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Two killed in road accident on Hyderabad-Vijayawada highway

Hyderabad: Two people including the driver of a private bus and a passenger died after it went out of control and crashed into a truck ahead on the Hyderabad-Vijayawada national highway at Choutuppal on the city outskirts on Wednesday. As per available information, the incident occurred around 5am, when the driver of the bus who is suspected to have missed to notice the stationary truck which had broken down and parked on the road side at Khaitapuram. Police suspect the driver had dozed off resulting in the crash. The bus driver and a woman passenger who was reportedly seated in the front seats suffered multiple bleeding injuries and died in the incident.

Woman killed in multi-vehicle accident on Hyderabad-Vijayawada highway

Hyderabad: A 29-year-old woman, Sravani, died in a major road accident involving two cars and a lorry in Choutuppal municipal area on the Hyderabad-Vijayawada highway.

According to reports, the incident occurred when two cars travelling from Hyderabad to Vijayawada collided with each other. Following the collision, one of the cars veered to the left and was hit from behind by an oncoming lorry. Sravani, who was travelling in the car that was struck by the lorry, died on the spot. Three persons were reportedly travelling in the vehicle. The impact was so severe that police had to deploy an earthmover to extricate her body from the wreckage.

Justice Varma impeachment: Government reaches out to political parties, wants all on board



GNS News Agency, June 4

Union Parliamentary Affairs Minister Kiren Rijiju on Wednesday underlined the government's resolve to take all political parties on board in moving an impeachment motion against Justice Yashwant Varma, saying corruption in the judiciary cannot be approached through a "political prism". He said the government wants the exercise aimed at axing Justice Varma, embroiled in a case of alleged corruption and indicted by a Supreme Court-appointed committee, a "collaborative effort". Mr. Rijiju told reporters that he has already initiated discussions with all political parties to bring the motion in Parliament's Monsoon session, starting from July 21, against the Allahabad High Court judge. He said the government wants all parties to "jointly" move the motion to remove Justice Varma. Mr. Rijiju said he will reach out to smaller parties, while all major parties have already been informed about the plan to bring a motion of impeachment against Justice Varma. "The government feels that the matter related to corruption is not one political party's agenda. It is a stand of all parties to fight against the menace of corruption, whether it is the judiciary or any other space," he said. The Minister underlined that the government would like to take all political parties on board on the issue, as corruption in the judiciary cannot be approached through a "political prism". He said most parties will revert after discussing the issue internally.

To a query, Mr. Rijiju said the decision on whether the motion will be brought in the Lok Sabha or the Rajya Sabha

will be taken based on the business of each House. According to the Judges (Inquiry) Act of 1968, once a motion to remove a judge is admitted in any of the Houses, the speaker or the chairman, as the case may be, will constitute a three-member committee to investigate the grounds on which the removal (or, in popular term, impeachment) has been sought. The committee consists of the chief justice of India (CJI) or a Supreme Court judge, the chief justice of one of the 25 high courts and a "distinguished jurist". Mr. Rijiju said the present case is "slightly different" as an in-house committee formed by then CJI Sanjiv Khanna has already submitted its report. "So what is to be done in this matter, we will take a call," he said. Integrating inquiry that was conducted. The Minister said the process has to be followed, but how to "integrate the inquiry already conducted" needs to be decided. "As per the rule, a committee has to be constituted and then the committee has to submit a report and the report will be tabled in the House and discussions will start to impeach. Here, a committee has already been constituted, not by Parliament. But it cannot be brushed aside" as it was constituted by the CJI, he said. Responding to questions that a committee has to be mandatorily formed under the Judges (Inquiry) Act, Mr. Rijiju said the speaker will take a decision in this regard. He said reconciling the report of the in-house panel and the one under law is a "secondary matter". The primary objective is to bring the impeachment motion. Mr. Rijiju hoped that the removal proceedings would be passed in the two Houses in the Monsoon session beginning July 21 and ending August 12. A fire incident at Justice Varma's residence in the national capital in March, when he was a judge at the Delhi High Court, had led to the discovery of several burnt sacks of cash at the outhouse. Though the judge claimed ignorance about the cash, the Supreme Court-appointed committee indicted him after speaking to a number of witnesses and recording his statement. The then CJI Khanna is believed to have prodded him to resign but Justice Varma dug in his heels. The apex court has since transferred him to his parent cadre, the Allahabad High Court, where he has not been assigned any judicial work. Justice Khanna had written to the president and the prime minister, recommending the impeachment motion, which is the procedure for axing members of the higher judiciary from service.

RCB IPL 2025 celebration kills 8, over 20 injured near in Bengaluru



GNS News Agency, June 4

Bengaluru: The celebrations for the first-ever IPL victory of the Royal Challengers Bengaluru (RCB) turned tragic on Wednesday with over 50 fans injured and falling sick, and eight feared killed following a stampede near the Chinnaswamy Stadium here. The incident occurred while fans were attending the celebration event for the RCB team lifting the IPL 2025 trophy. The authorities have confirmed that the bodies of two persons are at Bowring Hospital and that of four others at Vaidehi Hospital. Six persons are being treated in the ICU of the Vaidehi Hospital and three are admitted to the ICU. Sources confirmed the death of other two persons. The identities of the deceased are yet to be established.

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah and Deputy CM D.K.

Shivakumar visited the Bowring hospital. The stampede took place when thousands of fans attempted to enter the stadium in a hurry from various gates. Police at the scene transported the injured to ambulances and shifted them to the nearby Bowring Hospital. Police stated that the ambulances were unable to move quickly to the hospital due to the overcrowding on the roads. In a separate incident, one fan, while climbing a gate to jump into the stadium, fell and broke his leg.

Despite the presence of numerous police personnel, they are struggling to control the massive crowd. People are seen climbing trees and sitting on branches to catch a glimpse of the celebration. More details regarding the incident are yet to emerge. The government of Karnataka had earlier cancelled the victory parade from Vidhana Soudha to Chinnaswamy Cricket Stadium, citing security reasons. Police stated that they have been controlling the celebrating crowds since Tuesday night. Throughout the night, forces have been engaged in managing them and ensuring no untoward incidents occurred. A huge number of crowds have also thronged the Vidhana Soudha premises to witness the felicitation program by the government. Police had to resort to a mild cane-charge to control the crowd. Earlier, when the RCB team arrived at the HAL airport here on Wednesday, they were personally welcomed by Deputy CM D.K. Shivakumar. He presented bouquets to each player. Shivakumar especially greeted cricketer Virat Kohli, presenting him with both the RCB team flag and the Kannada flag.

Bharat Forecasting System, India's new monsoon model can now forecast hyper-local monsoon predictions

GNS News Agency, June 4

Hyderabad: Imagine having the ability to accurately forecast heavy rain in your neighborhood and lighter rain in your friend's neighborhood, which is located a few kilometers away. Or, having the superpower to predict heavy downpour at a very particular area of a district, that too 10 days in advance. This ability is now a reality, with Indian scientists developing a super-detailed computer model known as the Bharat Forecasting System (BFS). This system is much better at seeing small rain clouds and predicting heavy downpours, even 10 days ahead. In fact, the new forecasting system is being billed as even better than international weather modeling systems. Developed by a group of scientists from Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology (IITM), the BFS high-resolution modeling system can forecast and determine what's happening every 6.5 kilometers. This means BFS can predict weather changes in much finer detail, almost down to small towns and villages. A 6.5 km resolution model can 'see' and predict weather patterns in much finer scale than the existing 12-km resolution models.

Why is it being billed as better than international models? The BFS, which is technically known as the High-Resolution Global Forecasting Model (HGFM), was compared to existing high-end Global Forecasting System (GFS), which is a numerical weather prediction model utilized by multiple countries, including the United States. According to IITM weather researchers, who published their work 'High-Resolution Global Forecast Model' in prestigious European Geosciences Union (EGU) in March, the BFS is actually better at predicting heavy rains accurately than the old standard, which is crucial for the public ahead of weather calamities.

Not Kaleshwaram Commission, but Congress Commission: MLC Kavitha stages protest opposing notices to KCR

GNS News Agency, June 4

Hyderabad: Telangana Jagruthi president and BRS MLC K Kavitha declared that the Congress government constituted Justice PC Ghose Commission on Kaleshwaram project only to politically target former Chief Minister K Chandrashekhar Rao and defame the previous BRS government. She led a protest by Telangana Jagruthi opposing the notices issued by the Commission to Chandrashekhar Rao. "It is not Kaleshwaram Commission, but a Congress Commission as the inquiry is not about accountability, but about political defamation. What wrong did KCR do? If you issue notices to him, it is like issuing notices to the entire populace of Telangana," she said. Addressing the gathering amid chants of "Jai Telangana" and "Jai KCR" at Dharna Chowk, Kavitha reminded that the Kaleshwaram Lift Irrigation Project (KLIP) as a transformative effort that brought water to millions of acres across the State. She said Kaleshwaram was not just three barrages, as it comprises 21 pump houses, 15 reservoirs, 200 km of tunnels, and 1,500 km of canal. "It was KCR's vision that made it possible to lift water from 90 metres to 600 metres height, defying gravity, to provide 40 TMC to Hyderabad and 16 TMC to industries, besides irrigating nearly 40 lakh acres," she added. The Telangana Jagruthi president questioned why the Congress government has not summoned Krishna Reddy of Megha Engineering and Infrastructure Limited (MEIL), which constructed 15 pump houses in the project. She pointed out that the then Congress government gave majority of the irrigation project works to



Has it been tested?

As part of the research, the IITM weather scientists ran the model (HGFM) every day from June to September 2022 (monsoons). They used historical data to see how their new model would have predicted past events. Tests revealed that the model could predict upcoming monsoon rains events 10 days in advance, enough time to prepare for floods. Why is BFS important for India? Till now, the weather researchers have been able to accurately forecast/predict the movements of monsoon clouds and wind patterns over large areas. However, it is a struggle to exactly forecast the precise amount of rain that falls in specific areas or locations. They have not been able to forecast the day-to-day or week-to-week change of weather at small or specific locations. However, now, with the BFS system, which was recently launched, researchers can now accurately forecast if a specific village or a small town will get a downpour or just a drizzle.

"It's wonderful": Elon Musk's father visits Ram temple

GNS News Agency, June 4

Ayodhya (UP): Errol Musk, father of tech billionaire Elon Musk, visited the Ram temple in Ayodhya on Wednesday afternoon and described the experience as "wonderful" and one of the "best things" he has ever done. Errol also paid obeisance at the Hanumangarhi temple nearby. He was initially scheduled to visit the Taj Mahal in Agra as well but the plan may be dropped due to extreme heat in the region. Chinnaswamy Stadium Stampede: RCB IPL 2025 celebration kills 8, over 20 injured near in Bengaluru. "It's wonderful, absolutely wonderful (Ayodhya visit). It's one of the best things I've ever done. I'm so glad I came to see it and can't wait till the temple gets completed, the big temple, it's going to be something like a wonder of the world," Errol told PTI Videos. Separately, talking to reporters after visiting both temples, he said, "My experience here in India has been wonderful. I'm here (in India) to begin working with Servotech and am looking forward to spending a lot of time in the country. The temples are marvellous and so are the people." Accompanied by his daughter Alexandra Musk, Errol arrived at Ayodhya airport around 2.30 pm and left after 4 pm. He was wearing kurta-pyjama during his visit to the Ram temple.

Security was on high alert in the temple town during the visit. "There is already a three-layered high-level security cover in place in Ayodhya, which includes round-the-clock deployment of high-tech anti-drone systems capable of detecting and neutralising unauthorised aerial activity," a



police officer said. He added that security arrangements in and around the temple area include CCTV surveillance, regular checking of visitors and deployment of specially trained personnel. "However, no additional security cover will be extended officially for this visit as the existing measures are adequate," he said. Errol, who is the Global Advisor to Servotech Renewable Power System Ltd, began his India trip on June 1 and will be in the country till June 6, a spokesperson for the Haryana-based company said in a statement. "His visit is squarely focused on accelerating India's burgeoning green technology and electric vehicle (EV) charging infrastructure development," the company said. Servotech managing director Raman Bhatia is also expected to visit the Ram temple on Wednesday.

Protests intensify in Pedda Dhanwada over controversial ethanol factory



GNS News Agency, June 4

Hyderabad: Tensions flared in Pedda Dhanwada village of Jogulamba Gadwal district as local farmers and residents escalated their protests against the proposed ethanol factory. The project, embroiled in controversy for months, is facing strong opposition due to fears of environmental degradation, water scarcity, and threats to agriculture in the area.

Reports of construction work resuming late on Tuesday night sparked a fresh wave of protests by villagers. For

nearly a year, residents of Pedda Dhanwada and ten surrounding villages have been engaged in a prolonged battle with the company to halt construction. People, primarily dependent on agriculture, fear the factory will pollute the environment, contaminate water sources, and deplete groundwater reserves crucial for irrigation. Similar protests were staged by farmers in Dilawarpur in Nizamabad district in January this year against another proposed ethanol factory. Public opposition had led to the cancellation of that project. The Pedda Dhanwada protests have since gained widespread support. Political leaders from opposition parties, including the BRS, have visited the protest site and extended their support.

The situation took a dramatic turn on Tuesday night when the factory's management reportedly resumed construction under the cover of darkness, despite earlier assurances from the State government that the project would be halted pending further review. The company's actions, which included deploying containers and private personnel at the site, stunned locals and triggered immediate outrage. By Wednesday morning, residents of Pedda Dhanwada and neighbouring villages had assembled at the site and resumed protests with renewed vigour.



MEIL under Jala Yagnam scheme in erstwhile Andhra Pradesh. She criticised the Revanth Reddy government for neglecting repairs at Medigadda barrage and depriving water to farmers, while blaming others. The BRS MLC questioned Revanth Reddy's silence on Andhra Pradesh's Banakacherla project and Godavari-Penna Rivers inter-linking. "When Telangana's water is being diverted, why is there no protest from the Chief Minister? Why did not he raise the issue with the Centre to stop it?" she asked. Kavitha also called out BJP silence, urging that at least MP Eatela Rajender who has roots in Telangana statehood movement, to raise his voice against Andhra Pradesh's illegal projects and to lobby for national status for the Telangana irrigation projects. "Despite having 8 MPs and 8 MLAs, Telangana gets nothing from the BJP-led Centre," she said.

Indian Chronicle

English Daily

Dawn of the Opal Suchata era

It has been a gruelling journey for a non-descript Thai girl to become a global household name as a 21-year-old (born on September 20, 2003). The rise has been meteoric given that Opal Suchata Chuangsri debuted at the Miss Universe Thailand in 2022, as an 18-year-old. Today she walks tall, quite literally (five ft 11 inches) and rules over the fashion firmament having been crowned with the Miss World title on a momentous day (May 31) in Hyderabad. It is a good augury that lately winners of coveted beauty pageants (Miss Universe and Miss World) are coming from relatively less known cities and towns. Gone are the days when the hot favourites were models and beauty queens from big countries. Suchata Chuangsri scripted history by becoming the first Thai woman to clinch the Miss World crown. All through the month-long extravaganza, she was all of poise and a synonym for beauty with brains, the traits that helped her clinch the crown while putting to shade the others waiting to bag the crown that was up for grabs. The elegant Thai walked away with Rs 8.5 crore in prize money.

When one looks at her career graph and the dexterity with which she performed during the questioning sessions, she comes across as a person, who, unlike her predecessors, is determined to do her bit for the society, including exposing the misconceptions surrounding breast cancer, which is taking a heavy toll of women all over the world. The days when the contestants would win the title with a 'I wish to be like Mother Teresa' mantra are gone. Today, the winner must show a high level of consistency and intelligence across segments like 'Head-to-head challenge', 'Top model', 'Beauty with a purpose', sports and multimedia exposure.

Bamboo poles, old iron scrap auction: ITDA Project Officer B. Rahul



“BHUKYA RANJITH NAIK” INDIAN CHRONICLE “BHADRADRI KOTHAGUDEM (JUNE 4): “Integrated Tribal Development Agency (ITDA) Bhadrachalam has decided to auction bamboo poles (about 98 bushes) and old iron scrap (about 500 kg) located at HNTC Nursery Garimella Padu, Prashanth Nagar Gram Panchayat, Chunchupalli Mandal, Bhadradi Kothagudem District, Bhadrachalam ITDA Project Officer B. Rahul said in a statement. Therefore, he requested all interested parties to participate in the auction on the 10th of this month at 10:30 am at HNTC Nursery, Garimellapadu, by paying a deposit of Rs. 3000. He indicated that the Project Officer, ITDA Bhadrachalam, has the full authority to cancel or restart the auction.

Engineers' Association Members Meet TUDA Chairman Dollars Diwakar Reddy



a traditional shawl. The association members also extended a formal invitation to him to participate in the upcoming “Engineers’ Expo”, which is scheduled to be held in Tirupati city in July

“June 4 Indian Chronicle Rayalaseema co-ordinator” “Representatives from the Association of Planners and Engineers today paid a courtesy visit to Tirupati TUDA Chairman, Dollars Diwakar Reddy.” “During their meeting, they formally felicitated Dollars Diwakar Reddy with

“The delegation included Engineers’ Association President Prasad Reddy, General Secretary Shanmugam, Vice Presidents Nageswara Rao and Sudhakar Reddy, Treasurer Sandeep, and members Bangaraya, Madana Gopal, Vasanth, Krishna, and Kishore”, among others.

Grand Inauguration of Swancrest Pre School, Attapur by Hon’ble MLA Shri Prakash Goud



Hyderabad, 4th June 2025:

Swancrest Pre School, located in Nalanda Nagar, Attapur, was officially inaugurated on Wednesday in a grand ceremony by Shri Prakash Goud, Hon’ble MLA of Rajendra Nagar, who graced the occasion as the Chief Guest. The event was marked by vibrant celebrations and enthusiastic participation from students, parents, staff, and well-wishers. In his address, MLA Shri Prakash Goud lauded the efforts of the school management in establishing a high-quality early education centre in the locality. He interacted with the directors, Mrs. Shwetha and Mr. Ravi, encouraging them to build an institution that focuses on holistic learning and child-centered development. He assured the school of his full support in all their future endeavours. Adding to the significance of the event, Mr. T. Mallesh Mudiraj, Chairman of the Gudimalkapur Market Committee, attended as the Guest of Honour and extended his congratulations to the Swancrest team, wishing them great success in their journey. Distinguished guests Mr. M. Bhaskar Goud and Mr. M. Ravinder Goud from the TPCC were also present. They appreciated the initiative and expressed their commitment to supporting the school’s vision of empowering young minds. The event also saw the presence of Mr. Rajgopal, President of the Nalanda Nagar Welfare Association, along with his committee members, who commended the initiative and welcomed the school into the community. The inaugural ceremony marked a significant milestone for Swancrest Pre School, setting a strong foundation for nurturing future generations with quality early education.

DESI GOVAMSHA RAKSHANA SAMVARDHANA SAMITHI TELANGANA

“Goshala Department – Vishwa Hindu Parishad



“PS Ashokan” Indian Chronicle “manthani June 3,” “The Vishwa Hindu Parishad and the Goshala Department have taken up the protection of Indian breed cows as a divine responsibility, inspired by the scriptures. According to the scriptures, protecting Indian cows ensures the well-being of the entire universe. The milk, curd, ghee, urine, and dung from Indian cows are extremely beneficial to human health. But today, Indian breed cows are becoming endangered.” “Hence, to protect and conserve Indian cows, the Telangana government has implemented The Telangana Prohibition of Cow Slaughter and Animal Preservation Act, 1977, which is in force.” “This Act prohibits cow slaughter in Telangana. However, due to lack of proper implementation, cow slaughter is still occurring illegally in several places, including Hyderabad. Cow trafficking is also widespread.” “To address this issue, the Vishwa Hindu Parishad’s Goshala Department is actively working to create awareness, implement laws, and encourage cow protection.” “We request that awareness programs on cow protection be conducted at all levels, including educational institutions, youth groups, women’s groups, farmers, and public platforms.” “Our main objectives:” “1. Establish at least one Goshala (cow shelter) in each Mandal (sub-district).” “2. Rescue illegally transported cows with the help of police and public awareness.” “3. Promote cow-based natural farming among farmers.” “4. Raise awareness about the spiritual and economic importance of Indian cows.” “5. Encourage temples and spiritual organizations to maintain cows in temple premises.” “6. Offer training programs for youth and farmers in cow protection activities.” “7. Request

the Telangana State Government to support police officers and volunteers working sincerely to stop cow trafficking and slaughter.” “[8:04 pm, 3/6/2025] +91 94401 53424: 9. Due to the negligence of municipal officials and the irresponsibility of elected public representatives, open places and water tanks in the town have been encroached upon and turned into residential plots and houses.

As a result, animals are unable to find water to drink during summer, leading to tragic deaths of cows and calves. The municipality and revenue department should take immediate action to restore these lands.” “10. Construct cattle ponds in suitable locations and ensure a proper water supply to prevent cattle deaths.” “11. Take action as per Telangana High Court Order WP No. 15948 dated 08-06-2021.” “12. Set up permanent structures for grass, fodder, water, and shelter in all Gaushalas using Gaushala Development Funds. Provide care and treatment for sick...”

“13. Appoint dedicated veterinary doctors and supporting staff in all Gaushalas and ensure regular health checkups and treatment for animals.” “14. Provide adequate funds for the functioning of Gaushalas.” “15. Take stringent action against illegal cattle transporters and slaughterers. Set up a fast-track court for cattle protection and ensure quick justice.” “16. Declare “Gopashtami” as a Cow Protection Day and conduct awareness programs in educational institutions and public places regarding the importance of cow protection.” “We earnestly request the government to take immediate steps to implement the above demands, protect cattle, and support Gaushala development.

TUDA Towers Nearing Completion, Soon to Be Accessible to Public:

TUDA Chairman Dollars Diwakar Reddy



“June 4 Indian Chronicle Rayalaseema co-ordinator” “TUDA Chairman, Dollars Diwakar Reddy, announced today that the TUDA Towers, currently under construction in the heart of Tirupati, will soon be completed and made available for public use.” “On Wednesday, Mr. Diwakar Reddy,

accompanied by TUDA officials, conducted an inspection of the ongoing construction work at the TUDA Towers. During the inspection, he emphasized the critical need to adhere to strict quality standards and ensure that the construction proceeds in full compliance with all relevant regulations.” “Mr. Reddy highlighted the significant demand for the TUDA Towers, attributing it to their strategic location in close proximity to both the railway station and the bus stand. He reiterated his commitment to completing the project within the stipulated timeframe without any compromises, ensuring its swift availability to the public.” “Officials present during the inspection included TUDA Secretary Sreekanth, Superintending Engineer Krishna Reddy, Executive Engineer Raveendra, DE Basha, AE Shanmugam, KPC Contractor Sushil, and other engineers.

Dr. C.R. Rajan Attends DCCB Chairman's Swearing-in Ceremony

“June 4 Indian Chronicle Rayalaseema co-ordinator” “Amasa Rajasekhara Reddy, recently elected as the DCCB Chairman, officially assumed his duties at the DCCB office on Wednesday.” “Following this, “Dr. C.R. Rajan”, who serves as the Chittoor TDP President and Chairman of the State Vanniyakula Corporation, paid a courtesy visit to the new Chairman at his office in Chittoor. Dr. Rajan honored him with a shawl and presented a bouquet, extending his heartfelt congratulations.” “Speaking on the occasion, Dr. C.R. Rajan remarked that TDP chief Nara Chandrababu Naidu consistently leads in recognizing every party worker who dedicates themselves tirelessly to the party’s cause. Several Chittoor TDP leaders also participated in this event.

Chaurya Paatham: A heist like no other - Crime, Comedy & Chaos Awaits on Lionsgate Play



Hyderabad: A twisted heist and a tunnel full of surprises awaits! Chaurya Paatham flips the crime-comedy genre, delivering a wild ride packed with humour, heart and chaos. A heist like no other premieres on Lionsgate Play on 6th June. Directed by Nikhil Gollamari, the Telugu-language film features Indhra Ram, Payal Radhakrishna and Rajeev Kanakala. The plot follows a young man desperate to fund his first film, who ropes in a ragtag gang to rob India’s most peaceful and zero crime village, Dhanapalli. But when their supposedly foolproof plan goes sideways, a chain of unexpected events unfolds, flipping everything upside down.

With unforgettable characters, witty storytelling, and a plot full of surprises, Chaurya Paatham is the heist film you didn’t know you needed. Don’t miss this quirky, unexpected adventure that turns into the most entertaining heist of the year!

Talking about his debut film, Indhra Ram says, “This film was an entirely new experience for me, especially as my debut. The mix of crime and comedy felt offbeat, and playing Vedanth Ram, an aspiring filmmaker with big dreams, caught between passion and madness, was both fun and challenging. Balancing that desperation was one of the most rewarding challenges of my career. It’s not just about the heist; it’s about showing why someone would go that far. I hope I’ve done justice to Vedanth Ram, and I gave it my all.” He continues, “Chaurya Paatham represents new-age filmmaking. While it follows the heist genre, it offers a layered story set against the rural backdrop that stays with you post the credit roll. Each character is unforgettable and adds a unique twist to the tale. The production value from visuals to sound are top notch, we’ve put a lot of effort into making sure it elevates the experience. It’s been an honour to work alongside such a talented team, all of them have done a fantastic job. It’s a project I’m incredibly proud of and I hope the audience enjoys the digital premiere.” Watch the madness unfold in Chaurya Paatham, streaming June 6 only on Lionsgate Play.

Tirupati Cloth & Readymade Merchants Association Representatives Pay Courtesy Visit to TUDA Chairman Dollars Diwakar Reddy



“June 4, Indian Chronicle Rayalaseema co-ordinator” “Representatives from the Tirupati Cloth & Readymade Merchants Association today paid a courtesy visit to “Sri Dollars Diwakar Reddy, Chairman of the Tirupati Urban Development Authority (TUDA)”, to extend their best wishes.”

“The meeting was attended by “Sri Paradala Mani (Subrahmanyam), Secretary of the Association, Sri Sagar, Treasurer, and Sri Veerabhadra Rao, a member.” Discussions at the meeting revolved around key areas such as the development of commercial activities within TUDA’s purview, enhancing trade infrastructure, and outlining future development strategies crucial for the merchant community.”

“Sri Dollars Diwakar Reddy” assured the representatives of TUDA’s full cooperation and support for the growth and welfare of the merchants. “On this occasion, the Association conveyed its congratulations to the Chairman and presented him with a memento



Grand Yoga Program Conducted at Chandragiri Fort Premises

“Yoga Must Become an Integral Part of Our Daily Lives,” Says District Collector Dr. Venkateswar S. “Everyone Should Participate in Yoga Andhra,” Urges MLA Pulivarthi Nani “Complete Health Through Yoga,” States TUDA Chairman Dollars Diwakar Reddy



Shubham Bansal, Yadava Corporation Chairman Narasimha Yadav, along with other prominent leaders and officials, actively participated in the "Yoga Andhra - 2025" training program, performing various yoga asanas. "Speaking on the occasion, "District Collector Dr. Venkateswar S. urged all citizens to actively participate in and contribute to the success of the month-long "Yoga Andhra" program, which is a significant initiative by the state government. He announced that the "11th International Yoga Day" will be celebrated on "June 21st in Visakhapatnam, with "Prime Minister Narendra Modi" expected to grace the event. He further stated that a special action plan has been formulated to raise public awareness and explain the multifaceted benefits of yoga over the coming month. "MLA Pulivarthi Nani" underscored that yoga should become an indispensable part of everyone's life. He also appealed to each individual to educate at least four others about the benefits of practicing yoga and take personal responsibility for encouraging them to adopt the practice. "TUDA Chairman Dollars Diwakar Reddy" observed that in the contemporary modern era, individuals are experiencing significant stress due to their professional and business commitments, leading to various health issues. He highlighted yoga as an excellent and effective method to alleviate this stress. He strongly recommended that everyone incorporate yoga into their daily routine, asserting that just 30 minutes of daily yoga practice can help in keeping many ailments at bay. He concluded by stating that it has been scientifically proven that yoga acts as a holistic remedy for numerous health concerns. "The program witnessed the enthusiastic participation of hundreds of students, women, and youth.

“June 4, Indian Chronicle Rayalaseema co-ordinator District Collector Dr. Venkateswar S., MLA Pulivarthi Nani, and TUDA Chairman Dollars Diwakar Reddy jointly emphasized the importance of integrating yoga into our daily lives. "As part of the State Government's highly prestigious "Yoga Andhra" program, a large-scale yoga training session was organized at the historic Chandragiri Fort. District Collector Dr. Venkateswar S., MLA Pulivarthi Nani, TUDA Chairman Dollars Diwakar Reddy, Joint Collector

Free Legal Aid for the Underprivileged by the Mandal Legal Services Authority.



free legal aid to the economically disadvantaged. Addressing a Legal Awareness Seminar organized in Gujpadugu village of Manthani Mandal, she highlighted the opportunity to amicably resolve eligible disputes during the Lok Adalat scheduled for the 14th of this month. She urged citizens to make use of this platform for settlements through mutual understanding and to approach the courts without hesitation for legal assistance. "Bar Association Vice President Sri K. Raghotham Reddy emphasized the importance of legal literacy and made the public aware of their fundamental rights, duties, and relevant laws. Tahsildar Sri Kumaraswamy provided clarity on issues related to land records and legal aspects of property matters. Sub-Inspector of Police, Manthani, Sri D. Ramesh, gave an informative session on cyber laws and the dangers of counterfeit currency. "Advocates Sri Shashibhushan Kache and Sri Katakam Srinivas addressed legal issues pertaining to the agricultural sector and farmers' rights. The programme witnessed active participation from PSCS Chairman Sri Kotha Srinivas, Lok Adalat member Sri Kanukuntla Swamy, alongside numerous women and farmers from the community.

“PS Ashokan Indian Chronicle Manthani June,5 Senior Civil Judge Smt. V. Bhavani stated that the Mandal Legal Services Authority is committed to providing

TUDA Chairman Dollars Diwakar Reddy Inspects



out in Chandragiri mandal, accompanied by TUDA officials. "During the inspection, discussions centered on the essential facilities yet to be provided in the layout. Officials informed the Chairman that key infrastructure, including drainage systems, electricity supply, and CC roads, has already been established.

They further clarified that out of a total of 135 plots within the layout, only 12 remain unsold. "On this occasion, TUDA Chairman Dollars Diwakar Reddy instructed officials to prioritize the provision of water facilities in the layout. He also directed them to conduct an auction for the remaining 12 plots as soon as the necessary government approval is secured. He affirmed that the layout is now fully prepared for plot owners to commence construction of their homes. "The inspection team included TUDA Secretary Sreekanth, Superintending Engineer Krishna Reddy, Land Acquisition Officer Sujana, Planning Officer Devi Kumar, and other officials.



Mamandur Layout June 4 Indian Chronicle Rayalaseema co-ordinator TUDA Chairman, Dollars Diwakar Reddy, today inspected the Mamandur TUDA lay-

Praneeth Foundation Founder Pays Courtesy Visit to DCCB Chairman

*June 4 Indian Chronicle Rayalaseema co-ordinator Praneeth Penumadu, Director of Edify School and Founder of Praneeth Foundation, today paid a courtesy visit to Amasa Rajasekhar Reddy, who was recently elected as the DCCB Chairman, at his office in Chittoor. "On this occasion, Praneeth Penumadu felicitated Chairman Rajasekhar Reddy with a shawl and presented him with a bouquet, extending his congratulations. During the meeting, Praneeth Penumadu remarked that TDP chief Nara Chandrababu Naidu is always at the forefront of recognizing every party worker who tirelessly strives for the party's cause. "Cherukuri Vasanth Kumar, a senior TDP leader from Chittoor, also participated in this event.



Communal Harmony Meeting Convened at Manthani Police Station Ahead of Bakrid Under CI Raju's Leadership.

“PS Ashokan Media Today Manthani June 5 In anticipation of the upcoming Bakrid festival, a communal harmony and peace coordination meeting was organized under the stewardship of Circle Inspector Raju at the Manthani Police Station premises. "The meeting witnessed the active participation of Sub-Inspectors from Ramagiri, Mutharam, and Manthani police stations. Eminent figures who graced the occasion included Kotha Srinivas Gupta, President of the Vishwa Hindu Parishad – Manthani, Ramadugu Maruthirao, Honorary Advisor, and Kanukuntla Swamy, a well-known district-level social leader. Also in attendance was Meda Goni Rajamouli Goud, Vice President of the Telangana State Cow Protection Committee. "Leaders from the Muslim community, including the President of the Manthani Masjid Committee, respected cleric Babai, and several other religious scholars, took part in the discussions. The event drew a substantial turnout of local citizens, highlighting the collective commitment to maintaining interfaith unity, mutual respect, and social cohesion during the festival period. "The gathering concluded with a shared resolve to uphold law and order, encourage peaceful celebrations, and promote a spirit of brotherhood among all communities.

Inumula Satyanarayana Appointed as Telangana State Convenor of Lawyers India Organisation (LIO)



Organisation (LIO), a prestigious national-level legal institution committed to legal empowerment and advocacy across the country. The appointment was officially announced today by Sri Ponnam Ravinder, the National Secretary of LIO. "The official induction took place in Hyderabad, where the formal appointment letter outlined the strategic responsibilities entrusted to Advocate Satyanarayana. His mandate includes spearheading the expansion of LIO's mission-driven activities throughout Telangana, fostering legal literacy among citizens, implementing advocate welfare initiatives, conducting legal awareness seminars, facilitating pro bono legal aid camps, and coordinating the filing of Public Interest Litigations (PILs) on matters of social concern. "Further responsibilities involve liaising with judicial, administrative, and government bodies through formal representations and overseeing the appointment of district-level legal representatives and committee members under the organisation's framework. "In a parallel development, High Court Advocate Sri Ale Narasimha has been designated as the General Secretary of the Telangana State Unit of LIO. His appointment was also formally ratified today. "Expressing his gratitude, Advocate Inumula Satyanarayana conveyed heartfelt thanks to the national leadership of LIO for the trust reposed in him. As a gesture of respect and appreciation, he felicitated Sri Ponnam Ravinder with a ceremonial shawl, acknowledging his leadership and unwavering support.

“PS Ashokan Indian Chronicle Manthani, June 5 In a noteworthy development, renowned High Court Advocate Inumula Satyanarayana has been appointed as the Telangana State Convenor of the Lawyers India

Crucial TPCC Strategy Meeting Held at Gandhi Bhavan Under the Leadership of President Mahesh Kumar Goud

“PS Ashokan Indian Chronicle Manthani June 5 A significant strategy meeting of the Telangana Pradesh Congress Committee (TPCC) was convened at Gandhi Bhavan under the leadership of TPCC President Mahesh Kumar Goud. The meeting was organized to review ongoing party programs and strengthen grassroots coordination as part of the "Jai Bhim... Jai Babu... Jai Samvidhan" initiative. "The session witnessed the active participation of key Congress leaders, including AICC in-charge Meenakshi Natarajan, Telangana Minister Sridhar Babu, and MLC Addanki Dayakar. Also in attendance were PCC observers and co-ordinators of the campaign, who engaged in in-depth discussions aimed at invigorating the party's organizational framework across the state. "The leaders emphasized the importance of upholding constitutional values, social justice, and inclusive governance. Strategies for mobilizing public support and boosting cadre morale were thoroughly discussed, setting the tone for upcoming political activities and electoral preparedness.



Employment Training and Placement Program Empowers Rural Youth.

“PS Ashokan Indian Chronicle Manthani June,5 Government Degree College, Manthani, in collaboration with Young India Skills University, successfully hosted an Employment Training and Placement Program aimed at empowering the educated youth of Manthani and its surrounding areas. The initiative targeted individuals who had completed their Intermediate or Degree education, offering them valuable career opportunities. "The event witnessed an enthusiastic turnout, with over 100 young men and women participating in the placement drive. Expert recruiters and industry professionals from the BFSI (Banking, Financial Services, and Insurance), Logistics, and Human Resources sectors conducted interviews and selected eligible candidates for various job roles. Selected candidates were offered a starting salary of 18,000, marking a promising step toward financial independence and career growth.

grams in bridging the gap between education and employment in rural areas. "Professor Dr. Jonnalagadda Sudhakar, Registrar of Young India Skills University, acknowledged



“Dr. Jai Kishan Ojha, Principal of the college, expressed heartfelt gratitude to Telangana IT Minister Mr. Duddilla Sridhar Babu and Vice-Chancellor of Young India Skills University, Mr. VLVSS Subbarao, for choosing Government Degree College, Manthani, as the venue for such a meaningful initiative. He highlighted the importance of such pro-

the pivotal role played by IT Minister Mr. Sridhar Babu and Vice-Chancellor Mr. Subbarao in conceptualizing and executing this employment initiative. He emphasized that the university is committed to conducting more such programs in the future, focusing especially on rural youth to enhance their employment prospects. "Principal Dr. Ojha also encouraged students

Rs 639 crore for 2 duplexes: Mumbai's Worli records India's priciest apartment sale to date



GNS News Agency, June 4

at a cost of Rs 2.83 lakh per sq ft on a carpet area basis. The registration was done earlier this week.

According to documents, Tewari shelled out more than Rs 63.9 crore in stamp duty and GST alone, bringing the total payment for the transaction to just short of Rs 703 crore. Worli, a sea-facing locality in south-central Mumbai, has become a hub of luxury housing and the deal reflects its supremacy in India's premium residential realty. With panoramic views of the Arabian Sea and proximity to Bandra, Nariman Point, and upcoming infrastructure such as the coastal road and sea link extensions, Worli is still among India's favourite locations for its elite class. Earlier this month, banker Uday Kotak hit the headlines after he purchased a whole sea-facing building on Worli Sea Face for more than Rs 400 crore.

Some of the apartments in the deal are said to have closed at about Rs 2.90 lakh per sqft, inclusive of land rights. Mumbai's real estate market, particularly in the luxury segment, has seen an unprecedented surge in recent months. The city recorded its highest-ever property registrations in April 2024, driven by a mix of investor sentiment, limited supply in premium zones, and growing appetite for signature homes among India's wealthiest individuals.

Residents' body slams Panchkula Municipal Corporation for not adjusting garbage tax refunds in 2025-26 bills

GNS News Agency, June 4

panchkula garbage tax issue, citizens welfare association cwa protest, haryana property tax 2025-26. The association has called for immediate corrective action and urged the chief minister, local bodies minister, and senior officials of the urban local bodies department to intervene. The Citizens' Welfare Association (CWA), an apex body of Panchkula residents, has accused the municipal corporation of ignoring Haryana government directions and public sentiment by continuing to levy garbage collection charges in the property tax bills for 2024-25 without adjusting excess amounts already paid by residents last year. In a press statement issued on Wednesday, the CWA said that despite a Haryana government waiver of garbage charges for the financial year 2024-25, many "honest and good paymasters" had already paid the full amount, including the garbage tax, in anticipation that it would be adjusted in the following year's bills. However, the municipal corporation has issued fresh bills for 2025-26 without accounting for the excess amount collected in 2024-25. Residents are now being compelled to pay garbage charges again, which has sparked widespread resentment. "MC staff are reportedly coercing residents to pay the full amount, including garbage tax, and asking them to seek refunds only after the payment is made for 2025-26," the release stated, citing specific complaints from residents. Among the complainants are V K Jain and Madhu Jain, owners of House No. 521, Sector 15, Panchkula. In their representation to the municipal corporation commissioner and the chief minister, they stated that they had paid Rs 3,914.19, including garbage tax, on June 21, 2024 (receipt No. G13053240017906-7) but were still being asked to pay the same charges again this year. Similarly, Deepak Arora, a resident of Sector 12A, has also alleged that he was directed by municipal corporation



staff to pay the garbage tax again before seeking a refund for last year's payment. The CWA also pointed out that former Speaker of the Haryana Vidhan Sabha and ex-Panchkula MLA Gyan Chand Gupta had during his tenure announced in an official booklet a policy of "free lifting of garbage from door to door". The booklet mentions a Rs 2.10-crore expenditure on vehicles and equipment for this purpose, assuring residents that the service would remain free of charge.

The association has called for immediate corrective action and urged the chief minister, local bodies minister, and senior officials of the urban local bodies department to intervene. They demanded that no garbage fee should be collected until the system is made "smooth and foolproof" and that the municipal corporation must first refund excess charges paid in 2024-25 before collecting any new amounts. "It is imperative that the honest taxpayers are not penalised. The municipal corporation must stop collecting advance garbage fees until pending adjustments are made," said CWA president S K Nayar. The association warned that failure to address the issue would only deepen public dissatisfaction and further erode trust in civic authorities.

Punjab Governor Gulab Chand Kataria flags off mobile soil testing van; vehicle to tour more than 18,000 villages



GNS News Agency, June 4

Punjab Governor Gulab Chand Kataria Thursday flagged off a mobile soil testing van as part of the Soil Yatra 2025 from the Raj Bhavan in Chandigarh. The initiative, led by GreenAffair Sustainable Solutions Pvt Ltd, a Punjab Agricultural University (PAU)-PABI-supported startup, marks a significant leap toward data-driven, regenerative farming practices, said PAU Ludhiana, in a statement.

"The Soil Yatra is a woman-led, science-backed movement aimed at revolutionising soil health diagnostics across

rural India. Equipped with cutting-edge soil testing technologies and a digital interface for real-time analysis, the van will travel across 18,000+ villages in Punjab, Haryana, and Himachal Pradesh, promoting soil literacy, sustainable inputs, and precision agriculture," said the varsity in a press release. Dr M S Bhullar, Director, Extension Education, PAU, said, "This is not just a vehicle - it is a mobile revolution bringing science to the soil. It's the kind of innovation that can transform how farmers manage their land, increase productivity, and reduce dependency on harmful chemicals." Dr T S Riar, Principal Investigator, PABI-PAU, and Dr Poonam A Sachdev, Co-Principal Investigator, Punjab Agri Business Incubator (PABI), emphasized the empowerment angle, saying, "This campaign highlights how women-led enterprises are shaping India's future in agri-tech. It's inspiring to see a woman entrepreneur take the lead in transforming rural livelihoods through science and sustainability." The Soil Yatra is supported by a consortium of institutions, including IISER Mohali, NSRCEL IIM-B, Nexus UConn, and Startup Punjab, among others. The van, designed to conduct on-the-spot soil tests and offer customised reports, will help in guiding farmers on ideal crop and fertiliser use, thereby promoting regenerative farming and soil conservation. "This is more than a campaign - it's a soil revolution for Bharat," said a PAU expert.

Karnataka to form Special Action Force to address communal crimes, hate speeches in 3 districts

GNS News Agency, June 4

The Karnataka government Wednesday ordered the formation of a Special Action Force (SAF) to tackle communal crimes in the Dakshina Kannada, Udupi and Shivamogga districts. It will have three companies, one each for three communally sensitive districts of the state, as per the order issued by the home department. The SAF will have 248 personnel and will be headed by a deputy inspector general (DIG)-level IPS officer. Monitoring hate speech and provocative incidents and collecting intelligence on events that could lead to communal tensions are among the key objectives of the special unit, which will also look into the possible radicalisation of youth.

The 248 posts for SAF are being carved out from the Anti-Naxal Force (ANF), whose strength of 656 personnel will now be reduced to 376. The government has decided to reduce ANF numbers as the last known Naxals in the region surrendered recently. The SAF is being formed following a resurgence in murders that have triggered communal tensions in the region. Over the past month, three murders have rocked the region. The first was of migrant labourer Ashraf, who was lynched in Mangaluru. Days later, rowdyshooter Suhas Shetty was hacked to death, prompting the police to impose prohibitory orders in the Dakshina Kannada district.

On Tuesday, one Abdul Rahim was hacked to death near Bantwal in Dakshina Kannada district, leading to another round of prohibitory orders in the district. Speaking to reporters Thursday, Home Minister G Parameshwara said the government had announced the formation of SAF soon



after the first two murders. Following discussions on how to structure the SAF, it was noted that the focus was on three districts to prevent future communal tensions. "When a person of one community is killed, another person of another community is murdered. If such a feeling of vengeance continues, how can people live peacefully? We will not stop until it is curbed," he said. Apart from legal action against the culprits, peace meetings are also being held in the presence of community leaders to address the issue. Dakshina Kannada, he said, is a district with many good people and high-quality education. "It has great potential to develop. For this, we have to focus on preventing this," the minister said. On the recent killing, he said that the government has taken it seriously. "We will take action against everyone involved, and no one will be spared," he said, calling for restraint from local elected representatives when talking about such incidents.

Midday meal workers at school in Haryana's Nuh not paid for 10 months, lawyer writes to NHRC

GNS News Agency, June 4

The complaint urges the NHRC to investigate the matter urgently, direct authorities to release the pending salaries, and ensure such violations do not recur in government-run schools. The complaint urges the NHRC to investigate the matter urgently, direct authorities to release the pending salaries, and ensure such violations do not recur in government-run schools. A Delhi-based lawyer has complained to the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) that midday meal workers at Government Model Sanskriti Senior Secondary School in Raniyala village of Haryana's Nuh district have not received their honorariums for the past 10 months.

Filed on Wednesday by advocate Ashok Agarwal, the complaint alleged a serious violation of labour rights at the school in the Ferozpur Jhirka area. Cooks and their helpers have not received their pay of Rs 7,000 per month for the last 10 months now. Agarwal found on visiting the school with social activist Dr Ashfaq Ahmad on May 24. According to the complaint, many of the midday meal workers have served the school for 10 to 15 years preparing and serving meals to students daily. "Despite their continuous work... they have been left without remuneration, leading to significant economic hardship and emotional distress for them and their families... This situation is not only unjust and exploitative but also amounts to a grave violation of labor and human rights. The denial of rightful wages over such an extended period bears resemblance to "Begar" (forced or unpaid labor), which is explicitly prohibited under Article 23 of the Indian Constitution", the complaint reads. It goes on to raise concerns about systemic issues, suggesting that similar exploitative practices may exist in other government schools across Haryana, given that the affected school is affiliated with the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE), one of India's prominent educational boards.



Agarwal told The Indian Express that the workers do not get paid for the two vacation months in a year too. The complaint thus urges the NHRC to investigate the matter urgently, direct authorities to release the pending salaries, and ensure such violations do not recur in government-run schools. Vishram Kumar Meena, Deputy Commissioner, Nuh, told The Indian Express that the administration would ask the district elementary education officer to look into the issue and resolve it. "I have got a message from the DC and have spoken to the midday in-charge, who is currently on leave. We will look into it and give an update tomorrow. Normally, there are budgetary issues sometimes, but not at present. In any case, 10 months is too long a time," District Education Officer Ajit Singh said. Nuh MLA Aftab Ahmed raised questions about the state government's approach to public education. "They have declared it an aspirational district but do not pay any attention to the education woes. District officers of the department are not sufficiently hired or are kept on additional charge. I will look into this school and others, and see that their payments are released. The poor workers do not have a union or support system or anything, and are usually on their own," he told

Revenue conferences should be utilized.

District Collector Jitesh V. Patil. "BHUKYA RANJITH NAIK" "INDIAN CHRONICLE" "BHADRADRI KOTHAGUDEM (JUNE 4): "District Collector Jitesh V. Patil said that land issues will be resolved as soon as those with land issues participate in the revenue conference and submit their applications. The Collector examined the applications given by farmers on land issues in the Bhu Bharathi organized in Bangaru Chilaka village of Lakshmi Devipalli mandal as part of the revenue conferences to be held until June 20.

Later, the collector said that in this revenue conference, the officials will receive applications related to land issues such as names in land records, fluctuations in land area, inherited lands, land nature errors, land issues in the prohibited list, missing survey number of patta passbooks updating of government lands, plain title cases, determination of boundaries, land issues included in Part-B, land acquisition cases, and other land issues and will conduct an investigation at the field level according to the



new ROR Act. He also said that the lands will be settled within the specified time. He also asked the Tahsildar to ensure that those who come to submit applications do not face any difficulties. Kothagudem RDO Madhu, Lashmidevipalli Tahsildar, and other concerned officials participated in this program along with the Collector. "[7:33 pm, 4/6/2025] +91 96400 45005: End" [7:36 pm, 4/6/2025] +91 96400 45005: ----

"Coalition Government is a People's Government," Declares Janasena Tirupati Rural President Venkat Royal

June 4 Indian Chronicle Rayalaseema co-ordinator "Janasena Tirupati Rural President *Venkat Royal" today asserted that the coalition government is truly a government of the people. "On Wednesday, grand celebrations marking the "first anniversary of the coalition government's victory" were held at the

Tirupati Rural Vice President Pratap Reddy, BJP's Vijayakumar, Oteru Chandramouli, Samarasimha Reddy,



Shashi Reddy, Yugandhar Royal, Jayakrishna Royal, alongside other Janasena leaders and activists.

District Collector Jitesh V. Patil inspected the EVM godown.



eras in the CCTV camera room were inspected. Later, he told the security guard to keep the area around the godown clean and no one should be allowed inside without permission.

Later, the inspection registers were signed. The Collector was accompanied by Election Superintendents MD. Mujahid, Ranga Prasad, Political Party Nomula Ramesh BJP, Laxman Agarwal Congress Party, Hum Aap The Party Rambabu, election staff Naveen, Ashok and others participated in this inspection.

"BHUKYA RANJITH NAIK" "INDIAN CHRONICLE" "BHADRADRI KOTHAGUDEM (JUNE 4): "District Collector Jitesh V. Patil inspected the EVM godown in the premises of the RDO office on Wednesday. Speaking on the occasion, the Collector said that as per the orders of the Chief Electoral Officer, an inspection is carried out every month regarding the security of the EVM, and as part of this, the EVM godown was visited on Wednesday. As part of this inspection, the room where the EVM and VVPATs are located, and the functioning of the cam-

In Himachal Pradesh, college dropout arrested for keeping 'sensitive and objectionable material' on phone



GNS News Agency, June 4

Acting on a tip-off from Central agencies, the Himachal Pradesh Police arrested a 21-year-old man from his home in a village in the state's Kangra district late Wednesday for allegedly keeping "sensitive and objectionable material" on his phone, and being in contact with individuals in Pakistan through online platforms. According to the police, an initial examination of his phone revealed that the college dropout also appeared to be in contact with individuals in Pakistan through Facebook, WhatsApp groups, and other online platforms. "On May 28, the police conducted a raid at the suspect's residence, took him into custody, and brought him to the Dehra Police Station for questioning. Upon examining his mobile phone, we found sensitive and objectionable content that falls under the purview of Section 152 of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita," said a police officer. Mayank Chaudhary, Superintendent of Police (SP)

Dehra, told The Indian Express, "Indeed, sensitive and objectionable material was found on the suspect's mobile phone, which could endanger the sovereignty of the country. However, we have not yet found any conclusive evidence that he was directly involved in acts of spying." "The suspect has been arrested under Section 152 of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), 2023. We received a tip-off from Central agencies regarding his suspicious activities, and placed him under surveillance for at least a week. He was apprehended after his actions raised serious red flags," said Chaudhary. Section 152 of the BNS, 2023 pertains to criminal acts that endanger the sovereignty, unity, and integrity of India. "If we find evidence of spying, relevant charges will be added in the FIR. The seized cell phone was sent for forensic examination," Chaudhary added.

While senior officers declined to divulge the exact nature of the sensitive content found on Abhishek's phone, a source said his phone contains pictures and video clips of "sophisticated weapons, armouries, and other material that would be highly unusual for an ordinary person to possess". "The ongoing investigation will determine whether Abhishek personally recorded this material or if it was shared with him through social media by people across the border." Sources also said Abhishek comes from a Below Poverty Line (BPL) family. His father, Rajender Singh, works as a private driver, and his mother is a homemaker. They added that Abhishek is unemployed, and takes up catering work at private parties occasionally. A case has been registered under the relevant sections at the Dehra Police Station, and further legal proceedings are underway as per the law, said the officer.

When a spray bottle, and not a bloodstained knife, helped cops solve a woman's murder near Mumbai

GNS News Agency, June 4

In May last year, a woman was found murdered in Nallasopara near Mumbai. A bloodstained knife was found near the crime scene, but it was not the piece of evidence that turned the case around. Instead, the Mira-Bhayandar Vasai Virar police cracked the case by following the trail of an unexpected item left behind by the accused — a delay spray, used by men to enhance their sexual performance. On May 28, 2024, a woman's body was found in the foothills of a hill in the isolated area of Dhaniv Baug in Nallasopara. Her throat was slit, and there were two stab wounds on her chest and stomach. The body had swelled, indicating that she was probably killed 8-10 hours ago. The police suspected that the woman was murdered elsewhere and that the killer had dumped her body in a remote location so that it would not be spotted.

On the village sarpanch's complaint, a case of murder and destruction of evidence was registered at Pelhar police station. Senior Inspector Jitendra Vankoti formed multiple probe teams, and the investigation began. There was no article found on the dead body that could help the police identify the woman. But as the deceased was wearing a burqa, the police suspected she could be a Muslim. A police team obtained voters' lists from the nearby areas and started checking Muslim households. Meanwhile, another team focused on the articles seized from the crime scene, including the knife. When enquiring at local stores about the knife did not yield any result, the police shifted their attention to other articles seized from near the spot where the body was found — three used condoms and the delay spray. According to Vankoti, the spray container had batch numbers printed on it. He dispatched a police team to various medical stores to trace the shop it was purchased from. After enquiring at multiple medical stores, a man identified the container and the condom packet, and after checking the batch number, allegedly confirmed to the police that a young man had purchased the items. This development prompted the police to check the store's CCTV, and soon they had a photo of a suspect in their hands.

Meanwhile, the first police team making enquiries with Muslim families living in the area came across a house where two children were crying. When the police asked the neighbours why the children were crying and where their parents were, a neighbour told them that their mother had been missing for three days and their father had gone to the police station to lodge a missing persons report. The police team rushed back to the police station and found the children's father, Jiaull Shah. Since the woman's body was sent for a post-mortem at Sir JJ Hospital in Mumbai, Shah was shown photographs of the body. He identified the de-



ceased as his 34-year-old wife, Saira Bano, from her bangles, clothes and an unusually short finger on her foot. A few days later, he was taken to the mortuary at Sir JJ Hospital, where he confirmed her identity. The police then showed Shah the CCTV photo of the youth who had purchased the items from the medical store. Shah identified him as his nephew, Najabuddin Mohammed Sammi, 21, the police said. He allegedly also told the police that, though Sammi did not live there, he had been spotted in the area a few days ago. The police obtained Sammi's mobile phone number from Shah, but it was found switched off. From phone call analysis and other technical evidence, the police learnt that Sammi worked in a bakery in the Aman Vihar area of Delhi.

A police team led by detection officer Sopan Patil went to Delhi, and after making enquiries at more than 100 bakeries, they managed to nab Sammi and bring him to Maharashtra. During interrogation, Sammi allegedly revealed that he had been having an affair with his aunt, Saira Bano, for the past two years. Later, when he got married in Delhi, he started ignoring her, and this allegedly made Saira Bano angry, leading to fights between the two. Sammi's wife also allegedly started suspecting her husband. This is when Sammi decided to murder Saira Bano, police sources alleged. After arriving in Maharashtra, Sammi allegedly called Saira Bano to meet him in an isolated place late at night to avoid being spotted by anyone. He bought the condoms and delay spray from a local medical store, the police said. When she came to meet him, the two allegedly had sex. After that, Sammi allegedly took out a knife and slit Saira Bano's throat and stabbed her. He allegedly dumped her body at the foothills of a hill and returned to Delhi, the police said, adding that the evidence he carelessly discarded near the crime scene eventually helped them solve the case.

Five lakh devotees to accompany Sant Dnyaneshwar palkhi to Pandharpur amid rain concerns



GNS News Agency, June 4

At a recent meeting with the state government, the Varkari Sampradaya raised important concerns about infrastructure, including healthcare, sanitation, water supply, transportation, and first aid facilities during the procession. At a recent meeting with the state government, the Varkari Sampradaya raised important concerns about infrastructure, including healthcare, sanitation, water supply, transportation, and first aid facilities during the procession. (File photo) The annual Sant Dnyaneshwar Maharaj palkhi (chariot) procession will begin from Alandi in the Pune district of Maharashtra on June 19, with lakhs of devotees walking to Pandharpur. It will mark the start of the Ashadhi Wari pilgrimage to the temple town in the Solapur district dedicated to Lord Vitthal.

The palkhi is scheduled to reach Pandharpur on July 10 and return on July 29. Devotees will halt in Pune city on June 20 and 21. This year, 280 dindis (groups of worshippers) have registered with the Sant Dnyaneshwar Maharaj Sansthan, while 330 Dindis are associated with the Sant Tukaram Maharaj Sansthan. An estimated 5 lakh pilgrims are expected to accompany the Sant Dnyaneshwar palkhi. Meanwhile, the Sant Tukaram Maharaj palkhi will depart from Dehu, also in the Pune district, on June 18, reaching Pandharpur on July 10 and returning on July 21.

This Palkhi will halt at Nana Peth in Pune on June 21. At a recent meeting with the state government, the Varkari Sampradaya raised important concerns about infrastructure, including healthcare, sanitation, water supply, transportation, and first aid facilities during the procession.

Dr Ajay Taware, accused in Pune Porsche car crash case, held in Ruby Hall Clinic kidney transplant 'malpractice' case

GNS News Agency, June 4

Dr Ajay Taware, former head of forensic medicine department at the government-run Sassoon General Hospital and an accused in the Pune Porsche car crash case, was arrested by the Pune city police on Thursday in connection with the alleged malpractices in a kidney transplant conducted at Ruby Hall Clinic in 2022. Taware, currently lodged in Yerwada Central jail for his alleged role in tampering with blood samples of the minor accused in Porsche crash case, was taken into custody from the jail and would be produced before a court in the afternoon, said a senior police officer. A First Information Report (FIR) in the kidney transplant malpractice case was lodged at the Koregaon Park police station on May 11, 2022, against 15 people, including senior management members and doctors of Ruby Hall Clinic, Pune, for alleged malpractices in a kidney transplant in which a woman was allegedly presented as the organ receiver's wife after being promised Rs 15 lakh in return. The FIR was filed based on a complaint by Dr Sanjog Kadam, Deputy Director of Medical Services, Pune. The police said the case pertains to a kidney swap procedure, also known as paired kidney exchange, between the man from Moshi (in Pimpri Chinchwad) and the woman from Kolhapur posing as his wife, and a mother-daughter duo from Baramati. The police said the mother from Baramati gave her kidney to the Moshi resident, while her daughter

Govt school teachers in Siddipet help children go for digital detox



GNS News Agency, June 4

Siddipet: Ever since the advent of smartphones, mobile addiction among children has turned into a worrying aspect for most parents. From days when summer vacations saw children playing under mango trees, near temple ponds and in the local playgrounds, most children these days spend time staring into their mobile phones or tablets, playing online games or watching YouTube games and watching Instagram reels. And as schools reopen too, many still are not able to focus on their books with the mobile phone being a major distraction. Girls are meditating at their homes after 21-day long digital detox programme at Chankhan Maktha in Siddipet district. This is when govern-

ment primary school teachers of Chandkhan Maktha in Wargal mandal decided to organise a 21-day digital detox programme for 46 students and other school kids in their village. The teachers, Varala Prasanth Kumar and C Suman designed the programme after noticing many of their students addicted to smartphones. For 21 days, the two teachers engaged the children in various activities, games and fun events, which were what children used to be engaged with before smartphones and internet took over the day to day lives. Prasanth Kumar said the need for digital detox stuck them during interactions with the students on the last working day of school in April. Asked what they would do in vacation, most students said they would do Reels and Shorts. "We were shocked as these were students below 11 years old," he says.

Then, Prasanth and Suman met the parents and explained how they intend to engage the children in physical activities and restrict the usage of mobile phones, and the parents immediately agreed to it. Interestingly, even some parents and students from other classes also joined their detox concept. As part of the detox, the students were formed into groups and engaged with games and other fun activities. Suman says they realised that many students were not focussing on studies in classrooms due to excessive use of mobile phones. "Increased physical activity will certainly enhance their focus levels and improve their performance in studies as well," the teacher says.

Pakistan sets up its first bitcoin reserve

GNS News Agency, June 4

Islamabad: In a major initiative, Pakistan has announced the establishment of its first government-backed Strategic Bitcoin reserve as it invited investment in the country's crypto markets. Pakistan Crypto Council CEO Bilal Bin Saqib made the announcement on Wednesday at the Bitcoin Vegas 2025 conference in Las Vegas, which was attended by US Vice President JD Vance and the sons of President Donald Trump, Eric and Donald Trump Jr. Saqib, who was recently appointed Special Assistant to the Prime Minister for Crypto and Blockchain, also called on global crypto builders to come and invest in Pakistan. "Pakistan is no longer defined by its past. It is being reborn as a forward-looking hub of digital innovation — powered by its youth, sharpened by necessity, and led by a new generation of tech statesmen," Saqib was quoted as saying in a statement issued by his office.

"If you're building something real — come build it in Pakistan. Come build wallets for the unbanked. Come tokenise land. Come scale your mission with our youth and our unstoppable grit." The statement noted that Pakistan has over 40 million crypto wallets and is one of the "largest and most active freelancer economies in the world". According to an official release, Saqib is responsible for developing a comprehensive, FATF-compliant regulatory framework for



digital assets, launching bitcoin mining initiatives, and overseeing blockchain integration in governance, finance and land records. In his speech, Saqib announced the establishment of the national bitcoin wallet, "holding digital assets already in state custody — not for sale or speculation, but as a sovereign reserve signalling long-term belief in decentralised finance," Dawn reported. He also revealed that the government had allocated 2,000 megawatts of surplus electricity in the first phase for bitcoin mining and AI data centres, opening doors to sovereign miners, tech firms and clean energy partners around the world, the paper.

Unmindful of farmers' misery, Congress Govt to constitute yet another committee

GNS News Agency, June 4

Hyderabad: The State government is all set to constitute yet another expert committee to study the current status of the Kaleshwaram barrages — Medigadda, Annaram and Sundilla and oversee its rehabilitation works. The new panel will be chaired by former Central Water Commission (CWC) chairman AB Pandya. The slow-paced approach to the rehabilitation of the project has ignited fresh concerns among farmers. With structural damage to the Medigadda barrage first reported in October 2023, the prolonged delays in restoring these critical irrigation structures have left thousands of farmers in Telangana's northern districts without reliable water supply, threatening their livelihoods for yet another crop season. The Medigadda barrage, a key component of the ambitious Kaleshwaram Lift Irrigation Project, suffered distress in Block-7, including sinking piers and cracking. The Congress government, terming it non-functional, blamed the previous BRS regime. Similar issues, such as seepage and piping distress, were claimed to have been identified at the Annaram and Sundilla barrages. The National Dam Safety Authority (NDSA), in its April 2025 report, attributed the damage to design, inadequate maintenance, and water storage practices. It recommended demolishing and reconstructing Block-7, after conducting comprehensive geotechnical and structural assessments for all three barrages.

However, the government's slow response has drawn sharp criticism. Farmers in districts like Jayashankar Bhupalpally and Mulugu, who rely on the KLIP for irrigation, are growing increasingly frustrated. "We've lost three crop seasons already, and now they're saying repairs won't start until November 2025. How are we supposed to survive?" asked Venkatesh Rao, a farmer from Mahabubabad district. The delays have forced many to depend on erratic rainfall or costly borewells, pushing small farmers into debt. The peasant bodies have estimated that over 50,000 farm-



ers have been affected, with agricultural losses running into crores. The newly constituted committee, tasked with charting a rehabilitation plan, is expected to take months to finalise its recommendations. Experts warn that the actual repair work, including the demolition and reconstruction of Block-7, could extend beyond 2026, depriving irrigation support for two or more crop seasons. "The process is complex," said an Irrigation Department official, citing challenges like heavy siltation, logistical constraints, and pending financial clearances for contractors. The implementation agencies such as Larsen & Toubro and Afcons had already contested the observations made by the NDSA on the barrages. The NDSA's recommendations remain unimplemented as the contractors have raised concerns about inconsistencies in the report, further delaying consensus. The State government's consultations with the CWC for technical assistance, which remained inconclusive, have further slowed progress. "The government promised us restoration of water supply to our irrigation channels with Kaleshwaram and SRSP stage II, but we're left with dry fields and empty promises," complained Sekhar Reddy, in Suryapet district.



Taware was a member of this committee and allegedly played a role in the kidney transplant malpractice, and hence the doctor has been named an accused now. Earlier, the police had arrested two middlemen Ravi Rodge and Abhijit Gathne in this case. Ruby Hall Clinic's managing trustee Dr Purvez K Grant had told the Express, "Ruby Hall has done nothing wrong. We are being unnecessarily harassed." In April, the Maharashtra Medical Council suspended the medical licence of Dr Ajay Taware, for "gross misconduct and breach of medical ethics", following his alleged involvement in Pune Porsche crash case. Dr Taware has been charge-sheeted in the Porsche car crash case for allegedly playing a role in swapping the blood samples of the minor driver and others at the Sassoon hospital.

Elon Musk is leaving Trump administration after criticising President's 'big beautiful bill'



GNS News Agency, June 4

Elon Musk is leaving his government role as a top adviser to President Donald Trump after spearheading efforts to reduce and overhaul the federal bureaucracy. The billionaire entrepreneur posted Wednesday (May 28, 2025) about his decision on X, his social media website. "As my scheduled time as a Special Government Employee comes to an end, I would like to thank President @realDonaldTrump for the opportunity to reduce wasteful spending," he wrote. "The @DOGE mission will only strengthen over time as it becomes a way of life throughout the government." As my scheduled time as a Special Government Employee comes to an end, I would like to thank President @realDonaldTrump for the opportunity to reduce wasteful spending. A White House official, who requested anonymity to talk about the change, confirmed that Mr Musk was leaving. Mr Musk's departure comes one day after he criticised the centrepiece of Mr Trump's legislative agenda, saying he was "disappointed" by what the President calls his "big beautiful bill". The legislation includes a mix of tax cuts and enhanced immigration enforcement. While speaking to CBS, Mr Musk described it as a "massive spending bill" that increases the federal deficit and "undermines the work" of his Department of Government Efficiency, known as DOGE. "I think a bill can be big or it could be beautiful," Mr Musk said. "But I don't know if it could be both." "I'm not happy about certain aspects of it, but I'm thrilled by other aspects of it," he said. Mr Trump also suggested that more changes could be made. "We're going to see what happens," he said. "It's got a way to go." Republicans recently pushed the measure through the House and are debating it in the Senate. Mr Musk's concerns are shared by some Republican lawmakers. "I sympathize with Elon being discouraged," said Wisconsin Sen. Ron Johnson.

Speaking at a Milwaukee Press Club event on Wednesday (May 28, 2025), Mr Johnson added that he was "pretty confident" there was enough opposition "to slow this process down until the president, our leadership, gets serious" about reducing spending. He said there was no amount of pressure Mr Trump could put on him to change his position. Speaker Mike Johnson has asked senators to make as few changes to the legislation as possible, saying that House Republicans reached a "very delicate balance" that could be upended with major changes. The narrowly divided House will have to vote again on final passage once the Senate alters the bill. On Wednesday (May 28, 2025), Mr

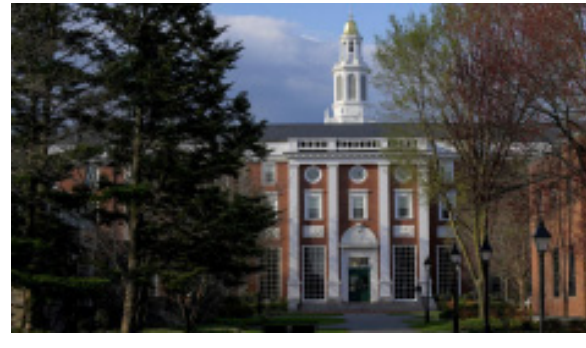
Johnson thanked Mr Musk for his work and promised to pursue more spending cuts in the future, saying "the House is eager and ready to act on DOGE's findings." The White House is sending some proposed rescissions, a mechanism used to cancel previously authorised spending, to Capitol Hill to solidify some of DOGE's cuts. A spokesperson for the Office of Management and Budget said the package will include \$1.1 billion from the Corporation of Public Broadcasting, which funds NPR and PBS, and \$8.3 billion in foreign assistance. Mr Musk's criticism comes as he steps back from his government work, rededicating himself to companies like the electric automaker Tesla and rocket manufacturer SpaceX. He's also said he'll reduce his political spending, because "I think I've done enough."

At times, he's seemed chastened by his experience working in government. Although he hoped that DOGE would generate \$1 trillion in spending cuts, he's fallen far short of that target. "The federal bureaucracy situation is much worse than I realised," he told The Washington Post. "I thought there were problems, but it sure is an uphill battle trying to improve things in D.C., to say the least." Mr Musk had previously been energised by the opportunity to reshape Washington. He wore campaign hats in the White House, held his own campaign rallies and talked about excessive spending as an existential crisis. He often tended to be effusive in his praise of Mr Trump. "The more I've gotten to know President Trump, the more I like the guy," Mr Musk said in February. "Frankly, I love him." Mr Trump repaid the favour, describing Mr Musk as "a truly great American." When Tesla faced declining sales, he turned the White House driveway into a makeshift showroom to illustrate his support. It's unclear what, if any, impact that Mr Musk's comments about the bill would have on the legislative debate.

During the transition period, he helped whip up opposition to a spending measure as the country stood on the brink of a federal government shutdown. His latest criticism could embolden Republicans who want bigger spending cuts. Republican Utah Sen. Mike Lee reposted a Fox News story about Mr Musk's interview while also adding his own take on the measure, saying there was "still time to fix it." "The Senate version will be more aggressive," Mr Lee said. "It can, it must, and it will be. Or it won't pass." Only two Republicans — Reps. Warren Davidson of Ohio and Thomas Massie of Kentucky — voted against the bill when the House took up the measure last week.

"Hopefully, the Senate will succeed with the Big Beautiful Bill where the House missed the moment," he wrote. "Don't hope someone else will cut deficits someday, know it has been done this Congress." The Congressional Budget Office, in a preliminary estimate, said the tax provisions would increase federal deficits by \$3.8 trillion over the decade, while the changes to Medicaid, food stamps and other services would reduce spending by slightly more than \$1 trillion over the same period. House Republican leaders say increased economic growth would allow the bill to be deficit-neutral or deficit-reducing, but outside watchdogs are sceptical. The Committee for a Responsible Federal Budget estimates the bill would add \$3 trillion to the debt, including interest, over the next decade.

Harvard holds commencement amid Trump funding cuts, threats to international students



GNS News Agency, June 4

Harvard University is holding its commencement Thursday (May 29, 2025) at a pivotal moment, when its place as one of the world's leading higher education institutions is under what increasingly seems like existential threats from the Trump administration. Other schools face the loss of federal funding and their ability to enrol international students if they don't agree to the Trump administration's shifting demands. But Harvard, which was founded in 1636, a century and a half before the nation itself, is taking the lead on defying the White House in federal court — and paying a significant price.

The Trump administration's latest salvos include asking federal agencies to cancel about \$100 million in contracts with the Ivy League school. The government already cancelled more than \$2.6 billion in federal research grants, moved to cut off Harvard's enrolment of international students and threatened its tax-exempt status. Blow on foreign students' enrollment Visa interviews for international students admitted to schools nationwide were halted on Tuesday, and Mr. Trump said on Wednesday that Harvard should reduce its international enrolment from 25% to about 15%. Sustained by a \$53 billion endowment, the nation's oldest and wealthiest university is testing whether it can be a bulwark against Trump's efforts to limit what it calls antisemitic activism on campus, which Harvard sees as an affront to the freedom to teach and learn nationwide. Attack on academic freedom

The Trump administration has demanded Harvard enact broad government and leadership reforms and changes to its admissions policies. It also demanded the university audit views of diversity on campus and stop recognising some student clubs. Dr. Abraham Verghese, the bestselling author and Stanford expert on infectious diseases, will be the principal speaker at the university's 374th commencement. On Wednesday, NBA Hall of Famer and activist Kareem Abdul-Jabbar was the "Class Day" speaker,

and journalist Christiane Amanpour addressed graduates of Harvard's Kennedy School. Both praised Harvard for standing up to the Trump administration, with Abdul-Jabbar specifically calling out the actions of Harvard President Alan Garber. "When a tyrannical administration tried to bully and threaten Harvard, to revoke their academic freedom and to destroy free speech, Dr. Alan Garber rejected the illegal and immoral pressures," Abdul-Jabbar said to wide applause as he compared Garber's response to Rosa Parks' stand against racist segregation. "After seeing so many covering billionaires, media moguls, law firms, politicians and other universities bend their knee to an administration that is systematically strip-mining the US Constitution, it is inspiring to me to see Harvard University take a stand for freedom," he continued. In response to the administration's threats, Harvard has sued to block the funding freeze and persuaded a federal judge to temporarily halt the enrolment ban. It is going to court in Boston on Thursday just as the commencement is wrapping up, hoping for a ruling that allows it to continue enrolling international students. "We believe that the government overreach and devastating attacks on scientific and medical research are unwarranted and unlawful, and so we have taken legal action to defend the institution," Garber said in an interview with a university publication. "We should all be concerned that colleges and universities have increasingly come under attack. But we should not dismiss the criticisms even when they are based on distortions or inaccuracies — we need to look for the underlying concerns that can be embedded in them," said Garber, who commissioned internal reports last year on antisemitism and anti-Arab prejudice at the Ivy League campus. The Trump administration has said it wants "to protect American students and faculty from antisemitic violence and harassment." It cites campus protests against Israel. Like many college students around the country, Harvard students set up tents called on the university to divest from companies supporting Israel's military, which has levelled Gaza in response to attacks by Hamas. Last year, hundreds of graduating students walked out of commencement chanting "Free, free Palestine" after weeks of campus protests. Harvard also said some protesters would not receive diplomas alongside their classmates, although it eventually allowed most to get them. This year, the anti-war demonstrations have largely faded from view, but protesters plan a silent vigil before Thursday's ceremony. "As a graduate of Harvard, I am horrified by Israel's mass murder of Palestinians (including by deliberate starvation), its total levelling of Gaza, its targeting of hospitals, its assaults on Palestinian educational and cultural institutions, and its relentless killings of journalists," Harvard graduate Victor Wallis explained in a statement.

How has SC deviated from the POCSO Act in a recent judgment? | Explained

GNS News Agency, June 4

The story so far: On May 23, the Supreme Court (SC) declined to impose a sentence on a man convicted under the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act, 2012 (POCSO Act), noting that the victim did not view the incident as a crime and had suffered more from the legal fallout.

Why was POCSO enacted?

Enacted in December 2012, the POCSO Act criminalises both penetrative and non-penetrative sexual assault, sexual harassment, and child pornography. A gender-neutral law, POCSO deems all minors under 18 incapable of 'consent', and mandates child-friendly procedures like special courts, in-camera trials, and video-recorded testimonies. With strict penalties, a presumption of guilt on the accused, and time-bound trials, the Act aims to fill critical legislative voids and deliver swift, victim-centric justice.

What is the case?

The case involved a 13-year-old girl from rural West Bengal, reported missing by her mother in May 2018, who was later found to have married a 25-year-old man (accused). Despite her mother's rescue efforts, she stayed with him and later gave birth to a daughter. Based on an FIR by her mother, a special judge in September 2022 convicted the accused under POCSO and IPC Sections 363 (kidnapping), 366 (kidnapping, abducting or inducing woman to compel her marriage etc), 376 (2)(n) (repeated rape on same woman) and 376 (3) (rape on woman under 16 years), sentencing him to 20 years imprisonment. However, the Calcutta HC overturned the conviction by invoking its inherent powers under Section 482 of the Code of Criminal Procedure, despite POCSO's non-recognition of 'consensual relationships' with minors. It further recommended legislative amendments to exclude such relationships from POCSO's ambit. The judgment veered into a discourse on 'adolescent sexuality', attributing it to climate change, food habits, early puberty, and a "taboo-free atmosphere" influenced by social media and pornography. This unscientific reasoning overlooked social factors and reinforced outdated gender norms.

What did the SC state?

On August 20, 2024, the top court in a suo motu proceeding set aside the HC's ruling, reaffirming that POCSO



does not recognise 'consensual sex' with minors and its objective must not be diluted. Stressing that judgments must remain concise and law-focused, it criticised the HC for straying from 'legal reasoning' into personal opinions and social commentary. However, sentencing was deferred pending a report from a three-member expert panel tasked with meeting the victim and submitting findings. The expert committee found that the victim, now living in poverty and a temporary shelter, remains committed to the accused and faces significant hardship in tackling the police, society and legal system to secure his release. It flagged the inadequate implementation of the POCSO Act as a "collective failure" and recommended keeping the family unit intact for the child's welfare, alongside providing financial, legal, and educational support. "The society judged her, the legal system failed her, and her own family abandoned her", the SC observed, citing the report. Exercising Article 142 (extraordinary jurisdiction), it withheld sentencing and directed the West Bengal government to ensure her welfare and rehabilitation.

What next?

The unusual deviation from the child protection law in this case must not set a precedent, as the judgment emphasises. Any such exception risks weakening the core intent of the POCSO Act to protect minors from sexual exploitation. Opening the door to exceptions could lead to widespread misuse, with perpetrators hiding behind the guise of 'family protection' to exploit vulnerable girls. India urgently needs comprehensive sex education and a stigma-free curriculum.

Examining the RBI's remittances survey

GNS News Agency, June 4

Remittances have long played a quiet but crucial role in India's external sector balance, but in terms of policy attention, they have often been overshadowed by indicators such as foreign direct investment (FDI) and trade flows. Yet the latest data from the Reserve Bank of India (RBI)'s Sixth Round of India's Remittances Survey, released in March, makes it clear that such flows are integral to the stability and structure of India's external accounts. Inward remittances stood at a record \$118.7 billion in 2023-24, not only exceeding FDI inflows but also financing over half of India's merchandise trade deficit. India's persistently high remittance flows constitute a vital stabilising force in the context of global economic uncertainty and tightening financial conditions.

Structural shifts However, the data also point to deeper structural shifts that merit closer attention. The most striking is the changing spatial composition of remittance sources. The traditional dominance of countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) is now giving way to advanced economies (AEs). The U.S. accounts for 27.7% of India's inward remittances, up from 23.4% reported in the Fifth Round (2020-21) Survey. The U.S., U.K., Canada, Australia, and Singapore together account for 51.2% of the flows, overtaking the cumulative share of the six GCC nations (37.9%) by a large margin. This inversion of a historical pattern reflects not only macroeconomic shifts but also a change in the profile of Indian migrants — from predominantly low-skilled workers in West Asia to high-skilled professionals and students in AEs.

This has long-term implications for both the volume and stability of remittance inflows. Migrants in AEs tend to have higher and more stable earnings, and their remittance behaviour is often less sensitive to cyclical volatility in commodity markets. At the same time, unlike temporary workers in the Gulf, high-skilled emigrants in AEs may remit less as their economic and familial integration abroad deepens. One concern is the growing concentration of large-value transactions. In 2023-24, transfers above ₹5 lakh accounted for nearly 29% of total remittance value, even though they represented a small fraction (1.4%) of overall transactions. This skew suggests that remittances are increasingly driven by higher-earning, professionally mobile Indians rather than broad-based migrant remitters. While this may reflect the upward mobility of the diaspora, it also creates potential vulnerabilities. A slowdown in high-skilled migration due to adverse host-country immigration policy shifts could affect these large inflows disproportionately. There is also an accelerating shift toward digital modes of remittance. In 2023-24, digital channels, on average, accounted for 73.5% of all remittance transactions. Transaction costs have correspondingly declined. The average cost of sending \$200 to India now stands at 4.9%, below the global average of 6.65%, though still above the Sustainable Development Goal benchmark of 3%. This progress is impressive and attributable to the rise of fintech platforms and app-based money transfer services.

Despite this aggregate progress, the transition to digital channels has not been uniform across remittance corridors. While migrants in countries such as the UAE (76.1%) and Saudi Arabia (92.7%) have recorded a very high share of remittance transfers via digital channels, others such as those in Canada (40%), Germany (55.1%), and Italy (35%) continue to depend more heavily on conventional methods. These disparities suggest that the infrastructure and regulatory environment remain a binding constraint. For India, the policy challenge lies in deepening cross-border digital payment linkages. Doing so will not only lower costs and increase efficiency but also ensure that remittance flows



remain within formal, trackable financial channels. At the sub-national level, the remittance map shows persistent asymmetries. Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, and Rajasthan received a total share of under 6% of remittances, while Maharashtra, Kerala, and Tamil Nadu received about 51%. This is not merely a reflection of historical out-migration patterns but of unequal access to migration-enabling infrastructure: foreign language training, credentialing pathways, and employer linkages remain thin. National skilling missions must become far more State-responsive; else, India risks perpetuating remittance elite-regions and households with the social capital to migrate and the financial literacy to leverage returns, while leaving the rest behind.

Notably, this round does not provide data on how remittances are used at the household level. This limits a fuller understanding of the developmental role of remittances beyond their macroeconomic contribution to the balance of payments. As the profile of migrants shifts towards higher-skilled occupations and as transaction sizes become more concentrated at the upper end, it is crucial to assess whether these flows are being directed towards longer-term financial goals such as savings, investment, or asset creation or continue to be primarily consumption-smoothing in nature. Incorporating this dimension would also help inform the design of complementary instruments — savings-linked remittance products, targeted financial literacy programmes, or investment incentives for remittance-receiving households — that can enhance the long-run developmental multiplier of these inflows. Amarendra Nandy, Assistant Professor (Economics Area) at the Indian Institute of Management Ranchi. Views are personal

South Korean navy patrol plane crashes in country's south

Seoul: A South Korean navy plane with four crew members crashed during a training flight on Thursday and it was not immediately known if they survived, the navy said. The P-3C patrol plane took off from its base in the southeastern city of Pohang at 1:43 pm but fell to the ground due to unknown reasons, the navy said in a statement. The navy is working to determine the status of the four people aboard the plane and why it crashed, the statement said. There have been no reports of civilian casualties on the ground, it said. Pohang's Nambu police station also confirmed the crash involved a navy patrol aircraft and it couldn't immediately confirm whether there were any deaths or injuries. An emergency office in Pohang said that rescue workers and fire trucks were dispatched to the site after receiving reports from local residents that an unidentified aircraft fell onto a hill near an apartment complex and caused a fire. The scale and damage of the fire wasn't immediately known. Yonhap news agency published photos showing firefighters

Pakistan sets up its first bitcoin reserve

Islamabad: In a major initiative, Pakistan has announced the establishment of its first government-backed Strategic Bitcoin reserve as it invited investment in the country's crypto markets. Pakistan Crypto Council CEO Bilal Bin Saqib made the announcement on Wednesday at the Bitcoin Vegas 2025 conference in Las Vegas, which was attended by US Vice President JD Vance and the sons of President Donald Trump, Eric and Donald Trump Jr. Saqib, who was recently appointed Special Assistant to the Prime Minister for Crypto and Blockchain, also called on global crypto builders to come and invest in Pakistan. "Pakistan is no longer defined by its past. It is being reborn as a forward-looking hub of digital innovation — powered by its youth, sharpened by necessity, and led by a new generation of tech statesmen," Saqib was quoted as saying in a statement issued by his office. "If you're building something real — come build it in Pakistan. Come build wallets for the unbanked. Come tokenise land. Come scale your mission with our youth and our unstoppable grit." The statement noted that Pakistan has over 40 million crypto wallets and is one of the "largest and most active freelancer economies in the world". According to an official release, Saqib is responsible for developing a comprehensive, FATF-compliant regula-



tory framework for digital assets, launching bitcoin mining initiatives, and overseeing blockchain integration in governance, finance and land records. In his speech, Saqib announced the establishment of the national bitcoin wallet, "holding digital assets already in state custody — not for sale or speculation, but as a sovereign reserve signalling long-term belief in decentralised finance." Dawn reported. He also revealed that the government had allocated 2,000 megawatts of surplus electricity in the first phase for bitcoin mining.

Plastic pellets found on Kerala coast after shipwreck pose serious environmental impact, warn experts



Tiny plastic pellets (nurdles) found on beaches in Thiruvananthapuram in Kerala following the sinking of the container vessel MSC ELSA3 could have serious implications for the marine and coastal ecosystems and humans, warn experts. While not inherently toxic, the pellets remain a dangerous pollutant. Their short- and long-term impacts include habitat contamination and their breaking up into micro and nano plastics and entering the food chain, according to A. Biju Kumar, Senior Professor, Marine Monitoring Lab, Department of Aquatic Biology and Fisheries, University of Kerala.

The 'nurdle spill' on Kerala's coast is a wake-up call for India's coastal management, shipping safety, and marine conservation, Dr. Biju Kumar said on Wednesday (May 28, 2025) after conducting field verifications at the Varkala and Kochu Veli beaches in Thiruvananthapuram. "While the crew of the MSC ELSA3 were safely rescued, the ocean remains at risk," he said, describing this as the first major incident of plastic nurdle landings in India caused by a shipwreck.

Classified as primary microplastics, these pellets and are between from 1 mm to 5 mm in diameter. They constitute a major component in the global plastic chain.

According to Dr. Biju Kumar, the pellets found in Kochu Veli are mostly low-density polyethylene (LDPE) and high-density polyethylene (HDPE). They are the most commonly used material for manufacturing products such as plastic bags and films, flexible tubing, coatings for paper cartons and cables, detergent bottles, hard plastic containers, pipes and crates. They are also used in packaging material, household goods, electronics and automotive parts and medical equipment. LDPE is quite difficult to recycle, he said. Every year, millions of tonnes of these tiny pellets are transported across the globe. The Liberian-flagged MSC ELSA3 had capsized and sunk in the Arabian Sea off Kochi over the last weekend (May 24 and May 25). Its cargo consisted of 643 containers, including 13 laden with hazardous cargo. Several of the containers washed ashore in the coastal districts of Kerala in the days that followed, triggering concern. For Thiruvananthapuram, the immediate response should include manual beach clean-ups and using specialised equipment such as floating booms, nets and sifting tools for containing the spread of the nurdles and collection, according to Dr. Biju Kumar. Other measures include advising local communities not to handle such plastic pellets. Additionally, the shipping company should be held accountable for the spill and made to finance the clean-up, he said. Following the shipwreck off Kochi, the Kerala government had placed the nine coastal districts of Kerala on alert. It had also announced plans to constitute two separate rapid response teams under the Factories and Boilers department and the State Pollution Control Board in the nine districts for handling oil spills and containers that wash ashore.

States told to cut sugar, salt in food items

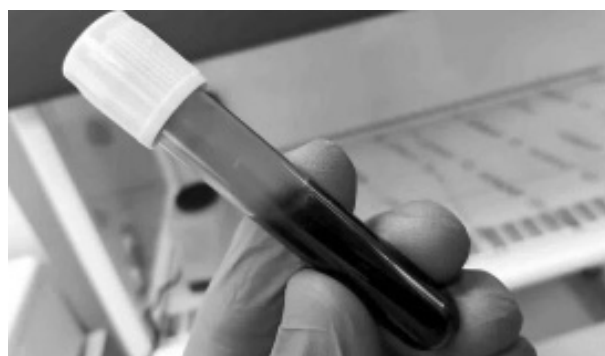


Hyderabad: The Women and Child Development Ministry has recently issued an advisory, based on a technical report from the National Institute of Nutrition (NIN), to all States to reduce refined sugar, salt, preservatives, colours and artificial flavours in take-home rations and hot cooked meals provided to beneficiaries. The Union Ministry observed that a recent analysis of contents of take-home rations and hot cooked meals provided to beneficiaries in multiple Indian States revealed higher proportions of refined sugar, salt and preservatives. This goes against the purpose of providing such supplementary nutrition, which is to reduce malnutrition in children and anemia in women.

The Women and Child Development Ministry has urged the States to adhere to the advisory while implementing take-home rations and hot cooked meals. "Refined sugar should not be used. Only jaggery should be used for sweetening, if needed. Inclusion of added jaggery should be restricted to less than 5 percent of total energy to avoid excessive intake of discretionary calories," the advisory said. Use of foods high in fat, salt and sugar (HFSS) should be avoided

by all age and gender groups. The use of salt should be limited. States must also consider designing Take-Home Rations recipes without adding salt and sugar so that the beneficiaries may use the same as per their taste/preference, the advisory said. The States must also reduce the number of sweet recipes served in morning snacks and hot cooked meals, and ensure the ingredients used for production of supplementary nutrition are safe and comply with all applicable provisions of Food Safety and Standards Regulations, 2011, it said. The foods for infant nutrition i.e. foods intended for 2 year-old children should be free from artificial preservatives, added colours, flavours and other synthetic ingredients and should comply with the food safety regulations. Only emulsifiers which are permitted under the FSSAI are permitted, the advisory added. Highlighting the dietary guidelines issued by Hyderabad-based NIN, the Women and Child Development Ministry said that there should not be added sugar for children under 2 years of age. In both adults and children, the WHO recommends reducing the intake of free sugars.

No more needles, as AI-tech based solutions deliver instant blood test results in minutes



Hyderabad: Imagine getting blood tests results in minutes on your cell phone, instead of waiting half a day in private laboratories or one full day in state-run labs. And what if you don't even need a needle to get those blood work reports? That's exactly what the newborn babies, mothers and even care givers at Niloufer Hospital experienced recently, when a unique initiative, Amruth Swasth Bharat, was launched by Hyderabad-based health tech startup Quick Vitals.

Initially launched at Niloufer Hospital and tested on first batch of children, the initiative is expected to expand to other parts of the country. To get their blood reports, all the patient has to do is to sit in front of a light source and wait for the results. The Amruth Swasth Bharat is based on Photoplethysmography (PPG), an emerging technology that detects changes in blood volume within our skin's tiny blood vessels. It operates by shining light from an LED onto the skin and then measuring the amount of light absorbed or reflected. As blood absorbs more light than surrounding tissues, variations in light absorption indicate changes in blood flow caused by the beating heart.

Until recently, PPG sensors were primarily used by smart watches (using green light) to track heart rate and oxygen saturation. However, companies like Quick Vitals have successfully integrated AI with PPG sensors, thus expanding their diagnostic capabilities. The AI deep learning algorithms can now analyze the subtle and complex

patterns within PPG signals to derive much wider range of health parameters such as Hemoglobin A1c, stress levels, blood pressure, in addition to heart rate, respiration rate and Oxygen saturation (SpO2). "The technology is definitely promising and has the potential to be a boon for healthcare sector. Still, there is a lot of validation of the tests results have to be done. I will try to understand the results in more detail in the coming weeks," says newly appointed Superintendent, Niloufer Hospital, Dr G Vijay Kumar on Tuesday. Founder of Quick Vitals, Harish Bisam said that Amruth Swasth Bharat fully supports contactless spot checks through camera-based devices like smart phones. The new testing method is expected to be rolled-out in other States, especially Maharashtra in the coming months.

Plan to integrate RTA database with TGiCCC system

Hyderabad: A coordination meeting aimed at enhancing the real-time data accessibility for traffic enforcement was held at the Telangana Integrated Command and Control Centre (TGiCCC) in Banjara Hills on Wednesday.

The objective of the discussions was to integrate the Road Transport Authority (RTA) database with the TGiCCC system. This integration will enable the automatic retrieval and display of crucial vehicle-related details, such as Pollution Under Control (PUC) certificate validity, insurance status, and registration information, directly within the existing TGiCCC system at the time of challan generation.

"This real-time data synchronisation is expected to streamline enforcement workflows, significantly reduce manual verification efforts, and ensure all challans are issued based on up-to-date and authenticated information from the RTA database," officials said in a press release. The Commissioner, Transport, assured on deputation of a dedicated team to facilitate the implementation of this proposed automated challan system.

Circadian rhythms: how your body's internal clock regulates your health



Awake all night? Taken a flight across time zones? Each of these events makes us tired, grumpy and out-of-sorts. A short nap may not be enough to catch up on either sleep or a sense of wellness, because the biological rhythm of the body has been disrupted. There are many biological rhythms in nature, one rhythm familiar to all, is the seasonal flowering of plants. Another such rhythm is the 24-hour-cycle circadian rhythm. The word 'circadian' is derived from the Latin words circa which means 'about' and dies meaning day. The earth's day-night cycle directly impacts the biological clock of all living organisms, including plants and microorganisms.

How were circadian rhythms discovered?

The French astronomer Jean Jacques d'Ortois de Mairan was the first to observe circadian rhythms in the Mimosa plant. He observed that the plant unfurled its leaves in the morning and closed them in the evening. This behaviour continued despite the plant being kept in the dark, and was the first demonstration that the behaviour of leaves could continue, independent of light input. The molecules that control circadian rhythms were discovered in the 1960s through Ronald J. Konopka's elegant work with Seymour Benzer. He discovered the period or per gene, whose variants either shortened, lengthened or abrogated the 24-hour circadian rhythm of the fruit fly, *Drosophila*. This showed that the period gene was a component of the 24-hour clock, and not its output. In the 1980s and 1990s, Jeffrey Hall, Michael Rosbash, and Michael Young built on Konopka's work identifying: (i) the cycling expression of the period gene that was entrained by light, (ii) light-sensitive genes like timeless and cryptochromes, that act along with the period and (iii) feedback regulation that led to the cycling of the period protein. This pioneering research laid the foundations of understanding how the central 24-hour circadian clock operated in the fruit fly brain. Their work was awarded the Nobel Prize in Physiology (Medicine) in 2017. Joseph Takahashi's work in mice showed that central clock genes in this organism were similar to those identified in fruit flies, and these genes showed similar light-dependent feedback regulation. Such experiments revealed the existence of an evolutionarily conserved ancient mechanism to tie light input from the natural rotation of the earth to cycling molecules in the brain. A 3-D model of the hormone melatonin that assists sleep and is sometimes used as a sleep aid to help with jet lag | Photo Credit: Getty Images

How do circadian rhythms work?

A 'master' clock called the suprachiasmatic nucleus (SCN) is present in the brain and consists of both neurons and supporting glial cells. This master clock drives several peripheral clocks in the heart, liver, spleen, skin, skeletal muscles, lungs, gastrointestinal tract, etc. The SCN integrates several sensory inputs called zeitgebers which mean 'time givers'. Zeitgebers for the circadian clock include light, food, noise, stress, social environment and temperature. Among these, light is the strongest zeitgeber. The process of synchronisation of the circadian clock in response to external cues is called 'entrainment'. Light is sensed by the photosensitive retinal ganglion cells and transmits information to the SCN, which in turn synchronises the peripheral clocks of the body. Exposure to light at dawn advances and entrains the clock and at dusk delays the clock. This entrainment releases hormones, such as cortisol to help us wake up and stay alert (activity rhythm) and suppresses melatonin, the hormone that assists sleep and is sometimes used as a sleep aid to help with jet lag. Aside from these 'activity rhythms', these released molecules control feeding, blood pressure and body temperature. The clock's impact on wellness

The circadian rhythm sets up physiological rhythms with consequences on wellness. For instance, in the afternoon our reaction times are the fastest. By late evening, cardiovascular strength, blood pressure and body temperature are at their peak. As the sun sets and it becomes dark outside, the pineal gland in the brain releases melatonin. Watching television or working on electronic devices during this time, exposes us to blue light from screens, which has similar effects as the sunlight during the day. This blue light interferes with the action of melatonin and delays not only the onset of sleep, but also disrupts our circadian rhythm. Many other factors can also disrupt the circadian rhythm. The most common ones include traveling across time zones, shift work, age, medications, food intake and its timing, and neurological disorders. For healthy individuals, exposure in the morning to sunlight outdoors provides the strongest light input to reset and entrain the circadian clock. Food is another zeitgeber that impacts circadian rhythms, eventually controlling metabolism. However, controlling the quality and size of our meals alone is insufficient; the timing of meals is equally important for most living organisms. Researchers have shown that fruit flies fed at the wrong time laid fewer eggs. Mice fed during their "rest period", were more prone to diabetes and obesity and showed cognitive impairment. Similarly, in humans, the mistiming of food can affect health. The timing of our meals directly affects the secondary clocks in organs such as the liver, pancreas and gastrointestinal tract. The genes that control the secondary clocks show rhythmic expressions, meaning the levels of proteins they produce also rise and fall in a 24-hour cycle. Genes linked to sugar (glucose), protein and fat metabolism also show stereotypical oscillations in synchrony with circadian rhythms. Even short delays in mealtimes can alter the expression of some genes that provide feedback to circadian rhythms. Two hormones are key to regulating our appetite: ghrelin and leptin. Ghrelin levels increase during hunger and fall with food intake, while leptin has the opposite effect—it is low when we are hungry,

and surges when we feel full, reducing food intake. Thus, ghrelin levels peak and leptin levels are low just before our regular mealtimes. Disruptions in circadian rhythms, typically due to shift-work or sleep deprivation, also perturb the rhythmic release of ghrelin. Food types and meal timings affect circadian activity and physiological rhythms. Morning fasting affects the metabolism of subsequent meals and affects physical activity and nocturnal feeding. High fat and alcohol consumption disrupt circadian rhythms. Glucose metabolism is directly related to sleep patterns. Shorter sleep durations or disrupted sleep cause a spike in fasting blood glucose and reduce insulin sensitivity. The response of tissues to insulin (sensitivity) is critical to maintaining blood glucose levels. Lack of sufficient sleep and disrupted circadian rhythms can lead to poor regulation of food intake, as well as conditions such as diabetes and weight gain.

Exercise is not as strong a zeitgeber as light, but, like food, it is a non-photic zeitgeber, and can potentially delay or advance circadian rhythms. Thus, exercise is an additional input to reset disrupted rhythms. Apart from the mode and intensity of exercise, its timing has an equally beneficial effect on the circadian rhythm through the modulation of clock genes. A study has shown that 45 minutes of aerobic exercise in the evening, as opposed to the morning helps reduce blood pressure in people with hypertension. Another study has shown that evening walks are better at reducing low-density lipoprotein, also known as the 'bad cholesterol', and fibrinogen – elevated levels of which can clot blood, creating blockages in blood vessels. Overall, the mode and timing of exercise helps alleviate the risk of cardiovascular diseases. A combination of exercise and its timing can help maintain a good circadian rhythm, which benefits health.

Circadian rhythm also affects the metabolism of drugs in the liver, thus medications are ingested along with our meals or at bedtime. The time of the day also determines how vulnerable we are to infections and how well we respond to vaccines. In other words, our immune responses also oscillate with circadian rhythms. Cardiovascular diseases (CVDs) are the leading causes of death across the world. A mainstay of delaying CVD is treating elevated cholesterol through statins, a class of cholesterol-reducing drugs. Statins are usually prescribed to be taken in the evening for two main reasons. First, cholesterol biosynthesis in the liver peaks during the night controlled by the peripheral liver circadian clock. Second, most statins have a short half-life. This means half of the drug is eliminated from the bloodstream within a few hours. Taking statins in the evening thus synchronises the effectiveness of the drug during peak periods of cholesterol biosynthesis.

We spend around a third of the day sleeping. Sleep is essential for several processes such as tissue growth, repair and regeneration, elimination of metabolic waste products from the central nervous system etc. It is not just the duration: the time of day that a person sleeps is also important for health. Whether in adults or in children, timely and adequate sleep is essential for a healthy body and mind. While adults need 7-8 hours of sleep, adolescents require more sleep, approximately 8-10 hours. An undisturbed circadian rhythm is important to promote wakefulness and alertness during the day and rest through sleep during the night. However, several global studies report shorter durations or disturbed sleep among adolescents. Chronotype, a person's natural inclination with regard to the time of day when they prefer to sleep or when they are most alert or energetic, is important to account for, in how societies function. 'Larks' naturally wake up early and are active in the morning while 'owls' wake up later, or are active during the later part of the day. Likewise, teenagers normally experience a delayed onset of sleep due to an approximately two-hour shift in their circadian rhythms. This shift is driven by hormonal changes during their growing years. Thus, teenagers sleep late but have to wake up early, around 6 a.m. or 7 a.m., as schools often begin early in the morning. This delayed sleep phase leaves teenagers with fewer hours to sleep and causes major disturbances to their circadian rhythms. This disruption is often exacerbated by access to social stimulation from the internet/messaging, blue light from electronic devices and poor sleep hygiene. Such disturbances lead to difficulties in waking up, daytime sleepiness, an inability to stay attentive, absenteeism, poor school performance etc. It may also lead to anxiety and depression and can worsen the mental health of teenagers. Researchers and experts hence recommend school timings be rescheduled so that classes start later for adolescents in synchrony with their natural circadian rhythms. This will ensure they do not compromise on their sleep duration and quality, thereby promoting good mental and physical health. There is increasing evidence that shows that a delay in school start timings helps teenagers have better sleep quality and better educational outcomes.

Taking adult chronotypes into consideration in a work environment can also help individuals be both productive and healthy. To sum up, physiology, a central pillar of human health, is driven by the master circadian clock in the brain that acts on, and via, several peripheral clocks. The clock is entrained primarily by light, but also by meal timings and exercise to maintain normal circadian rhythms. Additionally, the output of the clock in concert with a variety of zeitgebers provides feedback to maintain healthy rhythms. These rhythms likely differ slightly depending on the chronotype of the individual. Disruption of rhythms has been shown to have a variety of detrimental effects leading to sleep disruptions, diabetes, obesity and poor mental health.

Eight buffaloes electrocuted in Mahabubabad

Mahabubabad: Alleged negligence of electricity officials has cost farmers dearly at Chinna Mupparam village of Inugurthi mandal in the district as eight buffaloes died due to electric shock.

A resident of the village Venkanna told the media that electric poles fell down pulling down live electricity wires to the ground due to winds and rains three days ago. The matter was taken to the notice of the electricity department officials but no action was taken.

The failure of the officials in repairing the electricity line led to the death of the cattle, Venkanna said. The farmers whose buffaloes died cried bitterly at the loss as the cattle were their main source of livelihood.

The according to villagers the buffaloes belonging to Kaleru Bhaskar, Harish, Pedda Devender, Chinna Devender, Raju, Shivaji, Ramesh and Rajasekhara went grazing on the outskirts of the village on Thursday; came in contact with the severed electric wires and were electrocuted. The affected farmers said that they suffered a loss of over Rs. 4 lakh with the death of the cattle. The villagers demanded action against the negligent electricity department officials and to pay compensation to the cattle owners.

Honey traps, extortion, fake IDs: Probe into Telangana man's murder reveals wife's mind-boggling life of lies and crime



Investigations into the murder of a 54-year-old businessman from Telangana, whose semi-burnt body was found on a private coffee estate in Kodagu, Karnataka on October 8, has revealed the treacherous past of his wife — a thrice-married woman who has a history of crime, cheating and honey trapping since 2017. The probe led to the arrest of Panthalu Niharika alias Nikita alias Sailatha alias Akula Sailatha, 29, the Bengaluru-based wife of the murdered businessman Ramesh Kumar. Also under arrest are her current boyfriend Mai Reddy Nikhil, 28, a veterinarian with whom she ran a pet clinic in Bengaluru, and Ankur Rana, 32, a taxi driver from Haryana's Karnal whom she befriended while lodged in a Haryana jail in 2021 in a case pertaining to cheating her second husband.

Ramesh Kumar was allegedly strangled in his Maruti car in Uppal near Hyderabad on October 1 by Ankur Rana and Panthalu Niharika. The murder plot was allegedly hatched by Niharika to lay her hands on documents to a property worth Rs 8 crore in Telangana which her third husband had reportedly sold and not shared with her. Kumar's body was transported over a distance of 850 km from Hyderabad to Suntikoppa in the hill district of Kodagu, Karnataka by the trio in a Mercedes Benz GLA 2022 car loaned to the Telangana businessman by a friend, Kanchaty Srihari of Hyderabad. The body was moved to a pit in a coffee estate located by the roadside in Suntikoppa a little after midnight — three days after the murder — and set aflame to prevent identification. On October 8, the body, with the face almost completely burnt, and a shoe was found by workers at the 50-acre Pannya estate.

The Kodagu police cracked the case of the unidentified body after nearly 12 days of investigations by analysing CCTV footage from over 500 cameras which led to the identification of the Mercedes Benz. Later, technical analysis of the missing businessman's phone records led the Kodagu police to Niharika and her boyfriend Mai Reddy Nikhil and later to Ankur Rana in Haridwar, Uttarakhand where he had gone to work as a driver after executing the murder at the behest of Niharika. The sensational murder case took an additional turn after Ankur Rana escaped from the custody of Kodagu police in Hyderabad on October 31 before he was tracked down again to Jaipur in Rajasthan on November 5 through the combined efforts of police from multiple states. Panthalu Niharika and her treacherous past investigations into the murder case soon unravelled Niharika's criminal history on the basis of which she has been described as "dangerous" by the police. The police found that Niharika is under trial in a case in Karnal, Haryana where she is accused of cheating her second husband Kamaldeep Saini, a software engineer, of over Rs 70 lakh after she married him claiming to be a software engineer. According to the case registered against Niharika by Saini, she befriended him on the "Meet4U" dating app and claimed to be employed with one of the leading IT companies in India. She allegedly told Saini a sob story of a family tragedy to propose marriage after which the couple reportedly wedded on June 22, 2019 and began living together in Bengaluru. During the marriage, Niharika allegedly claimed to have a serious illness and extracted lakhs of rupees from Saini for treatment. She also brought along a young girl who she claimed was her niece, says the case filed by the software engineer. During the Covid-19 pandemic, the couple moved to Saini's home in Karnal in 2020-2021 where Niharika's demands for funds increased and

he discovered that she was previously married to a man called Panthalu Anantharam in Telangana and the young girl was her daughter. Saini alleged in his cheating complaint filed in Haryana in January 2021 that the true picture emerged when he looked at her laptop one day. According to the police case in Karnal, where Niharika was arrested on February 4, 2021, Niharika had two identities with different birth dates and had forged educational qualification certificates. Saini also claimed to have found incriminating pictures of her with other men and details of chats which indicated that she had extorted money from several people. In 2017, Niharika was also incidentally accused in a case in Bengaluru where she was arrested for luring a software engineer with sexual favours before attempting to extort funds from him. She was allegedly part of a gang involved in honey-trapping software engineers. She was, however, acquitted in the case along with eight others in 2019. The case records reveal that Niharika, who was living in a paying guest facility in Bengaluru, had claimed to be married to Telangana-based Panthalu Anantharam at the time. "The person arrested in 2017 in a case in Bengaluru has the same credentials as the Niharika arrested in the Kodagu murder case," police sources said. Ankur Rana's involvement during her imprisonment in Karnal, from February 2021 to December 2021, Niharika met Ankur Rana — the second accused in the Ramesh Kumar murder case — police sources said. Rana's mother Santhoshi was lodged in the same prison in an atrocity case, they added. They got acquainted when Rana used to visit his mother in jail. They continued the association after she was released from jail," police sources revealed. "In the last two years, Ankur Rana was in Bengaluru for about two months on Niharika's invitation," sources said. He had worked briefly as a driver in Bengaluru before returning to Haridwar until he was summoned by her to Hyderabad for the October 1 murder. The police are investigating whether Ankur Rana has a criminal history as well. His wife had died in a fire in Haridwar after which his Rana's in-laws accused him of killing her. However, there is no confirmation on whether Rana played a role in the death, sources said. Meanwhile, he was also linked to a couple of vehicle theft cases in the Uttar Pradesh region, sources revealed. Following her release on bail in the cheating case in Haryana in 2021, Niharika did not appear before the Karnal court for his trial for over two years until the court issued a non-bailable warrant for her arrest in May 2024 which resulted in her appearance in July that year. She was then arrested again before being released ahead of an August 2024 trial date. After she returned to Bengaluru from Karnal, Niharika befriended the veterinarian Mai Reddy Nikhil, who is the third accused in the Telangana businessman's murder. She was living with Nikhil and looking after the pets in his clinic, the police indicated. On November 16, a district court in Kodagu granted bail to Nikhil, who is originally from Cuddapah in Andhra Pradesh, in the Ramesh Kumar murder case by citing that he had only played a role in the destruction of evidence and did not have a direct role in the murder on account of which he faces only a maximum jail term of seven years. As per the story of the prosecution itself, the role of this Petitioner starts after the murder and Public Prosecutor in his objections clearly stated in para-5 that, there is an allegation against the murder with regard to the accused No. 1 and 2 and accused No. 3 has helped them in order to destruct the dead body..." the district court said while granting bail to Nikhil. In the course of the murder probe, the police found that Niharika met the businessman Ramesh Kumar during a journey on a Metro train. He reportedly left his first wife to marry Niharika in a registered marriage. The police said she knew Kumar owned properties and was targeting his wealth. Following the murder on October 1 near Hyderabad, Niharika allegedly went to Kumar's house and collected a large number of documents in order to locate land deeds. In a bid to throw the investigators off her trail, she sent a message to Kumar's phone — which was in her possession — soon after the murder, stating that she was returning to Bengaluru to be with her daughter. She abandoned the deceased man's phone in Karnataka after disposing of his body in Kodagu believing that it would cover her tracks, sources said.

IIT Bombay scientists develop water-pollutant detecting device 'AroTrack'

In a significant development for sustainable environmental management, scientists at the Indian Institute of Technology Bombay (IIT Bombay) have introduced AroTrack, an economical and portable device to accurately detect harmful pollutants such as phenol or benzene in water. Scientists claim that the device can be a game-changer given the increasing water pollution due to industrialisation, urbanisation, and unregulated effluent discharge.

AroTrack device uses proteins typically found in bacteria living in heavily polluted environments to effectively identify multiple aromatic pollutants in water. Once mixed in the water sample, the protein undergoes a highly selective ATP hydrolysis chemical reaction if an aromatic compound is present in the sample. This reaction is expressed with a change in the colour of the protein solution, which AroTrack can then detect. The device is highly robust and compact, measuring slightly smaller than a small projector. Professor Ruchi Anand from the Department of Chemistry, Professor Rajdip Bandyopadhyaya from the Department of Chemical Engineering and their team at IIT Bombay introduced a simple and affordable biosensing device capable of detecting harmful compounds such as, phenol, benzene, and xlenols.

The key component of the device is a biosensing module called MopR - a sensitive sensor for detecting phenol. Ms. Anand's research team engineered it from the *Acinetobacter calcoaceticus* bacteria in 2017. MopR is both selective and stable, meaning it can detect pollutants even in complex environments with a high degree of precision. Researchers at IIT Bombay have further diversified the MopR biosensor to detect other pollutants from the benzene and xlenol groups by engineering mutations in the bacterial protein. "The protein biosensing is very specific as the protein sensing pocket is tailor-made for the ligand (ion or molecule, like phenol or benzene). We have engineered mutations in the DNA of the protein sequence that can give mutant versions of the protein that now sense different molecules, creating a battery of sensors. Each sensor is particularly designed for a ligand," Ms. Anand explains. Once interfaced with an in-house, multi-channel monitoring apparatus, the MopR-based sensor forms the core of the newly developed aromatics tracking device—AroTrack. Talking about how the AroTrack detects the pollutants using the biosensor modules, Mr. Bandyopadhyaya explained, "AroTrack contains a light emitting diode [LED]-phototransistor assembly, that shines a light of appropriate wavelength through the sample and detects how much is absorbed. A more intense colour generates a higher absor-



bance." The overall cost of the device is a minimum of \$50 [less than ₹5,000]. Mr. Bandyopadhyaya said that AroTrack was born out of the philosophy to make field-usable analytical devices, based on translating analytical capabilities generated in the laboratory into actual field-ready devices. "It is designed so that almost any user, technically trained or layman, may quickly learn and generate accurate data for traditionally difficult to measure and distinguish aromatic xenobiotic pollutants," he said. "Using in-house 3D printing in our laboratory, we were able to economically design, fabricate and iterate a fully functional device. Also, the cost could be kept down by using basic electronics and open-source, mass-produced microcontrollers for data processing and analysis," Mr. Bandyopadhyaya added. AroTrack can detect several aromatic contaminants, including phenol, benzene, and 2, 3 dimethylphenol, even when these pollutants are present in low concentrations - usually in the 10-200 parts per billion range. Tests in simulated wastewater and actual environmental samples have found that the AroTrack is highly reliable, offering a degree of accuracy and efficiency on par with modern spectrophotometers, which are currently used for detection. The device also reliably worked in water temperatures up to 50 degrees Celsius and completed the tests in under 30 minutes, the scientists said. Due to its low cost, battery-operated nature, and portability, AroTrack can be ideal for rural and low-income settings that often lack resources and have difficulty accessing expensive laboratory tests, Ms. Anand said. "We are currently trying to increase the type of pollutants to biphenyl aromatics and pollutants that are complex aromatics." Speaking about its market readiness, Mr. Bandyopadhyaya said, "The product is ready as an initial functional prototype, which can demonstrate all the reported functions. To make it fully market-ready, more field trials and quality analysis are needed to assess its robustness under more varied working conditions in the field, with a wider variety of water sources and compositions."

The 'brilliant' student died barely a month after joining medical college



GNS News Agency, June 4

An inconsolable mother and a sister who had to be rushed to a hospital due to low blood pressure — similar heartbreaking scenes were witnessed at the Methaniya house on Monday morning in Jesada, one of the last villages along the Little Rann of Kutch in Gujarat. An eerie silence gripped the house as relatives gathered to mourn the death of 18-year-old Anil Methaniya, a first-year student at Gujarat Medical Education and Research Society (GMERS) Medical College at Dharpur in Patan. Anil had joined the college on October 14, barely a month before his death. The student — who had scored 550 in NEET without taking any coaching classes — died after he was allegedly ragged by his seniors in his hostel on the intervening night of November 16-17. Anil reportedly fell unconscious late on November 16, after he was made to stand for nearly four hours. Besides being booked for culpable homicide not amounting to murder, 15 of Anil's seniors have been suspended by the medical college following a report by its anti-ragging committee. Inspector P J Solanki of Balisana police station told The Indian Express, "All 15 second-year students have been arrested." Back at the Methaniya house, the family says Anil was the only student from Jesada, a small village with an estimated population of 5,000 in Dhrangadhra taluka of Surendranagar, who had cracked the tough all-India pre-medical entrance exam. The youngest among three siblings, Anil was the only son of Natwarbhai, 56, a farmer, and Gitaben, 53, a home-maker. Anil's elder Sheetal, who got married in 2019, completed her graduation in science and education, while Nidhi is a physiotherapist. "Anil was very excited about Nidhi's February wedding. He had promised to help with all the preparations," says Sheetal, 28. After he finished his primary education from a private school in Dhrangadhra, 20 km from Jesada, Anil's father shifted him to the Vivekananda Science Academy Sadhana Vidyalaya in Halvad, nearly 50 km from the village. In Class 9 and 10, Anil lived with his sister Sheetal and brother-in-law Hirenbhai in Dhrangadhra. "He stayed with us for nearly two years. In all that time, he never asked for anything. However, we knew that he was fond of travelling and loved pizza. His last trip was to Shimla — the school took him there in Class 11," says Hirenbhai.

gujarat medical student ragging death, indian express Anil with his elder sister Nidhi, who is set to be married in February. While in Class 10, Anil had made up his mind that he wanted to become a doctor, says Gautam Methaniya, 23, his cousin who is an IT professional based in Ahmedabad. "He was a brilliant student. He did not take any coaching classes but he still managed to crack NEET. He scored 550 in NEET and 90.57 percentile in GUJCET

Why countries struggle to eliminate fossil fuel subsidies | Explained

Fossil fuels are the leading driver of climate change, yet they are still heavily subsidised by governments around the world. Although many countries have explicitly promised to reduce fossil fuel subsidies to combat climate change, this has proven difficult to accomplish. As a result, fossil fuels remain relatively inexpensive, and their use and greenhouse gas emissions continue to grow. I work in environmental and energy law and have studied the fossil fuel sector for years. Here's how fossil fuel subsidies work and why they're so stubborn.

What is a subsidy?

A subsidy is a financial benefit given by a government to an entity or industry. Some subsidies are relatively obvious, such as publicly funded crop insurance or research grants to help pharmaceutical companies develop new drugs. Others are less visible. A tariff on an imported product, for example, can subsidise domestic manufacturers of that product. More controversially, some would argue that when a government fails to make an industry pay for damage it causes, such as air or water pollution, that also amounts to a subsidy. Subsidies, especially in this broader sense, are widespread throughout the global economy. Many industries receive benefits through public policies that are denied to other industries in the same jurisdiction, such as tax breaks, relaxed regulations or trade supports. Governments employ subsidies for political and practical reasons. Politically, subsidies are useful for striking bargains or shoring up political support. In democracies, they can mollify constituencies otherwise unwilling to agree to a policy change. The 2022 Inflation Reduction Act, for example, squeaked through Congress by subsidizing both renewable energy and oil and gas production. Practically, subsidies can boost a promising young industry such as electric vehicles, attract business to a community or help a mature sector survive an economic downturn, as the auto industry bailout did in 2008. Of course, policies can outlive their original purpose; some of today's petroleum subsidies can be traced to the Great Depression.

How are fossil fuels subsidised?

Fossil fuel subsidies take many forms around the world. For example in Saudi Arabia, fuel prices are set by the government rather than the market; price ceilings subsidise the price citizens pay for gasoline. The cost to state-owned oil producers there is offset by oil exports, which dwarf domestic consumption. Indonesia also caps energy prices, then compensates state-owned energy companies for the losses they bear. In the United States, oil companies can take a tax deduction for a large portion of their drilling costs. Other subsidies are less direct, such as when governments under-price permits to mine or drill for fossil fuels or fail to collect all the taxes owed by fossil fuel producers. Estimates of the total value of global fossil fuel subsidies vary considerably depending on whether analysts use a broad or narrow definition. The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, or OECD, calculated the annual total to be about US\$1.5 trillion in 2022. The International Monetary Fund reported a number over four times higher, about \$7 trillion.

(Gujarat Common Entrance Test)," says Gautam. Anil's father says his hard-working son had just one dream — "to make his family proud". Natwarbhai says, "If fulfilling his dream would have required me to sell my land, I would have done it in a heartbeat. He was absolutely fine when we last spoke. He was hale and hearty, and never complained of any health issues. He never even tested positive for Covid. At the time of his admission to college (in September), all his medical reports were normal."

A farmer who owns 80 bighas, Natwarbhai says they had paid Rs 6 lakh as the fee for Anil's first semester. "My wife, Nidhi and I dropped him to his hostel on October 14. All of us were excited since Anil would come home a fortnight later for Diwali vacation," he says. The family last spoke to Anil in the evening on November 16. "We spoke around 7.30 pm on Saturday (November 16). He called us daily in the evening. He sounded happy and spoke to everyone," Natwarbhai recalls. A call he received a few hours later would shatter their world irrevocably. "At 12.15 am (on November 17), a resident doctor at the GMERS college called me. He said Anil had fallen unconscious and had been admitted to the hospital," says Natwarbhai, adding that they rushed to the college. "We reached there around 4 am. At the hospital, a doctor informed us that Anil was no more," he says. Later, Natwarbhai says, the family was asked to attend a meeting, where the dean, the police, first-year students and seniors were present. "The meeting ended after it was discovered that Anil had fainted after being ragged for three hours — he had been forced to remain standing. He was rushed to the hospital on the premises, where he died," says Dharmendra, Anil's cousin. Anil's body was handed over to the family around 11.30 am on November 17, after a post-mortem examination. However, the police are yet to receive information on the cause of death. Anil's family too confirmed that they had not received any information regarding the autopsy report till late on Monday. Inspector Solanki confirmed that the cause of death was awaited. "An expert will provide the cause of death based on the findings of the panel that conducted the autopsy." While Dr Hardik Shah, the dean of GMERS Dharpur, was unavailable for a comment, Dr Manish Ramavat, the interim Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the society who was earlier the medical superintendent of the civil hospital attached to the college, says, "We already have protocol in place, as well as anti-ragging committees in all medical colleges (run by the society) and anti-ragging helplines for students... Additionally, we have asked all deans to be more vigilant, especially just after admissions, to prevent incidents of ragging." Though students are required to sign affidavits at the time of admission stating that they will not engage in ragging, incidents continue to be reported from medical colleges across Gujarat, and the rest of India. Just six months ago, the Gujarat High Court had heard a public interest litigation on ragging. Meanwhile, Anil's family has demanded punitive action against both the students responsible and the college administration. "No one else should lose their child like we did. We were aware that ragging happened in medical colleges, but with all the rules in place, we assumed it had stopped by now. So we never asked Anil about it or heard about it from him," the father says. Sandeep, 32, one of Anil's cousins, says the incident has left people concerned for the safety of their children. He says, "Since the incident, people have been saying that it is better to make them (their children) do farming to ensure they stay alive." Stating that the family wants justice, Sandeep adds, "The senior students responsible for Anil's death should be expelled. A simple suspension will not do. In fact, they should be banned from taking admission anywhere in the country or abroad."

Why do estimates of fossil fuel subsidies vary dramatically?

Analysts disagree about whether subsidy tabulations should include environmental damage from the extraction and use of fossil fuels that is not incorporated into the fuel's price. The IMF treats the costs of global warming, local air pollution and even traffic congestion and road damage as implicit subsidies because fossil fuel companies don't pay to remedy these problems. The OECD omits these implicit benefits. But whichever definition is applied, the combined effect of national policies on fossil fuel prices paid by consumers is dramatic. Oil, for example, is traded on a global market, but the price per gallon of petrol varies enormously around the world, from about 10 cents in Iran, Libya and Venezuela — where it is heavily subsidised — to over \$7 in Hong Kong, the Netherlands and much of Scandinavia, where fuel taxes counteract subsidies.

What is the world doing about fossil fuel subsidies?

Global leaders have acknowledged that subsidies for fossil fuels undermine efforts to address climate change because they make fossil fuels cheaper than they would be otherwise. In 2009, the heads of the G20, which includes many of the world's largest economies, issued a statement resolving to "rationalise and phase out over the medium term inefficient fossil fuel subsidies that encourage wasteful consumption." Later that same year, the governments of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation forum, or APEC, made an identical pledge. In 2010, 10 other countries, including the Netherlands and New Zealand, formed the Friends of Fossil Fuel Subsidy Reform group to "build political consensus on the importance of fossil fuel subsidy reform." Yet these commitments have scarcely moved the needle. A major study of 157 countries between 2003 and 2015 found that governments "collectively made little or no progress" toward reducing subsidies. In fact, the OECD found that total global subsidies nearly doubled in both 2021 and 2022.

So why are fossil fuel subsidies hard to eliminate?

There are various reasons fossil fuel subsidies are hard to eliminate. Many subsidies directly affect the costs that fossil fuel producers face, so reducing subsidies tends to increase prices for consumers. Because fossil fuels touch nearly every economic sector, rising fuel costs elevate prices for countless goods and services. Subsidy reform tends to be broadly felt and pervasively inflationary. And unless carefully designed, subsidy reductions can be regressive, forcing low-income residents to spend a larger percentage of their income on energy. So, even in countries where there is widespread support for robust climate policies, reducing subsidies can be deeply unpopular and may even cause public unrest. The 2021-22 spike in fossil fuel subsidies is illustrative. After Russia's invasion of Ukraine, energy prices surged throughout Europe. Governments were quick to provide aid for their citizens, resulting in their largest fossil fuel subsidies ever. Forced to choose between climate goals and affordable energy, Europe overwhelmingly chose the latter. Of course, economists note that increasing the price of fossil fuels can lower demand.

Where is ISRO heading?



GNS News Agency, June 4

Only three decades ago, the Indian space programme was a diminutive affair, dominated by the newfound successes of the Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV) and a then-fledgling clump of communications satellites. Today, the programme is a large tree with a flourishing canopy. There is a slew of ongoing projects accompanied by projects being ideated, developed, tested as well as retired. The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) — employer of several thousand engineers, scientists, and administrators — is now accompanied by IN-SPACe, a new nodal agency to oversee and enable private space enterprises' activities, and NewSpace India, Ltd., to manage commercial launch commissions and commercialise Indian space technologies. ISRO's spaceport in Andhra Pradesh has expanded to two launch pads while a second port is under construction in Tamil Nadu. Its PSLV rocket is likewise joined by five others — three operational and two in the works — with bespoke features to meet specific civil and national needs while serving commercial markets when opportunities arise.

ISRO operates more than 50 satellites in earth orbit and has launched more than 400 in commercial missions paid for by foreign governments and companies. It has also hoisted four missions to the moon, one to Mars, two space telescopes, and a solar physics probe. Missions in the near future include a synthetic aperture radar satellite co-built with NASA, more interplanetary missions, an orbital space station, and of course human spaceflight. Its experts are designing next-generation engines (especially the SCE-200), green(er) fuels, and high-performance materials. The organisation is currently transferring SSLV and PSLV manufacturing to industry while government reforms from 2019 invited private enterprises to build and operate virtually any technology.

Against the backdrop of India's history, a national space programme of this magnitude is by all means very successful. 'Success' here refers to the programme's ability to plan and execute longer-term projects with crore-rupee budgets, coordinate activities across multiple centres, manage procurement, logistics, and accounts with industry contractors, and balance political ambitions and public expectations. Unfortunately, neither ISRO nor the programme has the luxury of having their efforts vis-à-vis spaceflight, space exploration, and commercialisation judged only by the yardstick of how far India alone has come.

The fact is the Indian space programme can take great strides and still remain uncompetitive with the other countries belonging to the same elite club to which it has repeatedly claimed to belong. While the U.S. and Russia (including the erstwhile USSR) had a head start of many decades, China, Japan, and Europe for a long time enjoyed more funding, technological sophistication or both.

But it's also possible to flip this tension the other way. The dramatic rise of commercial opportunities in space technologies and spaceflight — led by the successes of and radical innovation by companies like SpaceX and aided by the struggles of regulatory agencies to catch up — has placed the carts of profit and/or primacy before the horse of national needs. For example, India is committed to an increasingly complex series of scientific missions to the moon, to be complemented in due course by the Bharatiya Antariksh Station and crewed moon missions. The cumulative cost will be in the tens of thousands of crore rupees and lakhs of work-hours — yet neither ISRO nor the Department of Space have explicitly articulated what the ultimate purpose is here. Simply put, what's in it for Indians?

In 2019-2020, the Department of Space reorganised the space programme to allow ISRO to focus on research. It hived off the responsibility of organising and executing commercial launches to NewSpace India, Ltd. (a public-sector undertaking), in 2019 and that of overseeing the activities of the country's young and ambitious space startups to IN-SPACe (an autonomous body) in 2020. This division of labour was intended to improve each arm's ability to better define its goals and work towards them in an era in which space technologies are both diversifying and becoming more sophisticated.

At the same time, the division is still open-ended to the extent that there isn't a policy or law that specifies what long-term goals they are collectively working towards and why. This is in and of itself not a bad thing if the space programme is also finding its footing, but it can't afford to take its time. Some important inefficiencies linger in the reorganisation that could lead to the uneconomical use of valuable resources. For example, IN-SPACe is both promoter and regulator of private space enterprises; there is no independent tribunal to settle disputes between private companies and IN-SPACe; and there is no space law attuned to the needs of this new, wider ecosystem of participants.

Nonetheless, the more vehement supporters of India's plans have advanced three typical arguments: (i) partaking of the comity of nations, (ii) not losing out on future opportunities, and (iii) the value of spin-off technologies. Speculative though the value of all three are, they can't be dismissed out of hand. Argument (i) in particular is quite valuable: countries working together on space missions can reduce the per-country costs as well as open new channels for soft diplomacy. The value of (ii) and (iii) is more obvious: to keep opportunity costs in future from surging while amortising them in the interim by taking advantage of the new technologies that become available in the course of achieving those overarching goals. But a direct counterargument here is that the cost of attaining these new technologies can be much lower if we pursued them in a more direct manner rather than anticipating them as spin-offs. More broadly, if there is one correct answer to how ISRO and India should orient themselves — joining the pursuit of greater goals versus being led by Indians' needs — it has yet to present itself. The leaders of the Indian space programme also haven't explicitly articulated what their long-term priorities are nor how they are to be determined.

The launch vehicles As things stand today, at least a significant part of the answer lies with India's launch vehicles. The reason is simple: both national and commercial missions are affected by their capabilities and availability.

ISRO can currently access four launch vehicles: the PSLV, the Geosynchronous Satellite Launch Vehicle Mark 2 (GSLV Mk-2), the Launch Vehicle Mark 3 (LVM-3), and the Small Satellite Launch Vehicle (SSLV). It has also just started work on the Next-Generation Launch Vehicle (NGLV) and is conducting what appear to be mid-stage tests of the Reusable Launch Vehicle (RLV). It is also making

good progress on a human-rated version of the LVM-3, called HLVM-3, for its Gaganyaan human spaceflight missions. In addition, the Department of Space pays launch service providers abroad to buy payload capacity on their rockets when India's own don't fit the bill.

For many years, ISRO followed a supply-driven model of launch services: it would build and launch satellites onboard rockets, then promote the availability of these services in order to induce demand. But as it acquired newer, better rockets as well as access to more launch options, and together with reforms in the space sector, ISRO switched to a demand-driven model: until a customer — within India or international — requested a particular service, ISRO wouldn't build the corresponding satellite and/or launch vehicle. The problem now is that people and/or industries have to wait a service before it can exist, and they may not think to want it unless the want is acute or, more likely, they may not even be aware of the possibility that a satellite-based service could fulfill their requirements. Because the provision of these launch services is an important revenue source for ISRO as well as the industry member that will operate the satellite, the question is who will be responsible for seeding demand: ISRO or industry. The answer isn't yet self-evident.

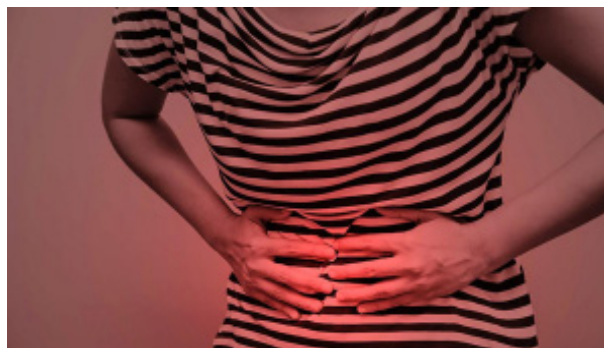
This said, India's budding space startups could help bridge this gap to a meaningful degree. Soon after the Government of India opened the door to private sector participation, it has also been trying to give the first people through the door a push, or at least is giving an impression to that effect. The government has sweetened startups' involvement by opening up and/or expanding foreign direct investment (FDI) in rockets and launch facilities and in satellite manufacturing, operations, and data products; floating an interest-free loan pool of Rs 1 lakh crore for all tech startups; an investment pool of Rs 1,000 crore for space tech startups; a 24% hike in the allocation for IN-SPACe; and proposed removing the angel tax — all in 2024 alone.

When she announced the 2024-2025 (post-poll) budget, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman also said the government hopes the national space economy will expand five-fold in the next 10 years. While the size of the venture capital fund read together with this comment elicited mixed reactions from startup operators, the government's aim is clear: for private enterprises to take advantage of opportunities in the global space economy — and make use of the available launch options. Many startups are doing good work. Some notable ones include Bellatrix Aerospace (small-satellite manufacturing and in-space mobility), Digantara (space surveillance and satellite traffic management), GalaxEye Space (multi-sensor earth observation), PierSight (persistent maritime monitoring with synthetic aperture radar satellites), Pixxel (hyperspectral imaging), SatSure (infrastructure and agriculture intelligence based on satellite data), and Skyroot Aerospace (launch vehicle design and construction). I haven't included many others here strictly due to space constraints. There's a chicken-and-egg problem here as well, however. The growth stories of North American and European startups teach us that for them to really break into a traditionally state-held bastion, the government needs to be an anchor customer in their early days: i.e. provide repeating and high-value business. Thus far, the Indian government has failed to do this, instead choosing to provide financial incentives and investment capital. Startup leaders sincerely hope it will resolve this lacuna soon. The Gaganyaan supremacy

This said, the availability of four launchers with two more in the works doesn't mean demand is the only problem. There is a significant confounding factor that influences which launcher is picked for which mission, and which becomes clearer when the options are considered one at a time. The SSLV has been designed such that a new rocket can be built and launched in one week, with a payload capacity of 500 km to low-earth orbit (100 km and above from the surface) and 300 kg to a sun-synchronous orbit. In transferring the manufacturing specs to industry, ISRO's plan seems to be for companies to sign on launch contracts by satellite providers in such volumes as to keep the SSLV launch manifest busy, and free up the PSLVs and GSLVs for higher-value missions. But it's not clear whether there is enough demand for small-satellite launches to sustain the SSLV programme.

The GSLV Mk-II is unavailable for commercial launches. In the early days of ISRO's cryogenic engine programme, it received a few units from the Soviet Union based on which it developed its own variant. ISRO called the three-stage medium-lift rockets that flew with the Soviet KVD-1 cryogenic engines the GSLV Mk-I and those with the Indian variant, called CE 7.5, became the GSLV Mk-II. The GSLV Mk-III is powered by ISRO's even-better CE 20 engine and a more powerful booster stage. The vehicle was later christened the LVM-3 for its distinct design. The RLV and the LVM-3 need to be understood together. A preamble: ISRO has had a tough time manufacturing launch vehicles for successive missions fast enough. This is why, for example, it had to postpone the launch of the Chandrayaan-3 mission in 2022 to secure a commercial launch contract from the London-based satellite internet services provider OneWeb. The company had originally been scheduled to launch its satellites onboard a Russian Soyuz rocket, but then Russia invaded Ukraine, the UK imposed sanctions on the Asian country, and OneWeb was forced to terminate its contract and look for another provider. This was ISRO, which at the time could build one LVM-3 unit only every eight months and thus had to postpone the Chandrayaan-3 mission to the next year. Even now, given the investments already made as well as the political mileage its successful execution is expected to yield for the national government, Gaganyaan's HLVM-3 remains ISRO's primary focus (as launch vehicles go), leaving other missions to become subordinate to its deadlines. The RLV is one such casualty. The RLV's final payload capacity to low-earth orbit is unclear. Even assuming it's (a high) 20 tonnes, it probably won't be useful for commercial missions. The SpaceX Starship already offers a higher payload capacity at a lower per-kilogram price. Instead, its features indicate the RLV will be a runway-capable 'space plane' that can carry experiments into low-earth orbit, stay there for some time, and bring its payload back. Thus, it's more like Boeing's X-37B, somewhat like the Soviet Union's Buran project, and little like the NASA Space Shuttle. The RLV's launch profile also means its payload will have particular volume constraints. This said, thanks to HLVM-3, ISRO has been making slow progress. Even now, it's not clear when the organisation plans to have the RLV ready for operational missions. And because ISRO currently doesn't have access to a homegrown launch vehicle for satellites heavier than six tonnes, it has to pay ArianeSpace or, as it did recently, SpaceX to get super-heavy payloads to orbit. While these foreign options are available, they are expensive, don't have leeway for the launch vehicle to be adjusted to the payload's needs, and don't allow defence technologies to be present onboard. Finally, and fortunately, there's little uncertainty about the NGLV's purpose: it will be a bulkier version of the LVM-3 capable of lifting even heavier payloads to the geostationary transfer orbit, up to around six tonnes. It will also be partially reusable and thus potentially offer a per-kilogram cost for payloads considered reasonable for commercial missions.

All you need to know about: Polycystic Ovary Syndrome



Polycystic Ovary Syndrome (PCOS) is a complex hormonal disorder that affects millions of women worldwide. Characterised by menstrual irregularities, metabolic disturbances, and dermatological concerns, the condition presents significant health challenges. However, timely intervention, lifestyle modifications, and medical support enable women to manage PCOS effectively and lead fulfilling lives. Understanding symptoms The symptoms of PCOS vary among individuals, making early diagnosis essential. The most common manifestations include menstrual irregularities, such as unpredictable, heavy, or absent periods. Metabolic disturbances, often linked to insulin resistance, contribute to unexplained weight gain and difficulty in managing weight. Dermatological concerns, including excessive facial hair, persistent acne, and hair thinning, are also commonly reported. Symptoms usually emerge during adolescence or early adulthood, and diagnosis is typically confirmed when at least two of three criteria are met: irregular menstrual cycles, elevated androgen levels detected through blood tests or physical symptoms, or the presence

of ovarian cysts identified via ultrasound. In certain cases, additional effects such as infertility or dark patches on the skin, known as acanthosis nigricans, indicate metabolic concerns that warrant medical attention.

Addressing PCOS at an early stage can significantly improve long-term health outcomes. Managing insulin resistance through dietary modifications and physical activity is crucial in reducing the risk of type 2 diabetes. Cardiovascular health also benefits from a nutrient-rich diet and regular exercise, which aid in managing hypertension and cholesterol levels. For those seeking to conceive, lifestyle modifications alone often improve fertility, though medical assistance may be required in some instances. While lifestyle adjustments remain the foundation of PCOS management, medical interventions offer additional support. A modest weight reduction, even as little as five to 10 % of body weight, has been shown to restore ovulatory function and alleviate symptoms. Pharmacological treatments, including ovulation-inducing medications assist in stimulating egg release, while insulin-sensitising drugs help regulate blood sugar levels and restore menstrual regularity. In more complex cases, advanced therapeutic options such as ovarian drilling, a minimally invasive laparoscopic procedure, can enhance ovulation. Assisted reproductive techniques, including intrauterine insemination (IUI) and in vitro fertilisation (IVF), offer viable solutions for those facing fertility challenges. Meanwhile, emerging treatments, including targeted hormonal therapies and specialised nutritional supplements, continue to show promise in improving ovarian function and overall symptom management. With increasing awareness and advancements in treatment, individuals with PCOS can take charge of their health, make informed choices, and improve overall well-being.

How pragmatism is inadequate to understand Ambedkar's scholarship

After several decades, the scholarship of Dr. B. R. Ambedkar is getting global attention. In the last four years, four biographies by different scholars and four scholarly books, excluding a set of five volumes on Dr. Ambedkar's life and philosophy, have been written. Still, scholars from different disciplines or through interdisciplinary approaches are reluctant to teach or research Ambedkar's thoughts. In this context, it is interesting to see the scholarship of Scott R. Stroud explore the intellectual relationship between John Dewey and B. R. Ambedkar. His last book, *The Evolution of Pragmatism in India: Ambedkar, Dewey and the Rhetoric of Reconstruction*, demonstrated the scholarship of Ambedkar and Dewey within pragmatist thought. Initially, Stroud, as a Deweyan scholar, explored the Deweyan influence on Ambedkar's political philosophy to develop the theory of Ambedkar's navayana pragmatism.

His latest article which appeared in the *Economic and Political Weekly* titled "B. R. Ambedkar and the Evolution of Pragmatism in India", responded to some of his critiques, and defended his Deweyan argument. This essay critically engages with Stroud's article in EPW.

Cannot be reduced to pragmatism Stroud's scholarship attempts to interpret Ambedkar's political philosophy in the global pragmatist tradition. Pragmatism is a progressive philosophy; and therefore, thinkers like Ambedkar become important figures in the global pluralist pragmatist philosophical tradition, Stroud argues. However, the range of scholarship on Ambedkar over the years demonstrates that he goes beyond pragmatism — the pragmatist-Deweyan interpretation articulates only one aspect of Ambedkar's thought. Stroud provides only a Deweyan reading of Ambedkar. Making a Deweyan interpretation of Ambedkar's multifaceted activities and intellectual engagement only gives us a partial understanding of him and reduces Ambedkar's versatile radical philosophy. In his recent book, *Ambedkar's Political Philosophy: A Grammar of Public Life from the Social Margin*, Valerian Rodrigues explicates the wide-ranging nature of Ambedkar's scholarship of political philosophy. Rodrigues argues that John Dewey is only one of his teachers. Therefore, merely interpreting Ambedkar's thought through Dewey and pragmatism will give only one philosophical understanding.

For example, one of the claims Stroud developed is that Ambedkar passionately learned from Dewey's teachings, which remained with Ambedkar for a long time, whether it was the French Revolution or a lecture on psychology. Further, Stroud created a speculative story through a book written by Nima Adlerblum, assuming it was Ambedkar who would attend each lecture of Dewey and reproduce Dewey's words and language. Further, Stroud focuses on Ambedkar's western education, in which Dewey's influence was central. By doing so, Stroud wishes to portray Dewey as a permanent thinker who shapes Ambedkar's philosophy. This however seems to omit the fact that Ambedkar was a versatile reader who explored different philosophies and utilised social experiences and scholarship in his activism. Stroud rather forcefully argues that most of the concepts and terminologies Ambedkar used in his activism and intellectual formulation accorded with Dewey. But this obsession with Dewey's impact and pragmatism on Ambedkar creates a limited kind of scholarship. Stroud defines pragmatism as "flexible, adaptive and diverse". Arguably, Ambedkar did adopt a kind of pragmatic approach engaging with the modern state in articulating democracy. Unfortunately, Stroud is not interested to interpret this through Dewey's *The Public and Its Problem* — probably because he could not connect the arguments in the book with Ambedkar's experience; the way he engages with the state with a pragmatic approach such as negotiating with



Gandhi, other Indian leaders, and the later Constituent Assembly debates. Although, Stroud equates pragmatism and social democracy, it is important to see Ambedkar's original emphasis of social democracy, and not within the pragmatist tradition.

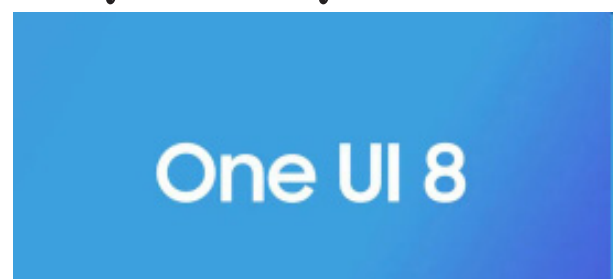
Pragmatism is important, but inadequate to annihilate caste in a Brahmanical society. Ambedkar cited Dewey in *Annihilation of Caste*, but it is not a pragmatic text. Stroud claims that Ambedkar learned the "psychology of habit and custom" from Dewey in thinking about the psychology of caste. But how could Stroud overlook the untouchability encountered by Ambedkar throughout his life — whether it is physical or psychological? Stroud's articulations are lofty; it also implicitly indicates that Ambedkar's originality lies in Dewey, that Ambedkar's scholarship and experience of caste count for little, and that his reading of several texts on caste seem secondary.

Stroud argues that Ambedkar's conversion to Buddhism was a pragmatic approach. But Buddhism was a life-long philosophy that Ambedkar cultivated from his childhood; giving credit or echo to Dewey is a misinterpretation. For example, Ambedkar's family were part of the Kabir Panth, which teaches the importance of ethics and morality. Further, Ambedkar read the *Budhha Charitra* in his early age which remained his sole inspiration. Ambedkar also wrote a letter to Sharada stating that "the only person to whom I owe all my being is Gautama Buddha." Very importantly, Rodrigues shows in his recent book, a wide-ranging scholarship on the "epistemic location of Ambedkar" that includes Kabir's legacy, Dewey's influence, Phule's presence in Ambedkar, the social and political discourse of Bombay and India, Fabian socialism, social democracy and so on. In the Columbia alumni newspaper, where Ambedkar expresses admiration for his "great professors, John Dewey, James Shotwell, Edwin Seligman, and James Hervey Robinson", Stroud only picks John Dewey for his project of pragmatism. Similarly, one should also explore Ambedkar's time in London (LSE). How can Ambedkar's western education only focus on Dewey? The *Annihilation of Caste* was a lifelong project for Ambedkar's emancipatory politics and philosophy. The annihilation of caste, the declaration of renouncing Hinduism and the conversion to Buddhism were revolutionary acts, not merely accorded to pragmatism. They were part of his praxis because Ambedkar could see the limitations of the modern state and constitutional democracy. He found Buddhism to be an ultimate path. His 22 vows discard the authority of Hindu gods and goddess — it is not a reformist act either, not even restructuring Hindu society. Too much reading of pragmatism into Ambedkar suggests an American project — the same American project yet to adequately address the structural and perpetual racial discrimination faced by people of colour. Ambedkar was equally aware of the limitations of pragmatism and the modern state and hence caste annihilation was his project of emancipation.

Samsung unveils One UI 8 Beta, bringing personalized AI and enhanced productivity to Galaxy devices

Hyderabad: Samsung has officially announced the beta rollout of One UI 8, its latest software update built on Android 16. Redefining the Galaxy user experience, One UI 8 introduces an advanced multimodal AI agent, productivity improvements, and deeper personalization. Early-bird access is granted for Galaxy S25, S25+, and S25 Ultra users in Germany, Korea, the UK, and the US. Close-quartered collaborative efforts with Google saw the integration of real-time design feedback into One UI 8 as the UI launches alongside Android 16 for the very first time. It opens AI-powered multimodal capability, contextual UX, and suggestions for foldables. Highlights include Now Bar and Now Brief that deliver curated insights to assist with task management. Privacy, from the Sa release of Knox Vault, is treated as paramount, giving the user complete control over processing both on-device and in the cloud AI.

One UI 8 simplifies everyday workflows. Auracast



audio streaming allows device connectivity across the range, from Galaxy Buds3 to hearing aids, by way of QR codes, and repair center visits become easy via NFC-enabled support tools. The updated reminder app organizes your trips and works, still, with voice instructions. Quick Share now supports one-tap file sharing via the quick settings panel.

'Growth in productivity, real incomes not happening as fast; leading to queuing for govt jobs': NITI Aayog vice chairperson



compared with \$29 trillion for the United States. Highlighting the difference in labour productivity in the two countries, Bery said, "We're roughly half the size of the US economy. Our labour force currently is approximately three times the size of the US labour force."

The eminent economist said rising productivity leads to faster growth in real incomes and improved standards of living. "The fact that that has not been happening as fast as people's aspirations is what is leading to (them) queuing for government jobs, etc. What is really important is that those better jobs be generated by the private sector," Bery said. The Economic Survey 2024-25 said real monthly wages for both male and female salaried and self-employed workers in 2023-24 were lower than pre-pandemic levels in 2017-18. It also noted that while corporate profitability soared to a 15-year high in 2023-24, growth in wages has "lagged". Bery noted that advanced economies such as the UK and Canada are also "concerned about stagnant productivity". "India's track record has not been bad in terms of growth of productivity, but it needs to get better. Our problem is our lower level, not only with respect to the US but also with respect to some of our peers, such as China and others in ASEAN. And certainly, in G20, our labour productivity is the lowest," he said. The NITI Aayog vice chairman emphasised focusing on underutilised labour to boost productivity. "Faster growth is if we can deploy more of our underutilised labour, particularly women and youth, in more productive activities," Bery said.

The growth in labour productivity and real incomes is not happening "as fast as people's aspirations", which has led to them "queuing for government jobs", NITI Aayog Vice Chairperson Suman Bery said on Thursday. In his remarks at a Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) summit, Bery noted the real challenge facing India is raising productivity both manufacturing and services, and urged the private sector to create "better jobs".

"A particular dimension of Viksit Bharat is the urgency of raising labour productivity. This is very much an area where the private sector has an important role to play," Bery, who also chairs the Economic Advisory Council to the Prime Minister (EAC-PM), said. Bery observed India's GDP in purchasing power parity (PPP) terms stood at \$15 trillion,

Indian economy to sustain its position as fastest growing major economy in 2025-26: RBI annual report

India's bank holidays are detailed and are determined according to Reserve Bank of India (RBI) regulations. For 2025-26, the Reserve Bank of India has projected real gross domestic product (GDP) growth at 6.5 per cent and consumer price index (CPI) inflation at 4 per cent. The Indian economy is poised to remain the fastest-growing major economy in 2025-26 driven by its sound macroeconomic fundamentals, robust financial sector and commitment towards sustainable growth, the Reserve Bank of India said in its annual report for 2024-25.

It, however, said that uncertainty about global trade post-protectionist measures, protracted geopolitical tensions and global financial market volatility pose downside risks to the growth outlook and upside risks to the inflation outlook. "The Indian economy is poised to sustain its position as the fastest growing major economy during 2025-26, supported by pickup in private consumption, healthy balance sheets of banks and corporates, easing financial conditions and the government's continued thrust on capital expenditure," the annual report said. For 2025-26, the Reserve Bank of India has projected real gross domestic product (GDP) growth at 6.5 per cent and consumer price index (CPI) inflation at 4 per cent. The easing of supply chain pressures, softening of global commodity prices and higher agricultural production on the back of a likely above-normal south-west monsoon augur well for the inflation outlook in 2025-26, the report said.

In the financial year 2024-25, headline inflation eased by 73 basis points (bps) to 4.6 per cent in 2024-25. The report said that with inflation falling below the target in February and March 2025, supported by a sharp fall in food infla-



tion, there is now greater confidence about a durable alignment of headline inflation with the target of 4 per cent over a 12-month horizon. "The benign inflation outlook and moderate growth warrant monetary policy to be growth supportive, while remaining watchful about the rapidly evolving global macroeconomic conditions," it said. Prolonged geopolitical uncertainties, excessive global financial market volatilities, trade fragmentation and restrictive trade policies pose upward risks to the inflation trajectory, it said. On financial markets, the report said during 2025-26, markets will closely track the implications of tariff policies of the US and reciprocal measures by others, as an uncertain policy environment may instil volatility in global financial markets. Following a correction in the second half of 2024, Indian equity markets are expected to remain resilient amidst stable macroeconomic conditions and moderation in equity market valuations, although geopolitical uncertainty poses downside risk.

Elon Musk checks out after taking the chainsaw to US government: why it was just a matter of time

In less than five months, Elon Musk is leaving US President Donald Trump as one of his top advisers after spearheading the efforts to cut the American government's federal staff strength. Musk's exit, announced late Wednesday, marks the end of a tumultuous chapter that saw thousands of layoffs, a following out of key government agencies and multiple lawsuits. Musk accomplished far less than he'd started out to do, when he took charge at the Department of Government Efficiency, or DOGE. And this follows a pattern. Just 69 days after Trump announced the DOGE team, Vivek Ramaswamy, who was to share the burden at the helm with Musk, abruptly quit.

"As my scheduled time as a Special Government Employee comes to an end, I would like to thank President @realDonaldTrump for the opportunity to reduce wasteful spending," Musk wrote on X Wednesday. "The @DOGE mission will only strengthen over time as it becomes a way of life throughout the government." Incidentally, Musk's announcement came a day after the news channel CBS released part of an interview in which he criticised Trump's tax cut bill — the centrepiece of the President's legislative agenda — by saying he was "disappointed" by what Trump calls his "big beautiful bill."

The legislation includes both tax cuts and stricter immigration enforcement. Musk had earlier voiced his dissenting views on immigration action, especially on H1B visas. "I think a bill can be big or it could be beautiful," Musk said. "But I don't know if it could be both." Key Reasons Musk's role at DOGE was seen as somewhat temporary, but the unceremonious exit has got tongues wagging. The main reason for this is being attributed to Musk's signalling in recent weeks that would be shifting his attention back to running his businesses, especially electric automaker Tesla. His role at DOGE had, however, led to multiple run-ins with key personalities in Trump's cabinet, including Secretary of State Marco Rubio and Defence Secretary Pete Hegseth. Also, Musk's role at the helm of DOGE fell well short of his original targets for reducing headcount.

When Musk started out, Trump had likened the initiative, an idea mooted by Musk himself, to the "Manhattan Project" (the World War II project led by the US to produce the first nuclear weapon) saying "this will send shockwaves through the system, and anyone involved in government waste, which is a lot of people!" The prediction indeed turned out to be true, and Musk became a bugbear for many inside Trump's cabinet and those laid-off, including many in Trump's voter base in the heartland states. There were also multiple contradictions in the symbiotic relationship between Trump and Musk, which both sides had to work with — or around, right from the start. China: Trump started by increasingly filling his incoming administration with China trade and security hawks while Musk had a cordial working relationship with high-ranking officials in China, where he established Tesla as the country's first fully foreign-owned automaker in 2018. Chinese state media has often cited

Tesla as an example of successful trade cooperation between Beijing and Washington. China is Tesla's second-largest market only after the US and the Tesla Gigafactory in Shanghai, which started production in 2020, is the carmaker's largest production centre in the world. Tesla sold some 600,000 EVs in China last year. As the developing trade war between the world's two biggest economies intensified, Musk found himself in an increasingly difficult position to firewall his interests in China and justify his position as one of Trump's top advisors.

Trumponomics: Before taking charge, Musk has expressed doubts over the basic tenets of Trump's economic plans including his call for mass deportations of undocumented immigrants and higher tariffs on practically all imports. On tax cuts, Musk had acknowledged at a "telephone town hall" just before Trump's swearing in that cutting government spending, given the tax cut promises, could be painful. On the other issue of illegal immigration, the Washington Post had reported how Musk himself "worked illegally" in the US while building Zip2, his company which sold for about \$300 million in 1999 and bankrolled most of his other ventures. Climate change: Trump's climate change denial and consistent ridicule of EV manufacturing flew in the face of Tesla's main business. Trump has vociferously supported internal combustion engine car makers, batted for the Detroit Big Three (GM, Ford and Chrysler) and started to walk the talk by cutting federal support for EVs. For Musk, all of this presented an existential challenge. His personal wealth was tied largely in Tesla stock and his EV hard sell was fundamentally rooted in the environmentally-friendly pitch of battery electric cars that Tesla makes. The Detroit three were among Tesla's competitors. Paring down the federal subsidy was a serious headwind for Tesla especially when EV sales are seeing a temporary slowdown. Starlink, SpaceX: Musk's Starlink satellite internet service has provided a clear frontline advantage to Ukraine since the 2022 Russian invasion, permitting Kyiv to share real-time drone feeds between battlefield units and keep communication lines open where war has disrupted cell phone services. Given Trump's perceived rethink on Russian president Vladimir Putin, Starlink's support to Ukraine has already seen some recalibration. SpaceX, which operates Starlink, has a lot of business riding on US government contracts. It won a \$1.8-billion contract with US military and intelligence agencies in 2021 and is now the major rocket launcher for NASA and Pentagon. Clearly, Musk needed to straddle a diplomatic tightrope and face conflict-of-interest scrutiny. His lay-offs at the Department of Space also raised serious issues of conflict. Cutting jobs: For all the talk of streamlining government, Musk's impulsive firings in his companies did not square with Trump's employee-friendly pitch. Indeed, during his campaign, Trump championed the cause of American workers, eliciting support from prominent union leaders ostensibly campaigning against mass lay-offs at American companies.

Major study says malaria reinfection creates special immune cells



In a groundbreaking discovery that could reshape our understanding of the immune system and pave the way for revolutionary new vaccines and drugs, scientists have characterised a previously less-understood immune cell with powerful regulatory functions. They have found that immune cells called TR1 cells play a dominant role in mounting an immune response to malaria. The implications of the study, published in the journal *Science Immunology* on April 25, are far-reaching, potentially opening new pathways to conquer not only malaria but many other 'difficult' infections for which we currently lack effective vaccines.

The human immune system has a complex multi-layered defence against infections. Its arsenal of weapons includes numerous components and subcomponents with precisely defined tasks to execute. They must also coordinate with each other to ensure the response is effective and minimises self-harm. When an infectious agent breaches the first layers of defence (skin and mucosae), specialised arms of the immune system respond. The first among them is innate immunity: it acts against any threat non-specifically, while activating other arms of the system, which are collectively called adaptive immunity. In addition to acting against a threat, adaptive immunity stores a record of the molecular signature of the threat, or antigen, with help from the memory cells. Every antigen has specific memory cells. When they recognise an antigen they've encountered before, they accelerate and enhance the immune response. This adaptive immunity has two important sub-components. Antibody-mediated humoral immunity is mediated chiefly by B-cells while cell-mediated immunity involves the T-cells. The new study, led by Jason Nideffer of Stanford University, focused on a subtype of T-cells called CD4+ cells. They are also called helper cells because they help activate B-cells, T-cells, and immune cells like macrophages during an immune response. The team examined helper cells in children and adults who have suffered malaria multiple times. One subset of helper cells are the type-1 regulatory T-cells, or TR1 cells. Another subset of helper cells are the TH1 cells.

The study was conducted in eastern Uganda, where the malaria parasite *Plasmodium falciparum* (Pf for short) is perennially transmitted. Ugandan children under 5 years of age often suffer three to five episodes of malaria every year. After multiple episodes, they become clinically immune by about 10 years of age: i.e., they don't develop symptoms despite getting infected by Pf again. The researchers have surmised that Pf-specific helper cells play a crucial role in developing this clinical immunity. Specifically, for many years, malaria textbooks said that the human body responded to a Pf infection by mounting a 'classic' immune response mediated by CD4+ TH1 cells. But by sequencing more than 500,000 single CD4+ T-cells and tracking their genetic barcodes, the researchers found that TR1 cells are the real heroes. While they make up only around 3% of resting CD4+ cells, they account for almost 90% of all Pf-specific helper cells. The research team took advantage of an ongoing three-year study called Malaria in Uganda Systems Biology and Computational Approaches study (MUSICAL). The study is trying to understand malaria in Uganda using advanced systems biology and computational approaches. Investigators follow the participants with regular surveillance, including blood smear, quantitative PCR tests, peripheral blood mononuclear cell sampling. In the new study, the researchers tracked helper-cell clones through multiple infections in humans to assess their long-term stability and the efficiency with which they could facilitate an immune response inside the body over hundreds of days. (Helper cells that respond to the same antigen are said to be clones of each other.)

A health worker prepares a malaria vaccination. The World Health Organisation endorsed the use of the malaria vaccine Mosquirix on children aged five months to five years in October 2021. The first unique feature of the study was its longitudinal nature. All previous studies on the subject have been cross-sectional, i.e. studying a population at one point in time. Longitudinal studies are more challenging since they require repeated biological sampling, active case-finding, and long-term follow-ups of participants.

The researchers used an advanced technique called single-cell RNA and T-cell receptor (TCR) sequencing to track the relative proliferation of different CD4+ T-cell clonotypes (clones derived from the same ancestor cell),

Delhi school kids are becoming obese, developing BP: Why AIIMS study is sounding alarm bells

It's time to clamp down on cheap street foods outside schools and mobile addiction as adolescent school students in Delhi are suffering from abdominal obesity — commonly known as belly fat — and hypertension, according to a new study conducted by the All-India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) Delhi. This is particularly concerning since both of these could be risk factors for diabetes and heart disease in their adult years.

The study has found that while obesity is more common in private schools, hypertension is prevalent in both private and public school students. What is alarming is the presence of dyslipidemia (abnormal levels of fats in the blood) in children, at approximately 34 per cent. The condition indicates abnormal readings of cholesterol, triglycerides, high density lipoprotein (HDL) or good cholesterol and low density lipoprotein (LDL) or the bad cholesterol. This does not always mean that the children look fat. In fact, they may look skinny but have a high body fat percentage and low muscle mass. The study was conducted by doctors from endocrinology, cardiac biochemistry and biostatistics departments of AIIMS and funded by the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR). Researchers have been tracking the status of 3,888 students, between six- and 19 year-olds, at both private and public schools in Delhi. Altogether 1,985 students were from public schools and 1,903 were from private ones. The team looked at blood pressure (BP), waist circumference, fasting blood glucose, cholesterol and triglycerides. Explaining the findings, Dr Nikhil Tandon, Professor and HOD, Endocrinology and Metabolism, AIIMS, and co-principal investigator, says, "A lot of parameters in early life project what will happen in later life. The current obesity might not be causing diabetes now but

their changes afterwards, and whether they multiplied in the same ways after every infection. Together, these data conote the cells' memory potential (how well they remember) and clonal fidelity (how well they make copies of themselves). This was the second unique feature of this study. Previous studies on the CD4+ T-cell response to malaria were based on characterising them using enzyme-linked immunosorbent spot assays or flow cytometry-based approaches, which have many inherent limitations. As a result, researchers have thus far had trouble characterising whether the TR1 cells induced by malaria were a bona fide class of helper cells distinct from other TH1 cells. By sequencing memory CD4+ T-cells before, during, and multiple times after repeated episodes of malaria, the researchers acquired an unbiased picture of CD4+ T-cells' memory in the body. To perform its specific functions, each cell needs specific proteins. The sequencing technique reveals which proteins a cell is making. Call it a genetic barcode that the sequencing reads to reveal the cell's current state. The team found that nearly all clonotypes displayed a strong preference for one of seven subsets of CD4+ T-cells. This finding was made possible by the team's use of single-cell genomics in vivo. Perhaps the biggest finding was that the TR1 cells also displayed high average clonal fidelity. The study also identified TR1 cells as the dominant CD4+ T-cell subset induced after paediatric malaria and that they are capable of long-term memory with clonal fidelity upon reinfection. Sequence samples in the same individuals also revealed many clonotypes at multiple time points that retained their fidelity for hundreds of days. The researchers used each T-cell's barcode TCR sequence to keep track of 'who was who' as the cells went from a calm, resting state to a revved-up, activated state. The technique let them see — without any guess-work — which genes flipped on universally and which flipped on only in, say, TR1 cells. It revealed the presence of fresh subset-specific genes. It also showed that while helper cells 'shouted' by expressing the TNF and IL-2 genes, regulator cells hit the brakes by expressing the FAS gene.

The researchers also conducted another test that likened the seven CD4+ T-cells subsets to an army with seven regiments. When they blew a loud horn, every soldier charged forward. But when they waved a specific enemy flag — in this case, Pf-infected red blood cells — only one regiment, the TR1 peacekeepers, stepped forward. These TR1 troops are normally a small minority yet almost all malaria-recognising T-cell badges belonged to them. In other words, people who have never fought malaria don't have that regiment, so nothing much happens when their cells see the specific flag. In sum., the researchers were able to verify that TR1 cells mounted a focused, antigen-specific response to blood-stage malaria and not a broad, nonspecific reaction. With longitudinal follow-ups, researchers found that TR1 cells' abundance increased with every infection — even when the second infection occurred hundreds of days from the first — and more than tripled after a few infections. The abundance also correlated with the frequency of Pf parasites in the blood, suggesting that the TR1 cell response depends on the antigen load. Although the abundance also dropped a bit from the peak once an individual recovered from an infection, it still maintained higher baseline levels in clinically immune individuals.

In fact, even though a subset of helper cells called TH1 cells also clonally expanded after a symptomatic infection, they didn't expand upon reinfection — whereas the TR1 helper cells did. This suggested that the TH1 cells are likely not Pf-specific and that their expansion after the first infection was unrelated to the infection being malaria. The finding is important because it almost completely negates a suggestion from previous studies that malaria primarily induces a TH1 response. The researchers also found some preliminary evidence to suggest that the TR1 cell response is encoded epigenetically, meaning the response is controlled in a way that is independent of the genes. Gene-expression studies of TR1 cells showed that there are distinct subgroups of these cells: naïve-like TR1 cells, effector TR1 cells and memory TR1 cells. The expansion and contraction of these subpopulations during and after symptomatic infections proved that these are functionally distinct entities and validated the memory potential of individual Pf-specific TR1 clones.

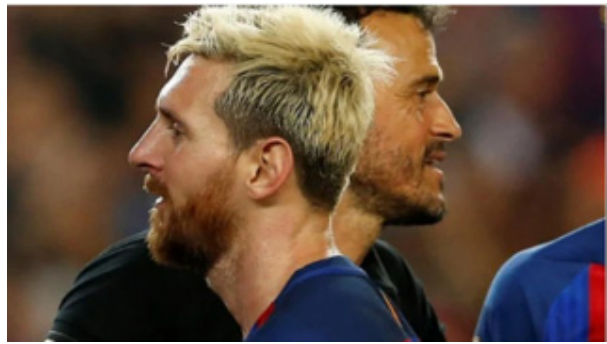
These insights into the immune response against malaria are likely to be game-changers: in approaches to prevent or manage malaria infections as well as in terms of opening new avenues to interrogate certain diseases and how our bodies respond to them. For example, by proving that TR1 cells are the ones to follow during a malaria reinfection, the study offers new ways to develop effective vaccines against malaria. If TR1 cells take centre stage, and given how they work, they may be helping the body carry Pf parasites without falling severely ill. Their specific role also opens the door to host-directed therapies, i.e. improving treatment outcomes by 'tuning' the immune system rather than targeting the pathogen itself. The findings may also open new avenues of research into the immunology of other infectious diseases and new ways to conquer them.

increase the chances and beget adult obesity. With an increase in non-communicable diseases, obesity is a big factor that we must talk about. Culturally, we have to change our perception. Malnutrition isn't just about under nutrition but also over nutrition, which is equally bad."

What's behind the abnormal readings of students?

While access to junk food is usually associated with the affluent class, what has been overlooked is that even students from lower middle classes are now eating unhealthy food. "What's happening is that they buy the cheaper and smaller packets of branded processed snacks. Street vendors peddle highly fried food or high sugar food at low prices which students of government schools find pocket-friendly. The quantity becomes more important than the quality of food. On top of it, they are not spending their energy. These children, too, are sitting in one place with a mobile, equally addicted as their private school counterparts. So the screen time has increased. Unspent calories are being converted to fat, which are being deposited around the organs. However, even the percentage of obese students is increasing in public school children," says Dr M Kalaivani, assistant professor of Biostatistics, AIIMS Delhi and principal investigator. Comparing data from 2006, she says the prevalence of obesity was five per cent, which has now increased to 23 per cent in private school-going children from affluent families. "In 2006 the prevalence of underweight children was high in public schools but now those public school-going children are also moving towards obesity," adds Dr Kalaivani. Which is why it's important to make some changes in the mid-day meal scheme, which was conceived at a time when under-nutrition was a public health concern. "

When Lionel Messi fought with Luis Enrique, ‘a period of tension’



Messi returned to Barcelona training a couple of days after his teammates, after spending New Year's in Rosario. He arrived by plane with Dani Alves and Neymar. But for some reason Messi was in a bad mood. During the training, Messi fell in the opponent's penalty area and Luis Enrique, who was refereeing, said, "siga siga" (go on), triggering protests from Messi. The situation escalated and Messi went after the coach in the dressing room and Clarin the newspaper reported that Neymar had to intervene to stub out the tension that day.

That weekend though, Messi was substituted in a loss to Real Sociedad. Messi was brought in only 13 minutes into the second half, didn't have much of a role in the game, and was substituted. He ended up arguing with Enrique again, and didn't turn up for training next day. "Until everything was resolved, there was a period of tension, which I certainly didn't seek out, but which arose and which I had to deal with," Luis Enrique recalled now. In the recent past, in 2022, Messi too has spoken about that phase. "I had a special relationship with Luis Enrique. When he decided to leave, we tried to convince him to stay until the very end because we were still doing well. In 2015 January he benched me and there was a conflict, but it got resolved and we had a fantastic relationship," Messi said. Under Enrique's leadership, Barca won two league titles, two Copa del Rey triumphs, a win at the Super Cup, and a Champions League title. "Today I can only speak highly of Leo Messi," says Luis Enrique, who left Barca with an 80.29 percent effectiveness rate: "A beastly season."

GNS News Agency, June 4

Under Enrique's leadership, Barca won two league titles, two Copa del Rey triumphs, a win at the Super Cup, and a Champions League title. Under Enrique's leadership, Barca won two league titles, two Copa del Rey triumphs, a win at the Super Cup, and a Champions League title. On May 31, Luis Enrique will coach PSG in the Champions League final in Munich against Inter Milan, but he took time out to rewind to his days with Barcelona, in particular a fight with Lionel Messi. "Everyone thought it was easy to manage Barcelona with Messi, Neymar, and Suárez, but now it's clear that it isn't," says Luis Enrique just days before the big European final.

The moment of friction came in 2015. In January 2015,

'Chelsea fans deserve it, they've waited for few years for good moments': Chelsea manager Enzo Maresca after winning Conference League

GNS News Agency, June 4

Chelsea thrashed Real Betis 4-1 to win the UEFA Europa Conference League in Wroclaw, Poland on Wednesday, ending their 2024-25 season with silverware just days after confirming their spot in the UEFA Champions League for the next season. The title win made Chelsea the first club to win all three major European Championships, having won the UCL and the Europa League (2013 and 2019) on two occasions. The Blues are also the first side to win all five of UEFA's men's senior club competitions, including Super Cup and Cup Winners Cup. In addition, the club with a rich history have also claimed the FIFA Club World Cup in 2021.

The Blues had to struggle in the first half, going down 1-0 after a ninth-minute goal by Abde Ezzalzouli before making a swift comeback in the second half. "In the first half, we approached the game in the wrong way. I expected it a little bit, because for two days the happiness was a little bit too much after Nottingham Forest," said Chelsea boss Enzo Maresca. "You go all season waiting, waiting. We struggled a little bit with that, but the second half was much better. The message after Forest was that if we wanted to be an important team, what we've done is done and we want to win a final now. That was the message, but there's the happiness, the tiredness. We played on Sunday for a big target, (Betis) played on Friday for nothing. They had 48 hours extra. I expected it a little bit, but in the second half we were much better and we were attacking in behind, which we didn't do before half-time," he added.

Chelsea beat Forest 1-0 in the last league game to finish fourth in the Premier League, denying their opponent



a chance in UCL while confirming their spot. Enzo Fernández opened the account for Chelsea in the 65th minute before Nicolas Jackson found the back of the net in the 70th minute. It was followed by an 83rd-minute goal by Jadon Sancho and ended with an extra-time goal by Moisés Caicedo in the 91st minute. "I'm very proud, and very happy," he said. "I know the fans deserve it, they've waited for a few years for good moments. The club has invested a lot of money so they've been waiting too. Hopefully, this can be a starting point and we can begin to create something important," said an elated Maresca. The target for next season? "We're going to try again. We'll enjoy it for a week or so, and then start looking ahead," he concluded. Chelsea have now won nine UEFA club competitions, placing them eighth in the all-time rankings behind Real Madrid (26), AC Milan (17), Barcelona (14), Liverpool (13), Bayern München (12), Juventus (11) and Ajax (10). Inter can join them on nine trophies if they beat Paris in the upcoming UEFA Champions League final in Munich.

What is Virat Kohli's Playoffs batting record ahead of PBKS vs RCB IPL 2025 Qualifier 1 match?

GNS News Agency, June 4

PBKS vs RCB Qualifier 1: Virat Kohli holds a poor IPL Playoffs record across 15 appearances. (BCCI) PBKS vs RCB Qualifier 1: Virat Kohli holds a poor IPL Playoffs record across 15 appearances. (BCCI) Virat Kohli will undoubtedly be the point of focus when Royal Challengers Bengaluru step out to bat against the Punjab Kings in the IPL 2025 Qualifier 1 match at the Maharaja Yadavindra Singh International Cricket Stadium in Mullanpur, Chandigarh



The 36-year-old Kohli has been part of heartbreaks aplenty in RCB colours over the years and was a part of three IPL finals with the franchise, losing on all three accounts. Since the IPL Playoffs system was introduced, Kohli and RCB have played in two finals in 2011 and 2016, reaching the finals in both editions after winning the Qualifier 1 matches. However, Kohli and RCB have held a mixed record in the Playoffs stages of the IPL over the years. 2016 seasons behind successive editions in 2023 and 2024. Kohli has racked up eight fifties this season, his best haul for any IPL edition since debut in 2008, the fifty-plus scores count was only bettered during his record-breaking season in 2016, with four centuries and seven half-centuries. Kohli has been on a superb run away from home too, notching up a fifty in every designated away game in 2025. However, RCB's star batter has not been at his belligerent best in the Playoffs stage over the years. In 15 previous IPL Playoffs appearances, Kohli has only scored 341 runs. Kohli averages 26.23 in these games and has a lowly 121.78 strike-rate while posting a fifty in two innings.

Asian Athletics Championships: India win gold in mixed relay

GNS News Agency, June 4

Gumi (South Korea): India's 4x400m mixed relay team defended its gold with a domineering performance after four individual silvers and a bronze in varying events bolstered the country's overall tally to eight medals on a brilliant second day out at the 26th Asian Athletics Championship here.



The Indian quartet of Rupal Chaudhary, Santhosh Kumar, Vishal TK, and Subha Venkatesan won the top honours with a timing of 3:18.12 sec. Of these, Rupal also claimed the individual women's 400m silver earlier in the day. Subha, on the other hand, was a part of the mixed team that claimed gold in the 2023 edition. China, which finished a distant second with a time of 3:20.52s, and Sri Lanka, which clocked 3:21.95s to take third place, were both disqualified. The reasons for their disqualification have not been disclosed yet. Due to the disqualifications, Kazakhstan (3:22.70s) and Korea (3:22.87s) clinched the silver and bronze medals, respectively.

'Boos from fans is something that Man United needs': Manager Amorim after 1-0 loss to ASEAN All-Stars in friendlies



GNS News Agency, June 4

Manchester United's horrid run continued even after the football season was over. The Ruben Amorim side was handed a 1-0 loss against ASEAN All-Stars in a post-season friendly match at the Bukit Jalil National Stadium in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia on Wednesday. Nearly 73,000 United fans and supporters were in attendance for their team's first game in Malaysia since 2009. However, things were left disappointed with a loss as there was a smattering of boos at full-time. After another disappointing finish, Amorim said he felt guilty for United's performance and they deserve boos from the fans. "I'm always guilty of the performance of the team, no matter what. Since I've been here from the first day, I am guilty. The boos from the fans is something that

we need, maybe," said the Portuguese after the match. "Because every game we lost in the Premier League, they (fans) were always there (supporting). It's like the way of playing, if they see that it's not working, they will change the way they behave. But I felt when we finished and walked away, the supporters were with us. But, again, let's wait for the next season," he added.

A 71st-minute goal from Maung Maung Lwin was the difference between both the teams. Amorim admitted that United were slow on the pitch and should have performed better. "We should perform better. We were slow, we don't have us to win every exercise in training, and every game the important thing is we had no injuries," said a dejected Amorim. "With some players it was a risk but we wanted to show respect to the fans. We should win with these kind of games," he added.

Before concluding, Amorim declined to confirm the signing of Wolves' Matheus Cunha, who reportedly is set to join United for a 62.5 million Euro deal. "You have to wait for that for the next season. It is for you guys to talk about. I won't confirm anything. I have no news. We will see. There will be some changes," he said. Man United finished 15th in the Premier League campaign, where they finished 15th in the standings. They lost the Europa League final to a fellow Premier League club, Tottenham Hotspur, to end another campaign without any silverware. The Red Devils will play another friendly, this time against Hong Kong in Hong Kong on Friday.

'Rishabh Pant isn't going to score 118 on a tricky pitch': AB de Villiers slams IPL commentators for 'negative' remarks on RCB in LSG match

GNS News Agency, June 4

Royal Challengers Bengaluru legend AB de Villiers was not pleased to hear the negative remarks about the franchise during their last IPL 2025 league match against the Lucknow Super Giants at the Ekana Stadium on Tuesday. A win crucial to secure a Qualifier 1 spot, RCB were silenced by the home side in the first half when they racked up a massive 227-run total on the back of skipper Rishabh Pant's century. The RCB bowlers came under collective fire in the absence of Josh Hazlewood, but de Villiers said he was fuming when he heard the excessive criticism from the commentary box.



"I listened to the commentators last night, and honestly, it got me so angry," said de Villiers on his YouTube channel. "They were so negative when we were bowling. They kept saying, 'RCB's bowling is under pressure. They don't look like they're going to manage it. Once again, an inform team is starting to lose momentum.' But what about this- maybe it was just a really good batting wicket, guys? To all you very clever and sharp commentators out there, how about considering the possibility that it was an excellent surface for batting?" de Villiers further elaborated on how commentators tend to formulate and stick to certain narratives.

"They went on about how RCB's bowling unit was once again in poor form. As I watched the match, I thought: sometimes commentators get fixated on a narrative. Yes, RCB have never won a title, but it's lazy to keep saying, 'Here

we go again. The bowlers are failing, they're useless,' without properly analysing what's happening on the field. Rishabh Pant is not going to score 118 off 60-odd balls on a tricky, very difficult pitch. All the LSG batters were fluent out there. "Yes, there was some poor bowling at times. But ultimately, one must look at the bigger picture- 227 runs on a wicket that typically doesn't support such batting suggests it was simply a very good surface. RCB were still in the contest; they weren't blown away, and they proved that," he added. Nevertheless, RCB razed down the tall target, securing their highest-ever chase in history with seven balls to spare on the back of Jitesh Sharma's unbeaten 84 and Virat Kohli's fifty. The three-time runners-up will face Punjab Kings in the Qualifier 1 match in New Chandigarh on Thursday.

Nagalakshmi living her dreams through journeys of her children, Praggnanandhaa and Vaishali

GNS News Agency, June 4

As the tense form of Vaishali sits on the board, blitzing out moves against elite opponents at the Norway Chess tournament, her mother Nagalakshmi makes herself comfortable on the last seat of the playing hall in a spot that's out of Vaishali's eyeline. Walk into the playing hall on any given day of the Norway Chess tournament, and Nagalakshmi will likely be there in that exact seat for an hour after 5 pm when the games start. Her face is usually impassive. Her eyes are trained on the facsimiles of the chessboards being projected up on the walls of the playing hall at the Finansparken Bjergsted for the audience to follow the action. She admits she doesn't understand the nuances of the sport — or even wants to understand them — but as Praggnanandhaa had said during the Tata Steel Kolkata Chess tournament in 2023, she can gauge what's going on on the board simply by the expressions on her kids' faces.



"But these days it's getting harder to do that," she had told The Indian Express with a chuckle last year during the Norway Chess tournament, when again, you could find her on the same seat in the playing hall during each game of Norway Chess when both of her kids, Praggnanandhaa and Vaishali, were playing. "Both my kids usually have the same expression during games these days. It's hard for me to read it now. I don't know the game. And I don't ever want to learn the game. It's a conscious decision. If I learn the sport, then every move will be a source of tension. Because I don't know the sport well, I'm okay." Thanks to her two children, Nagalakshmi has lived some of the dreams she had when she was younger.

Nagalakshmi is not the only family member of a player in the playing hall at Norway Chess. This year, Magnus Carlsen's father, Henrik, and his wife, Ella, besides Gukesh's father, Rajini Kanth, have been constants in the playing arena during every game. While Gukesh's father sits in the playing hall itself with barely any movement from the start to the end of a game, Carlsen's dad has a self-imposed prohibition about entering playing halls. So he withdraws to a backroom, out of sight from the rest of the world. Last year, the then world champion Ding Liren's mother would also make it a point to be in the playing hall for games, ensuring she sat at a spot where her son was in her eye line. Last year, at the official players' hotel, since the breakfast would end early, it was not unusual to see Nagalakshmi carrying plates of food for both Pragg and Vaishali back to their rooms. She would then get busy cooking lunch for both kids in their room, with the utensils she had brought along with her. Though the kids eat non-vegetarian fare, and there are a few Indian restaurants in Stavanger, they're always wary of what they might accidentally eat, so Nagalakshmi ensured they have a warm home-cooked meal for lunch before games. "For breakfast, Pragg and I don't leave the room because we're usually sleeping. So our mother gets us plates of food with fruits and croissants in the morning. For lunch, she makes it all by herself. We don't contribute anything or help her prepare in any way. She makes sure that other things are set for us during tournaments, and we can fully focus on chess. She has done the same for us for about 15 years now." Vaishali had told The Indian Express during Norway Chess 2024. The grandmother sibling duo is so used to having Nagalakshmi in their corner at events that when they're both playing in different countries, things get tricky for whoever has to travel alone. "I'm so used to travelling to tournaments with her that I feel the absence when she has to travel with Pragg. Last year, I went to Turkey to play in the Turkish league, when I was staying alone. My mother had travelled with Pragg because he had a more important tournament at the time. I had to cook for myself because I didn't like the food. I had to make my own lunch, so I had to prepare before games and then I had to wash the dishes myself. I really felt every day at that time that I wish my mother was here," Vaishali had said.

"I'm on my sixth passport now. Four of them are completely stamped out," Nagalakshmi beamed. She wasn't boasting, but you could sense the pride in her voice at what the passports had come to represent. When she was young, she had dreamt of a life abroad. "I got my first passport when I was young and studying. I had a BSc degree in mathematics. Before I got married, I wanted to go abroad and work at a hospital in whichever country I could. But that passport expired without it getting any use. I wanted to pursue this further abroad. I also worked as a lab technician in Chennai. Twice in my younger days, I had a government job. But on one of those occasions, I was pregnant (with Vaishali), so I had to forgo the opportunity," Nagalakshmi had told if chess players are bound by game-time routines, players' parents such as Nagalakshmi find their own rhythms too for the five-hour-plus windows when they're just hanging about at the arena while their kids play. For the second straight year, Nagalakshmi tiptoes out of the playing hall as soon as the clash meanders into the middle game. She will be back during the endgame, usually carrying a fruit or a bar of chocolate in her handbag for Vaishali. This has been one of the routines that she follows at tournaments where she accompanies her kids around the world. She is also present within listening distance every time Vaishali does a media interview.

Will Aryan Khan's show The Ba***ds of Bollywood be to India what Seth Rogen's The Studio is to Hollywood?



pointed out, "As a matter of fact, Farah shot that segment in true Studio-fashion: putting up a camera outside the actual awards." Both Farah and Zoya, cousins and daughters of a film producer and screenwriters, respectively, grew up on the sidelines of the film industry. They both saw their families struggle financially, which gives them a fair vantage point to criticize the industry as much as love it. But unlike Farah's film that packed in more themes, Zoya's love letter to the Bollywood outsider didn't find as many takers.

"Don't get me wrong. It's a much-loved film! But as a junior artist told Seth Rogen on the sets of The Studio, 'I hope this is not a very expensive inside joke.' That's what Luck By Chance was: an inside joke that a few would appreciate, but many would struggle to decode the narrative winks. Hrithik Roshan, Rishi Kapoor, and Dimple Kapadia are all on point in the film, but ultimately, the film is from the point of view of the outsider," said an assistant director who's worked with Zoya closely in the past. Moreover, Luck By Chance depicts the whims and quirks of the film industry insiders through a lens of love, instead of a magnifying glass that has more scrutiny. Konkona Sen Sharma's character remains a TV actor for years while Farhan Akhtar rises the ranks because he blends in. The film presents both paths, instead of cornering the film industry to reflect and change itself. Farhan Akhtar and Konkona Sen played lead roles in Luck By Chance. Farhan Akhtar and Konkona Sen played lead roles in Luck By Chance. Both Om Shanti Om and Luck By Chance were written at a time when the studio system hadn't entirely found a stronghold on the Hindi film industry. Madhur Bhandarkar, who'd already explored a part of the world with Page 3 in 2005, promised to expose the industry with Heroine (2012), starring Kareena Kapoor.

"Like all Bhandarkar films, Heroine also sensationalized the events and characters. It's not that they weren't true. The origins were. But they were exaggerated for gratuitous effect. Whereas in The Studio, it's not the events or the characters, but the situation that's heightened. That places people we know in circumstances we fear, instead of dumping characters far removed from reality in situations of the same nature," underlined a former film critic, now an industry insider. Just last year, there were two shows — Showtime on Disney+ Hotstar and Industry on Amazon MiniTV — that offered a ringside view of the contemporary film industry. Produced by Karan Johar, once alleged as "the flagbearer of nepotism," Showtime was as pulpy as that punchline, but eventually drowned in its own excesses. Whereas Industry, created by Navjot Gulati, has its moments, but is yet again a 2024 Aaram Nagar counterpart of Luck By Chance. "Showtime and Industry are fun to watch, but they don't have the bite of Entourage or The Studio. For god's sake, The Studio made Martin Scorsese weep on camera because he was removed from a film! Will a Sanjay Leela Bhansali do that cameo here," said an insider.

To even come close, one needs a fresh directorial voice who hits that sweet spot between being an insider and operating on the margins. And a strong studio to back it up: You need corporate muscle and tremendous goodwill to combat potential lawsuits and Reddit threads. So, is Aryan Khan's directorial debut The Ba***ds of Bollywood that show? Backed by Shah Rukh's Red Chillies Entertainment, the show hasn't revealed any of its cards, including the cast or the plot. But everyone, from Karan Johar to Ted Sarandos, have sung laurels about the show. "It's a fiercely guarded show. I can't say whether it's on the lines of The Studio, but the word out there is Aryan has the right distance to be objective and the apt position to be an observer," says a former employee of Netflix India. Right distance after his infamous arrest in 2021? "No, even before that, unlike his father, Aryan's ambition wasn't to be a movie star. He always wanted to be a filmmaker. If Shah Rukh Khan's son can have and assert that clarity from such a young age, you definitely have to give him that he's objective," the source adds. Whether The Ba***ds of Bollywood turns out to be to Bollywood what The Studio is to Hollywood is left to be seen, but the screenwriter (whose show is stuck) is hopeful Aryan's show will empower other studios to greenlight scripts like theirs. "I'm all for good stories. As long as we want to empower them," they say, adding, "Bollywood isn't really known for poking fun at anything, whether it's politics or businesses, but the least it can do is make fun of itself. Maybe that's the story it needs to get out of this creative crisis."

Ajay Devgn on choosing Kajol for Maa: 'Any husband would cast his wife in a horror role'



Kajol's character. "I want to thank Maddy, my friend, who has flown all the way from Chennai. He was shooting there all night, as you can gauge from his voice," said Devgn, who then hugged his Shaitaan co-star. "Whenever we've hugged on stage, it's been very lucky," quipped Madhavan. "Let's keep hugging," Devgn responded. When asked if he is concerned about the comparison between Maa and Shaitaan, Devgn said, "One can't compare both. The effort is always towards making a good film. The rest, fingers crossed, once you watch, you'll decide whether it's good or not." He clarified he wasn't tempted to make a cameo in Kajol's film just because Shaitaan shares the world with Maa. "Every film has its own story and characters. The actors who suited the parts have been cast like Ronit (Roy) is there," added Devgn. Vishal Furia, who has directed Maa, also defended any comparison with the Chhori franchise on Amazon Prime Video India, part 2 of which released earlier this year. "The only similarity is that both are stories of mothers. But we're talking about Maa Kali in this film, who is a much bigger entity. This world is much, much bigger. It's a cinematic experience. You can't watch it on OTT. You'll have to come and watch it in theatres," he said.

Ajay Devgn is back with the world of Shaitaan, but this time not as an actor, but as a producer. He's co-producing Maa, a mythological horror film, starring his wife Kajol in the lead role. "Who could he imagine in a horror role besides me?" Kajol burst out laughing as she shared the stage with Devgn at the trailer launch of Maa in Mumbai on Thursday. "Any husband would cast his wife," added Devgn. Maa revolves around Kajol's character who involves a supernatural power to protect her daughter from evil forces in a haunted haveli. "The character of the mother was so strong, who else could we imagine in the role but her," said Ajay Devgn. Kajol claimed that Maa is Hindi cinema's first mythological horror film. "So many horror films — horror comedies and other genres — are being made. But no one has attempted a mythological horror before. We have such a rich mythology over centuries. Hollywood has to create mythologies, but we're not using what we already have," reasoned Devgn. Kajol also confessed that the theme of motherhood in Maa echoed with her. "I spoke about this during Salaam Venky as well," she said, referring to the mother of a terminally ill patient she played in Revathy's 2022 directorial. "It's any parent's worst nightmare (to lose their child). I normally tend not to let my feelings affect my shot, but somewhere down the line, subconsciously, emotions come easier. Tears fall more easily. Because you feel so connected to it, and it's so real," the actor added. Kherin Sharma plays Kajol's daughter in Maa. When Ajay Devgn was asked if he didn't think of casting their daughter Nysa Devgn in that role, he promptly said, "At the moment, she's not interested in this kind of work." Interestingly, their son Yug Devgn, who was also present at the trailer launch, has lent his voice, along with his father, to the dubbed Hindi version of Hollywood action film Karate Kid: Legends, releasing in Indian cinemas this Friday. Since Maa comes from the world of Shaitaan, Vikas Bahl's hit supernatural horror film of last year, Ajay Devgn pulled off a surprise at the start of the trailer launch event. R Madhavan, who played the evil Vanraj Kashyap in Shaitaan, popped up to introduce

Kajol, Ajay Devgn react to '8-hour work shift' demand for working moms amid Deepika Padukone-Sandeep Reddy Vanga row: 'You should be able to...'



The makers of Maa, starring Kajol and backed by her husband-actor Ajay Devgn, released the trailer of the film on Thursday. During the trailer launch of the movie, the actor couple was asked about their opinion on the reduced number of work hours for mothers, amid Deepika Padukone and Sandeep Reddy Vanga's Spirit row. Deepika walked out of Vanga's Spirit, with sources citing that her demand for 8-hour workday, among many oth-

ers, was not met by the filmmaker. When a journalist asked if the demand of working an 8-hour for a mom is appropriate, Kajol replied, "Well, I love the fact that you can work less and..." Ajay apologised for interrupting her and said, "It is not like it's not going well with the people. Many are understanding it now. Most of the industry, I would say, will not have a problem with this. And apart from this being a mother and working for 8 hours, you should be able to start working for 8 to 9 hours shift. So I think it's person-to-person, but most of the industry does understand nowadays." Deepika Padukone and Sandeep Reddy Vanga stirred up a controversy after their reported fallout in Prabhas starrer Spirit. Several reports earlier suggested that Deepika opted out of due to remuneration issues, and her conditions around the work hours, in the wake of her motherhood journey. Soon after the speculations, it was officially announced that Tripti Dimri will be playing the female lead in Spirit. However, after a leak of the film's plot, Vanga took to his X handle and shared a cryptic post and wrote, "When I narrate a story to an actor, I place 100% faith. There is an unsaid NDA (Non Disclosure Agreement) between us. But by doing this, You've 'DISCLOSED' the person that you are... Putting down a Younger actor and ousting my story? Is this what your feminism stands for? As a filmmaker, I put years of hard work behind my craft & for me, filmmaking is everything. You didn't get it. You won't get it. You will never get it." Talking about Maa, along with Kajol, the movie also stars Ronit Roy, and Indraneil Sen Gupta, among others. Produced by Kumar Mangat Pathak, Ajay Devgn and Jyoti Deshpande under Jio Studios and Devgn Films, it will be released in various languages, including, Hindi, Tamil, Telugu, and Bengali, for a pan-India reach. The film is scheduled to hit the theatres on June 27.

Prabhas' Salaar is the most-watched movie on Indian OTT, Korean content outperforms homegrown titles on Netflix

JioHotstar dominated streaming charts in the month of March, according to new data shared by Nielsen. The most-watched film in India during this time was the Prabhas-starrer Salaar: Part 1 – Ceasefire, which made over Rs 700 crore in its box office run. Directed by Prashanth Neel, Salaar also featured Prithviraj Sukumaran, and is set to get a sequel. According to the report, shared by Variety, JioHotstar occupied seven of the top 10 spots on the charts. Dragon, on Netflix, also found a spot on the list, which was compiled after measuring the mobile phone viewing patterns of people in the 18-45 demographic in urban areas with populations exceeding 1 lakh.

The most-watched title as far as series are concerned was MX Player's Aashram, followed by JioHotstar's Thukra Ke Mera Pyaar. Surprisingly, the Korean series When Life Gives You Tangerines took the third spot, meaning that it outperformed every Indian title on Netflix in March. The fourth spot was claimed by the evergreen favourite Stranger Things, which also outperformed every Indian title. Game of Thrones also found a spot, while MTV Roadies led the pack in the non-original series category.

The list is based on data compiled from metro, mini-metro, Tier 1, and Tier 2 cities, using metrics that measure time spent and engagement. India has the world's second-largest internet users, which is why it's high on the priority lists of international streamers. Netflix hasn't quite cracked the market yet, despite having had a presence in India since 2018. Thanks to the Indian Premier League, JioHotstar's subscriber rate reportedly grew to within touching distance of Netflix — 280 million, as compared to Netflix's 300 mil-



lion-plus. Discussing the viewing habits of Indian audiences in an interview with Indian Express, Monika Shergill, vice president — content, Netflix India, said, "You have to tell them in a way that wows people — surprises or delights them. It should be worth their time. Today, sitting anywhere in the world they can experience any kind of content, in any language. Their benchmark for what's good storytelling has gone up. We have some catching up to do."

'Virat Kohli's one like increased 2 mn followers of the girl': Rakul Preet Singh calls Virat-Anushka Sharma 'most inspiring', calls Avneet Kaur controversy 'sad'

Anushka Sharma and Virat Kohli have become the ultimate couple goals for many in the country, including actress Rakul Preet Singh, who is married to actor-producer Jacky Bhagnani. While the actor-cricketer duo keep making headlines for their cute gestures for each other within the cricket stadium and visits to spiritual places, Rakul in a recent interview shared how the couple is an inspiration for the entire nation. Speaking to Shubhankar Mishra on his YouTube channel, Rakul shared, "The couple I am extremely inspired by is Anushka Sharma and Virat Kohli. I think the entire nation is inspired by them." The actress also shared her opinion on the controversy around Virat Kohli accidentally liking actress Avneet Kaur's pictures on Instagram. Talking about the buzz around it, Rakul called it extremely sad. She said, "We are so jobless that we even know that his one like increased 2 million followers for the girl (Avneet Kaur). How does it matter? It's so sad that it became a news." Speaking about Virat's reaction to the whole controversy, Rakul said, "That is very personal decision. I think when you are a celebrity at Virat's level, everything that you do comes under the scanner. Even if you follow a profile, it becomes news." When asked if his statement was a forceful move by him, who once was known for his expressive nature, Rakul said, "A person evolves and changes over time. He might be a rebel back then but now he is a changed man, maybe because he wants to change. Who are we to assume that initially he was very expressive and now he is forced to issue statements for a single like. Everyone has their journey, so these bots that we have on Instagram, they don't really have any work. They only follow who wore what when and what have they been doing lately."

A day after Anushka Sharma's recent birthday, Virat Kohli was all over the news for liking a picture of Tiku Weds Sheru actress Avneet Kaur. The incident became so big that Virat Kohli had to ultimately issue a statement claiming, it was accidental. His statement read, "I'd like to clarify that while clearing my feed, it appears the algorithm may



have mistakenly registered an interaction. There was absolutely no intent behind it. I request that no unnecessary assumptions be made. Thank you for your understanding."

Urvashi Rautela claims Leonardo DiCaprio called her 'Queen of Cannes'

Mumbai: Urvashi Rautela claims Hollywood icon Leonardo DiCaprio called her the "Queen of Cannes" but social media users aren't buying it. Urvashi took to Instagram, where she shared a string of selfies with DiCaprio and captioned it: "When Leonardo DiCaprio calls you the Queen of Cannes! Thank you, Leo... now that's a Titanic compliment #QueenMovesOnly #QueenOfCannes #LeoAndUR #UrvashiRautela #Cannes2025 #leonardodicaprio." However, it's the comment section that really stoked the show, as social media users are skeptical of the actress's claim especially given her track record. One asked: "Does Leo know that he called you the queen of Cannes?" Another asked a similar question in the comment section: "