

Indian Chronicle

English Daily

Ghosts of 1984

THE turbulent events of 1984 continue to be a burdensome baggage for the Congress. The Sikh psyche was scarred by the Army action on the Golden Temple and the anti-Sikh violence that broke out in Delhi and other cities after PM Indira Gandhi's assassination. The wounds are yet to heal, and there is still no sense of closure. Congress leader Rahul Gandhi's recent admission that "the party committed a lot of mistakes when he was not there" is a step towards reconciliation with the Sikh community, though it has come rather late in the day.

Rahul has said that he is "more than happy" to take responsibility for everything wrong the party did in its history. He must also take a fair share of the blame for the acts of omission when he — or his mother Sonia Gandhi — was holding the party's reins. The Nanavati Commission report on the 1984 riots implicated Congress leaders such as Jagdish Tytler and Sajjan Kumar, but the party high command did not weed out the black sheep. Another leader suspected of inciting rioters, Kamal Nath, was appointed CM of Madhya Pradesh in December 2018, when Rahul was the party president. True, the Nanavati panel had given Nath the benefit of the doubt, but why did Rahul prefer to ignore the damning testimonies of witnesses?

Ironically, it was Manmohan Singh, India's lone Sikh PM, who apologised to the community and the nation for the riots, even though the Gandhi family should have done the needful. An apology by Sonia or Rahul on the floor of Parliament would have gone a long way towards letting bygones be bygones and moving on. The least that Rahul can do now is to ensure that tainted veterans are expelled from the party. That would lend credibility to his repentance.

Immediate Demolition Requested for House Built on Government Land



“P.S.Ashokan”Indian Chronicle“Manthani,May 7”“Construction carried out on government land using an old house number”– Revealed during D.L.P.O. inquiry”– Konaasipet resident Kodudula Rajayya demands swift action from the Collector”“Kodudula Rajayya, a resident of Konaasipet village in Manthani mandal, has appealed to the District Collector to immediately demolish a house allegedly constructed illegally on government land by Kodudula Pochayya. Speaking to the media at the Manthani Division Press Club on Tuesday, Rajayya stated that Pochayya used the old house number 1-94 to construct a new house without obtaining any official permission from the village panchayat.”“According to Rajayya's complaint, the original house bearing number 1-94 was located elsewhere with clearly defined boundaries. However, the newly constructed house, though registered under the same number, stands on government land with entirely different boundaries. Rajayya detailed that the old house had the following borders: to the north, vacant land belonging to Godugula Pochayya; to the south, a CC road; to the west, the house of Bheemun Shankarayya; and to the east, a CC road. In contrast, the new construction's boundaries are: to the east, vacant land belonging to Thalla Gopal; to the west, the house of Lingalapalli Rajeshwar Rao; to the north, vacant land owned by Perala Vimala; and to the south, a CC road maintained by the village panchayat.”“Rajayya alleged that the registration of the new house was carried out based on misleading documentation. Following his formal complaint supported by evidence, the Manthani D.L.P.O. conducted a full inquiry on the 2nd of this month and recorded statements from those involved. The D.L.P.O. has stated that the findings will be submitted to the District Panchayat Officer for further action.”“Rajayya urged the District Collector to treat the matter with urgency, conduct a detailed investigation, and take immediate steps to remove the illegal construction. He also demanded legal proceedings against those responsible for the false registration, asserting that no ownership rights exist over the said government land.

Jupally oversees grand welcome preparations for Miss World delegates

Hyderabad, May 6 Minister for Tourism and Culture Jupally Krishna Rao visited Rajiv Gandhi International Airport, Shamshabad, on Tuesday to review the arrangements for receiving international delegates arriving for the Miss World pageant. The Minister instructed officials to ensure a grand and culturally authentic welcome that reflects Telangana's rich traditions and warm hospitality. “The airport must serve as a vibrant gateway to Telangana's identity, showcasing our traditions and cultural pride,” he remarked.

Accompanied by officials from GMR Passenger Experience, the Department of Tourism, Customs, Immigration, and CISF, the Minister conducted a detailed inspection of the welcome arrangements. He suggested adorning the arrival area with fresh flowers and traditional mango and banana leaf toranas to create a festive and visually immersive atmosphere. To ensure a seamless experience for the arriving delegates, Jupally Krishna Rao directed authorities to streamline immigration and customs procedures and to increase the number of reception teams. He emphasised that every aspect of the airport experience should prominently reflect Telangana's artistic and cultural heritage. This international event marks a prestigious opportunity for Telangana to present its culture, tourism potential, and hospitality on the global stage.

Sashtra Wellness Spa and Salon Hosts Exclusive Wellness Soirée for Influencers and Lifestyle Connoisseurs



Hyderabad:Sashtra Wellness Spa and Salon recently hosted an enchanting wellness soirée, drawing an elegant gathering of influencers and lifestyle connoisseurs who revel in the art of self-care. The event, expertly curated by renowned lifestyle curators Shreya Pandey and Nisha Jaiswal, aimed to celebrate the transformative power of rejuvenation through a variety of luxurious treatments and holistic beauty rituals.

Set in a warm and inviting atmosphere, the soirée showcased Sashtra's signature offerings, allowing guests to indulge in a range of luxurious services. Attendees were treated to pedicures, nail extensions, hair styling sessions, and express beauty treatments, all meticulously crafted to refresh and rejuvenate. With expert therapists and stylists

on hand, the evening illuminated Sashtra's commitment to a holistic approach to beauty and wellness.Ms. Fatima, Owner of Sashtra Wellness Spa, expressed her delight at the successful gathering: “At Sashtra, we believe that self-care is not just a routine but a joyful ritual that nourishes both the body and soul. Our exclusive soirée was a wonderful opportunity to share this philosophy with like-minded individuals who appreciate the value of wellness as part of their lifestyle. We are thrilled to have provided an evening of indulgence that leaves our guests feeling refreshed and inspired.”Guests left the event not only pampered but also motivated to prioritize their well-being in their daily lives—each interaction designed to remind everyone of the importance of self-love and care.

If there are Pakistanis in the district, they should be identified and sent back “– BJP District President Balram“

Mulugu, Mahipal, Indian Chronicle : BJP District President Sirikonda Balaram has demanded that the government identify Pakistani nationals in Mulugu district, immediately check their visas and immediately send them to their native places. In this regard, on Monday, under the leadership of BJP Mandal President Rayanchu Nagaraju, he met Mulugu District Collector Diwakara TS and handed over a memorandum. Speaking on the occasion, Balram said that the Center is taking steps to identify Pakistani nationals in India and send them back, and that steps should also be taken to identify Pakistani nationals residing in Mulugu district illegally. He expressed his



concern that terrorists who took refuge with the help of Pakistan had carried out a brutal attack in Pahalgam, Kashmir on April 22 and killed 26 people. He said that Pakistani nationals living in various parts of Mulugu district who do not have valid

documents and have expired visas should be identified.

He said that these measures will increase confidence in security among the people. BJP State Council Member Bhukya Jawahar, ST Morcha State

General Secretary Kotha Surender, district leaders Donthireddy Ravi Reddy, Gadam Kumar, Dandiga Venkanna, Elkathurthi Srihari, Yeruva Papireddy, Velpukonda Raghuvveer, Sagar and others participated in the program.

Koil Alwar Thirumanjanam Held at Sri Padmavathi Ammavari Temple as per agamasastra



“May 6,Indian Chronicle, Rayalaseema coordinator”“The Koil Alwar Thirumanjanam was conducted with great fervor at the Sri Padmavathi Ammavari Temple in Tiruchanoor on Tuesday as per agamasastra. As part of the program, Sri Padmavathi Ammavaru was awakened with Suprabhata seva, followed by Sahasranamarchana and purification rituals. Subsequently, the Koil Alwar Thirumanjanam took place from 6:00 AM to 9:00 AM. During this ritual, the temple premises, walls, ceilings, pooja materials, and other articles were first cleansed with water. Following this, a sacred mixture of fragrant substances such as Namakopu, Srichurnam, Kasturi Turmeric, green leaves, Gadda Karpooram (camphor), sandalwood powder, Kumkum, and Kichiligadda was sprinkled throughout the temple. Devotees were then allowed for Sarva Darshanam (general darshan).”“On this occasion, the temple's Senior Archaka (priest) Babu Swamy stated that the annual Vasanthotsavam (spring festival) of Sri Padmavathi Ammavari Temple will be held from May 11th to 13th. He informed that the Ankurarpnam (ceremonial commence-



ment) for this festival will be performed on the evening of May 10th at 6:00 PM. As part of the festivities, the Swarna Rathotsavam (golden chariot procession) will be a visual treat for devotees at 9:45 AM on May 12th. During the three days of Vasanthotsavam, Snapana Thirumanjanam (holy bath) will be performed for the Utsava deities of the Goddess at the Friday Gardens from 2:30 PM to 4:30 PM. Every night from 7:30 PM to 8:30 PM, the Goddess will grace the four main streets surrounding the temple, bestowing her blessings upon the devotees. He called upon all devotees to be recipients of the Goddess's grace. Devotees can participate in the Vasanthotsavam by paying ₹150/- each.”“The TTD (Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams) announced in a statement that due to these festivals, the Kalyanotsavam (celestial wedding) and Oonjal Seva (swing ritual) have been cancelled from May 11th to 13th. Donors from Hyderabad, Swarna Kumar Reddy, offered eight curtains to the Goddess's temple. AEO Devarajulu, Superintendent G. Ramesh, Temple Inspectors Chalapathi, Subbarayudu, Prasad, Subhaskar, AVSO G. Satish Kumar, and others participated in the event.

3,989 mini Anganwadi teachers promoted

Hyderabad, May 6 The State government has announced promotions for mini Anganwadi teachers, promoting a total of 3,989 to the position of Anganwadi teachers. These newly promoted teachers will now receive the same salary as Anganwadi teachers, starting at Rs. 13,650 per month, an increase from their previous salary of Rs. 7,800.

CPA Australia: Survey reveals optimistic growth and employment outlook for India's small business sector

Hyderabad: India's small business sector is one of the most dynamic and optimistic in the Asia-Pacific, according to the results of the 16th Asia-Pacific Small Business Survey conducted by one of the world's largest accounting bodies, CPA Australia. The survey findings for India reveal 78 per cent of Indian small businesses grew last year, reflecting the country's strong post-pandemic recovery.

Mr Prafulla Chhajed, a Certified Practising Accountant with CPA Australia, who has more than 30 years of accounting and finance experience in India said: “This momentum has been driven by a vibrant business environment, a strong emphasis on innovation and rapid digital transformation.”“Business confidence is high, with 86 per cent of respondents expecting their business to grow this year. Another standout trend is the growing export focus of India's small businesses, with 64 per cent expecting an increase in overseas sales this year, higher than most of the surveyed markets.

“India's micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) continue to perform strongly in a fast-changing economic environment,” said Mr Chhajed, “Their confidence, willingness to embrace technology and innovation and explore new markets positions them as a driving force in India's fast-growing economy.

“The positive outlook among MSMEs can be attributed to a combination of domestic and international factors. Domestically, technological advancements, improved infrastructure like the enhanced internet connectivity, and supportive government policies for MSMEs in finance and digitalisation have fostered a beneficial environment for small businesses to thrive. “Booming global demand for Indian products and services has further buoyed MSMEs, encouraging many to export for higher profits. Government schemes offering financial incentives and export support have also motivated more MSMEs to expand their international presence.”

RTC Workers Demand Immediate Action on Pending Issues“

“ P S A S H O K A N “ I N D I A N CHRONICLE“MANTHANI,MAY 7”“Manthani: The unresolved grievances of RTC employees must be addressed without delay, or workers will be forced to initiate a strike, warned RTC JAC Chairman Mr. Ailayya and Convenor Mr. K.K. Reddy. Responding to a call given by the Joint Action Committee (JAC), RTC employees staged a protest near the Manthani Bus Depot, wearing black badges and chanting slogans such as “We are ready – ready to strike.”“During the protest, the workers unveiled a campaign poster signaling their preparedness for industrial action. Addressing a press conference on the occasion, the JAC leaders demanded immediate resolution of long-pending employee is-



sues. They urged the government to release the 2021 Pay Revision Commission (PRC) benefits without further delay and criticized the continued postponement of salary arrears.”“The leaders expressed concern over the management's failure to regularize contract workers, alleging that employees were being subjected to prolonged low-wage labor. They insisted that the government should integrate RTC into the state administration to ensure job security and fair treatment for all workers.”“The JAC warned that if their demands are not met by the 6th of this month, they would launch an indefinite strike starting from the morning of the 7th.”“Among those present at the protest were JAC Co-Chairman Mr. Edla Ramesh, Co-Convenors Mr. S. Sadaayya, Mr. Krishna, Mr. Janardhan, Mr. Khutubuddin, Mr. M. Pochayya, Mr. J.D. Naik, Mr. Intiyaz, Mr. M. Prabhakar, Treasurer, Media Convenor Mr. Md. Munir, and Publicity Secretaries Mr. K. Raju, Mr. Vijender, Mr. N. Rajayya, Mr. B. Gopal, and Mr. P. Kumar.

FDDI launches “Say No to Drugs” initiative to promote Drug-Free India

Hyderabad, May 6 The campus of the Footwear Design and Development Institute (FDDI) Hyderabad was alive with energy and purpose as students and faculty united for the impactful “Say No to Drugs” campaign, part of the national initiative Nasha Mukta Bharat Abhiyan. This event aimed to raise awareness about the detrimental effects of drug and alcohol abuse, fostering a commitment to a drug-free India.

Organized by esteemed faculty member Dr. Rambabu Muppiddi and the Social and Environmental Club, the event was hosted by second-year students Sinchana and Anirudh, who infused the session with enthusiasm and clarity. The atmosphere was charged with a collective determination to combat substance abuse and promote healthier lifestyles among the youth.A standout moment of the event was the motivational address by Dr. N Tej Lohit Reddy, IAS, Executive Director of FDDI Hyderabad. Dr. Reddy delivered a compelling speech that highlighted the devastating impact of substance abuse on individuals and society at large. He inspired students to remain focused on their aspirations and to envision a future free from the grips of addiction. His powerful message resonated deeply with the audience, particularly the youth, leaving an indelible mark on their commitment to the cause.The campaign underscored the significance of education, awareness, and self-discipline. Students actively participated, pledging to reject drugs and serve as ambassadors of this vital message within their communities. The event concluded on an uplifting note with the powerful reminder: “If you can quit it for a day, you can quit it for a lifetime — SAY NO TO DRUGS.”

CITU Launches Nationwide Strike Posters in Manthani



“ P S A S H O K A N “ I N D I A N C H R O N I C L E “ M A N T H A N I , M A Y 7 “ “Manthani: As part of the preparations for the upcoming nationwide general strike, the Centre of Indian Trade Unions (CITU) unveiled campaign posters on Monday at the Municipal Office premises in Manthani. Addressing the gathering, CITU District Committee member Mr. Budida Ganesh strongly criticized the central government's move to repeal 29 hard-earned labor laws—established through decades of struggle inspired by the freedom movement—and replace them with four consolidated labor codes. He asserted that these new codes are fundamentally incompatible with the spirit of the Indian Constitution and threaten the rights and dignity of the working class. Mr. Ganesh cautioned that the enforcement of

the labor codes could severely undermine worker protections, potentially reducing employees to a state of servitude under corporate control. He called for the immediate withdrawal of the labor codes and urged the government to address other unresolved labor-related grievances. Emphasizing the urgency of united action, Mr. Ganesh appealed to all sections of the working class to actively participate in the nationwide general strike scheduled for the 20th of this month, ensuring its resounding success under the collective leadership of various trade unions. The event witnessed the participation of prominent leaders including Mr. Chippakurthi Chandu, Mr. Singarapu Gattayya, Mr. Mallesh, Mr. Devender, Mr. Rajayya, Mr. Rajender, Ms. Pochamma, and Ms. Bhagya.

TTD EO J. Syamala Rao Assures Better Amenities on Srivari Mettu Route



“May 6, Indian Chronicle Rayalaseema coordinator” “The Executive Officer (EO) of Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams (TTD), J. Syamala Rao, stated that improved amenities will be provided for devotees who are coming to Tirumala via the Srivari Mettu route. Following reports of inconvenience faced by pilgrims in obtaining tokens along the pedestrian path, the EO, accompanied by TTD Additional CH Venkaiah Choudary and TTD JEO V. Veerabrahmam, conducted inspections on Tuesday. Speaking on the occasion, the EO acknowledged that the TTD had received complaints regarding difficulties faced by devotees in acquiring tokens on the Srivari Mettu route and the lack of proper cooperation from auto-rickshaw drivers. Allegations have also surfaced indicating that auto-



rickshaws are exploiting the facilities provided by TTD for their personal gain and charging exorbitant fares from devotees. In response, the EO assured that steps would be taken to find a permanent solution for the devotees. He mentioned that a review of the existing amenities provided by TTD to the pilgrims would be conducted to ensure better and more robust facilities. The EO added that the possibility of increasing the number of buses from Tirupati to Srivari Mettu and augmenting the token issuing counters would be examined. He also emphasized that feedback would be collected from devotees to provide enhanced amenities. The inspection program saw the participation of TTD CE Satyanarayana, SEs Venkateswarlu and Manoharam, TTD Deputy EO Lokanatham, and other officials.

District Collector Stresses Expedited Completion of CNG Works on National Highway

“PS. Ashokan” Indian Chronicle “Manthani, May 7” “Assures comprehensive procurement of premium-grade paddy” Tailoring training center to empower women to be operational within 3 days” Collector Koya Sri Harsha undertakes extensive developmental inspection in Manthani region” District Collector Sri Koya Sri Harsha has issued firm directives to accelerate the execution of CNG-related infrastructure works along the Warangal-Mancherla National Highway. During an intensive inspection tour across Manthani mandal on Tuesday, the Collector emphasized the necessity of completing these works within a strict three-day timeframe to avoid further delays and to enhance regional connectivity. “As part of his tour, the Collector reviewed the progress of national highway works at Vempadu village and visited key agricultural and developmental sites including the paddy procurement centers at Puttapaka, Ekalspur, and the Manthani Agricultural Market Yard. He also examined the ongoing construction of a government-sponsored tailoring training center at the old milk collection point in Manthani town. Speaking to the media, the Collector reiterated the government's unwavering commitment to farmers, assuring that every grain of high-quality paddy produced during the Yasangi (Rabi) season would be procured at the prescribed Minimum Support Price (MSP). He



stated that all procurement centers are fully equipped with requisite facilities and that purchases are being conducted strictly in adherence to Fair Average Quality (FAQ) norms. Immediate logistics arrangements have also been made to transfer the procured grain to designated rice mills without delay. “In a bid to promote women's empowerment and skill development, the Collector instructed officials to expedite the completion of the tailoring training center and ensure it becomes fully operational within three days. The center aims to provide free vocational training to women in and around Manthani town, enabling them to attain economic self-reliance. “Later, the Collector visited the CNG pipeline worksite at Adivaram Peta in Ramagiri mandal and instructed the engineering teams and administrative officials to prioritize timely completion with strict qual-

ity standards. Accompanying the Collector during the field visit were District Cooperative Officer Sri Mala, Manthani Municipal Commissioner Manohar Reddy, Tahsildar

Kumaraswamy, Ramagiri Tahsildar Suman, Additional District Magistrate Anjani, PACS CEO Ashok, APM Padma, AE Mounika, and other relevant departmental officials.

Earthquake tremors felt in Prakasam district of Andhra Pradesh

The residents in Andhra Pradesh experienced a wave of alarm today as a slight earthquake tremor rattled several areas in Prakasam district. Locals reported feeling the ground shake for a brief second in the mandals of Podili, Darsi, Kurichedu, and Mundlamuru. Accompanying the tremors were loud noises, prompting frightened individuals to rush out of their homes. In neighbouring Telangana, tremors were also reported on Monday, affecting the districts of Karimnagar, Rajanna Sircilla, Jagtiala, Nirmal, and Peddapalli. The movements were significant enough to induce panic among residents, who fled their homes as objects rattled and the earth shook momentarily. Particularly, the impact was noted to be severe in Karimnagar district, with residents of Choppadandi, Gangadhara, and Ramadugu mandals feeling the tremors acutely.

ACB raids Mulugu ZP office – Superintendent caught taking bribe of Rs. 25 thousand

– ACB registers case against accused and another employee” “Mulugu, Mahipal, Indian Chronicle: An officer mercilessly demanded bribe from a fellow employee. When asked to make a bill for his leave allowance, he insisted on giving him a bribe of Rs. 60 thousand. The incident took place at the Zilla Parishad office in Mulugu district headquarters on Tuesday. DSP Sambaiah revealed the details to the media. Gadegoni Sudhakar is working as a superintendent in the Zilla Parishad office in Mulugu. An employee named Venkatesh is working as a junior assistant in the same office. However, an employee who had taken medical leave for a few months had demanded that the superintendent prepare the bills for the medical leave salary due to him and submit them to the STO office. For that, the superintendent demanded that the employee be given Rs. 60,000. He initially said that he would give Rs. 20,000 to the superintendent and an additional Rs. 5,000 to another employee, Soumya. They had reached an agreement that the remaining Rs. 40,000 would be given after the bill was sanctioned. Fed up with being asked for a bribe to prepare the bill for the money he was rightfully owed, the employee Venkatesh approached the Warangal Range ACB officials. On Tuesday, ACB officials caught Superintendent G. Sudhakar red-handed while he was taking a bribe of Rs. 25,000 at the Mulugu ZP office. Along with Sudhakar, the employee Soumya was detained and questioned. They said that they had taken two people into custody after conducting special



chemical tests and confirming the bribery, and Rs. 25,000 had been seized from them. DSP Sambaiah said that they would be produced before the ACB court on Wednesday. He said that the employee was arrested for taking bribe from a fellow employee for not doing his job honestly. He said that the investigation is ongoing. If any government employee demands a bribe, he should inform the ACB officials and file a complaint by calling the toll-free number 1064 or 9440446106. He said that the details of the complainants will be kept confidential.

Tomorrow Lucky Dip for Admissions in Minority Gurukul..

“Mulugu, May 06 (Indian Chronicle):” “Tomorrow 8th may (Thursday) Lucky Dip for Admissions in Minority Gurukul school. The school principal Y Srilata said in a statement on Tuesday that. students who have applied for admission to the fifth grade at the Minority Girls' Gurukul School in Mulugu Dist Devagiri Patnam in Mulugu Mandal will be selected for 10 pm and 30 minutes tomorrow 8th May (Thursday). BC, SC, ST and OC students are being selected in the presence of parents in the non-minority department in the 2025-26 school year. Parents of the students were asked to attend in a timely manner. DMWO Ravinder, RLC Ramesh Lal Hutkar and Joint Warangal District Academic Coordinator Ruhina will be in attendance as Lucky Dip supervisors.



Steps should be taken towards victory in the upcoming local body elections - BJP leader, Bhuvanagiri Parliament constituency in-charge Taduri Srinivas



“Mulugu, Mahipal, Indian Chronicle: BJP leader, Bhuvanagiri Parliament constituency in-charge Taduri Srinivas has called for taking the party towards victory in the upcoming local body elections, strengthening it at the booth level and taking central schemes to the people. Srinivas, along with election in-charge Dr. Pesaru Vijay Chander Reddy and former MP Ajmira Sitaram Nayak, participated in a meeting held in Mulugu on Tuesday under the chairmanship of District President Sirikonda Balaram. Chief guest Taduri Srinivas said that the party structure should be institutionally strengthened and strengthened for the local body elections. He said that the state party will move towards power in the upcoming elections by weakening the BJP in Mulugu district. He suggested that every worker in the district should work like a soldier to hoist the lotus flag and that each worker should be prepared for public struggles as if he were equal to 100 people. He said that the ruling Congress party should stand up and fight on the side of the people, criticizing the policies of the government that came to power after making unfulfilled promises. He said that the party should be strengthened at the booth level in Mulugu district to support Prime Minister Narendra Modi's welfare schemes and give him support. He said that mandal com-

mittees should be formed giving priority to all communities. The event was attended by State Executive Member Chintalapudi Bhaskar Reddy, State Council Member Bhukya Jawahar Lal, District Chief Secretary Srilamantula Ravindrachari, Vice Presidents Jinukala Krishnakar Rao, Enugu Ravinder Reddy, Mallela Rambabu, Adapa Bikshapati, Secretary Vaidugula Tirupati Reddy, Official Spokesperson Vasudeva Reddy, District Secretary Lingampalli Srinivas, State Policy Research Member Bhukya Raju Nayak, State ST Morcha Official Spokesperson Gugulothu Swaroopa, SC Morcha Official Spokesperson Jodi Ramaraju, Leaders Karupothula Yadagiri, Alle Shobhan, Ravi Reddy, District Leader Chanda Jyoti, Mahalakshmi, District Council Member Reddy Srinivas, Vasam Sarayya, Gaddala Haribabu, District OBC District President Dandiga Venkanna, Palla Buchanna SC Morcha District President Vavilala Janardhan, ST Morcha President, Gandepalli Satyam, Mandal Presidents Rayanchu Nagaraju, Paidakula Mallesh, Marka Satish, Tallapalli Lakshman, Vinukolu Chakravarthy, Ravula Janakiram, Durgam Sammakka, Yadagiri Murali, Suvarnapaka Narender, Sambasivudu, Satyanarayana, Baikani Mahender, Veeran Rajasekhara, and others participated.”

Three trapped by ACB sleuths for extracting bribe from complainants

Hyderabad, May 6 The ACB has registered a case under Section 7A of the Prevention of Corruption Act, 1988 (as amended in 2018) against the accused officer Annaboina Rajeswara Rao, Motor Vehicle Driver, Corporate, Singareni Collieries Company Ltd (SCCL), Kothagudem, Bhadradi Kothagudem District for criminal misconduct.

The accused misused his official position for personal financial gain by engaging in corrupt and fraudulent practices between 2021 and 2024. He exploited his influence over internal administrative processes such as transfers, promotions, recruitments, and Corporate Medical Board decisions. The allegations include collecting bribes amounting to Rs 31,44,000 from various employees and job aspirants by making false promises to secure transfers, manipulate medical fitness outcomes, provide job placements, and influence promotions. These amounts were report-

edly received through both cash and digital payments, often using intermediaries. The AO fell to fulfil any of the commitments made. He alleged to have performed his official duties improperly and dishonestly to obtain undue advantage. The details of the complainant are withheld due to security reasons. The was arrested today and produced before the Special Court for SPE & ACB Cases-cum-II Additional District & Sessions Judge at Warangal another trap case, the ACB sleuths on May 6 caught Gadhegani Sudhakar, Superintendent, office of the Chief Executive Officer, Zilla Praja Parishad, Mulugu District, at his office while demanding and accepting bribe of Rs 25,000/- (Rs 20,000/- for himself and Rs 5,000/- for another) from the complainant for doing official favour i.e. as a reward for preparing the medical leave period salary bills of the complainant and submitting it to the District Treasury Office, Mulugu.

BJP leaders submit memorandum to Governor to deport illegally residing Pakistani nationals



Hyderabad, May 6 A delegation of BJP leaders today met Telangana Governor Jishnu Dev Varma and submitted a memorandum and urged the latter to take immediate action to deport illegally residing Pakistani nationals from Indian soil. The BJP leaders comprising Dr K Laxman, MP, Dr G Vijaya Rama Rao, former MLA and OBC Morcha National president and BJP State Vice President Chinthala Ramchandra Reddy, Sankineni Venkateswar Rao, former MLA, BJP State Vice president G. Premender Reddy Dugyala Pradeep Kumar, BJP State General Secretary, Bangaru Shruthi, Dr Kasam Venkateswarlu, BJP State General Secretary, BJP State general secretary submitted a memorandum to the Governor stating that a brutal terrorist attack was occurred in the Pahalgam region of Jammu & Kashmir by terrorists sheltered and supported by Pakistan on April 22, 2025, which claimed the lives of 26 innocent civilians, has shocked the entire nation. "It is evident,

that this very brutal attack was planned and executed on the directions of ISI, the Inter Services Intelligence of Pakistan and the Pakistani Army. The entire country is in a state of deep shock over this heinous crime and all decent countries of the world are with India against Pakistan at this point. Prime Minister Narendra Modi has resolved to rebuke all such forces with a bitter reply as never before, so that no terrorists or States sponsoring terrorism can escape. The Defence forces have been given a free hand by the Prime Minister to fulfil this resolve and we are sure that the efforts of the Indian defence forces will complete this task. The entire 140 crore people of the nation are with the Prime Minister and the Defence forces on this issue". They said in the wake of the tragic incident, the Central Government has taken a significant step by annulling the Indus Water Treaty, minimising and limiting the diplomatic relations with Pakistan, cancellation of visas issued to Pakistani nationals and commencing their deportation from the country within a limited time-frame. "It is time to promptly identify all Pakistani nationals residing in various parts of the State, who are without valid documents, possess expired visas, or whose visas have been suspended. As this is a matter of grave national security, all such individuals must be listed out without delay, and necessary legal action should be initiated immediately. This is a highly sensitive matter, and there is an imminent urgency that the local administration act swiftly and decisively in accordance with the national directives to instil public confidence and to address potential security concerns in a timely manner. They urged the Governor to instruct the State government to act immediately on this Memorandum in identifying and deporting all Pakistani nationals, who are staying without valid documents, whose visas have expired or whose visas have been suspended, in the interest of nation's security.

We will corner Congress MLAs & ministers from today: Bandi Sanjay Kumar



Karimnagar, May 6 : Union Minister of State for Home Affairs Bandi Sanjay Kumar has strongly condemned Chief Minister Revanth Reddy's comments that the State's financial situation was not good and that they were not able to avail loans. He said the CM had decided that the promises made to the people in the elections cannot be implemented anymore. "The pension of Rs 4,000 will not be given to the elderly anymore. The women will not get Rs 2500 per month and gold. The unemployment benefit of Rs 4,000 will also not be given. The students will not get Rs 5 lakh assurance cards. The promises made to farmers have been blown up," he commented. He said the Congress had already finished its game in Telangana. He questioned as to what Congress leader Rahul Gandhi, who had earlier promised to implement all the promises made to the people of Telangana by holding the Samvidhan book in his hand, would answer

now? He said the State ministers and the Congress MLAs had become afraid of the CM's comments. He made it clear that there was no question of leaving the Congress party, which has broken its promise and raised its hands. He said they would stop the ministers and MLAs from today along with people.

Union Minister Bandi Sanjay, who visited the Ellareddy Peta Mandal headquarters of Rajanna Siricilla district today, also visited the local press club. He interacted with local reporters for a while. He asked about their problems. Later, while talking to the media, he took potshots at the CM's comments. He criticised that Chief Minister Revanth Reddy, who should be the head of the family of the Telangana State, was not acting like the head. "The State has gone bankrupt. It is shameful for the CM to make such comments. People are already completely against the Congress party," he claimed.

He also claimed that Congress MLAs were also afraid of their future after the CM's comments and added that the CM completely destroyed the self-respect of the entire Telangana people with his comments while claiming that there is no greater insult to the four crore Telangana people than this. He said it was a blatant lie for the CM to state that he was not able to meet any Central minister, including the PM during his Delhi visit. He has met the Prime Minister many times. He keeps meeting Union ministers from time to time. But what is he saying? In December 2023, July 2024, and February 2025, Revanth Reddy met Prime Minister Narendra Modi. Not to mention the meeting with the Union ministers. Union Minister Gadkari met him on Monday too," he said.

Meticulous Arrangements Initiated for the Revered Kaleshwaram Saraswati Pushkaralu



Hyderabad, May 6 (NSS): The Federation of Telangana Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FTCCI), has announced its Annual Excellence Awards 2025. Entries are open across 21 categories, with the last date for submission extended to 15 May 2025. Initiated in 1974, the FTCCI Excellence Awards aim to promote excellence and the spirit of entrepreneurship across the state. Over the past five decades, the awards have become among the most coveted recognitions in Telangana. Most years, they have been presented by successive Chief Ministers, and this year too, Chief Minister Revanth Reddy is likely to present the awards at a grand ceremony in June. Dr Suresh Kumar Singhal, President of FTCCI, in a press note issued in the city today, emphasised the chamber's legacy in identifying and recognising outstanding contributions to industry, commerce, and trade. "These awards are given to organisations known for quality production, innovation, sustainable growth, and significant contributions to the state's GDP."

Ramakanth Inani, Chair, FTCCI Excellence Awards Committee & Past President, elaborated on the 21 award categories, which include Excellence in Industrial All Round Performance – Large Industries & SMES; Excellence in Agri-Based Industry; Excellence in Export Performance – Large Industries & SMES; Excellence in CSR, Aerospace & Defence Industry, Pharma; Excellence in ESG Performance – Large Industries; Excellence in Tourism Promotion & Hospitality; Excellence in Marketing Innovation; Excellence in Product Innovation – Large & SME; Excellence in Health Care Innovation; Excellence in Research & Development – Large Industries; Excellence in Start-up; Excellence in Digital Tourism. Additionally, awards will be presented in individual categories such as: Excellence in Science & Engineering; Women Entrepreneurship; Self-sustaining Effort by a Differently Aabled Person; Social Entrepreneurship.

R. Ravi Kumar, Senior Vice President, FTCCI, noted that the awards are highly credible and greatly boost organisational morale, encourage quality improvements, and bring prestige to the winners. Srinivas Garimella, Member of the FTCCI Excellence Awards Committee and Chair, Industrial Development Committee, shared that applications can be submitted online via the dedicated portal: www.ftcciawards.in. The awards are open to all businesses based in Telangana, and the process is completely digitised. A nominal entry fee is applicable. The entries will be evaluated by a distinguished jury panel, including: Justice Challa Kodanda Ram, M. Gopal Krishna, IAS, retd; Ajay Mishra, IAS, retd, B.P. Acharya, IAS, retd, Prof. Uday B Desai, Founding Director, IIT Hyderabad.



PS Ashokan "Indian Chronicle" Manthani May 7 "The Government of Telangana has embarked on comprehensive and strategic preparations for the forthcoming Saraswati Pushkaralu at the sacred Triveni Sangam in Kaleshwaram, located in the Bhupalpally district. This confluence is uniquely venerated for the invisible subterranean flow of the Saraswati River, believed to sanctify the region with immense spiritual potency." "Chaired by Minister for Endowments, Smt. Konda Surekha, and Minister for IT, Industries, and Handlooms, Sri Duddilla Sridhar Babu, a high-level review meeting was convened at the Secretariat to assess the progress of infrastructure and logistical arrangements. The Ministers underscored the need for flawless execution, anticipating an influx of devotees in the hundreds of thousands from within the state and across the country." "Key directives issued to the administrative machinery included: "Institution of robust multi-sectoral infrastructure, encompassing transport logistics, public sanitation, health and emergency services, law enforcement, and information dissemination." "Prioritization of vulnerable populations—including children, the elderly, and expectant mothers—to ensure their safety, convenience, and access to essential services." "Expedited completion of all pending civil and engineering works, with an emphasis on quality and safety compliance." "Adoption of best practices from past large-scale religious congregations such as the Sammakka-Saralamma Jatara and Bhadrachalam Kalyanam, to ensure seamless coordination." "Ministers emphasized that all preparatory works must be concluded by May 14, 2025, at 10:35 PM, when Brihaspati (Jupiter) enters Mithuna Rashi



(Gemini)—marking the official commencement of the 12-day Pushkaralu period. Pilgrims are expected to undertake ritualistic holy dips starting at sunrise on May 15. "To facilitate information access, the government has inaugurated a dedicated web portal and mobile application, enabling devotees to obtain real-time updates on schedules, amenities, transport routes, and rituals. A toll-free helpline will also be established to provide immediate assistance and guidance." "In a significant spiritual gesture, the Ministers announced that each day of the Pushkaralu will be sanctified by the ceremonial dip of a distinguished Peethadhipathi (spiritual leader). The inaugural rites on May 15–16 will be presided over by Sri Sri Sri Madhavananda Saraswati Swamy of Sri Gurumadananda Peetham, Rangampet, Medak." "Minister Konda Surekha reaffirmed the unparalleled spiritual stature of Kaleshwaram, noting that it remains the sole confluence in Southern India where the mystical Saraswati is believed to flow as an "Antarvahini" (underground river), analogous to Prayag in the North. The act of bathing in these waters during Pushkaralu is deeply believed to bestow absolution from all sins." "The review was attended by an elite panel of officials, including Chief Secretary Ramakrishna Rao, Director General of Police Jitender, Principal Secretary of Endowments Shailaja Ramaier, Principal Secretary for Roads and Buildings Vikas Raj, SERP CEO Divya Devarajan, Endowments Commissioner Venkata Rao, and other senior dignitaries and temple authorities." "The State Government reiterated its unwavering commitment to orchestrating the Saraswati Pushkaralu as a spiritually transformative, culturally vibrant, and logistically seamless event of national prominence.

Govt directs officials to ensure grand success of Saraswathi Pushkaralu



Hyderabad, May 6 The State government has directed the officials to ensure the completion of all necessary arrangements well in advance and make a grand success of Saraswathi Pushkaralu 2025, which are held from May 15 to 26 at Triveni Sangamam near Kaleshwaram temple in Jayashankar Bhupalpally district. Minister for Endowments Konda Surekha and Minister for IT and Industries Duddilla Sridhar Babu held a review meeting with officials on the Saraswathi Pushkaralu at the Secretariat here on Tuesday and directed the officials to take all precautionary arrangements for the successful conduct of the event. The Ministers said the Telangana government is making large-scale preparations to ensure smooth and grand celebrations for the upcoming Pushkaralu. With lakhs of devotees expected to visit the Pushkaralu, the state administration is taking every measure to provide a safe, hygienic, and spiritually enriching experience, they said. Senior officials, including Chief Secretary Ramakrishna Rao, DGP Jitender, Endowment principal secretary Shailaja Ramaier and R&B, Transport Principal Secretary Vikas Raj were present in the meeting. Minister Konda Surekha said that the Pushkaralu will be performed for 12 days from the time Jupiter enters the Gemini sign (Mithunarasi), and these will begin on May 14 at 10.35 PM and the Pushkara pujas will have to be performed from sunrise the next day. She stated that drawing inspiration from the successful conduct of other major religious gatherings such as Sammakka-Sarakka Jatara, Komuravelli Jatara, and Bhadrachalam festivities, the government is committed to elevating the Sarasvati Pushkaralu to the same level of reverence and organisation. The daily rituals will begin with ceremonial baths conducted by respected religious leaders. The official inauguration on May 15 and 16 will be led by Sri Guru Madanananda Sarasvati of Rangampet and Sri Madhavananda Sarasvati of Medak, symbolizing the deep spiritual roots of the event, Konda Surekha said. Speaking at a high-level review meeting, Minister Konda Surekha emphasised, "No devotee should face any difficulty. All arrangements will be of the highest standard, reflecting our respect for cultural traditions and public welfare." She stated that the Congress

government's aim is to make the Sarasvati Pushkaralu not just a religious celebration, but a memorable and seamless experience for every pilgrim. Event Timeline: The 12-day Pushkaralu festival will begin on May 14 at 10:35 PM, coinciding with Jupiter's entry into Mithuna Rashi, marking a rare and auspicious period for holy dips in the Sarasvati tributary of the Godavari River.

Transport & Facilities: Bathing ghats are being expanded and new ones added. Permanent toilets, drinking water stations, and waste management systems are being set up. Additional TSRTC buses will be deployed under the free travel scheme to ease pilgrim movement. Safety and Medical Services: Special attention is being given to crowd control and emergency readiness. First-aid centers, on-site medical teams, and special care zones for children, pregnant women, and senior citizens are being arranged to avoid inconvenience. Digital Outreach: A dedicated Pushkaralu portal and mobile app, launched by the Ministers, will provide pilgrims with live updates, maps of ghats, emergency contact details, and other important information. A toll-free helpline is also operational for public assistance.

MP Eatala slams CM over his comments

Hyderabad, May 6 Former minister and BJP MP Eatala Rajender today slammed Chief Minister Revanth Reddy's comments that Telangana was bankrupt. "It was not Telangana that went bankrupt. The Congress party went bankrupt," he alleged.



Eatala criticized Revanth Reddy for forgetting that he was the CM of the state while making his comments. He was furious that if the income of the state is around Rs. 20 thousand crores per month, how could the CM say that the state turned bankrupt? He said that Telangana had never been a poor state and added that Telangana was still the richest state in the country. He accused Congress leaders of looting the state with a fear of not coming to power again. "When promises were made, were the financial situation of the state not known," He questioned. He demanded that congress leaders Rahul Gandhi and Sonia Gandhi should react on Revanth Reddy's comments. He criticized that the Congress party had hidden itself from Telangana like Saturn.

CM Revanth should resign from his post: Jagadish Reddy

Hyderabad, May 6 Chief Minister Revanth Reddy's comments on the State's financial situation are currently creating a political storm in Telangana. BRS party leaders are getting extremely angry over the CM's comments. Former minister Jagadish Reddy commented that CM Revanth was an incompetent CM, who is not capable of governing the State. He said Revanth did not deserve to be the CM even for a moment. He demanded that Revanth should resign immediately and apologize to the people of the State.

Revanth's behavior is like a person, who does not

know Onam, he studied in the tenth standard. There is no threat to the financial situation of Telangana. His words make it clear that Revanth is incapable of governing. Former CM KCR brought Telangana, which was formed with debts, to an income of two and a half lakh crore. The real problem is coming when the State's income decreases and the income of ministers increases. They are looting the State's income like mafia and taking it to Delhi. State Ministers are competing for taking bribes to get the CM post. Revanth is crying foul just to break promises. Every word Revanth said on Monday is a lie," he said.

Cyber Crimes DCP Sribala deputed to UN Mission, given grand farewell

Hyderabad, May 6 Cyberabad Cyber Crimes DCP B. Sribala has been deputed to the United Nations Mission in South Sudan for a one-year assignment, in recognition of her outstanding service in cyber law enforcement.

During her tenure, she led several key operations targeting cyber fraud, financial scams, and online harassment, while also launching impactful digital literacy campaigns to promote cyber safety among students, professionals, and the general public. Her proactive initiatives and leadership have earned her national recognition, and her deputation marks a proud moment for the Telangana Police and the nation. Cyberabad CP Avinash Mohanty, IPS, along with other senior DCPs, bid her a grand farewell, congratulating her on the prestigious international assignment. Her service and leadership have been widely appreciated. The meeting was attended by DCP Crimes L.C. Naik, EOW DCP K. Prasad, DCP Special Branch Sai Sri, Women & Children Safety Wing (W&CSW) DCP Srujana Karnam, Medchal SOT DCP Srinivas, Madhapur SOT DCP Shoban

Kumar, Cyber crimes ADCP Chandrakanth and several other senior police officers.

Bihar Group-1 officials impressed by CM Prajavani's functioning

Hyderabad, May 6 (NSS): A team of Bihar Group-1 officials visited CM Prajavani at Mahatma Jyotiba Phule Prajdhavan in Hyderabad on Tuesday. They observed the implementation process of CM Prajavani, which was explained to them by Dr. G. Chinna Reddy, Incharge and Vice Chairman of the State Planning Board, and Divya Devarajan, State Nodal Officer. They were highly impressed with CM Prajavani's functioning, stating that it's a unique initiative not seen in any other state.

Closed-door book event on Gandhi's assassination cancelled in Surat, after police fear 'law and order situation'



GNS News Agency, May 6

A closed-door event to discuss and promote a book on Mahatma Gandhi's assassination had to be called off at the last minute after Surat police said it could not be permitted for fear of leading to a "law and order situation." Organised by Surat NGO Prarthna Sangh and Maitri Trust, the event, titled "Godse ne Gandhi ko kyon mara" (Why did Godse kill Gandhi), based on the Hindi book 'Usne Gandhi ko kyon mara' by poet and author Ashok Kumar Pandey, was to be held on Thursday at the Rotary Hall which is run by the Jeevan Bharti Trust in Nanpura. Invitations for the event had been extended to people from different sections of society by the organisers over the past few days when officials from the Athwa Lines police station contacted the hall authorities to check if police permission had been obtained.

Talking to, the manager of Jeevan Bharti Trust, Kalpesh Patel, said, "This is an age-old hall, and for the entire last year, the hall was closed for public events due to renovations. The Thursday evening event was the first such after the renovation. We have not taken any police permission for any program conducted in the hall to date." Patel told The Indian Express, "On Wednesday night, an official from the Athwalines police station contacted us to inquire if the event organisers had secured police permission for the event. I informed them that no such permission had been obtained for the closed-door programme at that point... The officers warned us that if the programme proceeded without police approval, there would be strict actions taken against the event organisers as well as the trustees of the Jeevan Bharti trust. We then reached out to the Prathna Sangh representatives and informed them of the police's stance, at which point they agreed to cancel the programme."

Sources told this newspaper that Prarthna Sangh had booked the hall ten days ago by paying a deposit of Rs 25,000 to the Jeevan Bharti Trust. Athwalines police inspector H. K. Solanki said, "As per the rules, we told the hall

authorities to inform organisers to take police permission for such an event. They have not submitted any application for such police permission till date. The police should know what speech is likely to be given and on which topic, and its repercussions. If the speech is recorded and goes viral on social media, it may lead to a law and order situation and other issues. So we requested them to take police permission. As there was no time left for them to obtain police permission, they have cancelled the event."

Retired Professor Kishor Desai, vice president of Prarthna Sangh, said, "We verified with the hall authorities and found that no police permission had been obtained to date, and it is unnecessary to obtain permission for any closed-door event. On April 23, we met with Surat police commissioner Anupam Singh Gahlaut and invited him to our event. On Wednesday night, I received a call from a manager and trustee of the Jeevan Bharti trust, who urged me to cancel the programme or obtain police permission. It seems the police may have exerted pressure on them, which led to the trustee's refusal to provide us with a hall." The speakers at the proposed event were retired principal of Ahmedabad's H K Arts College Prof Hemant Kumar Shah, and his son Atman Shah, who is also a professor. According to sources, this would have been the fourth event to discuss the book, after two held in Ahmedabad: one on January 30 to mark Gandhi's assassination and then on April 11. Another was held on April 13 in Vadodara. Professor Hemant Kumar Shah said, "It is a shameful thing that in the present times we cannot talk about Gandhi's murderer. My question is: what kind of forces are responsible for not allowing such a programme in Surat city which is the land of the famous poet Kavi Narmad. By not organizing such an event, it clearly violates the freedom of speech which is granted to us in the Indian constitution. We have conducted three such events: two in Ahmedabad and one in Vadodara, and we have received tremendous response from the public. Professor Kishor Desai attended the Vadodara event and invited us to do one such event in Surat." He said, "I have prepared a script of 55 paragraphs mainly based on the book 'Usne Gandhi ko kyun Mara' by Dr Ashok Kumar Pandey, Delhi-based veteran historian. That book was written in Hindi by Dr Pandey, and I translated it to Gujarati. Dr Pandey remained present at the book unveiling ceremony in Ahmedabad at Sahitya Parishad hall, which was jam-packed with attendees." "The programme was designed to give information in a short time frame to the attendees. After the event, we... request people to read (the book). The motive is to educate the people and know the truth behind the conspiracy of the Gandhi murder and who are others and what has driven them to kill Mahatma Gandhi. We don't talk about politics at the event," he said.

Second case of murder by live-in partner in Haryana: Cab driver held for killing woman, dumping body in Uttarakhand

GNS News Agency, May 6

live-in Gurgaon police said the accused wrapped the woman's body in a bedsheet and hid it under a bridge in Uttarakhand on November 16. Gurgaon police said the accused wrapped the woman's body in a bedsheet and hid it under a bridge in Uttarakhand on November 16. More than five months after a taxi driver from Uttarakhand stabbed his live-in partner to death in the hill state, the Gurgaon police said Thursday they have arrested the 31-year-old man in connection with the murder. According to the Gurgaon police, the victim Jarna had been in a live-in relationship with Mustaque Ahmad, the suspect, in the Haryana city for the past three years, and worked as a domestic help. She was a divorcee with two children from her previous marriage, they added.

They said Ahmad is already married, and it had become a point of friction between the two. Ahmad and Jarna belong to Udharnagar district in Uttarakhand. The police said the case came to light when the victim's sister filed a complaint at the Sector 5 Police Station, reporting her missing in November last year. The police got a breakthrough on April 24 when the investigators traced Ahmad's location in Uttarakhand, where he had been hiding. The police said that Ahmad hid in various locations in Uttarakhand to evade arrest, and also fled to Mangalore. The police will present Ahmad in court to seek custody on Thursday for further interrogation and evidence recovery.

They said Ahmad stabbed the woman to death in the Nanda Nahar village in Udharnagar district, wrapped



the body in a bedsheet, and hid it under a bridge on November 16, 2024, a day after he took her to his sister's house. Based on his inputs, the police recovered the body of Jarna, 35, from under the bridge. According to the police, Jarna was annoyed after Ahmad's marriage to another woman last November, which became the point of friction between the couple. "Efforts were made to resolve the dispute between the live-in couple even through a panchayat in Uttarakhand. No further details on his motive have come to the fore yet," Assistant Sub-Inspector Sandeep said. This is the second case this week in Haryana where a man has been arrested for allegedly murdering his partner. On Tuesday, the Faridabad police Crime Branch arrested a man for strangulating his wife, and then hiding her body inside a bed for days. The murder allegedly arose after the deceased had made derogatory remarks against the suspect's minor daughter from his previous marriage.

Engines tailored for narrow lanes, ladders for high-rise rescues, fire-fighting robots: Delhi CM plans to modernise fire safety infra

GNS News Agency, May 6

During her visit to the Delhi Fire Service (DFS) headquarters at Connaught Place on Friday, Delhi Chief Minister Rekha Gupta announced a sweeping modernisation plan aimed at upgrading the city's fire safety infrastructure. The government, in its March Budget, had allocated Rs 504 crore to the DFS. Of this, Rs 110 crore will be used to procure state-of-the-art equipment, including 100 compact fire engines tailored for Delhi's narrow lanes, Gupta said. "These mini fire trucks will be crucial in reaching narrow lanes and densely populated areas quickly," said Home Minister Ashish Sood, who accompanied Gupta. Narrow lanes have been one of the biggest challenges for the DFS to reach accident spots on time.

The Budget includes plans to deploy advanced fire-fighting tools such as Aerial Water Tower (AWT) vehicles, 32-m turntable ladders for high-rise rescues, mini firefighting robots capable of operating in temperatures up to 500°C, and 24 new quick response vehicles (QRVs). These facilities are aimed at boosting emergency response capabilities while ensuring the safety of firefighters. The plan will also include the integration of a computer-aided dispatch system into the DFS control room, which will enable real-time tracking of all fire trucks. Further, surveillance cameras will be installed in each fire vehicle, and control room



personnel will receive technical training to handle upgraded systems efficiently. Acknowledging the deteriorating state of the DFS headquarters, Gupta announced the construction of a new, modern facility, for which a budget has already been approved. She outlined a roadmap, including short-term initiatives such as staff recruitment and holding public awareness campaigns, and long-term plans like the development of a GIS-based centralised management portal and international collaborations to train firefighters. Highlighting the scale and workload of DFS, Gupta said, "Today, DFS has 86 fire stations and over 3,000 dedicated firefighters who face more than 36,000 emergency situations annually."

Uttar Pradesh Outsource Service Corporation a step closer, Yogi finetunes its role & power

GNS News Agency, May 6

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Friday chaired a high-level meeting on setting up of a corporation — Uttar Pradesh Outsource Service Corporation (UPCOS) — to streamline labour entitlements and fair remuneration of outsourced workers in the administration. Last month, The Indian Express had reported that the Uttar Pradesh government was planning to set up a separate corporation to manage affairs of outsourced employees — from centralised hiring to looking after their financial and job security aspects, and ensuring reservation for the Scheduled Castes (SCs), Scheduled Tribes (STs) and OBCs in contract employment. A proposal to this effect is to be tabled before the Cabinet for approval.

It is estimated that there are over 11 lakh contractual employees working in its 93 departments of the state administration. During Friday's meeting, the chief minister highlighted the challenges faced by outsourced workers, such as salary deductions, delayed payments, denial of EPF/ESI benefits, lack of transparent recruitment, and workplace harassment—and stressed the need for systemic reforms. "The state government is committed to up-

holding the dignity, security, and social justice of all personnel," said the chief minister. "This corporation will not only bring transparency to the administrative system but also instill stability and confidence in the lives of lakhs of outsourcing workers," he added. In shaping the framework of the proposed corporation, the chief minister directed that a service provider agency should not remove any employee without the recommendation of the competent authority of the concerned department. He further instructed that full remuneration must be credited directly to employees' bank accounts by fifth of every month, and timely deposits of EPF and ESI contributions must be ensured. "Strict action—including blacklisting, debarment, financial penalties, and legal proceedings—will be taken against agencies that violate regulations. Provisions to this effect will be clearly defined within the corporation's structure," the CM was quoted as saying. During the recent Budget Session, Chief Minister Adityanath had told the Assembly that the minimum wage for the contractual employees will be from Rs 16,000 to Rs 20,000 per month. Furthermore, the chief minister directed that all appointments through the outsourcing corporation must strictly follow reservation norms, an official said.

Haryana water-sharing row: As AAP protests outside Punjab BJP chief Sunil Jakhar's residence, Abohar MLA hands out bottles of unclean canal water to them

GNS News Agency, May 6

High drama unfolded outside the residence of Punjab BJP state president Sunil Jakhar in Abohar in Fazilka district on Thursday when Aam Aadmi Party workers, led by Fazilka MLA Narinder Pal Singh Sawna and others, gathered to protest against the alleged high-handedness of the Central Government through the Bhakra Beas Management Board (BBMB) in releasing additional water to Haryana. Though Jakhar was not present then, his nephew and Abohar MLA Sandeep Jakhar greeted the protestors with bottles of contaminated canal water from the region to take a dig at the state government for not acting to ensure potable water in Malwa districts. Five additional tube wells were dug up in Abohar due to the high contamination levels in the canal water for the past month.

Handing over the discoloured water bottles to AAP leaders, Sandeep, who was currently suspended from the Congress, said, "Sunilji's stand on Punjab's waters is clear. He has always firmly supported Punjab's interests and maintains that Punjab has no surplus water to share. But I urge you to talk about this contaminated water flowing through Malwa's canals for over a month. Why are you silent on this issue? Isn't denying Punjab's clean drinking water a violation of their basic rights? This polluted water comes from the Harike headworks in Ferozepur and is being supplied to canals in Fazilka, Muktsar, and other districts. Why haven't you spoken up until now?" Surprisingly, Arun Narang, former Abohar MLA and currently AAP's Abohar constituency in-charge, deflected the issue by saying, "This is a matter for the Abohar Municipal Corporation. The Corporation is under BJP control, so please don't show us this water... we haven't come for that purpose."

Sandeep Jakhar, however, claimed that the source of water is not the municipal corporation but the Harike headworks. "Water from the Sutlej and Beas flows into that headworks which further goes to the Ferozepur feeder canal and then through a canal network in Malwa. Abohar Municipal Corporation draws this water, cleans it, and supplies it to households. But for the past month, this canal water has not been potable, and the government has done nothing to raise or resolve the issue. The same water is flowing into hundreds of villages where they use it for drinking and irrigation purposes," Sandeep said. Despite the confrontation, the AAP delegation — including Fazilka MLA Sawna, Punjab Agro Chairman Shaminder Singh Khinda, former MLA Arun Narang, and District Planning Board Chairman Sunil Sachdeva — eventually left the place after lodging their protest against the alleged attempts by the Centre and Haryana to extract more water from Punjab via BBMB. Sawna asserted that the Punjab government, under Chief Minister Bhagwant Singh Mann, is committed to pro-



tecting the state's water resources. "Punjab is not violating anyone's rights. We are protecting our own. Haryana has already received 3 per cent more than its entitled share and Rajasthan 11 per cent more. Punjab has used its share judiciously and has only received 89 per cent of what it is due. If Haryana is given more water forcefully, Punjab's fields—especially in southern-western districts like Sri Muktsar Sahib and Fazilka—will dry up," he warned. However, the AAP leaders remained silent on the issue of canal water contamination in Malwa. On Wednesday, a group of farmers visited Harike headworks and stated that the state government was not bothering to stop the discoloured water coming from the headworks towards canals. The protest outside Jakhar's residence was part of a statewide AAP campaign targeting BJP leaders over the water-sharing dispute.

The Bhakra Beas Management Board (BBMB) annually allocates water to Punjab, Haryana, and Rajasthan. The current allocations—from May 21, 2024, to May 20, 2025—are: 5,512 MAF for Punjab, 2,987 MAF for Haryana, and 3,318 MAF for Rajasthan. Haryana had already exhausted its share by March 31. Subsequently, the Haryana government appealed to Punjab for more water, citing drinking water needs. On humanitarian grounds, Punjab began supplying 4,000 cusecs daily to Haryana starting March 6. However, according to the Punjab government, only 1,700 cusecs are required to meet the drinking needs of Haryana's 3-crore population. A few days ago, Haryana demanded an additional 8,500 cusecs per day, which Punjab claimed was not meant for fulfilling Haryana's drinking water needs but for irrigation. AAP leaders alleged that the crisis stems from Haryana's mismanagement of its water resources. Punjab, meanwhile, is grappling with its own water crisis caused by dipping groundwater levels, and dam levels: Pong Dam is down 32 feet, Bhakra Dam 12 feet, and Ranjit Sagar Dam 14 feet compared to last year. Despite this, BBMB has allegedly decided to continue supplying additional water to Haryana and even transferred an officer in connection with the decision, AAP leaders alleged.

Complete caste census in 3 months, or your decision will be considered hogwash: Mallikarjun Kharge to Centre



GNS News Agency, May 6

Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge demanded on Thursday that the Centre complete the Census, in which caste will also be enumerated, in the next three months, even as he said the BJP-led government was delaying the decennial exercise to hide the "lack of development" in the country. Addressing a price-rise protest against the central government at Hubballi, Kharge said the Centre was not interested in carrying out a caste census in the past. "I had written a letter to the PM in April 2023 seeking a caste census to ensure the development of backward castes... When we asked for it, they said that the country would be divided and (the Congress) was sowing differences between communities. Why are you doing it now?" he asked. Kharge said the BJP government was not interested in the Census as it would reveal the economic conditions of people in the country. "Our feeling is that they are not doing it honestly. Therefore, (the Census) should be completed in three months. If you do it, we will know you are interested in the Census. If not, we will have to say it is just hogwash," he said. Kharge said the Centre was empowered to increase the 50 per cent reservation ceiling set by the Supreme Court. He accused the Centre of blocking attempts by states like Karnataka to increase reservation, while states like Tamil Nadu already has 69 per cent reservation in government jobs. He also reiterated the Congress's demand to amend Article 15 of the Constitution to ensure reservation in the private sector. Earlier in the day, speaking at an event in Bengaluru,

the Congress leader said the budget allocation for the Census was insufficient. Noting that Karnataka had spent Rs 165 crore to carry out the Socioeconomic and Educational Survey, he said the Union government has set aside only Rs 575 crore for the Census in the entire country. "Is it possible to take up a survey in that amount? It is not adequate even to complete the Census in Uttar Pradesh... They want neither to take up the Caste Census nor help OBCs," the leader of the Opposition in the Rajya Sabha went on.

Man from Maharashtra arrested for fraud

Hyderabad: The Hyderabad Cybercrime police arrested one Gurjot Singh (26), a driver from Maharashtra for his alleged involvement in as many as 16 investment fraud cases across India, including two cases in Telangana.

He had lent his bank account to cyber fraudsters, who further diverted money obtained from frauds into that account. According to the police, recently a 56-year-old man from the city became the latest victim of the gang. Initially he had invested small amounts in different bank accounts provided by the suspects, who showed some profit every day.

The suspects told the victim that he would receive the profit amount into his application wallet and the same could be withdrawn into his personal bank account, after deduction of tax for each withdrawal. Believing them to be genuine he deposited an amount multiple times totaling Rs 2.4 crore. Later they stopped the withdrawal process. Based on his complaint, the Cybercrime police booked a case and subsequently traced and arrested the suspect. Efforts are on to nab others.



‘No water to spare’: Congress backs AAP govt, but asks it to stop dharna drama



GNS News Agency, May 6

Bhagwant Mann, Bhagwant Singh Mann, Bhakra Beas Management Board, Punjab government, Indian express news, current affairsPunjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann said Punjab needs water for the upcoming paddy sowing season and there is not a single surplus drop to spare. The Punjab Congress leadership Thursday said that the state did not have a drop of water to spare for Haryana and blamed the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) for orchestrating injustice against Punjab’s farmers in the intensifying water dispute with Haryana.In a statement, Punjab Congress president Amrinder Singh Raja Warring warned that people of the state will not allow a single drop of extra water to flow to any other state.He said what has been the rightful due of Haryana has already been provided to it and it cannot seek extra water when Punjab was itself too much short of it.

The PCC president demanded that Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann must call an emergency all- party meeting to devise an effective strategy to save Punjab’s

waters.Referring to the AAP announcement of holding protests and dharnas, he said it was just a drama aimed at diverting the public attention. “When you are in government, why do you need to stage any dharna?” he asked the AAP government while telling it to stop this ‘drama’ and take everyone along.Warring said there was no reason for Haryana to seek extra water when it had already got its share. “We cannot let our own state go dry to provide water to others,” he said while assuring full support and cooperation to the government to deal with the situation.The PCC president accused the AAP government of hypocrisy, alleging it had a secret understanding with the BJP which was exposed when it unleashed a reign of terror on the peacefully protesting farmers.

“When you already have such an understanding with the BJP, why do you need to enact the drama of protests?” he asked the AAP leadership, while warning it against any compromise or surrender of Punjab’s water to any other state.Leader of Opposition in Punjab Assembly Partap Singh Bajwa said with Punjab’s reservoirs depleted and 76.5 per cent of its groundwater blocks overexploited, Haryana’s demand for 8,500 cusecs threatens Punjab’s agricultural backbone which produces 185 lakh metric tonnes for India’s food security. Bajwa accused the BJP of sacrificing Punjab for political gains, demanding urgent action to safeguard the state’s water rights. “Haryana has already consumed 103 per cent of its 2.987 MAF water share, yet seeks more, flouting prior agreements,” he said.The LoP said the Bhakra Beas Management Board (BBMB), under BJP’s political grip, has dismissed Punjab’s evidence of Haryana’s overdraw, railroading the state’s objections in recent deliberations.

Haryana CM Saini hits out at AAP’s ‘dirty politics’, says drinking water supply never halted before

GNS News Agency, May 6

Hitting out at Punjab’s ruling Aam Aadmi Party over its refusal to release more water to Haryana, Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini claimed on Thursday that the supply of drinking water has never been halted in history in such a manner.Speaking to journalists in Panchkula, Saini said, “This is not about irrigation water but drinking water. We have learned from the Gurus that we welcome even strangers by offering them water”.He added, “Never in history has there been a dispute over drinking water. This is dirty politics as elections approach. The people of Punjab understand this. Punjab is our elder brother. Why are differences being created? Don’t engage in such dirty politics.”Saini also referred to AAP leader Arvind Kejriwal’s earlier allegations of poison being mixed in the Yamuna River water. “He (Kejriwal) is behind Bhagwant Mann, dictating him through written slips,” Saini alleged.Criticizing AAP leaders for their inability to accept defeat in Delhi, Saini remarked, “Kejriwal is still in shock”.Saini said both he and Mann come from humble backgrounds and “we both know how our mothers used to carry water pots 2 km away from home; therefore, he should not politicise the drinking water issue”.The Haryana CM explained, “Every year in May and June, additional water is released because the demand for water increases during the summer. The NCR industry has grown, and the population there has increased.”Saini further elaborated, “Every year in April, May, and June, as much as 9,000 cusecs of water is released. From this, Delhi receives 500 cusecs, Rajasthan gets 800 cusecs, and Punjab receives 400 cusecs, leaving 6,800 cusecs for Haryana.”According to Saini, the usual release of water is 4,000 cusecs, which rises to 9,000 during the summer months.“Rainwater also needs to be preserved; otherwise, it will go to waste and flow into Pakistan. We will not let



water go to Pakistan. Mann Sahib should work in the interest of humanity by staying away from party politics,” Saini emphasized.He said, “all political parties in the state share the same stance on this issue”.Later, Saini hit out at AAP for politicising the water distribution issue and called it “deeply regrettable and against the spirit of national unity.”Emphasising that this is not a matter of irrigation but of essential drinking water, the chief minister said such a basic human need must never be turned into a political tool.“Water is a lifeline, not a political weapon. As our elder brother, Punjab should set an example, not block what is rightfully and ethically shared,” Saini said in an official statement.Punjab is the sacred land of the Gurus, and, unfortunately, the Bhagwant Mann-led Punjab government is disregarding the Gurus’ teachings of compassion and humanity, added Saini.He aid our culture is such that “if Punjab is thirsty, we would cut from our own share of water to give it to the people of Punjab”. “In just two months, the monsoon will begin, and then rainwater will flow into Pakistan—a country that is killing our innocent citizens. Why should we give them water.”

How a video by a woman in Israel, alleging abduction of her family, led to arrest of woman from ‘Godmother’ Santokben’s clan in Porbandar

GNS News Agency, May 6

Earlier this month, a video uploaded on social media by a Porbandar woman, presently living in Israel, caught the attention of the Gujarat Police.In the video, the woman, Leelu Kuchhadiya, claimed that her father Bhana Odedara, husband Bhanu, and teenaged son Ranjit had been held hostage by Hiralba Jadeja – a member of the powerful political clan of Kutiyana in Porbandar.On April 30, though, Bhana approached the police again and made a shocking allegation: All the claims made by Leelu in the video were true. He alleged that he, along with his son-in-law and another family member, and later his grandson Ranjit, was picked up from his home and taken to Hiralba’s house where they were kept for over two weeks. The 65-year-old man further alleged that they were asked to return the money that Leelu had allegedly borrowed from Hiralba and made to sign several blank cheques. Hiralba was arrested on charges of abduction, extortion and criminal intimidation, among other sections of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS).Hiralba is the widow of Bhura Munja Jadeja, the former one-time MLA of the Ranavav-Kutiyana assembly constituency of Porbandar in 1995, which, after delimitation in the late 1990s, became Kutiyana constituency.She is also related to current Kutiyana MLA Kandhal Jadeja, the son of her brother-in-law, gangster Sarman Munja Jadeja, and his wife Santokben who was popularly known as “Godmother”.

The FIR against Hiralba Jadeja, and two others, brothers Hitesh Bhima Odedara and Vijay Bhima Odedara, and 4-5 unknown people, was filed at Harbour Marine police station on Wednesday.The FIR stated that on the intervening night of April 10 and 11, four to five men arrived at the family’s home in Kuchhadi village and woke up the complainant, Bhana, who was sleeping on the porch. They asked him to wake up Leelu’s husband Bhanu and another relative, Gigi, asking all three to accompany them to Suraj Palace – the home of Hiralba. By the next morning, Gigi had been allowed to return to her own house.Later that afternoon, Hiralba called Bhana and Bhanu to her chambers and alleged that Leelu had borrowed Rs 70 lakh from her. When Bhana denied any knowledge of the matter, the accused made a video call to Leelu and demanded the money, said the FIR. Two days later, the accused picked up Leelu’s son Ranjit, 17, and brought him to the bungalow, the FIR stated.According to the FIR, Bhana and his son-in-law Bhanu were thrashed for the next two weeks and made to call up their relatives as well as their sarpanch, asking for the money.



Hiralba Jadeja had allegedly kept the woman's father, husband and 17-year-old son at her home for over two weeks, demanding that her money be returned, said police

The accused then made the complainant and Bhanu sign 11 blank cheques, the FIR said, adding they also took some jewellery from their home.By this time, Leelu had made the video narrating her ordeal and shared it on social media.On April 27, the accused gave Bhana and Bhanu their car and asked them to go to the police station to record their statement, the FIR said. Under duress, the complainant did not divulge any details of what had transpired the past fortnight, the FIR added. After going home, Bhana talked to his relatives and decided to file a formal complaint against Hiralba and other accused persons.At a press conference on Thursday, Porbandar Superintendent of Police (SP) Bhagirathsinh U Jadeja said, “Leeluben, who is in Israel, had uploaded a video in which she alleged that Hiralba and her men had abducted her husband and son and that she (Hiralba) was attempting to extort them. When the police reached out to Bhanu and Ranjit, they claimed no such abduction had taken place. However, finding their statements suspicious, the police continued the investigation and finally, on April 30, Leeluben’s father came forward and filed a complaint against Hiralba and others.”SP Jadeja further made an appeal to the public encouraging other victims, if any, to come forward and file complaint against the accused. Speaking to the SP said that the police are still looking for the other accused in the case and that they will be arrested shortly.It was not clear yet whether Leelu had borrowed any money from Hiralba or not.

BJP says Punjab doesn’t have surplus water for other states but questions AAP ‘drama’



GNS News Agency, May 6

Amid escalating tension over sharing of water, the BJP’s Punjab unit chief Sunil Jakhar Thursday said the state does not have surplus water for Haryana. Union minister and BJP Rajya Sabha MP Ravneet Singh Bittu too claimed that not a single drop of the border state’s share of water will be released by the Bhakra Beas Management Board (BBMB). Jakhar, however, urged Punjab government to release drinking water to Haryana on humanitarian grounds even as Bittu accused Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann for allegedly “dramatising” the water issue for “political gains”.“As a Union minister, I categorically state that Punjab’s rightful share of water will not be released under any circumstances,” said BittuIn a post on X, Jakahr said, “We have always firmly stood for the interests of Punjab, and our stand is clear—Punjab does not have any surplus water to give to any other state. While we do not oppose providing drinking water on humanitarian grounds, using this as a tool for petty politics may suit the Aam Aadmi Party. But it goes against the spirit and principles of Punjabiyaat?.

Bittu too described Mann’s “outcry” on the water issue as “theatrical” and “politically motivated”, calling it a “distraction” at a time when the nation stands united on national security matters.“While the entire country is focused on serious concerns such as national security, Mann is trying to divert attention by staging unnecessary drama over water,” Bittu allegedOn a similar strain, Jakhar wrote, “At a time when tensions at the international border resemble a war-like situation, the Punjab government is destabilising the state by engaging the state police force in handling protests and dharnas outside BJP offices in Punjab and Chandigarh?.”Jakhar alleged that AAP was trying to cover up the crimes of “their leaders Manish Sisodia and Satyendar Jain, who are involved in a Rs 2,000-crore classroom scam in Delhi”.Jakhar further said, “We in Punjab organise chabeels to offer people sweet water in scorching heat. Not only this, we must remember the story of Bhai Kahaniya ji, who used to offer water to everyone wounded in the battlefield, be they Sikh or those fighting against Sikhs.”He urged AAP leaders to “shed their duplicity and remember the prom-

‘I told you to spare my woman’: A Facebook warning later, Kerala love triangle ends in murder

GNS News Agency, May 6

kerala love triangle murder news, indian expressThe murder allegedly took place at the house Mini was constructing to live away from her husband, police said.On March 20, N K Santhosh from Chapparappadavu in Kerala’s Kannur district shared a photo of himself on Facebook, posing with a gun. “Hitting the target is the task. Certainly, the target will be hit,” the 40-year-old said in the caption.

Later that evening, after allegedly firing a fatal gunshot at local BJP leader K K Radhakrishnan (49), who lived 11 km away at Panapuzha, Santhosh again took to Facebook: “I told you to spare my woman. It is okay even if my life is lost... I won’t forgive you.”He was arrested for the murder soon after, and 41 days later, so was the dead man’s wife — 42-year-old Mini Nambiar, a mother of two and a former BJP district committee member. She was arrested on conspiracy charges.According to police, Santhosh, who is unmarried, and Radhakrishnan’s wife Mini were in a relationship. The murder allegedly took place at the house Mini was constructing to live away from her husband, police said.Investigating officer Vineeshkumar M T said, “The Facebook posts indicate that Santhosh was determined. He wanted to live with Mini. Their chats show that they were planning to live together, but at the same time, they realised that Radhakrishnan was in no mood to let them be. Analysis of the WhatsApp chats between the two show that Santhosh had indicated to Mini about the murder. But she did not alert her husband.”After the crime, she had deleted all WhatsApp chats with Santhosh, and even removed his number from her phone, police said. However, they said,

ises made during the Haryana elections”. He said Mann had said while campaigning for the Haryana Assembly elections last year that water would be given to Delhi and Haryana. Even in the Supreme Court, the government stated that farmers were not allowing the construction of the Sutlej-Yamuna Link (SYL) canal. This exposes their double standards.

Pritpal Singh Baliawal, a BJP spokesperson, accused the AAP of trying to divide the nation despite claiming to stand with it amid the border tensions. He said, “Punjab has the rightful claim over its water and Punjab’s water is for the state itself. Why are Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann and the AAP’s Punjab president, Aman Arora, silent on what their MP and AAP Haryana president Sushil Kumar Gupta said about giving SYL water during the Haryana poll campaign?”Bittu added, “Mann is shedding crocodile tears. The AAP failed to stand its ground in the recent meeting with the BBMB. Unprepared and clueless, their team stayed silent as Haryana demanded more water. Why didn’t CM Mann defend Punjab’s needs? BJP stands firm: not a drop of Punjab’s water will go elsewhere.”

Bittu also accused the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) government of trying to “derail” the ongoing dialogue between the farmers and the Union government over the former’s demands.Punjab government’s “interference was a calculated move to mislead the farmers, particularly since many farmer organisations have expressed their opposition to the AAP-led state government”, the BJP MP said.He also pointed out that the farmer leaders have already announced that they will boycott a meeting on May 4 if Punjab ministers are invited to it.BJP national secretary Tarun Chugh too attacked Mann, accusing him of playing politics over the issue. “When the AAP government was in power in Delhi, Arvind Kejriwal’s stand on the issue was something else,” Chugh said.The AAP has also upped the ante. Its spokesperson Malwinder Singh Kang wrote to Union minister Bittu asking him if he was toeing the line of his party colleagues in Haryana. “The BJP-led central government has crossed all limits by forcing the BBMB to release 8,500 cusecs of Punjab’s water to Haryana. This is nothing short of an unconstitutional act of daylight robbery,” he wrote.AAP’s state unit chief Aman Arora, in a letter to Jakhar, repeated the allegations about 8,500 cusecs of water and accused the BJP of taking an anti-Punjab stance both at the Centre and in Haryana.“Being the president of the state, you need to clarify your stand on Punjab at this juncture. Haryana has already utilised its share of water till March 31, 2025, and the next allocation will be from May 21, 2025 to May 20, 2026. Punjab had already been releasing 4,000 cusecs of water per day to Haryana. I hope you, being a Punjabi, will stand for the interests of Punjab. I have great hopes from you,” Arora wrote to the state BJP chief.

‘India is culturally rich and beautiful... we should offer better infrastructure for filmmaking’: Shah Rukh Khan

GNS News Agency, May 6

Lauding the central government’s initiative to host the World Audio Visual and Entertainment Summit (WAVES) 2025, producer-actor Shah Rukh Khan on Thursday said the shooting processes should be made easier for Indian filmmakers as well as those who come from abroad to shoot in the country.“India has so much to offer. It is so culturally rich and beautiful. We should offer them better infrastructure for filmmaking,” he said.

Along with actor Deepika Padukone, Khan was speaking at a panel discussion on “The Journey: From Outsider to Ruler”, which was moderated by producer-director Karan Johar as part of four-day long WAVES summit.“It is not important whether you are an insider or outsider, what matters is how you want to create space in your chosen field. Many assume that only privileged people would get a chance. But you have to create a space for yourself by working hard, finding out how this world works, and then giving your best to it,” said Khan.Speaking on the topic, Padukone said when she entered the film industry as a teenager, it was a new world for her. “I applied my dedication, determination and hard work —which were in my control —when I started working as an actor,” she said and added that though a newcomer she was offered a meaty double role in her debut movie “Om Shanti Om” (2007).



self that you have done pretty well,” the “Piku” actor said.“When you’re young, you experience an adventure called life. As we grow older, fear, anxiety, and thoughtfulness take over. When I was young, I was brash, a bit overconfident and gutsy too. I would like to tell myself thank you for being like that. Otherwise, I wouldn’t have taken this path,” said Khan, one of the most successful Indian stars.

Two booked for abusing cattle rescued by police in Telangana’s Adilabad

Adilabad: Two persons working in a cowshed were booked for abusing cattle that were rescued by police while being illegally transported to a slaughter house, in Uttoor mandal headquarters on Thursday.Uttoor ASP Kajal Singh, in a press statement, said that a case was registered against Aryan, an owner.

Pakistan PM, President meet amid tension with India, vow ‘befitting’ response to any aggression



GNS News Agency, May 6

Pakistan’s President Asif Ali Zardari and Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif met to discuss the security situation and vowed to respond to “any act of aggression in a befitting manner”. The two met for the first time as tensions rose between India and Pakistan after terrorists killed 26 people, mostly tourists, in Jammu and Kashmir’s Pahalgam on April 22. According to an official statement, they said that Pakistan would never compromise on its territorial integrity and sovereignty and would “respond to any act of aggression in a befitting manner”. “Pakistani nation is united and stands behind its armed forces, who are capable of responding to any threat or aggression,” the leaders said. Separately, Mr.

Sharif also had a telephonic conversation with the Amir of Qatar Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani, Radio Pakistan reported. During the conversation, he reiterated his offer of cooperation for a “transparent” investigation into the terror attack. A day after the attack, India announced a raft of punitive measures against Pakistan including suspension of the Indus Waters Treaty, shutting down of the only operational land border crossing at Attari and downgrading of diplomatic ties in view of cross-border links to the massacre. India also closed its airspace for flights operated by Pakistani airlines.

Meanwhile, Pakistan’s former Foreign Minister and Pakistan Peoples Party Chairman Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari held a rally in the Sindh province where he accused India of using terrorism as a pretext to usurp water flowing into Pakistan. Mr. Bhutto was referring to the suspension of the Indus Water Treaty of 1960 by India after the Pahalgam attack. He repeated that if water meant for Pakistan is stopped, it would be considered an act of war, and Prime Minister Narendra Modi should know, “either water will flow in the river or blood.” Mr. Bhutto said that Sindh is home to the ancient Indus Valley Civilisation and in that sense, it belongs to the people of India and Pakistan who take pride in the old civilisation. “Indian people also love it and they know that their history is linked with Sindhu...neither will we allow someone to suffocate Sindhu, nor will the Indian people allow any such attack,” he said.

U.S. based Kashmiri activist Syed Ghulam Nabi Fai declared ‘proclaimed offender’

GNS News Agency, May 6

Dr. Syed Ghulam Nabi Fai, 76, a Washington-based Kashmiri activist who heads the World Kashmir Awareness Forum, was on Thursday (May 1, 2025) declared a “proclaimed offender” by a court in central Kashmir’s Budgam in a case filed under the Unlawful Activities Dr. Syed Ghulam Nabi Fai, 76, a Washington-based Kashmiri activist who heads the World Kashmir Awareness Forum, was on Thursday (May 1, 2025) declared a “proclaimed offender” by a court in central Kashmir’s Budgam in a case filed under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA). [Photo Credit: Ghulam Nabi Fai/Youtube] Dr. Ghulam Nabi Fai, 76, a Washington-based Kashmiri activist who is the Chairman of the World Forum for Peace & Justice, was on Thursday (May 1, 2025) declared a “proclaimed offender” by a court in central Kashmir’s Budgam in a case filed under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA). A Special Judge of the National Investigation Agency (NIA) Court, Budgam, on the plea of the J&K Police, declared Mr. Fai as a proclaimed offender in a First Information Report (FIR) filed in 2020 at the Budgam Police Station under Sections 10, 13, and 39 of the UAPA. Mr. Fai has been given 30 days from the date of proclamation to surrender before the J&K Police. According to the J&K Police, Mr. Fai, a resident of Wadwan, Budgam, was “presently concealing himself in the U.S.”



cooperation and deliberate attempts to conceal himself to evade arrest, the Budgam Police presented a plea before the court. Acting on this plea, the court declared Mr. Fai a proclaimed offender on April 30, police sources said. Mr. Fai has been a close associate of separatist leaders in Kashmir. Considered an affiliate of the banned Jamaat-e-Islami (JeI), Mr. Fai graduated from Aligarh Muslim University before shifting to the U.S. in 1977 for higher studies. Currently, Mr. Fai is a citizen of the U.S.

He founded the Kashmiri American Council, which lobbied in the U.S. for separatist leaders in Kashmir. He is considered one of the few influential Kashmiris who remained active on backchannels, especially with the top leadership of Republicans and Democrats in the U.S.

China’s strategic push — Asia ties amid tariff tensions

GNS News Agency, May 6

The President of China, Xi Jinping’s three-nation tour of Southeast Asia (April 14-18, 2025) to Vietnam, Malaysia, and Cambodia, had one goal: to pitch Beijing as the only reliable partner of choice. Facing what is at the moment a 145% tariff on Chinese exports imposed by the Trump administration, China is actively recalibrating its external economic engagement, especially in geographies where it enjoys strategic proximity and relatively receptive partners. This Southeast Asia outreach is not just routine diplomacy. It is a considered move by Beijing to mitigate external economic pressure, project stability, and cement its leadership narrative in the Indo-Pacific. The visit also comes in the wake of the “Central Conference on Work Relating to Neighbouring Countries” (April 8-9). This relatively rare workshop was attended by senior party leaders and underscored the importance of fostering a “community with a shared future” with neighbouring states. China is keen to insulate itself from the ramifications of a deepening trade war with the U.S., which now extends beyond tariffs to export controls, technology bans and financial decoupling. In this context, Southeast Asia serves as a buffer and a bridge. It offers China resilient trade channels, manufacturing alternatives, and diplomatic partners to collectively push back against the narrative of de-risking or containment led by Washington.



this visit is politically significant. U.S. engagement with Southeast Asia has been episodic and often perceived to be reactive, despite Washington’s measures to the contrary. The U.S.’s Indo-Pacific strategy is also often seen in parts of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) as security heavy and narrowly focused on countering China. Mr. Xi’s visit, in contrast, offers tangible deliverables: infrastructure projects, digital collaboration, trade facilitation, and security dialogues.

By visiting key ASEAN members, he also played into intra-ASEAN dynamics. For instance, the effort to deepen ties with Vietnam, traditionally wary of Chinese assertiveness in the South China Sea, is an attempt to reassure Hanoi. In Malaysia, China’s emphasis on peaceful dispute resolution and BRI collaboration appeals to a government that is cautious about becoming a pawn in the U.S.-China rivalry. While Washington continues to emphasise security partnerships — through AUKUS (Australia, the United Kingdom, the U.S.), the Quad (Australia, India, Japan, the U.S.), and bilateral alliances — China is doubling down on economic diplomacy, where the U.S. is perceived to have underdelivered. Initiatives such as the Indo-Pacific Economic Framework for Prosperity have been criticised for lacking market access incentives, in contrast to China’s clear offers of investment and trade.

Moreover, Beijing’s ability to present itself as an indispensable economic partner may complicate U.S. efforts to build a coalition to isolate or deter China economically. If Southeast Asia increasingly leans further towards economic interdependence with China, Washington will find it harder to operationalise a robust economic counter-strategy. Mr. Xi’s Southeast Asia tour is a forward-looking strategy to entrench Chinese influence in the Indo-Pacific at a time of systemic flux. In the contest between the U.S. and China for regional primacy, this kind of diplomacy is calculated strategic positioning, with long-term implications for regional alignment, economic integration, and rule-setting. Finally, this tour is also about domestic political signalling. For Mr. Xi, the ability to show that China is not internationally isolated, despite mounting western pressure, is crucial. The optics of warm receptions, economic deals, and strategic dialogues serve to buttress his authority at home and offset negative headlines around the economic slowdown or diplomatic frictions with the West. At the same time, they signal to the region — and the Global South at large — that China continues to be there for them to lean on. How receptive Southeast will be to Mr. Xi’s outreach, despite Beijing’s own unilateral tendencies, remains to be seen.

Trump names Secretary of State Rubio as acting National Security Adviser, taps Mike Waltz for U.N. envoy



GNS News Agency, May 6. President Donald Trump said on that he’s naming Secretary of State Marco Rubio as acting National Security Adviser to replace Mike Waltz, whom he is nominating for United Nations ambassador. Mr. Trump announced the moves shortly after news broke that Mr. Waltz and his deputy Alex Wong were departing the administration just weeks after it was revealed that Mr. Waltz added a journalist to a Signal chatbeim used to discuss military plans. Mr. Trump said Mr. Rubio will continue to serve as Secretary of State. “I am pleased to announce that I will be nominating Mike Waltz to be the next United States Ambassador to the United Nations. From his time in uniform on the battlefield, in Congress and, as my National Security Advisor, Mike Waltz has worked hard to put our Nation’s Interests first,” Mr. Trump wrote on social media.

“In the interim, Secretary of State Marco Rubio will serve as National Security Advisor, while continuing his strong leadership at the State Department. Together, we will continue to fight tirelessly to Make America, and the World, SAFE AGAIN.” Mr. Waltz came under searing scrutiny in March after revelations that he added journalist Jeffrey Goldberg to a private text chain on the encrypted messaging app Signal, which was used to discuss planning for a sensitive March 15 military operation against Houthi militants in Yemen. A far-right ally of the President, Laura

Loomer, has also targeted Mr. Waltz, telling Mr. Trump in a recent Oval Office conversation that he needs to purge aides who she believes are insufficiently loyal to the “Make America Great Again” agenda.

Mr. Waltz, who served in the House representing Florida for three terms before his elevation to the White House, is the most prominent senior administration official to depart since Mr. Trump returned to the White House. In his second term, the Republican President had been looking to avoid the tumult of his first four years in office, during which he cycled through four national security advisers, four White House chiefs of staff and two secretaries of state. The Signal chain also showed that Defence Secretary Pete Hegseth provided the exact timings of warplane launches and when bombs would drop. Mr. Waltz had previously taken “full responsibility” for building the message chain and administration officials described the episode as a “mistake” but one that caused Americans no harm. Mr. Waltz maintained that he was not sure how Mr. Goldberg ended up in the messaging chain, and insisted he did not know the journalist. Mr. Trump and the White House — which insisted that no classified information was shared on the text chain — have stood by Mr. Waltz publicly throughout the episode. But the embattled national security adviser was also under siege from personalities such as Ms. Loomer, who had been complaining to administration officials that she had been excluded from the vetting process for National Security Council aides. In her view, Mr. Waltz relied too much on “neocons” — referring to hawkish neoconservatives within the Republican Party — as well as others who Ms. Loomer argued were “not-MAGA-enough” types. Mr. Waltz was on television as late as Thursday (May 1, 2025) morning, promoting the administration’s agreement with Kyiv that would allow the U.S. to access Ukraine’s critical minerals and other natural resources. As reports began to circulate that Mr. Waltz could be leaving the administration, Ms. Loomer appeared to take credit in a post on the social media site X, writing: “SCALP.”

China says assessing U.S. proposals for talks to reduce tariffs

GNS News Agency, May 6

China, said it is assessing whether to start trade talks with the U.S. on tariff reductions following recent approaches by Washington, a move that would possibly ease the tit-for-tit tariff war between the world’s two largest economies. “China is making assessments as the United States has recently reached out to convey messages to China through relevant parties many times, expressing hope to engage in talks with Beijing over tariff issues,” the Chinese Commerce Ministry said in a statement. “The tariff and trade wars were unilaterally initiated by the United States. If the U.S. wants to negotiate, it must demonstrate sincerity, and make preparations and take concrete actions on issues such as correcting its erroneous practices and lifting the unilateral tariffs,” the statement by its spokesperson said. U.S. President Donald Trump slapped 145% on Chinese exports. Later the White House said tariffs on Chinese goods amounted to 245%.

China has been denying any talks with the U.S. on tariffs while President Trump said talks were on and Chinese President Xi Jinping spoke to him. The Chinese Foreign Ministry denied any such talks between the two Presidents. Both the U.S. and China have been steadily increasing tariffs on each other’s goods since the U.S. raised tariffs on dozens of countries. China now faces 245% taxes on exports to the U.S., while other countries were given a 90-day reprieve for most duties. On April 16, China appointed



a new top international negotiator after Mr. Trump said the ball is in Beijing’s court to work out a deal to end the tariff deadlock. According to a fact sheet issued on April 16, the White House said, more than 75 countries have already reached out to discuss new trade deals. As a result, the individualised higher tariffs are currently paused amid these discussions, except for China, which retaliated. China is the only country to have retaliated with tit-for-tat levies. For China, the U.S. is the third largest export market. Despite China putting a brave front, there is considerable concern here about the impact of Trump’s tariffs on China’s economy, which is struggling with slowdown due to falling exports, low domestic consumption and collapse of the housing market.

Trump cannot use Alien Enemies Act to deport Venezuelans from South Texas, Judge rules

GNS News Agency, May 6

A federal judge barred the Trump administration from deporting any Venezuelans from South Texas under an 18th-century wartime law and said President Donald Trump’s invocation of it was “unlawful.” U.S. District Court Judge Fernando Rodriguez Jr. is the first judge to rule that the Alien Enemies Act cannot be used against people who, the Republican administration claims, are gang members invading the United States. Judge Rodriguez said he wouldn’t interfere with the government’s right to deport people in the country illegally through other means, but it could not rely on the 227-year-old law to do so.

“Neither the Court nor the parties question that the Executive Branch can direct the detention and removal of aliens who engage in criminal activity in the United States,” wrote Judge Rodriguez, who was nominated by Mr. Trump in 2018. But, the judge said, “the President’s invocation of the AEA through the Proclamation exceeds the scope of the statute and is contrary to the plain, ordinary meaning of the statute’s terms.” In March, Mr. Trump issued a proclamation claiming that the Venezuelan gang Tren de Aragua was invading the U.S. He said he had special powers to deport immigrants, identified by his administration as gang members, without the usual court proceedings. “The Court concludes that the President’s invocation of the AEA through the Proclamation exceeds the scope of the statute and, as a result, is unlawful,” Judge Rodriguez wrote. In an interview on Fox News, Vice President J.D. Vance said the administration will be “aggressively appealing” the ruling and others that hem in the president’s deportation power. “The judge doesn’t make that determination, whether the Alien Enemies Act can be deployed,” Mr. Vance said. “I think the President of the United States is the one who determines whether this country is being invaded.” The chair of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus, Rep. Adriano Espaillat, D-N.Y., said in a statement the judge had made clear “what we all knew to be true: The Trump administration illegally used the Alien Enemies Act to deport people without due process.” The Alien Enemies Act has only been used three times before in U.S. history, most recently during World War II, when it was cited to intern Japanese-Americans.

The proclamation triggered a flurry of litigation as the administration tried to ship migrants it claimed were gang members to a notorious prison in El Salvador. Judge Rodriguez’s ruling is significant because it is the first formal permanent injunction against the administration using the AEA and contends the president is misusing the law. “Congress never meant for this law to be used in this manner,” said Lee Gelernt, the ACLU lawyer who argued the case, in response to the ruling. Judge Rodriguez agreed, noting that the provision has only been used during the two World Wars and the War of 1812. Mr. Trump claimed Tren de Aragua



was acting at the behest of the Venezuelan government, but Judge Rodriguez found that the activities the administration accused it of did not amount to an invasion or “predatory incursion,” as the statute requires.

“The Proclamation makes no reference to and in no manner suggests that a threat exists of an organised, armed group of individuals entering the United States at the direction of Venezuela to conquer the country or assume control over a portion of the nation,” Judge Rodriguez wrote. “Thus, the Proclamation’s language cannot be read as describing conduct that falls within the meaning of ‘invasion’ for purposes of the AEA.” If the administration appeals, it would go first to the New Orleans-based 5th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals. That is among the nation’s most conservative appeals courts and it also has ruled against what it saw as overreach on immigration matters by both the Obama and Biden administrations. In those cases, Democratic administrations had sought to make it easier for immigrants to remain in the U.S. The administration, as it has in other cases challenging its expansive view of presidential power, could turn to appellate courts, including the U.S. Supreme Court, in the form of an emergency motion for a stay pending an appeal.

The Supreme Court already has weighed in once on the issue of deportations under the AEA. The justices held that migrants alleged to be gang members must be given “reasonable time” to contest their removal from the country. The court has not specified the length of time. It’s possible that the losing side in the 5th Circuit would file an emergency appeal with the justices that also would ask them to short-circuit lower court action in favor of a definitive ruling from the nation’s highest court. Such a decision likely would be months away, at least. The Texas case is just one piece of a tangle of litigation sparked by Trump’s proclamation. The ACLU initially filed suit in the nation’s capital to block deportations. U.S. District Judge James E. Boasberg issued a temporary hold on removals and ordered the administration turn around planes that had left with detainees headed to El Salvador, a directive that was apparently ignored. Later, the Supreme Court weighed in.

Has the Pahalgam attack crossed a red line?



The calculated brutality of the terror attack in Pahalgam in Jammu and Kashmir appears to have crossed a red line for India-Pakistan ties that were already at an all-time low. Following its diplomatic measures against Pakistan, what appropriate military response can India craft? Has the Pahalgam attack crossed a red line? Sharat Sabharwal and Lieutenant General (Retired) Deependra Singh Hooda discuss the question in a conversation moderated by Suhasini Haidar. Edited excerpts:

The Prime Minister has said that he has given the military “a free hand” for operations. Pakistan’s government has been saying every 24 hours that an attack is imminent. Given the indicators that a military option will be exercised next, would you say that all non-military options have been exhausted?Sharat Sabharwal: There seems to be no diplomacy between the two countries at the moment. We know that some other countries, notably the U.S., have said that they are in touch with both sides and have urged them not to escalate matters. But what would it take for Pakistan to do something, which would be acceptable to our government, which would then move us towards de-escalation? There is nothing of that kind on the horizon. The government has to take into account the strong public sentiment on the issue, the record of what was done in 2016 (in Uri) and in 2019 (in Pulwama), (India’s) surgical strikes and Balakot strike in response and the expectation now that there will be some finite action.

Lt Gen (Retd) Deependra Singh Hooda: I think some non-military options are still on the table, such as international pressure, especially on Pakistan, to back off. But the statements coming from Pakistan, such as ‘Indian blood will flow through the Indus’, are very hostile. I don’t see any give from the Pakistani side. Therefore, if there are no options left, then some sort of use of military force seems the only way forward.I wouldn’t read too much into the ‘free hand’ that has been given to the forces. Obviously, the military has always had a free hand in preparing for any action. In 2016, when we were planning the cross-border operation, the government didn’t interfere at all in the planning. But the military cannot move when it wants. Whatever is contemplated must get political approval.Would a Pakistani offer to assist with the investigation, as was the case in 2008 after the Mumbai attacks and then in 2016 after the Pathankot airbase attack, be de-escalatory?

Sharat Sabharwal: There has been no such offer [from Pakistan] this time. There is complete denial and there are belligerent statements being made. Pakistan Army chief Asim Munir is a hard-liner, going by his speeches and public pronouncements. After Pathankot, was Pakistan Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif who made the offer, but he was helpless in front of the Army chief, and [the investigation] went nowhere. In 2008, a lot of international pressure was built up on Pakistan, especially because nationals of other countries also got killed in the attacks (in Mumbai).How would rate the government’s five-point diplomatic measures so far?Lt Gen (Retd) Deependra Singh Hooda: Many of those measures will have a limited impact, given how we didn’t trade at the borders or give many visas anyway. I think what is significant in the long term is holding the Indus Waters Treaty in abeyance, and linking its resumption with terrorist activities in Pakistan.

Sharat Sabharwal: Clearly what has agitated Pakistan is the move on the Indus Waters Treaty. The remaining measures are largely symbolic. The integrated check post opened in 2012, but has never been used to its potential. The number of visas had gone down significantly over the years in any case. On the Indus Waters Treaty, Pakistan had apprehensions all along that at some stage India would decide to divert Pakistan’s share of water. This hurts [Pakistan]. In the short term, we can stop giving hydrological data which is used for managing flows and floods. We can build our own projects without adhering to the stipulations of the Treaty in informing Pakistan. We are technically challenged by the lack of infrastructure and the heights at which those rivers flow. But the psychological pressure on Pakistan is something new.

Are there lessons learned from responses in the past — 2008, 2016, 2019, etc. — when we think about the response that is to come?

Sharat Sabharwal: In 2008, there was no publicised punitive activity, but international pressure built up and resulted in Pakistan not only acknowledging that Ajmal Kasab was their national, but also ordering an investigation by their federal investigation agency. It was at this stage that I went as High Commissioner in April 2009. In June, [Pakistan] gave us a 30-page dossier, in which they acknowledged for the first and the last time that the attack was mounted from their territory and launched by the Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT). And they gave us elaborate details of the training, of where the boat was launched, etc. They took seven people into custody and launched a prosecution in an anti-terrorism court, all of which offered us a way towards de-escalation. We resumed dialogue in March 2011. In 2012, we saw the lowest level of violence along the Line of Control (LoC) and in Jammu and Kashmir since the turn of the century. This is not something that necessarily offers us any options for today, as it is not clear whether Pakistan would be willing to admit what it did, or whether that will [alone] be acceptable to the [Modi] government.

Lt Gen (Retd) Deependra Singh Hooda: In 2016, we had planned for a reaction, but Pakistan said “nothing happened” and did not retaliate (to the surgical strikes). The Pakistani response to the Balakot strikes in 2019 taught us that there would be retaliation after that. After 2019, Pakistani strategists have written about a strategy of ‘quid pro quo plus’ — that is, reacting in an equal manner plus a little more — if India does something. So, as we contemplate actions now, we need to prepare for that. In 2019, we hadn’t looked at this aspect enough, so there was a hasty reaction to Pakistan’s retaliation. We need to see what is the lowest level of military force which can be considered a success from our side. People have suddenly started talking about ‘taking PoK (Pakistan-occupied Kashmir)’; that is far-fetched.

If taking PoK is far-fetched, how about a surgical strike on the LeT leadership, such as Hafiz Saeed?

Lt Gen (Retd) Deependra Singh Hooda: That is a possibility if we have the kind of intelligence and capability the U.S. had [in taking out Osama Bin Laden]. It is possible. And that is a legitimate target for us.Sharat Sabharwal: We also need to draw some lessons on what impact these actions have on the minds of Pakistan’s terror planners. They lull the terror activity to some extent, but this attack makes it clear that we do not have the capacity to secure an en-

during change in Pakistan’s behaviour yet.

Can we speak about diplomatic engagement then? Even after 2019, we had the 2021 LoC ceasefire negotiations. In 2024, External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar travelled to Islamabad for the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO), although he didn’t hold a bilateral dialogue. Should such measures end as well?

Sharat Sabharwal: The primary challenge we have now is China. Our responsibilities on that side of the border (Line of Actual Control) have grown. I believe it is in our interest to keep the western border as calm as possible. At the moment it is very volatile because of what has happened. We cannot leave the SCO just because Pakistan is part of it or because China has an active role in it. We must think of larger considerations.Lt Gen (Retd) Deependra Singh Hooda: A ceasefire in 2021 made strategic sense. We were looking more closely at the military challenge from China, at the fact that a large number of forces had got deployed there (at the LAC). We cannot completely insulate the ceasefire from the state of India-Pakistan relations as they exist today. We are already seeing breaches on the ceasefire line and I think that will only increase. Obviously both sides have built up additional forces along the LoC, expecting something to happen. There will be suspicion regarding any movement taking place on both sides. If and when military action takes place, I think the ceasefire will not survive.

Has the Pahalgam attack drawn a line? Is there any chance of bilateral, diplomatic engagement in the future?

Lt Gen (Retd) Deependra Singh Hooda: For now, the attack has drawn a red line. We can’t look five or 10 years down the line, but in the immediate future, I don’t see any positive engagement happening. We see only rhetoric from Pakistan — on war, nuclear weapons, etc.

Sharat Sabharwal: My reading is that the trajectory of this relationship, even beyond the resolution of this crisis, remains sombre. Diplomacy has taken a complete backseat for various reasons. First, our ‘terror and talks cannot go together’ policy. Second, Pakistan’s unreasonable demand, which it sticks to, that India must withdraw the Article 370 move, for any bilateral engagement. The two countries are dependent entirely on security, deterrence, and coercion to manage the relationship. Ideally, coercion should be a means to an end, with its impact being leveraged at some stage through dialogue and diplomacy to bring the adversary to a more desirable stage. I don’t think permanent peace between India and Pakistan is on the cards, given the nature of the Pakistani state. Our aim should be to manage this relationship at the lowest possible level of pain. Because if it is a journey of coercion, and coercion becomes an end in itself, that creates an environment that is prone to volatility. Our security forces protect us brilliantly against most of that volatility, but there is always a chance of the enemy getting through.

In the aftermath of the Pahalgam attack, there is a spotlight on Pakistani Army chief Gen Asim Munir. Is he different from past Pakistan Army chiefs?

Lt Gen (Retd) Deependra Singh Hooda: Absolutely, if you look at the speech that he gave in which he talked about Kashmir being the jugular vein and how Hindus and Muslims are completely different. The character of this attack is also different, and is much more deliberate: singling out tourists, singling out unarmed civilians, trying to identify religious identities, and shooting males only in front of their wives and children. This was, I think, a very deliberate provocation, with possibly some [Pakistan Army] training. It’s not possible that some local terrorist group has thought this up.Sharat Sabharwal: Yes, I have seen a difference right from the beginning. If you look at previous chiefs, such as General Ashfaq Parvez Kayani, General Pervez Musharraf, General Qamar Javed Bajwa... each of them had some idea of taking Pakistan forward. There is no such idea that has come from [General Munir].. Some of his public statements repeat what has been said by the Pakistanis earlier, but the way he speaks, it seems he is a hard-liner. And you see the kind of approach that is being taken in this crisis.

Should India’s response also factor in a Chinese role, given Chinese Finance Minister Wang Yi’s statement in support of “Pakistan’s sovereignty”?

Sharat Sabharwal: Well, China has not only supported Pakistan’s right to defend its sovereignty and legitimate security interests, but they have also favoured an “impartial probe”, which Pakistan suggested as a diversionary tactic. We must understand that China is now more deeply invested in Pakistan than ever before because of the CPEC (China-Pakistan Economic Corridor), which is its route to the sea, bypassing the maritime choke points in the east, notably the Malacca Straits. 80% of Pakistan’s weaponry comes from China. There are very close linkages across the board between the armed forces, and economically. Whether China gets involved now, however, depends upon what kind of action we take and on Pakistan’s response and what it develops into.

Lt Gen (Retd) Deependra Singh Hooda: As long as Chinese interests in the CPEC are not threatened, I don’t see China trying to do something apart from perhaps intelligence sharing.

50 Years of Rajinikanth: the filmmakers who made the star

Recently, an image of Rajinikanth with a bunch of his recent directors went viral. Clicked on the sets of the actor’s upcoming film, Jailer 2, it had the film’s director Nelson along with Karthik Subbaraj (Petta) and Lokesh Kanagaraj (whose film with Rajini, Coolie, will be the actor’s next release). What is interesting to note is that none of the three directors were even born when Rajini made his debut in 1975, with K. Balachander’s Apoorva Raagangal. 50 years later, on the same release date as the yesteryear film, Rajini’s Coolie will hit theatres. The transition from working with established industry legends to fresh blood has been a tried and tested process for Rajini. Just like a film, the making of a star is also not a one-person job. Over the years, Rajini has teamed with a variety of filmmakers with varying levels of experience. Let’s look at some of the directors who catapulted this actor into stardom.

Along with fellow talents like Kamal Haasan, Chiranjeevi, Jaya Prada, Sridevi and Jayasudha, Rajini was also nurtured by the legendary Balachander who, after Apoorva Raagangal, gave him his subsequent Tamil films Moondru Mudichu and Avargal. Interestingly, all these films co-starred Kamal Haasan. Over the years, Balachander would work multiple times with the actor in films like Thappu Thalangal, Ninaithale Inikkum and Thillu Mullu. The young Rajini’s sophomore was the Kannada anthology film Katha Sangama, by veteran Kannada filmmaker Puttanna Kanagal. Balachander also gave Rajini his Telugu debut with Anthuleni Katha. Despite doing a few Kannada and Telugu films in the late 70s, Rajini got his first experience working with a relatively new Tamil filmmaker in Kavikkuyil (1977), co-starring Sivakumar and Sridevi and helmed by Devaraj

Strong fundamentals and a sharp tactical mind make Tavish a name to watch out for



Indian tennis has many juniors striving hard to make a mark and forge their path towards becoming professionals.While there is no dearth of effort from most, some stand out to the discerning eye, like Tavish Pahwa, who wound up 2024 as the country’s No. 1 in both the under-16 and under-14 sections. The best evaluation of such a talent is done by a coach of considerable calibre, like Australian Todd Clark, who has been associated with Indian tennis for about 15 years.Having worked with Tavish for about a year and a half, he believes the 15-year-old will soon be “a name to watch” on the global stage.“Athletically gifted, Tavish has excellent movement, speed and agility on the court. His ability to cover all areas of the court, paired with a sharp tactical mind, sets him apart from his peers,” Todd explained.“He reads the game exceptionally well, often anticipating his opponent’s moves and devising effective strategies to counter them. His composure and court awareness are rare qualities for someone of his age.”Further analysing the youngster, Todd spoke highly about his technical and mental capabilities.“Tavish’s game is built on strong fundamentals. While all aspects of his game are clean, focused work is ongoing to refine his serve and return to turn them into defining weapons,” he said.Tavish is a fierce competitor and enjoys being in the thick of battle, against quality opponents who push him hard to bring out his best.“There has been a marked improvement in his emotional control and discipline, on and off the court. With continued exposure to high-level competition, his ability to make sound decisions under pressure will only improve.” Todd said. The coach is understandably proud that Tavish has been able to back his case by finishing the year as No. 1 in both under-14 and under-16 in 2024.“Apart from finishing last year as No. 1 in the country in both under-14 and under-16, Tavish also won the National under-16 title. He secured his first ITF singles title in Colombo. These milestones mark Tavish as one of the country’s most promising young talents,” he said.Tavish, who has slipped to No.

J&K’s economy and tourism in peril after Pahalgam massacre

The targeted killings of tourists in Pahalgam in Jammu and Kashmir took place at a time when the region was witnessing a tourism boom. The number of visitors was at a 15-year high and the Union Territory (UT)’s own revenue generation had started showing signs of improvement. The home States of the victims reflected the diversity of tourists that the Valley had began attracting. Now, with several key destinations in Kashmir deemed unsafe by the government, over 80% of upcoming bookings have been cancelled. Amid escalating tensions at the border, the tourism sector is bracing itself for a bleak year.Though attacks on tourists are rare, civilians in the Valley have increasingly become targets in recent years. In 2024, the share of civilians in militancy-related deaths in J&K was the highest in nearly two decades. If the latest killings are included, this year marks the highest share of civilians killed (data till April 30). Notably, when districts are ranked according to civilian deaths, Anantnag — home to Pahalgam, the site of the latest attack — ranks among the worst-affected in many years.

The number of tourists began rising in 2010 and continued to grow until 2012. When juxtaposed with data on terrorism incidents, the trend aligns with the period between 2011 and 2015 — years marked by fewer terrorism-related incidents in the Valley. Thereafter, tourist numbers gradually declined. They crashed in 2018 and 2019 before coming to a standstill in the following years due to the pandemic. However, the number of tourists surged again in 2023 and 2024. In fact, 3.5 million tourists visited the Kashmir Valley in 2024 — 1.6 times more than the previous peak recorded in 2012.It was not just tourism that recovered. The UT’s ability to raise its own tax and non-tax revenue also improved in recent years. Chart 2 depicts the changing composition of J&K’s total receipts over time.

In 2024-25, over 46% of the UT’s revenue was budgeted to come from Central grants and another 10% from centrally sponsored schemes, underscoring the UT’s heavy dependence on the Centre. Borrowings were expected to



account for an additional 17% of the UT’s revenue.Only 8% of the total revenue came from non-tax sources; 18% was from the State’s own taxes. As a trend, this was a notable improvement — the 8% from non-tax revenue was strong compared to many previous years and the 18% from State taxes was the highest in over a decade. In the wake of the recent attack, not just the tourism industry, but also the UT’s ability to generate own revenues will likely suffer in the foreseeable future.Chart 3 shows the year-wise share of civilians among those killed in militancy-related incidents in J&K between 2000 and 2025 (up to April 30). In 2024, civilians accounted for 24% of such deaths — the highest proportion since 2005. In 2024, civilians were deliberately targeted by terrorists. Notably, in 2023 and 2024, there was a rise in targeted killings of Kashmiri Pandits and other minorities in the Valley. In 2025, an overwhelming 56% of militancy-related deaths, including victims of the latest attack, have been civilians.Chart 4 shows the year-wise share of Anantnag in the UT’s total civilian deaths in militancy-related incidents.Anantnag recorded over 10% of the UT’s civilian deaths in such incidents, in seven out of the last 10 years. Baramulla, Kulgam, Pulwama, Shopian, and Srinagar have also been consistently hotspots for civilian deaths in the past.



T. R. Ramanna (Kuppathu Raja), Muktha Srinivasan (Polladhavan, Sivappu Sooriyan), K. Vijayan (Viduthalai) and A. C. Tirulokchandar (Vanakkatukuriya Kathaliye).At the same time, he also starred in screenwriter-turned-filmmaker Mahedran’s debut flick Mullum Malarum, with whom he would go on to work in Johnny and Kai Kodukkum Kai. He made his Malayalam debut with I. V. Sasi’s Allauddinum Albhutha Vilakkum.An underrated filmmaker Rajini collaborated with often during the late 70s and early 80s is R. Thyagarajan with whom he made films like Thai Meethu Sathiyam, Annai Oru Aalayam, Anbukku Naan Adimai and Ranga. Another collaborator who rarely gets his due credit is Vikram filmmaker Rajasekhar who teamed up with Rajini in films like Thambikku Entha Ooru, Padikkadavan, Maaveeran, Mappillai and Dharma Durai.It was in the mid-80s that he made his first and only film with cinematographer-turned-director Balu Mahendra, films like Veera, Baba and the cult classic Baashha.

Fatty liver disease goes down with novel weight loss drugs, shows new study: What does this mean for therapy?



Nearly two in three people with fatty liver disease lost some of the liver fat and inflammation after using semaglutide 2.4 mg weekly shots for one-and-a-half years, according to initial results from an ongoing phase 3 trial, published recently in the New England Journal of Medicine. Importantly, around one in three patients also saw reduction in liver fibrosis or scarring of the liver that prevents it from functioning properly.

Metabolic dysfunction-Associated Steatotic Liver Disease (MAFLD) — until recently referred to as the Non-Alcoholic Fatty Liver Disease — is a chronic condition where there is an excessive build-up of fat on the liver. This fat accumulation leads to inflammation, scarring of the liver and may even cause liver cancer. The prevalence of MAFLD in India is estimated to be between 9% and 32%. Dr SK Sarin, liver specialist and vice-chancellor of the Institute of Liver and Biliary Sciences, talks about the significance of the findings.

What do the results of the phase III trial tell us?

This is a very important study, which builds on the findings of the phase 2 trial on the impact of semaglutide on MASLD. Phase 2 trials are usually done to fix the dosing and the highest 2.4 mg dose of the medicine was used for the current trial. The results show that 62.9% of the people

on semaglutide saw a loss of liver fat and inflammation as compared to 34.3% among people given placebo. The stiffening of the liver also reduced in 36.8% of the participants on semaglutide as compared to 22.4% on placebo. The participants lost around 10% of their body weight in the current trial as compared to 14% recorded previously. All in all, the study shows promising results for fatty liver disease.

How does the drug work? Are these the effects of weight loss?

Semaglutide belongs to a class of medicines known as GLP-1 receptor agonists which mimic the action of certain gut hormones to improve secretion of insulin, inhibit secretion of glucagon that stimulates glucose production in the liver, and also reduce appetite by slowing down digestion. The study does not look into the confounding variable of weight loss, so we cannot say if there is any other reason for the improvements seen. However, it is well-known that when people lose weight, MASLD improves. People who lose around 7-10% of their body weight, see a reduction in liver fat. And, with a weight-loss of more than 10%, they see regression in fibrosis. This happens even if people lose weight without using these drugs.

What is the current treatment for MASLD? What are the challenges?

The best way to treat MASLD is weight loss — be it with drug or with diet and exercise. The drug is meant for people who are not able to move and exercise or are unable to lose weight with diet and exercise. They come with several side effects such as vomiting, nausea, and even serious side effects such as stomach paralysis, inflammation of the pancreas, and thyroid cancer. At present, there are three lines of treatment. One, of course, are the GLP-1 drugs that work on the gut hormones. Two, a drug called resmetrom that works on the thyroid hormone — this is again very expensive at around \$ 5,400 a month. Third, FGF21 medicines that work on the adipose tissues. All of these medicines are meant to help with weight loss and thereby improve the liver.

Karnataka youth dies after drinking five bottles of alcohol: Why heavy drinking is simply poison for the heart

Do not bet on a bottle of alcohol, which studies have proven to be toxic to health. A 21-year-old man in Karnataka has died after he drank five bottles of liquor neat over a Rs 10,000 bet with his friends. The incident also proves how binge-drinking at one go can be a major risk factor for a sudden cardiac arrest. “While occasional alcohol consumption in moderation may not pose major health risks for many, binge drinking — defined as consuming a large quantity of alcohol in a short time — can have serious and immediate consequences for heart health,” says Dr Mukesh Goel, Cardiothoracic and Cardiovascular, Heart and Lung Transplant surgeon, at Apollo Hospital, Delhi. This pattern of drinking overwhelms the body’s ability to cope, leading to a cascade of harmful effects on the cardiovascular system. He lists the effects:

Heavy drinking at one session heightens the risk of heart attack and stroke within hours of consumption. It triggers the release of certain hormones that cause constriction of blood vessels, thus increasing the blood pressure abruptly. This stresses the arteries and the heart, increasing the risk of heart attack or stroke. Rapid consumption can raise blood alcohol concentration (BAC) to dangerous levels, which impact key organs and their functioning, like breathing, heart rate and body temperature regulation.

Heavy alcohol consumption is linked to abnormal heart rhythms, even in healthy individuals. Alcohol is a diuretic and quickly depletes electrolytes and fluids in the body. In this case the person drank neat, which means he was severely dehydrated. Electrolytes are crucial for maintaining a stable and regular heartbeat. Any imbalance disrupts the



electric impulses in the heart, leading to sudden cardiac arrest. Repeated episodes of heavy drinking can weaken the heart muscle, reducing its ability to pump blood effectively and eventually leading to heart failure. Alcohol can interfere with oxygen delivery to the heart tissue, increasing the risk of angina (chest pain) or myocardial infarction (heart attack). Binge drinking can make blood platelets more prone to clumping together, increasing the chance of dangerous clots that can block blood vessels in the heart or brain. The liver can only metabolise a limited amount of alcohol per hour. Excessive intake overwhelms the organ. As it struggles to handle the toxins produced during this process, they pile up quickly, damaging liver cells. Alcohol depresses the central nervous system, which can slow down brain function and impair motor skills. In extreme cases, this sluggishness of the brain can lead to unconsciousness, coma, even death.

Ultra-processed food expert and nutrition scientist Kevin Hall resigns: What it means for research



Amidst funding cuts and layoffs, the United States’ National Institute of Health also lost one of its foremost nutrition and metabolism scientists, Kevin Hall. After working for 21 years, he resigned earlier this month, saying “recent events have made me question whether NIH continues to be a place where I can freely conduct unbiased science.”

Why did Hall decide to quit?

The move comes after the scientist’s views on one of his recent publications about addiction to ultra-processed foods was censored. In a post on X, Hall said: “I experienced censorship in the reporting of our research because of science concerns that it did not appear to fully support preconceived narratives of my agency’s leadership about ultra-processed food addiction. I was hoping this was an aberration. So, weeks ago I wrote to my agency’s leadership expressing my concerns and requested time to discuss these issues, but I never received a response.”

He said that given the bipartisan support to preventing diet-related chronic diseases, he had hoped to expand the research programme. He went on to say: “The NIH ... allows scientists to take risks, form unique collaborations, and do studies difficult to conduct elsewhere.”

What did the study say?

Last month, the agency published a study that showed that the dopamine-hit after eating ultra-processed foods was not similar to what is seen in drug users as previously thought. Brain scans have shown that the levels of the feel-good hormone dopamine increases in the brain when people take addictive drugs, pushing them to go for it again and again. It was believed that the dopamine-reward mechanism may be similarly triggered by foods high in fats, sugars,

and salts, driving people to consume more and more. In their latest research, Dr Hall’s team, however, did not see significant changes in the dopamine levels in brain scans after consuming ultra-processed foods. Those who did show very small increases in their dopamine level, however, found their milkshakes to be more pleasurable and ate more cookies later on. However, researchers put in a caveat that the machine used to study the brain, while very effective for tracking the large dopamine changes caused by drugs, might not have been sensitive to detect small changes. So the research raised more questions about what makes these foods more addictive.

What are ultra-processed foods?

Ultra-processed foods are industrially produced foods containing ingredients not available in home kitchens, such as breakfast cereals, biscuits, chicken nuggets and other frozen foods. These tend to contain high levels of salts, sugars, and fats, especially harmful fats such as trans fats. While many naturally occurring fruits, vegetables, or nuts might contain high levels of either fats or carbohydrates, they rarely ever contain both unlike ultra-processed foods. These foods have been known to cause addictive behaviours in people and are known to lead to diet-related chronic diseases such as obesity, hypertension, and diabetes among others.

Hyderabad-based ParentVerse now available on iOS and Android

Hyderabad: Hyderabad-based ParentVerse, a digital parenting companion, launched on iOS and Android, for families navigating the challenges of raising children in a tech-driven world. The app under a ‘freemium’ model offers free features with plans to introduce advanced, premium tools for subscribed users in the near future. It offers a more engaging and empowering experience, allowing parents to guide their children’s digital usage while promoting healthy habits through interactive, gamified tools.

Ukraine and US have finally signed minerals deal. What does it include?



Kyiv: After months of tense negotiations, the US and Ukraine signed a deal that is expected to give Washington access to the country’s critical minerals and other natural resources, an agreement Kyiv hopes will secure long-term support for its defense against Russia. According to Ukrainian officials, the version of the deal signed on Wednesday is far more beneficial to Ukraine than previous versions, which they said reduced Kyiv to a junior partner and gave Washington unprecedented rights to the country’s resources. The deal itself has not yet been made public, but the Economy Ministry and the Prime Minister’s office have offered some details.

The agreement — which the Ukrainian parliament must ratify — would establish a reconstruction fund for Ukraine that Ukrainian officials hope will be a vehicle to ensure future American military assistance. A previous agreement was nearly signed before being derailed in a tense Oval Office meeting involving US President Donald Trump, US Vice President JD Vance and Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy. “We have formed a version of the agreement that provides mutually beneficial conditions for both countries. This is an agreement in which the United States notes its commitment to promoting long-term peace in Ukraine and recognizes the contribution that Ukraine has made to global security by giving up its nuclear arsenal,” Ukrainian Economy Minister Yulia Svyrydenko said in a post on Facebook. The signing comes during what US Secretary of State Marco Rubio said would be a “very critical” week for US-led efforts to end the war that appear to have stalled. Ukraine sees the deal as a way to ensure that its biggest and most consequential ally stays engaged and doesn’t freeze military support, which has been key in its 3-year-old fight against Russia’s full-scale invasion. “This agreement signals clearly to Russia that the Trump administration is committed to a peace process centred on a free, sovereign, and prosperous Ukraine over the long term,” Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent said in a statement.

What does the deal include?

The deal covers minerals, including rare earth elements, but also other valuable resources including oil and natural gas, according to details released by Ukrainian officials. It does not include resources that are already a source of revenue for the Ukrainian State. In other words, any profits under the deal are dependent on the success of new investments. While Trump has repeatedly expressed interest in Ukraine’s rare earth elements, it unclear what other

minerals might be part of the deal. Earlier this year, Andrii Yermak, the head of Ukraine’s presidential office, said it could include lithium, titanium or uranium. The agreement ensures full ownership of the resources remains with Ukraine, according to Ukrainian officials. The state will determine where and what can be extracted. It also does not refer to any debt obligations for Ukraine, the officials have said, meaning profits from the fund will not go toward the paying the US back for its previous support.

What are rare earth elements? They are a group of 17 elements that are essential to many kinds of consumer technology, including cellphones, hard drives and electric and hybrid vehicles. China is the world’s largest producer of rare earth elements, and both the US and Europe have sought to reduce their dependence on Beijing, Trump’s chief geopolitical adversary.

How will the fund work?

The agreement establishes a reconstruction investment fund, and both the US and Ukraine will have an equal say in its management, according to Svyrydenko. The fund will be supported by the US government through the US International Development Finance Corporation agency, which Ukraine hopes will attract investment and technology from American and European countries. Ukraine is expected to contribute 50% of all future profits from government-owned natural resources into the fund. The United States will also contribute in the form of direct funds and equipment, including badly needed air defense systems and other military aid.

Contributions to the fund will be reinvested in projects related to mining, oil and gas as well as infrastructure. No profits will not be taken from the fund for the first 10 years. Trump administration officials initially pushed for a deal in which Washington would receive \$500 billion in profits from exploited minerals as compensation for its wartime support. But Zelenskyy rejected the offer, saying he would not sign off on an agreement “that will be paid off by 10 generations of Ukrainians.”

What is the state of Ukraine’s minerals industry?

Ukraine’s rare earth elements are largely untapped because of state policies regulating the industry, a lack of good information about deposits, and the war. The industry’s potential is unclear since geological data is thin because mineral reserves are scattered across Ukraine, and existing studies are considered largely inadequate. In general, however, the outlook for Ukrainian natural resources is promising. The country’s reserves of titanium, a key component for the aerospace, medical and automotive industries, are believed to be among Europe’s largest. Ukraine also holds some of Europe’s largest known reserves of lithium, which is required to produce batteries, ceramics and glass. In 2021, the Ukrainian mineral industry accounted for 6.1% of the country’s gross domestic product and 30% of exports. An estimated 40% of Ukraine’s metallic mineral resources are inaccessible because of Russian occupation, according to data from We Build Ukraine, a Kyiv-based think tank. Ukraine has argued that it’s in Trump’s interest to develop the remainder before Russian advances capture more.

The future in your palm - a non-contact wearable that studies skin flux to estimate health

William Blake could have scarcely estimated just the expanse that a palm full can contain, when he said ‘hold infinity in the palm of your hand’, but science today can give him a fair estimate. Smaller and smaller wearable devices, with the surface area the extent of a mere watch dial, have come to play, measuring all kinds of health parameters on the go — heart rate, blood oxygen, even continuous blood glucose levels. Here’s yet another wearable, but one with a difference. Researchers have zeroed in on a wearable that can study the streams of molecular substances that pass through the skin, as a measure of studying the health status of individuals. What is different is that this wearable is ‘non contact’ relying on an enclosed chamber immediately adjacent to the skin’s surface to do its job.

A collaboration of American and South Korean experts from the domains of materials sciences, dermatology, engineering, bio-medics and chemistry worked to produce a small device, just about the size of a smartphone face, that has demonstrated unique capabilities to measure the flux of water vapour, volatile organic compounds and carbon dioxide at various locations on the body, to examine not just skin health but general health too. The particular use has been to study wound healing properties in diabetes and has the additional advantage of non contact operation, therefore potential damage to fragile tissues can be avoided. John A. Rogers who is the Lewis Simpson and Kimberly Querry Professor of Material Sciences and Engineering, Biomedical Engineering, and Neurological Surgery at the Northwestern University, U.S. and is steering the research says his team has been working on wearable technologies for about two decades now. “With the COVID pandemic, there began a heightened awareness of the value of technologies that could continuously monitor health status; catch very early signs of disease or infection or health complications, in remote and, cost-effective ways. We have introduced a number of skin interface devices for measuring vital signs like electrocardiograms, blood oxygenation, body temperature.”

The wearable in question however is unique, he explains. “It is unique in the sense that the sensors don’t contact the skin. They’re actually separated from the skin, and instead of directly measuring underlying physiological processes- cardiac cycles, lung function, for example, we’re measuring, properties of the skin itself and measuring species that emerge from the body through the skin to the surrounding environment. And likewise, we are also measuring chemical species that can move from the environment into the body through the skin.” He adds this is something that people haven’t looked at before, and experiments have proved that there’s a lot of interesting information that emerges, related to wound healing but also basic health. The authors write up the results in a recent paper published in Nature journal. This technology can provide unique insights for clinical decision-makers managing conditions such as dermatological diseases and dermal wounds, but who are also interested in understanding the underlying pathophysiology better. It can also monitor hazardous chemicals that enter the human body via the skin, making it a viable option to monitor the health of persons working in hazardous industries and zones.

He continues to explain: The skin is a layered substance with a pretty good impermeable water barrier on the very surface - called the stratum corneum. Underneath that is the epidermis and then the dermis. Those tissues are fairly permeable to water. But the stratum corneum is a very



A small device, just about the size of a smartphone face, has demonstrated unique capabilities to measure the flux of water vapour, volatile organic compounds and carbon dioxide at various locations on the body.

thin layer of dead cells, and serves as a barrier. If that barrier did not exist, you’d have tons of water evaporating and water loss just coming out through all surfaces of the body. So, it performs a very critical function as a water barrier. If that’s compromised in any way, then, you can be at risk for dehydration and, degradation in the properties of the healthy living part of the skin, the epidermis and, and the dermis. Therefore, measuring water permeation through the skin can tell you a lot about the barrier function of the skin, and various skin disorders can reduce the barrier functions, Prof Rogers explains. “You can monitor that. Transcutaneous CO2 for example, coming right through the surface of the skin is important, and physicians already know how to interpret that.” He adds that their assumption is that the device, with its capacity to read and measure the environmental species that enters the body through the skin will likely yield additional insights that physicians are not aware of yet.

The device itself, he describes, is like a small pocket, with wireless electronics that can transmit data to your phone. It also has a chamber that forms a microclimate when the device is sealed against the surface of the skin. Suspended within that chamber is a suite of sensors, very small semiconductor devices that can measure water, CO2, and various volatile organic compounds. On the back, there is a valve that can be opened and closed through a wireless trigger. When the valve is closed and the device is on the surface of the skin, the sensors measure a gradual increase in the concentration of water vapor and CO2. When the valve is open to the surrounding environment, the heightened concentrations of those species can dissipate because now those species can just diffuse out to the surrounding environment. We make measurements with the valve closed, then open, and so on. The rate at which those concentrations increase determines the flux.” These low-cost devices can just be adhered to the surface of the skin, and measure these properties continuously, without a physician having to be at call. The device can be mounted anywhere on body and track outward flux and also inward flux at the same time. Prof. Rogers says there has already been some interest in the device from the perfumery industry. And while it has not yet been studied in an environment where the patient has suffered burns, he added that it would be an exciting pathway to launch on. Once adequate data emerges from the device over a period of time, measurements off the skin might turn out to be an additional vital sign that doctors rely on to estimate the health of their patients, in addition to the conventional vital signs.

Apple confirms ‘majority’ of iPhones sold in US will come from India in near term



Apple CEO Tim Cook has confirmed that a majority of the iPhones sold in the US will be exported from India in the June quarter, but said he could not give a longer-term view than that due to the evolving trade war between the United States and China, where the company produces the maximum number of its products. “For the June quarter, we do expect the majority of the iPhones sold in the US will have India as their country of origin,” Cook told analysts during the company’s earnings call. “I would not want to predict the mix of production in the future, but I wanted to give you clarity for the June quarter,” he added.

This is a near-term confirmation for Apple’s increasing reliance on India, as China gets hit with the hardest tariff rates from the US. While the iPhone maker saw only “limited impact” from tariffs in the March quarter, Cook said Apple couldn’t forecast beyond that. However, if things remained the same, the company estimates tariffs will add \$900 million to its costs in Q3, much lower than initially anticipated. Apple was caught in the crosshairs of the retaliatory tariff action by US President Donald Trump last month, where China was among the worst hit. While there have been some concessions along the way, such as the US administration exempting smartphones and computers from many of the levies, there is fear that the categories could see fresh tariffs in the future, something that Trump has hinted at. India received a relatively much lower tariff rate, and was also among the countries where the US paused retaliatory tariffs for 90 days. Making and exporting from India, therefore, could be a more cost-effective proposition for Apple.

Apple sells more than 60 million iPhones in the US a year, and in the last fiscal, it produced a total of \$22 billion worth of iPhones in India, which is around 20 per cent of its global production capacity. Of this production, it exported iPhones worth around \$18 billion from India. Apple doubled down on production in India in 2020, after the Indian government announced its production linked incentive (PLI) scheme for smartphone manufacturing, under which it was to subsidise manufacturers depending on the amount of their incremental sales. While the company started by making some of its older iPhones in India, today it produces all models, including the higher-end Pro range for global consumption.

Apple, through its contract manufacturers, has been the biggest beneficiary of the scheme, which has helped it move some production away from China. The company started with three contract manufacturers here – Foxconn, Wistron and Pegatron – and the latter two have now been acquired by the Tata Group. There are some challenges though. As of Apple’s latest official list of suppliers, in 2023, as many as 157 of the company’s various vendors and suppliers manufactured in mainland China, up from 151 the previous year. The number of Indian suppliers was 14. As per people in the know, that has now gone up to 64 suppliers in the country, marking a slow but gradual movement of much of its supplier base to India as well. Apple and its manufacturing partners have been the biggest beneficiaries of subsidies under the PLI scheme for smartphones. The Indian Express had earlier reported that, under the scheme, the government has disbursed close to \$1 billion in the three years from 2022-23 to 2024-25, with the three contract manufacturers of Apple receiving cumulatively over 75 per cent of the amount. Apple’s contract manufacturers, Foxconn, Tata Electronics and Pegatron (which was recently acquired by the Tatas), have received a total of almost Rs 6,600 crore over three years – 2022-23 and 2024-25. In 2023-24, Foxconn, which is Apple’s biggest contract manufacturer globally, received a subsidy disbursement of Rs 2,450 crore, the highest during the year. However, in 2024-25, the data showed no incentive was issued to Foxconn. In 2024-25, Samsung received the highest subsidy of close to Rs 958 crore.

Green hydrogen gets official stamp as India notifies certification scheme, carbon credit rules



To boost India’s green hydrogen exports and encourage energy-intensive sectors to adopt the emerging fuel, the Centre has introduced a certification scheme under the National Green Hydrogen Mission and notified rules for claiming emission offsets under the Carbon Credit Trading Scheme (CCTS). Union Minister of New and Renewable Energy Pralhad Joshi on April 29 launched a scheme to measure, monitor, report, verify on-site, and certify green hydrogen based on a standard introduced by the Ministry in 2023.

What is green hydrogen certification?

“This will help to ensure that the hydrogen produced in India truly qualifies as green. A lot of greenwashing tends to happen these days, which is why certification is most important. With the certification in place, our green hydrogen will carry a mark of quality and credibility, making it globally desirable and export-ready,” Joshi said about the scheme. On April 27, the Bureau of Energy Efficiency (BEE), nodal agency for the Green Hydrogen Certification Scheme, also announced an offset mechanism for hard-to-abate sectors using green hydrogen under CCTS, to allow them to earn and trade credits. While CCTS does not yet include sectors like steel, refineries, and shipping, where there is a use case for switching to green hydrogen, the latest guidelines will provide industry greater clarity on compliance before the ambit of CCTS eventually widens. In 2023, the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE) introduced a green hydrogen standard, capping emissions at 2 kg of CO₂ per kg of hydrogen produced. The certification scheme, based on the standard, applies only to green hydrogen production from electrolysis or conversion of biomass.

With the scheme in place, the export appeal of Indian green hydrogen is likely to increase. At the launch, Joshi said India has signed an agreement with Japan to supply over 4 lakh tonnes of green hydrogen derivatives like green ammonia. The heads of terms (HoT) for the cross-border supply of green ammonia to Japan were signed in August last year. Still, high production costs remain a hurdle. In

March, the Parliament’s Standing Committee on Energy noted that “the current cost of production of green hydrogen is quite high,” and called for green hydrogen hubs to be located in regions rich in renewable energy, water, and proximity to demand centres to be economically viable. For exports, the government has identified Kandla, Paradip, and Tuticorin—all with international ports—as key hubs for green hydrogen production. “In 2012-13, the cost of solar energy was Rs 12 per unit; today it’s around Rs 2,” Joshi said. “What made this possible? Scale, skill, and speed. Green hydrogen will follow the same path,” he added.

At the launch of the green hydrogen certification scheme, Saurabh Diddi, director of BEE, emphasised the importance of ensuring transparency, authenticity, and accountability in green hydrogen production. Diddi also said the certification scheme “will enhance investor confidence and enable producers to access carbon credits”. On April 27, the BEE, under the Ministry of Power, released a methodology for estimating carbon offsets from green hydrogen produced via electrolysis. In effect, it defines how switching from fossil fuels like coal to green hydrogen can reduce emissions and earn tradable credits under CCTS. So far, emissions targets under CCTS apply only to sectors like aluminium, chlor-alkali, pulp and paper, and cement, where the potential of green hydrogen is limited. However, the new methodology offers a compliance roadmap for hard-to-abate sectors like steel and shipping, once CCTS expands to cover them. To be clear, the green hydrogen certification scheme itself is not a mitigation tool and does not generate emission reduction credits. However, it can be used to support claims for credits under CCTS. Heavy water use for green hydrogen prompts desalination push Compared to the rules for green hydrogen certification, the carbon offset mechanism under CCTS sets significantly stricter standards—especially on water use for electrolysis. CCTS guidelines, for instance, cap a project’s water consumption at no more than 5 per cent of the locally available drinking water, to ensure it does not displace other uses. Producing 1 kg of green hydrogen via electrolysis requires around 10 litres of treated water, according to official estimates. “The treated water required for hydrogen production can also be sourced by desalinating seawater or treating wastewater, with only a marginal impact on the cost of hydrogen production,” the MNRE told the Standing Committee on Energy. “Under the Mission, sustainable use of water will be encouraged. R&D will also be supported for technologies that can utilise seawater or waste water directly, thereby reducing the need for treatment and further decreasing the water requirement,” it said. Backed by an outlay of nearly Rs 20,000 crore, the National Green Hydrogen Mission also supports domestic electrolyser manufacturing, green hydrogen production, and sector-specific pilot projects.

Opinion trading platforms: Why SEBI has warned investors against dealing with them

SEBI Warning Against Trading Platform: India’s markets regulator, the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI), has cautioned investors against dealing with ‘opinion trading platforms,’ a new segment in the country’s burgeoning online real money gaming and betting market, which allows users to win money by placing bets on the likelihood of a real-life event taking place. So far, such platforms – which are regulated in countries like the United States – largely went under the regulatory radar in India, but government agencies now appear to be turning their attention towards the sector. And that’s for good reason: the industry has so far raised more than Rs 4,200 crore in funding from over 35 investors which include Sequoia Capital (PeakXV), Elevation Capital, Accel Partners, Soma Capital and Y Combinator.

As per industry estimates, these platforms have registered transaction volumes of over Rs 50,000 crore a year with a user base of more than 5 crore people. Collective revenues for firms in the sector are projected to be over Rs 1,000 crore for the financial year 2024-25.

What are opinion trading platforms?

Opinion trading platforms provide their users or participants a platform to trade or enter into arrangements wherein the payout is dependent on the outcome of a yes/no proposition of happening or not happening of the underlying event. In some cases, opinion trading platforms are designed in a manner so as to resemble an investment platform as they use terminologies such as profits, stop loss, trading etc., terms closely associated with trades in securities. The sector in India has companies like Gurugram-based Probo and MPL Opinion. While the former offers questions on a varied set of sectors like sports, elections and cryptocurrency, the latter only deals with questions related to cricket matches.

How do opinion trading platforms operate?

These platforms allow participants to earn money by investing in their predictions on any sports, political, weather, or crypto events. Participants can bet on any event based on their predictions. If the predictions are correct, a participant makes money, and in case the prediction goes wrong they lose. For example, in a particular state election, an opinion trading platform will give the following option to its participants to bet on – “Will political party X win the election by a margin of N?” The answer will be yes or no. If a participant’s prediction comes out to be correct, they will win the money; and if it is wrong, they lose. Other question themes revolve around the outcome of live cricket matches and other sporting events, how an athlete is going to perform and if they will score a certain number of runs or score a set number of goals, and whether cryptocurrency like Bitcoin will touch a particular figure, among others.

What are SEBI’s concerns?

The markets regulator said that in general, opinion trading does not fall within regulatory purview of SEBI, as what is traded is not security. “Since none of the platforms providing opinion trading can qualify to be recognised stock exchange, and are neither registered or regulated by SEBI, any trading of securities on them is illegal (in case some of the opinions traded qualify as security),” it said.

The regulator warned investors or participants that no investor protection mechanism under securities market purview will be available if they invest through such opinion trading platforms. Such platforms are liable to face action for violation in that case, SEBI said. It also advised recognized stock exchanges to initiate appropriate action for violations. The opinion trading sector is regulated across countries like the US, UK and Australia. In the US, Kalshi, the company that started the opinions trading segment – and from which Probo gets a lot of its inspiration from – is regulated by the Commodity Futures Trading Commission (CFTC), one the country’s two main stock market regulators. Although, it is worth noting that a similar predic-



tion app called Polymarket has come under the scrutiny of the US Department of Justice allegedly accepting trades from US-based users. The company is not registered with the CFTC and as a result, can not legally allow US-based users to wager on the platform. India’s IT Ministry had come up with amendments to Information Technology Rules to regulate online gaming platforms, which could have had a bearing on firms like Probo. However, there is a question mark on the status of these rules. For now, these laws have no regulatory teeth, which furthers the problem of the legal lacunae that exists around online gaming in general, and opinion trading platforms in particular.

Term deal for Russian oil off the table for now; US crude purchases to depend on commercial viability, says Indian Oil chairman Sahney

The prevailing geopolitical and geoeconomic uncertainties have evidently shelved a potential term deal for Russian oil that was being pursued by India’s public sector refiners. Government-owned oil refiner Indian Oil Corporation (IOC), which is also India’s largest refiner, is currently not in “any active negotiations” for a term deal with Russian oil majors like Rosneft, according to Indian Oil Chairman Arvinder Singh Sahney. On the question of increasing oil purchases from the US, given that the Donald Trump administration wants to increase American oil and gas exports and India is a major importer of crude oil, Sahney said that all purchase decisions would be purely on commercial basis, and there was no “mandate” for the company to buy more oil from any country.

As of now, we are not in any active negotiations... We are waiting and watching because every day things are changing. Every day the situation on tariffs, the situation on sanctions are changing... So, in these topsy-turvy conditions, I don’t think it is prudent to go in for a term deal with a new player... any new player,” Sahney told reporters in response to a question on the status of term deal negotiations with Russia. The company, however, remains open to inking term contracts with new suppliers, should the conditions allow, he added. Term oil deals are usually annual supply agreements with fixed volume commitments at a predetermined pricing formula. Such contracts assure buyers as well as suppliers of steady supply and offtake, unlike spot market oil deals that are prone to higher pricing and supply volatility. Spot contracts, as the name suggests, are immediate purchases from suppliers or traders with the shortest-possible delivery cycle. A bulk of oil purchased by India’s public sector refiners—IOC, Bharat Petroleum Corporation (BPCL).

India’s media and entertainment industry can grow over \$100 billion in next decade: Mukesh Ambani

India’s media and entertainment industry has the potential to grow over \$100 billion in the next decade, creating millions of jobs, Reliance Industries Ltd’s (RIL) Chairman & Managing Director Mukesh Ambani said in his address at the inaugural session of WAVES 2025 summit, Ambani said, “India’s media and entertainment industry is today valued at \$28 billion. It can grow to over \$100 billion in the next decade. This growth will drive entrepreneurship, generate millions of jobs, and create a ripple effect across sectors.”

He said to achieve this, India should invest in state-of-the-art content clusters across the country. “It should train tens of thousands of our talented young people in animation, VFX, and other technologies, and should incentivise IP creation, AI-powered innovation and gamification,” he said. Adding that India should have new investment avenues for this industry, Ambani said, “And India should create an enabling, encouraging and empowering regulatory environment that rewards imagination and inclusion.” He said India’s entertainment and cultural industry is not just soft power – it is real power. “In an increasingly turbulent and uncertain world, our stories give the hope of a better future with their power to unite, inspire, and enrich,” he said. Ambani said that no nation can match India’s storytelling power. “Therefore, with great confidence and creativity, let us take our



stories globally to heal a divided world,” he stated. The fusion of storytelling and digital technologies is again unique to India, which has multiplied the impact and reach of entertainment and cultural experiences beyond imagination, he said. The tools of AI and immersive technologies can make India’s stories more captivating than ever before – and take them instantly to audiences across languages, countries and cultures, Ambani said, adding, “By mastering these tools, I am confident that India’s super-talented young creators will rule the global entertainment industry with blockbusters.”

ATM transaction fee revision: How much more will customers pay from May 1?



ATMs have gained prominence as a delivery channel for banking transactions in India.

Starting today (May 1), customers will have to shell out more money for using Automated Teller Machines (ATMs) as the fee for such transactions has been increased by Rs 2 to Rs 23 from Rs 21. The new charges will be levied on customers after they exhaust free permissible transactions. Currently, customers are eligible for five free transactions every month from their own bank ATMs and three transactions from other bank ATMs.

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has also allowed ATM networks to decide on the ATM interchange fee – the charge a bank pays to another bank for offering ATM services.

What is the revised ATM transaction fee from May 1?

In March this year, the RBI revised the interchange fee and customer charges for usage of ATM and cash recycler machines. Bank customers are eligible for five free transactions, which include financial (cash withdrawal) and non-financial transactions (balance enquiry) every month from their own bank ATMs. They are also eligible for free transactions (inclusive of financial and non-financial transactions) from other bank ATMs – three transactions in metro centres and five transactions in non-metro centres. “Beyond the free transactions, a customer may be charged a maximum fee of Rs 23 per transaction. This shall be effective from May 1, 2025,” the RBI had said in a notification. The RBI said that applicable taxes, if any, will be additionally payable.

The last revision in the ATM transaction fee was done in January 2022, when the RBI had allowed to increase the

customer charges to Rs 21 per ATM transaction. This review was done to compensate banks for the higher interchange fee and given the general escalation in costs. On August 14, 2014, the RBI had put a ceiling or cap on customer charges at Rs 20 per ATM transaction.

How about the ATM interchange fee?

The RBI said the ATM interchange fee will be as decided by the ATM network. The regulator had previously allowed an increase in interchange fee per transaction from Rs 15 to Rs 17 for financial transactions and from Rs 5 to Rs 6 for non-financial transactions in all centres, effective August 1, 2021. The country’s ATM network, a vital part of the banking infrastructure, is primarily managed by the National Financial Switch (NFS), a leading multilateral ATM network operated by the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI).

The ATMs of a bank are connected to the accounting platform of the bank through ATM switches. Inter-bank ATM networks are created by setting up apex level switches to communicate between the ATM switches of different banks. The inter-bank ATM networks facilitate the use of ATM cards of one bank at the ATM(s) of other banks for basic services like cash withdrawal and balance enquiry. Banks owning the ATMs charge a fee for providing the ATM facility to the customers of other banks. This fee referred to as ‘interchange fee’ is recovered by the ATM deploying bank from the card issuing banks.

However the interchange fee is not fixed across banks and depends on the terms of bilateral / multilateral arrangements. Banks with larger ATM network treat interchange fees as an important stream of revenue. Automated Teller Machines (ATMs) have gained prominence as a delivery channel for banking transactions in India. Banks have been deploying ATMs to increase their reach. While ATMs facilitate a variety of banking transactions for customers, their main utility has been for cash withdrawal and balance enquiry.

As at the end of March 2025, the number of ATMs, CRMs and White-label ATMs (WLAs) deployed in the country was 2.55 lakh. This included 2.19 lakh ATMs of banks and 36,216 white-label ATMs. As of end March 2025, public sector banks had deployed 1.33 lakh ATMs, while private banks and foreign banks had deployed 77,117 and 993 ATMs, respectively. Commensurate with the branch network, larger banks have deployed more ATMs. Most banks prefer to deploy ATMs at locations where they have a large customer base or expect considerable use. To increase the usage of ATMs as a delivery channel, banks have also entered into bilateral or multilateral arrangements with other banks to have inter-bank ATM networks.

‘I love chasing on any field, thrive under pressure’: Shreyas Iyer after helping PBKS beat CSK by 4 wickets



GNS News Agency, May 6

Punjab Kings were back on winning ways after chasing down 191 to beat Chennai Super Kings at Chepauk in Wednesday’s Indian Premier League match, resulting in CSK becoming the first team to be eliminated from the play-offs race. Where Yuzvendra Chahal stole the show with his second career IPL hat-trick, it was skipper Shreyas Iyer who controlled PBKS’ tricky chase. He anchored the innings well and guided PBKS to a four-wicket win with his 72 off 41.

“I love chasing on any field. I feel like I thrive whenever there is a big total on the board and you need to take the charge and momentum for the team for the rest of the batters to come and go full throttle,” said Iyer, who added valuable partnerships with Prabhsimran Singh, Nehal Wadhwa and Shashank Singh. He was also adjudged the player-of-the-match. Iyer struck his fourth fifty of the season. His 72-run innings included five fours and four sixes as Punjab moved on second place in the points table with 13 points in 10 matches behind Royal Challengers Bengaluru. Mumbai Indians and Gujarat Titans — with 12 points each — are third and fourth, respectively. Talking about his form in away games in this IPL, Iyer said, “I don’t want to curse it and just stay in the present and reacting to the ball. It doesn’t matter where I am playing. I just play with my approach. Sometimes it works sometimes it doesn’t.” Iyer said batting against fast bowlers with the new ball has given him a great amount of practice. “Lately I have been batting a lot in the nets and facing the quick bowlers, especially with the new ball and that’s given me immense confidence. This is one part I have really worked on,” he said. “The attitude is something that I keep high whenever I approach the field. So I think all these small boxes have been ticked and that’s there to see,” he added.

‘Watch who you kiss’: Elite athletes warned casual sex could lead to doping bans

GNS News Agency, May 6

In 2009, Richard Gasquet had tested positive for cocaine but managed to avoid doping sanctions after proving that the substance entered his system through kissing a woman in a nightclub. In 2009, Richard Gasquet had tested positive for cocaine but managed to avoid doping sanctions after proving that the substance entered his system through kissing a woman in a nightclub. Elite athletes have been issued an unusual but urgent warning: steer clear of one-night stands or risk failing a drug test. At a high-profile anti-doping summit, leading sports lawyers and experts unpacked a growing trend of athletes being caught in doping scandals due to intimate encounters, particularly in the Tinder era where fleeting hookups are harder to trace back. Mark Hovell, a top sports lawyer and the independent chair in tennis star Jannik Sinner’s anti-doping case, cited a notorious example: French tennis player Richard Gasquet, who tested positive for cocaine in 2009. Gasquet was later cleared after successfully arguing that the substance entered his system when he kissed a woman in a nightclub. “Gasquet managed to get her to come and give evidence to say: ‘Yes, I’m a cocaine addict. I use cocaine,’” said Hovell. “‘I kissed him in this nightclub.’ But with a one-night stand, how are you going to be able to find that person again? That’s the problem.” When moderator Jacqui Oatley asked if athletes needed to at least get a phone number to protect themselves, Hovell didn’t flinch: “They might not have the evidence they need.”

US Anti-Doping Agency (Usada) chief Travis Tygart backed Hovell’s view, referencing the case of American boxer Virginia Fuchs in 2020. Fuchs tested positive for banned substances but was exonerated after proving the



metabolites came from sexual transmission via her male partner. “I think based on the cases we’ve seen, watch who you kiss and watch out who you have an intimate relationship with,” Tygart told delegates at the Sports Resolutions conference. He urged the World Anti-Doping Agency (Wada) to act fast by raising the threshold for trace substances like clostabal and ostarine, compounds that can be passed through sexual contact. Without such reforms, athletes risk bans for minuscule amounts they may not have knowingly ingested.

“I think it’s a pretty ridiculous world we’re expecting our athletes to live in,” Tygart said. “Which is why we’re pushing to try to change these rules to make it more reasonable and fair.” He added, “The onus is always on the athletes. We as anti-doping organisations need to take some of that responsibility back. And I worry how many of the intentional cheats are actually getting away because we’re spending so much time and resources on the cases that end up being someone kissing someone at a bar.”

KCA suspends S Sreesanth for three years, seeks legal action against Sanju Samson’s father for ‘false’ remarks



GNS News Agency, May 6

The Kerala Cricket Association on Friday announced that former India pacer S Sreesanth has been suspended from all cricket activity for making “false and defamatory statements” against the association in the controversy surrounding Sanju Samson’s exclusion from India’s Champions Trophy squad earlier this year. The KCA said that the decision to suspend Sreesanth, currently the co-owner of the Aries Kollam Sailors franchise in the Kerala Cricket League, was taken at a special KCA general body meeting in Ernakulam “Following the controversial remarks, the KCA had issued show-cause notices to Sreesanth and the franchisee teams Kollam Aries, Alleppey Team Lead content creator Sai Krishnan, and Alleppey Ripples. As the franchisee teams gave satisfactory replies to the notice, the meeting decided not to proceed with further action against them. However, the KCA instructed the team management to be vigilant when including members,” the KCA statement read. The KCA also said that it will seek legal action for compensation from Sanju’s father, Samson Viswanath, Reji Lukose and a TwentyFour news channel anchor for making “baseless allegations against the association in Sanju’s name.”

What is the KCA-Samson-Sreesanth controversy?

In February 2025, the issued a show-cause notice against Sreesanth for slamming the KCA in its decision to snub Sanju from the Vijay Hazare Trophy squad in December 2024. The wicketkeeper-batter was reportedly then omitted from India’s ICC Champions Trophy 2025 squad for not playing the 50-over domestic tournament. KCA said its show cause notice was not for Sreesanth showing support to Samson, but for “making false and defamatory statements” which was a violation of his contractual terms as the co-owner of the Kollam Sailors franchise. In its response to Sreesanth’s comments, KCA brought up the infamous 2013 spot-fixing case against Sreesanth to say that it always supported players, even if they were in jail, which was a dig at the former India pacer. “When Sreesanth was in jail facing allegations in the infamous match-fixing scandal, KCA officials visited and supported him. Although the court quashed the criminal case, it is a fact that he has not been acquitted in the match-fixing case. In such a situation, there is no need for Sreesanth to take up the protection of other players,” the statement read.

Sreesanth had asked which international player KCA had managed to produce after Samson. At this, KCA slammed Sreesanth’s “ignorance about Kerala cricket” before listing out names of players: “Sajana Sajeevan, Minnumani, Asha Shobana, and junior players like Joshitha V.J. in the Under-19 World Cup winning team, Najla CMC in the Under-19 team, and Mohammed Enaan in the Under-19 Asia Cup team.” However, Sreesanth did not back down after the show-cause notice, instead lambasting KCA in an interview with Kerala media outlet Onmanorama where he questioned why KCA has been overlooking local players. “They (KCA) take players from other states to play for us. For what? Disrespectful to our Malayali cricketers,” he said. “We have just one player at international level, Sanju. Let’s all support him,” Sreesanth said. “The so-called KCA has not produced an international cricketer since Sanju. We have great players like Sachin, Nidheesh, Vishnu Vinod, and many others, but are they (KCA) pushing them to play at higher?” he questioned. Kerala eventually proceeded to qualify for their first-ever Ranji Trophy final in the 2024-25, finishing runners-up behind Vidarbha in an injured Samson’s absence.

Why was Sanju Samson dropped?

Earlier, explaining why Samson was ignored for the VHT tournament, KCA secretary Vinod S Kumar had told The Indian Express: “Sanju had sent an email stating that he would not be available for the camp. The team had a short camp in Wayanad without him. Naturally, we only considered those who were part of the sessions for selection. There has been no further discussion with him on the matter.”

We were guilty of small errors, says Parag

Hyderabad: Rajasthan Royals captain Riyan Parag said that his team, which was eliminated from the on-going IPL, was guilty of a lot of small errors.

“I think we’ve done a lot of things right, we’ve done a lot of things wrong,” Parag said in the post-match briefing. “We want to focus on the things we’ve done right. A lot of mistakes, a lot of small errors, I think we’ve got to focus on how to not make them again, focus on the good as well,” he said.

“We’ve had a few close matches, so hopefully the next three games when we get opportunities like we have in the first 11 games of this season, hopefully we can do it better,” Parag said.

“We’ve been getting good starts, but it’s up to the middle order — myself, Dhruv for us to step up in the middle overs when we lose wickets in the power-play, [we] couldn’t just do it. But we still back ourselves if another situation comes next game, I think we should be up for it,” Parag said.

Momentum is with us, says Deepak Chahar



Hyderabad: Mumbai Indians pacer Deepak Chahar said that they were playing good cricket as a unit and everybody was in form which also meant the team had the confidence in everyone. In the post-match briefing after Mumbai drubbed Rajasthan Royals in Jaipur to record its sixth straight win to top the points table, Chahar said it was good to be on the top as the team would get an extra chance even as others would also love to move to the top.

“I think the momentum is with us and as a player and

as a team you focus on the particular game, winning and losing is the end result and you focus on the game and match to match. So obviously the momentum is with us and we’re focusing on the next game now,” the star pacer said. “As a bowler when you’re bowling with world class partners. I think it becomes easy for you because as a bowler if you have a bad over and then that bad over is backed by a brilliant over or a wicket then it’s an easy job for me again to come and bowl to the new batter,” he explained on bowling in tandem with someone like left-arm pacer Trent Boult and Jasprit Bumrah. “So bowling with world class bowlers, those who have consistently done well in international cricket and IPL obviously helps me and when you bowl as a bowling unit it becomes difficult for the other team also,” Chahar said. On Rajasthan’s young talent Vaibhav Suryavanshi, the Mumbai pacer said he was a good talent and would do well in the future. On Mumbai’s replacement Raghu Sharma for Vignesh Puthur, Chahar said Mumbai Indians always promoted youth and that it would be the call of the captain and the management on who should play. “Raghu is a good bowler and I’ve played him in the nets. He has a lot of variation in his experience. If he plays, I think he’ll do well in the IPL,” the pacer said.

‘Winger’ Harry Maguire the hero as Manchester United beat Athletic Club 3-0 in Europa League semifinal 1st leg

GNS News Agency, May 6

Harry Maguire once again found himself in the headlines, but this time for the right reasons as Manchester United secured a commanding 3-0 first-leg win over Athletic Club in their Europa League semi-final 1st leg. Stationed unusually high up the pitch, the 32-year-old defender drifted onto the right wing in the 30th minute, chopped inside with surprising flair, and whipped in a teasing cross that eventually found its way to Casemiro via Manuel Ugarte’s flick. The Brazilian made no mistake, heading United into the lead and triggering stunned admiration across the dressing room and the dugout. United captain Bruno Fernandes could hardly believe what he had witnessed. “I said it straight away: what a winger,” he said. “I don’t think even he thought he had that in his locker. No one was expecting that, I don’t think even the opposition was expecting that.” Maguire, who had scored the dramatic winner in United’s quarter-final second leg against Lyon, took the moment in stride. “It was nice to do a bit of dribbling out there and put in a great cross,” he smiled. “We had a lot of bodies in the box so they must have trusted me to get that cross in.” Manchester United coach Ruben Amorim acknowledged the resilience of Maguire, who has endured a long spell under scrutiny at Old Trafford. “Sometimes there are moments in our life, and Harry had difficult moments and everything he did was, I don’t want to say wrong, but it is that word, wrong,” Amorim



told TNT Sports. “Now everything he does is good for the team, so he has to enjoy it.”

Amorim even quipped that the centre-back is turning into a serious option out wide: “A good winger,” he joked. Fernandes added a brace of his own, converting a penalty after a VAR review saw Dani Vivian dismissed for a foul on Rasmus Hojlund, and then slotting home just before the break to give United a healthy cushion going into next week’s return leg. “The result is really good, but we have to understand the result also. With a little bit of luck, we managed to keep us in the game,” he said. “This is not done, they can do the same thing at Old Trafford because they are really strong.”

‘Top of the list from outsiders’: Ravi Shastri urges India to pick Sai Sudharsan for England Test tour



GNS News Agency, May 6

With a momentous five-match Test tour to England coming closely on the heels of the IPL 2025 season, former India head coach Ravi Shastri opened up on a couple of left-field choices that he feels must make the cut for the Test squad that is vying for a first series triumph in England in 18 years. Shastri batted for the inclusion of Gujarat Titans opener Sai Sudharsan who has struck a purple patch in the ongoing IPL season. The left-hander has emerged in the running for the Orange Cap race, amassing over 450 runs in nine outings. Building a formidable partnership up top with Shubman Gill, Sudharsan has struck five fifties to help the Titans maintain their spot in the top four with only two weeks of action left in the league stage.

Touting Sudharsan as an all-format India prospect, Shastri leaned in on the southpaw’s County experiences as well to make a case for the 23-year-old’s inclusion. “I see this young man, Sai Sudharsan, for all formats of the game,” Shastri told The ICC Review. “He seems like a class player and my eyes would be on him certainly.” While his overall First Class average only reads 39.53 in 29 matches for 1957 runs, Sudharsan has made fruitful appearance for Surrey in the County over the last two years, tallying 281 runs in five games with a century and a half-century. “Being a left-hander in England, knowing English conditions, and just his technique, the way he plays, I think he’ll be top of the list for me from the outsiders wanting to get into this side,” added Shastri. Shastri also said India must have a look at their left-arm seam options for the Test set-up, urging the management to have their eyes on Arshdeep Singh and Khaleel Ahmed.

“It could be anyone. It could even be a white-ball specialist. I don’t like this thing when they say someone like Arshdeep Singh is a ‘white-ball specialist’.” You need a left-arm, go and find him, whoever it is and whoever is the best of the lot — pick them. There’s Khaleel Ahmed, who again, his rhythm is good, he’s bowling well. So it’s important to get that mix,” Shastri remarked. The five-match series, marking the start of a new WTC cycle, will begin in Birmingham on June 20.

‘Anna, am nervous’ Anupama Upadhyaya and Sathish Karunakaran overcome panic to win on their India international debuts

Stepping out of PV Sindhu’s 5-foot-11 shadow can be very daunting. She might not have won any matches at the Sudirman Cup, but India’s singles coach Rahul Yadav, guided along two youngsters, who went from boggle eyed respect for Sindhu to absolute quaking fear to seeking inspiration from India’s tallest shuttle figure, who cheered from the sidelines. This, they did by winning on their India international debuts. First Anupama Upadhyaya walked upto Rahul and told him in the gym on the morning of the tie, that she was wracked by nerves and would be wretched if she couldn’t win, while replacing Sindhu for the women’s singles. Later, Sathish Karunakaran was 7-11 down against Harry Huang, who was nailing all the eyeball confrontations at the net, when he stumped the coach with the words “little panic”. Rahul was expecting something on those lines, but not, his main lead, men’s singles player to flat out admit: “Anna, I’m very nervous.”

It all worked out well as India clinched the tie 3-2, thanks to the two singles. But it was an edgy day and a thrilling set of matches that kept the neutral Chinese crowds at Xiamen riveted to an utterly peripheral tie, solely due to India’s young brigade and their mad outing on the court. For perhaps the first time ever, Indian badminton fielded a team in all five events — two singles and three doubles of the Sudirman Cup — who were all born in or after 2000A good 19 years after Saina Nehwal was thrown into the deep end against a then Top 10 Tracey Hallam at the 2006 Commonwealth Games, India took a bold step to deploy those 25 years or

less. Like that day in Melbourne, India finished on the winning side against England. It was only England, no great shakes at badminton. The result was inconsequential — with India having lost to Denmark and Indonesia, similarly 4-1 and out of quarters contention. And this is no definitive revival — Indian badminton is really quite smack in the middle of serious doldrums. But at least, the singles personnel, Anupama Upadhyaya (World No 44) and Sathish Karunakaran (World No 48) got moving, and finally pulled the tie 3-2, towards India. Tanisha Crasto, who has been diving around the court all three days and bringing decibel energy to a beleaguered squad, continued with a 21-17, 21-17 win alongside Shruti Mishra over Lizzie Tollman and Estelle van Leeuwen, to seal the tie in the first three matches. Miu Lin Ngan, England’s women’s singles entry has no ranking worth speaking off — it’s 1107 — but Anupama was completely melting with dread since morning, knowing she was to debut, replacing Sindhu till she won 21-12, 21-16. The Indian, a former national champion at 17, and now 20, took the first 5 points, then couldn’t believe she was off to a start, and lost the next 5. Anupama is a rally player, a strictly steady player, mild mannered, soft spoken and with not even a pretension to a power-smash, let alone compare with Sindhu’s thunder attack of yore. Her first outright winner came at 12-10 in the second set, such is her reliance on staying in the rally, and tease out mistakes from opponents. But Rahul says the past two months have been largely about coach Pullela Gopichand teaching her to yell and show aggression while keeping calm. “

‘After two drinks, Salman Khan is a different person’: Mika has cracked the code to keeping Bhai happy, says he shouldn’t be approached between 2 pm and 6 pm



Singer Mika Singh recalled several stories about Salman Khan, and said that he is one of the few people who know when to approach the superstar. He said that one should stay away from Salman during certain hours of the day, because he is guaranteed to ignore you. It is only in the evening that Salman opens up, and that, too, if music is involved. In an interview with Shubhankar Mishra, Mika recalled a hilarious anecdote about Salman rebuffing Meet Bros at the premiere of Race 3, even though they’d chilled together only a few hours prior. Mika then let them in on his secret.

“Salman Bhai raat ko kuch aur hote hain aur din ko kuch aur hote hain (Salman Bhai is a different person at night, and a different person during the day),” he said, adding, “Salman Khan is very open with me. After two drinks, he treats me like an equal. But this shouldn’t make you delusional, regardless if you’re two pegs down or four pegs down. He’s Salman Khan. The problem is when people become arrogant early in their lives.”

Mika said that he was guilty of making the same

‘Deepika Padukone doesn’t like to admit it, but she should credit Himesh Reshammiya for giving her a break’: Mika admits singers would get drunk and complain about Himesh’s rise

Before making her acting debut with the film Om Shanti Om, opposite Shah Rukh Khan, Deepika Padukone appeared in Himesh Reshammiya’s “Naam Hai Tera” music video. Singer Mika Singh said that Deepika should

credit him more often for giving her a break, and that she doesn’t speak about it as much as she should. He also admitted that the playback singing community in Bollywood was extremely jealous of Himesh’s early success as a singer, because he was getting all the big songs at one point. Mika himself was thrown for a loop because he felt that they sounded alike. In an interview with Shubhankar Mishra, Mika said, “Deepika doesn’t like to admit it, but she should. More newcomers will learn from her on how to grow in the industry.” In an earlier interview with Pinkvilla, Himesh was asked about launching Deepika, and he said, “We launched many other girls, but they didn’t become Deepika Padukone. So, the whole credit goes to her. She starred in the music video of ‘Naam Hai Tera’, and she was a star from day one. She was fantastic. Her dedication, hard work, and screen presence was good even back then.”

Deepika appeared as a guest on Indian Idol 11, when Himesh was on the judges’ panel. She thanked him for giving her an opportunity, and said, “I knew nothing about shooting when I was shortlisted for the music video. I never went to a film set or knew how music videos are shot. Whatever I am doing today, I have learned it while filming the music video. Thank you, sir, for giving me this opportunity. You had faith in me when nobody else did.” Mika said that it was in 2004, while working with Himesh on a project, he suggested that he, Himesh, should also consider singing. The advice backfired on

mistake in his first meeting with Salman. “I was a fool. I should’ve touched his feet and asked if I could sing a song for him. He was there on set for the shoot of ‘Jaanam Samjha Karo’, and he even had tea with us. But I didn’t have the street smarts to get his contact details. He asked me to sing, and I sang with full moves. He must’ve been thinking what a cartoon they’ve presented before me.” Recalling the story about how Salman ignored Meet Bros at a movie premiere, he said, “I’ve never told this story, but Meet Bros once had biryani with him, and thought that they’d become best friends. They don’t know what I know. I know that Salman Bhai is cranky during the day, and that you should only approach him after 6 pm, preferably with a song. Between 2 pm and 6 pm, stay away from Salman Bhat. And so, Meet Bros had biryani with him at night, and the next day they went to the premiere of Race 3. They stood there eagerly, waiting for Salman Bhai. He came and walked past them. They were stunned that he didn’t even say hello. They’d just had biryani the night before! I told them that this isn’t the time to approach him. You need to wait for the evening. It’s not that he needs to have a few drinks to chill, but he just takes his time to get into the zone. During the day, he’s lost in his thoughts.”

Mika said that Salman tends to call his friends up at odd hours of the night, and gets upset with them if they don’t answer. Mika was caught in a similar situation when he was in Bali. He said, “Salman Bhai loves to sing. He also loves calling people up in the middle of the night, sometimes at 4 am. And he gets upset if you don’t answer. I was in Bali, and I get a call from him at night. He tells me that he wants to sing the song ‘Hangover’, and he sang on the phone. I thought he sang very well. Then he sang ‘Jumme Ki Raat’, and I didn’t have the heart to tell him... That was supposed to be my song, but obviously nobody was going to tell him that he couldn’t sing it. So, I texted Bhushan Kumar and Sajid Nadiadwala, and I told them I knew what was happening.”



him, because when Himesh debuted as a singer, he skyrocketed to the top of the industry. “He delivered 40 hits in a row, and I’d just set foot in Mumbai. It was over. His success didn’t just impact singers, but also composers. Everybody was wondering where this tsunami had come from. I delayed my Bollywood career because of him, because I wanted his wave to run its course. Had I also stepped in at the same time, people would’ve made comparisons,” he said, adding, “All the singers would get together over drinks and curse him. But he’s so talented. He’s an incredible composer.”

Weeks after endorsing Sunny Deol’s Jaat, Hema Malini criticises ‘violent’ Hindi films:

Veteran actor Hema Malini, who attended the inaugural session of Waves Summit 2025 on Wednesday, recently criticised the kind of films that are being made currently and said that everyone is making “gruesome and violent” films. Hema said that her era in the movies was the “best time” and added that she worked very hard across the decades to maintain her status in the film industry. In a chat with HT City, Hema said, “That was the best time I must say. I am really lucky to have worked in so many films under so many directors. Very few people get that opportunity. I am very proud to be a part of this beautiful film industry. If someone talks bad about this industry, I feel very sad. I have given so many people name, fame and glory, so many people have got it. But only those who work with dedication, don’t get distracted and just concentrate on your work. That’s why till date, I have my name.”



Hema was then asked about the current state of the film industry when a lot of films are not doing well. “My time was the best,” she said and added, “Aaj ki film theek hai, acha hai, bana rahe hain bechare, sab bana rahe hain. (It’s okay, everyone is trying to make films.) Everything is very gruesome, violence itna hai. Nothing is interesting to watch. You feel



scared to even touch ki yeh picture dekhu ki nahi, ghabarahat hoti hai (Should I even watch? It gives you anxiety). Everybody is having a sword in their hand and killing everybody. Kuch bhi pleasant, happiness dene vala nahi hai (There is nothing pleasant that gives you happiness.)” Hema added that everyone is making “dark films.” Hema recently

endorsed Sunny Deol’s action film Jaat and told Instant Bollywood, “I heard it has opened with bumper number. It is nice to know that people are liking his film. Dharam ji khush hain (Dharm ji is very happy.) The film is so good, I believe.” Sunny is Hema’s step-son. He is the son of Dharmendra and his first wife Prakash Kaur.

‘Bipasha Basu stalled the shoot for three hours over an omelette’: Mika recalls traumatic experience as producer, admits Akshay Kumar warned him



Singer Mika Singh made his debut as a producer with the web series Dangerous, starring married couple Bipasha Basu and Karan Singh Grover. But the experience made him second guess his decision. He has spoken often about the difficult time he had with the two actors, and has previously accused them of throwing tantrums on set and making unreasonable demands. In a new interview, Mika recalled how Bipasha brought the shoot to a halt for three hours because she wanted an omelette. “Ek omelette ke peeche pura shoot ruk gaya. Teen ghante ke liye shoot ruk gaya omelette ke peeche (The entire shoot was halted over an omelette for three hours),” he told Shubhankar Mishra on his podcast. Asked about the production, Mika said, “It was a dangerous experience. The movie starred Bipasha Basu and her husband, Karan Singh Grover. The last time they worked together was in 2013, in a movie called Alone. How was I supposed to know that producers are actually worthless in this business. I thought producers are the big-shots. Now, Akshay Kumar has taught me what a producer really does; they only call actors to set and tell them that the shot is ready.”

He continued, “In my head, I’m the best producer of Bollywood after Dharma. I’m sitting here, and they have a problem with their omelette on set. Luckily, I had sent my personal chef to be with them, anticipating exactly something like this. I’d told him to placate them if something goes wrong. Bipasha didn’t eat her breakfast and showed up on set. At 11 in the morning, I get a call, ‘Mika, what is happen-

ing? This is such a rubbish production’. I was like, ‘What happened?’ She says, ‘Omelette’. I told my guy to make her an omelette.” Mika said that things went from bad to worse when Karan broke his leg, and insisted upon getting treatment in London. He said, “I’m sitting here, having spent all that money on the production. Then, Karan breaks his leg. He could’ve gotten it treated in India, but he stayed there for three months. It was a childishly simple stunt, and he broke his leg, poor guy. I have no beef with them, but it makes you wonder why certain people aren’t successful. You should never turn your nose at opportunities. You don’t respect success. You think that the producer is your servant. You should worship producers, because you don’t know what’ll happen to you tomorrow.”

Previously, in an interview on the KADAK YouTube channel, the singer said that Bipasha and Karan demanded separate rooms, and refused to perform a kissing scene that was in the script. He said, “I took a team of 50 to London for a month-long schedule. However, it was extended to two months. Karan and Bipasha created a lot of drama. They were a married couple, so I booked a single room for them. But, they were like, ‘No, we need our separate rooms.’ I didn’t understand the logic. They then demanded to moved to a different hotel. We did that as well.” In an interview with Pinkvilla, Mika said that the drama caused the production’s budget to escalate from Rs 4 crore to Rs 14 crore. “The shoot was set in London, and the budget increased from Rs 4 crore to Rs 14 crore. And the drama created by Bipasha ensured that I would always regret getting into production,” he said.

As NCERT cuts out Mughals from Class 7 history books, R Madhavan asks why only 1 chapter on Cholas, Pandyas: ‘They ruled for 2400 years’

R Madhavan, who recently played a fictional character in Karan Singh Tyagi’s film Kesari Chapter 2, also starring Akshay Kumar, said that he will “probably get into trouble” for raising objection about history syllabus being taught in Indian schools. The actor said during his younger days, there was more study material on Mughals, than the Cholas and Pallavas. His comments come in the midst of the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT)’s decision to remove major portions about the Delhi Sultanate, ruled by many dynasties including the Mamluks, Tughlaqs, Khaljis and Lodis, and the Mughal empire from the Class 7 history textbook. Along with these cuts, portions about social movements in contemporary India and caste system have also seen deep cuts. The new additions in the textbooks include new content in textbooks include government initiatives such as Make in India, Beti Bachao Beti Padhao, and how land becomes sacred through pilgrimages such as the Char Dham Yatra, visits to Shakti Pithas and Jyotirlingas.

“I might get into trouble for saying this, but I’ll still say it. When I studied history in school, there were eight chapters on the Mughals, two on the Harappa and Mohenjo-daro civilizations, four on British rule and the freedom struggle, and just one chapter on the southern kingdoms — the Cholas, Pandyas, Pallavas, and Cheras,” he said and compared the timelines for each period.

“The British and the Mughals ruled us for close to 800 years, but the Chola Empire is 2,400 years old,” he claimed. Cholas ruled from the seventh century to the thirteenth century, which is approximately 500 years, Britishers ruled in India for almost 200 years and Mughals were present in the sub-continent for around 300 years. He said, “They were pioneers of sea travel and naval power. They had spice routes that extended to Rome. Where’s that part of our history? Where’s the mention of us building temples all the way to Angkor Wat with our mighty naval forces? Jainism, Buddhism, and Hinduism spread to China. People in Korea speak half Tamil because that’s how far our language reached. And we encapsulated all of this in just one chapter.” He then criticised the history syllabus in schools and claimed that even though Tamil is the oldest language in the world, nobody knows about this. “Whose narrative is this? Who decided the syllabus? Tamil is the oldest language in the world, but nobody knows about it. The scientific knowledge hidden in our culture is being mocked right now,” he said.

He also said that Britishers created a “false narrative” of the Jallianwala Bagh massacre. Madhavan claimed that the Britishers’ version of history apparently “teaches us” that “humne Jallianwala Bagh mein badmaashi kiye honge (we must have done something wrong at Jallianwala Bagh).” The massacre, which happened in 1919, had General Reginald Dyer shooting at thousands of Indians that resulted



in their death. The film, Kesari 2, is set after the massacre and fictionalises the events that happened afterwards, even though it’s based on a book titled ‘The Case That Shook the Empire’.

Madhavan told News 18 Showsha, “General Dyer and his granddaughter said we were a set of terrorists and looters who deserved to be shot. He stopped shooting because he ran out of bullets. How can you whitewash history to such an extent that you create a false narrative? Many of us may believe that humne Jallianwala Bagh mein badmaashi kiye honge (we must have done something wrong at Jallianwala Bagh) because that’s what their version of history teaches us. Going back to what I said, I shouldn’t be getting into trouble for this, because it’s a fact.” He said that the makers should not be blamed for “taking small liberties” to “set things right”, and also claimed that they have not changed the narrative. “If we have to set things right, don’t blame us for taking small liberties. Tell us only if we’ve changed the narrative. Blame us only if we come up with an outcome that isn’t true to history. Don’t blame us for bringing the truth about history. The easiest way to discredit us is by saying that we took liberties,” he said. In the film, C Sankaran Nair is fighting against General Dyer at a court in Amritsar, and Madhavan’s character is speaking in favour of the Empire. As per Sankaran Nair’s autobiography, he fought against Michael O’Dwyer at a London court because he believed that O’Dwyer was to be held equally for Jallianwala Bagh massacre. Film’s director Tyagi recently described the film as a “synthesis of history and fiction” in a chat with Bollywood Hungama.