# MANUU B.Ed. admissions through NCET

Hyderabad, June 24 (NSS): Maulana Azad National Urdu University (MANUU) is inviting online applications for admissions in B.A. B.Ed., B.Sc. B.Ed., B.Com. B.Ed. Integrated Teacher Education programmes (ITEP) from candidates who have appeared in National Common Entrance Test (NCET) conducted by NTA and has a valid NCET 2025 score card. According to Prof. M. Vanaja, Director, Directorate of Admissions, candidates can register and apply through admission portal https://manuucoe.in/ITEPAdmission upto July 05. The first provisional list will be released on July 07, documents can be uploaded from July 08 to 10 and certificate verification will be done on July 11. Candidates have to pay fee on July 12 & 13. The classes will commence from July 15. The second provisional list will be released on July 15.

Candidates must have studied Urdu as subject/language or in 10th/12th or equivalent Madarasa courses with Urdu as medium of instruction.

# Financial assistance for Education in Telangana & Andhra Pradesh for 2025-26

Hyderabad, June 24 (NSS): Online applications are invited through the National Scholarship Portal for the children of beedi workers, limestone and dolomite mines workers, mica workers, iron ore, manganese ore and chrome ore mines workers, and cine workers. This assistance is for students studying from Class 1 to Class 10 (Pre-Matric) and from Class 11 to Professional Degree (Post-Matric) in government and government-recognized schools and colleges in Telangana and Andhra Pradesh. The deadlines for submitting online applications are: For Pre-Matric (Class 1 to 10) financial assistance for education. For the Wards of Beedi, Cine, Limestone & Dolomite, Iron Ore, Manganese Ore, Chrome Ore, and Mica Mines Workers in the States of Telangana & Andhra Pradesh for the Year

## Revanth Reddy asks Congress leaders to set aside personal agendas, calls for unity



#### GNS News Agency, June 24

Hyderabad: Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy has urged party leaders to set aside personal agendas and work for the Congress party's cause. With reports of differences among Ministers, MLAs and other leaders from various constituencies reaching Gandhi Bhavan, the Chief Minister called for coordination and unity. Every effort must be made to ensure that the Congress retains power after the next elections, he said here on Tuesday.Addressing Ministers and TPCC committee members during the Political Affairs Committee meeting at Gandhi Bhavan, the Chief Minister emphasised that party leaders must work with discipline.

He said those appointed to various party committees should operate at the grassroots level, and assured them that leaders who sincerely work for the party would be rewarded with appropriate posts. With local body elections fast approaching, the Chief Minister said he was ready to visit villages. He noted that the Congress government was implementing several welfare and development programmes across the State. The party leadership, he added, must focus on strengthening the cadre at the grassroots level and gear up for the Jubilee Hills bye-election. He also reminded the leaders that several challenges lay ahead, including constituency delimitation, women's reservations and the 'One Nation, One Poll' proposal. These issues, he said, must be faced with determination.AICC incharge Meenakshi Natarajan, Cabinet Ministers and TPCC leaders attended the meeting

# Explore investment opportunities in Future City: Sridhar Babu

#### GNS News Agency, June 24

New Delhi: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday shared Union Minister Chirag Paswan's article, which highlighted a remarkable transformation of India's food processing sector over the past few years and also hailed the rural entrepreneurs for powering the drastic change.PM Modi took to his social media handle on X and shared an immersive article by Union Minister for Food Processing Chirag Paswan, in which the latter gave a detailed glimpse into broad structural changes adopted by his Ministry and how this led to empowering of rural heroes, enabling them to become key pivot of economic growth. The Union Minister penned case studies of some of the farmers, chronicling their growth from small-time enterprises to flourishing food ventures. Sharing an example of a makhana producer from Bihar, Chirag Paswan said, "With support from the Pradhan Mantri Formalisation of Micro Food Processing Enterprises (PMFME) scheme, he (makhana producer) has built a thriving food venture that now exports to the United States and Canada.""His story reflects the broader vision of India's food processing mission: To turn local strengths into global opportunities," Chirag Paswan added. The Union Minister said that till a few years ago, the food processing landscape was fragmented, with rampant post-harvest losses and unrealised value from agricultural produln 2014, the gross value addition of the sector stood at Rs 134 lakh crore. Today, following sustained policy and institutional drive, that figure has risen to Rs 224 lakh crore," he informed.Notably, the PMFME scheme was launched under the Atmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan with an outlay of Rs 10,000 crore to empower the unorganised micro food enterprises through formalisation, capacity building and access to credit. The Union Minister further wrote, "India's growing leadership in the global food economy finds powerful expression through World Food India - the Ministry's flagship international platform for investment, innovation, and collaboration. Designed to showcase India's strengths across the food processing value chain, the event has evolved into a trusted forum for global stakeholders to engage with India's agri-food ecosystem."He further pointed out, "Our goal is unambiguous - to ensure that every shelf

PM Modi shares Chirag Paswan's article lauding

remarkable transformation of food processing industry



in the world carries a product that proudly bears the name of India and behind every such product stands a story of collective prosperity and national pride."The Union Minister shared the article on X and wrote, "Under the visionary leadership of PM Modi, India's food processing sector has undergone a transformative journey - from farm to shelf empowering our rural heroes.'

# **Trump announces** ceasefire between Iran, Israel

#### GNS News Agency, June 24

New York: Iran and Israel have agreed to a ceasefire after the US pounded Tehran's nuclear facilities, US President Donald Trump announced. He said Monday evening on Truth Social, "It has been fully agreed by and between Israel and Iran that there will be a Complete and Total CEASEFIRE". The ceasefire will start in six hours - around midnight Washington time and 9:30 am in India - "when Israel and Iran have wound down and completed their in progress, final missions", he said. In a dramatic end to the missile war between Iran and Israel into which the US was drawn in with both missiles and B2 stealth bombers, Trump, who had showered invectives on Tehran for years, wrote, "I want to thank Iran". "On the assumption that everything works as it should, which it will, I would like to congratulate both Countries, Israel and Iran, on having the Stamina, Courage, and Intelligence to end, what should be called, 'THE 12 DAY WAR'", he wrote. The announcement followed a symbolic show of Iran, which shot missiles at a US base in Qatar after having given the US notice of the strike, according to Trump.He said 13 of the 14 missiles that Iran fired were shot down, and there were no casualties."They've gotten it all out of their 'system', and there will, hopefully, be no further HATE", he said. Trump, who had threatened dire consequences if Iran retaliated after the US attacks on its three nuclear facilities in Isfahan, Natanz, and Firdo, was mollified by the symbolic retaliation."I was 'set free' because it was headed in a non-threatening direction", he said.Trump's posts were sparse in details and said nothing about how, where or by whom the truce was reached. Iran, exhausted by the 12 days of missile war with Israel and the final punch from the US, finally appears ready for a truce.



make a new deal in his second term. The United Nations Security Council was scheduled to meet on Tuesday on that agreement known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action which was signed by the five permanent members of the Council and Germany and the European Union.It is to be seen if the peace will hold as Israel disrupted the negotiations between Iran and the US by starting to bomb Iran two days before a scheduled meeting between representatives of Tehran and Washington. That in turn led to the US joining in after about ten days of sitting on the fence. How the ceasefire will work is complicated as set out in Trump's Truth Social post. He indicated that first Iran is to hold a ceasefire, which Israel will respect, and that will be followed by an Israeli ceasefire for another 12 hours, at which point it will become permanent. After the two ceasefires, "upon the 24th Hour, an Official END to THE 12 DAY WAR will be saluted by the World", Trump said. Trump's gamble in joining on Israel's side while isolated from the other traditional US allies would pay off if the truce holds. After the US attacks on the three nuclear centres, which Trump said had obliterated Tehran's nuclear potential, Iran appeared to have little to gain by continuing the defiance of the US as well as most nations that have opposed the Shia nation getting a nuclear weapon. Iran, which had allied with Russia, supplying it with drones for the Ukraine war, did not get any backing from Moscow - or Beijing - when the US bombs rained

# CM Revanth dares KCR, Harish Rao for a debate on Banakacharla project

Hyderabad, June 24: Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy has challenged K. Chandrashekar Rao, the president of the BRS, along with party MLA Harish Rao, to participate in a debate regarding the Banakacharla project. While speaking at the Rythu Bharosa Vijayotsava Sabha at the Secretariat on Tuesday, the Chief Minister stated that if KCR truly wishes to engage in a discussion about the Banakacharla project, he ought to send a letter to the Speaker of the Assembly."Legislative Affairs Minister Sridhar Babu will take charge of organising a special Assembly session on the date specified by KCR. We should have a conversation about who has wronged Telangana concerning the Godavari water issue. I will present all the relevant details in the Assembly. KCR should also participate in this debate," Revanth Reddy declared. He also rebuked the accusations from BRS leaders claiming that Revanth Reddy has compromised Telangana's interests with Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister Nara Chandrababu Naidu.If I had wanted to associate with Chandrababu Naidu, I would have remained with the TDP. Why would I come here to seek the blessings of Rajiv Gandhi? KCR and his family have embezzled vast amounts of money through irrigation projects and have seized thousands of acres in the name of farmhouses. Now, they are engaging in harmful propaganda against me regarding the Banakacharla project," Revanth Reddy stated. I am asking the BRS leaders directly from this platform. What was your financial condition prior to the establishment of Telangana? How did Harish Rao acquire a farmhouse in Moinabad, and how did KTR obtain property in Janwada while KCR has one in Gajwel? They accumulated immense wealth, yet the state of Telangana is burdened with a debt of Rs. 8 lakh crores. Over the past decade, KCR's family has become wealthier than the Nizams, while the once-prosperous state of Telangana is now facing bankruptcy," he emphasized.(NSS)



Hyderabad, June 24 Minister for Information Technology and Industries Duddilla Sridhar Babu has urged the Indo-French Chamber of Commerce & Industry (IFCCI) and its member companies to actively explore investment opportunities in Telangana's prestigious Future City project, an upcoming 30,000-acre global innovation hub being developed under the Public-Private Partnership (PPP) model.He emphasised the importance of deepening Indo-French collaborations during a high-level roundtable organised by the IFCCI held at the Secretariat here on Tuesday. The roundtable brought together senior officials from the Government of Telangana and a delegation of leading French business representatives to discuss investment opportunities in sectors such as engineering, artificial intelligence (AI), clean energy and manufacturing. Speaking on the occasion, Sridhar Babu highlighted that the project is aligned with the vision of Chief Minister Revanth Reddy to position Telangana as a world leader in innovation, sustainability and advanced infrastructure.

Telangana has emerged as a preferred investment destination, attracting over Rs.3 lakh crore in investments in the past 18 months. Last year alone, Hyderabad welcomed 70 new Global Capability Centres (GCCs), a reflection of the state's pro-business policies and governance model," he said. The Minister further noted that Telangana is integrating Artificial Intelligence into its TG-iPASS industrial approval system to enhance transparency and speed in clearances. Several prominent French companies, including Sanofi, Monin, Safran, Capgemini, Dassault, Teleperformance, and Opella Healthcare, have already established a strong presence in Telangana across sectors like aerospace, IT, pharmaceuticals, and food processing. Minister Sridhar Babu encouraged French businesses to explore emerging sectors such as clean energy and green mobility, smart healthcare and digital governance, future-ready education, sustainable manufacturing, agri-Innovation and emerging technologies."Our collaboration with French enterprises goes beyond investments. It is about co-creating a sustainable and technology-driven future," he said. The French delegation included senior representatives from Monin India, Opella Healthcare, Safran Aircraft Engine Services India, Sanofi India, Teleperformance, Ziegler Aerospace and Var Electrochem Pvt. Ltd., among others.

In the 46 years since the Shah of Iran was overthrown, "Death to America" has been a common refrain in Tehran, holding a grudge against Washington for its role in deposing the elected government of Mohammad Mosaddegh through a coup that ultimately gave absolute powers to Reza Pahlavi, the Shah

A 2015 international agreement to rein in Iran's nuclear programme was shredded by Trump, who attempted to

# Harish Rao asks govt to stop dramas for gaining local body elections

# Work together to ensure reach of development fruits to people: CM Revanth



Hyderabad, June 24 Chief Minister Revanth Reddv has suggested that the Congress party and the State government collaborate to ensure that the benefits of development reach the people directly. During a meeting of the newly appointed Political Affairs Committee (PAC) of the Telangana Pradesh Congress Committee (TPCC) held at Gandhi Bhavan on Tuesday, the Chief Minister expressed his views. He remarked that the 18 months of Congress leadership represent a significant period for Telangana and emphasized the importance of the party and government working in harmony. Revanth Reddy advised that party committees should be established at the booth, village, and mandal levels. He noted that a robust presence at the booth level would enable government initiatives to be efficiently delivered to the people. He also urged the TPCC to concentrate on reinforcing the party's structure and called for party leaders to unite their efforts in order to facilitate the Congress's return to power. The Chief Minister has directed

party committee leaders to engage at the grassroots level and set specific objectives, emphasising the need to fill nominated positions such as those in market and temple committees.

"We will encounter numerous challenges in the near future. Matters such as delimitation, the women's reservation bill, and Jamili elections are all on the horizon. Given these circumstances, I am prepared to visit villages and raise awareness among the people. Party leaders must be ready to face these challenges, and they should also prepare for the upcoming Jubilee Hills by-election," stated Revanth Reddy.

# America's attack on Iran is shameful : Left parties

Hyderabad, June 24 The Leaders of the Left parties have expressed their anger that America was pushing the world towards World War-III with its imperialist ambitions by relying on its economic power. They said that it was shameful that America, which has been playing an indirect role in creating wars between various countries, had now attacked Iran. Protesting the US bombings on Iran, a protest program was organized at the Narayanguda YMCA cross roads in Hyderabad under the auspices of the Telangana State Left Parties on Tuesday. The program was attended by CPI State Secretary and the party MLA Kunamneni Sambasiva Rao, State Secretariat Member V.S. Bose, Hyderabad District Secretary S. Chayadevi, CPI(M) State Secretary John Wesley.



Hyderabad, June 24 Former minister and Siddipet MLA Harish Rao has demanded that the Congress government stop the dramas being played in the name of Rythu Bharosa scheme money before the local body elections and apologize for the 19-month-long ordeal of the farmers. He said that limiting the Rythu Bharosa monetary benefit to ?.12,000 after promising to give ?.15,000 per acre in the election manifesto was a betrayal. He said that the Rythu Bharosa scheme was not implemented in the last monsoon season and mocked that in the Yasangi season, the congress leaders were celebrating it in the name of their victory for votes. He alleged that the congress leaders deceived the farmers during their assembly election campaign and added that they completely drowned the farmers after coming into power. Harish Rao wondered whether CM Revanth Reddy holding the celebrations for cheating the farmers by not fulfilling the he made to the farmers?

#### **INDIAN CHRONICLE**

# Indian Chronicle

English Daily

# A million-dollar adviser for cash-strapped Telangana — Revanth's Tony Blair gamble

The recent signing of a Memorandum of Understandng (MoU) between the Telangana government, led by Chief Minister Revanth Reddy, and the Tony Blair Instiute for Global Change (TBIGC) has sparked controversy. The institute, headed by former British Prime Minister Tony Blair, is known for offering strategic advisory services to governments across the world. Telangana's finances in reefall under Congress rule; revenues plummet, debts palloon, borrowing turns recklessHowever, the collaboraion raises eyebrows due to TBIGC's financial record eportedly generating USD 121 million through its advisory operations. This prompts many to question whether such an expensive partnership is appropriate for a State currently facing financial distress as claimed by the Congress government.

Chief Minister Revanth Reddy has cited Telangana's inancial distress in various public meetings. That no one elieves him and the party high command in Delhi refuses o give him appointments is another matter. What is more uzzling is that, despite the "bankrupt" condition of the State, his government has gone ahead and signed the NoU with an international adviser known for charging exrbitant fees. One wonders how a 'cash-strapped' State an afford to engage with such a high-profile nstitution.Meanwhile, the Revanth Reddy government has een on a price-hiking spree: the cost of sand has risen rom Rs 1,200 per tonne during the BRS regime to now Rs 2,000. Alcohol prices, Metro Rail and bus pass fares ave also increased. Yet, the Congress government coninues to delay the implementation of 6 Guarantees, Dec arations and 420 promises.The choice of TBIGC also rerives concerns about the Revanth Reddy government's

Teach For India Opens Applications For 2026 Fellowship. A Unique Chance To 'Lead With Love' Across Classrooms in India

Hyderabad: Teach For India, a non-profit championing educational equity, today announced the opening of applications for its 2026 Fellowship program. Fellows will have the opportunity to transform the lives of children and cultivate future leaders with compassion and dedication. Applications for the 2026 Teach For India cohort open July 1, 2025.

The Teach For India Fellowship is a transformative two-year, full-time paid program. It brings together exceptional individuals from diverse backgrounds, attracting Fellows from over 500 universities and colleges and 300 companies across India. The selection process is rigorous, attracting some of the nation's most brilliant and promising young leaders. Chosen Fellows commit to serving as fulltime teachers in affordable private schools or English-medium government schools. Here, they'll guide students through the complexities of India's inequities, directly addressing the root causes of educational disadvantag vond the classroom, the Fellowship cultivates crucial leadership skills, including empathy, active listening, and relationship-building, fostering significant professional growth. Currently, our community boasts over 1000 Fellows, all united by a shared vision: to build a more compassionate and equitable India through education. What truly sets the Teach For India Fellowship apart is the unparalleled opportunity to drive significant change within the existing educational landscape. About Teach For India: Teach For India is a nationwide movement working to ensure that every child in India receives an excellent education. Rooted in the belief that meaningful change begins with strong leadership, the organisation envisions an India free of poverty and filled with love where education is the driving force behind transformation. Over the next decade, Teach For India aims to build a movement of 50,000 leaders who will work collectively to impact the lives of 1 in 10 children from low-income communities.

# Colgate's Oral Health Movement -4.5 Million Screened, Interesting Insights Uncovered, Drives Dental Visits Across India



Hyderabad:Colgate-Palmolive (India) Limited has been on a mission to revolutionize India's Oral Care for over eight decades, with a deep commitment to improving the nation's Oral Health. While almost 100% of households in India are using toothpaste, the adoption of optimal Oral Care behaviour continues to present an opportunity. While nearly every Indian household uses toothpaste, the opportunity to adopt optimal oral care behavior remains significant. It's about cultivating simple, inexpensive daily habits with profound, long-term health benefits.

With 90%\* of Indians facing dental issues and only 9% visiting a dentist regularly, it was imperative to start a dialogue and create meaningful action around this critical issue. To bridge the awareness gap that exists between current behaviour and ideal, Colgate launched the Oral Health Movement in November 2024 - An initiative that leveraged cutting-edge technology to empower millions of Indians, enabling them to screen their oral health from their mobile phones and access free dental check-ups through a network of 50,000 dentists in partnership with the Indian Dental Association (IDA). \*Dental camp study by Kantar in 2019

As part of the Colgate Oral Health Movement, over

4.5 million Indians screened their Oral Health across the length and breadth of the country with participation from 18,000+ pin codes covering more than 700 districts. Further, 1/6th of them visited a dentist post-screening (IDA data), thereby reflecting how the Movement successfully nudged Indians towards further action. Additionally, the nationwide Movement has delivered actionable intelligence on India's Oral Health, highlighting key areas that require urgent attention and intervention. The findings will shape the future of Oral Care initiatives in the country. Based on user participation in Colgate's Oral Health Movement, India's average Oral Health score is 2.6 out of 5.0.

The Oral Health Score provides a powerful, personalized insight into an individual's oral health by assessing the risk of cavities, gum issues, and stains. A common thread among Indians achieving higher oral health scores was their adherence to specific healthy practices. These included brushing teeth twice a day, moderating consumption of caffeine and sugary beverages, eating a healthy and nutritious diet, and avoiding tobacco.Here's a glimpse of India's oral health landscape:

41% of individuals face a high risk of cavities, 44% are prone to gum issues and 14% report stains.

72% of Indians are at high risk for at least one oral health concern while 4% are at the risk of all three (cavities, gum problems, teeth stains)

Only 10% of 4.5 million Indians screened, got a dental health score of 5/5.

The trends also vary across age groups and regions: More than 60% of Indians above the age of 50 are at a high risk of gum-related issues

Eastern India reported the higher incidence of tooth stains, largely linked to tobacco usage

Cavities were more common in Kerala, Jharkhand, and Rajasthan, where over 50% of participants in were found at high riskA heightened vulnerability to cavities within two key demographics: 50% of children aged 3–12 years and 72% of older adults aged over 64 years of age. These groups require particular attention and targeted preventive careOut of the 4.5 million respondents, 24% received the lowest score of 1

# Philips Launches New Smart TVs in India on Flipkart



Hyderabad: Philips, a global pioneer in consumer electronics and trusted innovation, unveils its latest smart television offering in India – Philips Mirage Series (PFT6130). Designed to deliver an elevated entertainment experience that combines powerful visual performance, eye comfort, and smart technology, the Mirage Series is available in 32" and 43" screen sizes on Flipkart.

The Mirage Series PFT6130 introduces 3DR Technology, a breakthrough in display performance that enhances light energy efficiency within the TV panel. This technology ensures every frame is brighter, sharper, and more vivid, with deeper blacks and improved contrast. Viewers can expect a theatre-like experience in their living rooms, making it ideal for binge-watchers, movie buffs, and gaming enthusiasts alike. A standout feature of the Smart TV is its commitment to eye comfort. Equipped with Eye Care Technology, the television offers a flicker-free display that minimizes strain and fatigue during extended viewing. Additionally, the Intelligent Brightness Adjustment or Night Mode automatically adapts the screen's brightness based on ambient lighting, offering a more relaxed viewing experience, particularly in low-light conditions. The Mirage PFT6130 Series features Dolby Audio for crystal-clear dialogue and immersive surround sound, coupled with 20W speaker output and Intelligent Volume Control. These enhancements ensure consistent and cinematic sound quality, making every scene come alive-whether it's a dramatic film, live sports, or music. Visually, the Mirage Series PFT6130 is designed to impress with its boundless screen and ultra-slim bezel, offering a modern, immersive aesthetic that seamlessly fits into any home décor. The HDR10 and HLG support further elevate the viewing experience, delivering a wider colour gamut, enhanced contrast, and life-like details across dark and bright scenes. Whether you're streaming the latest 4K HDR content or catching up on live TV, the Mirage Series promises an ultra-realistic visual treat. Running on the latest Google TV OS, the television brings a content-first interface with smooth navigation and a highly personalized user experience. Viewers can access many apps, including YouTube, Netflix, Prime Video, and JIO + Hotstar. With built-in Google Assistant, users can use voice commands to search, control smart devices, and access information hands-free. The CC Cast (Chromecast Builtin) feature further enhances convenience by allowing effortless casting from smartphones and tablets directly to the TV.

# Telangana aspires to become a global sports hub: Sridhar Babu

# **5 Exciting Ways to Use Balsamic Vinegar in Indian Meals This Week**

Hyderabad:Indian food is all about bold spices, vibrant colours, and unforgettable flavours. But sometimes, a little



Balsamic Chaat Salad

Give your regular

The balsamic vinegar adds a rich, tangy kick that makes the whole salad pop with flavour.

Balsamic Paneer Tikka

Take your paneer tikka game up a notch. Marinate paneer cubes in yogurt, ginger-garlic paste, red chilli powder, garam masala, and just a hint of balsamic vinegar. Grill or bake until golden and slightly charred.

The vinegar helps tenderize the paneer and adds a subtle sweetness that perfectly balances the spices.

#### Roasted Veggies with Balsamic Glaze

Roast your favourite Indian veggies – think carrots, cauliflower, and bell peppers - with olive oil, salt, pepper, and a drizzle of balsamic vinegar. Roast until caramelised and golden. The Balsamic brings out the natural sweetness of veggies and gives your everyday sabzi a restaurant-style upgrade.

Balsamic Fruit Raita

For a raita with a twist, mix diced apples, bananas, and pomegranate with thick curd. Stir in a little balsamic vinegar, roasted cumin powder, and a touch of honey. The vinegar cuts through the richness of the curd, making the raita bright and refreshing – perfect alongside spicy mains.

# Konda Surekha launches 50-day student campaign for environment protection

Hyderabad, June 24 : Aimed at creating awareness among students about the environment protection, Minister for Forests, Environmental and Endowments Konda Surekha unveiled a poster for the 'National Student Paryavaran Competition 2025 (NSPC)' at her residence here on Tuesday. This poster launch marks the commencement of a 50-day environmental awareness campaign in Telangana. In this competition, students will kick off activities by planting trees; each child will be responsible for planting and nurturing one tree, taking a pledge to protect it, and tying a rakhi to the tree as part of the Vriksha Rakshabandhan. Trees can be planted in honour of elders or freedom fighters.

Students will also learn waste segregation by separating wet, dry, plastic, and e-waste at home and school. Activities like Zero Waste Lunch, compost pits, and a Swachhata Corner in classrooms will be promoted. Children will be encouraged to reduce plastic use, recycle old items, and participate in Recycle Stores and Swap Shops. To save water, students will take a Water Pledge, learn to fix leaks, practice drip irrigation, reuse water, and maintain rainwater harvesting pits. Each student will monitor one water tap.On the occasion, the Minister emphasised the need for students to adopt eco-friendly habits and play an active role in protecting the environment. She urged all students to actively participate and make the state a leader in environment education by focusing on trees, waste and water management.



OLAVITA

chaat a gourmet makeover! Toss together boiled chickpeas, chopped onions, tomatoes, cucumber, coriander, and pomegranate seeds. Add a splash of balsamic vinegar, a squeeze of lemon, chaat masala, and a pinch of black salt.

Balsamic Drizzle on Tandoori Pizza

Make a homemade pizza with a base of tandoori chicken or paneer, onions, and capsicum. Once it's out of the oven, finish with a drizzle of balsamic vinegar reduction (just simmer balsamic vinegar till thick). This tangy-sweet glaze pairs beautifully with the smoky, spicy toppings and takes your pizza to the next level.

# Obsession Turns Sinister in Ram Gopal Varma's psychological thriller'Saaree', Set to premiere exclusively on Lionsgate Play



Hyderabad; A vacation with friends. A stranger in a saree. A glance that spirals into madness. Inspired by real life events, Saaree is a psychological thriller that forces viewers to confront a deeply unsettling question: how well do you really know the people we interact with online? What begins as an online infatuation, morphs into relentless stalking, emotional manipulation, and a harrowing loss of control. Saaree follows the story of Kittu, played by Satya Yadu, a photographer who becomes obsessed with a woman played by Aaradhya Devi, whom he sees in a saree, an image that consumes him completely. As admiration twists into control, and rejection triggers rage, his obsession begins to threaten everything around her.

Written and Presented by Ram Gopal Varma and directed by Giri Krishna Kamal, Saaree isn't just a film - it's an alarming look at obsession, infatuation and its terrifying consequences in the digital age. Streaming exclusively on Lionsgate Play from June 27th, this nerve wracking psychological thriller dives into the terrifying side of unchecked desire. The film will be available in Telugu, Hindi, Tamil, and Malayalam. Speaking about Saaree, filmmaker Ram Gopal Varma shared, "Saaree isn't just fiction - it's rooted in the terrifying reality of actual digital stalking that is becoming increasingly common today. Today, relationships form faster online than in real life, often without truly knowing who's on the other side. With Saaree, I wanted to go beyond the surface and show how something as seemingly harmless as a social media interaction or a glance can spiral into a full-blown emotional nightmare. What starts as affection can quickly become control, and control disguised as love is far more terrifying than hate. The experience of making this film was intense because it forced me to sit with some uncomfortable truths."He continues, saying, "In the film, the saree becomes more than just a garment, it's a symbol of how desire and illusion are projected onto women, regardless of what they wear. Even something as traditional as a saree can be objectified.



Hyderabad, June 24 Telangana is on a mission to emerge as a "Global Sports Hub," said Minister for IT and Industries Duddilla Sridhar Babu.Speaking at a programme after inaugurating the SLV Pro Badminton Stadium at Samathanagar, Nizampet, here on Tuesday, the Minister affirmed that this vision is central to the people-centric governance being led by Chief Minister Revanth Reddy.

"As part of our commitment to making Telangana shine on the global stage, especially at the 2036 Olympics. We have introduced a comprehensive new sports policy. There was a time when cricket dominated the public imagination. Today, that landscape is evolving. Parents and children alike are embracing diverse sports, and mindsets are shifting accordingly," he said.Minister Sridhar Babu said, "Hyderabad was once synonymous with biryani. Now, it's equally recognised for badminton,".

He praised the legacy of world-class athletes like Pullela Gopichand, Saina Nehwal, PV Sindhu, Chirag Shetty and Satwiksairaj, all of whom began their journey in Telangana. "Inspired by these champions, many young children are now choosing badminton as a serious career path, representing India at national and international levels. Gopichand's contributions have been instrumental in making Hyderabad the badminton capital of India."

Underscoring the government's strong focus on sports, the Minister announced the establishment of the Young India Sports University, targeted for launch in 2026. "We are also working to create sports grounds across every village panchayat and mandal headquarters. Soon, Telangana will host a FIFA-certified girls' football academy at Gachibowli."He further added, "Plans are underway to establish dedicated sports schools in each of the ten erstwhile districts of the state. Our efforts are aimed at identifying and nurturing talent from the grassroots. We are committed to creating opportunities, infrastructure, and mentorship for young athletes to thrive." As President of the Badminton Association of Telangana, Sridhar Babu also emphasised the association's ongoing efforts to take badminton beyond Hyderabad into rural areas. He urged parents to encourage their children to pursue any sport they are passionate about, and to support them in developing their potential. The event was also attended by MLA Arikepudi Gandhi, MLC Deshapathi Srinivas and other dignitaries





# SIT records MP Eatala Rajender statement in phone tapping case

MLC Kalvakuntla Kavitha seeks support

from Left parties for rail roko program

Hyderabad, June 24 : The SIT officials today recorded the statements of BJP leaders Eatala Rajender and Premender Reddy in the phone tapping case. It was found that the phones of both of them were tapped by the previous BRS government during the 2023 November elections. The SIT officials have found that 4,000 phones had been tapped so far. Eatala Rajender appeared before the SIT at the Jubilee Hills police station in the phone tapping case. The SIT officials recorded Eatala 's statement.

Eatala alleged that he was the first victim in the phone tapping case. He also alleged that his family members, drivers and gunmen's phones were also tapped by the BRS party led state government. The SIT found that he was subjected to the phone tapping before and after the Huzurabad by-election. Kukatpally MLA Madhavaram Krishna Rao filed a complaint with the SIT officials. He said that in the complaint that his phone conversations were secretly tapped from 2020 to 2024. Telangana TDP Organizing Secretary Vejandla Kishore Babu complained to the SIT that the KCR government had tapped his phone in a conspiracy. Kishore Babu gave evidence on the phone tapping to the SIT officials.MP Eatala Rajender said that the phone tapping case was progressing at a snail's pace. He accused all the officials of acting as KCR'd puppets. He was furious that former SIB chief Prabhakar Rao violated the rules and worked for KCR.

Prabhakar Rao is not an IPS officer. However, he was appointed as the SIIB chief. A retired officer was appointed illegally. Guidelines were flouted. Phone tapping is against democracy. The Phones of judges, ministers, and party leaders were tapped. Previously, the entire intelligence wing was with KCR." he claimed. He said that It would take a year and a half to form a commission of inquiry into the phone tapping case. He criticized the existence of a corrupt agreement between BRS and Congress. He alleged that the phones of prominent people from all walks of life were tapped in the KCR government. He said that no one has the right to obstruct the right to freedom guaranteed by the Constitution. Rajender said that it was cruel for the KCR government to tap the phones of the leaders instead of antisocial forces. Senior BJP leader Premender Reddy told the SIT officials that his two phones were tapped during the assembly elections.

He said that it was shameful for the previous KCR government to indulge in the phone tapping. He also said that it was cruel to listen to the personal matters of political leaders, journalists and film personalities' phone calls. He criticized that the phone tapping was done to hurt the BJP. Premender Reddy demanded that the Congress government should conduct a full investigation into the phone tapping scam Premender Reddy revealed that there were thousands of victims in the phone tapping case but only a few people were being called as witnesses. He demanded that the government conduct a CBI investigation to find out the real culprits in the phone tapping case. He alleged that the Congress government may also be involved in the phone tapping issue. Premender Reddy revealed that the BJP lost in many places in the Telangana elections due to the phone tapping scam.

# Empowering students from classroom to career Launch of "A+ Production House" by MANUU & SCDS

Hyderabad, June 24 The Samana College of Design Studies (SCDS), Maulana Azad National Urdu University (MANUU) launched "A+ Production House", a platform designed to integrate academic learning with real-world industry exposure. Prof. Syed Ainul Hasan, Vice-Chancellor and Prof. Ishtiaque Ahmed, Registrar officially inaugurated the production house amidst much enthusiasm and applause.Speaking on the occasion, the Vice-Chancellor stated "Earn while you learn, is not just a slogan for MANUU and SCDS, it is a living reality. This initiative stands as a shining example of what true skill based education should look like". Prof. Abdul Wahid, Dean, School of Technology said this is not merely a production house, it is a platform where designers can bring their dream to life. It opens the door for students to enter the professional world with confidence and creativity The Chairperson of SCDS, Ms. Samana Hussain emphasized the uniqueness of the initiative. This is the first of its kind in India - a University backed production house aimed not only at training students but also helping them sustain in the market. This platform transform students from learners to entrepreneurs, said SCDS Chairperson. With this launch, SCDS and MANUU take a bold step in shaping the future of creative education in India.

## **CS holds VC with district collectors**

Hyderabad, June 24 Chief Secretary K Ramakrishna Rao today held a video conference with the district collectors and reviewed the progress of Vana Mahotsavam, Indiramma housing scheme, availability of fertilizers, Oil Palm Expansion, Bhu Bharathi, seasonal illness, TB Mukht Bharath and Medical Colleges requirements etc. The Officials from Revenue, Housing, Health, Agriculture and Forest department attended the video conference.

Speaking on the occasion, CS exhorted the collectors to think innovatively to make a lasting impact in the lives of the people. He said that there was a tremendous scope for the Collectors to take up the development and welfare programmes of the government in their districts, which will go a long way in the upliftment of the poor and downtrodden. He informed that hereafter video conference would be held on every Tuesday.

The Chief Secretary asked the collectors to review the progress of the Indiramma houses and issue sanction proceedings and added that they should also ensure that all the sanctioned houses be grounded immediately. On Vanamahotsavam program, the collectors were told to conduct the district monitoring consultative committee meeting and effectively review in the district with the concerned departments. He emphasized the need to ensure good quality seedlings were kept ready for planting with a special focus on plantation of fruit bearing species. The collectors were also told to take stock of the survival of plants as well. state Minister for Environment and Forests Konda Surekha suggested a targeted approach to take up the plantation by involving all departments. Vacant lands in the districts should be identified to take up plantation in a big way, she added.

Secretary of the Agriculture department Raghunandan Rao told the district collectors that sufficient quantities of fertilizer stocks were available and added that the collectors have to ensure that no panic buying or hoarding should take place anywhere in the state. The special officers should visit the fertilizer dealers in their respective districts and take stock of the situation, he said. On oil palm , he asked the collectors to identify large areas in their districts to take up the oil palm plantation. The Chief Secretary informed that more than 8 lakh applications were received during the revenue sadassus held across the state. He asked the collectors to personally monitor the applications and take steps to dispose them with a humane approach.

The CS asked the collectors to be alert on the spread of transmissible illnesses and vector borne diseases due to the onset of the monsoon season. On TB Mukth Bharath Abhiyan, he asked the district collectors to prepare plan of action and also conduct convergence meeting involving DMHOs, Hospital Superintendents, Red Cross and Indian Medical Association. Chief Secretary asked the District Collectors to take stock of the requirements of Medical Colleges especially from HR perspective and take appropriate steps.Principal Secretary EFS&T Nadeem Ahmed, Secretary H&FW Christina Z Chongthu, Secretary Revenue Lokesh Kumar, PCCF and other senior officials were present.

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Tharoor's comments on Modi

#### GNS News Agency, June 24

Lok Sabha member from Thiruvananthapuram Shashi Tharoor's opinion about Prime Minister Narendra Modi's "energy and dynamism becoming a prime asset for India on global stage" is his personal view and doesn't reflect the party 's view, the Congress said on Tuesday, even as it reiterated that the Narendra Modi government's foreign policy has completely "fallen flat". "That may be his [Mr. Tharoor's] opinion but that is not the Congress party's view. It is not the Congress view since we have presented our views with evidence and proof," Supriya Shrinate, who heads the Congress' social media department, told reporters.In an opinion piece published in The Hinduon Monday, Mr. Tharoor, who had headed a parliamentary group for global outreach after the Pahalgam terror attack, lauded Mr. Modi's approach.Addressing a press conference here, Ms. Shrinate said the reality of India's foreign policy was that the U.S. had issued a travel advisory of Level 2 and advised its



Hafiz Saeed, Dawood Ibrahim, etc., they are being provided protection by Pakistan. On the contrary, an advisory is being issued against us while Pakistan's Army Chief Asim Munir is being invited to enjoy a meal with U.S. President Donaid Trump, who has, in turn, hyphenated India and Pa kistan," she added. The Congress leader said it was highly objectionable that the Indian Prime Minister and Pakistan's Army Chief were being hyphenated. "From enforceable hugs to 'Howdy Modi', 'Namaste Trump', and 'Ab Ki Baar Trump Sarkaar', to going to the U.S. uninvited. He has done everything possible, and look at what America is doing to us," she said."At a time when we need large nations of the world to stand with us, America is issuing travel advisories against us and citing incidents that pertain to the rest of the world. But this really maligns us, and what is the government doing about it? Absolutely nothing. Pin drop silence like always," Ms. Shrinate added.

Hyderabad, June 24 Telangana Jagruti President and BRS Party MLC Kalvakuntla Kavitha has requested the Left parties to support the rail roko program to be organized on July 17 demanding 42 percent reservation for BCs in education, jobs and local bodies. Kavitha met separately with CPM state secretary John Wesley in the city and the party central committee members Sadhineni Venkateswara Rao, JV Chalapathi Rao and state secretariat member K. Govardhan at the New Democracy state office Marks Bhavan in Adikmet. Speaking on the occasion, she said that for the increase in the BC reservations and the implementation of the Kamareddy BC Declaration, many democratic movements had been organized under the auspices of the Telangana Jagruti and United Phule Front for a year. She also said that the Congress government, had introduced a bill for the BC reservations in education and jobs in the Assembly and Council and another bill for increasing reservations in the local bodies and got it approved. She said that even though it has been three months since the bills were sent to the Center, CM Revanth Reddy had not put any pressure on the Center to implement them prompting them to give a call for the rail roko program on July 17 Kavitha said that they had been agitating for the implementation of the Kamareddy BC Declaration for two years. She said that even though the bills were passed in the Assembly and Council in obedience to their agitations, no effort was made to give them legality.

She alleged that CM Revanth Reddy, who has done half a century in going to Delhi, had not even once pressured Prime Minister Modi for the approval of the BC bills. She said that the Congress government was doing immense injustice to the BCs. She also said that the only way to get the Centre to approve the BC bill was through a movement like the rail roko program . She said that they would organize the rail roko program along with like-minded parties and public organizations that would come together with them.Congress Mother statues will be sent to Gandhi Bhavan

Reacting to the decision of the state government to install Telangana Talli statue in all district collectorates she said that after coming to power, they would send those statues to Gandhi Bhavan with respect. She reminded that it was not right to change the Telangana Mother's statue, which is the symbol of the Telangana movement.

# Vanamahotsavam to be taken up with a targeted approach: Konda Surekha

Hyderabad, June 24 Minister for Environment, Forwments Konda Surekha has emphasised the need for a focused and well-coordinated strategy to implement the Vanamahotsavam programme effectively across the Telangana State. Speaking during a video conference chaired by Chief Secretary K. Ramakrishna Rao with District Collectors from the Secretariat here on Tuesday, the Minister highlighted the importance of identifying vacant government and community lands to carry out large-scale plantations She stressed that a target-based approach must be adopted and every department should actively participate in making the plantation drive a success. The Minister said that identifying suitable land in advance would ensure smooth execution of plantation activities, especially during the monsoon season Konda Surekha directed District Collectors to immediately convene District Level Monitoring and Consultative Committee meetings, in coordination with all line departments, to chalk out the Vanamahotsavam

action plan. She also underlined the need for quality seed-

lings to be prepared beforehand, with priority given to planting fruit-bearing species that benefit both the environment and local communities. In addition to plantation activities, the Minister instructed district officials to regularly monitor the survival rate of planted saplings, and to ensure postplantation care, including watering and protection measures.

The video conference also discussed a comprehensive review of several ongoing state programmes, including the Vanamahotsavam, Indiramma Housing scheme, fertilizer availability, oil palm expansion, Bhu Bharathi digitisation initiative, seasonal disease preparedness, TB Mukt Bharat Mission and infrastructure development for new medical colleges.

Principal Secretary (EFS&T) Nadeem Ahmed, Secretary (Health & Family Welfare) Christina Z Chongthu, Secretary (Revenue) Lokesh Kumar, PCCF and other senior officials were also present in the meeting.

### women, especially, not to travel alone to India, citing various cases of rapes.

"It also goes on to say that various kinds of crimes, incidents of violence and terror attacks can happen in India. It very categorically mentions that American officials will need permission from the government before their travel to India... This kind of advisory is being issued for India, which will have far-reaching impact on our standing," she said.Ms. Shrinate said such an advisory "maligns" the country and urged the government to register its protest and take up the matter at the highest level. "However, nothing of this kind of advisory has been issued for Pakistan, which is a terror country, housing terrorists such as Masood Azhar,

# Defence Ministry clears 2,000 crore contracts under emergency procurement for counter-terror operations

# No party other than Congress has truly thought about farmers: Bhatti



Hyderabad, June 24 : Deputy Chief Minister Bhatti Vikramarka has criticised the previous BRS government for providing only partial financial assistance under the "Rythu Bandhu" scheme while withdrawing most other support measures. Addressing the Rythu Bharosa Vijayotsava Sabha near the Secretariat on Tuesday, he said no political party in India-other than the Congress-has genuinely thought about or loved farmers. He highlighted that it was the Congress party which built multi-purpose irrigation projects for farming and provided free electricity to farmers. It has taken steps to ensure Minimum Support Price (MSP) for crops, mandated banks to compulsorily give loans to farmers and also launched historic programs like the Green Revolution to double crop yields, Bhatti Vikramarka reminded. The Deputy Chief Minister emphasised that only Congress governments have undertaken such transformative initiatives for agriculture, unlike any other governments. "No party has embraced farmers with the kind of love and commitment that Congress has," he said. "Agriculture means Congress," he reiterated. Recalling the dreams of former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi,

who envisioned taking India into the 21st century and creating wonders, Bhatti Vikramarka said it was heartening to see farmers celebrating today—a true tribute to Rajiv Gandhi's vision. He further noted that in just three months since coming to power, the Congress government has already waived Rs.21,000 crores in farm loans—an act unmatched by any other government in the country. He added that the government is also providing Rs.12,000 annually to landless and poor agricultural laborers directly into their bank accounts. The Deputy Chief Minister accused the previous BRS government of merely offering token amounts under "Rythu Bandhu" while stopping zero-interest and lowinterest loans, subsidies for drip and sprinkler systems, bonuses for harvested crops, MSP payments, and compensation for crop loss

# PAC termed Congress governance as Golden Period in Telangana: Bhatti

Hyderabad, June 24 Deputy Chief Minister Bhatti Vikramarka stated that the Political Affairs Committee (PAC) of the Congress Party has expressed satisfaction over the transformative decisions taken over the past year by the Indiramma-led Congress Government under the leadership of Chief Minister Revanth Reddy. Speaking to the media at Gandhi Bhavan here on Tuesday after attending the PAC meeting, the Deputy Chief Minister said the PAC termed the Congress governance as a Golden Period in Telangana and appreciated the farmer-friendly and welfare schemes which are unprecedented in the country.



GNS News Agency, June 24

In a significant move to strengthen the Indian Army's operational readiness in counter-terrorism (CT) operations, the Ministry of Defence has concluded 13 contracts under the Emergency Procurement (EP) mechanism. These contracts, amounting to ?1,981.90 crore, have been finalised against an overall sanctioned outlay of ?2,000 crore for the Indian Army.Executed through fast-track procedures under the EP mandate, the procurement aims to enhance situational awareness, lethality, mobility, and protection for troops deployed in CT environments. The acquisitions were completed within compressed timelines to ensure rapid capability augmentation.Key equipment being procured includes Integrated Drone Detection and Interdiction Systems (IDDIS), Low Level Lightweight Radars (LLLR), Very Short Range Air Defence Systems (VSHORADS)- Launchers and Missiles, Remotely Piloted Aerial Vehicles (RPAVs), Loitering Munitions, including Vertical Take-Off and Landing (VTOL) systems, Various categories of drones, Bullet Proof Jackets (BPJs), Ballistic Helmets, Quick Reaction Fighting Vehicles (QRFVs) - Heavy and Medium, Night Sights for Rifles. These procurements reflect the Ministry's

commitment to equipping the Indian Army with modern, mission-critical, and completely indigenous systems to meet emerging security challenges. The EP route continues to be a key enabler in bridging urgent capability gaps and ensuring timely induction of vital operational equipment.

# A dream to create Andhra Pradesh's own Silicon Valley in Amaravati

More than 25 years ago, N. Chandrababu Naidu, the Chief Minister of the unified State of Andhra Pradesh, had a dream to transform Hyderabad into a global city, which he could, by establishing the landmark HITEC City, which made the city famous.Cyberabad, the bustling township which the HITEC city evolved into over the years, is today home to many IT and IT-Enabled Services (ITES) companies. That was the time when he spearheaded the IT revolution with some valuable contributions from a host of luminaries, notably Bill Gates, under whose stewardship Microsoft India Development Centre (MSIDC) was set up in Hyderabad. MSIDC was Microsoft's largest software development centre outside its headquarters in Redmond, Washington.As the Chief Minister of the successor State of Andhra Pradesh now, Mr. Naidu plans to develop a Quantum Valley (QV) in Amaravati, on the lines of Silicon Valley, aimed at leading the State in quantum technologies and Artificial Intelligence (AI). The idea is to make Andhra a preferred destination for an assortment of IT, Electronics, Communications and related companies specialising in cuttingedge technologies



#### Ranga Reddy

# **Tirupati Urban Development Authority (TUDA) Aims** to Make Tirupati India's Top District in Five Years



"June 24, Indian Chronicle, Rayalaseema coordinator ""Dollars Diwakar Reddy, Chairman of the Tirupati Urban Development Authority (TUDA), today announced an ambitious plan to elevate Tirupati district to the number one position in India within the next five through comprehensive development vears initiatives." Chairman Diwakar Reddy held a special meeting on Tuesday with professors from the School of Planning and Architecture (SPA) in Vijayawada to discuss the district's development blueprint. During the meeting, he outlined TUDA's ongoing projects and presented the scope of future projects intended for the entire Tirupati district. He invited the university's professors to participate actively in TUDA's development efforts."The professors expressed their keen interest and commitment to collaborating with TUDA, assuring the authority of their full support and assistance from the institution."Chairman



Diwakar Reddy highlighted Tirupati's strategic advantages, including its international airport, international railway station, national highways, and access to sea routes. He emphasized the intent to fully leverage these assets to ensure the holistic development of the district. He also acknowledged the strong backing and comprehensive support from key state leaders, including Hon'ble Chief Minister Nara Chandrababu Naidu, Hon'ble Deputy Chief Minister Pawan Kalyan, and Hon'ble Education Minister Nara Lokesh."Earlier, the SPA professors cordially welcomed and felicitated Chairman Dollars Diwakar Reddy. The meeting was attended by notable members of the School of Planning and Architecture, including In-charge Director Professor Dr. Ayon, Head of Architecture Department Professor Dr. Srinivas, Head of Planning Department Dr. Prashant Vardhan, Urban Design Coordinator Dr. Karthik, scholar Sumanth, and other officials.

# K.V.N. Productions Producer N.K. Lohith **Offers Prayers at Tirumala's Srivari Temple"**



"June 24, Indian Chronicle, Rayalaseema coordinator ""N.K. Lohith, a prominent film producer from K.V.N. Productions, visited Tirumala today to seek the blessings of Lord Sri Venkateswara Swamy."Lohith, who produces films under the K.V.N. Productions banner, participated in special prayers during the VIP break darshan this morning. He offered his prayers with great devotion N.K. Lohith will achieve with this film.

and completed his darshan of Lord Srivari. Following the darshan, Vedic scholars blessed him with Vedic chants at the Ranganayakula Mandapam inside the temple."On this occasion, Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams (TTD) officials honored Lohith with a traditional silk vastram and presented him with Teertha Prasadam (sacred water and offerings). Temple staff and Lohith's close associates were also present during the occasion."Lohith expressed that the darshan of Lord Swamy brought him immense spiritual peace and joy. He reportedly sought the Lord's blessings for the success of his upcoming film projects. He emotionally stated that the Tirumala darshan would remain an unforgettable moment in his life and hoped for more successes in his cinematic journey with the grace of Lord Srivari."This visit to Tirumala was a deeply spiritual and personal experience for Lohith. Currently, Lohith is producing "Jana Nayagan," the final film of Thalapathy Vijay, a movie that has generated immense anticipation among fans. All eyes are now on what kind of success

# The Vana Mahotsavam program should be successful by involving the people:State Chief Secretary K. Rama Krishna Rao



# Everyone should be a partner in establishing a drug-free society: SP Rohit Raj""Bhukya Ranjith Naik''Bhadradri Kothagudem

,June 24(Indian Chronicle):District SP Rohit Raj said that youth and students should not become addicted to bad habits and should strive for higher goals. As part of the International Drug Prevention Awareness Week, the SP released posters at the district SP office on Tuesday. Speaking on this occasion, the SP said that awareness programs will be organized regularly by the district police department to create awareness about the health effects and economic and social consequences of drug use.""He said that youth and students should not destroy their precious lives by getting addicted to bad addictions like drugs. He said that they should set high goals from the student stage and take steps towards achieving their goals. He pointed out that taking intoxicants like marijuana and drugs has harmful effects on health, as well as financial losses and loss of recognition and respect in the society. He said that everyone should participate in the ongoing struggle to eradicate these drugs and provide a better future for the future generations. He called on the youth and students to stay away from intoxicants and marijuana and to hold high positions in the future. He said that if marijuana and other intoxicants are being sold anywhere in the district, the police should immediately inform them. Later, posters made with the aim of Mission Parivartan eradicating the society from drugs were unveiled, and everyone should work like soldiers so that they do not fall victim to the drug epidemic. He said that to register as a Drug Eradication Soldier, one can register through the link.""Link to register as a drug eradication soldier. A link to view celebrity messages as part of drug eradication" "https://qr.me-qr.com/link-list/Q2AsYQqJ/ show" "DCRB DSP Mallaiah Swamy, CI Srinivas, SB Inspector Srinivas, 1st Town CI Karunakar, IT Cell Inspector Ramu, Julurupadu CI Indrasena Reddy, Ashwaraopet



CI Nagaraju Reddy, RIs Narasimha Rao, Krishna Rao and others participated in this program.

It is a pleasure to see tribal youth working to preserve the cultural traditions of the tribals: Subhash, Special Officer, Ministry of Tribal Welfare, New Delhi (Mota)



Shaik Sharief"Bhadrachalam,June 24(Indian Chronicle): It is a pleasure to see the creation of a tribal museum so that the tribal youth of today can learn, practice and preserve the cultural traditions of the tribals that have been followed since the time of their grandparents, said Subhash, Special Officer, Ministry of Tribal Welfare, New Delhi (Mota).As part of a two-day tour of Bhadrachalam Division, the Special Officer, Ministry of Tribal Welfare, visited the Tribal Museum in the ITDA premises on Tuesday and enjoyed the artefacts, paintings, pictures and driver's cuisine in the museum. After speaking, he said that the Tribal Museum has been designed to be a feast for the eyes of tourists and that the objects and ornaments used by the older generation of tribals are very good, and every artefact in the museum is natural.He said that he had a good experience after vis-

iting the temples and museums in Bhadradri and Kothagudem districts for two days and congratulated the ITDA Tribal Welfare Department officials for ensuring that the welfare schemes being introduced by the Central Government are being properly provided to the tribals.Later. ITDA Project Officer B Rahul met in his chamber and discussed the welfare schemes being provided to the tribals in the tribal village. After that, the PO honored them and presented them with a memento.

""""Bhukya Ranjith Naik"", Bhadradri Kothagudem, June 24 (Indian Chronicle): The State Chief Secretary K. Rama Krishna Rao said that the Vana Mahotsavam program should be successful by involving the people. On Tuesday, C.S. K. Rama Krishna Rao conducted a review of the government's priority programs with the district collectors through video conference from Hyderabad. Forest and Environment Minister Varyulu Konda Surekha attended online. District Jitesh V. Patil, Forest Department Officer Krishna Goud and Trainee Collector Saurabh Sharma participated in this video conference from the IDOC office. The CS discussed at length on various issues such as the Vana Mahotsavam program, Indiramma Indla, availability of fertilizers, expansion of oil palm crop, measures to control seasonal diseases, and resolution of Bhu Bharathi applications and made several suggestions. State Chief Secretary K. Rama Krishna Rao said that more than 2 lakh 30 thousand Indiramma houses have been distributed to the beneficiaries and the construction work of more than one lakh houses has been grounded. The CS suggested that the grounding and construction of the Indiramma houses sanctioned before the heavy rains should be done up to the basement level. He said that the government has waived the sewerage charges by supplying sand free of cost for Indiramma houses. He said that the government has issued orders to the beneficiaries to complete the pending work of double bedroom houses. He said that the MB records should be recorded to the extent of double bedroom houses that have been constructed at present and houses should be allotted to the beneficiaries, and the government will deposit the necessary funds in the accounts of the beneficiaries to complete the remaining work. The CS said that the central government has sanctioned 1 lakh 13 thousand houses under PM Awas Yojana Urban 2.0 and that Indiramma houses should be sanctioned to at least 500 poor people from each town. The CS advised the collectors to also examine the cultivation of plants distributed to houses under the Vana Mahotsavam program, and to take strong steps to plant and care for them. He said that each district should prepare a special plan and organize the Vana Mahotsavam program, and the details of the plants planted should be recorded online with geo coordinates from time to time.He said that a

in each district. He said that the required stock is currently available till July, and the required fertilizer stock is being procured by September. He said that special officers should be appointed to monitor the fertilizer stock tize retail sales. He said that precautionary measures should be taken to ensure that there is no shortage at agricultural cooperatives and fertilizer shops. He said that the target is to expand oil palm cultivation to 1.25 lakh acres this year. He said that steps should be taken to expand the crop by making farmers aware of the profitable crop of oil palm. He said that about 8 lakh 27 thousand applications were received through the Bhu Bharati Act Revenue Conferences, which were on various issues like Sadha Bainama, ROR issues, and corrections in the title deed. The CS ordered that steps be taken to resolve these applications by August 15. He said that strong measures should be taken in the districts to control seasonal diseases like dengue, malaria, and chicken gunya, and that collectors should take special care and undertake various programs like awareness creation and monitoring on the control of seasonal diseases. He said that as part of the Tabi Mukt Bharat program, medical camps ... "[18:33, 24/6/2025] +91 96400 45005:

# PAC termed Congress governance as Golden Period in Telangana: Bhatti

Hyderabad, June 24 Deputy Chief Minister Bhatti Vikramarka stated that the Political Affairs Committee (PAC) of the Congress Party has expressed satisfaction over the transformative decisions taken over the past year by the Indiramma-led Congress Government under the leadership of Chief Minister Revanth Reddy.Speaking to the media at Gandhi Bhavan here on Tuesday after attending the PAC meeting, the Deputy Chief Minister said the PAC termed the Congress governance as a Golden Period in Telangana and appreciated the farmer-friendly and welfare schemes which are unprecedented in the country. He stated that the PAC has resolved to strengthen the party from booth-level to mandal and district levels by formulating an action plan through the Pradesh Congress Committee (PCC).PAC also decided to establish a robust mechanism to take the welfare schemes launched by the government to every household and grassroots level," he said. Bhatti Vikramarka alleged that during the the BRS regime, farmers were neglected and they didn't receive the Rythu Bandhu regularly."Those, who ruled for a decade and did not take part in any BC-related surveys, are now questioning the BC caste census taken up by the Congress government.

### Tenders invited for printing of Uddipakam Workbook-2: ITDA Project Officer B. Rahul"



""Shaik Sharief"Bhadrachalam,June 24(Indian Chronicle)Short-term tenders are being invited from printing presses in Bhadradri Kothagudem and Khammam districts for printing and supplying Uddipakam Workbook-2 to tribal students studying in tribal primary and ashram schools under the jurisdiction of the tribal welfare department of the joint Khammam district government, ITDA Project Officer B. Rahul said in a statement. He said that 30,89,784 pages will have to be printed and supplied to approximately 13,206 students in these schools. Therefore, he requested the interested printing companies to obtain the short tender forms from the DD (TW) office, ITDA, Bhadrachalam by paying the appropriate fee in the form of DD, and said that such tender forms should be submitted by 4 pm on the 28th of this month, and the tender will be held at the ITDA Bhadrachalam office at 5 pm. He requested that for complete details, the Deputy Director (G.I., S., Department) ITDA Bhadrachalam should be informed through their office phone numbers 970

# Koka Joga Rao, who achieved a Master of Science in Sports Coaching College, should be taken as a role model. ITDA Project Officer B. Rahul"Shaik Sharief"



Bhadrachalam, June 24 (Indian Chronicle): ITDA Project Officer B. Rahul said that it is very commendable that Koka Joga Rao, who studied in a tribal welfare school in a remote tribal village and secured a seat in a Master of Science in Sports Coaching College, is a role model for fellow tribal youth. After presenting a check of Rs 47.700 to Koka Jogara Rao of Lingapur village in Gouraram gram panchayat of Dummugudem mandal in his chamber on Tuesday, he said that he studied up to class 10 in the best available school of the Tribal Welfare Department, completed his intermediate at Sainik School

in Ashok Nagar, Warangal, studied for a B.Sc. at Manuguru Degree College, and received financial assistance from ITDA to study Bachelor of Sports in Coaching at National University Manipur under the sports quota. After receiving financial assistance from ITDA, he studied for an M.Sc. in Sports Coaching and secured eighth rank nationally and first rank in the Telangana state and secured a seat at Subhash National Institute of Sports, Patiala, Punjab. He said that it is gratifying that a tribal youth, through his dedication, has secured a seat in the sports quota and is a role model for his fellow youth, and he congratulates

# him and his parents for that. Congress Mother statues will be sent to Gandhi Bhavan

Reacting to the decision of the state government to install Telangana Talli statue in all district collectorates she said that after coming to power, they would send those statues to Gandhi Bhavan with respect. She reminded that it was not right to change the Telangana Mother's statue, which is the symbol of the Telangana movement







#### Ranga Reddy

# 'Can't dilute issue or protect wrongdoers':Bombay HC orders probe into 2012 New Year's Eve 'party' at Mankhurd children's home



#### GNS News Agency, June 24

Bombay HCThe court ordered the Commissioner for Persons With Disabilities to initiate an inquiry into the alleged incident within six weeks and forward the findings to the Maharashtra government Observing that the authorities cannot protect wrongdoers or keep an issue pending for a decade, the Bombay High Court on Monday ordered a probe into an alleged party hosted on New Year's Eve in 2012 at a home for mentally deficient children (MDC) in suburban Mumbai's Mankhurd, consisting of 265 inmates.

The court ordered the Commissioner for Persons With Disabilities to initiate an inquiry into the alleged incident within six weeks and forward the findings to the Maharashtra government which shall take appropriate action against the errant people within three months. The bench of Chief Justice Alok Aradhe and Justice Sandeep V Marne disposed of a Public Interest Litigation (PIL) filed in 2014 by activist Sangeeta Punekar, which had highlighted the "shocking state of affairs", citing news reports of an alleged party hosted by donors at the MDC homes. According to a news report, champagne was popped, cash was showered on bar dancers, and alcohol was served at the party on December 31, 2012.

The institution is run by the Children's Aid Society, a 100 per cent aided NGO. The petitioner claimed that complaints were lodged by the MDC home authorities regarding the New Year's Eve party and a probe was conducted by a panel comprising the Child Welfare Committee (CWC) chairman, Divisional Deputy Commissioner-Konkan, and an officer of the Women and Child Development Department. However, despite the inquiry, no action was taken against the concerned persons, the petitioner argued. After the lawyer representing the respondent authorities sought time to take instructions from officials and further respond to the plea, Chief Justice Aradhe orally remarked, "The petition cannot be kept pending for 10 years. Effect of the incident cannot be diluted and you cannot be protecting wrong doers. What action have you taken in 11 years? You do not know. It has to be taken."When the lawyer responded that the respondents will find out, the bench stated, "We are allowing the petition. It took 11 years? You should be ashamed of your officers. And now you have the guts to say that will find out? So that we should continue the matter for another 25 years? Do you know the effect of keeping the petition pending?"It noted in the order, "We are surprised to note that despite the inquiry being conducted in the alleged incident, till today no action has been taken against the delinquents. The counsel for the respondent was unable to point out that any action was taken against the delinquent. No useful purpose will be served by keeping the petition pend-

The bench ordered a probe followed by "suitable action" by the state government and seeking its compliance report, disposed of the PIL.In April, while hearing a batch of pleas including that of Punekar, the high court had questioned the state government as to why all 94 MDC homes in Maharashtra were not operational. The court has, meanwhile, kept pending other pleas on the issue to be heard in due course.

# Mumbai's island city records 100 mm of rainfall as monsoon makes a comeback

#### GNS News Agency, June 24

Mumbai's island city recorded three-digit rainfall figures in the last 24 hours as the monsoon made a comeback after a dry spell of nearly three weeks. According to the India Meteorological Department (IMD), Mumbai's coastal observatory at Colaba recorded 100.4 mm of rainfall during the 24-hour cycle that ended at 8.30 am Monday, while the Santacruz observatory recorded 86 mm of rainfall during this same period. The weather bureau has placed Mumbai and its neighbouring districts of Thane and Palghar under a yellow alert till 8.30 am on Tuesday, indicating moderate to heavy rainfall is likely to continue. Meanwhile, the Raigad district has been kept under a red alert during this period.

The officials in the weather bureau have attributed the current spell of rainfall to a cyclonic circulation system and a trough. "Currently, an upper air cyclonic circulation system lies over central Bay of Bengal off north coastal Andhra Pradesh, while yet another upper air cyclonic system, which was over Marathwada, lies above South Madhya Maharashtra that has led to the intense rainfall in the last 24 hours," a weather bureau official told The Indian Express. "A monsoon trough has also developed mainly over the Konkan districts of coastal Maharashtra, as a result of which the island city has seen heavier rainfall compared to the sub-urbs during the past 24 hours," the official added.



The IMD data further shows that since the monsoon arrival on May 26, the Colaba and Santacruz observatories have recorded 261.5 mm and 204.6 mm of rainfall each, so far.Mumbai this year has seen an early monsoon onset on May 26 – the earliest in 75 years. Usually, the southwest monsoon arrives any time between June 8 to 15 every year, and the average rainfall recorded in June stands at 537 mm.Overall, the city records an average of 2,319 mm of rain between June and September, which are labelled as monsoon months for the year.Meanwhile, data furnished by the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation's (BMC's) automatic weather system shows that the island city has recorded 98 mm of rainfall, followed by 75 mm and 58 mm of rain in the western and eastern suburbs.

# Rapido, Uber, Ola pause bike taxi operations in Karnataka following HC order



#### GNS News Agency, June 24

rapidoState Transport Minister has emphasised that the government is not inclined towards drafting a bike taxi policy and that white-board two wheelers cannot be used for commercial purposes.Following the Karnataka High Court's recent order suspending the services of bike taxis, aggregator Rapido, Uber and Ola ceased operations in the state Monday.In a notification to its customers on the app, Rapido said, "Starting June 16, 2025, our Bike Taxi services in Karnataka will be paused in compliance with recent High Court orders. While we deeply believe in the value bike taxis bring to daily commuters, we respect the law and will fully abide by the directive."

It added, "We remain committed to the communities we serve and hopeful for a future where convenient, affordable mobility is accessible to all. We are navigating the way forward with the government to bring your favourite bike taxis back on the road soon."With the ban kicking in, pending formation of rules under section 93 of the Motor Vehicles Act, commuters are already feeling the pinch, with some complaining about having to shell out more money to hire autorickshaws. Akash Kollur, lamented on X, "I was paying a maximum amount of Rs 55 for a bike taxi from Thippasandra to Indiranagar everyday to my office. Currently, I need to pay Rs 85 for autorickshaw. Hiring offline autorickshaws will be like IPL auction in Bengaluru."

The ban comes after a division bench of the Karnataka High Court refused to stay a single bench's April 2 order that directed all bike taxi operators to suspend operations within six weeks which was later extended by a few more weeks. Acting Chief Justice V Kameswar Rao observed on June 13 that an interim relief could have been given to aggregators, provided the state government considered drafting a bike taxi policy. "However, in this case, the state government has clearly made a policy decision (of not being interested to frame a bike taxi policy)," he noted. State Transport Minister Ramalinga Reddy has emphasised that the government is not inclined towards drafting a bike taxi policy and that white-board two wheelers cannot be used for commercial purposes. Several bike taxi operators and industry bodies like National Association of Software and Service Companies (Nasscom) and Internet and Mobile Association of India (IAMAI) requested the state government to roll back the ban and called for a comprehensive bike taxi policy to aid the lakhs of drivers dependent on such operations. On Sunday, Namma Bike Taxi Association wrote a letter to Chief Minister Siddaramaiah and Leader of Opposition in Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi expressing concerns over the livelihood of lakhs of gig workers engaging in bike taxi operations. The association, in its letter, stated, "Over 1,00,000 gig workers in Bengaluru and across Karnataka are losing our right to earn and feed our families because of a blanket ban on bike taxi services. Some of us work all 7 days, covering 10-12 hours a day, just to feed our families. We ride in the hot sun, heavy rain, and traffic to keep the citv movina.'

It further stated, "Passengers also suffer. Many use bike taxis for quick, low-cost rides. These are the only affordable rides for thousands, especially where buses are few. We do nearly 8 crore trips in a year. Who will help these riders now?"Meanwhile, Rapido had earlier argued that a blanket ban in the absence of regulation would directly impact the livelihoods of over 6 lakh people across Karnataka. The company also submitted that it had disbursed over Rs 700 crore to captains and paid over Rs 100 crore in GST contributions across categories in Bengaluru over the last years. Rapido had stated that over 75 per cent of bike taxi riders use the platform as their chief source of livelihood, earning an average of Rs 35,000 per month. The company also said that two-wheeler contract carriage had been legal since the inception of the Motor Vehicle Act 1988, with an advisory to this effect issued by the Centre reiterating this position in law.

# Sewage in taps and garbage on streets: Sec 49-C cries for help

#### GNS News Agency, June 24

Residents of Sector 49-C, Housing Board Colony, Chandigarh, are battling a civic crisis as sewage water contaminates their drinking supply, garbage heaps continue to grow, and municipal authorities fail to intervene meaningfully.Allotted between 2010 and 2011, the housing board flats for economically weaker sections (EWS) are just over a decade old, but the infrastructure is already crumbling. For the past two to three months, residents have complained of sewage mixing with their tap water — resulting in illness and distress. Despite submitting multiple complaints and photographic proof, authorities carried out only a single round of water testing. Water quality improved briefly but deteriorated again soon after.

"The smell here is unbearable and makes us feel sick," said Parmeela Devi, a resident. "We've complained to everyone, but nothing has changed. Sewage keeps mixing with our drinking water." She added that her children have suffered from fevers, stomach infections, and dengue, with stagnant sewage becoming a breeding ground for mosquitoes. When officials did visit, she said, "they dug up the broken pipe and then told us to replace it ourselves. We can't really afford it".

The colony's iron pipelines, prone to rust and break-



Sharma, who parks behind his building, added, "We file water complaints every day, but nothing changes. Water keeps leaking, and parking is a mess."A local vendor painted a grim picture: "Moss has started growing in the stagnant sewage water, and the stench is as bad as if hundreds of dead chickens were dumped here". Frustrated by inaction, some residents have started cleaning gutters themselves. "We have no choice but to do it ourselves," said one member of a couple clearing a blocked drain outside their home.Vikas pointed to a fresh concern: "MC workers cleaned the gutters once, but then dumped the waste right outside the school boundary." With broken pipes and blocked drains all around, he warned, "We need immediate action to improve our water systems."

# 15-year-old male gaur dies at Delhi Zoo, played key role in breeding efforts

#### GNS News Agency, June 24

GaurThe Indian gaur, also known as the Indian bison, is the largest extant bovine species and is classified as Vulnerable on the International Union for Conservation of Nature's (IUCN) Red List.

A 15-year-old male Indian gaur which played a critical role in the breeding programme at the National Zoological Park (NZP) in Delhi died Sunday morning due to age-related issues, officials informed. The gaur had been kept under special care inside a holding cell over the past few days as its health condition began to decline. The animal was brought to Delhi Zoo from the Mysuru Zoo in 2014 as part of a conservation exchange and went on to become a dominant breeding bull in the enclosure.

"It had been under observation and veterinary care for the past few days. Unfortunately, it passed away this morning due to senility," said Dr Sanjeet Kumar, director, Delhi Zoo. "The gaur was one of our most significant contributors to the captive breeding programme. More than 75 per cent of the 15 gaurs currently housed in NZP are its direct progeny."Zoo authorities have said that samples from the deceased animal will be sent to the Indian Veterinary Research Institute (IVRI) for further investigation to rule out any underlying health issue.

The Indian gaur, also known as the Indian bison, is the largest extant bovine species and is classified as Vulnerable on the International Union for Conservation of Nature's



(IUCN) Red List.Dr Kumar said the zoo will continue to prioritise the health and genetic diversity of the gaur population through its conservation and breeding practices.Meanwhile, the Delhi Zoo has proposed a new adoption scheme that will allow visitors to adopt animals for periods as short as a day. The plan, currently awaiting approval, aims to replace the zoo's existing year-long adoption model with more flexible options, including monthly, quarterly, half-yearly, and daily terms, according to officials."At present, the adoption is only available for a oneyear term and involves a formal stamp paper agreement. We are proposing changes that would allow people to adopt animals for a shorter duration, from a single day to a few months," Dr Kumar said earlier.

# 99 DNA matches confirmed, 64 bodies handed over so far after Air India crash: Gujarat Health Minister

#### GNS News Agency, June 24

By Monday afternoon, DNA samples of 99 of the 241 passengers and crew who died in the Air India Boeing 787 Dreamliner crash in Ahmedabad had been matched, and 94 families had been contacted, Gujarat Health and Family Welfare Minister Rushikesh Patel said in a post on X.He said that 64 bodies had been handed over to relatives so far, and the remaining 35 would be released soon.

Dr Rajnish Patel, Professor of Surgery at BJ Medical College, told mediapersons on Monday morning that 13 families were present at the hospital to collect the remains. "Twelve families have opted to collect the bodies together after DNA confirmation for all their deceased members. Discussions have been completed with 11 other families, who are on their way to collect the remains," he said.As of 9:30 am on Monday, the bodies included victims from



Kheda, Ahmedabad, Botad, Mehsana, Vadodara, Bharuch, Aravalli, Junagadh, Anand, Mahisagar, Gandhinagar, and Bhavnagar districts. age, are at the root of the issue. But garbage disposal has added to the crisis. A vacant plot near the Valley of Animal Park, close to the colony, is being used as an illegal dumping ground by Municipal Corporation (MC) contractors. According to residents, when they objected, the trash was merely buried under mud. Public dustbins have also been removed, and garbage is now collected only once a week. "They took away our dustbins, and now garbage is piling up everywhere," said Vikas, another resident. "When we complained about the illegal dumping by the MC, they just quietly covered the trash with mud. It's making our colony dirty and unhealthy."

Sewage manholes, residents say, are never cleaned properly. "The stench from the leaking sewage makes it impossible to live here," said Surjeet Kumar. Mandeep Area councillor Rajinder Sharma blamed faulty housing board construction, saying sewage and drinking water pipelines were laid parallel and are prone to cross-contamination when cracks appear. He claimed manholes fall under the MC's jurisdiction, while residents must maintain chambers outside their homes. He also denied allegations of illegal dumping by the MC.But residents remain unconvinced, saying the MC's actions are inconsistent and inadequate. With the monsoon approaching, they fear the situation will worsen and urge urgent intervention to prevent the outbreak of waterborne diseases.

# Mohali police nabs 'most wanted' fugitive after 8-round gun battle



#### GNS News Agency, June 24

A hot pursuit on Lakhnour Road erupted into gunfire Sunday night when CIA Kharar officers cornered Sandeep Kumar, the fugitive named in seven serious cases, including the 26 May Phase-1 murder SSP Harmandeep Hans said the encounter began around 8 pm, directly opposite the Mohali SSP headquarters. "Kumar fired four shots at our team and drove into the roadside thicket. We returned fire eight rounds in total and hit him in the leg. No police personnel were injured."SSP Hans said, "Police believe Kumar had come to supply narcotics." A .32-bore pistol and live cartridges were recovered; the .315-bore weapon used in May's homicide is still missing. Paramedics moved Kumar to Mohali Civil Hospital, where he remains under guard.Hans added that Kumar already faces charges of murder, rape, POCSO offences, kidnapping, arms violations and drug trafficking. His alleged getaway rider in May's killing, Bablu, was captured in Badaun, Uttar Pradesh, earlier this week. Because Kumar opened fire on officers, a fresh FIR at Sohana Police Station now lists Sections 109, 132, 221 of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita alongside the Arms Act."Given the gravity of the case, special teams were formed under SP Investigations and SP Operations," Hans said. "We tracked Kumar's movements for days and finally pinned him down. The hunt for his associates and additional weapons continues." Investigators describe Kumar as a habitual offender previously arrested in Phase-1 and Balongi (Punjab) and Swarghat (Himachal Pradesh) on counts ranging from theft and kidnapping to drug smuggling.SSP Harmandeep Hans said Saturday's operation struck "a major blow to organised crime in the region".

# Police arrest accused within 24 hrs of stealing disabled man's phone, cheating him of Rs 1.07 lakh

#### GNS News Agency, June 24

ahmedabad policeThe accused was identified as Rahul, son of Rambabu, a resident of Ramgarh, District Panchkula. Police in Panchkula have claimed to have arrested a man for stealing a mobile phone from a differentlyabled man and fraudulently transferring Rs 1,07,800 from his bank account through UPI. The accused was identified as Rahul, son of Rambabu, a resident of Ramgarh, District Panchkula. The complaint was lodged on June 13, by Mehboob Khan (34), a resident of Ramgarh under the jurisdiction of Chandimandir Police Station.Mehboob, who is differently-abled and minimally educated, works at a clothing store to support his family. On April 19, his mobile phone went missing, following which he promptly reported the loss to the police and got a duplicate SIM card issued. However, during a subsequent visit to his bank, he discovered that a total of Rs 1,07,800 had been withdrawn from his account via multiple UPI transactions without his knowledge.









# Iranian missiles hit Tel Aviv and Haifa, Israel warns of tough response



TEL AVIV/DUBAI/WASHINGTON, GNS News Agency, June 24- Iranian missiles struck Israel's Tel Aviv and the port city of Haifa before dawn on Monday, killing at least eight people and destroying homes, prompting Israel's defence minister to warn that Tehran residents would "pay the price and soon".Iran said its parliament was preparing a bill to leave the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), adding that Tehran remains opposed to developing weapons of mass destruction. Passing the bill could take several weeks.The Reuters Tariff Watch newsletter is your daily guide to the latest global trade and tariff news. Sign up here.

Israel is presumed to have a sizable nuclear arsenal but neither confirms nor denies it. It is the only Middle East state that has not signed the NPT.Israel's military, which has gutted Iran's nuclear and military leadership with airstrikes, said on Monday it had killed four senior intelligence officials including the head of the Revolutionary Guards' intelligence unit. Israeli authorities said a total of seven missiles of the fewer than 100 fired by Iran overnight had landed in Israel. A military spokesman also said Israel had achieved aerial superiority over Iran and had destroyed more than a third of Iran's surface-to-surface missile launchers.At least 100 people were wounded in Israel in the overnight blitz, part of a wave of attacks by Tehran in retaliation for Israel's strikes targeting the nuclear and ballistic missile programmes of sworn enemy Iran.Iran, facing its worst security breach since the 1979 Islamic revolution, said dozens of alleged saboteurs and "spies" linked to Israel had been arrested since the start of the conflict. Iran's currency has lost at least 10% of its value against the U.S. dollar since the start of Israel's biggest ever attack on its old enemy last Friday. The dangers of further escalation loomed over a meeting of G7 leaders in Canada, with U.S. President Donald Trump expressing hope on Sunday that a deal could be done but no sign of the fighting abating on a fourth day of war.Geopolitical stability in the Middle East has already been undermined by spillover effects of the Gaza war between Israel and Palestinian militant group Hamas.In total, 24 people in Israel have been killed so far in the Iranian missile attacks, all of them civilians. The death toll in Iran has reached at least 224, with civilians accounting for 90% of the casualties, an Iranian health ministry spokesperson said.Iran's state media reported that the Farabi hospital and surrounding areas in the western province of Kermanshah were hit in a missile attack, causing serious material damage.In Israel, search and rescue operations were underway in Haifa where some 30 people were wounded, emergency services said, as dozens of first responders rushed to the strike zones. Fires were seen burning at a power plant near the port.Video footage showed several missiles over Tel Aviv and explosions could be heard there and over Jerusalem.Several residential buildings in a densely populated neighbourhood of Tel Aviv were destroyed in a strike that blew out the windows of hotels and homes near the U.S. Embassy branch in the city. The U.S. ambassador said the building sustained minor damage, but there were no injuries to personnel.

Item 1 of 17 A drone photo shows the damage over residential homes and a school at the impact site following a missile attack from Iran on Israel, in Bnei Brak, Israel Guydo Tetelbaun was in his apartment in Tel Aviv when the alerts came in shortly after 4 a.m. (0100 GMT)."As usual, we went into the (shelter) that's right across the street there. And within minutes, the door of the (shelter) blew in," the 31-year-old chef said."It's terrifying because it's so unknown. This could be the beginning of a long time like this, or it could get worse, or hopefully better, but it's the unknown that's the scariest."The pre-dawn missiles also struck near Shuk HaCarmel, a popular market in Tel Aviv that typically draws large crowds buying fresh fruit and vegetables. Iran's Revolutionary Guards said the latest attack employed a new method that caused Israel's multi-lavered defence systems to target each other and allowed Tehran to successfully hit many targets, without providing further details. The Israeli Defence Force did not immediately respond to a request for comment on the strikes. Israeli Defence Minister Israel Katz said in a statement: "The arrogant dictator of Tehran has become a cowardly murderer who targets the civilian home front in Israel to deter the IDF from continuing the attack that is collapsing his capabilities."Group of Seven leaders gathered in the Canadian Rockies on Sunday with the Israel-Iran conflict expected to be a top priority.Before leaving for the summit on Sunday, Trump was asked what he was doing to de-escalate the situation. "I hope there's going to be a deal. I think it's time for a deal," he told reporters. "Sometimes they have to fight it out."the main known facilities of Iran's nuclear programme.Oil prices edged down on Monday, after surging 7% on Friday, as the military strikes by Israel and Iran over the weekend avoided oil production and export facilities. While investors remain on edge, stock and currency markets in Asia were little moved. Israel has said its military campaign will escalate in the coming days.Trump has lauded Israel's offensive while denying Iranian allegations that the U.S. has taken part and warning Tehran not to widen its retaliation to include U.S. targets.Trump has repeatedly said Iran could end the war by agreeing to tough restrictions on its nuclear programme, which Iran says is for peaceful purposes but which Western countries and the IAEA nuclear watchdog say could be used to make an atomic bomb.

# US police arrest suspect Vance Luther Boelter for Minnesota lawmakers' shooting

MINNEAPOLIS, GNS News Agency, June 24,A massive two-day manhunt ended on Sunday with the arrest of Vance Boelter, 57, for allegedly killing a Minnesota Democratic state lawmaker and her husband while posing as a police officer, Governor Tim Walz said.Boelter allegedly shot dead Melissa Hortman, the top Democrat in the Minnesota House, and her husband, Mark, in their home on Saturday - a crime Governor Tim Walz characterized as a "politically motivated assassination."The Reuters Daily Briefing newsletter provides all the news you need to start your day. Sign up here.Authorities said Boelter also allegedly shot and wounded another Democratic lawmaker, state Senator John Hoffman, and his wife Yvette at their home a few miles away.





#### GNS News Agency, June 24

KANANASKIS, Alberta, - Leaders from the Group of Seven nations begin annual talks on Monday amid wars in Ukraine and the Middle East that add to global economic uncertainty, as host Canada tries to avoid a clash with U.S. President Donald Trump.

The G7 leaders from Britain, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan and the U.S., along with the European Union, are convening in the resort of Kananaskis in the Canadian Rockies until Tuesday. The Reuters Daily Briefing newsletter provides all the news you need to start your day. Sign up here.But beyond the serene and picturesque mountain setting, they confront challenges. The first five months of Trump's second term upended foreign policy on Ukraine, raised anxiety over his closer ties to Russia and resulted in tariffs on U.S. allies. With an escalating Israel-Iran conflict, which is spiking global oil prices, the summit in Canada is seen as a vital moment to try and restore a semblance of unity between democratic powerhouses."The most important goal will be for the world's seven largest industrial nations to reach agreement and take action," German Chancellor Friedrich Merz said before attending his first G7.That will not be easy. After years of consensus, the traditional allies have scrambled to keep Trump engaged and maintain unity.

Canada has abandoned any effort to adopt an all-encompassing comprehensive communique to avert a repeat

### Germany hands Syrian doctor life for torturing dissidents, media report

Seeking unity, G7 meets amid escalating

**Ukraine, Middle East conflicts** 

#### GNS News Agency, June 24

FRANKFURT, - A German court sentenced a Syrian doctor found guilty of torturing dissidents in Syria to life in prison on Monday, local media reported, the latest win for victims of the Assad regime under universal jurisdiction rules. The 40-year-old doctor, who was arrested in June 2020 five years after fleeing to Germany among a large influx of Syrian refugees and starting a new life, was handed a life sentence without parole, DPA news agency reported. The Reuters Daily Briefing newsletter provides all the news you need to start your day. Sign up here. German prosecutors have used universal jurisdiction laws that allow them to seek trials for suspects in crimes against humanity committed anywhere in the world.

They have targeted several former Syrian officials in similar cases in recent years. A spokesperson for the Higher Regional Court in Frankfurt, which heard the case over 186 sessions spanning three and a half years, could not be immediately reached for comment. The defendant, identified as Alaa M. in accordance with German privacy laws, was accused of torturing opponents of former Syrian President Bashar al-Assad while serving as a physician at a military prison and hospitals in Homs and Damascus in 2011 and 12 In court. Alaa M. pleaded not guilty, saying he w the target of a conspiracy. The plaintiffs were supported by the European Center for Constitutional and Human Rights (ECCHR), which has brought similar cases to German courts in the past.ECCHR lawyer Patrick Kroker called Monday's ruling "a further step towards a comprehensive reckoning with Assad's crimes"."Judgements like these are milestones on which a further reappraisal of the crimes, which will hopefully one day also be possible in Syria, can build." he said in a statement emailed to Reuters. Alaa M. munique after leaving.Instead, Ottawa has sought to get consensus for a chair's statement that summarizes the key discussions and six other pre-negotiated declarations on issues such as migration, artificial intelligence and forest fires. Talks on Monday will centre around the economy, advancing trade deals, and China. Efforts to reach an agreement to lower the G7 price cap on Russian oil even if Trump decided to opt out have been complicated by the surge in oil prices since Israel launched strikes on Iran on June 12, two diplomatic sources said. The escalation between the two regional foes is on the agenda, with diplomatic sources saying they hope to achieve at least a joint statement to urge restraint and a return to diplomacy. "We are united. Nobody wants to see Iran get a nuclear weapon and everyone wants discussions and negotiations to restart," France's President Emmanuel Macron told re-

of a 2018 summit in Quebec, when Trump instructed the

U.S. delegation to withdraw its approval of the final com-

porters in Greenland on Sunday before travelling to Canada. He added that given Israel's dependence on U.S weapons and munitions, Washington had the capacity to restart negotiations. Highlighting the unease among some of Washington's allies, Trump spoke on Saturday with Russian President Vladimir Putin and suggested the Russian leader could play a mediation role.Macron dismissed the idea, arguing that Moscow could not be a negotiator because it had started an illegal war against Ukraine. A European diplomat said Trump's suggestion showed that Russia, despite being kicked out of the group in 2014 after annexing Crimea, was very much on U.S. minds."In the eyes of the U.S., there's no condemnation for Ukraine; no peace without Russia; and now even credit for its mediation role with Iran. For Europeans, this will be a really tough G7," the diplomat said. Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelenskiy and NATO Secretary General Mark Rutte will attend the summit on Tuesday. European officials said they hoped to use the meeting, and next week's NATO summit, to convince Trump to toughen his stance on Putin."The G7 should have the objective for us to converge again, for Ukraine to get a ceasefire to lead to a robust and lasting peace, and in my view it's a question of seeing whether President Trump is ready to put forward much tougher sanctions on Russia," Macron said.



arrived in Germany in 2015 and worked as a doctor, becoming one of roughly 10,000 Syrian medics who helped ease acute staff shortages in the country's healthcare system.Prosecutors charged Alaa M. with over a dozen counts of torture and accused him of killing a prisoner.

He is also accused of burning and injuring inmates' genitals in two separate cases. In one instance, he allegedly performed a bone fracture correction surgery without adequate anaesthesia. The doctor also worked at the Mezzeh 601 military hospital in Damascus, a facility known for its role in the Syrian regime's torture apparatus. According to Human Rights Watch, the hospital's morgues and courtyard appeared in a cache of photographs that documented widespread, state-sponsored abuse of civilians. The images were smuggled out of Syria by a former Syrian military photographer codenamed Caesar. The Assad government, which was toppled in December 2024, denied it tortured prisoners.

"After a two-day manhunt, two sleepless nights, law enforcement have apprehended Vance Boelter," Walz told a news conference. "One man's unthinkable actions have altered the state of Minnesota."A moment in this country where we watch violence erupt, this cannot be the norm. It cannot be the way that we deal with our political differences. Now is the time for us to recommit to the core values of this country, and each and every one of us can do it."

Walz said Hoffman, who had been hit with nine bullets, came out of his final surgery and was moving towards recovery.Boelter has links to evangelical ministries and claimed to be a security expert with experience in the Gaza Strip and Africa, according to online postings and public records reviewed by Reuters.Boelter was charged with two counts of second-degree murder and two counts of second-degree attempted murder, the criminal complaint showed.Three of those charges are punishable with jail terms of up to 40 years, according to the complaint unsealed on Sunday.

Item 1 of 3 People visit a memorial outside the Minnesota State Capitol in honor of Democratic state assemblywoman Melissa Hortman and her husband Mark, after a gunman killed them, in St. Paul, Minnesota, [1/3]People visit a memorial outside the Minnesota State Capitol in honor of Democratic state assemblywoman Melissa Hortman and her husband Mark, after a gunman killed them, in St. Paul, Minnesota, U.S., carrying out the shootings, wearing an officer's uniform and driving a Ford SUV with police-style lights, according to a Hennepin County criminal complaint unsealed on Sunday.Boelter fled on foot early on Saturday when officers confronted him at Hortman's Brooklyn Park

home said authorities who had warned residents to stay indoors for their own safety and unleashed the state's biggest manhunt. When police searched Boelter's SUV after the shootings they discovered three AK-47 assault rifles, a 9-mm handgun, and a list of other public officials including their addresses, the criminal complaint showed. Working on a tip that Boelter was near his home in the city of Green Isle, more than 20 SWAT teams combed the area, aided by surveillance aircraft, officials said. Boelter was armed but surrendered with no shots fired."The suspect crawled to law enforcement teams and was placed under arrest, Lieutenant Colonel Jeremy Geiger of the Minnesota State Patrol told the briefing. "The suspect was taken into custody without any use of force."The operation to capture Boelter, drawing on the work of hundreds of detectives and a wide range of federal, state and local law enforcement agencies, was the largest manhunt in state history, Brooklyn Park police Chief Mark Bruley said."Now begins the hard work of looking at what the motive is," Bruley said. The killing was the latest episode of high-profile U.S. political violence.Such incidents range from a 2022 attack on former Democratic U.S. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi's husband at their home, to an assassination bid on Donald Trump last year, and an arson attack at Pennsylvania Governor Josh Shapiro's house in April. Reporting by Tom Polansek and Nathan Layne; Additional reporting by Michelle Nichols, Leah Douglas, Michael Martina, Costas Pitas and Katharine Jackson, and Rishabh Jaiswal and Shubham Kalia in Bengaluru:

### Iran wants to kill Trump, says Israel Prime Minister Netanyahu

#### GNS News Agency, June 24

Tel Aviv: Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has made explosive claims that Iran had targeted US President Donald Trump for assassination due to his strong opposition to its nuclear ambitions. Speaking to Fox News on Sunday, Netanyahu described Trump as Tehran's "enemy number one" and accused Iran of actively plotting his elimination. "They want to kill him. He's enemy number one," Netanyahu stated. "He's a decisive leader. He never took the path that others took to try to bargain with them in a way that is weak, giving them basically a pathway to enrich uranium, which means a pathway to the bomb, padding it with billions and billions of dollars."

Netanyahu praised Trump's record on Iran, highlighting key decisions such as the withdrawal from the Iran nuclear deal and the killing of top Iranian commander Qasem Soleimani. "He took up this fake agreement and basically

tore it up. He killed Qasem Soleimani. He made it very clear, including now, 'You cannot have a nuclear weapon, which means you cannot enrich uranium.' He's been very forceful, so for them, he's enemy number one," the Israeli President said. He also revealed that he himself was targeted by Iranian aggression. "They fired a missile right into the bedroom window of my home," Netanyahu said, claiming that the attack was part of Tehran's broader campaign against leaders opposed to its nuclear program. He described himself as Trump's "junior partner" in efforts to prevent Iran from acquiring nuclear weapons. Netanyahu warned that Israel was facing an "imminent threat" from Iran, necessitating urgent and decisive military action. "We were facing an imminent threat, a dual existential threat," he said."One, the threat of Iran rushing to weaponise their enriched uranium to make atomic bombs with a specific and declared intent to destroy us.

# **Israel furious as France shuts four weapons stands at Paris Airshow**

PARIS/JERUSALEM, GNS News Agency, June 24 France shut down the four main Israeli company stands at the Paris Airshow for refusing to remove offensive weapons from display, in a move condemned by Israel and highlighting tensions between the traditional allies.A source familiar with the matter told Reuters on Monday that the instruction came from French authorities after Israeli firms failed to comply with a direction from a French security agency to remove offensive or kinetic weapons from the stands.The Reuters Tariff Watch newsletter is your daily guide to the latest global trade and tariff news. Sign up here., Rafael, IAI and Uvision. Three smaller Israeli stands, which didn't have hardware on display, and an Israeli Ministry of Defence stand, remain open.France, a long-time Israeli ally, has gradually hardened its position on the government of Benjamin Netanyahu over its actions in Gaza and military interventions abroad.

French President Emmanuel Macron made a distinction last week between Israel's right to protect itself, which France supports and could take part in, and

French President Emmanuel Macron made a distinction last week between Israel's right to protect itself, which France supports and could take part in, and strikes on Iran it did not recommend.Israel's defence ministry said it had categorically rejected the order to remove some weapons systems from displays, and that exhibition organisers responded by erecting a black wall that separated the Israeli industry pavilions from others.

strikes on Iran it did not recommend.lsrael's defence ministry said it had categorically rejected the order to remove some weapons systems from displays, and that exhibition organisers responded by erecting a black wall that separated the Israeli industry pavilions from others. This action. it added, was carried out in the middle of the night after Israeli defence officials and companies had already finished setting up their displays."This outrageous and unprecedented decision reeks of policy-driven and commercial considerations," the ministry said in a statement. Item 1 of 5 View of the closed IAI stand after the four main Israeli com-

pany stands at the Paris Airshow have been shut down by organizers during the 55th Paris Air Show at Le Bourget Airport near Paris, France, J[1/5]View of the closed IAI stand after the four main Israeli company stands at the Paris Airshow have been shut down by organizers during the 55th Paris Air Show at Le Bourget Airport near Paris, France, "The French are hiding behind supposedly political considerations to exclude Israeli offensive weapons from an international exhibition - weapons that compete with French industries."IAI's president and CEO, Boaz Levy, said the black partition walls were reminiscent of "the dark days of when

Jews were segmented from European society".Two U.S. Republican politicians attending the air show also criticised the French move.Talking to reporters outside the blacked-out Israeli defence stalls, U.S. Republican Governor Sarah Huckabee Sanders described the decision as "pretty absurd", while Republican Senator Katie Britt criticised it as "shortsighted". The French prime minister's office did not immediately return a request for comment.Meshar Sasson, senior vice president at Elbit Systems, accused France of trying to stymie competition, pointing to a series of contracts that Elbit has won in Europe."I



# Madhya Pradesh Minister Vijay Shah's remarks against Col Sofiya Qureshi: An FIR and an angry High Court



GNS News Agency, June 24

On May 14, the Madhya Pradesh High Court directed the State Police to register a First Information Report (FIR) against Cabinet Minister Vijay Shah for making allegedly inflammatory remarks against Indian Army officer, Colonel Sofiya Qureshi. Aghast at the Minister's remarks, the Court directed the police to register an FIR against him for offences under Sections 152, 196(1)(b) and 197(1)(c) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, which are related to acts endangering national unity and promoting enmity between groups.

Though a criminal case was registered against Mr. Shah on the same date at Raikunda village under the Manpur police station limits in Indore (Rural) district, the Court questioned the manner in which the FIR was written. It said that the FIR was "deficient in material particulars of the actions which constitute each of the specific offences' and could be "quashed on a later date". The Court, therefore, not only directed the police to consider the entire order of May 14 to be read as part of the FIR for all processes, but also decided to monitor the probe so that the police act fairly in accordance with the law without being influenced by any extraneous pressures. While the law relating to the quashing of an FIR is well settled, so is the law relating to the registration of a cognisable offence. Section 171(1) of the BNS states that "every information relating to the commission of a cognisable offence", if given orally, will be written, and if communicated electronically, will be taken on record by the officer in charge of a police station. So, information pertaining to commission of a cognisable offence must be written in the FIR

It is common for the police to reproduce the main complaint in the FIR if the complaint is given in writing. Even in a case where preliminary enquiry is conducted into a complaint which does not contain elements of a cognisable offence, the original complaint is reproduced in the FIR along with result of the enquiry. Therefore, though such an FIR may run into pages, the essential elements of an offence are not missed out.It is also prudent to write elements of the cognisable offence in the FIR, which form the basis for application of various sections of the law, because this gives the accused an opportunity to seek bail and apply for other protections under the law.

There are many instances where the FIR has been found wanting in the ingredients of a cognisable offence and as a result, relief was provided by the constitutional courts. In Vinod Dua v. Union of India (2021), the Supreme Court, exercising its powers under Article 32 of the Constitution, quashed the FIR holding that "all the offences set out in the FIR are not made out". In Arnab Goswami v. the State of Maharashtra (2020), it granted bail to the appellant on the premise that "a prima facie evaluation of the FIR does not establish the ingredients of the offence of abetment of suicide". The law relating to the quashing of an FIR is well settled. It is intrinsically entwined with the law relating to the writing of an FIR. High Courts can exercise their inherent powers under Section 528 of the BNS to guash an FIR, to prevent abuse of the process of any Court, or otherwise to secure the ends of justice. However, such powers are to be exercised sparingly and with caution.

The Supreme Court, in State of Haryana v. Bhajan Lal (1992), laid down certain guidelines on the circumstances where a High Court can exercise its inherent powers. The first two guidelines under which an FIR can be quashed are relevant to this case. The first guideline says the inherent powers to quash an FIR can be exercised "where the allegations made in the FIR or the complaint, even if they are taken at face value and accepted in their entirety, do not prima facie constitute any offence or make out a case against the accused". As per the second guideline, an FIR can be guashed "where the allegations in the FIR and other material, if any, accompanying the FIR do not disclose a cognisable offence, justifying an investigation by police officers under Section 156(1) of the Code except under an order of a Magistrate within the purview of Section 155(2) of the Code." The Code refers to the erstwhile Criminal Procedure Code, and Section 155 pertains to a non-cognisable offence. Other situations include the allegations made in the FIR along with the evidence collected not disclosing the cognisable offence, the FIR disclosing only a non-cognisable offence, the allegations being absurd and inherently improbable, the offences with express legal bar given in the Code or the Act concerned, and criminal cases manifested with mala fide intentions. In the case under consideration by the M.P. High Court, while referring to the links of the video of the Minister's speech, the FIR states that the "full order dated 14.05.2025 is enclosed". Thus, if the FIR is challenged for want of sufficient material disclosing commission of a cognisable offence, the enclosed order of the Court cannot be lost sight of.

As per the settled law, the FIR can be quashed only if the Court finds the material deficit after considering the FIR and the enclosed material (the court order in this case) in its entirety. Though it would have been prudent for the police to include relevant parts of the alleged speech which constitute offences mentioned in the FIR, the FIR if read in entirety, is not deficit in the required material. Therefore, the High Court's harsh comments against the police seem unwarranted and premature.

# **Common molecule offers clue to** making old muscles young again

#### GNS News Agency, June 24

As we age, it gets harder to recover from a fall, injury or even a tough workout because the body's muscle-repair system starts to falter. Muscle stem cells (MuSCs), the inhouse repair crew, stop dividing and rebuilding tissue, losing their ability to respond to damage. A study in Cell Stem Cell on June 12 suggested this decline may be reversible. The key isn't some futuristic therapy but a molecule already used in hospitals today.

Researchers found that five daily injections of pr taglandin E2 (PGE2), a compound involved in inflammation and used clinically to induce labour, restored muscle stem cell function in aged mice. After treatment, older mice regained the ability to regenerate damaged muscle: their muscle fibres grew larger, muscle mass increased, and strength improved by about 20% compared to their untreated peers. The findings are important because PGE2 is naturally produced in the body, particularly after injury. It signals MuSCs to start repairs in young muscle, but in older tissue this signal fades, leaving stem cells inactive even when needed.After PGE2 treatment, aged stem cells "woke up". resumed dividing, participated in tissue repair, and helped restore the animals' muscle strength. Remarkably, these effects lasted at least two weeks beyond the treatment window, suggesting more than just a temporary boost. Even more strikingly, the outcome held true outside the body. When aged stem cells were treated with PGE2 for just 48 hours in the lab and transplanted into injured muscle, they formed new tissue at levels comparable to young stem cells. Imaging showed that these treated cells engrafted robustly, persisted for weeks, and even expanded in response to subsequent injury - evidence that PGE2 acted directly on the cells themselves, not just their environment. To understand how, the team examined mo-



# **Rising cases of COVID-19 bring to fore** associated threat of deep vein thrombosis



India has registered a rise in COVID-19 cases beginning from last week of May this year. As of June 16, the country has 7,264 active cases. The World Health Organisation in its recent report (week of May 19 to 25 2025) that SARS-CoV-2 activity was generally low globally, though elevations have been reported in a few countries in Central America and the Caribbean, Tropical South America, South West and Northern Europe, Western Asia, Southern Asia, South-East Asia, and Eastern Asia.While doctors have stressed that there is no need to panic as a majority of the cases are mild and do not require hospitalisation, this spike in cases, has brought to the fore once again, several associated health risks including deep vein thrombosis (DVT) -both during and after infection.

"This risk of DVT remains elevated even after recovery from Covid-19, with the risk ratio increasing up to 70 days post-infection," said Anil Bansal, member, Delhi Medical Association (DMA). The risk is particularly high in the first week after diagnosis. While the risk decreases in subsequent weeks, it remains elevated for several weeks postinfection, he added. Deep vein thrombosis (DVT) occurs when a clot forms in one of the deep veins of the body. This usually occurs in the leg. DVT can be dangerous, as the blood clot can break free and travel through the bloodstream. If the blood clot gets lodged in the lung and blocks blood flow, it can lead to pulmonary embolism, which can be life threatening.

Venous thromboembolism (VTE) occurs with deep vein thrombosis (DVT) and pulmonary embolism (PE). It can result in significant mortality, morbidity, and healthcare costs. Approximately 30% of patients with symptomatic VTE manifest with PE, and others with DVT. The incidence of DVT in India in the general population is about 1.79 per thousand. More than 50% of post-surgical procedure patients are at risk of developing VTE. The prevailing notion that the incidence of VTE in Asians is less than that in the Western population has been disproved by recent reports.

Previously, a taskforce report by the National Academy of Medical Sciences (India), Delhi on Venous Thromboembolism had noted that in view of the ageing population of India and the increasing burden of non-communicable diseases along with infectious diseases affecting healthcare service delivery, there is a dire need to understand the early impact on the incidence and burden of deep venous thrombosis (DVT) and pulmonary embolism (PE) in India.Increasing age, being male, trauma, surgery, prolonged hospitalisation, malignancy, neurologic disease, central venous catheter, prior superficial vein thrombosis, and varicose veins have been identified as some of the major risk factors for developing VTE. In women, oral contraceptive pill use, pregnancy, and hormone replacement therapy are established as independent risk factors. Some of the important risk factors for surgical patients developing VTE are age, type of surgery, length of procedure, and duration of immobilisation. The task force stated that appropriate prevention and management of VTE was vital but in India, lack

of trained human resources (healthcare professionals); inadequate laboratory diagnostic support; inadequate availability of pharmaceutical supplies; lack of awareness in the community; need for suitable research along with equitable distribution of facilities for the management of VTE - hamper 100 per cent safety of patients.

Aabid Amin Bhatt, medical director, Ujala Cygnus Group of Hospitals explained that COVID-19 and its link with a higher chance of VTE, including DVT and PE, is now well established."This link comes from the virus's ability to cause a strong inflammatory reaction, often called a cytokine storm, which can disrupt the usual way blood clots. Research has found that patients, particularly those in the hospital with severe COVID-19, have a hypercoagulable state, meaning their blood is more likely to clot. The virus also directly harms the endothelial cells that line blood vessels, which further increases the risk of clots forming," said Dr. Bhat. He added that recent research indicates that even after recovery, individuals who had COVID-19 may remain at an elevated risk for thrombotic events for several months. This has prompted ongoing updates to clinical guidelines recommending thromboprophylaxis (blood thinning treatment) during hospitalisation and, in some cases, even post-discharge. The medical community now regards COVID-19 not just as a respiratory illness, but also as a systemic vascular disease with serious implications for blood clotting and cardiovascular health, he said. Abhishek Bansal, senior consultant and chief interventional radiologist, Aakash Healthcare said that a very high percentage of patients admitted with severe COVID-19 infections were observed to be affected by this condition. "This was noted to be primarily because they had been hospitalised in the ICU for extended periods. Any duration of immobilisation or prolonged bed rest was noted to increase the risk of developing DVT or pulmonary embolism," he said.Dr. Bansal stressed that COVID-19 vaccines demonstrated that they are highly efficacious in preventing the occurrence of DVT and pulmonary embolism. "At the same time, some concerns had been raised about the vaccines themselves potentially causing DVT in a few individuals. However, it has been clearly documented that this risk is extremely lowestimated at approximately one in 10 lakh (one million) patients. Even in such rare cases, the condition is generally mild. It has been emphasised that if the individual had instead suffered from an actual COVID-19 infection, the risk of developing DVT or pulmonary embolism would have been substantially higher," he said

"Anticoagulant medicine have now been added as a standard treatment protocol of Covid-19 and many deaths have been prevented after we established the relationship between the two medical conditions," noted. Surinder Kumar Gupta, associate director, pulmonology, Paras Health, Panchkula."The most prevalent variant, LP.8.1, accounted for 27% of all submitted sequences in the week ending on 25 May 2025 which is a decrease from 32% in the week ending on 27 April 2025. NB.1.8.1 accounted for 21% of all submitted sequences in the week ending on 25 May 2025, a significant increase from 9% in the week ending on 27 April 2025," it said in the recently released data.WHO added that during this reporting period, all other variants showed a stable or decreasing trend

"Available evidence suggests that JN.1, XEC, LP.8.1, and NB.1.8.1 do not pose additional public health risks relative to other currently circulating SARS-CoV-2 variants," it said.At the regional level, LP.8.1 decreased in the Americas and the Western Pacific Region, but slightly increased in the European Region. XEC decreased in all regions with sufficient data. NB.1.8.1 increased in the Americas, Europe, and the Western Pacific Region, but decreased in South-East Asia

## What are flue gas desulphurisation units? | Explained

lecular changes inside the cells. PGE2 reopened regions of the genome that had become inaccessible with age. It also dialed down a stress-related pathway called AP-1, which becomes overactive in aging MuSCs. The molecule reset the cells' internal programmes, allowing them to act more like their younger selves.

The study adds to an ongoing shift in how scientists think about ageing. For years, researchers believed agerelated decline in muscle repair was driven mainly by the environment around stem cells, such as inflammation or scar tissue. But this work adds to evidence that stem cells themselves carry reversible, internal changes, opening the door to therapies that rejuvenate cells directly. The relevance goes far beyond the lab. Sarcopenia affects millions and contributes to frailty, slow recovery, and hospital readmissions in older adults. There are no approved therapies that restore MuSC function. The new study suggests a brief intervention could one day support healing in such situations. More research is required before this therapy can be tested in humans. But by showing that stem cell aging isn't irreversible, this study also opens a new frontier.

# Will Smith says he turned down 'Inception' because he didn't understand the story

Los Angeles: Star Will Smith took everyone by surprise by sharing that he turned down the lead role of filmmaker Christopher Nolan's "Inception" because he didn't "understand the plot".Smith shared the anecdote during a recent interview with radio station Kiss Xtra (via HuffPost). Hollywood star Leonardo DiCaprio ended up headlining the cerebral action thriller instead, reports variety.com.

"I don't think I've ever said it publicly but I am going to say it because we are opening up to one another," Smith said.He added: "Chris Nolan brought me 'Inception' first and I didn't get it. I've never said that out loud. Now that I think about it, it's those movies that go into those alternate realities... they don't pitch well. But I am hurt by those, too."Nolan's blockbuster opened in theaters and went on to gross \$839 million at the worldwide box office. Sources revealed at the time that Brad Pitt was actually Nolan's first choice but he did not commit to the project. Smith was up next, now revealing he didn't understand the plot. DiCaprio signed on after and ended up with one of his biggest hit movies. While Smith knows rejecting "Inception" was a career blunder, it wasn't as painful in retrospect as his decision to turn down Neo in "The Matrix." The part went to Keanu Reeves, which gave him an iconic action franchise.Smith said during the radio interview: "It hurts too bad to talk about." Smith posted a YouTube video in 2019 explaining why he turned down "The Matrix." The main rea-



son was because he didn't connect to the Wachowski siblings' pitch, which he said was more about their intended directing style and not about the actual story.Smith re-told the pitch as follows: "We're thinking like... imagine you're in a fight. You, like, jump. Imagine if you could stop jumping in the middle of the jump. But then, people could see around you 360 degrees while you stop jumping. We're going to invent these cameras and then people can see the whole jump when you stop in the middle of the jump."Then there was "Django Unchained," which Quentin Tarantino offered to him before ultimately going with Jamie Foxx in the title role

The story so far: On June 4. The Hindu reported that a committee of experts, chaired by Principal Scientific Advisor (PSA) Ajay Sood, has recommended that India do away with a decade-long policy of mandating Flue Gas Desulphurisation (FGD) units in all coal-fired thermal power plants Flue gas is emitted as a byproduct of combustion of fossil fuels. It mainly contains pollutants such as carbon dioxide (CO2), sulphur dioxide (SO2), nitrogen oxides, particulate matter, etc. FGD units specifically target the SO2 emissions in flue gas. SO2 is an acidic gas, and is usually treated with a basic compound in the FGD unit to neutralise the pollutant. There are three common types of FGD systems around the world - dry sorbent injection, wet limestone treatment, and using sea water to remove SO2. The dry sorbent injection method involves adding a powdered sorbent like limestone to the flue gas, where it reacts with SO2. The resultant compound can be removed by using an electrostatic precipitator, or a fabric filter. The wet limestone treatment method also uses limestone to remove SO2, but instead of using it in a powdered form, it uses a limestone slurry. Passing SO2 through this slurry results in the formation of gypsum, which is a stable compound and has wide applications in industries like construction. This is the commonly used technology, and has very high efficiency. Sea water treatment is used in plants located near coastal areas. Sea water first absorbs SO2 from flue gas, and then the water is treated to make it suitable to be discharged back into the sea.

Why are SO2 emissions bad?

SO2 is one of the major greenhouse gases that cause global warming, and can cause respiratory problems in humans. Sulphur dioxide can also lead to the formation of other oxides of sulphur in the atmosphere, which can in turn react with other compounds to form particulate matter. "It has been established in several modelling studies that 15% of India's ambient PM2.5 is attributable to coal. A significant share of this (80%) is in turn attributable to secondary particulate matter formed from the SO2 that is released when coal is burned. FGDs are absolutely necessary to mitigate this route to PM2.5 formation," Karthik Ganesan, Fellow and Director - Strategic Partnerships, Council on Energy, Environment and Water told The Hindu.

#### What's status of FGD units in India?

In 2015, the Union Environment Ministry issued a policy that mandated all 537 coal-fired TPPs in India to install FGD units to reduce SO2 emissions. The first deadline for this was 2018, but merely a handful of the plants met the deadline. As of April 2025, compliance had been pushed to 2027, 2028, and 2029, respectively, depending on the category of the thermal power plant. It takes around two years to install an FGD unit. According to a government press release dated August 1, 2024, FGD units have been installed in only 39 out of 537 coal-fired TPPs in India. On December 30, 2024, the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC) issued a notification, pushing back the deadline for complying with SO2 emission norms by three years without specifying any reasons. In April 2025, a study com-

missioned by the PSA's office concluded that the Environment Ministry should roll back its 2015 policy mandating all of India's TPPs to install FGD units.

Why are FGD units contentious?

Installing FGD units is a costly affair. According to the Central Electricity Authority, FGD costs approximately ?1.2 crore per MW to install. As of April 2025, India's installed coal capacity stood at 2,19,338 MW, which is more than 46% of the country's total electricity installed capacity. This is expected to rise in the coming years. In his statement at a June 10 press conference, Union Power Minister Manohar Lal Khattar said, "About 97,000 MW of power will be added, and implementing FGD means an additional expense of ?97,000 crore. We have to consider this carefully. Neither should health be harmed, nor people face increased tariffs, nor warming increase.'

However, some researchers like Shruti Sharma, Lead, Affordable Energy, at the International Institute for Sustainable Development, Bengaluru, believe that even though skipping FGD units may appear to offer short-term savings, it risks undermining India's clean air targets and public health commitments". "FGDs can add up to ?0.72 per kWh to electricity tariffs - a cost that reflects the price of cleaner air. Importantly, over 80% of this increase in tariffs is due to the FGD technology's fixed costs, and variable cost increase is in all cases less than ?0.1 per kWh. This limits the risk of volatile or unexpected costs and makes it easier for utilities and regulators to plan and manage the impact," she said. It's also tricky to gauge how FGDs make an impact on air quality, since it depends on the proximity of towns to power plants. "The contribution to PM2.5 in Delhi, for example, is not that significant from coal-based power plants but given the levels that Delhi experiences, many sources have to be addressed, and stationary sources are easier to target," Mr. Ganesan said.

#### Is there an alternative to FGD?

According to experts, no. "There is no alternative to FGDs itself to remove SO2 that is released from the burning of coal. Washing of coal does not remove the sulphur that is embedded within the physical structure of the coal. India's coal consumption is likely to rise over the course of this decade and many plants that will remain without FGDs are likely to be older and inefficient ones run by the stateowned electricity generation companies. There is an urgent need to get these also compliant without delaying any further," Mr. Ganesan said."While FGD installation raises power tariffs modestly, it also significantly reduces the broader social costs of pollution. Cleaner air lowers household and government spending on healthcare, improves worker productivity, and reduces the economic toll of pollution-related illness. Ultimately, it's a question of whether we pay a little more upfront for cleaner technology - or continue paying far more through medical bills, lost income. and reduced quality of life," Ms. Sharma said.Removing FGD mandates will not only spike SO2 concentrations especially in northern .









#### **INDIAN CHRONICLE**

# Nagaland's biggest tourism fair, a window to the state



News Agency, Dec7The Hornbill Festival Nagaland's iconic cultural and tourism fair that is annually held from December 1 to 10, has evolved into a celebration showcasing the diverse and vibrant cultural and traditional heritage of the tribes of Nagaland. In its 25th year, the festival was conceived at a time when the state was slowly returning to normalcy, following the signing of a ceasefire agreement between the Naga armed group Isak-Muivahled National Socialist Council of Nagalim and the Centre, after having been through insurgency for over five decades. The long-drawn insurgency had not only hit normal life with daily hours of curfew across the state, it had also badly impacted tourism."A few of us traveled with the then chief minister of Nagaland SC Jamir to international tourism events and Nagaland was not known anywhere," recalled Thangi Mannen, former state tourism secretary. She said the festival idea was conceived as an event to promote the cultural richness of Nagaland. Jamir saw it as an event with the potential to become a "window to Nagaland".

The festival was named after the Hornbill bird given its association with the socio-cultural life of the Nagas through folklore, dances, songs, and usage of the magnificent bird's feather as motifs on ceremonial attires and men's headgear. In the first few years, the festival was a five-day event held at Khouchiezie, a fair ground in the heart of the state capital Kohima. The state government acquired a plot of land from the southern Angami villages of Kigwema and Phesama, located about 10 km from Kohima, and turned it into the main venue for the growing event in 2003. The picturesque sloping hillock was named the Naga Heritage Village, Kisama, a combination of the two donor villages. Tribal morungs (huts) of all the 17 recognised tribes were constructed at the venue, each placed strategically that altogether they represent the shape of the map of Nagaland. After the festival was shifted to Kisama, the government extended the festival duration to seven days. Over the years, the festival became popular, attracting visitors from different districts, states as well as foreign tourists, prompting a further extension of the festival to 10 days. The annual carnival is often called the "festival of festivals" in the northeastern state. It marks the culmination of all the Naga tribal festivals held according to the state's rural calendar, providing a closer look at the Naga culture and way of life. It promotes the diverse Naga ethnicity and brand Nagaland through traditional art, food, dances, music, tribal rituals and indigenous games, crafts, highlighting Naga textiles and designs

The festival now attracts tourists from across India and abroad; In 2023, the state tourism department recorded 1.5 lakh footfalls. The state government invests ?5-6 crores every year on the festival. According to an independent study, a Report on Economic Assessment of Hornbill Festival, the Hornbill Festival in 2023 generated approximately ?131 crore. The state government has approved ?100 crore to upgrade infrastructure in Kisama for 2024-25. The festival has over the years hosted the country's top political dignitaries including the president and the prime minister of India, foreign diplomats as also film stars. The ongoing edition is showcasing a collaborative cultural experience with the US, UK, Japan and Peru as international partners while Sikkim and Telangana are the partner states.

### Protecting your health from mosquitoborne diseases this rainy season

The monsoon season brings with it heavy rainfall, high humidity and also some major health issues such as mosquito-borne diseases that are spread through the bites of female mosquitos.

The pathogen (virus or parasite) is consumed by the female mosquito when it bites an infected human or animal. The pathogen grows and enters the mosquito's salivary glands, where it is spread by further bites. Some examples of viruses caused by mosquito bites are dengue, chikungunya, Zika, West Nile virus and yellow fever. Malaria is a parasitic disease spread by plasmodium through Anopheles mosquitoes. Lymphatic filariasis (elephantiasis), is a parasitic worm disease spread by a number of genera of mosquito (e.g., Culex, Anopheles). Studies show that over 7,00,000 people die each year from vector-borne illnesses, which make up around 17% of infectious diseases worldwide. About 80% of people are at risk, and the number of cases is increasing as a result of travel, urbanisation, climate change, and mosquito adaptation. The Aedes mosquitoes are the primary cause of regular dengue and chikungunya outbreaks in India, particularly during the monsoon season. Vector control, diagnosis, and surveillance is spearheaded by the National Vector Borne Disease Control Programme (NVBDCP).Dengue virus symptoms include fever, headache, eye pain, muscle pain, and rash. If not treated promptly, it can lead to severe complications including dengue haemorrhagic fever, plasma leakage, and shock syndrome, which can be fatal.

The symptoms for Chikungunya virus include sudden



ache, muscle pain, and rash. In rare cases, it can cause severe diseases like encephalitis, meningitis, or paralysis.Malaria symptoms include fever, chills, headache, vomiting, anaemia and jaundice. If it progresses to cerebral malaria, it can cause organ failure and even death, if left untreated. Lymphatic filariasis often doesn't show symptoms early on, but later it can cause lymph swelling, elephantiasis, and associated health risks, often followed by social stigmatisation. The majority of these illnesses are mainly managed with supportive care, which includes rest, fluids, and analgesics. Early detection to prevent major illness or death from developing (example -- dengue shock, cerebral malaria, neuro-invasive WNV) also enables supportive care and prompt interventions, lowers the viral load, which also prevents further transmission (e.g., dengue). To stay safe from these diseases we recommend using bed nets, sleeping in air-conditioned or screened rooms, and dressing in long-sleeved shirts and slacks. Lower the amount of standing water in homes. At the level of public health and the community, In India, the NVBDCP encourages the following: fogging during outbreaks; larvicidal measures like Abate and the use of larvivorous fish; indoor residual spraying (DDT, IRS). Community mobilisation and public education; promoting community involvement through awareness campaigns, clean-up drives, and surveillance are also encouraged

# Why India must uphold stringent standards in cosmetics



With rising affluence and the influence of the Instagram generation, India's demand for cosmetics has witnessed an unprecedented boom. This surge in interest is no longer confined to the affluent, but has permeated the middle and even lower-middle segments of the market. The sector has seen a proliferation of blockbuster direct-to-consumer (D2C) brands and startups, each eager to capture a share of this expanding market. As more small and medium enterprises (SMEs) and startups vie for attention, it is crucial that consumers are not misled by substandard products or exaggerated claims. Ensuring the highest quality and safety of cosmetics is paramount, and this responsibility falls squarely on the Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS), the apex body regulating industry specifications.

However, BIS now faces a significant threat from those advocating the replacement of its time-tested vertical standards with a broad, horizontal approach. If implemented, this shift would not only affect the domestic cosmetics industry, it would result in substandard products coming into the market, at cost to the customer. It is essential that India upholds its stringent, product-specific standards to protect both its industry and consumers. India's existing vertical standards, meticulously crafted by the BIS, operate under the stringent regulations laid out in the Drugs and Cosmetics Act, 1940, and the Cosmetic Rules, 2020, and are designed to safeguard the quality, safety, and performance of cosmetic products. BIS standards-such as IS 2888 for toilet soaps, IS 13498 for bathing bars, and IS 4199 for liquid soaps-have been carefully crafted to meet the specific needs of the Indian market. These standards are product-specific, ensuring that each category of cosmetics from soaps to skincare and haircare - meet the requirements tailored to their unique formulations. This approach has not only nurtured consumer trust but also fostered the growth of a vibrant, homegrown cosmetics industry, especially among SMEs and startups.

Take, for example, the standard for toilet soaps. The Indian Standard (IS) 2888 specifies that toilet soaps must contain a minimum of 76% Total Fatty Matter (TFM) for Grade 1, with lower grades requiring at least 70% and 60% TFM respectively, which guarantees that consumers receive high-quality products that meet safety and performance benchmarks. Unfortunately, some foreign manufacturers, under the guise of promoting global innovation and sustainability, are lobbying for the adoption of horizontal standards-broad, generic guidelines that apply uniformly across product categories. While these horizontal standards may be marketed as progressive, they threaten to undermine the very foundation of India's cosmetics sector. These one-size-fits-all rules lack the detailed parameters necessary to guarantee the safety, quality and performance of individual products, which vary widely in composition and purpose.Should horizontal standards replace the vertical ones, Indian manufacturers-especially SMEs and startups-will be hit hardest. These businesses, which rely on clear, product-specific guidelines to maintain quality and consistency, would struggle to adapt to a new regulatory framework that lacks the specificity they depend on. The switch to horizontal standards would compromise consumer safety. Vertical standards are crafted with a deep understanding of the unique risks and requirements associated with different types of cosmetics. Horizontal standards, by contrast, offer only minimal guidelines, increasing the risk that unsafe or ineffective products could slip through regulatory cracks and reach the market. This poses a serious threat to consumers, who deserve better than to be exposed to potentially harmful or subpar products. India's cosmetic industry, built on the foundation of BIS's vertical standards, has only helped to innovate and create excellent products. This progress must not be undone by the imposition of generic standards that neither serve the interests of the industry nor the consumers. The Indian government must remain vigilant on this and protect a system that has worked so effectively for decades. The demand for cosmetics in India is growing rapidly, and with it, the responsibility to maintain the highest standards of safety and quality. The Bureau of Indian Standards has long been the guardian of these standards, ensuring that Indian consumers can trust the products they use. The push for horizontal standards, however, threatens to dismantle this carefully built system, undermining both the domestic industry and consumer safety. It is imperative that India protects its existing vertical standards and continues to support a thriving, self-reliant cosmetics sector-one that prioritises the well-being of its people over the demands of foreign interests.

# **Menstrual health literacy: Empowering women through education**

Menstrual health education is about more than just biology; it's about creating empowerment, equality, and respect for women and girls everywhere. Imagine a world where talking about menstruation is normal, not hidden. In this world, every girl can attend school without fear, every woman can talk about her period cycle with respect, and can walk freely, knowing her body brings pride instead of shame.But in reality, about 88% of teenage girls have menstruation in India. In most cases, when mensuration starts, it is often seen as a "curse" or a sickness, according to Child Rights and You (CRY). This lack of knowledge is not limited only to India. Globally, 1.8 billion women menstruate each month, yet over 500 million lack access to the right products or privacy needed to manage their period cycle responsibly. These figures represent real lives affected, chances missed, and dreams put on hold due to a lack of knowledge and resources about menstruation. For these girls, understanding menstrual health could change their lives from struggle to opportunity. Menstrual health literacy is more than just basic information. For many, it serves as a pathway to liberation, assisting them in respectfully managing their health and making their voices heard. In resourcelimited areas, the lack of menstrual health education keeps women and girls trapped in poverty and disadvantage. This issue extends beyond not having sanitary products. Imagine a young girl in a rural area where discussing menstruation is taboo and she lacks access to appropriate products and hygiene knowledge. Without menstrual literacy, her teenage years are filled with worry, confusion, and low self-esteem. However, with the right education, she can seize the power to make informed health choices, advocate for her rights, and escape the cycles of poverty and silence that have persisted for generations. The wonderful news is that progress is finally happening. In India, the government's Menstrual Hygiene Management



high fever, severe joint pain, and rash. It can also lead to chronic joint pain lasting for months, with rare cases involving neurological complications..Zika and Aedes virus symptoms are typically mild, including rash, fever, conjunctivitis, joint pain, and headache. However, it can cause serious complications including birth defects (microcephaly) in pregnant women and neurological syndromes in adults.Most people infected with the West Nile Virus won't show symptoms. When symptoms occur, they can include fever, head-

# A whale tooth's journey from the sea to a Copper Age pit

When archaeologists were digging a new library site at Valencina de la Concepción in southwest Spain in 2018, they uncovered an unusual item: half of a large sperm-whale tooth lying in a 4,000-year-old pit.

Because nothing like it had ever been reported from Copper-Age Iberia, the team ran a bevy of tests to learn where it could have come from and how it ended up in the pit. Thus, based on evidence of marine boring and beach-root damage, the team unravelled the tooth's long journey from a sperm whale's mouth and to a settlement deep inland, offering en route a timeline of coastal processes four millennia ago. The team shot overlapping photos with a camera and processed them to build a detailed 3D model that could be rotated on a screen, allowing tiny marks to be examined without handling the fragile specimen. Then team members used a digital microscope to reveal surface scratches, drill holes, and biological bores smaller than a millimetre wide.

The team also unraveled four kinds of small tunnels and grooves: made by sponges, marine worms, grazing snails, and burrow-



ing barnacles. They also rents rolled it around and mapped bite marks left bepartially buried it in hind by sharks. The shape of sand.Someday, a storm or the root — thick with a single very high tide finally tossed point and light enamel the tooth onto a nearby matched contemporary shore. While buried in beach sperm whales. The original sand, plant roots etched new tooth was estimated to have channels and a limestone been 20-25 cm long, meancrust formed on its surface. Humans of the Coping the whale was an adult.Radiocarbon dating of per Age then picked it up, the other animal bones and probably because it looked pottery in the pit revealed it exotic and valuable, and was dug in about 2500-2400 pressed several chisels or BC.In this way, the team reawls into the break edge to ported that after the whale split pieces off pieces, probdied, the tooth stayed on the ably to seabed long enough for ornaments.Eventually, the sponges, worms, snails and people placed the trimmed barnacles to bore into it and tooth in a pit about a metre for sharks to scavenge the wide and deep along with carcass. Later, water cur-

and animal bones. The archaeologists didn't find any human bones inside and thus concluded the pit to be a "structured deposition", meant to remove precious items from everyday use. This is the only spermwhale tooth found in Copper-Age Spain and only the second in the Western Mediterranean of similar date. Its discovery thus widened the list of rare and prized materials - including elephant ivory, ostrich eggshells, and use rock crystals — circulating in at Valencina at this time. The burial also showed that coastal objects, even from gigantic sea creatures never broken dishes, stone tools, seen alive inland.

(MHM) Scheme offers free



and potential are disrupted ties. Organisations around just because of her menstrual cycle. This fight against period poverty is not a stopgap solution; it's about giving young women the chance to build a better future.With knowledge about menstrual health, women and girls can take control of their health and lives. They understand how to handle their menstrual cycles, identify symptoms that require medical help, and seek treatment without feeling embarrassed. In communities that support menstrual health education, old cultural taboos, and harmful myths are fading away, creating a positive space where girls can confidently manage their health. Picture a world where every girl understands her body's changes, allowing her to stand strong, aim high, and chase her dreams without fear. This change not only benefits individual health but also unlocks potential as it creates a positive impact that ultimately strengthens the entire community.Empowering women through menstrual health literacy is also a step toward breaking down longlived gender barriers. When girls and women have the resources, knowledge, and trust to manage their health, they can participate more fully in school, work, and public life. This simple change can open doors that can lead to better representation in leadership, improved economic stability, and a stronger voice in society.Menstrual health literacy is a wise investment in our future. Empowered young women will remain in school and pursue their dreams while contributing positively to their communi-

the globe are working with schools, parents, and community leaders to make this vision come to fruition. When a girl's education and future are not limited by her natural cycle, it creates opportunities for growth that lead to stronger and healthier communities for future generations. The journey toward menstrual health literacy goes beyond simply providing facts; it seeks to restore dignity, promote equality, and affirm that every girl and woman deserves respect and opportunity. For millions of women and girls who face barriers to managing their period cycle safely, every step toward better literacy and access is crucial. This is not only a health issue-it is a human rights issue. Supporting menstrual health literacy means supporting a world where every girl has the right to live her life fully, to dream without limits, and to lead without fear. This is not just about providing sanitary products; it is about inducing self-respect, igniting self-belief, and inspiring a generation to rise above the challenges they face.Menstrual health literacy stands as a revolutionary force, challenging the status quo of lives, communities, and futures. A thunderous call for change is replacing the whispers around periods. By prioritising menstrual health education and resources, society is forging a world where every girl thrives, every woman takes control, and every community reaps the benefits of the active participation of all its members. This is more than a health campaign; it is a bold commitment to humanity, respect, and an unstoppable future.

# Volunteering makes everyone part of solutions



In 2018, Kerala faced an unusual southwest monsoon. The torrential rain devastated the state displacing close to a million people, taking over 400 lives. It resulted in damaging 6000 miles of roads, more than 200 bridges and caused around 340 landslides. This was the century's biggest calamity the state encountered. The state also witnessed phenomenal aid that flew into the state from India and outside in the very first phase itself through non-governmental organisations (NGOs) fuelled by the efforts of its volunteers. Besides this aid flow, a large number of independent and community volunteers worked side by side contributing immense time and efforts with the government in rescue and rehabilitation mission. Whenever the world is hit by a catastrophe or challenge, it's the volunteers who jump in first to support. The planet today is inhibited by over eight billion people. There are countless socio-economic, and environmental problems humanity face today such as drought, poverty, the climate crisis and war. Volunteering has immense potential to solve many of these. As per statistics, a third of world's workforce in NGOs are volunteers. A 2022 World's Volunteerism Report by the United Nations estimates that around 860 million people volunteer every month worldwide. Nonetheless, 'giving' as a practice and culture is not uniform across world. Charities Aid Foundation (CAF) that compiled World Giving Index covering 143 countries, in their 2023 report says that Indonesia is the most generous country in the world (sixth year in a row) followed by Ukraine and Kenya, wherein the least generous are Poland followed by Croatia and Yemen. India ranked 43 from top. The three parameters CAF studies under the volunteering umbrella are giving time, efforts and resources. While helping a fellow being is as old as history, individualism and altruism were regarded antagonistic as the former is about self-interest and the later about interest in the wellbeing of others. Social science research points out that it may not be as contradictory as it may sound. The United States (US) is often cited as an example to this as the country is long known for having deep-rooted individualistic values but is also known for its generosity (the US is consistently in the top quintile of the CAF report). There is evidence to believe that both altruism and selfish interests co-exist in people and it's the circumstances that triggers any one behavior to be dominant. Corporate volunteering programmes (CVPs) under Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) has gained

substantial momentum over the past years. Besides, there are volunteering hours contributed by employees through CVP. A study done by Benevity covering over 12 million people from 473 companies in 18 countries shows that there is a considerable surge in employee engagement when the employees are in volunteering programmes (they are 50% more likely to stay with the company). According to an observation, India has the potential to use about 150 million voluntary hours that can be contributed by its 15 million (approximate) white-collar workforces through appropriate voluntary programmes. The best thing about volunteering is that it has many win-wins. Stakeholder welfare, success and fulfilment are part of the 'purpose statements' of many corporates. Volunteering can be one of the means to achieve this. There is evidence that Volunteering Time Off (VTO) can increase productivity. The benefits of volunteering include reduced stress and improved leadership skills. Many corporates agree that mindful volunteering programmes help build employee engagement, stakeholder trust and brand perception. The general rise in volunteering that involves giving time, efforts, skills and money is a reassurance of hopeful optimism. According to neuroscience, an act of kindness and generosity releases endorphin, a hormone that provides happiness and contentment. Giving also improves self-confidence and provides meaning and purpose to life. However, there are a few gaps in the volunteering paradigm that can be impediment to the growth of good volunteering culture in societies. There are concerns regarding volunteers being used as unpaid workers as the line between genuine volunteerism and free labour is thin. Long durations of voluntary work and unsafe working conditions pause the guestion of good voluntary practices. According to the US Bureau of Labor Statistics, voluntary workers are three times more likely to have fatal injuries when working in a fire site. Besides, there are instances of commercial organisations using volunteers to get their own work done. Appropriate law and regulations can bring in clarity on the purpose and sanctity of volunteering practices. Providing volunteers with a great experience is a crucial part of building a volunteering culture. Corporates can do this by substantiating a demographically diverse workforce providing them with volunteering opportunities where varied skills can be used. VTO as a practice would communicate the genuine interest of the corporates in social impact. What is important is to focus on ethical volunteering programmes. Volunteering programmes created and initiated by schools can place the students at the center of 'experiencing' the same leading to valuable skills and leadership development. If not guided properly, students may develop an 'opportunist mindset' on volunteering (as universities and employers place certain preferences over students with volunteering background). Further, the role of families cannot be undermined in instilling the value of volunteering among children. According to a previous UN report, the global economic value of volunteering is around \$1.4 trillion. As we celebrate another International Volunteers Day on the December 5, 'volunteering makes people part of the solutions' as a theme is compelling.

# MDB reforms in the slow lane: Findings from a Global Survey of Experts, 2024



the perception of experts on the current state of MDB reforms. This survey, led by researchers from the Indian Council for Research on International Economic Relations (ICRIER), in close coordination with Brookings, the Centre for Global Development (CGD), and the Overseas Development Institute (ODI), was carried out in February and March 2024. The questionnaire was based on the IEG recommendations and had 30 questions grouped under five components where reforms were seen as essential to streamline the transformation of the MDB system, namely, vision and mission, making MDBs better banks, bolder bank and bigger bank, and establishing a monitoring mechanism. While existing surveys have focused on developmental impact of MDB's operation, this is the first survey that seeks the views of experts on MDB reform process agreed by the G20. The online survey questionnaire was sent out to 350 experts worldwide, many of whom were previously consulted for the IEG reports. In total, 69 responses were received from 15 countries, representing eight professional affiliation categories. Of the respondents, 55% were from Part I (donor) countries and 45% from Part II (EMDEs) countries. Nearly one-third of the respondents were "insiders", which include the current employees of MDBs, Board of Directors of MDBs and Executive Directors of MDBs, and the remaining two-thirds classified themselves as "outsiders", namely those who have no direct or indirect affiliation with the MDBs. Regarding familiarity with MDB reforms, particularly the IEG's recommendations, 68% of respondents reported being highly familiar, while 32% indicated a moderate to low level of familiarity.

# Gujarat lions tamed for tourism, drives conflict in Saurashtra, finds new study



Private tourism hotspots, where lions are often baited, are leading to increased conflicts between humans and Asiatic lions in Gujarat's Saurashtra region, according to a new study published in Conservation Biology, a science journal. The research, conducted by Keshab Gogoi, Kausik Banerjee, Stotra Chakrabarti, Anirudh Pratap Singh, and Y.V. Jhala between 2012-2017 and recently released in the journal, revealed a complex dynamic between lions and humans, across a 30,000 square km landscape, shaped by history and economics.

Analysing 11,901 compensation claims, covering 14,099 livestock kills across 1,092 villages, the study found that these community tourism hotspots (CTHs) where locals conduct unregulated lion tours on private land had far reaching effects. The study found that proximity to these areas best explained (68.9%) the variability in the spatial occurrence of conflict. These tourism hotspots, where lions are often baited with livestock for visitor viewing, create risks extending up to 15 km around them. The Gujarat forest department (GFD) pays compensation for livestock predation and for human injuries or deaths in attacks by carnivores. The researchers collected records of compensation from all forest divisions and forest ranges for 2012-2017 for livestock and from 2011-2017 for humans in the lion landscape."Areas of high lion conflict were in the proximity of CTH and lion refuge patches. These attack hotspots extended up to 15 km and 10 km for livestock and human attacks, respectively, from CTH. Baiting of lions is often practiced at these CTHs, and such provisioning can cause lions to lose the fear of humans and impede the learning of hunting techniques in juvenile lions, consequently resulting in adult lions becoming habituated to humans and losing their wild instincts," the study said.

The study 'Deciphering the enigma of human-lion coexistence in India' examined compensation records for livestock from 2012-2017, with 91.38% of all recorded claims occurring outside protected areas. Based on a sample of 292 respondents, researchers estimated that 95% of livestock predation events resulted in compensation claims. While the GFD regulates official lion tourism within the Gir Protected Area, high demand for less restricted viewing has led to this parallel tourism economy. Compensation claims peaked during monsoon and winter months, according to the study. The findings suggested that while these tourism spots provide income for local communities, their unregulated nature poses risks to both humans and lions. The researchers recommend bringing these sites under proper legal oversight to maintain their economic benefits while reducing potential dangers.

"Lion tourism in CTHs should be legalised with controlled mechanisms in place. Remember, economic incentive is a key driver as why humans are tolerant of lions in Gujarat. Conservation and Community Reserves under the wildlife protection act is one way to do it," said Y.V. Jhala, a leading wildlife expert and one of the study's authors. "Currently, people conducting illegal lion shows use livestock as bait and then claim government compensation for these losses. Essentially, taxpayer money is subsidising these illegal activities."The second factor that contributes to the animal-human conflict is the density of lions (24.2%) as areas of low lion density, which are typically human-dominated landscapes outside Gir Protected Areas, showed higher probability of livestock predation than areas with high lion density inside the protected areas, as per the study. The research showed distinct seasonal patterns - livestock predation increased during monsoon (July-October) and winter (November-February), while human incidents peaked in summer months. Another important aspect of the study is that 61.86% of 1,434 surveyed communities in Saurashtra region showed tolerance towards Asiatic lions despite risks of conflict. The Maldhari communities have lived inside protected areas with lions for over 150 years while some communities near Gir have a three-decade history of coexistence. "This coexistence is related to a mix of sociocultural tolerance, enforced legal protection, government compensation, and mutual adaptation of humans and lions to each other," the study noted. Economic status significantly influenced attitudes - wealthy respondents were 5.75 times more likely to tolerate lions compared to economically poor respondents. "Economically well-off people rarely need to deal with lions at a personal level and thus can tolerate them in the neighborhood. Whereas livestock herders, one of the most economically impoverished strata in the society, confront lions on a daily basis to the detriment of their livelihoods and thus have a more negative attitude," according to the research paper. The lion population has grown significantly since the study period. The last census carried out in 2020 recorded 674 lions, up from 523 in 2015 - a 29% rise in five years. These lions inhabit not iust the Gir National Park and Sanctuary but have spread across several districts of Saurashtra, including Girnar, Mitiyala, and Pania Sanctuaries, coastal areas, and adjoining regions of Amreli and Bhavnagar districts.

The current set of multilateral development banks (MDBs) needs to become bigger, bolder and better, to address the global challenges of the 21st century. The Independent Experts Group (IEG) established under the Indian G20 presidency, made 30 recommendations to make MDBs operationally effective ("better"), mitigate the financial risks facing their borrowers ("bolder"), and triple their lending capacity ("bigger"). Although the G20 has addressed MDB reforms before, the effort under the Indian presidency marked a significant push for comprehensive, transformational change, including a clear implementation timeline. Given the long-term nature of MDB reforms, it is crucial to track progress as well as capture the perception of stakeholders on the pace and scope of their reforms. Thus, a global survey of experts - comprising from academia, think tanks, CSOs, government, private sector and existing and former employees of MDBs - was carried out, to capture

# High-fat dairy products may increase risk of fatty liver disease: Study

New Delhi: Eating high-fat dairy products which include whole milk, cream, frozen yoghurt, butter, and ghee, may increase the risk of fatty liver disease, according to a study.The study, published in the Journal of Hepatology Reports, showed that low-medium fat dairy products such as skimmed milk, cottage cheese, and low-fat cheese may be protective, and should be preferred over high-fat dairy to prevent Metabolic dysfunction-associated steatotic liver disease (MASLD).

MASLD is related to nutrition, but evidence of an association between high-fat and low-fat dairy products is lacking. To fill the gap, a team of researchers from the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, in Israel, evaluated this association by performing experimental studies in mice and an observational human study. They found that low-medium fat low-sugar dairy products are more protective than highfat dairy. In general, high-fat diets may be harmful.

"It would be advisable to prefer low-fat low-sugar dairy products and minimise intake of high-fat dairy products; however, additional evidence is needed to allow generalisability of our findings," the researchers said. In the animal study, 6-week-old male mice were fed a high-fat diet (HFD) consisting of lard, soybean oil, and milk fat for 12 weeks. All HFDs induced similar weight gain and steatosis and did not affect liver enzymes. Milk fat increases serum cholesterol and advanced glycation end-products (AGEs) levels more than lard or soybean oil. Further, in 316 patients, the team found that high consumption of low-medium fat low-sugar dairy products was associated with a



"It would be advisable to prefer low-fat low-sugar dairy products and minimise intake of high-fat dairy products; however, additional evidence is needed to allow generalisability of our findings," the researchers said. In the animal study

lower risk for MASLD incidence. "Constantly high consumption of high-fat low-sugar dairy products was associated with greater odds for new onset/persistence of MASLD". However, the team found that neither low-medium nor highfat dairy consumption was related to fibrosis.

# Trigger-happy teens strike terror in NE Delhi

And he's unapologetic. Brash, even. He flaunts his crimes on Instagram for an audience of thousands. His feed brims with bravado, showcasing weapons, taunts and an unsettling confidence.Now 17, the boy is a core member of the infamous "Makoka 315" gang - a chilling assembly of minors that has unleashed terror in northeast Delhi. They revel in violence - shootings, stabbings, and killings and flaunt their exploits online. The gang's name is a nod to the stringent Maharashtra Control of Organised Crime Act, also known as MCOCA, a law meant to crush criminal svndicates. The "315" refers to the bore of the crude pistols they wield with unnerving ease, says a Delhi Police head constable tracking the gang and working to dismantle their functioning. Their crimes have cast shadows over northeast Delhi: a shooting at Guru Teg Bahadur (GTB) Hospital, the November 9 murder of a 24-year-old in Kabir Nagar, a stabbing in Jafrabad, and countless firings in crowded neighbourhoods. They frequently boast of their crimes on social media and post videos of themselves going to observation homes and appearing in courts. Dressed in blue jeans and a red shirt with the words "Gangsta" emblazoned unsubtly across, the boy, who asked not to be named, screamed languidity. He boasted of the three murder cases against him with disinterest."Yes, we do it (crime). We go to jail and come back in a few months. What's the worry?" he said, scrolling through his phone. The minor declined to reveal where the gang gets its weapons. "I can't share such details with you". On whether he lives with his parents, the boy said: "I show them my face occasionally ... that's enough... I don't want the life they live."During the conversation, the boy, who is mostly hooked to Instagram where he has 3,000 followers, says that he operates social media handles for two of his friends in "Bachcha Jail" - their nomenclature for observation homes - ensuring that their infamy doesn't wane."We make videos in advance and post them regularly. It's important for our clout in the area and generally in our circuits" he said. In 2020, three minors, aged between 13 and 16, including the 13-year-old mentioned above, shot a gym trainer in Jafrabad over a petty insult. "The trainer slapped one of the boys and they saw this as an opportunity to establish their clout in the area. They went to his house and shot him," the officer said. Around the same time, two teenagers - aged 16 and 17, both social mediasavvy residents of Seelampur and Vijay Park - murdered an ice cream seller in Yamuna Vihar. It was their way of "announcing their arrival in Delhi's underworld", said investigators. Around the same time, two teenagers - aged 16 and 17, both social media-savvy residents of Seelampur and Vijay Park — murdered an ice cream seller in Yamuna Vihar. It was their way of "announcing their arrival in Delhi's underworld", said investigators. A year later, aged 14, he fired outside a house in Welcome area. The same year, he was



allegedly involved in murdering a police informant in Maujpur.He was apprehended and sent to an observation home, but released in a few months. Investigators said that gangs seek out minors to carry out heinous crimes like murders as well as petty thefts because they are sent to observation homes only for four to six months before being released. The fact that the cycle of events - from a juvenile committing the crime to his apprehension, time is less time consuming makes minors easy hires. In 2023, aged 16, he was involved in a firing and robbery incident with some friends in a club in Karol Bagh."We believe the gang was formed in early 2023 when all these minors who committed murders joined hands and started operating under the name Makoka 315," the officer cited above said. The officer said that they live in the same neighbourhood where they got acquainted and decided to "work together". The gang was earlier headed by a 21-yearold man who was arrested in July in the GTB shooting case. But now, it is headed by a 17-year-old currently lodged at an observation home where he was sent after his involvement in a murder on November 9. These minors quickly became pawns in the broader nexus of Delhi's gang wars."The 21-year-old (mentioned above) is closely associated with this gang, but he has since formally joined the Hashim Baba gang," the officer said.Links to Hashim BabaTheir exploits caught the attention of the Hashim Baba gang, one of the city's most feared criminal networks, linked to notorious gangster Lawrence Bishnoi. Makoka 315, by their own admission and according to police probe findings, operates as an auxiliary of the Hashim Baba group. "The gang's links to Hashim Baba were known for a long time, but it was established during the investigation of GTB shooting. The former head (the 21-year-old) of the Makoka gang was tasked with the hit job," said the head constable cited above.Its members, most still in their teens, carry out murders, robberies, and intimidation for as little as 15,000-20,000 - a pittance compared to what seasoned gangsters charge.







# Meta appoints Arun Srinivas as India head



Meta on Monday (June 16, 2025) appointed Arun Srinivas as Managing Director and Head for Meta in India with effect from July 1, 2025, the company said in a post on Facebook. He is currently Meta's Director and Head of Ads Business in India. As part of his new job, Mr Srinivas would focus on bringing the organisation's business, innovation and revenue priorities together to serve partners and clients, while continuing to support the long-term growth of Meta's business and commitment to India, the post said.

"He will spearhead the India charter and strengthen the strategic relationships with the country's leading brands, advertisers, developers and partners to drive growth for India as a market." it said. According to the Meta, Mr Srinivas's appointment follows the recent announcement of Sandhya Devanathan taking on an expanded role of leading both India and South East Asia. He will transition to his new role from July 1, 2025, and will continue to report to Sandhya Devanathan, vice-president (India and South East Asia). Meta

"As India continues to be at the forefront of economic growth and innovation, we are excited to have Arun at the helm of our efforts in this critical market. Meta in India is leading the way in Al adoption, WhatsApp, and Reels, and Arun's impressive track record of building high-performing teams, driving product innovation, and fostering strong partnerships makes him the ideal leader to drive Meta's continued investment in the country," said Ms Devanathan.Since joining the company in 2020, Mr Srinivas has played a pivotal role in leading Meta's work with the country's largest advertisers and agency partners focusing on strategic revenue priorities such as AI, Reels, and Messaging, it said.

According to information available on LinkedIn, Mr Srinivas comes with close to three decades of experience in sales and marketing leadership roles in various companies. He started his career as a product manager for Reebok in 1996. He worked with Unilever as a branch sales manager and stayed in the company for more than 15 years until he became the vice-president of Foods South Asia. In 2017, Mr Srinivas left Unilever and joined Bengaluru-based WestBridge Capital Partners as an operating advisor. In 2019, he joined Ola as chief operating officer (COO) and global CMO, and stayed in the company until he joined Meta n 2020. Before heading Meta's India ads business, he was director and head of Meta's global business group from September 2020 to September 2022. He completed his Bachelor of Science degree from the University of Madras in 1993 and finished a PGDM in Marketing from the Indian Institute of Management (IIM) Calcutta in 1996. He also did a course in executive education in strategic customer management in 2007 from the U.S.-based Northwestern University - Kellogg School of Management.

# IT major Genpact's 10-hour workday announcement triggers backlash

Technology and services major Genpact's decision to increase daily work hours to ten has triggered a backlash from its employees and human resource (HR) experts, who say the move undermines progressive workplace values. A large number of employees have taken to social media to slam the decision. The change, announced internally 20 days ago, has left many employees unsettled. At one of the company's Hyderabad offices, an employee described the mood as tense. "I used to log in at 12 p.m. and wrap up by 9 p.m., and even that was exhausting. Now, with the new policy, I'll have to start at 11 a.m.," the employee said, requesting anonymity.

According to Genpact employees in Hyderabad, the implementation is scheduled in the middle of June. "When the decision was announced, we hoped they might reconsider after 15 days. But that didn't happen and now it is too late," the employee added. Under the new system, the employees explained, 'productivity' will be monitored through an internal portal that tracks daily active hours. "If I clock the allotted time, I earn 500 points per month, which is worth ?3,000. We have been told that 5% of it, which is ?150 in my case, will be paid for the additional time. It hardly feels like an incentive.

A senior employee involved in hiring said on the condition of anonymity: "The work pressure is intense, and attrition is rising. I'm seeing experienced staff walking out everyday and new faces being hired. What's worse is that this 10-hour policy isn't even official. It's passed through managers and agents. If you question it, you're branded with 'behavioural issues' and let go. Earlier, HR maintained transparency in hiring numbers. Now, even that's controlled entirely by management."Concerns have also been aired on social media platforms. "This absolutely pathetic and



logs keystrokes. You have to maintain 9 hrs of those out of 10 now, or you get warning mails. 3-4 of such emails and they deduct your bonus and kill appraisals (sic)," the user added

A veteran in the IT-enabled services sector, who began his career at Genpact more than two decades ago, said the decision contradicts the values the company was built on. "I worry this will influence other firms, especially local companies, to follow suit. HR has failed to act as a voice of reason here," he said. Executive search consultant Achyut Menon said the policy reflects a broader post-pandemic shift in corporate strategy. "After giving big salary hikes during the pandemic, companies now think they overpaid. So, they're bringing in harsh policies like extended hours and strict office mandates to make employees leave voluntarily, while hiring cheaper replacements on the side," he explained.Mr. Menon added that automation is accelerating this trend. "Longer hours are not the answer. The future belongs to organisations that invest in skill-building,





The story so far: The Delhi High Court recently issued a series of guidelines to streamline procedures in hospitals handling Medical Termination of Pregnancy (MTP) cases involving sexual assault survivors, after finding that miscommunication, and administrative lapses had resulted in the denial of timely medical care to a minor rape survivor.

#### What was the case?

Justice Swarana Kanta Sharma issued the guidelines while adjudicating upon the plea of a 17-year-old rape survivor who had been taken to the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS), Delhi, for medical examination and termination of pregnancy. Although accompanied by a police officer following the registration of an FIR, hospital authorities initially refused to conduct an ultrasound, citing the absence of identity documents. The matter was then referred to the Child Welfare Committee (CWC), which directed the hospital to proceed with the termination and submit a status report. However, the hospital continued to insist on identity proof and age verification through an ossification test. The ultrasound was eventually carried out after a CWC member personally intervened. By that time, the minor was found to be approximately 25 weeks and 4 days pregnant. The hospital then declined to convene a medical board, contending that a court order was required as the pregnancy appeared to exceed the 24-week statutory limit prescribed under the Medical Termination of Pregnancy (MTP) Act, 1971. Following the court's intervention, a sevenmember medical board was finally constituted at AIIMS to assess the feasibility of terminating the pregnancy. After conducting an ultrasound, the board determined that the gestational age of the foetus was 23 weeks and 4 days, and that the survivor was physically and mentally fit to undergo the procedure. This contradicted the hospital's earlier record, which had put the gestational age at 25 weeks and 4 days. The court noted with anguish that no explanation was provided for this discrepancy.

#### What directions were issued to hospitals?

The court observed that when an investigating officer presents a sexual assault survivor for medical examination, along with the official case file and FIR details, separate identity verification may be dispensed with. It further stressed that in cases involving minors, procedural safeguards applicable to routine diagnostic cases should not be applied rigidly or mechanically.Justice Sharma directed that

# What happens to our skin when we take hot shower?

As the weather gets cooler, many of us turn to hot showers and baths to warm up and wind down. But what actually happens to your skin when you have really hot showers or baths? Your skin is your largest organ, and has two distinct parts: the epidermis on the outside, and the dermis on the inside. The epidermis is made up of billions of cells that lay in four layers in thin skin (such as on your

in all cases where a rape or sexual assault survivor is found to be pregnant, a comprehensive medical examination must be conducted without delay. In instances where the gestational age appears to exceed 24 weeks, hospital administrations were instructed to immediately constitute a medical board to conduct the necessary examination and submit a status report to the appropriate authorities without awaiting specific court orders. Hospitals were also directed to ensure that updated Standard Operating Procedures and relevant legal guidelines are readily accessible in both Emergency and Gynaecology Departments, and that duty doctors are regularly briefed and sensitised on their obligations under the MTP Act, the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act, and other binding directives issued by the Supreme Court and High Courts.

The court further mandated that quarterly training programmes be organised for doctors and medical staff in coordination with legal aid bodies such as the Delhi State Legal Services Authority and the Delhi High Court Legal Services Committee (DHCLSC). Each government hospital was also directed to designate a nodal officer to oversee MTP cases and related medico-legal processes, serving as a single point of contact for the CWC, investigating officers, and the courts. Additionally, consent for MTP procedures was to be obtained from the survivor or her guardian, in a language they fully comprehend, such as Hindi or Enalish

#### What was the Delhi police instructed to do?

The court directed the Delhi Police to ensure that investigating officers handling POCSO and sexual assault cases undergo mandatory training every six months, with a focus on MTP procedures, court orders, and coordination with medical and welfare authorities. Certificates of completion are to be duly recorded in the officers' service files. Police officers were also instructed to ensure that sexual assault survivors are presented before the concerned doctor, hospital, or medical board at the earliest opportunity, along with all requisite case files

#### What were the guidelines issued earlier?

On April 17, Justice Sharma issued guidelines for CWCs and the DHCLSC to prevent delays in such cases, while hearing a plea involving a minor sexual assault survivor seeking termination of a pregnancy beyond 27 weeks. She directed that whenever a minor survivor with a gestational age exceeding 24 weeks is referred by the CWC to a hospital for examination or termination, the CWC must immediately notify the DHCLSC. Upon receiving such information, the DHCLSC shall promptly assess the need for legal intervention, including approaching the competent court for permission to terminate the pregnancy, so as to avoid further delay. Earlier, in January 2023, the judge mandated that during the medical examination of a sexual assault survivor, a urine pregnancy test must be conducted. If the survivor is found pregnant and is an adult seeking termination, the investigating officer must ensure that she is presented before the medical board on the same day. State governments were also ordered to ensure that medical boards are constituted in the hospitals.



ing salary," wrote one Reddit user. "Not just that, you have life integration, not those that demand more time for marto complete "WAM" that basically is an abusive tool which ginally more pay."

company increased working hours to 10, without increas-purposeful work, fair compensation and respect for work-

# Why have special economic zones rules been relaxed? | Explained

nomic Zones (SEZ) Rules,

Rules now allows the Board

of Approval for SEZs to re-

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formation that make all of

The story so far: The Government of India has been taking various steps to boost the production of semiconductors and electronics in India, in a bid to reduce our dependence on imports. Some previous measures include the Semicon India programme launched in 2022 with an outlay of ?76,000 crore. Now, the government has gone a step further and has relaxed key rules related to Special Economic Zones (SEZs) to further encourage the domestic manufacture of semiconductors and electronics.

Why are semiconductors important?

Semiconductors lie at the heart of an increasingly electronic society, with AI and machine learning only the latest in a long trend of increased digitisation and automation. Semiconductors are the tiny chips processing vast amounts of in-

2006, a week earlier, to enthese processes possible, in hance the domestic manuone's phone, computer, tabfacture let, smart TV, smart semiconductors.One of speaker, car, and every these tweaks was to Rule 5, other electronic gadget. Acwhich dealt with the size of cording to the Semiconducthe SEZ. Earlier, an SEZ set tor Industry Association, up exclusively for the manu-China accounted for about facture of semiconductors 35% of all semiconductors or electronic components manufactured in the world in needed a minimum contigu-2021. Following the COVIDous land area of 50 hectares. 19 pandemic, much of the This has now been signifiworld, including India, cantly reduced to 10 hectrealised that the concentraares. This reduced size will tion of supply chains in one allow companies to make country posed huge risks for smaller investments but still any country dependent on avail of SEZ benefits such those supplies. Therefore, as tax exemptions, duty-free they started trying to boost imports, and infrastructure the domestic manufacture of support.Another amendsuch key components. ment to Rule 7 of the SEZ

What are the latest steps by the Indian government?

On June 9, the Minisquired SEZ land to be "entry of Commerce and Induscumbrance-free". Land is try announced that it had deemed to be encumnotified several modificabrance-free if it does not tions to the Special Ecohave any legal claims, liens,

or charges against it, and when clear title of ownership and transfer can be established. With India's complicated and often-archaic land record mechanisms, and lengthy legal processes, such a requirement would have stymied a lot of SEZs. Relaxing this rule will allow SEZs to come up faster.A third amendment was to Rule 18, allowing SEZ units in semiconductor and electronics component manufacturing to supply domestically, after paying the applicable duties. Conventionally, SEZs are exclusively export-oriented. Allowing domestic sales not only shields the SEZs from the ongoing global trade uncertainty, but also ensures a steady supply to the domestic market itself.

What has been the impact?

Given the changes are so recent, one can't immediately establish long-term impacts. However, following the tweaks, two new SEZs have already been approved with a total investment of ?13,100 crore. Micron Semiconductor Technology India will establish an SEZ facility in Sanand, Gujarat for the manufacture of semiconductors with an estimated investment of ?13,000 crore, while Hubballi Durable Goods Cluster, a part of the Aequs Group, will establish an SEZ facility for the manufacture of electronic compo-Dharwad, nents in Karnataka, at a cost of ?100

eyelids) and five layers in thick skin (such as the on sole of your foot).

The cells (keratinocytes) in the deeper layers are held together by tight junctions. These cellular bridges make waterproof joins between neighbouring cells. The cells on the outside of the epidermis have lost these cellular bridges and slough off at a rate of about 1,000 cells per one centimetre squared of skin per hour. For an average adult, that's 17 million cells per hour, every day. Under the epidermis is the dermis, where we have blood vessels, nerves. hair follicles, pain receptors, pressure receptors and sweat glands.Together, the epidermis and dermis (the skin): protect you from ultraviolet radiation from the Sun-synthesise vitamin D3, which helps your intestines absorb calciumprotect you against bacteria, parasites, fungi and viruses regulate your body temperature via the dilation of blood vessels and sweat glands releasing sweat help display how we're feeling (think, for example, of blushing or goosebumps) allow us to feel sensations such as touch. pressure, pain and temperature.So, your skin is important and worth looking after. Washing daily can help prevent disease, and really hot baths often feel lovely and can help you relax. That said, there are some potential downsides.Normally we have lots of healthy organisms called Staphyloccocus epidermis on the skin. These help increase the integrity of our skin layers (they make the bonds between cells stronger) and stimulate production of anti-microbial proteins.

These little critters like an acidic environment, such as the skin's normal pH of between 4-6.If the skin pH increases to around 7 (neutral), Staphyloccocus epidermis' nasty cousin Staphyloccocus aureus - also known as golden staph - will try to take over and cause infections. Having a hot shower or bath can increase your skin's pH, which may ultimately benefit golden staph. Being immersed in really hot water also pulls a lot of moisture from your dermis, and makes you lose water via sweat.

This makes your skin drier, and causes your kidneys to excrete more water, making more urine. Staying in a hot bath for a long time can reduce your blood pressure. but increase your heart rate. People with low blood pressure or heart problems should speak to their doctor before having a long hot shower or bath. Heat from the shower or bath can activate the release of cytokines (inflammatory molecules), histamines (which are involved in allergic reactions), and increase the number of sensory nerves. All of this can lead to itchiness after a very hot shower or bath.Some people can get hives (itchy raised bumps that look red on lighter skin and brown or purple on darker skin) after hot showers or baths, which is a form of chronic inducible urticaria. It's fairly rare and is usually managed with antihistamines. People with sensitive skin or chronic skin conditions such as urticaria, dermatitis, eczema, rosacea, psoriasis or acne should avoid really hot showers or baths. They dry out the skin and leave these people more prone to flare ups. The skin on your hands or feet is least sensitive to hot and cold, so always use your wrist, not your hands. to test water temperature if you're bathing a child, older person, or a disabled person. The skin on your but-

tocks is the most sensitive to hot and cold. This is why sometimes you think the bath is OK when you first step in, but once you sit down it burns your bum. You might have heard women like hotter water temperature than men but that's not really supported by the research evidence. However, across your own body you have highly variable areas of thermal sensitivity, and everyone is highly variable, regardless of sex. Making the most of moisturising Moisturising after a hot bath or shower can help, but check if your moisturiser is up to the task. To improve the skin barrier. your moisturiser needs to contain a mix of:- an emollient such as ceramides, squalanes or dimethicone (emollients incorporate themselves into the lipid barrier in the epidermis to reduce water loss)- a humectant such as glycerin or hyaluronic acid (humectants draw moisture from the dermis into the epidermis)- an occlusive such as petroleum jelly or Vaseline, mineral oil, or cocoa butter (occlusives reduce water loss through the skin and increase the production of anti-microbial peptides).Not all moisturisers are actually good at reducing the moisture loss from your skin. You still might experience dryness and itchiness as your skin recovers if you've been having a lot of really hot showers and baths. If you're itching after a hot shower or bath, try taking cooler, shorter showers and avoid reusing sponges, loofahs, or washcloths (which may harbour bacteria). You can also try patting your skin dry, instead of rubbing it with a towel. Applying a hypoallergenic moisturising cream, like sorbolene, to damp skin can also help. If your symptoms don't improve, see your doctor.

### Deepfakes and Democracy truth in the age of hyperrealism

In the long battle between truth and falsehood, the latest and most formidable weapon is no longer misinformation but hyperrealism. Deepfakes - Al-generated images, videos, and audio that mimic real people with uncanny precision, are fast becoming the frontline threat to democratic integrity. They don't just bend the truth. They manufacture it, pixel by pixel.

Unlike traditional forms of political propaganda, which rely on half-truths and selective editing, deepfakes fabricate entire realities. A political leader declaring war, a judge accepting bribes, a journalist confessing to bias, none of it need actually happen.

All it takes is a few hours of training an Al model on publicly available content, and the result can be indistinguishable from reality. In a hyperconnected world where perception often trumps fact, that is a dangerous prospect.



# R Ashwin accused of ball-tampering by Madurai Panthers; TNPL asks franchise to show proof



With the allegations against Ashwin being severe, the TNPL's CEO Prasanna Kannan has asked the franchise to show proof of the incidents. (Image credit: TNPL)With the allegations against Ashwin being severe, the TNPL's CEO Prasanna Kannan has asked the franchise to show proof of the incidents.

A day after Madurai Panthers team officially wrote to the Tamil Nadu Premier League (TNPL) that R Ashwin and his team Dindigul Dragons allegedly tampered with the ball during their match on June 14, the organisers have demanded the franchise to provide evidence for the same. In their complaint to TNPL, the Madurai franchise has alleged that the defending champions used towels treated with chemicals that resulted in the ball getting heavier and produced metallic sound when it came into contact with the bat. With the allegations being severe, the TNPL's CEO Prasanna Kannan has asked the franchise to show proof of the incidents. "They have filed a complaint, which we have acknowledged. Though they have to lodge any complaints within 24 hours of the game, we have still accepted it and have asked them to furnish proof of their allegations. We will be forming an independent committee if we find there is any truth to their allegations. Without sufficient evidence, it is wrong to put forth such allegations against a player and another franchise. If they don't provide any evidence, then Madurai will face due sanctions," Prasanna told

In the letter to TNPL, the Madurai franchise COO S Mahesh wrote: "A serious case of ball tampering occurred during our recent match against Dindigul Dragons. Despite repeated warnings, the Dindigul team blatantly tampered with the ball, using towels that appeared to have been treated with chemicals."With the tournament coinciding with the monsoon season, the matches have been hampered by rain. The said fixture began after a brief delay following a short downpour in Salem, following which Madurai batted first and made 150/8 in 20 overs, which Dindigul overhauled in 12.3 overs and 9 wickets to spare. Ashwin had gone wicketless with the ball before scoring 49 as an opener. It is understood that factoring the wet outfield conditions, the Tamil Nadu Cricket Association provides towels to each of the franchises and players are allowed to use it to dry the ball only in front of the umpires. "They have to dry the ball only using the towels provided by TNPL. And every time the ball is hit for a six or immediately after a dismissal and over-break, umpires regularly check the ball and they didn't find any issue with the ball during the said match," Kannan

# WR Chess claim FIDE World Blitz Team Championship title after controversial replay of lost quarter-final match

#### GNS News Agency, June 24

After controversially making it to the title round, WR Chess claimed their second title at the FIDE World Blitz Team Championship on Sunday after edging past KazChess in both matches with 4:2 scoreline. This is the team's second blitz crown since the competition began in 2023. Rating favourites Team WR Chess beat KazChess in a tight final, with Alireza Firouzja, Hikaru Nakamura and Maxime Vachier-Lagrave scoring crucial wins in the final match to secure the crown.

There was some controversy in the way WR Chess had claimed the title. In the quarter-finals, WR Chess had been handed a 2-4 defeat by Germany and Friends in the first match. WR's top stars like Ian Nepomniachtchi, Nakamura and Firouzja lost their games. But WR then lodged an appeal claiming that they were not informed by the organisers of the exact time when the round was going to start. The team claimed that this made them reach the playing venue two minutes late for the blitz game. After this complaint, the match was replayed, with some reluctantance from Germany and Friends. WR Chess won the replayed match 4.5:1.5 and then claimed a 4:2 victory with colours reversed to enter the semi-finals.

India-based Team MGD1 had claimed the FIDE World Rapid Team Championship title earlier in London after starting the event as the sixth seeds. MGD1 had racked up 10 wins from 12 rounds played over three days to be crowned champions following an intense battle for supremacy with



Team Hexamind.From 53 teams that started the FIDE World Blitz Team Championship on Saturday, 16 made it to the knockout stage (where teams played a round of 16, quarterfinals, semifinals and the final). In each knockout pairing, teams played at least two blitz matches, where colours were reversed after the first game. If the score was level after two matches, additional games were played until a winner emerged.Third place in the FIDE World Blitz Team Championship went to the Hexamind Chess Club, who defeated the Uzbekistan team in both matches with 3.5:2.5. The winners of this year's rapid tournament, MGD1, defeated Freedom in the duel for fifth place.In the round of 16 stage, the WR Chess Team had claimed wins in both matches, as had Freedom and MGD1 Team. Meanwhile, Uzbekistan had one victory and one draw.

# R Ashwin accused of ball-tampering by Madurai

# The wild logic of playing 1.b4, also called the Orangutan Opening



GNS News Agency, June 24

In a game where history meets razor-sharp preparation, few openings are more wonderfully odd than 1.b4 the Orangutan, or Sokolsky Opening. This flank pawn push, born of humour and analytical curiosity, made its global debut in 1924 when Grandmaster Savielly Tartakower, fresh from a visit to the Bronx Zoo, claimed to have been inspired by an orangutan named Susan. While the narrative is entertaining, the maneuver itself is serious. 1. b4 has evolved into a versatile and creative weapon, avoiding deep theoretical lines while inviting rich, imbalanced positions. Despite its underdog status, world champions such as Magnus Carlsen have resorted to it, demonstrating that in chess, a lesser-traveled course can, however, lead to victory.

Even though the line is mostly seen in faster forms of chess these days, such as bullet or blitz, it has also been played at the higher level by many super GMs, such as Fabiano Caruana and Carlsen, among others. Black's most popular replies are 1...e5 and 1...d5. Both leading to a very dynamic position. White's aim with this line is to get the opponent out of his usual preparation early on and invite him to a fierce battle of initiative and tactical play in the middlegame. The following position arises after 1.b4 e5.2. Bb2 Bxb4 3. Bxe5 Nf6 4. c4, the move c4 is quite rare but interesting. A look at the Orangutan, or Sokolsky Opening, which starts off as 1.b4 after four moves: 1.b4 e5. 2. Bb2 Bxb4 3, Bxe5 Nf6 4, c4, A look at the Orangutan, or Sokolsky Opening, which starts off as 1.b4 after four moves: 1.b4 e5. 2. Bb2 Bxb4 3. Bxe5 Nf6 4. c4. Although a Titled Tuesday favourite, Fabiano Caruana's game with white against Kollars Dmitrij from the NC World Masters, Dortmund, Germany in 2023 is an exception being played during the classical format. A fascinating position arose after 16 moves starting with 1.b4 d5

A position that arose after 16 moves in a game that started with 1.b4 d5. A position that arose after 16 moves in a game that started with 1.b4 d5.From zoo-side inspiration to grandmaster execution, the Orangutan Opening walks a curious line. Part myth, part method, it's a tribute to chess's rich imagination. And a reminder that every move has a story - even 1.b4.Shivika Rohilla is a Woman FIDE Master based in New Delhi. At just 17, she is the founder of the Shivika Rohilla Chess Academy (SRCA), which she runs alongside her mother, Dr. Nidhi Bhasin Rohilla, and national instructor Yogender Sharma. Passionate about both chess and education, Shivika recently passed Class XII with an impressive 95%, scoring a perfect 100 in English. She firmly believes that excellence in chess and academics can go hand in hand—and is living proof that it's possible to pursue both with dedication and discipline. Through SRCA, she is also working to promote chess among girls and young women.

# Indian prodigies chase norms, rating points and dreams, one budget trip to Europe at a time

#### GNS News Agency, June 24

Two years ago, Yatin Sarbalia and his then nine-yearold son Aarav embarked on a unique Euro trip. In a threemonth phase, the father and son duo traversed country lines, going from Spain to France to Hungary before finally ending in Norway then flying back to India. Unlike a sightseeing tour of traditional European delights, this was a chess trip. Aarav had flown to Europe with his chess rating around 1400, and when he came back, it had touched 2000 after playing in five tournaments.

This year, Aarav, now 11 and holding the title of a FIDE Master, has already been on two Europe trips, playing events in Graz (Austria) and Cannes (France) on the first trip in February before playing in three back-to-back events in Munich in May-June. He will soon be back, to play in another three-four tournaments in France next month.Aarav is not the only one. At the Norway Chess Open event held in Stavanger a few kilometers away from the Norway Chess tournament - IM Savitha Shri and 11-year-old Woman FIDE Master Charvi Anilkumar are among the 16 Indian players competing. These players are paying from their own pocket for travel, food and living expenses in an expensive country like Norway for very specific reasons: some are chasing norms, some are in the hunt for rating points, some are seeking experience against GM-level opponents and others are trying to bring their rating up to match their strength. Trips like these by budding Indian chess stars are becoming increasingly frequent since the pandemic with players going abroad and playing in back-to-back tournaments before returning home to refuel and then flying back again



Open tournament. ndia's Charvi Anilkumar at the Norway Chess Open tournament. (Express Photo)"If you look at the junior list of India, off the top of my head, I can recall maybe the one-odd player, who still plays in India. But that is also due to lack of funds, not because he doesn't want to play in Europe. Basically, there are no Indian kids who play in India anymore, if they have a choice."

These days there are websites that — for a small annual subscription fee — give you a detailed list of tournaments around the world that may not even make it to the FIDE website's elaborate tournament calendar. There are also "tour organisers" who help take budding norm seekers on specific events in Europe. There are two popular "tours" that players can play in: the Catalan Circuit which has four back-to-back tournaments in Barcelona in July-August

# Panthers; TNPL asks franchise to show proof

#### GNS News Agency, June 24

With the allegations against Ashwin being severe, the TNPL's CEO Prasanna Kannan has asked the franchise to show proof of the incidents. (Image credit: TNPL)With the allegations against Ashwin being severe, the TNPL's CEO Prasanna Kannan has asked the franchise to show proof of the incidents. A day after Madurai Panthers team officially wrote to the Tamil Nadu Premier League (TNPL) that R Ashwin and his team Dindigul Dragons allegedly tampered with the ball during their match on June 14, the organisers have demanded the franchise to provide evidence for the same. In their complaint to TNPL, the Madurai franchise has alleged that the defending champions used towels treated with chemicals that resulted in the ball getting heavier and produced metallic sound when it came into contact with the bat.

With the allegations being severe, the TNPL's CEO Prasanna Kannan has asked the franchise to show proof of the incidents. "They have filed a complaint, which we have acknowledged. Though they have to lodge any complaints within 24 hours of the game, we have still accepted it and have asked them to furnish proof of their allegations. We will be forming an independent committee if we find there is any truth to their allegations. Without sufficient evidence, it is wrong to put forth such allegations against a player and another franchise. If they don't provide any evidence, then Madurai will face due sanctions," Prasanna toldIn the letter to TNPL, the Madurai franchise COO S Mahesh wrote: "A serious case of ball tampering occurred during our recent match against Dindigul Dragons. Despite repeated warn-



ings, the Dindigul team blatantly tampered with the ball, using towels that appeared to have been treated with chemicals."With the tournament coinciding with the monsoon season, the matches have been hampered by rain. The said fixture began after a brief delay following a short downpour in Salem, following which Madurai batted first and made 150/8 in 20 overs, which Dindigul overhauled in 12.3 overs and 9 wickets to spare. Ashwin had gone wicketless with the ball before scoring 49 as an opener. It is understood that factoring the wet outfield conditions, the Tamil Nadu Cricket Association provides towels to each of the franchises and players are allowed to use it to dry the ball only in front of the umpires. "They have to dry the ball only using the towels provided by TNPL. And every time the ball is hit for a six or immediately after a dismissal and over-break, umpires regularly check the ball and they didn't find any issue with the ball during the said match," Kannan said.

# Neeraj Chopra says javelin dreams take flight on home soil at the Neeraj Chopra Classic

Olympic gold medallist Neeraj Chopra says the Neeraj Chopra Classic is more than a competition—it's a platform where history is made. He urges fans to witness India's rise as world-class javelin throwers compete on Indian soil for global glory.

Hyderabad: "The Neeraj Chopra Classic is not just a competition; it's where every javelin doesn't just land on the ground, but writes history, said Neeraj Chopra, former Olympic gold medalist in javelin.

Once upon a time, there was a dream — that our flag would soar high, proudly in front of the world. Even today, the dream remains, the same, but the stage has change, Neeraj said.Now, our flag must rise on its own soil, among its own people, where the world will witness a rising India. The Neeraj Chopra Classic is not just a competition; it's where every javelin doesn't just land on the ground, but writes history, the world champion said.Watch the world's best javelin throwers compete on the same ground, chasing a new crown," said Neeraj Chopra.



So why are Indian youngsters taking so many trips to Europe?

As Kushager Krishnater, an IM who has worked with the likes of Arjun Erigaisi and Vidit Gujarathi in the past and is currently helping players of varying strengths, points out: "European players, as compared to Indians, have an inflated rating. This is because they have a lesser number of players and more tournaments. So more than their rating being inflated, it's Indians whose ratings are deflated (they do not accurately represent how good the player really is in strength)."These Euro trips, for many players, are a way to correct that rating deflation which they cannot in India. This is exactly what happened to Aarav in 2023.Kushager says that travelling abroad to chase norms or ratings started to catch on in India about 15 years ago. But only a few players could afford it then. Around 2015-16, it became common among players rated above 2100. But since COVID, it has become so commonplace that right now, players in the 1700-1800 bracket are also doing it. The basic tenet of these trips is simple: plan one European trip in such a way that you can play two-three events while living on a shoestring budget, finding cheapest accommodations and taking buses. If you do this four or five times a year, you end up playing 12-15 tournaments.

"At this point, chess in India, in my opinion, doesn't exist professionally. If you want to become a professional player, you would only play in India if you don't have the funds to play abroad. If you are someone looking to become one of the best, or let's say you are trying to become an IM or GM at a young age, you would not even think of playing in India, maybe except national tournaments," says Kushager.India's Charvi Anilkumar at the Norway Chess

(Barbera Del Valles Open, XXV International Open Sant Martí, 49th International Chess Open "Vila de Sitges" and 49th Open Internacional "Ciutat de Badalona" 2025) and the Czech Tour (Prague Open, Marienbad Open, Pilsen Open, CZECH OPEN Pardubice, Summer Prague Open 2025, Olomouc Chess Summer 2025)."10 years ago, the Catalan Circuit used to be the OG spot for playing European events, because you get to go in one city, rent one apartment for a long couple of months and play," says Kushager. "Even now, you will still find at least 50 Indians playing these events in Europe, who are rated anywhere between 1700 to 2200, just to increase their rating."UAE has also become a hotspot for Indians because for around Rs one lakh you could play in two back-to-back events. But events in UAE used to be so overrun with Indian players - at last year's Abu Dhabi Masters, for example, there were 85 Indians among 217 contenders - that organisers are now putting caps on Indians.Kushager says that players have started to wisen up. About a decade back, a trip to Europe meant playing in cities like Budapest, Belgrade or in Spain. It was rare at that point to find too many Indians there. But once others found out about it, these tournaments too would have plenty of Indians signing up, which meant Indians were again running into plenty of compatriots, and their ratings deflation problem persisted. Then players started to look for outposts in Europe where there wouldn't be too many Indians. Playing events in the USA would also solve the problem, but getting visas for the USA can be tricky business. What has been the most refreshing is the maturity with which players like 11-year-old Aarav and their parents are chasing their goals."For us, these tournaments are an opportunity to improve by playing stronger players. We don't have specific things like norms in mind," says Aarav's father Yatin. "We don't have expectations of norm in mind because that puts insane pressure on kids. If Aarav gains strength, norms will be easily achieved anyway."

# Indian team to compete in Para Powerlifting World Cup in Beijing

#### GNS News Agency, June 24

New Delhi: A 16-member team will represent India at the 2025 Para Powerlifting World Cup, to be held in Beijing from June 17 to 25. The team includes the likes of Zainab Khatun, Seema Rani, Jhandu Kumar, Joby Mathew, Manish Kumar and Kasthuri who impressed at the recently concluded national championships. Out of the 16 players, seven are women.

A grand send-off ceremony for the athletes was organized on Sunday. Former president of Paralympic Committee of India Deepa Malik, current PCI Secretary General Jayawant Hamnnavar and India Para Powerlifting Chairman JP Singh were among those present on the occasion. "With every tournament, India is establishing itself as a force to reckon with in the global para powerlifting



fraternity. Our players are in great shape, and we can expect commendable results in China," Singh said."









#### Ranga Reddy

#### **INDIAN CHRONICLE**

Sunjay Kapur's last photo, taken moments before he died, shared by his polo team: 'Our we dear friend tragically passed away on field'



Actress Karisma Kapoor's ex-husband, business tycoon Sunjay Kapur, tragically passed away on Thursday in London. As per a few media reports, Sunjay was playing the polo semi-finals for the Cartier Trophy when he accidentally swallowed a honey bee and suffered a heart attack. Days after his passing, his polo team – Sujan India Tigers shared his last photo with the team's captain, Jaisal Singh, moments before he lost his life. The finals will be dedicated to late Sunjay Kapur, and a minute's silence will be observed before the finals in his memory. As a mark of respect, the team's captain will also not play the final match.

Sharing the photo, his team wrote, "Today we play the final of the Cartier Trophy in memory of our dear friend Sunjay Kapur, who tragically passed away on the field a few days ago. Our Captain and Patron, Jaisal Singh, will mount up with the team to observe a minute's silence in honour of his dear old friend Sunjay, and then sit out as a mark of respect. This photograph of Sunjay and Jaisal was taken moments before they mounted up to play the semifinals a few days ago." r...The note further stated, "RIP Sunjay; you will be missed – your tireless enthusiasm and patronage will be remembered forever by the entire polo community."

#### Who was Sunjay Kapur?

The chairman of Sona Comcast, a business conglomerate with his net worth at over Rs 10,000 crore. He took over the control of the company after his father Surinder Kapur passed away in 2015. A passionate polo player, Sunjay has played the sport with Prince William in the past. On June 12 during a match, he accidentally swallowed a bee and suffered a cardiac arrest. He collapsed on the spot, and could not be revived despite multiple attempts.Sunjay Kapur married Karisma Kapoor in 2003, and the two got divorced in 2016. They have two children together. Before Karisma Kapoor, Sunjay was married to fashion designer Nandita Mahtani. After his separation from Karisma, Sunjay married Priya Sachdev, and the two had a son together. His last post was about expressing grief over the tragic Air India plane crash in Hyderabad.

# **'Rishi Kapoor was naked, I refused to do the scene': Aruna Irani recalls how Raj Kapoor convinced her to do Bobby sequence, Rishi's surprised reaction**

Rishi Kapoor flashing his bare butt in the one of the scenes in Bobby (1973), was considered a bit too much for the 70s. In fact, the late actor's co-star Aruna Irani, who was sharing the screen space with him in the shot, refused to do the sequence because she was feeling 'shy'. It was Rishi's father and the film's director Raj Kapoor who convinced her to do it, telling her not to look at him directly. In an interview, Aruna also revealed that the Chandni actor confronted Irani about her refusal to do the shot with him later.

In an interview with Lehren Retro, Aruna revealed that she wasn't convinced to do the scene earlier, but Raj Kapoor asked her to focus on the 'right things' instead. "I had said no initially. He comes out nude and dries out his hair with a towel. He gave that shot. I told Raj ji that I can't do it. He said, 'Dont look there na, don't see wrong things, see right things'. I did it at last," she said. The veteran actor also recalled that Rishi Kapoor confronted her about her refusal later. "I was then working with Chintu ji in Ravi Malhotra's film. He said, 'Aruna ji, mujhe aapse ek baat poochni hai. You objected a lot in that scene, but nanga toh mujhe hona tha, aap kyun object karahe the (Arunaji, I have to ask you something. I was the one who was naked in the shot, why were you objecting)?" she recalled. However, after listening to his point of view, Aruna Irani felt that he was indeed right. "I told him that I was feeling shy. I was thinking and getting restless to ask you that why you were feeling shy when I was the one naked in that scene. But, he was actually right," she ended. Rishi Kapoor's film



Aruna Irani was asked to woo Mehmood to get work; his silence on their marriage rumours ruined her career: 'He stopped working with me'

Veteran actor Aruna Irani and Mehmood were in a relationship while the latter was married. In a recent interaction, Aruna admitted that since she wasn't getting much work when she entered the film industry, she was advised to woo Mehmood to get more opportunities, as he was among the top actors in the industry at the time. She acknowledged that Mehmood supported her career, which eventually led her to fall for the late star.

Speaking to Lehren Retro, Aruna revealed that she had been a big fan of Mehmood ever since her school days. She said, "Dance director Suresh Bhatt told me 'tu Mehmood ko ghaas dal (You woo Mehmood), only he can get you work.' But there also I kept saying yes and no to Mehmood (refusing his advances), but he started giving me work even on those basis and slowly I developed a soft corner for him. Through him I saw money, fame, name and I thought 'Mein kab tak iss aadmi ko bewkoof banaugi (Till when will I make this man a fool). Then we became friends and then more than friends, but that was it with him."

Aruna recalled that she and Mehmood parted ways because they realised they weren't good for each other's careers. She also admitted that rumours of their marriage had been circulating, and since Mehmood never clearly addressed them, it negatively impacted her career. She recalled, "Vinod Khanna asked Mehmood if I can play his heroine in a film. He asked Mehmood if we both have been married. Mehmood just looked at me and smiled and didn't say anything. So he made my career also and ruined it also."Later in the conversation, Aruna shared that Mehmood



had refused to marry her, even though she wanted to get married to him. She added, "His family prevented him from working with me and so he stopped working with me." When asked if she went out of the way to please Mehmood in order to get work, she responded, "Not out of the way but definitely haad se bahar jakar I pleased him. I came from a very poor family so that was the first time I saw name, fame, money." While Aruna gained success during her relationship with Mehmood, she stopped getting work after they broke up. She said, "I didn't have a relation with him after that but I had the responsibility of my family and I focused on that. Nobody was giving me work after this break up. I started doing songs. I never had the complex that I am doing songs after playing the lead heroine. I just wanted to get out and earn."

# Aamir Khan answers those questioning his patriotism: 'My film Sarfarosh was the first to take Pakistan's name, suffered losses but...'



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India and Pakistan's recent conflict after the Pahalgam terror attack has caused a storm in the Hindi film industry. Many people blamed the Khan trio - Aamir Khan, Salman Khan, and Shah Rukh Khan for not speaking up against Pakistan publicly in the aftermath of the attack. No, in a recent interview, Aamir defended himself after the accusations, revealing that his 1999 release Sarfarosh was the first ever film in the history of Indian films, to refer to the country as Pakistan instead of 'padosi mulk'. The actor also revealed that he even took a stand for the country and didn't allow Dangal's release in Pakistan despite possible losses, because their censor board demanded the removal of the Indian flag and national anthem.During a chat with Rajat Sharma on his show Adalat, Aamir cited former Deputy P LK Advani's example and said, "If you pick India's film history, we have never been allowed to take their name, we had to use the term 'padosi mulk'. My film Sarfarosh was the first one ever in history, in which we have taken Pakistan and ISI's names without hesitation. John said that the Censor Board won't pass this. I said, 'Why won't they? We will explain it to them'. When Advani ji can call their name in the Parliament publicly that they are doing wrong by us and spreading terrorism, then why can't we?"

in the film," he added.Moreover, Aamir Khan lost money for not allowing his 2016 film Dangal's release at the theatres in Pakistan. "When Dangal released, Disney was one of the producers. When they presented it, they got a reaction from Pakistan's censor board to remove the last scene – where they hoist the tricolour and sing the national anthem after Geeta Phogat's victory in the match. I told them within a second that our film won't be released in Pakistan. I didn't even think twice. They said that it will affect our business and cause losses. I told them I have no interest in people who are asking to remove the Indian flag and national anthem, I don't want that business or money," the actor shared.

When asked by the host about making most of his money from China, he clarified and replied, "I have earned the most from India only. In China, two of my films worked a lot - Secret Superstar and Dangal. They love my films a lot. When these films released, we didn't have any enemity with China, there was actually friendship." Referring to a recent award he received in China, he continued, "They didn't call me 'National treasure of China', you should take note that they awarded me as 'National treasure of India' Yes, they are out enemies right now. Jo Jo humaare khilaaf hoga, lekin main humesha humaare armed forces and desh ki saath hi khada rahunga."During the same interview, Aamir also spoke about visiting the soldiers at Kargil. "I have gone there. When the Kargil war happened and we won, I spent eight days there. I landed in Leh and I was on that road which leads to Srinagar, for those eight days. I met every regiment there - SM rifle, Rajputana rifle, Ladakh scout, and many more. I only met jawans, went to encourage them. Aapne humaare liye yudh jeeta hai, hifaasat ki hai, main aapko pranaam karta hun, main aapka shukraguzaar hun. I don't think anyone else went there," he said. From living in a bunker near the border to eating with the soldiers, the actor did it all. Instead of him encouraging the jawans, the opposite happened. "I made a request to the army's high command to spend these eight days with jawans, not with officers specifically. I wanted to encourage them but after spending so many days, I realised that our Indian soldiers don't even need to motivation. They are living and working in such a difficult terrain but their confidence and strength is of another level. They have a bright smile on their faces. They ended up boosting my morale, instead of vice versa.""I ate with them and asked about their lives. I even spent one of the nights in a bunker at the border. There were around 6-8 soldiers there with me. I don't think anyone else has done this. I am only answering this because you asked, otherwise I don't feel good about advertising whatever good deeds I have done. I don't have this nature, I live my own life," Aamir concluded.

Bobby was a teen romance of a rich boy and a poor girl which remains fresh for the later generations as well. It also featured Dimple Kapadia, Prem Chopra and Prem Nath. The romantic-musical drama was a major hit and the highest-grossing Indian film of 1973.

# Farah Khan says she regrets not marrying Jaaved Jaaferi after seeing his luxury Bandra apartment.



In her latest YouTube vlog, Farah Khan visited actor Jaaved Jaaferi's beautiful sea-facing apartment in Bandra and she's so impressed that she jokingly says she wishes she had married him. Farah, along with her cook and regular vlog partner Dilip, is seen walking into Jaaved's stylish home and being completely wowed by it. Hugging him, she jokes, "Jaaved, tere se hi shaadi kar leti mai yaar agar yeh ghar mil raha hota mereko (Jaaved, I would've married you if I knew I'd get a house like this!)" The funny moment leaves Jaaved in splits and sets a fun mood for the rest of the vlog.Jaaved's house is decorated in soft beige tones, with large indoor plants and a comfortable sage green sofa in

the living room. Elegant white hanging lamps and a Spanish-style dining table add a touch of class to the space.As Farah continues the house tour, she gets more and more impressed. The bedrooms have large closets, cozy beds, and personal items that make them feel warm and homely. One wall is dedicated to souvenirs Jaaved has collected from his travels. Looking at it, Farah says, "This is beautiful ya." She also meets Jaaved's wife, whom he jokes about, saying, "Achi toh lag rahi hai. She is beautiful abhi bhi," as Farah hugs her warmly.Wall dedicated to collectibles in Jaaved Jaaferi's home. (Photo: Farah Khan/YouTube) Farah Khan checks out Jaaved Jaaferi's homeA fun moment in the vlog is when Jaaved takes Farah to a part of the terrace that he calls the "Titanic view." He stretches his arms out wide like Jack from the movie Titanic, making Farah laugh. From the balcony, Jaaved also shows her a clear view of the mountains, the airport, and homes of actors like Emraan Hashmi and Sanjay Dutt.He also shares a bit of Bollywood history. Pointing to two buildings, he says, "Yaha pe Dilip sahab ka bangla tha, ab building ban gayi, (It was once place to Dilip Kumar's bungalow, but now they have made a building here), and "Yeh Rishi sahab ka bangla tha, ab building ban gayi (And this was supposed to be Rishi Kapoor's bungalow)."Jaaved then takes Farah into a special room filled with CDs, cassettes, and musical equipment. "This is where my younger son makes his music," he says, giving fans a look at his personal creative space. Towards the end of the vlog, Farah shares an interesting story about her own home-the one where she now films all her YouTube content. She says, "Jaaved had actually seen the same house one day before I did!" Jaaved explains, "Vikas Oberoi told me someone was checking out the house for Vastu, he didn't reveal the name to me. And then he said, if they didn't agree,

The film's team finally received the permission to take Pakistan's name. "We got permission to use the names on that basis. So many films released after that were using Pakistan's name. People say that I don't say anything against them, but sabse bada naam toh unka maine hi liya hai, aur kisi ne nahi. After Sarfarosh, I got many negative comments from Pakistan for attacking them

# The Rebel Kid aka Apoorva Mukhija makes explosive claims about The Traitors, reveals Karan Johar personally interviewed contestants: 'I lied about lots of things to be on the show'

Karan Johar-hosted The Traitors has become a hot topic on social media. On Monday morning, Uorfi Javed slammed fellow contestant Apoorva Mukhija (The Rebel Kid) for making false claims in her YouTube vlog called Story Time. Apoorva has made several explosive claims about the show, revealing a few behind-the-scenes details that are usually kept under wraps, and admitting that she lied in several interviews just to be on the show.

'I made sure to give such answers in my interview that they selected me...'Talking about how she lied during her interview with BBC Studios, the studio behind The Traitors, Apoorva Mukhija said that she was the most irrelevant contestant as compared to others on the show. "This was a very big opportunity for me. BBC Studios was producing it, Amazon Prime was streaming it, and Karan Johar was hosting the game show. We made the show like Bigg Boss to some extent. Till I was offered this show, I had no content on YT, no films, etc. I was one of the most irrelevant people on the show as compared to others; the makers also thought 50 times before taking me on board. But I made sure to give such answers in my interview that they selected me. I just wanted to be on the show anyway. The minute they told me I was selected for the show, I freaked out, because I lied about a lot of things, saying that I am entertaining and will do whatever. I knew nothing. I was very

underprepared and underconfident," Apoorva confessed.Apoorva Mukhija admitted to saying certain things deliberately, knowing they would make it past the edit. She even revealed details from her interview with Karan Johar. "A friend of mine told me that whenever I went to give interviews on the show, I should say something iconic that they can't cut out from the show. That I should give moments and memes, which changed my perception," Apooorva explained. The Rebel Kid added, "After we went to the palace, everyone was called inside to get interviewed by Karan Johar. It was about whether we wanted to be a traitor or not. I knew I would have been a horrible traitor. But since this game is about the traitors and they would get the most screen time and control over the game, I said I would love to be a traitor. Karan asked me why, and I said I wanted the ability to throw out anybody from the show who talked too much or irritated me. I didn't mean any of it though. Then Karan asked me who would be the first person I would throw out of the show, and I said Sufi Motiwala. I was like, if he judges people's clothing for a living and that's how he dressed, then I didn't trust his judgment."'I was told I would be given three phone calls on the show, but later they denied making such claims'Recalling the moment when her fight with Uorfi Javed began, Apoorva Mukhija shared a back story and explained,

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