of LeT chief Hafiz Muhammad Saeed), schools, medical facilities, and farmland.

This camp in Pakistan Occupied Kashmir (PoK) is located 30 km from the LoC, and is the LeT's most important training centre. The Army said on Wednesday that the terrorists behind the attacks in Sonmarg and Gulmarg last October, and Pahalgam on April 22, were trained here. The name of this camp also came up after the 2000 Red Fort attack. According to sources in the security establishment, the camp emerged in the 1990s, at the height of the militancy in Jammu & Kashmir. It has provided combat and weapons training, instruction in survival tactics and guerrilla warfare strategies, and ideological indoctrination to many LeT recruits over the years. Under international pressure, the Sawai Nala camp was very briefly shut down following the 9/11 and 26/11 terror attacks. In recent times, several terrorists caught while infiltrating into J&K have named this camp as a location where they received training.

OPERATION SINDOOR, Army strikes, Army strikes in Pakistan, Army strikes Pakistan terror sites, Indian army, Army strikes PoK, Pakistan-occupied Kashmir, Pahalgam attack, Pahalgam terror attack, Pahalgam terrorist attack, Pahalgam terrorists, Indian army, india pakistan ties, india pakistan tensions, article 370, Indian army, Abrogation of Article 370, terrorism, terrorist attack, Kashmir attack, Jammu and Kashmir terrorist attack, Jammu and Kashmir, cross-border infiltration, border security, border infiltration, Pahalgam attack, Pahalgam terror attack, Pahalgam terrorist attack, Pahalgam terrorists, Indian army, india pakistan ties, india pakistan tensions, article 370, Indian army, Abrogation of Article 370, terrorism, terrorist attack,



Kashmir attack, Jammu and Kashmir terrorist attack, Jammu and Kashmir, cross-border infiltration, border security, border infiltration, Indian express news, current affairs A building in Muzaffarabad, PoK turned to rubble by Indian missile strikes.

3. Syedna Bilal camp, Muzaffarabad
- The Indian Army said on Wednesday that this camp was the main staging area for the Jaish-e-Mohammed in PoK, and served as a centre for weapons, explosives, and jungle-survival training. It is located on the Neelum river opposite the Red Fort in Muzaffarabad. Intelligence sources said the camp is suspected to have come in the late 1990s or early 2000s, and that apart from JeM recruits, LeT fighters, too, are trained here. Photographs retrieved from the phones of killed JeM terrorists have indicated that the Pakistani special forces, the Special Service Group, provide training to the terrorist recruits at this site.
4. Barnala camp, Bhimber
- Located 9 km from the LoC in PoK, this is a training centre for weapons handling, assembling IEDs, and jungle-survival, the Army said on Wednesday. Security sources said the camp came up in the 1990s, and is used by both the LeT and the JeM terrorist groups. Sources said the camp specialised in preparing militants for mountainous and forested terrains which they would have to reckon with while infiltrating into J&K. Its close proximity to the LoC also makes the Barnala camp a useful launchpad for terrorists looking to cross into J&K, or for smuggling operations.
5. Abbas camp, Kotli
- The Army said on Wednesday that the camp, located 13 km from the LoC in PoK and only 2 km from the Kotli military camp, is used to prepare fidayeen fighters — suicide attackers — for the JeM. Sources in the security establishment said this camp too came up in the 1990s. It provides close-quarters battle (CQB) training, breaching and hostage-taking drills, and indoctrination focusing on martyrdom (shahadat) missions. The camp's name has come in various terror attacks including the one on the J&K Assembly in 2001, and on the Army brigade headquarters in Uri in 2016.6. Sarjal camp, Narowal

This camp lies 6 km away from the IB in Pakistan's Punjab province. The Army said the terrorists who killed four J&K police personnel in March 2025 in Kathua, Jammu, were trained here. Located inside the premises of a primary health centre in Sarjal village near Sialkot, the camp was established in the late 1990s.

# Innovation, as a solution to the growing crisis of antimicrobial resistance



Antimicrobial resistance (AMR) is an escalating public health crisis with the potential to undermine the effectiveness of current antibiotics, leading to longer hospital stays, more intensive care, and higher mortality rates. To address AMR, we must recognise that it is a multifaceted issue influenced by various sectors such as human health, animal husbandry, agriculture, and environmental factors. While the challenge is immense, innovation in both technology and strategy holds the key to mitigating this global health threat.

Understanding the complexity of AMR is not simply the result of overprescribing antibiotics in hospitals. It stems from numerous factors that include irrational antibiotic use in humans, animals and in agriculture. Inappropriate prescriptions, the use of antibiotics in animal feed for growth promotion and agricultural practices that encourage the use of antibiotics contribute significantly to the development of resistant pathogens. Once resistance develops, these microbes can spread rapidly, especially in healthcare settings where infection prevention measures may be inadequate. Sanitation and infection control in hospitals are also critical to reducing the spread of resistant bacteria. Inadequate sanitation in communities, especially in low-income areas, further fuels the problem by allowing resistant pathogens to proliferate and spread. Socio-economic factors such as poverty, lack of clean water, and insufficient access to healthcare exacerbate the issue, making it a complex, multifactorial challenge.

Given the complexity of AMR, addressing it requires more than just conventional strategies. Innovation plays a central role in tackling this global challenge, not only through new devices but also by developing new approaches to influence behaviour and improve systems. One of the most important areas where innovation can make a difference is in antibiotic stewardship. Ensuring rational antibiotic use in hospitals is critical to prevent the development of AMR. Technology can support healthcare providers with real-time data to guide antibiotic prescriptions and reduce unnecessary use. AI-powered decision support systems and digital health tools are increasingly being developed to assist clinicians in selecting the appropriate antibiotic, determining the correct dosage and setting the right treatment duration. These innovations enable healthcare providers to make informed decisions that minimise the risk of resistance and ensure that antibiotics are used only when absolutely necessary. In addition to technological innovations, behavioural innovations are essential in the fight against AMR. Prescrib-

ers often face significant challenges in convincing patients to limit their demand for antibiotics, particularly when it comes to conditions like the common cold or flu, where antibiotics are ineffective. Public health campaigns and education programmes that raise awareness about the dangers of unnecessary antibiotic use can help shift public perception. By empowering patients to understand that antibiotics are not always the answer, and encouraging prescribers to resist pressure to overprescribe, we can foster a culture of responsibility in both the prescribing and consuming of antibiotics. Innovations in diagnostics and vaccines

In addition to improving antibiotic stewardship, innovations in rapid diagnostics and vaccines are crucial in the battle against AMR. Rapid point-of-care diagnostic tools can help clinicians quickly identify the pathogen causing an infection and determine its antibiotic resistance profile. By providing immediate insights into the specific infection, these diagnostic tools allow for targeted treatments, reducing the use of broad-spectrum antibiotics and minimising the risk of resistance. These diagnostic innovations are particularly important in resource-limited settings where access to laboratories and timely test results may be restricted. Along with diagnostics, the development of new vaccines can help prevent infections that often lead to the unnecessary use of antibiotics. Vaccines reduce the incidence of infections such as pneumonia, diarrhoea, and certain types of urinary tract infections, thereby reducing the need for antibiotics. Innovative vaccines can also target antibiotic-resistant pathogens, further contributing to the reduction of AMR. Over the past two decades, my perspective on AMR has evolved significantly. Initially, I focused on policy changes, regulations, and stewardship programmes. However, through my work with the Longitude Prize, I came to realise that innovation is the true catalyst for change. While policies and regulations are important, they often face slow implementation and resistance. It is innovation that disrupts the status quo, providing practical, scalable solutions to complex challenges like AMR.

India, with its massive population, diverse healthcare infrastructure and socio-economic challenges, faces unique hurdles in combating AMR. However, the country's sheer scale presents it with an opportunity to become a leader in AMR innovation. India has more than one million doctors, hundreds of thousands of pharmacies, and a large number of hospitals. The government's commitment to addressing AMR through policy frameworks like the National Action Plan on AMR is commendable, but effective implementation requires innovation in healthcare practices, sanitation, and technology. The Chennai Declaration on AMR has already made significant strides in raising awareness and engaging stakeholders from across sectors. However, to truly tackle AMR in India, we must integrate innovation at every level — be it in the development of new antibiotics, diagnostics, vaccines, or sanitation technologies. India has the potential to become a global leader in the fight against AMR by prioritising innovation in both policy and practice. The path forward in combating AMR involves embracing a multi-pronged approach that integrates technological innovation, behavioural change, improved infection control practices, and better sanitation. By fostering a culture of innovation — at all levels of healthcare, governance, and society — India can make significant strides in mitigating the impact of AMR. India's leadership in the global fight against AMR will depend on how well we harness the power of innovation. With the right policies, infrastructure and support for entrepreneurs, India can set an example for the world in the fight against one of the most significant public health

# Edinburgh to Ernakulum: Strategies for wooing investors

Through “Global Investor Meets”, State governments compete with each other every year to show-case themselves before the investor community and the elite, thereby giving the indication that employment promotion through new investments stands out as their policy plank. In the early part of the present century, the economic cold war between Gujarat and Maharashtra led to a search for new strategies of attracting investments. In 2003, the then Chief Minister of Gujarat, Narendra Modi, came up with the idea of ‘Vibrant Gujarat’ as an experimental project, offering a meeting place for potential investors. Various State governments including Kerala, Tamil Nadu and Punjab followed the path. Today, most States in the country organise “Investor Meets” periodically.

The Department of Economic Affairs (DEA), Ministry of Finance, has been conducting various road shows and investor meetings within and outside India, with a view of providing sufficient clarity to potential investors and to improve their interests for participating in India's growth story. The Ministry has created a common service point to help the initiatives by the States as well. Besides, as part of the “Start-up India” and “Make in India” programmes, such meets have been supported by the DPIIT. Hence, beyond the political vision and programme of the States concerned, such Meets are part of a national agenda of investor facilitation. While today State governments organise ‘Investor Meets’ on a regular basis, and make competitive claims on their positive outcomes, an enquiry into global practices would be educative and useful.

Historically, I can trace it back to the history of the ‘Business Birth rate Strategy’ (BBRS) that was implemented in Scotland in the 1990s. The BBRS was started with an over-arching aim of making Scotland one of the most entrepreneurial destinations in the world. It had the specific objective to close the start-up gap with the southeast of England. While only one percent of people in Scotland were committed to starting a business, it was 4% in the south of England. The Scottish experiment was often criticized those days as “wasting public money”. Despite all such criticism, the strength and contribution of the BBRS was the ‘campaign mode’ under which it was implemented, and its ability to mobilize all major stakeholders such as leading universities, industry associations, promotional agencies, media, and financial Institutions under a single umbrella that was set up by a powerful nodal agency, the Scottish Enterprise, in 1994. Subsequently, when in 2016 the Industries & Commerce Department of the Government of Kerala approached me requesting a comprehensive study on the investment scene in the State, I had no hesitation to recommend a “campaign mode” intervention in the State, on lines of the Scottish Model.

Development of entrepreneurship and MSMEs is a state subject in India. Therefore, the national policy regime has only a restricted role and background. Though the States are expected to make good use of such a background, this does not often happen. Rather than creating regional success stories to be show cased at the national level, the States often compete against each other in favour of national rankings and fund flows. The results accruing from



State level efforts need to be scientifically understood at the national level, as each State is a stakeholder at the national level in the development process. This is the rationale for national level ranking of States, originally done under the ‘Ease of Doing Business’ (EoDB) ranking, and subsequently under the new regime of the Business Reforms Action Plan (BRAP). These rankings are based on the value of an index; it can act as an information tool at the national level, but it does not tell the full story. Available literature shows that, in the race to become topper at the national level ranking, various State governments follow their beaten-track strategies, neatly repacked. Yet despite their drawbacks, such rankings act as a method for reputational incentivisation that has a crucial role in a democratic federal system. Index numbers, while useful for tracking trends, have limitations, considering the qualitative aspects of the variables chosen. Therefore, they can, at best, be used as approximate indicators rather than as precise measures.

Ultimately, market-friendliness is the acid test of investment resilience and the sustainability of individual States. Public policy interventions, such as Investor Meets, need to be contributory and supportive to creation of such a market-friendly environment. An analysis based on ‘Udyam’ data shows, such a reasonable balance in seen in the case of States such as Gujarat, Telangana, Odisha, Punjab, Kerala and Uttaranchal. The demand for business-centric reforms often arise from an elite business community.

Their interests are often not representative of that of the larger electorate. This conflict of interests is obviously the ground for corruption and unfair business practices. Investment promotion, in essence, means private sector development. Private sector development means fostering a vibrant and fair market system that creates economic opportunities and drives sustainable growth. This essentially means sound economic governance, for which a country like India still has to travel a lot. In developing and emerging economies, a necessary first step is a ‘rights-based approach’, which holds institutions and powerful people accountable for their responsibilities to those with less power. Such an approach differs from a ‘needs-based’ or ‘welfare’ approach that create dependency on development agencies. For this to happen, there need to be new reforms and legislations that can add value to every subsequent Investor Meet. This will help to enhance investor confidence and foster genuine competition between States.



# Study relates stroke risk with mental ability



Lower abilities of concentration and learning during childhood and teenage could be related to a tripling of risk of having a stroke before turning 50, according to a research.

While lower mental abilities have been linked to higher risks of developing cardiovascular and metabolic diseases, researchers said that evidence in this regard is inconsistent. The latest findings are published in the Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health. In their analysis, the team of researchers, including those from Hebrew University, used data of over 17.4 lakh young Israelis — aged between 16 to 20 years — taken as part of an evaluation before they began military service. This data included weight, blood pressure, diabetic status and other factors, such as education, socioeconomic background and mental ability, including concentration, reasoning and problem solving.

Recorded between 1987 and 2012, the data from military evaluation was compared with those from the Israeli national stroke database, mandatory reporting for which began in 2014. Up until 2018, an individual's first stroke or death, whichever came first, was used for analysis.

Among the participants with low to medium mental ability (IQ scores up to 118), stroke cases were found to be more common, with these individuals facing a 2.5 times higher risk of experiencing a stroke before turning 50 years old, compared to those with higher mental abilities (IQ scores above 118). Of the total 908 stroke cases recorded between 2014-2018, 767 were caused by a blood clot (ischaemic stroke), 41 per cent of which were found to have occurred before turning 40 years of age. The researchers found that among these 767 ischaemic stroke cases, the risk was almost double in the participants with medium mental ability and over three times higher in those with low mental abilities during their teenage. Further, the authors found that the risk of stroke heightened by 33 per cent for every one unit drop of mental ability on a scale of 1-9 developed by them.

A score of 1-3 corresponded to an IQ below 89 (low), 4-7 to IQ 90-118 (medium), and 8-9 to IQ above 118 (high), according to the scale developed by the researchers. Even as no cause-and-effect relationships were established, they suggested that mental ability (or cognitive function) could serve to identify people at a higher risk of getting a stroke, thereby delaying disability and death. "Provision of early social and health support for individuals with lower cognitive function might be essential for mitigating their elevated risk," the authors wrote.

# Jaideep Ahlawat sheds 8-9 kilos in a month for ‘Maharaj’: Is rapid weight loss really safe?



Actor Jaideep Ahlawat recently revealed his impressive weight loss journey for Maharaj, shedding from 109.7 kg to 83 kg in just five months. Speaking with Netflix India, Ahlawat said he lost 8-9 kg in the first month alone, under the guidance of fitness coach Prajwal Shetty. "Within a month, I lost almost 8-9 kilos. But it was very painful. He has videos of me where I am crying," the actor told the streaming platform. To understand the health implications of such rapid weight loss, and the precautions one should take, indianexpress.com spoke to clinical experts.

What happens when you lose weight drastically?

According to Sampada Shinde, clinical nutritionist and certified diabetes educator, shedding eight to 10 kg in a month is considered rapid weight loss, which can strain the body even with a proper workout regimen and diet. "Rapid weight loss can result in deficiencies of essential vitamins and minerals, as some food groups are completely eliminated from calorie-restricted diets," she said. This drastic reduction in food intake can also impact mood, hunger hormones, sleep patterns, and stress levels due to nutrient deficiencies and calorie restrictions, Shinde explained, noting that it may compromise immunity and increase susceptibility to infections. Anushree Sharma, a registered dietitian at Health1 hospitals in Ahmedabad, said, "Such quick

weight loss is often seen in patients practicing water fasting or on very low-calorie diets, which are insufficient for normal bodily functions." She warned that rapid weight fluctuations can lead to gallstones and loss of muscle proteins if heavy exercises aren't complemented by a proper diet. Patients may get results but could face issues like dull skin and hair fall later due to deficiency of micronutrients, she said. What is the ideal weight one should lose in a month?

Sharma recommended that patients may aim to lose two to three kg per month. Shinde suggested that a healthy target for weight loss is 0.5 to 1 kg per week, leading to approximately two to four kg of weight loss per month, depending on individual diet and lifestyle factors.

What's the safest way to go about it? For rapid weight loss, Sharma advised seeking guidance from a qualified dietitian to manage portion sizes of meals while ensuring nutrient adequacy in the diet. "Effective weight loss requires a holistic approach that includes proper diet, exercise, stress management, and adequate sleep," Sharma emphasised. Shinde stressed the importance of a balanced, nutrient-rich diet comprising whole grains, pulses, vegetables, fruits, lean proteins, and healthy fats. "Regular exercise of at least 30 minutes daily should be a priority. Combining exercise with diet supports optimal fat loss and muscle development," she recommended.

# Online guide faces flak for listing Indian foods like jaljeera, aloo baingan, upma, and more as ‘worst-rated’: ‘Far away from reality’

Indians love their food, with its enormous variety distinguishing it from other cuisines. Recently, an experiential online guide, Taste Atlas, sparked controversy by ranking 10 popular Indian foods and drinks as "worst-rated" — gajak, jaljeera, coconut rice, panta bhat, thandai, achappam, mirchi ka salan, malpua, upma, and aloo baingan. The ratings range from 2.7 to 3.2 stars. This is the second time in a row aloo baingan has been rated the worst. In January 2024, aloo baingan or brinjal-potato combination found itself among the world's 100 worst-rated foods. Former Rashtrapati Bhavan chef Montu Saini told indianexpress.com that he "completely disagrees" with the list and called it "far away from reality". "What was the sample size considered to draw such an outcome? Who all voted? How many of them were vegetarian/non-vegetarian? I disagree with this outcome.



You can't generalise with this," said Saini. One user wrote, "Unfortunately this list is negligence max. All of our heirloom recipes are on that worst list. Indian culture celebrates seasonal produce. Gajak, and Panta Baat are all examples of this. And it fell into the worst list. This is what happens when the world wants to think they know everything about India." Bruh India has one of the richest culinary histories and argu-

ably the most culinary diversity out of every country in the world and you chose Mango Lassi as #1? This is like cappuccino being the #1 food in Italy. Stick to European foods you'll have no idea what you're talking about when it comes to Asia," said a third user. One Instagram user said, "A very carefully curated list of Indian foods by non-Indians definitely. I have no idea what you guys were even thinking when you put

Mirchi ka Salan on that list." Another one wrote, "Got to set the record straight: Indian food is a treasure of flavors and diversity. Every dish and every bite tells a unique story, a journey! This ranking is typical and completely misses the incredible richness of Indian cuisine." Meanwhile, the "best-rated" foods list, in the same Instagram post, featured mango lassi, masala chai, butter garlic naan, stars

# Can 5:2 fasting method control Type 2 diabetes? Here's what an expert has to say



The medical fraternity has been neck deep in research to find ways to alleviate worries for diabetics. While injections and insulin shots can be expensive, altering one's diet is a more affordable alternative. With diet culture gaining traction in the health and wellness industry, we explore the 5:2 fasting method. To understand its potential benefits, indianexpress.com spoke to Dr Aasim Maldar, consultant endocrinologist and diabetologist at PD Hinduja Hospital & MRC, Mahim, Mumbai. "The 5:2 fasting method involves following a normal diet for five days a week and fasting for the other two days. The fasting days can be any two days, as long as there is at least one non-fasting day between them," said Maldar.

How can it help regulate diabetes type 2?

"Studies have shown that the 5:2 fasting method can improve fasting plasma glucose levels and overall diabetes

control, but it is unclear if these benefits are above those gained from weight loss. A six-month study showed similar weight loss and maintenance with 5:2 fasting and a daily low-calorie diet," he said. "Weight loss, in turn, improves glycemic control. We need more long-term, robust studies to confirm if there are any direct benefits to glycemic control and cardiac health," said Maldar.

Is this method safe?

Maldar mentioned that while the 5:2 fasting method may be an alternative for short-term weight loss, it isn't recommended for long-term use, especially for people with chronic illnesses. "It should not be practiced by growing children, adults with comorbidities like kidney, liver, or heart issues, elderly people, and pregnant women. Additionally, Type 2 diabetics on insulin or multiple oral medications should refrain from this diet," he said. He suggested that a daily calorie-restricted, balanced diet should be your go-to method. If that is not possible due to work commitments or travel, then you may consider 5:2 fasting. "Usually, a non-fasting day will involve a normal diet with whatever food a person usually eats. Fasting days, however, consist of a very low-calorie diet, around 400 to 500 calories," Maldar said. On non-fasting days, one should avoid eating anything and everything; it should still be a balanced diet. According to him, diet advice should always be personalised, as "one size doesn't fit all." Always consult your doctor, nutritionist, and healthcare team before making any drastic changes to your dietary patterns.

# Doctors on why they prefer a person's left (or right) hand to administer vaccine — and if it impacts efficacy

There are numerous dos and don'ts when it comes to taking vaccines. But today, we would like to understand how vaccines are administered and why one particular arm is chosen over the other, and whether that also affects the vaccine's efficacy. Dr Rajeev Gupta, director, internal medicine, CK Birla Hospital (R), Delhi said that normally, the upper deltoid region of the left arm for right-handed individuals is preferred. "This preference is due to the potential for local pain at the injection site, which could impede the use of the dominant hand if the vaccine were administered in the right arm. By choosing the left arm, right-handed people can avoid discomfort that might interfere with their daily activities," said Dr Gupta.

Additionally, the deltoid is easy to access and less sensitive than other potential injection sites, making the process more comfortable for the recipient, said Dr Amit P Ghawade, consultant-pediatrician and neonatologist, Motherhood Hospitals, Kharghar, Mumbai. However, if you have had a previous reaction or experience with a vaccine in one arm, it may be preferable to use the other arm to avoid any potential issues, said Dr Ghawade.

So, does the choice of arm affect efficacy?

Denying the hypothesis, Dr Gupta said that the choice of arm does not affect the efficacy of the vaccine, as the immune response remains the same regardless of which



arm is used. "This consideration applies to all vaccines, ensuring that individuals can comfortably continue their routines without compromising the effectiveness of the immunisation," said Dr Gupta. It's important to note that these guidelines apply to most routine vaccines, such as the flu shot, Covid-19 vaccine, and other common immunisations. "However, there may be exceptions for certain vaccines or specific medical conditions. In such cases, it is always best to follow the recommendations of your healthcare provider," said Dr Ghawade. However, Dr Ghawade added that individual circumstances and preferences should also be considered when deciding which arm to use for vaccine administration.

# Are magnesium flake baths an effective way to reduce stress?

When stressed, the body undergoes a series of physiological changes, one of which is the depletion of magnesium levels, neuroscientist and former psychiatric doctor Dr Tara Swart said. According to Dr Swart, magnesium is a crucial mineral involved in over 300 biochemical reactions in the body, including those that regulate stress response. "Therefore, during times of stress, your body's demand for magnesium increases which can manifest with twitchy eyelids or spasms," she explained in a podcast with Mel Robbins, a best-selling author, life coach, host, and CNN commentator. As such, bathing in magnesium flakes is beneficial for replenishing magnesium levels and managing stress, he added. "When you soak in a bath infused with magnesium flakes, your skin absorbs the mineral directly into the bloodstream, bypassing the digestive system. This method ensures efficient absorption and utilisation of magnesium, especially when compared to oral supplements, which may not be as readily absorbed by the body," said Dr Swart.



What are magnesium flakes and how are they beneficial?

Dr Saroj Kumar Yadav, consultant, internal medicine, Aakash Healthcare said that magnesium flakes are a "highly effective and natural way to combat stress and enhance overall well-being". "Regular use of magnesium flakes can be a transformative addition to your wellness regimen, helping you to feel more relaxed, sleep better, and ultimately lead a healthier life. Adequate magnesium levels can significantly reduce stress and improve sleep, making it easier to handle daily challenges," said Dr Yadav. Magnesium flakes are derived from magnesium chloride, a highly absorbable form of the mineral. "These flakes are sourced from the ancient Zechstein Sea, ensuring their purity and efficacy. When dissolved in water, they create a magnesium-rich solution that can be easily absorbed through the skin," described Dr Yadav. Magnesium is known as nature's relaxant. "It plays a crucial role in regulating the body's stress response by supporting the production of neurotransmit-

ters that promote relaxation and calmness. Additionally, magnesium helps to balance melatonin levels, the hormone responsible for sleep, thereby improving sleep quality," noted Dr Yadav. It also aids in the removal of lactic acid from muscles, promoting quicker recovery after exercise and reducing muscle soreness, added Dr Yadav. According to Dr Yadav, using magnesium flakes is simple and convenient. "For a full-body soak, dissolve 1 cup of flakes in a warm bath and soak for 20-30 minutes. For a more localised treatment, such as a foot soak, dissolve half a cup in a basin of warm water and soak your feet for 15-20 minutes. This method allows magnesium to be quickly absorbed through the soles of the feet, providing a concentrated dose of the mineral," said Dr Yadav.

What to keep in mind?

While magnesium flakes are generally safe for most people, there are a few considerations to keep in mind. "Individuals with kidney problems or severe heart conditions should consult a healthcare provider before using magnesium flakes," said Dr Yadav. Also, people with chronic sleep issues, or mental health issues need to seek timely medical treatment and should not resort to magnesium as a one-point solution.

# Deepika Padukone's LiveLoveLaugh launches 'Lecture Series Unplugged'

Mumbai: Actress Deepika Padukone's LiveLoveLaugh (LLL) foundation has announced a new platform for mental health conversations with the launch of 'Lecture Series Unplugged'. This quarterly event aims to build awareness and sustain open discussions about mental health. Deepika, founder of LLL, said: "Over the last decade, LLL has managed to successfully create a safe space for crucial mental health conversations. With 'Lecture Series Unplugged', LLL aims to reach a broader audience by offering relatable stories that can further strengthen our impact on individuals, communities, and society at large." The series will spotlight prominent figures sharing their lived experiences and insights on success, failures, triumphs, and learnings.





# Ovarian cancer survivors: How 3 women across age groups reclaimed their lives



“After surgery, she did a course of chemotherapy to kill remaining cancer cells and prevent recurrence. She was declared cancer-free one to two years after completing her chemotherapy regimen. She was given the go-ahead to

## No heart attack but 38-year-old has early morning palpitations and headache: What are unusual signs of high BP?

## SAT refuses to stay SEBI's interim ban order on Gensol Engineering

# A peanut got stuck in 3-year-old's windpipe: Why are children prone to swallowing and feeding difficulties?



terrestrial broadband networks, they can cover vast swathes of areas with very little physical equipment needing to be installed. The approval for Starlink comes just days after the Department of Telecommunications (DoT) released guidelines for satellite communication companies. The guidelines call for companies to set up local manufacturing, data localisation, use domestic navigation systems, implement a blocking mechanism, and cooperate with law enforcement agencies. According to the guidelines, satcom companies will have to share with the government a year-wise phased manufacturing plan aiming at indigenisation to a level of at least 20% of their ground segment of the satellite network that is established at the end of 5 years after launching commercial operations. The companies should also ensure provisioning of NavIC based positioning systems in their user terminals on "best effort basis," along with a transition plan to implement NavIC in a time-bound manner by 2029. NavIC is India's regional satellite navigation system, similar to GPS, which is a global system developed by the United States. Companies will have to provide real time monitoring to ensure that no user traffic originating from, or destined for India is being routed through any gateway outside Indian territory. They will also have to submit an undertaking that they will not copy and decrypt Indian telecom data outside India. Operators would need to implement service restriction to "any individual, group of subscribers or certain geographical areas" during "hostilities," the guidelines said. These companies will have to seek separate clearance ("from security angle") for voice service and data service. Satcom operators will also have to ensure that their data centres are based within the geographical boundary of India and shall make provision to provide Domain Name System (DNS) resolution within its territory.

to the brain. Patients — especially older adults — report feeling tired, confused or unable to focus, which could be early neurological signs of poorly controlled blood pressure.

4. Shortness of Breath  
If walking short distances or climbing stairs suddenly leaves you breathless, this could be a red flag. Persistent high BP may weaken the heart muscle, eventually leading to heart failure, where shortness of breath becomes a hallmark symptom.
5. Blood in Urine  
Hypertension can damage the kidneys over time. Macroscopic damage to the blood vessels can result in hematuria, or blood in the urine. While this can also occur due to other issues like infections or stones, it is sometimes a indirect indicator of poorly-controlled hypertension.
6. Facial Flushing  
Sudden flushing or redness in the face may occur during BP spikes, especially in individuals with stress-related or secondary hypertension.
7. Ringing in the Ears (Tinnitus)  
Persistent or pulsating tinnitus can sometimes be linked to elevated BP, especially when accompanied by headaches or dizziness. It may be the body's way of signaling changes in blood flow or pressure in the head and neck area. The key issue with hypertension is that it can quietly damage organs over time—especially the heart, brain, kidneys and eyes. Recognizing unusual signs early can prevent complications. All you need is a simple regular checkup.

# A peanut got stuck in 3-year-old's windpipe: Why are children prone to swallowing and feeding difficulties?

When a three-year-old girl was brought into the emergency room of Max Hospital, Shalimar Bagh, Delhi, in a critical condition with high-grade fever, cough, vomiting bouts and severe respiratory distress, her parents thought she had contracted some serious infection. But paediatric pulmonologist Dr Deepak Kumar suspected that something had gone into her windpipe. Tests showed fragments of a peanut she had eaten 10 days ago. Putting his stethoscope on her heaving chest, he noticed that there was poor air flow on the right side of her chest and a wheezing sound. A chest X-ray confirmed his suspicion of a foreign body trapped in the child's airways. He performed a bronchoscopy in the paediatric intensive care unit as the camera-mounted wire hit the peanut lodged in the right main bronchus (one of the main tubes that carry air to the lungs). He manoeuvred it to remove the nut fragments, restoring the child's ability to breathe normally in four hours and sparing her from potentially life-threatening complications. "Some tissue had also formed around the peanut due to the body's inflammatory response. With steroids for inhalation, she recovered completely," says Dr Kumar.

What are common food items that put children at risk?

Dr Sonia Mittal, Director, Paediatrics, who has seen many such cases of foreign objects getting stuck in children's windpipes, says parents should watch over hard solids in their children's diet. "Peanuts, dry fruits, candies, small toys, beads and marbles are often swallowed by kids. Organic materials like peanuts can cause significant inflam-



mation in the airways if not removed promptly. This can lead to severe complications if not diagnosed early. In this case, timely identification, diagnostics and intervention ensured the child's complete recovery. The peanut was stuck for at least 10 days," she says.

Food can enter a toddler's windpipe (trachea) during swallowing due to a condition called aspiration. Children under the age of three are still learning how to eat properly. "In the body, there are two main pipes — the windpipe (trachea) and the esophagus (food pipe). When we swallow food, a flap called the epiglottis partially covers the windpipe to prevent food from entering it, allowing us to breathe safely. However, young children often play or run while eating and if they eat solid food during this time.



# Who will replace Virat Kohli at No. 4 for India in Test cricket?



GNS News Agency, May 13

The new number four for India in Tests would neither hear the cracking applause when he strides out nor the numbing silence when he retreats to the dressing room. Or to the scale associated with two immediate predecessors, Sachin Tendulkar and Virat Kohli. Instead, he could feel the squeezing weight of history and heritage, the burden of 25,151 runs, 51 hundreds, 36 years, the halo and honour, records and responsibility of the inheritance. The natural heir is Shubman Gill, the most promising of the youth brigade, a prospective captain and touted as a future great. He fits the profile—a splendid stroke-maker, stoked in the classical ethos yet with a post-modern outlook, with a game that he could bend to suit diverse conditions, a blossoming superstar, a composed presence, a smiling, handsome face that has begun adorning advertisement hoardings, and non-controversial off the field. However, him occupying the most sacred post in India's batting line-up comes at the inevitable expense of a rejig and the consequent headaches.

Gill has just grooved into the one-drop role—an important slot in itself, where the greats Don Bradman, Brian Lara and Ricky Ponting logged in—especially with a potentially new/makeshift/stopgap opening pair. Now, the team management would have to discover a new number three as well. The options are thin in this facet too. KL Rahul has the required characteristics to blossom as long-term mainstay, but he could be repurposed as an opener. Abhimanyu Easwaran, should he be picked, is still waiting for his Test cap. So is Sai Sudharsan. Rajat Patidar has been tried and tested, but failed, besides nursing an injury. Former India captain Virat Kohli, center, addresses India teammates as they prepare to take to the field during the third Test in Melbourne. (AP Photo) Former India captain Virat Kohli, center, addresses India teammates as they prepare to take to the field during the third Test in Melbourne. But if Gill sticks to three, admittedly his favourite spot, he would leave the management fretting to fill up the Kohli space. Rahul's name springs to mind. He has batted everywhere in the top six, sort of India's emergency code, barring number five. When Kohli skipped England's tour to India last year, he was handed over the keys to the coveted spot. He looked the part and scored 84 and 22 in the first Test before an injury ruled him out for the remaining series, a recurring theme of his start-stop 58-Tests-old career. The most established among India's batsmen, he has all the tools to succeed at No 4. But the decision could also depend on whether the team management could find a suitable No 3, Gill's favourite spot and an important one at that if only India had a settled opening firm, Rahul could have been seamlessly slotted into the spot. He has the experience and knowhow to practise the responsibilities of the role. But the bigger worry is opening, where Rahul's experience and success in England could see him open. Should he find himself back in the squad, he can stake his claims. He could bat anywhere in the top five, comes with incredible experience and is in the (domestic) form of his life. Familiarity with England conditions would matter too.

His transition from domestic to Test cricket has been relatively smooth. His Test best has come at number four, and it's a familiar spot for him in the Mumbai side. All he

needs is the trust of the selectors and support staff. But India need to fill the Rohit Sharma-shaped hole at the top too, and Rahul could be persuaded to fill in the openers' shift. The circumstances are different to when Kohli eased into Tendulkar's shoes. Back then, India could pick any of three—Kohli, Cheteshwar Pujara and Ajinkya Rahane—to bat anywhere from three to six. The trio has turned up in most positions as well, and were sufficiently experienced. Not to forget Rohit Sharma knocking on the selectors' doors too.

What about Karun or Sarfraz?

Historically, too, India had not sweated over batting inheritances. From Vijay Merchant to Vijay Manjrekar, Sunil Gavaskar to Dilip Vengsarkar and Mohammed Azharuddin, Sachin Tendulkar to Virat Kohli, the spiritual lineage passed on unbroken. All teams are illuminated and trapped, in almost equal measure, by their history. But the depth of India's red-ball batting has been running dry, so much so the once-discarded names are back in the fray.

Like Karun Nair. The failures post his triple hundred in 2016 and the slump with Karnataka had thrust him into wilderness, but a shift to Vidarbha and a consistent run in domestic cricket has rerouted him back to Test reckoning. He has form and county experience behind him, but he would be like a virtual debutant, his last Test coming eight years ago. He was a squad member of India's 2018 batch to England, but couldn't impress the management into giving him a chance. Prolific in domestic cricket, his two stints with Northamptonshire yielded considerable profit. In 13 games, he piled 985 runs at 69. Similar numbers in India's A tour to England could pave his way back to the squad, and could be installed at four.

The selectors are then left with Sarfraz Khan, Rishabh Pant, Dhruv Jurel and Ravindra Jadeja. The wares of Pant and Jurel are more suited to lower middle-order, where they are endowed with the liberty to trades punches or counterpunch, irrespective of whether the team is wobbling or shining. Jadeja at six or seven offers lower-order stability, besides elongating the batting order. All-rounder Nitish Kumar Reddy is too callow for the role. This limits the list to Sarfraz. He is no stranger to top-four duties. He has transitioned to Test cricket with satisfactory, if not sizzling success. An aggregate of 37.10 in 11 innings with a hundred and three fifties cannot be termed listless by any stretch of imagination. His Test best, a magnificent 150 against New Zealand in Bangalore, too arrived at four. He could be jumpy at the crease, but has a clarity of approach and purpose to succeed at this level. Worrying, though, is the think tanks' lack of trust in his batting abroad, as he was largely a passenger in Australia last year. The deeper the crisis is assessed the surer Gill's ascent to the number four seems. Not only because there aren't other suitable alternatives, but also he seems the worthiest man for the role. The move has other benefits too. The line-up would not be top heavy. Experience and talent would be more equitably distributed. Imagine a situation where a top-three of Jaiswal, Rahul and Gill being blown by a new-ball burst, India would be left with an undercooked middle order. It would take Gill some getting used to, but it's not just runs and hundreds that await him, but history and heritage too. The mantle could crush him, it could inspire him to cricketing immortality too.

# 'A' series provides opportunity for Karun Nair, B Sai Sudharsan to press their case ahead of Tests in England

GNS News Agency, May 13

Yashasvi Jaiswal and Ishan Kishan will headline the India A squad for the first unofficial Test against England Lions starting on May 30. With the IPL play-offs running simultaneously and the final slotted for June 3, The Indian Express understands that the national selection panel headed by Ajit Agarkar has picked a 14-member squad for the first match, including players whose involvement in the T20 league ended in the league stage. Other than Jaiswal and Kishan, other players expected to take the flight to UK by the end of this month include Karun Nair, Nitish Kumar Reddy, Abhimanyu Easwaran, Dhruv Jurel, Shardul Thakur, Tanush Kotian, Akash Deep, Khaleel Ahmed, Anshul Kamboj and Manav Suthar. It is understood that Sarfraz Khan, who isn't part of any IPL team, will not travel with the first batch of the India A squad and instead head to UK along with the Test squad. Rajat Patidar, nursing a finger injury, is unlikely to make the cut for the England tour. After the first 'Test', the plan is to send the likes of Shubman Gill, Sai Sudharsan and Washington Sundar for the second A fixture. India are scheduled to play an intra-squad match as preparation before the first Test against England. It remains to be seen whether it would be played over three days or four. The game is understood to be played behind closed doors without any live coverage. The performances in these three matches will hold plenty of significance with two slots now vacant in the first XI following the retirements of Rohit Sharma and Virat Kohli. In the case of Easwaran, the England trip is significant as he has been on the fringe for nearly seven years now. He was part of India's tour to England in 2021, but returned without playing a game. And even on the last tour of Australia, he was part of the squad as a reserve opener as his wait for a Test debut grew longer. Easwaran, one of the prolific scorers on the domestic circuit as well as for India A, now faces competition with 23-year-old B Sai Sudharsan also vying for a spot in the top three. As a result, the A team fixtures could well become an audition for a place in the Test XI.

These matches will also be an opportunity for Nair to



make a strong case for his inclusion in the Test squad. In 2018, he was part of the Test squad, but never got to play a game with the then team management under Ravi Shastri even preferring Hanuma Viharl over him. This time with Kohli not around, and Nair being not just an in-form batsman but also vaing international experience under his belt, he could be in the reckoning if he scores in these matches. As far as the pace department is concerned, with Jasprit Bumrah, Mohammed Shami and Mohammed Siraj unlikely to feature in all five Tests, India are planning to rotate their pack which will also include Harshit Rana and Prasidh Krishna. Among the outsiders, Haryana's Anshul Kamboj stands a good chance of making the cut as he is known not just to make the ball seam both ways but is also capable of bowling long spells. Though the series will take place in early summer, pitches in County cricket of late have been full of runs. Moreover, since the advent of Bazball, England have mostly preferred to play Tests on flat decks. In such conditions, India are aware of the challenges for their bowling unit. Given Bumrah, Shami and Siraj are all strike bowlers who mostly operate on an attacking line and length, the think tank is on the lookout for a seamer who could hold one end up, which Ishant Sharma did exceedingly well on the last two tours. Kamboj, with his skillset to make the new ball move both ways and ability to bowl long spells, is seen as a similar asset who could complement this attack.

# Why Vishy Anand prescribes a 'take it easy policy' for teenage world beaters

GNS News Agency, May 13

Does the current generation of teenage prodigies that's in a tearing hurry to complete their hostile takeover of the chess world need to pause every once in a while to recharge their mental batteries? Do Gukesh, Praggnanandhaa, Arjun Erigaisi and others from their generation like Uzbekistan's Nodirbek Abdusattorov need to manage their work loads? If you ask Viswanathan Anand, the veritable godfather of Indian chess, they certainly must. Currently in Bucharest for the ongoing Superbet Chess Classic Romania event, Anand was asked by Cristian Chirila, who is a second to Fabiano Caruana, if the five-time world champion had any advice for the younger generation of stars about what they should focus on while training considering that the international calendar is pregnant with events.

"What should they focus on?" prodded Chirila, asking Anand about the upcoming generation in general without naming any names in particular. It's a question you reckon that a few members of India's golden generation of grandmasters would have asked themselves, if not Anand directly, at some point in the last few years since every tournament organiser—across formats—seemingly wants a piece of the three posterboys of India's golden generation. The proliferation of chess tournaments since the COVID-19 pandemic has happened at a remarkable pace. Just in 2025, events like the Checkmate: India vs USA and chess' entry into the Esports World Cup were announced. The Freestyle Chess organisers also added a four-event Grand Slam Tour. "My approach would be to simplify my calendar a little bit," began Anand. "If you play all of them, then I think you don't get a minute to yourself. I would skip one or two events here or there and just experience everything else." Anand's rationale behind this, he elaborated, was simple: "The question is how to split up your time. That's why I say it's important to give up one or two events somewhere and give yourself a month or two off because you can easily get sucked into playing a lot and then you don't have a minute to yourself to think about anything." Anand has a long track record of practising what he preaches. Back in the days when he frequented chess tournaments, he too would take a break from the sport whenever results started to sag.

Viswanathan Anand with India's current generation of chess stars like Vidit Gujarathi, Gukesh, Praggnandhaa, and Arjun Erigaisi at the draw ceremony of the men's Tata Steel Chess India tournament in Kolkata in September 2023. (Express photo by Partha Paul) Viswanathan Anand with India's current generation of chess stars like Vidit Gujarathi, Gukesh, Praggnandhaa, and Arjun Erigaisi at the draw ceremony of the men's Tata Steel Chess India tournament in Kolkata in September 2023. (Express photo by Partha Paul) Anand's advice comes at a poignant time for India's troika of Gukesh, Pragg and Arjun. All three have experienced heady highs in the past few years, but also tasted dizzying dips in forms. Gukesh, for example, almost won the Tata Steel Chess event in Wijk aan Zee right after being crowned as the youngest world champion in chess history. It was a tournament that reaffirmed to the world that the hunger that had propelled the Chennai boy to become a world champion at 18 was still there. But since that event, he's experienced a slump at two freestyle tour events in Weissenhaus and Paris. And at the ongoing Superbet Chess Classic Romania event in Bucharest, he's currently winless after five games, drawing four and losing to Maxime Vachier-Lagrave.

Arjun too experienced a dip at the season-opening event in Wijk aan Zee where he laboured to get a win in 11

# Virat Kohli retires: He never gave up until one day he did

GNS News Agency, May 13

Within days of Rohit Sharma calling time on his Test career, Virat Kohli followed suit and announced his retirement from the longest format. Was he quick to read the room after the abrupt end to Rohit's Test innings? With talk of Shubman Gill's coronation at 25, did he sense palace intrigue and a subtle signal to him? Or was it the case of the 36-year-old father of two and an undisputed batting great no longer having that famous drive to deal with the demons in the head that mess with muscle memory? Days before the team for the England tour was to be announced, Kohli shared his decision with the world on Instagram: "There's something deeply personal about playing in whites. The quiet grind, the long days, the small moments that no one sees but that stay with you forever... As I step away from this format, it's not easy—but it feels right. I've given it everything I had... I'll always look back at my Test career with a smile."

The post had Frank Sinatra singing his 'I did it my way' song in the background, reminding that a career of 123 Tests which brought a little less than 10,000 runs too might not be totally fulfilling. "Regrets, I've had a few. But then again, too few to mention. I did what I had to do," goes the song's lyrics. Though, of late, Kohli had been finding it tough to do what he had to. In that context, this England tour miss is actually a judicious 'well left'. It is a grim reminder of the reality of ageing. Kohli still has a gym-sculpted body and is Bolt between wickets. But the fittest too can get jaded, the driven too slow down, and even Kings call it a day. Kohli has retired, but hasn't given up. He never does, it's just that every great story has an end. Once he signs up for a cause, he never backs out. That was the original narrative around the Delhi boy when he first hit the headlines as an 18-year-old in his debut first-class season. It was an incredibly cold December day in 2006 when he landed at the Feroze Shah Kotla (now the Arun Jaitley Stadium) in a Delhi Ranji Trophy jersey hours after his father died. In the dressing room, he broke down but quickly splashed his eyes with water to play a match-saving knock. He left early and lit his father's pyre. It was after the sun had set on the toughest day of his life that he would tell his elder brother: "I am going to play this game at the highest level and there is nothing that can distract me from doing that." Kohli didn't just play at the highest level but will finish as one of the greatest the game has seen. With ODIs still interesting to him, he can further glorify his legend.

From his under-19 days, he never doubted himself or let intimidation overwhelm or undermine him. In the initial rounds of the 2008 Under-19 World Cup in Malaysia, he would swagger around the team hotel. Once when a tall well-built England player crossed him and gave him a look of disapproval, Kohli raised his eyebrows: "Why you staring?" The English boy blinked and sheepishly snuck away. "Arrey, inko dikhana padta hai (One needs to show these guys) who's the boss," he would say.

By the end of the tournament, he would make sure that the other teams conceded he was the boss. The junior



games of the tournament before finally beating Nodirbek and Gukesh in the final two games of the event. Pragg seemed to have hit a ceiling in the first half of 2023, when he just could not break into the 2700 club. Then, while Gukesh and Arjun broke into 2800, Pragg, the OG teenage prodigy from this generation, was moored in the mid 2700s. All three have played a heavy amount of chess since the pandemic, sometimes with barely any gap between events. Gukesh, for example, ended the Tata Steel event in Wijk aan Zee (played in classical format) on February 2 and was then playing in the freestyle variant at the Weissenhaus Freestyle Chess tournament five days later. He then played at the freestyle event in Paris, and is now in Romania. Unlike other sports, mental fatigue is a very real threat in chess. A cricketer or a footballer won't spend hours in training sessions on the day of a game. Chess players do. They would probably feel uneasy walking into the playing hall if they did not prepare their battle plans for hours. World No 1 Magnus Carlsen's choice to play freestyle has also unburdened him from the tedious homework he needed to do otherwise: at freestyle, players only find out what the starting position is 10 minutes before their game, so there's no point preparing for hours leading into a game.

In a special episode of 60 Minutes show on CBS News back in 2012, it was revealed that Magnus Carlsen was spending as much as 200 days a year on the road, playing at tournaments. This was separate from the chess prep he was doing at training camps back home as he prepared for an assault on the world champion's throne in the coming years. Those days were heavy with chess, playing six-hour-long games in the morning and then preparing for six more hours for the next day's opponent when back in the hotel room. While Anand pointed out that the Indian youngsters played a healthy mix of chess—never ignoring classical chess events for the more excitable rapid and blitz variants or the new and shiny Freestyle Chess variant—all four variants (classical, rapid, blitz and freestyle) demanded a completely different 'state of mind' from players. "When playing rapid and blitz events, it's a slightly different state of mind because you're playing multiple games a day (at rapid and blitz tournaments it's common for players to play four or more games in a single day since games are much shorter than classical events). So in the faster events, you need to be able to play more openings just on the fly. But for classical you need to get quite deep into what you're going to do because it's only one game a day. So rest is important between events. It also allows you to think about what kind of situations you're going to face," Anand added. India's young gunslingers on the battlefield of 64 squares are known to follow Anand's words like it's gospel. This just might be his most important advice to date.



India triumph would be followed by his graduation to the senior team and a phase when he lost focus. By his own confession, Kohli got caught in leading the 'cool life'—partying, eating unhealthy and taking cricket for granted. Realising that he was drifting from his goal, he would take the challenge of being his old self. He changed his routine and diet. He starved. "One night I was so hungry that I had thoughts of chewing up the bedsheet," he had once said. The linen was spared nor was the room service approached, but Kohli's resolve didn't break. The will to take the tough road remained unbreakable.

hat would be the recurring theme of the Virat Kohli story. In 2014, he was in a freefall on the England tour. He thought he had forgotten how to bat and would not get his touch back. He couldn't sleep. Later, he would figure out that he was dealing with depression. Kohli would reach out to Sachin Tendulkar and that would start his rehabilitation. Once he ironed out the flaws, trusted his game, he got back his purpose in life. Runs would flow, he would get proclaimed as cricket's GOAT, but fame and fortune would bring bigger challenges. It is around the Covid-19 period that Kohli would face existential issues. When the world called him King Kohli, Superman, Chasemaster, he was confused about his own identity. "With your professional identity, somewhere you start losing perspective as a human being," he would articulate. To live up to the hype around him, Kohli would say that he would "fake his intensity". The world wanted him to be the scowly Kohli even when he wasn't in a mood to be that. He would share these anxieties with the world after he would return from a rare cricket break, something he had never done in his life. Even on his return, Kohli would find it tough to meet the staggering standards he had set for himself. From January 2022 to January 2025, he would score just three Test hundreds. None memorable, nor with gravitas. Kohli, the Test batsman, was wilting but he wasn't giving up. He would train hard, even take philosophical inputs from spiritual gurus. He kept exploring, kept trying to keep the promise he had made to his brother. Recently during the IPL, he had spoken about how the meaning of cricket had changed for him. "You start with wanting to hit the ball and later, you go through this whole journey of being someone and dealing with expectations. But then finally again, you reach a point... and say I am here to hit the ball," he had said in an RCB podcast in the middle of his dream IPL run.



## Asin's husband Rahul Sharma turned down more than Rs 6,500 crore funding, says it could've saved Mircromax from downfall



Former actor Asin tied the knot with Micromax co-founder Rahul Sharma in 2016, after Akshay Kumar played Cupid between the two of them. Akshay was also a part of their wedding festivities, and said that getting them together took several years. Two years before they tied the knot, Rahul was witnessing incredible, unprecedented success as an entrepreneur. His mobile phone company was challenging the biggest players in the Indian market, and beating them. However, things turned around when Chinese brands entered the picture. Appearing on Nikhil Kamath's podcast, Rahul said that he turned down \$800 million in funding from Alibaba in 2014, which, in hindsight, could've been the wrong decision. "When Meizu was raising a round with Alibaba, we were deep down with them at that time. This was in 2014. We were raising around \$800 million (Rs 6,700

crore by 2025 conversion rates). The business was throwing so much of cash, we said, 'We don't need money'. We didn't take that money, we were like, 'We're doing quite well, and we already have so much of...'"

Asked if this was a 'bad decision in hindsight', Rahul explained that they didn't anticipate what would happen when Chinese players entered the market. Not only did those brands undercut his prices, but suppliers stopped providing them with latest components. "We thought that if we'd taken care of the Finnish and the Koreans at that time, we could take care of the Chinese too... That was a different game, because when the Chinese came, they came with so much gunpowder." They took a hit the same year when Rahul and Asin tied the knot, and three years later, they decided to pivot. "If we keep burning at this pace, we'll get completely finished, we won't have any capital left. We said, 'Let's stop burning money and wait for a U-turn'... If you ask me, in hindsight, yes (we should've taken it). Because that time we never new you had to create a war chest. With \$800 million, you sit on the casino table and say, 'Now play'." In an earlier interview with Raj Shamani, Rahul recalled how Akshay set him up with Asin at a cricket match between India and Pakistan in 2012. "Akshay said she's a girl who's very, very simple, down-to-earth, similar to you. She just comes, does her work, and goes back, very professional. Her mother is a doctor, father is into services, so fantastic. Then he gave her number to me and my number to her. He just felt there's so much common in us. We come from the same values and backgrounds," he recalled.

## Farah Khan's cook Dilip finds support after viewers object to how Mukesh Chhabra treated him: 'How disrespectful'



Audiences on Reddit voiced their displeasure at how Farah Khan's cook, Dilip, is treated in her vlogs. The filmmaker-choreographer has found a massive audience on YouTube channel, where she creates food-related content with Dilip. The channel has over 1.5 million subscribers. The latest episode featured casting director Mukesh Chhabra, whose treatment of Dilip raised a few eyebrows. Sharing a clip from the episode, in which Mukesh appears to shove Dilip, people complained about the disrespect with which he is often treated. Several episodes of the series feature scripted bits where Farah threatens to fire Dilip, who, in turn, complains about his low salary.

After making him 'audition' for a role in the new episode, Mukesh said, "You should stick to the kitchen." Later, while preparing biryani with the help of his personal cook, Mukesh told Dilip, "You don't know how to act, you don't know how to make biryani." When Farah advised Dilip to not stand in the shadow, Dilip jokingly stood in front of her. Mukesh pushed him aside, which angered observers on social media. The clip was shared on Reddit with the heading, "Mukesh Chhabra misbehaving with Farah's cook

Dilip." People in the comments alluded to this. "It came to my attention too while watching the video. Mukesh Chhabra pulled him forcefully, without realising that Dilip is doing it in jest. It was very rude. Even earlier in the episode, he insults Dilip by telling him that he doesn't have any acting talent bitterly, and then Farah subtly comes to Dilip's defense by saying he acts well while asking for a salary hike. The vibe was off during this video as compared to all the other guests Farah has on her show." Another person commented, "I feel so bad for Dilip! I know Farah wants to be funny/make it appear as if it's fun banter but I honestly feel uncomfortable with the sorts of things she gets Dilip to say/says to him and makes him do. She should know where to draw the line. How disrespectful." A third person concurred, adding, "I don't care if this is scripted- you shouldn't treat someone this way. it's not funny." Others accused Mukesh of being 'elitist' and 'classist'. Another person commented, "I have also noted in her videos, that whenever they go to someone's house, he touches everyone's feet, now I can understand he does that for elders, but he also does that for young ppl too, which is very sad!!"

The comments section of the original video was also filled with negative reactions to Mukesh's perceived behaviour. "Mukesh Chhabra showed how he behaves with people from a different class. I liked Farah Khan standing for Dilip," one of the top-voted comments read. "The way Farah ma'am called Dilip her baccha and supported him, I just fell in awe for her," another person wrote; Farah 'liked' this comment. Highlighting the shove, a third person wrote, "Why would he do that? Everyone deserves respect no matter what job they do. We love you Dilip, you are the real star of the channel." Another viewer praised Farah for saying, "Mera Dilip pure India mein famous hai." Farah's vlogs have featured several prominent Bollywood personalities, such as Ananya Panday, Archana Puran Singh, Kabir Khan, and others.

## Chandrakanta actor Shahbaz Khan says he's called 'overexposed' while favourites get work, recalls Dilip Kumar's advice: 'Submit yourself...'

Actor Shahbaz Khan, known for playing negative roles in 90s films, recently spoke about not getting enough work in films and OTT shows. He shared how casting directors often tag actors like him, who were prominent in the 90s, as "overexposed." The actor also addressed the rising remuneration of actors and blamed it on the entry of corporates into the film industry. Speaking on the YouTube channel Just Baat, Shahbaz talked about the high fees charged by actors and said, "Old actors started with less money but at that time the value of money was more. Currently, if actors are being paid more, then their expenses are also high. The economy has changed. Purane actors ne bhi maal banake rakha hai. Sab set hai (Old actors made a lot of money. They are all set). But they are not getting work now. New actors charge a lot after corporates entered the market, the game has changed. Films have become money-minting machines and the creativity has taken a back seat."

Speaking about casting directors and the lack of work for him, he said, "Casting directors have their favourites and they call old actors like me, who have worked a lot in the 90s, overexposed. This is wrong. Overexposed are those actors whom you cast in every other OTT show. Some actors are such that the audience doesn't want to see, but they are pushed on them. The new age casting directors and actors think of themselves as no less than Dilip Kumar. They think of themselves as the biggest actor. Casting directors don't cast actors like me by tagging us overexposed. A lot of actors from my generation face this." While Shahbaz admitted to not getting much work in the South film industry, the one or two projects he has done there taught him a great deal about how that industry functions. "People in the South industry work with a lot of discipline and passion. They would call me at 6 am for a 7 am shoot, saying the car is ready," he said. During the conversation, Shahbaz also spoke about his experience of meeting the late legendary actor Dilip Kumar for the first time. He shared that the legend gave



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him three pieces of advice on becoming a great actor. "It feels like people like Dilip Kumar weren't born, they landed directly from the sky. When I met Dilip Kumar, I asked him for his advice on how to become a good actor. He told me to be like clay when I go on set and to give myself completely to the director. He advised me to surround myself with positive people and those from whom I can learn. And he told me that every actor should be spiritual to be a good actor, he should have a connection with God."

## Sarkeet movie review: Asif Ali, Orhan elevate Thamar KV film



**Sarkeet movie review:** One of the most intriguing qualities of Thamar KV as a filmmaker is his ability to craft a slow-burn drama using plot devices that many other directors would have simply used to create a thriller. It's not easy to resist the norms and the illusion perpetuated by the market that the commercial formula is the safest bet for success. In his debut film 1001 Nunakal (2023), despite having ample elements to turn it into a full-blown, edge-of-the-seat thriller akin to Jeethu Joseph's Mohanlal-starrer 12th Man (2022), Thamar took a different path. He treated the plot with restraint, creating a unique and memorable film that explored the complexities of lies and the consequences — or lack thereof — of absolute honesty among people who share close relationships. In his sophomore directorial venture Sarkeet, Thamar has adopted a similar approach, crafting another drama that also functions as a two-hander at times. The film follows a youngster and a boy on a much-needed outing that would allow them to blow off steam and escape the many issues they're grappling with.

For Jeffron (Orhan), a child with severe attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) — which causes difficulties with attention, hyperactivity and impulsivity — life is largely confined within the walls of his home in the United Arab Emirates (UAE), especially since he can no longer attend school. Once his parents, Balu (Deepak Parambol) and Stephy (Divya Prabha), leave for work, locking him inside a room in their flat, Jeffron is left alone with his imagination, which runs wild all the time. Though his parents love him, especially his mother, they are clueless about how to handle his condition, particularly during his outbursts. The most troubling part is that they don't even make the necessary effort to understand or support him, despite Stephy being a nurse with access to resources that could help them educate themselves. Whenever Jeffron throws a tantrum, they treat it as an isolated incident rather than part of a larger pattern, failing to address the root of the issue. Their inability to agree on how to manage his behaviour leads to frequent arguments between Balu and Stephy too, thus making matters worse. Meanwhile, Jeffron crosses paths with Ameer (Asif Ali), an unemployed youth who has arrived in the UAE with dreams of finding a decent job to improve his life and support his elderly mother back home. Jeffron and Ameer are then drawn into an unexpected sarkeet (jaunt) that ends up changing their lives forever.

One of the major draws of Sarkeet, which also under-scores Thamar's strengths as a filmmaker, is how visually distinct it is from 1001 Nunakal, a film that required an opulent setting in keeping with its backdrop. Take Jeffron's house, for instance: its interiors not only reflect how his ADHD manifests, but also subtly reveal the

family's financial struggles — evident in the many items they've repaired or glued back together after Jeffron has broken them, rather than replacing them. Without relying on heavy-handed symbolism or dialogues, writer-director Thamar effectively conveys that the couple's marriage is interfaith; that despite the passage of years, their lives remain insecure; and that both are frustrated with their living conditions. In parallel, and without resorting to extensive exposition or melodrama, the makers also shed proper light on Ameer's living situation. Notably, Thamar's personal experience of having lived in the Gulf has added depth and authenticity to Sarkeet. The struggles depicted in the film, in particular, differ significantly from the stereotypical portrayals often seen in Malayalam cinema set in the UAE, adding to its overall beauty and emotional impact. Within Jeffron's home, too, Thamar avoids the clichéd tropes and exaggerated moments that makers often lean on when depicting marital discord or familial tension. Instead, he treats these dynamics with subtlety and depth, in a way that serves the narrative well. In one scene, Balu and Stephy are shown arguing loudly over Jeffron's behaviour. While most directors might depict the child as visibly distressed — or perhaps crying, Thamar offers a more nuanced portrayal. Here, Jeffron is seen in the background, jumping on the sofa, not paying attention to the conflict around him. In another moment, after Stephy informs Balu that she's pregnant, Jeffron accidentally breaks the tea glass his father is holding. Frustrated by Balu's muted reaction to the news and overwhelmed by everything that's happening — and all that lies ahead — Stephy lashes out and hits Jeffron many times before locking him in his room. She then calmly returns to the dining table, where Balu joins her, and they discuss the idea of adoption. Rather than resorting to theatrics, Thamar handles such emotionally charged scenes with restraint and realism, grounding the film in a naturalistic tone that feels familiar and authentic. His ability to gradually flesh out interpersonal relationships, without forcing characters into writer-convenient situations, is visible in this film. In fact, it isn't limited to Jeffron and Ameer; the dynamics between Balu and Stephy, Balu and his friend Pothan (Asanth), and Ameer and his friend (Swathi Das Prabhu) are also thoughtfully developed. At the same time, the arcs given to the central characters, particularly Ameer and Jeffron, are quite endearing, albeit predictable. While the writing, especially in the second half, comes across as overtly convenient, the heartfelt performances of Asif and Orhan and their compelling on-screen chemistry allow the audience to overlook these shortcomings to an extent.

Another area where the writing falters is in its near-complete disregard for the many other characters once Ameer and Jeffron come together. Even those who appear later in the film feel like afterthoughts, particularly Ameer's father (Zhinzh Shan), who was introduced in an impactful manner with Ameer even delivering an emotional line explaining their tumultuous bond. Asif Ali, as always, delivers a brilliant performance as Ameer. From start to finish, his portrayal only strengthens. Here, he once again showcases his exceptional ability to handle emotional sequences with depth and sincerity, leaving a lasting impression on the audience. Orhan is impressive as Jeffron and he carefully navigates a role that could easily have tipped into overacting. Deepak Parambol delivers a performance better than many of his recent dismal ones. Divya Prabha does a solid job as Stephy, although traces of her character Anu from All We Imagine as Light are visible in this portrayal. Aeyaz's cinematography, particularly in the shots with just Ameer and Jeffron and the entire space around them vacant as if they have only each other, amplifies the film's core themes beautifully. Rangeeth Prathap's editing complements this visual rhythm and elevates the narrative flow. Thamar's thoughtful choices on when to employ music and when to lean into ambient sound further enrich the atmosphere, allowing Govind Vasantha's music to emerge naturally and powerfully when it appears. Equally commendable is Vishvanathan Aravind's art direction.

## Sourav Ganguly asked Shah Rukh Khan's opinion while selecting playing eleven in KKR, Dada answers if someone 'poisoned SRK's ears against' him

When Bollywood star Shah Rukh Khan bought the Kolkata Knight Riders team during the first edition of Indian Premier League in 2008, he got cricketer Sourav Ganguly to lead the team. But after three seasons of less than mediocre results, it was time for KKR to bid adieu to Ganguly. For Ganguly, this was a big blow as the cricketer had been friends with SRK for a long time. In his autobiography, A Century is not Enough: My Roller-coaster Ride to Success, Ganguly recalled his time with SRK in KKR and shared his thoughts about the rumours that someone had "poisoned Shah Rukh's ears against me." He also shared how SRK was gracious enough to extend a hand of friendship even when Ganguly played for a rival team.

Ganguly shared before the start of IPL 4, there were speculations about his future with KKR and soon enough, CEO of the team, Venky Mysore told him that they won't retain him as a player, and offered him a job as a mentor. Ganguly believed that he had more batting left in him and wondered if he should call Shah Rukh to have a direct chat with him, but he stopped himself. "I had known Shah Rukh for a long time and enjoyed a friendship with him. But it was not rocket science to deduce that the offer must have had his approval," he wrote as he reminisced their friendship that first started in the year 2000. As KKR went through one loss after another during their third season, Ganguly said that he would consult with Shah Rukh about their playing eleven. "I used to be in constant touch with him and in sea-



son three, more than once took his opinion while deciding upon the final eleven — something I had never done while picking an Indian eleven. But as I said, the IPL was managed and played in a completely different way," he wrote. Ganguly agreed that the team's decision to remove him from captaincy was "quite justified" but he felt that to leave him out as a batsman was "unjustified." This was the time when many people asked Ganguly if someone had been bad-mouthing him to SRK. "I was also asked many times if someone had poisoned Shah Rukh's ears against me. My answer has been the same: I don't think so. There was a theory doing the rounds that my chest-thumping in a particular match against Deccan Chargers at Eden Gardens had angered the KKR management," he wrote.

## Here's what Wamiqa Gabbi has to share about 'Jubilee 2'

New Delhi: Actress Wamiqa Gabbi, who is gearing up for the release of her upcoming film "Bhool Chuk Maaf," has shared an update about the second season of "Jubilee" and said it is in the writing stage. Talking to IANS about the period drama show, which was released in 2023, Wamiqa told IANS: "I think it's in writing. I only know this much. I have no idea what they are writing, I am also waiting to know more about it. I have only this much update about it." "Jubilee" is created and directed by Vikramaditya Motwane. This series stars Prosenjit Chatterjee, Aparshakti Khurana, Sidhant Gupta, Aditi Rao Hydari, Wamiqa Gabbi

and Ram Kapoor. It is a thrilling yet poetic tale woven around an ensemble of characters and the gambles they're willing to take, in pursuit of their dreams, passion, ambition and love. Talking about "Bhool Chuk Maaf", directed by Karan Sharma, the film revolves around Ranjan, a small-town romantic boy from Banaras, who lands a government job to marry Titli but forgets his vow to Lord Shiva-only to be trapped until he fulfills his promise. A hilarious tale of love, fate, and redemption unfolds. The film is produced by Dinesh Vijan under the Maddock Films banner, with music by Tanishk Bagchi, lyrics by Irshad Kamil, and vocals by Tanishk Bagchi and Madhubanti Bagchi.