

## BJP CONDEMNS ILLEGAL ARREST OF PARTY LEADERS AND WORKERS

Hyderabad, Aug.22 The state unit of BJP has strongly condemned the “illegal” arrest of Telangana state party president N. Ramchander Rao and several other leaders by the police on Thursday. Rao’s convoy was stopped at Moinabad, and he was taken into custody while returning from a 24-hour tour of Chevella constituency. He was later shifted to Moinabad Police Station.The arrests came ahead of BJP’s proposed protest with the theme “Save Hyderabad” near the Secretariat, against what the party called the Congress government’s negligence in providing basic civic amenities in GHMC limits.

## ‘Sweat more in peace, bleed less in war’: IAF Chief AP Singh

GNS News Agency, August 22

New Delhi: Chief of the Air Staff, Air Chief Marshal A.P. Singh, on Friday underlined the importance of continuous investment in defence and rigorous training for the armed forces, stressing that India’s safety rests on the preparedness of both its military and police forces.He was addressing students as the chief guest at an event at Maharaja Agrasen College in Delhi.“Our boundaries - from external and internal threats - remain safe because of the defence forces and the police. We must not treat this as a burden on the exchequer, but as a necessity. I am very happy that our government has recognised this need and has been regularly acquiring new systems and weapons,” he said.

Highlighting India’s rise in defence capabilities, the Air Chief noted, “Today, we are at par with anybody in the world because of continuous investment. We train with the best in the world, not just to learn, but also to teach.”He also drew attention to the humanitarian role of the Indian Air Force (IAF). “During natural calamities, you must have seen helicopters dropping food, evacuating people, or delivering aid. Whenever civil authorities request, the IAF takes up that task,” he said, while reiterating that air defence of the nation remains the force’s primary responsibility.



Citing the recent Operation Sindoor, Singh said, “To give a befitting reply to the adversary is our task. It requires intense training. As the saying goes, the more you sweat in peace, the less you bleed in war.”He explained that the IAF is a 1.6 lakh-strong organisation where “everyone has a role, from junior staff to the Chief.” Training, he said, is a continuous process supported by practical exercises.

“Even when there is no war, at least 8–10 air bases always have 2–4 aircraft on standby to intercept any intruder. We are always ready, fully equipped,” he stressed.

## KTR contrasts KCR’s foresight in ensuring timely urea supply against Congress’s incompetence

GNS News Agency, August 22

Hyderabad: Holding the Congress government responsible for current fertiliser crisis, BRS working president KT Rama Rao contrasted it’s incompetence with former Chief Minister K Chandrashekar Rao’s meticulous planning to ensure uninterrupted supply during the BRS regime. He accused the ruling Congress of failing to anticipate farmers’ needs, thereby forcing them into difficulties and tears.

Recalling past measures, Rama Rao said under Chandrashekar Rao’s leadership, the State had devised elaborate strategies to avert fertiliser shortages. He said Chandrashekar Rao held advance reviews with agricultural officials, sought allocations from the Centre with detailed calculated requisitions, and even deputed Telangana officers at Andhra Pradesh ports to monitor shipments.He remembered the former Chief Minister personally speaking to South Central Railway officials, securing 25 special goods trains and mobilising over 4,000 lorries to move stocks, and ensuring urea reached villages without delay. “This was the determination to make the farmer the king,” he said.

Taking a sharp dig at the Congress government, the



BRS working president said farmers were facing distress due to incompetent people who know nothing about governance, except petty politics. He stated that people of Telangana have understood the difference between incompetent leaders of Delhi parties and K Chandrashekar Rao’s long-term vision. He asserted that the downfall of those who were making farmers struggle, has already begun.

## Yadadri power plant to be dedicated to nation by January 15 : Bhatti

Hyderabad, Aug.22 Deputy Chief Minister Bhatti Vikramarka announced that 4,000 MW Yadadri power plant will be dedicated to the nation by January 15, 2026. He expressed anger that after the National Green Tribunal imposed a stay on environmental clearances in October 2022, the then rulers completely ignored the works of Yadadri power plant for nearly two years. He said the delay of even a single day in such a mega project involving investments of thousands of crores caused a heavy economic burden on the people of the State.With the blessings of the people, when the Praja Government came to power on December 7, 2023, it immediately conducted another public consultation in February 2024 and obtained environmental clearances, Bhatti Vikramarka explained. Since then, the project works have been monitored daily. A weekly calendar of tasks has been prepared, and progress is being ensured accordingly. In this process, two units have already been dedicated to the nation, he said.

Bhatti Vikramarka attended the job appointment letter distribution programme for Yadadri power plant land losers at Praja Bhavan here on Friday. Speaking on the occasion, he said every week, if scheduled tasks are not completed, officials and engineers are questioned and made accountable. Alongside, arrangements like a railway line for coal supply, townships for workers and officers, are being executed on fixed timelines. Coordination with BHEL, local public representatives and officials is being maintained, he added.The Deputy Chief Minister assured that through CSR funds, world-class education and corporate-level healthcare will be provided free of cost in the villages around the Yadadri power plant. An ambulance for every mandal in the plant surroundings, CC roads and flyovers to avoid road damage, and funds for land acquisition for road works have been sanctioned.

Bhatti Vikramarka criticised those who spread misinformation that Congress means no power supply. He said: “Congress means current, current means Congress.” He reminded that even in 1978, under the then Congress government, machinery was imported from Japan’s Mitsubishi to generate electricity using pumped storage technology. He stressed that the hydel, thermal, solar, and wind power projects built during Congress rule are still functioning successfully.He pointed out that the sub-critical technology-based Bhadradi power unit, taken up by the previous rulers, turned into a disaster for the State. In contrast,



Telangana will be made the national hub for high-end green power generation, Bhatti Vikramarka declared.The government is spending 17,000 crores to supply free power to 29 lakh agricultural pump-sets and 51 lakh families (200 units per family).

## Heli tourism set to take off soon in Telangana: Jupally

Hyderabad, Aug.22 Minister for Tourism Jupally Krishna Rao has announced that the State government intends to introduce heli tourism, offering tourists the opportunity to enjoy a brief aerial experience.

As part of this initiative, plans are underway to facilitate heli tourism routes from Hyderabad to Somasila and back to Hyderabad via Srisaillam, in partnership with the Is My Trip company. This development is expected to significantly enhance the State’s tourism industry, with further details to be disclosed shortly, said Jupally Krishna Rao.

The Minister launched the development of the Somashila Wellness and Spiritual Retreat Nallamala project, which is projected to cost about Rs. 68.10 crore and conducted the groundbreaking ceremony for the Amaragiri Island Wellness Retreat, estimated at Rs. 45.84 crore, in Amaragiri in Kollapur Assembly constituency on Friday. He also initiated trenching work for the Somashila VIP Ghat – Boating Point valued at Rs. 1.60 crore.

## CHINNA REDDY URGE FOR GST REMOVAL ON HANDLOOM SECTOR

Hyderabad, Aug.22 Dr. G. Chinna Reddy, Vice-Chairman of Telangana State Planning Board, urged the Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman to withdraw the Goods and Services Tax (GST) on handloom sector in order to protect India’s heritage weaving culture.The senior Congress leader and board vice-chairman, in his letter to the Union minister, stated that the handloom industry provides the second-largest source of employment in Telangana after agriculture and that the GST burden has severely impacted thousands of dependent families. He appealed to the Centre for having a complete exemption of the sector from GST to safeguard rural artisan livelihoods.

## PM Modi inaugurates Asia’s widest six-lane bridge in Begusarai

GNS News Agency, August 22

Patna: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday inaugurated the much-awaited six-lane road bridge over the Ganga River at Simaria Ganga Dham in Begusarai, one of Asia’s widest bridges.Chief Minister Nitish Kumar joined him in cutting the ribbon and walking a short distance on the bridge, greeting the crowd gathered despite the rain.The Prime Minister waved to enthusiastic supporters who thronged the venue.

Locals said the entire Simaria Dham was decorated “like a bride” for the occasion, with people turning up from far-off areas to witness the inauguration.The project has been a long-standing demand of the region. PM Modi had laid the foundation stone of the bridge back in October 2017, and after years of construction, the bridge has now been completed at Rs 1,871 crore.The newly inaugurated bridge is touted as Asia’s widest six-lane bridge built across the Ganga.It connects Aunta village in Mokama block of Patna district with Simaria Dham in Begusarai, significantly cutting travel time between the two districts.Officials said the bridge will not only ease connectivity between Patna and Begusarai but also boost regional trade, employment opportunities, and industrial growth.

Locals expressed their gratitude, saying travel to Patna had been difficult until now, but with the new bridge, they



can reach the state capital much more easily.Amid rain, people waited for PM Modi. He also acknowledged the crowd’s energy, waved multiple times and interacted briefly with supporters while inspecting the bridge.Many locals described the day as a milestone for the region.“Whether it is rain or hail, we came from far away to see the Prime Minister. Today, a long-awaited dream has been fulfilled,” said one attendee.Earlier in the day, PM Narendra Modi inaugurated and laid the foundation stone of 14 projects worth Rs 12,992 crore in Gaya.

## CM Mamata sounds nostalgic ahead of Metro projects inauguration by PM Modi, asserts she sanctioned them

GNS News Agency, August 22

Kolkata: West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Friday sounded nostalgic ahead of inauguration of Metro rail projects by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, adding she had planned and sanctioned the Metro corridors in and around Kolkata.Taking to her X handle, CM Banerjee wrote: “Allow me to be a little nostalgic today. As the Railways Minister of India, I was fortunate in planning and sanctioning series of Metro Railway corridors in metropolitan Kolkata. I had drawn the blueprints, arranged the funds, initiated the works and ensured that the different ends of the city (Joka, Garia, Airport, Sector V, etc..) were connected by an intra-city Metro grid.”Notably, CM Banerjee was extended an invitation by the Centre to attend the inauguration ceremony by PM Modi. However, she refused to accept the invitation and decided to stay away from the event.She further said that as Chief Minister of West Bengal, she took part in executing such projects.“Later, as the Chief Minister of West Bengal, I had the additional privilege of taking part in execution of the projects. From the State, I arranged free land, paved roads, arranged rehabilitation of displaced people, removed impediments, and ensured all help in the execution of projects. Our chief secretaries successively held series of coordination meeting to ensure integration of execution agencies. My planning as Railways Minister got fulfilment in my participation in execution,” she said.Banerjee during her tenure as Railway Minister



(2009-2011) had laid the foundations of Metro rail projects which are seeing the light of the day now. She concluded by saying that expanding metro infrastructure has been a long journey for her.Leader of the Opposition in state Assembly Suvendu Adhikari, meanwhile, took a dig at Banerjee for trying to steal credit of projects which received setbacks under her tenure as chief minister of the state. Metro Corridor (Orange Line), launching of viaduct at Chingrighata Junction is required and all arrangements for temporary traffic diversion have been made in consultation with Kolkata Police, but the NOC from the Govt. of West Bengal for executing this stretch is still pending for months. Not even a personal letter from the Hon’ble Railway Minister; Shri @AshwiniVaishnaw Ji, in this regard, have been able to persuade you,” he said.

## HC criticises Government for premature release of Ghose report, denies stay

Hyderabad, Aug.22: The Telangana High Court on Friday directed the State government to withdraw the 60-page excerpt of the Justice P.C. Ghose Commission report on the Kaleshwaram Lift Irrigation Project that was made public prior to its tabling in the Assembly, calling the move by the Chief Minister and the government “overzealous and inappropriate.”A division bench comprising Chief Justice Aparesh Kumar Singh and Justice G.M. Mohiuddin, while hearing two writ petitions filed by BRS president and former chief minister K. Chandrashekar Rao and former Irrigation Minister T. Harish Rao, took strong exception to the manner in which the report was publicised.

The court observed that the propriety of the Chief Minister holding a press conference and releasing portions of the report before it was formally tabled in the Legislature was questionable.The Bench ordered that the 60-page excerpt be immediately removed from all public domains. The petitioners had sought suspension of the report, contending that its findings touched upon their conduct and reputation and could be used to initiate action against them. However, the Chief Justice’s Bench declined to grant any stay or suspension of the report.

In its interim order, the Court recorded the submission of Telangana Advocate General A. Sudershan Reddy that the State government would place the complete report before the Legislative Assembly for discussion, and that action, if any, would only be taken following the debate.Dismissing the fears raised by the petitioners, the Bench observed:“The apprehension of the petitioners that action would be taken against them on the basis of the findings of the report allegedly touching upon their conduct and reputation is misplaced. Hence, no further interim directions are required to be passed.”

The division bench also noted that the Commission of Inquiry, headed by former Supreme Court judge Justice Pinaki Chandra Ghose, had committed a serious lapse by making allegations against the petitioners without issuing prior notices under Sections 8B and 9C of the Commissions of Inquiry Act, 1952. These provisions mandate that individuals whose conduct is under scrutiny be given an



opportunity to present their case before adverse findings are made.The court directed the State government to file a detailed counter-affidavit within four weeks addressing these concerns, while the petitioners have been given one week thereafter to submit their replies.

## KTR blames urea crisis on incompetent leadership in Telangana

Hyderabad, Aug.22 : BRS working president K. T. Rama Rao (KTR) launched a scathing attack on the current Congress government, holding it responsible for the severe urea shortage plaguing farmers across Telangana.

He warned that the downfall of the current rulers, who have pushed farmers to their limits, has begun. KTR stated that the state’s farmers are facing hardship and tears because of an incompetent government that lacks administrative knowledge. The people of Telangana, he said, have now understood what true leadership and effective governance—the hallmarks of KCR’s tenure—entail.



# Indian Chronicle

English Daily

## Trump tariffs-A dark cloud and a silver lining

US President Donald Trump has suffered a bad press in India. Still, it is indisputable that the crisis his tariffs have triggered for our economy may not be such a bad thing: it has already goaded the government to reset the GST and FDI regimes. It is a truism that crises force governments into long-overdue reforms, and the present turbulence may, paradoxically, prove to be an inflection point for India's economy. Early signs indicate that Trump's tariffs have broken the policy inertia of the Narendra Modi government; it is rethinking the goods and services tax (GST), foreign direct investment (FDI), and export promotion policies.

The government is reportedly working on a 100-day reform agenda prepared by the Commerce & Industry Ministry. It is not merely a firefighting exercise but a comprehensive strategy to improve India's global competitiveness. This is significant because, for too long, India has managed its trade policies reactively, focusing on ad hoc measures rather than laying down forward-looking, structural reforms. Another key area under review is the GST regime. While GST has streamlined indirect taxation, its complexity and compliance burdens have stifled smaller exporters and startups. Rationalising and reducing GST slabs, simplifying compliance, and ensuring quicker refunds could ease liquidity pressures and incentivise export-oriented businesses. If the current crisis accelerates this process, Indian exporters may be better positioned in the medium term, not just against US tariffs but also against rising competition from countries like Vietnam and Bangladesh. Equally important is the prospect of further liberalising the FDI regime.

## Strict Action Will Be Taken If Lucky Lotteries Are Held:



SP "Kumrambheem, Asifabad District Reporter. Jade Srinivas. "Indian Chronicle" August, 22. "Asifabad SP Kantilal Patil said that Ganesh Navratri celebrations should be held peacefully in the ASF district police area. The SP made several suggestions to the organizers of Vinayaka Mandapalas. He said that the organizers should not organize lucky draws, lotteries, and prize schemes at Ganesh Mandapalas. He warned that strict action will be taken against those who organize lucky draws. He said that there is a ban on lucky lotteries in the state.

## Do justice sir..A Tarmer Tresenting A Aetition To AO Milind Kumar"



"Kumrambheem, Asifabad District Reporter. Jade Srinivas. "Indian Chronicle" August, 22. "Asifabad A farmer complained that he had purchased a pesticide from a fertilizer shop in the district headquarters and sprayed his cotton plants, but since then the growth of the plants has stopped and the leaves are falling off, demanding justice. Farmer Rukum Sambaiah, a resident of Gollaguda village in the mandal, purchased the pesticide from a fertilizer shop in the district headquarters 20 days ago and sprayed his 3-acre crop. Since then, the plant has stopped growing and the leaves are drying up, Sambaiah complained. When he asked the shop owner, the farmer said that he had nothing to do with it and that he had given them their number to contact the company. When he called them and told them about the matter, they said that they did not have a dealership from our company and that we had not sold him the pesticide.

## BJP COMMITTED FOR WOMEN EMPOWERMENT : RAMCHANDER RAO

Hyderabad, Aug. 22 : Appealing to the women to support the BJP in coming elections, Telangana BJP president N Ramchander Rao today asserted that the party is committed towards women empowerment and welfare. Addressing a gathering at "Mahila Sammelan" at Aloor village in Ranga Reddy district, Rao alleged that both the previous BRS and the present Congress governments have failed to extend benefits to women in Telangana. He highlighted several central government schemes for women.

## Thanks to Telangana Government for Granting Promotions



Hyderabad; The School Teachers' Federation (STF) Telangana expressed gratitude to Chief Minister Revanth Reddy and Deputy Chief Minister Bhatti Vikramarka for granting promotions to teachers, which had been pending for a long time. Speaking at a press conference organized at Basheerbagh Press Club, STF President Devarakonda Saidulu and State General Secretary Pochayya stated that despite numerous struggles during the previous government's tenure, issues related to teachers' transfers and promotions remained unresolved.

They urged the government to regularize the services

of 420 contract lecturers working in junior colleges. They also demanded the payment of salaries for the strike period for Samagra Shiksha employees and job security for contract employees working in KGBV and Samagra Shiksha. Additionally, they requested that model school teachers be paid salaries through the 010 head of account. The STF further demanded that all teachers who lost their local status due to G.O. 317 be transferred back to their native districts. They also called for the fulfillment of promises made to employees as per the Congress Party's manifesto.

## Gen S Life Celebrates Stories of lives well lived To mark World Senior Citizens Day

Hyderabad; Marking World Seniors Day with a fitting tribute to India's growing 60+ community, Gen S Life, a lifestyle app dedicated to enriching the lives of seniors, announced their original podcast series Kahaani Abhi Baaki Hai. The series will premiere on 29th August 2025, exclusively on the Shemaroo Lifestyle YouTube channel, which reaches over 12 Lac subscribers. By releasing directly on YouTube, the show is strategically positioned to engage the 60+ audience.

Hosted by the charismatic Tarana Raja, celebrated RJ and Indian actress known for her distinctive voice and engaging presence, Kahaani Abhi Baaki Hai opens the door to untold stories and unfiltered reflections. The series shines a spotlight on the lived experiences, wisdom, humour, and resilience of the 60+ whose stories have been shaped by time but remain deeply relevant today.

Watch the trailer here: <https://www.instagram.com/reel/DNnLJBqsk84/?igsh=MTi0Z3JmZDNNMHBZMA%3D%3D>

New episodes will release every Friday at 4 pm on the Shemaroo Lifestyle YouTube channel, featuring 17 inspiring individuals from diverse backgrounds including Late Urmila Asher (Gujjuben), Tiku Talsania, Rakeysh Omprakash Mehra, Padmashri Bhawana Somaaya, Dr. Pawan Agrawal, Prahlad Kakkar, Sandip Soparkkar, Ayaz Memon, Binod Pradhan, Darius Shroff, Madhu Raja, Chinmay Sengupta, Shameem Akhtar, Shashanka Ghosh, Pushpa, Sohrab Ardeshtir & Avantika Akerkar. Each guest



shares unique life stories and perspectives that prove ageing is not the end of the story: it's a new chapter waiting to be told.

Meenakshi Menon, Founder, Gen S Life, said, "On this World Senior Citizens Day, we celebrate not just age, but the wealth of experience and inspiration our elders bring to the world. Kahaani Abhi Baaki Hai is an extension of our commitment to keep the 60+ community engaged and heard. Every story has depth, memories and hope. This podcast gives these wonderful seniors, who have lived rich lives, the spotlight they truly deserve. We believe stories have the power to bridge generations, and this series is our heartfelt effort to do just that. Stories of hope, resilience, love and life."

## "Merutsav 2025 Moves from Sporting Glory to Cultural Brilliance under Evolve '25 – Think. Create. Adapt."



GNS News Agency, August 22

Hyderabad: Meru International School's flagship interschool festival, Merutsav 2025, has entered its next exciting chapter as the cultural fest kicks off today, following the successful completion of the sports segment earlier this month. Merutsav 2025 kicks off today on August 22, 2025, at Meru International School, Miyapur, Hyderabad. From sports to art, music, dance, theatre, chess, innovation, and more – there's something for every talent!

From July 26 to August 11, Merutsav 2025 Sports brought together 1,800+ student athletes from 40+ schools, who competed across 25+ events including basketball, badminton, taekwondo, table tennis, chess, and yoga. The competitions not only celebrated athletic excellence but also

reflected the spirit of Evolve '25 – Think. Create. Adapt., as students displayed resilience, adaptability, and teamwork in every match. Building on this momentum, the spotlight now shifts to the two-day cultural fest, where over 3,000 students from 40+ schools will participate in an impressive lineup of 70+ events. From music, dance, and theatre to debate, art, and innovation challenges, the cultural edition of Merutsav 2025 promises to be a melting pot of ideas and creativity. Adding to this, Ms. Meghana Gorukanti Jupally, Founder and Director of Meru International School, said: "Merutsav is not just a festival, it is a platform where young minds discover their strengths, push their boundaries, and express their creativity. Through both sports and culture, we aim to nurture resilient, confident, and compassionate individuals who are ready to evolve into future leaders."

## Daniyala Venkateswarlu as Bhadrachalam Tahsildar

Shaik Sharief, Bhadrachalam, August 22, Indian Chronicle Daniyala Venkateswarlu, who has been working as the in-charge Tahsildar of Bhadrachalam till now, assumed full responsibilities on Friday.

As the Bhadrachalam Tahsildar has been on long-term leave for the last six months, the District Collector has issued orders handing over full responsibilities to Daniyala Venkateswar, who is working as the Deputy Tahsildar.



## Shad Nagar Detective Inspector Venkateshwarlu Honored with Gold Medal and Cash Award by Hyderabad CP Anand



"INDIAN CHRONICLE "SHADNAGAR, August 22" "In recognition of his outstanding performance in duty, Shad Nagar Detective Inspector Venkateshwarlu was presented with a prestigious gold medal and cash award by Hyderabad City Police Commissioner Anand on Friday. "The award, instituted by the Raja Bahadur Venkata Rama Reddy Memorial Educational Society, acknowledges Venkateshwarlu's exemplary services. Expressing his delight, the Detective Inspector stated that receiving this honor brings him immense pride and joy. He attributed his success to adhering to the guidance of his superiors and executing his responsibilities in line with their directives. "Venkateshwarlu extended his heartfelt gratitude to Cyberabad Police Commissioner Sri Avinash Mohanty IPS, along with other officials including Shamshabad DCP Rajesh, Shamshabad Additional DCP, Shadnagar ACP Lakshminarayana, and Shadnagar CI Vijay Kumar for their support and mentorship.

## Shadnagar MLA Veerlapalli Shankar Urges Minister for Immediate Release of Urea Stocks



"INDIAN CHRONICLE "SHADNAGAR, August 22" "Shadnagar MLA Veerlapalli Shankar met Agriculture Minister Tummala Nageswara Rao on Friday to urge the immediate release of allocated urea stocks for farmers in his constituency. During the meeting, the MLA emphasized the need for swift action to ensure farmers receive the necessary urea supplies to support their agricultural activities. "Minister Nageswara Rao responded positively, assuring prompt action to address the request. Additionally, MLA Shankar appealed for the establishment of an Agricultural Market Committee (AMC) in Jilled Chowdariguda Mandal to benefit local farmers. The minister reportedly promised to consider the proposal and work towards its approval soon. "Speaking on the occasion, MLA Shankar reaffirmed his commitment to ensuring that farmers in the Shadnagar constituency face no hardships. He stated that all necessary measures are being taken to support agricultural activities and address farmers' concerns in the region.

## Save Yellandu, the birth place of Singareni: GLBKS



"Rayala Kishore, Yellandu Constituency, August 22, Indian Chronicle: "At the GLBKS Yellandu branch committee meeting held at the IFTU office, State Treasurer Bayya Varaprasad demanded immediate steps to protect Yellandu, the birthplace of Singareni. He said higher officials are neglecting the area for their personal prestige, pushing it towards closure. Varaprasad stressed that new coal mines must be opened in Pusapalli, Gundala and Koyagudem to ensure Yellandu's survival. He urged that workers from the soon-to-be-closed JK Open Cast be adjusted locally. The union resolved to unite with other workers' organisations to launch movements against the management's negligence. "The meeting was presided over by branch secretary Koppula Srinivas and attended by union leaders Posham Babu, Kondapalli Srinivas, Mohan Rao, Ravuri Upender Rao (IFTU Area Secretary), Sarangapani (IFTU District President) and others.





As a part of creating Cyber Fraud Awareness among the citizens of Telangana, State Bank of India, Hyderabad Circle has been conducting various digital frauds awareness activities at various places like Educational institutions, NGOs, offices, Malls, Metro Stations, Parks etc., throughout the Telangana state. In continuation to the above on 21.08.2025 SBI in association with Reserve Bank of India has conducted a Town hall meeting on Cyber fraud awareness with target group as Students of various colleges and Universities. Approximately 450 students from Veeranari Chakali Ilamma Women's University (VCIWU), Sun International college, PDS college of nursing, Ghulam Ahmed college of Education etc., have participated.



Shri Ravi Kumar Verma, GM, SBI, Dr S. Subbaiah, CGM RBI & Ombudsman, AP & Telangana, Shri P. Kalyan Chakravarthy, DGM RBI & Dy. Ombudsman, AP & Telangana, Smt. Dr Loka Pavani, Principal VCIWU, Shri Bipin Kumar Singh, DGM SBI, Navneet Kumar DGM SBI have participated in the meeting. SBI has presented a detailed presentation on various types of cyber frauds and enlightened the students to be careful, vigilant and to spread awareness among their circle. Students were explained that awareness is the best defence and are advised to ensure Do's & Don'ts, which were discussed in the meeting are followed without fail. Importance of 1930, Cyber Crime Helpline number was explained along with www.cybercrime.gov.in. RBI has presented the Integrated RBI ombudsman scheme 2021 and explained the various options available for grievance redressal. Post presentation, queries of the students were answered by the officials and students have expressed their satisfaction and informed that the programme was really helpful, and they came to know about various things which were not known to them in order to safeguard themselves from the Cyber Frauds. The meeting ended with vote of thanks by Shri Bipin Kumar Singh, DGM SBI.

Regards  
(G Ramakrishna)  
ASSISTANT GEN

## \*Grand Celebrations Mark Raja Bahadur Venkata Rama Reddy's Birth Anniversary\*



“Shadnagar Reddy Association President Urges Commitment to His Ideals” Shadnagar, August 22, 2025: Raja Bahadur Venkata Rama Reddy, a remarkable figure dedicated to public welfare, was fondly remembered on his 157th birth anniversary. The Shadnagar Reddy Association, led by its president Koppula Madanmohan Reddy, paid tributes by garlanding his statue at the association's office. Speaking on the occasion, Madanmohan Reddy praised Venkata Rama Reddy as a multifaceted visionary

who established educational institutions and hostels during a time when educational opportunities were scarce in the Telangana region, enabling countless individuals to access education. He also highlighted Reddy's exemplary service as the City Kotwal, serving with distinction for 14 years and earning the appreciation of the Nizam government. The event saw participation from key association members, including General Secretary Gurram Ravinder Reddy, Treasurer Madduru Narasimha Reddy, Sripal Reddy, Bairi Harishwar Reddy, and others.

## National Seminar on Quantum AI Applications in Electric Vehicle Tech held



INDIAN CHRONICLE “August 22” The Department of Electrical and Electronics Engineering (EEE) at Guru Nanak Institutions successfully wrapped up a three-day national seminar titled “Quantum Artificial Intelligence Applications for Next Generation Electric Vehicle Technology” on Friday. Held from August 20 to 22, the event was sponsored by the All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) under its VAANI scheme, emphasizing the integration of regional languages in technical education alongside advancements in cutting-edge engineering innovations. “The seminar, organized under AICTE's Vibrant Advocacy for Advancement and Nurturing of Indian Languages (VAANI) initiative, aimed to bridge multilingual discourse with emerging technologies. It brought together eminent professionals, researchers, and academicians from prestigious institutions such as the Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs) and National Institutes of Technology (NITs) to explore the transformative potential of Quantum Artificial Intelligence (QAI) in the electric vehicle (EV) sector.” Keynote sessions and expert talks delved into critical topics, including quantum algorithms for EV data analytics, AI-driven smart grids and charging infrastructure, battery efficiency optimization through machine learning, and real-time diagnostics with predictive maintenance for EVs. Participants actively engaged in technical sessions, panel discussions, and paper presentations, many of which incorporated or were supported in regional languages to

align with VAANI's goal of fostering inclusive technical education. “Over 150 delegates, comprising faculty members, research scholars, and industry professionals from across India, attended the event. Distinguished guests from IITs and NITs delivered insightful keynote addresses, enriching discussions on collaborative research opportunities, regional language-based technical publications, and the creation of educational resources in Indian languages.” Dr. Y V Balarama Krishna Rao, the seminar's convener, and Dr. S Rajender Reddy, co-convener, expressed profound gratitude to the institution's leadership for their unwavering support. They acknowledged the contributions of Sardar Gagandeep Singh Kohli, Vice Chairman; Dr. H S Saini, Managing Director; Dr. S Sreenatha Reddy, Director; Dr. P Parthasaradhy, Joint Director; and Dr. S V Ranganayakulu, Dean (R&D), whose guidance played a pivotal role in the event's success. “The seminar culminated in a valedictory session where speakers praised AICTE-VAANI's vision and commended the organizing team at Guru Nanak Institutions for their flawless execution. Certificates of participation were awarded to attendees, and feedback from participants highlighted enthusiasm for future multilingual, technology-focused academic gatherings.” “This event underscores the growing emphasis on sustainable mobility solutions powered by QAI, positioning India at the forefront of EV innovation while promoting linguistic diversity in higher education.

## Quality education should be provided for the future of students: District Collector Jitesh V. Patil.



“Bhukya Ranjith Naik, Bhadradi Kothagudem Bureau, August 22, Indian Chronicle: District Collector Jitesh V. Patil on Friday conducted a surprise inspection of Mahatma Jyotiba Phule School and Telangana Backward Classes Welfare Residential Boys School and Hostel in Manuguru. The collector thoroughly inspected the classrooms, dining hall, hostels, and school surroundings. During the hostel inspection, he interacted with the students directly and learned details about accommodation facilities, cleanliness, drinking water, beds, mattresses, bathrooms, etc. The Collector suggested that the authorities should conduct continuous monitoring so that the students do not face any problems and should pay special attention to the health and safety of the students. After visiting the classrooms, he conducted a comprehensive review on the interest of the students in their studies, the quality of teaching of the teachers, and the level of learning. He guided the stu-

dents to study with discipline and make good use of the facilities provided by the government, and the teachers should provide training for competitive exams along with teaching. During the inspection of the canteen, the Collector directly inspected the storage of food items, the cleanliness of the kitchen, and the quality of meals served to the students. He instructed the staff to cook with fresh ingredients and ensure that the food is nutritious and tasty. Speaking, the Collector said that there should be no compromise in providing quality education for the future of the students and ordered that the officials should continuously monitor accommodation, meals, cleanliness, and security. He said that students should be provided with opportunities to showcase their talent in sports and cultural programs along with books. The Collector instructed the officials to submit reports on the problems faced by the schools and find immediate solutions.

## A milk anointing ceremony was performed on a portrait of Nara Chandrababu Naidu under the auspices of the Telugu Desam Party



“Bhukya Ranjith Naik, Bhadradi Kothagudem Bureau, August 22, Indian Chronicle: The people of Bhadrachalam are able to sleep peacefully in the months of June, July, and August because of the flood embankment (karakatta) in Bhadrachalam. This flood embankment was constructed in 2004-2005 under the leadership of then-Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu and then-Minister Tummala Nageswara Rao for the people of Bhadrachalam, extending from Etapaka to Subhash Nagar Colony near the Sai Baba Temple. Thanks to this embankment, the town of Bhadrachalam is protected from even major floods in the Godavari River. The credit for this goes to the then-Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu and the then-District Minister Tummala Nageswara Rao. Even when the Godavari water

level reached 50 feet, the town of Bhadrachalam used to flood, but that is no longer the case. Recalling the visionary leader, now the Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh, Chandrababu Naidu, a milk anointing ceremony was performed on his portrait. During the event, they said that the Bhadrachalam embankment is a complete shield (“Srirama Raksha”) for the town and that without it, the people of Bhadrachalam would not exist. They also noted that the embankment withstood the 72-foot flood in the Godavari in 2022. They further stated that in the upcoming local body elections, the Telugu Desam Party, BJP, and Jana Sena will contest together, and they urged everyone to remember the development works done by the Telugu Desam Party and show their strength in the local elections.

## Seizure of Ganja worth over 2 crore in Tekulapalli: Yellandu DSP Chandrabhanu

“Rayala Kishore, Yellandu Constituency, August 22, Indian Chronicle: In Bhadradi Kothagudem district, police seized a large quantity of ganja near Venkatya Tanda in Tekulapalli mandal. Yellandu DSP Chandrabhanu revealed the details of the case on Friday. On Thursday evening, CCS and Tekulapalli police jointly conducted vehicle checks near Venkatya Tanda. During the checks, they stopped a lorry (RJ06GC0833) and found 424.950 kg of ganja inside. Its estimated value is ₹2,12,47,000. According to the information, the accused had purchased the ganja in



Odisha and were transporting it via Bhadrachalam and Palvancha towards Rajasthan. Among the ac-

cused, Prabhul Gurjar and Shivaraj Gurjar were arrested, while Rambabu and Narayan Gurjar are ab-

sconding. A case has been registered and investigation is underway. Tekulapalli CI Battula Satyanarayana,



# World-Class "Manmohan Singh Earth Sciences University" to be Built in Kothagudem



““““Bhukya Ranjith naik,Bhadradri kothagudem Bureau,August 22,Indian Chronicle:“Agriculture Minister Tummala Nageswara Rao has directed officials to create an exceptional plan to build the Manmohan Singh Earth Sciences University (Kothagudem) as a model for the world.“On Friday, in the Minister's chamber at the Secretariat, Minister Tummala, along with Vice-Chancellor Smt. Yogita Rana and other officials, reviewed the construction plan for the Manmohan Singh Earth Sciences University in Kothagudem, which was prepared by prominent architect Usha.“During the meeting, the Minister stated that the university is being established to become a landmark for Telangana state and a beacon for the entire world. He revealed that measures are being taken to construct the university with modern technology and all essential facilities. The Minister advised that the plan should be meticulously designed with a focus on quality standards and without any flaws. He also suggested building spacious classrooms, hostels, and libraries to ensure comfort for students and lecturers. He instructed officials to present the designs to



the Chief Minister soon for his approval, in line with his directions.“The Minister advised making all necessary arrangements for the inauguration ceremony as soon as Chief Minister Revanth Reddy gives the green light. He also spoke with the Bhadradri Kothagudem Collector regarding the master plan. He directed officials to temporarily conduct classes in the currently available buildings and to repair and make the hostel buildings available to students. He set a deadline of three years for the completion of the university's construction.“The Minister said that this Earth Sciences University is the first of its kind in the country and should be built with an attractive design that makes it a landmark not only for Telangana but for the entire nation. He stated that the university, which will take shape on a vast 300-acre campus, will become a hub for high-standard education and employment opportunities for thousands. The Minister expressed hope that this university will pave the way for a bright future by producing thousands of young scientists. He further opined that the university will provide opportunities for advanced studies and help in the creation of scientists.“Minister Tummala's Special Efforts...“Minister Tummala's effort to upgrade the mining college into a university is immense. He works tirelessly for the development of the agency area of Bhadradri Kothagudem district. He played a key role in upgrading the Bhadradri Kothagudem Mining College into an Earth Sciences University. He succeeded in convincing the Chief Minister to establish the university to promote the fame of Bhadradri Kothagudem district across the country.“Minister Tummala is making special efforts to ensure that the university in Telangana brings glory to the state worldwide. His initiative in convincing the government to upgrade it to a university and in getting the bill approved is unforgettable. Minister Tummala is relentlessly fighting with a strong resolve to build a university that will showcase the prestige of Khammam district to the world.

# Aswaraopet MLAs Our beloved leader Sri Jare Adinarayana laid the foundation stone of development works worth Rs 1 crore 14 lakh 50 thousand across Annapureddypalli Mandal.“



““““Kukkadapu Naresh Kumar, Aswaraopeta constituency, August 22, Indian Chronicle: Today, Friday, Aswaraopet MLA Sri Jare Adinarayana laid the foundation stone of development works in several panchayats in our Annapureddypalli Mandal. In this program, officials of various departments, Mandal President Vanama Gandhi\*, Congress Party District Leader Parsa Venkat, Congress Party



Constituency Senior Leader Banavat Bheemudu, District Leader Vemula Ramana, SC L Mandal President Yadala Venkateswarlu, Village Branch Presidents of Ten Panchayats, NSUI Presidents, Youth Congress Presidents, Social Media Coordinators of Ten Panchayats, Mandal Coordinator, Congress Party Fans, Jare Anna Fans, and others participated.

# Bekkanti Srinivasa Rao appointed as gazetted head master of Narsapuram school““““

Shaik sharief ,Bhadrachalam, August 22,Indian chronicle:“Bekkanti Srinivasa Rao has been appointed as gazetted head master of Zilla Parishad High School in Narsapuram village of Dummugudem mandal. As part of the recent promotion process undertaken by the government, Srinivasa Rao, who was serving as the FAC (additional responsibilities) head master in the same school till now, has been promoted to full-fledged gazetted head master.“The government issued orders in this regard on Thursday and Srinivasa Rao formally took charge of the post on Friday. The teachers said that his long experience in the field of education and his contribution to the development of the school are very great.“On this occasion, the teachers, students and parents of the school congratulated Bekkanti Srinivasa Rao. Speaking on the promotion, he expressed his hope that he would do his best for the betterment of the students and the further development of the



school and that with the cooperation of everyone, they would reach greater heights. He said that special plans will be made to improve the standards of education in the future. Education officers and teachers attended the program and congratulated Srinivasa Rao.

# Telangana to Partner with Taiwan’s Premier Institutes for Semiconductor R&D and Talent Dept.

Taipei /Hyderabad, Aug.22 A high-level T-CHIP® (Technology–Chip Innovation Program) delegation led by Mr. Sundeep Kumar Makthala commenced its three-day Taiwan mission with strategic engagements at National Yang Ming Chiao Tung University (NYCU) and the Taiwan Semiconductor Research Institute (TSRI), two of Taiwan's most prestigious institutions shaping the global semiconductor landscape. This visit advances Telangana's global mission to train 10,000 semiconductor professionals by 2030.At NYCU, discussions focused on joint research programs, co-designed curriculum, and talent exchange initiatives, aimed at equipping students and faculty in Telangana with world-class skills in chip design and semiconductor innovation. Several of the world's leading semiconductor and technology company founders and CEOs are alumni of NYCU, including Acer founder Stan Shih and TSMC founder Morris Chang (who served as a key advisor and collaborator to NYCU).

At TSRI, conversations centered on collaborative R&D, shared access to facilities, and sustained research partnerships—designed to nurture cutting-edge semiconductor development.

Joining the delegation virtually, Prof. V. Balakista Reddy, Chairman of the Telangana State Council of Higher Education (TSCHE), welcomed the initiative and announced that TSCHE is ready to partner with T-CHIP® to strengthen semiconductor research and talent development in Telangana. He emphasized that these collaborations represent mutually beneficial opportunities, which will elevate Telangana's research and innovation landscape while shaping India's role within the global semiconductor ecosystem.

Ken Khoo, CEO of Spring Semiconductor, and Maruthi Kurma, President, WTITC Malaysia chapter, were also part of the delegation—underscoring the depth of international participation and support for T-CHIP.Reflecting on the visit, Mr. Sundeep Kumar Makthala, Founder of T-CHIP, stated “Semiconductors are at the heart of global innovation. By partnering with world-class institutions in Taiwan, T-CHIP® is creating a bridge between Telangana's talent and global expertise. These strategic collaborations will empower our students, drive research breakthroughs, and position Telangana and India at the forefront of semiconductor leadership.”

# Party's preparations needed for local body elections: Chada Venkat Reddy

Hyderabad, Aug.22 CPI National executive member Chada Venkata Reddy today called upon his party cadres who are consistently fighting on people's issues, to gear up for the upcoming local body elections in Telangana. He urged them to contest with determination and secure victory, thereby strengthening the party's representation in local bodies. There is a need to consolidate the party's base, he noted.

Addressing a gathering on the third day of "CPI Telangana State 4th Congress" at Gajula Ramaram in Medchal-Malkajgiri district, Venkat Reddy said that there were criticisms that the century-old CPI had not come to power in the country or the state. But the fact is that the party took pride as the poor people still reposed faith in the red flag believing that the party represented their struggles. “CPI has always fought for land, food and for the liberation of the poor. Leaders must take forward land struggle move-

ments to safeguard that belief,” he added.Referring to land issues, the CPI leader pointed out that although the "Dharani portal" was replaced with "Bhu Bharati portal" in Telangana, it was not being implemented properly at the ground level. He asserted, “As the land problems persist in villages, our activists must take up the struggles to resolve them. Movements are the lifeblood of the Communist Party, and Telangana offers immense opportunities to expand and strengthen the organization.”On this occasion, Reddy came down heavily on the BJP government, accusing it of pursuing authoritarian and fascist policies under the guise of democracy. “A religious fanatic and RSS member has been hoisting the national flag at Delhi's Red Fort for the past 11 years”, he quipped.Calling for unity among the Left parties, he reminded that the CPI had already campaigned across the country with the slogan "BJP Ko Hatao, Desh Ko Bachao" to counter the BJP's fascist policies.

# Operation Sindoor delayed urea shortage : M. Raghunandan Rao

Hyderabad, Aug.22 Senior BJP leader and Medak MP M. Raghunandan Rao on Friday revealed that the arrival of urea had been delayed due to Operation Sindoor.Speaking to the media at the VAR Convention Hall in Siddipet on Friday, MP Raghunandan Rao lashed out at some people , who are deliberately putting their shoes on the line and doing politics in the name of the urea shortage. He assured that 50 thousand metric tons of urea would be brought to Telangana within a week. On this occasion, MP Raghunandan Rao reminded that it was only the central government that is providing urea to farmers and not the BRS and Congress parties.

He said that adequate urea would be provided to all the farmers within a week. He expressed anger that some people were creating an artificial shortage of the urea. On this occasion, he ordered the officials to take action against such people. He advised the farmers not to believe the false allegations of politicians and not to worry. He made it clear that they should not stoop down for flexes and do politics. Medak MP Raghunandan Rao predicted that those, who do such wrong things would not even get a deposit in the next elections.

He said that some people were spreading misinformation against Prime Minister Modi by saying that he is discriminating between states. He said that the central government would do justice with an equal focus, regardless of who is in power in the states. He said that the center would release funds of Rs. 20 lakhs for each village panchayat building and Rs. 10 lakhs for Anganwadi centers. He explained that Rs. 2. 8 crores had been allocated for 26 Anganwadi centers in Gajwel, Dubbaka and Siddipet constituencies in Siddipet district.He accused the Congress leaders of beating coconuts in the name of a work fair. He questioned as to how they would spend the funds provided by the center. He asked the collector to take legal action against them. He explained that Rs. 2. 10 crores had been allocated for the 27 Anganwadi centers in Medak district. He reminded that the Center had released Rs. 4. 6 crore funds for the 56 Anganwadi centers in the Medak Lok Sabha constituency. MP Raghunandan Rao said that the Center had provided 75 percent of the funds for the works initiated by the state government in the name of the Work Fair and the remaining 25 percent funds had been allocated by the state government.

# CITY POLICE COMMISSIONER REVIEWS PERFORMANCE OF ZONAL CYBER CELLS

Hyderabad, Aug.22 :Hyderabad Police Commissioner CV Anand conducted a comprehensive review of the "7 Zonal Cyber Cells (ZCCs)" to assess their performance over the past two months.Six key parameters - NCRP petition disposal, Refund mechanisms, Case detections, Public awareness campaigns, Inter-state coordination via the 'Samanvaya' portal and IR uploads to CCTNS, have been reviewed.

During the review, key achievements have been highlighted, which included 65.15 percent rise in petition disposal (8,209 petitions in 2025 as against 4,970 in 2024), 87.03 percent increase in refund amounts (Rs.1.41 crore refunded across 768 cases), 680% surge in IR uploads to

CCTNS, improving documentation, Enhanced interstate coordination in cybercrime investigations. Citizens are advised to report cybercrimes by dialing the 1930 helpline or contacting the nearest police station / ZCC.On this occasion, the Commissioner assured immediate support to address the needs of the officers concerned. He appreciated the growing awareness among citizens in reporting cybercrimes and urged stronger coordination with banks, telecom operators and judicial agencies. Continued training and awareness campaigns to prevent cybercrimes and need to empower the citizens, he emphasized.Additional CP (Crimes) P. Viswa Prasad, DCP (Cyber Crimes) Dara Kavitha, ACPs, SHOs and inspectors attended the meeting. (

# Three Expos – Sports, India Process, and Eco Sustain begin at Hitex

Hyderabad, Aug.22 : The 8th Edition of Sports Expo India 2025, along with India Process Expo & Conference (IPEC) and Eco Sustain Expo, began simultaneously at Hitex Exhibition Centre, Madhapur on Friday. While the Sports Expo is a two-day event (August 22–23), the India Process Expo & Conference and Eco Sustain Expo will run for three days (August 22–24).The Sports Expo was inaugurated by Vakiti Srihari, Minister for Sports & Youth Services of Telangana; Shiv Sena Reddy, Chairman, Sports Authority of Telangana (SATG) , Jay Prakash, Head of Corporate Communications, NMDC, in the presence of T.G. Srikanth, Business Head, Hitex, Rajesh Vetcha, Race Director, NMDC Hyderabad Marathon 2025.

The India Process Expo & Conference and Eco Sustain Expo were inaugurated by Dr. Jatoh Ram Chander Naik, Deputy Speaker, along with Prof. K. Purushotham Reddy (Eminent Environmentalist), Dr. Addanki Dayakar, MLC, Sircilla Rajaiah, Chairman, APSFC, Dr. G. Rajender Reddy, Former Chairman, AP Bhoodan Yagna Board, and C.S.S. Rao, MSME DFO, Hyderabad, Joint Director & HOD.

Speaking after inaugurating the Sports Expo, Minister Vakiti Srihari said, “Our Chief Minister Revanth Reddy vision is to make Telangana a Healthy State. The government is giving strong impetus to sports, and the State Sports Policy is a step in that direction. If a small nation like South Korea can produce 36 Olympians, why not India with 140 crore people?”Shiva Sena Reddy urged everyone to join hands with the Government in making Telangana the “Active Lifestyle Capital of India.” “A healthy state is a wealthy state,” he said.Rajesh Vetcha announced that Hyderabad Runners Society will host 5K and 10K runs as part of the NMDC Hyderabad Marathon in conjunction with the expo.

The 5K run will be held on August 23, starting and ending at Hitex, while the 10K run will be held on August 24, starting from Hitex and ending at Gachibowli Stadium.At the industrial expos, Dy Speaker Dr. Jatoh Ram Chander Naik emphasised: “India has the world's largest youth population, yet many remain unemployed. Industries must go rural, as that is where the majority of our people live.”He, along with other dignitaries, also unveiled the Indian Green Gas Equipment Manufacturers Association (IGGEMA) and its logo.Prof. K. Purushotham Reddy criticised the dilution of CSR, stating: “CSR is not charity—it is corporate responsibility. No corporation has the right to pollute our environment.”Dr. Addanki Dayakar, MLC, stressed the importance of green energy in rural India, while Sri Sircilla Rajaiah called for urgent solutions to the solid and liquid waste menace.R. Balakrishna explained IGGEMA's purpose: to give voice to industries in the southern region, which until now lacked a dedicated platform.

Sports Expo features 60 exhibitors and showcases eSportEx – India's first hybrid pavilion combining traditional sports with competitive gaming. Over 2,500 players and YouTube celebrities are expected to participate India Process & Eco Sustain Expos feature 270 exhibitors demonstrating innovations in manufacturing and sustainable technologies.Speaking about two industrial expos, T.G. Srikanth, Business Head, Hitex, said, “The expos encourage knowledge exchange, collaboration, and business growth. Eco Sustain Expo, in particular, aligns with the global shift towards sustainable manufacturing and green technologies.” The three expos—Sports Expo, India Process Expo & Conference, and Eco Sustain Expo—together create a powerful platform to promote health, innovation, sustainability, and industry growth.

# WORKSHOP HELD ON "RECENT ADVANCES IN FUNDAMENTAL GEOSCIENCES"

Hyderabad, Aug.22 :A workshop on "Recent Advances in Fundamental Geosciences" was organized today by the Geological Survey of India (GSI), Southern Region, at MS Krishnan Auditorium, GSI Training Institute, Hyderabad.After inaugurating the event, director general of GSI Asit Saha highlighted the "importance of fundamental geosciences" in advancing mineral exploration through modern petrological insights, mitigating climate change via carbon storage, and understanding paleo-environments through paleontological studies. He emphasized the need for "interdisciplinary research" and strengthening "research and development (R&D) in geosciences", especially in the context of emerging technologies like AI and ML.ADG and HOD, SR Deb Kumar Bhattacharya underlined the role of fundamental geosciences in "groundwater contamination studies" and "carbon sequestration" for sustainable environmental management.Dr. L.P. Singh, DyDG, SU,

Telangana, SN Mahapatro, DyDG, SU, Andhra Pradesh, Dr. S. Ravi, Dy DG & Head, Mission-V, GSITI, Hyderabad, K.V. Maruthi, DyDG & RMH-IV and Convener and several eminent scientists, academicians and dignitaries from various government and academic institutions attended.On the occasion, the dignitaries released the publication "GSI Records Volume 158, Part-5: Extended Abstracts of Progress Reports for Field Season 2023-2024, Southern Region."The technical session included lectures by eminent national and international speakers on petrological, environmental, and paleontological studies, followed by a panel discussion on "Geoscience for Sustainable Development and New Frontiers for Exploration" moderated by Dr. Krishnapriya Basak, Director and Organizing Secretary. The workshop concluded with the key message that "research and innovations in fundamental geosciences are vital for sustainability, climate change mitigation and resource-efficient economic development."



## Amid space crunch, Punjab and Haryana HC considers third site proposed for possible relocation



GNS News Agency, August 22

The Punjab and Haryana High Court on Wednesday took note of a fresh proposal to utilise land vacated after the shifting of the furniture market for a possible relocation of the court complex, adding a third alternative to the two already under consideration. The division bench of Chief Justice Sheel Nagu and Justice Sanjiv Berry was hearing the matter of space constraints at the high court and possible sites for additional courtrooms and facilities. Additional Solicitor General Satya Pal Jain, representing the Union of India, informed the court that officials and stakeholders — including members of the Bar, court staff, architects, and the Union Territory administration — met on August 7 to discuss the urgent requirement for more courtrooms. He said the meeting examined two possible courses of action, keeping in mind the severe space crunch and the fact that the current complex is a UNESCO World Heritage site.

Options being consideredThe first option, Jain said, is to expand “within the existing campus,” specifically towards the parking area outside the Bar room. The plan proposes three underground parking levels and three floors above ground, accommodating 16 new courtrooms at an estimated cost of Rs 200 crore. However, this would require UNESCO’s clearance — a process expected to take about a year — and would cause significant disruption to the roughly 1,000 vehicles parked there daily, alongside logistical and security challenges during the multi-year

## BJP MLA Ashok Dinda and other party leaders move Calcutta HC after Kolkata Police summons related to ‘attacks on policemen’ at Nabanna Abhijan

GNS News Agency, August 22

The cases are related to alleged violence by BJP MLA during the Nabanna Abhijan on August 9, held to recognise the first death anniversary of the doctor who was raped and murdered at the R G Kar Medical College and Hospital. The cases are related to alleged violence during the Nabanna Abhijan on August 9, held to recognise the first death anniversary of the doctor who was raped and murdered at R G Kar Medical College and Hospital. (Facebook/Ashoke Dinda)

BJP MLA Ashok Dinda, former BJP MP Arjun Singh and BJP leaders Shanku Deb Panda and Kali Khatik have moved the Calcutta High court for anticipatory bail and quashing of the FIRs filed against them. The cases are related to alleged violence during the Nabanna Abhijan on August 9, held to recognise the first death anniversary of the doctor who was raped and murdered at the R G Kar Medical College and Hospital. On Wednesday, the matter was mentioned to the single bench of Justice Jay Sengupta for a hearing on an urgent basis. The court granted permission for the matter to be filled, and it is likely to be heard tomorrow. While Dinda and Khatik have sought anticipatory bail, Singh and Panda moved court for the quashing of the cases. On Tuesday, the Kolkata Police had summoned Dinda, the BJP MLA of Moyna, for allegedly threatening policemen during the Nabanna Abhijan. He has been asked to appear before the New Market Police station on August 18 at 11 am. According to a police officer, they have seized CCTV footage where Dinda is allegedly seen threatening policemen and instigating others to assault the police. According to Kolkata Police, seven cases were

## ‘Slight dip, not drastic’: Amid diplomatic tensions, Bangladesh traders continue to find buyers in Kolkata



GNS News Agency, August 22

Amidst the ongoing political and diplomatic tensions between India and Bangladesh, saree traders from across the eastern borders are not only continuing their active participation in The India International Grand Trade Fair (IIGTF) 2025 at the Science City Ground in Kolkata — a major trade event — but are also selling in other major cities like Delhi, Mumbai, and Bengaluru. The ongoing diplomatic unease follows the student movement in Bangladesh that forced the resignation of Sheikh Hasina in August last year, following which she fled to India.

In Kolkata, commerce seems to have a fluctuating relationship with politics. Many Bangladeshi traders are still selling famous sarees like Dhakai Jamdani, Muslin and Tangail, which are loved by Indian buyers for their beauty and craftsmanship. Indian customers are showing strong interest and buying these sarees in large numbers. Ayat Jamdani’s Rohan, a Bangladeshi trader at IIGTF, said, “We started business 40 years ago. We have our own production in Dhaka, Narayanganj. The business was better in our grandparents’ era as people didn’t have access to online shopping then.” He added, “Due to digitisation, we have faced a major dip in sales. In fact, business was better before the Covid-induced pandemic. Nowadays, it’s mostly the repeat customers who drive sales.” Md Naseeruddin Opu, another Bangladeshi saree trader at the IIGTF said, “There hasn’t been a drastic change. Traders from India go to Bangladesh and vice-versa. That is how it should be.” “There are two out of 100 people who talk of the conflict between the two

construction. The second option involves relocating court facilities to one of two new sites. The first is Sarangpur, with 48 acres of available land and an estimated project cost of Rs 350 crore. The Union territory administration is open to this plan, though site-specific challenges remain. The second is an IT park, which will be assessed for feasibility. Jain said a small team of senior officials and Bar representatives will visit both Sarangpur and the IT park this weekend to evaluate ground realities such as traffic flow and infrastructure readiness. Bar Association seeks time

The Bar Association has sought time till August 20 to decide whether it is willing to move out of the current complex. If it agrees, planning will proceed at the chosen new site. If not, the administration will have to pursue the in-situ expansion despite the constraints. During the hearing, Bar Council president Sartaj Singh Narula suggested a third option — using several acres of land freed after the furniture market’s relocation near Sectors 53–55, close to Mohali. Senior standing counsel for the Union territory, Anit Jhanji, reading from affidavits, highlighted the Capitol Complex’s UNESCO heritage restrictions, noting that any major construction within the protected zone must be pre-cleared by the World Heritage Committee under Paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines. He also traced the legal framework since the complex’s 2016 inscription is part of Le Corbusier’s transnational architectural works. The bench also discussed an approved plan near the Open Hand Monument that proposes shifting certain high court branches into five new halls, freeing space within the main building. The counsel suggested incorporating two underground parking levels into this project to address staff parking shortages. The court noted that, if feasible, this plan could be placed before the heritage committee by September for clearance. Bar Council advocates, meanwhile, called for a small joint committee of the high court, Union territory administration, and Bar representatives to address “minor but persistent” operational issues outside the courtroom, such as delayed fire safety clearances and relocation of branches.



lodged — five by Kolkata Police and two by Howrah Police. Four FIRs have been registered in New Market police station and one in Hare Street police station under the jurisdiction of Kolkata Police. The FIRs were lodged for allegedly violating High Court orders by not going to R R Avenue and taking a procession towards Park Street, for allegedly creating a ruckus at the “Rakhi” stall of another political party, allegedly assaulting a police constable and causing head injuries, allegedly vandalizing the office of the hawkers’ union, and allegedly damaging the camera of a mediaperson and “confining” him. Five policemen were injured and admitted to SSKM Hospital on Saturday. Four of them were discharged after first aid; one was admitted to the trauma care centre with scalp injuries. On Sunday, Commissioner Manoj Verma met the hospitalised constable, identified as Prasanta Poddar, 36, who is a security personnel of the Deputy Commissioner of Police (South Suburban division).

countries and say they won’t buy from us but that apart, everything is fine. We have been participating in this fair for the last 30 years. It’s just that business was better before. Although Durga Puja is around the corner, the response is not up to the mark,” he added. Md Nazmul Khan, a trader who focuses on Jamdani sarees, said before Hasina left Bangladesh, business was better in his country. “I love Indian culture, but the problem is, I can’t stay here,” he said.

## 9 players from Sri Guru Gobind Singh College to represent Chandigarh at Junior National Championship

It’s game time in Jalandhar, and Sri Guru Gobind Singh College in Chandigarh Sector 26 is sending a power-packed contingent to the turf. Nine of its finest hockey talents have been named in the Chandigarh Squad for the prestigious 15th Junior Men National Hockey Championship, being held from August 12 to 23 in Punjab’s hockey heartland. Leading the charge is captain Prabhjot Singh, a BA second-year student, Junior National (Chandigarh) silver medallist, and Junior India camper, with Fateh Singh as vice-captain. The formidable line-up also includes Premjeet Singh, Sharandeep Singh, Rishav, Sukhampal Singh, Satnam Singh, Mohd Zaid, and Dheeraj. Professor (Dr) Gurcharan Singh Gill, the team in-charge, and principal Dr Jaswinder Singh have expressed confidence in the squad. “We wish our team the very best and hope they make us proud,” said Dr Jaswinder Singh, adding that he expects the players to bring glory to both the college and the Chandigarh team. Dr Gill underlined the scale of the competition: 30 teams from across the country, split into divisions A, B, and C, will compete in a new format comprising league matches leading into knock-out rounds. “

## 2021 West Bengal post-poll violence: Absconding rape accused held in Ghaziabad



CBI arrest West Bengal post-poll violence rape case, Usman Ali rape accused arrested, 2021 West Bengal Assembly election violence. The CBI claimed that after concerted efforts on the basis of technical inputs, the accused was arrested from near a mosque at Ilaychipur, Ghaziabad, Uttar Pradesh. The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) arrested

an absconding accused on Tuesday in a rape case allegedly related to the post-poll violence after the 2021 West Bengal Assembly election.

The CBI claimed that after concerted efforts on the basis of technical inputs, the accused was arrested from near a mosque at Ilaychipur, Ghaziabad, Uttar Pradesh. The CBI had registered the case on August 30, 2021, in which it was alleged that the rape took place in the victim’s house on May 4, 2021. A chargesheet was filed against the accused — identified as Usman Ali — on May 5, 2022, before the Court of Ld Special Judge SC/ST(POA) Act, Tamuk, Purba Medinipur. Ali had been granted bail on September 25, 2024 by the Calcutta High Court, following which the CBI challenged the order in the Supreme Court. In a statement, the CBI said that neither the accused nor his advocate appeared before the apex court. On August 2 this year, a non-bailable arrest warrant was issued against Ali and the agency was directed to produce him before the court on August 13.

## Animals ‘missing’ from Alipore Zoo: ‘Enquiry on, report expected in two weeks’, Central Zoo Authority tells Calcutta HC

GNS News Agency, August 22

Calcutta HC: In July, a three-member CZA team visited the zoo to carry out an audit and examine allegations of a gross mismatch in wildlife inventory, also checking records of animal transfers. A three-member CZA team visited Alipore zoo in July to carry out an audit and examine allegations of a gross mismatch in wildlife inventory, also checking records of animal transfers. The Central Zoo Authority (CZA) on Wednesday informed Calcutta High Court that it has initiated an investigation into the Alipore Zoological Garden case.

During the hearing of a Public Interest Litigation (PIL) regarding several animals missing from the zoo, Additional Solicitor General Ashok Kumar Chakraborty, on behalf of the CZA, stated: “An enquiry is on and a report is expected in two weeks. We are seeking time.” Petitioners’ counsel Bikash Ranjan Bhattacharya submitted: “In the heart of the city, there is a zoo; attempts are being made to sell the land. Can the state government sell the land in violation of the Forest Act? One tender was floated but it got no response, so they floated another.” The Division Bench of Justice Sujoy Paul and Justice Smrita Das De, noting the enquiry was on, posted the matter for hearing on September 1.

In July, a three-member CZA team visited the zoo to carry out an audit and examine allegations of a gross mismatch in wildlife inventory, also checking records of animal transfers. The West Bengal Forest Department launched a separate probe. Meanwhile, zoo director Arun Mukherjee was transferred to the Padmaja Naidu Himalayan Zoological Park in Darjeeling Hills, which authorities termed routine. City-based voluntary organisation SWAZON had filed a petition earlier that month accusing the zoo of mismanagement, with over 300 animals “missing overnight” from records. The petition alleges that while the zoo had 672 ani-



imals at the end of 2023-24, the number dropped to 351 at the start of 2024-25 — a fall of 321 in one night. “The unexplained vanishing of animals, including those classified as endangered, suggests either gross negligence or intentional suppression of facts. Neither the Central Zoo Authority, nor the West Bengal Zoo Authority (WBZA), nor the administration of the Alipore Zoo has issued any public statement, (or) filed any report addressing these discrepancies. Given that the CZA disburses funds to the WBZA for the management of zoos, and that both are publicly funded bodies, these unexplained disappearances of animals demand immediate audit and investigation,” the petition read. It cites alleged inconsistencies: on March 3, 2011, the zoo had 1,452 animals, which allegedly dwindled to 672 by March 31, 2024. “Between March 31, 2017 (1,186 animals) and April 1, 2017 (910 animals), 276 animals were unaccounted for overnight. The West Bengal Zoo Authority’s figures showed a discrepancy of 302 animals in the same period. In 2022, the closing stock of endangered animals was 190, but the opening stock on April 1, 2022 was 131 — a difference of 59 endangered animals with no explanation,” the petition further read.

## Almost 2 crore passengers travel on MSRTC buses over Raksha Bandhan weekend

GNS News Agency, August 22

The long Raksha Bandhan weekend, coupled with holidays, saw a huge passenger surge for the Maharashtra State Road Transport Corporation. From August 8 to 11, nearly two crore people rode MSRTC buses, and the corporation earned a revenue of Rs 137.37 crore — around Rs 16 crore more than in the same period last year, thanks to some extent by a fare increase. Monday saw the highest single-day collections of over Rs 39 crore, as per MSRTC officials. Narali Purnima on Friday, Raksha Bandhan on Saturday, and Sunday were followed by the return journey rush on Monday.

Assuming such demand, the MSRTC deployed extra buses at the divisional level. Also, parallel services were operated on routes where the passenger load exceeded 60 per cent. Revenue collections were Rs 30.06 crore on Friday, Rs 36.86 crore on Saturday, Rs 33.36 crore on Sunday, and Rs 39.9 crore on Monday. As many as 1.93 crore passengers availed of the service in these four days, and 88 lakh of them were women. Several of them got the 50 per cent fare concession under the Mahila Samman Yojana, for which the MSRTC is compensated by the Government. MSRTC officials said that Raksha Bandhan and Bhai Dooj during Diwali are traditionally among the most



revenue-generating days for the corporation. “Family outings on these festivals result in a big spurt in intercity and intrastate travel. We plan our timings accordingly,” an MSRTC official said. “This time around, the extra services we ran during the festival season ensured we were able to meet the demand well and post higher revenues.”

## ‘Issue show-cause notices to senior officers’: How Delhi Police chief S B K Singh aims to curb corruption in the ranks



GNS News Agency, August 22

To fix accountability among senior Delhi Police officers in cases where their subordinates are found involved in corruption cases, Delhi Police Commissioner S B K Singh has told all special commissioners of police (CPs) that show-cause notices should be issued to concerned district deputy commissioners of police (DCPs) and assistant commissioners of police (ACPs) for failing to supervise their staff. In a meeting held at Delhi Police headquarters on August 6, Singh reiterated that there was “zero tolerance” for

corruption. “Singh told all the Special CPs that show-cause notices should be issued to concerned ACP (sub-division) and district DCPs for not keeping proper supervision of their staff. An adverse entry in this regard should also be made in the annual performance appraisal report of concerned ACP (sub-division),” a senior police officer said.

Till August 10 this year, 16 FIRs have been registered and 15 Delhi Police personnel have been arrested by the vigilance branch under sections of the Prevention of Corruption Act. Last year, the number of such arrests was eight. The Central Bureau of Investigation has arrested five police personnel. “Last week, the CBI had arrested a sub-inspector from North Rohini police station for allegedly demanding Rs 40,000 from a man for not arresting his cousin and helping him to get anticipatory bail. Later, Singh directed to suspend the concerned SHO [station house officer] for lack of supervision,” the officer said. On August 1, a day after assuming additional charge as the Delhi Police chief, Singh had interacted with senior police officers and discussed several strategies for curbing corruption in the force and increasing police visibility. Increased police visibility, curb on corruption, better response at police stations, and an audit of cases registered in the last five years were the four areas that he wanted senior police officials to work on.



# APAAR ID is now mandatory for CBSE board exam registration. Here is what you need to know about it



GNS News Agency, August 22

The Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) has now made it mandatory for students to submit their APAAR IDs while registering for the board exams. The decision was ratified during the board’s governing body meeting in June. APAAR stands for Automated Permanent Academic Account Registry. It was envisioned under the New Education Policy, 2020. Simply put, it is an identification number which is linked to enrollment, and a student’s journey from pre-primary to higher education can be tracked through it. Report cards and results can be linked to it and accessed on Digilocker. The APAAR ID will be unique and remain the same through one’s education journey. The government has also argued that it will put an end to fake education certificates, with students’ APAAR IDs working as an authentication link.

Why does CBSE want it to be part of board exam registration?

The proposal to link APAAR ID to board exam registration was part of the CBSE’s Governing Body meeting in June. So far, the board required schools to send a list of candidates who will appear for the Class 10 and 12 board

exams, alongside the registration details of students when they are in Classes 9 and 11.

The minutes of the meeting note that there is no mechanism to link these details to any “standardised identity system, leading to inconsistencies and lack of verifiability across databases”. “The Ministry of Education has now mandated the adoption of APAAR IDs for all school students as part of the Digital Public Infrastructure for Education. This initiative aims to provide every student with a lifelong, universally accessible digital academic record, thereby streamlining data management and enhancing transparency in the education system,” read the minutes. After discussion, the Board decided that linkage of student registration with APAAR ID will start in time for the 2026 board exams. “The Committee members unanimously agreed on the proposal for linking APAAR ID with registration... and list of candidates. The chairperson... explained that the compulsory attachment of each student’s APAAR ID will improve data accuracy and eliminate duplication,” the minutes said. Students or their parents will have to provide information such as name, age, date of birth, gender, photograph and Aadhaar numbers. The information will be verified using Aadhaar authentication. In schools across Delhi, consent forms have been distributed over the past two years to get parents on board. Consultations and meetings have also been held with stakeholders. While registration for the APAAR ID was not meant to be mandatory initially, linking it with board exam registration can be seen as a step towards mandatory uptake. Parents have raised concerns about misuse of personal information and leaks. The government, however, has said that the information will not be accessible to anyone except those involved in educational activities or bodies such as the Unified District Information System for Education Plus or the UDISE+ database, scholarships, maintenance academic records, educational institutions and recruitment agencies.

# Citing lack of ‘cogent and live proximate link’ to suicide, Telangana High Court quashes criminal case against builder

GNS News Agency, August 22

telangana high courtThe judgment pointed to certain circumstantial inconsistencies, such as the family’s initial belief that Rao’s death was due to a cardiac arrest and the subsequent cremation without an autopsy, which cast doubt on the case’s very foundation. The Telangana High Court recently quashed a criminal petition filed against a city builder who was accused of abetment to suicide of his construction partner and cheating, based on the lack of a “live proximate link” between the accused’s actions and the death. The court also relied on the prosecution’s failure to prove fraudulent intent from the inception of the business transaction.



The judgment, delivered by Justice Juvvadi Sridevi on August 1, emphasised the necessity of a “live proximate link” between the alleged instigation and the act of suicide. The court observed that the suicide note, discovered a week and a half after the death, contained no evidence of “direct or live proximate act of instigation, intentional aid, or active involvement” by the accused. The case stemmed from a business dispute between the petitioner, Nandyala Narendar Reddy, and his construction partner B Lakshmana Rao, who allegedly died by suicide in 2022. The prosecution’s case was built on a “suicide note” found eleven days after Rao’s death, which accused Reddy of financial deception and refusing to register Rao’s share of flats. The judgment pointed to certain circumstantial inconsistencies, such as the family’s initial belief that Rao’s death was due to a cardiac arrest and the subsequent cremation without an autopsy, which cast doubt on the case’s very foundation.

“Significantly, the so-called suicide note does not contain any direct or live proximate act of instigation, intentional aid, or active involvement on the part of the petitioner-accused that could be construed as abetment within the meaning of Section 107 of the Indian Penal Code (IPC), so as to attract the offence under Section 306 (of the) IPC,” the judgment said. Drawing upon a Supreme Court precedent, the court reiterated that “mere allegations of harassment, dis-

cord, or strained relations, in the absence of a specific, proximate, and overt act of incitement or instigation, are legally insufficient to bring home the charge of abetment”. In the absence of any such “cogent and live proximate evidence”, the court found that the foundational ingredients to attract the offence under Section 306 (of the) IPC are clearly lacking. Regarding the cheating charge under Section 420 of the IPC, the court differentiated between a criminal offence and a mere contractual dispute and found that the prosecution failed to establish fraudulent intent at the inception of the business transaction. The ruling reaffirmed the legal distinction that “mere breach of contract or failure to fulfill a promise, in the absence of such initial fraudulent intent, does not constitute an offence” under Section 420 of the IPC. Highlighting it as a major procedural failure in the police investigation, the court noted the investigating agency’s inexplicable omission to interview a crucial witness, Gandom Ranga Rao, the site supervisor who was privy to the business dealings. This failure was deemed a “serious lapse” and “fatal to the case of the prosecution.” The court concluded that compelling the petitioner to endure a trial would be a “sheer abuse of the process of law,” in the absence of any cogent and legally admissible material establishing ingredients of the alleged offences” under sections 306 and 420 of the IPC and consequently dismissed the criminal proceedings.

# A man killed and buried his son in Karnataka’s Hassan: how the crime was exposed after 2 years

GNS News Agency, August 22

An excavation in Karnataka’s Hassan has uncovered a murder mystery that lay hidden underground for two years. The murder unravelled after the death of Gangadhar, 55, due to illness on August 2 in Santebasanahalli village under the Alur taluk of the Hassan district. Gangadhar had two sons — Raghavendra, 32, who worked with the Bengaluru Metropolitan Transport Corporation (BMTC), and Rupesh, who stayed at home.

Following Gangadhar’s death, relatives started reaching out to Raghavendra, his elder son, but they could not contact him even as Rupesh handled the funeral arrangements. However, their relatives became suspicious. “What kind of son doesn’t come even when his father dies?” asked one of them. They asked Rupesh, a special needs person, to call Raghavendra for the ceremony to be held on the third day of their father’s death. When the pressure from the family members mounted, Rupesh tried to deflect them by giving incorrect phone numbers, making their relatives suspicious.



When the Aluru police interrogated Rupesh on August 6, he told them his father had killed Raghavendra in 2023, and buried him in their house. He told the police his older brother was addicted to online games and gambling, and had been suspended from his job. Rupesh also told them he owed money to people. Raghavendra, who had divorced his wife, believed his father was wealthy, and asked for money. Gangadhar, whose wife died five years ago, owned five to six acres of fertile land and a shop. “He came back from Bengaluru, and constantly demanded money from his father. During a fight that took place two years ago, Gangadhar killed Raghavendra,” said a police officer.

Gangadhar kept Raghavendra’s body at home for two days. On the third day, he intimidated and threatened his younger son and buried the body in a charcoal pit behind

Suspicious relatives and mounting pressure on one of the dead man’s sons in Karnataka’s Hassan led to the discovery of the murder.

the house. “Rupesh said when he learned about the murder, his father threatened him that he would kill him,” said the police officer. Rupesh helped his father bury his brother’s body and did not tell anyone about his murder, said the officer.

Based on Rupesh’s statement and complaints from relatives, the Aluru police conducted an exhumation process Tuesday. They discovered a human skeleton in place Rupesh had pointed to. A team from the Forensic Science Laboratory (FSL) collected the bones for further examination. “We will conduct DNA tests and bone marrow tests, which will give a clear picture of whether the skeletal remains were of Raghu,” a police officer said. The police have registered a murder case and taken Rupesh into custody. They said they are conducting a further investigation into the murder.

# Alert for bird flu in UP; state issues orders for prevention of virus



GNS News Agency, August 22

A bird flu alert was issued in Uttar Pradesh this Wednesday, with orders issued on guidelines for prevention against the potential threat of H5 Avian Influenza. After a review, the Chief Minister directed all the concerned departments to ensure the safety of the “protected animals

and birds”, warning against negligence.

Meanwhile, the state health department has been instructed to submit a report on preventing the spread of H5 Avian Influenza to humans. Orders have been issued to increase security across all zoos, bird sanctuaries, national parks, wetlands and cow shelters in the state. Further directions have been given to ensure sanitization of zoo premises — including the use of blowtorch if required — and health checks for all animals and birds. Zoo staff working closely with animals have also been ordered to mandatorily use PPE kits and safety gear. Officials informed that directions have been given to ensure that zoo staff are trained on avian influenza symptoms, its transmission and prevention. Directions have also been given to monitor poultry farms across UP. Officials said that coordination is being established with the Central Zoo Authority, National Centre for Disease Control, the state Health Ministry, the state Fisheries and Dairy Department and IVRI Bareilly for better management and prevention of the flu.

# Lumpy skin disease: 339 cattle dead in 5 districts of Maharashtra, 93% vaccination completed

GNS News Agency, August 22

As many as 9,8230 cattle have been affected by the latest outbreak of the lumpy skin disease in Maharashtra, resulting in the death of 339 of them, according to the Animal Husbandry department, which has claimed vaccination of 93 per cent of the state’s cattle population against the disease. The viral disease is characterised by the development of skin nodules on various parts of the animal’s body, including the head, neck, limbs, udder, and genitals, along with discharge from the eyes and nose. The disease also causes mobility issues in animals and a drastic reduction in milk production among the cattle. While those that survive develop lifelong immunity, vaccination is the only effective way to protect the cattle population from the lumpy skin disease virus (LSDV).



Pravinkumar Deore, Commissioner of Animal Husbandry, said they have begun vaccinating calves as well. “The animals in Maharashtra have almost achieved herd immunity. We are now focusing on the few strays that may have missed vaccination,” he said. The present outbreak is now centred around Pune, Satara, Solapur, Ahilyanagar and Jalgaon districts of Maharashtra. The Animal Husbandry department has stated that, unlike previous outbreaks, this one is much milder and is restricted to only certain pockets. Previously, it was believed that maternal immunity was transmitted during pregnancy in animals, but the department has now begun mass immunisation of calves as well. Lumpy Skin Disease was almost alien to India until 2019, when outbreaks occurred in several districts of Odisha. In 2023, lumpy skin disease led to the death of

over 8,000 cattle in India. Rajasthan and Gujarat were epicentres of the disease back then. The Centre then directed state governments to undertake mass-scale immunisation of animals using the vaccines available in the market. Meanwhile, Maharashtra is set to become the first state in the country to develop its own vaccine for the disease, named Lumpi-ProVac. This vaccine is currently being developed at the Animal Husbandry department’s institute in Aundh. Partha Sarathi Biwas is an Assistant Editor with The Indian Express with 10+ years of experience in reporting on Agriculture, Commodities and Developmental issues. He has been with The Indian Express since 2011 and earlier worked with DNA. Partha’s report about Farmers Producer Companies (FPC) as well long pieces on various agricultural issues have been cited by various academic publications including those published by the Government of India.

# Beard, husky voice: How a woman posed as man to steal cash, jewellery worth Rs 1.5 crore from relative’s house

GNS News Agency, August 22

Mira Bhayandar crime: The Mira Bhayandar Vasai Virar (MBVV) police in Maharashtra Tuesday arrested a 27-year-old woman who allegedly donned a fake beard and a mask to look like a man and stole cash and valuables worth Rs 1.5 crore from a relative’s house. Based on CCTV footage, the MBVV crime branch arrested Jyoti Bhanushali, a Gujarat resident. An officer said Jyoti, dressed as a man with a beard, went to the residence of her relatives in Vasari-Virar Monday, knowing that only her cousin’s father-in-law, Uddhav Bhanushali, would be at the house. When she rang the bell, Uddhav opened the door, said the police. The woman, who had trained to speak in a huskier voice, spoke in Kutchi, a Gujarati dialect, and said she needed to use the washroom urgently, as per the police. Uddhav allowed her in and after going to the washroom, she allegedly told him that there was some leakage in the bathroom.

When Uddhav went inside, she allegedly locked the door from the outside and fled with cash and jewellery worth approximately Rs 1.5 crore. It was only when his family members came home and unlocked Uddhav that the crime came to light. The family then approached the local police station, and the police filed an FIR. The crime branch team began reviewing the CCTV footage and identified a person



with the stolen goods at Vasai railway station. While Uddhav identified the person whom he thought was a man, on closer scrutiny of the footage, his sister-in-law identified the person as Jyoti. The police team then began chasing her and found that she had taken a train to her hometown in Gujarat. Eventually, the crime branch team managed to nab her from Gujarat, where she was placed under arrest and brought to the city. An officer said that during questioning, she told them that her family had recently suffered losses. She said she had seen her cousin wearing jewellery at a family function and decided to hatch the plan to rob her.

# BJP’s Munirathna asks why Bettahalasuru station was dropped, DK Shivakumar slams MLA’s ‘selfish motive’

GNS News Agency, August 22

BJP MLA Munirathna and Karnataka Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar locked horns in the state Assembly Tuesday over the alleged dropping of Bettahalasuru station which is part of Phase 2B of the Bengaluru Metro project.

Phase 2B, also known as the Blue line, is a key link to Bengaluru’s Kempegowda International Airport. Shivakumar, in his response to Munirathna during Question Hour in the House, stated that the Bettahalasuru station was dropped after real estate major Embassy Group failed to fund its construction as per an earlier agreement. “The government has noted that although Bettahalasuru Metro station was originally approved in the DPR (Detailed Project Report) with Embassy Group agreeing to fund its construction, the group has not paid the agreed amount. As a result, the station has now been dropped from Phase 2B despite its earlier inclusion in the plan,” the deputy chief minister stated.

The station was originally included in the 2018 DPR which was forwarded to the Centre. The state also acquired land for the project after the Embassy Group committed to funding the station’s construction at a cost of Rs 120 crore. However, according to Shivakumar, the group has paid only Rs 1 crore so far. Raising the issue in the Assembly, MLA Munirathna questioned how a private entity’s funding failure could stall a public infrastructure project. “This station serves the public, not private interests. Land acquisition and DPR approval are complete. The government must act to

protect public interest,” he said, adding that local MLA Krishna Byre Gowda had also written to Shivakumar underlining the station’s importance. Shivakumar, however, hit back stating that Munirathna owned 70-80 acres of land around the station, which is why he insisted on developing it. “As per norms, it is allowed to name the station after a company if they sponsor the construction with CSR funds. Prime Minister (Narendra) Modi praised the model and Opposition leader (R) Ashoka was also there. Munirathna has about 70-80 acres of land there and hence he needs a Metro station,” the deputy chief minister said.

To which Munirathna quipped, “If DCM D K Shivakumar makes a call to Embassy builders, they will make the payment in 24 hours. Builders in Bengaluru only listen to him.” Replying to him, Shivakumar stated, “Self-interest is natural. The Embassy (Group) has about 250 acres and they were willing to pay Rs 120 crore of the total cost of Rs 140 crore to brand the Metro station there. They have given only Rs 1 crore till now. We will build the station and name it after Munirathna if he pays for it.” The controversy comes even as Embassy Group, through Vikas Telecom Pvt Ltd, which is part of Embassy Office Parks REIT, is funding the Rs 100-crore construction of the Kadubeesanahalli station on the Outer Ring Road (ORR) corridor under Phase 2A of the Metro project. The station, to be named ‘Embassy Tech Village Kadubeesanahalli Metro Station,’ is part of a 17-km stretch from Central Silk Board to KR Puram with 16 stations.



# Zelenskiy in Berlin for online meeting with Trump, European leaders



BERLIN/KYIV, -GNS News Agency, August 22 Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskiy visited Berlin on Wednesday for a German-hosted virtual meeting with Donald Trump and European leaders, two days before the U.S. president meets Russian President Vladimir Putin in Alaska.Europe's leaders are trying to drive home the perils of selling out Kyiv's interests at the first U.S.-Russia summit since 2021.The Reuters Daily Briefing newsletter provides all the news you need to start your day. Sign up here.

Trump has said the Alaska talks will be a "feel-out" meeting as he pursues a ceasefire in Moscow's war on Ukraine, having said last week, to consternation in Kyiv and Europe, that any deal would involve "some swapping of territories".Zelenskiy shook hands with German Chancellor Friedrich Merz before disappearing into bilateral talks.The two men will take part in a video conference with the leaders of Finland, France, Britain, Italy, Poland and the European Union at 2 p.m. (1200 GMT). NATO Secretary General Mark Rutte will also attend.Trump and Vice President JD Vance will join the call at 3 p.m. (1300 GMT)."Will be speaking to European Leaders in a short while. They are great people who want to see a deal done," Trump wrote on Truth Social.The unpredictability of the summit in Alaska has fuelled Europeans' fears that the U.S. and Russia could

take far-reaching decisions over their heads and even seek to coerce Ukraine into an unfavourable deal."We are focusing now to ensure that it does not happen - engaging with U.S. partners and staying coordinated and united on the European side," said one senior official from Eastern Europe.Wary of angering Trump, European leaders have repeatedly said they welcome his efforts while stressing that there should be no deal about Ukraine - almost a fifth of which Russia has occupied - without Ukraine's participation.Trump's administration tempered expectations on Tuesday, telling reporters the summit would be a "listening exercise" for him to hear what it would take to get to a deal.Trump's agreement last week to the summit was an abrupt shift after weeks of voicing frustration with Putin for resisting the U.S. peace initiative. Trump said his envoy had made "great progress" at talks in Moscow.

Half a dozen senior European officials told Reuters that they see a risk of a deal being struck that is unfavourable for Europe and Ukraine's security. They said European unity would be vital if that happened.After the meeting with Trump, the "coalition of the willing", a group of countries working on plans to support Ukraine in the event of a ceasefire, will also convene online.A Gallup poll released last week found that 69% of Ukrainians favour a negotiated end to the war as soon as possible. But polls also indicate Ukrainians do not want peace at any cost if that means crushing concessions.Ahead of the calls, Zelenskiy said it would be impossible for Kyiv to agree to a deal that would require it to withdraw its troops from the eastern Donbas region, a large swathe of which is already occupied by Russia.That, he told reporters on Tuesday, would deprive Ukraine of a vast defensive network in the region, easing the way for a Russian push deeper into Ukraine in the future.He said territorial issues could only be discussed once a ceasefire was in place and Ukraine had received security guarantees.Russian Foreign Ministry spokesperson Alexei Fadeev said Moscow's stance had not changed since it was set out by Putin in June 2024.As preconditions for a ceasefire and the start of negotiations, the Kremlin leader had demanded that Ukraine withdraw its forces from four regions that Russia has claimed as its own but does not fully control, and formally renounce its plans to join NATO.



GNS News Agency, August 22

LONDON, A month before she was stabbed to death by her ex-boyfriend, Bethany Fields walked into a police station in northern England to report his abusive and controlling behaviour. He had threatened to kill her, but she was not assessed as high risk.Fields is among many domestic abuse victims failed by risk assessments based on a form known as DASH used by Britain's overstretched police forces, social workers and others for more than 15 years, according to two academic studies, several women's charities and victims' relatives.The Reuters Daily Briefing newsletter provides all the news you need to start your day. Sign up here."To get that form right literally means the difference between life and death," said Bethany's mother, Pauline Jones.The charity which co-developed the form, SafeLives, has now been tasked by the government with a project which its CEO Ellen Miller described as examining the way to see "how a review could work through, how a bigger rewrite could happen"."We know so much more now, that it needs to evolve, it needs to change," Miller said, confirming a project that is yet to be publicly announced.DASH had saved many lives, she said, adding that it should be rewritten rather than replaced and that it was up to police to use it properly.

"The problem is not the DASH. The problem is police officers' values and behaviours," she said.A report by the Independent Office for Police Conduct (IOPC) into Fields' murder, published online in April this year, said the officer conducting the assessment was inexperienced to undertake such a sensitive assignment and lacked supervision; it also questioned the DASH form.Those filling in the DASH (Domestic Abuse, Stalking and Honour-Based Violence Assessment) tick: "yes", "no", or "don't know" - sometimes labelled "other" - in response to questions about possible abuse.The IOPC said the third option reduced the chances of officers pinning down a potential yes. That in turn reduces the chances of getting enough ticks for the assessment of high risk that triggers a referral for extra support.Marsha Scott, chief executive of Scottish Women's Aid, said the DASH tool was "deeply flawed".

Researchers from the Universities of Manchester and Seville found the DASH "performs poorly at identifying high-risk victims", with 96.3% of such cases being wrongly assessed as standard (low) or medium risk in their study of 350,000 incidents logged by an unnamed major UK police force.SafeLives did not respond to a request for comment

# Britain reassesses 'flawed' domestic abuse risk tool

on the statistic, published in Madrid-based journal Psycho-social Intervention in 2022.The British system is not the only one to come under scrutiny. Spain's interior ministry said in January it had updated its gender violence management system to make it more effective; in June, it said British officials had visited to find out more.Britain's interior ministry did not respond to a request for comment for this article. It has said reducing violence against women and girls is a priority and that it plans to publish a new strategy on the issue.

In the year ending March 2024, there were 108 domestic homicides, of which 83 of the victims were female.Reuters was not able to establish how many of those deaths followed DASH risk assessments or what those had concluded but found other deaths in which an assessment had been undertaken.Seventeen weeks pregnant, Fawziyah Javed was pushed to her death from the top of the Arthur's Seat hill in Edinburgh in 2021. Her mother, Yasmin Javed, told Reuters her daughter had reported her husband's violent and controlling behaviour to the police.Officers told her she was medium risk and despite the risk factor of being pregnant and a visit from police six days before she died, she was never referred for high risk support, her mother said, adding: "These mistakes are costing lives."Contacted for comment, police said only that the IOPC is still investigating the force's response.Both Javed's husband and Fields' ex-partner were convicted of killing them.When asked about fatalities after DASH assessments, Miller said: "I think the DASH could always be better," adding that it was up to police to safeguard people from the risk of death in their recruitment and training.Her hope, she said, was that a "refreshed DASH" would be used adequately in every case.The interior ministry has asked other charities to help SafeLives "bring together insights" into the systems for assessing and managing risk in the country, a letter from the ministry to one of them who asked to remain anonymous showed.Several charities contacted by Reuters said they feared the project would not go far enough.

Ngozi Fulani, CEO of Sistah Space, a charity supporting victims from African and Caribbean heritage, said the DASH may not be effective for many in those communities, due to mistrust of police linked to institutional racism."They chose to leave us out, that speaks for itself," she said, referring to the fact they have so far not been asked to contribute to the project.The Spanish police and some organisations are using new technology to assess future risk: Berlin-based startup Frontline has a machine learning risk assessment and British data scientist and former police officer Tori Olphin has created an algorithmic model to predict future harm, for example.The College of Policing, a professional body for police in England and Wales, has developed its own tool, DARA, with Cardiff University Professor Amanda Robinson, to address what she says are some of DASH's flaws, particularly around coercive control, which only became a criminal offence there in 2015.A police representative said they would assess all the available tools."Police officers must be supported with the right training and tools to identify offences and protect victims," said Assistant Chief Constable Claire Bell, Deputy Director of the National Centre for Violence Against Women and Girls and Public Protection.

# Solitary cell with mattress on the floor for South Korea's once powerful ex-first lady

GNS News Agency, August 22

SEOUL,GNS News Agency, August 22 South Korea's former first lady Kim Keon Hee will spend her first day in jail on Wednesday in a cell much like the one her husband and ex-President Yoon Suk Yeol occupies as prosecutors pursue the once high-flying couple in a widening criminal probe.Kim was formally booked into the Seoul Nambu Detention Center on the western edge of the capital, a comparatively new correctional facility that opened in 2011 and one of the few run by a female warden.The Reuters Daily Briefing newsletter provides all the news you need to start your day. Sign up here.

She will be treated in the same way as other inmates but will receive minor adjustments in her daily routine given her status as a high-profile figure, a source familiar with the matter told Reuters.Kim was imprisoned after a court approved a warrant for her arrest late on Tuesday on the grounds that she might destroy evidence amid an ongoing investigation into allegations of bribery, stock fraud and influence peddling.Kim's lawyers have denied the accusations against her and dismissed as groundless speculation news reports about some of the gifts she allegedly received in return for favours.Kim apologised for causing concern in the country and called herself "a nobody" as she appeared for questioning last week.

Her solitary cell has a small table that can be used as a desk and for eating meals and a floor mattress to sleep on, said the source, who asked not to be identified because he was not authorised to speak to the media.Kim will have separate access to a common shower room and be allowed to exercise outdoors for an hour every day except on Sundays, the time staggered to avoid overlap with other inmates, the source said.Prison will be an entirely new experience for Kim, unlike for her husband who has already spent about 100 days in jail.

Yoon is on trial over his botched attempt to impose martial law, on charges of insurrection, an accusation he denies. He has been imprisoned at the Seoul Detention Center, which despite its name is outside the capital to the south.The former first couple had lived in a spacious apartment in an upscale district of Seoul before Yoon's election as president in May 2022 and had returned there after his ouster for the martial law decree that resulted in a political disaster for him, his party and now for his wife.Kim is a wealthy businesswoman in her own right and most of the couple's assets including the apartment belong to her, according to a government database.Now, Kim will receive the same food as the average inmate, usually traditional Korean fare prepared at a cost of about 1,500 won (\$1.08) per meal. On Wednesday, toast with strawberry jam, sausages and salad were on the menu for breakfast.Kim had not eaten since late Tuesday and was not in good health, one of her lawyers told Reuters. It was unclear whether she would appear for questioning by prosecutors on Thursday, the lawyer said.A fine art expert who founded and ran a successful curation agency, Kim has been embroiled in a number of scandals before and after her husband's election in 2022, with the controversies at times overshadowing Yoon's turbulent presidency.Her fashion choices and policy lobbying in areas like promoting a ban on eating dog meat made her controversial in a country where a first lady has typically kept a low profile.Han Dong-soo, a former judge and a prosecutor who worked with Yoon, said Kim had "a politically strategic mind" and was a driving force behind



her husband's ascent to top office.After she married Yoon when he was 52, Kim became the main influence of practically all of his thinking and decisions, Han said. Kim was 39 when they wed."Kim Keon Hee chose him," said Han. "And she gave him the strategy and energy to be president"

# Turkiye urges Israel, Kurdish forces to stop destabilising Syria

Ankara: Israel and Kurdish fighters should stop threatening the security and stability of Syria, Turkish Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan said Wednesday.

Speaking at a news conference in Ankara with Syrian Foreign Minister Asaad al-Shibani, Fidan accused Israel and the Kurdish Syrian Democratic Forces, or SDF, of undermining the country's efforts to reestablish itself after more than a decade of civil war.He said Israel had "fuelled certain difficulties" in Syria and warned that Israeli security "cannot be achieved through undermining the security of your neighbours."

"To the contrary, you should make sure your neighbouring countries are prosperous and secure. If you try to destabilise these countries, if you take steps to that end, this could trigger other crises in the region."Since Islamist-led insurgents ousted former President Bashar Assad in a rebel offensive in December, the new interim government in Damascus has struggled to maintain stability and heal the wounds of the nearly 14-year civil war.

Most recently, hundreds were killed in clashes in the southern province of Sweida between government forces and local Bedouin tribesmen on one side and fighters from the country's Druze minority on the other.Meanwhile, tensions have also risen between the central government and the US-allied SDF that controls northeastern Syria. Implementation of an agreement reached in March to merge the SDF with the new Syrian army has stalled and there have been scattered outbreaks of violence between the two sides.Fidan accused the SDF of trying to turn instability in Syria into an "opportunity for themselves."Ankara views the SDF with hostility as the group is spearheaded by the People's Protection Units, or YPG, affiliated with the Kurdish group that recently entered a peace process with Turkey after more than 40 years of fighting.The SDF has said it is not party to the deal between Ankara and the Kurdistan Workers' Party, or PKK.

# Israel pounds Gaza City, 123 dead in last 24 hours

CAIRO/JERUSALEM, GNS News Agency, August 22 Israel's military pounded Gaza City on Wednesday prior to a planned takeover, with another 123 people killed in the last day according to the Gaza health ministry, while militant group Hamas held further talks with Egyptian mediators.The 24-hour death toll was the worst in a week and added to the massive fatalities from the nearly two-year war that has shattered the enclave housing more than 2 million Palestinians.

The Reuters Daily Briefing newsletter provides all the news you need to start your day. Sign up here.Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu reiterated an idea - also enthusiastically floated by U.S. President Donald Trump - that Palestinians should simply leave."They're not being pushed out, they'll be allowed to exit," he told Israeli television channel i24NEWS. "All those who are concerned for the Palestinians and say they want to help the Palestinians should open their gates and stop lecturing us."

Arabs and many world leaders are aghast at the idea of displacing the Gaza population, which Palestinians say would be like another "Nakba" (catastrophe) when hundreds of thousands fled or were forced out during a 1948 war.Israel's planned re-seizure of Gaza City - which it took in the early days of the war before withdrawing - is probably weeks away, officials say. That means a ceasefire is still possible though talks have been floundering and conflict still rages.Israeli planes and tanks bombed eastern areas of Gaza City heavily, residents said, with many homes destroyed in the Zeitoun and Shejaia neighbourhoods overnight. Al-Ahli hospital said 12 people were killed in an airstrike on a home in Zeitoun.

Tanks also destroyed several houses in the east of Khan Younis in south Gaza too, while in the centre Israeli gunfire killed nine aid-seekers in two separate incidents, Palestinian medics said. Israel's military did not comment.Eight more people, including three children, have died of starvation and malnutrition in Gaza in the past 24 hours, the territory's health ministry said. That took the total to 235, including 106 children, since the war began.Israel disputes those malnutrition and hunger figures reported by the health ministry in the Hamas-run enclave.Hamas chief negotiator Khalil Al-Hayya's meetings with Egyptian officials in Cairo on Wednesday were to focus on stopping the war, delivering aid and "ending the suffering of our people in Gaza," Hamas official Taher al-Nono said in a statement.



Egyptian security sources said the talks would also discuss the possibility of a comprehensive ceasefire that would see Hamas relinquish governance in Gaza and concede its weapons.A Hamas official told Reuters the group was open to all ideas if Israel ends the war and pulls out. However, "Laying down arms before the occupation is dismissed is impossible," the official, who asked not to be named, told Reuters.Netanyahu's plan to expand military control over Gaza, which Israeli sources said could be launched in October, has heightened global outcry over the widespread devastation, displacement and hunger in the enclave.About half of Gaza's residents live in the Gaza City area.Foreign ministers of 24 countries, including Britain, Canada, Australia, France and Japan, said this week the humanitarian crisis in Gaza had reached "unimaginable levels" and urged Israel to allow unrestricted aid.Israel denies responsibility for hunger, accusing Hamas of stealing aid. It says it has taken steps to increase deliveries, including daily combat pauses in some areas and protected routes for aid convoys.The Israeli military on Wednesday said that nearly 320 trucks entered Gaza through the Kerem Shalom and Zikim crossings and that a further nearly 320 trucks were collected and distributed by the U.N. and international organizations in the past 24 hours along with three tankers of fuel and 97 pallets of air-dropped aid.The United Nations and Palestinians say aid entering Gaza remains far from sufficient.The war began on October 7, 2023, when Hamas-led militants stormed into southern Israel, killing 1,200 people and taking 251 hostages, according to Israeli figures. Israel's offensive against Hamas in Gaza since then has killed more than 61,000 Palestinians, according to local health officials.

# Corruption trial opens against Sheikh Hasina, nieces in housing plot scam

GNS News Agency, August 22

Dhaka: The corruption trial against ousted prime minister Sheikh Hasina and 17 others, including her nieces Azmina Siddiq and British MP Tulip Siddiq, in a housing plot scam started on Wednesday at a Dhaka court with depositions of the complainant, media reports said.Afnan Jannat Keya, a complainant who is an assistant director of the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC), testified before Judge Md Rabiul Alam of the Special Judge's Court-4 in Dhaka in the afternoon, The Daily Star newspaper reported.Earlier, ACC Deputy Director Md Salahuddin, also the complainant of another graft case, gave his statement before Judge Alam in another case filed against 17 people, including Hasina, Sheikh Rehana and Tulip.

London-based Siddiq, who represents the UK capital's Hampstead and Highgate constituency for the governing Labour Party, resigned as Treasury minister earlier this year after allegations of corruption against her family following the ACC's investigations.The 42-year-old politician, who has consistently denied allegations of wrongdoing, has accused the Muhammad Yunus-led interim government in Dhaka of an orchestrated "smear campaign" to damage her reputation.On August 11, recording of statements started in three other cases over alleged corruption in plot allocation, involving Hasina, her son Sajeeb Wazed Joy, and daughter Saima Wazed Putul, Bangla language daily Prothom Alo reported.

The anti-graft body filed six cases between January



12 and 14 against Hasina, members of her family, and 23 others over alleged irregularities in the allocation of plots under the Purbachal New Town project.Tulip has been accused of using her special power to get plots for Rehana, Bobby and Azmina.On March 25, the ACC filed six charge sheets of the cases with the Metropolitan Senior Special Judge's Court in Dhaka, where Hasina was named as a common accused in all six cases. The commission has listed all the accused as fugitives.On July 31, charges were framed against 29 people, including Hasina, Rehana, Joy, Putul, Bobby, Tulip and Azmina, in their respective cases.Hasina, 77, faces multiple cases in Bangladesh after being ousted on August 5 last year following a mass student-led agitation in the country, which forced her to flee Dhaka.



# What happens to your lungs after one year in a highly polluted city like Delhi



If you've been living in Delhi for a year or more, chances are your lungs have already started to feel the impact, even if you're otherwise healthy. Delhi's air quality, especially during the winter months, routinely crosses alarmingly high pollution levels. PM2.5, fine particulate matter known to infiltrate deep into the lungs, often climbs beyond 255 µg/m³, occasionally touching 400–500 µg/m³ during smog episodes. For context, India's own safe limit, under the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS), is 40 µg/m³.

So what does this mean for your lungs after one year in the capital?

Several health studies suggest a worrying trend. A recent comparative analysis showed that 40.3% of Delhi residents have reduced lung function — double the rate observed in areas with significantly cleaner air. One particularly striking figure: 2.2 million children in Delhi are already showing signs of lung damage. Nearly one in three children suffers from some form of respiratory difficulty. Adults aren't spared either. Even those without pre-existing conditions report more frequent respiratory infections, shortness of breath, and a lingering cough that simply doesn't go away. In fact, the likelihood of developing chronic respiratory symptoms in Delhi is 1.7 times higher than in places like Pauri Garhwal, a region with far cleaner air. In the first few months of exposure, symptoms might be mild — a sore throat, an occasional wheeze, or a nagging cold. But over time, the lungs adapt in ways that aren't healthy. Medical specialists warn that by the 4–8 month mark, the lungs are in a state of chronic inflammation. They're working harder to filter the air, leading to cellular changes that can impair function.

By the end of a full year, long-term exposure sets in. Lung capacity decreases, particularly in children and older adults. For those with asthma or COPD (chronic obstructive pulmonary disease), this can mean more frequent flare-ups and hospital visits. Some research even indicates that exposure to these levels of air pollution can reduce overall lung growth in children — an effect that may be irreversible.

Air pollution and cancerWhile most people associate Delhi's air with coughing and wheezing, there's a darker and more permanent consequence — cancer. According

to the World Health Organization and the IARC (International Agency for Research on Cancer), air pollution is now classified as a Group 1 carcinogen — in the same category as tobacco. Prolonged exposure to PM2.5 and other pollutants has been directly linked to an increased risk of lung cancer, especially in non-smokers. In fact, studies suggest that in heavily polluted urban environments, non-smokers can face nearly the same risk of developing lung cancer as light smokers. Emerging research has also found possible associations between air pollution and other cancers, including bladder, breast, and even childhood leukaemia, although more data is needed on the subject. Delhi's rising cancer incidence, particularly lung cancer in non-smoking individuals, mirrors global patterns seen in cities with poor air quality.

Who is most at risk?

While everyone breathes the same air, certain groups are more vulnerable. These include: children, whose lungs are still developing; elderly individuals, often with pre-existing heart or lung conditions; pregnant women, due to potential impacts on foetal development; asthmatics and COPD patients, who experience more severe reactions and urban non-smokers, now facing rising lung cancer rates due to prolonged pollutant exposure. What you can do Moving out of Delhi is not an option for many. There are however, some practical measures you can take to protect your lungs. These include: staying indoors on high pollution days, especially early mornings and evenings; using air purifiers at home, preferably with HEPA filters; wearing N95/N99 masks when going outside — surgical masks simply don't offer enough protection; monitoring your health by perhaps considering an annual lung function test, especially if symptoms persist; eating smart with a diet rich in antioxidants — think fruits, vegetables, and nuts — that may help reduce inflammation caused by pollutants and avoiding smoking or passive smoke as when combined with air pollution, the cancer risk multiplies.

The bigger pictureAir pollution contributes to an estimated 1.5 million premature deaths in India each year, including deaths due to respiratory and cardiovascular diseases, strokes — and increasingly, cancer. Delhi's authorities have introduced the Graded Response Action Plan (GRAP) and are promoting electric vehicles and cleaner fuel standards. While these are steps in the right direction, change will be slow. In the meantime, protecting your health is a personal responsibility. If you've spent a year in Delhi and notice changes in your breathing, stamina, or general health, don't dismiss these symptoms as "just the weather." They may be early signs of something bigger. Consult a healthcare provider, especially if you have a persistent cough, chest discomfort, or unexplained fatigue. Stay informed about the air quality index (AQI). Make your home a clean-air zone. And above all, don't ignore what your body is trying to tell you: your lungs may not get a second chance.

# Bridging home cover gap amid rising climate shocks



The recent tremors in Delhi NCR and flash floods across North India have once again raised a critical question: Are urban households truly prepared for climate-linked disasters? Even monsoons, this year, have had a lasting impact on homes and lives. Over six lakh people have been displaced in Assam with 47 lives lost across the North East. Homes, bridges and power lines have been swept away in Himachal Pradesh's cloudbursts. Add to this the powerful 6.1 magnitude earthquake that struck Nepal in February, with tremors strongly felt across Bihar, Siliguri, and parts of Delhi NCR, and it becomes clear one can no longer ignore nature's fury. Images of flooded ground floors, collapsed boundary walls, and soaked interiors fill news feeds every single year.

If it is Himachal and Assam this year, it was Maharashtra in 2021, Karnataka in 2024 and Uttarakhand in 2023. Despite recurring events, rural and urban India persistently stay under-insured when it comes to home insurance. Beyond seasonal shocks, here's why India needs to take such insurance more seriously amid climate crisis. Floods during monsoons have become a lot more common in recent years. But apart from that, 59% of India's landmass is also at moderate to severe earthquake risk. Not just that, landslides, lightning strikes, and even urban floods now affect cities once considered "safe zones". Given these statistics, it is understandable our data suggests natural disasters are now the leading reason (41%) why Indians consider home insurance. And yet, only 39% go on to purchase one.

Barrier of confusionSo, what holds so many back? Confusion remains a major barrier. Nearly 27% of respondents say they find it hard to compare policies or understand inclusions. Most importantly, 23% of the people believe home insurance is not necessary at all. The reason is

often they haven't experienced direct loss or haven't been educated about the real risks. Another 18% of interested buyers drop off at the final stage, citing lack of clarity or urgency.

Apart from natural disasters, ongoing home loans and thefts were cited as the other top reasons for considering home insurance. As per the data, a growing number of households, especially those with active home loans (31%), are beginning to view insurance as an important financial shield. However, there is another angle. Many lenders require borrowers to insure the structure at the time of loan disbursal, but that coverage is often minimal, covering just the structure, and not the belongings or contents within. This raises the question: are we protecting our investments or just ticking boxes? Meanwhile, 30% see theft as an important factor to go for home insurance, particularly in fast-expanding urban areas. Securing household belongings and valuables is top of mind for them.

Reality hits homeIndia has unique geographical and ecological challenges, ranging from the earthquake-prone zones of Gujarat and Northeast India to the cyclone-vulnerable coasts of Odisha, West Bengal, and Tamil Nadu. According to the National Disaster Management Authority, India recorded 159 earthquakes from November 2024 to February 2025. Also, India ranks among the top five countries most affected by natural catastrophes in terms of economic losses. Interestingly, the home insurance gap is not just about cities. As smaller towns urbanise and real estate investments spread beyond Tier 1 cities, the risk spreads as well. The good news is that the sector is responding to these challenges. India's home insurance market, which was valued at \$9.57 billion in 2024, is projected to nearly double to \$18.07 billion by 2033. Digital onboarding, AI-powered underwriting, and claim automation are already making making on-ground impact. But the biggest hurdle is consumer trust, awareness and understanding. Until the average household clearly understands what home insurance covers and how little it costs relative to the protection it provides, adoption will remain low and reactive, instead of being proactive. In 2025, home insurance is no longer a luxury but a prerequisite for financial resilience. If the events of this year have shown us anything, it's that climate risk can no longer be viewed as hypothetical. The cost of being uninsured or under-insured is too high. In an era defined by uncertainty, peace of mind may just be the most valuable coverage of all.

# Reforms are necessary to bolster electoral integrity

The Election Commission's attempts to strengthen the credibility of India's democratic process by means of an extensive revision of the electoral rolls has unfortunately devolved into yet another partisan fight on the political stage. As the EC has embarked on a special intensive revision (SIR) of voter lists beginning in Bihar as the State heads to the polls in a few months, Opposition parties tried to march to the commission's office in New Delhi on August 11 in protest. These critics, quick to push back against proposed schemes to enhance the accuracy and credibility of the electoral rolls, are also quick to point to inaccuracies and duplicates within the list and brand it as electoral fraud and "vote chori (theft)". The Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha, Rahul Gandhi, held a press conference on August 7 to deliver a presentation accusing the EC of voter fraud in Karnataka in the 2024 Lok Sabha election. Similar allegations have been made with respect to the Maharashtra Assembly election also.

The EC is constitutionally empowered to conduct free and fair elections. This is no easy task to administer in the largest democracy in the world with nearly one billion eligible voters. India's electoral process has been reformed and improved drastically since its first elections in 1951-52. Further reforms are no doubt necessary in bolstering electoral integrity. As the EC itself announced, a number of factors make intensive revision of electoral rolls necessary, including India's frequent inter- and intra-State migration, new voters, and the non-reporting of deaths. But to attack both the commission's past performance and its future proposals for reform as a means of scoring political points is deeply unhelpful, adding only to toxic political noise. Aadhaar link

The EC's plans to strengthen India's electoral systems, including revising the rolls and linking Aadhaar to the elector photo ID card (EPIC), are neither new nor politically motivated. For over a decade, the commission has consistently advocated for electronic identification systems as a tool to eliminate two of the most persistent challenges facing the country's electoral process: duplicate entries and voter impersonation. As early as 2015, the EC launched the National Electoral Rolls Purification and Authentication Programme (NERPAP) to identify and remove duplicate entries. Linking EPIC and Aadhaar was part of this technical approach. Over four years, the EC repeatedly submitted technical and legal proposals to government advocating for biometric authentication to improve roll accuracy. The EC's announcement in March this year that it had set the ball rolling for linking Aadhaar with EPIC, therefore, has



deep roots.

"One citizen, one vote" is the foundation of India's democracy. The Aadhaar-EPIC linkage will be key in protecting this, from removing duplicate voters to preventing impersonation on polling day. But individual data privacy is a concern. The EC and the Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI) must act to ensure protection of personal data, safeguarding the secure management and protection of Aadhaar-linked voter data.

The protests of August 11 reveal fundamental inconsistencies in the Opposition's positioning. Parties simultaneously highlight alleged instances of voter fraud in Karnataka, while opposing measures being rolled out in Bihar that could address documented vulnerabilities. This approach serves neither democratic integrity nor voter interests. These critical voices should, in fact, be applauding the efforts of the EC and its SIR of voter lists. The "evidence" of 2024 electoral fraud as posited by Opposition figures — from duplicate names to multiple voters in single addresses and invalid addresses — will be weeded out by this process. The Aadhaar-EPIC linkage will further cement the accuracy and credibility of the voter rolls. Electoral integrity transcends partisan interests. When documented vulnerabilities persist while potentially comprehensive solutions face resistance that is driven by petty politics, democracy suffers. The continuation of India's long tradition of free and fair elections is dependent on an accurate electoral roll — something that requires constant and intensive revision, and which can only be administered by the EC. It will not be an easy task. All parties, regardless of politics, have a duty to work collaboratively to find technically sound solutions that safeguard both the rights of citizens and Indian democracy. For a challenge such as this, serious debate is needed, not political posturing.

# Whales and dolphins regularly hang out with each other

South East Queensland: As the annual humpback whale migration is underway with thousands of whales passing by the Australian coast, there are reports of dolphins joining the mass movement. But this isn't a one off. In fact, a study, published in Discover Animals, shows interspecies interactions between dolphins and whales are widespread and frequent around the world. There have been several reports of whale and dolphin interaction in the past. One that astonished the public back in 2004 featured a humpback whale in Hawaii repeatedly lifting a bottlenose dolphin on its head. Researchers suggested such close contact between whales and dolphins is likely very rare — and maybe related to care giving. But other forms of interactions resembling joint feeding, play and harassment are now being frequently documented thanks to drone technology. Many are also featured on social media. For the new study, an analysis was undertaken of 199 independent whale-dolphin interaction events involving 19 different species. These interactions spanned two decades and occurred across 17 countries. Researchers drew from social media platforms — such as Facebook, YouTube and Instagram — and foot-

age contributed by citizens to get a variety of observations. Each entry was carefully reviewed to identify the species involved, validate the interaction and categorise behaviours. Two additional cases came from camera tags attached to humpback whales. These offered an underwater "whale's-eye view" of their encounters with dolphins. Their behaviours were categorised such as rolling, tail slaps, bow riding, and rubbing, and classified dolphin positions relative to whale body parts such as head, flank and tail fluke. The study contradicted earlier assumptions that inter-species interactions between dolphins and whales are very rare. The most common interaction was dolphins swimming near the whale's head (akin to bow riding). This accounted for 80 per cent of observed dolphin positions. Humpback whales were the most involved whale species, while bottlenose dolphins led the dolphin side. Based on videos we analysed, dolphins initiated most interactions through bow riding, swimming in formation, or even touching whales. In more than one-quarter of the events, the whales responded in seemingly similar ways.

# All you need to know about: rabies



The Supreme Court's recent ruling directing the Delhi government and local bodies to immediately capture stray dogs, detain them in pounds created across the national capital territory and never let them loose back into public spaces, has ignited a controversy. One of the points the court made was about children lost to rabies due to stray dog bites. What is rabies and what is the extent of the public health burden caused by it? Here is all you need to know about rabies.

What is rabies?

Rabies is a deadly, fatal, zoonotic viral disease. The rabies virus (RABV) is generally transmitted through the bite or scratch of an infected animal. Rabies infects mammals, including dogs, cats, livestock and wildlife. Other animals that carry rabies include: bats, raccoons, skunks and foxes. According to the World Health Organization (WHO) however, dog bites and scratches cause 99% of the human rabies cases. In rare cases, rabies is transmitted through the infected saliva of an animal coming into contact with an open wound or mucous membranes such as in the eyes or mouth. What makes this virus dangerous is that once clinical symptoms begin, there is no cure: it is fatal. However, rabies can be prevented through prompt vaccination after exposure. The WHO classifies rabies as a neglected tropical disease (NTD) and states that children between the ages of 5 and 14 are frequent victims.

What are the signs and symptoms of rabies?

The rabies virus has an incubation period. This means it can take several days or weeks (up to two or three months) in the body before symptoms appear. The incubation period can vary based on factors such as the location of the wound. It is during the next phase, when the virus travels to the central nervous system, known as the prodromal phase that symptoms appear. Initial symptoms may be similar to those of the flu and may include: fever, headaches, discomfort, vomiting, weakness and prickling or tingling at the site of the bite. The disease then progresses into a severe form, usually about two weeks after the first symptoms. At this stage, the acute neurologic phase, the rabies virus begins damaging the brain and spinal cord. In a majority of people symptoms of 'furious rabies' appear, and these include aggressive behaviour, hallucinations, hyperactivity, fear of water (hydrophobia), excessive salivation, fear of air or drafts and delirium. A smaller number of patients have symptoms of 'paralytic rabies' which involves paralysis of the muscles and weakness, starting from the site of the bite and progressing to the rest of the body, eventually leading to a coma. Furious rabies usually lasts a few days while paralytic rabies can last longer. The WHO states that the paralytic form of rabies is often misdiagnosed, con-

tributing to the under-reporting of the disease.

What is the vaccination available?

There are currently no WHO-approved tools to diagnose rabies prior to the onset of clinical symptoms, making it crucial to see a healthcare provider immediately after a bite, scratch or contact with a wild animal, or a potentially infected pet animal. Healthcare providers must make an accurate risk assessment to decide on vaccination. The wound must be cleaned gently and thoroughly as well. Vaccines for rabies are: pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) which is recommended for people in high-risk professions where they may come into contact with infected animals or those travelling to such areas and post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP), which is given after exposure, and which prevents the virus from entering the central nervous system. It is important to note that taking the PrEP does not mean that PEP is not needed: even those who have taken the PrEP must seek care after exposure. As listed under the WHO - Prequalification of Medical Products, as of 2024, there are only three WHO pre-qualified human rabies vaccines available globally: RABIVAX-S by Serum Institute of India Pvt. Ltd., VaxiRab N by Zydus Lifesciences Limited, and VERORAB by Sanofi Pasteur.

What do you do if bitten or scratched by an animal?

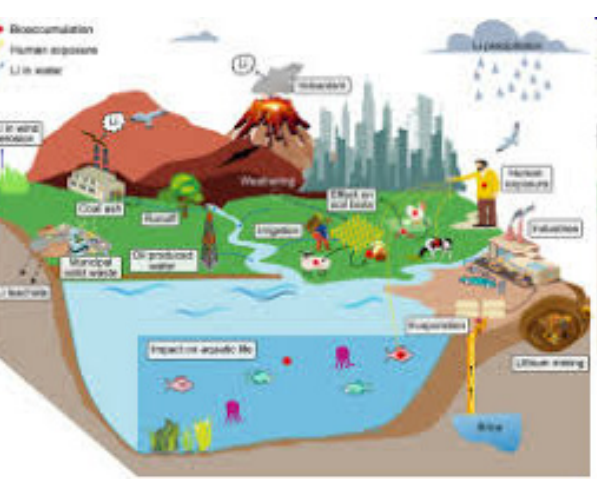
If you've been bitten by animal that may have rabies, or even scratched or licked it is important to seek medical attention. Wash the wound thoroughly with soap and water and then go to your healthcare provider, giving as much detail as possible about the animal and the kind of contact. The post exposure prophylaxis (PEP) rabies vaccine usually consists of four shots over 14 days. Your doctor may also give you shots of human rabies immunoglobulin, given into or around the wound in order to give the body antibodies to destroy the virus around the wound. (This is not taken if a vaccination has already been taken prior to exposure). If treatment is availed of promptly after exposure, it is usually effective at preventing rabies.

What is the situation in India?

In India, there were more than 37 lakh cases of dog bites and 54 suspected human rabies deaths reported during 2024, according to a written reply given by S.P. Singh Baghel, Minister of State for Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying to the Lok Sabha. A January 2025 research paper, 'Estimates of the burden of human rabies deaths and animal bites in India, 2022–23: a community-based cross-sectional survey and probability decision-tree modelling study' however found that the estimated human rabies death occurring annually in India was 5,726. It also found gaps in vaccine access and completion of vaccine courses.



# From mines to minds: how lithium shapes energy and psychiatry



In a significant stride towards bolstering strategic resources, Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s recent visit to the United States last month culminated in the launching of a collaborative initiative focused on recovering and processing critical minerals, notably lithium. This partnership underscores the rising importance of lithium in various sectors, from energy storage to pharmaceuticals. Lithium, denoted by the symbol Li, has atomic number 3 and is a silvery-white alkali metal. It was discovered in 1817 when Swedish chemist Johan August identified it within the mineral petalite. In 1821, William Brande successfully isolated lithium in its elemental form through the electrolysis of lithium oxide.

Due to continuing exploration, measured and indicated lithium resources have increased substantially worldwide, totalling about 105 million tons as per the U.S. geological survey in 2024. Major lithium reserves are concentrated in South America’s ‘Lithium Triangle’—encompassing parts of Bolivia, Argentina, and Chile. Australia is the leading producer, extracting lithium from hard-rock spodumene deposits. India’s lithium deposits are in Reasi (Jammu & Kashmir) and Mandya (Karnataka), with exploration ongoing in Rajasthan, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, and Himachal Pradesh. The recent Indo-U.S. initiative aims to recover and process lithium. In 1859, Alfred Baring Garrod published a paper in The London and Edinburgh Monthly Journal of Medical Science examining lithium’s potential to dissolve uric acid crystals, proposing its use for gout treatment. The hypothesis stemmed from chemical observations rather than clinical trials. While lithium salts showed promise in vitro, therapeutic applications were limited by toxicity and impractical dosing. The study marked one of the earliest discussions on lithium’s physiological effects, but its medical relevance remained uncertain. In 1949, Australian psychiatrist John Cade published a seminal paper in the Medical Journal of Australia detailing his discovery of lithium’s antimanic properties. Cade hypothesised that mania was linked to a metabolic imbalance and conducted experiments, injecting guinea pigs with urine from manic patients, observing toxic effects. He administered various compounds to identify the poisonous substance, noting that lithium carbonate has a calming impact on the animals without sedation. Translating these findings to clinical practice, Cade treated ten patients with mania using lithium salts, reporting significant mood stabilisation and reduction in manic symptoms. This groundbreaking study introduced lithium as an effective treatment for mood disorders like acute mania and bipolar disorder.

Melbourne’s Noack and Trautner (1951) and French psychiatrists Despinoy and De Romeuf (1951) indepen-

dently tested lithium in manic patients, reporting effectiveness. Despite initial scepticism and concerns over toxicity, further studies, notably by Danish psychiatrist Mogens Schou in the 1950s and 60s, confirmed lithium’s efficacy as a mood stabiliser. By 1970, lithium was approved for the treatment of bipolar disorder in the United States.

Mechanism of action and ongoing mysteriesLithium’s exact mechanism in stabilising mood disorders is not fully understood. It is hypothesised that it influences neurotransmitter activity and intracellular signalling pathways, by competing with sodium ions due to their chemical similarities as alkali metals. This competition may alter neuronal excitability and neurotransmission. Despite its long history of use, the precise biological underpinnings of lithium’s mood-stabilising effects continue to be a research subject. Lithium has a narrow therapeutic window (0.6–1.2 mEq/L), requiring regular monitoring to prevent toxicity. It is absorbed orally, distributed evenly in total bodywater, and is excreted unchanged via kidneys, necessitating renal function monitoring. It is not used in pregnant women.

With lithium, the difference between an effective dose and a toxic dose is small. At therapeutic levels, lithium stabilises mood, but even slight elevations can lead to toxicity, causing neurological, renal, and cardiac complications. Lithium also interferes with thyroid function, leading to hypothyroidism. Over time, this can lead to fatigue, weight gain, and depressive symptoms, further complicating bipolar disorder management. Lithium exemplifies the Paracelsus’ principle—“the dose makes the poison”—whereby a slight deviation from the therapeutic range can turn it from a life-saving mood stabiliser into a toxic agent. It also has a delayed onset of action—often requiring weeks to show full effects—which means that more rapid-acting medications are usually preferred in acute manic episodes. Second-generation antipsychotics have emerged as viable alternatives to lithium due to their mechanism of action and better safety profile. Unlike lithium, which acts as the source of bipolar disorder by inhibiting sodium-GPCR protein pumps in neurons, SGAs act at a downstream level by modulating neurotransmitter activity, particularly dopamine and serotonin. This difference means that while lithium exerts its effects at the root of the disorder by stabilising neuronal activity, SGAs regulate the symptoms more directly by blocking excessive neurotransmitter action. Despite the increasing use of SGAs, lithium remains the drug of choice for specific bipolar disorder presentations, manic episodes and suicidal tendency prevention. It is most effective for classic euphoric mania and bipolar disorder with a strong genetic component. Lithium uniquely reduces the risk of suicide in bipolar patients, a benefit that SGAs do not replicate. Its mood-stabilising properties are particularly valuable in preventing relapses, ensuring long-term remission, and managing treatment-resistant cases. What prompted John Cade to hypothesise lithium for mood stabilisation remains a greater mystery than the unknowns surrounding its mechanism of action. His work was published in 1949 when the relationship between medical research and ethics fundamentally differed from today’s standards. Cade’s experiments immediately after WW-2 reflected an era where scientific curiosity often operated in a vacuum, independent of ethical considerations. With the establishment of modern research ethics, including informed consent, clinical trial regulations, and oversight committees, such an experiment—would not even be possible today. Yet, these historical inquiries remind us that medical advancements have often emerged from unconventional and ethically questionable explorations. In addition to its role in psychiatry, lithium is indispensable in battery technology, nuclear energy, ceramics, and lubricants. It plays a crucial part in carbon neutrality by enabling renewable energy storage.

# Trouble at the Centre of Excellence: Why Jadavpur University remains on the boil?

On March 12, the Minister of State for Education Sukanta Majumdar informed the Parliament that Jadavpur University is set to lose the status of Institute of Eminence (IoE) due to a fall in budgetary allocation. Mr. Majumdar, who is also West Bengal BJP president in response to a question by another BJP MP Samik Bhattacharya mentioned that the Empowered Experts Committee (EEC) considered the revised proposal of the Jadavpur University and observed that there was a steep decline in the budget from the earlier projected amount of ₹3,299 crore to ₹606 crore. Such a steep decline in the budget was not conducive to realise the target set for the IoE Institutions. While the question was raised and replied to by two senior BJP leaders from West Bengal, the development could not have come at a worse time. Jadavpur University, the highest-ranked university in West Bengal, has been on the boil over the past three weeks. Recent violence at the university

Days before the start of the new academic session, violence erupted at the university when West Bengal State Education Minister, Bratya Basu, came face to face with a group of students on March 1. The students who had blocked the Minister’s car were demanding that the student’s union election be held at the university. After a commotion for a few minutes, the Minister’s car drove over the protesting students and some protesting students came under the wheels of the Minister’s car. While the protests and blocking of the Minister’s convoy was not something new at the state-run university, the fact that the wheels of the Minister’s car injured students was unprecedented. For more than two weeks the university witnessed protests and academic activities remained suspended. Nine FIRs have been registered, eight of which against students and one at the instruction of the Calcutta High Court against the Minister, his driver, and another professor at the university. Set up in 1955, Jadavpur University is considered an outcome of the country’s freedom movement and is the highest-rated university in West Bengal, which till decades ago boasted of top-rated educational institutions in India. As per the latest National Institutional Ranking Framework (NIRF) ranking by the Ministry of Education released in August 2024, Jadavpur University ranked at the ninth position across the country on the list of universities. The university has excellent humanities, science and technology professors and has several interdisciplinary schools and centers that are engaged in inter-disciplinary research. It is not only politics and protests but also fund constraints that are hampering the development of the university. The Jadavpur University Teachers Association (JUTA) has raised the question that ₹1 crore was crowdfunding for applying for the IoE status. JUTA in a statement in January 2025 said that the university spent ₹34.97 crore from its coffers for “non-salary maintenance-related expenditures” and it will have to borrow funds in future if the situation continues. The university is completely dependent on State funding and has missed the opportunity to generate resources through self-financing courses or other means like engaging with its vast alumni network. With no central funds in sight and the state government stressed of funds due to other financial commitments such as cash



incentive schemes for women and children, the JU might have to grapple with funds crunch for a while. Politics at the university At the centre of the controversy is the politics at the university. Jadhavpur University has been a bastion of student unions with Left ideology for the past several decades. The campus saw violence during the turbulent Naxal movement of the 1970’s. Despite being in power for almost 14 years in West Bengal, Trinamool Congress that has not been able to establish itself among the students of this premier university. The Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad (ABVP), the student wing of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh, has also tried to establish a presence in the university but without much success. March 2025 is not the first time Jadavpur University has made headlines for the wrong reasons. In September 2019, almost a similar situation had emerged when the students laid siege to the convoy of the then Union Minister Babul Supriyo inside the university campus. Mr. Supriyo, who was a BJP MP then, was rescued by then West Bengal Governor Jagdeep Thakur. Beyond the colourful graffiti adorning the walls of the university campus and the slogans of revolution painted all around, student politics has often taken difficult turns, from the occasional laying siege at the office of Vice Chancellors and authorities to the ‘Hok Kolorob (Let there be Noise) movement in 2014 when the siege went to 150 hours. In August 2023, a first-year student allegedly fell to death while being ragged by his seniors. Thirteen students were arrested in connection with the case that is being heard in the Calcutta High Court. There is much more than aggressive student politics that needs to be addressed by all the stakeholders of the university. The students protest surveillance on the campus and oppose setting up a police outpost, but block movement of others and gherao Vice Chancellors and other constitutional functionaries visiting the institute. The authorities on the other hand try to keep passing the buck. When the Education Minister’s car was surrounded by students on March 1, 2025 the University Vice Chancellor Bhaskar Gupta was nowhere to be seen. He later fell ill and was hospitalised for a few days. Even in the past when there was a ragging death at the campus hostel or a Union Minister convoy was stopped, the university authorities were not seen handling the issue proactively and shifted the blame to institutional lapses. The different teachers’ associations seem to be more committed to the different ideologies they represent and their actions are more inclined in the interest of the ideology rather than the interest of the university.

# A land where ambition grows minus an outbound ticket



The recent drama over the unceremonious repatriation of Indians who attempted illegally to enter the United States of America, and who ended up handcuffed and manacled in an American military aircraft that dumped them on the tarmac in Amritsar, raises a whole series of issues. Migration, after all, is not merely a policy issue. It is a human story, woven into our collective memories and dreams. Immigration has long been an integral part of human history, shaping civilisations, economies, and societies across the globe. India, with its rich tradition of global engagement, has long seen its people traverse continents in pursuit of opportunity, new lives, better futures. Every year, millions of Indians embark on this journey, making India the country with the highest number of emigrants in the world. Today, Indians are no longer just workers abroad; they are leaders, shaping global industries. With Sundar Pichai at Google, Satya Nadella at Microsoft, and a host of others born and raised in India heading Fortune 500 companies, Indian migrants drive innovation and economic power in the West. History proves that migration has always been a force multiplier, enriching both migrants and host nations. Yet, in an era of rising walls, both physical and political, migration faces unprecedented scrutiny.

For decades, the lure of the American Dream has beckoned young Indians with the promise of economic opportunity, social mobility, and the prospect of a better future. While the IT engineers in Silicon Valley went on scholarships or work visas and stayed on, the Sikh cab drivers navigating the streets of New York may have found less conventional means of entry. But these illegal migrants are not fugitives but opportunity-seekers wanting a fair shot at prosperity. With remittances to India crossing \$120 billion in 2023, migration fuels a cycle where families seek to replicate the success of relatives abroad. It is the vast expanse of opportunity in major U.S. cities, the promise of work under the radar, and the prospect of eventual amnesty (like so many before them) that draws them in. An estimated 7,25,000 undocumented Indian migrants — nearly one in four of all Indians in the U.S. — live and work clandestinely in the U.S. There is a painful paradox at the heart of India’s illegal migration story. We celebrate tech billionaires while youth unemployment soars, showcase gleaming infrastructure while millions struggle for dignified work. India’s growth story features booming statistics, shrinking opportunities, and a rising economy still unable to assure its own people that their future lies at home. The lure of foreign shores is sometimes about ambition, sometimes about survival. This has birthed a thriving network of unscrupulous agents weaving fantasies of western riches, convincing even people from India’s most prosperous States to leave. Gujarat — a State championed as an economic success story, the launch-pad of the Prime Minister’s rise — sees thousands risking everything to migrate. Punjab, too, is revered as India’s breadbasket; it feeds the nation, yet its youth are leaving in droves. Rising unemployment, dwindling agricultural returns, and an insidious drug crisis have eroded hope, leaving many with little choice but to seek their fortunes abroad, legally or otherwise.

In their desperation, many Indians turn to shadowy networks, paying staggering sums to be smuggled across borders. What was once the path of young, single men now sees entire middle-class families — the bedrock of India’s ambitions— risking everything for a fresh start abroad. The Gujarati family that froze to death trapped in a snowdrift on the Canadian-U.S. border in January 2022 was upper middle-class at home. Some of those who were sent back

by the U.S. had paid a crore of rupees to get there. Who would have imagined that people with a crore of rupees would not thrive in India? Why is India, one of the world’s fastest-growing economies, a rising geopolitical force, and a nation with unparalleled human capital, still unable to provide enough opportunities for its own people? Why has the pursuit of dignity, stability, and economic security led millions of Indians to distant shores, even where they are not welcome? These are uncomfortable questions — ones we can no longer ignore. More mirage than dream There is also the question of what they find when they get there. The American Dream, once seen as a golden ticket, is increasingly a mirage. Many find themselves trapped in an endless cycle of uncertainty — living in fear of deportation, working in jobs that barely sustain them, struggling to integrate into societies that, at times, view them with racist suspicion. And for many who leave, the struggle does not end when they cross the border — it follows them, sometimes in the most tragic ways. We hear of migrants working endless hours in exploitative conditions, of families back home waiting for news that never comes. And now, for many, the journey merely ends in humiliating deportation. The United States is well within its legal authority to return those who have entered its territory unlawfully. They have been doing so: the Biden administration deported 1,100 Indians in the last fiscal year. Since October 2020, nearly 1,70,000 Indian migrants have been detained by U.S. Customs and Border Protection while attempting to cross the border illegally, largely from Canada or Mexico; they are all subject to deportation. However, the manner in which this process is conducted has been dismaying. Deportation must be carried out with dignity and a respect for human rights. The recent images of shackled and handcuffed migrants being loaded onto military aircraft, suggesting more a criminal extradition of felons than an immigration enforcement measure, have understandably agitated Indians. Colombia and Mexico have rejected such treatment of their citizens, rightly arguing that deportation is an administrative process, not a punitive spectacle. Humiliating individuals to deter others serves no just purpose — it merely erodes dignity and distorts perceptions. We must ask: should a democracy treat another’s citizens this way? Does border enforcement justify undermining the very values the deporting nation upholds? Diplomacy is not just policy but also a reflection of national character. While India does not, and should not, endorse illegal immigration, we cannot be silent spectators to the mistreatment of our citizens. A nation’s stature is not just economic clout or international reach but the respect its passport commands. True global engagement is not just about alliances and trade deals; it is about setting an unwavering standard — wherever an Indian stands, their nation stands with them. Another paradox: We hail the aspirational young Indian, but he prefers to fulfil his aspirations abroad. India must not be a place migrants are forced to return to, but one they want to return to. Those coming back are not just deportees but skilled, ambitious individuals whose aspirations can drive India’s growth. We must make opportunities accessible to all, not concentrated among the privileged. Inclusive growth, innovation, and investments in infrastructure, education, and entrepreneurship must be national imperatives. More than just jobs, India must offer careers that inspire people to stay, build, and invest in their future here. As the world builds walls, India must build bridges — to opportunity, prosperity, and a future where migration is an option, not a necessity. If India is to truly rise, it must become a nation where people do not feel compelled to leave, but empowered to stay. India must not just be the world’s largest exporter of talent but a magnet for it — a place where ambition flourishes without an outbound ticket, where success is celebrated at home, and where prosperity is not a foreign fantasy but a reality shaped on our own soil. Let us make India, once again, a land of hope. Not because the world is rejecting our people, but because, if we do the right things, they will have no need to look elsewhere. Shashi Tharoor is a fourth-term Member of Parliament (Congress), Lok Sabha, for Thiruvananthapuram, Chairman of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on External Affairs, and the Sahitya Akademi Award-winning author of 26 books, including Pax Indica: India and the World of the 21st Century (2012). The writer is grateful to Urjasvi Ahlawat for her assistance

# How can India meet its rising power demand?

As the fastest-growing major economy in a rapidly heating world, India’s electricity demand is growing fast. Since FY21, India’s electricity consumption has risen at approximately 9% per annum, compared to an average of 5% annually in the preceding decade. The Central Electricity Authority (CEA) had projected electricity demand to grow at a 6% CAGR between 2022 and 2030. However, recent trends suggest a strong likelihood of overshooting these estimates. Can India’s power sector keep up with this demand and transition to renewables at the same time?

What’s driving India’s electricity demand? Besides economic growth and urbanisation, climate change-induced heat stress, marked by increasingly hotter summers, is one of the key factors driving electricity demand. Currently, industries, households, and agriculture comprise 33%, 28%, and 19% of total electricity use in India, respectively. Yet, household electricity demand has grown the fastest over the past decade. The summer of 2024 witnessed a 40-50% year-on-year growth in room air conditioner sales, driven by rising incomes and record-breaking temperatures. All-India peak demand crossed 250 GW on May 30, 2024, which was 6.3% higher than projections. In 2025, after recording the warmest-ever February in 125 years, India must now brace for extended heatwaves and a peak electricity demand growth of 9-10%.

How has India met rising demand so far? Since the early 2000s, power generation capacity has quadrupled to 460 GW, making India the third-largest electricity producer globally. Driven by the imperatives of clean energy transition, India’s power sector is undergoing a major shift with the rise of Renewable Energy (RE) technologies like solar and wind. In 2010, the Indian government set a target of 20 GW of RE by 2020, which was revised upwards in 2014 to 175 GW by 2022. In 2021, India further amped its target to achieve 500 GW of non-fossil fuel power capacity by 2030. The government has continuously adopted several long-term and short-term measures to meet the spikes in demand. For instance, to manage the peak in 2022, it increased coal allocation to the power sector and prioritised its transportation through railways. It also directed imported coal-based power plants to operate at full capacity. States that have added substantive solar capacities utilised the surplus solar power to meet day peaks. Nights peaks continue to pose a challenge. In many ways, 2024 was a land-

mark year — India added a record 28 GW of new RE capacity, bumping up the share of RE in the electricity mix to 13.5%. The share of coal in the capacity mix fell below half, though it still caters to 75% of power demand. India’s RE capacity now stands at 165 GW. Another 32 GW of RE is expected to be commissioned in 2025. In the following five years, India would need to add about 50 GW of RE every year to meet its 2030 goal.

Why should India further raise its clean energy ambitions?

Episodes of power shortages in the last two years amid rapid growth in demand pose an important question. How should India act and plan to meet its rising energy demand reliably and cost-effectively? A new study by the Council on Energy, Environment and Water (CEEW) answers this question by simulating six scenarios of India’s power sector in 2030. CEEW found that failure to achieve 500 GW of clean energy capacity by 2030 will lead to power shortages and higher power costs, even if demand grows moderately. For instance, 0.26% of the demand will not be met if we achieve only 400 GW. Just this small percentage alone could impact the power supply to ~1 million households for 2.5 hours daily. States in northern India would be the worst affected because of network constraints. If demand grows faster (at 6.4% CAGR between 2023 and 2030 instead of 5.8%) and the 500 GW target is achieved, India will still need additional generation capacity to avoid major power shortages. Here, India has two choices — add six GW of new coal (beyond the under-construction capacities now) or 100 GW of new RE capacity (beyond the stated 500 GW). The first choice will meet the demand, but the coal fleet will remain under high stress with a likelihood of increased downtime. This could result in sudden shortages and increased costs. The study finds that the latter choice of 100 GW of new RE capacity, distributed across States, is a better option.

How can India aim for 600 GW by 2030? India must achieve 600 GW of clean energy by 2030 to keep pace with demand. This will help the country deliver reliable power at lower costs, saving up to ₹42,400 crore (\$5 billion) in procurement costs in 2030 alone. It will also yield higher social and health benefits, with 1,00,000 new jobs (during 2025-2030) and up to 23% lower emission of air pollutants in 2030. However, a 600 GW target would require 70 GW of RE addition annually until 2030 which may sound wishful.



# As US tariff concerns mount, Textiles Ministry hold meeting with exporters



Amid rising concerns by businesses about the impact of the 25 per cent reciprocal tariff by the US, the Ministry of Textiles has called a meeting with major textile and apparel exporters from across the country here today. The meeting, to be chaired by Union Textiles Minister Giriraj Singh, has been called to discuss the challenges being faced by exporters in their order flows, especially amid the widening tariff differentials with other competing Asian countries after the recent imposition of secondary tatiffs by the US on India. With the US being India's largest export market for the labour-intensive textile and apparel industry, textile exporters are under stress after the hike in import tariff to 25 per cent from August 7 by the Trump administration, which is set to rise further to 50 per cent on August 27. Textile and apparel exporters have been asking for support from the government as their orders have been hit with buyers either asking them to share the tariff hike burden or pausing the orders till further clarity emerges about the trade deal negotiations between India and the US.

Disruption in Cash FlowsOne of the major concerns raised by textile and apparel exporters in their representations to the government has been about a disruption in their

cash flow with a reduction in orders by buyers from the US, officials said. "Exporters are asking for sops. They are asking for soft loans or interest subvention schemes or focused market schemes. Their concern is that they should get cash in hand," an official told The Indian Express.

Exporters are hoping that the tariff hike is temporary and they are able to retain the orders as buyers are already shifting to other countries with lower tariffs such as Vietnam and Bangladesh, with India's 25 per cent reciprocal tariff exceeding those applicable to other competing Asian countries, except China. If the higher levies continue, there's also a worry in policy circles that the distress in the textiles and apparels sector could result in job losses. The government is engaging continuously with exporters to understand the evolving situation. "Exporters have been communicating their issues. The government is taking their feedback and will provide the necessary support to them," another official said. Impact on India's merchandise exportsThe Ministry of Finance has estimated that more than half of the country's merchandise exports to the US will be subject to the higher reciprocal tariff. The US is a key market for Indian Ready-Made Garments (RMG) exports; its share in India's total garment exports in 2024 stood at 33 per cent, as per the Apparel Export Promotion Council (AEPCC). Home textiles and carpets are also significant export-oriented sectors, with exports accounting for 70-75 per cent and 65-70 per cent of total sales, respectively, for these sectors. Of this, the US accounts for 60 per cent of exports for home textiles and 50 per cent of exports for carpets. US President Donald Trump had announced a 25 per cent tariff on Indian goods in a post on social media platform Truth Social on July 30, with an additional but unspecified "penalty" for importing energy and defence items from Russia. On August 6, the penalty was clarified to be an additional 25 per cent tariff that will be effective from August 27.

# Air India to suspend Delhi-Washington flights from September 1 due to truncated Boeing 787 fleet, Pakistan airspace closure

Air indiaAviation safety regulator Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) clarified that the Air India flight that had to perform a go-around at the Chennai airport on Sunday did so on the instructions of the Chennai air traffic control (Representational Image/Air India will be suspending its flights between Delhi and Washington from September 1 due to a combination of operational factors—primarily the insufficient availability of Boeing 787-8 aircraft due to their retrofit programme and the continued closure of the Pakistani airspace. The Tata group airline said Monday that the Delhi-Washington service suspension is "to ensure the reliability and integrity of Air India's overall route network". Air India currently operates the thrice-weekly Delhi-Washington service via Vienna, where it takes a technical halt. The service was direct, but the longer flying time necessitated by the closure of Pakistani airspace to Indian aircraft from late April led to it becoming a one-stop service. Air India uses its legacy Boeing 787-8 aircraft—from its government ownership days—for its Delhi-Washington flights.

"The suspension is primarily driven by the planned shortfall in Air India's fleet, as the airline commenced retrofitting 26 of its Boeing 787-8 aircraft last month. This extensive retrofit programme, aimed at significantly enhancing customer experience, necessitates a prolonged unavailability of multiple aircraft at any given time until at least end of 2026. That, coupled with the continued closure of airspace over Pakistan, impacts the airline's long-haul operations, leading to longer flight routings and increased operational complexity," Air India said in a release. "Customers with Air India bookings to or from Washington, D.C. beyond September 1, 2025 will be contacted and offered alternative travel arrangements, including rebooking on other flights or full refunds, as per their individual preferences. Air India customers will continue to have the options of one-stop flights to Washington, DC via four US gateways—New York (JFK), Newark (EWR), Chicago, and San Francisco—with the airline's interline partners, Alaska Airlines, United Airlines, and Delta Air Lines, allowing customers to travel on a single itinerary with their baggage checked through to the final destination," the carrier said, adding that it will continue to operate non-stop flights between India and six destinations in North America, including Toronto and Vancouver in Canada.

While Air India did not specify till when the Delhi-Washington service will remain suspended, flight schedules data suggests that the route could remain suspended well into next year. Air India had earlier planned to increase the frequency to up to five flights a week, it is learnt. The closure of the Pakistani airspace to Indian airlines and aircraft had



extended flight durations for international flights flying West from airports in North India, forcing Air India to convert a number of its long-haul services to North America to one-stop flights with technical halts at European airports. While most of those flights were reverted back to non-stop services through alternative routings, the Delhi-Washington service is among the few remaining services that are operating through one-stop flights. Pakistan closed its airspace to Indian airlines and aircraft as relations between New Delhi and Islamabad soured in the wake of the Pahalgam terror attack by Pakistan-backed terrorists. The tragic crash of an Air India Boeing 787-8 aircraft in Ahmedabad on June 12 also led to greater scrutiny of other aircraft of the type in Air India's fleet, with the airline itself introducing a "safety pause" and doing additional voluntary pre-departure checks of its aircraft. The safety pause also led to some disruption in Air India's wide-body aircraft operations, and led to the airline announcing a temporary curtailment in its international wide-body schedule, which is expected to be reinstated from October 1. Meanwhile, Air India has also embarked upon the second phase of the programme to retrofit its legacy fleet to bring it at par with its new product and brand identity.

The \$400-million retrofit programme starting with its legacy narrow-body aircraft began in September last year. In the second phase, which began last month, its legacy wide-body jets will be retrofitted with new interiors, apart from having their avionics and other critical components upgraded. The retrofit of Air India's legacy Boeing 787 is expected to be completed by mid-2027, which would mean that the operational fleet would be curtailed till the programme is on. The retrofit of Air India's legacy Boeing 777 jets is likely to start in January 2027 and be completed by October 2028. The first phase of the programme—for 27 legacy narrow-body planes—is likely to be completed by September this year.

# ‘A regime of perpetual tolling’: Public Accounts Committee flags current tolling system, recommends creation of AERA-like tariff authority to ensure fairness

A parliamentary committee has expressed concerns over the current tolling system, highlighting that charges are often levied indefinitely irrespective of road quality, traffic volume, user affordability or recovery of project cost.

The committee said the practice was formalised by a 2008 amendment to the Fee Rules allowing for "perpetual tolling" even after project costs are recovered. While toll rates are revised annually based on a fixed 3 per cent increment and Wholesale Price Index (WPI) adjustments, there is no independent mechanism to assess if these charges are justified by actual operation and maintenance costs, the committee said. "...the Committee observe that the concept of tolling in perpetuity was first introduced through an amendment to the Fee Rules in 2008, allowing continued collection of user fees even after the recovery of project costs. This provision was further clarified and codified through the 2023 amendment to the Fee Rules, which explicitly permits tolling to continue beyond the end of the concession period, thereby formalising a regime of perpetual tolling," said the Public Accounts Committee (PAC) in its report submitted to the Parliament on Tuesday.

According to the report, the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways (MoRTH) acknowledged this, adding it has initiated a study with NITI Aayog to revise the user fee determination framework, including base rates, inflation indexing, and concession structures. The PAC further recommended that the ministry should establish a tariff authority, on the lines of the Airports Economic Regulatory

Authority (AERA) in the civil aviation sector, to ensure transparency and fairness in toll fixation, collection, and regulation. "This authority should be mandated to review and determine the periodicity of toll revisions based on certain parameters... The Committee desires that toll collection on any highway stretch must be rationalised and substantially reduced once capital and routine maintenance costs have been recovered. Any continuation of tolls beyond this point should be permitted only if clearly justified and approved by the proposed independent oversight authority," said the committee. The PAC also said that all existing contracts and publicly funded toll plazas allowing tolling beyond cost recovery must be reviewed to safeguard user interest and uphold the principle of equity in public infrastructure usage. It said that while higher toll charges are justified during the period of concession agreement, continuation after that needs to be justified. The committee also raised the concerns over the cases where tolls continue to be collected even in situations where the essential service — namely, safe, uninterrupted, and timely travel — is not available. This includes highway stretches that are incomplete, under prolonged construction, or marked by serious deficiencies in safety and traffic flow. It recommended that MoRTH and National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) should establish a system for automatic toll refund or waiver in cases where the highway is incomplete, unfit, or unavailable fully or under maintenance for use. "The Committee are particularly concerned by the absence of any institutional mechanism for refunding or waiving toll in such cases.

# Social media claims ‘death begins in your big toe’; we ask experts what that means



Social media often makes some startling claims. The latest one is that 'death begins in your big toe.' "Why? Because the big toe is the farthest geographical point in your body from your heart. Our heart takes blood, reoxygenates it, and sends it back to the tissues of the body. Blood flow is one of the most important aspects of our health. When we sit for longer than an hour, 50 per cent of the blood flow to our legs has decreased. So, you need movement to improve the health of your feet." Dr Saumya Sekhar Jenasamant, consultant, Cardiothoracic & Vascular Surgeon, KIMS Hospitals, Thane, contended that while the idea is "over-generalised", it makes an important point. "The big toe is one of the furthest points away from the heart. Maintaining proper blood flow is crucial for keeping distant areas healthy. There may be problems with blood flow in the extremities, and particularly in patients with diabetes, periph-

eral artery disease (PAD), or heart issues. If a debilitating health complication develops, it may start in the toes or feet. Yet, the reality of death does not technically begin in the toe, but significant deleterious health problems may show warning signs there first," said Dr Jenasamant.

So, why is poor circulation a concern?

When circulation is poor, the first place that suffers is likely the feet, because they are the furthest from the heart. "You may experience numbness, tingling, coldness, discoloration, and wounds that do not heal. In extreme cases, mostly patients with PAD or diabetic neuropathy, this can lead to infections, ulcers, and gangrene if untreated," said Dr Jenasamant. The heart pumps oxygen-rich blood to all parts of the body, but when one sits for over an hour, blood flow to the legs can be impacted and is low. This can lead to stiffness, numbness, and even swelling in the feet. Hence, movement is essential, said Dr Manjusha Agarwal, senior consultant, internal medicine, Gleneagles Hospital Parel, Mumbai.

What is the importance of movement?

Movement is key. Sitting in one position can restrict your circulation, particularly in the legs and feet. Dr Jenasamant explained that statistically, blood flow to the legs could be decreased by almost fifty percent after one hour of sitting without movement. You can take a short break to stand, move around, or stretch, said Dr Jenasamant.

What should individuals be mindful of?

Do not ignore symptoms relating to your feet. According to Dr Jenasamant, cold toes, cuts that heal slowly, changes in skin colour, and persistent numbness should all be discussed with your doctor, especially if you have a history of diabetes, smoking, or are sedentary. "Regular exercise, reducing blood sugar and cholesterol, and routine foot inspections can go a long way towards maintaining healthy toes, and keeping the bigger picture in mind," said Dr Jenasamant.

# Here’s what happens to blood sugar levels when you eat 2 bananas vs. one banana with similar ripeness

When you consume a banana, the carbohydrates present in the fruit — particularly sugars such as fructose, glucose, and sucrose — influence your blood sugar levels. So, what happens when you consume two bananas instead of one? "A medium banana contains approximately 27 grams of carbohydrates, of which around 14-15 grams are sugars. When you eat one banana, your body digests the sugars, leading to a gradual increase in blood glucose levels. This response can vary based on individual factors like insulin sensitivity and metabolic rate," said Dr Manjusha Agarwal, senior consultant, internal medicine, Gleneagles Hospital Parel, Mumbai. In contrast, eating two bananas doubles the carbohydrate intake to approximately 54 grams. "This larger quantity can lead to a more significant spike in blood sugar levels compared to just one banana, as your body processes the additional sugars," added Dr Agarwal.

The rate of this increase can also be affected by the banana's ripeness. A more ripe banana has higher sugar content due to the conversion of starches into sugars, potentially leading to a quicker and higher spike in blood sugar. Dr Narander Singla, lead consultant, internal medicine, CK Birla Hospital, Delhi, said the glycemic index (GI) of bananas also plays a crucial role. "The GI of bananas varies based on their ripeness. Unripe (green) bananas typically have a GI around 42, meaning they raise blood sugar more slowly. Ripe bananas have a GI closer to 51, while overripe bananas can reach a GI of 62 or higher, which means they can cause a quicker rise in blood glucose levels. This is because unripe bananas contain more resistant starch, a type of carbohydrate that is digested slowly. In contrast, ripe bananas have more simple sugars that are rapidly absorbed," said Dr Singla.

So, what to note?

For individuals monitoring their blood sugar levels, such as those with diabetes, understanding how portion size af-



fects blood sugar response is crucial. "Eating smaller portions of fruits with higher sugar content can help manage blood sugar levels more effectively," said Dr Agarwal. When considering the impact on blood sugar levels, consuming one banana is usually manageable for most individuals and results in a moderate increase in blood sugar. Dr Singla stressed that consuming two bananas at once can overwhelm the body's ability to process glucose efficiently, especially for those with impaired insulin sensitivity. To better manage blood sugar while still enjoying bananas, "portion control is key". "You can split a banana into halves or thirds and eat it throughout the day rather than all at once. Choosing bananas that are just ripe, with minimal brown spots, can also help reduce the glycemic load. Additionally, pairing bananas with nutrient-dense foods like nuts, seeds, or yogurt can slow down glucose absorption and help maintain stable blood sugar levels," said Dr Singla. By being mindful of ripeness, quantity, and dietary pairing, bananas can remain part of a healthy, balanced diet, even for those managing their blood sugar levels.

# ‘Helped me in a way’: When Raj Babbar spoke about his relationship with Rekha; can grief-born bonds help partners heal?

When Raj Babbar and Rekha's paths crossed, both were navigating personal grief — he, mourning the loss of Smita Patil; she, emerging from the shadows of a long-standing relationship. Their connection, while brief, was a source of quiet comfort, forged on a foundation of mutual understanding and emotional vulnerability. Speaking years later, Raj Babbar reflected on that time with remarkable clarity. "Yes, our relationship helped me in a way. We drifted together because of certain circumstances. At that time, Rekha had broken off from a long-standing relationship. She wanted to get away from it. I was in a similar situation," he said in an old interview according to Times of India, explaining how their companionship grew amidst shared sorrow. "At the same time, we were also working together, we clung to each other for emotional support. We tried to understand each other's problems. One does not forget such a relationship very easily. Though we aren't together today, we still have fond memories of those special moments."

Is it common for people to bond romantically while coping with grief or emotional loss, and can such relationships provide genuine healing?

Psychologist Raashi Gurnani tells indianexpress.com, "When two people find themselves navigating through grief, heartbreak, or emotional transitions, it's not uncommon for a romantic connection to form. In psychology, this is often viewed as a coping mechanism — people instinctively seek comfort, understanding, and emotional safety in those who reflect their current state of mind. When Raj Babbar spoke of his bond with Rekha, it seemed to stem from a shared emotional void, a need to be understood without explanation." In such moments, she notes that vulnerability acts as a bridge, stripping away superficial layers and allowing individuals to connect on a deeper, more genuine level. "These relationships, though born in fragility, can sometimes offer genuine healing. They give a sense of companionship during emotionally turbulent times, and that mutual presence can be incredibly grounding."

How do emotionally vulnerable relationships differ from those that begin in more stable phases of life?

Emotionally vulnerable relationships often carry a different weight than those formed in emotionally stable periods, notes Gurnani, adding that there is a "heightened in-

tensity" in such connections. She mentions, "They tend to evolve quickly, because both individuals are yearning to feel whole again, often hoping the other person will fill the emotional void they are carrying. While this can feel profound, it may also create dependency or blur boundaries. Stability, on the other hand, allows for more mindful, balanced love to grow — where attraction is often based on compatibility rather than emotional need. Relationships born from trauma might have a beautiful beginning, but sustaining them long-term requires self-awareness and healing outside the bond too."

# Elon Musk alleges Apple favours OpenAI over xAI, threatens legal action

New Delhi: Tesla and SpaceX owner Elon Musk on Tuesday threatened legal action against tech giant Apple, alleging that the company is unjustly favouring the OpenAI application in its App Store. Musk's own AI startup, xAI, was not able to claim the number one spot on the App Store due to this favoritism, he alleged.

Musk wrote on X, "Apple is behaving in a manner that makes it impossible for any AI company besides OpenAI to reach #1 in the App Store, which is an unequivocal antitrust violation. xAI will take immediate legal action." "Unfortunately, what choice do we have? Apple didn't just put their thumb on the scale, they put their whole body!" he said in another post. The accusation came as competition intensified between Grok, xAI's large language model, and OpenAI's ChatGPT. xAI launched Grok 4 last month and claimed notable performance improvements over competitors. The AI firm has since added features like Grok Imagine for image and video generation and personalised companion chatbots. Grok rose from the 60th rank to second place in Apple's Productivity category. The free tier allows only a limited number of queries per day, after which it requires a subscription.



## Rishabh Pant tries his hand at baking a pizza: ‘That’s the only thing I can do with a broken foot’



GNS News Agency, August 22

India wicketkeeper batter Rishabh Pant, currently recuperating from a foot injury sustained in the 4th India vs England Test at Manchester, shared a fun video on his social media handles on Thursday where he was filmed making a pizza. “Today, I am going to show you how to make a pizza. Bear with me,” Pant said in the beginning of the video titled “Impasto, salsa, forno... and me.” He would then go on to shape the dough and said, “I think I am going to make vegetarian pizza. I love vegetarian.” “I think if I make more pizzas, I’ll be sorted. It’s hot in here guys,” he added while applying the toppings before sending the dough into the oven to bake.

“That’s the only thing I can do with a broken foot, baking pizza. My brother must be thinking ‘ghar pe toh kuch banaya nahi hain, yaha pizza bana raha (He hasn’t cooked anything at home but he’s making a pizza here),” Pant said. Last month, after the 4th Test match between England and India ended in a draw, the BCCI had confirmed that Pant would not be taking any further part in the series. “Rishabh Pant, who sustained a fracture to his right foot during the fourth Test against England in Manchester, has been ruled out of the fifth and final Test of the series. The BCCI Medical Team will continue to monitor his progress and the team wishes him a speedy recovery. The Men’s Selection Committee has named Narayan Jagadeesan as replacement for Rishabh Pant for the fifth Test, which begins on July 31, 2025 at Kennington Oval, London,” a statement from the board read. Pant fractured his toe while attempting a reverse sweep on Day 1, which led to him having to retire hurt. He then remarkably continued his innings while batting almost on one foot and scored 54 in 75 balls. Pant was advised six weeks of rest and was expected to not travel to the ground on Day 2. However, he was eventually spotted in the dressing room in full gear and he then hobbled out after Shardul Thakur was dismissed shortly before Lunch. On Day 5, the keeper wasn’t required to bat due to Jadeja and Sundar’s gritty knocks which ended the 4th Test in a stalemate.

## Magnus Carlsen had an ‘idiot test’ he used to decide opening prep for world championship, Russian GM reveals

GNS News Agency, August 22

Daniil Dubov, who worked with Magnus Carlsen for two world championship battles, recently revealed that the World No. 1 used to have something he termed as an ‘idiot test’ which he used to decide the opening prep for the world championships. “Magnus always had that method to try out ideas which we called the “Idiot Test”. The “Idiot Test” is that if you have found an (opening) idea, you have to play it against an unprepared Laurent Fressinet (French grandmaster) and beat him. If you don’t win, the idea is refuted,” Dubov said in a Russian podcast with Ilya Levitov.

“(If you don’t win with that idea against Laurent Fressinet) The idea doesn’t work! I can tell you that it’s a 90%-reliable piece of statistic! That’s how it is,” he added. The Russian Grandmaster also revealed that in the initial world championships, the role was with Norwegian grandmaster Jon Ludvig Hammer.

“Earlier, the certified idiot would be Hans-Ludvig Hammer, but when I joined the team Hammer was no longer there, so this was Fress (Fressinet). But thank God I played much better than Fress, so the majority of the ideas passed the test, regardless of their quality,” he said. Dubov then spoke about another member of Team Carlsen, Dutch GM Jorden van Foreest. “That was the problem with Jorden van Foreest’s ideas later on, because as it turned out, Jorden is a desperate case in blitz, and strangely enough Fress was better than him in blitz. Jorden would tell me ‘Come on, let me show you the idea, and you go ahead and play it yourself!’” Dubov revealed. Dubov, who was part of Carlsen’s



team for the world championship battles against Fabiano Caruana and Ian Nepomniachtchi, also spoke about how competitive the Norwegian can get. In the podcast, he opened up about his experiences with Carlsen at the world no 1’s training camps ahead of the world championship fights in 2018 (against Caruana) and 2021 (vs Nepomniachtchi). Dubov revealed that he was invited to join the Team Carlsen after playing a spontaneous blitz match at a Chess World Cup. Dubov sets the scene of the training camp. He said he had flown to Oslo after a series of stopovers, and at the airport he was picked up by members of Team Carlsen who then picked up Carlsen before the team headed to a suburbs near Oslo for the camp. But things started off rocky for the duo. Dubov said he had a clash with Carlsen on the first day itself at a training camp, not during a chess game, but while playing a football match.

## | ‘Looking back at that, I did that on purpose’: Nathan Lyon remembers his sledging tactics against England in 2017-18 Ashes

GNS News Agency, August 22

In less than 100 days, Brendon McCullum-coached England side will tour Australia for the Ashes and the England team will hope to win The Ashes after a gap of ten years. The last time England won The Ashes was in 2015 when the Alaistair Cook led England team won the series 3-2 in England. Having played in seven Ashes series and with a total of 110 Ashes wickets under his belt, Australian off-spinner Nathan Lyon has opened up his tactical sledging ahead of the 2017-2018 Ashes. Lyon, who currently has a total of 562 wickets in his Test career, had told the English media “Could we end some careers? I hope so’ ahead of the 2017-18 Ashes and with Australia then winning the series, Lyon believes the play worked and it took pressure off wicket-keeper Tim Paine and batsman Cam Bancroft. “Looking back at that, I did that on purpose. I wanted to make it about England, take a lot of pressure off ‘Painey’ and Cam Bancroft. Painey (Tim Paine) was coming back into the side, Cam (Bancroft) was making his debut, so there was a lot of pressure on our batting group, especially those young guys. I felt like my game was in a really good area, where I could be confident in backing up my skill (with words). I wanted to take some pressure off



them. That’s part of the game – I think I did that, all the attention came to me, which is all right. I’ve always had the approach that I’ll do whatever it takes for this team, and whatever my role needs, whether it is taking heat, I’m more than happy to do that, or bowling off-breaks or going out and doing nightwatchman,” Lyon told Sydney Morning Herald. Stay updated with the latest sports news across Cricket, Football, Chess, and more. Catch all the action with real-time live cricket score updates and in-depth coverage of ongoing matches.

## Lakshya Sen to face top seed Shi Yu Qi in first round; tough Chinese tests early for Satwik-Chirag, PV Sindhu

GNS News Agency, August 22

India’s top badminton stars will face stern tests if the country has to keep up the medal-winning streak at the BWF World Championships as the draws for the tournament to be held in Paris from August 25 were made on Wednesday. For starters, in men’s singles, Lakshya Sen has been handed the toughest possible draw as he is pitted against the top seed and world No 1 Shi Yu Qi of China. At the bottom half of the men’s singles draw, HS Prannoy starts off with a winnable match against Joakim Oldorff, the world No 49 from Finland but his second round clash is set to be against second seed Anders Antonsen of Denmark.

Possibly India’s best bet for a podium finish this year at Paris 2025 – one year down the line from the heartbreaks of Paris Olympics at this very venue last year – would be Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty. Seeded 9th in men’s doubles, they have an opening round bye and would either face fellow Indians Hariharan Amsakuranan-Ruben Kumar or Liu Kuang Heng and Yang Po Han of Chinese

Taipei in the second round. But their further progress faces two massive tests. A potential round of 16 clash against Liang Wei Keng-Wang Chang is followed by a possible quarterfinal against their nemesis Aaron Chia and Soh Wooi Yik. A year ago, the Malaysians had ended the Indians medal hope at the Olympics in the quarterfinals too.

India’s most successful player in the history of the World Championships, five-time medallist and former winner PV Sindhu historically has had a strong record against Chinese players at the event. But given her form in 2025, it would be mammoth ask for her to overcome second seed Wang Zhi Yi who she could face in the quarterfinals. The Indian star begins her campaign against Bulgaria’s Kaloyana Nalbantova and potentially Malaysia’s Letsshanaa Karupathevan in the second round. India have won at least one medal at every BWF World Championships since 2011. Given their overall struggles on tour this year, the odds of that streak extending were dependent on receiving kinder draws but it hasn’t quite panned out that way.

## Cricket Australia CEO bats for fewer Test matches involving handful of teams: ‘Don’t think everyone in world needs to aspire to play test cricket’



Tom Moody on IND vs ENG India vs England Test Players of the two teams clap after observing a minute’s silence in memory of former England cricketer Wayne Larkins before the start of play on day one of the second cricket test match between England and India at Edgbaston in Birmingham, England, Wednesday, July 2, 2025. (AP Photo/Scott Heppell)

Cricket Australia CEO Todd Greenberg batted for fewer Test matches involving a handful of nations, saying that forcing some cricket countries to play the traditional 5-day format might bring financial ruin upon those aforementioned countries. He added that there should be more investment in marquee series like the Ashes. “I don’t think

everyone in world cricket needs to aspire to play test cricket, and that might be Ok. We’re literally trying to send countries bankrupt if we force them to try to play test cricket. Scarcity in test cricket is our friend, not our foe,” Greenberg said. “We need to make sure we invest in the right spaces to play test cricket where it means something and has jeopardy. That’s why the Ashes will be as enormous and profitable as it is — because it means something,” he added.

India, England and Australia are often referred to as the ‘Big Three’ in cricket. Test series between them are played over five matches and attract a lot of eyeballs and revenue. The just-concluded Anderson-Tendulkar Trophy saw nail-biting contests, high drama and on-field skirmishes in a series that ended 2-2 after a classic at The Oval. The 2023 Ashes in England was also a memorable encounter, also finishing 2-2 after the hosts recovered from a 0-2 deficit. The return series Down Under, starting in November this year, is highly anticipated. The International Cricket Council (ICC) has set up a Working Group under former New Zealand batsman Roger Tose to look into ways of improving the WTC format ahead of the 2027-29 cycle, and one of the options on the table is a two-tier system with promotion and relegation built into it. Instead of backing the two-tier formula, Thompson wants the current WTC structure to be tweaked, citing the underdog story of South Africa emerging as champions in the final in June, beating favourites Australia.

## Rohit Sharma jumps to 2nd spot a day after training return and Babar Azam’s West Indies flop show

GNS News Agency, August 22

A day after India’s 50-overs captain Rohit Sharma was reported to have hit training for the first time since the end of the IPL 2025 season, the 38-year-old Mumbaikar moved closer to the top spot in the International Cricket Council’s (ICC) ODI batting rankings, vaulting to second place over Pakistan’s Babar Azam. Despite not featuring in an ODI since smashing a rollicking 76 in the final of the 2025 Champions Trophy against New Zealand in Dubai in March, the star India opener moved up a place behind his young teammate Shubman Gill after Babar’s repetitive failures in the West Indies. The former Pakistan captain only score 56 runs in the recently-concluded three-match ODI series against West Indies. In the series decider on Tuesday, Babar managed only nine runs as Pakistan crumbled in a 295-run chase, bundling for 92. Besides Rohit and Gill, India possess three other batters in the top 15, with former captain Virat Kohli standing fourth, Shreyas Iyer eighth and wicketkeeper-batter KL Rahul ranking 15th.

Following a largely successful Test tour against England for India under Shubman Gill ending 2-2 recently, reports have circulated on the uncertainty of the future of both Rohit and Kohli in the ODI format. While the two stalwarts had pulled the plug on their T20I careers following the World



Cup in the Caribbean last year, Rohit and Kohli both announced their Test retirements within an interval of few days in May earlier this year. On Tuesday, just days after Virat Kohli posted a photo of himself after a training session in the UK, Rohit also posted a picture of himself with former India assistant coach Abhishek Nayar in the gym. Nayar reposted that with the caption that said: “Let it begin”. Rohit has begun training with Nayar at a suburban Mumbai facility after taking a break of a couple of months from cricket following the IPL, according to PTI.

## The Sushil Kumar timeline: From Olympic double to murder case involvement – tracing former wrestling world champion’s rise and fall

GNS News Agency, August 22

Former wrestling world champion Sushil Kumar suffered a massive setback on Wednesday as the Supreme Court cancelled the bail granted to him as he faces trial in the 2021 murder of wrestler Sagar Dhankhar in Delhi’s Chhatrasai Stadium. A bench of Justices Sanjay Karol and P K Mishra gave Kumar a week to surrender, after Kumar had been granted bail earlier this year after spending three-and-a-half years in jail. The order came on an appeal filed by the father of Sagar Dhankhar challenging the March 4, 2025, order of the Delhi High Court granting him bail. While granting him bail, the HC noted that only 30 of the 186 prosecution witnesses have been examined in the three years since the trial began.

Hailing from Baprola, Delhi, the 42-year-old Kumar’s story is replete of dizzying highs and treacherous nadirs that has tarnished his sporting legacy. Here is a look at the timeline of Sushil Kumar’s journey from the akharas of the Chhatrasai Stadium to his Olympic glory and a murder case that has blemished his career achievements. 1997: A 14-year-old Sushil Kumar joins the Chhatrasai Stadium’s akhara, which was started in 1988 by his former coach, now father-in-law, Satpal Singh. 2003: Sushil participated in the Asian Wrestling Championship held in New Delhi, clinching the bronze medal in 60kg freestyle category. In the same year he won a gold medal in the freestyle category at the Commonwealth Wrestling Championships in London. 2005: Kumar featured in the Commonwealth Wrestling Championship in Cape Town and won the gold medal in 66kg freestyle category and bronze in the 66kg Greco-Roman category. 2006: Won gold in the 2007 Commonwealth Wrestling Championship in London in 66kg freestyle category. Received the Arjuna Award.

2008: Wins his first Olympic medal, bagging bronze in the 66kg freestyle category. 2010: At the World Wrestling Championships held in Moscow, Kumar created history by becoming the first Indian to win a world wrestling title. Won



the gold medal in the 66kg freestyle category in the Commonwealth Games held in Delhi. 2012: At the London Olympics, Sushil Kumar created history, winning the silver medal in the 66kg freestyle category. He became the first man to win multiple individual Olympic medals for independent India. 2014: Won the gold medal in the 74 kg freestyle category at the Glasgow Commonwealth Games. 2018: Wins third consecutive Commonwealth gold in Gold Coast, Australia. May 4, 2021: Sushil Kumar and several others were accused of fatally assaulting Dhankhar during a property dispute. The attack, which also left two of Dhankhar’s friends injured, caused Dhankhar to suffer cerebral damage from a blunt object, according to the postmortem report. May 23, 2021: Following the incident, a massive manhunt for the Olympian was launched. He managed to evade arrest for 18 days by traveling through Punjab, Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, and Haryana. Delhi Police eventually captured him in the Mundka area of the city. Kumar was apprehended while traveling on a borrowed scooter to collect cash from a national-level athlete. October 2022: A Delhi trial court formally charged Kumar and 17 others with several crimes under the Indian Penal Code (IPC), including murder, rioting, criminal conspiracy, kidnapping, and robbery. They were also charged with offenses under the Arms Act.

## Liverpool’s Arne Slot and Jurgen Klopp pay tribute to late Diogo Jota’s legacy

GNS News Agency, August 22

Hyderabad: Liverpool manager Arne Slot and former boss Jurgen Klopp reflected on the late Diogo Jota’s impact. Slot praised the centre-forward’s personal and professional achievements, while Klopp hailed his influence on the team’s dynamics. Speaking on JioHotstar show “Preview of the season 2025-26” Arne Slot praised Diogo Jota’s achievements over the past year. “He was a champion for his family, which is the most important thing. He was a champion for his country, winning the Nations League for a nation he loves [Portugal] and cares deeply about. And, he was a champion for us by helping win the Premier League,” Arne Slot said.

And, Jürgen Klopp highlighted Jota’s impact on the team and said that Diogo was an incredibly important player for us. “Having him in the side changed the dynamics,” he



added. Slot expressed his admiration for Jota as both, a player and a person: “



## Sholay turns 50: Thakur's consuming obsession with vengeance destroyed so much and yielded so little



Whenever I think of Sholay, it is not its grandeur that comes to me, but its stillness. I don't think of Thakur's (Sanjeev Kumar) endless pursuit of justice, but of his fevered, near-mad obsession with revenge. I don't dwell on the warmth of Jai (Amitabh Bachchan) and Veeru's (Dharmendra) legendary camaraderie, but on the silence left behind when one of them falls and the enjoyment ends. I don't tremble at Gabbar Singh's (Amjad Khan) terror, rather, wonder what storm could shape a man into such inexorable ruthlessness? I don't smile at the spirited flirtations between Veeru and Basanti (Hema Malini); instead, my heart rests in the aching glances between Jai and Radha (Jaya Bachchan). It's not the comic interludes of Soorma Bhopali (Jagdeep) or the bumbling Jailer (Asrani) that stay with me, but the tragedy of Imaam Saab (A.K. Hangal) and his son Ahmed

Sholay, to me, is not the towering epic it became in the history of cinema. It is the film that breathed in the spaces between the spectacle, in the pauses between gunfire and laughter, where all there was, was grief. Look into Thakur's eyes when we first meet him in the film. Watch him as he narrates that first flashback, recounting who he once was. There's a sense of loss that haunts him. It is evident all through the film, especially in those moments which he share with Radha, where you can almost see an unspoken loss. The way he looks at her, you feel he wants to tell her to let it all go, to start again, together, from the wreckage. And in the climax, when he finally walks towards Radha, she collapses into him, weeping. And still, even in that moment of closeness, he cannot hold her. Look at his face, it's full of anguish and defeat. It's the face of a man who knows he is a prisoner of his own pain. It's the face of a man who is a victim in his own eyes. That's why, in one of the greatest moments ever penned by Salim-Javed, Thakur finds himself at a loss for words when Imaam Saab's son is killed by Gabbar. Framed masterfully by Dwarka Divecha and Ramesh Sippy, this scene reveals two sides of Thakur. We see the villagers turn on him, disappointed, disillusioned. And we see Thakur making a plea for blood. A cry for violence. An eye for an eye. He tells them he has never bowed to anyone, never compromised, and never will. He will live with pride, and die with it. But just when we're in danger of being swept up in the grandeur of his defiance, the scene cuts piercingly back to Imaam Saab. Although he also reflects the same sentiment: "Izzat ki

maut, zillat ki zindagi se behtar hai." But the weight of those words, spoken from his mouth, carries something Thakur's cannot. The mise-en-scene reinforces this: as the old man walks back to the mosque, the camera frames the crowd in two subsequent wide shots. And in both, Thakur is nowhere to be seen. Because even the frame understands: in that moment, Imaam Saab's humility has outshone Thakur's arrogance. There's another remarkable moment, when Thakur is shown a mirror to the destruction his vengeance is causing. It comes just after the interval, following the 'Mehbooba Mehbooba' song. Jai is wounded, bleeding, and he and Veeru make their way back to Thakur's haveli on horseback. From her upstairs room, Radha sees them, and then, she runs. As she moves through the vast haveli, descending from one floor to another, you almost begin to think how lonely both Thakur and Radha must be in this sprawling, empty house. And when Thakur sees Radha's concern for Jai, her urgency breaks through his monomania. He is stunned by her action, by her impulsiveness. And in that look, in that pause, we sense it: he realises, perhaps for the first time, that others live in this house too. People with needs he has long forgotten to see, while chasing justice for those who are already gone. This is a wordless scene, and there are plenty of these silences that speak far more than the famous dialogues ever could. The way Jai plays that same love theme for Radha, again and again, as she lights the evening lamps, the way every major decision in the film is arrived at by tossing a coin, and the way it all ends, you don't walk away with joy or triumph. You walk away empty. Empty of friendship lost, of love left incomplete, of a man who lost his entire family...and gained what, really? Each major moment is laced with sadness. Say, the opening and closing shots, of trains coming and going, mirror each other like book-ends to a tragedy. Even the interval, where we glimpse Thakur's haunted past, still hurts deeply. But nothing hurts more than the climax, when you see Jai's funeral pyre burning against the dusk, and Radha, standing at a distance, closing her window and shutting herself off from the world. Someone once told me Sholay is the great Indian epic, the ultimate masala film, where good triumphs over evil. But all I see in it... is melancholia. All I see in it is everybody losing something, and triumphing far too little.

## 'Ali Fazal's family prepares separate dishes for Jains during Eid': Richa Chadha opens up about her 'exciting' inter-faith marriage with the actor

One of Bollywood's most beloved power couples, Richa Chadha and Ali Fazal, are all set to celebrate their third wedding anniversary. Although the industry has long seen actors marrying in real life, what makes this couple special to the audience is that they are both outsiders with no prior connection to the industry whatsoever and made it big solely through their hard work. Following their wedding in 2022, the couple welcomed a baby girl in 2024, thus taking a new and even bigger step in their personal lives. Last month, the first-time parents had also penned a heartwarming post on the occasion of their daughter Zuneyra's birthday, reflecting on the impact her arrival had on their lives and how she changed them for the better.

As they revel in all the joy and love, Richa opened up about being in an interfaith marriage with Ali, which she described as an "exciting" experience. Taking part in the eighth edition of The Indian Express' Expresso, she said, "I love being in an interfaith marriage, and it's exciting. I get to learn so many new things. Also, my dad is Punjabi and my mom is Bihari. So that in itself was a unique combination when they got married in the '80s. Between Ali and me, even though we are very secular, progressive and spiritual people, we do things with the other person's religion because it's just amazing."

Richa further mentioned that she loves visiting Ali's ancestral home in Lucknow during Eid, noting that people from all faiths come together there to mark the occasion and celebrate the festival. "Not just Muslims, everyone comes there on Eid to eat biryani or yakhni pulao. They also prepare a separate set of dishes for the Jains who live across the road. It's wonderful to see them sitting around, and Ali's 90-year-old grandmother will make paan. The whole mahaul is so joyous," she shared. She shared that Ali also embraced all the Hindu festivals like Diwali and Bhai Dooj that her family celebrates. "He was so happy. Recently, he came dancing to a big fat Punjabi wedding, and he was just showered and smothered in love," she shared. Going a step further, Richa also spoke about what she believes to be the biological benefits of promoting marriages outside one's own



Richa Chadha, at the eighth edition of The Indian Express' Expresso, opened up about being in an interfaith marriage with Ali Fazal, which she described as an 'exciting' experience.

community. "I think we must take a cue from nature. In nature, the main cause of congenital diseases is inbreeding. What does that mean? That means that nature wants you to share and spread. That's how you evolve and grow." The eighth edition of Expresso was presented by HSBC in association with Taj Lands End, Mumbai, Seetu Kohli Homes as the Luxury Partner, Chambers of Kartik Seth as the Knowledge Partner, and Radico as the Celebration Partner.

## Harry Potter's Ron Weasley marries Ed Sheeran after serving 14 years in prison in new music video, singer explains 'crazy' idea in BTS footage

Ed Sheeran has been pulling out all the stops for his upcoming album 'Play'. Having already collaborated with the likes of Shah Rukh Khan and Arijit Singh, the singer gave his fans another surprise in the music video for his song 'A Little More'. Actor Rupert Grint, known for his role as Ron Weasley in the Harry Potter series, played the protagonist of the music video: a middle-aged convict who has just been given a second chance at life after being released from prison. To add to the fun, Sheeran just dropped behind-the-scenes footage of the music video. The footage kicks off just like the original video, as the director Emil Nava introduces to the fans the stars of the video, including the two aforementioned gentlemen and actor Nathaniel Emmanuel, who played the wife of Rupert. Sheeran starts the video by explaining the idea behind it all and says, "The concept of the video is that Rupert gets out of prison after some 12-14 years because he was stalking me. I'm not sure that he would get 12 years for that, but sure. In the video, he starts seeing me very vaguely here and there, and he thinks he is going crazy, and by the end I am everywhere. I had the idea, and then I rang up Emil, and then we convinced Rupert."

An interesting detail in the footage released is that several versions of Sheeran would be spread across the screen, while the one actual one is still explaining the concept, which is just like how the character of Rupert sees the world, filled with Ed Sheeran all around. Sheeran admitted that this is the longest shooting schedule he has ever been on, five days, and he loves that he gets to play 60 different characters, like the priest, the guy in the gym, the garbage man, etc. Emil is then seen telling Sheeran that, "Basically this is just a movie. 50 outfits, 20 locations – this can very well be



a movie if we just keep going on." The singer said that the moment he thought of the idea, he wished for Rupert to say yes, because it wouldn't work with anyone else, to which Rupert replied, "It was an easy yes."

Emil continues the video and tells the fans that they had to get someone brilliant to play Rupert's wife, and hence they got Nathaniel. The Fast Saga actor said, "It was like the end of last week, and they just asked me, 'Do you want to do a video?' and I was like, 'Yeah, that sounds like fun.'" By the time Nathaniel walks into Rupert's life, he has already gone crazy and even sees Sheeran in the wedding dress instead of his wife. Rupert gave his thoughts on the video and said, "I wouldn't even get to know if someone was stalking me; I am that much into my own world, which maybe is a red flag. It's a fascinating thing, fandom, and I think we are kind of similar souls, so it's always fun to be around him. It's just the best, because every time he is in the wedding dress, it melts my heart."

## Director of Salman Khan's next almost made cricketing debut alongside Sachin Tendulkar in Ranji trophy: 'He made a century, I was that good'

Filmmaker Apoorva Lakhia worked as an assistant director in Hollywood for a few years before he started working in India. His first project here, Ashutosh Gowariker's Lagaan, reached the Oscars, and legitimised the logistical excellence that Apoorva displayed on the nearly six-month long schedule. Now, he is directing Salman Khan in his next film, Battle of Galwan. But, not many know that if not a filmmaker, Apoorva could have been a cricketer.

In a recent interaction, Apoorva revealed that he was supposed to make his debut as a cricketer alongside Sachin Tendulkar in a Ranji Trophy match in 1988. However, his father was against his dreams of becoming a cricketer and wanted him to manage the family business in Ahmedabad. He told Samir Kochhar on his YouTube channel, "I got a letter from the Gujarat Ranji Trophy, saying that I was selected to play for the Gujarat Ranji Trophy team and that was the match where Sachin Tendulkar debuted against Gujarat and scored his first 100 runs. I was that good in cricket." Sachin Tendulkar's Ranji Trophy debut was in a match against Gujarat, playing for Bombay (now Mumbai) at the Wankhede Stadium in December 1988. He was just 15 years old at the time. In that match, he scored a century, making him the youngest Indian to achieve this feat in first-class cricket. It was probably his interest in cricket, and his expertise in the game, that led him to Aamir Khan's production Lagaan, which was a sports drama. Mnay cast and



crew members have previously credited Apoorva for running a tight ship on the set, which even included leaving Aamir behind when he wasn't on time. About a month ago, Battle of Galwan made headlines when Salman Khan took to Instagram to share its motion poster. The poster showed Salman bloodstained, with cuts on his face and hands. It also featured the line: "Over 15,000 ft. above sea level, India fought its most brutal battle without firing a single bullet." In Battle of Galwan, Salman is expected to play Colonel B Santosh Babu, the officer who led the 16 Bihar regiment during the 2020 Galwan Valley clash with Chinese soldiers.

## Shah Rukh Khan's Om Shanti Om fire scene was shot at a location that was 'destroyed' in fire itself, reveals Anand Mahindra



Shah Rukh Khan and Deepika Padukone's Om Shanti Om remains a fan favourite, even nearly two decades after its release. A scene in which Om tries to save Shantipriya from being engulfed by flames on set was shot at Mumbai's Mukesh Mills. The mill has a spooky reputation, with several film industry personalities recalling stories. The chairperson of Mahindra and Mahindra, Anand Mahindra, Anupam Thareja and Boman Rustomji Irani, recently graced the stage for the launch of new 2025 YeZdi Roadster motorcycle at the Mukesh Mills. At the event, Anand Mahindra said, "What I love about this is... I think most of you know that this was very intricately linked to Om Shanti Om. This is where Shah Rukh chose to film it. And there was very good reason, maybe even he was inspired by the history of this plot which suffered a fire and was destroyed, and that was a part of the plot. So, the plot of Om Shanti Om in fact involved fire and reincarnation," he said. He also recalled that the superstar even used the YeZdi in his 1994 hit film Kabhi Haan Kabhi Naa. "And frankly, that's exactly what we are here to do. I am sure Shah Rukh is going to be happy because he used the YeZdi in one of his earliest films Kabhi Haan Kabhi Naa. He really likes this brand," Anand added. During an interview with Hindi Rush earlier, action-director Sham Kaushal was asked about this action scene in the film. "No VFX was used around that time, so we had to light the fire on that set. It had Shah Rukh Khan, Deepika Padukone, three camerapersons, and around 60 members of my unit inside the set. So, there were a total of 100 people inside the set that was on fire," he shared in Punjabi. He added, "I was immensely stressed out during that shoot. I don't know how to explain it because one had to be careful. One had to make sure to put off the fire within seconds of

lighting it. If someone commits a mistake anywhere, it could end on a disastrous note. I swear by God, there were so many times I'd go to the side and start crying on set. I felt I'd have a heart attack." Om Shanti Om was directed by Farah Khan and hit the big screens in 2007. The movie also marked the acting debut of Deepika Padukone. Besides Shah Rukh Khan and Deepika, the film also featured Shreyas Talpade, Arjun Rampal, and Kirron Kher in pivotal roles.

There are so many stories that need to be told, says actress Madhu Shalini

Chennai: Actress Madhushalini, who is as popular in Tamil as she is in Telugu, has now turned a producer by presenting director Srujan Attada's Telugu film 'Kanya Kumari', featuring Geetha Saini and Sricharan Rachakonda in the lead. Talking to IANS, the actress, who made a name for herself in the Tamil film industry with her impactful performances in director Bala's 'Avan Ivan' and the Kamal Haasan-starrer 'Thoogavanam', says that she is now working both as an actress and at the same time, producing films. "I am already in the process of producing a Hindi film. It is a science fiction film and it is yet to be titled. Although I turned producer with that film, 'Kanya Kumari' will technically be my first film as producer as it releases first," she discloses. Producing a film requires quite a bit of courage. Ask her what made her make that decision and she says with a laugh, "I was actually looking for good scripts for myself. That was when I found out that there were so many stories that needed to be told. I thought that when I have the capacity to tell these stories, I will. I came across this sweet, sweet story and I wanted to help them in whatever capacity I could. That is when I thought I would present this film." So, what was it about Kanya Kumari that she chose to back the film by presenting it? Says Madhu Shalini, "It is a very rooted love story between a boy and a girl who have their own goals. A lot of girls will be able to relate to this story. When you have a perception of where you want to be or what you want to do in terms of goals or objectives, so much can happen if your family and friends are on your side. However, when the converse happens, it can take a toll on the person."