

Auto driver dies after alleged thrashing by Rajendranagar police in Hyderabad

Hyderabad: An auto-rickshaw driver died after allegedly being thrashed by the Rajendranagar police on Tuesday night.Mohd Irfan (35), a resident of Gandipet, was reportedly summoned to the police station following a complaint made by his wife Nishad Begum alleging he was maintaining an illicit relationship with another woman.Around 7.30 pm, Irfan went to the police station and was inside till 10.30 pm. His brother, Mohd Sadiq, alleged Irfan was beaten up in the police station. Speaking to media persons at Osmania General Hospital, Sadiq said, “In the police station, my brother’s wife asked the policemen to beat him. On her directions, the police beat my brother with rubber belts.

President Murmu briefed on Operation Sindoor by CDS and service chiefs



GNS News Agency, May 14

Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) General Anil Chauhan, accompanied by the three service chiefs, briefed President Droupadi Murmu, in her capacity as Commander-in-Chief of the Indian Armed Forces, on the progress of Operation Sindoor on Wednesday (May 14, 2025). The meeting included General Upendra Dwivedi, Chief of the Army Staff, Air Chief Marshal A.P. Singh, Chief of the Air Staff, and Admiral Dinesh K. Tripathi, Chief of the Naval Staff, all of whom provided updates on the ongoing operation.

The Rashtrapati Bhavan, in a post on social media platform X, confirmed the briefing and highlighted the President’s recognition of the armed forces’ efforts. “The

President commended the valour and dedication of the armed forces that made India’s response to terrorism a sterling success,” the post read. General Anil Chauhan, Chief of Defence Staff, along with General Upendra Dwivedi, Chief of the Army Staff, Air Chief Marshal A. P. Singh, Chief of the Air Staff, and Admiral Dinesh K. Tripathi, Chief of the Naval Staff, called on President Droupadi Murmu and briefed her about...Operation Sindoor, launched on May 7, is India’s strategic counteroffensive in response to the Pahalgam terror attack on April 22, which claimed the lives of 26 civilians. The operation aims to target and neutralise terror camps operating within Pakistan and Pakistan-Occupied Kashmir.

India’s homegrown ‘Bhargavastra’ counter swarm drone system test fired successfully

GNS News Agency, May 14

A new low-cost Counter Drone System in Hard Kill Mode ‘Bhargavastra’, has been designed and developed by Solar Defence and Aerospace Limited (SDAL) signifying a substantial leap in countering the escalating threat of drone swarms.The micro rockets used in this counter-drone system underwent rigorous testing at the Seaward Firing Range, Gopalpur achieving all designated objectives. Three trials were conducted for the rocket at Gopalpur on May 13 in presence of senior officials of Army Air Defence (AAD).Two trials were conducted by firing one rocket each. One trial was conducted by firing two rockets in salvo mode within 2 seconds. All four rockets performed as expected and achieved the required launch parameters underscoring its pioneering technology in mitigating large-scale drone attacks.A Unified Solution for Countering Unmanned Aerial Vehicle Threats: ‘Bhargavastra’ boasts of advanced capabilities for detecting and eliminating small, incoming drones at distances of upto 2.5 km.

It employs unguided micro rockets as the first layer of defence capable of neutralising swarm of drones with lethal radius of 20 meters and guided micro-missile (already tested earlier) as the second layer for pinpoint accuracy, ensuring precise and impactful neutralisation. Designed for seamless deployment across diverse terrains, including high-altitude regions (> 5000 m above sea level), the system addresses the unique operational demands of India’s armed forces.Highlighting Bhargavastra’s adaptability and cost-effectiveness, SDAL emphasised its indigenous design and the development of dedicated rocket and micro-missiles to neutralise hostile UAVs. Furthermore, the system is modular and can have an additional soft-kill layer to include Jam-



ming and Spoofing to provide an integrated and comprehensive shield for all branches of the armed forces. The system being modular the sensors (Radar, EO & RF Receiver) and shooter can be configured as per user requirement and made to work in an integrated manner for layered and tiered AD cover, enabling engagement of targets at longer ranges.

Further, the system is also engineered for seamless integration with existing network-centric warfare infrastructure. Equipped with a sophisticated Command-and-Control Centre featuring advanced C4I (Command, Control, Communications, Computers, and Intelligence) technology, the system’s radar can detect minute aerial threats from 6 to 10 km away. Its Electro-Optical/Infrared (EO/IR) sensor suite further ensures precise identification of Low Radar Cross-Section (LRCS) targets.‘Bhargavastra’ provides a comprehensive situational awareness overview, enabling operators to evaluate and counter individual drones or entire swarms.

Telangana,” he said. He also confirmed that similar events would be held in the US, UK, Canada, and Australia.MLA Dr K Sanjay, MLC Dasoju Sravan, and other BRS leaders, including Chandu Talla, Abhilash Rangineni, and Putta Vishnuvardhan Reddy, were present at the poster launch.

Hyderabad: Former Minister T Harish Rao expressed anguish over the severe distress faced by Telangana farmers as untimely rains damaged paddy crops across the State. He criticised the Congress government’s delay in procurement, urging Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy to act swiftly.“Farmers are in tears at every procurement centre. The crop cultivated with six months of toil is now soaked and damaged due to thunderstorm,” he said.Taking a direct jab at the Chief Minister, Harish Rao said Revanth Reddy, who is conducting reviews from the Integrated Command Control Centre amid police protection, must open his eyes and come to the rescue of farmers.

Unseasonal rains damage paddy in Mulugu

Mulugu: Heavy rains that lashed Eturnagaram mandal in Mulugu district have damaged paddy stocked at procurement centres at several villages.Paddy procurement centres set up at Shivapuram and Gogupalli villages were inundated by rainwater. As a result piles of paddy at the procurement centres got wet and washed away in the floodwaters causing losses to the farmers.The district witnessed heavy rainfall accompanied by thunder and lightning on Wednesday morning. The farmers were complaining that the delay in procuring paddy has caused losses to them.

Justice B.R. Gavai sworn in as Chief Justice of India

GNS News Agency, May 14

Justice Gavai is the first Buddhist Chief Justice of India. He took his oath of office, pledging his commitment to uphold the Constitution and faithfully discharge duties, in Hindi.Chief Justice Gavai acknowledged the applause with folded hands, shook hands with Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Union Law Minister Arjun Ram Meghwal, Union Home Minister Amit Shah, other dignitaries and family members sitting in the foremost row, including his immediate predecessor, Justice Sanjiv Khanna. The Chief Justice of India touched his mother’s feet. Prime Minister Modi was also seen going upto the Chief Justice’s mother to greet her. The ceremony concluded with the rendering of the National Anthem.Judges of the Supreme Court and High Courts, both sitting and retired, were present at the ceremony.Chief Justice Gavai would be heading straight to the Supreme Court for a cup of tea with his colleagues before they take on the day’s load of cases listed for hearing. The CJI would continue to share his Bench with Justice Augustine George Masih.The Chief Justice is expected to call a meeting of all the judges to discuss the road ahead, share his vision and take suggestions. There is hardly 10 days before the court goes into the annual summer recess, though it would be partly working with at least three Benches hearing cases at a time.Born on November 24, 1960 at Amravati, Justice Gavai Khanna joined the Bar on March 16, 1985. Justice Gavai’s father, Ramakrishna Suryabhan Gavai, also known as ‘Dadasaheb’, was a former Governor of Bihar and a prominent Dalit leader.Known as a bold and decisive judge who speaks his mind, Justice Gavai was part of

many impactful decisions at the Supreme Court, including the upholding of abrogation of Article 370 of the Constitution and the striking down of the electoral bonds scheme.The Judge was part of a Constitution Bench which held that States have a right to sub-classify Scheduled Castes notified in the Presidential List in order to provide them more preferential treatment in public employment and education.Justice Gavai’s judgment in the Manish Sisodia bail case had fortified the right to personal liberty. He headed the Bench which had ordered the release of Perarivalan, a convict in the Rajiv Gandhi assassination case.Justice Gavai practised independently in the Bombay High Court from 1987 to 1990. After 1990, he had practised mainly before Nagpur Bench of Bombay High Court.He had practised in Constitutional and Administrative Law, and was a Standing Counsel for Municipal Corporation of Nagpur, Amravati Municipal Corporation and Amravati University.



Union Cabinet approves 3,706 crore HCL-Foxconn semiconductor joint venture; plant to be set up at Jewar

GNS News Agency, May 14

The proposed HCL-Foxconn semiconductor plant will manufacture display driver chips for mobile phones, laptops, automobiles, and other devices, said Minister of Information and Broadcasting Ashwini Vaishnaw while briefing the media. Noting that there are already five semiconductor units are in advanced stages of construction, the release said that the Jewar plant would mark the be sixth semiconductor unit, and will take India “forward in its journey to develop the strategically vital semiconductor industry.”The unit will process 20,000 wafers per month and create about 2,000 jobs, a release said.“Semiconductor industry is now shaping up across the country. World class design facilities have come up in many States across the country. State governments are vigorously pursuing the design firms,” the press release said.“As the country moves forward in semiconductor journey, the eco system partners have also established their

facilities in India. Applied Materials and Lam Research are two of the largest equipment manufacturers. Both have a presence in India now. Merck, Linde, Air Liquide, Inox, and many other gas and chemical suppliers are gearing up for growth of our semiconductor industry,” it added.



BSF constable, detained by Pakistan, returned to India; Pakistan Rangers personnel also sent back



GNS News Agency, May 14

A Border Security Force (BSF) constable who was detained by the Pakistan Rangers on April 23 after he inadvertently crossed over the border in Punjab was returned to India on Wednesday A senior government official said that a Pakistan Rangers personnel who was detained in India along the Rajasthan border on May 3 was also returned to Pakistan on Wednesday.The return of the jawan comes days after India and Pakistan agreed to cessation of military operations on May 10.BSF said that the “repatriation” of Constable Purnam Kumar Shaw (also spelt as ‘Sahu’) became possible due to the “consistent efforts of BSF through regular flag meetings with Pakistan Rangers and through other communication channels.”BSF said that Mr. Shaw was “taken back from Pakistan by BSF” at 10.30 a.m. on Wednesday at the Attari–Wagah border in Punjab. “He had inadvertently crossed over to Pakistan territory, while on operational duty in area of Ferozepur sector on April 23 around 11.50 a.m. and detained by Pakistan Rangers,” BSF said.The constable from the 182nd battalion was detained a day after the Pahalgam terror attack, while he was accompanying farmers beyond the fence in Ferozepur sector. Farmers are allowed to cultivate land up to the zero line, the international boundary, as the fence and border gates are positioned around 150 yards away. No kind of defence construction is allowed in the open area beyond the fence.According to reports, Mr. Shaw moved into the shade to rest while in uniform and carrying his service rifle

when Pakistan Rangers apprehended him.His return comes 11 days after BSF personnel detained the Pakistani Ranger along the Rajasthan border. Mr. Shaw’s family had expressed hope earlier this week for a possible swap following this development.During Mr. Shaw’s detention, his wife Rajni Sahu had actively sought intervention from West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee to help secure her husband’s release. The constable hails from Rishra in West Bengal. Ms. Sahu had also traveled to Ferozepur to meet with senior BSF officials regarding her husband’s situation.

IMA intensifies fight against quacks in Telangana

GNS News Agency, May 14

Hyderabad: To further intensify the fight against quackery, the Indian Medical Association (IMA), Telangana chapter, on Wednesday directed its local branches to submit a list of medical establishments that are run by quacks to relevant District Collector and Superintendent of Police and urged them to take swift action.In a letter addressed to its local units, the IMA, Telangana, directed its members approach the District Collector and SP to give proper directions to District Medical and Health Officer (DM&HO) to take action against healthcare facilities that are operated by unqualified individuals.“We think this will yield more results by bringing pressure at the local level.

PUBIC NOTICE

This to inform to the general public at large that, Ade Savitha w/o Ade Dhanraj is intending to advance loan from State Bank of India, Branch Shivaji Chowk, Adilabad, by mortgaging property Plot No. 48, in Sy.No. 61/1/1, plot measuring 40'x50'=2000 Sq Fts, situated at Savargaon-T, Adilabad within the limits of Adilabad Municipality, to the bank.

That, the Original link document No. 136/1995 is been lost.

If any one has any claim, right, title or interest of any kind in the said property, they may contact the undersigned within 15 days of the publication of this Notice, with all documents of claim and title.

If no objection is received within 15 days, then the bank will proceed to complete the other formalities for the mortgage and if any claim and objection arise, it shall be deemed to have been waived.

Bipin Kumar Patel
Advocate,
ADARSH Building,
N.H.No.44, Adilabad
Cell: 9440005500

Dt: 14-05-2025

BRS silver jubilee celebrations in Dallas on June 1, poster unveiled at Telangana Bhavan

GNS News Agency, May 14

Hyderabad: The silver jubilee anniversary of BRS is set to be celebrated together with a grand event at the DR Pepper Arena in Dallas, USA on June 1, coinciding with Telangana Formation Day on June 2. Former Minister and BRS MLA Talasani Srinivas Yadav unveiled the poster for the BRS Silver Jubilee celebrations at Telangana Bhavan on Wednesday.Speaking on the occasion, Srinivas Yadav pointed to the global enthusiasm among the diaspora about the silver jubilee anniversary of the BRS and Telangana formation. He said Telangana NRIs across the world are celebrating the formation of the State with pride.In ten years of K Chandrashekhar Rao’s leadership, Hyderabad saw remarkable growth. The celebrations at Elkathurthy were historic, and it is heartening to see NRIs now stepping up for the BRS Silver Jubilee,” he said.BRS Global NRI coordinator Mahesh Bigala announced that the party’s 25-year milestone would be marked with cultural programmes and a large NRI gathering in Dallas, with BRS working president KT Rama Rao addressing the gathering. “Telangana and Telugu NRIs are showing immense interest in the event. Party chief K Chandrashekhar Rao has a deep connection with Dallas, and the celebrations will reflect the pride of

Indian Chronicle

English Daily

Captain Kohli

Virat Kohli's retirement from Test cricket — abrupt and untimely for millions of his fans — brought the curtains down on an era that saw India consolidate its position as a cricket powerhouse. The defining feature of Kohli, whose career spanned 14 years and 123 Tests, has been his infectious energy, grit and relentless pursuit of excellence which helped redefine Indian cricket. He is one of the best Test captains and batters to have ever played for the country. Apart from personal records, which put him among the greats of modern cricket, Kohli's biggest contribution is that he has brought fitness to the centre stage of the game and his on-field manic energy rubs off on his teammates. Hailed as a master chaser, his running between the wickets — swiftly converting singles into twos — is the stuff of cricketing legend. Many feel that he still has enough cricket left in him and his exit from Test may have come a bit early. However, as King Kohli himself said, it was not an easy decision but it felt right. It is commendable that he has decided to call it quits in the longer format of the game when he is still at his peak. What set him apart was not just his hunger for runs, but his commitment to excellence in the toughest format of the game. His leadership marked a shift in how India competed overseas — with aggression, self-belief and refusal to settle for second best.

Coming just after skipper Rohit Sharma's retirement, Kohli's exit will leave the Indian team, touring England next month, in the hands of inexperienced young talent. In the years that this Delhi lad dominated the game, it was impossible not to be mesmerised by his energy. Kohli made his Test debut on India's tour of the West Indies in mid-2011 and took over the Test captaincy reins from MS Dhoni in 2014. He led India over a successful eight-year tenure with 50 Test wins out of 68 outings, making him the most successful Indian Test captain ever.

Central Government Accused of Undermining MGNREGA Implementation."



"Ps Ashokan"Indian Chronicle"Manthani May,14,""Gaddalapalli, Manthani Mandal – May 14, 2025"During an inspection of the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) worksite at Gaddalapalli village in Manthani mandal, members of the Agricultural Workers' Union expressed grave concern over the challenges faced by laborers under the scheme. "Speaking to the media, Mr. Budida Ganesh, District Secretary of the Agricultural Workers' Union, alleged that the Central Government is deliberately obstructing the effective implementation of MGNREGA by introducing excessive rules and conditions. He stated that these restrictions are resulting in the exploitation of rural laborers. "It is unacceptable that laborers toiling under the blistering sun are receiving a mere Rs. 50 as daily wages," he said. "Due to extreme weather conditions, workers are unable to meet the official workload targets, which are unrealistic and inhumane. These standards must be revised. "Mr. Ganesh demanded that authorities ensure the mandated wage of Rs. 307 per day is paid to every worker. He further called for immediate arrangements for shade and drinking water at all worksites, and urged the government to release all pending wages without delay. "He criticized the Central Government for weakening the objectives of the employment guarantee scheme through excessive regulations and procedural delays. "Several union members and local leaders, including Ram Reddy, Rajireddy, Balayya, and Ramulu, were present during the inspection and extended their solidarity with the workers.

Unseasonal rains in Telangana wreak havoc on crops, farmers demand relief

GNS News Agency, May 14

Hyderabad: Unseasonal rains and thunderstorms have battered several parts in the State over the last few days, causing extensive damage to crops. The relentless downpour, accompanied by gusty winds and hailstorms, has left farmers reeling in many districts. Crops such as paddy, maize and mango have borne the brunt.

Districts such as Mulugu, Adilabad, Nirmal, Mancherla, Karimnagar, Nizamabad, Kamareddy, Siddipet, Warangal, Hanamkonda, Sangareddy, Medak, Rangareddy, Suryapet, Yadadri Bhongir and Mahabubabad reported extensive crop losses. In Mulugu, paddy stocks at procurement centres were soaked, rendering them unfit for sale, while standing crops were flattened by strong winds. Farmers in Mancherla complained of losses similar to an earlier round in April last during which some 862 acres of paddy and 3,713 acres of mango orchards were devastated alongside 2 lakh metric tonnes of paddy at procurement centers.

Preliminary estimates suggest the May 12–14 rains have caused considerable damage, with ongoing surveys by agricultural officials expected to reveal the full extent. The India Meteorological Department (IMD) had issued an orange alert for Hyderabad and other districts, forecasting light to moderate rain with thunderstorms through May 14. The unseasonal weather, driven by a cyclonic circulation, has disrupted the harvest season, particularly for paddy and maize, while mango orchards in northern districts suffered premature fruit fall due to gales. Farmers like Venkatesh from Mulugu expressed despair, stating: "The rains destroyed our paddy just when we were ready to sell. We need immediate government help." The State government has directed district officials to conduct rapid damage assessments, with promises of compensation at Rs. 10,000 per acre, as seen in prior incidents. However, farmers voiced frustration citing delays in procurement and relief.

Everything is ready for the visit of the Miss World contestants to Ramappa"— Security should be on high alert at all times"— District SP Dr. Shabarish.P IPS



"Mulugu, Mahipal, Indian Chronicle: In the wake of the arrival of Miss World contestants in Mulugu district on Friday, Mulugu District SP P. Shabarish has ordered the personnel who have come to the security to be on high alert at all times. Speaking at a meeting organized with the officers and personnel who have come to the district headquarters for security, he ordered the officers and personnel, from the home guards to the top-level officials, to be on high alert at every place where the Miss World contestants are likely to visit. He advised them to be at their assigned duty points and to perform their duties with commitment without any negligence. He advised the security personnel to be on high alert at all times to prevent any untoward incidents from



happening anywhere. A total of one thousand officers and staff, including one Additional SP, ASP, two DSPs, 14 CIs, 43 SIs, 127 ASIs, HCs, 360 constables, 160 women constables, 54 home guards, 113 TGSP constables, and 125 special party constables, are being deployed for the World Beauty Day.

Along with the SP, Additional SP Sadanandam, ASP Eturunagaram Shivam Upadhyaya IPS, DCRB DSP Kishore Kumar, Mulugu DSP Ravinder, CIs, RIs, SIs, RSIs, and staff who came for the event participated in the meeting. After the meeting, the District SP conducted a mock drill with the district officials to create awareness among the officers and staff who came to the security post.

Manthani Student Excels at International Karate Championship in Malaysia"Wins Gold and Silver Medals.

"PS Ashokan"Indian Chronicle"Manthani May,14,""In a remarkable achievement that has brought pride to the town of Manthani and the Peddapalli district, Mettu Hasini, a 19-year-old student of the Japan Shitoryu Karate Academy, has secured top honors at the International Karate Championship held at the Hypocity Sports Council Hall in Malaysia from May 9 to 12, 2025. "Competing in the 66 kg weight category, Hasini clinched the Gold Medal in the Kata event and the Silver Medal in the Kumite event, demonstrating exceptional skill, discipline, and determination. Her success is attributed to the expert training and mentorship of Karate coach Mr. Kaviti Sammayya. "Her outstanding performance has been lauded by several eminent personalities in the karate community, including Mr. P. Papayya (National Vice President, Japan Shitoryu Karate), Mr. Guntupalli Sammayya (State Executive President), and senior instructors Mr. Ippa Srinivas, Mr. Nagelli Rakesh, Ms. Jadagala Shivani, Mr. Kaviti Shiva Ganesh, Ms. K. Shwetha Nandana, Ms. Md. Taiba, Ms. T. Harshini, Mr. K. Vishnu, Mr. B. Vishnuvardhan, Mr. P. Geya Sriram, and Mr. P. Teja Sriramulu. "This international accomplishment is a source of great inspiration for young athletes and a proud moment for the local community.



Revenue conferences should be utilised: District Collector Jitesh V. Patil.District “



"Ranjith naik Bhukya ,Bhadrachalam,May 14(Indian Chronicle) : "Collector Jitesh V. Patil stated that land issues will be resolved as soon as those with land issues participate in the revenue conference and submit their applications. It is known that Sujathanagar mandal has been selected as a pilot project for organising revenue conferences as part of the implementation of the Bhu Bharati Act. On this occasion, the Collector examined the applications given by farmers on land issues in Bhu Bharati in Sarvaram and Koyagudem villages of Sujathanagar mandal.Later, the Collector said that in this revenue conference, the officials will receive applications related to land issues such as name errors in land records, fluctuations in land area, inherited lands, land nature errors, land issues on the prohibited list,

survey number missing, absence of patta pass books, up-dating of government lands, simple title cases, determination of boundaries, issues of lands included in Part-B, land acquisition cases and other land issues and conduct field investigations as per the Bhu Bharati New ROR Act. He also said that the lands will be resolved within the specified time. After the conferences in the revenue villages of the mandal are completed, conferences will be held in all the mandals of the district in the first week of June. The Tahsildar was also asked to ensure that there is no difficulty faced by those who come to submit applications.Kothagudem RDO Madhu, Sujathanagar Tahsildar Sirisha and other concerned officials participated in this programme along with the Collector.

M.P. HC orders immediate FIR against Minister Vijay Shah over remarks on Colonel Sofiya Qureshi

GNS News Agency, May 14

The Madhya Pradesh High Court on Wednesday (May 14, 2025) directed the State Police to register an FIR within four hours against Cabinet Minister Vijay Shah over his controversial remarks on Colonel Sofiya Qureshi of the Indian Army, with the court noting that he had called the officer a "sister of terrorists".

Taking suo moto cognizance of the matter, Justice Atul Sreedharan directed Director General of Police (DGP) Kailash Makwana to lodge an FIR against Mr. Shah within four hours under serious criminal charges, including the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita Sections 196 (promoting enmity between groups) and 152 (act endangering sovereignty, unity and integrity of India). "Prima facie, the statement of the Minister that Colonel Sofiya Qureshi is the 'sister of the terrorists' who carried out the attack of Pahalgalam encourages feelings of separatist activities, which thereby endan-

gers the sovereignty and integrity of India," Justice Sreedharan said, after taking cognizance of news reports.

Noting that Mr. Shah's comments are "dangerous", Justice Sreedharan said, "Now, they have started reaching out to the Armed Forces of this country." Shortly after the HC's directions, a top official in the Chief Minister's Office told The Hindu that discussions were going on among senior Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leaders about a possible action against Mr. Shah. Mr. Shah, State's Tribal Welfare and Bhopal Gas Tragedy Relief and Rehabilitation Minister, has once again courted controversy with his remarks, with Opposition leaders alleging that he has linked Colonel Qureshi with terrorists of the April 22 Pahalgalam attack. Addressing a public event on May 12, Mr. Shah had said, "Those people (terrorists) who had wiped out the sindoor (vermilion) of our sisters... we avenged these people by sending their sister to destroy them.

Trainee IPS officers visited the 5th Battalion “



"Mulugu, Mahipal, Indian Chronicle: Trainee IPS officers visited the Telangana 5th Police Battalion in Chawai, Govindaraopet Mandal, Mulugu district on Tuesday. Trainee IPS officers Mannan Bhat, Ruthvik Sai, Sai Kiran, and Vasundhara, who inspected the entire battalion, met with the in-charge Commandant K. Subrahmanyam and inquired about the details. The Commandant briefly explained to them about the system, functioning, and work being done by the battalion. Later, they visited the Pasra Outpost related to the battalion and learned about its duties and functioning. They discussed departmental matters with the officials. Assistant Commandant Anil Kumar, RIs Shobhan Babu, Karthik, Salmon Raj, Ram Prasad, Annayya and other staff participated in the program.

P.Harindranath is new Deputy EO of Sri Padmavati Temple“



"May 14, Indian Chronicle , Rayalaseema coordinator" "P. Harindranath has assumed charge as the new Deputy Executive Officer (DEO) of the renowned Sri Padmavathi Ammavari Temple in Tiruchanoor. This appointment follows a recent large-scale transfer of Deputy EOs within the Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams (TTD). "Upon assuming office on Wednesday, Harindranath expressed his elation at being entrusted with this responsibility at the abode of Goddess Sri Padmavathi Ammavaru. He attributed this opportunity to the divine grace of the Goddess. Speaking to the media, the newly appointed DEO affirmed his commitment to ensuring a satisfying pilgrimage experience for all devotees. He emphasized his dedication to taking necessary measures for the smooth conduct of Kainkaryams (religious services) to the Goddess in accordance with the Agama Shastras. "Prior to this role, Harindranath served in the R-2 section of Tirumala. The outgoing Deputy EO, Sri Govindarajan, has been repatriated to his parent department, the HR Services

Farmers need not worry"- The government will buy every grain soaked due to untimely rains"- The Congress government will support every farmer"- Minister Seethakka inspects the soaked paddy“Mulugu,



Mahipal, Indian Chronicle: Panchayat Raj, Rural Development, Rural Water Supply and Women and Child Welfare Minister Dhanasari Anasuya Seethakka inspected the paddy soaked due to untimely rains that fell on Tuesday night in Gogupalli village of Eturunagaram mandal. Speaking on the occasion, he said that farmers need not worry due to untimely rains, and the government will buy every grain soaked due to untimely rains. "Her said that the state government will support the farmers and the government will pay the crop loss compensation and deposit it directly in the farmers' accounts. District Agriculture Department officials have instructed the officials to find out where the paddy is still wet and purchase it on a war footing. District Library Chairman Banoth Ravi Chander, along with Congress Party state district block mandal village leaders, activists and others participated in this program."

GHMC steps up efforts to support livelihoods of transgender community

Hyderabad: Efforts are on to ensure the transgender community members get opportunities to earn a dignified living, senior officials from Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC) on Tuesday said.As part of these efforts, GHMC Additional Commissioners, Sneha Shabarish and Chandrakanth Reddy held a meeting with the members of the transgender community to chalk out strategies aimed at providing them with meaningful employment.Facilitated by GHMC's Urban Community Development (UCD), the meeting focused on ways to upskill transgenders and have them in different roles. "We tried to gauge their qualifications and interests so that they can be offered job opportunities in various departments of GHMC," said Sneha Shabarish.

District SP Rohit Raju IPS handed over 150 mobile phones recovered by the district police through the CEIR portal to the victims.“



“Ranjith naik Bhukya, Bhadrachalam, May 14 (Indian Chronicle): “District SP Rohit Raju IPS informed that the mobile phones of the victims who lost their phones in all the police stations across the district will be recovered through the CEIR portal and returned to them. He said that the mobile phones lost by the victims will be traced based on the complaints received through the CEIR portal in all the police stations across the district. Today, 150 victims who lost their mobile phones in the last two months were handed over their phones at the district SP office. He informed that if the victims who lost their mobile phones immediately register all the details asked for online in the CEIR portal, their mobile phones will be tracked and traced back from the concerned police station. Therefore, if anyone has lost or stolen their mobile phone, they can immediately get their mobile phones back through the CEIR portal. He informed us that in the last five months, a total of 743 mobile phones have been found and handed over to the victims. The SP said that if one can lodge a complaint by entering the details of their lost mobile phone through the portal, then such phones can be easily found. He said that such a mobile can be traced only when a third party tries to use the lost mobile phone. On this occasion, the SP congratulated the district police officers and staff who worked hard in finding and handing over the mobile phones of the victims. Later, he presented them with certificates of appreciation. SB Inspector Srinivas, IT Cell Incharge CI Ramu, SI Suresh and IT Cell members Naveen, Naresh, Mahesh, Naren and others participated in this programme.

““Former MLA Kuna Srisailam Goud Distributes CMRF Cheques to Beneficiaries“



“Quthbullapur, May 14 “Former MLA and Congress state leader Kuna Srisailam Goud distributed cheques from the Chief Minister’s Relief Fund (CMRF) at his residence in Shapur Nagar, which falls under the Quthbullapur constituency. The cheques were given to individuals recently treated for health issues in hospitals—Rs. 15,000 to Rakshalkar Swapna, Rs. 60,000 to Thammali Narasimha, and Rs. 60,000 to Mahesh Goud.”“Later, he met with several people from the constituency who came with problems and requests. He accepted petitions and responded positively.

Speaking on the occasion, Kuna Srisailam Goud said that the Chief Minister’s Relief Fund has become a boon for the poor. “He stated that the Chief Minister’s goal is to ensure that every common person in Telangana receives the benefits of welfare schemes. He emphasized that the people’s government is committed to public welfare and development.”“The event was attended by local residents, welfare association leaders, women’s groups, public representatives, party leaders, workers, supporters, and others.

CPI Constituency Secretary Uma Mahesh Condemns Remarks Against Khureshi, Who Successfully Led Operation Sindhoor



“Quthbullapur, May 14 “CPI constituency secretary Uma Mahesh, in a press statement, strongly condemned the comments made by BJP minister Vijay Shah, who allegedly referred to Indian soldier Sofia Khureshi as a “sister of Pakistani terrorists.” Uma Mahesh termed these remarks as treasonous and demanded the immediate arrest of the minister.”“He stated that Sofia Khureshi, who bravely led Operation Sindhoor—an Indian government operation retaliating against terrorist attacks in Pahalgam, Kashmir—risked her life to destroy terrorist camps in Pakistan. Undermining her heroism and dedication based on religion is unacceptable, he said.”“The CPI condemns attempts to demean her by linking her religious identity to terrorism. Uma Mahesh criticized BJP ministers and certain leaders for turning the sacrifices of soldiers into tools for political gain, especially by adding a communal twist. He emphasized that such behavior shows the BJP’s lack of genuine respect for the Indian armed forces.”“He also accused the BJP of politicizing terrorist attacks and military responses, similar to how they allegedly used the Pulwama and Parliament attacks during previous elections. However, he asserted that the people have seen through such strategies and rejected them.”“Uma Mahesh demanded that BJP minister Vijay Shah be immediately removed from the cabinet, declared a traitor, and arrested for insulting the bravery and sacrifice of the Indian soldier by making communal comment

Karimnagar sees rise in ACB cases against government officials

Karimnagar: Though there is nothing new in government officials demanding bribe, corruption among officials seems to have gone up in the recent past. Fifteen officials were trapped by the Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) within a span of five months in the district. Though officials of 13 Government Departments, which have direct connection with the public, have frequently been involved in corruption, the percentage is high in the revenue and police departments. In a recent incident, ACB officials had arrested Irrigation Department Executive Engineer Arram Reddy Amarender Reddy for taking a bribe of Rs 60,000 from a contractor at his residence in Karimnagar on Friday night. Working in the Irrigation Division-7 of Rajanna-Sircilla district, the EE had

demanding the bribe to clear bills of Rs 50 lakh of the complainant. In another incident, two officials working with the Irrigation Department’s Division-6 office in Sultanabad were trapped on April 23. Office superintendent Dupala Sridhar Babu had demanded a bribe of Rs 20,000 from one of the office employees Ijaz to prepare bills for his sick leave (Half Pay Leave) of 88 days. On April 11, Senior Assistant of District Treasury office, Jagtial, Raghu Kumar was trapped while accepting a bribe of Rs 7,000 from a retired employee to clear pending bills. In a similar incident, Jammikunta Indira Kranthi Patham (IKP) community coordinator Pasaragonda Suresh was trapped while accepting a bribe of Rs 10,000 from a village organisation assistant .

Disability is only for the body, not for the mind“-



Disabled people should take a step forward with self-confidence“- Minister Danasari Seethakka “Mulugu, Mahipal, Indian Chronicle: Disability is only for the body, not for the mind, and these aids are being distributed to help the disabled people take a step forward with self-confidence, said State Panchayat Raj, Rural Development, Rural Water Supply, Women and Child Welfare Minister Danasari Anasuya Seethakka. A special program was organized at the Zilla Parishad office under the chairmanship of District Welfare Officer K. Sirisha under the auspices of the Women, Children, Disabled and Elderly Welfare Department to distribute battery-powered tricycles to 6 disabled people of the district. Minister Seethakka, who was the chief guest on the occasion, said that disability is only for the body, not for the mind, and these aids are being distributed to help the disabled people take a step forward with self-confidence. He praised that the disabled are no less than the able-bodied and that they still have different abilities. He said that the public government is committed to the welfare of the disabled, and as part of that, reservations are being given to the disabled in government jobs and welfare schemes. He also said that as part of providing employment to the disabled, arrangements have been made so that they can get

a job suitable to their qualifications without having to go around any offices for job opportunities, but directly register their details on the website specially created for them by the government. He said that in the coming days, innovative programs will be designed under the auspices of our public government for the development and welfare of the disabled with the aim of empowering them. He hoped that our public government will work like a crutch for the disabled and that the disabled will take advantage of the welfare schemes implemented by the government and rise to the top. Later, District Collector Diwakara T.S. Speaking on the occasion, he said that in every welfare scheme implemented by the government, the disabled will be given first priority and the government will provide all possible support to the disabled in the district. Addressing this program, Chitra Mishra, ITDA Project Officer, Eturunagaram, said that it is a great thing to provide these assistive devices to the disabled for free with the special initiative of Minister Seethakka. He advised the disabled to use these assistive devices properly and overcome their disability. Additional Collectors Mahender, Sampath Rao, Library Chairman Banoth Ravi Chander, “Other departmental officials and others participated in the program.”

After decade-long hiatus, Maharashtra to relaunch seaplane tourism services

GNS News Agency, May 14

A decade after its maiden flight, Maharashtra is set to revive its long-anticipated seaplane tourism project, marking a renewed push to improve regional connectivity and tap into the state’s vast tourism potential. The Maharashtra Tourism Development Corporation (MTDC) decided to relaunch seaplane services in the state, connecting Mumbai, Pune, western Maharashtra, and Konkan with lesser-accessible yet scenic locations such as Ganpatipule in Ratnagiri, Koyna Dam in Satara, Ujani Dam in Solapur, and Mandwa near Alibaug. Officials said the initiative was designed to reduce travel time, offer a unique aerial experience, and promote tourism in areas rich in the state’s natural and cultural heritage.

The seaplane initiative was originally launched in February 2014 with a nine-seater Cessna 208 Amphibian aircraft operating between Mumbai and Pavana dam near Lonavala. However, the service faced multiple challenges, including regulatory hurdles and the arrest of Sahara Group chief Subrata Roy, leading to the suspension of operations shortly after its commencement. Additionally, MTDC’s efforts to start a seaplane service within Mumbai—from Juhu airport to Girgaum Chowpatty—were stalled due to approvals pending for the construction of a jetty at Chowpatty. “This time, the approach is more pragmatic and future-ready,” a senior MTDC official said. “We are focusing on commercially viable routes, using existing infrastructure like helipads and certified waterbodies, and working closely with civil aviation authorities to streamline permissions.”

Under the revamped plan, MTDC proposes to use 9–19-seater amphibious aircraft—single or twin-engine—that can operate on land and water. The service is envisioned not just as a novelty, but as a sustainable, quick-access transport mode for tourists and high-value travelers. Officials said bids/Expressions of Interest (EOIs) have been invited from aviation operators with experience in seaplane operations. “We aim to introduce seaplane operations as part of our tourism and connectivity enhancement initiatives. The project will facilitate faster travel to key tourist destinations, boost tourism, and improve regional connectivity. The initiative will enhance accessibility to tourist attractions, promote regional connectivity, and offer premium aerial tours showcasing the state’s natural beauty, historical landmarks, and cultural heritage.

Maharashtra’s diverse landscape, ranging from the Western Ghats and pristine beaches to UNESCO World



Heritage sites, offers significant potential for seaplane operations,” the official said. This initiative seeks to enhance travel convenience, boost tourism, and create a structured framework for seaplane tourism operations in the state. The MTDC official added that the objective was to enhance tourism potential by introducing seaplane connectivity to strategic locations and improving accessibility to destinations by utilising existing helipads. “This would also boost economic growth at tourist destinations and ensure environmentally sustainable and safe operations,” he said. The project is also being framed within Maharashtra’s broader goal of sustainable tourism development. “We are factoring in environmental safeguards from day one, including impact assessments and compliance with coastal and aviation regulations,” the official added. Apart from easing access to destinations like Ganpatipule—known for its beachside temple—and ecotourism hubs such as Koyna and Panshet, the seaplane service is expected to provide a boost to local economies through increased tourist footfall and associated employment. Experts say the success of the initiative will depend on affordable pricing, reliable schedules, and awareness-building among domestic tourists. “Seaplanes work best when integrated with other modes of transport and marketed as part of a curated travel experience,” said a tourism industry analyst. If successful, Maharashtra will be one of the first states in the country to operate a multi-route seaplane network. MTDC indicated that initial routes could be operational within the next few months, subject to final clearances and operator agreements. The state’s renewed focus on aerial and water-based transport reflects a wider trend in post-pandemic tourism planning, where smaller aircraft, shorter getaways, and access to nature-based destinations are increasingly in demand. Maharashtra has also decided to introduce cruise tourism, with plans for coastal and river cruise services.

Traders prepared to boycott Turkish apples



GNS News Agency, May 14

Traders in Pune and Mumbai’s wholesale fruit markets say the decision to ban imports of apples from Turkey would take effect later in the season as the season is yet to start there, however many traders confirmed that they would support the boycott. Apples from the USA, Poland, Iran, South Africa, traders said, would be more than enough to fulfill supply needs with domestic production from Himachal Pradesh and other parts of North India, traders say.

In view of reports of a ban on apples from Turkey, traders in Pune’s market said that at present products from

the country are yet to reach the state. “Turkey’s season starts post October and continues for 3-4 months. At present apples from USA, Iran, South Africa are feeding the domestic demand along with domestic production,” said a trader from Pune’s wholesale market. Rohan Ursal, a trader from the market, said Poland has emerged as an important source market for apples in recent times.After Turkey’s military support to Pakistan, calls for boycott of the country and its produce has grown loud in the country. In the fiscal year of 2023-24, India had imported 11.76 lakh tonnes of apples from the country. Pistachios, peas, masur are other major exports to India from Turkey.

Traders in Pune’s market said they would participate in the ban. “Of course we will support the ban but Turkey will start exporting later in the year,” said a trader from Pune’s market yard. Traders assured that there would not be any shortfall in production or availability as the countries have reported good production figures till date. Post the conflict between Pakistan and A section of Indian citizens has called for the boycott of Turkey. Both these countries have helped Pakistan with arms and ammunition.Both Turkey and Azerbaijan are major tourist destinations for Indian travellers. Last year trade sources said over 3.25 lakh Indian tourists had visited Turkey.

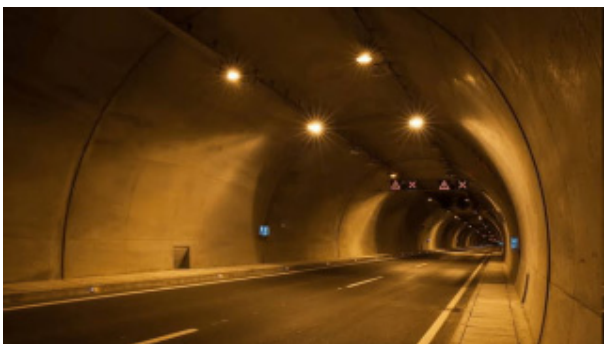
Bengaluru civic body to spend over Rs 50 crore on consultancy firms for big-ticket infra projects

GNS News Agency, May 14

Rs 53.7 crore. That is how much the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) is set to spend on consultancy firms and financial advisors as part of Karnataka Deputy Chief Minister D K Shivakumar’s Brand Bengaluru initiatives aimed at decongesting the state capital and streamlining mobility in the city.The BBMP has already spent over Rs 14 crore on preparing a detailed project report (DPR) and a pre-feasibility report for the tunnel road and elevated corridor projects in Bengaluru. This includes Rs 9.5 crore paid to Rodic Consultants for a DPR of the 18-km Hebbal-Silk Board tunnel road and Rs 4.7 crore to Turkey-based Altinok Consulting for the feasibility study, which proposes a 170-km network including the 46-km tunnel roads (North-South and East-West corridors) and 124.7 km of elevated corridors, double-deckers, and underpasses.

Additionally, the BBMP is set to spend over Rs 9 crore after shortlisting Rodic Consultants once again for preparing the DPR of the east-west tunnel road connecting KR Puram and Nayandahalli. The BBMP is also set to incur a cost of Rs 22 crore for consultancy services from like Siddhi Consulting Engineers, Nagesh Consultants, and Infra Support for preparing the DPR for four elevated corridors.Further, BBMP has also hired Boston Consulting Group (BCG) as financial advisors for 21 weeks at a cost of Rs 8.5 crore. This comes close on the heels of the state government appointing BCG as financial advisors at a cost of Rs 9.5 crore primarily to address financial pressures and boost revenue to fund its ambitious welfare schemes and infrastructure projects. The mandate was to enhance tax and non-tax revenues, streamline expenditures, plug financial leakages, and explore innovative funding sources like public-private partnerships (PPPs).

According to BBMP officials, New-Delhi based Rodic Consultants, which was criticised for its “shoddy” executive summary of the north-south tunnel road DPR, has once again been shortlisted by the civic agency. In fact, a three-member panel headed by BMRCL executives was also formed to verify the technical and other aspects of the DPR. Meanwhile, the government is yet to officially approve the BBMP’s decision to go ahead with the only single bid of Rodic Consultants for preparing the east-west tunnel road DPR. The New Delhi-based consultancy firm came under severe public scrutiny for an alleged “copy-paste” job of the north-south tunnel road project DPR. The BBMP also



slapped a fine of Rs 5 lakh on the firm for a “compiling error” during preparation of the executive summary of the DPR.

The civic agency has shortlisted Siddhi Consulting Engineers for preparing a DPR for an elevated corridor connecting Old Madras Road to Madiwala. Nagesh Consultants will be tasked with a DPR for a flyover/underpass along Kanakapura Road, and Infra Support is shortlisted for preparing a DPR for an elevated corridor connecting Nagawara and Bagalur Junction and a corridor connecting Old Madras Road and Yeshwantpur.“The objective is to plan for road infrastructure that will last in Bengaluru for the next 25-30 years. We have given the consultants 60 days to prepare the DPR for the four elevated corridor projects. The government is yet to approve it,” said a BBMP official. The consultants have been tasked with developing comprehensive traffic surveys, alignment plans, land acquisition schedules (if any), structural designs and other related detailed field studies.Meanwhile, the Karnataka government has allocated a budget of Rs 7,000 crore for the BBMP in 2025-26. Additionally, the government has stood as a guarantor for Rs 19,000 crore to support the BBMP’s Rs 40,000-crore tunnel road projects.Criticising the staggering consultancy expenditure, Satya Arikutharam, an urban mobility expert, said, “It is becoming clearer that the yet-to-be-established BMLTA’s (Bengaluru Metropolitan Land Transport Authority) oversight is sorely missed by the city. The BBMP’s consultancy expedition is not only wasteful, it also severely hurts the cause of sustainable public transport.”“Expect multiple Ejjipuras dotting the city for decades if the government succeeds in pushing these half-baked schemes,” Arikutharam added, referring to the long-delayed construction of a flyover at Ejjipura in the city.

PSEB Class 12 Results 2025: 91% students pass, Harseerat Kaur from Barnala tops with perfect 100%



GNS News Agency, May 14

The Punjab School Education Board (PSEB) Wednesday announced the Class 12 results 2025, with a pass percentage of 91 per cent, 2 percentage points lower than last year.Announcing the results, PSEB chairman Dr Amarpal Singh attributed the drop in pass percentage to the strict measures the board took to curb cheating during examinations.Harseerat Kaur from Barnala is the Class 12 topper. A student of Sarvhitkari Senior Secondary Vidya Mandir, Barnala, she achieved a perfect score of 500 out of 500 marks (100 per cent).

The second position was secured by Manveer Kaur from the Science stream, with 498 out of 500 marks (99.60 per cent). She is a student of S S Memorial Senior Secondary Public School, Kassoana (Ferozepur). The third position was claimed by Arsh Nahi from the Humanities stream, who also scored 498 out of 500 marks (99.60 per cent). She is a student of Shri Tara Chand Vidya Mandir Senior Secondary School, Bhikhi (Mansa). Although both students scored the same marks, Manveer Kaur was awarded the second position due to being younger.The chairman said 2,65,388 students appeared for the exams, out of which 2,41,506 students passed. The pass percentage among girls was 94.32 per cent, while it was 88.08 per cent among boys. Notably, all three transgender students who took the exam cleared it.The pass percentage in rural areas was 91.20 per cent, slightly higher than the 90.74 per cent in urban areas. Government schools recorded a pass percentage of 91.01 per cent, private schools 92.47 per cent, and aided schools 86.86 per cent.Regarding stream-wise performance, Science stream topped with a pass percentage of 98.52 per cent, followed by Commerce at 96.83 per

cent, Vocational at 90 per cent, and Humanities at 87.58 per cent.District-wise, Amritsar topped with a pass percentage of 96.29 per cent, followed by Gurdaspur (95.84 per cent) and Pathankot (94.21 per cent). Ironically, Barnala, the home district of the topper Harseerat Kaur, recorded the lowest pass percentage at 86.07 per cent.

In the merit list, Ludhiana outshone all other districts with 55 students making it to the list. Hoshiarpur followed with 31 students, Patiala with 30, Jalandhar with 25, Amritsar with 16, Ferozepur with 15, and SAS Nagar with 13 students. Notably, not a single student from the Malerkotla district was featured on the merit list.

CII to conduct two-day conference & expo for cement industry from May 15

Hyderabad: The Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) – Green Business Centre is set to host the 21st edition of Green Cementech 2025 Conference & Exposition at HICC, Hyderabad, on May 15 and 16.

The event being organized in partnership with the Cement Manufacturers Association (CMA) with the theme ‘Road towards Net Zero Carbon’, aims to provide a dynamic platform for cement industry leaders and sustainability professionals to share, showcase and discuss latest developments in the net-zero transition.Featureing presentations and discussions on the net-zero transition in the Indian cement industry, it will have more than 10 technical sessions, 50 national and international speakers, 500 participants, and 70 plus stalls showcasing the latest technologies and services, a press release said.For registration, those interested can click <https://shorturl.at/FBL5W> contact Ph. 80089-22217. Website: <https://shorturl.at/15myz>



United Kingdom's new immigration rules to hit Indian students and workers hard



GNS News Agency, May 14

Hyderabad: The United Kingdom government’s decision to tighten visa norms are set to hit Indian students, more particularly Telugus, aspiring to study and build a career in Great Britain, hard.As per the recent rules released by the UK government, foreign students will now be allowed to stay only for 18 months post completion of their degrees in the UK universities. Though the government retained the Graduate Route, a visa that allows international students to stay in the country and work, it had reduced the stay duration from 24 months to 18 months.

Under the new measures, foreign students who acquired Regulated Qualifications Framework (RQF) Level 6 (graduate) and above qualification will be eligible for skilled worker visas. This is a significant shift from previous rules, which allowed recruitment at RQF Level 3 like care workers and other mid-skilled workers.The salary threshold for

skilled workers has also been increased, making it difficult for the employers to hire international students who graduated from the UK universities.

Further, the UK government has done away with the social care visas to new applications received from overseas. Until a new workforce strategy is developed and rolled out by 2028, the government decided to permit visa extensions and in-country switching for those who are already in the UK.These new norms are set to impact an already plummeting number of Indian students opting for higher education in the UK, which recorded a 26 per cent decrease. As per the UK Home Office data, the sponsored student visas issued to Indian students fell from 1,20,000 to 88,732 between years 2023 and 2024.“There is already a drop in the number of students going to the UK, Canada and US due to tighter immigration norms. Given the new rules, students opting for the UK are expected to further come down. Students are now opting for countries – New Zealand, Australia, Ireland and Germany – for their higher education,” said Ajaya Kumar Vemulapati, Director IMFS.Further, the UK government has made new English language requirements for immigration routes, for both applicants and their dependents, mandatory. This is to ensure a better knowledge of English of the applicants and their dependents.The UK government, as per reports, is contemplating levying a new six per cent tax on tuition fee income, which the universities generate from intentional students, and reinvesting into the higher education and skills system. If the plan fructifies, the higher education for international students will turn more expensive as universities pass the tax on overseas students.

Women should move forward with courage, compassion and commitment“-

State Rural Development and Panchayat Raj Minister Danasari (Sitakka)“



- Miss World team visits Ramappa temple“- A buzz of beautiful women in Ramappa“- District administration extends unprecedented welcome“- Artists welcome with tribal traditional Kommukoya dance performances “Mulugu, Mahipal, Indian Chronicle: Women should move forward with courage, compassion and commitment, said State Rural Development and Panchayat Raj Minister Danasari Seethakka. A Miss World team comprising representatives from 35 countries visited the Ramappa temple, which has been recognized by UNESCO as a World Heritage temple, on Wednesday. On this occasion, District Collector Diwakar, SP Shabarish, district officials, and tourism department officials gave a warm welcome to the group of world beauties through a performance by tribal traditional Kommukoya dance artists. The beauties who reached the temple washed their feet and went inside to worship. On this occasion, the temple officials and staff gave them a warm welcome. Special prayers were performed in the temple. They asked the temple staff about the history of the temple. They were enchanted by the ancient temple Ramappa Temple. They were amazed by the temple’s architecture and style. The world beauties visited Ramappa Temple like Telugu girls, wearing silk sarees / silk accessories to enhance their Telugu character. They took photos of the temple on their cell phones. The State Minister for Panchayati Raj, Rural Development and Women and Child Welfare, Dhanasari Anasuya (Sitakka), specially supervised the smooth conduct of the Miss World tour. Later, at the assembly premises set up in the Ramappa Temple premises, the Telangana Sahitya Academy and the Department of Language and Culture, dressed as Queen Rudramadevi, presented historical aspects of the rule of the Kakatiya kings in the form of dance, Perani dance by Ranjit Perani Dance Group, Satyam Shivam Sundaram Shivatandavam by 65 Perani artists, and a light & sound show. Later, Minister Seethakka said that Mulugu is a place home to cultural and historical monuments and that he was happy that 35 countries had come here for the Miss World pageant. He said that Mulugu district is a testament to the tribal lifestyle, self-respect and freedom of the tribals who lived in harmony with nature for centuries, and the bravery of Sammakka Saralamma who fought against the kings for freedom. He said that Sammakka Saralamma and Rani Rudramadevi proved that women are brave and powerful. He said that he was happy to attend this ceremony not only as a minister but also as a child of this region, and that beauty is not just visible externally, real beauty lies within



the mind and lies hidden in the development of others. He said that Mulugu region is a center of creativity and divinity, and that the Ramappa Temple, a UNESCO recognized World Heritage Site, was built by the Kakatiya kings in the 13th century, and this structure stands out for the greatness and grandeur of this region. He said that the ancestors of the Kakatiya kings built temple towns and tanks, and in the same way, today women should increase their courage, compassion and commitment, which will be useful for our personality as well as for comprehensive development. He extended his best wishes to all the women participating in the Miss World pageant on behalf of the people of Mulugu region. Later, Minister Seethakka invited the Miss World contestants to the dias and honored them with a badge of honor. He unveiled the book Kakatiya Kala Vaibhavam, written and printed under the auspices of the Telangana Language and Culture Department.

Why did Tamil Nadu ban mayonnaise made from raw eggs?



GNS News Agency, May 14

Last month, Tamil Nadu became the third State in the country after Kerala and Telangana to ban mayonnaise prepared from raw eggs for a year. This decision, according to the State's Food Safety Department, was in the interest of public health. Mayonnaise made of raw eggs is a high-risk food as it carries a risk of food poisoning, especially from *Salmonella* bacteria, *Salmonella typhimurium*, *Salmonella enteritidis*, *Escherichia coli*, and *Listeria monocytogenes*. A number of food business operators use raw egg for the preparation of mayonnaise, and improper preparation and storage facilitates contamination by microorganisms can create a public health risk, the notification said. Food safety officials clarified that only mayonnaise made from raw eggs was banned and not mayonnaise made of pasteurised eggs and vegetarian mayonnaise.

A. G. Saranya Gayathiri, managing director, Parikshan FSS Pvt Ltd said: "Spoiled eggs can produce many kinds of diseases. Normally, if an egg is broken, experts say that it should be processed within 20 minutes. It is a highly perishable and a high risk item. In the preparation of mayonnaise using eggs, it is not a hot food process as we use raw

eggs. So, personal hygiene, place hygiene and equipment hygiene is very important. Once it is prepared, it should be used immediately or stored at a temperature of 0-5 degrees C. Since it is easy to prepare, it is prepared in many places including places that do not have a proper chilling system. Without proper awareness, food handlers keep it at room temperature, and so the chances of food spoilage become very high. That is why the government banned the product."

What are the health risks?

Kalarani. R, dietician, Rajiv Gandhi Government General Hospital, calls the government ban a welcome move. "Microbial contamination remains a significant concern when raw eggs are involved, particularly when products are prepared in unhygienic environments or stored improperly. Unrefrigerated mayonnaise can become a breeding ground for harmful bacteria such as *Salmonella*, which poses serious health risks. *Salmonella* infection can cause symptoms ranging from diarrhoea, fever, and abdominal cramps to more severe outcomes such as bloody stools, high fever, and even life-threatening complications like bacteremia. These dangers highlight the importance of food safety, especially in products consumed widely across age groups," she says. Venkatesh Munikrishnan, senior Consultant - Colorectal and Robotic Surgeon, Apollo Proton Cancer Centre, also agrees. "In order to safeguard public health, the government's decision to ban mayonnaise made from raw eggs is both appropriate and essential," he points out. "A common ingredient in street foods like burgers and shawarmas, contaminated mayonnaise is a major contributor to food-borne illnesses like diarrhoea and nausea. Young people are especially vulnerable because they often eat food from outside without understanding how it is prepared or stored. This ban is an important step toward food safety because *Salmonella* can contaminate eggs internally before the shell forms," he adds.

Helipad coming up in Worli coastal road for medical emergency, tourism, VIP movement

GNS News Agency, May 14

mumbai worli, indian express The helipad is proposed to be constructed at the existing Worli jetty, exactly opposite the Worli Dairy. Eyeing a fillip to multimodal transportation in the city, the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) has proposed to construct a helipad at a pre-existing Worli jetty abutting the Mumbai Coastal Road Project (MCRP). Situated 120 metres into the sea, a temporary marine jetty at Worli – for coastal road works – is now slated to be developed into a helipad for emergency use, as well as boosting tourism.

Earlier this year, Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister Eknath Shinde instructed civic officials to consider the possibility of developing the helipad. After studies by the Maharashtra Maritime Board found the jetty structurally sound and gave its nod for using the jetty for multimodal transportation, the BMC roped in Pawan Hans Ltd as a consultant to conduct feasibility studies for developing the jetty into a helipad.

Why is the project being developed?

The project is aimed at catering to medical emergencies, boosting tourism, while also facilitating the VIP movement. Being the financial capital of the country, civic officials said that the helipad would also improve our transportation in the city by providing an alternative means. It forms a part of the government's plan to boost multimodal transportation in the region. Location and the specifications: The helipad is proposed to be constructed at the existing Worli jetty, exactly opposite the Worli Dairy. The platform of the existing jetty spans about 750 sq metres, and is projected 120 metres into the sea.

According to officials, the helipad is slated to come up abutting the promenade along the coastal swatches. This is among the two jetties that the civic body had constructed



as a part of the MCRP. While one jetty at Amarsons Garden, which was built on stilts and constructed with steel, was dismantled, the jetty near Worli Dairy, being constructed in RCC, was used for surveillance by the coastal police. Recently, Pawan Hans Ltd, which is a public enterprise under the Ministry of Civil Aviation, has submitted reports approving the development of the jetty into a helipad. Now, the civic body is in the process of procuring approvals from other agencies, ranging from the defence ministry to the Coastal Regulatory Zone (CRZ) authority. Administration speaks: "The jetty was initially constructed for material carriage and interchange work on the coastal road project. Since this was a concrete and permanent structure, the plan to develop a helipad was floated. Since the work was immediate, we appointed Pawan Hans Ltd as consultants at a cost of Rs 5 lakh for feasibility studies. Now that we have received their report approving the plan, we will be working on procuring other approvals," said a civic body officer. Besides aiding during medical emergencies and VIP movement, the officer said the area can also serve the purpose of marine surveillance for the coastal police.

On alert, Haryana's Panchkula district to observe blackout tonight



GNS News Agency, May 14

A blackout will be observed across Panchkula in Haryana from 7 pm on Friday as a precautionary measure, Deputy Commissioner Monika Gupta said, adding that the district has been placed on high alert because of emergency preparedness amid heightened tensions between India and Pakistan following the launch of Operation Sindoor. Panchkula is completely safe and there is no need for a curfew, Gupta said, appealing to residents to stay vigilant and cooperate with safety protocols. She also advised residents to avoid panic and trust only official communications from the district administration. Gupta added that only information from the administration's social media handles or the official civil society WhatsApp groups, which include ward councillors, sarpanches, and other key community leaders, should be trusted.

Chairing a meeting with officials at the district secretariat, Gupta mentioned that following a sudden blackout alert, a district-wide blackout was observed on Thursday night. She noted that another alert could be issued on Friday as well. As a precautionary measure, she urged all residents to voluntarily observe a blackout on Friday evening and remain indoors. All lights inside homes should be turned off, Gupta said, adding that people should avoid going out unless there was an urgent need. It was also decided to keep solar street lights turned off until the situation normalised. Sensitive areas in the district have been identified, and teams from the health and fire departments are on alert, officials said. Shops and market lights to be turned off Panchkula Deputy Commissioner Monika Gupta also appealed to market associations to switch off display board lights and

ensure no external or internal lights remain on in commercial establishments on Friday night. Shopkeepers have been requested to observe a voluntary blackout and close markets by 7 pm Friday. CCTV cameras, if present, should be turned off to enhance the effectiveness of the blackout, Gupta said, adding that lights in common parking areas should also be turned off. Gupta also directed that no lights should remain on at night in government headquarters and offices. Relevant department heads must ensure compliance, she said. To ensure the timely dissemination of any alerts, monitoring teams have been formed for different areas. These teams will use sirens and loudspeakers to notify people in the event of a sudden alert, Gupta said.

Chennai set to receive Krishna water from Andhra Pradesh amid ongoing supply efforts

Chennai: Chennai is expected to receive Krishna River water from Andhra Pradesh by the early hours of Friday, after a brief halt in supply due to repair work along the water canal. According to officials from the Water Resources Department (WRD), the water released from the Kandaleru reservoir is likely to reach the Tamil Nadu border by Thursday evening or early Friday.

The supply was temporarily suspended by Andhra Pradesh authorities to carry out repair work on the sluice gate of the Kandaleru-Poondi (KP) canal near Kalahasti.

Krishna river is a crucial source for Chennai, particularly during peak summer months when demand for drinking water surges. The Poondi reservoir in Tiruvallur district, which stores Krishna water before transferring it to the Red Hills reservoir for city supply, had stopped receiving inflows from April 24.

However, WRD officials confirmed that Andhra Pradesh resumed water release earlier this week as committed. The Kandaleru reservoir currently holds nearly 44,000 thousand million cubic feet of water.

Bengal CPIM seeks to float 'alternative schools', tuition centres, health camps ahead of 2026 Assembly polls



GNS News Agency, May 14

In its first letter of the year to its ranks, the CPIM has called for the formation of grassroots-level "alternative" schools, tuition centres, and health camps to reach out to the people of West Bengal. Named "Mission 360", the party's directive was made with determination to make significant gains in the upcoming 2026 Assembly polls. However, some leaders feel the party is also placing emphasis on rebuilding its credibility through these initiatives. In its first organisational message of 2025, called the "party chithi", the West Bengal CPIM stated, "The struggle to present alternatives is very relevant in the present time." The party has instructed its cadre to establish at least two fully functional teaching centres in every district of the state. The message noted that party-affiliated teachers, professors and older students in higher education can be involved in the initiative. Similarly, the party has directed that health centres be set up in every area committee, where medical advice and medicines can be provided at reasonable prices. These centres can involve local doctors, nurses, medical representatives, Red Volunteers, student and youth front

workers, and various other organisations. The party chithi further instructed every district committee to launch such initiatives and submit reports by August this year.

Beyond these social initiatives, the CPIM's message stressed that the 2026 assembly election is a crucial "political struggle" and must not be neglected. The party has mandated the formation of permanent organisational structures and members at every booth. It instructed that committees be formed at every booth across the state by June 30. The memo also read, "Individual campaigns on social media should be stopped. Party members expressing personal opinions – especially when they contradict party decisions – must refrain from doing so. Social media must not be used for inner-party struggles." A senior CPIM leader said, "The party has not only lost vote shares but also its support base across the state. This decline happened because we lost social credibility. Regaining that credibility will automatically bring votes." He added, "In the past, we gained workers and activists through various movements, but we failed to integrate them into the party structure. After the RG Kar movement, many from the broader society joined us, and we must now involve them in future movements to strengthen the party." CPIM state secretary and politburo member Md Salim said, "We are not challenging the public health or education systems. However, it is true that both sectors in our state have serious gaps. Because of these gaps, the working class is suffering – they go to other states or spend large amounts of money on healthcare and education. We want to bridge that gap and help the poorer sections of society." He added, "Our Red Volunteers did commendable work during the Covid-19 pandemic. We are engaging them and similar forces in these alternative health and education systems. (The project is) named Mission 360 because it is a project through which the party will intervene in all sectors of society to help the people."

'We will buy our own anti-drone system': Punjab CM Bhagwant Mann as border tensions escalate

GNS News Agency, May 14

Hours after India began a counter-offensive as Pakistani drones and missiles attempted to hit military facilities in cities along the western and northern frontiers, Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann said on Friday that his government was planning to purchase anti-drone systems for the state. Anti-drone systems are designed to detect, track, and neutralise unauthorised drones. Punjab is already in the process of purchasing such systems in its fight against drones.

CM Mann said that Punjab shared a 532 km border with Pakistan. "We have six border districts. We will buy our own anti-drone system. The Border Security Force (BSF) is also supporting us. The BSF already has anti-drone systems. But we will buy more and help the security personnel. Drones will not be allowed to enter our territory and will be felled. Punjab stands with India," said Mann. Mann had called an emergency meeting of the Cabinet on Friday amid the heightened tensions along the border. He announced that the Cabinet had also decided that the 'Fairshety Scheme', under which road accident victims get immediate help on the roads by Sadak Surakheya Force, would be extended to the victims of war and terrorism.

"Considering the ongoing circumstances, we have decided that the scheme would also cover victims of war and terrorism. Under this scheme, free medical treatment would be given to these victims," said Mann. He added that the government was in touch with the deputy commissioners and tehsildars of the border areas. "We will coordinate with the Army. There is no need to panic, no need to listen to any rumours. Some shells have been found in fields. But Punjabis do not fear anything. They have always stood firm with the country. Punjab will stand guard for the Tricolour and its waters. We have filled all the vacant posts in the border areas to ensure that we are on top of the situation," Mann said. Mann also said that he was posting his Cabinet colleagues in border districts to ensure that there was no hoarding or black-marketing of essential commodities. He said the ministers belonging to border areas, including



Kuldeep Singh Dhaliwal, Lal Chand Katarachak and Laljit Bhullar, would stay put in these districts along with other ministers and review the situation. "They will ensure that no hoarding or black-marketing takes place. They will be at the shops and other places. I want to tell people that there is no shortage of LPG, petrol and diesel in the state. There is no need to buy six LPG refills. If anyone is black-marketing, you can complain to the deputy commissioner of your area," Mann said. The CM also said that they would be implementing the Old Pension Scheme (OPS) and employees who either joined or were appointed in or before 2014 would be given the benefit of the scheme. He said the Cabinet had also given a nod to promote maize under the diversification plan of the government. "We have written to the Centre to give us Rs 17,000 per acre for diversification to maize. We hope to get this amount for the sake of diversification," he said, adding that they have already got in touch with the National Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Federation of India (NAFED), which will be procuring the maize. MARKFED (Punjab State Co-op Supply and Marketing Federation Ltd) will also purchase it, he added. "We will ensure that if a farmer sows maize after diversifying from paddy, it is procured," Mann said. The Cabinet had also given its nod to create a land pool in different parts of the state. "We will do land pooling. The land owners will be given commercial and residential properties in lieu of the land," he said.

Pune civic body to regulate water consumption through billing every month, warns of snapping supply if metering is opposed

GNS News Agency, May 14

PMC water supply department, indian express The PMC water supply department has started issuing notices to housing societies that are opposing the installation of water meters. "Amidst complaints about insufficient water supply from several parts of the city, the Pune Municipal Corporation (PMC) is planning to recover water charges every month, and has decided to get tough on housing societies by warning them of snapping supply connections for opposing the installation of water meters to measure actual consumption.

M J Pradip Chandran, Additional Municipal Commissioner, said many parts of the city are getting an insufficient water supply as more water is drawn by other localities to meet their increased needs. "The only way to keep a check on the consumption of water supply is through metering of supply, which will act as a deterrent to excess and unnecessary use of water. PMC has divided the old city area into five zones for installing meters and revamping the water supply system. We are trying to start recovery of water charges as per consumption based on water meter readings in the area where over 90 per cent supply connections have been installed," he said, adding this will start monthly billing of water supply to consumers. The PMC water supply department has started issuing notices to housing societies that are opposing the installation of water meters. The civic body is installing water meters on its own for consumers in the city as a part of its ambitious project of ensuring a sufficient and uninterrupted water supply. "It is necessary to reduce water leakage to ensure sufficient water for all citizens. PMC is unable to identify the water leakage in the system. Thus, there is a need to measure the supply and



consumption of water for which a water meter needs to be installed at each water connection," said Nandkishor Jagtap, in charge of, water supply department, PMC.

"Housing societies should cooperate with civic administration in installing water meters on the supply connection to them. If they don't cooperate, then PMC, without intimidation, will discontinue the water supply, and the onus of it will be on the concerned housing societies," added Jagtap. Jagtap said citizens should use water judiciously, and anyone found misusing treated water will be penalised for washing vehicles and watering plants or for construction activities.

The PMC project aims to reduce water leakage and theft by metering the supply while erecting overhead storage tanks in part of the city to ensure equitable supply to all. Under its project of metering water supply, PMC has put the onus on ensuring the safety and maintenance of water meters with the consumers.

‘Black day for us’: Indiranagar residents cry foul over groundbreaking ceremony of new stadium at Victory Ground



GNS News Agency, May 14

The Karnataka government on Thursday went ahead with the ground-breaking ceremony for an enclosed stadium in Bengaluru's Indiranagar, replacing a basketball court, the lone playground in the area, amid opposition from residents who termed it a "black day".The project by the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) at the Victory Ground has sparked fear among the residents of Indiranagar as they feel the new enclosed space would restrict accessibility to a huge section of people, particularly children from the lower-income group.

"It was a Black Day for us, residents of Inagar, we were restrained by the Police from entering the only open playground of our area to witness a public event of encroaching our playground on a CA site using public money!! What a joke of democracy & blatant usurping of public land," "i change Indiranagar", a federation of resident welfare associations in Indiranagar, posted on X.The Indiranagar Basketball Club (IBBC), a private club, currently uses the ground for basketball coaching.The ground-breaking cer-

emony was attended by Karnataka Chief Minister's Political Secretary and MLC K Govindaraj, Bengaluru City Police Commissioner B Dayanandar, and BBMP Zonal Commissioner (East) Snehal R. Govindaraj, who had first announced the government's interest to construct a stadium on the Victory Ground, is also the president of Karnataka State Basketball Association and the president of Karnataka Olympics Association.

The Detailed Project Report (DPR) from the BBMP has sparked concerns that the project would privatise a public space. The basketball ground at Victory Grounds in 1st Stage Indiranagar is expected to become a tensile-roofed stadium at an estimated cost of Rs 6.5 crore.Swarna Venkataraman, core member of the residents federation, told The Indian Express, "The police restrained us from our only open playground, which we as residents maintained over the years. We were barred from accessing a public playground, which was unheard of. Converting this to a private stadium will only cut off access to the public, especially children from low-income areas who use this playground for sports and other recreational purposes."The residents also called out BBMP zonal commissioner Snehal for attending the groundbreaking ceremony, days after she allegedly feigned ignorance over the project during a meeting with the residents.A similar proposal in 2017 to convert the basketball court into an indoor stadium was halted following opposition from residents and a stay order from the Karnataka High Court. The State Human Rights Commission had also condemned the plan, criticising attempts to restrict public access to open spaces. The Karnataka High Court has stayed the tender process for the 2107 project, noting that the question of whether the construction contributes to the improvement or a more beneficial use of the playground requires further consideration.

As temperatures soar, soda and ice gola shops offer cool relief in dozens of flavours

GNS News Agency, May 14

With summer temperatures soaring, local soda and gola shops across Pune are witnessing a sharp rise in customers looking for cool, refreshing drinks. From classic masala sodas to fusion fruit mixes and traditional ice golas, these shops have been serving hundreds daily, especially in the evenings.The Soda Factory in Ajmera, run by Mahesh Ghodke, 78, offers a wide variety of sodas. "We are proud to say we serve over 40 types of soda, and each one has its own twist. Our shop is known for unique flavours like Masala Cola, Kala Khatta, Jeera Soda, Mango Punch, Blue Lagoon, Guava Mirchi, Orange Masala, Pineapple Crush, Watermelon Soda, Chikoo Soda, and so many more. We even make combo sodas like Fruit Blast, Rainbow Soda, and Triple Mix," he said.

The Soda Factory is open daily from 11 am till midnight, which sometimes stretches up to 1 am and their drinks are priced between Rs 25 and Rs 90. "During the summer, our sales shoot up by more than 90 per cent. To make it special, we have introduced 'Summer Chill Specials' like Khus Mojito, Iceberg Mint, and Aam Panna Soda," Ghodke said. "Everything is made fresh with chilled soda and in-house masala blends."Fizz Fantasy Soda Shop on Camp Street, known for its fusion sodas, sees a large crowd too. Arbaz Sheikh, an employee, said, "Fizz Fantasy is where people come for funky and fusion sodas. We have around 20 soda types, but we keep experimenting. Some bestsellers are Lemon Mint Blast, Kala Khatta Masala, Apple Twist, and Peach Fizz. Kids love our Bubblegum Soda and Blueberry Cooler."

The shop offers sodas priced between Rs 30 and Rs 100, in regular and jumbo sizes. "In the peak summer season, we see a 50-60 per cent jump in sales. We also offer flavours like Coconut Lime Chill and Frozen Guava Masala, and have 'buy-2-get-1-free' deals on weekends," he said. The store operates from 11.30 am to 11 pm.In Kothrud, Mahalaxmi Ice Gola and Soda continues to attract families with its traditional gola flavours. "We are a family-run gola and soda stall, and our specialty is traditional stick gola — the kind you remember from childhood," said Seema Patil, a staff member. "We crush the ice fresh and use home-made syrups like Kala Khatta, Rose, Kairi, Orange, and Butterscotch.""Hygiene is our top priority. We ensure that all our ingredients are fresh and clean. We regularly sanitise our equipment and work area to keep everything safe for our customers. My staff and I wear gloves while preparing



the gola, and we make sure to use clean water to make ice when possible or get ice from a hygienic place or factory that maintains cleanliness. We want families to enjoy their treats without worries, and we take every step to provide a safe environment," Patil added.Golas are priced anywhere between Rs 20 and Rs 80, depending on the variety. A popular new item is the Choco Delight Gola, which includes chocolate syrup and choco chips. "In summer, our sales double," she said. Their soda options include Jeera, Lemon, and Orange Soda. The stall runs from 12 noon to 11.30 pm.In Viman Nagar, New Soda Shop has also been gaining attention. Its owner Advani, who prefers to go by his surname, said, "The store sells the most sodas during summers, so this is our peak time. We have had the store for about two years here and it has been doing very well. We have around eight flavours and the ones that sell the most are Jeera, Blueberry and Orange soda. We also have fruit juices."Raj Ice Gola Centre near Sarasbaug Lane has been serving golas for the past decade. "We have been making authentic Maharashtrian-style golas for 10 years," said Ayush Pawar, 65, its owner. "Our golas are crushed manually using a traditional ice crusher, then placed on a wooden stick. We pour thick, flavoured syrup generously on it and roll it in masala or coconut flakes."Popular flavours include Kala Khatta Stick Gola, Aamras Gola, and Sitaphal Gola. "We have also started 'Ice Cream Gola', where we top the gola with vanilla ice cream and chocolate sauce—it is a hit among teenagers," he added. The prices here range from Rs 30 to Rs 100. During April to June, sales rise by around 70 per cent, and extra staff members are hired to manage the demand. "We also offer a Summer Gola Platter with three mini golas of different flavours for Rs 80," he said. The shop is open from 12 noon to 11 pm.

Alleged JMB members arrested in Bengal: ‘Were plotting attacks, recruitment drives,’ say police



GNS News Agency, May 14

A Bengaluru police officer told The Indian Express that they had no leads for almost 10 days despite checking more than 50 cameras from the incident location to where the car ended its journey.As per police, the arrested persons are allegedly part of a module that is engaged in "dissemination of seditious and jihadi materials" by using "encrypted, sophisticated" methods.In the intervening night of May 8 and 9, teams of the Special Task Force of West Bengal conducted simultaneous raids at Nalhati and Murarai in the Birbhum district and arrested two persons — Ajmol Hossain (28) of Nalhati and Saheb Ali Khan (28) of Murarai.

"The two have been found to be propagating the ideology of Jamatul Mujahideen Bangladesh or JMB, which is a banned terror organisation in India," claimed an official.As per police, the arrested persons are allegedly part of a module that is engaged in "dissemination of seditious and jihadi materials" by using "encrypted, sophisticated" methods. They are also accused of planning to "target certain persons and places, which could harm the sovereignty and

integrity of India"."They were engaged in recruiting and motivating Muslim youths to join terror organisations and radicalising them with a view to wage war against the Government of India," said a police official.As per police, Hossain earlier allegedly tried to enter Bangladesh in connection with "jihadi activities" and has "connections" in other parts in the sub-continent."The two, along with other associates, tried to procure firearms and planned to prepare explosives in order to propagate and practice the ideology of 'Ghazwatul Hind'," said the STF.The two accused will be produced in the Court of the Additional Chief Judicial Magistrate (ACJM) in Rampurhat, Birbhum on Friday with a prayer for police remand to conduct detailed interrogations and find other nodes of the module.

Pawan Kalyan lauds Indian forces, PM Modi for precision strikes

Mumbai: The entire nation is applauding Indian defence forces targeted attacks on the terror camps in Pakistan as part of 'Operation Sindoor'.Telugu superstar Pawan Kalyan has lauded the targeted action, and expressed his gratitude to PM Modi for the precision and planning.The Telugu superstar took to his X, formerly Twitter on Wednesday, and penned a long note thanking PM Modi and the Indian forces.He wrote in Hindi, "Where there is no valor, there is the decay of virtue. Where there is no valor, selfishness triumphs." - Dinakar'Decades of endurance... endurance! To the brave leadership of the three armed forces, who, after excessive endurance, rekindled the spirit of valor in the entire nation of India through 'Operation Sindoor'.

Despite record production, government wheat procurement in Punjab falls short of 2024 figures



GNS News Agency, May 14

This year, Punjab recorded an average yield of 5,390 kg per hectare, according to 94 per cent of the crop-cutting experiments — it estimates crop yield by selecting a representative section of a field, harvesting it, and using the data to project the overall yield for the entire area — conducted by the Punjab Agriculture Department so far. This yield is the highest ever, surpassing the previous record of 5,188 kg per hectare in 2018-19. Only the results of 6 per cent of the crop-cutting experiments are pending, but authorities have stated that these remaining results will not significantly impact the overall productivity.This year, wheat was grown on 35 lakh hectares in Punjab, leading to a total production of 189 lakh metric tonnes. In comparison, last year, wheat was planted on 35.16 lakh hectares, resulting in a total production of 182 LMT.This year's government procurement figures have come down despite what has been described as a "bumper crop" with the total wheat arrivals in mandis (markets) exceeding last year's numbers till May 8. A total of 127.02 lakh tonnes of wheat has already reached the mandis this season, surpassing the 126.68 lakh tonnes recorded at the same time last year and well above the 122.53 lakh tonnes recorded in 2022-23.However, while the quantity of wheat reaching the mandis is high, the pace of government procurement has slowed considerably. Of the

127.02 lakh tonnes arriving in mandis this year, 126.62 lakh tonnes have been purchased, including 10.32 lakh tonnes procured by private players.Last year, in the entire season, approximately 134.13 lakh tonnes of wheat had arrived in the mandis. This year, the procurement season will end on May 31. With just weeks left until the official end of the season, it seems increasingly unlikely that the government will meet last year's procurement target.

One of the key reasons for the decline in government procurement is the increased participation of private players in the wheat market. This season, private traders have been more aggressive in sourcing wheat directly from farmers, offering competitive prices and incentives. As a result, some farmers have opted to sell their wheat to private buyers instead government.With private traders offering a slightly higher price than the Minimum Support Price (MSP), farmers have also started holding back a portion of their wheat in anticipation of better prices in the coming weeks."The private players are offering better prices than the government right now. With a bumper crop this year, some of us have decided to hold on to a part of our wheat and sell it later when the prices might go higher," said Gurmair Singh, a farmer from Ludhiana district. "It's a risky strategy, but we have seen the prices going up in the last year too, so it is worth the wait," he added.As of Thursday, May 8, less than 1 lakh tonnes of wheat is expected to arrive in mandis, with only about 76,000 tonnes recorded on that day. This indicates that the bulk of the wheat has already been procured by the government, and now the remaining wheat supply is dwindling.The procurement season in Punjab typically runs until the end of May, but it is clear that with only 5 per cent of the expected supply remaining to be sold, government procurement this year will fall significantly short of last year's total of 12.5 million tonnes (approximately 125 lakh tonnes). Experts believe that the state's procurement agencies are unlikely to match the wheat procured in the previous season, with the final figure likely to be considerably lower.

Complete blackout to be imposed in Ambala tonight; use of inverters for outdoor lighting banned

GNS News Agency, May 14

The orders issued by District Magistrate Ajay Singh Tomer also banned the use of inverters or generators for outdoor lighting. However, these "may be used for indoor use on condition that all door and windows are fully covered by thick curtain, so as to ensure no lights come out," the order said.

"In view of the prevailing circumstances and intelligence inputs indicating a potential air strike threat from Pakistan, it is imperative to ensure complete blackout during the night hours to safeguard public safety and strategic interests. And whereas, use of inverter, generator and any other power backup used for outdoor lights, bill board, street lights etc. may invite any terror/drone attack in District Ambala," the orders issued on Friday reads.The order was issued under Section 163 (Power to issue order in urgent cases of nuisance or apprehended danger) of the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS), 2023."This order shall be promulgated by announcement through the publicity van of district information and public relations officer and by affixing of copies of the order on notice boards of the district courts,



office of SP, DSPs, police stations, security branch, municipal corporation, panchayats, tehsills, BDPOs and in bus stands in the district of Ambala by the District Information and Public Relations Officer," the order states. "Superintendent of Police, Ambala, shall be responsible for the compliance of the above orders. Any person found guilty of violation of this order shall be prosecuted and punished as per law under section 223 of the BNSS," it adds.

How artist Jyoti Bhatt questioned power hierarchies and chronicled his times

GNS News Agency, May 14

The visual language of one of India's most distinguished artist-pedagogues, Jyoti Bhatt, combined modernism with traditional idiom, as his engagements left a deep imprint on Indian art. In the exhibition titled "Line and the Lens" at Latitude 28 in Delhi, Rekha Rodwittiya — artist and his student at Faculty of Fine Arts at Maharaja Sayajirao University (MSU) of Baroda in the late '70s — has woven together decades of his art practice, reflecting on the evolution of his oeuvre and that of the Indian art landscape. In this interview, Rodwittiya discusses her fondest memories of her beloved teacher and her curatorial vision for the exhibition celebrating Bhatt. Excerpts from an interview:

What are your memories of being taught by Jyoti Bhatt at MSU?

I have always said that while I was studying at FFA (1976-1981), Jyoti Bhatt was the only teacher who exemplified, through his teaching and conduct, a lived and practised understanding of feminism. He addressed his responsibilities of being an educator very seriously, exposing his students to varied areas of articulation within the arts — yet never preferring anything as being more or less deserving of attention to curiosities. He has been a major contributor to defining the pedagogic content of the syllabi at the faculty, and with students from varied cultural backgrounds he insisted that an openness to diverse cultural practices was respected within the classroom. He loved to deconstruct methods and techniques to share with us, and was wary of anyone holding things as too precious to be questioned. All students were equal to him. He disliked any display of power hierarchy, and always stated that he learned from his students because their questions led him to new areas of inquiry. At a personal level, one of my most impactful experiences was when as his student, after a particularly grueling submission session, he said to me that I could view critique as damning or I could view it as a compliment that indicated that people held an expectation of me.

A major dimension of Jyoti Bhatt's oeuvre and the exhibition is his photographic documentation of indigenous traditions of rural India, beginning in the late 1960s and continuing for over four decades. What, in your view, is the significance of this archive?

These works of the artist are known as the series 'Living Traditions'. This archive is hugely significant because it serves to document, what he himself refers to, as vanishing practices. However, for me this archive serves another less obvious factor of importance. The wanderings of his travel create this journeying back and forth between the many worlds of 'his India'. It positions his engagement with plural and parallel existences that otherwise get ignored. He is, however, never the outsider or the voyeur — he is within the images he takes despite his physical absence, because he has the connect of empathy that allows him to be the sutradhar of these other worlds. He brings them to you to also belong within. The camera therefore isn't a device to "record" but to perpetual memory.In a note on the exhibition, you note that Jyoti Bhatt's graphic works often

employ "subversive inflections as a means by which he positions his politics, and the critique he has of establishments that he views as retrogressive to the ideals of pluralism and liberal thinking". Could you please elaborate?Jyoti Bhatt is never shy of what constitutes his value system and therefore the personal politics that shapes his thinking. He grew up in Bhavnagar, where he was exposed to the changes India was experiencing through the Independence movement, and through the industrialisation that the British Raj had swept to our shores. Extraordinarily, he displays his political alertness at the tender age of 12, when he paints an image that references the reality of a lower caste Dalit man having to proclaim his presence to the upper castes by wearing a broom what sweeps away the imprint of his existence, so as to avoid polluting them even in passing. As an artist he continues to exhibit an informed understanding of how visual language provides a vocabulary that can be read, and which accommodates a commentary with referential indicators that are infused with specific meaning. We see this very clearly in the works he did in 1975-77 that holds the commentary of censure in which he refers to MF Hussain equating Indira Gandhi as mother India, during the time of the Emergency.

Do you feel that by choosing to work in mediums often considered peripheral or less celebrated, such as printmaking and photography, he also attempted to interrogate established hierarchies between artistic mediums?

Jyoti Bhatt has always been someone who discredits systems of elitism and hierarchies. He worked outside of any need to hold attention to any personal space of self-glorification. However this did not mean he did not see his art practice as holding relevance and belonging within the discourses around him. What he positioned was the idea of disseminating a work of art through an edition, therefore becoming a means and method by which his art could reach and belong to many people. He also strongly believes in the idea of democratising his art practice by keeping his prices very nominal and not playing up to the manipulations of an art market. Perhaps this is because Jyotibhai has never cared to be prescriptive. Respectful of the choices and functioning of other artists and art institutions, he nonetheless configures his own operative systems as an artist, to what his personal beliefs adhere to.

‘New Pope poised to champion justice, doctrinal clarity and leadership’



GNS News Agency, May 14

Pope Leo XIII was a man who stood for social justice and if former Cardinal Robert Prevost from the United States chose the name Pope Leo XIV, it could signify a continued emphasis on justice-related issues, high-ranked members of the clergy told. “Assuming the name ‘Leo XIV’ suggests the new Pope’s resolve to build upon the legacy of Leo XIII – Pope from 1878 to 1903 – known for his social teachings that addressed workers’ rights and the challenges of industrialisation. The new Pope seems poised to continue in the direction of social justice, doctrinal clarity, and strong leadership in times of crises,” Fr Francis Gonsalves, a Jesuit priest and Professor of Theology at the Jnana Deepa Institute of Theology, Pune, said.

According to Fr Gonsalves, the 69-year-old Pope brings to the papal office a wealth of experience. “The challenges he faces are many. Pope Leo XIV – ‘Leo’ meaning ‘lion’ in Latin – steps into the shoes of Pope Francis, globally acclaimed for his humility, love for the poor, efforts to

broker world peace, and protect creation. To traditionalists, Francis was regarded as too liberal; to progressives, too slow to change. Leo XIV will have to steer a middle course,” he observed. “As leader of 1.4 billion Catholics and the first American Pope, Leo XIV inspires hope while braving the challenges of a polarised church and a geopolitically complex landscape,” Fr Gonsalves said. According to Fr Nigel Barrett from the Archdiocese of Bombay, the new Pope’s election arrives at a pivotal juncture as the Church grapples with existential challenges, declining congregations in the West, reverberations of clerical abuse scandals, internal tensions between tradition and reform and an urgent call to address poverty, migration and ecological crises in an increasingly fractured world.

Bishop Malcolm Sequeira, Bishop of Amravati, also noted that Pope Leo XIII was known to strengthen the Church’s relationship with the modern world and address social injustices. “The newly elected Pope, who has taken his name as Pope Leo XIV, brings new hope of continuing to build cordial relationships with the world and uplift the downtrodden,” he saidFr Roque Alphonso, Vicar General, Diocese of Poona, also added that the election of Pope Leo XIV is a significant moment for the Church. “As we await the appointment of a new Bishop for the Poona Diocese, we trust that the Holy Father will lead us toward a brighter future in faith,” he said. While Fr Louis D’mello, Parish Priest of Holy Trinity Church, Pune, added that the new Pope’s experience as a missionary and his dedication to serving the Church will guide them well. Fr Stanley Fernandes, Parish Priest of Saint John Paul II Church, Pune, too, observed that Pope Leo XIV’s role as the Holy Father is vital in these times.

India, Pakistan accuse each other of attacks as hostilities rise

JAMMU, India/ISLAMABAD, GNS News Agency, May 14, India and Pakistan accused each other of launching new military attacks on Friday, using drones and artillery for the third day in the worst fighting between the nuclear-armed South Asian neighbours in nearly three decades. The old enemies have been clashing since India struck multiple locations in Pakistan on Wednesday that it said were “terrorist camps”, in retaliation for a deadly attack on Hindu tourists in Indian Kashmir last month. The Reuters Tariff Watch newsletter is your daily guide to the latest global trade and tariff news. Sign up here.

Pakistan denied it was involved in the attack but both countries have exchanged cross-border fire and shelling and sent drones and missiles into each other’s airspace since then, with about four dozen people dying in the violence. Villagers have fled border areas in both countries and many cities have been hit with blackouts, air raid warnings and panic buying of essentials. India has suspended its prestigious Indian Premier League T20 cricket tournament after one match was stopped midway on Thursday and the floodlights switched off. The fighting is the deadliest since a limited conflict between the two countries in Kashmir’s Kargil region in 1999. India has targeted cities in Pakistan’s mainland provinces outside Pakistani Kashmir for the first since their full-scale war in 1971.

The Indian army said on Friday that Pakistani troops had resorted to “numerous cease fire violations” along the countries’ de-facto border in Kashmir, a region that is divided between them but claimed in full by both. “The drone attacks were effectively repulsed and befitting reply was given to the CFVs (ceasefire violations),” the army said, adding all “nefarious designs” would be responded to with “force”.

Pakistan Information Minister Attaullah Tarar said the Indian army statement was “baseless and misleading”, and that Pakistan had not undertaken any “offensive actions” targeting areas within Indian Kashmir or beyond the country’s border. In Pakistani Kashmir, officials said heavy shelling from across the border killed five civilians, including an infant, and injured 29 in the early hours of Friday. India’s defence ministry did not immediately respond to a request for comment. A “major infiltration bid” was “foiled” in Kashmir’s Samba region on Thursday night, India’s Border Security Force said, and heavy artillery shelling persisted in the Uri area on Friday, according to a security official who did not want to be named. “Several houses caught fire and were damaged in the shelling in the Uri sector...one woman was killed and three people were injured in overnight shelling,” the official said. Sirens blared for more than two hours on Friday in India’s border city of Amritsar, which houses the Golden Temple revered by Sikhs, and residents were asked to remain indoors. Hotels reported a sharp fall in occupancy as tourists fled the city by road since the airport was closed. “We really wanted to stay but the loud sounds, sirens, and blackouts are giving us sleepless nights. Our families back home are worried for us so we have booked a cab and are leaving,” said a British national who did not want to be named.

Other border areas also took precautionary measures

No role to play beyond facilitator in Indus Waters Treaty: World Bank President Ajay Banga

GNS News Agency, May 14

New Delhi: World Bank President Ajay Banga has said that the multilateral agency has no role to play beyond a facilitator in the Indus Waters Treaty signed between India and Pakistan in 1960 for sharing of waters of Indus, Jhelum, and Chenab. India has suspended the decades-old Indus Waters Treaty in the wake of the killing of 26 tourists in a terror attack in Jammu & Kashmir’s Pahalgam on April 22.

“We have no role to play beyond a facilitator. There’s a lot of speculation in the media about how the World Bank will step in & fix the problem, but it’s all bunk. The World Bank’s role is merely as a facilitator,” the PIB said in post on X quoting World Bank President, Ajay Banga. The Indus Waters Treaty, brokered by the World Bank, has governed the distribution and use of the Indus river and its tributaries between India and Pakistan since 1960. The Indus river system comprises the main river, the Indus, and its tributaries. The Ravi, Beas, Sutlej, Jhelum and Chenab are its left-bank tributaries, while the Kabul river, a right-bank tributary, does not flow through Indian territory. The Ravi, Beas, and Sutlej are collectively referred to as the eastern rivers, while the Indus, Jhelum, and Chenab are known as the western rivers. The water of this river system is crucial to both India and Pakistan. At the time of Independence, the boundary demarcation between the two newly formed na-

India has suspended the decades-old Indus Waters Treaty signed with Pakistan in the wake of Jammu & Kashmir’s Pahalgam terror attack on April 22 in which 26 tourists were killed

tions — India and Pakistan — cut through the Indus Basin, leaving India as the upper riparian and Pakistan as the lower riparian state.



Inside China's decision to come to the table on Trump tariffs



GNS News Agency, May 14

BEIJING, Since U.S. President Donald Trump imposed steep tariffs on China last month, Beijing has responded in kind. On state and social media, it posted images of Mao Zedong, lambasted “imperialists,” and sent a message: capitulation to bullies is dangerous, and it wouldn’t back down. But behind closed doors, Chinese officials have grown increasingly alarmed about tariffs’ impact on the economy and the risk of isolation as China’s trading partners have started negotiating deals with Washington, according to three officials familiar with Beijing’s thinking. The Reuters Tariff Watch newsletter is your daily guide to the latest global trade and tariff news. Sign up here. These factors, along with outreach by the U.S. and an easing of Trump’s rhetoric, persuaded Beijing to send its economic tsar He Lifeng for meetings with U.S. counterparts in Switzerland this weekend, the officials told Reuters.

Re-engagement was complicated by the fractious nature of U.S.-China diplomacy. In particular, Beijing considered a letter the U.S. side sent to Chinese ministries in late April about fentanyl “arrogant,” two officials said. Efforts to arrange talks were further impaired by disagreements over which officials should be involved, said one of these people and another official.

China’s reasons for deciding to negotiate, Washington’s letter on fentanyl, U.S. diplomatic challenges in Beijing, and the early outreach between the two sides are reported by Reuters for the first time, based on interviews with nearly a dozen government officials and experts on both sides. Most of the people were granted anonymity to discuss non-public information. China’s foreign ministry said in a statement to Reuters that it reiterated that “China’s firm opposition to the U.S. abuse of tariffs is consistent and clear, and there is no change.”

“The U.S. has ignored China’s goodwill and unreasonably imposed tariffs on China under the pretext of fentanyl. This is a typical act of bullying, which seriously undermines dialogue and cooperation between the two sides in the field of drug control.” China’s State Council and ministry of commerce didn’t immediately respond to faxed requests for comment. The White House and State Department also didn’t respond to Reuters questions about the lead-up to the Geneva talks. China’s Vice Foreign Minister Hua Chunying said on Friday that China has full confidence in its ability to manage U.S. trade issues, adding that the Trump administration’s approach cannot be sustained.

The trade war between the world’s two largest economies, combined with Trump’s decision last month to impose duties on dozens of other countries, has disrupted supply chains, unsettled financial markets and stoked fears of a sharp downturn in global growth. Chinese export restrictions, meanwhile, have squeezed the supply of critical minerals the U.S. needs for weapons, electronics and consumer goods. Trump’s approval ratings are falling due to his handling of tariffs and the economy. The volatile run-up to the Geneva talks underscores the deep mistrust and divergent negotiating styles between the Trump team and China, which could make for protracted and fraught discussions. “Both sides I think are balancing trying to look tough with not wanting to be responsible for sinking the global economy,” said Scott Kennedy, an expert in Chinese business affairs at the Center for Strategic and International Studies in Washington. “The Chinese set a high bar for these talks, but it became increasingly clear that the Trump administration wanted to talk, and they couldn’t say no forever. So, they’ve accepted what are probably best seen as pre-negotiations in Geneva.”

After Trump’s tariff salvo last month, China took a hard line in its public messaging. Beijing posted footage on its official social media feeds of a Chinese MiG-15 fighter shooting down a U.S. jet in the Korean War, with commentary: “China won’t kneel down, because we know standing up for ourselves keeps the possibility of cooperation alive, while compromise snuffs it out.”

The tone began to shift on April 30, when a state media-affiliated blog said the U.S. had “proactively reached out to China through multiple channels, hoping to discuss tariffs.” CSIS’s Kennedy said contacts between Chinese agencies, Beijing’s embassy in Washington and the Trump administration had been increasing in frequency in recent weeks. Some in-person interactions took place at the International Monetary Fund and World Bank meetings in late April, including with Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent, which paved the way for the Swiss meeting, said Kennedy.

After Trump’s “Liberation Day” tariffs, Chinese Commerce Minister Wang Wentao quietly reached out to his U.S. counterpart, Howard Lutnick, but was rebuffed as not senior enough, according to one official familiar with the exchanges. Trump has been pushing for direct talks with Chinese President Xi Jinping. But China has rejected that idea as not in keeping with its traditional approach of working out the details first before the leaders sign any deal, according to public statements by both sides. Another significant factor for China was Trump’s public berating of Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy in February, said one of the sources, adding that any unscripted hostile interaction between the U.S. and Chinese leaders would represent an unacceptable loss of face for Xi. As messaging on both sides grew more conciliatory, China decided to put forward its vice premier and Xi confidant He Lifeng, whose direct predecessor struck the “Phase One” trade deal with the U.S. in 2019. The move satisfied Washington’s demands for substantive talks with a senior official with direct access to Xi, but avoided exposing the Chinese leader to potential embarrassment, said one of the sources.

As for the choice of venue, the Swiss foreign ministry said that “during its recent contacts in Washington and Beijing, Switzerland expressed to the U.S. and Chinese authorities its willingness to organize a meeting between the two parties in Geneva.” Among the main drivers of Beijing’s climb-down were internal signals that Chinese companies were struggling to avoid bankruptcies and to replace the U.S. market, three people familiar with the Chinese government’s thinking said.

Some areas feeling immediate impact were furniture and toy makers, as well as textiles, said one of the

officials. U.S. diplomats in China have also been closely monitoring factory closures, strikes, and job losses in the industrial heartland in southern China. Many analysts have downgraded their 2025 economic growth forecasts for China, and investment bank Nomura has warned the trade war could cost it up to 16 million jobs. China’s central bank this week announced fresh monetary stimulus.

One of the officials said Chinese companies were struggling to replace the U.S. market because developing nations cannot buy as many items, and that for many firms this was an existential threat that needed to be resolved in days or weeks. In addition, Beijing was worried it was left without a place at the negotiating table while its major trading partners, such as Vietnam, India and Japan, began talks with Washington, said two officials familiar with Beijing’s thinking. In a warning to the countries negotiating with the U.S., China’s commerce ministry said in a statement this week that “appeasement cannot bring peace, compromise cannot be respected, and adhering to principled positions and upholding fairness and justice is the right way to safeguard one’s own interests.”

As part of the push to counter the U.S., China is sending its Premier Li Qiang to Malaysia in late May for a summit with a newly established group of Southeast Asian and Arab nations, two sources told Reuters. A regional diplomat based in Beijing told Reuters China’s message to Southeast Asia was “We will buy stuff from you.” In Geneva, Beijing appears to have modest expectations. Internally, China has downgraded the talks from a higher level to merely a meeting, reflecting its view that the discussions will be mostly about finding out Washington’s demands and red lines after weeks of contradictory messages by Trump and other senior U.S. officials, according to a person familiar with the matter. Still, one official said China could draw on its extensive toolbox and follow Asian neighbors in offering to buy more American liquefied natural gas.

On the table may also be purchases of agricultural goods, similar to the 2019 “Phase One” deal during Trump’s first term. At the time, Beijing said it would increase purchases of U.S. agricultural products by \$32 billion over two years. While other matters like the U.S.’s axing of the “de minimis” exemption for packages under \$800 from China and the sale of TikTok are also likely to play a part in the broader talks, Chinese officials said they do not expect them to play a central role this weekend.

Even before triggering the broader trade war, Trump imposed a 20% tariff on Chinese goods, saying Beijing wasn’t doing enough to counter the flow of chemicals used to produce the deadly drug fentanyl. One of the moves that complicated the rapprochement, according to two officials, was a letter sent by the U.S. to China in late April that outlined the steps Trump wanted Beijing to take on fentanyl. The document, reviewed by Reuters, caused friction with Beijing because it referenced a congressional report that asserted China, through value-added tax rebates for exporters, directly subsidizes production of fentanyl precursors for sale abroad. China denies it does so.

The letter, sent to the ministries of foreign affairs, commerce, and public security, called on Beijing to publicize the crackdown on fentanyl precursors on the front page of the Communist Party mouthpiece People’s Daily; send a similar message through “internal party channels” to party members; tighten regulation of some specified chemicals; and deepen law-enforcement cooperation. Two officials familiar with China’s reaction said it found especially the first two points “arrogant” because Beijing saw it as the U.S. dictating what China should do within its ruling apparatus.

One said fentanyl would feature in the Geneva talks and that the U.S. government’s opening position would be to present the four points to China. A U.S. official familiar with the letter said the Trump administration simply wanted China to curb the flow of fentanyl precursors to drug cartels. Complicating the negotiations, Trump’s Washington team has frozen out many U.S. embassy officials responsible for earlier contacts with Chinese counterparts, two people familiar with the matter said. Trump’s new ambassador to China, David Perdue, is slated to arrive in Beijing next week, but Deputy Chief of Mission Sarah Beran, who served as a senior official on China in the Biden administration’s National Security Council, was removed from her post this week, the two officials said. The turmoil has resulted in lack of internal consultations on demands put forward by the American side, the officials said. An official familiar with Chinese thinking said there had been minimal contact with the U.S. embassy ahead of the Geneva talks. Additional reporting by Kevin Kroklick and the Beijing newsroom; David Lawder, Michael Martina and Andrea Shalal in Washington; and John Revill in Zurich; editing by David Crawshaw. Laurie Chen is a China Correspondent at Reuters’ Beijing bureau, covering politics and general news. Before joining Reuters, she reported on China for six years at Agence France-Presse and the South China Morning Post in Hong Kong. She speaks fluent Mandarin.

North Korea's Kim visits Russian embassy as his generals meet Putin

SEOUL, May 9 (Reuters) - North Korean leader Kim Jong Un made a rare visit to Russia’s embassy in Pyongyang with his daughter on Friday and reaffirmed “the invincible alliance” between the two countries, while Russia’s leader greeted North Korean generals in Moscow.

Congratulating Russia on the 80th anniversary of the Soviet Union’s victory over Nazi Germany in World War Two, Kim said North Korea would “consolidate and develop the long tradition of the DPRK-Russia relations, the noble ideological foundation and the invincible alliance”, state-run KCNA reported.

The Reuters Tariff Watch newsletter is your daily guide to the latest global trade and tariff news. Sign up here. Kim has taken his young daughter to a variety of events recently, part of what South Korean intelligence views as plans for her to succeed her father. North Korea’s unprecedented deployment of thousands of troops, as well as huge amounts of artillery ammunition and missiles, has helped Russia push back a Ukrainian incursion into its western Kursk region. It has also brought North Korea and Russia - both economically and politically isolated - closer. More than three years after its full-scale invasion of Ukraine, Russia is marking the World War Two anniversary with a military parade attended by China’s Xi Jinping. In Moscow, Russian President Vladimir Putin greeted North Korean army generals with handshakes after hosting the parade. Putin embraced Kim Yong Bok, a three-star general who is considered to be a key figure overseeing North Korea’s troop deployment to Russia. Kim is subject to sanctions by the United States, South Korea and the European Union.

When sirens sound and bugles call



Less than two weeks after 26 people were killed by terrorists in Pahalgam, Kashmir, India’s Ministry of Home Affairs directed States to begin mock drills to make sure the administration and emergency services are prepared for possible military action from Pakistan or escalated terror attacks. The nationwide exercise is being conducted in public spaces, hospitals, and schools to help civilians establish safety protocols.

On May 5, in Punjab’s Ferozepur town, when the hooters went off, it was a throwback for 75-year-old Harish Monga. “I was posted in Ferozepur in 1971, when the war broke out between India and Pakistan. There were no mock drills, so people were not aware of the evolving situation,” says the retired government employee, remembering the fear and panic then. Now, people are calm because of communication, he says. Monga worked at Punjab Markfed, the State’s marketing federation that looks after the supply of goods from cooperatives.“In 1971, I shifted my family to Bathinda for safety. I had to be present in the office, but I used to travel the 50 kilometres every day. After the war began, there were trenches constructed around our office building, and as soon as the siren was sounded, we used to take shelter there,” he says.

In Dinanagar town, Gurdaspur district, about 20 km from the barbed-wire border with Pakistan, Sunil Dutt, a social worker and farmer, says that on May 7, the morning after India targeted nine terrorist sites in Pakistan, a 30-minute blackout drill was held. “In 2016, when India conducted surgical strikes, villagers were asked to move to a safer place, there was a kind of hysteria. I have immense faith in our defence forces,” he says. Punjab’s border with Pakistan extends to 532 kilometres.May 7 was declared Operation Abhyaas (rehearsal), a just-in-case playing out of possible scenarios, where the civil defence across the country simulated a variety of situations, including aerial attacks, hospital emergencies, and fires.Surya Parkash, a college student in Chandigarh, says it has been a great learning experience. “Now I know if a siren is sounded, I must immediately get out of the building and reach the ground or a bunker, if there is no roof. I am to lie down under a tree or in the open,” he says. He adds that he also learnt that during this time, pedestrians or vehicles moving on the road should immediately give way to emergency vehicles, which may include fire engines and ambulances. “The best part is I won’t be panicking and will be able to help others as well,” says the 18-year-old, who is a cadet of the National Cadet Corps (NCC).

The desert State of Rajasthan, which shares a 1,048-km-long international border with Pakistan, is on high alert. Large-scale mock drills and blackouts are being carried out in 28 cities, even as residents in Jaisalmer, Bikaner, and Jodhpur hear the thunderous sounds of Indian Air Force jets in the sky.The 15-minute blackouts conducted at different time slots in Jaipur to test readiness for aerial emergencies late on May 7 evening received mixed responses. Some residents complained that there was a lack of coordination among the government agencies. Rajendra Gupta, a shopkeeper in Jaipur’s Sethi Colony, says the residents of his locality were waiting for a power cut by the power distribution company, but it did not happen. “We switched off the lights in our area ourselves. I myself stopped the vehicles in front of my shop and asked the drivers to wait briefly until the blackout was over,” he says.

Civil defence teams, supported by the police and fire brigade, implemented rescue operations and created medical response scenarios at different places. Some areas followed guidelines, while the commercial establishments in some posh localities in the State Capital required police intervention for participation.Several towns in the State witnessed panic buying. Crowds flocked to grocery stores for essentials: grain, cooking oil, medicines, salt, soap. Suraiya Parveen, 74, a retired government school teacher residing at Ziledari Ka Chowk in Jaipur’s Walled City, says her son is constantly receiving messages with advice to stock up. “It is better to be prepared than face shortages or price hikes later. We don’t know what might happen. We live in a border State,” Parveen says.Government and private schools were closed on May 7, and examinations were postponed in the border districts of Barmer, Jaisalmer, Bikaner, and Sriganganagar.

Vikram Sharma, principal of Saraswati Secondary School at Subhash Nagar in Pali city, says students were told about the drill during the morning assembly. “The siren sounded when teachers and students were at work. Some of the children promptly hid under tables in their classes, while others lay on their stomachs,” he says. Students were also told about measures and arrangements to be made at home, such as what to do when the siren blared.Indu Sawant, 61, who retired as a commercial artist, is at home in Jangpura, New Delhi, on a hot Wednesday evening. As she checks her mobile phone, reading news articles about the mock drill, she recalls, when she was 10, back in 1974, how her government school in E Block, Jangpura, held mock drills for all students, class-wise.

“A 30-minute mock drill was necessary for all. The school trained us by digging trenches, and every time the siren would go, we had to learn how to shelter ourselves and safeguard those around us,” Sawant says. She also recalls how her school administration taught them to ensure the windows of their houses were covered with black paper, to avoid any kind of light.A phone in hand, Sawant recounts how information was disseminated back then via a radio that the family would gather around. While TV news was available, it was very limited. Much of the information was from school. “Now, information is a click away; people are much more aware; there is discussion around it,” Sawant says.O.P. Growel, 79, who has been running a textile shop for over six decades in Khan Market, also recalls witnessing similar drills during the wars of 1962, 1965, and 1971. “Since the 1971 war, this is the first time I am witnessing such a drill. It shouldn’t have come to that. These drills should be a compulsory practice both for the civil and military fronts to best prepare for any circumstances,” he says.Anil Kumar, an autorickshaw driver in Khan Market who watched the drill unfold while waiting for a passenger, observes that there are more crowded markets in the national capital. He hopes similar drills are being conducted there.

.. the siren went off in Connaught Place. Some panicked, asking strangers on the road about what had happened. Kusum, 55, a pavement fruit seller, lost sight of her 15-year-old grandson, who was with her. 2When she caught sight of him, he was almost in tears. “We didn’t know about this drill. Only the shopkeepers who had heard the news knew,” she says.

Mala Bajrangkare, 70, who was selling soft toys on the pavement, got scared as the lights went out in the area, because power cuts are rare in this part of Delhi.In the darkness, about 10-15 people flashed phone lights, violating instructions, and began a chorus of “Bharat mata ki jai,” along with “Nahi chhodega, nahi chhodega; Pakistan se hum badla lenge” In Old Delhi’s Chandni Chowk, as the sun beams down on Town Hall, at least 200 shopkeepers and customers gather outside when a siren goes off. Bhagwan Bansal, the president of the traders’ association here, says that a simulation was created of what could go wrong in case there was an attack or panic. Six persons play-acted being injured on the road.

“The crowd was divided into groups, and through a loudspeaker were taught how to give first aid, then proceed to the hospital. Agencies like Delhi Police, hospital staff, civil defence volunteers, and the fire department guided people on how to respond,” Bansal says. He adds that many had doubts, which were cleared. People from all walks of life, across age groups, showed an interest. “I hope more such drills take place, so we are better prepared,” Bansal says.At Fortis Hospital, Shalimar Bagh, there was an air strike simulation that resulted in a ‘building collapse’ and ‘multiple casualties’. In response, emergency services were activated. The fire department initiated immediate rescue operations, followed by firefighting efforts and a coordinated evacuation process. Approximately 10 ‘injured’ were quickly ‘stabilised’ and transferred to the emergency room of Max Hospital, Shalimar Bagh, with the assistance of Red Health and CATS ambulances. To ensure timely medical intervention, the traffic police facilitated a green corridor between the two hospitals. The mock drill concluded once all patients were safely evacuated and accounted for, says Deepak Narang, the facility director at the Fortis Hospital.

The Central government-run Dr. Ram Manohar Lohia Hospital, situated less than 3 km away from Parliament, also conducted a high-intensity mock drill simulating the emergency management of 20 bomb blast victims at 4 p.m. on May 7. Dr. Pulin Kumar Gupta, director and professor of medicine, says this exercise was aimed at evaluating the hospital’s preparedness, response coordination, triage efficiency, and critical care capabilities in the event of a mass casualty incident.

“Each victim was assigned a unique profile, requiring multidisciplinary interventions, like traumatic amputations, abdominal wounds, and skull fractures,” he says. The hospital’s advanced cardiac life support ambulance services were activated for field triage and transport.Like in Rajasthan, people in Haryana too began to hoard the basics, spurred by fake messages titled ‘advisory notice’. The messages urged people to store groceries and medicines for at least two months, keep ₹50,000 cash at home, and get their vehicles fully fuelled. Shopkeepers and fuel station attendants in parts of Gurugram confirm panic buying and fuelling.One attendant at a petrol pump off National Highway-48 that connects to Delhi, says there was a sudden increase in people — mostly cab drivers — refuelling on the afternoon of May 7.Rajesh Aggarwal, 52, who runs a grocery store in Gurugram’s Sector 15, says the sudden spike in demand reminded him of the COVID-induced lockdown.In just an hour after opening, he received more than a dozen home-delivery order calls. “Customers have been calling for candles, match boxes, and batteries. Many ordered dry rations (pulses, rice, flour) in bulk,” he says.Schools sent messages to parents, advising them on how to encourage open conversations with their children so they wouldn’t panic.

Adhering to the directive from the Ministry of Education, schools also showed children a government-issued video on air-raid preparedness. There was also a mock drill in schools, including DAV Public School in Sector-14 and 10A, to simulate an emergency situation, to prepare students and teachers.Haryana does not share a border with Pakistan. However, Millennium City is sensitive because of its proximity to Delhi and its strategic importance, with several multinational companies having offices here.Though mock drills were conducted in crowded locations such as Ambience Mall, many Gurugram residents took to social media platform X in anger. “NO AIR RAID sirens were heard. 60% of residents switched off on their own. Traffic was on. But most kept some lights on. Mock drill! Seriously???,” says Bhawani Shankar Tripathy, general secretary, Residents’ Welfare Association, Sector-23A, in a post.Another resident, Midrula Dwivedi, says, “I hear no siren in my area in Gurgaon. Wonder if the mock drill is still on? Outside the park is brightly lit.”

Samsung launches vision AI-powered TVs in India, redefining home entertainment with AI technology



Hyderabad: Samsung has launched its premium 2025 TV lineup in India, introducing models across Neo QLED 8K, Neo QLED 4K, OLED, QLED, and The Frame categories that have AI powers. At the center of the new range stands Samsung Vision AI, a next-gen solution for smarter and more personalized home entertainment.

The finest of the lot is the Neo QLED 8K QN950F with AI Upscaling Pro bringing down lower-resolution content to near-8K quality. The model features Glare-Free viewing, Auto HDR Remastering Pro, and Color Booster Pro for cinematic-grade and immersive experiences. Samsung Vision AI rests on three pillars: AI Mode, which optimizes visuals and sound in real time; AI Experience, which personalizes content and settings based on user behavior; and Multi-Device Connectivity, which is seamless integration across Samsung’s ecosystem.

Universal Gesture Control is a unique feature by which a user can operate the TV via simple hand movements, while Generative Wallpaper turns the idle screen into flowing, personalized art. In integration with SmartThings, these TVs provide alerts in real time, check energy use, and even are integrated with Pet and Family Care Mode, which records any uncharacteristic activities, further lending to home safety.Pre-orders will start on 7th of May, 2025. There are launch offers that include free soundbars (worth Rs 90,990), cashback of 20%, and EMI options.

Do restaurants have the right to charge a service fee?



The legal tussle over the legitimacy of service charges in restaurants has been fiercely contested for three years in the Delhi High Court, with both the Central Consumer Protection Authority (CCPA), representing consumer interests, and restaurant associations refusing to back down.

What’s the issue?

At the heart of the issue is whether the service charge, typically ranging between 5% to 20% across restaurants, is a legitimate business practice or an unfair imposition on consumers.Following a series of consumer complaints about compulsory service charges being added over and above the cost of the food items in restaurants and hotels, the CCPA issued guidelines in July 2022 prohibiting restaurants from levying such charges by default.The National Restaurants Association of India (NRAI), with over 7,000 restaurant members in India, and the Federation of Hotels and Restaurants Association of India (FHRAI) representing the interests of 55,000 hotels and 5,00,000 restaurants, challenged the guidelines in court.

How is it different from a tip?

A customer typically decides to give a tip, or gratuity, only after the meal is completed, when they are in a position to assess the quality of food and service. The decision to pay a tip or gratuity by a consumer does not arise merely by entering the restaurant or placing an order, however, service charges are pre-fixed percentages added to the bill regardless of the service experience.

What is the historical perspective?

The debate over service charges and tipping is not new. As far back as 1958, the Hotel Standards and Rate Structure Committee, chaired by late MP Diwan Chaman Lal, took note of the then-growing practice in India of levying a service charge on hotel bills, typically ranging from 5% to 15%.The committee took a strong stand against the solicitation of tips, terming it “injurious to the dignity of the worker and management” and a source of harassment for the customer. It, however, said a satisfied customer should be free to offer a tip voluntarily.

What is the consumer perspective?

For consumers, a mandatory service charge, especially when not disclosed upfront, feels like an unfair burden. Complaints to the National Consumer Helpline indicate that diners discover this when the final bill is presented.

Smoke and scare: controversy over smoke at Kozhikode MCH building refuses to die down

K.M. Ashraf, a health-care volunteer, was walking up to the scanning unit on the ground floor of the Surgical Super Specialty, Accident and Emergency Care Block of the Government Medical College Hospital, Kozhikode, around 7.50 p.m. on May 2. He wanted to find out whether it was time to shift a patient to the procedure room.“I heard some knocking sounds from the UPS room opposite the ‘red area’ where people in critical condition are admitted. Shortly, I saw plumes of smoke billowing out through its door,” he says.Sensing trouble, Ashraf and a few passers-by rushed to alert doctors and caregivers. Some of them sprang into action and broke open the door. They quickly grabbed the fire extinguishers mounted on the walls and started dousing the smoke.Gasping for breath“Soon, everyone was gasping for breath as thick smoke engulfed the premises. We felt a burning sensation as well. All of us rushed to the ‘red area’ to evacuate the patients who were on ventilator support,” Ashraf recalls.

The seven-storey building with a glass facade in its middle, constructed under the Pradhan Mantri Swasthya Suraksha Yojana (PMSSY), has the triage of the casualty ward on the ground floor. It also houses a host of operating theatres and an intensive care unit (ICU). Though inaugurated in 2023, the block has not been fully functional. The casualty section and some theatres were recently shifted to the building. Being one of the major public health-care institutions in northern Kerala, the hospital caters to the medical needs of patients from at least five districts.

Intermittent power outagesAccording to a non-medical staff member who was on duty at the time of the incident, there had been intermittent power outages in the building after rain lashed the area earlier in the day. Thereafter, one of the batteries in the UPS room attached to the MRI scanning unit on the ground floor could have burst after a suspected electrical short-circuit. It is suspected that one of the batteries could have caught fire, later damaging all the other 34 in the UPS room.

In no time, the area was engulfed in smoke and the stench of burnt electric wire and batteries filled the air. There was panic all around. None was prepared for such an eventuality. People were seen covering their faces with whatever piece of cloth they could get hold of. Some tied handkerchiefs over their faces, and a few others used face masks. Another one was seen removing his shirt to tie it around his face. “There was a haze everywhere, and nothing could be seen,” a volunteer recalled.Caregivers and people outside the PMSSY block of the Government Medical College Hospital, Kozhikode, on May 2 night after smoke engulfed the building. | Photo Credit: K. RageshThe smoke, which initially covered the ground floor of the building, began spreading to the upper floors later. Fire and Rescue Services person-

Moreover, attempts to have them removed are frequently met with resistance.

What is the government’s position?

In December 2016, the Ministry of Consumer Affairs issued a letter to all States and Union Territories flagging that the National Consumer Helpline was receiving a number of complaints from consumers of hotels and restaurants charging service charge, in lieu of tips. The Ministry clarified that ‘service charges’ are voluntary, and a consumer dissatisfied with the services can have them waived.However, since hotels and restaurants continued to collect service charges from consumers, in July 2022, the CCPA issued more stringent guidelines banning hotels or restaurants from adding a service charge automatically or by default to the bill. The guidelines also banned the collection of service charges from consumers by any other name.

What are restaurants saying?

Hospitality bodies like the NRAI and FHRAI, which have challenged the guidelines in court, argue that service charges have been an industry norm for over 80 years and there exists no law that prohibits them from charging the same.They contend it forms part of wage negotiations with staff and ensures the fair distribution of customer tips among all staff, including labour, utility workers, backend workers, etc., and not just front-end service staff.They said restaurants and hotels ought to have the freedom to price their goods in the manner they choose, either by setting a price for the food product itself or by distributing the cost between the price of the food product and the service charge.They urged that the interests of customers who can afford to pay the service charges must be balanced against the interests of the workmen, who are in a much more vulnerable position.

What have the courts said so far?

When the initial pleas were filed against the CCPA guidelines, the High Court, in an interim order in July 2022, stayed the guidelines, provided restaurants prominently displayed the inclusion of a service charge on menus.On March 28, this year, the High Court ruled that service charges or tips are a voluntary payment by the customer, and it cannot be made compulsory or mandatory by hotels and restaurants.



nel, volunteers, health-care workers, police personnel, and residents joined the rescue mission. The creaking sounds of wheelchairs, portable beds, and stretchers rent the air as the patients were taken to the front yard from the smoke-filled rooms. Within minutes, a war-like situation emerged outside the building.

Ambulance sirens

Ambulance sirens blared across the front yard as patients in serious condition were shifted into them and driven away to safety. “Suddenly, someone alerted the rescue workers that there were a few patients in the ICU. However, some of the caregivers refused to move out to safety as the patients were in an intubated condition. We explained to them the gravity of the situation and convinced them to get out as quickly as possible,” says a hospital staff member who actively participated in the evacuation.V.T. Baiju, a casual labourer from Koyilandy, had accompanied his aunt Thanka to the casualty ward after she sustained injuries in a freak accident. “Smoke suddenly filled the surgery department where the doctor was about to examine my aunt. We managed to slip out of the building through the back door. She was later shifted to a private hospital in the city in an ambulance,” he says. As many as 151 patients were relocated to wards in other buildings in the hospital and some private health-care institutions in the city. The Fire and Rescue Services personnel entered the building after all the patients were shifted elsewhere, another hospital staffer adds.MLA alleges asphyxiationMeanwhile, the incident kicked off a controversy with T. Siddique, Kalpetta MLA, alleging that at least three patients, including Naseera, a resident of his constituency, died of asphyxiation during the evacuation. There were also allegations that the bodies of five patients, who died of asphyxiation, were shifted to the morgue.Yousuf Ali, Naseera’s brother, alleges that the patients from the ICU were evacuated after snapping the ventilator support. He also alleges that the emergency exit door was found locked, which hampered the evacuation. “We had to smash a nearby glass door to take out the patients,” Yousuf Ali says. He also alleges that though Naseera was provided ventilator support again after being shifted to another ward, she passed away soon.

How this woman suffering from a rare condition causing ‘water allergy’



From the time we wake up, we are so dependent on water for our daily jobs and needs. But imagine being allergic to this very essential element for survival of humanity! Yes, this 23-year-old Niah Selway from the UK suffers from a rare condition called Aquagenic Pruritus – water allergy.

This rare condition is characterised by the development of severe and pricking-like epidermal itching which are evoked by contact with water. Sometimes, being in contact with water might also turn out to be deadly. But as one

can't think of doing their daily jobs without the universal solvent, Niah shares a video on her social media platforms to explain how she takes a bath without letting a drop of water touch her body.

In the now viral video, she explains about all kinds of precautions she takes before going for shower and how painful the process could be. Also, she mentions she uses the 'bath oil' instead of water for the clean-up process as it bubbles up and makes her feel like a 'normal bath' in the video shared on her Instagram handle @niahselway.

While the condition raised several queries among netizens – if she can consume water and can she take a quick two-minute shower instead of the long painful process. Sharing some answers to these queries, Niah comments: "It doesn't make a difference how long I stay in the water, because once the contact has been made with my skin, the allergic reaction will begin after 5-10 mins whether I'm still in contact with water or not. For me, bathing is better because in the shower, the water hits against my skin and causes more pain." Recently, the 23-year-old also started a GoFundMe Page to raise money for treatment at a private medical centre in Germany. Her goal is £2,50,000.

"My skin itches for hours after I come into contact with any form of water including rain, sweat, tears, urine, etc. I wasn't born with this condition, but it became worse through my teenage years, as I went through puberty," she writes on the GoFundMe page. Niah also takes painkillers and anti-sickness medicine to keep normalise her condition a bit, especially if she gets a severe reaction.

Meditation for a healthier you



New Delhi: If you have decided you need to look after your body and mind better, you're not alone. While many are turning to yoga and home workouts, meditation is gaining popularity as well. However, we still have questions like how to begin, where to start, what will the experience be like and what it will feel like! According to Anshul Agrawal, Director and Partner at Zed Black and a meditation practitioner himself, meditation is the subtle skill of doing anything but letting go of all struggles in order to relax and reconnect with your actual nature, which is love, joy, and peace.

"Meditation allows you to relax completely. It is critical to maintain mental health and lower stress levels. It is a simple exercise of inhaling and exhaling. It's a stimulating activity that's simple to integrate into your everyday routine." Meditation is simple to learn and involves some fairly straightforward techniques, he says. Before getting started, here is what Agrawal suggests:

Know the basics

Today, meditating daily is not a luxury but a necessity. We must harness the power of meditation if we want to be unconditionally joyful and have peace of mind. The goal is to make you calm, stress-free, pain-free, healthy, and happy. Meditation is beneficial to one's physical, mental, and emotional well-being. Meditation has been used to accomplish enlightenment. It has been preached by great

minds as a method of alleviating misery. Meditation has been shown to be beneficial for a variety of life goals. It is referred to as "meal for the soul" by modern-day meditators. Meditation increases focus and allows you to be aware of the present moment. If you give heed, you'll see that the mind oscillates between the past and the future.

Make it a routine

Commit to a regular practice, a few times a week if possible. Ten or 15 minutes initially, daily — and where you will sit, relatively undisturbed with some light music if that makes you happy. Initially, it takes discipline and perseverance to make a habit, so honour your routine and time for self-love. Opt for a healing fragrance

To create a space of Meditation one can burn fragrances or incense sticks which elevates the mood. Camphor is a sensation that transports you to a higher realm. Since historic times, it's known for its fragrant and therapeutic properties. The use of incense in healing has been a part of Ayurveda since its inception. Zed Black has introduced Aarogyam Camphor Incense sticks. The Camphor induced agarbatti will help create positivity in your surroundings, stimulate creativity, help in better concentration, relieve stress and anxiety and aid in peaceful and sound sleep and creates a sense of spirituality. Feel your breath

Follow the sensation of your breath as you inhale and exhale. When you notice that your mind has wandered in a few seconds or a minute or more, simply return your attention to the breath. You will realize, meditation isn't about not thinking, your mind won't automatically shut off and become thought-free. Instead, meditation can help you become more aware of your thoughts, and better regulate them over time.

Stick with it

It's always easy to start something new — a new diet, a new exercise regime, a new hobby — but the tricky part is to keep it going. For this to happen you need to be clear of your reasons to meditate and practice meditation. One needs to be clear about what you want to get out of your sessions — whether it's to feel happier, feel calmer, be more focused and productive at work or be less stressed. This fundamental thought will help you in creating the right attitude of mind and help you to maintain the commitment for your peaceful self.

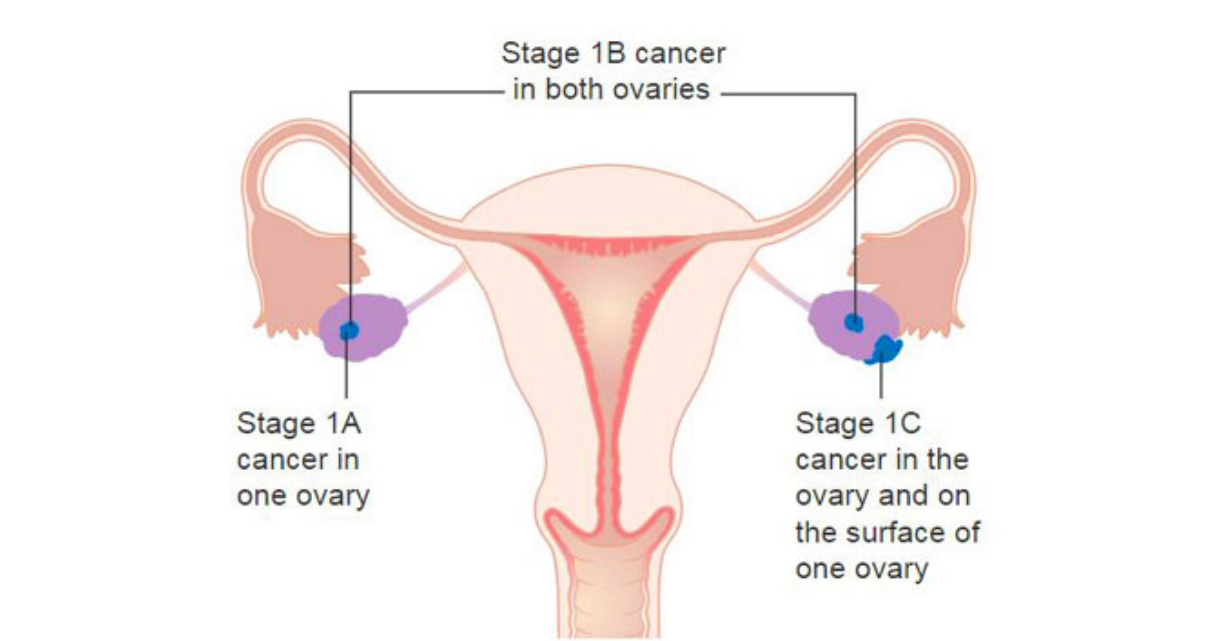
One in 100 deaths is by suicide: World Health Organization



Geneva: One in a hundred deaths globally can directly be attributed to suicide, the World Health Organization (WHO) said, arguing that the Covid-19 pandemic has increased factors for suicide worldwide. In 2019, more than 700,000 people died of suicide, one in 100 deaths, which was more than HIV, malaria, wars or homicide, the world body said in a statement issued on Thursday. The same year, prior to the global pandemic, the global suicide rate was decreasing everywhere, the WHO declared, with exception of the Americas region that saw increases of 17 per cent. Among young people aged 15-29, suicide was the fourth leading cause of death after road injury, tuberculosis and interpersonal violence. According to the WHO, more than twice as many males die due to suicide as females (12.6 per 100 000 males compared with 5.4 per 100 000 females). Suicide rates among men are generally higher in

high-income countries (16.5 per 100 000). For females, the highest suicide rates are found in lower-middle-income countries (7.1 per 100 000). Suicide rates in the WHO African (11.2 per 100 000), European (10.5 per 100 000) and South-East Asia (10.2 per 100 000) regions were higher than the global average (9.0 per 100 000) in 2019. The lowest suicide rate was in the Eastern Mediterranean region (6.4 per 100 000). The spread of the coronavirus has caused turmoil in societies, increasing factors of suicide globally, WHO Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus noted. "Our attention to suicide prevention is even more important now, after many months living with the Covid-19 pandemic, with many of the risk factors for suicide, job loss, financial stress and social isolation, still very much present," Tedros was quoted as saying in the statement.

Potential therapeutic target identified for ovarian cancer



Alabama: The findings of a new study done by the University of Alabama at Birmingham researchers reveal that a gene called DOT1L appears to play a role in the progression and severity of ovarian cancer. It also found that inhibitors of the DOT1L enzyme may offer a new therapeutic approach for the disease. These findings were published in the journal Oncogenesis. The need is clear despite decades of work to develop new treatment modalities; the five-year survival of patients with advanced ovarian cancer is between 10 and 30 per cent. Others have found that DOT1L is overexpressed in several cancer types, and recent clinical work has shown synergistic antiproliferative activity for a DOT1L inhibitor against MLL-rearranged leukaemia. The UAB researchers, led by Romi Gupta, PhD, assistant professor of biochemistry and molecular genetics, now show that DOT1L promotes ovarian cancer tumour growth by stimulating pro-tumorigenic metabolic pathways and blocking the programmed cell death called apoptosis. Gupta and colleagues first looked at data sets from patients. They found that DOT1L expression was significantly higher in tissues from ovarian cancer patients compared with tissues from healthy patients. Furthermore, patients with ovarian tumours that had high DOT1L expression showed shorter progression-free survival and shorter overall survival rates compared with patients whose ovarian tumors had lower DOT1L expression.

DOT1L is a histone methyltransferase that epigenetically methylates the histone H3 lysine 79 in chromatin, and this alters gene expression in cells. The UAB researchers

found that EPZ-5676 — a DOT1L inhibitor that has been used in several clinical trials to treat MLL-rearranged leukaemia — was able to block the growth of ovarian cancer cells in culture. EPZ-5676 also significantly blocked subcutaneous ovarian cancer tumour growth in a mouse xenograft model. Mechanistically, DOT1L inhibition downregulated the expression of various genes that are required for biosynthetic pathways and reduced the levels of essential biosynthetic metabolites in ovarian cancer cells. DOT1L inhibition also upregulated genes involved in programmed cell death, which increased apoptotic cell death for ovarian cancer cells in culture. The pharmacologic inhibition of DOT1L also upregulated the expression of ligands for natural killer cells in some of the ovarian cancer cell lines tested. These gene expression changes seen in DOT1L inhibitor-treated cells thus suggest that DOT1L overexpression in ovarian cancer leads to plentiful supplies of the metabolites needed for rapid tumour growth and also protects against tumour cell death caused by apoptosis or natural killer cell attack. "Our results suggest that DOT1L might be a pharmacologically tractable drug target for ovarian cancer therapy," Gupta said. "It will also be useful in combination with other immunotherapeutic agents to further enhance their effectiveness in treating ovarian cancer." Co-authors with Gupta for the study, "Disruptor of telomeric silencing 1-like promotes ovarian cancer tumour growth by stimulating pro-tumorigenic metabolic pathways and blocking apoptosis," are Suresh Chava, Suresh Bugide and Yvonne J.K. Edwards, UAB Department of Biochemistry and Molecular Genetics.

New mothers' sleep loss linked to accelerated aging: Study



"The early months of postpartum sleep deprivation could have a lasting effect on physical health," said the study's first author, Judith Carroll, UCLA's George F. Solomon Professor of Psychobiology.

Washington: When new mothers complain that all those sleepless nights caring for their newborns are taking years off their life, they just might be right, according to the University of California Los Angeles (UCLA) researchers.

UCLA research published this study in the journal Sleep Health.

Scientists studied 33 mothers during their pregnancies and the first year of their babies' lives, analyzing the women's DNA from blood samples to determine their "biological age," which can differ from chronological age. They found that a year after giving birth, the biological age of mothers who slept less than seven hours a night at the six-month mark was three to seven years older than those who logged seven hours or more.

Mothers who slept less than seven hours also had shorter telomeres in their white blood cells. These small pieces of DNA at the ends of chromosomes act as protective caps, like the plastic tips on the ends of shoelaces. Shortened telomeres have been linked to a higher risk of cancers, cardiovascular and other diseases, and earlier death.

"The early months of postpartum sleep deprivation could have a lasting effect on physical health," said the study's first author, Judith Carroll, UCLA's George F. Solomon Professor of Psychobiology.

"We know from a large body of research that sleeping less than seven hours a night is detrimental to health and increases the risk of age-related diseases." While participants' nightly sleep ranged from five to nine hours, more than half were getting less than seven hours, both six months and one year after giving birth, the researchers report.

"We found that with every hour of additional sleep, the mother's biological age was younger," said Carroll, a member of the Cousins Center for Psychoneuroimmunology at UCLA's Jane and Terry Semel Institute for Neuroscience

and Human Behavior. "I, and many other sleep scientists, consider sleep health to be just as vital to overall health as diet and exercise."

Carroll urged new mothers take advantage of opportunities to get a little extra sleep, like taking naps during the day when their baby is asleep, accepting offers of assistance from family and friends, and, when possible, asking their partner to help with the baby during the night or early morning. "Taking care of your sleep needs will help you and your baby in the long run," she said.

Co-author Christine Dunkel Schetter, a distinguished professor of psychology and psychiatry at UCLA, said the study results "and other findings on maternal postpartum mental health provide the impetus for better-supporting mothers of young infants so that they can get sufficient sleep — possibly through parental leave so that both parents can bear some of the burdens of care, and through programs for families and fathers."

Dunkel Schetter added that while accelerated biological aging linked to sleep loss may increase women's health risks, it doesn't automatically cause harm to their bodies. "We don't want the message to be that mothers are permanently damaged by infant care and loss of sleep," she emphasized. "We don't know if these effects are long-lasting."

The study used the latest scientific methods of analyzing changes in DNA to assess biological aging — also known as epigenetic aging, Dunkel Schetter said. DNA provides the code for making proteins, which carry out many functions in the cells of our body, and epigenetics focuses on whether regions of this code are "open" or "closed." "You can think of DNA as a grocery store," Carroll said, "with lots of basic ingredients to build a meal."

If there is a spill in one aisle, it may be closed, and you can't get an item from that aisle, which might prevent you from making a recipe. When access to DNA code is 'closed,' then those genes that code for specific proteins cannot be expressed and are therefore turned off."

Because specific sites within DNA are turned on or off with aging, the process acts as a sort of clock, Carroll said, allowing scientists to estimate individuals' biological age. The greater an individual's biological, or epigenetic, age, the greater their risk of disease and earlier death.

The study's cohort — which included women who ranged in age from 23 to 45 six months after giving birth — is not a large representative sample of women, the authors said, and more studies are needed to better understand the long-term impact of sleep loss on new mothers, what other factors might contribute to sleep loss and whether the biological aging effects are permanent or reversible. Carroll and Dunkel Schetter reported last year that a mother's stress prior to giving birth may accelerate her child's biological aging, which is a form of "intergenerational transfer of health risk," Dunkel Schetter said. Co-authors of the new study included researchers from the department of psychology, the department of psychiatry and biobehavioral sciences, and the department of human genetics and biostatistics at UCLA and from the psychology department at the University of Colorado at Colorado Springs.

Funding sources for the study included the Eunice Kennedy Shriver National Institute of Child Health and Human Development and the National Institute of Aging, both part of the National Institutes of Health.

‘If conflict broadens, residential sales could dip by 5-10%,’ says Anarock; Nifty Realty index closes 2.4% lower



A potential reduction in residential absorption by 5-10 per cent in case of further escalation is likely to hit the luxury market first. A potential reduction in residential absorption by 5-10 per cent in case of further escalation is likely to hit the luxury market first. Residential real estate sales in Delhi-NCR and other parts of northern India could drop by 5-10 per cent in the short-term if the ongoing conflict between India and Pakistan broadens, according to Prashant Thakur, head of research at real estate consultancy Anarock.

Additionally, cement and steel prices are likely to be elevated over the medium-term due to high demand from the defence sector, unless the government makes an intervention, Thakur said. On Friday, the Nifty Realty index comprising India's top 10 residential developers closed 2.38 per cent lower at 823.8, led by Raymond Ltd (-4.9 per cent), Macrotech Developers Ltd (-3.7 per cent), DLF Ltd (-2.7

per cent), and Prestige Estates Projects Ltd (-1.8 per cent). The broader Nifty 50 index fell by 1.1 per cent, following concerns of escalation after Pakistan launched drones and other munitions along India's western border late Thursday. "Wars also stall construction and dampen end-user and investor confidence. Aspiring homebuyers put decisions on hold. Retailers put a brake on their expansion plans, and tourists postpone their travel plans. Real estate markets adapt, pause, and then bounce back," Prashant Thakur said in a note.

A potential reduction in residential absorption by 5-10 per cent in case of further escalation is likely to hit the luxury market first. "Luxury housing buyers tend to delay purchases in periods of uncertainty. Demand for mid-income housing will be the first to recover once normalcy is restored," according to Thakur. With respect to housing capital values, Thakur does not foresee any significant drop, "unless hostilities stretch longer than one fiscal year". "Today's market is dominated by large, listed and financially robust developers who do not carry excessive leverage. This gives them prolonged 'holding power', and the major banks also are well-capitalised. There may be a pause on price hikes, followed by a sharp hike in prices on account of higher construction costs next year," he said.

The hospitality real estate sector and tourism more generally will also be affected over the short-term, with hotel occupancies in north India falling anywhere between 10-15 per cent, Thakur said. The Nifty India Tourism index closed 1.27 per cent lower on Friday, led by Indian Hotels Company Ltd (-3.71 per cent), Lemon Tree Hotels Ltd (-2.51 per cent), and EIH Ltd (-2.44 per cent).

India-Pakistan tensions: Nirmala Sitharaman to chair meeting with banks, financial institutions on cyber readiness

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman will chair a review meeting on cybersecurity preparedness of banks and financial institutions on Friday evening, amid heightened concerns that the country's critical infrastructure could be hit by cyber attacks amid the ongoing tensions between India and Pakistan. Representatives from various public and private banks, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI), National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI), NSE, BSE, and the Indian Computer Emergency Response Team (Cert-In), among others are expected to attend the meeting. Cert-In has been coordinating with various critical sector entities to ensure their cybersecurity preparedness.

The development comes as the Pakistan Armed Forces launched multiple attacks using drones and other munitions along the entire Western Border of India on Thursday night while also resorting to numerous ceasefire fire violations (CFVs) along the Line of Control in Jammu and Kashmir. The Indian Army said that the "drone attacks were effectively repulsed and befitting reply was given to the CFVs". The Pakistani escalation came a day after India carried out targeted strikes on nine sites in Pakistan and PoK. On May 7, The Indian Express had reported that following 'Operation Sindoor,' agencies and organisations which are in charge of India's critical infrastructure, such as the Power Ministry, financial institutions including banks, and telecom operators were asked to be on "high alert" after having faced a number of cyber attacks following the Pahalgam terror attack last month. "There have been some DDoS attacks on some infrastructure, but we have contained them. Now we are on high alert because such attempts will certainly be made," a senior government official had said earlier. A DDoS (Distributed Denial of Service)



attack is a cyberattack where an attacker overwhelms a website, server, or network with malicious traffic from multiple sources, making it slow or inaccessible to legitimate users. The Indian Express had reported on Wednesday that soon after news about Operation Sindoor broke, social media platforms such as X were flooded with misinformation related to India's strikes on nine sites in Pakistan and Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK). The ministries of IT and Information and Broadcasting sprung into action and decided that the government will dip into its legal powers of blocking any content or account they feel is propagating misinformation related to the strikes. Social media platform X said that it received executive orders from the Indian government requiring the company to block over 8,000 accounts in India, including those belonging to "international news organisations and prominent X users". It said that falling foul of the executive orders could subject the company to potential penalties including significant fines and imprisonment of its local employees.

Ample petrol, diesel, LPG stocks available across the country, avoid panic buying of fuel, say India's oil companies

Indian Oil Panic Buying: Amid soaring tensions between New Delhi and Islamabad, major public sector fuel retailers on Friday assured citizens that ample fuel stocks are available across the country, and urged them to desist from panic buying and hoarding of fuels like petrol, diesel, and cooking gas. "IndianOil has ample fuel stocks across the country and our supply lines are operating smoothly. There is no need for panic buying—fuel and LPG is readily available at all our outlets. Help us serve you better by staying calm and avoiding unnecessary rush. This will keep our supply lines running seamlessly and ensure uninterrupted fuel access for all," the country's largest fuel retailer Indian Oil Corporation posted on social media platform X (formerly Twitter).

"BPCL assures all citizens that sufficient stock of Petrol, Diesel, CNG, and LPG are available across our nationwide network. All our Fuel Stations and LPG Distributorships are operating smoothly and are fully equipped to meet the energy needs of consumers. There is no cause for concern or panic buying. We urge all customers to remain calm, as our supply chain operations remain robust and efficient, ensuring uninterrupted supplies," India's second-largest public sector refiner and fuel retailer Bharat Petroleum Corporation posted on X.

The advisories followed a few incidents of people resorting to panic buying of essential items and fuels over the past three days, primarily due to anxiety spread by some viral social media messages, which have been dismissed as fake by the government. According to sources in India's fuel retail sector, fuel supplies are normal and incidents of panic buying have been isolated. Nevertheless, it is important to reassure people that enough fuel is available to prevent panic buying and hoarding, officials said. Panic buying, fuelled by rumours, can by itself lead to regional disruptions in fuel supply, and therefore, countering any misinformation on the fuel availability situation is important, they said. India has over 96,000 fuel retail outlets that sell automobile fuels petrol and diesel spread across the length and breadth of the country. Of these, Indian Oil alone has over 40,000 outlets, followed by the other two public sector fuel



retailers—Bharat Petroleum and Hindustan Petroleum Corporation—each of which has nearly 24,000 fuel retail stations. Private sector players like Reliance Industries, Nayara Energy, and Shell cumulatively have close to 9,000 fuel stations. As for LPG, or cooking gas, there are over 25,000 distributors dotted across India, with Indian Oil accounting for nearly 13,000, and Bharat Petroleum and Hindustan petroleum accounting for the rest.

Tensions between India and Pakistan have soared after New Delhi struck nine locations in Pakistan and Pakistan-occupied Kashmir on Wednesday. The strikes — codenamed 'Operation Sindoor' — targeted terror bases in Pakistan and were in retaliation for the deadly terrorist attack on tourists in Pahalgam, Kashmir on April 22 that left 26 people dead. Following India's precision strikes at Pakistan's terror infrastructure, the conflict between the two nuclear-armed neighbours has flared up considerably over the past couple of days with regular exchange of fire and drone assaults. With the escalation in tensions, instances of panic buying of food, fuel, and other essential items have been reported from some parts of the country, mainly areas in states along the border with Pakistan. A number of areas in these states experienced full blackouts on Thursday night as Pakistan, in a major escalation of the conflict, launched multiple attacks directed at the Indian territory using drones and other munitions, but all of these attacks were thwarted by Indian air defence systems and armed forces.

India reported 21 lakh additional deaths in 2021 compared with 2020



India recorded over 1 crore deaths in 2021 — the second year of the COVID-19 lockdown — which was around 21 lakh deaths more than in 2020, according to two key reports on registered births and deaths published this week by the Registrar General of India (RGI) after a five-year gap. "In the case of registered deaths, the number of registered events has gone up from 81.2 lakhs in 2020 to 102.2 lakhs in 2021, i.e., an increase of 26.0%," the report, 'Vital Statistics of India based on the Civil Registration System for the year 2021', said.

The other report on the Medical Certification of the Cause of Death 2021, compiled by the RGI, said that deaths with COVID-19 as the underlying cause of death increased

from 1,60,618 in 2020 to 4,13,580 in 2021, which included 2,67,363 male, 1,46,215 female, and two transgender fatalities. In 2021, out of 10,224,506 deaths, as many as 2,395,128 were medically certified deaths, which was 5,83,440 more registered deaths when compared with 2020. According to the report, a total of 5,74,198 COVID-19 deaths were reported in 2020 and 2021. The COVID-19 dashboard maintained by the Union Ministry of Health says that, as on May 5, the total number of deaths induced by the pandemic stood at 5,33,665. The report said that among the leading groups of causes, diseases of the circulatory system, including pulmonary ailments, constituted 29.8% of the total number of medically certified deaths, followed by deaths caused by COVID-19 at 17.3%; deaths caused by diseases of the respiratory system at 12.7%; and deaths caused by certain infectious and parasitic diseases at 6.1%. COVID-19 was the second leading cause of death in 2021; it was the third leading cause of death in 2020. Among the 32 States and Union Territories, Uttar Pradesh, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, Madhya Pradesh, Karnataka, Bihar, Andhra Pradesh, Kerala, West Bengal, Odisha, Chhattisgarh, Haryana, Punjab, Telangana, Jharkhand, and Delhi contributed significantly to the increased number of deaths registered from 2020 to 2021, the report said. The number of registered births decreased by about 0.1%, from 242.2 lakh in 2020 to 242.0 lakh in 2021, the Civil Registration System report said.

MDRF, U.S. researchers call for precision treatment following discovery of a new subtype of monogenic diabetes

Scientists from the Madras Diabetes Research Foundation (MDRF), Chennai, in collaboration with Washington University School of Medicine in St. Louis, United States, have discovered a previously unrecognised subtype of Maturity-Onset Diabetes of the Young (MODY), and have called for wider access to genetic screening and precision treatment for diabetes patients, particularly in India. MODY is a rare, inherited form of diabetes caused by mutations in a single gene, typically appearing in adolescents and young adults. While 13 MODY subtypes have been recognised to date, the newly identified variant challenges long-standing assumptions about the condition, doctors said.

Researchers say the breakthrough not only adds to scientific understanding but also underscores the urgent need to integrate genetic testing into routine diabetes care. This, they noted, could mark a turning point in improving diagnosis, treatment, and long-term disease management for thousands of individuals living with undetected or misclassified forms of monogenic diabetes. These defects primarily affect the pancreatic beta cells, which are responsible for insulin synthesis and secretion. These defects primarily affect the pancreatic beta cells, which are responsible for insulin synthesis and secretion. | Photo Credit: Special Arrangement

The study, published in the journal — Diabetes — of the American Diabetes Association, identifies Loss of Function (LOF) mutations in the ABCC8 gene (it helps regulate insulin release in the pancreas by controlling a channel that responds to glucose levels, allowing insulin to be released into the bloodstream, when needed), in contrast to the Gain of Function (GOF) mutations previously linked to MODY and neonatal diabetes. The new variant results in early-life hypoglycemia, followed by later-onset diabetes — a progression previously undocumented in MODY cases. Colin G. Nichols, lead researcher, Washington University School of Medicine, highlighted in the study that the LOF mutation impairs potassium channel function in pancreatic beta cells, disrupting insulin secretion. He said the study marked the first observed switch from congenital hyperinsulinism to



diabetes in maturity-onset diabetes of the young context. Radha Venkatesan, executive scientific officer, head of molecular genomics at MDRF and co-lead author, emphasised the clinical implications of this discovery. "This variant does not respond to conventional treatments such as sulphonylureas, which are effective in other MODY forms. Understanding the underlying genetic mechanism is key to guiding appropriate therapy," she said. Insulin secretion is the process by which pancreatic beta cells release insulin into the bloodstream. Insulin secretion is the process by which pancreatic beta cells release insulin into the bloodstream. | Photo Credit: Special Arrangement Sulphonylureas work by stimulating insulin release from the pancreas, lowering blood sugar levels. Sulphonylureas work by stimulating insulin release from the pancreas, lowering blood sugar levels | Photo Credit: Special Arrangement V. Mohan, chairman of MDRF, reiterated the importance of incorporating genetic testing into standard diabetes diagnosis. "Many patients with MODY remain undiagnosed or misclassified as having type 1 or type 2 diabetes. This discovery strengthens the case for precision diagnosis and treatment," he said. The findings are based on clinical data and laboratory analysis of Indian patients. Researchers believe that expanding access to genetic testing could lead to earlier detection and more effective care for individuals with monogenic forms of diabetes.

A silent burden: Thalasassaemia patients in Karnataka battle disease with hope and hardship

Her day begins with a quiet prayer and a glance at the faded calendar, marked with yet another hospital appointment. For over two decades, Gowramma's life has revolved around needles, blood bags, prescriptions, and silent strength. Gowramma is the mother of two grown-up children — Tarun and Santosh — both living with thalassaemia, an inherited blood disorder characterised by reduced haemoglobin production.

Every few weeks, the children need blood, life-saving transfusions that keep them alive, but slowly poison their bodies with iron. The medicine to fight this iron overload is expensive, and the bills never stop. The family has a small garment shop at Peenya, an industrial area in the northern part of Bengaluru, and is struggling to meet an avalanche of medical expenses. Gowramma has not been able to get the free medicines from the government-run Victoria Hospital for the last four months. At Sunkadakatte, a semi-urban locality in west Bengaluru, life is a daily struggle for 19-year-old Mubeena Ruqsar, who lives with her parents. She was diagnosed with beta-thalassaemia major at just six months. Since then, blood transfusions every three weeks, countless needles, and a growing pile of medical records have all been part of her routine. Her father, Rahmathulla, works as a mechanic in a local garage. Her mother, Sakina Banu, once dreamed of becoming a teacher but now dedicates every waking hour to managing Ruqsar's health — tracking her transfusion schedules and watching for signs of fatigue, fever, or distress. They live in a rented two-room house, and save every extra rupee for hospital visits and medicine. The young adult's treatment involves not just transfusions but also expensive iron chelation therapy. Bone marrow transplant offers the only permanent curative option for children with thalassaemia, but access remains limited due to financial and logistical barriers, according to experts. Bone marrow transplant offers the only permanent curative option for children with thalassaemia, but access remains limited due to financial and logistical barriers, according to experts. These three are among an estimated 10,000 thalassaemia patients in Karnataka, a number that experts say is growing due to the lack of systematic screening and awareness. No government registry is available to document the number of people living with this disorder.



However, despite the growing burden, public health mechanisms remain fragmented. The State established the Karnataka State Blood Cell for the treatment of patients with blood disorders (haemophilia, thalassaemia, and sickle cell anaemia) in 2017. While this Blood Cell — operating under the National Health Mission (NHM) — is coordinating treatment and providing free transfusions in government hospitals, access to quality iron chelation drugs and specialised care remains uneven.

Although the State is providing thalassaemia drugs for free, short supply and lack of access to standardised drugs are proving costly for patients. Patients, who had been dependent on branded drugs by known manufacturers, are now getting only generic medicine manufactured by smaller pharma companies at the government centres. This is because there has been no response from big players to the tenders floated for procuring the drugs post-COVID-19 pandemic. Officials, who expressed helplessness, said according to norms, the tender has been allotted to the lowest bidder among those who participated.

According to data from the State Health Department, as many as 2,288 thalassaemia patients are registered with the 36 Integrated Centres for Haemoglobinopathies and Haemophilia (ICHH) run under the NHM. These centres, which also run day-care centres, provide free iron chelation drugs and blood transfusion services. Nearly half of the total registered patients have enrolled at the Indira Gandhi Institute of Child Health (IGICH) in Bengaluru, which is the nodal centre.

IPL 2025, PBKS vs DC: With his edge-of-the-seat batsmanship and six-hitting show, Priyansh Arya dazzles



EMS News Agency, May 14

Following the blackout in Dharamsala due to attacks in Pathankot, roughly 90 km from the hill city, that led to the match's abandonment, Punjab Kings' dazzler Priyansh Arya shone brightly with a 34-ball 70, offering joy for the patient fans that lingered despite the rain and unease of the war in the background.

For much of the evening, the match seemed destined to be washed away by unseasonal rain. But then, rain relented, and at half past eight o'clock, Arya and Prabhsimran Singh strode out to the middle amid gun-toting men in Army fatigues, against Delhi Capitals. Just 12 IPL games old, the 23-year-old has captured the imagination to such an extent that the crowd began to chant his name akin to the Sachin anthem that was the most ubiquitous soundtrack of Indian arenas in the 90s and aughts. More often than not, he dis-appoints them; that's a risk entailed with his high-risk brand of batting, a bargain he is ready to strike. But there are nights when he makes up for them with edge-of-the-seat batsmanship, where the heartbeat cannot resist its furious pounding. It took just one ball to raise the excitement scale.

Mitchell Starc dished up an unusual loosener, which he clipped past fine-leg for his first boundary. The next stroke probably set the tone of one of the stormiest nights in the history of the league. He disdainfully slapped him over point, tip-toeing on his back foot and freeing his long and supple arms. In the next hour, he absorbed the audience into his world. The identity, stature or nature of the bowlers did not bother him. It did not matter to him whether the ball clocked 145 or 75 kph, whether it was a virtuosos left-arm quick or a malevolent left-arm wrist spinner. He scythed and sliced, cuffed and cudgelled them to all corners of the stadium, masking the lethargic outfield with the concoction of power and timing. The only bowler that seemed to trouble him temporarily was Dushmantha Chameera at the start. He eked out only six runs off his first six balls. Then, he uncorked the stroke that devastated the Sri Lankan seamer's mo-

rale. He angled a shortish ball into his leg-stump, and he short-arm jabbed him over deep square leg. Chameera's mind would have slipped back into his teenage years, where he would have watched with marvelled eyes his national team coach Sanath Jayasuriya author similar strokes. His night grew darker, as Arya smeared him for a four and another six, the latter a ferocious thump over long-on's head. Like several of the new-age, left-handed T20 openers from India, he sets himself up on the back foot. He doesn't have a pronounced front-foot stride; rather loves to ride the bounce and hit on the up. But when the spinners arrive, he jumps out to them without any hesitation whatsoever. He telegraphs his intentions quite early, and subsequently, bowlers drop their length. But he does not check or change his stroke; rather goes full throttle, augmented by a delightful balance, marked by the stillness of his head, a fluid transfer of weight into the shot and a supreme extension of the arm. He is not particularly a tall man, just two feet short of six, but he has lean and long arms that enable him to get the reach he wants, making him look taller than he actually is. Kuldeep realised this trait to his chagrin. Arya sashayed down the track to a tossed-up stock ball, realised he was far from the pitch but went through with his plan, and deposited the ball irretrievably into the roof. He repeated the strike next ball, leaving Kuldeep shaken. A few balls ago, he struck the most difficult of his half-dozen swipes over the fence. An over-spun Axar ball bounced a tad more than he had judged. But never mind, he got himself tall, got under the ball fully and with a sweet, straight swing pillaged the ball over long-off. Then to flaunt his eye to improvise, he reverse swept Kuldeep, whose bagful of variations was exhausted. A joyous six-hitter — it's hard to believe his claim that he was reluctant to strike maximums at the start of his career — he has bypassed a raft of more famous and powerful ones to sit second on the table (28, hitting one every eight balls he faces). Add the tally of 42 fours, and it's reasonable to assume that India have unearthed another free-wheeling opener. Eventually, on what would be the last ball of the night, Arya perished to the slowness of T Natarajan's short ball. Eleven minutes later, the match was called off, with Punjab Kings on 122/1 in 10.1 overs.. It was as though the night, one of the strangest in the league's history, had only one purpose. A wondrous show of six-hitting by Arya in terms of their IPL fortunes, Punjab Kings would feel slightly relaxed despite the match getting abandoned as they have managed 16 points and are on third (based on net run rate). But they are not fully guaranteed of the play-offs as both Mumbai Indians and DC have 14 points. All three have two games apiece. A win could seal PBKS's entry to the last four in what could be a photo-finish race. MI and DC are slated to duel on May 15, which could virtually be a knock-out.

'Net master' Ayush Shetty trumps OG ace of dribble game, Kidambi Srikanth, in dogfight to enter Taipei Open quarterfinals



Bangalore's badminton coach Krishna Kumar recalls a tall Ayush Shetty — when he trained at I Sport Academy for five years — setting himself a unique challenge even as he was skimming 6 feet. "Daily for 30-40 minutes, even back then, his mind was set on perfecting the net," he recalls about what in itself isn't particularly strange. "He would declare that out of 10 attempts, at least 7 times he would get himself a point on the net chord! And he would make it. That much precision he trained for," the former coach says, revealing the cheeky skill to nick the tape and ensure it tipsles over to the other side.

Ayush now trains at the bigger Prakash Padukone academy with Sagar Chopda and Vimal Kumar, having helped him add variations from the back court to his game. But Krishna Kumar, a coach known for his technical finesse, insists this 'dribble game vs self' is something that can be traced back to Mangalore, where he started. On Thursday at the Taipei Open, playing another net-master, Kidambi Srikanth, Ayush won 21-16, 15-21, 21-17. Ayush had messaged Krishna Kumar a day earlier to say, "This time I will beat him easily." However, Srikanth, not quite back to his old levels but definitely playing sharper than he had in recent times, was no easy opponent. In what turned into a dogfight at the net between two absolute connoisseurs of that delicate dribble, Ayush, merely 19, prevailed against the pro at 30. To Ayush's credit, though, he barely scored any from net chords; it was the net game where he proved to be better on the day. It was a rare and pleasantly surprising solid attacking performance from Srikanth, i.e. very few smashes sprayed out of bounds. But at the net, his stomping zone from where he reached World No. 1 and won more titles than any other Indian male in singles, Srikanth, was forced to blink. Still, his attack promises some spark in the coming months. On Thursday, however, Ayush prevailed in 61 minutes. It was particularly notable because Srikanth brought the game to the net, focusing on his variations and short length attack. Both Indians were smashing with a whip — Ayush, of course, with a harder hit from his 6'4" range. But at the eyeball confrontation, Ayush managed the tumbles on the front court that forced Srikanth to lift. The Ayush big smash took care of the res. Ayush would request me to train for half an hour before everyone else. Just to perfect the control of the forecourt. Practising net chords is rare, but the emphasis on net was because he realised if he could create good openings at the net, then the attack could get going," Krishna Kumar recalls.

The men's singles game has moved on from silken strokes and style, and perhaps the Ayush-Srikanth match was a pointer into just how one-dimensional the game gets wi a slam-bang attack, though both have some delectable deception. When Srikanth wasn't killing on his follow-up stomp strides with the backhand, he got drawn into the dribble trouble. With his reach and racquet skill, Ayush can play from a little further behind while still asserting control. It's the Viktor Axelsen game-in-the-making: testy dribbles, force a lift, one stride back for a whiplash smash. But training for what is more forearm, not the shoulder, was fore-

sight on Ayush's part. "He was exceptional on net chords played on purpose. It was hours playing 11-point dribble-games which became a habit, and now seeking perfection," the coach adds.

Vimal Kumar, though, is sure to replay the day's match and show Ayush how Srikanth flicks the shuttle back to open up the court, something the youngster needs to learn.

As such, with Srikanth not giving up, and moving well on the court for his cross smashes and own net fest kills, things reached the decider pretty quickly. After Ayush accelerated at 15-15 in the opener and took the first, Srikanth amped his attack to level sets. From 10-13 down, Srikanth wasn't fading out and levelled at 14-14. It was at 15-14 that a stroke of ill-luck struck Srikanth, and he had no recourse to reviews. Returning from the midcourt, Srikanth watched as one push zoomed past his outstretched racquet, and the shuttle fell out. Srikanth celebrated. But the linesperson and chair umpire ruled it as Srikanth's racquet nicking the shuttle on the way, awarding the point to Ayush. The older Indian was gobsmacked — on his haunches, arguing, but not being heard for a whole 2 minutes when even the chief referee refused to reconsider with the net umpire weighing in for status quo. As happens in such cases, the unfairness of it, as he perceived, wrecked his concentration, and he lost the set 21-17 from 16-14, which could well have been 15-15. A tame parry into the net ended Srikanth's resistance. Nicking an opponent's outstretched racquet was certainly not a skill he trained for, Krishna Kumar laughs. "When I sat for his matches, he certainly could win net chords at will. But his bigger skill was if he got pushed to the corner, Ayush could get the shuttle back 8 out of 10 times, or 9," he says. A lot of 1 vs 2 would see Ayush scrambling to the corners. "He has this tremendous skill to change direction when in danger, and it's no weak return. But at the net, while Srikanth is older and experienced, Ayush is younger and sharper-skilled," he says as Ayush prepares to take on Brian Young in the quarters next. Srikanth will debate it — and it was debatable bigly — but Ayush Shetty might well have invented a racquet-chord.

GNS News Agency, May 14

Hyderabad: The Indian Supercross Racing League (ISRL), the world's first-ever franchise-based Supercross championship, has witnessed an unprecedented response to its Season 2 rider registrations that opened late last month. The league has recorded an astounding 89 registrations in just the first three weeks, with all major athletes from Season 1 already confirming their participation for the upcoming season. This remarkable early response outpaces last season's registration timeline, where the league received 85 registrations after 3 months, ISRL is charted for a 2x growth vis-à-vis Season 1. The swift re-registration of established riders, including international superstars and Indian talent, demonstrates the immense excitement and growing demand for the league among athletes globally.

The global appeal of ISRL continues to grow, with registrations pouring in from across the Americas, Europe, Asia, and Australia. Among the star athletes returning for Season 2 are Matt Moss, Jordi Tixier, Reid Taylor, Thanarat Penjan, Ben Hallgren and Thomas Ramette. They will be

'Football ke rang, Begusarai ke sangh'



Hyderabad: Football ke rang, Begusarai ke sangh. It's more than just a tagline pasted on the pillars of an under-construction flyover leading into this town. It's a quiet revolution that began with broken legs and bruised pride in a forgotten corner of Bihar. Tucked away from the din of Patna's bustle, in a humble locality of Barauni in Begusarai district, football did not just arrive, it fought its way in. This ground, a patch of land that carries the legacy of a freedom fighter, Yamuna Bhagat, became football's unlikely home nearly 80 years ago. But the spark that truly lit its modern-day fire came in 1990, when a hastily assembled team of local girls, untrained and unsure, was battered by a seasoned Muzaffarpur team in an exhibition match, meant to mark the ground's 50th anniversary.

Some hobbled away, some were stretchered and all had wounds that cut deeper than skin. But instead of shame, it birthed a movement. "We were humiliated. But we turned that pain into purpose," recalls Chandra Shekhar, a retired schoolteacher and former footballer, whose words carry the weight of generations. "The story of the ground dates back to pre-Independence era, when freedom fighter Yamuna Bhagat started with a library to educate youngsters from the oppressed communities upon his release from jail. The real transformation took place in 1990 when we planned to celebrate 50 years of the ground," narrated Chandra while

reflecting on the struggles and sacrifices the village made to turn it into a nursery for young female footballers. "We had invited two teams for an exhibition match, and only one of the two reached here. As organisers, we were left red-faced, and all of a sudden we decided to form a team with young girls who had never played the sport," he recalled. A year later, armed with courage and fuelled by community spirit, Begusarai's girls returned to the field, not to survive, but to compete. They beat Ara 1-0, a side that had former India striker Poonam in its ranks, in what would be remembered not for the result, but for the resolve.

That one goal was a clarion call: We belong here. Over the next three decades, Barauni turned into a cradle of footballing dreams, led by unsung heroes like Chandra Shekhar, and former Mohun Bagan goalkeeper-turned-mentor Sanjeev Kumar Singh, who chose turf over a steady Army career, love for the game over comfort. Together, they nurtured talent, mentored generations and preserved a ground that once broke them and later, built them. Sanjeev candidly admitted that his dedication to football has come at the cost of ignoring the interests and needs of his family, but pointed out that someone had to shoulder the responsibility. "For my family, I'm useless, but I can't help it. I try to support them, but football remains my first love. Everyone is busy with their jobs, so someone had to take responsibility. It's a sacrifice born of love, not obligation. A choice that helped this venue host Santosh Trophy matches in 2018, and now, India's flagship youth sporting event," said an emotional Sanjeev. Today, Begusarai has emerged 12-time State champion, supplies 70 per cent of Bihar's squad, and has a football culture rooted deep in community pride. Barauni finally finds itself on the national map, hosting the Khelo India Youth Games 2025. It's the applause for three decades of quiet toil, village-wide sacrifice, and football played with heart, not boots. The scouts from the Sports Authority of India (SAI) are in town, identifying prospects and predictably, many have roots in this very village.

How Carlo Ancelotti's move from Real Madrid to Brazil got awkward

GNS News Agency, May 14

Carlo Ancelotti is swapping Real Madrid for Brazil in one of the biggest moves in world football. The problem is, neither he, nor Madrid, want to talk about it. As coaching switches go, they don't come any bigger than this. But when news broke on Monday that Ancelotti was leaving the sport's most successful and iconic club team to take charge of its most successful and iconic national team, there was an awkward silence. Madrid chose to ignore the announcement by the Brazilian soccer federation and was still to publicly acknowledge it 24 hours later. There was silence, too, from Ancelotti, who didn't even provide a quote for his new employer when it published its official statement. That left an uncomfortable vacuum until Ancelotti finally confirmed his departure during a scheduled news conference on Tuesday, which he only took part in because he was supposed to preview Madrid's upcoming match against Mallorca

"If I didn't have this news conference today it would have been a fantastic day. But in this news conference I have to explain things that I don't want to explain," the Italian coach said. Becoming coach of record five-time world champion Brazil should be among the proudest moments of Ancelotti's career. He will be the first foreign coach of Brazil at a World Cup — taking charge of the team of Pele, Ronaldo and Neymar; and the most iconic yellow jersey in soccer. But even for Ancelotti — who is famed for his cool demeanor on the sideline, cigar smoking and the odd raised eyebrow — his reaction has been understated. The 65-year-old Ancelotti — who has won a record five Champions League titles as a coach — begins his new job later this month with a view to leading Brazil to next year's World Cup. With three more rounds of the Spanish season to go, Ancelotti said he did not want "anybody asking me about other things, because I respect this jersey a lot and I want



to respect it until the last day. The announcement came after Madrid's 4-3 loss to Barcelona over the weekend all but confirmed the defending Spanish champion would surrender its league title. Barcelona needs just two points to be crowned champion and can complete the job against Espanyol on Thursday. Ancelotti's exit has been long-trailed, with departing Bayer Leverkusen coach Xabi Alonso widely expected to replace him. So news of the deal will not have come as a surprise to Madrid, which was involved in the negotiations to release Ancelotti early from a contract that had another year to run. But its silence has been notable, with no messages of congratulations or thanks to a coach that won two Champions League titles and the Spanish title in his second spell at the club. Ancelotti also coached Madrid from 2013-15, which saw him win another Champions League. Despite Ancelotti's future being confirmed, Madrid has not been pushed into responding with an announcement of its own succession plans. "Real Madrid will release the statement when they want. There's no problem whatsoever. They'll do it at the appropriate time for Real Madrid and there's nothing further to add," Ancelotti said.

Michael Vaughan on Virat Kohli: 'Test cricket would've been far blander place without him'

GNS News Agency, May 14

India's captain Virat Kohli kisses the field after scoring a double-century during day two of the first cricket Test match against West Indies at the Sir Vivian Richards Stadium in North Sound, Antigua, on July 22, 2016. (AP Photo) India's Virat Kohli kisses the field after scoring a double-century during day two of the first cricket Test match against West Indies at the Sir Vivian Richards Stadium in North Sound, Antigua, on July 22, 2016. (AP Photo) With Virat Kohli retiring from Test cricket, the Indian cricket team would be competing in the five-match Test series in England without the legendary Indian cricketer. Terming Virat Kohli as someone without whom Test cricket would have been a 'far blander place', former England captain Michael Vaughan has stated that Test cricket would have lost its appeal had Kohli not been there in recent years. More than 30 years, I don't believe there is any individual who has

done more for the Test format than Virat. When he took the captaincy just over a decade ago, I was worried India was losing interest in Test cricket. MS Dhoni was one of the great white-ball players but it felt like he captained a Test team who did not love the format. The game needs India to be madly in love with Test cricket, and that is what Virat fostered as captain. His passion, skill, and the way he talked about Test cricket always being the pinnacle has been a huge shot in the arm for the format. Test cricket would have been a far blander place without him, and there is a chance it would have lost its appeal if he had not been as interested and invested in it," Vaughan wrote in his column for The Telegraph. During his 123-Test career, the 36-year-old played 28 Test matches against England and scored a total of 1991 runs in 50 innings with an average of 42.36. Out of those 28 Test matches, Kohli played 17 Tests in England against the hosts and scored 1096 runs including two hundreds and five half-centuries.

ISRL registers record response in season 2 rider registrations

GNS News Agency, May 14

Hyderabad: The Indian Supercross Racing League (ISRL), the world's first-ever franchise-based Supercross championship, has witnessed an unprecedented response to its Season 2 rider registrations that opened late last month. The league has recorded an astounding 89 registrations in just the first three weeks, with all major athletes from Season 1 already confirming their participation for the upcoming season. This remarkable early response outpaces last season's registration timeline, where the league received 85 registrations after 3 months, ISRL is charted for a 2x growth vis-à-vis Season 1. The swift re-registration of established riders, including international superstars and Indian talent, demonstrates the immense excitement and growing demand for the league among athletes globally.

The global appeal of ISRL continues to grow, with registrations pouring in from across the Americas, Europe, Asia, and Australia. Among the star athletes returning for Season 2 are Matt Moss, Jordi Tixier, Reid Taylor, Thanarat Penjan, Ben Hallgren and Thomas Ramette. They will be

joined by three major international names: Alexander Fedortsov (USA), the 2025 'AMA SMX Next' National Champion, Adrien Escoffier (France), a leading contender in the FIM World Supercross Championship, and Luke Clout (Australia), and 2024 P6 World Supercross Championship. India's own top performers- Rugved Barguje, Ikshan Shanbhag, and Sarthak Chavan, who impressed in the previous season, will also be back in action. This blend of world-class international athletes and exceptional home-grown talent sets the stage for an exhilarating second season. Eeshan Lokhande, Co-Founder, Indian Supercross Racing League, said the overwhelming response they had seen in just the first three weeks of Season 2 registrations highlights ISRL's growing stature in the global motorsport arena. "The swift return of all our top athletes from Season 1, along with a surge of new entries, is a powerful testament to the success and influence of our debut season. It's a strong validation that fuels our team's passion to take Season 2 to new heights to deliver a world-class experience for both riders and fans."



Gram Chikitsalay review: Safe and staid Panchayat redux colours itself in sameness



A doctor comes to a village, there to discover a place where a familiar mix of innocence and craftiness is at play, where a quack has a bustling practice, and where he, the well-intentioned doc, learns life lessons. Replace Amol Parashar's doctor with Jitendra Kumar's sachivji, and you will get the set-up for Panchayat, TVF's much-loved show, with so little difference as to be negligible. But given that clueless shehari babus having to check their privilege can make for an entertaining ride, there will always be similar shows. Dr Prabhat Sinha's entry into Bhatkandi sets the tone for the five-part series. A funeral procession is passing by, the building which houses the PHC (public health centre aka gram chikitsalay) is a decrepit heap surrounded by overgrown fields, and compounder Phutani (Dwivedi) and helper Gobind (Makhija) — reminding us of Faisal Malik and Chandan Roy's function in Panchayat — express disbelief that the doctor actually has plans to stay back and do his job, and that he won't just be a rubber stamp like the others who came before him.

The TVF stamp is clear, and the mandate appears to be the same: give the viewers yet another slice of ruralcore where the clash between city and village is laid out in slow-paced easily digestible chunks, supported by quirk and accent, steering clear of anything that would be hard to navigate — class, caste, religion — especially given how easy

we are to take offence, especially in these times. Local quack Chetak Kumar (Pathak), who consults Google when stumped, which is very often, says: 'patient kamaana padta hai, bharosa jeetna padta hai' (you have to earn trust and patients). Prabhat laments the lack of a 'system that works', and has to encounter sarcasm from a portly CMO (chief medical officer) for his very presence — 'toh kya ehsaan kiye ho' (don't think you are doing us a favour by being here). A colleague (Ranjan Kapoor) from a neighbouring village who seems to be a busy bee, contrasting Prabhat's lack of work, gives him a sweet scooty ride: could there be a romance brewing? A nurse (Singh) and her troubled son (Kumar) get written into the strongest thread in the series, but it also results in heavy melodrama. The arrival of rival politicians and their shenanigans feel like space-fillers. And Parashar's Prabhat becomes a wiser man, without us being any the wiser of what goes on inside him. This could have been something more. The connection between the lack of proper medical facilities in villages, and the reluctance of well-trained doctors to leave their cushy city lives for a 'gaon ki posting', has resulted in a system that's broken. But the insistence on keeping everything cosy makes 'Gram Chikitsalay' safe and staid, giving off a very Panchayat redux vibe, which may have very well been the one that the creators were going for, but which colours its brand new series in sameness.

Vikramaditya Motwane says no space left for indie films in India: 'Even streamers aren't our saviours'

Filmmaker Vikramaditya Motwane, who kicked off 2025 on a strong note with the critical and commercial success of his Netflix series Black Warrant, has expressed concern over the shrinking space for independent cinema in India. In a recent interview with The Hollywood Reporter India, the director reflected on how drastically the landscape has changed in the last decade. "The fact that Phantom could make Masaan once, for example, I think that industry has changed right now," he said, referencing the now-defunct Phantom Films. "I don't think there's space for an indie film for a theatrical audience, or even for a streaming audience."

Motwane pointed out the lack of purely artistic Indian films being backed by local studios or platforms post-pandemic. "If you think about it, when was the last purely artistic film that was made for streaming since the pandemic? I can't think of a single one that has been made without an international producer," he said. "There was a lot of talk about India at Cannes last year — we had four films in the festival, across all the sections — each one of them had an international partner. None of them were an indigenous Indian production."

Reflecting on the pre-pandemic era, he added, "If I take it all the way from Udaan, the same year, 2010, we had Peepli Live, Dhobi Ghat, LSD, That Girl in the Yellow Boots. And after that you had Masaan, Court, Newton. All these movies played in theatres, they all did well in the theatres — for their budgets, they all did well enough. There was a certain amount of money that was made back. Nobody went broke." On the shift since COVID-19, Motwane acknowl-



edged, "Things have changed drastically. Not only are these movies not playing in theatres anymore, but also not on streamers. Streamers are not supposed to be our saviours... but that didn't turn out." Despite the dismal state of affairs, Motwane underlined the importance of keeping independent cinema alive. "They must be made," he insisted. His advice for aspiring indie filmmakers? "If you want to make them, be smart about it — go out there, find an international producer, as then only you can get distribution, to get the money back."

Mani Ratnam was not born wise, says Kamal Haasan: 'He is young just like me but the inspiration...'



Kamal Haasan added Silambarasan's words also hold true for filmmaker Balu Mahendran. The veteran actor shared, "Mani Ratnam and I, we have both worked with Balu Mahendra. Only he could train a dog to act. He would walk upto it to teach him action. There was a dog named — Subramani which acted in a film. He loved the dog's acting so much that he took it home after the shoot. It grew up in his place. I used to be jealous of the dog."

Mani Ratnam and Kamal Haasan are gearing up for the release of their second collaboration, Thug Life, 38 years after their first film Nayakan (1987). With the movie scheduled to release on June 5, the cast and crew have been actively promoting it at different events and cities. Recently, Kamal Haasan, Silambarasan TR, and Trisha sat down for a discussion, during which STR praised Ratnam for his passion and love for cinema.

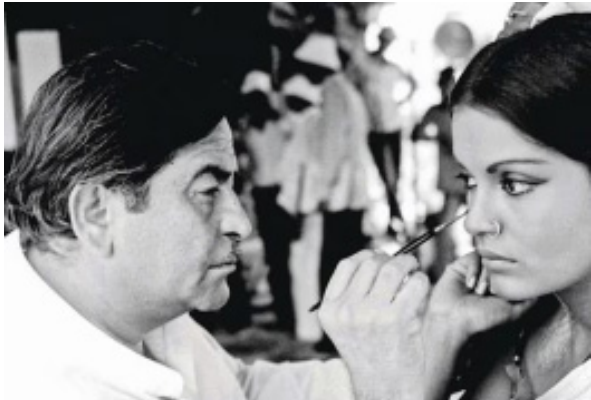
Simbu said, "Usually directors correct actors from the monitor. They just shout from there but when it comes to Mani sir, he makes sure to walk to the actor to tell them what he wants. Maybe this is one of the reasons why we respect him so much. The way he explains, we automatically do things right." Haasan, who shares a strong bond with the filmmaker, chimed in, "Mani Ratnam was not born wise. He is young just like me but the inspiration he has... his choice of the leaders he got inspired from."

Kamal Haasan added Silambarasan's words also hold true for filmmaker Balu Mahendran. The veteran actor shared, "Mani Ratnam and I, we have both worked with Balu Mahendra. Only he could train a dog to act. He would walk upto it to teach him action. There was a dog named — Subramani which acted in a film. He loved the dog's acting so much that he took it home after the shoot. It grew up in his place. I used to be jealous of the dog." Besides Haasan, Trisha and STR, Thug Life also stars Sanya Malhotra, Abhirami, Ashok Selvan, Aishwarya Lekshmi, Joju George, Nassar, Ali Fazal, Pankaj Tripathi, Rohit Saraf and Vaiyapuri.

Raj Kapoor wondered why he was 'accused of exploiting women', argued with censor board for Zeenat Aman's portrayal in Satyam Shivam Sundaram: 'If Fellini shows a nude woman...'

Raj Kapoor is still remembered as one of the greatest filmmakers of Indian cinema but in his later films, many viewers started pointing out that women in his films were presented with a certain male gaze that seemed exploitative. Raj was aware of this criticism but he believed that was seen as exploitative by others, was his way of showing a woman's beauty. Almost all of his films after the 1970s, including Bobby, Mera Naam Joker, Satyam Shivam Sundaram, Prem Rog and Ram Teri Ganga Maili presented a lot of its female characters in a sexualised way and Raj addressed the same in the book presented by his daughter Ritu Nanda.

In the book, Raj Kapoor: The One and Only Showman, Raj spoke about the time that he had a conversation with the CBFC (Central Board of Film Certification) regarding his film Satyam Shivam Sundaram. The film starred Zeenat Aman in the lead role and her costumes in the film created quite a stir in those days. Raj shared in the book, "We are shocked by nudity. We must grow up. In a country that has produced seven hundred million children, people are shocked by partial nudity! Why are we so hypocritical? Children don't grow on trees. They are made in bed. And what is immoral in showing a beautiful girl? Take cinema to the villages, give them entertainment. The only entertainment they have now is brewing alcohol, drinking it and producing children." Raj then spoke about showing Satyam Shivam Sundaram to the censor board in India and shared, "When the film (Satyam Shivam Sundaram) was complete, I asked the censor board, 'Which is more harmful, this or what you are permitting? You see the banners and posters all over India. Everybody is holding a gun or a sword or something with which to kill, in a country that propagates



non-violence! Can't you understand that that is what is harmful?" Raj insisted that he respected women, and did not understand why he was accused of exploiting them. He said that when a director like Federico Fellini showed women in the nude, it was seen as art, but when he tried something similar, it was seen as exploitation. "I respect women and I cannot understand why I am accused of exploiting them. If a Fellini shows a woman in the nude, it is considered art. If I show off a woman's beauty, it's called exploitation," he wrote. Women in Raj Kapoor's films weren't always shown in the same way as there was a significant shift after the 1970s. He acknowledged that and wrote, "What influenced my work of the early 1950s is not necessarily what will influence the work of the 1980s. It is not that idealism has been lost. I have taken up themes in which women are perhaps more active than men or are more subjected to emotional tyranny by society."

Aisha actor Amrita Puri buys luxury apartment in Mumbai worth Rs 37 crore, pays Rs 2.22 cr as stamp duty

Actor Amrita Puri, known for her role in Sonam Kapoor's Aisha (2010), and her family have bought luxury apartment worth Rs 37 crore in Mumbai, as per property registration documents reviewed by Square Yards. The real estate investment, located on the 49th floor of Lodha World Towers in Lower Parel.

According to the documents, it is measured over 5,446 sq ft. The documents also show that Amrita's luxury apartment was registered on April 30, 2025, for which a stamp duty of Rs 2.22 crore and registration fees of Rs 30,000 were paid in advance. It was bought along with rights to four car parking spaces.

As per Square Yards, Lodha World Towers, constructed by Macrotech Developers, also known as Lodha Group, is one of the tallest buildings in India. Lower Parel is known for being one of Mumbai's prime residential and commercial hubs, offering premium living spaces and business districts, including Bandra-Kurla Complex (BKC) and Nariman Point. Several Bollywood celebs such as Abhishek Bachchan, Shahid Kapoor, writer Amish Tripathi, and sports personality Zaheer Khan, have also purchased real estate properties in Lower Parel, as per Square Yards' analysis of IGR property registration documents. Recently, actor Akshay Kumar was also in the headlines for selling an office space in Lower Parel, Mumbai, for Rs 8 crore,



according to property registration documents accessed by Square Yards. The Kesari 2 actor had bought the property in 2020 for Rs 4.85 crore, which shows a 65% profit in its total valuation. The office, located in One Place Lodha, has a measured carpet area of 1,146 sq ft. Amrita Puri is popular for movies like Aisha, Kai Po Che!, and Four More Shots Please! Meanwhile, on the work front, she was last seen in the Netflix thriller web series IC 814: The Kandahar Hijack in 2024.

Kendall Jenner and Sitara Ghattamaneni in one frame? Fans are loving the unexpected crossover



Sitara Ghattamaneni, daughter of actors Mahesh Babu and Namrata Shirodkar, recently crossed paths with American supermodel and socialite Kendall Jenner. While Sitara is no stranger to celebrity, given her lineage, this unexpected crossover still took fans by surprise. The star kid shared a photo from the encounter on Instagram. In the picture, Sitara is seen posing with Kendall, seemingly aboard a plane. She also tagged Kendall in the photo. This is not the first time Sitara Ghattamaneni has been seen alongside a celebrity. During the grand wedding ceremony of Anant Ambani and Radhika Merchant, Sitara posed with Kendall Jenner's half-sister Kim Kardashian. At the same event, she posed with Bollywood stars such as Alia Bhatt, Ranveer Singh, and Aishwarya Rai Bachchan, among others. Sitara captioned the post, "A stary celebration. A spectacular night with some beautiful people!!!" While Mahesh Babu and Namrata Shirodkar have made their mark on the big screen — with Namrata even holding a Miss India title — they are yet to confirm when their daughter might follow in their footsteps. In a media interaction earlier this month, Namrata was asked about Sitara's future in acting, especially given her experience voicing baby Elsa in the Telugu dub of Frozen 2. She replied, "Sitara is just 12 years old now, so there's a lot of time left for us to discuss it." Though her film debut remains uncertain, Sitara has already appeared in a PMJ Jewels advertisement. The couple's elder child, Gautham Ghattamaneni, is gearing up to take their legacy forward. He is currently pursuing a degree in art at New York Uni-

versity and impressed fans with a video where he could be seen showcasing his acting talents in a mime act on stage.

I've grown into a version of myself who's not afraid to try, to fall, to rise and to keep surprising people: Ananya Panday

Mumbai: It was in 2019 when her debut film "Student Of The Year 2" released. Actress Ananya Panday, who has completed six years in Hindi cinema, said that when she started off she was nervous and now she is not afraid to try. "I was 19 when I started. I was nervous, starry-eyed and still figuring out who I was", she said. The actress added: "Now, I think I've grown into a version of myself who's not afraid to try, to fall, to rise and to keep surprising people. I'm still learning."

"I don't have all the answers, but I know I want to keep getting better and to pick roles that challenge me, scare me a little, and keep giving me butterflies." "Student of the Year 2" is a sports romantic comedy film directed by Punit Malhotra and produced by Karan Johar's Dharma Productions. A standalone sequel to the 2012 film Student of the Year, it stars Tiger Shroff, Tara Sutaria, Ananya Panday, and Aditya Seal. It marks the debuts of both Tara and Ananya in Hindi cinema. Ever since her debut, the actress, who is the daughter of actor Suyash Panday, has featured in films such as Pati, Patni Aur Woh, Khaali Peeli, Liger and Gehraiyaan. She saw commercial success with "Dream Girl 2". Her performances as a young woman navigating the perils of urban life and technology in the drama Kho Gaye Hum Kahan and the thriller film CTRL along with the comedy series Call Me Bae, were well-received. She was last seen in the courtroom drama Kesari Chapter 2, starring Akshay Kumar and R Madhavan. Follow Us :