

## CM Revanth to hold rally today in support of Indian armed forces

Hyderabad, May 7 (NSS): In a show of support for the armed forces, the Chief Minister, accompanied by Ministers and other officials, will take part in a rally at 6 PM on Thursday, starting from the State Secretariat and proceeding to Necklace Road. During an emergency high-level meeting at the Integrated Command Control Centre (ICCC) here on Wednesday, the Chief Minister decided to organise a rally in solidarity with the Indian Army and extend the complete cooperation to the national Armed forces following the Operation Sindoor.

## Govt to promote rural tourism through Miss World contestants’ field tours

Hyderabad, May 7: When considering tourism in Telangana, Hyderabad, which is the capital of the youngest state, consistently emerges as a prominent destination.Under the leadership of Chief Minister Revanth Reddy, the state government is now prioritising the global promotion of rural tourism by leveraging the hosting of the Miss World event. The Telangana government plans to use the Miss World platform as an extraordinary opportunity to introduce the world to the state’s rural cultural, historical, and tourism treasures. With over 120 countries participating and the event broadcast live in 150+ nations, special strategies have been devised to prominently showcase Warangal and other rural tourism destinations, attract international tourists, and transform the rural landscape

# India launches ‘Operation Sindoor’, conducts strikes against terror infrastructure in Pakistan, PoK



GNS News Agency, May 7

Indian armed forces hit nine terror infrastructure targets in Pakistan and Pakistan Occupied Kashmir (PoK) under ‘Operation Sindoor’ from where terror attacks were “planned and directed” against India, the Defence Ministry announced early on Wednesday “Our actions have been focused, measured and non-escalatory in nature. No Pakistani military facilities have been targeted. India has demonstrated considerable restraint in selection of targets and method of execution,” the Defence Ministry said in a statement issued at around 01.45 a.m. on Wednesday.Later in the day, at a media briefing on Operation Sindoor on Wednesday morning, Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri noted that following the Pahalgam terror attack on April 22, the Government of India “naturally” responded with a set of initial measures relating to the engagement with Pakistan that were announced on April 23 and it was deemed essential that the perpetrators and planners of the attack be brought to justice.“Despite a fortnight having passed since the attacks, there has been no demonstrable step from Pakistan to take action against the terrorist infrastructure on its territory or on territory under its control. Instead, all it has indulged in are denials and allegations. Our intelligence monitoring of Pakistan-based terrorist modules indicated that further attacks against India were impending. There was thus a compulsion both to deter and to pre-empt.”These steps come in the wake of the barbaric Pahalgam terrorist attack on April



22 in which 25 Indians and one Nepali citizen were killed. “We are living up to the commitment that those responsible for this attack will be held accountable,” the statement said adding that there will be a detailed briefing on ‘Operation Sindoor’, later on Wednesday.Just few minutes after the official statement, the Army’s official handle on social media ‘X’ put out a post, “Justice is Served. Jai Hind,” along with the hashtag of Pahalgam Terror Attack.An Indian military response has been widely expected and senior leaders including Prime Minister Narendra Modi had reiterated that the perpetrators behind the attack would not be spared. These are the third such punitive strikes against terror infrastructure in Pakistan and PoK in the last decade - surgical strikes by Indian Army in September 2016 after the URI terror attack and the Balakot air strike by Indian Air Force against terror training camp in February 2019 after the Pulwama terror attack.

## PM Modi cancels Europe visit amid heightened tensions with Pakistan

GNS News Agency,May 7

New Delhi: Prime Minister Narendra Modi has called off his scheduled three-nation Europe tour in the wake of heightened tensions with Pakistan, sources confirmed on Wednesday. PM Modi was scheduled to travel to Croatia, Norway and the Netherlands starting May 13 and also participate in the 3rd India-Nordic Summit in Oslo on May 15-16.However, the visits have now been cancelled and the concerned governments notified, sources said a few hours after India conducted ‘Operation Sindoor’ to target terror camps in Pakistan following the heinous April 22 Pahalgam terror attack that resulted in the death of 26 innocent civilians.Last month, PM Modi had cut short his Saudi Arabia visit and returned home immediately after the Pahalgam terror attack.Prime Minister Modi also decided not to travel to Moscow to attend the Victory Day celebrations of Russia scheduled for May 9.

The decision to suspend Europe visit comes amid increased volatility along the Line of Control (LoC) after India carried out precision missile strikes on nine high-value terror targets across Pakistan and Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK).The government described the operation as a calibrated military action aimed solely at dismantling terror infrastructure without escalating broader hostilities.’Operation Sindoor’, launched at 1:44 am on



Wednesday, was a joint effort involving the Indian Army, Navy, and Air Force. The strikes were closely monitored through the night by Prime Minister Modi, who remained in constant contact with senior military commanders and National Security Advisor (NSA) Ajit Doval.The government reiterated that “our actions have been focused, measured and non-escalatory in nature. No Pakistani military facilities have been targeted. India has demonstrated considerable restraint in the selection of targets and method of execution.”“This government has kept its promise -- those responsible will be held accountable,” India said in a statement.

## Telangana, Andhra Pradesh CMs hail ‘Operation Sindoor’

GNS News Agency,May 7

Telangana Chief Minister, A. Revanth Reddy, and his Andhra Pradesh counterpart N. Chandrababu Naidu have hailed the strikes against terror hideouts in Pakistan.Telangana Chief Minister Revanth Reddy said that the strikes against terror factories in Pakistan have “made us proud.”Chief Minister Reddy stated that as an Indian citizen, he stands strongly with the armed forces.“The strikes against terror factories in Pakistan and Pakistan Occupied Kashmir make us proud. Let us make this a moment for national solidarity and unity, and all of us speak in one voice - Jai Hind!,” he posted on his X handle.CM Reddy was holding an emergency meeting with top officials at the Integrated Command and Control Centre (ICCC) in Hyderabad to review all security preparations in the wake of ‘Operation Sindoor’.The meeting will review the security measures to safeguard all major installations and key strategic Central, Defence and state government locations.The Telangana government will provide total support and cooperation to, and work along with the National Armed Forces, said a statement from the Chief Minister’s Office.CM Reddy will personally review the situation on a war-footing and ensure security, safety and ensure total vigilance in Hyderabad and other cities, towns and villages across Telangana.Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister Naidu also took to social media platform X to hail ‘Operation Sindoor’.“With pride, I salute the brave warriors of the Indian Armed Forces for swiftly avenging the Pahalgam terror attack. With their unmatched bravery and precision, they have again demonstrated that our



nation will defend itself with iron will,” he said.CM Naidu posted that under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the world has witnessed India’s strength and determination. “Our country stands united against terror and firmly in support of our Armed Forces. Jai Hind!,” he said.Deputy Chief Minister Pawan Kalyan, too, hailed ‘Operation Sindoor’. The Jana Sena leader thanked the three service chiefs and Prime Minister Modi and said they infused bravery in Indian society whose hands were tied due to extreme patience for a long time. “We are with you. Jai Hind,” the Deputy CM posted on ‘X’.Minister for Human Resources Development Nara Lokesh stated that ‘Operation Sindoor’ was a loud message to those who dare test India’s sovereignty that with the strong leadership of Prime Minister Modi, India will strike back with strength, precision, and unshakeable determination.“I wholeheartedly applaud Modi Ji for being

## Fifteen Maoists killed in Chhattisgarh’s Bijapur: Police



GNS News Agency,May 7

At least 15 Maoists were killed by the security forces on Wednesday in an anti-Maoists operation being conducted along the Karegutta hills in Chhattisgarh’s Bijapur, said police sources.The said operation, Operation Sankalp, has been continuing since April 21 and till Tuesday, four alleged Maoists had been gunned down.A police source said that the casualties on Wednesday could be around 15 to 18 so far and it might increase as and when search progresses.“Today, good operational outcomes are expected in the ongoing ‘Operation Sankalp. All security forces are safe and fully committed to ensuring a safe and secure Bastar region,” said the source

## After Operation Sindoor, Centre calls all-party meet on May 8

GNS News Agency,May 7

New Delhi: In the wake of Operation Sindoor, a tri-service military action targeting nine high-value terror sites in Pakistan and Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK), the Centre has convened an all-party meeting on Thursday at 11 a.m. to brief the nation’s political leadership on the strategic strikes.Union Minister Kiren Rijiju made the announcement on Wednesday and wrote on X, “Govt has called an All Party leaders meeting at 11 am on 8th May, 2025 at Committee Room: G-074, in the Parliament Library Building, Parliament Complex in New Delhi.”Earlier in the day, Prime Minister Narendra Modi met President Droupadi Murmu at Rashtrapati Bhavan and formally briefed her on the operation. The precision strikes were launched in the early hours of Wednesday and lasted just 25 minutes.Between 1.05 a.m. and 1.30 a.m., 24 missiles were deployed to strike nine terrorist facilities, including Lashkar-e-Taiba’s headquarters in Muridke and major terror training sites in Bahawalpur — long considered breeding grounds

for extremist operations.India emphasised that the action was not escalatory but a calculated and proportionate response to the April 22 terror attack in Pahalgam, Jammu and Kashmir, where 26 civilians, including a Nepali national, were killed.“Our actions have been focused, measured and non-escalatory in nature. No Pakistani military facilities have been targeted. India has demonstrated considerable restraint in the selection of targets and method of execution,” the government said in a statement.Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri reiterated that India’s goal was to dismantle terror infrastructure while avoiding civilian casualties and preventing broader conflict. “Operation Sindoor was a proportionate and responsible response to Pakistan’s ongoing support for terrorism,” he stated, adding that Pakistan had continued its pattern of denial and deflection instead of taking action against the perpetrators of the Pahalgam massacre.“This government has kept its promise — those responsible will be held accountable,” the statement added, underscoring India’s determination to retaliate against any future cross-border terrorism.

## Detain Pakistan, Bangladesh nationals residing illegally in Telangana: CM Revanth



Hyderabad, May 7 Chief Minister Revanth Reddy has directed the police officials to detain Pakistan and Bangladesh nationals who are residing illegally in the State“A communication system should be established in the command control center. Strict action will be taken against those who disturb peace and security,” Revanth Reddy said.The Chief Minister held an emergency meeting with officials at the Command Control Center here on Wednesday in the wake of Operation Sindoor. Chief Minister’s Advisor Vern Narender Reddy, DGP Jitender, Home Secretary Ravi Gupta, other officials from Army, Police, Disaster Management and other related departments were present. During the meeting, Revanth Reddy emphasised that a strong message of supporting Indian Army by the entire nation should be rolled out and politics should not take place and parties maintain restraint in the difficult times.The Chief Minister directed that leaves of the employees of all departments which engage in the emergency services should be cancelled and all employees should be ready to render services. The Ministers and officials should also be available and cancel all foreign trips, if any, he said. The Chief Minister further stated that strict action should be initiated if government employees make controversial statements in the

media and social media, adding that a toll-free round the clock number will be provided for the people.The officials concerned have been asked to stockpile blood in Blood banks and emergency medicine for emergency needs. Information about the availability of beds in the private hospitals should be updated from time to time.officials should strength coordination with the Red Cross. Food stocks should also be made sufficient. Moreover, police officials should enhance vigilance about cyber security and warned of stringent action against those who peddle fake news. Officials should set up special cell to curb fake news which could cause to create anxiety and panic among people,” Revanth Reddy said.Police authorities were also directed to connect all CC cameras to the command control room in the three Police commissionerates in the Greater Hyderabad City.

## CM Revanth to inaugurate HYDRA police station today

Hyderabad, May 7 The Hyderabad Disaster Response and Asset Protection Agency (HYDRA), which is taking an iron hand on the land grabbers, has now added a police station. The HYDRA police station has been set up next to its office, Buddha Bhavan, Hyderabad. Chief Minister Revanth Reddy will inaugurate the HYDRA Police Station on Thursday. From now onwards, the HYDRA’s operations will be further strengthened with the addition of its own police station, similar to the Disaster and Fire departments.ACP P. Tirumal has been appointed as the SHO of the police station. 6 inspectors, 12 SIs and 30 constables are currently deployed at this police station. This police station, which has been constructed as G+2, has an area of 10,500 square feet.



# Indian Chronicle

## English Daily

### At the brink

THE brutal terror attack in Pahalgam, claiming 26 lives, has brought India and Pakistan to a dangerous precipice. Tensions are escalating swiftly, with both nations exchanging sharp rhetoric and bolstering military postures. Against this volatile backdrop, the United Nations has stepped in, urging both sides to exercise "maximum restraint" and "step back from the brink." UN Secretary-General António Guterres' intervention and the Security Council's closed-door consultations underscore international alarm. His warning is not mere diplomatic rhetoric — it is a crucial plea to avert a devastating conflict between two nuclear-armed neighbours. Pakistan, having taken the issue to the UNSC, may have hoped for international censure of India, but the global mood has instead shifted toward de-escalation, not intervention.

India's restrained response so far has helped prevent further deterioration. However, the rising clamour within the country for punitive action puts pressure on New Delhi to consider military options, which could trigger a wider conflagration. The call for restraint, especially after such a brutal terror strike, may seem unjust to the grieving families and an outraged public. Yet the cost of full-scale conflict is unimaginably high. A military showdown would not only engulf the subcontinent but it could also destabilise the region for decades. History has shown that war between India and Pakistan leads only to more casualties, diplomatic isolation and economic setbacks. It is essential that both countries recommit to backchannel diplomacy and confidence-building measures. The global community, especially the UN and key players like the US and China, must go beyond statements and actively mediate to prevent escalation. A military solution to Kashmir is a dangerous illusion. The only real solution lies in sustained dialogue, addressing root causes of unrest and isolating the terror networks that sabotage peace.

# For the Child Rights Movement in India, we will move to maintain respect to protect children.

FIRST INDIAN LAWYER TO RECEIVE

World Jurist Association

Medal Of Honour



**BHUWAN RIBHU**

Child Rights Activist & Founder,

Just Rights for Children

“““Warangal Bureau, May 07 (Indian Chronicle) :“““Share NGO Warangal District Co-ordinator Thota Sirisha said that.. for the child rights movement in India and to protect children, they will be honored. In Warangal Rural and Warangal Urban District, their company has been closely related to children's protection efforts. Just Rights for children here support and lead local activities to prevent child marriages and trafficking. Just Rights for Children (JRC) is the world's largest legal interference network in the world for protection of children with the Ang GO partners in 416 districts of India, Sher An GO 2030, to make the district safe for childrenWorking under the legal strategic guidance of Ribhu. His legal interventions have influenced the rights policies of the state -level levels that benefit the weak children, including these districts (Telangana state). By 2030, a worldwide recognition will be a call for the functioning of the district child's protection to achieve a child marriage - free Warangal Rural and Warangal Urban. Bhuvan Ribhu Ribhu Dominican Founder Bhuvan Ribh Dominican is the first Indian lawyer to receive the Medal of Honor in the World Law Congress in the Republic of the Leading Child Rights Law. Bhuvan Ri Bhuvan has strong relations with Warangal Rural and Warangal Urban districts in Telangana state as he is a partner in the Just Rights for Children's Network in the Sheren GO district.

The World Jurist Association is the world's oldest judicial community and since 1963, the World Jurist Association Sir Win Stun Churchill, Nelson Mandela, Ruth Bader Ginsburg, Spain King Felipe, Rene Casin, and Kerry Kenadi were the giantsRespected. The event, which was held in the Dominican Republic, was attended by more than 1500 legal dignitaries and 300 spokespersons from more than 70 countries. Speaking on the occasion, Ravikant, Convener of Just Rights for Children's ConvenerReceiving our founder Medal of Honer is not our networkK, but for the entire child's rights movement in India, it reiterates that legal intervention is a powerful tool for protecting our children and to maintain their dignity. The event was also attended by the Honorable Dominican Republic Woman Minister Myra Gimenez. The Supreme Court has approved its 2024 guidelines. Sher Ani GO Director Gopal Reddy, Warangal Rural and Warangal Urban Districts Co -ordinator Thota Sirisha said that the district will also follow this strategy, believing that the district will be free from child marriages by 2030.

# Welfare schemes have not stopped despite the state's poor economic situation“



“– The goal of the Indiramma government is to fulfill the dreams of the poor““– The goal of the public government is to implement development and welfare schemes““– State Revenue, Housing, Information and Public Relations Minister Ponguleti Srinivas Reddy““Mulugu, Mahipal, Indian Chronicle: Despite the state's poor economic situation, we are implementing development and welfare schemes with sincerity and the public government is moving forward to make the dreams of the poor come true, said State Revenue, Housing, Information and Public Relations Minister Ponguleti Srinivas Reddy. On Wednesday, the foundation stone for Indiramma's house was laid in Tekulagudem village of Vajedu mandal in the district, construction of a BT road from Nagaram to Payabatla with a cost of Rs 400 lakhs, construction of a Vajedu Mandal Praja Parishad office building with an estimated cost of Rs 150 lakhs, and construction of a BT road from Edcherlapalli to Muthuram with a cost of Rs 300 lakhs. The road construction work was inaugurated by the State Revenue, Housing, Information and Public Relations Minister Ponguleti Srinivas Reddy, along with Bhadrachalam MLA Dr. Tellam Venkat Rao, District Collector Divakara T.S., SP Shabarish, and ITDA PO Chitra Mishra. Later, the minister handed over Indiramma House sanction documents to 57 people from Kongala village and 64 people from Nagaram village to the beneficiaries. Later, the foundation stone was laid by State Revenue, Housing, Information and Public Relations Minister Ponguleti Srinivas Reddy, local legislators Tellam Venkat Rao, District Collector Divakara T.S., and ITDA PO Chitra Mishra for the construction of a Sub-Project Manager (PR) office building at the Venkatapuram mandal center with an estimated fund of Rs. 60 lakhs. The minister handed over the sanction documents of Indiramma houses to the beneficiaries at Rythu Vaidika in Patrapuram village. Speaking at various programs organized on this occasion, Minister Pongireddy Srinivas Reddy explained that the previous government had incurred a debt of Rs. 8 lakh 19 thousand crores in the state and had put a huge burden on the people, and after the Indiramma government came to power, the debts incurred by the previous rulers were being paid off and the welfare benefits were being implemented. He said that with the aim of building Indi Ramma houses for every poor girl child, the state government has provided an opportunity to build houses for every poor family with Rs 5 lakh, and that foundation stones for various development programs will be laid today for the construction of houses for the poor in Vajedu and Venkatapuram mandals. He said that in addition to the promises made by the Praja government before the last elections, programs have been taken to implement new promises, and from this year's Ugadi, six kilograms of rice is being provided to each person with the aim of providing the rice eaten by the rich to the poor. He said that while there were few job opportunities during the previous rule, today's Praja government has provided 57,662 job opportunities in ten months, and that the Indiramma government has brought the Bhu Bharati Act in the state and made it a boon for poor farmers. He said that

applications have been received from eligible persons with the aim of providing financial assistance under the Rajiv Vikas Yojana to provide security to the unemployed in the state, and six thousand crore rupees will be given to all eligible persons on June 2. He said that steps have been taken to teach poor students with new knowledge and that ten lakh rupees have been increased for the poor to get medical services under the Rajiv Arogya Sri Yojana. He said that although the previous government showed a stepmotherly love for the poor, today's Chief Minister Enumula Revanth Reddy is moving forward with the aim of seeing the tears of the poor. The minister explained that the construction of 20 lakh Indiramma houses will be undertaken in the state to fulfill the aspirations of the poor, and new schemes will be implemented in the coming days after the financial situation of the state government improves.““Construction of Indiramma houses in every village: Bhadrachalam MLA Tellam Venkat Rao.““Bhadrachalam MLA Tellam Venkat Rao said that steps are being taken to quickly complete the ambitious Indiramma house construction program undertaken by the government in all the villages of Bhadrachalam constituency. He participated in various programs held in Vajedu and Venkatapuram mandals on Wednesday along with Minister Ponguleti Srinivas Reddy.

Speaking at the programs organized on the occasion, the MLA requested Minister Srinivas Reddy to allocate additional Indiramma houses to the poor people of the villages under ITDA. He said that there are poor people of all sections in all the villages in Vajedu and Venkatapuram mandals under his constituency and houses will be allotted to them in a phased manner. He assured that the public government will take steps forward with the welfare of the poor as its goal and will take steps to ensure that the fruits of the welfare implemented by the government reach all the deserving poor. He said that he will definitely fulfill the promises he made before the elections for the development of the constituency.““District administration takes special initiative on house construction: Collector““District Collector Divakara T.S. said that the district administration is taking special initiative to complete the construction work of houses at the earliest. He explained that 106 houses have been sanctioned in Tekulagudem village of Vajedu mandal, of which 62 houses are at ground level and 15 houses are at ground level. He explained that the first installment of money has been paid to the beneficiaries after the construction of the houses was completed. He said that the concerned officials are working in coordination for the construction of the houses and are paying special attention to complete the construction work. He said that the government has taken the district as a priority and has allocated additional houses for the construction of houses for the poor and tribals under ITDA. ASP Shivam Upadhyaya, DFO Rahul Kishan Jadhav, RDO Venkatesh, district officials, public representatives, mandal officials, Indiramma House beneficiaries, and others participated in these programs.“[4:50 pm, 7/5/2025] +91 98485 52224: .....

# Detain Pakistan, Bangladesh nationals residing illegally in Telangana: CM Revanth

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Chief Minister's Advisor Vem Narender Reddy, DGP Jitender, Home Secretary Ravi Gupta, other officials from Army, Police, Disaster Management and other related departments were present. During the meeting, Revanth Reddy emphasised that a strong message of supporting Indian Army by the entire nation should be rolled out and politics should not take place and parties maintain restraint in the difficult times. The Chief Minister directed that leaves of the employees of all departments which engage in the emergency services should be cancelled and all employees should be ready to render services. The Ministers and officials should also be available and cancel all foreign trips, if any, he said. The Chief Minister further stated that strict action should be initiated if government employees make controversial statements in the media and social media, adding that a toll-free round the clock number will be provided for the people. The officials concerned have been asked to stockpile blood in Blood banks and emergency medicine for emergency needs. Information about the availability of beds in the private hospitals should be updated from time to time. "Officials should strength coordination with the Red Cross. Food stocks should also be made sufficient. Moreover, police officials should enhance vigilance about cyber security and warned of stringent action against those who peddle fake news. Officials should set up special cell to curb fake news which could cause to create anxiety and panic among people," Revanth Reddy said. Police authorities were also directed to connect all CC cameras to the command control room in the three Police commissionerates in the Greater Hyderabad City. He further stated that steps should be taken to improve surveillance and enhance security in all district headquarters and sensitive areas. Tighten security at all Foreign Consulates in Hyderabad. Enhance security measures at all IT companies, the Chief Minister said. He also instructed Hyderabad police to be on high alert and hold talks with Peace Committees, if necessary. The police department should also keep an eye on the moments of history sheeters and old criminals, the Chief Minister added.

# 57,000 Govt jobs recruited within a year: Sridhar Babu



Hyderabad, May 7 Minister for IT and Industries, Duddilla Sridhar Babu announced that the State government led by Chief Minister Revanth Reddy has successfully recruited 57,000 individuals into government service within the span of a year—a remarkable achievement at the national level. Speaking at the inauguration of a new building at Natco Zilla Parishad High School in Kothur of Shadnagar constituency on Wednesday, the Minister highlighted the government's committed effort to strengthen public education. "Initiatives are underway to introduce digital classrooms across all government schools, with a clear objective to enhance academic standards through a structured, expert-driven approach," Sridhar Babu said. He emphasised the goal of preparing students in government institutions to perform on par with those in private schools. Emerging technologies such as Artificial Intelligence are being integrated into the curriculum to ensure future-readiness. Teachers have a key role in restoring public trust in government schools. Long-pending promotions for government teachers have been addressed. Specialised 'Amma Committees' have been established to oversee school operations," the Minister said. He also addressed criticism from the opposition, calling it politically motivated and baseless, especially as the government is earnestly working to deliver every electoral promise. He questioned the credibility of those who failed to provide housing for the poor over the past decade but now seek to criticise the current administration. Reaffirming the government's commitment to inclusive development, the Minister stated that Indiramma housing would be provided to all eligible beneficiaries in a phased manner. The event was attended by Shadnagar MLA K. Shankaraiah and representatives from Natco, including Lakshminarayana and PSRK Prasad.

# TTD Trust Board meeting held in Tirumala

Tirumala, May 7 Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams (TTD) Chairman B.R. Naidu has announced that the land adjacent to the Seven Hills should not be allotted to private individuals to protect the sanctity of the world-famous spiritual pilgrimage site of Tirumala. The TTD Trust Board Mandal meeting was held at Annamaiah Bhavan in Tirumala on Wednesday. Earlier, the TTD board had decided to transfer 24.68 acres of land belonging to the Andhra Pradesh Tourism Authority (APTA) to TTD in Survey No. 604 in Peruru village of Tirupati Rural Mandal. In lieu of that site, the TTD Board has approved the transfer of 24.68 acres of TTD land in Tirupati Urban Survey No. 588-A to APTA. Similarly, the transfer of another 10.32 acres of APTA land in Survey No. 604 in Tirupati Rural to TTD, and in lieu of that, the TTD Board has requested the State Government to expedite the process of allotting 10.32 acres of TTD land in Survey No. 588-A in Tirupati Urban to APTTTD EO J. Syamala Rao, Additional EO Ch Venkaiah Chowdary, JEO Veerabrahmam, Board members V. Prashanthi Reddy, Panabaka Lakshmi, Jasti Purna Sambasiva Rao, Nannapaneni Sadashiva Rao, M. Shantaram.

# "Women are Equal to the Divine"...

# “““Every Day is Women's Day in India

# “““Sri Sri Sri Ramyananda Bharati Swamini“““



“ May 7, Indian Chronicle Rayalaseema co-ordinator““The Sri Vasavi Kanyaka Parameswari Temple, located in Kotha Veedhi, Tirupati, celebrated the auspicious occasion of the Goddess's Jayanti (birth anniversary) with

great grandeur. Upon the invitation of the temple committee members, Mantra Maheshwari Sri Shakti Peethadheeshwari Sri Sri Sri Ramyananda Bharati Swamini participated in the Sri Vasavi Kanyaka Parameswari Jayanti celebrations and offered a diamond-studded tilak (auspicious mark on the forehead) and Sare (traditional offering of clothing) to the Goddess. "On this occasion, Mataji (revered mother) stated that "Nari Eva Narayani," meaning woman herself is Narayani (Goddess Lakshmi). She explained that this Narayani occasionally manifests in human form to bestow her divine presence upon humanity, and Sri Vasavi Kanyaka Parameswari was one such divinely born being. She further emphasized that every woman is akin to Narayani, that is, equal to a deity. While the world observes International Women's Day once a year, in India, we worship goddesses in various forms every day, making every day equivalent to Women's Day for us, she blessed. "The program witnessed the participation of a large number of Kanyaka Parameswari Temple committee members and devotees.

# Pragathinagar TGSPDCL AE in ACB net

Hyderabad, May 7 (NSS): Today, A Gnaneshwar, AE (Operations), Pragathinagar, TGSPDCL, was caught by ACB sleuths, Ranga Reddy unit, when he demanded Rs 50,000/- as bribe and accepted Rs 10,000/- from the complainant for showing official favour i.e. "to issue work completion order for 63 kv transformer and for installation of nine III Phase meters to the complainant plot". The bribe amount was recovered from the accused at his instance. A Gnaneshwar, AE (Operations), Pragathinagar.



# Miss World contestants’ itinerary to promote rural tourism:



May 12: Visit to Buddhavanam and Buddhist Theme Park at Nagarjuna Sagar, a spiritual tourism landmark. May 14: Explore the historic Thousand Pillar Temple and Warangal Fort in Warangal, followed by a visit to the UNESCO World Heritage Site Ramappa Temple. Witness the traditional Perini Shivatandavam dance performance. May 15: Spiritual tour to Yadagirigutta temple in Yadadri Bhuvanagiri district and a hands-on experience with Pochampally Ikat handlooms. May 16 : Visit the ancient Pillalamarri Banyan tree in Mahbubnagar district. May 21: Attend an arts and crafts workshop in Shilparamam, interact with local artisans, and learn about traditional craftsmanship. This global event will provide unprecedented exposure to Telangana’s rural tourism destinations, highlighting the state’s cultural heritage, historical narratives, and modern development. Speaking about the Buddhavanam and Buddhist Theme park located near Nagarjuna Sagar, officials said this serene complex celebrates Buddhist culture and spirituality. Featuring Buddha statues, stupas, and meditation halls, the theme park vividly depicts Buddha’s life, teachings, and art. It promotes mental peace through meditation and yoga programs while boosting cultural exchange and tourism.

## Thousand Pillar Temple (Hanamkonda)

The Thousand Pillar Temple, located in the district headquarters of Hanamkonda, is a testament to the architectural splendor of the Kakatiya dynasty. Built in the 12th century by King Rudradeva, this temple is dedicated to Lord Shiva, Lord Vishnu and Lord Surya. It stands on a star-shaped platform with a unique triangular structure. There are more than 1000 delicately carved pillars surrounding the sanctum sanctorum. The main attraction is the monolithic Nandi statue, which shows the skill of the sculptors. The temple was partially destroyed during the Turkish invasion and was restored in the 20th century. It is a magnificent example of ancient Indian architecture. Thousands of tourists visit this temple every year.

## Warangal Fort

Warangal Fort is a magnificent testament to the architectural splendor of the Kakatiya dynasty. Built in the 13th century, this fort served as the capital and strategic location of the Kakatiyas. The magnificent ramparts, which extend for more than 3 kilometers, reflect its grandeur. The arch with miniature sculptures called Kakatiya Kala Toranam is the special attraction of this fort. The Shivalinga in the Swayambhu temple is a sacred pilgrimage site for devotees. The granaries and warehouses in the fort reveal the wealth of that time. This fort is a living seal of the rich cultural heritage of Telangana. It has become a must-visit

place for everyone due to its historical importance and architectural beauty.

## Ramappa Temple

The Ramappa Temple located at Palampet in Mulugu district is a symbol of the architectural wealth of the Kakatiya Empire. It was built in the 13th century during the reign of Ganapati Deva Maharaja. This Shiva temple is famous after the name of the main sculptor Ramappa. The sculptures here, beautiful dance forms, and sculptures depicting mythological stories are amazing. What is special is that the roof of the sanctum sanctorum is made of lightweight bricks, which have the ability to change the acoustic resonance. The temple is known for its earthquake-resistant architecture. Declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 2021, the temple is surrounded by a beautiful natural pond and lush green forests. Tourists who come here every year must appreciate the eternal artistic splendor of the Kakatiyas.

## Pochampally Sarees

The Pochampally Ikkat sarees, which are made by the skilled weavers of the Pochampally (Puttapaka) region, are world famous. In this weaving art, which has a history of over 200 years, yarn or silk threads are pre-dyed in a dye and woven into intricate geometric patterns. The weavers display incredible skill in the "ikat" technique to ensure that the dyed threads match exactly. Each saree takes 10-20 days to make. These sarees, which received the Geographical Indication tag in 2005, were recognized as UNESCO's "City of Craft". Pochampally sarees, which have traditional colors as well as modern designs, are in demand in foreign markets including India. Their specialty is that they are eco-friendly due to the use of natural colors. These sarees reflect the cultural pride of Telangana on the world stage.

## Pillalamarri Banyan Tree

The Pilalamarri Banyan Tree (Pillala Banyan) located in Mahabubnagar district is a unique natural wonder. This ancient tree of the Ficus bengalensis species has a history of over 700 years. Spread over 3 acres, the aerial roots of this tree hang down to the ground, creating natural "pillars". For the locals, it serves as a natural platform for social and cultural activities. It provides shelter to the habitat of birds, insects, and small animals and preserves biodiversity. According to local legends. Thousands of tourists visit this natural wonder every year. The government has declared it a protected monument. With its popularity and environmental significance, this tree is a symbol of Telangana's cultural heritage!

## Yadagirigutta Temple

Located in the Yadadri Bhuvanagiri district, the Yadagirigutta Sri Lakshmi Narasimha Swamy Temple is one of the most famous pilgrimage sites in South India. It is famous as the Panchamukha Narasimha Swamy Temple. The history of this temple, which is reached by climbing 120 steps to the top of the hill, dates back to the Chalukya period. In 2016, the government decorated it with Rajasthan marble and gold plating. In the main sanctum, Narasimha and Lakshmi Devi are seen in unison in the form of a Swayambhu stone. This temple, which combines Dravidian and Chalukya architectural styles, is making Telangana a spiritual and tourist destination.

# Double murder for gain case solved in 72 hours by Alwal police, CCS Medchal & SOT zone



Hyderabad, May 7 On a tip-off, on May 6, the teams of Alwal Police Station, CCS Medchal and SOT Medchal Zone cracked a double murder for gain case within 72 hours by apprehending the accused. On May 4, morning, a complaint was received from one Bojja Latha, w/o Venkanna, resident of Machabollarum. She stated that her family had been residing at Machabollarum for the past eight years, working as watchmen in an apartment. Her parents, Rajamma and Kanakaiah, had been staying nearby in Alwal

for the last five months. Her father had been unwell for the past two months, and she used to visit them daily. On May 3, 2025, at around 1900 hours, her parents visited her home and left around 2000 hours. The next morning, May 4, at 0730 hours, she went to her parents' house to deliver a milk packet and found them lying on cots with sever head injuries and bleeding. Unidentified persons had killed them by assaulting them with a stick and stolen gold jewellery (pustela thadu weighing two tolas) and silver anklets (weighing 25 tolas). The police registered a case Crime No. 465/2025, U/s 103, 380 BNS, PS Alwal and plunged into investigation and identified the accused as Chinthakindi Anil Kumar of Krishna Nagar Colony, Macha Bollarum. Police said the accused was involved in 21 theft cases i.e. PS Alwal one robbery case, one rape-cum-murder case, three extortion cases, one attempt to murder case, one attempt to murder case in Narsapur, one rape-cum-murder case in Bollarum. The PS Alwal registered as known depredator sheet or known delinquent sheet maintained at PS Alwal. Detective Inspector of Police, Alwal PS, along with teams from CCS Medchal and SOT Medchal Zone, under the supervision of N. Koti Reddy, IPS, DCP Medchal Zone, Cyberabad, were appreciated.

# Salute to Indian Army for Operation Sindoor : Aleti Maheshwar Reddy



Hyderabad, May 7 BJP Leader Aleti Maheshwar Reddy today said that the Indian Army's launch of operation Sindoor was commendable. He congratulated the Indian Army for killing a large number of terrorists hiding in nine camps of three terrorist organizations in Pakistan

through the Operation Sindoor . “The people of the country are proud of the launch of Operation by the three defence services of India to eliminate Pakistan-sponsored terrorists.

The courageous decision taken by Indian Prime Minister Modi to take action to suppress terrorism with an iron fist will stand as a compass for the world. Through Operation Sindoor , Prime Minister Modi has once again proven that the his government would not leave the evil forces that want to harm Indians in any situation and will see to their end. He saluted the Indian army for its courageous acts . “Heartfelt congratulations to Prime Minister Modi and the Indian Army, who are unveiling a proud India and a resilient India through their capable leadership. It is time for the entire nation to stand by the Indian Army, which has taken action against Pakistan-sponsored terrorists, and by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who is taking bold decisions to end terrorism. Jai Bharat ... Jai Hind,” he said

# FDDI announces Faculty and Non-Faculty openings across multiple Departments

Hyderabad, May 7 : Footwear Design & Development Institute (FDDI), Hyderabad, an institution of national importance under the Union Ministry of Commerce & Industry, invites applications from qualified Indian nationals for academic and non-academic posts. This is your chance to leverage your skills and creativity to influence the future of design and production in the vibrant footwear and fashion industry. Apply today and step into a world of innovation and excellence.

Available positions across departments include: In Fashion Design, openings are for Senior Faculty (Grade I) and Chief Faculty in Pattern Making & Garment Construction; Junior Faculty and Faculty in Textiles & Production Techniques; Junior Faculty and Faculty in Illustration & CAD; Junior Faculty, Faculty, and Senior Faculty (Grade I) in Design Process; and Lab Assistant in the Textile Lab.

In Leather Goods & Accessories Design, positions are

available for Junior Faculty, Faculty, and Senior Faculty (Grade II and Grade I) in Product Design, as well as a Lab Assistant in Garment. In Footwear Design & Production, there are openings for Junior Faculty and Faculty in Component, Lasting & Finishing, along with a Lab Assistant in the Component Lab. In the Information Technology Services Cell (ITSC), we are looking for an Assistant Manager (IT). In Promotions & Admissions, the position of Assistant Manager for Promotions and Outreach is available. Lastly, in Student Affairs & Examination, we have an opening for an Assistant Manager in Administration. Apply Online: FDDI Careers (<http://fddiindia.com/career>) Online Registration opened on May 3, 11 am. Last date to apply is May 26, 11.59 pm. Only online applications with supporting documents will be accepted. Candidates will be shortlisted based on written tests and/or interviews, and notifications will be sent via email/post.

# CARE Hospitals, Hi-Tec City hosts a ‘MOM’orable celebration ahead of Mother’s Day

Hyderabad, May 7 : In a heartfelt tribute ahead of Mother’s Day 2025 (May 11), CARE Hospitals, Hi-Tec City, hosted a special celebration today to honour the incredible spirit of motherhood. The event, celebrated as "A MOMorable Celebration", brought together mothers, children, caregivers, and staff for an afternoon filled with joy, gratitude, and meaningful engagement.

The celebration was graced by chief guest Dr Vanitha Datla, Vice-Chairperson & Managing Director of ELICO Ltd., who delivered an inspiring keynote on the evolving roles of women and the enduring strength of mothers. The event also featured reflections from senior leaders of CARE Hospitals, including Nilesh Gupta, Chief Operating Officer, CARE Hospitals – Hi-Tec City; Dr. S.V. Lakshmi, Senior

Obstetrician & Gynaecologist and Dr. Sailaja Kambhampati, Senior Pulmonologist, each highlighting the vital role of mothers in shaping healthier families and communities.

The afternoon unfolded with interactive games and activities for guests and children, followed by a ceremonial lamp lighting, an opening address by Nilesh Gupta, and a series of heartfelt speeches. CARE hospitals have launched Exclusive Mother’s Health Package, a comprehensive offering specially designed to cater to the preventive and holistic healthcare needs of mothers across all age groups. The initiative reflects the hospital’s continued focus on early diagnosis, wellness, and personalized care for women. Guests were also felicitated, and winners of fun games and activities were announced, wrapping up the event with refreshments and shared smiles.

# Civil Mock drills held to create awareness: CP CV Anand



Hyderabad, May 7 Hyderabad City Police Commissioner CV Anand today said the sirens were sounded at 4 pm on the orders of the Central Government. He said this was a preparatory measure to increase the alertness among the people and added that no one needs to panic over this. He spoke to the media after the completion of the Civil Mock drill in Hyderabad. "We sounded industrial sirens, petrol vehicle sirens, police sirens. We instructed everyone to stay where they were when the siren were sounded. We gave all kinds of instructions from the command control center. We provided information that airstrikes had taken place in four areas. We identified how the officials of all departments were performing and responding through these models. NDRF, SRF, Revenue, GHMC, Municipal, Police, Fire Department, Electricity, Transport and other departments all rushed to the respective areas and took up relief mea-

sures," he said. Anand said measures like shifting the injured to hospitals and controlling the fire were taken up and added that Traffic police gave clearance for the movement of fire engines and ambulances. "Medical personnel provided first aid. The injured were shifted to hospitals on stretchers to save them. All this is to increase alertness among the people. We are informing all that this is just a preparatory measure. We have done a mock drill to see how government departments will participate when such incidents occur. There are some shortcomings in this. We will all sit down, review and work to overcome them. We will take steps to improve the preparedness required to face catastrophic situations" he said.

# MP Asaduddin Owaisi welcomes Operation Sindoor

Hyderabad, May 7 It is known that the Indian Army carried out blitzkriegs in the name of Operation Sindoor targeting terrorist camps in Pakistan and Pakistan-occupied Kashmir. AIMIM chief and Hyderabad MP Asaduddin Owaisi responded to this Operation Sindoor today. Asaduddin Owaisi said he welcomed the attacks carried out by the Indian security forces on the terrorist camps in Pakistan. He said he wanted stricter action to be taken against the Pakistani terrorists.

young men and women must make the most of this platform to showcase their talent, he said, expressing confidence that the job fair will inspire and empower the youth to shape a brighter future.

In addition to employment opportunities, Bliss Berg Future of Hope and Sigma Hospitals have organised free medical camps during the event. Renowned doctors will provide complimentary health check-ups and advice, enabling early detection and prevention of health issues. By integrating job prospects with healthcare services, the initiative underscores its commitment to social welfare. The job fair witnessed the participation of thousands of unemployed youth and numerous multinational companies. Organisers expressed optimism that the event will drive positive societal change by combining career opportunities with healthcare access, paving the way for a brighter and healthier future.

tion, can inform the Singareni Vigilance Department and added that the names of the complainants would be kept confidential and the company would provide them with full protection. It also reiterated that a reward of Rs 10,000 would be given to those whistleblowers, who provide details and evidence about the corrupt persons.

The company advised the Singareni workers not to follow the wrong people and ruin their working lives and not to approach those, who tempt them. The management also advised that if Singareni employees or officials in areas, mines, departments, or any outside person is expecting bribes, their details should be provided to the Vigilance Department of the company and ACB. The management appealed to the workers responsible for the company to cooperate and provide information. The management made it clear that no one, no matter what position they are holding would be spared. It reminded that in the past, several employees, who committed irregularities in Singareni were investigated and dismissed from service. It was also revealed by the company that action had been taken against several people as per the law. The company advised people to provide information to their phone number on 94911 44104 or to the Vigilance Department's email ID [vig@scclmines.com](mailto:vig@scclmines.com).



a 24-storey building in a colony near the DRDA building in case of an emergency. Fire fighters were deployed in the area. This drill was conducted in coordination with officers from 12 departments. They created awareness on how to evacuate those injured in the firing to safe areas with the help of their peers.

# Mega Job Fair in Hyderabad

Hyderabad, May 7 : Hyderabad is set to host a landmark job fair, offering a unique platform for unemployed youth in Telangana to secure promising career opportunities, announced Dundra Kumaraswamy, National President of BC Dal. Organised jointly by Deccan Blaster Mannan Khan and Bliss Berg Future of Hope, the job fair will take place at Kaja Mansion Function Hall in Banjara Hills, Hyderabad.

The event was inaugurated by chief guests Dundra Kumaraswamy and Dr Vinay Sarikonda, who cut the ribbon to mark the occasion. Over 100 reputed companies will conduct interviews at the fair, providing job opportunities to eligible candidates across diverse sectors, including pharmaceuticals, healthcare, IT, education, and banking.

Speaking on the occasion, Dundra Kumaraswamy urged the youth to seize the golden opportunity. "Qualified

# SCCL to crack whip against corruption

Hyderabad, May 7 Some anarchic forces involved in corruption and irregularities in Singareni, which is a byword for hard work and provides light to the country, have already been eradicated, and if information about those who run such corrupt activities and those who are behind it is disclosed, they will also be crushed with an iron foot, the Singareni management warned in a statement on Wednesday.

The company issued the statement in the wake of the arrest of a Singareni employee by the Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) on Tuesday for allegedly extorting money by promising to make them unfit in the medical board process, make them transfer, make those newly selected for jobs fit in medical exams, and provide them with jobs on deputations, internal and external exams. It has been made clear by the company that it would not ignore anyone, who cheats innocent workers and added that strict action would be taken against them. The management has warned that there was no question of leaving those, who indulge in the corrupt acts and even those who stand behind them and support them.

It said the victims of corruption or any other workers and others, who have information about any kind of corrup-

# Civil mock drill held successfully in city

Hyderabad, May 7 : In the wake of the tense situation between India and Pakistan, a civil mock drill was successfully concluded in Hyderabad as per the orders of the Union Home Ministry. Personnel from various departments participated in the mock drill held in the city under the name of Operation Abhyas.

The mock drill was conducted to create awareness on the skills to respond in emergency situations. Sirens were sounded for two minutes in several areas under the GHMC limits. The Sirens were also sounded at major intersections in Hyderabad. The NDRF personnel explained the rules to be followed by citizens if war was inevitable. The mock drills, which continued in four areas of the city line Nanalagar, Kanchanbagh, Secunderabad and ECIL, NFC were monitored by senior officials from the Command Control Center.

The authorities explained on how to safely evacuate



# AWARD DISTRIBUTION CEREMONY OF TES-45 COURSE

Hyderabad, May 7 Technical Entry Scheme-45 (TES-45) course passed out from the Cadets Training Wing (CTW), Military College of Electronics and Mechanical Engineering (MCEME) after completing three years of tough and arduous technical & military training. The Award Distribution Ceremony of the Passing Out Course (POC) (TES-45) was held at the MCEME Auditorium on Wednesday. Lieutenant General Neeraj Varshney, VSM, Commandant, MCEME and Colonel Commandant, Corps of EME was the Chief Guest for the event. The function was attended by large number of distinguished guests, senior officers & proud parents of the Cadets. While welcoming the audience, Brigadier Atul Jaiswal, Commander, CTW congratulated the passing out course for their exemplary performance in all training activities during the course. Lieutenant General Neeraj Varshney, VSM, Commandant, MCEME and Colonel Commandant, Corps of EME in his address congratulated all the Cadets and their parents of for becoming officer and choosing the noble profession of arms. The General Officer exhorted the course to be aware of the rapid technological challenges which are manifesting in the modern-day battlefield and be prepared to confront them with tech expertise and professional acumen. He also emphasized on having an internal compass and locus of control to guide them in tough situations and provide direction. He

underlined the essential qualities of professional competence, commitment and devotion to duty and the need to embrace future with courage, humility, perseverance, and unwavering integrity to serve the nation with honour, dedication, and a steadfast commitment to lifelong learning and innovation.

The Chief Guest also expressed his appreciation for the dedicated faculty and staff of the Cadets Training Wing, MCME for their expertise, mentorship, and commitment towards shaping the Officer Cadets (OCs) into capable and ethical leaders. He extended his felicitations to the proud parents whose love, support and encouragement have been instrumental in the success of the graduating OCs. The Chief Guest awarded meritorious OCs of the course with various awards & medals. The prestigious GOC-in-C ARTRAC Gold medal for standing first in order of merit was awarded to Wing Cadet Captain Gem Phub from Bhutan, Silver Medal for standing second in order of merit was awarded to Wing Cadet Quarter Master Sahib Singh & Bronze medal for standing third in order of merit was awarded to Wing Cadet Adjutant Abhishek Patil. Awards were also given to Cadets excelling in various aspects of training like Drill, Officer-Like Qualities, Weapon Training, Outdoor Training, Military Subjects and Sports. The Chief Guest also interacted with the parents of the Cadets of the passing out course.

## Uttam urges CWC to expedite water allocation for Telangana projects

New Delhi, May 7 In a determined push to resolve Telangana's pressing irrigation and water allocation concerns, Minister for Irrigation Uttam Kumar Reddy met Central Water Commission (CWC) Chairman Atul Jain in New Delhi on Wednesday. The meeting focused on expediting water allocations for two major projects — the Palamuru-Ranga Reddy Lift Irrigation Scheme (PRLIS) and the Sammakka-Sarakka Barrage - while also raising critical issues related to inter-state water management, infrastructure safety, and backwater impact from the Polavaram project. Launched in 2015, the Palamuru-Ranga Reddy project is a flagship initiative aimed at irrigating approximately 12.3 lakh acres across the drought-prone districts of Mahabubnagar, Nagarkurnool, Vikarabad, Rangareddy, and Nalgonda. The scheme proposes lifting 2 TMC of water per day from the Krishna River during the 60-day flood season using a series of five pumping stations to address water scarcity and groundwater depletion in the region.

During the meeting, Minister Uttam requested a total water allocation of 90 TMC for PRLIS, with an immediate sanction of 45 TMC in the first phase, citing that Telangana had already complied with all procedural and documentation requirements laid down by the CWC. Similarly, the Sammakka-Sarakka Barrage, located at Thupakulgudem in Mulugu district, is designed to stabilise irrigation for nearly 5.55 lakh hectares under the J. Chokka Rao Devadula Lift Irrigation Scheme and the Sriram Sagar Project (Stages I & II). With a total capacity of 6.94 TMC, the barrage will also cater to drinking water needs of several villages along its route. Uttam Kumar Reddy urged the CWC to expedite the allocation of 44 TMC for the Sammakka-Sarakka project, noting that all necessary maps and documentation had been submitted. He underlined the importance of early approval to ensure that agrarian communities dependent on these projects are not left vulnerable to recurring droughts.

# Vasavi Kanyaka Parameshwari Jayanthi Celebrated with Grandeur

“Month-long festivities conclude with spiritual fervor and vibrant devotion”

PS Ashokan "Indian Chronicle" Manthani, May 8<sup>th</sup> The sacred town of Manthani witnessed a magnificent celebration of Sri Vasavi Kanyaka Parameshwari Jayanthi at the revered temple dedicated to the goddess. The month-long festivities, marked by deep spiritual significance and cultural splendor, attracted a large congregation of devotees— not only from the Arya Vaishya community but from various walks of life. "The celebrations reached their peak on Wednesday with a series of auspicious rituals. Beginning at 5:30 AM, the temple resonated with divine energy as Mangala Snaman (ritual bath), elaborate deity adornment, sacred abhishekams, and Lalita Sahasranama Parayanam were performed. Devotees were spiritually uplifted by devotional hymns, bhajans, and a narration of the life and glory of Vasavi Mata, highlighting her message of peace and sacrifice. "Following the rituals, the temple authorities organized Mangala Harathi, distribution of Teertha Prasadam, and a grand Annadanam (community feast), reflecting the spirit of service and unity. "In the evening, a vibrant Shobha Yatra (procession) was held through the main streets of Manthani, featuring the deity's beautifully decorated idols. Women devotees added to the festive spirit with traditional Kolatam dances, while musical and cultural performances captivated the onlookers. "The event was graced by esteemed dignitaries including Sri Nalamasa Prabhakar, District President of the Arya Vaishya Sangham, who attended as the chief guest. Also present were Kotha Srinivas, Temple Committee President; Ellanki Vamsidhar, President of the Manthani Arya Vaishya Sangham; Racharla Thirumala, President of the Women's Wing; and several committee members and community leaders. "The celebrations served as a remarkable testament to the enduring devotion and unity of the community, honoring the divine legacy of Vasavi Mata.



## West Bengal HS results out: Three districts outperform Kolkata, 90.79% of students pass

GNS News Agency, May 7

According to the Council, the results have been available online from 2 pm onwards for students to check and download. Students can access their results through the official websites [wbresults.nic.in](http://wbresults.nic.in) and [wbchse.wb.gov.in](http://wbchse.wb.gov.in) as well as via SMS, mobile apps, and the DigiLocker platform. Hard copies of marksheets and pass certificates will be distributed to respective schools on May 8 from 10 am onwards.

This year, 4,82,948 students had enrolled for the examination, of which 4,73,919 appeared. The overall pass percentage stood at 90.79%, a marginal increase from last year's 90%. The examinations were conducted from March 3 to March 18. Dr Chiranjib Bhattacharjee, President of the Council, stated, "This is the last year of the annual exam system which has been in practice since 1978. The Higher Secondary examinations will adopt a semester-based format. The third semester will be held from September 8 to September 22, 2025, and the fourth semester from February 12 to February 27, 2026." The exams were conducted in six languages, covering a total of 62 subjects, which included 15 languages and 13 vocational subjects. "This year, the number of female students exceeded male students by 47,539, which is perhaps the outcome of various government initiatives," said Dr Bhattacharya. Male students recorded a pass percentage of 92.03%, while female students achieved a pass rate of 88.12%. In terms of stream-wise performance, male candidates outperformed their female counterparts in both Science and Commerce. The Science stream led with a 99.46% pass rate, followed by Commerce at 97.52% and Arts at 90.7%.



District-wise, Purba Medinipur topped the list with a 95.74% pass percentage, followed by North 24 Parganas at 93.53%, and Kolkata at 93.43%. A total of 72 candidates secured positions in the top 10 merit list. The topper this year is Rupayan Pal from Burdwan C M S High School, who scored 497 out of 500 (99.4%). To prevent malpractice, WBCHSE had deployed metal detectors at all exam centres and introduced a "question paper serial number" system to track any potential leaks. There were no major incidents reported during the examinations, apart from a few isolated cases. Eight mobile phones were recovered, and the admit cards of those students were confiscated. To enhance result authentication, WBCHSE has introduced QR codes and percentile scores on marksheets.

Students unsatisfied with their results may apply for Post Publication Scrutiny (PPS) or Post Publication Review (PPR), with applications to be submitted online. The revaluation results are expected by June 2025, in line with last year's schedule.

# CPI Maoist Party Members Surrender



“- Mulugu District SP Shabarish -”Mulugu Mahipal, Indian Chronicle: Five members of the banned CPI Maoist Party surrendered before Mulugu SP Shabarish on Wednesday. On this occasion, SP Shabarish informed the media about the details of the surrendered members. On this occasion, SP Shabarish said that under the auspices of the Telangana Police Department, in the presence of Mulugu District Police, several tribal development and welfare programs like “Poru Kanna Ooru Minna . Mana Ooriki Kurl Randi” organized in the district have been taken up to make the Maoists who are in hiding surrender before the Telangana government. He said that the surrendered Maoist members are surrendering to know about the facilities provided by the Telangana state government and want to live a peaceful life with their families. In this context, five members of the CPI Maoist Komatipalli RPC, working in various capacities, surrendered on Wednesday, the SP said. Among those who surrendered were Komatipalli RPC member Madavi Bhima, Komatipalli RPC jungle branch member Madavi Kosa, Komatipalli RPC DKAMS member Madavi

Bhima, Komatipalli RPC member Vanjam Oora, and Komatipalli RPC Chaftanya Nityamandali member Vanjam Hungi. The Maoist party members who surrendered were involved in many criminal incidents in the state of Chhattisgarh in the past on the orders of top leaders, and since January 2025 till today, 47 banned CPI Maoists working at various levels in the party have voluntarily surrendered before the police so far. He said that the best surrender policy in India is being implemented in Telangana state, and as part of that, as part of the rehabilitation of the surrendered Naxalites, the reward money announced against them is being transferred to their bank accounts in the form of DD within 24 hours of surrender. If they have health problems, they are being given appropriate medical treatment and treatment. He said that assistance is being provided and rehabilitation is being provided from the government. The SP urged the Maoists who are still in hiding to abandon outdated ideology and live a comfortable life with their families in the public life. On this occasion, the SP handed over Rs 25,000 each to the surrendered members as immediate assistance.”.....

## **‘Against terrorism, not any country’: tourists who were stranded in Kashmir express relief over Operation Sindoor**

GNS News Agency, May 7

Girish Bhalchandra Naikwadi, 40, a resident of Rahatani in Pimpri-Chinchwad, was among the tourists who were in Kashmir when terror struck on April 22. As the night-marish hours unfolded, Naikwadi and three families with him scrambled to find flights and hotels to accommodate their changed plans – all the while aware of the cloud of fear hanging over them. On Wednesday, Naikwadi responded to Operation Sindoor with relief. “I believe Operation Sindoor sends a strong message to those who threaten our peace. Our soldiers are doing an incredible job, and I have faith in their capabilities. While we celebrate this success, we must remain vigilant and support our forces in every way possible. The safety of our families and our nation depends on it. I hope that this operation is just the beginning of a larger effort to ensure that such acts of violence do not happen again. We stand united with our armed forces, and I pray for their safety as they continue to protect us,” he said.

Other tourists from Pune who had been stranded in Kashmir during the terror attack echoed the sentiment. Satish Awasare, a retired assistant commissioner of police, said, "I was there with my wife in the parking area near the attack site when the firing had just happened. We were asleep. When I heard about Operation Sindoor, I felt a huge relief after learning that we didn't just condemn the attack and move on. We have full confidence in the Indian armed forces leadership handling this operation and their actions; our country is in the hands of wise people. Whatever they do will be in the best interest of our country. And this is just a teaser we thoroughly enjoyed." Awasare said the attack on Pakistan was "a war against terrorism and not against any country". "The government took strong action. I'm not someone who wants war, but these terrorists need to understand they can't keep attacking our people and get away with it," the former police officer said. Another Pune resident, Sandip Patil, who was struck in Gulmarg following the Pahalgam terrorist attack, said, "I was very happy when I saw the news about Operation Sindoor in the morning. I just kept thinking about those



tourists who didn't make it out of Pahalgam. We could've been one of those. This operation was absolutely necessary and has ensured justice for those innocent lives. We first stopped the water supply to the Chenab river, prepared a strategic plan, alerted our civil defence with mock drills and then went for Operation Sindoor—a befitting reply, destroying terror hideouts in Pakistan.”Patil added, “These terror camps have been causing trouble and disturbing the peace in Jammu and Kashmir for too long. This is a measured response as it sends a clear message without starting a full-blown war. We are impressed by how professionally our Indian armed forces operate and repose complete faith in their work.”Deepali Gaikwad, 27, from Shirur, said, “I am proud that the government has conducted the operation. I don't think India will have anything to worry about in terms of safety after the operation. The Army and intelligence services are capable and our technologies are advanced. We must, however, stay alert and respect the drills taking place.”For Shirish Deshmukh, a resident of Karambe, Operation Sindoor is an indication of a larger action that will send out a stronger message to terror outfits against targeting India. “India has always valued peace and rarely been the aggressor, but let's see what the future holds. We have full faith in our armed forces and trust that they will shield us from harm even if matters escalate. I hope the brave soldiers protecting our nation remain safe,” he said.

# **‘Action was overdue’: Captain Amarinder Singh hails strike on terror camps under Operation Sindoor**

GNS News Agency, May 7

amrainder singhA former Army officer himself, Amarinder Singh congratulated the Indian defence forces “for exercising utmost restraint by specifically targeting the terror camps” and “not targeting civilian or military installations.”Senior BJP leader and former Punjab Chief Minister Chaudhary Amarinder Singh Wednesday hailed the Indian defence forces’ precision strikes on terror camps inside Pakistan and Pakistan-occupied Kashmir in the wake of the Pahalgam terror attack in which 26 people were killed.Reacting to the strikes, Amarinder said, “The action was overdue as Pakistan had not been desisting from exporting terror into our country.”A former Army officer himself, Amarinder congratulated the Indian defence forces “for exercising utmost restraint by specifically targeting the terror camps” and “not targeting civilian or military installations.”“India does not want any escalation. The country had made it categorically clear that it will not let those responsible for the Pahalgam terror attack go unpunished. They have been punished as admitted by the Jaish-e-Mohammad terrorist who, though he escaped himself, lost several members of his family,” Amarinder said.Our target was the terrorist training camps, and we have hit them hard and that is it,” he stated.Warning Pakistan against trying to escalate the conflict “lest it lead to its own doom”, he condemned its attack which resulted in the death of several people in the border town of Poonch in Jammu and Kashmir on Wednesday.At least 10 civilians were killed and 40 were injured, mostly in Jammu’s Poonch sector, as Pakistani troops resorted to heavy shelling across the Line of Control in response to Operation Sindoor, official sources said earlier. After the shelling, many families in Poonch started fleeing toward Jammu, seeking safety.



A former Army officer himself, Amarinder congratulated the Indian defence forces “for exercising utmost restraint by specifically targeting the terror camps” and “not targeting civilian or military installations.”

Earlier, Punjab Chief Minister and Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) leader Bhagwant Mann took to X and said that the country is united in the fight against terrorism, "We are proud of our Indian Army and our brave soldiers. 140 crore countrymen are standing with the Indian Army. The people of Punjab stand with the country's army for the courage and enthusiasm of the soldiers." Operation Sindoor was executed two weeks after the terror attack in Baisaran meadow in Jammu and Kashmir's Pahalgalam on April 22.



## Delhi history-sheeter who masterminded armed robbery at former partner’s kin’s house arrested with 4 aides



GNS News Agency,May 7

delhi police, ATM machine, govindpuri, indian expressThe police have also nabbed four of his aides who broke into the woman's house in Anand Parbat and fled with Rs 25 lakh from their hideout in Ghaziabad. The Delhi Police on Thursday arrested a history-sheeter who allegedly orchestrated an armed robbery at the house of the sister of his former 'partner in crime' in an act of revenge.

The police have also nabbed four of his aides who broke into the woman's house in Anand Parbat and fled with Rs 25 lakh from their hideout in Ghaziabad. They have been identified as Ishu, Rahul, Bobby, and Sachin, while a search is on for another person in the gang, a minor, who

## Illegal kilns burning industrial waste on Rajasthan-Haryana border, National Green Tribunal told

GNS News Agency,May 7

A recent inspection conducted by the Rajasthan State Pollution Control Board has flagged the operation of illegal kilns—commonly referred to as bhattis—in the Aravalli region along the Rajasthan-Haryana border, with inputs suggesting these units are using industrial waste from Manesar and Gurugram. The findings were submitted to the National Green Tribunal (NGT) in April 2025 on a suo motu plea based on a media report concerning the contribution of non-stubble burning sources to rising air pollution in the Delhi-National Capital Re

When residents of Nurpur village in Tauru, Haryana, were contacted to enquire about the illegal kilns operating in the area, they revealed that illegal kilns were being operated on the Rajasthan-Haryana bordIllegal crucibles were found in the border villages of Udhanwas (Rajasthan) and Nurpur (Haryana) during the inspection by officials of the pollution control board on April 2

Locals informed the officials that the kilns operated late at nig A large quantity of waste rubber cuttings or plastic sheet cuttings of automobiles were found in the area. This waste is melted in crucibles and the material is left under the sun drying. The material is transported to other locations for grinding, after which the ground material is used as fuel by the brick kilns along with cuttings, sheets. According to the affidavit, the pollution board team found that the brick kilns were operating without valid consent. Its report relied in part on local intelligence that alleged the industrial waste being burned originated from the Manesar and Gurugram industrial clus-

## Carpooling gets green light in Maharashtra: safety, pricing and regulation take centre stage

GNS News Agency,May 7

In a move aimed at easing traffic congestion and offering an affordable commuting option, the Maharashtra government has legalised carpooling in Mumbai and Pune through government-registered mobile apps. Private vehicle owners can now offer up to 14 carpool trips per week. Importantly, fare rates are capped based on fuel, tolls, and insurance, ensuring they remain lower than standard taxi fares. To address widespread safety concerns, the policy mandates background verification for both drivers and passengers. It also allows women the option to choose female drivers. Only platforms that have received government approval are authorised to offer these services. While the final list of approved apps is yet to be released, Shride, a platform familiar to many users, is expected to be part of the sanctioned group. Quick Ride, BlaBlaCar, and RYDE are likely contenders, depending on their compliance with regulatory requirements. For 21-year-old Pune commuter Pramugdha Dey, safety and pricing are top priorities. "If this is meant to be an alternative to autorickshaws, then one of the first things that comes to mind is pricing. Whether there will be a standardised pricing system or not is crucial," she said.

"Can I just enter anybody's cab? Is there some kind of guarantee of safety, especially for women and young people?" However, she agreed that if these issues are resolved, the system could become a convenient and comfortable way to travel. "Standardised prices and better safety could not only improve accessibility but also help reduce traffic if more people start carpooling on a larger scale." Another commuter, Pawan Shirode, who has been using the Shride carpooling platform for over two years, feels largely unaffected by the legalisation. "Carpooling being legal now wouldn't make a lot of difference for me," said Pawan, who commutes 13 km daily and has faced no difficulties so far. Asked if he would try new apps, he replied, "I'll give them a try and see how it goes, but mostly I'm okay with my situation." In addition, safety remains a key concern for many women. Urvi Sopal said, "Carpooling is a smart choice for daily commuters looking for a budget-friendly and comfortable ride, but sharing a car with strangers can raise safety concerns." She stressed the importance of conducting background checks on both drivers and passengers. Meanwhile, Ira Singh questioned the very idea of private carpooling, arguing that it resembles a taxi service more than a casual ride share. "Having a certified driver through an app is a more reliable system. If someone is going to use an app, get certified, and pick up strangers, isn't that basically being a cab driver?" she said. "Honestly, people who want to do this kind of thing should just join Uber or Ola, because it's practically the same thing," she added.

Reflecting on the regulatory landscape, Sub-regional Transport Officer Swapnil Bhosale said, "Currently, only the government resolution has come out. We are still waiting

held the woman at gunpoint, the police said. The police said the prime accused, Manish, 27, masterminded the burglary on April 30 following a fallout with Jitender, with whom he had associated in an attempt to murder case in 2018. According to the police, five men stormed into Jitender's sister's house around 8 pm, threatened her with a gun, locked her up in a room, and fled with Rs 25 lakh in cash. The person who held the country-made pistol was a juvenile who is still on the run, said an officer. "A team led by Inspector Satender Mohan and ACP Ramesh Lamba got a tip-off about the hideout of the accused. The raid was conducted at Sudamapuri, Ghaziabad, and Haibatpur, Gautam Budh Nagar in UP, and the accused Manish with his accomplices was nabbed," Aditya Gautam, Deputy Commissioner of Police (Crime), said. During interrogation, Manish, who has 27 cases against him including that of rape, said that he roped in Ishu after a scuffle with Jitender to exact revenge. Ishu then arranged a band of people he thought could pull it off, the police said. "On the day of the incident, Ishu, Bobby, Sachin, and the juvenile met Manish, who showed them the house of the victim. The accused juvenile was carrying a country-made pistol. They entered the house at about 8 pm on April 30 and executed the armed robbery before fleeing," DCP Gautam said. According to the police, Jitender had beaten up Manish in 2024, and since then, the latter had been waiting for an opportunity to take revenge on him.



ters in Haryana. While the source of the waste is still under investigation, its hazardous nature raises red flags for regulatory agencies. The pollution board further noted that the kilns were engaged in unpermitted combustion activities, including burning industrial sludge and rubber-based waste—materials known to emit toxic pollutants such as particulate matter (PM), carbon monoxide, sulfur oxides, and volatile organic compounds.

The Aravalli region is a notified ecologically sensitive zone, and illegal industrial activity poses a dual threat—both to air quality and to ecological degradation.



for proper guidelines on how the carpooling system will function and how it'll work out for both commuters and drivers. "The government decided to legalise carpooling on April 29. While the legalisation of carpooling marks a significant step forward in urban mobility, its success will depend on effective implementation and clear regulatory frameworks. Addressing safety concerns, particularly for women, and ensuring transparency in pricing will be critical in building public trust. As commuters begin to explore this newly sanctioned mode of transport, the coming months will reveal whether carpooling can genuinely become a mainstream, safe, and reliable option for daily travel in Mumbai and Pune.

## SFI Telangana committee wants State government to conduct pending degree semester exams

Hyderabad: The Students Federation of India (SFI) Telangana committee demanded the State government immediately initiate measures to conduct the long-pending degree semester examinations in several State universities. In a representation submitted to TGChE Chairman Prof V Balakista Reddy on Friday, SFI Telangana president S Rajnikanth and T Nagaraju expressed concerns over non-conduct of the examinations in Kakatiya, Palamuru, Telangana, Satavahana and Mahatma Gandhi universities.

The examinations were supposed to be completed by the end of April. However, they were not concluded, creating a lot of confusion and chaos among students, the SFI Telangana committee said. The students' body highlighted that due to delay in release of fee reimbursement arrears by the State government, the private degree colleges refused to cooperate with the universities in holding the semester examinations. A total of 4.89 lakh students are pursuing degree programmes in five universities and more than one lakh students are in the final year.

## Cong leader Bhupinder Hooda: ‘Punjab move to curtail Haryana’s water supply unconstitutional, inhuman’



GNS News Agency,May 7

The Punjab government's move to stop Haryana's water is "unconstitutional, immoral and inhuman", former chief minister and Congress leader Bhupinder Singh Hooda on Friday said, even as urged the BJP government in state to call a special Assembly session following an all-party meeting on water-sharing issues. "Punjab government has no right to stop Haryana's water. Doing so is an attack on the federal structure. Haryana is not begging. This is the state's share of water, the quantity of which was decided under a proper agreement between the two states," Hooda said. Addressing a press conference in Rohtak, he said, "Pressure must be put on the Punjab government to prevent a water crisis in Haryana. But so far, the BJP government has failed miserably in securing Haryana's share of

water. Due to BJP's incompetence, the people of Haryana may face a severe water shortage," he warned.

Hooda further accused the BJP government of ignoring repeated Congress warnings regarding water-sharing concerns. "Despite Congress raising this issue in the assembly multiple times, the BJP government remained indifferent. Today, Punjab officials occupy all major posts in BBMB, leaving Haryana without representation or advocacy. The state is now facing the consequences," he said. The former Chief Minister recalled that Haryana used to receive its full share of water during the Congress government, which ensured the state's active participation in the Bhakra Beas Management Board (BBMB). "There were three members from Haryana in BBMB, including an officer from the irrigation department. The Congress government regularly appointed SDOs and junior engineers in the board," Hooda said. He pointed out that the Superintendent Engineer in the board should be from Haryana, as per rules, but no such appointment was made under the BJP government. "When Haryana lacks representation in the board, who will speak for our rights?" he asked. Hooda accused the BJP of failing to advocate for Haryana's interests, saying, "Despite the Supreme Court's verdict in favour of Haryana on SYL, the government has failed to secure water. Despite BJP ruling for the third term at both state and central levels, it has remained silent on SYL. Projects like SYL and Dadupur Nalvi were dismantled under BJP rule."

## Nick-of-time plea in SC by son in Bengaluru gives Kashmiri family reprieve from deportation to Pakistan

GNS News Agency,May 7

A petition filed in the Supreme Court in the nick of time by the Bengaluru-based son of a Kashmiri family, through a senior lawyer who is an advocate on record in the Supreme Court, has provided a reprieve from deportation to Pakistan for the family. The Kashmiri family, who are all Indian passport holders, were issued a notice on April 25 by the Foreigners Registration Office in Srinagar stating that they were Pakistani nationals who had overstayed their visas and should leave the country immediately in the wake of the Indian government's post-Pahalgam terror attack orders.

The 70-year-old patriarch of the family, his wife, a son, and a daughter were arrested at around 9 pm on April 29 by the Jammu and Kashmir Police and were taken to the India border at around 12.20 pm the next day for deportation to Pakistan. "The oldest son in the family, who has been living in Bengaluru for many years, approached us seeking legal intervention after his parents and two siblings had been arrested on April 29. We were able to file a petition in the Supreme Court the next day and get a hearing listed on May 1 due to the advances in usage of electronic systems by the court," said Dr Nanda Kishore, the Supreme Court advocate and law professor in Bengaluru who represented the family. The senior advocate who argued the matter through video conference on Friday said that the Foreigners Registration Office in Srinagar had erred in calling the family Pakistani nationals when they were holders of Indian passports.

"There seems to be some mistake that has occurred. When all the family members are holding Indian passports, how can they be called Pakistani nationals and deported overnight? This means it can happen to anyone with an Indian passport. There has to be a process of law that has to be followed even if there are doubts about a passport," Nanda Kishore said. The Bengaluru advocate was approached by the eldest son of the family, Ahmed Tariq Butt, 35, and the youngest son, who are both working in Bengaluru. "Both the sons in Bengaluru are well educated and employed with multinational firms," said the advocate for the family.

The deportation order meant that the lives of their family were going to be overturned overnight due to a mistake in recognising them as Pakistani nationals instead of Indian



citizens, the advocate indicated. When the order to leave India was issued, the family tried approaching the media to raise the issue, but there was no response on account of the prevailing atmosphere in the aftermath of the Pahalgam attack, the advocate said. The family is reported to have moved from Mirpur in PoK to Srinagar in 1997, with the patriarch arriving first, followed by the rest of the family. "The Petitioner No. 1 and his family members are law-abiding individuals who are Indian nationals, who have been living peacefully and contributing to society in their respective capacities," the petition filed in the Supreme Court on behalf of the family stated. According to the petition, the family has roots in India going back many generations, with a grandfather holding a voter ID card in the 1950s. The petition says that the patriarch of the family owns a house in Rawalpura, a plot in Barbarshah, and an apple orchard near Pattan in Srinagar. "The Petitioner No. 1 submits that they have a legitimate expectation to continue residing in India, owing to their longstanding presence, familial ties, ongoing professional activities, and other socio-economic commitments. They were not given an opportunity to explain their situation or contest the allegations before the impugned notices were passed," the plea said. According to the petition, the two sons working in Bengaluru were also facing the threat of deportation with the Jammu and Kashmir Police asking the youngest son to reach Amritsar and also collecting the address details of Butt. Following the Supreme Court order to the Government of India on Friday to verify all documents held by the family before deciding on deportation, Butt's parents and two siblings were being brought back to Srinagar, the family's advocate in Bengaluru said Friday.

## Historic Punjab’s Chappar Chiri road crumbles, SAD leader warns govt of protest



GNS News Agency,May 7

The road connecting Mohali to the historic Fateh Minar and Gurdwara Baba Banda Singh Bahadur at Chappar Chiri is in an appalling condition, and should be repaired just days before a major religious gathering, said Shiromani Akali Dal leader Parvinder Singh Sohana. He requested the Punjab government for immediate repair of the Chappar Chiri - Mohali road as this road leads to a site of immense histori-

cal and religious significance, yet its current state exposes the hollow claims of the government's development model, said Sohana.

The SAD leader highlighted that crores of rupees were spent by the previous Badal government to build Fateh Minar, a national symbol of Sikh valour, but the present regime has failed to maintain basic infrastructure around it. With the annual Sirhan Fateh Divas celebration of Baba Banda Singh Bahadur on May 12, Sohana cautioned that thousands of devotees will face difficulty unless urgent repairs are made. "Despite repeated requests to the MLA over the last three years, no action has been taken. If repairs are not initiated immediately, we will be forced to protest," he added. Sohana was joined by local leaders, including Sarpanch Sohan Singh Chappar Chiri, Shamsher Purkhalvi, Navjot Singh Jyoti, Sarpanch Gurpreet Singh Tangori, and others, who jointly appealed for immediate action. They urged the Punjab government to respect the religious and historical value of the site and act without delay to fix the road before the mass congregation.

## Farmers suffer huge losses due to unseasonal rains across Khammam

Khammam: Unseasonal rains that lashed several mandals in Khammam district in the past couple of days caused immense damage to farmers. Paddy, which farmers had dried in the fields, got wet and papaya plantations were damaged at many places while electric poles were broken in some places causing disruption in power supply. Papaya plantations in Karepalli and Raghunadhapalem mandals were damaged due to the thunderstorms causing financial loss to farmers. Paddy at Bachhod purchase centre in Tirumalayapalem mandal was soaked due to lack of tarpaulins. Farmers complained that paddy was not bought even 15 days after the stocks were brought to the purchase centre. CPI (ML) New Democracy leader G Ramesh said

that the farmers suffered losses due to the government's negligence. The government should buy the soaked paddy, he demanded.

At Bokkala thanda in Karepalli mandal, five buffaloes died due to electric shock as six electric poles were uprooted due to strong winds on Thursday night. The cattle while grazing in the field came in contact with electric wires and died on Friday. The Electricity Department officials were informed about the incident and were asked them to stop electricity supply. However, the officials did not stop the supply, complained a farmer, Hathiram. The farmer alleged that his cattle died due to the negligence of the officials and said the cattle were worth around Rs 4 lakh.



# Haryana govt declines probe sanction against Khemka, Verma



GNS News Agency,May 7

The Haryana government has declined permission to investigate two separate FIRs lodged against retired IAS officer Ashok Khemka and IAS officer Sanjeev Verma. The FIRs, filed on the same day—April 20, 2022— stemmed from complaints the two officers had made against each other. Ashok Khemka, a 1991-batch IAS officer, attained superannuation on April 30 this year while Sanjeev Verma, a 2004-batch IAS officer, currently serves as Director General of Haryana Sports Department.

The Haryana Police had previously sought ex-post facto permission to proceed with investigations into both FIRs. However, a senior official in the Haryana government said on Friday that the request for sanction had been de-

nied. Official sources confirmed that Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini, the competent authority in this case, has approved a related proposal concerning the matter. When asked about the reason behind the denial of probe sanction, an official explained, “The fundamental basis for the decision is that under the Prevention of Corruption Act, no case can be registered against an officer without prior government approval. If an FIR is lodged in such matters without prior permission, further proceedings cannot continue. In this case, both FIRs were filed without the government’s approval.”

The FIR against Khemka was registered under Section 13 (criminal misconduct by public servant) of the Prevention of Corruption Act and Section 420 (cheating) of IPC at Panchkula’s Sector 5 police station on a reference sent by Verma. Verma, in his reference, had alleged irregularities in the recruitment of two manager Grade-I officials (a class-III post) in the Haryana State Warehousing Corporation (HSWC) in 2010. Both the officials, Pradip Kumar and Surinder Singh were dismissed from service by Verma on April 20, 2020. An hour after it booked Khemka and three others, the Panchkula Police registered another FIR — on charges of criminal conspiracy and fabrication of official documents — against Verma on the former’s complaint. The FIR against Verma was lodged after an unprecedented development in which the then state Home Minister Anil Vij had accompanied Khemka to Panchkula deputy police commissioner’s office to complain against Verma.

# CBI officer who sought Honda City car as bribe convicted in Chandigarh

GNS News Agency,May 7

The Special CBI (Central Bureau of Investigation) Court of Chandigarh on Friday held a CBI inspector guilty in a graft case. The convict, CBI inspector Ravinder Singla had demanded a Honda City car from a company and reportedly obtained bribery worth Rs 4.3 lakh. The CBI Court of Alka Malik, Additional District and Sessions Judge, convicted Singla, under various sections. According to the prosecution, Singla was arrested by a CBI team from Delhi on May 26, 2016, after T K Sharma, manager of Nectar Life Sciences Limited, a pharmaceutical company at Sector 9, lodged a complaint against him that the officer was using the company’s Honda City and despite several requests, did not return the car and even threatened to implicate him in a false case if they did not stop demanding their car back from him. Sharma alleged to the CBI in his complaint that Singla came to his office and demanded a car to go to Delhi to attend a meeting, saying his official vehicle had broken down and then refused to return the car once he returned from the meeting. Singla was then posted in the Special Crime Branch, which deals with several cases referred by the Punjab and Haryana High Court for investigation.

According to the CBI, Singla in conspiracy with other co-accused (Pramod Kumar Gautam (since deceased) and Paramjit Singh demanded gratification other than legal remuneration in the form of Honda City car from Nectar Life Sciences Limited, which was obtained by him for his personal use and also threatened the complainant company to



implicate them in a false case. Thereafter, Singla also insisted the complainant company to transfer this vehicle in Singla’s name or in the name of his relatives. Additionally, Gautam and Paramjit met the official of the company and threatened them regarding some pollution norms violations allegedly committed by the aforementioned company, thereby, they negotiated for a bribe and also obtained an amount of Rs 4.3 lacs from the employee of the accused company on behalf of Singla, the prosecution claimed. The CBI, acting on the complaint of Sharma, lodged a FIR, and later filed chargesheeted Singla’s accomplice, for extortion. During the trial, the defence counsels argued that the accused have been falsely implicated by the company, and no such demand was made by the accused. The court on hearing the arguments and going by the evidence in the case, held Singla guilty, but acquitted Paramjit. The quantum of the sentence will be pronounced on Saturday.

# High Court orders BJP’s Anta MLA to surrender in 2005 revolver threat case

GNS News Agency,May 7

The Rajasthan High Court on Friday directed BJP MLA Kanwarlal Meena to surrender immediately in connection with a 2005 case in which he was convicted of threatening a bureaucrat with a revolver. The court upheld his 2020 conviction and sentence handed down by an appellate court. The HC upholding Meena conviction also threatens the latter’s Assembly membership; as per Section 8(3) of the Representation of the People Act of 1951, conviction of a lawmaker for an offence with a two-year sentence or more leads to disqualification from the House.

Meena, a two-term BJP legislator, had initially been acquitted by a trial court but was later convicted in December 2020. He had then filed a criminal revision petition in the HC against his appellate court conviction which found him found guilty under IPC Sections 353 (assault or criminal force to deter a public servant), 506 (criminal intimidation), and the Prevention of Damage to Public Property Act. He was sentenced to three years’ rigorous imprisonment for the last two charges and two years for IPC 353, to be served concurrently. Justice Uma Shankar Vyas, while dismissing Meena’s revision petition, noted that the conviction was “in accordance with the facts and law” and based on “strong evidence.” The court directed him to surrender before the trial court or face a non-bailable warrant. The court said that crimes, such as the one by Meena, “seriously affect the law-and-order situation and create a feeling of insecurity among the common people and public servants and their morale falls.”

Leader of Opposition Tika Ram Jolly said the HC’s decision is “welcome,” while hoping that Meena’s “membership will immediately be revoked due to the sentence exceeding two years.” The case pertains to February 2005, when Ramniwas Mehta, then a Rajasthan Administrative Services (RAS) officer and posted as Sub Divisional Officer, Aklera, was informed of locals in Manohar Thana, Jhalawar, blocking the road to demand an up-sarpanch re-poll. When Mehta and others reached the spot, Meena, who arrived with 6-7 men in a vehicle about half an hour later, took out a revolver and allegedly aimed it at Mehta’s head asking him to announce a re-poll within two minutes or get killed instead.

Mehta, as per records, told Meena that, “a revolver can kill but not enforce a re-poll.” Despite the presence of senior police officials, Meena damaged recording equipment — to remove traces of his actions — and left the scene. At the time, he already had 15 criminal cases against him and was not yet an elected representative. Subsequently, the District Magistrate asked the Superintendent of Police to lodge an FIR, who then directed the concerned SHO and an FIR under several sections of the IPC, PDPP and the Arms Act was lodged. Key testimonies came from Mehta, IAS probationer Pritam B. Yashwant, and Tehsildar Ramkumar, while other witnesses mostly turned hostile. Meena was arrested three years after the incident and released on bail the same day. His lawyers argued that the case was politically motivated and pointed to inconsistencies in witness statements. Advocate Manish Gupta confirmed they plan to challenge the HC order in the Supreme Court via a Special Leave Petition. Meena first won



election from Manohar Thana in 2013 and was re-elected from Anta, Baran District in 2023. Meanwhile, Mehta is now an IAS officer and serves as Secretary, Rajasthan Public Service Commission, Ajmer.

# SHOs of four key Chandigarh police stations among 7 Inspectors transferred



GNS News Agency,May 7

In a fresh administrative reshuffle within the Chandigarh Police Department on Friday, the Station House Officers (SHOs) of four key police stations — Cyber Crime Cell, Sector 19, Industrial Area, and IT Park — were transferred. In total, seven Inspectors were reassigned new roles, as per the latest order issued by the police headquarters. According to the order, Inspector Usha Rani, previously the SHO of Sector 19, was posted as the new SHO of IT Park Police Station. Inspector Sarita Rai, serving in the Computer Wing, was appointed as the new SHO of Sector 19. The Traffic Inspector, Iram Rizvi, was given the charge of Cyber Crime Police Station, while Inspector Rohitash Yadav, who held that position, was transferred to the security wing. Additionally, Inspector Satnam Singh, previously posted in the Traffic Wing, was appointed as the new SHO of Industrial Area police station. Inspector Juldhan Singh, former SHO of IT Park, was made in-charge of the Central Reserve Unit (CRU).

# Back home with infant only 20 days ago, man loses entire family



GNS News Agency,May 7

Jyoti had shifted to her husband’s native village in Kanpur when she discovered she was pregnant with her third child. Only 20 days ago, after giving birth seven months ago, she had returned to her husband Ajay in Delhi’s Najafgarh with her three children. While they were asleep, Jyoti (28) and her three sons — seven-year-old Aryan, five-year-old Rishabh and seven-month-old Priyansh — died as their house at Kharkhari Nahar village in Najafgarh collapsed under the weight of a Neem tree during Friday morning’s heavy rain in the Capital.

Ajay, who suffered minor injuries, was discharged from

the hospital by 2 pm. Half an hour later, he was at the mortuary of Rau Tula Ram Hospital, waiting to take the bodies of his children and wife home for the last time. A labourer working in the fields, Ajay had been living alone one-room tubewell house in the middle of farmland where he worked while his family was in Uttar Pradesh. He was looking for a bigger house and a school for the children, said his relatives. “I got the call around 6 am from his father. He said that Ajay’s thekedar (contractor) called about a tree falling on his house,” said Sukhdev Kushwaha (65), Ajay’s uncle.

Ajay’s cousin Ankush (20), who lives in Kanpur, rushed to Delhi this morning. “Ajay and his family used to live in a rented room in a building before Jyoti became pregnant with their third son. After she moved to Kanpur with the children, Ajay moved to the farmland.” “Ajay had come to Delhi around 15 years ago, and was working with contractor Devraj Singh for the past two years as a farm labourer,” a relative added. Deputy Commissioner of Police (Dwarka) Ankit Singh said a PCR call was received at 5.26 am about the house collapse. When the police reached the spot, they found that gusty winds had uprooted a Neem tree, which collapsed onto a small house. A family of five was trapped under the debris. “Police and fire department teams pulled the family out of the rubble and shifted them to the hospital where four were declared dead,” the officer added.

# Attari-Wagah gates re-open, 27 Pakistan nationals cross over

GNS News Agency,May 7

Attari-Wagah border, Pakistan nationals cross over, Pakistan nationals cross border, Pakistanis cross over, Pakistanis cross border, Pahalgam attack, Pahalgam terror attack, Pahalgam terrorist attack, Pahalgam terrorists, Indian army, india pakistan ties, india pakistan tensions, article 370, Indian army, Abrogation of Article 370, terrorism, terrorist attack, Kashmir attack, Jammu and Kashmir terrorist attack, Jammu and Kashmir, cross-border infiltration, border security, border infiltration, Indian express news, current affairs Pakistan nationals walk towards the Attari-Wagah border on Friday. About 27 Pakistani nationals stranded at the Attari-Wagah border, following the expiry of the Indian’s deadline for them to leave the country, crossed over via the Integrated Check Post (ICP) in Amritsar on Friday.

In wake of April 22 Pahalgam terror attack, the Indian government cancelled all types of visas granted to Pakistani nationals and ordered them to leave the country by April 30. According to reports, about 80 Pakistani nationals were stranded at Attari on Thursday after the deadline expired. The 27 Pakistani nationals who crossed over Friday had been camping on the roads outside the ICP. About 50 more are queuing outside the ICP and may be allowed to cross over after clearance of customs and immigration



authorities. However, no Indians returned to the country on Friday. Meanwhile, Pakistan on Friday announced it would continue to allow the use of the Wagah border crossing for its citizens stranded in India. Responding to media queries, a spokesperson for Pakistan’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs acknowledged reports of Pakistani nationals, including children, stranded at the Attari border on the Indian side. We are aware of the media reports indicating that some Pakistani nationals are stranded at Attari. We are open to receiving our citizens in case the Indian authorities allow them to cross over,” the spokesperson said.

# DDA carries out demolition drive in Sainik Farms following L-G’s order

GNS News Agency,May 7

The Delhi Development Authority (DDA) carried out a demolition drive in South Delhi’s Sainik Farms to remove unauthorised construction on the land, which it had acquired, between April 24 and April 26, 2025. The drive was conducted in coordination with the Delhi Police, said officials. According to a statement issued by the DDA on Friday, the demolished structures included under-construction farmhouses spread over more than two bighas. The land falls under Saidulajab Village, which is part of Sainik Farms. The move follows directions from Lieutenant Governor V K Saxena, who is the chairman of DDA.

The L-G had asked officials to take strict action to remove encroachments on the DDA land. Further action is being planned in other areas with unauthorised construction, as per officials. It is estimated that about 50 lakh people in the Capital live on unoccupied construction, spanning about 175 Sq Km (approx. 43,000 acres) at present. This includes private and public land.

Under the Pradhan Mantri-Unauthorised Colonies in Delhi Awas Adhikar Yojana (PM-UDAY) scheme, 1,731 unauthorised colonies were marked for recognising ownership rights to residents in 2019. Sainik Farms is not in this



list of 1,731 unauthorised colonies in Delhi, which the DDA has decided to regularise under the PM-UDAY scheme. In March, the Delhi High Court, while hearing a petition seeking regularisation of Sainik Farms, had pulled up the Central government for not deciding on the issue and said the Centre and the Delhi government should iron out the issue of regularisation. In February, South Delhi BJP MP Ramvir Singh Bidhuri in Parliament had also raised the issue of regularising Sainik Farms and 68 other such colonies to provide ownership rights and civic amenities.

# Shortfall of SC/ST students & teachers at IIT Delhi flagged in submission to Parliamentary panel

GNS News Agency,May 7

Only 3.1% (20) of the 642 faculty members at the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Delhi belong to the Scheduled Caste (SC) category, and just 1.2% (8) are from the Scheduled Tribe (ST) category — a shortfall of 76 SC and 40 ST faculty members, or 11.9% and 6.3% respectively. As per the Central government’s reservation norms, institutions like IITs are required to maintain 15% reservation for the SC category and 7.5% for the ST category. The data for SC/ST representation across the institute, including teaching staff, students and non-teaching staff, was furnished to the Parliamentary Committee on the Welfare of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes last month ahead of a review visit on April 11 by the panel’s members, it has been learnt. In their memoranda submitted to the panel, representatives of students and teachers flagged concerns related to research pushback and placement concerns, among others. The data, which gave an overview of student representation over a decade, revealed that the intake for the SC category for undergraduate programmes was around 13.85% in 2015-16. This went up to 14.92% in 2024-25. For the ST category, the institute saw a surge from 6.92% to 7.46% in the same period. In postgraduate programmes, the percentage went from 11.27% in 2015-16 to 13.11% in 2024-25 for the SC category, and from 3.54% to 4.31% for ST candidates. In PhD programmes, the admission for SC students rose to 9.69% in 2024-25 from 8.88% in 2015-16, with ST student admissions surging to 3.28% in 2024-25 from 0.97% in 2015-16. The Parliamentary Committee’s visit was part of a broader review of the implementation of Constitutional safeguards for marginalised communities by premier institutes.

An official memorandum issued by the Lok Sabha Secretariat on March 26 underlined that the Committee’s “on-the-spot local study visit” would examine “implemen-

tion of reservation policy in student admissions, in faculty and non-faculty positions, along with other measures undertaken to safeguard the rights of SC/ST teachers/ad-hoc teachers/employees.” The Committee, chaired by MP Fagga Singh Khulaste, held interactions with faculty and students during its visit and met with the ST and SC faculty and student representatives to hear their grievances. Meanwhile, as per sources, IIT Delhi in its responses concerning the faculty representation, stated, “The institute undertakes all the necessary steps to ensure adequate representation from all the categories..” Institute specifically encourages applicants from the SC/ST/OBC/EWS category as well as persons with disability. On many occasions, few candidates are shortlisted from the ones who’ve applied, and even fewer are finally recruited. This leads to a scenario where fewer faculty members are on roll than the sanctioned strength. “On student admissions, the institute in its responses said, “There are no unfilled seats in all course-based programmes.”

In PG and PhD programmes, “some students leave due to the resignations on personal, medical, better job opportunity, and better prospects,” said the institute. Students and faculty members also submitted memoranda to the panel. “Many departments do not have a single SC/ST faculty,” read the memorandum submitted by teachers’ representatives on April 11. “The under-representation is severe,” they wrote, pointing out that key hiring panels such as the Recruitment Advisory Committee (RAC) have “increased the workload of SC/ST community and also exposed them to further conflicts and pressure at the department level.” “So far, no SC/ST faculty has been offered any key administrative position at the level of Dean or Associate Dean,” the faculty memorandum noted. The faculty also alleged that research on caste-related issues faces resistance from within the institution.



# Pope Trump! U.S. President posts AI-generated image of himself dressed as pope



GNS News Agency, May 7 U.S. President Donald Trump posted a spoof picture of himself dressed as the pope on his Truth Social platform after joking that he would like to be the next Catholic pontiff. The president is seen in

## When faith and friendship crossed boundaries: A Christian couple, a Muslim friend, and the will to carry on

In an age marked by increasing social divides, the story of Geetha, David, and Amir Unnisa stands out as a testament to the enduring power of friendship and compassion beyond religious lines. Geetha, a 70-year-old Christian woman from Hyderabad, spent decades earning a living by selling flowers outside temples. Alongside her was her husband, David, a skilled cook and her lifelong partner. Though they never had children, their bond was rich with love and shared hardships. Earlier this year, however, their world was shaken when Geetha lost her right leg to diabetes.

Following her amputation at the government-run Gandhi Hospital, Secunderabad in January 2025, David gave up his job to care for her full time. It was a reversal of roles; just months earlier, Geetha had looked after David when he underwent surgery for appendicitis, despite her worsening health. With no immediate family to turn to, the couple leaned solely on each other, their days marked by quiet courage and unwavering devotion. But help arrived from an unexpected place. Hearing about their plight from far-away Mumbai, Amir Unnisa, David's childhood friend made the journey across States to support them. Despite her modest means, Amir Unnisa tirelessly sought help for her

what appears to be an AI-generated color image, with his right index finger pointed toward the sky, wearing papal regalia, including white robes, a gold crucifix pendant and the mitre hat.

It comes after Mr. Trump joked to reporters this week that he would like to be the next pope, just days before cardinals are due to start the conclave to elect the successor of Pope Francis who died on April 21. Asked who he would like to succeed Pope Francis, Mr. Trump said: "I'd like to be pope, that would be my number one choice." Cardinal in New York 'very good': TrumMr. Trump went on to say that he did not have a preference but said there was a cardinal in New York who was "very good."

He appeared to be referring to the archbishop of New York, Timothy Dolan, a theological conservative and fiercely opposed to abortion. File picture of Donald Trump at the funeral of Pope Francis in St. Peter's Square on April 26, 2025 in Vatican City, File picture of Donald Trump at the funeral of Pope Francis in St. Peter's Square on April 26, 2025 in Vatican City, | Photo Credit: Getty ImagesMr. Trump attended the funeral service of Pope Francis last week, his first foreign trip since returning to power. About 20% of Americans declare themselves Catholic, and exit polls indicated in November that they voted around 60% in favor of Mr. Trump.

Pope Francis had arguably been one of the most powerful moral voices on the world stage critical of Mr. Trump. When Mr. Trump first ran for president in 2016, Francis was unsparing on his signature promise to build a border wall to seal off Mexico. Francis told reporters, "Anyone, whoever he is, who only wants to build walls and not bridges is not a Christian."



friends, knocking on doors across Hyderabad. Her efforts initially met with disappointment, until a local auto driver, familiar with the city's charitable networks, took her to Helping Hand Foundation (HHF). Moved by Geetha's condition, HHF quickly stepped in, pledging to provide financial assistance and facilitate her ongoing treatment at Gandhi Hospital. "They need monthly support until Geetha can walk again and return to her flower-selling work, which HHF will be supporting," said Mujtaba Hasan Askari of Helping Hand Foundation.

## Can ChatGPT's Shopify deal hurt Google's search business?

A year after OpenAI launched ChatGPT, on the company's developer community, one member broached: "Looking for a shopify [sic] solution which can index product data from the store and recommend users with products based on user message." In response, another one replied: "You could build a dynamic web-scraper, using Selenium and beautiful soup [sic], to extract the html [sic] from web pages and then implement functionality to instruct the API to extract certain elements, like prices." After roughly two years later, OpenAI took a different, but easy path to make the integration.

On April 29, the Microsoft- and Softbank-backed AI startup announced it is experimenting with a shopping feature that will visually display product details and pricing to users based on the context of their interaction with the bot. While the Sam Altman-led company did not reveal how the back-end of this feature works or whether it has formally tied up with online commerce platform Shopify to make this happen, some developers spotted a new code in ChatGPT's public web bundle a few days earlier that revealed a Shopify checkout link, along with fields for shopping, price, product ratings and purchasing. Taking the cue for Mr. Lutke's post, this integration between Shopify and ChatGPT marks a turning point in the evolution of online commerce that could dramatically shift how consumers discover and purchase products. If the partnership unfolds as planned, it will usher in a paradigm shift in shopping, moving away from conventional browser-based searches and embracing a conversational, AI-driven shopping environment.

Historically, online commerce has relied heavily on search engines, social media platforms, and digital ads to funnel traffic to online stores. Shoppers typically start with a Google search, scroll through product listings, compare prices across sites, and then navigate through checkout flows that often involve multiple clicks and forms. This process, while familiar, is fragmented. The ChatGPT-Shopify integration could potentially create a seamless, in-chat shopping model. For instance, a user searching for the "best running shoes" on a browser and clicking through 10 different links might switch to simply asking ChatGPT for a product recommendation. The bot would then suggest a curated set of products based on the query, user preferences, reviews, and possibly even previous interactions. Most importantly, the user could complete the purchase within the chat interface, thanks to the 'check-out' part included in the public web bundle.

When AI connects buyers and sellersWhat we are witnessing with this type of integration is an entirely new, personalised way of shopping that could fundamentally change user behaviour, provided the integration is successful and the user finds value in the chatbot's recommendations. Also, in this model, ChatGPT will act as both the search engine and the storefront, blurring the lines between discovery, recommendation, and checkout. The bot's ability to play all these roles effectively will be put to the ultimate test, the result of which could disrupt the status quo in digital sales. While consumers could find this method to be faster and more personalised, for merchants hosting



their service through Shopify, the stakes are even higher. And this integration could transform Shopify from a website-creating platform for merchants into a marketplace-like ecosystem, instantly giving its millions of merchants exposure to ChatGPT's user base, without extra marketing or integration work.

This type of paradigm shift raises new challenges. Chief among them is visibility. For instance, if an AI chatbot acts as the new gatekeeper, how can brands ensure their products are featured? Would ChatGPT favour brands with more data, better reviews, or existing popularity, in effect reinforcing existing hierarchies as smaller or newer merchants may struggle unless AI ranking mechanisms are transparent and inclusive? Moreover, as chatbots summarise product descriptions in their own words, brands may lose control over how their products are represented. This could dilute brand identity and force companies to rethink how they communicate their value proposition, optimising not for human readers, but for AI comprehension. Despite these concerns, the broader trend is hard to ignore. As consumers grow more comfortable with AI tools and expect faster, more intuitive digital experiences, chatbot-based product discovery is poised to gain ground. ChatGPT meets Google Search

To set the record straight, Google is still a colossal player in the global tech landscape with nearly 90% market share in the global search business. Alongside its search dominance, Google's advertising empire, bolstered by Google Ads, YouTube ads, and display ads, generates a significant portion of its income. However, the shopping feature in ChatGPT represents a looming threat to Google's dominance in this space. If consumers increasingly turn to AI chatbots for product discovery instead of browsing Google's search results pages, the Internet giant could see a significant disruption to its core business model. In a traditional search flow, users enter keywords into Google's search bar, explore links, compare products, and click on ads. Advertisers pay Google when their ad is clicked, driving much of its revenue. But, if ChatGPT becomes the preferred method of product discovery, users might no longer engage with Google's search engine as much for product searches. Instead, they could rely on the AI chatbot to instantly offer tailored product recommendations, complete with checkout options, without ever leaving the chatbot interface

# India ban leaves Pakistani YouTubers and cricketers worried over loss of earnings and reach



GNS News Agency, May 7  
Islamabad: Several Pakistani YouTubers and former cricketers have voiced deep concerns over a recent ban imposed by Indian authorities, saying it will deliver a major blow to their earnings and online visibility. Many Pakistani content creators, especially those focused on cricket, have built thriving platforms with large Indian audiences. With India being one of the biggest markets for cricket-related content on YouTube and social media, creators say the restriction could severely affect their livelihood. "A large portion of

our viewership comes from India. One can't deny the fact that most of these channels rely heavily on their Indian fan base," a former Pakistan cricketer told IANS. "This ban is going to hit many YouTubers hard, both financially and in terms of visibility."

Over the past few years, dozens of Pakistani cricket analysts, former players, and vloggers have gained popularity among Indian fans for their candid takes on matches, player performances, and cross-border cricketing rivalries. Many of them also collaborate with Indian content creators and earn revenue through monetized views, brand partnerships, and live interactions.

Now, with the Indian ban in effect, their primary source of traffic and engagement has taken a hit, leading to uncertainty about the future. Digital experts also warn that the move could have long-term consequences. "For creators who depend on YouTube's monetization, losing Indian viewership means a steep drop in ad revenue," said a social media strategist based in Lahore. While some hope the ban is temporary, others are exploring ways to diversify their audience base beyond India. Until then, the content community in Pakistan remains anxious, bracing for the financial fallout of losing access to their largest and most loyal audience.

## Trump's budget includes \$3.2 billion for World Bank's fund for poorest countries

GNS News Agency, May 7  
President Donald Trump asked Congress to approve \$3.2 billion in contributions to the World Bank's International Development Association (IDA), which provides low- or zero-interest loans to the world's poorest countries. International finance experts hailed the sum, to be paid over three years, as a welcome surprise, given recent worries that Trump could skip making any contribution to IDA. Former President Joe Biden had pledged to contribute \$4 billion, but that money has not yet been transferred. The new amount is lower, but will still help the World Bank get close to its goal of raising \$100 billion for IDA by leveraging countries' contributions, sources familiar with the process said. The final decision rests with the U.S. Congress.

Asked if the Trump administration would stick to the \$4 billion pledge, Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent had indicated the sum would be decided in the budget, with much depending on actions by World Bank President Ajay Banga and the head of the International Monetary Fund aimed at re-focusing the institutions on their core missions. Clemence Landers, vice president at the Center for Global Development, welcomed the amount proposed for IDA. "The U.S. IDA number stands out as a rare bright spot in a budget full of drastic cuts to the U.S. foreign assistance apparatus," she said. "There has been significant speculation about the U.S. role in the international financial institutions under



Trump, and whether the U.S. would pay into IDA at all." The budget proposal unveiled by Trump on Friday cuts foreign aid by \$49 billion, a senior official with the Office of Management and Budget told reporters. Documents released by the White House showed a cut of \$555 million in funds for the African Development Bank and the African Development Fund, saying it was "not currently aligned" to the administration's priorities. The budget proposal did include the \$3.2 billion for IDA, adding other donors and institutions should take on more of the costs. "This fulfills the President's promise to no longer dole out foreign aid dollars with no return on investment for the American people," the document said.

## From millets to mistrust, a harvest gone sour

Draped in a blue pattu sari, gold chains around her neck and ears heavy with jewellery, 60-year-old Rangamma of Hothi B. village in Telangana's Medak district still carries the quiet dignity of a woman who once believed she had a stake in change. Seated on the low wall of a village well, she opens her lunch box, tears a piece of jonna rotte (jowar roti) and eats it with mango pickle under the noonday sun. "We are innocent, illiterate women," she says, recalling how they were once drawn into a new world of sanghams (voluntary village-level associations) and savings. "They told us we could save, take loans, stand on our feet. So we believed and started saving — first 1 a week, then 5," adds the mother of four.

For over four decades, the Deccan Development Society (DDS) helped transform the lives of Dalit women across Telangana's arid Zaheerabad mandal (Medak). The agri-based voluntary organisation turned fallow land into food, built homes, created seed banks, ran alternative public distribution systems and drew global recognition for its community-led model. It was a story of transformation, and pride. But now, that pride has curdled into pain and suspicion. Women like Rangamma who helped build the movement are raising difficult questions — about missing savings, land deals and the lack of transparency in the very institution they helped build.

Beyond the spanking wide roads of western Hyderabad, beyond the skyscrapers of the Indian Institute of Technology-Hyderabad, and beside the Bidar-Hyderabad road is a green oasis — Pastapur village in Zaheerabad mandal. Speckled with two-storey houses, gabled roofs and farmlands, the village is just another prosperous settlement in Telangana. But beneath its serene surface lies a story of struggle, solidarity and simmering doubt. Under the leadership of P.V. Sathesh, the DDS became a nationally and internationally recognised model for grassroots development and millet revival. On a bright, sunny day, shaded by tamarind and neem trees near the village well, a group of women chat about sanghams, sorghum and sustainable farming — terms that have been part of their lives since the 1980s. This is the land of the DDS, in the drought-prone Zaheerabad region. "The movement of sanghams started in Bardipur," says B. Jayappa (65), a resident of Medak and one of the initial jinees of the savings scheme. "I reached out to G.S. Gopal after the foundation of our homes was wrecked by the upper castes in 1982. They blamed us for eating peddakura (beef) and did not want us to build homes close to the temple." At the time, Gopal was part of the IDL Rural Development Trust, a subsidiary of industrial explosives manufacturing unit IDL Industries Limited. He would putter around on a scooter, working on development projects in Medak — then the constituency of Indira Gandhi, who had just won the Lok Sabha seat. IDL had stepped into the picture as the Centre had allowed 100% tax exemptions to corporates. Gopal helped 20 villagers to band together and form the first informal small savings self-help group (SHG). The then State government pitched in with aid of ₹5,840 per house, and with IDL's help, 16 houses were built. "Those houses still stand," says Jayappa. By 1983, the Deccan Development Society was formally born. It brought together thousands of marginalised women in the region, creating a voluntary association centered around sustainable and equitable development. Savings, loans and livestock At a time when daily wages were ₹2 a day, villagers began saving 1 per week — a humble but radical act of collective empowerment. The pooled money enabled members to borrow for livelihood needs. "Twenty years ago, we

started by saving ₹5, ₹10 and ₹50. Then we would borrow to buy goats for 1,600 or buffaloes for ₹4,000. Whatever we earned, we deposited back with DDS so we could borrow again. Then the sangham closed," shares Nagamma, a frazzled grandmother from Dannavaram village who was just 20 when the movement began. She had two daughters and a son at that age. "I still don't have land. But I have hands," she adds with a hint of pride. One of the first funding agencies to recognise the role of women, savings and sorghum, and step in to support DDS was Germany's Brot für die Welt (Bread for the World) in 1989. A major turning point came in 1995 with the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing, which placed gender equality on the global development agenda. For DDS, which had already ticked boxes on gender justice, Dalit empowerment, dryland agriculture and seed sovereignty, this brought a rush of international funding. DDS began working with thousands of Dalit women, promoting sustainable agriculture, reviving native greens, setting up grain banks, and rejuvenating fallow lands. It created one of India's earliest community-run alternative Public Distribution Systems (PDS), where instead of rice, millets — the food grain of the region — were distributed village-wise. DDS offered ₹4,200 per person to turn fallow land productive and grow millets over a three-year period. The harvest was distributed locally with DDS subsidies, using a five-point poverty scale to determine eligibility. This created seed sovereignty in the region as 574 acres came under cultivation and spurred food security rooted in local traditions. Jonna rotte (sorghum roti), a staple for people in Telangana, Maharashtra and Karnataka, returned to the table. "We got seed money to cultivate the land and deposited part of our earnings with DDS. We gave 25% of what we earned, they promised to add 75% and give it to us in times of need. We dug wells, built watersheds, picked stones and even contributed ₹210 for a sangham shop," Rangamma says. "But when I asked about the ₹3,000 we had deposited 20 years ago, the bank said my name wasn't even in the joint account book. At the police station and Mandal Revenue Officer's office, they taunt us by saying that DDS has more money than the government. "Did the sangham members ask for the money? "Yes, we did. We were told it is safe. But later, whoever asked for money was dismissed," she sighs. Divya Veluguri, executive director of DDS, confirms the complaints. "We have initiated a process where savings are being returned following verification of records held by both DDS and sangham members. In most cases, the loan amounts taken were higher than the deposits. This is documented both at DDS and in sangham ledgers.

So far, we have issued notices in 30 villages, inviting members to reclaim their deposits." Yet discontent runs deep. The main man and the money "Sathesh did not let anyone question his functioning," says Jagannath Reddy, a resident of Mogudampally village in Medak who worked with DDS from 1986 until his sudden dismissal in 2009. The man at the centre of both reverence and resistance was Periyapatna Venkatasubbaiah Sathesh. A graduate of the Indian Institute of Mass Communication, Sathesh had worked with Doordarshan in Hyderabad before he joined DDS in its early days. He would go on to lead the organisation for four decades until his death in March 2023. From setting up balwadis (pre-schools) and mobilising women's groups to pushing for food sovereignty and sustainable farming, Sathesh shaped the organisation's philosophy and reach. Under his leadership, DDS became a nationally and internationally recognised model for grassroots development and millet revival.



# The great porn experiment of the 21st century: an epidemiological natural study



In a recent divorce ruling, the Madurai Bench of the Madras High Court adjudicated a case where the husband accused his wife of being addicted to pornography, alleging that it amounted to cruelty within the marriage. But the court ruled that private viewing of adult content does not qualify as cruelty. While the court addressed the question through the lens of individual autonomy and marital privacy, the judgment invites a deeper inquiry: can pornography consumption be considered an addiction? Because the judiciary recognises substance addiction—like alcoholism or drug dependence—as valid grounds for divorce under the charge of cruelty. But pornography sits in a grey area. It is not a chemical substance but a sensory stimulus and leaves no visible scars on the body after consumption. However, it shares unsettling similarities with known addictive behaviours. The human fascination with erotic imagery is ancient. The sensuous murals of the Ajanta caves etching expressions of sexuality have always had their place in art. But never before in history could humans instantly access, stream, and interact with vast oceans of visually stimulation erotic material—free, anonymous, and available twenty-four hours a day. Today, an ordinary person can access more bodies, fantasies, and acts than a medieval king could dream of in his harem.

The human brain is wired to respond to novelty in sexual mating. The Coolidge effect is a unique mammalian behavioural pattern that refers to the biological tendency to be re-stimulated by a new mate or stimulus. Modern pornography capitalises on this evolutionary trap with endless scrolls, categories, and ever-changing scenarios. It is not just about arousal; it is about novelty. This novelty acts as a supranormal stimulus, referring to artificially enhanced stimuli that hijack natural reward systems. Globally, studies suggest that pornography consumption is more prevalent among males than females, with self-reported surveys indicating that approximately 60–70% of young men and around 30–40% of young women engage in regular viewing. However, these numbers vary widely by age, cultural context, and methodology. The most reliable study to date—a nationally representative Australian survey—found that 4.4% of men and 1.2% of women “considered themselves addicted to pornography”. India lacks large-scale, peer-reviewed research on pornography use. Much of the available data is based on self-reporting that is prone to bias.

Pornography use is not classified as an addiction by the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders 5 & the International Classification of Diseases (ICD-11). The ICD-11 does acknowledge ‘Compulsive Sexual Behaviour Disorder’, which includes persistent and distressing patterns of sexual behaviour like porn use, but places this under impulse control disorders, not addictions. This hesitation reflects a deeper scientific dilemma: where do we draw the line between habit and harm, between high-frequency use and clinical pathology? The difficulty in categorisation begins with the elusive nature of the behaviour itself. In the case of substances like alcohol or nicotine, thresholds can be defined in grams, blood levels, or measurable physical harm. With porn, the metric is psychological: does it interfere with daily functioning, does it cause distress, does it lead to compulsive patterns? The model includes impaired control (such as cravings or failed at-

## Strengthening parliamentary oversight in India

A historical fact is that over nearly three years, the Constituent Assembly met for 167 days to frame the Constitution of India. Among the many crucial debates that occurred was the question of what form of government India should adopt. Defending the choice of a parliamentary system, Dr. B.R. Ambedkar argued that it offered more responsibility and less stability which is a necessary trade-off for a functioning democracy. He emphasised the point that such a system allows for the daily accountability of the executive through questions, motions and debates in Parliament, and periodic accountability through elections. While the Constitution enshrines checks and balances, legislative oversight has often been diminished. Efficiency in governance is important, but not at the cost of transparency. Strengthening the role of Parliament in scrutinising executive action is essential in not just making laws but also ensuring their effective implementation and accountability. If India seeks ‘Maximum Governance’, it must also commit to ‘Maximum Accountability’, starting with an empowered and effective Parliament. Over decades, Parliament has developed an array of mechanisms to fulfil this mandate — some formal, some by convention. From the daily scrutiny of Question Hour and the spontaneity of Zero Hour, to the behind-the-scenes workings of Standing Committees, these tools form the framework of accountability. In theory, they empower Members of Parliament (MP) to ask probing questions, seek detailed information, and even move a no-confidence motion if necessary. Despite its strong framework, parliamentary oversight often falls short. Question Hour, intended as a daily spotlight on government accountability, is frequently disrupted by noisy protests, leading to adjournments where important issues remain unaddressed. During the 17th Lok Sabha (2019-24), Question Hour functioned for 60% of its scheduled time in the Lok Sabha and 52% in Rajya Sabha, significantly reducing its effectiveness. Even when it operates, individual MPs tend to focus on isolated queries rather than a systematic scrutiny of complex, cross-ministerial problems. Parliamentary committees, including the Department-related Standing Committees (DRSC), meet regularly and generate detailed reports, though these are often not taken up for discussion on the floor. Consequently, despite their detailed evaluations of policies and schemes, committee findings have had limited influence on legislation or executive action. Despite their mandate for detailed scrutiny, committee consultations tend to engage a relatively small group of stakeholders, raising concerns about diversity and the breadth of input. Moreover, their inherently temporary structure limits the ability of members to develop both expertise and institutional standing. Even with its inconsistencies, Indian legislative oversight has had notable successes. The Standing Committee on Railways recommended waiving dividend payments by Indian Railways in 2015 to improve its financial health, which was implemented in 2016. The Standing Committee on Transport influenced

tempts to stop), functional impairment (neglect of work, studies, or relationships), and risky use (continuing the behaviour despite adverse consequences). This is further complicated by the fact that porn is sensory stimuli, not a physical drug like tobacco nor a tangible engagement like gambling. It doesn’t require a casino, partners or money; unlike alcohol, it doesn’t leave a smell or a hangover. All it needs is a smartphone and a closed door. This ease of access powered by the digital revolution makes porn consumption nearly frictionless. This invisibility makes it harder to measure, regulate, and study. The scientific community faces another challenge: there is no real control group or animal model. With the explosion of internet access post-2000, nearly all adolescents and young adults today have been exposed to pornographic content, often before they experience partnered intimacy. In this sense, our generation lacks a “control group” or “baseline”, making it impossible to determine the long-term psychological effects of this exposure. When everyone smokes, lung cancer becomes normal. Unlike substances that can be tested in animal models to study addiction pathways, pornography—being a visual and cognitive experience unique to humans cannot be replicated in lab rats or monkeys. There is no rodent equivalent of compulsively watching or endlessly scrolling through nude mates. This absence of animal models has hampered the routine route of scientific enquiry and stalled the progress of understanding porn consumption.

Neurobiological evidence about porn use however, is accumulating. Functional MRI studies have shown that people with compulsive porn use display altered activity in brain regions involved in reward processing, such as the ventral striatum and amygdala. Repeated exposure to high-stimulation erotic content results in what neuroscientists call “sensitisation”—heightened response to cues—and “desensitisation”—the need for more extreme or novel content to feel the same level of arousal. Over time, changes in the prefrontal cortex may weaken impulse control, mirroring what is seen in substance use disorders. These structural and functional changes are mediated by key neurotransmitters: dopamine, which regulates pleasure and reward; glutamate, which governs learning and habit formation; and serotonin, which modulates mood. Just like alcohol or cocaine, pornography also appears to rewire the brain. Clinically self-reported porn consumers reported heightened anxiety, insomnia, poor concentration, irritability, and relationship dissatisfaction. There is also growing concern about body image issues, unrealistic expectations about sex, and emotional detachment in intimate relationships.

In epidemiology, natural experiments refer to large-scale phenomena not designed or controlled by scientists but observed historically to understand their impact. The widespread and unregulated consumption of digital pornography may be such an experiment. Just as Marie Curie worked with radioactive isotopes before understanding the dangers, or as Hollywood once glamorised cigarette smoking as a symbol of sophistication, we may be living through a phase of cultural naivety. We are normalising a behaviour whose long-term effects on brain development, social bonding, and emotional regulation we have yet to understand fully. No fixed threshold can define “what’s too much,” but science agrees that the brain is malleable. Whether this adaptation is healthy or harmful depends on the context, the individual, and the consequences. But as researchers continue to debate, as platforms continue to evolve, and as generations continue to consume, one thing becomes increasingly clear—we are in the midst of one of the largest unregulated psychological natural experiments in human history. And the results may take decades, if not longer, to fully unfold. The Madras High Court judgment appears well-aligned with existing medical consensus. Whether future evidence shifts this perspective remains uncertain, but for now, labelling porn use as cruelty lacks the clinical backing needed for such a legal conclusion, even though consuming it is not advisable.

the Motor Vehicles Bill amendments in 2017, removing caps on third-party insurance and establishing a National Road Safety Board. Other significant interventions include the Committee on Public Undertakings addressing delays in National Highways Authority of India (NHAI)-managed highway projects, recommending that projects commence only after acquiring 80% of land and necessary clearances. Similarly, the Estimates Committee advised increasing domestic uranium production by opening new mines, reducing dependency on imports. The Public Accounts Committee (PAC) exposed critical delays, opaque appointments, and corrupt practices during the Commonwealth Games in 2010. On average, the PAC has made 180 recommendations every year in the past eight years, out of which 80% were accepted by the government. To make oversight truly effective, Parliament must adopt targeted reforms, beginning with robust post-legislative scrutiny. Laws do not end with their passage; they begin there. Yet, India lacks a formal process to track whether laws are achieving their intended impact. This gap can be addressed by creating sub-committees under each Standing Committee or a specialised body to review implementation. The United Kingdom offers a useful model: government departments submit reviews of major laws within three to five years, which are then examined by parliamentary committees — enabling timely course correction and ensuring that laws deliver on their promises. Strengthening and institutionalising committee work must also be a priority. One way to do this is by making oversight findings more accessible; through translations in local languages, visual explainers, or short videos. At the same time, select DRSC reports should be brought to the floor for debate, followed by a mandatory response from the Minister concerned. This would ensure that committee work informs parliamentary discourse and enhances executive accountability. Committees must also be strengthened with dedicated research and technical support, thus moving beyond mere administrative assistance. Technology offers a powerful opportunity to modernise and strengthen parliamentary oversight. MPs in India often operate without specialised staff or professional research support, making it harder to scrutinise complex policies or spending data. Faced with massive volumes of budget documents, audit reports, and policy reviews, they are at a disadvantage. By leveraging Artificial Intelligence and data analytics, Parliament can help members swiftly flag irregularities, track policy trends, and frame sharper, evidence-based questions. While delivering the inaugural address held to formally inaugurate the new Standing Committees in 1993, the then Vice-President K.R. Narayanan said that the main purpose of the system was not to weaken or criticise the administration but to strengthen it by investing it with more meaningful parliamentary support. Strengthening legislative oversight means honouring the mandate citizens have given their representatives; to make sure the machinery of government stays transparent,

# IVF is expensive. Can recent cost-cutting technologies make a difference?



The year was 2004, the date was August 4, when our article, ‘Inside the tube and closer to nature’, was published as a letter to the editor, in the journal Reproductive Biomedicine, online. The founder-editor of the journal was the late Robert Edwards, Nobel prize winner in physiology and more famously known for being a pioneer in the field of IVF (in vitro fertilisation), credited for the birth of the world’s first test tube baby. The article spoke of our experience with performing tubal procedures in IVF and their efficacy in successful pregnancy rates. The concept being: retrieval and transfer of the female oocytes into the ampullary portion of the fallopian tube, in its natural environment. Either these oocytes were loaded with sperms, or an intrauterine insemination was performed so that the sperms swam naturally towards their destination to fertilise with the oocyte. The concept of performing this was to reliably place gametes in their natural environment to enable fertilisation. Mimicking nature is the intention of IVF, be it temperature control or the well-fortified culture media used and their growth periodically monitored in CO2 incubators. Now, tubal procedures have become obsolete. Advances in cell culture methods and the expense of anaesthesia and it being a laparoscopic procedure, sealed their fate. Cutting costs in conventional IVF

But then again, we feel the urge to cut costs in conventional IVF. This compels us to research techniques that could possibly reduce the number of injections that are taken by women, known as controlled ovarian hyperstimulation, to yield more than just a few mature follicles in their ovaries. When these follicles, which are monitored by ultrasounds on alternate days, reach a mature size, we surgically aspirate them to retrieve oocytes. The first method of cost cutting was to either perform a natural cycle IVF, or use minimal stimulation protocols with a combination of more tablets than injections. Depending on the individual’s age, diagnosis and ovarian reserve, stimulation protocols are tailor-made for their needs. The other method, which is not new in the market is, in vitro maturation of oocytes (IVM). In this method, we retrieve oocytes from follicles that are not fully mature (1.4 x 1.4 cm) and culture them in media, to which are added specific proportions of follicle-stimulating and luteinising hormones along with serum-derived protein and growth factors. This method cut short nearly half the cost of injections and also reduced risks of a potential complication called ovarian hyperstimulation syndrome (OHSS). However, the American Society of Reproductive Medicine only recently, in 2021, declared it as non-experimental and its usage around the globe is much lower in comparison to conventional IVF. The reason being, lower

## A profound shift in the global order

India is at another inflexion point, reminiscent of Vasco De Gama sailing into Kozhikode in 1498 and of a complacent Zamorin lacking strategic intention. Instead of trade routes, global value chains are being reshaped by force. The stakes are high for India which is in line to be the third largest economy. The 75-year-old post-colonial order, labelled as globalisation, characterised multilateralism imposing rule-based restrictions on all for the common good. Its conceptual foundation of a world divided between ‘donors’ and ‘recipients’ became obsolete with China ‘overtaking’ the United States as the largest donor, and in the share of manufacturing and global trade. The World Trade Organization and the United Nations and Treaties lost their utility to the proponents, leading to U.S. withdrawals. The COVID-19 pandemic exposed the G-7 scrambling to corner medicines, oblivious of the plight of others. Now, the G-7 is splitting leaving a vacuum and global institutions such as BRICS will soon have more requests for membership. U.S. President Donald Trump is not whimsical. He is responding to a more equal world moving out of the colonial frame that is attempting to hold on to fading benefits. Bilateral deals are forcing countries to subordinate their interests and the way tariffs have been described and defined arbitrarily based on trade imbalance intrudes into how national laws should be changed. Least Developed Countries no longer have privileges. The U.S. is restructuring its approach to prosperity and power and so should the others.

The ‘breakup’ of the G-7 and G-20 now leaves global agenda-setting open. Since 2020, the U.S., China, the European Union and India have together contributed nearly three-quarters of all growth, with the U.S. and China accounting for almost half. There is also a decline in the relative power of the U.S. Russia has become an Asian power, increasing energy links with China and India. Asia will soon again have two-thirds of global wealth and power (as had been the case throughout civilisation except for the age of colonialism). Geopolitics has returned to its natural state of co-existence sharing prosperity.

India has to be strategic to grasp new opportunities with the ‘dismantling’ of the WTO just as China used its entry into the WTO for its rise. The U.S. and China are pretty much evenly balanced in terms of influence, trade, technology, defensive military capacity and playing tit-for-tat on tariff levels. The challenge is to manage trade relations with the U.S. pushing its agricultural and energy surplus and to build on the rapprochement with China. The future direction has been set in the recent statement of Prime Minister Narendra Modi that this is the Asian Century. The turmoil within the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) is an opportunity to jointly work towards an Asian common market, with bilateral concessions to share prosperity. As the WTO’s ‘most-favoured nation’ clause of non-discrimination withers away, it is in India’s longer term interest to propose a new cooperative architecture to ASEAN and the African Union, as their potential consumption will exceed current consumption in the U.S. and Europe. India’s world-class diplomats should be given the task of coming up with a new type of principles of global governance for a more equal world. Gaining from global value chains that are dependent more on technology than on tariffs requires laying out a new type of rules that reduce non-tariff barriers and treat linkages between goods, services, investment and infrastructure as part of composite agreements, with a review of national impacts annually.

Trade and innovation neglected Emerging from colonialism, India framed foreign policy in terms of a balancing between the great powers, relying on tactics than on strat-

success rates. Also, there is a learning curve in lab preparations for this process and it does remain challenging for regular use.

The same year as IVM was gaining popularity as the new kid on the block, I was doing my Master’s in clinical embryology (2004-2006) at the Jones Institute of Reproductive Medicine in Virginia, U.S.. For my final thesis, I decided to perform in vitro maturation on a select group of PCOS (polycystic ovarian syndrome) patients who were ideal, as they required more injections, and so were also at risk of OHSS. However, I soon realised the nuances of culturing immature oocytes outside of the body not only depended on stringent culture conditions but also the basic quality of oocytes. PCOS patients are a tricky group where quality is concerned. I had to abandon my research and convert it to a literature review instead. Recently, a U.S.-based biotechnology company that works in reproductive health Gameto, grabbed headlines, with the introduction of ‘Fertilo’, which utilised ovarian support cells derived from stem cells, to literally recreate the ovarian environment, in vitro. These ovarian support cells are derived from human induced pluripotent stem cells (hiPSC) that overexpress a variety of transcription and growth factors. Not only that, they behave like the nourishing granulosa cells that respond to exogenous hormones and feed the oocyte in vivo. So instead of supplementing the hormones as discussed earlier, the ovarian stem cells formed the elixir in culture in which immature oocytes were incubated for 30 hours, following which a maturity check was performed and fertilisation was enabled by conventional methods such as IVF and ICSI. To test safety and efficacy, 20 patients were recruited. Once cleared, the remaining 20 patients were randomised to two groups, one using fertile and the other using conventional IVM. The success rates projected as maturation rate, ongoing pregnancies and live births is double in the Fertilo group in comparison to the IVM group. The bias in the study however, is that the population was less than 37 years old and also had normal ovarian reserves. The success of this remains to be seen in a variety of diagnoses like older women, PCOS patients, those with low ovarian reserves etc. In this subset of patients, the current refined stimulation protocols have actually yielded much better results than a decade ago, including a reduction in OHSS. There are many factors that need to be considered before plucking a gamete out of its natural environment and subjecting it to in vitro conditions. The oocyte maturation process requires an intact meiotic spindle, proper nuclear maturation whereby there is resumption of meiosis (cell reduction division) and cytoplasmic maturation that enables accumulation of growth factors, leading to normal fertilisation and growth in vitro. Apart from these processes, disruption of epigenetic events from maternally expressed genes could result in poor integrity of embryos post fertilisation.

In conclusion, newer culture methods and research methodologies that cut costs and complications are most welcome; however, elaborate multicentre studies and a follow-up of the pregnancies and births are required to ensure that results are on par, or better than conventional and time-tested IVF methods. The real test of IVF is not merely pregnancy rates, but how well the babies are doing 20 years into the future.



egy. The first challenge to the post-colonial world was the Bandung Conference of newly independent Asian and African countries in 1955. Jawaharlal Nehru moved to the Non-Aligned Movement in 1961, shifting from economic development to peace in a divided world, becoming a darling of the West while India remained poor. The best diplomats are still sent to negotiate resolutions in the United Nations, ignoring rights and opportunities through trade. India also ignored what other leading powers were doing — technological innovation in partnership with academia and industry, which is the other side of the coin of trade. Now is the time for hard decisions to be taken to develop a national consensus between political parties and States on how to nurture talent and focus on skills and employment in order to regain our technological edge, wealth and global status. The West developed on the foundation of colonialism unlike the East. New policy groups need to engage and seek complementarity with China, ASEAN and Africa as value chains get restructured. There will no longer be global goods and treaties to which others can subscribe; the smaller countries that have been hit hardest by the new order are looking for an alternative to choosing sides. India has the endogenous capacity to aim for global technological leadership by developing open source software that will shape future multilateralism and international cooperation. Huawei, which was sanctioned by the U.S. for spreading telecommunications networks worldwide, is manufacturing 7-nanometer (7nm) chips just behind global technology leaders. The DeepSeek open source AI model is cheaper than and as good as the best in the U.S.. Fifteen years ago, a World Bank study noted that China has reached global scale in the hardware industry but not in software. India had achieved the reverse, then faltered. Lesson from China: The most important lesson in China’s re-emergence is national consensus on endogenous pathways to achieve prosperity, and not looking at socio-economic growth through the modelling prism of the West. Patents are a better indicator of future prosperity than GDP. Reducing the price of assured electricity is the most effective incentive for a restructuring of the economy, and prosperity is the optimum adaptation to adverse effects of climate change. India needs to formulate grand challenges with academia and industry to leverage its world-class human talent, vast data and proven digital stack to build the best large language models in the world, which would make India a formidable cyber power. In the digital world, the foundation of wealth and influence is AI, which is reminiscent of India clothing the world for millennia relying on skill and not monopoly.



# Building a community of nature educators in Bengaluru



A game of spring bingo is underway at Cubbon Park on a pleasant Sunday morning. The players fan across the park's lush lawns and thickets of trees, dodging other Sunday regulars (walkers, joggers, readers, skaters, dogs, lovers ambling hand-in-hand) as they attempt to identify specific things in the park: new leaves, flowering trees, spiderlings, edible leaves and birdsong. Once they cross out most of the items on their respective bingo cards, they sit in a circle under a large tree, ready to share insights and meet other like-minded people.

Now in its 10th edition, this monthly event is a nature educators' meet-up, an informal convening of people in or interested in the nature learning space. These meets, an initiative of the Nature Conservation Foundation's Nature Classrooms, is a space "where people can feel free to come, share their work, collaborate, network and give nature education a voice," says Priyanka Prakash, a project manager at Nature Classrooms. According to nature educator and ecologist Vena Kapoor who founded and heads Nature Classrooms, an initiative to link everyday learning and education to the natural world, this idea of an informal meet-up was seeded from a casual conversation during a team meeting. "My colleagues and I were discussing how many people reach out to us, saying that they are also interested in nature education and asking if they could meet us," she says. This casual conversation led to them thinking that it would be "nice for people from the nature education space to catch up occasionally, just to discuss each other's work, see if we want to share resources, figure out what is happening in this space and help each other."

In April last year, a call was put out on the Nature Classrooms Instagram page announcing an in-person meeting for nature educators in Bengaluru. The turnout at the first meetup, which was held on April 21, at Cubbon Park, was impressive, which surprised them, recalls Veena. "Some people who came were just curious and wanted to know what other people were doing. Or there were people who were planning to get into nature education and wanted to meet people who were already doing nature education," she says. What also became evident was that people were just happy to see the number of other people working in this space, she believes. "It made them feel less alone." During this meetup, many participants also told the organisers that they wanted a more consistent engagement, so this first informal meeting became the first of a series of regular events at Cubbon Park. "We decided that we will all meet on the last Sunday of every month and stick to that so automatically people will be able to add it to their diaries," says Vena. Since then, this informal meetup has occurred every month, except for one month, during the Deepavali break. Participants bring in their own perspectives, ideas and experiences, with the focus of the conversation hopping from the use of effective nature-based education tools to the problems of parachuting in and out of communities.

A spirit of camaraderie is visible among the group under the large tree at Cubbon Park, with green grapes and cookies being passed around and plenty of side talk. Manini Bansal, a visual communication designer and animal-lover, who is facilitating this session, then takes over, beginning by talking about her own journey. "I am someone who grew up just enjoying nature and loving being outdoors...constantly looking for creatures...bringing random animals into the house," she confesses, with a laugh,

recalling how her grandmother used to call her Mowgli.

Manini goes on to trace her career path, starting with her training at design school, her first job at a design studio ("I absolutely hated it") and her experience of working as the managing editor of Current Conservation, a not-for-profit quarterly print and online magazine focusing on conservation. Back then, only people from the conservation space knew about this magazine, so her goal was to engage the larger public "to make sure that the magazine was out there through different ways of design and communication," she says. In keeping with this goal, the magazine often conducted events for the public, including nature education workshops for children, she says, describing some of them. She then raises a very germane question: How do you talk about nature to children from different socioeconomic backgrounds? The rest of the group starts chiming in with their own perspectives, ideas and experiences, with the focus of the conversation hopping from the use of effective nature-based education tools to the problems of parachuting in and out of communities, the scope of nature journals, whether taking a utilitarian human-centric perspective is the best approach to conservation, among other things. Other specific issues, like the impact of the proposed Sharavathi project in Karnataka on the endangered lion-tailed macaques and how development often severely impacts insect diversity, were also discussed at the session. "We were very conscious, right from the beginning, that we didn't want it to be a unidirectional lecture-based session. We wanted it to be a community space for what we thought we wanted out of these meetings," says Vena. While the Nature Classrooms team facilitated the first few meetings, other participants from the larger community have also been volunteering to facilitate these meet-ups. "So, every session has been very different in terms of topics we have chosen to discuss," she says, while Priyanka adds, "It is just us trying to see the diverse conversations we can have around nature education and how we can bring people to share their work and lead some of these sessions."

Priyanka feels that nature education is gaining some momentum now, with many educators developing their own resources and content. But it is still somewhat happening in pockets, which can be isolating, according to her, and so, "we feel it would be so nice if we can come together and exchange our work with one another," she says. "I think this space needs a lot of partnerships and collaborations with people bringing in diverse expertise because education requires different approaches."

Murtuza Khetty, a freelance trainer, educator and theatre professional who has been regularly attending these meetups right from the beginning, agrees. "Not many institutions look at working with nature as part of their whole curriculum," says Murtuza, who has also moderated one of these sessions. In his opinion, there are a lot of people in the nature education space who are doing good work, but they're all working in silos. "Being part of this community is helping people get new ideas and collaborate," he says, an opinion also echoed by artist and educator Antara Mukherji. "I get to meet this tribe of people that I connect with immensely and can relate to," says Antara, who especially likes the group's diversity. "The connection-building and opening of another perspective helps; sometimes I feel very secure in my opinion, but then getting another perspective opens up the mind," she says. There is also strength in numbers, says Vena, who believes that creating a collective will lead to more voices speaking together on nature education in a manner that is "much more powerful and effective than working with silos," she says. She hopes that, at some point, the group can come together to create a resource or intervention collaboratively "that all of us can use...something designed in such a way that it can be tweaked for different geographies and cultural contexts." Vena also believes that, over time, nature educators will be able to open different chapters of this meetup in other parts of the country. "We've got people from outside the city who've heard about these meetups and planned their trips to Bengaluru to ensure they attend them. The hope is that this model can be taken to other cities and towns."

# home insurance vs. home-loan insurance



Should you buy home insurance or home-loan insurance is a million-dollar question. People often use the terms interchangeably, though they are not supposed to be used that way

Should you buy home insurance or home-loan insurance is a million-dollar question. People often use the terms interchangeably, though they are not supposed to be used that way. Fundamentally they are apples and oranges. Home insurance protects you from losses arising out of damages caused to the structure of your house and its contents. In contrast, a home-loan insurance protects a person (or his family) from the liabilities of the home loan or the equated monthly instalment (EMI) payments. Let's dive into the details.

On April 1, 2021, IRDAI made it mandatory for all general insurers to offer standard home insurance policy called 'Bharat Griha Raksha'. For instance, if someone's house and the contents thereof are damaged owing to fire accident, flood, earthquake, volcano or other accidents or natural calamities, home insurance acts as a lifesaver. Under the policy, three types of coverage – for building structure, things at home and optional cover – are offered. One can include the optional cover in his/her policy by paying an additional premium. The optional cover is available for valuables such as jewellery, silverware, paintings, etc. based on agreed value. Further, this also includes personal accident cover if the damage to the building also resulted in the death of the insurance policy holder or his/her

spouse. Mohammad Monish, senior associate, home insurance, PolicyBazaar, (PW24995), says, "Most insurers offer coverage in the standard policy for cost of repairs, architect or surveyor's fees, costs of clearing debris, loss of rent, rent for alternative accommodation or cost of construction. However, some insurers may charge additional premium by offering few additional benefits via add-ons, making the policy costly. Therefore, buyers must carefully study the inclusions of standard policy, inclusions through the add-ons, premium amount payable, etc." A home-loan insurance prevents you from losing the ownership title of your house if you failed to pay EMIs to loan-providers (banks) on time. That is, when a borrower of a home loan defaulted on EMIs owing to death or other adversity, home-loan insurance comes in handy. For instance, let's assume Mr. X had availed a loan from ABYZ bank and he must pay EMIs for 30 years. During the tenure of the loan, if Mr. X met with an accident and died, the balance loan amount due to ABYZ bank would be paid by the insurer. This way, Mr. X's family members would be relieved from the burden of continuing to pay the EMIs. Of course, home-loan insurance coverage varies from one insurance company to the other. Some provide coverage only on the demise of the insured person, while some offer protection even when the person has critical illness, met with accident or lost job, thereby losing the earning potential. However, terms and conditions are not same across insurers.

Who can buy? Any individual can purchase a home insurance policy provided he owns a property in his name; that is, only if he is a landlord of any property. A tenant cannot buy a home insurance covering the structure of a building, for, he has no insurable interest, as per insurance parlance. However, he could avail a policy covering contents/valuables stored in the house. Home-loan insurance cannot be purchased if you do not have any existing home loan. For, the very policy is designed to offer protection only for the outstanding loan amount at the time of adversity.

Often, the premium payable for home-loan insurance would be much higher than that payable for the standard home insurance. Home-loan insurance could help you in reducing the down payment needed at the time of availing the home loan, as the insurer 'guarantees' repayment of the loan at the time of any untoward/adverse event. However, the standard home insurance has zero impact on down payment.

Are they mandatory?

Mr. Monish says, "Both Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India and Reserve Bank of India have not made it mandatory to buy home insurance or home-loan insurance.

# Why retirees prefer FDs Venkatesh Bangaruswamy



Most adult children have an issue with parents' investing in bank fixed deposits (FDs). The argument is bank deposits earn low post-tax returns and do not beat inflation. This is true. Yet, it may be optimal for retirees to invest in bank deposits. Now, we look at the behavioural reasons why deposits are staple investments for retirees.

More money is certainly better than some, whether it buys more happiness or not. But the source of money is important, especially for retirees. Most may be uncomfortable if generating more returns requires taking higher investment risk. The argument is based on a behavioural bias called loss aversion. Typically, losses hurt us more than gains can give us happiness of the same magnitude. That

is, a 10,000 loss is likely to be more painful than the happiness a 10,000 of gain can give. Empirical research shows working executives are likely to invest only when risking 10,000 can offer a potential gain of at least 20,000. That is, they want a reward to risk ratio of at least 2:1. Retirees require an even higher ratio, nearly 4:1. Why? Retirees typically depend on their passive income to meet post retirement living expenses. Therefore, an investment portfolio that not only has a high return potential but also high downside risk is not preferred. What if a significant part of portfolio value is lost due to market crash? What if they sell equity investments every year, and then run out of money in old age? Most retirees, therefore, prefer stable income portfolios. The satisfaction of receiving stable income is more dominating than having to worry about fluctuations on equity investments — earning higher returns but with high downside risk. Investing is about risk and return.

But behavioural biases can dominate the structure of an investment portfolio. It is true post-tax returns on bank FDs are unlikely to beat inflation. But more important is the retirees' fear of running out of money in old age. This can happen for two reasons. One, investments decline in value on negative returns. And two, the retirees' outlive life expectancy, referred to as the longevity risk. Retirees, therefore, adopt a simple rule to moderate (if not overcome) their fear: conserve capital and consume income. Any investment that fit this rule is naturally embraced. Bank fixed deposits do.

# Where a book is worshipped

Prapoyil is a verdant village near Cherupuzha, a small town 64 km from Kannur, Kerala. In Prapoyil is an exceptional temple, perhaps the only one of its kind in the world, the Navapuram Mathaatheetha Devaalayam (Secular House of God). The deity in the temple is the sculpted image of a book. The temple opened on March 4, 2021, and the installation of the idol, sculpted by Santhosh Manasam from nearby Kamballor village in Kasaragod district, was completed in October 2021. Devotees can pray in the sanctum sanctorum and offer books to the deity, and the prasadam in return is a book. There are no priests nor a hundi and anyone, irrespective of caste or religion, can pray in the temple. The idol-book is perched on a giant natural stone. The vision of the temple is rooted in the belief that knowledge is divine. The temple promotes and nurtures the philosophy of knowledge, fostering universal love and humility.

Its entrance hall is an impressive library of a few thousand books. Through the hall, adorned with sculptures on the walls, one ascends the steps to reach the idol — a concrete book installed atop a 30-foot-high stone. Three sentences are etched in its pages: "God is knowledge. Religion is broad thinking. Humble wisdom is the path." The sculptures in the entrance hall are of Cherusseri, the north Malabar poet who wrote the Malayalam epic Krishnagadha, Sri Buddha and a stone lamp, the symbol of knowledge. The two-acre complex in sylvan surroundings houses a few cottages, called Ezhuthupura (a cottage for writing) where writers can stay and write. Three of the cottages are complete and the target is 10.

This distinctive temple is a dream come true for Prapoyil Narayanan, who has been aspiring to create it for 35 years. His arduous life story is awe-inspiring. He is the only son of his mother. His father, Kokkodan Raman, a landlord, died when he was nine. All that Narayanan inherited was two acres. At the age of 15, he started shouldering the responsibility of his family. In his early twenties, he started thinking about the idea of the book temple and began setting aside a nominal amount for his dream project. He published many articles in different periodicals and became a reputable writer. Narayanan has authored 26 books. His initial education was in medical lab technology and after that, he started tutoring students. Sheer grit enabled him to own a flourishing parallel college in Cherupuzha town. The institution teaches degree and postgraduate courses in politics, sociology, history, commerce, Hindi, and philosophy. Narayanan himself is a postgraduate in five subjects and is currently studying for an MA degree in English literature. Income from his par-



allel college helped him save lakhs for the temple. The land development, sculptures, cottages and the festivals the temple organises are expensive and so far, he has spent a whopping amount of more than 760 lakh. Of late, he has received donations, but that does not even suffice for one-tenth of the expenses. The temple conducts two annual cultural festivals, during April and the Puja holidays. Literary debates, classical and folk-dance performances, book releases, seminars and debates, and dramatic performances mark the festivals with large audiences. Awards are presented to writers in four Dravidian languages. Naryanan is supported in his noble endeavour by his friend Sabu Maliyekkal and the villagers. Narayanan's ambition is to develop the temple into a self-sustaining institution. He has already initiated conversations with favourably inclined persons to make this a reality. To Narayanan, a truly rare individual who has dedicated his life to literature and books, the unwavering support of his wife, Shyla, is immeasurable.

# Miss World 2025 will showcase Telangana's beauty to the world: Krystyna Pyszková

Miss World 2024, Krystyna Pyszková, recently is in Telangana ahead of the 72nd Miss World competition, set to be hosted in the State this May. During her visit, she explored some of the region's cultural and historical landmarks and interacted with local communities. In an exclusive conversation with The Hindu, she shared her thoughts on the impact of Miss World, her passion for humanitarian work and her memorable experiences in Telangana. As Telangana is hosting Miss World this year, do you think such a competition inspires young women to participate?

Miss World is a powerful platform that sheds light on important global issues. For young women who want to grow, work on their mission and gain valuable experiences, this competition provides everything they need to amplify their efforts on a global scale. With 140 contestants from different countries coming together, it fosters a unique cultural exchange. It allows participants to connect with different perspectives and grow as individuals. You may never have the chance to visit every country in the world, but through Miss World, you make lifelong connections and gain friends everywhere you go.

As a global ambassador, what message would you like to give to the people of Telangana about the Miss World event?

We will be showcasing Telangana's beauty to the world, highlighting everything the State has to offer. Miss World is not just about stunning contestants, it's about purpose-driven individuals who want to inspire and make a difference. It's also a grand cultural festival where you can witness the 'Dances of the World,' national costumes and unique performances from each contestant. It's going to be an incredible experience, so I encourage everyone to be part of it.

Miss World also focuses on humanitarian work. What causes are you passionate about?

I am passionate about education. My first project in Tanzania focuses on providing quality education to underprivileged children. We have built a fully equipped school, which has been a long-term goal for me. I also run a project in the Czech Republic that provides craftsmanship training for disabled individuals. Employment is a challenge for them, and I want to help by giving them the skills to create and sell their own products. This initiative not only helps them



financially but also gives them a sense of purpose and belonging in the community.

How was your experience visiting Telangana?

The journey has been amazing. The first day was about exploring Telangana's hidden gems and its beauty. I visited the Yadagirigutta Temple, Chowmahalla Palace and Falaknuma Palace. I was really happy to do that because I hadn't had the chance to explore India's architecture in such detail before.



# ‘Third candidate’: After Canada, how Trump looms large over Australia’s election



Any mention of foreign influence on elections, and Russia or North Korea are likely the first countries that spring to mind. However, the Donald Trump administration in the United States—more specifically, the President himself—has, perhaps unwittingly, emerged as a new player in this sphere. He has already upended one election in Canada and appears poised to influence another in Australia. In Canada, within a span of just a few weeks, Trump’s provocations almost single-handedly pushed Mark Carney, a career central banker on his first ever run for public office, to the country’s top job, much against the run of play. Australia could be next., the 2025 Australian federal election got underway, with the incumbent center-left government of Prime Minister Anthony Albanese appearing to have been boosted by Trump’s belligerence over the past few weeks. Heading into the polls, Albanese leads the centre-left Labour Party over challenger Peter Dutton, who helms an alliance of right-leaning conservative parties known as the Liberal-National Coalition.

Amid the escalating trade war fanned by the White House, the Australian public, just like in Canada, seems to be rallying around a leader who can take Trump’s challenge head-on. Albanese has promised to do exactly that. “The two conversations I’ve had with President Trump are ones in which I stand up for Australia’s national interest and I will always do that,” Albanese told reporters as the election began. When the nation comes under fire from Trump, the natural response often is to just rally around the leader. That seems to have happened in Canada, and is likely to unfold in Australia. An Albanese victory would be significant in more ways than one. No sitting Australian prime minister has led their party to back-to-back election wins since John Howard, a conservative, in 2004.

Another key takeaway from a projected Albanese win—coming on the heels of Carney’s triumph in Canada—is that it would mark a departure from prevailing electoral trends across several countries: the widespread pattern of incumbents being unseated by challengers, and a notice-

able shift to the right in voter preferences. Trump has pretty much emerged as the third candidate in both these elections over the last couple of months, a second generation immigrant Australian told. Among other significant factors is the emergence of younger voters, which played a major role in Canada. In Australia as well, this is the first election in which younger voters outnumber Baby Boomers, according to the news agency Associated Press. These younger voters tend to lean away from right-leaning parties. Roughly a third of voters in Australia, where voting is mandatory, said they were less likely to support opposition Conservative leader Peter Dutton because of their views on Trump, according to a Resolve Political Monitor poll released two weeks ago and cited by The Washington Post. A separate poll published Friday in The Australian showed the Labour Party leading the Liberal-National Coalition 52.5 per cent to 47.5 per cent.

Dutton, like Canadian Conservative Party leader Pierre Poilievre, was ahead in the polls just before the start of Trump’s presidency. Poilievre’s loud populism and aggressive tactics were likened to Trump’s behavior, including his promised crackdown on drugs, attacks on “wokeism” and his ‘Canada First’ slogan. Dutton too was widely seen as echoing Trumpian rhetoric, including his statements about “wokeness,” a campaign focused on restricting immigration and his promise to cut the federal government, quite like Trump’s DOGE (Department of Government Efficiency) experiment. Albanese’s Labour has warned that Dutton’s coalition would make massive cuts to services to pay for its stated plans to set up state-owned nuclear power plants, which Labour said would be tantamount to mimicking DOGE’s promise to cut more than one in five federal public sector jobs. “We don’t need to copy America or anywhere else. We need the Australian way,” Albanese said on Friday. Dutton was careful to bracket his coalition as the underdog, a week before the polls. “We are the underdog and I think a lot of people will be expressing a real protest vote at this election as well because the prime minister believes he’s won this election,” Dutton said last week.

Just as Australia’s Liberal-national coalition was ahead three months ago, in Canada, the opposition Conservative Party victory seemed like a foregone conclusion while the ruling Liberal Party was pretty much written off until January. Then Trump started to show his imprint on this election in Canada, threatening a trade war, his repeated calls to annex Canada and make it the 51st US state, which he repeated again the morning of the Canadian polls in a social media post. Carney’s comeback was somewhat unprecedented in Canadian politics. Albanese could be in line to replicate that comeback in Australia from behind. And like Canada, the impact of ‘Typhoon Trump’, as they’re calling it Down Under, is indelible in this case too.

# India to raise concerns against Pakistan funding with all multilateral development banks, says official

India intends to speak with all multilateral development banks (MDBs) to push back against providing funds and loans to Pakistan against the backdrop of a terror attack in Kashmir last week, a senior government official said. The move to directly approach MDBs, including the World Bank, the IMF, and the Asian Development Bank, is part of the government’s broader efforts to curb financial flows that aid Pakistan to fund terror activities.

“We will flag India’s concerns to the IMF, World Bank, ADB, and other multilateral agencies. There needs to be a review of development funding to Pakistan due to links with terror financing,” the senior government official said on the condition of anonymity. India is stepping up its ante against Pakistan following the attack on April 22 that killed 26 tourists in Pahalgam, and is looking at several measures aimed at tightening financial flows to the neighbouring country. On Friday, The Indian Express had reported that the government is also working towards bringing Pakistan back into the ‘grey list’ of Financial Action Task Force (FATF), the global money laundering and terror financing watchdog.

India is likely to raise concerns against Pakistan in forthcoming board meetings of the multilateral agencies. The IMF’s Executive Board will meet on May 9 to review financing facilities extended to Pakistan, according to information available on its website.

The IMF is financing a \$7-billion aid package to Pakistan that was approved in September 2024. The ongoing 37-month long Extended Fund Facility programme of the IMF consists of six reviews over the span of the bailout, and the release of the next tranche of approximately \$1 billion will be contingent upon the success of the performance



review. The World Bank has committed up to \$50 billion to Pakistan for close to 400 projects, which includes a \$20 billion loan signed in January this year. Then, in March, it had approved another \$102 million for financing climate resilience. As recently as last week, it also greenlit \$108 million for two projects in Pakistan’s Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province, according to a report on April 29 by Karachi-headquartered newspaper Dawn. The World Bank’s Board of Executive Directors usually meets twice a week on Tuesdays and Thursdays. The ADB has a board meeting scheduled on May 20. Pakistan joined the IMF and the World Bank in 1950. Since then, the IMF has supported Pakistan with 25 financial arrangements. Currently, the World Bank’s portfolio includes 54 projects in Pakistan with a total commitment of \$15.7 billion. As of 2024-end, the ADB has committed over 700 public sector loans, grants, and technical assistance totaling \$43.4 billion to Pakistan.

# ‘US import curbs will remain higher for China, Vietnam and Cambodia’: Arvind Panagariya

Speaking at an event hosted by the Isaac Centre for Public Policy, Panagariya said the US-China trade conflict is “here to stay” and that a successful trade deal with the US could pave the way for agreements with the EU and the UK. On the Viksit Bharat aspiration, Panagariya said India could achieve a per capita income of \$14,000 by 2047 “in spite of all the gloom.” “There are some challenges looming from the trade side. At the moment, my own assessment is that we will come out of it stronger rather than weaker,” he said. According to Panagariya, the US wants to decouple from China on the grounds that it has “operated rather unfairly”. He noted there is a strong perception within the US administration that Chinese goods continue to enter the country through transshipments via Vietnam, Cambodia, and other neighbouring countries.

“My own prediction is that after the dust settles, restrictions on imports into the United States, not just from China, but also from Vietnam and Cambodia — either through tariffs or rules of origin— will remain significantly higher than on (imports from) India,” Panagariya said. According to him, a trade agreement with the US will also “open the door wider” for agreements with the EU and the UK, which will place India “incredibly favourably” in global trade. In his address, Panagariya emphasised that India has grown steadily despite three big shocks — the global financial crisis, the Covid pandemic, and the NBFC crisis. “Between 2003-04 and 2019-20, excluding the Covid years, which is a 17-year period, we experienced an average growth rate of 9 per cent in real dollars. Even when including the Covid years and extending to 2023-24, over a 21-year period, we grew at 7.8 per cent.”

“Between 2003–04 and 2019–20, excluding the Covid years, which is a 17-year period, we experienced an aver-



Import restrictions into the US—whether through tariffs or rules of origin—will ultimately be higher for China, Vietnam, and Cambodia than for India, according to the 16th Finance Commission chairperson Arvind Panagariya.

age growth rate of 9 per cent in real dollars. Even when including the Covid years and extending to 2023–24, over a 21-year period, we grew at 7.8 per cent. I feel reasonably confident that we can maintain a steady rate of growth at the current high levels,” he said. To reach the Viksit Bharat target of \$14,000 per capita, Panagariya said our overall gross national income (GNI) must grow by 7.8 per cent each year. According to the World Bank’s definition of a developed country, per capita income must be at least \$14,000 (in nominal terms). In FY24, India’s per capita income stood at \$2,570, which is calculated as the ratio of GNI to the population in any given year.

# Understanding pubic hair to figure out what comprises genital health



Pubic hair removal and grooming has ancient roots, based around hygiene and aesthetics in Egypt, Greece, and Rome, and linked to Persian rites of adulthood. By the Middle Ages however, it was linked to soliciting for sex work so much so that women started to use Merkins — pubic wigs — to hide syphilis. Fast forward to the 20th century and beauty standards along with marketing came into play. Razor company Gillette’s 1915 advertisement framed body hair as “unsightly,” and by the 1990s, razor and waxing brands began pushing the myth that pubic hair is unhygienic. The porn industry and media cemented this idea, making hairlessness, especially among women, seem like the norm rather than a choice.

But is pubic hair really unhygienic?

“Body hair is a marker of good health,” says Tanaya Narendra, a sex health expert working at Abhilasha Hospital and IVF care, Allahabad. She explains that pubic hair increases the surface area of the genitals, which makes it easy to regulate temperature and reduce chaffing during the summer. With India being hot most of the year round, pubic hair is a useful tool to maintaining hygiene and health, she points out. The ill effects of excessive grooming on women, shaving and waxing can weaken the skin’s barrier and immune defences, causing chronic inflammation and making the vulva more vulnerable to conditions such as lichen sclerosus (a chronic skin condition) and vulvar melanosis (increased pigmentation of the vulva), says Dr. Narendra. These grooming methods also disrupt the skin’s pH and lipid balance, reducing levels of the protective bacteria Lactobacillus in the microbiome. As a result, the area becomes more susceptible to infections such as , candidiasis (yeast infection) , bacterial vaginosis and urinary tract infections (UTIs). “Women and girls who removed pubic hair frequently, like weekly or monthly, were the ones who had recurrent UTIs,” says Andrzej Galbarczyk, a public health professor/researcher at Jagiellonian University, Kraków, Poland.. His study found that extreme grooming was linked to a higher risk of recurrent UTIs—three or more per year—suggesting that frequent hair removal may disrupt the pubic area’s protective microbial ecosystem.

Frequent grooming also leads to microtears, increasing the risk of sexually transmitted infections (STIs) through bloodstream exposure. A meta-analysis published in BMC Women’s Health by Asmaa Eltobgy et al last year, found that the odds of having gram-negative gonorrhoeal and chlamydial infections in pubic hair groomers were found to be statistically significant. Despite the hygiene myth, grooming can cause irritation, compromise protection, and lead to common issues like genital itching. Excessive grooming can also cause vestibulodynia, a hypersensitive skin condition of the vulva. Shaving and waxing often lead to irritation, ingrown hairs, and folliculitis, which can escalate into staph infections or abscesses. A blocked Bartholin gland (mucus-secreting glands located on either side of the vaginal opening) from poor hygiene or hair removal may cause abscesses and, in some cases, lead to pelvic inflammatory disease (PID). “A healthy vulva and vagina need the same care as your face,” says Sherry Ross, obstetrician-gynaecologist and author based in Santa Monica, California. stressing regular cleaning to prevent build-up, odours,

and infection. Polycystic Ovary Syndrome (PCOS), hirsutism (excessive hair growth), and diabetes can further complicate grooming due to hormonal imbalances, skin issues, and delayed wound healing.

For transwomen with neovaginas, the skin is especially delicate and more prone to dryness, irritation, and heightened sensitivity. Pubic hair removal in this sensitive area can lead to microtears, inflammation, and infections, which may complicate essential practices like daily vaginal dilation by causing pain and worsening skin conditions. Gentle grooming methods and proper aftercare are crucial to reduce these risks and maintain vulvar health, say experts. Frequent grooming also leads to microtears, increasing the risk of sexually transmitted infections risk through bloodstream exposure. Photograph used for representational purposes only. Frequent grooming also leads to microtears, increasing the risk of sexually transmitted infections risk through bloodstream exposure. Photograph used for representational purposes only. Men have increasingly embraced pubic hair removal as well, but the anatomical differences between male and female bodies influence how grooming affects health outcomes. In males , the urethral opening and the anus are approximately 18 to 20 cm apart, which significantly reduces the likelihood of cross-contamination by bacteria and, consequently, lowers the risk of UTIs and STIs. In contrast, females have a much shorter distance — around 4 cm — between the vaginal opening and anus, making them more vulnerable to bacterial migration and infections.

However, this doesn’t mean grooming is without risk for men. According to Dr. Narendra, men who frequently remove pubic hair often experience boils, microtears, and skin irritation, particularly on the scrotal skin, which is thin, highly vascularised, and prone to trauma. These minor injuries can become entry points for pathogens, potentially leading to folliculitis (inflammation of hair follicles), abscesses, or even secondary infections. These issues are compounded by the fact that in India, it is still taboo to talk about genital health. Numerous patients have said that their attempts at conversation with medical professionals about pubic hygiene have not gone well, leaving them to opt for do-it-yourself remedies or turn to wellness gurus. “Many patients come with chemical burns on vulva because they used a hair removal product that was not the right pH or was not designated for intimate areas,” says Dr. Narendra, who says she has seen young patients with scar tissue and altered cellular architecture of the vulva due to a lack of knowledge and understanding about their own bodies and products. The physical toll apart, the emotional toll of body image issues can be just as significant. Dr. Ross explains that women often feel insecure about their vulvas. “I hear comments like: ‘My lips are too big,’ ‘too bumpy,’ ‘too dark,’ ‘too uneven,’ ... or ‘My boyfriend/girlfriend tells me my labia are not pretty.’” She attributes this to the influence of porn and social media, which lead adolescent girls to obsess over the “perfect” vulva. Dr. Ross emphasises the need for self-awareness: “Everyone needs a roadmap.” She says she gives mirrors to her teen patients to help them understand their anatomy, empowering them to prevent sexual dysfunction and to build a healthier connection with their bodies. She also stresses the importance of discussing pubic hair removal practices and sexual history during consultations, to ensure comprehensive care. The importance of educating ourselves, especially in light of the rise in social media-promoted products targeting young women and trans individuals has never been more crucial. “Whether you were born with a vagina or had one created, it is important to clean the vulva, but you don’t have to do too much internal cleaning,” says Dr. Ross, emphasising that the vagina naturally maintains its pH balance, and disrupting this can lead to infections. The digital world is rife with inaccurate medical advice. ‘Dr. Google’ can lead to confusion, conflicting advice, and further issues. Taking charge of our health is key. “Educating those with a vulva and vagina is the first step to dispelling dangerous genital hygiene recommendations,” Dr. Ross says. It’s time to shift the way women view their bodies, particularly vulvas and vaginas. The shame and anxiety surrounding sensitive topics into pride and comfort must go. Women need to become better health advocates, not only for their genitals but also overall wellness. People must seek a reliable healthcare provider to partner with on their health journey.

# Can teen obesity be prevented by dancing? Chennai diabetologist’s routine reduces body fat, increases muscle mass

Thirty-nine-year old Sujatha, a homemaker in Chennai, simply loves dancing to Prabhudeva’s “Vikkalu Vikkalu.” Inspired by her daughter, she doesn’t miss this 10-minute dance workout based on High-Intensity Interval Training (HIIT) on Fridays. “The fast calorie burns and a variety of stretches have improved my flexibility,” she says. Meanwhile, these short dance sessions have not only kept 15-year-old Sarah Michelle energetic despite long hours at school and coaching classes, they have also increased her muscle mass, lowered her appetite for junk food and improved her sleep.

A study has demonstrated the benefits of a new fitness routine called THANDAV, (Taking High-Intensity Interval Training [HIIT] And Dance to Adolescents for Victory over Non-communicable Diseases [NCDs]). This was devised by Dr Ranjith Anjana Mohan of the Madras Diabetes Research Foundation and first tested among 23 girls, aged between 10 and 17, to see if it could neutralise sedentary behaviour among school-going adolescents and improve their metabolism with a fun and crisp routine. Subjects reported that this short- burst activity was not only easy to fit into school schedules but could keep their weight in check.

To validate this finding further, she conducted trials across two schools in Chennai with 108 girls aged between 13 and 15. One school did the THANDAV while the other served as a control. Over a 12-week period, the girls in the THANDAV group could increase their daily step count by 1073 steps, reduce their body fat by 2% and improve muscle mass. Additionally, participants reported significant reductions in both systolic and diastolic blood pressure, along with a drop in resting heart rate by 3 bpm (beats per minute). This involves short bursts of intense activity followed by cooldown time — with dance moves set to popular songs from Bollywood, Mollywood and Tollywood. Doing this thrice a week for even 10 minutes gives you all the metabolic benefits of running 60 minutes a day every day of the week. HIIT regimens have been proven to significantly reduce body fat mass, weight and improve cardiovascular fitness in both adults and adolescents. The 10-minute HIIT routine consists of four loops to be done on four hit tracks, including a two-minute high energy (80-90 per cent heart



rate) to 30-second low cooldown (50-60 per cent heart rate) moves. The movements are choreographed in a simple and repetitive manner so that they can be done in a loop without much stress. “While we had seen weight loss before, this time the major takeaway was an increase in muscle mass, essential for foundational health that can prevent chronic illnesses in adult years. Besides, this intervention is easy to stick to and prevents childhood obesity and diabetes. It can be accommodated even between exam schedules when students tend to negotiate physical activity. That’s why one in four teens is obese,” says Dr Anjana. But what impressed her the most was this fitness routine resulted in positive behavioural changes in the girls. “They reduced junk food intake, ate more at home, cut down their sitting hours by almost 200 minutes and increased the sleep duration by almost 47 minutes. The benefits of lifestyle correction at this age can cascade into adult years,” she adds. According to study authors, Type 2 diabetes occurs at younger ages in Indians compared to Caucasians. In fact, adolescents make up 14.2% of Type 2 diabetics. That’s why regular physical activity becomes even more important for Indian teens. Currently, around 25.2 per cent of adolescents do not meet moderate-to-vigorous physical activity guidelines, with urban residents (38%) and girls (29.3%) being less likely to be active. “Girls have to face many cultural and societal barriers but this routine blends seamlessly into their lives. They can even do this at home,” says Dr Anjana.



# ‘We got20 lakhs!’: Virat Kohli recalls his IPL beginnings, RCB vs CSK rivalry



GNS News Agency, May 7

Before the roaring crowds, the century celebrations, and the iconic No. 18 jersey, Virat Kohli was just a teenager losing his mind in a hotel corridor. As the IPL is in its 18th year, Kohli looked back at the surreal beginning of his journey in the league, marked by one unforgettable number: Rs 20 lakhs. “When the auction happened, we were in Malaysia, in Kuala Lumpur, and we were sold as first-class cricketers, who were limited to Rs 20 lakhs. We went crazy in the corridor — ‘We got Rs 20 lakhs!’ That was the emotion behind it. Because we didn’t know what to expect—the opening ceremony, the whole experience of meeting great cricketers — it was surreal.”

Kohli was part of that very first IPL auction in 2008, still fresh off captaining India to a U-19 World Cup title. Now,

he stands as the league’s most consistent performer and its most enduring face. “The first year was exciting in terms of unexpected things happening. We hadn’t played a lot of T20 cricket. Secondly, franchise cricket allowed us to play with different players from all over the world, players we looked up to.” Reflecting on how far the league has come, Kohli admits even he couldn’t have imagined its meteoric rise. “It’s been a long journey, one that we have seen grow, evolve, and become this amazing spectacle. Honestly, when IPL started, I never thought it could reach a stage like this. But 18 years and rolling, and every year you feel the same excitement, if not more, which is a massive credit to the league, the way it’s organized, the teams, the competitiveness, and the professionalism is top-notch.” Among all the experiences he’s had, one rivalry stands out. That’s the RCB vs CSK match, especially when the action unfolds at the M Chinnaswamy Stadium in Bengaluru. “I would say one team that, historically, I’ve felt we’ve had the most intense games with is Chennai Super Kings in Bengaluru. Because in Chennai, of course, there are Chennai fans — it’s just yellow and CSK fans everywhere. But to play against CSK in Bengaluru is something else, because a lot of Chennai fans come to Bengaluru. CSK fans travel in huge numbers, so they buy tickets very early and take over a section of the stadium. “So, there’s an intense atmosphere inside the stadium in Bengaluru when playing against CSK. And then, obviously, the game also gets very intense and competitive. That environment is the most exciting I’ve been a part of.”

# ‘Ineffective bowling and lack of partnerships behind SRH’s poor season’- Jaydev Unadkat

GNS News Agency, May 7

Sunrisers Hyderabad scumbled to their seventh defeat in the Indian Premier League 2025 losing by 38 runs against Gujarat Titans scored 224 in 20 overs losing six wickets with Jaydev Unadkat being the only SRH to concede below less than 9 runs per over. He took three wickets and was only the bright spot in SRH’s bowling. The bowler feels that ineffective bowling and lack of bowling partnerships has led to the poor season for his franchise.

“From my experience of playing in the IPL for all these years, for a team to do well, there has to be at least 3 or 4 guys, in terms of your bowling I’m talking, who have to contribute in every game. Like, there have to be 3 or 4 performances in every game for you to win games and probably this year, I would say that we are lacking that. When two guys are bowling well, the other 3 are probably not bowling in tandem, and like we look at partnerships in terms of batting,” Unadkat told the reporters after the loss against GT. “Like we look at partnerships in terms of batting, I think it’s the same in bowling as well. Because when you are not bowling well from both the ends, it creates unnecessary pressure on the other guy,” he added further

Opting to bowl first, SRH failed to contain the GT top order conceding a huge total. SRH’s strength was their ultra aggressive batting last season but the approach has failed this year constantly. Unadkat feels that always aiming to



score 200-plus runs can’t be the norm in the IPL any more. “Last year, we scored 200+ in four or five matches, and that gave us a sense that we had set a standard. But that can’t always be the norm. Other teams and batters are planning better now, and bowlers are also adapting and coming up with new strategies,” Unadkat said.

“Last year, swing was enough to make an impact, but this year, it’s about using variations effectively. Also, the pitches are playing a big role. Last year we had a lot of flat pitches, whereas this time we’ve had more difficult ones. That’s why we haven’t been able to carry the same momentum,” he added further. Currently, SRH is sitting at the ninth place in IPL points table above CSK and are most likely out of the tournament given their current form.

# Meet Kimi Antonelli, the youngest to take Formula 1 pole



GNS News Agency, May 7

Born in Bologna in August 2006, Antonelli has been part of the Mercedes driver development program since 2019. (Reuters) Born in Bologna in August 2006, Antonelli has been part of the Mercedes driver development program since 2019. In a breakthrough that will be etched in Formula 1 history, Mercedes rookie Kimi Antonelli became the youngest driver ever to clinch pole position, doing so with breathtaking composure in the sprint qualifying session of the Miami Grand Prix.

At just 18 years and 4 months old, Antonelli delivered a lap of supreme control and speed to edge out McLaren’s championship leader Oscar Piastri by a razor-thin 0.045 seconds. Lando Norris followed closely in third, while Red Bull’s Max Verstappen was just 0.055s off Norris’ time. Antonelli’s Mercedes teammate George Russell could only manage fifth, over three-tenths of a second adrift. This marked the first time Antonelli outqualified Russell, a state-

ment performance that hints at why Mercedes entrusted the Italian teenager to succeed the legendary Lewis Hamilton. “I am over the moon,” Antonelli said, beaming after the session. “I did not expect it. I was feeling good in the car and could improve lap by lap. That consistency came together right at the end. We’ll enjoy this moment but I’m focused on tomorrow. I want to repeat this.” Born in Bologna in August 2006, Antonelli has been part of the Mercedes driver development program since 2019 and has climbed the junior racing ladder with precision and patience. He dominated the Italian and ADAC Formula 4 championships in 2022 before impressing in Formula Regional and skipping Formula 3 altogether, a rare but bold move backed by Mercedes’ confidence in his raw talent.

Until Miami, Antonelli had adopted a cautious, methodical approach to his rookie season prioritising clean weekends over headline-grabbing performances. But under the sweltering Florida sun, he shed all restraint. From the moment practice began at the Hard Rock Stadium circuit, he looked sharp, assured, and fast. After stepping out of the car, the moment turned emotional as Antonelli shared a tight embrace with his father Marco, a former touring car driver and founder of the AKM Motorsport team where Kimi took some of his first competitive steps. “It was really nice to find him in the garage after qualifying,” said Antonelli. “He’s like a rock. I can always rely on him. I’d love to share this with my mum and sister too, hopefully next time.” With pole secured for the sprint race, Antonelli now has the golden opportunity to go one step further. A clean start could allow him to control the pace and chase a first career victory in just his fifth Formula 1 weekend. It’s an extraordinary feat for a driver who was still in high school last year.

# I don't see SRH bouncing back, says Ambati Rayudu

GNS News Agency, May 7

HYDERABAD: Gujarat Titans is well and truly in a great zone in the business end of the IPL, says JioStar expert Ambati Rayudu. Reflecting on Titan’s convincing win against Sunrisers Hyderabad in Ahmedabad on Friday night, Rayudu said that if one removed Abhishek Sharma’s innings, there wasn’t really much to talk about for SRH.

“That’s because of the quality of Gujarat Titans’ bowling and also some spectacular catches, one from Jos Buttler, one from Rashid Khan. Prasidh Krishna has been extraordinary, and those two wickets in the middle when the partnership was building for SRH were crucial. Their catching was top-class. And also Siraj, the way he has come back,” he explained. “I think the game was lost in the first innings itself for SRH. The target was just too much to chase, especially given the way they bowled early on, it was quite ordinary. But credit to GT for some extraordinary batting. SRH also fell short in the field, dropped catches, misfields—they just didn’t seem up for it tonight. GT brought so much energy, while SRH looked flat and low on intent,” Rayudu

said. “I don’t see SRH bouncing back this season. Their energy on the field was poor, to be honest. They’ll need to play much better cricket from here on and perhaps start thinking about rebuilding for the next season,” he said. For his part, another JioStar expert Ajay Jadeja said the right word for Titans was “energy”. “That catch from Rashid Khan and all those diving efforts were fabulous. He ran a lot, slid in, and still managed to pull it off. That effort shows,” he said. “Titans has taken brilliant catches in the past, but today’s energy was clearly fuelled by what happened in the last game.”

When you lose a game like that, you come back together—and they certainly did.” Jadeja said Shubman Gill would be no less even as India had Virat Kohli. “If you look at the consistency with which he scores—it’s similar in style. They don’t take unnecessary risks; they wait for the bowler to make a mistake,” he said. Pragyan Ojha, who played a lead role in Deccan Chargers winning the IPL once, head coach Ashish Nehra would always emphasise bowling hard lengths—and Prasadh Krishna thrived on that. “When you’re backed for your strengths, everything becomes easier.”

# Ernesto ‘Tito’ Bessone returns to motorsport at the age of 67



GNS News Agency, May 7

Argentine driver Ernesto ‘Tito’ Bessone is the only driver in the country’s history to win atleast one title in all four of the to categories of the country. He won Turismo Carretera (2003), TC2000 (1996), Top Race (2004), and Turismo Nacional (Class 3, 2003). However, at the age of 67, Bessone is returning back to compete making another record. He becomes the oldest driver to compete in a top-level national competition, surpassing the age of 66 at which, coincidentally, his father retired from racing in 1989, four years after becoming the oldest champion by winning the Class 2 of the TN. “It’s a huge emotion to return to TC2000. In 1985 I had the chance to witness the change from the Renault 18 to the Renault Fuego and the Ford Taunus to the Ford Sierra and it produced a great phenomenon in the category. Now, after 40 years, I have the chance to experience again this radical change in car models with the arrival of the SUVs and it’s an honour to be part of it,” said Tito while talking to Clarin.

He will be part of the El Halcón Motorsport and had tested the Next Gen Nivus of the TC2000. “I’m going to do it with great commitment, I’m going to give everything I have to be at the best level on a track that I really like like Oberá. I want to thank the category for making this project possible and the sponsors for trusting me,” added ‘Tito’ ahead of the debut of the new 500-horsepower SUVs designed especially for the category with models from brands such as Chevrolet, Honda, Toyota, Fiat, Nissan and the aforementioned Volkswagen.

Bessone’s last race in the TC2000 was on August 21, 2011, as a guest of Leandro Carducci in the 8th Edition of the 200 km of Buenos Aires. This time, he will be the protagonist, the 1996 champion with a Ford Escort, host of 263 races (among which he achieved 28 victories, 25 pole positions and 31 lap records) and who has just restored the historic Renault Fuego Coupé that he made win for the first time in 1985, the same year in which he won on his debut day in the TC

Who is Ernesto ‘Tito’ Bessone?

One of the most revered names of the Argentine motorsports, Bessone was born on 3rd April, 1958. He made his motorsport debut in the Turismo Nacional in 1979, driving a Peugeot. He won his first title in 1983 in the now-defunct Club Argentino de Pilotos (Argentine Drivers’ Club), driving a Datsun 280 ZX, and repeated the feat the following year. He also won the championship in that category in 1988, driving a Nissan 300 ZX. In 1995, driving a Ford, he won the Supercart title, a category that used the same vehicles as Turismo Carretera, but adapted for racing on race-tracks. And in 1996, he won the 2000 Turismo Competición championship driving a Ford Escort. In TC2000, he totaled 263 races and 28 victories.

# Novak Djokovic, MS Dhoni and the painful April of watching the unbreakable legends break

GNS News Agency, May 7

Novak Djokovic can be advised to follow MS Dhoni’s IPL season. If the Serb finds cricket boring, he can just watch his four-ball inning – calling it a painful-to-watch outing would be more apt – against Punjab Kings in CSK’s last game. Dhoni, 43, has looked in shape, sufficiently beefed up. But he couldn’t muddle many balls. When he did, he failed to clear the ropes, like he did once upon a time. CSK’s fortunes would get impacted. The IPL final is still about a month away but the multiple champions are out of contention. Dhoni failed when his team wanted him to succeed the most. And in his and CSK’s failure, is a lesson for Djokovic – Form wasn’t on tap, it doesn’t flow by just turning the knob.

Few days back, towards the end of last month, Djokovic, 37, had lost to World No. 44 Matteo Arnaldi in straight sets. It was a meek surrender. Acknowledging his fall but not sure if it was time to call it quits, Djokovic spoke about a “new reality”. He confessed how his goal these days was to win a few rounds and not the tournament. But like all sporting greats, in the business of performing miracles all their lives, he wasn’t writing himself off at Grand Slams. “Obviously Grand Slams are the most important tournaments for me. Which doesn’t mean that I don’t want to win here, of course I wanted to, but Grand Slams are where I really want to play the best tennis,” he said. That was the catch. Djokovic believed that “best tennis” was on tap and he was capable of turning the knob four times a year.

Watching Dhoni might make the tennis legend wiser about his future. Dhoni’s April was far worse than Djokovic. Very early this season, the IPL trophy was nowhere near his sight and winning a few games was his team’s realistic goal. Personally, playing a winning hand seemed beyond him. These days, he had modest targets – it was about getting a clean connection between bat and ball. Dhoni had been living the ‘new reality’ that Djokovic spoke about for the entire 2024 season. 2025 was about him waking up to an ‘age-old reality’. A shadow of his old self, he was a walking warning to the pros dragging their feet even after father time had blown the final whistle.

Back in the day, Dhoni always rose to the occasion. Now that was not the case. For CSK and Dhoni, that game against Punjab Kings was crucial. It was now-or-never – win or forget playoffs moment. Chepauk was packed. It was an arena that has witnessed many magical Dhoni knocks. The venue, the fans, the cause – this was the famous Thala hour. It took four-balls to realise, this used to be the Thala hour.

A shadow of his old self, Dhoni was a walking warning to the pros dragging their feet even after father time had blown the final whistle. (BCCI) A shadow of his old self, Dhoni was a walking warning to the pros dragging their feet even after father time had blown the final whistle. (BCCI) CSK were about 170 in the 18th over when Dhoni walked in. They needed to cross 200 to make it a game. The first ball from the tall South African pacer Marco Jansen was short, aimed at his head. Back in the day, Dhoni would have swatted it over square leg. He swung the bat, it caught the top edge and flew for four. Chepauk erupted. The next ball too was short but he couldn’t clear the boundary. At least it went where he intended. Next up was Yuzvendra Chahal. Dhoni knows him inside out. The leggie used to be



his pupil, rather a puppet, when he was the India captain. From behind the stumps, he would tutor Chahal all the time. Chahal pitched his first ball on his stumps. Dhoni lofted it for a straight six. How times change. Now, it was Chahal who was reading his master’s mind. Aware that Dhoni had got slower and lost touch, Chahal tossed the next ball outside off. Dhoni failed to reach or make a solid connect. He was caught on the fence. The touch had vanished, and so had the halo.

In a season where he has scored 151 in 10 outings, this has happened often. Dhoni is losing his aura, an important weapon that helped during those tight last-over situations. There was a time when Dhoni would leave it for late and pull off impossible wins – that was his way of leaving his signature on a winning game. This IPL too he tried the Houdini but his team sunk. He no longer could unshackle the chains in time.

Djokovic too is a master of tight matches. He has perfected the art of winning tie-breakers – where the situation isn’t too different from cricket’s final overs. There have been times when Djokovic would be down 0-2 but he would still wear that nonplussed Dhoni expression. Such was his winning percentage in 3rd, 4th and 5th sets, that he, his rivals and the world knew who was the favourite when the game went to the wire. This April, the month when the mighty fell, Djokovic too wasn’t his old self. He lost three matches in a row, something he hadn’t done for ages on the tour. His last loss was to Dutch lucky loser Botic van de Zandschulp at Indian Wells. The game went to the deciding third set but he couldn’t beat the World No. 85. That day he committed 37 unforced errors – if cricket kept that statistical count Dhoni’s numbers would be similar. After the game, Djokovic confessed “it was a struggle”. It is these struggles that make fans, accustomed to dispensing superlatives from their couches, wince. They feel betrayed by the slowing reflexes of the aging of Superman. Sport has always been about those obsessed with the singular Peter Pan story. Nobody stops ageing – neither stars, nor fans. But spectators would always want their heroes to be super-fit and super-successful. Watching Dhoni, Djokovic will get to know that the ‘new reality’ of downsizing ambitions comes with risks of shrinking your stature, denting your reputation and adding an anti-climatic postscript to your legacy. Form or best tennis aren’t on tap, they need to perennially flow. Only when ‘giving your best’ becomes a habit, it will organically flow into your veins at the opportune time. Dhoni couldn’t do that, wait for Paris to find if Djokovic can.

# Virat Kohli speaks on the ‘intense atmosphere’ when RCB – CSK play

GNS News Agency, May 7

Travelling fans of CSK have always enlivened the south side derby between Chennai Super Kings and Royal Challengers Bangalore, according to Virat Kohli. Speaking to JioHotstar’s ‘18 calling 18’ show, Kohli said, “I would say one team that, historically, I’ve felt we’ve had the most intense games with is Chennai Super Kings in Bengaluru.”

Kohli reckoned that playing CSK in Bengaluru was something else. “Because in Chennai, of course, there are Chennai fans—it’s just yellow and CSK fans everywhere. But to play against CSK in Bengaluru is something else, because a lot of Chennai fans come to Bengaluru. CSK fans travel in huge numbers, so they buy tickets very early and take over a section of the stadium,” he described. While RCB defeated CSK at Chepauk after many seasons, Kohli said that the rivalry always had the high notes. “So, there’s an intense atmosphere inside the stadium in Bengaluru when playing against CSK. And then, obviously, the game also gets very intense and competitive. That environment is the most exciting I’ve been a part of,” he said.

Kohli also recollected his first auction while going down

memory lane. Describing his excitement during the inaugural IPL season in 2008 and how surreal the experience was, he said, “The first year was exciting in terms of unexpected things happening. We hadn’t played a lot of T20 cricket. Secondly, franchise cricket allowed us to play with different players from all over the world—players we looked up to,” he recalled. The auction had erupted on the youngsters playing in Kuala Lumpur back then. “When the auction happened, we were in Malaysia, in Kuala Lumpur, and we were sold as first-class cricketers, who were limited to ₹20 lakhs. We went crazy in the corridor—“We got ₹20 lakhs!” That was the emotion behind it. Because we didn’t know what to expect—the opening ceremony, the whole experience of meeting great cricketers—it was surreal.” Kohli also said he never expected the IPL would reach this stage. “It’s been a long journey—one that we have seen grow, evolve, and become this amazing spectacle. Honestly, when IPL started, I never thought it could reach a stage like this. But 18 years and rolling, and every year you feel the same excitement, if not more, which is a massive credit to the league, the way it’s organized, the teams, the competitiveness, and the professionalism—top-notch,” he said.



## ‘Shah Rukh Khan’s character in Darr could have raped Juhi Chawla’s Kiran’, says writer Honey Irani, defends his behaviour as ‘genuine love’



The Shah Rukh Khan-starrer Darr was a significant film in the actor’s career. After playing the anti-hero in Darr and Baazigar, SRK established himself as an actor who could easily pull off being the bad guy, in an industry obsessed with uncomplicated heroes. But, over the years, his character in Darr has been questioned by the audience. Yash Chopra’s perceived romanticisation of the character, who stalks the woman he claims to love and even murders people just so he can be with her, has not aged well with certain viewers. In a recent interview, writer of the film Honey Irani said that they wanted to portray SRK’s character as a man who actually loved Juhi Chawla’s Kiran. Honey said that they wanted to draw a line between love and lust, and

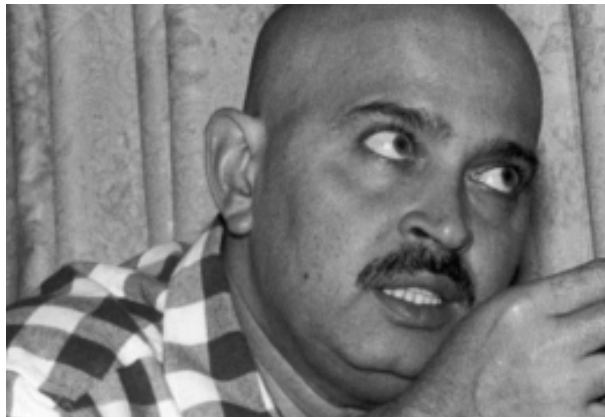
she insisted that he could have raped her but he didn’t. In a chat with Friday Talkies, Honey said, “He was crazy about her. With this, me and Yashi ji were very conscious that we don’t want it to look like lust. It shouldn’t be that he just wants to be with her and sleep with her and stuff like that. He says ‘I will marry you, I will make you meet my mother.’” Honey, who is the mother of filmmakers Zoya Akhtar and Farhan Akhtar, insisted that what SRK’s Rahul felt for Kiran was “genuine love”. “He was fascinated and madly in love with her. Otherwise, he could have raped her when they were on the boat but it wasn’t that. So we made that very clear that there is a very thin line in this,” she said. Honey did not address that Rahul was ignorant of Kiran’s wishes and forced his presence in his life, even when it put her in harm’s way. “He was a complex man and he had his own problems. Even when he said her name, he would be so scared that he would stammer,” she said. Honey said that Aamir and Sunny were offered the role at first but both passed on it. SRK jumped at the opportunity. “We narrated it to Aamir but something happened between him and Yash ji. I don’t know what happened and he said no. We narrated it to Sunny also. He said I will do the other role, the hero one. And then we talked to Shah Rukh and Shah Rukh jumped on it. He said ‘yeah, definitely I am doing it,’” she said.

## ‘I will be on the road’: Rakesh Roshan’s daughter recalls how the family’s fate was tied to his directorial debut, says, ‘Hrithik and I just looked at each other’

Filmmaker Rakesh Roshan has previously opened up about the time when he mortgaged many of his assets while making his directorial debut Khudgarz. At the time, Rakesh was already an actor and a producer but was not finding the success he dreamed of, so, he decided to direct. In a new interview, Rakesh’s daughter Sunaina shared that since he had mortgaged a lot of assets for Khudgarz, there was a big chance that the family could have lost everything.

In a chat with Pinkvilla, Sunaina said that while the family was driving to the premiere of Khudgarz, her mother asked Rakesh what would happen if the film flopped. “And Dad was like, ‘I will be on the road’. So me and my brother just looked at each other and we were like... We didn’t still understand what that meant but we were like, we will be on the road,” she recalled.

Sunaina said that things worked out for them, but a few years later, he was ready to bet it all again for Hrithik Roshan’s debut film, Kaho Naa Pyar Hai. “For Kaho Naa Pyar Hai, he mortgaged everything, he is a risk taker so he mortgaged everything and luckily, it did well,” she said. Sunaina said that since she was a teenager during Khudgarz, she didn’t know much about the business, but she learnt that during Kaho Naa Pyar Hai, all of Rakesh’s assets were on the line. “During Kaho Naa Pyar Hai, I know he mortgaged his house, his office, his cars, everything. It must have been very hard on my mother and my father,



and not letting the children know,” she said. Kaho Naa Pyar Hai was an instant success and turned Hrithik into a star. A week after the film’s release, Rakesh Roshan was shot on the street but he survived the attack. In an earlier chat with Bollywood Hungama, Rakesh had claimed the underworld had orchestrated this attack because they wanted Hrithik to work in a film financed by them. “I never gave any indication that Hrithik could do a film for them,” he said. Sunaina said that Rakesh always taught them to live below their means so even if they encounter tough times, they can get through. “He always taught me and my brother to live below our means. (He said) Tomorrow, if you don’t have the luxuries in life, I don’t want you to miss it,” she said.

## Has Avengers Doomsday full cast leaked online? Marvel fans worried about Tom Holland, Hugh Jackman missing from 60-member roster



Avengers: Doomsday has officially kicked off filming in London, and leaked set images along with a massive 60-member cast list are already doing the rounds online. Insider Jeff Sneider dropped an alleged list of remaining cast members that Marvel didn’t confirm earlier when they announced Robert Downey Jr. as Doom, alongside other returning names like Chris Hemsworth as Thor, Paul Rudd as Ant-Man, and Simu Liu as Shang-Chi. But the new leak has left fans even more anxious, as big names like Tom Holland, Elizabeth Olsen, and Hugh Jackman are missing from the list. Robert Downey Jr. (Doctor Doom), Chris Hemsworth (Thor), Paul Rudd (Ant-Man), Simu Liu (Shang-Chi), Tom Hiddleston (Loki), Florence Pugh (Yelena), Sebastian Stan (Bucky), Anthony Mackie (Captain America), Letitia Wright (Black Panther), Tenoch Huerta (Namor), Pedro Pascal (Reed Richards), Vanessa Kirby (Sue Storm), Joseph Quinn (Johnny Storm), Ebon Moss-Bachrach (The Thing), Danny Ramirez (Falcon), David Harbour (Red Guardian), Wyatt Russell (U.S. Agent), Hannah John-Kamen (Ghost), Winston Duke (M’Baku), Ian McKellen (Magneto), Patrick Stewart (Professor X), Rebecca Romijn (Mystique), James Marsden (Cyclops), Kelsey Grammer (Beast), Alan Cumming (Nightcrawler), Channing Tatum (Gambit), Lewis Pullman (Sentry). Journalist Jeff Sneider revealed an alleged leaked

cast list on The Hot Mic podcast and shared the same on his social media handle, though he mentioned to take the information with a ‘grain of salt.’ The list suggests Mark Ruffalo will return as Hulk, Brie Larson will reprise her role as Captain Marvel, and Jeremy Renner, who recently revealed turning down the Hawkeye 2 offer, might also return to his role as Clint Barton. Check out the list here: The rumoured list also has some major upsets, as fans were hoping for Spider-Man and Wolverine to reprise their roles. But if this one is to be believed, that’s not happening yet. Charlie Cox and Oscar Isaac are also missing. “Being able to create stories and explore characters within the Marvel Universe fulfilled a lifelong dream of ours,” said the Russo brothers, who are directing the movie. “We’re thrilled to collaborate once again with Kevin, Lou and the entire Marvel team.” Of what we know so far, the story of Avengers: Doomsday centres around the collapse of the multiverse, where different realities crash into each other, causing what are called “incursions.” Marvel recently dropped its new world of misfits called New Avengers as Thunderbolts, the cast will also reprise their role in Doomsday, along with the cast of the upcoming film The Fantastic Four: First Steps. This was confirmed in the Thunderbolts post-credit scene, which suggests that all Avengers and New Avengers may finally team up against the threat, and the one pulling the strings behind it all is none other than Victor Von Doom.

## ‘Ranveer Singh was a newcomer at the time, so we made him sit in the boot of my Hummer, Shah Rukh Khan drove’: Mika recalls epic party



Singer Mika Singh shares a strong bond with Bollywood star Shah Rukh Khan. He often tells the story of gifting a ring worth Rs 50 lakh to the actor, and when they made Ranveer Singh sit in the boot of a car as they went to a party. The singer recently shared details about these incidents and also clarified his statement about the Jawan star not keeping his promise of gifting him a bike. In a recent conversation with Shubhankar Mishra on his YouTube channel, Mika Singh recalled the time when they made then-newcomer Ranveer Singh sit in the trunk of his Hummer. He said, “It was Hrithik Roshan’s birthday. He invited all of us for a birthday party. The entire industry was present at the party. It was 6 in the morning so we left. Hrithik had then bought a new Rolls Royce. As there were too many people, we decided to go to Shah Rukh Khan’s Mannat as he has a huge house that could accommodate all of us.”

He added, “So the plan was made, now everybody was finding means to reach there. I said, ‘My car is huge,

we can all go in the same car.’ I told them Gauri Khan can sit here, I will sit there, Sanjay Kapoor and his wife can sit there. They asked what car do you have? I said Hummer. SRK asked, ‘Who will drive it?’ I quickly said, ‘Paaji, aap’. He was like, ‘Are you sure?’ I was like yes, please.” Mika added that Shah Rukh Khan was sweet enough to drive them all to his house. Adding more details about what happened on that evening, Mika said, “Soon, Ranveer Singh came running. He was like where do I sit? I told him, ‘Bhai tu dikki mein baith’ You are still a newcomer. Back then, we were his seniors. Now, he has become a master to us all. He is so sweet that he went and sat in the boot. We went all the way to Mannat, at 8 in the morning, we wrapped it up with a selfie.”

A long time ago, when Shah Rukh Khan had gifted bikes to John Abraham and Abhishek Bachchan, he had reportedly promised a bike to Mika too. Previously, the singer in an interview with Pinkvilla shared, “Although I have received gifts from him, he had once promised to gift me a bike. In fact, he promised it when he gifted a bike to Abhishek Bachchan and John Abraham. Even if not a bike, at least gift me a cycle, I’d be very happy.” Just five days after the interview, Mika met Shah Rukh Khan at the IIFA Awards, where they discussed his statement. Mika told Shubhankar Mishra, “I met Shah Rukh Khan at IIFA. His manager Pooja, is too nice, she jokingly reminded the star, ‘Please give him his bike’.” Mika also shared that he gifted a Rs 50 lakh ring to Shah Rukh Khan. Previously, talking about gifting a ring to the star, Mika told Pinkvilla, “He is one of the best actors and gentlemen. I always wear this ring (points to his finger), which is worth Rs 50 lakh. I have gifted similar rings to Amitabh Bachchan and Gurdas Maan too, but the first person I gave one to was SRK. I wanted to do something for the three of them. But I had nothing else to offer them, so I gifted them rings. My ring might not have even mattered to him since he could own rings worth Rs 50 crore or more. But he is very sweet and thanked me for the gift.”

## ‘Galaxy isn’t a mansion, it’s an apartment’: Salman Khan invited Avinash Gowariker to move in when he was homeless, offered Sohail’s room



Avinash Gowariker is one of the most sought-after celebrity photographers in the country, and after a multi-decade career of capturing the lives of the stars, he certainly has a lot of tales to tell. During an interview, Gowariker talked about none other than Salman Khan, and shared anecdotes about his family’s magnanimous nature. While recalling his early days in the industry, he said that he didn’t have a place to stay, and Salman invited him to move in. In an interview with Bollywood Bubble, Avinash talked about struggling to make ends meet during the nascent stage of his career, and how he survived. “When I started my career, I used to live in a 10\*10 feet kholi, and I had a Kinetic Honda, and that’s how it started. I used to live on rent from one place to another, and sometimes I was caught in between rents. I had no place to go, and when I told this to Salman, he said, ‘Come stay in the house; stay in Sohail’s room.’ This is how big-hearted they are.”

Avinash said that it’s not like the Khans were living in

a mansion, and yet they decided to take another person in. “I was a nobody; I was a simple, struggling, middle-class photographer, and they opened their house to me. All brothers were staying in the house, and it is not as if they stayed in a mansion. Galaxy is an apartment,” he said. When asked about the duration of his stay, he laughed and said, “There is some controversy regarding that because I think it was a few months, but Sohail claims it was a few years. But I did stay there for a long time, actually till the night Sohail got married.” The photographer added that all these traits that Salman displays have been inherited from their father, the great writer Salim Khan. Avinash is a cousin of the legendary director Ashutosh Gowariker, credited with movies such as Lagaan (2001) and Swades (2004). In a previous appearance on Cyrus Broacha’s podcast, Ashutosh had credited his success to his cousin and actors Salman and Aamir Khan and said, “If Salman likes you, your life is set.” Meanwhile, Salman Khan was last seen in Sikandar, alongside Rashmika Mandanna, Kajal Aggarwal, Sharman Joshi and Suniel Shetty.

## Mohanlal’s film earns thrice the collective revenue of Barroz and Malaikottai Vaaliban

Thudaram box office collection day 8: Mohanlal is having an excellent 2025. After the massive success of his film L2: Empuraan, which earned Rs 265.5 crore worldwide after opening at Rs 24.5 crore on its release day, his second release of the year is seeing similar success. After opening at Rs 5.25 crore last week, the film saw a huge growth over the weekend and continued this momentum by earning Rs 5.5 crore on its second Friday. The film’s total India net collection stands at Rs 56.9 crore, crore, according to industry tracker Sacnilk.

Meanwhile, according to Mohanlal, Thudaram has crossed the Rs 100 crore mark globally. The actor took to his X handle to claim his film reached the Rs 100 crore milestone in just six days of its release. The veteran star even celebrated the success of both his 2025 releases with members of AKMFCA State Committee, a picture of which he shared on his social media handles. Globally, the film is set to cross the Rs 150 crore mark.

Thudaram, reportedly made on a budget of Rs 28 crores, witnessed an overall occupancy of 61.37% in the Malayalam language. The film has also released in the Telugu language with selective shows across the country. Thudaram’s 8th day collection is just from 900 shows and is better than the figure posted by L2: Empuraan, which earned just Rs 4.55 crore on its eighth day of release. Thudaram, directed by Tharun Moorthy, is a crime thriller. Apart from Mohanlal, the film also stars Shobana,



Prakash Varma, Farhaan Faasil, Maniyanpilla Raju, and Chandini Baiju, among others.

Mohanlal had a difficult 2024, which was marked by two bombs. He made his directorial debut with the fantasy film Barroz 3D – Guardian of Treasures. The film, reportedly made on a budget of Rs 150 crore, earned just 10% of its budget in its lifetime. Similarly, the epic period film Malaikottai Vaaliban, directed by Lijo Jose Pellissery, failed to resonate with the audience. The film, reportedly made on a budget of Rs 65 crore, earned just Rs 29.75 crore worldwide.