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Rachakonda Ravi Kumar elected FTCCI president

Hyderabad, July 16 : The Federation of Telangana Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FTCCI) announced its new leadership for the year 2025–2026. Rachakonda Ravi Kumar, a well-known technocrat and industrialist, was elected president. K.K. Maheshwari, a fintech professional and entrepreneur, takes over as Senior Vice President. The FTCCI represents over 3,000 direct members and 160 associations, reaching an indirect membership base of 25,000+ businesses. Ravi Kumar currently serves as Executive Director of Zetatek Technologies Pvt Ltd. He also serves as an independent Director at Telangana Industrial Health Clinic Limited. A State and national-level Shuttle Badminton player Ravi Kumar, continues to promote sports and fitness actively. K.K. Maheshwari is the Chairman & Managing Director of CIL Securities Ltd, a BSE-listed, diversified financial services company. The firm is a member of NSE, BSE, and MCX, and offers services as Merchant Bankers, Registrars & Share Transfer Agents, and Depository Participants.

Mahila Shakti celebrations held at Peddapalli

Hyderabad, July 16 The Indira Mahila Shakti celebrations took place on a large scale at the district headquarters of Peddapalli on Wednesday. Ministers Tummalala Nageswara Rao, Sridhar Babu, Seethakka, along with MLAs and other elected officials, participated in the event. During the ceremony, the Ministers unveiled new RTC rental buses operated by women's associations and presented the first month's rental costs, totaling Rs. 3.47 lakh. Additionally, they distributed cheques amounting to Rs. 1 crore for accident and loan insurance.

In her address, Minister for Panchayat Raj Seethakka stated that Chief Minister Revanth Reddy is committed to the vision of making one crore women millionaires in Telangana. She highlighted that within 48 hours of the Congress government's formation, the promise of free bus travel was implemented to alleviate the travel expenses for women.

Uppal-Narapalli flyover to be completed by 2026 Dussehra festival: Komatireddy



Hyderabad, July 16 Minister for Roads and Buildings Komatireddy Venkat Reddy has stated that the construction of the Uppal-Narapalli flyover is set to be finished and opened to the public by the time of next year Dussehra festival. Accompanied by Government Whip Beerla Ilaiiah, Uppal MLA Bandaru Lakshma Reddy, and various officials, the Minister on Wednesday conducted an inspection of the flyover construction from Uppal Ring Road to Narapalli, assessing the progress of the project. During his remarks, Komatireddy Venkat Reddy emphasised the government's commitment to the Uppal-Narapalli flyover and outlined efforts to expedite its completion. He noted that the flyover project, which commenced nearly eight years ago, faced significant delays owing to financial issues and other factors. Since the Congress government took office, I have focused on the flyover's development, engaging in discussions with Union Minister Nitin Gadkari to accelerate the work's progress, the Minister said.

He also mentioned that the State government has successfully persuaded the central government and has replaced the contractor who was previously handling the project, entrusting the work to a new individual. We will expedite the progress of the project with focused attention and aim to finish it quickly. This flyover is the largest one following the PV Express Highway in Hyderabad. We intend to complete it and make it accessible to the public by the next year Dussehra festival," stated Komatireddy. In 2018, Union Minister Nitin Gadkari laid the foundation for a 6.25-kilometer flyover that extends from Uppal to the Central Power Research Institute (CPRI) in Narapalli, with a budget of ₹527 crore.

Sridhar Babu demonstrates true humanity by assisting accident victim



Hyderabad, July 16 Minister for IT and Industries Duddilla Sridhar Babu has demonstrated exemplary compassion and humanity. In a touching act of kindness, he extended immediate support to a young man critically injured in a road accident. Reassuring the victim not to panic, he personally intervened and ensured the injured was swiftly shifted to the hospital for timely medical care. The incident occurred on Tuesday night near the Cable Bridge, as the Minister was returning after concluding official engagements. Upon noticing the youth lying severely injured on the road-side, Sridhar Babu stopped his vehicle, got down, and comforted the victim with reassuring words. He promptly alerted the local police and took charge of the situation. The Minister arranged for the victim to be transported to NIMS Hospital in an auto-rickshaw, even deputing a constable to accompany him. He also provided his personal assistant's phone number, asking the victim to reach out in case of further need. Upon the victim's arrival at the hospital, Sridhar Babu personally contacted NIMS doctors over the phone and ensured that the best possible treatment was provided. He later followed up to check on the victim's recovery. The victim's family expressed heartfelt gratitude to the Minister for his timely intervention and humane gesture.

DCA inspects medical shops across State

Hyderabad, July 16 (NSS): The Drug Control Administration, Telangana, as part of a special drive to curb the illegal sale of Abortion Kits (Abortifacient Drugs), conducted inspections across the State on July 16, 2025. The inspections were conducted on several medical shops across the State, focused on detecting the unauthorized sale of Abortion Kits including Mifepristone Tablets, Misoprostol Tablets, and so on. During the inspections, discrepancies were detected in 149 medical shops regarding the sale of Abortion Kits (Abortifacient Drugs), and Show Cause Notices were issued for initiating departmental action.

New Delhi, July 16 :Telangana has scored a major victory by convincing the Centre to install telemetry instruments on the Krishna River and making Andhra Pradesh agree to take up the restoration and repairs of the Srisaillam Dam. These decisions were taken during the meeting of Telangana and Andhra Pradesh Chief Ministers A Revanth Reddy and N Chandrababu Naidu in New Delhi on Wednesday, convened by Union Jal Shakti Minister C R Patil.

Later, Chief Minister Revanth Reddy and Irrigation Minister Uttam Kumar Reddy briefed the media about the four major decisions taken during the meeting. Congress MPs including Abhishek Manu Singhvi, Dr Mallu Ravi and others were also present at the press conference. Irrigation Minister Uttam Kumar Reddy said that a key decision was taken to install telemetry instruments at every off-take point of the Krishna river and its canals. "The Krishna river water usage has been a bone of contention between Andhra and Telangana for a long time. Who is using more water, less water, which canal, which reservoir, which ayacut etc. A decision has



been taken today - and that is on the insistence of Telangana Chief Minister and myself - that telemetry instruments must be put at every off-take point of Krishna river or canals," he said. He explained that while some instruments had already been installed, the decision now was to complete the process across all relevant points. "We said that we would give you funds immediately to Krishna River Management Board to do an exercise of putting telemetry measuring instruments at various points of the Krishna River. That was an important decision taken today," he added.

On the Srisaillam Dam's safety, the minister said the structure had been showing signs of concern,

especially in the plunge pool and other parts, and had not been properly attended to. He pointed out that it was the duty of the Government of Andhra Pradesh to carry out maintenance works. "The National Dam Safety Authority has also expressed concern about the health of the dam. So it was decided today - the Government of India has given directions to the Government of Andhra Pradesh - that the Srisaillam Dam will come under them for the purpose of maintenance and immediately, immediately on the most urgent basis, whatever needs to be done, whether it is a plunge pool or other parts of the dam that need urgent work will be done immediately," he stated. On the issue of river management

boards, Uttam Kumar Reddy recalled an earlier agreement from the 2020 Apex Council meeting and provisions of the Andhra Pradesh Reorganisation Act, which had proposed a division of the two river boards between the two states. "A final decision was taken that one of the river management boards—the two river management boards, Krishna and Godavari - one will be located in Telangana and one will be located in Andhra. This is just a ratification of the earlier decision. So the Godavari Management Board will be in Telangana and the Krishna River Management Board will be in Andhra," he said. He also stated that on all other pending issues related to the Krishna and Godavari rivers, a committee would be constituted soon. "A decision was taken that a committee consisting of senior officers, engineers and experts from both states would be formed in the next 3-4 days or a week, and they will, in the next one month or approximately 30 days, come up with a way forward on all issues concerning the two states on Krishna and Godavari rivers," he explained.

Mayor urges citizens to make Hyderabad a clean and green city

Hyderabad, July 16 (NSS): GHMC Mayor Gadwal Vijayalakshmi has called upon every citizen to contribute their part to make Greater Hyderabad a clean and green city by saying that they were making a planned effort to make Greater Hyderabad a clean and green city. On Wednesday, Mayor Gadwal Vijayalakshmi and Commissioner RV Karnan planted saplings as part of the Vana Mahotsav program in Kukatpally Zone's Shirdi Hills Colony within Greater Hyderabad. A borehole motor was inaugurated for the water needs of the saplings.

Speaking on the occasion, the Mayor said as part of the Vana Mahotsav program in Greater Hyderabad this year and as per the State government's orders, their target was to plant 25 lakh saplings with public participation. She said the saplings would be planted throughout this season. She also said the saplings would be distributed to every household in the city to achieve the target. "The citizens want to actively participate in planting trees. Every citizen wants to plant a tree in the name of their mother with the slogan "Ek Ped ... Make Naam". We want to pay special attention not only to plant trees, but also to take care of them," she said and added that by planting trees, they would provide a healthy environment to children. Commissioner RV Karnan said the Vana Mahotsav program was being organized in the Greater Hyderabad area with the aim



of making Hyderabad green. He said the Vanamahotsav goals would be set ward-wise and the government target would be fulfilled. He said that more priority would be given to their care than just planting trees. The students, who participated in the program shouted slogans like "Go Green" and the Mayor and Commissioners joined them. They took pictures and congratulated them. Kukatpally Zonal Commissioner Apurv Chauhan, UBD Additional Commissioner Subhadra Devi, Corporator Ravula Seshagiri Rao and others participated in the program.

KTR challenges CM Revanth to Public Debate at Medigadda Barrage



Hyderabad, July 16 : BRS working president and former minister K.T. Rama Rao (KTR) has thrown a direct challenge to Chief Minister Revanth Reddy, asking him to participate in a public debate at the Medigadda Barrage—a structure the CM repeatedly alleged to have "collapsed."

Speaking at a meeting with the Dalit Bandhu Sadhana Samithi at Telangana Bhavan today, KTR launched a scathing attack on Revanth Reddy's credibility and knowledge. "If he really believes the Medigadda Barrage has collapsed, let him come there and debate in front of the people" said KTR. He reminded the public that BRS had earlier invited the Chief Minister for a public debate, offering him three full days of preparation. "We went to the Press Club, ready to debate. But Revanth ran away. He is a coward, who talks

big and disappears when confronted," he said. "Now again, I'm challenging him let's have a debate, not at Nagarjunasagar as he challenged, but at Medigadda Barrage itself," KTR added. KTR mentioned that senior BRS leader and former minister Jagadish Reddy had already visited the Medigadda site and renewed the challenge. "If he has the courage, the Chief Minister must come and face us," KTR demanded. He also stated that despite Revanth Reddy knowing full well that it was former CM K. Chandrashekar Rao who ensured water supply to tail-end farmers in regions like Tungatirthi and Suryapet, Revanth Reddy continues to spread blatant lies for political mileage.

KTR condemned the repeated use of vulgar and undignified language by the CM. "Revanth Reddy keeps calling me a thief. When asked to implement his poll promises, he shamelessly says things like 'Do what you want. Will you cut and bite me?'" This is not the language of a responsible public representative," said KTR. "Let the people of Telangana respond to this in the upcoming local body elections," he warned. Stating that Congress manifesto is the biggest fraud of the century, KTR lambasted its unfulfilled poll promises. "Their manifesto is the biggest political fraud in modern India. They gave 420 promises, deceiving every section of Telangana society. They said they'd implement everything in 100 days. Now, when questioned, they're filing undemocratic cases against social media users, journalists, and ordinary citizens.

Telangana a favorable state for industrial establishments: Bhatti



Hyderabad, July 16 French Consul General Marc Lemaitre and his delegation paid a courtesy call on Deputy Chief Minister Bhatti Vikramarka at the Secretariat here on Wednesday. During the interaction, the Deputy Chief Minister stated that Telangana is a favorable destination for setting up technology and other industries and the State government is ready to extend all the support for industries. Bhatti Vikramarka also advised the French delegation to study the available resources and other aspects in the state. Principal Secretary of the Finance department Sandeep Kumar Sultania, and TRANSCO CMD Krishna Bhaskar, among others, participated in the meeting.

KCR condoles passing of Telangana activist Prof Prabhanjan Yadav



Hyderabad, July 16 Former Chief Minister and BRS president K Chandrashekar Rao on Wednesday expressed deep sorrow over the death of prominent Telangana activist, Bahujan intellectual, and social philosopher Professor Prabhanjan Yadav. Reflecting on Yadav's crucial involvement in the Telangana statehood movement, KCR noted that Yadav was a dedicated advocate who left his government job in Delhi to participate in the fight for a separate state. He acknowledged that Yadav's work as a journalist, thinker, and activist had a lasting effect on the movement. In a statement, the BRS leader emphasised that Prabhanjan Yadav was a tireless supporter of the rights and advancement of marginalised communities, drawing inspiration from the teachings of Mahatma Phule and Dr. B.R. Ambedkar. He remarked, "His passing is a significant loss for Telangana," while offering his sincere condolences to Yadav's family.

KTR invited as speaker for prestigious 'Talk Journalism' event in Jaipur

Hyderabad, July 16 Former minister and BRS working president KT Rama Rao has been invited to speak at the upcoming Talk Journalism 2025, one of India's most prestigious gatherings of journalists, thinkers, and political leaders. The ninth edition of the festival will be held on July 19 and 20 in Jaipur. Recognized as one of the most vocal, articulate, progressive, and visionary leaders in contemporary Indian politics, especially from South India, KTR was chosen for his significant contributions as a policymaker and administrator during his decade-long tenure as Minister for IT and Industries in Telangana. His leadership has been widely acknowledged for transforming Telangana into a leading destination for technology and industrial investments, and for his strong, nuanced voice on national issues. In their invitation to KTR, the organizers of Talk Journalism highlighted the relevance of his perspective in the current national discourse. "We would like you to talk about the North-South Divide in Indian politics. The conversation will be moderated by Marya Shakil of NDTV. Talk Journalism is a platform where journalists from India and abroad come and talk about trends, developments and issues that journalism faces," the letter read. Over past eight editions, Talk Journalism hosted some of the most influential voices in media and public life. Among Indian journalists, personalities like Rajdeep Sardesai, Ravish Kumar, Barkha Dutt, Saurabh Dwivedi, and Suhasini Haidar have graced the platform. Internationally, the festival has seen participation from icons such as Edward Snowden, Eugene Robinson (Former Chair, Pulitzer Prize Board), Gerard Ryle (Editor, ICIJ), Nick Davies (The Guardian), and Christina Lamb (The Sunday Times). The event has also been a stage for prominent political leaders, including Sachin Pilot, Asaduddin Owaisi, Subramanian Swamy, GVL Narasimha Rao, Raghav Chadha, D Raja, and Priyanka Chaturvedi, to share their perspectives on key national and global issues.

Indian Chronicle

English Daily

Time to retire Jaguars from IAF fleet

Persisting with the ageing, outdated aircraft has been the bane of the Indian Air Force (IAF). This has put the lives of young pilots at risk. First, it was the Soviet-era MiG-21 aircraft, often dubbed as 'flying coffins', and now the Anglo-French twin-engine Jaguar that was involved in a series of fatal accidents. Four crashes this year involving the ageing Jaguar — claiming three lives — have raised questions over their safety. While MiG aircraft, which caused several tragedies in the past, are being phased out completely by the end of this year, the Jaguars, inducted nearly half a century ago, continue to play a key role in the Indian Air Force's frontline operations. Two IAF pilots were killed when Jaguar IB, a twin-seat trainer variant, crashed near Churu in Rajasthan last week. Earlier, the same variants were involved in two back-to-back crashes in March and April. The unailing regularity of the IAF aircraft crashes has become an embarrassing reality. Lack of modern avionics and inherent safety features, along with inadequate training and supervision of pilots as well as technicians, poor maintenance and overhaul practices, and lack of quality control on spares — all lead to the unacceptably high crash rate. The IAF currently operates six squadrons of the Jaguars. Ironically, India is the only air force in the world to still operate them. Britain, Ecuador, France, Oman, and Nigeria had all retired their Jaguar fighters years ago, with some on display in air museums in many of these countries. The first batch of 40 Jaguars, christened as 'Shamsher' (Sword of justice), was delivered to the IAF in fly-away condition in 1979 onwards and thereafter another 100-odd were licence-built by Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) till 2008, through a transfer of technology agreement with SEPECAT.

Vacant seats in tribal gurukuls spark row over negligence, mismanagement

Hyderabad, July 16 A simmering crisis in Telangana's Tribal Welfare Gurukuls has come to the fore, with more than 2,500 sanctioned seats lying vacant even after multiple rounds of admissions, raising serious concerns about official negligence, non-responsiveness, and lack of transparency. The issue has gained added significance as it centres around the erstwhile Palamuru region, represented by Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy himself. Out of 6,560 seats sanctioned across 195 Tribal Welfare Residential Schools, only 3,995 students have been admitted so far. The remaining 2,565 seats are yet to be filled, despite the completion of four rounds of digital counselling. What's raising eyebrows is that meritorious students who figured in official merit lists have allegedly been denied admission without explanation. The elected representatives, including MLAs and local body leaders, who sought seat allocations for deserving, underprivileged candidates, claim that their recommendation letters were dismissed or completely ignored by the concerned authorities. Parents and students are crying foul, accusing the system of deliberately sidelining eligible students in favour of opaque practices.

What has made the issue politically sensitive is the reported non-compliance by the Secretary of Tribal Welfare Gurukuls to a directive from the Chief Minister's Office. The CMO had asked all welfare education departments to furnish a detailed report of total seats, admissions, and existing vacancies. While other departments complied, the Tribal Gurukul administration allegedly failed to respond, raising suspicions of administrative apathy or deeper irregularities. Field-level reports from the erstwhile Mahabubnagar district reveal a disturbing pattern. Students who cleared the entrance exam have been made to run from pillar to post. Some school principals are being accused of providing misleading information about vacancies or stonewalling admission queries altogether. Student bodies allege that some seats are being withheld or misused, with murmurs of backdoor admissions and monetisation of access to Gurukuls. Several students have expressed helplessness, saying that despite qualifying fairly and attending counselling, they were systematically denied entry. The absence of a functional grievance redressal mechanism has only worsened the situation, leaving many students stuck in limbo while the academic year progresses without them. The situation has triggered a call for urgent government action. Civil society groups and student unions have demanded an independent probe into the irregularities, along with a full audit of the digital admission process. They are also pressing for accountability at the top level and immediate filling of vacant seats with eligible candidates from the merit list particularly from marginalised and economically weaker backgrounds. That such a failure has occurred in the Chief Minister's own home turf has drawn sharp attention from all quarters. Observers point out that if this is the condition in a high-profile district like Mahabubnagar, the situation in interior tribal belts could be even worse. With lakhs of tribal children relying on these residential schools for a shot at a better future, the Gurukul seat controversy has become a test not just of bureaucratic integrity, but also of the government's commitment to inclusive education. The question now is whether the state will act swiftly to restore confidence or let silence deepen the distrust.

Senior photojournalist Shaik Naseer passes away at 60

Hyderabad, July 16 Senior photo-journalist Shaik Naseer passed away on Wednesday morning at the age of 60 after a short illness. He is survived by his wife and two children. Naseer had worked with Munsif Urdu Daily for 35 years. Colleagues reported that he had been dealing with health problems for some time and passed away at home. His death has prompted expressions of grief from journalist associations and political leaders throughout the state. Minister for Roads and Buildings Komatireddy Venkat Reddy expressed deep sorrow over the death of senior photojournalist Sheikh Naseer. Praying for the peace of Naseer's soul, the Minister expressed his condolences and deep sympathy to his family members. In addition, former minister and BRS MLA Harish Rao expressed his profound sadness over the loss of senior photojournalist Naseer. He offered his sincere condolences to Naseer's family and colleagues, praying for strength for the bereaved family and for the departed soul to rest in peace.

Communist Party of India (CPI) to Hold 14th Tirupati City Conference, Marks 100 Years of Service“



“July 16, Indian Chronicle Rayalaseema co-ordinator”“The Communist Party of India (CPI) is pleased to announce its 14th Tirupati City Conference, scheduled for Friday, July 18, 2025, at Auto Nagar. The conference will commemorate the party's centennial milestone in India, celebrating a century of commitment to the rights and well-being of the working class and the poor.”“Mr. N. Chandrasekhar Reddy, a member of the CPI District Committee, today released a press note calling for widespread public participation.

“This conference is a significant event to review our collective struggles over the past three years and to strategically plan for future actions against policies that adversely affect the public and laborers,” Mr. Reddy stated. “We urge all residents to attend and contribute to the success of this important assembly.”“The CPI has a storied history of advocating for the populace, leading numerous movements for land, livelihood, and social justice. The party's efforts have been instrumental in protecting workers' rights, facilitating access to government welfare programs, and championing civil liberties. Mr. Reddy specifically highlighted the

party's successful campaigns against price inflation and its pivotal role in urban development projects, including the establishment of 26 colonies and securing land for the landless poor in the Tirupati area.”“The conference will feature esteemed party leaders, including CPI National Secretary Comrade Narayana, CPI State Secretary Comrade Ramakrishna, and Secretariat Member Comrade Sunkara Reddy, among other senior district officials.”“Key discussion points at the conference will include comprehensive resolutions addressing the anti-labor and anti-people policies of both the central and state governments, as well as a forward-looking agenda for the continued development of Tirupati city.

“The CPI extends a formal invitation to all citizens to attend the conference and join in the collective effort to shape a more just and equitable future.”“About the Communist Party of India (CPI):”“The Communist Party of India is a national political party in India with a history of over 100 years. The party is committed to the principles of communism, socialism, and democracy, working to represent the interests of the working class, peasants, and the poor.

Sanitation Workers Organize, Form New Committee to Fight for Rights



““July 16, Indian Chronicle Rayalaseema co-ordinator”“In a move to address years of neglect and sub-standard working conditions, sanitation workers of the Tiruchananuru Gram Panchayat have officially formed a new union committee. The decision, made during a general body meeting today, marks a unified front in their struggle for fair wages, basic benefits, and improved working conditions.”“The meeting, led by prominent union leaders including AITUC District President N. Chandrasekhar Reddy, was a platform for workers to voice their collective grievances and chart a path forward.”“Decades of Unaddressed Issues”“The sanitation workers, a crucial force in keeping the pilgrim town of Tiruchananuru clean for thousands of daily visitors, highlighted a series of critical issues that have remained unresolved:” * No Safety Net: Workers are provided with no ESI or Provident Fund (PF), leaving them vulnerable to financial hardship in case of illness or retirement.” * Sub-Human Wages: Pay scales are significantly below the living wage necessary for a family to survive, despite a Supreme Court recommendation of Rs. 26,000.”

* Uncompensated Labor: With pilgrims visiting in large numbers, workers are required to work long, strenuous hours from 4:30 AM without proper compensation or overtime pay.” * No Housing Security: Most workers are without house plots and are forced to spend a significant portion of their meager income on expensive rented housing.” * Medical Neglect: The Panchayat offers no medical expense coverage for on-the-job injuries or health issues, forcing workers to pay for their own treatment.”“A Unified Voice for Change”“Today, these workers have shown immense courage in coming together to demand their due,” stated N. Chandrasekhar Reddy. “Their labor is the backbone of this town's cleanliness and reputation, yet they are treated as disposable. The formation of this committee is a powerful statement that they will no longer be silenced.”“The new committee's first order of business is to present a formal petition detailing all grievances to the District Level Panchayat Officer, District Panchayat Officer, and the District Collector. The committee is resolute in its demand for a swift and favorable response.

AECOM Planning Experts Meet TUDA Chairman to Advance Settippalli Land Development“



“July 16 Indian Chronicle Rayalaseema co-ordinator”“Masterplanning team from Aecom, led by senior planning expert Mr. Chandan Sinha, met with C. Divakar Reddy, Chairman of the Tirupati Urban Development Authority (TUDA), to discuss the progress and strategic direction of the Settippalli land development project.”“The meeting, held at the TUDA headquarters, focused on key planning frameworks, infrastructure integration, and alignment with need of stake holders. During the discussion, several critical decisions were taken to move the project into its next phase, including zoning strategies and utility layout coordination.”“Chairman Divakar Reddy appreciated Aecom's technical insights and emphasized the importance

of aligning the development with Tirupati's long-term urban vision.

Panchayat Raj Engineer-in-Chief lands in ACB net

Hyderabad, July 16 Veeravalli Kanakaratnam, Engineer-in-Chief, Panchayat Raj Engineering Department was caught by Telangana ACB, City Range-II Unit on Wednesday, when he demanded and accepted a bribe of Rs 50,000/-



public duty improperly and dishonestly. The tainted amount was recovered from the accused at his instance. The accused Veeravalli Kanakaratnam is being arrested and sent to judicial remand

TCEI hosts Event Excellence Awards 2025

Hyderabad, July 16 The Telangana Chamber of Events Industry (TCEI) successfully hosted the Design by Raja – TCEI Event Excellence Awards 2025 at Savaaya Convention, Osman Sagar Road, Gandipet, Hyderabad, celebrating excellence in the events industry across Telangana and India. The 8th edition of the awards recognized outstanding talent, creativity, and innovation through 100+ awards across diverse categories under four major segments across Telangana and India.

The evening was graced by chief guest Patel Ramesh Reddy, Chairman, Telangana Tourism Development Corporation. The dignitaries formally inaugurated the program with the ceremonial lighting of the lamp and presented the awards in the presence of TCEI president Balram Babu, general secretary Ravi Bura, Awards convener Ramesh K. Muppuna, co-conveners Sudhakar Yerabadi and Hirish Reddy and TCEI Working Committee. The awards were broadly categorized to highlight excellence at both State and national levels. The 'Pearl of Hyderabad' segment honoured event professionals operating within the State of Telangana, while the 'Gem of India' segment acknowledged outstanding contributions from across the Indian events industry. A special category titled 'Jade of Hyderabad' offered recognition to individuals who have demonstrated consistent excellence in their respective fields. This year's honourees included Anil Kumar Lakotia of Swastik Supplying Company, Pingali Vidya Sagar of Catpro Events and Entertainment Limited, Md Maqsood Ali of A2Z Function Organisers, Moin Khan of Moghal Caterers, and Kishan Agarwal of Classic 3 Group. The Lifetime Achievement Award was presented to two industry veterans, who have made remarkable contributions to the growth and stature of the event industry in Telangana. Surat Singh Malhotra of The Namdhari Business Group and Kommu Adarsh Kumar of Musical Waves. Key award categories included Event of the Year, Best Corporate Event Manager, Best Wedding Planner, Best Destination Wedding Planner, Best MICE Event Planner, and awards for excellence in sound, lighting, technology, and furniture inventory—each representing the pinnacle of professional accomplishment in the industry. The evening ended on a vibrant note, as the atmosphere sizzled with a captivating dance performance, adding a perfect touch of celebration and colour to an unforgettable night.

CM should quit if pensions aren't increased, Divyangula Mahagarjana will be held on Aug. 13

Hyderabad, July 16 : MRPS founder-president Manda Krishna Madiga today demanded CM Revanth Reddy to resign from his post if he failed to increase the pensions of the disabled pensioners of the State. He also demanded that the State government should implement the welfare schemes for the poor as promised in the elections. A district preparatory meeting regarding Chalo Hyderabad scheduled to be held on August 13, 2025 in LB Stadium was held at Neredmet of Medchal Malkajgiri district on Wednesday.

Speaking as chief guest at the meeting, Mandakrishna Madiga expressed his concern that the promises made during the elections were not fulfilled even after 20 months of the formation of the Congress government. He demanded that the State government should provide a monthly pension of Rs 15,000 to severely disabled muscular dystrophy patients. He expressed his concern that the Opposition was not opening its mouth while the ruling party is doing injustice. Krishna Madiga stated that Arogyasri scheme for the poor, old age pension, widow pension, and rice from four to six kilograms for the poor were the results of the MRPS movement. He demanded that new pensions be given to the disabled for four to five years. He said the promises made during the elections were being implemented in the neighbouring Andhra Pradesh, but they were not being implemented in Telangana. He said the Opposition parties were also not speaking out on this issue and were keeping silent. Vinay Kumar and others participated in this program.

Conflict resolution workshop held at IAMC

Hyderabad, July 16 A landmark initiative in conflict resolution was held successfully recently. It was India's first-of-its-kind Family Mediation Training Program. The seven-day, 70-hour intensive workshop, held at the International Arbitration and Mediation Centre (IAMC), Gachibowli, was jointly organised by Invisible Scars Foundation and IAMC Hyderabad.

The program was specifically designed for non-legal professionals working in the social or development sector. It was fully funded under the CSR mandate of Centific, a global digital solutions company. “Disputes between spouses often arise over trivial matters. If they sit and talk, many issues can be resolved without court intervention, but that is not happening. We need more mediators to prevent the pile-up of family cases in courts.”

The workshop brought together 32 participants from across India like Ajmer, Bangalore, Bhubaneswar, Chennai, Delhi, Hazaribagh, Hyderabad, Kolkata, Mumbai, Nalgonda, Pune, and Warangal. The cohort included social workers, psychologists, and law enforcement officers, now certified as Family Mediators. Upon certification, they are empanelled with IAMC and support conflict resolution across programs in GBV, WASH, education, and health, directly within their communities.

According to Ekta Viiveck Verma, she plans to organise more such training programs. The NGO is also looking for philanthropic organisations to join hands with them to train more people in respected panel of experts. They include Susheela Sarathi – Senior Trainer, MCPC (Mediation and Conciliation Project Committee) of the Supreme Court of India. She has trained many advocates, Judges of the Lower and Higher Judiciary, and Professionals from various walks of life in Mediation. Tanu Mehta – Mediator and Trainer, Mumbai; K.S. Sarma, the Founder and Director of HAMPs (Hamps Bio Ltd), with a background in the broadcasting industry, having served as CEO of Prasara Bharati and Director General of Doordarshan; Dr. Varudhini Kankipati – Co-Founder, Inner Connect Psychological Counselling Centre, a professional counselling service provider. The program was inaugurated by Shikha Goel, IPS, Director General, Telangana Cyber Security Bureau, who also shared her personal experience as a trained mediator and urged more professionals to embrace this transformative tool.

Renowned Tirupati Ayurvedic Physician Dr. Bhaskara Rao Honored with "Best Teacher" Award



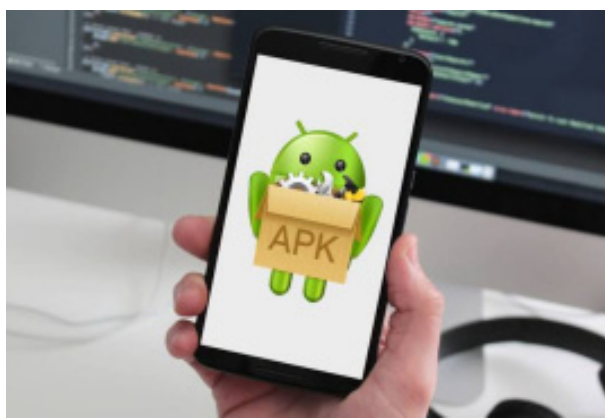
“July 16 Indian Chronicle Rayalaseema co-ordinator”“Dr. Bhaskara Rao, a distinguished Ayurvedic physician from Tirupati, has been conferred with the prestigious "Best Teacher" Award. The honor was presented by Union Minister of AYUSH, Pratap Rao Javed, at the Selya Khan National Conference held in New Delhi on July 14th. "Dr. Bhaskara Rao is widely recognized for his extensive contributions to the field of Ayurveda over the past 15 years. He has pioneered the Kshemasutra method for treating conditions such as piles and fistulas, successfully performing over 35,000 surgical procedures using this technique. "Beyond his clinical practice, Dr. Bhaskara Rao is an accomplished author, having penned five widely ac-



claimed books on Ayurveda in English. His dedication to advancing Ayurvedic knowledge extends to academia, with participation in over a thousand national and international Ayurvedic conferences where he has delivered impactful speeches and presented significant research papers. "The Union AYUSH Ministry recognized Dr. Bhaskara Rao's profound expertise, innovative approach, and tireless efforts in education and research within the Ayurvedic discipline, leading to his selection for this esteemed award. "About the Union Ministry of AYUSH: "The Ministry of AYUSH was formed to ensure the optimal development and propagation of AYUSH systems of healthcare, encompassing Ayurveda, Yoga and Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha, and Homoeopathy.

APK Files That Sink Everything, Opening Them Empties Bank Accounts.“

“Khammam Bureau, July 16, Indian Chronicle.”“As technology advances, so do cybercrimes. In an instant, money that people saved over years is vanishing. Scammers are sending fake apps via messages, hacking smartphones, and stealing everything in them. Sometimes, they even exploit people's hopes to rob them. Social media apps like WhatsApp and Telegram have become platforms for these crimes.”“Under the Pretext of Loans, Cybercriminals are especially targeting young people who move to cities seeking jobs. By collecting the contact numbers of job seekers, they send messages offering loans. Financially vulnerable youths fall into their trap. They're asked to pay a small service charge to process the loan — and end up getting scammed. A woman working in a private school in Madhapur paid 35,000 hoping for a loan and got cheated. She later filed a complaint with the Cyber Crime Police.”“Private Employees as Main Targets, Cybercrimes are being carried out under the guise of business investments, stock market trading, part-time jobs, digital arrests, fake customer care, debit/credit card frauds, free offers, and KYC updates. Criminals are creating apps with fake bank logos and sending APK files via WhatsApp and Telegram, hacking phones, and draining bank accounts. Notably, 56% of the people targeted are private sector employees. These individuals are frequently involved in online transactions, making them ideal targets. In 2024 alone, cybercriminals looted 1,869.9 crores, of which around 1,050 crores were lost by private employees. 186.9 crores were



lost by self-employed individuals.”“IT Professionals Losing Big in Trading Scams, Cybercrime is rampant in the state, especially in Hyderabad. The thriving IT sector and growing businesses make it a prime target. Lured by promises of high returns, many IT professionals are investing in trading platforms and losing heavily between 2 lakhs and 50 lakhs. Four out of every ten IT professionals have suffered such losses. After losing the money they earned over years, many are unable to even talk to their families about it. They say that stock prices are shown as 200 at first, only to crash to 10 in a few days, leading to huge losses. Victims are unsure of where and how to file complaints.

80% of healthcare needs will not require hospitals: Expert



Hyderabad, July 16 The founder of Idea Clinics and a senior endocrinologist Dr Shyam Kalavalapalli today said over 80% of healthcare needs would not require a hospital. He said by 2035, the hospitals would become much less relevant. Idea Clinics organized a conference titled 'Building for Bharat, India's Healthcare 2030' at The Park Hotel in Somajiguda. Telangana Tourism Chairman Patel Ramesh Reddy was the chief guest at the event.

Speaking on the occasion, Dr Shyam Kalavalapalli said apart from major surgeries and emergencies, most care can be provided at home by using modern technology. He

explained in the conference as to how hospitals can evolve into virtual care hubs. He said the digital transformation seen in sectors like food delivery, finance and retail was now entering the healthcare sector also. He said the special panel of expert doctors would also address emerging endocrine health challenges. There is a high incidence of diabetes in the youth, thyroid disorders, cancers, and obesity in India's urban population, he said. Senior endocrinologist professor Rakesh Sahay said another key item on the agenda was endocrine disruptors, pollution, plastics, and harmful chemicals found in everyday consumer products that silently disrupt hormonal health.

AP & Telangana CMs meet over project issue

New Delhi, July 16 : AP and Telangana Chief Ministers today met here to discuss water issues between the two Telugu Sates. AP CM N Chandrababu Naidu and his Telangana counterpart Revanth Reddy met under the auspices of Union Water Resources Minister CR Patil at Shramshakti Bhavan in Delhi.

AP State proposed a single point agenda for the Godavari Banakacharla project linkage while Telangana proposed 13 items. The Central government included the proposals of both the States in the agenda. AP and Telangana Water Resources Ministers Nimmala Ramanaidu and N. Uttam Kumar Reddy, Chief Secretaries of both the States, secretaries of Water Resources Departments and engineers attended the meeting. Before the meeting, the two CMs met with the officials of the respective States. They discussed the issues to be raised in the meeting and the technical answers to be given. The CMs reviewed with the CSs

and senior officials of the Irrigation Department at their official residences. The AP, which proposed the single point agenda for the Godavari-Banakacharla project linkage, submitted the objectives of the project in the form of a report. It explained that the water that is wasted in the sea will be used. On this occasion, it mentioned the statistics of the average flows of a hundred years in Godavari. It said that 3,000 TMCs of water is discharged into the sea every year. It explained that a maximum of 200 TMCs will be transported through the Banakacharla project. It stated that there will be no loss to the upstream States due to this project. It stated that it has not objected to any project built in Telangana for 11 years. It asked Telangana and the Central government to understand its actions as a downstream State. Speaking after the meeting, AP Minister Nimmala Ramanaidu said decisions had been taken on three important issues.

Mega Aadhaar Camp Receives Special Response: RDO Damodar Rao



“Shaik sharief ,Bhadrachalam, July 16, indian chronicle : Bhadrachalam RDO Damodar Rao said that the three-day mega Aadhaar camps organized at the Bhadrachalam RDO office have received a special response from the public. On Wednesday, on the orders of Bhadradi Kothagudem District Collector Jitesh V Patil at the Sub-Collector's office in Bhadrachalam, he said that 768 citizens have solved their Aadhaar-related problems through this mega camp held for three days. The RDO said that 149 new registrations were made through this mega Aadhaar camp, including elderly, disabled, transgender, biometric, and other updates; date of birth corrections (DOB Limit Cases); Aadhaar cancellation cases; and general inquiries, and a total of 619 issues were resolved. He said that 983 people came to this mega Aadhaar camp, which was held for three days. He said that those who did not have the correct certificates were advised to get their certificates and update their Aadhaar through Meeseva Kendras, and many Aadhaar issues that were not resolved for many days were resolved through this Aadhaar center. He said that through this program, their problems were resolved immediately by providing direct services to the people. He said that those who need to apply for Aadhaar corrections or Aadhaar-based certificates can contact the



Aadhaar centers in their mandals, Dummugudem Panchayat Office, Tahsildar Office, Charla MPDO Office, Bhadrachalam Banks, and Post Offices, and soon Aadhaar services will be available in the Panchayat Office, and if necessary, they can contact the School Aadhaar team near Burgampadu and Bhadrachalam. Bhadrachalam In-charge Tahsildar Daniel Venkateswarlu, RDO Office AO Rajendranath, Vamsi District Manager School Aadhaar, Bhukya Mohan Technical Person, Satyendra Kumar Technical Manager, Kumar Computer Man Holder, and Sub Collector Office staff who helped in organizing the mega Aadhaar camp were specially congratulated.

KTR asks mine workers' union to unitedly protect Singareni

Hyderabad, July 16 Telangana Coal Mine Workers' Union leaders today held a meeting with BRS working president KTR at Telangana Bhavan today. It has been decided that the Telangana Coal Mine Workers' Union will undertake many programs in association with the BRS party. Speaking on the occasion, KTR said coordination should be made with the party MLAs, in-charges and former ministers in the Singareni area. He said from now on, the in-charge of the Telangana Coal Mine Workers Union would be former minister Koppula Eeswar, who would act as the party's in-charge for the Telangana Coal Mine Workers Union. He said it had been decided to take forward the activities of the Telangana Coal Mine Workers Union on behalf of the party under the leadership of Koppula Eeswar and added that it had also been decided to fight on a larger scale on the Singareni issues. "It has been decided to bring pressure on the government in various forms, including the public sphere, until every promise made to the Singareni workers by the Congress government during the elections is implemented," he said. KTR suggested that many welfare and development programs carried out for the Singareni workers and the Singareni company during the ten-year rule of the BRS party led government should be widely taken up by the workers.

"During the ten years, former CM KCR worked with the sole aim of saving the Singareni as well as public sector enterprises. Our party not only saved the public sector enterprises in the state but also strongly opposed the



privatization of the public sector enterprises across the country. The Congress party has cheated the Singareni in the same way as the all sections of the society. It has been decided to bring these issues to the attention of the workers. It has been decided to speak out against the conspiracies being made by the Congress party in collaboration with the BJP for the privatization of the Singareni mines. The party will provide full support to the coal mine workers' union. The party will stand by the workers no matter what difficulties they face. The party's legal cell will also be fully supportive of the workers. If the Congress government does injustice to any worker, the BRS party's legal team will provide legal support to confront them legally," he said.

AIC-CCMB planning trials for Chikungunya vaccine with indigenously developed mRNA technology

CSIR-Centre for Cellular and Molecular Biology (CCMB) Atal Incubation Centre (AIC) is planning to go ahead with the next stage larger-scale trials of the indigenously developed mRNA vaccine technology for tackling Chikungunya. "Chikungunya is a serious, major debilitating disease in India and it does not yet have a vaccine. We have already demonstrated the ability to make use of mRNA technology to develop vaccines with a 'Proof of Concept' (PoC) during the COVID-19 pandemic. Our lab data trials show our Chikungunya vaccine works," disclosed AIC-CCMB chief executive officer N. Madhusudhana Rao. Results of lab experiments The lab experiments conducted on animals showed that the vaccine candidate can produce antibodies against Chikungunya proteins. The next phase will be to infect the animals and check if the virus load has decreased upon injecting the developed vaccine, he explained. The CEO said the institute had also completed initial trials into a potential mRNA vaccine to prevent tuberculosis (TB). But, to go into the next stage of animal trials and more elaborate testing, adequate funding is required, for which different options are being explored.

How vaccines work?

Vaccines work by preparing and training the immune system to identify disease-causing microorganisms and eliminate them quickly when the system encounters them. In mRNA technology, the host cell's immune system is

trained to evade the real infection by introducing mRNA of an important protein of the microorganism of concern into the host, said Mr. Rao. Interestingly, though AIC had developed the PoC for mRNA technology in less than a year and had announced the same two years ago, it did not elicit much response from either the Indian industry or foreign collaborators. "There were a few firms which evinced interest in making use of our mRNA technology for vaccine research. But they never came back with concrete proposals. It is an accepted fact that firms spend millions to take licenses from abroad rather than spend a few lakhs on local technology," said Mr. Rao, a former senior scientist of the CSIR-CCMB. Comirnaty (by Pfizer) or Spikevax (by Moderna) are based on mRNA technology for COVID and found to be extremely effective. The mRNA technology is considered chemically safe with no long-term challenges. The one developed in AIC-CCMB too is based on the existing mRNA vaccine model. It is as safe as the one approved by the US Food & Drug Administration Agency and had undergone a third party quality check, affirmed the CEO. mRNA works much better on viruses and vaccines can be developed for other diseases faster. "It is unfortunate that there are few takers for our technology, though many are trying the same through different platforms. But we want to go ahead with our trials for the potential Chikungunya and TB vaccine candidates now with different partners," added Mr. Rao.

Democrats troll Trump, GOP over Epstein scandal amid MAGA rift

Phoenix: Democrats are latching on to the Jeffrey Epstein scandal, demanding records be released and trolling Republicans on social media, news shows and in the US House as they revel in a rare fissure between President Donald Trump and his fiercely loyal base. Conspiracy theories over Epstein's death in prison and potential evidence in his sex trafficking case, including an alleged "client list", have largely been a fixation for the right, one egged on by Trump himself. But Democrats sensed an opening after the Justice Department said last week that no additional evidence would be released, and some of Trump's most influential allies refused to heed his pleas to move on. They're highlighting the dramatic about-face by some Republicans, which has divided the MAGA movement and could weaken a critical following for Trump. The more in-your-face approach also may help Democrats appease elements of the party's own base, who are hungry for a more

aggressive confrontation with the other side.

Rep. Ro Khanna, a California Democrat and likely 2028 presidential candidate, was among those who joined in on Tuesday. Khanna tried to put Vice President JD Vance — who has previously called for the Epstein files to be released — in the hot seat. Khanna shared an X post from 2020 GOP presidential candidate and former UN Ambassador Nikki Haley, who called for the Trump administration to "release the Epstein files and let the chips fall where they may". "A 2028 power move, @JDVance," Khanna wrote to Vance on X. "Where do you stand on the Epstein files these days?" Vance and Haley are both possible 2028 Republican presidential candidates. MAGA followers were incensed after the Justice Department and FBI abruptly walked back the notion that there's an Epstein client list of elites who participated in the wealthy New York financier's trafficking of underage girls.

29 cases, 11 states, Rs 40 crore: Karnataka police nab Bihar man with several mule accounts for cybercrime



GNS News Agency, July 16

The police arrested Hardeep Singh on July 12 after finding through the National Cybercrime Reporting Portal that his accounts were allegedly involved in these cases. (Express photo)The police arrested Hardeep Singh on July 12 after finding through the National Cybercrime Reporting Portal that his accounts were allegedly involved in these cases. (Express photo)The Karnataka Police investigation into a cyber fraud case, in which a victim lost Rs 3.80 lakh, has resulted in the solving of 29 cases across 11 states, involving the siphoning of Rs 40 crore.

The police arrested Hardeep Singh, 40, a resident of Patna in Bihar, on July 12 after finding through the National Cybercrime Reporting Portal (NCRP) that his accounts were allegedly involved in these cases, including the biggest fraud where a victim from Tamil Nadu lost Rs 9

crore.The Uttara Kannada CEN police registered a case on October 23 last year, when a person named Raphael Fernandes from Karwar filed a complaint stating that his brother, Wilson Fernandes, had lost Rs 3.80 lakh to cyber fraudsters. According to the complaint, he had received a call from someone claiming to be from the police department that there was a courier in his name, which contained the banned narcotic substance MDMA. After someone posed as a Mumbai crime branch police officer, Fernandes allegedly transferred money to fraudsters.The police brought the accused to Karwar after arresting him in Bihar. A probe revealed that his accounts were used not just for digital arrests but also for investment frauds and that he was part of a larger nexus, said a police officer.During the investigation, it was revealed that Singh allegedly had eight savings accounts and two current accounts in his name, which were used to siphon huge amounts of money from fraudsters. He received more than Rs 1 crore as commission for it, said a police officer.B Ashwini, Deputy SP of Uttara Kannada CEN police station, said, "Upon checking, we found that he was running a small jewellery shop, often known as a one-gram gold shop. He had a GST number for his shop and also had a Udyam certificate issued by the Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME), which helped him to open current accounts as well."In Tamil Nadu, Rs 9.09 crore was siphoned off, in Andhra Pradesh, Rs 2.47 crore, in Bengaluru's Marathahalli, Rs 80 lakh, and in Pulikeshi Nagar, Bengaluru, Rs 74.60 lakh, the police said.A police officer said Singh attempted to bribe the police, claiming he had done so previously to avoid detection.

Cages in place, drains covered at airport to nab elusive leopard

GNS News Agency, July 16

Admitting that the leopard was sighted on several occasions at Pune international airport, Union minister of state for Civil Aviation Murlidhar Mohol on Wednesday said that cages have been put up at the airport premises to catch the elusive leopard and steps have been taken to ensure that birds and animals that stray on to the premises don't lead to untoward incident and accidents at the airport."It is true the leopard has been sighted at the airport premises many times. It has been seen in CCTV footage. The leopard has not yet been caught but the Forest department has been roped in for the purpose," said Mohol.The minister said the forest department closed all drains, which could be possible hiding places, at the airport with nets. "The forest department has also set up cages for catching leopards. The area has also been cleared of things that could be a potential

food source for leopards. The boundaries of the airport have been sealed," he added.Mohol said a discussion was held to keep a check on the entry of domestic or stray animals at the airport premises."There are chronic garbage spots at the airport premises that becomes sources of food for stray animals and birds. As a result, there have been bird hit incidents at the airport," he said.Mohol said the Pune Municipal Corporation (PMC) has been instructed to demarcate spots around the airport from where regular moitoring can be conducted. He added that he has told authorities to remove illegal encroachments in the vicinity.The PMC recently demolished 17 structures that were illegally constructed in the restricted area of the airport in Lohegaon. A survey was conducted under the Bombay High Court's directions to ascertain illegal constructions in the restricted area of the airport.

Calcutta High Court dismisses all pleas against SSC's new recruitment notification

GNS News Agency, July 16

The Calcutta High Court on Wednesday dismissed all petitions challenging the rules and notification issued for the new recruitment process of the West Bengal School Service Commission (SSC).A division bench of Justices Soumen Sen and Smita Das De delivered the order, effectively upholding the May 30 notification issued by the SSC for the recruitment of teachers in state-aided schools.In June 2025, several petitioners had moved the High Court, arguing that the SSC's recruitment notification violated the guidelines laid down by the Supreme Court. During Monday's hearing, Advocate General Kishore Dutta, appearing for the state, defended the notification, stating that it had been framed in line with "modern-day requirements" and was intended for the benefit of students. He submitted that the recruitment process was in accordance with law.However, petitioners argued that the new rules diverged significantly from those applicable during the 2016 recruitment, which had been invalidated by the Supreme Court in April.According to the petitioners' counsel, the top court never directed the creation of a new rule giving 10 marks for 'teaching experience' at the end of the selection process.

They contended that the new rules altered the original 2016 evaluation pattern, under which academic qualifications carried 35 marks, the written exam 55, and the interview 10. The revised rules, they said, reduced academic qualifications to 10 marks, increased the written test to 60, and added new components — including 10 marks for lecture demonstration and 10 for teaching experience.The petitioners also raised concerns that candidates without prior experience would be disadvantaged, making it difficult for fresh aspirants to qualify.Further objections were raised over



the interview shortlisting ratio. The previous 1:1.4 ratio — in which 140 candidates were called for 100 posts — had now been changed to 1:1.6, or 160 candidates per 100 posts. According to the petitioners, this "violated" established procedure.The SSC had issued the May 30 notification for the recruitment of 35,726 teachers — 23,212 for classes 9 and 10, and 12,514 for classes 11 and 12 — in compliance with a Supreme Court directive that instructed the state to initiate a fresh recruitment process by May 31.The directive came after the Supreme Court, in April, ordered the cancellation of appointments of 25,753 teaching and non-teaching staff across government-aided secondary and higher secondary schools. Following an appeal from the state secondary education board, the court allowed those deemed "untainted" to continue receiving salaries until December, while barring 1,804 others from returning to schools.On April 17, the Supreme Court directed the state and the School Service Commission to submit affidavits on the new recruitment drive for the now-vacant posts by May 31.

College student dies at Nicco park waterfall in Kolkata; probe on into cause



GNS News Agency, July 16

An 18-year-old college student died after falling unconscious on a simulated waterfall at Kolkata's Nicco Park on Wednesday.He was rushed to a private hospital in Salt Lake, where doctors declared him dead.According to the amusement park's authorities, Rahul arrived at around 11 am with a group of friends.Rajesh Raisinghani, managing director of the park, said they do not consider the death an "accident", suggesting it may have been due to an underlying illness."Our staff suddenly saw some friends trying to bring a boy down (from the waterfall). He was found unconscious. Immediately, a wheelchair was brought in. He was first taken to primary care where the nurse found his pulse low, and suggested we take him to emergency services. By then, we had already called an ambulance. Later, doctors declared him dead. The incident took place this afternoon," Raisinghani said.Park officials said that Rahul, along with "four men and three women," believed to be college students, were taking a shower on the first floor of the Niagara Falls simulation when he suddenly felt dizzy and

collapsed.The Bidhannagar South police have taken charge of the investigation. Authorities are currently interviewing Rahul's friends to gather more information about the circumstances leading to his collapse. The unexpected death has reportedly caused panic and concern among other tourists visiting NICCO Park.Sweetey Kumari reports from West Bengal for The Indian Express. She is a journalist with over a decade of experience in the media

No transactions in Hyderabad GPO on July 21 due to digital upgrade

Hyderabad: There will be no public transactions at the Hyderabad GPO on July 21 with the Telangana Postal Circle proposing to roll out an upgraded system as part of digital transformative system.

The Postal Department had already switched over to next-generation APT application towards digital excellence and nation-building. A press release on Wednesday said the upgraded system will be implemented in Hyderabad GPO from July 22.The APT application (2.0) is designed to offer an enhanced user experience, faster service delivery, and a more customer-friendly interface to deliver smarter, efficient, and future-ready postal operations. The customers were requested to plan their visits in advance during this brief interruption.

Porsche car crash: JJB rejects police plea for trying 17-year-old minor driver as an adult



GNS News Agency, July 16

The Juvenile Justice Board (JJB) has today rejected the application by the Pune city police seeking an order that the minor accused in the Porsche car crash be tried as an adult.Two IT engineers Aneesh Awadhiya and his friend Ashwini Koshta, both aged 24 and hailing from Madhya Pradesh, were killed after the speeding Porsche driven by a 17-year-old boy allegedly in an inebriated state hit their motorcycle around 2.30 am on May 19, 2024.

Same day, a first information report (FIR) was lodged against the minor car driver at the Yerwada police station. Subsequently, citing sections of the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015, the Pune city police filed an application at JJB, seeking an order that the child in conflict with law (CCL) be tried as an adult in this case.Prosecution had argued that CCL (minor car driver) accused committed a 'heinous offence' and was driving the Porsche car after consuming liquor despite knowing its consequencesThe defence lawyer opposed the application saying the present offence cannot be legally termed as "heinous. The defence lawyer had also argued that the object of Juvenile Justice (JJ) Act is "reformatory" and not "punitive".A senior police officer confirmed that the JJB today passed an order in favour of the CCL. Earlier, when police had detained the minor and produced him before the JJB on May 19, he was granted by the JJB on conditions that he would "write an essay of 300 words" on "topic in effect of road accidents and their solutions", assist RTO officers and practice and study traffic rules for 15 days.But, following a public uproar, the minor was sent to an observation home on May 22. Apparently, the police again submitted applications at the JJB on May 21 and May 22, for trying the CCL as an adult.The minor's paternal aunt had then moved a plea before the high court (HC) and sought his release, claiming that as per the JJ Act 2015, it needs to be ensured that any conflict with the law does not result in him turning into a hardened criminal. On June 25, the HC ordered the minor's release and that he be handed over into the care of his paternal aunt. Subsequently, the minor was released from the observation home.

Meanwhile, the police investigation had revealed that when the minor driver, who is son of a prominent realtor, was taken to the government-run Sassoon Hospital after the accident for a medical examination, his blood sample was allegedly replaced with his mother's.A police probe also confirmed that blood samples of the two friends of the minor driver, who were in the Porsche at the time of the accident, were also swapped at Sassoon hospital.Police arrested and chargesheeted ten persons including the minor's parents, Dr Ajay Taware, the then head of the Forensic Medicine Department of Sassoon Hospital, Dr Shrihari Halnor, the casualty medical officer at the time, Atul Ghatkamble, a morgue staff and others.

They are booked under Indian Penal Code (IPC) sections 304, 279, 338, 337, 427, 120 (b), 201, 213, 214, 466, 467, 468, 471, 109 and sections of the Motor Vehicle Act and Prevention of Corruption Act.Special public prosecutor (SPP) Shishir Hiray had argued at the JJB that minor accused had been booked under IPC sections 467 (forgery) and 304 (culpable homicide not amounting to murder), which attract punishment of life imprisonment or imprisonment for up to ten year. "So he has committed a "heinous offence" as per section 2 (33) of JJ Act, which says that offences having punishment of imprisonment for seven years or more are 'heinous", Hiray had argued.Prosecution had submitted that in case of a heinous offence, as per section 15 (1) of JJ Act, the JJB shall conduct a preliminary assessment of a minor's mental and physical capacity to commit such offence, his ability to understand the consequences of the offence and the circumstances in which he allegedly committed the said crime. Prosecution submitted that after the preliminary assessment under section 15 (1), the JJB can, under section 18 (3) of the JJ Act, pass an order for trial of the minor as an adult.SPP Hiray had argued before the JJB the actual driver of the Porsche had asked the minor not to drive the car.

"But still the minor drove the Porsche after consuming liquor and committed the crime. He knew the consequences of driving under the influence of alcohol. He was present at the Sassoon hospital when his blood samples were swapped. He knew swapping blood samples was a crime. So he was aware of the consequences of the offence and should be tried as an adult," Hiray had said.Defence lawyer Prashant Patil submitted before the JJB that the CCL has no prior criminal record and the Porsche crash incident, though unfortunate, arose out of a moment of poor judgement, not criminal intention.Citing a Supreme Court judgement in Shilpa Mittal versus State of Delhi case, Patil had claimed that the present offence may not legally qualify as "heinous" and hence section (15) of JJ Act should not be invoked in this case.Patil had also submitted that as per section 2 (12) of JJ Act, any person below the age of 18 years is considered a child. Patil argued the goal of juvenile justice is to "rehabilitate" and not to punish the minor in the same way as for adults.

12-year-old held for sending hoax bomb threats to Delhi school, St Stephen's College

GNS News Agency, July 16

St Stephens college Teenager caught for sending bomb threat to St Stephens College and St Thomas School. (Source: Wikimedia Commons)A day after two educational institutions in the Capital — Delhi University's St Stephen's College and St Thomas School — received hoax bomb threats via emails, a 12-year-old boy who allegedly sent the fake threats was briefly held on Wednesday, said police.According to a police officer, the boy was apprehended in South Delhi, from where he had sent the emails on Tuesday morning. The boy was picked up and later released after counseling. The boy is a student of Class 8 at a private school.

At the time he sent the email, his parents were out of the city for medical treatment, a source said. During counseling, the boy revealed that he wanted the schools to be shut down and had randomly tagged the email IDs of the college and the school.While an FIR has not been registered, the matter is being probed further, a source added.According to an official of the Delhi Fire Service, on Tuesday, threats were received at St Stephen's College around 8.01 am and St Thomas School in Dwarka at 8.51 am.He said one fire tender each was sent to the college and the school, and later the calls were declared a hoax after searches.Meanwhile, three schools in the city received similar threats on Monday, and seven other schools received such emails on Wednesday, officers said.According to sources, the emails sent on Monday and Wednesday are suspected to have been sent by different persons and



are believed to be unrelated to Tuesday's incident.The emails that were received by the schools on Monday and Wednesday were sent using VPN (Virtual Private Network), the sources said further.

The officer stated that legal action is being taken, and the cyber units of the respective district police are conducting an inquiry in their areas.Since last May, several schools in the Capital have been receiving similar hoax threats. More than 200 schools received bomb threats on their official email IDs in May 2024. Soon after, similar threat emails were sent to several hospitals, colleges, and the Delhi Airport.Earlier this year, in May, the Udyog Bhawan office at the Central Secretariat received a bomb threat via email, triggering extensive security checks, which ultimately resulted in the building being declared safe.

After chappal row, Prada team lands in Kolhapur, meets craftspeople

GNS News Agency, July 16

A high-level team from the Italian luxury fashion house Prada visited the famous Chappal Galli of Kolhapur on Wednesday and interacted with shopkeepers on the footwear available there and how they were displayed, packaged and sold. The team also met Collector Amol Yedde to discuss the heritage of Kolhapuri sandals."The Prada team has been working in a professional way, observing every detail minutely and is serious about all the processes of making Kolhapuri footwear. This is the first time such a high-level team has visited Kolhapur. The team was impressed with the craftsmanship, but their standards are different from our handcrafted traditions, so we are waiting for their report on the visit," Lalit Gandhi, president of the Maharashtra Chamber of Commerce, Industry & Agriculture (MACCIA), said.Prada's visit comes in the wake of a global backlash after their Spring-Summer 2026 collection at Milan Fashion Week on June 22 saw models walk down in flat sandals that looked similar to Kolhapuri chappals. Since the fashion house did not give credit or acknowledge the Indian roots of the product that they had reportedly priced upward of Rs 1 lakh, it caused a storm of accusations of plagiarism and cultural misappropriation, as well as a PIL in the Bombay High Court.The Prada team had begun their visit to Kolhapur on Tuesday by spending time at five-six manufacturing facilities where they reviewed the making of Kolhapuri chappals and took some samples.On June 26, MACCIA had written to Patrizio Bertelli, chairman of the Prada Group, with a "request for acknowledgement and ethical collaboration regarding traditional Kolhapuri footwear designs".Kolhapuri chappals represent centuries-old craftsmanship rooted in the cultural fabric of Maharashtra, India. The products are not only symbolic of regional identity but also support the livelihoods of thousands of artisans and families in the Kolhapur region and surrounding districts,"

said the letter signed by Gandhi. It also pointed out that the chappals had received a Geographical Index (GI) tag from the Indian government in 2019.In a reply from Lorenzo Bertelli, Prada Group Head of Corporate Social Responsibility, the company said, "We acknowledge that the sandals featured in the recent Prada Men's 2026 Fashion Show are inspired by traditional Indian handcrafted footwear, with a centuries-old heritage. We deeply recognise the cultural significance of such Indian craftsmanship."

The company added that the entire collection was in the early stage of design development, and none of the pieces had been confirmed to be produced or commercialised."We are committed to responsible design practices, fostering cultural engagement, and opening a dialogue for meaningful exchange with local Indian artisan communities as we have done in the past in other collections to ensure the rightful recognition of their craft," it added.On July 11, MACCIA and Prada held a video meeting, where the latter reiterated the design's heritage. "Our aim was that the GI tag and the rights of the Kolhapuri sandal craft be protected, in which we were successful. It was at the meeting that Prada said that they would send two teams," Gandhi said."The present visit is by the technical team that flew from Italy to Kolhapur. Based on their report, another team, with the corporate business head and others, will visit Mumbai in the first week of August and meet us," he added."I would like Bertelli, the chairman, to also visit as this could open doors for the crafts of Maharashtra," he further said.The other proposals for discussion were the formation of a joint working group of Prada, MACCIA and artisan bodies to ideate and drive long-term engagement models between the design house and artisan communities; co-branded artisan collections; and the setting up of Prada Artisan Excellence Lab-India to foster high-end design innovation and skill enhancement and a fair trade supply chain development.

‘Liquor ban in Panvel’s Kharghar possible if due process is followed’: Deputy CM Ajit Pawar



GNS News Agency, July 16

ajit pawar“No new liquor licences have been issued in Maharashtra since 1972. However, transfers of existing licences are permitted under certain conditions,” said Ajit Pawar.Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar on Monday said that municipal corporations do not have the authority to ban liquor sale through a resolution but a ward-wise prohibition in areas like Kharghar in Panvel can be considered if the process laid down by law is followed.Responding to a calling attention motion raised by BJP MLA Prashant Thakur in the Assembly, Pawar clarified that a formal representation adhering to the existing notifications would be required to initiate any action regarding liquor ban in municipal areas.

“There is no provision in the rules allowing municipal corporations to cancel liquor licences based on a general

resolution. However, appropriate steps will be taken if a representation is submitted as per the prescribed procedure,” Pawar said.He referred to government notifications issued in 2008 and 2009, which allow voters in a municipal ward to propose a prohibition. Under the rules, if at least 25 per cent of the total voters or women voters in a ward submit a written representation, the district collector must conduct a secret ballot. If more than 50 per cent of the total voters or women voters vote in favour of banning liquor sales, the authorities are required to cancel the licences in that ward.Addressing concerns over the spread of liquor outlets in residential areas, Pawar said the government has periodically revised norms regarding licensing in areas that have transitioned from panchayats to municipalities. “No new liquor licences have been issued in Maharashtra since 1972. However, transfers of existing licences are permitted under certain conditions,” he added.Pawar also acknowledged the social concerns about alcohol consumption. “Personally, I believe no one should consume alcohol. However, individuals have the right to make their own choices. Some districts in Maharashtra have implemented prohibition, but reports suggest youth in those areas procure liquor from neighbouring districts, defeating the purpose of the ban,” he said.Pawar said any decision to revoke liquor licences will be based not on public sentiment voiced in civic meetings but on a clear majority in a secret ballot as mandated by law. The issue was also raised by MLA Abhimanyu Pawar, who sought clarity on how prohibition could be implemented in urban wards following increasing public demand.

After massive power outage in Pune’s Hinjewadi, Supriya Sule urges Fadnavis to appoint nodal officer for civic issues

GNS News Agency, July 16

A day after a massive power outage affected thousands in Pune’s Hinjewadi and surrounding areas for hours, Baramati MP and NCP (SP) executive president Supriya Sule on Monday urged Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis to appoint a nodal officer to resolve civic issues until an independent authority is appointed for the area.Hinjewadi falls under Mulshi taluka of the Baramati Lok Sabha constituency. The area is just outside the jurisdiction of the Pune Municipal Corporation (PMC) and the Pimpri Chinchwad Municipal Corporation (PCMC). The Rajiv Gandhi Infotech Park in Hinjewadi is under the control of the Maharashtra Industries Development Corporation (MIDC), while the residential area is governed by the Pune Metropolitan Region Development Authority (PMRDA).

“The residents of Hinjewadi, Rajiv Gandhi IT Park, Maan-Marunji, and surrounding areas are facing problems related to traffic, road, power, and waterlogging,” the Baramati MP wrote to Fadnavis.Residents are compelled to follow up on their grievances with multiple agencies such as the MIDC, municipal corporations, metro rail, PMRDA, Maharashtra State Electricity Development Corporation Limited (MSEDCL), and the police, resulting in considerable loss of time and mental distress, Sule wrote.The Opposition MP further wrote that the Rajiv Gandhi IT Park in Hinjewadi is a global centre and the government should therefore ensure civic facilities of high standards there.“There is a lack of coordination among the multiple government agencies, which add to the woes of residents,” Sule wrote. “I have already requested the state government to constitute an independent authority for Hinjewadi, Maan-Marunji, Jambhe, Gahunje, Nande, Lavale, Pirangut,



Bhukum, and other adjoining areas witnessing rapid urbanisation. It can be a special city development authority or industrial town authority that will enable proper planning, financial management, and service provider agency for the area. It will help residents raise their grievances and get them redressed. The state government should appoint a dedicated nodal officer for the area till the independent authority is formed so that the citizens can raise their civic issues easily.”Earlier, Sule had demanded an independent authority be formed to address public grievances related to the area.Incidentally, Maual MP and Shiv Sena leader Shrirang Barne and BJP legislator Mahesh Landge have demanded that Hinjewadi and surrounding areas be merged with the PCMC, but residents are opposed to the proposal.The power outage occurred in the afternoon on July 6 following a fault in an ultra-high voltage underground line near the Hinjewadi phase-2 metro station. The MSEDCL authorities said on Monday evening that full restoration of the power supply would take more time.

‘It’s like reintroducing a lost language’: How parents, schools in Delhi are gently nudging kids back to reading



GNS News Agency, July 16

Six-and-a-half-year-old Zain Ali would polish off his dinner only if there was a steady stream of YouTube car videos playing alongside. Worried about his growing dependence on the gadget, his father, Mohammad Mati, swapped the phone for glossy car magazines and a storybook on Lightning McQueen, the star of Pixar hit Cars — and watched the glow of the screen give way to the rustle of pages being turned.

“By picking topics he already likes, it’s getting easier to shift his attention from videos to books,” says the Noida resident. “It’s a slow process, but definitely worth it.”Other parents are making similar trades. Delhi-based Shweta Arora curbed her son Anhad’s marathon gaming sessions by signing up the fourth-grader for cricket and swimming, while Noida mother Jyoti Karakoti Bajetha is reviving bedtime stories to break, what she calls, her children’s growing “addiction” to reels and shorts.“At first, I felt relieved when I gave the phone to my child... mealtimes became easier,” says Arora.Delhi school Reviews by students of Tom Gates Is Absolutely Fantastic [at Some Things].

Over time, the child started losing concentration and became aggressive. Her efforts are now to introduce her son to books, which she says “is like reintroducing a lost language”.Several families in Delhi-NCR are now on a mission to help their children reclaim their imagination and curious spark — one book, one practice, and one page at a time.Dr Bhavna Barmi, a senior clinical child psychologist at Fortis Escorts Heart Institute in Delhi, says that “compared to previous generations, today’s primary school children — especially in urban or semi-urban areas like Delhi NCR — are exposed to higher levels of digital content from an early age”.As a result, she says reading as a leisure activity has declined. “Many children today associate reading with schoolwork rather than relaxation or imagination. There’s a reduction in deep, sustained reading. We see more fragmented attention, a preference for short texts like comic panels or YouTube shorts, and a reduced ability to follow longer narratives,” she adds.Dr Barmi also says that parental time constraints and lifestyle changes have meant

less shared reading at home, which was previously a norm in many households.At some homes, though, the ritual is making a quiet comeback.Salil Bhati, an avid reader himself, feared that the shelves filled with Amar Chitra Katha and books by Roald Dahl and Enid Blyton, which he’d lovingly stocked in his East of Kailash home for his two children, might never compete with the hypnotic glow of the digital world, especially after the pandemic.Another worry was that the children were comparatively slow to pick up reading compared to their classmates.So he started small: picture books of animals with a few sentences per page, mythological tales with bright illustrations, and simple adventure stories.And the gentle approach paid off.He still remembers the evening his daughter breezed through an entire book in one sitting. “That’s when I realised something had changed,” he says, laughing at how “even jazzy book covers” now stop the children in their tracks.The siblings have also taken to the daily DEAR (Drop Everything and Read) session at Delhi Public School (DPS) East of Kailash, a school-wide pause when every student sinks into a book of choice for 15 minutes.Delhi school Bluebells International School in Kailash Colony has filled its junior library with colour-coded stacks, puppet nooks, Braille rows, and self-help-themed picture books. (Express photo by Sophiya Mathew)Like DPS, several Delhi-NCR campuses have been pulling out every bibliophilic trick they know to draw children back into reading.At Modern Public School, Shalimar Bagh, a programme called ‘The Human Library’ invites pupils to “borrow” their peers for one-on-one conversations.“It helps children confront prejudice and stereotypes,” says Naina Nagpal, the school’s Primary Years Programme coordinator. “Members of the Health and Wellness Club share real-life stories — like living books — so classmates can question, discuss and replace myths with understanding.”Sardar Patel Vidyalaya, Lodi Estate, set up its first-graders for the summer with audiobook links — like Meri Saheli (My Friend) on StoryWeaver — so a child can press play and follow the words.At Tagore International School, Vasant Vihar, the low shelf in the junior library doubles as quiet therapy: self-esteem primers such as Alexandra Penfold’s Big Feelings and Emily Winfield Martin’s The Wonderful Things You Will Be sit beside classics like Cinderella.Librarian Madhuri once doubted boys would pick the fairy tale book — until they checked it out as eagerly as anyone else.Bluebells International School in Kailash Colony has filled its junior library with colour-coded stacks, puppet nooks, Braille rows, and self-help-themed picture books.Meanwhile, at ITL Public School in Dwarka, Barkhaa, a reading series curated by the National Council of Educational Research and Training, is lined up by theme — food, games, animals — while at Ramjas International School in RK Puram, junior librarian Chandana Ghosh holds skits in her classes where students role play story characters.

3 children dead in train-school van collision, a question remains: Was level crossing gate open or shut?



GNS News Agency, July 16

Hours after a passenger train collided with a school van at a level crossing in Tamil Nadu’s Cuddalore district, killing three children and injuring several others, a prima facie probe by the Southern Railway indicates the van tried to drive through the level crossing when it shouldn’t have, even as eyewitnesses and survivors claimed the gate was open.The accident, which occurred at 7:45 am at Level Crossing Gate No. 170, involved Train No. 56813, the Villupuram–Mayiladuthurai passenger. A van carrying children to Krishnaswamy Vidyaniketan Senior Secondary School in Kumarapuram was crossing the tracks when it was struck, instantly killing two boys aged 12 and 15 and a girl aged 16. Two other children, the driver, and a local rescuer sustained injuries.At 9 am, the first official statement issued by Southern Railway claimed that as the gatekeeper was “proceeding to close the gate”, the van driver “insisted”

on crossing, which “should not have been permitted.”However, at noon, in a more detailed statement, Railway officials claimed, “The gate was in closed condition when the van arrived; however, the van driver insisted on allowing the van to cross the gate to avoid the delay in reaching school.”The statement noted that the gatekeeper had been suspended, an FIR lodged, and dismissal proceedings initiated.

The noon release also blamed the local administration: “An underpass has already been sanctioned by the Southern Railway... but permission for it is not being given by the District Collector for the last one year.”However, victims and eyewitnesses claimed the gate was open when the van approached.A 15-year-old survivor, currently receiving treatment, told the media that “usually the school van stops at the closed gate around 7.30-735 am”. “Today, the gate was open. There was no stoppage, no train sound. Our van got on the tracks, and suddenly the train hit us,” he said. He said there weren’t many students on the van as it was going to pick up others.The van driver, who also suffered injuries, told a TV channel, “The gate was open, and there was no train siren or sound when we crossed the gate.”A farmer working in a nearby field also claimed the fate was open. Residents also claimed the gatekeeper on duty was thrashed after the accident.The Southern Railway has announced an ex gratia compensation of Rs 5 lakh for the families of the deceased, Rs 2.5 lakh for the grievously injured, and Rs 50,000 for others who were injured.Chief Minister M K Stalin also announced Rs 5 lakh each from the Chief Minister’s Relief Fund to the families of the children who lost their lives.

Karnataka Lokayukta extortion case: HC allows state anti-corruption agency to summon IPS officer Joshi again

GNS News Agency, July 16

The Karnataka High Court Tuesday allowed the Lokayukta police to issue a fresh notice to IPS officer Srinath Mahadev Joshi to appear in connection with an investigation into a case pertaining to alleged extortion by a dismissed police constable, Ningappa Savant, by posing as an official of the state anti-corruption agency and a middleman.The high court allowed the Lokayukta police to summon the Indian Police Service officer again as it noted that the earlier date for Joshi’s appearance in the previous notice had expired. The court also stated that a notice can be issued to Joshi to appear before the Lokayukta police within 10 days and allowed him to seek anticipatory bail.

On June 18, the HC stayed the summons issued by the Lokayukta police for questioning Joshi, who was a superintendent of police in the Karnataka Lokayukta, until June 12, about his association with Savant.On Tuesday, the Karnataka High Court also reserved its order in a plea filed by Savant to quash the FIR registered by the Lokayukta police against him in the alleged extortion case. On June 17, the high court bench of Justice S R Krishna Kumar had stayed the FIR filed against Savant.Joshi had earlier sought anticipatory bail from a Lokayukta court, but his plea was dismissed on June 24 by the special court as being “devoid of merits”. He obtained a media gag order on June 20 from a civil court against defamatory reporting regarding the case.In a statement last week, the Lokayukta said, “Joshi was in touch with Ningappa and was involved in threatening government officials to extort money. They used the code word ‘kg’ (for money), the preliminary probe has revealed. The money was converted by investing in cryptocurrency”.

The extortion activities linked to the Karnataka Lokayukta emerged following an extortion attempt on a regional transport officer (RTO) in Tumkur on May 23, 2025.



The Tumkur RTO filed a complaint with the police, saying he had received a call from an unidentified number from a person claiming to be Vamsi Krishna, the SP of the Bengaluru City Lokayukta unit, demanding money to prevent a Lokayukta raid on him.The probe in the case by the Lokayukta police led to the arrest on June 2 of Savant, who was identified as the alleged person who called the Tumkur RTO impersonating a Lokayukta police officer.Savant was granted bail on June 19 by the Karnataka High Court after his wife G K Chandrakala filed a plea saying the Lokayukta police did not follow the procedures mandated by the Supreme Court while arresting her husband on June 2.The Lokayukta police retrieved data from the phone they seized from Savant and found that the dismissed police constable was closely associated with Joshi through multiple messages and calls. They also found that Savant had 23 cryptocurrency wallets with around Rs 4.92 crore in 13 of them.The Lokayukta police searched Joshi’s residence on June 15. They approached the Karnataka High Court on June 30 to allow the continuation of the investigations against Savant and Joshi, citing public concern over the credibility of the anti-corruption institution in the wake of the case.

AIMIM, Nampally Organizes Third Mega Job Fair at Kings Palace, Mehdiapatnam, Hyd



Hyderabad, July 16:

The All India Majlis-e-Ittehad-ul-Muslimeen (AIMIM), Nampally constituency, successfully organized its Third Mega Job Fair at Kings Palace, Gudimalkapur, Mehdiapatnam on Wednesday. The event witnessed a massive turnout from job aspirants of various educational backgrounds.

Over 17,000 candidates registered online, while hundreds stood in queues for spot registrations, reflecting the growing demand for employment opportunities.

Speaking to Telangana Today, Md Majid Hussain, MLA – Nampally, said that 150 companies participated in the job fair, offering nearly 25,000 vacancies across various sectors. He assured that the selection process will begin immediately, with no delays in shortlisting and hiring.

“This is our third job fair, following the successful placement of 500 candidates in the first and 1,100 in the second. We are committed to supporting unemployed youth by connecting them with reputed companies,” said MLA Majid Hussain.

He also added that candidates who are not selected will not be left behind. They will be trained through TASK (Telangana Academy for Skill and Knowledge), Light House an supporting NGO and will be eligible to attend the next job fair after upskilling.

The fair was efficiently coordinated by Md Arif Rizwan, Corporator – Red Hills, Md Hannan, Ex-Vice President – HDFC, Md Zabbar, IT Professional, and Md Mukram, AIMIM Member, who played a crucial role in ensuring smooth execution of the event.

‘Need urgent unity of Opposition parties’: Mamata on Assam govt’s NRC notice to Bengal resident



GNS News Agency, July 16

West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee expressed shock after a Coochbehar resident in the state was served an NRC notice by the Assam government, calling it “a systemic assault on democracy”. She posted on X, “I am shocked and deeply disturbed to learn that the Foreigners Tribunal in Assam has issued an NRC notice to Uttam Kumar Brajabasi, a Rajbanshi and resident of Dinhat in Cooch Behar for over 50 years. Despite furnishing valid identity documents, he is being harassed on suspicion of being a ‘foreigner/illegal migrant’.”

Banerjee claimed, “... It is proof that the ruling BJP dispensation in Assam is attempting to implement NRC in

Bengal, where it holds no power or jurisdiction. A premeditated attempt is being made to intimidate, disenfranchise, and target marginalised communities. This unconstitutional overreach is anti-people, and exposes the BJP’s dangerous agenda of bulldozing democratic safeguards and erasing the identity of Bengal’s people.” She said that the alleged incident calls for “urgent unity” among all Opposition parties against the BJP’s “divisive and oppressive machinery”. Brajabasi claimed he never went outside the Coochbehar district and that his family has been residents of the area for five generations. The notice mentioned that he has to prove his Indian citizenship by July 15, claiming that his family entered from the Assam border in the 1970s. Brajabasi said he is afraid he will be sent to a detention camp. Meanwhile, BJP MLA and leader Sushil Barman said, “This is another baseless campaign of TMC. There is no truth in it. If this happened, the West Bengal government has to take responsibility for this.” North Bengal Development Minister and Dinhat TMC MLA Udayan Guha said, “The BJP is basically anti-Bengali. They are taking revenge on Bengalis because Bengal never voted for the BJP. The Trinamool Congress on their official X handle posted, “A resident of Dinhat, Cooch Behar is being hunted like a criminal by Assam’s Foreigners Tribunal. Despite submitting every valid identity proof, he’s being hounded and asked to cough up electoral rolls from every election between 1966 and 2008...”

MNS workers detained for assembling at Mira Road after cops deny nod for protest; additional force deployed

GNS News Agency, July 16

The detained MNS leaders were seen questioning police personnel as to why they were denied permission for the rally when the traders were allowed to carry out a protest there a few days ago. The detained MNS leaders were seen questioning police personnel as to why they were denied permission for the rally when the traders were allowed to carry out a protest there a few days ago. The Mira-Bhayandar Vasai-Virar police detained several workers of the Maharashtra Navnirman Sena (MNS) who tried to force their way to Mira Road to carry out a protest march on Tuesday morning even though the police had denied them permission for the same hours ago.



Devendra Fadnavis told reporters that the police commissioner had informed him that permission was denied by police as MNS refused to make minor changes to the proposed route on which they were planning to carry out the rally. An officer said the changes had been suggested in a bid to avoid law and order issues. Most MNS workers who were detained were allowed to go later, the officer said. “Some, like Avinash Jadhav, have been kept under detention as a decision is being taken on whether to allow the assembled crowd to go ahead with the rally,” an officer added. “We have police personnel stationed at various points that are sensitive, where law and order issues could take place, and additional forces too have been requisitioned to assist the police,” the police officer said.

Delhi airport emerges as world’s 9th busiest airport in 2024: ACI



GNS News Agency, July 16

Delhi airport has been ranked the world’s 9th busiest airport, handling more than 7.7 crore passengers in 2024, a report released on Tuesday said. Airports Council International’s list of the world’s 20 busiest airports is topped by Atlanta airport in the US which processed 10,80,67,766 passengers, followed by Dubai airport (9,23,31,506 passengers) and Dallas/Fort Worth airport in the US (8,78,17,864 passengers) at the second and third spots, respectively.

“Global passenger traffic hit a new high in 2024, surpassing 9.4 billion travellers — up 8.4 per cent from 2023 and 2.7 per cent above pre-pandemic levels (2019)... The top-20 airports alone processed 1.54 billion passengers, capturing 16 per cent of global traffic,” the release said. In

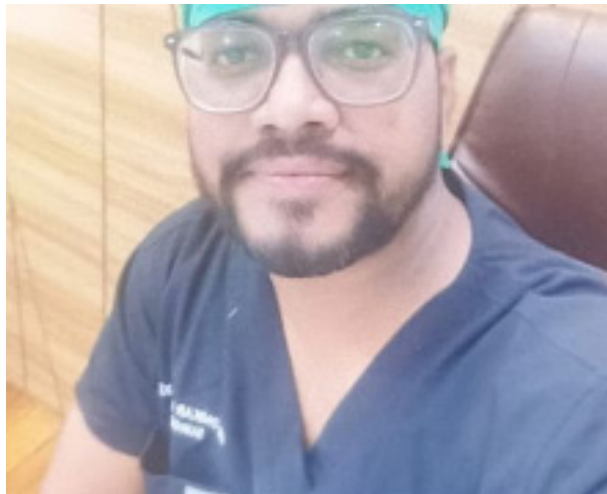
2024, the Indra Gandhi International Airport (IGIA) in the national capital handled 7,78,20,834 passengers, improving its ranking to the 9th position from 10th in 2023. The figure is based on the total number of enplaned and deplaned passengers while passengers in transit have been counted once. According to the Airports Council International (ACI) said the US contributed six airports to the top 20, mostly dominated by domestic traffic, except for JFK, where international passengers made up 56 per cent. Shanghai Pudong (PVG) climbed 11 positions to rank 10th globally, it said in a release. Other airports in the top 10 rankings are Japan’s Haneda (4th), UK’s London Heathrow (5th), US’ Denver (6th), Turkey’s Istanbul (7th), US’ Chicago (8th) and China’s Shanghai (10th). In terms of aircraft movements, Delhi airport was ranked two notches higher at the 15th position in 2024 compared to 2023. The number of aircraft movements at the airport touched 4,77,509 last year.

The list is topped by Atlanta airport with 7,96,224 aircraft movements. In 2024, aircraft movements topped 100.6 million globally, an increase of 3.9 per cent year-on-year and reached 96.8 per cent of 2019 levels, ACI said. The top-20 airports saw 11.08 million movements in 2024, up 5.4 per cent year-over-year. ACI represents 830 members operating 2,181 airports in 170 countries. The rankings reflect the scale of global aviation and the resilience of the industry that continues to grow, despite the complex global environment, ACI World Director General Justin Erbacci said.

‘Coming home for dinner’: Mumbai doctor jumps from Atal Setu after calling mother; police trying to trace him

GNS News Agency, July 16

A 32-year-old doctor from Sir J J Hospital in Mumbai allegedly jumped from the Sewri-Nhava Sea Link Atal Setu minutes after telling his mother on Monday night that he was coming home for dinner, the police in Navi Mumbai said on Tuesday, adding that they were still trying to trace him. Dr Omkar Kavitate, who was a resident of Kalamboli in Navi Mumbai, was last seen at the bridge on Monday night by a motorist who informed the police control room of the incident, according to the police. The police said Dr Kavitate had stopped his Honda Amaze car on the Navi Mumbai-Mumbai stretch of the sea link and crossed over the railing of the bridge.



police station. The police are speaking to the doctor’s family members, colleagues, and friends to find out why Dr Kavitate allegedly jumped from the sea bridge.

When we checked the phone call details, we found that the doctor last called his mother at 9.11 pm on Monday and told her that he was soon coming home to have dinner...” said Arjun Bajane, Senior Inspector of the Ulwa

‘We pay taxes, generate jobs, yet get no security’: Abohar businessman Sanjay Verma’s family slams govt after brazen murder

GNS News Agency, July 16

A day after Sanjay Verma, a businessman in Punjab, was shot dead by three masked assailants in Abohar in the Fazilka district, his brother Jagat Verma Tuesday questioned the Centre and Punjab Government over the rising killings of “honest businessmen” in the state. Thousands turned up to bid farewell to Sanjay Verma as he was cremated in Abohar. Standing beside the pyre minutes before the cremation at Shiwpur cremation ground, Jagat Verma said, “We pay taxes, generate employment for hundreds, yet get no security.” “I am not a politician, but my question is for the Prime Minister — why is there no strict action on gangsters? Why are they kept safe in jails while honest businessmen paying high taxes are killed on the roads?” So far, no arrests have been made. Harmanbir Singh Gill, Deputy Inspector General, Ferozepur Range, had stated they would crack the case soon. Police sources, meanwhile, said they have identified a suspect from Azimgarh village in Fazilka district, and have promised a breakthrough “soon”.

Though he didn’t name anyone, fingers quickly pointed to gangster Lawrence Bishnoi’s network. Bishnoi hails from Abohar. Hours after the murder, a Facebook post by one Aarzoo Bishnoi claimed responsibility for Sanjay Verma’s murder, tagging Canada-based gangster Goldy Brar and Shubham Lonker of Maharashtra. While the police have yet to confirm any direct gang link, the ruling Aam Aadmi Party (AAP)’s Punjab unit president Aman Arora Monday admitted that gangsters lodged in jails outside the state continue to orchestrate bloodshed. “The cold-blooded assassination — in broad daylight — has chilling echoes of singer Sidhu Moosewala’s murder three years ago, which remains unresolved,” said Congress state president Amrinder Singh Raja Warring. “Our Prime Minister visits dozens of countries — why can’t many gangsters hiding in Canada, America or elsewhere be extradited? The AAP promised to end gangster raj, but Punjab’s law and order is only worsening,” Warring added. “Today, it was not the pyre of busi-

nessman Sanjay Verma that burned in Abohar, but the pyre of Punjab’s law and order system. After this heinous crime, fear has gripped not only Abohar but the entire business community in Punjab that if someone receives an extortion call, they will think about paying the ransom to save themselves and their family rather than approaching the police,” said BJP’s state president Sunil Jakhar. “This is the greatest failure for any government. Does Chief Minister Bhagwant Singh Mann pay any attention to this issue, or will he continue to pass time with false promises?” Jakhar asked. Jakhar, the Punjab Congress chief, Warring, Abohar MLA Sandeep Jakhar, AAP’s local in-charge Arun Narang, former MLAs from different political parties, including Parkash Singh Bhatti, Mohinder Singh Rinwa, and Davinder Singh Ghubaya, among others, attended the cremation. BJP’s state president Sunil Jakhar, Punjab Congress chief Warring, Abohar MLA Sandeep Jakhar, AAP’s local in-charge Arun Narang, former MLAs from different political parties — Parkash Singh Bhatti, Mohinder Singh Rinwa, Davinder Singh Ghubaya and many others attended the cremation. BJP leaders, along with Jakhar, later burned an effigy of the Punjab Government, accusing it of completely failing to curb gang violence.

Sanjay Verma, known as Punjab’s ‘Kurta Pajama King’, ran the popular New Wear Well store in Abohar along with Jagat Verma, employing over 700 people. From politicians to bureaucrats, top cops to industrialists, his clientele spanned Punjab’s who’s who and even abroad. On Monday, CCTV cameras captured three young men — lean, hooded, barely in their 20s — waiting outside his shop. As soon as Verma stepped out of his vehicle around 10 am, they riddled him with bullets. While escaping, the assailants crashed their motorcycle, snatched another bike, and then vanished in an already waiting Swift car on Seeto Road. Sources indicate more people were involved in the murder of Sanjay Verma, raising questions about how organised this contract killing was.

Karnataka woman assaulted during ‘exorcism’ ritual as son watches, dies

GNS News Agency, July 16

Karnataka Geethamma, a villager from Karnataka’s Shivamogga district, was allegedly hit with a wooden stick for hours as part of an ‘exorcism’ ritual. A 45-year-old woman in Karnataka’s Shivamogga district died early on Monday morning after she was allegedly assaulted for hours as part of an exorcism ritual, the police said on Tuesday. Three people, including her son, have been arrested on murder charges, the police added.

The police identified the victim as Geethamma, a resident of Hosa Jambaghhatta village, and the arrested accused as her son, Sanjay, her distant relative, Asha, and Asha’s husband, Santosh. Meanwhile, a purported video of the incident, where Geethamma is seen pleading for water, went viral on social media, sparking outrage across the region. According to the police, around 9.30 pm on Sunday, Asha visited Geethamma’s house and convinced Sanjay that his mother was possessed by evil spirits and required an exorcism. Sanjay allowed her to proceed with the ritual, the police said. Asha allegedly performed a puja in front of Geethamma’s house, dragged her outside, and said she was possessed. She allegedly began beating Geethamma with a stick, claiming the spirit had not left her body. She then dragged Geethamma for approximately 2.5 km to the Chowdamma temple in Hale Jambaghhatta, where the assault continued until 2.30 am, the police said.

The violence escalated when Asha struck Geethamma on the head with a large stone and poured cold water over her body, the police said. Geethamma eventually collapsed due to hypothermia and severe head injuries, the police added. According to the police, Asha then declared that the spirit had been successfully removed and sent Geethamma back home, where her condition rapidly deteriorated. Geethamma was rushed to the Holehonnur community hospital, but doctors there pronounced her dead upon arrival. Following a complaint filed by another one of Geethamma’s sons, the police registered a murder case at



the Holehonnur police station. Sanjay, Asha, and Santosh were arrested on Monday. Superintendent of Police Mithun Kumar visited the crime scene to oversee the investigation. Nagappa, a relative of Geethamma and Asha, told the media that he had advised Sanjay to take Geethamma to the doctor. “Geethamma was suffering from some mental illness and was shouting during the night for the last 15 days. Sanjay thought she was possessed by an evil spirit. Four days before the incident, I had suggested he take her to a doctor in Shivamogga, but he decided that Asha would bring her relief,” he claimed.

Karkardooma court lawyers end hunger strike over shifting 34 digital cheque bounce courts after ‘assurance and request’ from Delhi HC

GNS News Agency, July 16

After a written assurance and request from Delhi High Court Chief Justice Devendra Kumar Upadhyaya, lawyers in Karkardooma Court have called off their four-day hunger strike protesting the decision to shift the judges of 34 digital Negotiable Instruments Act courtrooms that hear cheque bounce cases from six court complexes in Delhi to the Rouse Avenue court complex. For a week, the lawyers in the court complex situated in Northeast Delhi had been abstaining from work as part of the protest. After the Coordination Committee of All District Courts Bar Associations of Delhi held a meeting with Chief Justice Upadhyaya, the trial court lawyers finally decided to call off their strike.

“The Chief Justice took stock of the situation, requested the Members of the Karkardooma Bar to resume the work forthwith and further assured that all issues and concerns relating to functioning of Digital Courts shall be addressed at the earliest by the High Court at the institutional level,” a circular dated July 7 by Delhi High Court Registrar General Arun Bhardwaj reads.... the Chief Justice also conveyed to the Coordination Committee that he fully understands the situation and will take all possible steps to ensure that all courts function smoothly,” the circular stated.

Shortly afterwards, the secretary of the Shahdara Bar Association (SBA), advocate Narveer Dabas, issued a notice. “In view of the written assurance & request of Hon’ble Chief Justice, High Court of Delhi, (Copy Annexed), it has been unanimously resolved by the Executive Committee of Shahdara Bar Association (Regd.), that all members of SBA (Regd.) shall resume their work from 08.07.2025,” it read. Of the 34 courtrooms whose judges had been shifted, nine are from Dwarka, seven from Tis Hazari, six from Saket, five from Karkardooma Court, four from Rohini, and three from Patiala House Court. While the judges of the respective courtrooms were shifted to Rouse Avenue Court, the court staff (readers, ahlmads and stenographers), who ensure the functioning of the court, continue to operate from their respective districts. Rooms have been allotted to these judges on the seventh floor of the Rouse Avenue court complex in Central Delhi. The Delhi High Court, which was be-



The Delhi High Court had cited ‘optimal utilisation of available infrastructure and resources’ to justify shifting judges of digital cheque bounce courts from six court complexes in Delhi to the Rouse Avenue court complex.

hind this move, had cited “optimal utilisation of available infrastructure and resources” and “inadequate space” to justify the shift of judges of digital cheque bounce courts in a May 30 notification. “The remaining arrangement, including support staff deployment and recording of evidence from the respective District Court Complexes, shall continue as per the previous directions/practice until adequate and permanent space is made available in the District Courts concerned to which these Digital NI Act Courts ultimately belong,” the high court notification had stated. The move did not sit well with the Karkardooma Court lawyers and other trial court lawyers, who had flagged confusion in recording evidence, lack of virtual facilities and connectivity issues as their main problems.

Japan, South Korea seek to negotiate on tariffs before August deadline

Meanwhile, Ukraine said it had conducted a retaliatory drone strike on a Russian ammunition factory in the Moscow region — underscoring Kyiv’s resolve to continue defensive and counter-offensive actions. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky also took to X to express his intent to strengthen international support and cooperation through upcoming strategic meetings. “I instructed Ukraine’s Minister of Defence to prepare the next Ramstein meetings in various formats,” Zelensky posted. “The UK, along with Germany and other partners, is currently keeping Ramstein operational, and in August and September we expect — very much expect — the format to deliver new steps for our Ukrainian resilience.” Highlighting the growing reliance of Russian forces on Iranian-made “Shahed” drones, Zelensky said, “Everyone in the world can see how much Russia is relying on the use of ‘Shahed’ drones. They have few options left to prolong the war. I thank everyone who is helping us counter these attacks and, of course, everyone supporting our defence against Russian missiles.”

Supreme Court bans collection of extra fees by private medical colleges: T.N. serves as a case study



Last month, the Supreme Court ruled that self-financing medical colleges should not collect additional fees and adhere to the subsidised fee structure for BPL students. The court also ruled that if the students have paid any additional fees so far, they are entitled to a refund. This matter was taken up by the Supreme Court while upholding a High Court order that invalidated the Kerala Fee Regulatory Committee's notification directing private medical colleges to deposit higher fees collected from NRI students into a State corpus fund. While the apex court directed that the self-financing colleges are entitled to retain the fees transferred to the State, it also mentioned that "the State of Kerala or the Admission and Fee Regulatory Committee is at liberty to direct the colleges to furnish their accounts to establish that the directions have been complied with."

The recent ruling has reignited discussions about state-level fee regulation committees, established following a 2003 Supreme Court mandate requiring every state to form independent fee oversight bodies. These committees, headed by retired high court judges, are tasked with monitoring fee structures in private colleges, including self-financing medical institutions. However, questions persist about their effectiveness and whether private medical colleges comply with the prescribed fee structures. Tamil Nadu, home to 38 government medical colleges and numerous private ones, serves as an example. The State has had a fee fixation committee since 2007—currently headed by Justice R. Pongjiappan—and the Tamil Nadu Educational Institutions (Prohibition of Collection of Capitation Fee) Act, 1992.

In April this year, State Health Minister Ma Subramanian warned institutions against charging students for providing internships. This followed his statement last year, emphasising government action against colleges overcharging medical students. Earlier, in 2022, Medical Secretary Senthil Kumar had similarly issued stern warnings to private colleges violating the fee structure set by the regulatory committee. The general secretary of the Doctors' Association for Social Equality (DASE), G.R. Ravindranath, said, "The collection of exorbitant tuition and additional fees continues to plague self-financing colleges in the state, despite the Fee Fixation Committee's regulations." According to the Fee Fixation Committee's prescribed structure, private medical colleges are only allowed to collect 4.5/yr lakh and 14/yr lakh for government and management quota MBBS seats; the PG fee structure is set at 3.5 lakh for government seats and ₹15.5 lakh for management seats, he said. "None of the self-financing medical colleges follow this fee structure. Almost always they demand more money," said 26-year-old Dr Kavin B, who secured a PG government quota seat during State Counselling at a Kanyakumari-based private medical college.

"Although I was only required to pay ₹3.5 lakh, the college asked me for ₹15 lakh," she said. Many students, including Dr Kavin, gave up the allotted seats as the management demanded fees above the mandated structure. "For management quota seats, the college demanded 745 lakh, three times the prescribed fees!" she noted. She's waiting to retake the PG NEET exam, which is scheduled for August 3 this year and hopes to land a seat in a government college. Some colleges even force students to sign a bond, requiring them to pay the full tuition fees for all years—even if they leave the seat midway—plus an additional ₹15 lakh as a bond penalty, she added. Dr. Praveen (name

changed) recalls his experience trying to join a reputed self-financing medical college for his post-graduation. He was allotted a government quota seat—M.S. Orthopaedics—in the private medical college during the stray round of counselling conducted in February. "The last date to download the allotment order and pay the fees was February 28, but when we reached the college, they demanded ₹17 lakh in tuition fees alone, plus additional hostel fees," he said. The student added that the college administration continued to negotiate until 3 p.m., forcing him to miss the deadline to secure his seat. "The management made it very clear that I must pay the tuition fees as demanded—in cash—and that no bill would be provided." This was despite his requests for a bill so that he could apply for an education loan. "They also said that the stipend paid would be only ₹10,000, as against the ₹37,000 set by the State," he said. What followed were several visits and complaints filed with the Director of Medical Education and Research, which finally led to a government order from IAS officer, Dr. P. Senthilkumar, Principal Secretary to Government, requesting the reopening of the allotment order and declaring the seat as 'joined'.

"Despite the GO, the management did not budge," said Dr. Praveen. "If not 17 lakh, they asked me to pay at least 10 lakh extra." Dr Praveen had to forfeit his seat. "This one year has gone to waste. I lost the money deposited for counselling and was unable to sit for the last round because they made it look like I gave up the seat," he shared. He also added that he has received acknowledgement from the Fee Fixation Committee regarding the complaint raised, but is awaiting further response. Why some T.N. students move to other States? Some students from Tamil Nadu are opting to study in neighbouring states like Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh, citing that private colleges in these States tend to stick to the government-mandated fee structures.

Dr. Surya Prakesh is pursuing his MD in Anaesthesia at a private college in Kalburgi. "I applied under the open quota and got the seat. I paid the exact fee set by the fee committee, nothing more, and I also got the stipend amount," he said. According to the Karnataka Examinations Authority's Revised Provisional Fee Structure 2024-25 for medical colleges, the prescribed fee for MD-Anaesthesia (Private Fees) is ₹13,88,744. "This is not the case in TN; they routinely ignore fee committee guidelines, which is why I chose to apply in Karnataka," he adds. Two final-year MBBS students, who wished to remain anonymous, shared similar stories. They are studying at PES Institute of Medical Sciences and Research, a private medical college in Kuppam, Andhra Pradesh. One of the students said that four years ago, when he got a management seat at a Kanyakumari-based private medical college, they asked for 18 lakh in tuition fees alone, as opposed to the 12.20 lakh prescribed by the fee fixation committee back then. "We pay 12.5 lakh in Andhra. There are about 30 students in our batch from TN. Even though we were eligible for management seats, due to fee issues, people came here," he said. The other noted a shift in seat allocation: "In 2021, 30-35 seats were for out-of-state students. Now, Andhra prioritises local candidates, allotting only 8-10 seats for outsiders." The DASE General Secretary also mentioned that, in addition to tuition fees, self-financing colleges demand inflated fees under various miscellaneous categories, including uniforms, mess, hostel, and bus fees. "They demand further money through all these hidden costs, which pushes students into a corner," he said. He added that the government must strictly monitor and prohibit cash transactions that these private colleges demand, and implement penalties against those who fail to adhere to the fee fixation committee's guidelines. Speaking about measures the TN government has taken to support students from marginalised and economically deprived communities, he said the 2020 bill providing 7.5% reservation for government school students was a good gesture, but that more needs to be done. "Access to coaching centres is one such issue," he said. While state-run coaching institutes offer NEET preparation to marginalised students, the government should enforce stricter guidelines to ensure that private coaching centres also follow a reasonable fee structure.

Woman claims wrongful attachment of her land in Jayalalithaa's disproportionate assets case

A 68-year-old woman from Wallajahbad in Kancheepuram district has approached the Madras High Court, claiming that 2.15 acres of her land in Uthukadu village had been wrongly attached in connection with a disproportionate assets case involving former Chief Minister Jayalalithaa.

Justice D. Bharatha Chakravarthy on Tuesday (July 8, 2025) ordered notice to the Directorate of Vigilance and Anti-Corruption (DVAC) and directed a government counsel to make sure a counter affidavit was filed to the writ petition by July 28, after verifying the records and ascertaining the veracity of the claim. In her affidavit, the petitioner J. Kamasala said, she had purchased 33 cents of land in survey number 632/1, 1.51 acres in survey number 632/2, and 31 cents in survey number 640/6 by virtue of a sale deed executed by the Tamil Nadu Industrial Investment Corporation (TIIC) Limited on August 3, 2006.

The petitioner also stated the lands originally belonged to a woman named R. Lakshmi, who had mortgaged them with TIIC but could not discharge the loan in full. Hence, the TIIC had taken possession of the properties in 2002 and sold them by way of a public auction to the petitioner in 2006. Subsequently, when a private company named Madow Agro Farms Private Limited began interfering with a portion of the property, the petitioner's son J. Sathish Kumar filed a civil suit in 2017 for the declaration of title, and obtained a favourable decree from a district court in 2018.

However, recently, when she applied for an Encum-



brance Certificate for her properties, the petitioner got to know that the entire extent of 2.15 acres of her land had been included in a long list of immovable properties that had been attached in connection with Jayalalithaa's disproportionate assets case. She learnt that a Government Order had been issued with respect to the attachment and subsequently, the Kancheepuram Collector had sent a communication to the Sub Registrar's office on February 27, 2021 instructing the latter to not entertain any documents for the alienation of those properties. The petitioner informed the court of having sent representations to the DVAC, Kancheepuram Collector, as well as TIIC on April 21, 2025, clarifying that her properties had nothing to do with the disproportionate assets case. However, there was no response and hence, the present writ petition was filed.

Biocon Biologics gets UK's MHRA approval for Denosumab biosimilars

New Delhi: Biocon Ltd on Monday said its arm Biocon Biologics Ltd has received marketing authorisations from the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) in the UK for Vevzuo and Evfraxy, biosimilars of Denosumab used in the treatment of bone-related diseases. Vevzuo is authorised for the prevention of skeletal-related events (pathological fracture, radiation to bone, spinal cord compression or surgery to bone) in adults with advanced malignancies involving bone, Biocon said in a regulatory filing. It is also authorised for the treatment of adults and skeletally mature adolescents with giant cell tumour of bone that is inoperable or where surgical resection is likely to result in severe morbidity.

On the other hand, Evfraxy is authorised for the treatment of osteoporosis in postmenopausal women and in men at increased risk of fractures, the company said. In postmenopausal women, this significantly reduces the risk of vertebral, non-vertebral, and hip fractures, it added. Evfraxy is also authorised for the treatment of bone loss associated with hormone ablation in men with prostate cancer at increased risk of fractures. Biocon Biologics was recently granted marketing authorisation for Denosumab biosimilars by the European Commission (EC), allowing their commercialisation in all European Union (EU) member states and the European Economic Area (EEA), the company said.

A step away from transparency



The Election Commission of India (ECI) has introduced some new rules and revisions, including a Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of the electoral rolls in Bihar before the Assembly polls. This exercise will then take place across the country. In Bihar, the SIR exercise, aimed at removing duplicate entries in electoral rolls, started on June 25. It uses the 2003 electoral rolls as the base. The process includes door-to-door verification and new documentation requirements. The ECI aims to publish the final voters' list by September 30.

As part of the process, voters listed in the 2003 electoral rolls — the last time that an intensive revision was done in Bihar — do not have to submit documents unless they are asked. However, those who were not on the rolls in 2003 and new applicants will have to provide proof of date and/or proof of place of birth of self if they were born before July 1, 1987; proof of date and/or proof of place of birth of self and of one parent if they were born between July 1, 1987 and December 2, 2004; and proof of date and/or proof of place of birth of self and both parents if they were born after December 2, 2004. On the surface, this seems aligned with the ECI's broader goal of cleaning the electoral rolls and eliminating ghost voters from the voters' list and ensuring that only eligible Indian citizens exercise their franchise, which is fundamental to a free and fair democratic process. However, there are several concerns. First, many individuals/families from poor, Dalit, Muslim, tribal, and migrant communities often lack formal birth certificates. Second, many others will struggle to produce documents for verifying their parents' place of birth, largely due to historical gaps in State documentation.

Washington — the unsung hero in India's breach of Fortress Edgbaston

Ben Stokes shook his head in frustration. Maybe even a little disbelief. For an hour and a half, having embraced a stonewalling avatar, England's captain had kept India's wicket-hungry bowlers at bay when, in the last over before lunch, he was dismissed leg before, by Washington Sundar. Washington was the last of the five bowlers Shubman Gill pressed into operation on Sunday, the final day of the second Test at Edgbaston. Akash Deep had given India two crucial successes after play began 100 minutes late owing to the weather, but Stokes and Jamie Smith were then defiant. Deep and Prasidh Krishna, Mohammed Siraj and Ravindra Jadeja, were negated with application and focus. India weren't beginning to get itchy, but a blow before lunch... That would be quite something, wouldn't it? And so, with a little over five minutes to the interval, Gill brought on Washington. It made sense for so many reasons, not least because he would be bowling to a left-hander, with a bit of rough outside the off-stump to play with.

Washington had bowled 14 overs in England's first innings, without any numerical success. This one over before lunch was seen more as an exploratory exercise, to get him into the action more than anything else. That first over was tidy, no more. Then, Jadeja continued his spell from the Birmingham End, ostensibly the last over before lunch was to be taken at 2.30 pm. Cricket is a game of partnerships. The most obvious one pertains to batting and Jadeja was involved in two huge partnerships with Gill — 203 for the sixth wicket in the first innings, 175 for the fifth wicket in the second. But the bowling partnership doesn't get as much credit as its batting counterpart, or as much as it should. In normal course, his six deliveries should have been the last six before the break. But Jadeja bowls in overdrive. In a little over a minute, he had whirled through his over and therefore allowed Washington one more crack at England's embattled skipper. It hasn't been a summer of batting plenty for the left-hander, whose four preceding scores in Test cricket since late May read 9, 20, 33 and 0 (in the first innings in Birmingham, when he was caught behind off a Siraj lifter, first all). Maybe he had mentally switched off, maybe he was so sure Jadeja's would be the last over before lunch that he allowed his intensity to slacken. Or maybe we are doing Washington a disservice simply because it appears as if he doesn't put a great deal of work on the ball and yet often comes up with grand results.

Of the spinners on view in Birmingham, including England's Shoaib Bashir and better-than-part-timer Joe Root, Washington was the one who got the most drift. Perhaps that also worked in the deep recesses of Stokes' mind. To the third delivery of what would certainly be the final over before temporary respite for the hosts, Stokes thrust his right foot forward, the bat trailing in its wake. Delivered from round the stumps, the ball drifted in and held its line on pitching. It's possible Stokes played for non-existent turn but whatever the reason, he met the ball, with his pad, on the move. It takes a lot to get Washington excited. Such as ping-pong Ben Stokes in front on the final day of a Test during a push for victory. The usually controlled young man couldn't hide his delight, whirling towards umpire Saikat, his appeal full of belief and conviction. The Bangladeshi's index finger went up and after a brief consultation with Smith, Stokes chose to review the decision. In hope. In desperate hope. He was willing the ball to go on with the arm and miss leg, but in vain. As the three reds flashed on the giant screen, Washington was mobbed by his teammates for a second time in 30 seconds, the game all but in India's bag as England lost their sixth wicket, their captain, and their final recognised pair was dislodged.

To say that that was the turning point of the chase will be neither accurate nor warranted, but it was a huge moment nevertheless in the context of the game. Deep's twin strikes had settled whatever early nerves there might have been, but India might have started to second-guess themselves had Stokes and Smith, who smashed an otherworldly unbeaten 184 in the first essay, been unseparated at stumps. The dressing room might have been a slightly tense place despite more than 50 overs available to them to wrinkle out the last five wickets. There might have been a few 'what-ifs' thrown in. With that one ball, which was only possible due to Jadeja's manically swift over, Washington had lifted the mood, made sure that the team had a happy lunch, that grumpy faces and furrowed brows were replaced by broad smiles and a sunny outlook. It wasn't Washington's only contribution in a match that heralded his umpteenth comeback to the Test XI. His inclusion itself had sparked healthy,

Third, there may be lack of awareness and clarity around the new requirements. Many voters, especially in rural areas, may not fully understand which documents are needed, how to fill out forms, or where and when to submit them. With limited public outreach, complex paperwork required, and a tight timeline leading up to the final publication of the electoral rolls by September 30, there is a high risk of confusion, errors, and unintentional exclusions, particularly of those already on the margins of the system. Fourth, the process relies heavily on field-level officials (booth level officers and electoral registration officers), who hold discretionary power. While the framework allows for claims, objections, and appeals, the initial verification and decision-making are in the hands of local officers. This may lead to inconsistencies, delays, or biased judgment, especially in areas with limited oversight.

Fifth, the ECI has neither committed to publishing the list of names being removed from the electoral rolls, nor has it provided a clear, accessible system for applicants to track the status of their submissions. This makes it difficult for citizens, civil society, and the media to monitor the process, identify errors, or challenge wrongful exclusions, raising serious questions about accountability. The Lokniti-Centre for the Study of Developing Societies (CSDS) post-poll survey of the National Election Study 2024 revealed a concerning trend. When respondents were asked whether they trust the ECI, 12% reported 'not much' and 7% reported 'no trust at all'. In this atmosphere of suspicion, the ECI has now published a circular directing that all photos, videos, CCTV footage, and webcasts from polling stations be deleted within 45 days of the election results, unless an election petition is filed within that period. Earlier, footage and photos were retained for three months to one year, depending on the stage of polling. This new measure not only limits the time to scrutinise the material, but also shuts off avenues for transparency that existed earlier. While steps such as the EPIC clean up and voter turnout upgrade suggest that the ECI is pushing for efficiency, actions such as deleting polling station footage prematurely, implementing new documentation rules without sufficient public awareness, and failing to disclose names removed from electoral rolls contribute to the prevailing atmosphere of uncertainty and suspicion. At a time when public trust in institutions is under strain, the ECI cannot afford to be so opaque.



sometimes heated, debate. Popular opinion

Popular opinion demanded the inclusion of Kuldeep Yadav, the left-arm wrist-spinner, to offset the unavailability of Jasprit Bumrah, rested to manage his body and space out his workload. Washington wasn't even thought to be in the mix until, two days before the game, assistant coach Ryan ten Doeschate acknowledged that playing two spinners was a 'definite' option but that who those two spinners would be was the big question. That was the first indication — to the outside world — that the Tamil Nadu lad was seriously being considered. The team sheet at the toss confirmed the same, the all-rounder's inclusion as much to do with the depth in batting he provided at No. 8 as his incisiveness with the ball. The wisdom of packing the batting line-up when the need was for wicket-taking options was discussed threadbare outside the dressing room. Inside it, its occupants were convinced the right call had been made, a conviction that grew following the Gill-Washington alliance in the first essay. Almost everyone knows by now that even though India haven't used him in that capacity, Washington was a specialist, top-order batter until a few years back until successive teams started to view him as an off-spinner who could bat. If Washington felt his batting wasn't getting the credit it deserved, there was nothing he could do other than keep stacking up the big runs that would, hopefully, eventually, alter misconceptions.

It was on the back of his second highest first-class score, a fluent 152 against Delhi in the Ranji Trophy in October last year when he put on 232 for the second wicket with opener Sai Sudharsan, that the 25-year-old was recalled to the Test XI for the first time in three and a half years. Ironically enough, as an off-spinner who could bat. In his first Test since March 2021, he batted at No. 9 and No. 6 respectively against New Zealand in Pune, and at No. 9 and No. 8 in the next Test in Mumbai. 18*, 21, 38* and 12 as the rest of the batting imploded against Mitchell Santner and Ajaz Patel weren't shabby, but also in those two Tests, the off-spinner in Washington shone through as he comfortably outbowled 500-wicket man and Tamil Nadu senior R. Ashwin. With 16 wickets in the two Tests, his status as 'bowling all-rounder' — we love these tags, don't we, taking some kind of perverse pleasure in pigeonholing people? — was solidified, never mind if his Test average with the bat is in the 40s. But Washington couldn't care less. He wanted to play Test cricket — batter, bowler, all-rounder, whatever, just pick me please, he might well have said — and when he got his chance at Edgbaston, he was ready.

Gill produced some of the most spectacular shot-making of the Test, as you would expect of someone who smashed 430 runs across two innings, with 43 fours and 11 sixes, but the two strokes that remain fresh in memory came off Washington's willow.

In the first innings, as India looked to pile on the runs, Washington was given a tough time before lunch by Josh Tongue, the tall right-hander who had caught Jadeja by surprise with extra bounce and adopted the same approach against the taller left-hander. After the break, Washington looked more at home. As Tongue bounced him once too many times, he walked inside the line of the ball and played the most glorious of pulls that kept going and going deep into the stands behind fine-leg. It took one back to the Gabba and January 2021 when, in a tense run-chase, debutant Washington had played an eerily similar stroke off the bowling of Pat Cummins, his left leg raised and parallel to the ground, the right leg swivelling with grace and balance. In the second innings, with India pushing for quick runs and the declaration imminent, Washington came very late to the party but played the most stunning stroke, staying low while reaching out to Root's off-spin, breaking his wrists and effortlessly driving the ball over cover.

The university under attack, universities undermined



Universities are facing an unprecedented challenge. While in India the challenge has been growing over the last three decades, in the United States, it has erupted since President Donald Trump took office in January 2025. The challenge has been growing elsewhere too as society's expectations from universities are changing. The Trump administration is freezing \$3.2 billion of Harvard University's grants and contracts. There is a move to revoke Harvard's tax-exempt status which will cost it a few hundred million dollars. Harvard's President Alan M. Garber has said that political disagreements could pose an existential threat to educational institutions. Because a cut in funds is being used to coerce universities to change their policies regarding student admissions, protests on campus, faculty recruitment, and diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) programmes.

In India, the control of institutions of higher learning has increasingly slipped out of the hands of academics to the bureaucracies in the Ministries of Education and the University Grants Commission over the last 40 years. Academics in India are facing growing challenges related to teaching and research. The institutions they work in do not come to their defence, as seen in a recent case of a prestigious private university. All this represents a shift in the fine balance in the societal role of institutions of higher learning. The U.S. system was a model to emulate and even that is being dismantled.

There is an inherent tension in the social role of universities. On one side they are required to generate socially relevant knowledge to meet the evolving challenges society faces while on the other, they are expected to reproduce the existing societal structures. To fulfil their creative role, academia requires autonomy. The heart and soul of creativity is what makes societies dynamic. Unfortunately, rulers while paying lip service to this are hollowing it out in practice. Autonomy enables academics to take a long-term view of emerging social challenges, even anticipating them. Given the accelerating pace of change, by the time society becomes aware of the change, it becomes too late to tackle it. For instance, developments in Artificial Intelligence and social media are leading to challenges for employment, the issue of fake news and the nature of war. Autonomy enables current orthodoxy to be challenged and facilitates the generation of new knowledge. Without Galileo challenging the Church our understanding of the universe would not have advanced. Further, dynamism comes when academics who are aware of their own assumptions question them. Academics are a product of a time-consuming process. We do not know how to produce a Mahalanobis. He emerged out of an environment of freedom of thought that a university provides. In a shotgun approach, the system produces original thinkers who change the course of their discipline and give society new leads. The wider the catchment area, the higher the chance of producing excellence. Autonomy is needed all the way down the line. Universities need autonomy from vested interests to shield individual academics who generate new knowledge. Autonomy is not just for a vice chancellor or a director of an institute but it must be embedded in the structure of the institutions to enable the autonomy of functioning to individual academics.

Autonomy enables academics to develop their own view of their discipline which guides their research and teaching and which helps them resist orthodoxy and imposition so that originality flowers. Challenging orthodoxy ought to

Riya Singh on her experiences at the University of Sheffield, the U.K.



With a background in Urban Design from CEPT University, Ahmedabad, I have always been passionate about how urban spaces shape communities and bring about sustainability. I grew up in Bhilai, Chhattisgarh, and was deeply influenced by the sustainable living practices we followed. These early lessons instilled a respect for the environment and an awareness of how closely human lives are intertwined with Nature. However, while working in Himachal Pradesh, I grasped the severity of climate change. Witnessing first-hand the shifting landscapes, unpredictable weather patterns, and their direct impact on local livelihoods was a turning point. It deepened my commitment to working at the intersection of environmental change and social justice and led me to seek a more comprehensive understanding of global environmental challenges and solutions.

I chose to study M.Sc. Environmental Change and International Development at the University of Sheffield, the U.K., for its transdisciplinary approach, and its exploration of environmental change through a critical development lens. Students are encouraged to think beyond conventional solutions and engage with issues such as climate justice, gender inequality, and sustainable livelihoods. We are constantly challenged to analyse existing frameworks and develop innovative approaches to solving them. The School of Geography and Planning has strong connections with industry and policymakers and has been instrumental in bridging the gap between academia and real-world practice. This gave me an opportunity to attend guest lectures from professionals, take up field classes, and engage in different topics around sustainability, geo-politics and policy-making, providing invaluable insights into the practical challenges of

the second nature of academics which includes their own institutions. While that slows down decision making in institutions, it results in more robust decisions. Authorities running these institutions have to accept this and function democratically. Dissent is essential and not a malaise to be eliminated. A bureaucrat or a bureaucratized academic would not understand this and that is why such people are most often not suited to head a university. Challenging orthodoxy produces the tension between 'what universities ought to be' and 'what rulers expect' of them. Heads of institutions of higher learning have to negotiate this tension and academics are better suited for it than those with bureaucratized mindset. Cultivating dissent makes universities anti-establishment while the rulers expect them to promote their agenda and reproduce the existing social relations. A feudal system would not like the birthright of the rulers to be challenged and a capitalist system would want docile labour rather than aware workers who challenge the notion of 'dollar vote' that undermines democracy. The anti-establishment character is anathema to regimes with a narrow agenda and lacking in confidence. They limit autonomy to help push their agenda. They neither need new ideas nor value them, thereby downgrading the role of universities and their social status. This forces academics to become status quoist. Both rapid technical change and marketisation create a mist of the future resulting in short termism and a stultified view of society's future and the past. Complex ideas are neither understood nor valued and are turned into a caricature. An ahistorical view of society is propagated to fit the agenda of the rulers. Existing divides among people are exploited to further a narrow agenda and propagate conservatism by caricaturing an increasingly complex society. 'Democratization' via the Internet is helping the process by propagating instant ideas and opinions so that the imaginary is perceived to be the reality. This helps the rulers push their agenda. The U.S. and China have operated with a long-term agenda which has enabled them to dominate the fast globalising world which is witnessing a rapid evolution of technology and ideas. For this, the U.S. created a huge system of independent universities and research institutes and attracted talent from all over the world. This is now being undermined by the attack on U.S. universities and their faculty. Columbia buckled under pressure but Harvard has stood firm and challenged the government in court. It has received support from academics and over 150 universities. But why are private universities with big endowments dependent on government funding? Education and research are expensive. The faculty of universities need funds for projects across the board — in science and technology, social science and art and culture. Science and technology is crucial for development. But so is the social environment in which it flourishes. Creativity is multi-dimensional and requires a holistic view of research.

Funds for higher education ought to be free of strings to preserve autonomy. Private sector funding tends to be largely linked to the profit motive and affords limited autonomy. The burden then falls on public funding. This has been the case not only in India but also in the U.S. Only a liberal ruling regime can consider providing untied funds. In India, since the private sector spends little on research, public funding is crucial. Post 1991, public funding in India declined in per capita terms and starved institutions of higher education. This has enabled the state to not only curb autonomy but also push its agenda by appointing people of its own proclivity as the heads of these institutions and also allowing them limited autonomy.

The key role of institutions of higher learning is to generate socially relevant knowledge. This requires autonomy to challenge orthodoxy, which makes them appear to be anti-establishment. This is the social tension in their role as reproducers of societal structures and generators of new knowledge. Creeping short termism has led to a simplistic understanding of society and growing conservatism. Often the imaginary masquerades as new knowledge. All this undermines the value of universities in society and they get hollowed out while retaining the façade and none is left to defend their autonomy. This is what Harvard's Dr. Garber pointed to.

implementing environmental and development policies. Additionally, career workshops and networking events helped build meaningful connections and explore career opportunities. Beyond academics, I work as a Student Research Assistant at the Urban Institute, which has allowed me to collaborate with researchers across different disciplines and engage with urban development issues from a global perspective. It has been an exciting to contribute to discussions about sustainable cities and inclusive urban policies.

Studying here has provided me with numerous opportunities for personal and professional growth. The emphasis on research communication, critical analysis, and report writing has strengthened my confidence in articulating complex ideas effectively. Engaging in workshops, group discussions, and hands-on projects has refined my ability to think independently and present my work with clarity. The city is a vibrant and student-friendly place, offering something to do beyond academics. It fosters a strong sense of community and encourages students to engage in extra-curricular activities, volunteer work and social initiatives. It is not just a place to earn a degree, but a space where one can grow intellectually, gain hands-on experience, and be part of a global network of changemakers.

Three more teams to power India AI mission

New Delhi: After Sarvam AI, India on Friday selected three more teams —Soket AI, Gan AI, Gnani AI — for building indigenous artificial intelligence foundation models.

In line with its global AI ambitions—a comprehensive plan that entails enhanced AI infrastructure and local language model development — India has also announced availability of 16,000 more GPUs that would take the compute facility available to startups and researchers here to 34,000. IT Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw said significant progress has been made on India AI Mission, with focus on democratisation of technology. The compute facility supercharged with 34,000 GPUs will enable India to develop AI ecosystem in a big way, he said. Three more teams — Soket AI, Gan AI, Gnani AI — have been selected for building indigenous artificial intelligence foundation models.

Why is Pollachi sexual assault verdict unique? | Explained



The story so far: On May 13, 2025, a Mahila Court in Coimbatore convicted nine men from Pollachi under Section 376D (gang rape) of the Indian Penal Code and imposed the maximum punishment of imprisonment for the remainder of their life. The court also awarded a compensation of ₹85 lakh to seven victims, including those who had been subjected to sexual assault repeatedly pursuant to a conspiracy hatched by the convicts between October 2016 and February 2019. According to the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI), the modus operandi of the convicts was to befriend women before abducting and subjecting them to sexual assault. The prosecution had also charged the gang of recording the sexual acts on video and using those clips to threaten and rape the women repeatedly on different occasions. The 658-page judgement delivered by sessions judge R. Nandhini Devi highlights the challenges faced by the prosecution in proving its case in order to secure a conviction.

Did Victim 'A' exaggerate the offence committed against her?

Victim 'A', a 19-year-old college girl, was the last victim of the convicts before they got arrested in 2019. However, she turned out to be the first to lodge a police complaint on February 24, 2019 leading to the unearthing of their antecedents. According to the prosecution, A1 (28-year-old Rishwanth alias N. Sabarirajan, a civil engineer by profession) had pretended to have fallen in love with the victim, taken her to a place near a poultry farm in a car and abused her sexually by removing her upper garments on February 12, 2019. He also surreptitiously shot half naked pictures of the victim with a mobile phone and used them to threaten her. When she confided about it to her family members after a few days, her elder brother and his friends tracked down the accused as well as his accomplices and found many videos of other women having been subjected to sexual assault by the gang. Therefore, the family decided to lodge a complaint after 12 days since the victim was abused. When victim 'A' deposed before the trial court after six years, she levelled the charge of rape too against A1. However, the CBI Special Public Prosecutor fairly conceded that such an exaggerated claim made by the victim for the first time before the trial court, and not made before any of the four investigating officers or the two judicial magistrates during the course of investigation, need not be given credence. After recording his submission, the court said, it was quite possible that the victim did not want the accused to escape from punishment or imposed with lesser punishment and therefore, she might have chosen to make an exaggerated allegation. Stating that the improved version of the victim could certainly not be accepted by the court, the trial judge said, at the same time, the entire testimony of the victim could not be discarded just because of the exaggerated portion. The principle *falsus in uno, falsus in omnibus* (false in one thing, false in everything) has no application in Indian courts, she said. "There is a marked difference between exaggerated version and false version," the judge observed and added that it was the duty of the court to sift the chaff from the grain in case of exaggerations or contradictions. Ultimately, the trial court convicted A1 for the charge of outraging the modesty of the victim but acquitted A2 (30-year-old financier K. Thirunavukkarasu) and A5 (28-year-old Mani alias R. Manivannan whose car was used for the crime) from the charges levelled against them for having facilitated the offence against this victim.

What was the goof up in the charge sheets related to Victim B?

Victim 'B' was also a final year college student. She had been brutally gang raped by A1, A2, A3 (29-year-old M. Sathish), A4 (26-year-old P. Vasanthakumar) and A7 (29-year-old Haron alias T. Haronimus Paul) on April 24, 2018 despite being informed that she was menstruating at that point of time. The first charge sheet filed by CBI Inspector Vijayavaishnavi had mentioned the incident to have taken place in April 2018 but the supplementary charge sheet filed by Inspector Pachayammal had mentioned it as November 2018. The SPP told the court the victim had specifically mentioned the occurrence to have taken place only in November 2018 to the second investigating officer but had not mentioned any specific date or month to the first investigating

How the diet shapes healthy ageing



Across the world, the population of older adults has increased over time. And over 80% of them suffer from at least one chronic health disorder. The U.S. Centre for Disease Control (CDC) and World Health Organisation (WHO) point out that promoting global health is a priority. They both point out that a better-quality diet is beneficial for the prevention of heart attacks, diabetes and premature death.

The Mediterranean Diet, much lauded by health researchers as an ideal one, uses plant-based foods — vegetables, fruits, legumes and natural oils, moderate amounts of poultry and eggs — and avoids red meat. People there who practice this diet do live longer and healthier lives. Indeed, a typical food in India, with wheat or rice, dal, sabji with lots of greens, and curd/buttermilk, (and for non-vegetarians: eggs and fish but little or no meat), is essentially Mediterranean.

Towards this, two recent articles highlight the best food that we should take for

officer. Nevertheless, it was not known as to how the first investigating officer had mentioned the month as April 2018 in the first charge sheet.

However, relying upon the forensic report regarding the video shot during the gang rape, the trial court concluded that the offence had taken place only in April and not November 2018. It also stated that the victim might have had confusion in recalling the exact month since semester examinations generally take place during April as well as November. The judge also held that the prosecution had failed to prove the use of a black colour car for abducting the victim since it had been purchased by A1 only on August 11, 2018. Nevertheless, the judge convicted all the five accused for gang rape on the basis of the victim's oral testimony corroborated by the electronic evidence.

Why SC/ST Act was not invoked with respect to Victims 'C' and 'E'?

According to the prosecution, Victim 'C' was gang raped by A2, A5 and A6 in September 2018 and Victim 'E', a MBA final year student, was raped by A1 and subjected to criminal intimidation by A2 and A5. Since both the victims belonged to a Scheduled Caste, the defence counsel contended that the entire prosecution launched against them would fall to the ground. The counsel pointed out that only an officer in the rank of Deputy Superintendent of Police or above should investigate cases under the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act of 1989 and since only officers in the rank of Inspector had investigated the present case, all the charges against the accused must be eschewed. However, rejecting their argument, the trial judge held that the SC/ST Act need not be invoked merely because the victims happened to be from a Scheduled Caste unless there was evidence to prove that the offence had been committed due to caste hatred.

How did A6 get convicted for raping Victims 'D' & 'H' though he was not involved in any sexual act?

The trial court found A2, A3 and A5 to have subjected Victim 'D', a second year college student, to gang rape in October 2018. A6 had waited outside when the crime was committed and then dropped the victim in a car at Pollachi bus stand. Similarly, when eight of the nine accused mercilessly raped Victim 'H', a teacher at a private school, one after the other, A6 alone had refused to indulge in any sexual act despite being asked to do so by A5. Nevertheless, the trial court convicted A6 too for the charge of gang rape of both the victims since he was a part of the gang. Similarly, the court convicted A2 to A4 too for the charge of gang rape of Victim 'G', a beauty parlour employee, though the sexual act against her had been committed only by A1. The trial judge pointed out that the Supreme Court in its latest judgement delivered on May 2, 2025 in Raju alias Umakant versus State of Madhya Pradesh had held that it was not necessary for all the persons in a gang to have indulged in overt sexual acts to be convicted for gang rape. It was sufficient even if one of them had committed the act in pursuance of the common intention among the gang members.

Why didn't Victim 'F' testify in court leading to acquittal of accused?

The prosecution's case was that the nine accused had sexually assaulted as many as eight victims in total. However, one of them (Victim F) did not come forward to testify before the court. According to the prosecution, Victim 'F' was abducted and gang raped by A1, A2, A3, and A7. The victim had written a letter to the trial court expressing her inability to depose before the court due to a situation prevailing in her matrimonial home and the continuous medical treatment required for her new born baby. Therefore, left with no option, the CBI had dispensed with her examination before the court. The court acquitted all four accused from the charge of raping her but held that no adverse inference could be drawn against the prosecution and the CBI could not be found to have deliberately withheld the witness especially when it could not convince her to testify despite best efforts.

How did the court deal with defence arguments?

The defence raised many issues such as non production of the mobile phones of the victims, non collection of CCTV footage to prove abduction from public places, prosecution's failure to secure the clothes worn by the victims at the time of the crime, the non inclination of the victims to undergo medical examination and so on to make a dent in the prosecution case. However, the trial judge rejected all such contentions by observing that in sexual offence cases, the oral evidence of the victims alone was sufficient to convict the accused if such evidence inspires the confidence of the court.¹⁰ Our jurisprudential enthusiasm for presumed innocence must be moderated by the pragmatic need to make criminal justice potent and realistic.... Proof beyond reasonable doubt does not mean proof beyond the shadow of doubt. The law would fail to protect the community if it admitted fanciful possibilities to deflect the

healthy ageing. One in the April 3 issue of the journal *Nature*, titled 'The Best and Worst Foods for Healthy Ageing', points out that people who eat a diet rich in fruits and vegetables are more likely to reach the age of 70 without major physical or cognitive impairments. This article offers the advice that the recommendation to eat plenty of fruits and vegetables is well-founded: a large-scale 30-year study on dietary habits shows that di-

are high in these foods are associated with healthier aging. The massive study itself is published in *Nature Medicine*, titled 'Optimal dietary patterns for healthy aging'. The message here is 'get more fibre in your diet, eat more vegetables, pulses such as beans, lentils, and eat less fats and animal meat', suggesting that this practice will help senior citizens live a healthier life. In this study, health experts from the U.S., the U.K.,

Canada, and Denmark analysed data from two major studies: the Nurses' Health Study (tracking hospital workers and medical professionals) and the Health Professionals Follow-up Study (examining men's diet and lifestyle linked to serious illnesses such as cancer and cardiovascular diseases). By looking at the records of 70,000 women and 30,000 men, they uncovered key insights into how our eating habits affect our health.

After China’s RE magnet clampdown, a rethink in India on its EV policy push



In India’s policy circles, a steadfast focus of driving vehicular electrification by largely incentivising a singular technological platform – battery electric vehicles or BEVs – at the cost of all other technologies, could be in for a change. The immediate trigger for this has come from China’s newly imposed restrictions on rare earth magnet and related materials that kicked in from April 4, which are beginning to impact automakers across the world. This includes vehicle manufacturers in India.Bei

“The restrictions (on rare earth magnet and related materials imposed by China that kicked in from April 4) are a wake up call. In some ways, the timing is propitious. It’s akin to a person’s cocaine supply being withheld just as an addiction was building up. . . . It’s good this has happened now. A policy rethink is now on (after Beijing’s move),” a top government official told

India’s electric mobility plan has, so far, largely focused on replacing internal combustion engines with BEVs powered by Lithium-ion (Li-ion) batteries, which was positioned as the most viable energy storage option for the future. BEVs are essentially vehicles such as the Tata Nexon EV, BYD Atto3 or Mahindra BE6 in India, or the Nissan Leaf or the Tesla Model S sold abroad, which have no internal combustion engine or fuel tank, and run on a fully electric drivetrain powered by rechargeable batteries. Currently, government policy overtly favours BEVs, which are taxed at 5 per cent, with most other categories facing higher taxes over 43-48 per cent. The Centre has also been pursuing its target of EV30 @2030 that aims to ensure that 30 per cent of all newly registered private cars, 40 per cent of buses, 70 per cent of commercial cars, and 80 per cent of two-wheelers and three-wheelers will be electric in less than five years. All this could all possibly see a review in the due course. The restrictions on rare earth magnet and related materials imposed by China has led to vehicle makers, especially EV makers, staring at a potential shortage of the critical components, which raises concerns of price hikes and production delays in a nascent, cost-sensitive segment of the auto market. The Indian car industry is learnt to have initiated a conversation with the government to smoothen the process for procuring the rare earth magnets from Beijing. While the Chinese government has not imposed an outright ban on the export of rare earth magnets—a crucial element in making electric vehicles—the process has been made very difficult, which could take up a long time and pose shortage risks in the meantime. The applications have to be routed through the Ministry of Commerce (DGFT) and India’s Ministry of External Affairs, with end-use certifications being insisted upon in some cases by the Chinese side.Rare earth magnets, especially neodymium-iron-boron (NdFeB) magnets, are crucial for EV manufacturing, particularly in electric motors. They provide the strong magnetic fields needed for efficient and powerful electric motors, including traction motors that drive EVs. Rare earths are needed for making what are called permanent magnet

synchronous motors, which are used extensively in EVs. These magnets also play a major role in other vehicular components like power steering systems, wiper motors, and braking systems, which impact both EVs and ICE vehicles. China has a stranglehold over these rare earth magnets.

While the availability of rare earth metals is not limited to China, it is in the efficient processing of these critical elements where Beijing has a substantial lead, which was once enjoyed by the US and Japan. In recent years, Japan has been able to restart some of its minerals’ processing industry owing to government policies, but countries like the US and India are heavily dependent on Chinese exports of these metals.While China restricted exports of seven heavy rare earth metals including samarium, gadolinium, terbium, dysprosium, lutetium, scandium, and yttrium, as well as rare earth magnets in May in response to the US administration’s reciprocal tariff heat, these restrictions are still to be lifted in a meaningful way. A few months ago, China had also banned exports to the US of gallium, germanium, antimony, and other key high-tech materials with potential military applications.Chinese Stranglehold

Apart from China’s restrictions on rare earth magnets, Beijing’s virtual stranglehold in the EV battery ecosystem is yet another reason for concern here. The Indian government’s strong EV push comes amid a struggle by New Delhi to make inroads into the global lithium value chain, which too has prompted a rethink on the need to diversify the country’s dependency on Li-ion batteries in the overall EV mix. The demand for Li-ion batteries from India is projected to grow at a CAGR of over 30 per cent by volume up to 2030, translating into over 50,000 tonnes of lithium requirement for the country to manufacture only EV batteries.But with over 90 per cent of global Li production concentrated in Chile, Argentina and Bolivia, alongside Australia and China, and other key inputs such as cobalt and nickel mined in the Congo and Indonesia, India would need to be almost entirely dependent on imports from a small pool of countries to cater to its demand. While other options to Li-ion are being explored, viability remains a key factor, especially given China’s strong influence over this value chain. China is miles ahead of everybody in battery tech, with a strong base in the entire sourcing chain, and industry leaders such as battery makers CATL and BYD and carmakers such as Nio, Li Auto and XPENG Motors all from that country.There are some other niggling issues on the periphery too, when it comes to an overt policy preference for battery electrics. There’s the issue of upfront subsidy for EVs, for instance. The BEV experience across all markets, from Norway, to the US and China, show that the electric push works only if it is backed by state subsidies. The problem with this overt subsidisation of EVs, especially in the context of a developing nation such as India, is that much of this subsidy, especially the one offered as tax breaks for cars, ends up in the hands of the middle or upper middle class – the typical buyers of battery electric four-wheelers.Then there are problems with the charging network. An analysis by the World Bank suggests that investing in charging infrastructure is 4-7 times more effective in EV adoption than providing upfront EV purchase subsidies. Countries like Norway and China have seen faster EV adoption through their sustained efforts towards expanding the public charging infrastructure, while also offering purchase subsidies. India is struggling on this count.Then there’s the argument over the electricity source. In several countries that have gone in for an EV push, much of the electricity is generated from renewables — in Norway for example, it is 99 per cent from hydroelectric power. In India, despite a concerted renewable push, the grid is still fed largely by coal-fired thermal plants. Unless the generation mix changes significantly, there would be an issue with using fossil-fuel generation to power EVs. So, theoretically, while the tailpipe emissions by cars might not be polluting the cities where they are being driven, the pollution is still happening wherever the thermal plant is running.

X refutes govt claim, says it received orders to block Reuters, over 2,000 other accounts



This directly contradicts a statement issued by the official spokesperson of the IT Ministry on Sunday, which said: “There is no requirement from the Government of India to withhold Reuters handle. We are continuously working with X to resolve the problem.”

In a post via its Global Government Affairs Handle on Tuesday, X said that on July 3, the Indian government ordered X to block 2,355 accounts in India, including international news outlets like Reuters under Section 69A of the Information Technology Act. (Screenshot: X/Reuters)In a post via its Global Government Affairs Handle on Tuesday, X said that on July 3, the Indian government ordered X to block 2,355 accounts in India, including international news outlets like Reuters under Section 69A of the Information Technology Act. (Screenshot: X/Reuters)

Elon Musk-owned social media platform X has refuted the government’s claim over the blocking of Reuters’ accounts, saying it received blocking orders for more than 2,000 accounts in India, including those linked to the news agency on July 3.This directly contradicts a statement issued by the official spokesperson of the IT Ministry on Sunday, which said: “There is no requirement from the Government of India to withhold Reuters handle. We are continuously working with X to resolve the problem.”

On Saturday night, X blocked the handles of Reuters and Reuters World, with a message displayed on their accounts stating they had been withheld in India “in response to a legal demand”.In a post via its Global Government Affairs Handle on Tuesday, X said that on July 3, the Indian

What triggered heart attack in Bengaluru engineering student at 21? No, he didn’t smoke



An engineering student, all of 21, was rushed to the emergency with a massive heart attack. He seemed fit, had no family history, no diabetes, no risk factors or underlying conditions. Yet when we saw his angiogram, there was a 100 per cent blockage in the right coronary artery, one of the two main arteries that supply blood to the heart. We had to put in a stent, a mesh device to keep the artery widened, and restored blood flow. He didn’t smoke cigarettes but vaped.The young man’s lungs were also partially scarred as he had been vaping since age 16. Just before the heart attack, he felt like he was breathing through a straw. And even now, despite cardio rehabilitation exercise, he is yet to get back to normal breathing patterns. I have seen at least two or three cases of vaping triggering heart disease in the young. Although marketed as a safer alternative to traditional smoking, vaping poses just as much risk to heart health.

Why vaping is risky

Most vapes contain nicotine like cigarettes. The only difference is that there is tobacco combustion in cigarettes and in vapes there is a nicotine-based liquid, the aerosols of which reach the brain. As you inhale, nicotine goes to the brain’s reward circuit in seconds. The brain then gets ad-

Is dal good for weight loss? Why we shouldn’t worry about its carbs



Should the good old bowl of dal, that’s a staple of a balanced Indian meal, be now questioned for its carbohydrate content? Fitness-conscious youngsters, while choosing protein-rich plant foods, are crossing out dal for its carbohydrate content. “This is the greatest myth going around. Of course, dal has carbs but they are very negligible compared to the larger carbohydrate intake we have daily. The key aspect of weight loss is to keep to your daily calorie allowance and cut pure carbohydrates rather than eliminate a source of protein,” says Dr Seema Gulati of the National Diabetes, Obesity and Cholesterol Foundation (NDOC) Centre for Nutrition Research, Delhi.

What is the carbohydrate content of dal?

Dr Gulati says that the accepted reference of any kind of dal is 30 g, which when cooked would amount to a small katori (bowl). “A 30 g serving of dal (lentils) typically contains around 6-7 grams of protein. The exact amount can vary slightly based on the type of dal and how it’s cooked. For example, toor dal (pigeon peas) and moong dal (green gram) both offer around 6.5-6.7 grams of protein per 30 g serving,” she says. Now 30 g of dal, depending on the type used, can contain anything between 10 to 14 gm of carbohydrates when cooked. “Cereals have more carbs, and that is what we need to reduce, not the bowl of dal, whose carb load is unlikely to make a significant difference to your calo-

dicted to nicotine. And continued vaping impacts the cardiovascular system. Other chemicals found in vaping liquids, such as solvents, flavoring agents and even heavy metals, can trigger inflammation, which can further damage the heart and blood vessels.

How does vaping impact the heart?

It increases heart rate and blood pressure because nicotine triggers the release of adrenaline and activates the body’s sympathetic nervous system, commonly known as the “fight or flight” response. This puts extra strain on the heart and blood vessels, making them work harder than normal. This sustained heart stress can lead to sudden cardiac arrest, when the normal electrical impulses of the heart are impaired and shut down.High blood pressure damages blood vessels, causing them to tear and dislodge plaques. The plaque rupture causes blood clotting and blockage, triggering a heart attack. Research has shown that chemicals used in vapes can impair the production of nitric oxide in the cells lining blood vessels. Nitric oxide is crucial for relaxing blood vessels and ensuring smooth blood flow. When its production is reduced, blood vessels become stiffer, which can lead to poor circulation and increase the risk of blood clots.Even among people who have never smoked cigarettes, regular vaping has been associated with a greater likelihood of developing heart failure, when the heart becomes too weak or stiff to pump blood effectively. Sometimes, vaping can trigger atrial fibrillation, a common type of heart rhythm abnormality where the heart’s upper chambers (atria) beat irregularly and rapidly. This can lead to blood pooling and clotting in the heart, palpitations, fatigue, shortness of breath and an increased risk of stroke.

How do you know that vaping is stressing your heart out?

People who vape score very low on exercise stress tests that are used to predict heart disease risk. That’s because vaping impairs the heart’s ability to respond to physical stress.

rie intake and which has more nutrients that your body needs,” she says.

Dal has complex carbohydrates

Scientific meta analyses have shown how pulses and legumes are associated with a lower risk of obesity and diabetes, according to Dr Gulati. She lists several pluses of dal. On carbohydrates, she explains, “Dal is rich in complex carbohydrates, which are digested slower than simple carbohydrates, leading to a more stable and sustained release of blood sugar and energy. When consumed as part of a balanced meal with vegetables and other foods, the carbohydrates in dal are less likely to cause issues.”

Why dal is nutrient-dense

Dr Gulati feels that most overlook the fact that dal is a very good source of dietary fibre, which helps with digestion, promotes satiety, eliminates hunger pangs and can help regulate blood sugar levels. “Besides proteins and carbohydrates, dal is a storehouse of vitamins and minerals. Dals are particularly rich in folate, iron, potassium and magnesium, as well as B vitamins like thiamine. They also contain smaller amounts of other minerals like phosphorus and zinc. It is low in fat,” says Dr Gulati.

Is dal a complete protein?

No it’s not. “It does not have all nine essential amino acids which the body needs. Which is why in a plant-based diet, it has to be combined with other protein sources, be it quinoa, nuts and seeds,” says Mukta Vashist, consultant dietician at Sir Gangaram Hospital, Delhi. There is a reason why dal and rice are often combined; they provide complementary protein sources, meaning they provide a more complete set of amino acids than either would alone. “A cup of cooked rice has around 3 grams of protein. While dal is rich in the amino acid lysine, it’s often deficient in methionine and cysteine, while rice is deficient in lysine. Combining them helps the body synthesize proteins more effectively,” explains Vashist. A balanced meal thali was created for a reason.

How this TB triage tool experiment in Tamil Nadu reduced death by 20 per cent: Can it be used in national programmes?

A simple five-question triage tool — without the need for any laboratory tests — may be the key to saving lives of people diagnosed with tuberculosis (TB). Within two quarters of implementation in Tamil Nadu, the tool resulted in a state-wide reduction of early TB deaths — deaths recorded within the first two months of initiating TB treatment — by 20 per cent.In fact, two-thirds of the total districts in the state documented a 20 per cent to 30 per cent reduction in total deaths in 2024. Discussions are ongoing to implement a similar tool under the national programme. There were an estimated 28 lakh TB cases and 3.15 lakh deaths in India in 2023, according to the latest available data from the Global TB Report.

So how does the tool work?

Health workers in the state record five key parameters for all TB patients in the state — height and weight for calculating the body mass index (BMI) which can flag undernutrition in TB patients, swelling of the leg by pressing it for 15 seconds, respiratory rate per minute in a sitting position, oxygen saturation on a pulse oximeter and ability to stand without support.A patient is tagged severely ill if they have any one condition — severe undernutrition indicated by BMI of less than 14kg/m2, respiratory insufficiency as indicated by the respiratory rate and oxygen saturation, or poor performance status as indicated by their inability to stand. The ‘severely ill’ patients are immediately referred for comprehensive assessment and inpatient treatment.

How does differentiated care reduce deaths?

“Immediate in-patient care can reduce the probability of early death in the severely ill patients between one per cent and four per cent. Otherwise, the probability of death in these patients is between 10 per cent and 50 per cent,” said Dr Hemant Shewade, senior scientist from the National Institute of Epidemiology, who has studied the implementation of the initiative called Tamil Nadu-Kasanoi Erappila Thittam (TN-KET).The initiative, rolled out in 2022, is the first state-wide implementation of the country’s differentiated treatment guidelines, which aims to provide more support to severely ill patients. The implementation over the last couple of years demonstrates the feasibility and

effectiveness of differentiated care models. And, it goes a step beyond, to show that the triaging process can be shorter and quicker.The tool used in Tamil Nadu depends on just five parameters, instead of the nationally recommended 16 parameters. The triaging is performed by the health workers in the state within a day of diagnosis, with 98 per cent of those confirmed to have severe illness admitted to a hospital within seven days of diagnosis.While the tool can be used with just pen and paper, the TN government has a portal called Severe TB Web Application. “Now, this portal will have a prediction of the probability of a patient dying when the parameters are entered. This will help guide the health workers to take immediate action and prevent TB deaths,” said Dr Manoj Murhekar, head of the National Institute of Epidemiology.

How has the research from NIE supported other changes to the national programme?

The research from the institute has not only led to successful reduction of deaths due to TB but also in several interventions that have now been included in the national programme. One such intervention was increasing the monetary nutritional support provided by the government from Rs 500 to Rs 1,000. Importantly, the first three instalments of this monetary support are provided at the time of diagnosis.Dr Shewade said, “Our research found that in many cases there were delays in providing the monetary support, with many experiencing adverse outcomes before they got the support. We know that half of all the TB deaths that have to happen, happen within the first two months. And, without proper nutrition, the treatments are not likely to be as effective. This was the evidence behind the change in policy.”An evaluation of the national programme by the NIE showed that patients, on average, received the first instalment of their monetary nutritional support 91 days after the diagnosis. In fact, two thirds of the patients with an unfavourable outcome received the support after their outcome was declared, according to the evaluation. The evaluation also suggested doubling the monthly rations for those with severe and very severe under-nutrition — a suggestion that has not yet been implemented as part of the national programme

Jos Buttler reveals Shubman Gill’s unique practice: Does a lot of underarm drills, just grooving his shape



GNS News Agency, July 16

Shubman Gill two games into the series against England, has already been on a mission of breaking records. After four innings in the series, Gill had already scored 585 runs at an average of 146.25, slamming twin centuries at Edgbaston and a solitary century in Leeds. England’s teammate at Gujarat Titans, Jos Buttler, gave insights into Gill’s preparation and unique method of playing underarm balls. “Whatever he’s doing is working. So I’d be like I want

the same guy to give me throwdowns, want to do the same routine that I did. Having played a little bit with him in the IPL, he does a lot of basic drills and does a lot of underarm drills, just grooving his shape. You’d think why would a Test cricketer be doing underarm drills but it’s just the muscle memory, moving into the right positions, hitting the ball late, that’s something he talks about a lot and practices a lot. Hit the ball to the ground and let the ball come to him, which is a trait of all the best players. He’ll be doing lot of those kind of drills,” Buttler said on the ‘For The Love Of Cricket’ Podcast. “We hope as England fans that he doesn’t go on and break more records. We need to find answers to get him out. As a batter when you’re in that space you feel untouchable. You want to keep that momentum and energy on your side. Stay in that bubble.

His dad has been quite influential and been a coach of his while growing up so I’m sure he’s got a couple of phone calls from him saying keep playing. He’ll be someone who he’ll be turning to and leaning on for his game,” he added. Gill will be chasing the record of Don Bradman for the most runs in a bilateral Test series. The Australian has scored 974 runs in the 1930 Ashes in England.

Injured Rauf and Shadab to miss Pakistan’s T20 series in Bangladesh

GNS News Agency, July 16

Pakistan fast bowler Haris Rauf and allrounder Shadab Khan were injured and will miss the Twenty20 series in Bangladesh this month. Rauf injured a hamstring in Major League Cricket in the United States last week, and Shadab recently underwent shoulder surgery. Uncapped fast bowlers Ahmed Danial and Salman Mirza were picked in a 15-man squad on Tuesday to supplement Abbas Afridi and fast bowling allrounder Faheem Ashraf. Left-arm spinner Sufiyan Muqeem was also recalled after he was overlooked for the last home series against Bangladesh. Spin allrounder Mohammad Nawaz has also made his way back into the national squad since last appearing in January 2024 against New Zealand, after impressive performance in the Pakistan Super League. Pakistan: Salman Agha (captain), Abrar Ahmed, Ahmed Daniyal, Faheem Ashraf, Fakhar Zaman,



Hassan Nawaz, Hussain Talat, Khushdil Shah, Abbas Afridi, Mohammad Haris, Mohammad Nawaz, Sahibzada Farhan, Saim Ayub, Salman Mirza, Sufiyan Muqeem.

Dinesh Karthik draws comparisons between Shubman Gill and Virat Kohli: Captaincy was the best thing to happen...is that the same line



GNS News Agency, July 16

While the first Test in Leeds did not go to plan for Shubman Gill as a captain, his performance both with the bat and as a leader went a notch up at Edgbaston. Filling in the boots of Virat Kohli at four, Gill’s talent was never in question, but his performances never matched, especially outside India. However, he took responsibility for the captaincy as a duck to the water. Former Indian cricketer Dinesh Karthik draws a comparison between Gill and Kohli.

“Athers, you spoke about Virat Kohli. I met him a few days ago, and this talk about captaincy came up,” said Karthik in response to Michael Atherton. “He said people think ‘, I’m a great Test cricketer. I enjoyed my Test batting, which I did, but the fact is that getting my captaincy was the best thing to happen in my life.’ Why I am saying this is that the same line was used by Shubman Gill,” Karthik said on Sky Sports. “He said, ‘I used to bat differently, but now that I’ve got captaincy, I almost think this is what my team requires, rather than me wanting to do something individually as a batter.’ I said wow, this is something for which the world of cricket has to take notice,” Karthik recalled the conversation he had with Gill.

“Here is a man who has the appetite, he’s got the skill, he’s got the technique, but now he’s got the mindset as well. I’m the captain, I’m going to lead from the front, lead off the front foot,” Karthik added. Gill scored 430 runs in the second Test and was Man of the Match. It is his performance that helped India win the Test match alongside Akash Deep’s 10-wicket haul. “I mean, you can’t ask for anything more from a captain. You are 1-0 down in the series, you come out there and you bat like Bradman. 268 (269) and a 161, and you ended up winning the game.

Reetika Hooda, who made history as India’s top heavyweight wrestler, suspended for doping



GNS News Agency, July 16

Paris Olympian, Asian Championship silver medallist and junior world champion wrestler Reetika Hooda has been provisionally suspended for one year after she tested positive for a banned drug. A promising heavyweight wrestler in the 76kg weight category — one of the few from the country to succeed in the higher categories — Reetika was handed a provisional suspension on July 7 after her sample, collected by the National Anti Doping Agency (NADA) during the selection trials in New Delhi, returned positive. The substance is yet to be known. Taking note of Reetika’s failed dope test and the consequent action taken by NADA, the United World Wrestling (UWW) has suspended the 22-year-old until July 7, 2026.

Hailing from the same academy where the Rio Olympics medallist Sakshi Malik learnt her craft, Reetika became the first from India to book a quota in the heaviest Olympic weight class for women at last year’s Paris Olympics, where she lost in the quarterfinals. In October 2023, Reetika achieved another first for the country after being crowned the Under-23 World Champion. And earlier this year, she reached the final of the Asian Championship and returned with a silver medal. She was set to compete at the Ranking Series tournament in Budapest, starting July 17, and later in the World Championships in September. However, the Wrestling Federation of India (WFI) officials said she has been asked to leave the ongoing national camp at the Indira

Gandhi Stadium in New Delhi. Along with Reetika, two other wrestlers from the same academy as hers in Rohtak, have tested positive and been provisionally suspended.

ICC mourns death of Afghanistan umpire Bismillah Jan Shinwari



GNS News Agency, July 16

Hyderabad: The ICC has expressed its sorrow at the death of Afghanistan umpire Bismillah Jan Shinwari at the age of 41. Bismillah, a member of the ICC International Panel of Umpires, had officiated in 25 Men’s ODIs and 21 Men’s T20Is. His most recent international assignment was at the ICC Men’s Cricket World Cup League 2 in Al Amerat, Oman, in February this year. Mr. Jay Shah, ICC Chairman, mourned Bismillah’s death and expressed condolences to his family. Mr. Shah said Bismillah was a prominent umpire, respected by players, peers, and officials alike. “He was a regular on the international cricket circuit and had a long career ahead of him,” he said.

Narratives change faster than the scorecard: Manvinder Bisla slams Gautam Gambhir’s critics for selections in Edgbaston Test



GNS News Agency, July 16

When India picked the playing XI for the second Test at Edgbaston, quite a few questions were raised by the cricket pundits. However, India managed to thrash England by 336 runs in the end. The changes made were that Jasprit Bumrah was rested after the loss in Leeds, which did come to sharp criticism, and apart from that, Washington Sundar and Nitish Kumar Reddy were brought into the side in place of Sai Sudharsan and Shardul Thakur. Gambhir’s former Kolkata Knight Riders teammate Manvinder Bisla slammed Gambhir’s critics after the result. “Before the Test: @GautamGambhir messed up the XI. After the win: @ShubmanGill era begins. Narratives change faster than

the scorecard. PS: Both are leaders – credit goes to whole team for this famous win,” wrote Bisla on X (formerly known as Twitter). Bisla played one of the iconic innings in the IPL finals when he slammed 89 runs from 48 balls against Chennai Super Kings to help KKR win their maiden IPL title. What did pundits say?

Tom Moody: “India’s selection for this test is baffling. No, Bumrah is one thing, but to only have 5 specialist batsmen is a gamble. The fixation on all-rounders who are there to offer depth with bat and ball has never worked. Specialists are always going to offer more over a test,” Moody posted on X. Ravi Shastri: “If you look at the run, India has had, this becomes a very, very important test match. You’ve lost three against New Zealand, you’ve lost three against Australia,” Shastri told ‘Sky Sports’. “You’ve lost the first Test match here and you want to get back to winning ways. You have the best fast bowler in the world, and you make him sit out after seven days of rest, it’s something very hard to believe,” he said. Michael Atherton: “If I had been in their shoes, it would have been Bumrah for the big game, can’t afford to lose this game. I would have picked Siraj, who I thought improved throughout that game at Headingley, I would have picked the left-armer, Arshdeep Singh, for swing and to create some footmarks by the right hander’s off stump for Kuldeep Yadav, who I would have also played, and also Ravindra Jadeja. I would not have worried too much about runs at No.8,”

Varun Aaron says, ‘have not mustered up those numbers in a whole series...Shubman Gill has done it in just four innings,’ comparing to other greats

GNS News Agency, July 16

There were questions raised about Shubman Gill when he took over the leadership from Rohit Sharma. Not only just about his captaincy, but his record in England was quite average with the bat. However, two games into the series, the entire narrative has changed as the young Indian skipper scored three centuries from four innings and also after losing the first Test India came back in emphatic fashion at Edgbaston. “There have been greats who have gone to England, and they have not mustered up those numbers in a whole series. When I say whole series, I mean eight or 10 innings, and Shubman Gill has done it in just four innings. In just four innings, he has gone to 585 runs, and in one game, he has gone to 430 runs,” said former Indian pacer Varun Aaron speaking on the Follow the Blues.

“That just shows the kind of zone he is in, and it reflects in the way he talks to the press, and it reflects in the way he carries himself. He is just so sure, and I love the quiet confidence he has. It’s not brash, it’s not out there, you just know there is something within him, and there is a fire that burns so bright that he is going to take Indian Test cricket to the next level,” he added. Since the transition has begun, there have been questions raised about the style of captaincy Gill will stick to. While Virat Kohli was an attacking skipper, Rohit Sharma was more of a pragmatic cap-



tain. Speaking on Gill’s style, Aaron observed, “The biggest takeaway I have is that he is definitely a captain who backs his players. Just a small nugget of him praising Prasidh Krishna towards the end and saying that even Prasidh tried really hard, didn’t get the results, but we thought he bowled really well, it just shows he has every player’s back,” he replied. “Captains can very easily throw a player under the bus, but he is not one of those captains. He sticks out for his players.

Even on the field, he is able to marshal his bowlers really well. Also, he has got some very good support in KL Rahul and Rishabh Pant,” Aaron observed.

Dinesh Karthik recalls anecdote on retirement when Ravi Shastri said, ‘Don’t bother coming in the next Test, you are done’

GNS News Agency, July 16

Dinesh Karthik has always been under the shadow of MS Dhoni. While he has had his fine moments in his career, it has been a case of being in and out of the team regularly. Even as MS Dhoni retired from the longer format, it was Wriddhiman Saha who has been given the bulk of the opportunities. However, in 2018, on the back of a fruitful season for Tamil Nadu, Karthik returned to the Indian red-ball side.

Recalling the anecdote of how his Test career ended, Shastri said, “There’s not much in common between me and Nass, and I’d like to keep it that way. He finished at Lord’s. I finished at Lord’s. The only difference was that he went and knocked on the coach’s doors, saying I think I’m done. In my case, the coach came in and said, ‘Don’t bother coming in the next Test, you are done.’” The conversation on Test careers began as former England skipper Nasser Hussain described how his career came to an end. “I knew I was gone. Strauss (Andrew) came in for that game, and Michael Vaughan was injured. I went to my old coach, Duncan Fletcher, I worked with him for four years. I knocked on his door and said, ‘Dunc, tomorrow’s gonna be my last day. In the hope that Duncan would say, ‘Nass, you’re play-



ing pretty well’ but he went, ‘No, tomorrow is going to be your last day.’ I said, ‘Thanks, coach,” said Hussain. “Strauss was getting loads of runs; he was looking like he would get a hundred in both innings. I got him run out.

I got one of my best mates at the other end. I hit it through the covers, got a hundred. We beat New Zealand. That’s a decent way to go out. Vaughan came back in. Strauss, we knew, was a superb Test cricketer,” Hussain added.

Ben Stokes faces his greatest challenge as captain before Lord’s Test, says Mike Atherton

GNS News Agency, July 16

England’s captain Ben Stokes faces his biggest challenge yet as a leader on how to motivate his players for the Lord’s Test after the huge loss at Edgbaston, writes Michael Atherton, the former captain. “In the three years that Ben Stokes has captained England, it is hard to think that he has faced a sterner challenge than over the next two days, as he contemplates how to lift his players for the third Test at Lord’s. It will be a massive test of his leadership, and his own mental and physical resilience,” Atherton wrote in his The Times column.

The pre-series talk in England’s media had revolved around the Ashes, rather than focusing on the India series. Quite a few former players kept talking about the series in Australia, as if India series was just a preparation. Now, things are changing – and how. Atherton makes his point on why the next two days before the third Test is vital, and he uses Stokes’s own words before the second Test to make his point. “I used the three days after that game [at Leeds] to offer absolutely nothing to the world. I was a shadow of my normal self,” Stokes had said a day before the second Test. Atherton quotes Stokes and then makes the following observation: “It is not hard to imagine, then, how he must be feeling now. There was a gap of seven days between the first and second Tests ... The three days that Stokes used to shut himself off from the world after Leeds for his



own benefit, are essentially the days he must use now to rally his players. His workload at Edgbaston was not dissimilar. He spent 25 overs longer in the field; he bowled nine overs fewer and batted 16 minutes less. Defeat, of course, exacerbates matters. If he was feeling knackered after a win at Leeds and with a seven-day break, how must he have been feeling on Monday morning with the Lord’s Test three days away? “I’d keep faith with the batting and freshen up the seam attack, bringing in [Jofra] Archer and [Gus] Atkinson for Josh Tongue and Brydon Carse.” Archer is coming back from an injury, and so is Atkinson, who hasn’t played a game since tweaking his hamstring against Zimbabwe six weeks ago.

Upasana Kamineni tells fans to wait for their ‘Ram’ or walk their own path: ‘Marriage is no longer an obligation’



Upasana Kamineni, wife of actor Ram Charan, recently posted a long note on social media addressing the violence and hardships Indian women deal with after marriage and urged her followers to wait for the right person to come along. She asked her fans to wait for their own ‘Ram’ while sharing how women did not need marriage anymore for things like companionship, status or children and said that they should not marry just for the sake of it.

Upasana began the note by talking about how women in this country are taking important life decisions based on their own development and affordability and not due to so-

cietal pressure. “Women are approaching life more holistically and practically. Marriage and motherhood are no longer obligations; they’re conscious choices,” added Upasana. The 35-year-old was quick to acknowledge her own privilege and said that her education, upbringing and the fact that she found the right partner so early are all things that helped her make bold choices. Upasana Kamineni then shifted the conversation to the importance of marriage in contemporary times, especially for women, and even cited a Harvard University professor and her work. She argued that as the dynamics of society are changing, so is the importance of marriage in a woman’s life. She said, “Many women are financially independent, and some are even more successful than the men around them.

They’re raising children on their own terms. It’s no longer about needing a man; it’s about choosing a partner who respects you and sees you as an equal.” Upasana went on to cite NCRB (National Crime Records Bureau) data to prove how many cases of violence against women occur in their own homes after marriage. She demanded that men needed to be raised in a way so that their emotional maturity could match that of women. She even demanded other women with similar privilege to help empower those around them, the ones with less of a head start in life. She ended her message by saying, “And to every woman wondering if she’s being ‘too picky’ or ‘too late’, you’re not. Wait for your Ram, or walk your path solo. Both are valid and powerful.”

‘Bollywood folks tried to pull Arijit Singh down, got offended when he said no to songs’: Amaal Mallik says singer says no to ‘Rs 1 cr for a song’, wants good work

Singer Arijit Singh and music composer Amaal Mallik have collaborated on multiple popular songs like “Sooraj Dooba Hain” from Roy (2015) and “Soch Na Sake” from Airlift (2016), and “Roke Na Ruke Naina” (from Badrinath Ki Dulhania, 2017). Amaal regards Arijit as the number one singer of India, and at par with global artists, even above his younger brother Armaan Mallik.

“Arijit is a very good human being. He never wants to snatch away somebody else’s song and never compares someone’s achievements to another. He doesn’t show off he’s the number 1 singer of India, although he is. There are many good singers, no doubt, but the guy who can sing “Binte Dil” (from Padmaavat, 2018), “Sooraj Dooba Hai”, “Palat – Tera Hero Idhar Hai” (Main Tera Hero, 2014), “Duaa” (from Shanghai, 2012), Tum Hi Ho (from Aashiqui 2, 2013), and “Zamaana Lage” (from Metro... In Dino, 2025), no one else can sing all these that well. That voice now flows in the bloodstreams of all Indians,” reasoned Amaal. In the interview with Mirchi Plus, he revealed that a lot of people in the music industry try to drop him from songs. “The one who has God by him, or who has blessings of his family and good karma by his side, you can’t stop him,” said Amaal, adding, “I don’t know what he’s made of. He’s the closest to God in this industry.”

Amaal confessed he learnt from Arijit how to do his work very quietly. He recalled how his friends visited the studio to witness him and Arijit working together on “Roke Na Ruke Naina”. Standing outside the studio, they didn’t even realize Arijit has already made his way into the studio and recorded the song for 30 minutes. “He’s not here to prove a point,” said Amaal, adding, “What the both of us relate on is that we can’t be bought. If you give him Rs 1 crore and ask him to sing a song, he’d return it and say, ‘Bring me a good song.’ A lot of composers get offended by him that they’re offering their best songs to him, but he doesn’t want



to sing those. Because he’s probably sung so many songs of that genre that he’s exhausted. He also says, ‘I don’t want to tire myself out. I have nothing to prove. How many songs do I need to sing?’ He’s sung 800 songs across languages in 10 years. So shouldn’t he do his shows, travel the world, and spend time with his wife and kids, instead of singing your 100 songs?” Amaal revealed that in the last three to four years, actors and music labels have been trying to promote other singers in place of Arijit. “You can’t screw his success. But those who they can damage, they’re fully suppressing them. If a singer or a composer doesn’t sign the label, they’d be dropped from songs. Every label needs their singers and composers, which is fair, but what audience wants is also important, right? You make your five singers and five composers sing, but also mix it up once in a while otherwise it gets redundant,” said Amaal.

‘Anurag Basu would walk onto set, get inspired, and rewrite the scene’: Rohan Gurbaxani on Metro In Dino; draws parallels between Karan Johar and Zoya Akhtar

Those who’ve seen Anurag Basu’s Metro... In Dino will vividly remember the tender, tangled story between Konkona Sen Sharma and Pankaj Tripathi. And if they remember that, they’ll likely remember a small but significant presence in their chapter, Rohan Gurbaxani, who plays Aaryan. Aaryan, who falls for Kajol (Sharma), even as her husband Monty (Tripathi) tries, perhaps too late, to win her back. It’s a small role, yes, but one that leaves an impression. And in Rohan’s five-year journey as an actor, it’s another step of a slowly growing, deeply personal journey. Whether it’s a blink-and-you-miss-it appearance in Karan Johar’s Rocky Aur Rani Kii Prem Kahaani, or more layered moments in shows like Made in Heaven 2 or Bandish Bandits 2, Rohan has been showing up, doing the work and holding space.

In an exclusive conversation with SCREEN, Rohan Gurbaxani opens up about working across styles and visions, with directors like Anurag Basu, Zoya Akhtar, and Karan Johar. He talks about the on-set energy of collaborating with Ananya Panday. And then there’s his Shah Rukh Khan story, one of those surreal, once-in-a-lifetime moments he says will stay with him, always. There wasn’t one defining moment, honestly. I started off with dance as a kid, like most kids do, I guess. I did some drama too when I was younger, just like everyone dabbling in dramatics at school. But it was only around fifth grade that something began to shift. My mom enrolled me in an acting class, and I started learning a bit more seriously. That’s when acting really began for me. But it still didn’t feel like some kind of big calling, like, “Oh my god, this is my passion!” I kept at it through school just because I enjoyed it. Then, around the end of high school, I had this thought: If I really want to try this acting thing, I need to go to New York and give it everything. I wanted to learn properly. Study it. Live it. People used to say, “Oh, you want to be an actor?” but I didn’t even know what that meant yet. I didn’t know what my path would be. I guess the first real moment of validation came when I got into NYU.

Q: So when you were at NYU, because I’m also from a film school background, we often start with acting but gradually find ourselves drawn toward other aspects too. Did you feel a similar pull toward directing, writing, or production?

Absolutely. I explored a lot while I was at NYU. I majored in acting, but every summer break, I made it a point to do something that would help me understand the process behind the camera as well. I worked on production sets, assisted directors, took up AV gigs, anything that gave me hands-on experience. One of my first internships was with director Ashwin Kumar, who I think was the first Indian director to be nominated for an Oscar in the short film category. I also worked at Excel Entertainment for a while as an intern when I was just 19 years old. That’s where I had this incredible opportunity to assist on a shoot featuring Shah Rukh Khan. It was part of some shoot for Bollywood-themed attractions in an amusement park. The setup involved a green screen, and Shah Rukh sir had to perform on a raised platform. My job was to stand below with a silent fan to create wind and movement, it was such a surreal moment. Just watching him... the way he entered the room. He carries this aura, you know? Not because he’s trying to. He doesn’t demand attention, but he gets it. Even if you only catch the back of his head from across the room, you just know it’s him. That kind of humility and presence, it’s rare. And then there I was, barely 19, standing in front of him with this fan, helping create a moment of cinema. It was small, but for me, it was a massive moment.

Q: You’ve spoken a bit about working with Zoya and Karan. I find both of them fascinating in how they direct actors, very different, yet they share a deep understanding of emotion. What was it like to work with them so early in your career? Honestly, I’ve always admired both. Both Zoya and Karan have a very sharp sense of the human psyche. They understand people, how they feel, how they hide, how they break. And more importantly, they understand audiences. They know how to make emotional beats land, not just narratively, but viscerally. With Rocky Aur Rani, Karan was clearly trying to bring back a certain kind of family drama, that full-hearted, big-feelings kind of storytelling. And yet, he rooted it in something real. That’s not easy to pull off anymore, people try to revive older styles, but they don’t always work. Karan found a way to honour that legacy while modernizing it. Zoya, on the other hand, is more grounded in a different way. Made in Heaven has this raw, observational quality.

Roshan Mathew reveals Kesav in Paradise was more challenging than Dinanath in Ronth; opens up about his bittersweet relationship with stardom



Roshan Mathew is no longer just another name in Malayalam cinema’s long list of exceptional acting talents. Thanks to his relentless and successful efforts to keep pushing himself as a performer, consistently taking on roles that are starkly different from each other across a diverse range of films and series, Roshan now ranks among those rare actors who assure at least a minimum level of quality not only in their performances but also in the projects they choose.

Although it has been a decade since he debuted in cinema, he continues to power through with the same momentum and passion. While basking in the success of his recent outings, Ronth and Kankhajura, he is also busy filming his next project, Chatha Pacha. Amidst all this, he has not forgotten that it has been a year since Paradise, one of his most acclaimed films, hit the screens, and he remains deeply grateful to Sri Lankan filmmaking legend Prasanna Vithanage for giving him the role of Kesav. Malayalam cinema 6-month report card | Disappointment of most hyped movie, tables turning between superstars and more

In an exclusive interview with SCREEN, Roshan Mathew admitted that playing Kesav in Paradise was a more challenging experience than portraying Dinanath in Ronth. “They were both very different experiences and extremely different characters. But Kesav was tougher for me as an actor, mainly because he is more distant from me than Dinanath is. He’s more unlike me. Both the character and Prasanna sir’s process require the actors to access a very honest part of themselves, even when portraying a character with grey shades. Also, since his making is very minimal, even the tiniest things that appear on screen have big meanings, and the same holds true for performances as well. Grasping all of that was definitely a challenging experience for me, albeit an enjoyable one,” he shares. Regardless, Roshan maintains that the experience he had, even during the preparatory stages of Paradise, felt

very special. “I knew the process was going to be memorable, particularly since I would be collaborating with incredible talents like Prasanna sir and cinematographer Rajeev Ravi. But I hadn’t really spent too much time thinking about what would happen to the film afterwards. So, it felt truly overwhelming when it did,” he says. Mentioning that the film resonating with viewers wherever it was screened brought them great joy, Roshan adds, “We could see the concept of ‘be as specific and local — zoom in as much as you can — to make it more universal’ really working. At many international film festivals, the movie also struck a chord with Sri Lankan audiences, and that was heartwarming. They knew the political climate and the history of the country. They were people who had lived through it all. And while watching the movie, they felt seen. They felt it offered an accurate representation of what was unfolding there.”

When asked which three films or shows, that best reflect him as an actor and showcase his skills, he would recommend to someone unfamiliar with his works, Roshan Mathew picked director Geetu Mohandas’ Moothon (2019), in which he starred alongside Nivin Pauly; Paradise, which also featured his frequent collaborator Darshana Rajendran in a key role; and Chandan Arora’s crime thriller streaming series Kankhajura, where he shared the screen with Mohit Raina, Sarah Jane Dias and Trinetra Haldar Gummaraju. Interestingly, 2025 also marks a decade of Roshan Mathew in cinema. It has been almost 10 years since his first film, Adi Kapyare Kootamani (2015), was released. By this point in their careers, most young actors would have begun actively pursuing films and roles that propel them to stardom. However, Roshan is more focused on projects that challenge him and allow him to explore uncharted creative territories. Naturally, we asked whether he had no interest in the kind of stardom so many aspire to. “It would be a lie to say that I have no interest in that kind of stardom. It is very attractive, honestly. Also, in cinema, stardom is what empowers filmmakers to design projects with you in mind. You need the support of stardom to make the kind of projects you wish to do happen. So, for a very practical purpose, I need it and want to make that happen. However, I feel that the way to get there is not to do characters designed to project me as a star. Neither is that my strength, nor an area that excites me the most. It’s something that I like to experiment with,” he shares. “It’s not that I haven’t done extremely commercial projects. I’ve done films like Night Drive (2022) and Maharani (2023). I’m currently shooting for Chatha Pacha, which is an extremely commercial entertainer. But I don’t want to go after a requirement at the cost of my satisfaction of doing the kind of work that I want to do,” Roshan adds, noting that if he were, however, offered something like Jithu Madhavan’s Fahadh Fasil-starrer Aavesham, he would jump in with full excitement.

Mohit Suri says cousin Alia Bhatt was ‘born for the camera, always super commercial’: ‘Even as a 8-yr-old, she knew how she wanted to be clicked’



is also the first cousin of Alia, recently talked about how she was always clear about what she wanted to do and how she possessed a mind for the business even as a child.

While talking to ETimes, Suri recalled several anecdotes from Alia’s childhood and how she displayed certain qualities and habits that made it clear that she was born for the camera. He shared how she always wanted to be an actor, ever since she was 6 years old. He recalled that back in 2005, a remix video of one of the songs from his film Zeher had come out, and Mahesh Bhatt couldn’t make any sense of it. But Alia had that vision, and she explained to her father how the video worked. “He ultimately agreed with Alia and admitted that it must be something worthwhile if the younger demographic likes it,” added Suri.

Suri appreciated the clarity of thought Alia had even as a kid, going as far as understanding exactly what would work for an audience and what wouldn’t. Talking about dinner parties with the Bhatt family, Suri recalled how Alia was so self-aware of herself that she knew which angle she wanted to be photographed from even as a child and would promptly correct him if he made a mistake. The director added that her natural sense for the business, clarity and talent were all things that convinced the people around her that at some point or the other, she was going to end up in front of the camera. Coming to Suri’s career, he is currently waiting patiently for the release of his upcoming film Saiyarra, starring Ahaan Panday and Aneet Paada. All eyes will be on Ahaan, who is another legacy, being the nephew of Chunky Panday and cousin of Ananya Panday. The trailer and several songs from the film have already been released.

‘Kyunki Saas Bhi Kabhi Bahu Thi’ changed the face of Indian television, says Karan Johar

Mumbai: As the iconic and most successful show ‘Kyunki Saas Bhi Kabhi Bahu Thi’ is all set to make a comeback after 25 years on the small screen with its part 2, filmmaker Karan Johar, who has countless memories of it, said that the soap opera changed the face of Indian television and credited TV Czarina Ekta Kapoor for it.

Karan took to his Instagram stories, where he shared the promo of ‘Kyunki Saas Bhi Kabhi Bahu Thi 2’. Karan wrote as the caption: ‘Kyunki Saas Bhi Kabhi Bahu Thi – One show. Many generations. Countless memories. Personally, the one show that changed the face of Indian television and all credit to @ektakapoor for that!!!!’ • And now, a brand-new season to create more. Tune in on 29th July at 10:30 PM, only on @starplus to watch the new season. #KyunkiSaas Bhi Kabhi Bahu Thi. •

One of the longest-running soap operas, ‘Kyunki Saas Bhi Kabhi Bahu Thi’ commenced airing in 2000 and came to an end in 2008. The show revolves around Tulsi, an ideal daughter-in-law, the daughter of a pandit married to Mihir, grandson of business tycoon Govardhan Virani. It marked a turning point for producer Ekta Kapoor and resulted in



iconic serials Kahaani Ghar Ghar Kii and Kasautii Zindagii Kay. Actress-politician Smriti Irani will be seen reprising the role of Tulsi Virani, while Amar Upadhyay will once again bring Mihir Virani to life on screen. Others who will be seen in the show include names such as Hiten Tejwani, Gauri Pradhan, Shakti Anand, Kamalika Guha Thakurta, Shagun Sharma, Rohit Suchanti, Aman Gandhi, Ankit Bhatia and Tanisha Mehta.