

# INDIAN CHRONICLE

9 August, 2025 Saturday | Volume No:13| Issue No:151

Pages: 8+8

www.indianchronicle.com

Published from : Ranga Reddy (Telangana State) ₹ 3

## Jishnu Dev Varma participates in rakhi for soldiers celebration at Raj Bhavan

Hyderabad, Aug.8 Governor Jishnu Dev Varma participated in the “Rakhi for Soldiers” celebration at Raj Bhavan here on Friday. The programme was organised by the Samskruti Foundation and the event saw students from various colleges in the Twin Cities tying Rakhis to officers of the Army, Navy, and Air Force, symbolising gratitude and solidarity with the nation’s defenders. Extending Raksha Bandhan greetings, the Governor reflected on the festival’s deeper meaning of mutual protection and responsibility, invoking the Mahabharata tale of Draupadi and Lord Krishna.

## CM Revanth Reddy greets women on Raksha Bandhan



Hyderabad, Aug.8 : Telangana Chief Minister Revanth Reddy on Friday extended his best wishes to all the women of the state on the occasion of Rakhi festival (August 9). He said that everyone should celebrate the festival of Rakhi, which is a symbol of the bond between brothers and sisters, happily. He also said that the state government was implementing innovative programs and schemes with the aim of empowering the women and making them millionaires. He said that the women had been given a big place in the grant of Gruha Jyoti, new ration cards, Indiramma Atmiya Bharosa, Indira Canteens and Indiramma Houses scheme. He also said that the state government would support them until all women participate in the development of the state. He revealed that the government would take appropriate measures for the protection and security of the women and added that there would be no compromise on the development and welfare of the women anywhere. The Chief Minister assured that his government would always be available to all the brothers and sisters and would successfully administer the people with the blessings of everyone.

## Harish Rao urges CS for copies of Ghosh Commission's comprehensive report



Hyderabad, Aug.8 Former minister and BRS MLA T. Harish Rao on Friday met Chief Secretary K. Ramakrishna Rao at the Secretariat, where he submitted two memorandums —one on behalf of former chief minister K. Chandrashekar Rao and another in his personal capacity. The purpose of these submissions was to request access to copies of the comprehensive 665-page report from the PC Ghosh Commission regarding the Kaleshwaram project. The Justice PC Ghosh Commission presented its findings to the State government on July 31, holding former Chief Minister K. Chandrashekar Rao accountable, both directly and indirectly, for the purported irregularities associated with the Kaleshwaram project. Furthermore, the Cabinet decided to present the report to the Assembly during the upcoming monsoon session for further discussion. BRS MLA Harish Rao stated that since the Ghosh Commission delivered its report to the government, his party has been advocating for the release of the full report to facilitate a thorough examination. Harish Rao was accompanied by BRS MLC Deshapathi Srinivas, MLAs Kaleru Venkatesh, Mutha Gopal and Bandaru Lakshma Reddy and other leaders.

## BRS files complaint against BJP MP CM Ramesh over merger remarks

GNS News Agency, August 8

Hyderabad: The Bharat Rashtira Samithi (BRS) lodged a police complaint against BJP MP CM Ramesh for spreading lies that BRS would merge with the BJP. The party leader Manne Govardhan Reddy filed the complaint at Banjara Hills Police Station on Friday. He demanded that the police register an FIR against Ramesh and warned that if Ramesh repeated such comments, the consequences would be severe. Addressing the media after lodging the complaint, Govardhan Reddy accused MP CM Ramesh of amassing hundreds of crores through the liquor trade and bank fraud, including alleged embezzlement of Rs. 450 crore from banks. He said Ramesh joined the BJP from TDP only to escape the Directorate of Enforcement (ED) action. Capture the essence of Telangana, win cash prizes: FTCCI announces World Photography Day contest! He stated that Ramesh who acted as a mediator for the Revanth Reddy government in the mortgaging of Kancha Gachibowli forest land, has been rewarded with a Rs. 1,600 crore road development project in non-existent Fourth City.

## PM Modi speaks to Putin days after Trump's 'oil tariffs'; leaders reaffirm to deepen India-Russia ties

GNS News Agency, August 8

Prime Minister Narendra Modi said on Friday (August 8, 2025) that he spoke to Russian President Vladimir Putin over the phone and thanked him for sharing the 'latest developments' on Ukraine. In a post on X, Mr. Modi said both leaders also reviewed the progress in the bilateral agenda and reaffirmed their 'commitment to deepen the India-Russia Special and Privileged Strategic Partnership'. Mr. Modi also invited the Russian President to visit India later this year for an annual bilateral summit. Had a very good and detailed conversation with my friend President Putin. I thanked him for sharing the latest developments on Ukraine. We also reviewed the progress in



our bilateral agenda, and reaffirmed our commitment to further deepen the India-Russia Special and Privileged... National Security Advisor (NSA) Ajit Doval also met Russian President Vladimir Putin in Kremlin yesterday. Mr. Doval, speaking to Russian Security Council Secretary Sergei Shoigu, on Thursday confirmed that plans for President Putin's India visit are “almost finalised”. India

and Russia have been in discussions for Mr. Putin's visit to India since the beginning of the year. Mr. Putin last visited India on December 6, 2021, when India hosted the annual summit meeting at Hyderabad House. The talks between both the leaders come two days after U.S. President Donald Trump imposed additional tariffs on India, citing continued purchase of Russian

oil by Indian entities. The Minister of External Affairs reacted to the additional tariffs by Mr. Trump and called them ‘extremely unfortunate’. In response to the additional tariffs on India, Kremlin also accused the U.S. of exerting illegal trade pressure on India. “We hear many statements that are in fact threats, attempts to force countries to cut trade relations with Russia. We do not consider such statements to be legal,” Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov told reporters. “We believe that sovereign countries should have and do have the right to choose their own trading partners, partners for trade and economic cooperation, and to choose for themselves the forms of trade and economic cooperation that are in the interests of a particular country,” he said.

## HM Amit Shah slams Rahul Gandhi, Lalu Prasad Yadav over voter list objections; defends SIR

GNS News Agency, August 8

Patna: Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Friday hit out at Leader of the Opposition (LoP) Rahul Gandhi and RJD chief Lalu Prasad Yadav for opposing the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of the voter list, accusing them of protecting infiltrator vote banks. Addressing a public rally in Sitamarhi, Shah said, “The Constitution of India does not give voting rights to anyone not born in this country. Rahul Gandhi is roaming with the Constitution book, but I urge him to read it carefully. Infiltrators have no right to participate in our elections. They are your vote bank, and that’s why you are protesting.”

Shah reminded the opposition that voter list revisions were not new, claiming, “It was your great-grandfather Jawaharlal Nehru who started this process. You are losing election after election, and now you are giving excuses in advance for losing Bihar too. The formation of the NDA government in Bihar is certain.” Urging the crowd to back the SIR exercise, Shah alleged that the RJD and Congress feared losing votes once “intruders” were removed from the rolls. “As long as Narendra Modi’s government is in power, you will not succeed in making intruders citizens,” he declared. Responding to RJD’s charge that the Centre had done little for Bihar, Shah said, “PM Modi has visited Bihar six times this year alone, announcing Rs 83,000 crore worth of projects for the state.” He also contrasted the Modi government’s security record with that of the Congress era, accusing the latter of inaction against terrorism. “Under Congress, terrorists came,



exploded bombs, and returned to Pakistan. Under Modi, we gave fitting replies — the Pulwama attack saw an airstrike, the Uri attack brought a surgical strike, and after Pahalgam, we struck deep inside Pakistan under Operation Sindoor, dismantling terror networks,” Shah asserted. Amit Shah said the NDA government under Prime Minister Narendra Modi has honoured Mithila’s heritage in several significant ways, citing both cultural recognition and infrastructure development.

Addressing a gathering after performing the Bhoomi Pujan for the redevelopment of Maa Sita’s birthplace at Punaura Dham, Shah recalled that “Bihar Kokila” late Sharda Sinha was awarded the Padma Bhushan in 2018 and, posthumously, the Padma Vibhushan in 2025. He noted that Atal Bihari Vajpayee had included Maithili in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution, while PM Modi had promoted Maithili art and culture further.

## 6500 people’s phones were tapped by KCR govt: Bandi Sanjay



Hyderabad, Aug.8: Union Minister Bandi Sanjay Kumar today claimed that the KCR government tapped the phones of 6,500 people in Telangana. He said he was shocked to learn about the facts that came to fore in the SIT officials’ investigation in the phone tapping case. He alleged that the phones of State ministers and BRS party MLAs, including CM Revanth Reddy and Harish Rao were also tapped along with mine by the KCR government. “My phone was tapped. KCR also tapped the phones of the judge who investigated the TSPSC paper leak case. KCR also tapped the phones of his daughter Kavitha. They corrupted the SIB system, which has a good reputation across the country,” he criticised. Sanjay made these remarks while addressing media persons after appearing before the SIT officials in the phone tapping case. Speaking on the occasion, he said the BRS party leaders blackmailed contractors and leaders by using the SIB and threatened them to collect money. He said any kind of punishment to the phone tapping accused like Prabhakar Rao and Radhakishan Rao was not enough. “They tapped the phones of current CM Revanth Reddy and Harish Rao along with me by mentioning the

names of Maoists. They seized Rs 7 crore from the Khammam Congress MP candidate. They also seized crores of rupees from the Congress party by using the SIB as a trap. It needs to be found out,” he said. He alleged that both BRS and Congress parties were hand in glove in the phone tapping issue. He asked CM Revanth Reddy to seek a CBI inquiry into the phone tapping issue and added that the Centre was ready to extend any kind of support to the State government for holding the CBI inquiry. Sanjay said the CM should also attend the SIT inquiry immediately and give a statement.

## BRS leaders exploited poor with double bedroom house scheme: Ponguleti

Warangal, Aug.8 Minister for Revenue and Housing Ponguleti Srinivasa Reddy alleged that during the previous government, the BRS leaders had exploited the poor, unlawfully extracting money in the name of providing double-bed houses for over six years. The Minister said these promised houses were not presented to anyone during two election cycles, and the same BRS leaders attempted to deceive the people for a third time; however, the people responded by decisively defeating them in the elections. Ponguleti handed over double bedroom houses to 592 beneficiaries at Balasamudram area in Warangal district and participated in the housewarming ceremony. Speaking on the occasion, Ponguleti Srinivasa Reddy emphasised that the selection process for beneficiaries was conducted with complete transparency, irrespective of political affiliations, ensuring that allocations were made to eligible individuals.

## Women IPS officers lead smooth conduct of festivals in Hyd



GNS News Agency, August 8

Hyderabad: A new generation of leadership, all young women IPS officers, has silently but strongly worked for the recent peaceful conduct of the Bonalu celebrations and the Muharram processions in the city.

The group of women IPS officers — Sneha Mehra, Reshmi Perumal, N Swetha, and Rakshitha K Murthy — have emerged as the face of effective law enforcement, proving their mettle in commanding roles across the city. These officers, each heading different zones and wings of Hyderabad Police as Deputy Commissioners of Police (DCPs), orchestrated near-flawless bandobast arrangements for two of the city’s most challenging and sensitive religious events — Bonalu and Muharram.

Their work not only ensured seamless conduct of the festivities but also won admiration from citizens and their superiors. The simultaneous occurrence of Bonalu and Muharram events tested the preparedness of Hyderabad Police, especially in communally sensitive pockets of the old city. South Zone DCP Sneha Mehra worked with a sharp eye on intelligence coordination and a firm grip on ground deployment. She supervised multi-layered security arrangements across Charminar, Shahalibanda and Lal Darwaza. S Reshmi Perumal, DCP North Zone, tackled the unique challenges of managing Bonalu processions in densely packed localities in Secunderabad and simultaneously overseeing Muharram route clearances. She set up a command-and-control centre, which was a hive of activity, coordinating drone surveillance and Quick Response Teams. She strategically used She Teams for women’s safety during processions.

## Tribal women honour KTR with rakhi for his support in Lagacherla land struggle

Hyderabad, Aug.8 : In an uplifting display of appreciation, tribal women from Lagacherla village in Kodangal met BRS working president KT Rama Rao on Friday and tied Rakhi around his wrist, expressing gratitude for his support during their land struggle in Lagacherla.

The group, led by Jyothi from Rotibanda Thanda, described Rama Rao as a God-send, emphasising his dedication to advocating for their rights amidst government efforts to seize their agricultural lands, which threatened their livelihoods. They recounted how one of the women, Jyothi, who was pregnant, faced police intimidation after her husband’s arrest. Nevertheless, Rama Rao stepped in to assist Jyothi and the others, offering them his unwavering support. The women acknowledged his efforts in bringing their struggle to Delhi, submitting complaints to the National Scheduled Tribes Commission and the National Human Rights Commission, and facilitating the retraction of land acquisition. “He made sure that all imprisoned villagers received legal assistance and supported us until everyone was freed,” Jyothi stated after tying the Rakhi. She mentioned that KT Rama Rao treated her like a sister, providing support at every step and caring for their well-being, even naming her daughter Bhoomi Nayak. She regarded him as a brother to all women in need throughout Telangana.

## Andhra Pradesh fast-tracks Polavaram–Banakacherla link despite pending clearances

Hyderabad: Andhra Pradesh has fast-tracked efforts to divert so-called untapped floodwaters from the Godavari through the contentious Polavaram–Banakacherla Link Project, bypassing mandatory legal and environmental clearances. The controversial project, pegged at Rs.80,112 crore according to Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu, is primarily intended to supply water to the drought-prone Rayalaseema region, though immediate benefits will accrue to the Krishna delta.

Experts note that the proposed project would take at least three years to obtain mandatory approvals and an additional decade to complete the 25-km tunnel through the ecologically sensitive Nallamala forests. As a first step, the AP government has prioritised increasing the capacity of the Polavaram Right Main Canal from 17,500 cusecs to 38,000 cusecs to divert Godavari water to the Krishna river. The work is being carried out on a war footing to meet internal deadlines, sources said. However, this canal expansion will primarily serve the Krishna delta region, which has been under pressure due to upstream overdrawals by Andhra Pradesh from the Srisailem project.



# Indian Chronicle

English Daily

## India's response to Trump's bombast must be strong

When politics or, worse, rhetoric eclipses prudence, the consequences are usually unpleasant. With his unconventional approach to politics and policy implementation, US President Donald Trump has embarked on a course that is sometimes charted more by bombast and impulse rather than facts and reason. His announcement of 25 per cent tariffs on Indian goods a few days ago was a function of Trumpian peculiarity. And more peculiar was his announcement on Wednesday to double the tariff to 50 per cent, citing India's oil imports from Russia. Interestingly, the US tariff on Chinese imports was a lot less. While the initial 25 per cent tariff on Indian imports has come into effect on Thursday, the additional tariff will be levied three weeks later. These tariff announcements were rash because they did not take into account the multifarious nature of deep and growing ties between the world's two largest democracies. New Delhi's reaction has been measured. It was only when the Trump administration's statements and actions became intolerable that the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) issued a strong statement, saying the targeting of India was "unfair, unjustified and unreasonable." It went on to say that India would take all actions necessary to protect its national interests. Recently, the MEA also exposed the hypocrisy of the US and the European Union over ties with Russia. The European Union in 2024 had a bilateral trade of Euro \$7.5 billion in goods with Russia. In addition, it had trade in services estimated at Euro 17.2 billion in 2023. This is significantly more than India's total trade with Russia that year or subsequently," it said. Also, the US "continues to import from Russia uranium hexafluoride for its nuclear industry, palladium for its EV industry, fertilisers as well as chemicals."

## JSW MG Motor India kicks off 'EV Sahi Hai' awareness campaign



Hyderabad: JSW MG Motor India has officially kicked off its distinctive EV awareness campaign, 'EV Sahi Hai', which is designed to dispel myths and instill confidence around electric mobility. The campaign is structured into two parts. The first is 'consumer-led', featuring a series of 10 films that will be promoted digitally and on television. These films showcase real customers narrating their authentic EV experiences and reaffirming their decision to switch to EVs. Each testimonial concludes with the powerful message, 'EV Sahi Hai'.

The teaser and customer testimonial films can be found here: EV Sahi Hai. The second phase of the campaign is celebrity-led, where creative storytelling takes centre stage. Leveraging the popularity of Varun Sharma and Pulkit Samrat, this phase aims to creatively and effectively communicate the benefits of owning an EV in India. JSW MG Motor India will be introducing this phase by the end of August 2025. Drawing inspiration from the Association of Mutual Funds in India's (AMFI) successful 'Mutual Fund Sahi Hai' campaign, which significantly boosted mutual fund investments across the country, 'EV Sahi Hai' envisions accelerating EV adoption nationwide.

In addition, the carmaker is launching a brand-new website – [www.evsaiahai.com](http://www.evsaiahai.com), which will be accessible to customers starting August 9th, 2025. This website will feature a wide range of information on EVs, aimed at educating and raising awareness among consumers, especially those new to EVs. Commenting on the occasion, Udit Malhotra, Head of Marketing, JSW MG Motor India, said, "JSW MG Motor India is among the first movers into the EV segment and has been at the forefront of creating a conducive ecosystem through innovative disruptions. Since then, we have traversed a long journey and now intend to proactively communicate the positive stories of EV ownership in India through the unique 'EV Sahi Hai' campaign. This campaign highlights how the EV revolution boosted savings, reduced environmental impact, enhanced affordability, and delivered a superior driving experience. We are confident that this campaign will be a catalyst for expanding EV volumes and accelerating widespread adoption." Amit Nandwani, National Creative Director, Cheil X, said: "While most people agree that EV is the future, there are many misconceptions that stop them from buying one. The need of the hour is to remove these perception barriers so that more and more people can switch to EVs.

We believe there can be no stronger voice than that of real, satisfied customers to give a persuasive push to the fence-sitters. So, we decided to create a campaign that brings together unique experiences of EV owners from across India. We hope their stories will connect strongly with the viewers, and reassure them about EV being the right choice."

## FTCCI organising World Photography Day

GNS News Agency, August 8

Hyderabad, Aug.8 To mark the occasion of World Photography Day, the Tourism Committee of the Federation of Telangana Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FTCCI) is organising an open photography contest to celebrate and showcase the vibrant and diverse beauty of Telangana Tourism. Themed "Explore, Experience, and Exhibit the Spirit of Telangana Tourism", the contest invites photography enthusiasts from all walks of life to capture the essence of Telangana, its culture, heritage, landscapes, architecture, festivals, wildlife, cuisine, and people, disclosed P. Sangeetha, Director, FTCCI and A. Praksh, Chairman and D. Ramchandram, Co Chairman of the Tourism Committee while addressing a Photo Journalists meeting held at FTCCI on Friday.

## Rishton ka drama, thodi nok-jhok, aur poora laughter blast, this Saturday on Netflix's The Great Indian Kapil Show!



Hyderabad: On 9th August, The Great Indian Kapil Show celebrates Rakshabandhan with the kind of sibling masti only Bollywood can deliver, sweet, savage, and thoda masala maarke! This Saturday on The Great Indian Kapil Show, it is siblings uncensored as Shilpa and Shamita Shetty and Huma Qureshi and Saqib Saleem walk in, rakhis in hand and filters left far behind.

From Shilpa declaring she's better than her 90s self to teasing Shamita about her dating track record, it's all love, with a generous side of laughter. Shamita says that it is difficult to find love, and Shilpa just wants her to swipe right

on someone with brains and biceps. Huma comes armed with a jumbo rakhi for Kapil, because someone's gotta tie down our favourite inhouse aashiq aka Kapil. As for her sibling bond with Saqib? Equal parts wholesome and hilarious especially when he admits he hides some things from his behena when necessary, and she calls him her best friend and worst wingman. Fan proposals, brutal burns, and Sunil Grover's "Laila" moment? Check, check, and dhamaal check. Add a dance-off, dating apps, and Shilpa wondering if someone's brother is age-appropriate for Shamita, and you've got a Rakshabandhan episode that's filmy and funny in equal measure.

## Panchakattu Dosa Sees 101x Growth on Zomato, gears up for further expansion in Hyd

Hyderabad: Known for its fiery chutneys and authentic Rayalaseema dosas, Panchakattu Dosa has grown from a single food truck in 2019 to five outlets across Hyderabad, with two more on the way. Since onboarding on Zomato, its yearly orders have jumped from around 1,500 in 2020 to over 1.5 lakh in 2024, marking a 101x growth, all while keeping its street-side charm intact. Speaking on their journey, Naga Bharana Chilamakuri, Founder, Panchakattu Dosa said, "At Panchakattu, we strive to ensure that each meal is simple, soulful and steeped in Rayalaseema tradition. Onboarding on Zomato has helped us share this love for our cuisine with a large number of customers, enabling us to grow at a rapid pace." Aditya Mangla, CEO - Food delivery business, Eternal, said, "It's inspiring to see brands like Panchakattu Dosa grow rapidly while also staying true to cultural roots. We feel privileged to be able to support their journey by offering the tools, insights, and visibility they need to serve their customers better. Helping restaurants grow on our platform is a top priority for us."

Naga Bharana Chilamakuri, who hails from the dosaloving region of Rayalaseema, always dreamt of starting his own restaurant. That dream took shape in 2019 when he launched a humble food truck, serving fresh, flavour-packed dosas to locals in Hyderabad. What began as a small venture soon gained popularity, giving rise to Panchakattu Dosa, a brand built on a simple promise: fa-



miliar flavours, served with honesty and at pocket-friendly prices. Encouraged by growing customer love, the food truck gradually transitioned into a dine-in format, expanding to meet rising demand while holding on to the street-side warmth that defined its beginnings. Today, Panchakattu Dosa runs five outlets across the city, with two more set to open by year-end.

Since onboarding on Zomato, the brand has:

Grown 101x times in 4 years, with yearly orders increasing from around 1,500 in 2020 to over 1.5 lakh in 2024

Expanded to five outlets; extended lunch hours to tap into a wider customer base

Introduced lunchtime combos and strategic add-ons to boost order value, re-engineered its menu with consistent images and clear descriptions

## Varalakshmi Vratam Observed with Traditional Fervor at Sri Padmavathi Ammavari Temple



•The Ashtalakshmi Mandapam Shines During Tiruchanur's Varalakshmi Vratam "August 8 Indian Chronicle Rayalaseema co-ordinator "Sri Padmavathi Ammavari Temple Observes Varalakshmi Vratam" TIRUCHANUR — The Varalakshmi Vratam was celebrated with great grandeur at the Sri Padmavathi Ammavari Temple in Tiruchanur on Friday. The event was marked by a series of traditional rituals and special decorations that captivated devotees. "Early in the morning, the goddess was awakened with Suprabhatham, followed by Sahasranamarchana, Nityarchana, and Abhishekam for both the main and processional deities. On this auspicious day, the goddess was adorned in a beautiful golden sari, offering a divine sight to all devotees. The Utsava Murti (processional deity) of Sri Padmavathi Ammavaru was then seated on a lotus pedestal in the Asthana Mandapam, where rituals like Vishwakshenaradhana, Punyahavachanam, and Kalasha Sthapana were performed. The goddess was worshipped with a variety of traditional flowers, including roses, jasmine, and lotuses. "The temple priests explained that the significance of Varalakshmi Vratam and its rituals were detailed by Vyasa Bhagavan in the Bhavishyottara Purana. They also mentioned that Lord Shiva explained its importance to Goddess Parvati. The priests shared the story of Charumati, a devotee from the Treta Yuga, who received

great blessings by performing this Vratam. It is believed that observing this Vratam brings devotees immense benefits, including good children, a long and prosperous married life, wealth, health, and family happiness. "Special Arrangements for Devotees" TTD Executive Officer J. Shyamala Rao addressed the media, highlighting that the Varalakshmi Vratam was conducted with great splendor. He said arrangements were made to distribute Ammavari prasadam to every devotee who visited the temple. Special queue lines, Anna Prasadam (free meals), drinking water, and buttermilk were arranged to ensure the comfort of the large number of women who participated in the Vratam. "The event was broadcast live on SVBC for devotees to watch. Across Andhra Pradesh and Telangana, TTD distributed 8 lakh bangles, 1.60 lakh kankanas (sacred threads), 1.60 lakh turmeric threads, 1.60 lakh kumkum packets, and books containing the Lakshmi Ashtottara Shatanamavali at its 52 temples. "Ashtalakshmi Mandapam Captivates Devotees" The Vratam Mandapam, decorated by the TTD Garden Department, was a major highlight. A team of 40 staff members worked for three days to decorate the temple, Asthana Mandapam, and Vratam Mandapam with 3 tons of traditional flowers and 30,000 cut flowers. The mandapam was beautifully adorned with fruits like oranges and apples. The Gaja Lakshmi sculpture at the top of the mandapam and two Airavatas (celestial elephants) at the bottom were special attractions. The Asthana Mandapam was decorated with sculptures of the Ashtalakshmi and various colorful flowers like roses and lotuses. The Deputy Director of the Garden Department, Srinivasulu, said the floral decorations were made possible by a donation from a devotee in Chennai. "To allow all devotees to witness the Vratam, five LED screens were set up at different locations, including the Pushkarini, Vahana Mandapam, and Friday Gardens. "Swarna Rathotsavam" In the evening, as part of the Varalakshmi Vratam celebrations, the goddess was taken out on the Swarna Ratham (Golden Chariot) through the four Mada Streets of the temple, blessing the devotees."

## New Study Shows Meta Transforming Financial Product Purchases in India Takeaways

Hyderabad: Even as traditional channels have long guided financial decisions, a new wave is gaining momentum – Indians are increasingly taking charge of their financial journeys through digital content, communities, and creators. Financial advice is no longer confined to expert columns or in-branch consultations – it's happening on Reels, in WhatsApp groups, and through Instagram creators demystifying jargon in under 60 seconds.

The study commissioned by Meta and conducted by IPSOS, titled 'From Feeds to Financial Futures', surveyed 2000+ respondents aged 25-45 across Delhi, Mumbai, Bangalore, and Kolkata, who are current or prospective buyers of financial services products. The findings outline how digital channels have started dominating the path to purchase for financial services and products. Whether it's a short-form video that's simplifying mutual funds or a creator-led Reel that's breaking down the insurance jargon, people are increasingly learning and acting on financial information through their Feeds. Said Shweta Bajpai, Director Financial Services, Media, Travel, Real Estate, & Services (India), Meta, "Financial planning is integral to the lives of most Indians across income groups. But this process is rapidly evolving, fueled by digital. Whether it's the growing role of Meta platforms in the purchase journey, the increasing influence of Reels and creators, the rising role of business messaging or the growing number of women who are taking independent financial decisions – the study dispels many myths about how financial products are discovered and bought today, offering valuable insights for marketers and brands in the industry." The Digital Pulse of Purchase Decisions Despite being an industry with substantial offline presence and touchpoints, the study shows that 6 out of 8 touchpoints in the purchase journey of financial products are now digital, with 50% of these digital touchpoints attributed to Meta platforms. Additionally, more than 50% of financial services consumers view personal finance and investing content on Meta platforms. Said Lalatendu Das, CEO, Publicis Media, India, said, "Publicis Media, as a strategic partner to Meta, leverages the platform's advanced advertising solutions to drive exceptional results for our clients. Through a collaborative approach, we harness Meta's AI-powered tools like Advantage+ Sales Campaigns (A+SC) to enhance product discoverability and customer acquisition. This partnership enables us to deliver significant increases in leads and bookings for our clients, achieving outcomes like 53% improvement in high-net-worth individual leads for ICICI Prudential Life Insurance or a 7x rise in leads at 81% lower CPA for a large bank in the Philippines."

## Minister Seethakka Ties Rakhi to MLC Dande Vittal

"Minister Seethakka Tying Rakhi to MLC Dande Vittal" "Kumrambheem, Asifabad district Reporter. Jade Srinivas. Indian Chronicle. August, 08. "ON the occasion of Raksha Bandhan, a festival that symbolizes the affectionate bond between brothers and sisters, Telangana State Minister Da-nasari Anasuya (Seethakka) tied a Rakhi to Adilabad MLC Dande Vittal in the national capital, New Delhi, on Thursday. Minister Seethakka expressed her sibling affection by performing the Rakhi ritual, to which MLC Dande Vittal responded with heart – "felt thanks. Speaking on the occasion, he said that Raksha Bandhan reflects an unparalleled bond of love, respect, and devotion, and conveys a universal message of sibling unity and care, especially from sisters. He further stated that the festival carries deep social and spiritual significance, promoting harmony and mutual respect in society. Both leaders extended their warm Raksha Bandhan greetings to the people of the Telangana.

## \*MLA Veerlapalli Shankar Urges Power Officials to Prevent Electricity Issues\*



"Conducts Review Meeting with Power Department Officials" "SHADNAGAR, August 8" "INDIAN CHRONICLE "Shadnagar MLA and Chairman of the Public Sector Enterprises Committee, Veerlapalli Shankar, instructed power department officials to take proactive measures to prevent electricity-related issues in the constituency. On Friday, he held a review meeting with power officials at his camp office in Shadnagar. "During the meeting, he highlighted that some farmers in the constituency have been facing difficulties due to a shortage of transformers, poles, and wires, which had come to his attention. He informed the officials that he had met with Deputy Chief Minister Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka to secure approval for a large number of transformers and other electrical equipment. He directed the officials to take immediate action to resolve these issues using the newly sanctioned transformers and materials. "He also emphasized the need to keep spare transformers readily available as an alternative for immediate replacement in case any transformer requires repair. He urged the power department staff to be accessible and promptly address electricity issues in villages. "The review meeting was attended by Congress party presidents from all mandals, key leaders, the Divisional Engineer (DE), Assistant Divisional Engineer (ADE), Assistant Engineers (AEs), and other prominent figures.

## Cybercrime police detect 11 cases in a week

Hyderabad, Aug.8 : The Cyberabad Cybercrime Police detected 11 cases for the week from July 29 to August 4, leading to the arrest of 15 offenders across multiple States.



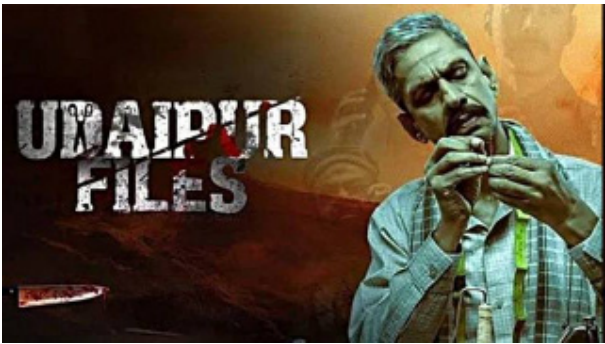








# ‘You acted as appellate authority’: Delhi HC asks Centre if it exceeded its powers by suggesting 6 cuts in ‘Udaipur Files’



GNS News Agency, August 8

The Delhi High Court on Wednesday orally asked the Centre if it has exceeded its powers as a revisional authority and instead ventured into being an appellate authority by suggesting six cuts to the film Udaipur Files. The Centre is expected to respond to the court’s query on Friday. The bench of Chief Justice D K Upadhyaya and Justice Tushar Rao Gedela was dealing with a petition by Mohammad Javed, an accused in the murder of Udaipur-based tailor Kanhaiya Lal on alleged communal grounds, which purportedly forms the basis of the film. Javed is seeking a postponement in the movie’s release until the trial ends, emphasising that it will jeopardise his right to a fair trial.

Earlier this month, Darul Uloom Deoband principal Maulana Arshad Madani had filed a Public Interest Litigation (PIL) pointing out that the movie is “replete with dialogues and instances that had led to communal disharmony in the very recent past and thus carry every potential to again stoke the same communal sentiments”. On July 10, the high court had temporarily stayed the film’s release while allowing those aggrieved by the purported vilification of Muslims in it to represent before the Central government and seek a review of the CBFC’s decision to greenlight the release. The court had noted that provisions under the Cinematograph Act empower the Centre to exercise revisional powers over the Central Board of Film Certification’s (CBFC) certification of a film. Javed, represented by Senior Advocate Menaka Guruswamy, argued before the bench on Wednesday that the Centre has exercised its revisional

powers in a manner that contravenes the statutory scheme prescribed under the Cinematograph Act. Guruswamy submitted, “The statute, as it stands today, envisages three kinds of revisional powers that can be exercised by the central government. The legislature never intended the Central government to be the film board...it’s a revisional power, they are not the board, they could not have suggested cuts.”

Under Section 6 of the Act, the Central government, while exercising revisional powers over CBFC certification already granted to a film, may either deem it to be an uncertified film in the whole or any part of India, or change the rating of certification, or may suspend the exhibition of the film. The Centre, represented by Additional Solicitor General Chetan Sharma, on Wednesday argued that in exercise of its revisional powers it had constituted a committee of five members which included members from the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Ministry of Home Affairs, and three others, which then recommended six cuts to the film which the filmmakers incorporated. The court, however, inquired if the Centre had exceeded its jurisdiction given the specific contours in which it can exercise its revisional powers as outlined under Section 6.

Chief Justice Upadhyaya orally posed a question to ASG Sharma, saying, “The kind of order you passed, suggesting for six cuts, whether this revisional authority is available with you?... Central government can only pass 3 (types of) orders, as enumerated under section 6 (2) (of the Cinematograph Act)... This committee (of five members) was formed to aid the ministry (of Information and Broadcasting), and based on the recommendations, the ministry could have passed an order as per Section 6... By suggesting cuts, you have acted as an appellate authority...” “It is the case of (Centre exercising its revisional powers) outside its jurisdiction... You are not exercising administrative powers, it is a statutory remedy which the petitioners were relegated to and if you are exercising the revisional powers, you have to exercise it within the four corners which confer that power,” he added. The bench has now kept the matter for further consideration on August 1, when the Centre is expected to explain its position on the court’s query.

# Missing Faridabad man at centre of probe after friend’s wife accuses him of rape; kin allege financial dispute

GNS News Agency, August 8

Over a week after he went missing, a 21-year-old Faridabad resident is at the centre of an investigation after the wife of his friend and colleague filed a police complaint accusing him of attempted rape just two days after his disappearance. The man’s family has, however, claimed that he went missing following a monetary dispute with the friend. Refusing to divulge details about the case, the police said a probe is underway into the missing complaint as well as the rape bid accusation. A police spokesperson said, “The accused (missing man) still appears to be on the run. We will be following due procedure in such cases. The rape survivor will be called for her statement and medical examination. Investigation is going on in both cases.”

The matter came to light when the man’s father returned from Haridwar after participating in the Kanwar Yatra. On June 24, a missing-person report was filed at the local police station, a day after the man’s motorbike, bag, and a shirt with bloodstains were found on a road in the village. According to the family, the police are yet to send a team for forensic analysis of the items recovered. Speaking to The Indian Express, the missing man’s father said his son, who worked for a quick commerce company, had a dispute with his colleague over money. “They were friends for two years. My son would keep lending money to his friend, who would ask for it on some pretext or the other.



Eventually, the sum reached close to Rs 2 lakh. My son took half of that money from our family,” the father said. offerHis son went missing after he asked the colleague about returning the money, the complainant alleged. “He had stopped returning our calls (since July 21). But his friend claims he spoke to him over the phone and even travelled with him outside the state last week. He is only responsible for whatever has happened to my son,” the man claimed, adding, “Paiso se ab matlab nahi, hume apna beta chahiye bas (The money does not matter now, we just want our son back).” The father added that while they had limited interactions with the rape complainant, she had no issues earlier. “We have not heard from his friend or been able to contact him (since July 23).”

# Friend of Mumbai school teacher arrested for sexually assaulting 16-year-old student surrenders before police



GNS News Agency, August 8

A woman, who is a co-accused and a friend of a school teacher arrested for allegedly sexually assaulting a 16-year-old student last month, surrendered before the Mumbai police Tuesday. A senior officer said it was earlier believed the woman, who allegedly helped the teacher in the crime, had left the country; however, a police probe revealed that she was in West Bengal. “Earlier this week, our team de-

tained her in West Bengal. She was, however, granted bail by a local court on the condition that she would surrender before the Mumbai police,” the officer said. The officer added that the co-accused surrendered Monday, following which she was produced before a court Tuesday, which sent her to police custody for two days.

The Mumbai police arrested the 40-year-old teacher of a prominent school in the city on June 29, and booked her on charges, including those under the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (Pocso) Act. A First Information Report (FIR) was registered in June after the boy’s mother saw a change in his behaviour and questioned him. The police said the teacher and the student had gone to hotels where the boy was sexually assaulted since January last year. During the probe, the police said the role of the teacher’s friend had come to the fore, following which she had been named as a co-accused in the FIR. The teacher’s friend had allegedly acted as an intermediary between the teacher and the student. A local court granted bail to the teacher on July 22. While granting bail, the court observed that, from the record, there is evidence from both sides showing that there was a consensual relationship.

# 3 men held in Kolkata for extortion through dating app for LGBTQ+ community

GNS News Agency, August 8

Kolkata Police have arrested three men for their alleged role in an extortion racket involving a dating app commonly used by members of the LGBTQ+ community. The arrests came after a complainant approached the police on July 17, claiming that the victim was lured to a secluded location and coerced into transferring nearly Rs 97,000. The FIR, filed at Ballygunge police station under Sections 308(2) (extortion) and 3(5) (common intention in criminal acts) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, alleges that the complainant met a man who identified himself as ‘Ashish’ through the app. The two allegedly then met in front of K B Motors on Gurusaday Road. The victim was then allegedly taken to an abandoned hutment near Ballygunge Circular Road, where ‘Ashish’ and two others allegedly threatened to ruin



the complainant’s reputation. Under pressure, the victim allegedly transferred Rs 96,888 across multiple bank accounts as demanded.

# 3 years of Sanjay Arora as Delhi Police chief: from media-shy officer to leading narcotics seizure worth Rs 13,000 crore



GNS News Agency, August 8

Amid speculation that his tenure may be extended, a farewell ceremonial parade has been organised on Thursday for Delhi Police chief Sanjay Arora, a 1988-batch IPS officer of the Tamil Nadu cadre. If the government does not grant him an extension, this will be Arora’s last ceremonial event, which is traditionally held for all police chiefs. The farewell ceremonial parade is a gesture of honour shown to the retiring police commissioner by the force at Police Lines, Kingsway Camp in Northwest Delhi. It concludes with a farewell speech by the officer, followed by the handing over of charge to his successor. Last month, the Delhi Home Department issued a formal notification announcing Arora’s retirement date as July 31. The Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) has yet to decide on the appointment of the next Delhi Police Commissioner. According to government sources, it is possible that an officer from outside the AGMUT (Arunachal Pradesh–Goa–Mizoram–Union Territory) cadre will be appointed again. If that happens, it will mark the third such consecutive appointment to the top post in the Delhi Police. Before Sanjay Arora, Rakesh Asthana, a 1984-batch IPS officer from the Gujarat cadre, served as the Delhi Police Commissioner after receiving a one-year extension to his service. He retired on July 31, 2022. In the days leading up to Asthana’s retirement too, there were similar speculations about a six-month extension to his tenure as the Delhi Police chief. Arora’s appointment order, which came late in the evening on July 31, 2022, from the MHA, had surprised the force, as he was also from outside the cadre and had also not yet completed his tenure as the head of the Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP), a role he assumed on September 1, 2021. He took over as the Delhi Police Commissioner on August 1, 2022, succeeding Asthana. Sources said that if the MHA considers appointing an officer from the AGMUT cadre, the senior-most of officers include S B K Singh (1988 batch), Virender Singh

Chahal (1991), Nuzhat Hassan (1991), Satish Golcha (1992), and Praveer Ranjan (1993). While Asthana was known for being vocal and never shying away from the media, Arora, during his three-year tenure as the head of the Delhi Police, remained media-shy and did not hold a single press conference on any issue. During his tenure, Delhi witnessed several major challenges, including threats, extortion, gang wars, street crimes, and cyber fraud. In the past three years, gangsters operating from abroad have posed a significant challenge to the Delhi Police, even issuing threats to officers on the force.

In 2023, the Special Cell successfully brought back one of the most wanted gangsters, Deepak ‘Boxer’ — an associate of Lawrence Bishnoi — from Mexico, marking one of the major successes of the force during Arora’s tenure. One of the biggest achievements of the Delhi Police during Arora’s stint was the busting of an international drug syndicate, resulting in the seizure of narcotics worth over Rs 13,000 crore by the Special Cell. For this, the MHA had appreciated the Delhi Police. However, several cases involving bomb threat emails sent to schools, hospitals, airlines, and other government institutions remain unsolved, besides two mysterious blasts that occurred in Rohini last year. During Arora’s tenure, the PCR (Dial 112/100) unit was re-established as a separate entity, after having been merged with the law and order unit during Asthana’s tenure. Arora’s stint, however, remained largely non-controversial. Although rumours about his transfer surfaced from time to time after he completed two years as Delhi Police Commissioner, he continued in the role. Arora is among the few officers who have served beyond the usual two-year tenure, following K K Paul (2004–2007) and Y S Dadvail (2007–2010). Additionally, Vivek Gogia, Special Commissioner and head of Delhi Police’s anti-terror unit, is also set to retire on the same day. Sanjay Arora’s stints in other forces During his time in the Tamil Nadu Police, Arora was the superintendent of police (SP) of the Special Task Force and carried out operations against forest brigand Veerappan in the sandalwood forests of the state. In 2004, the sandalwood smuggler was killed in a shootout by Arora’s team, which was led by famed IPS officer K Vijay Kumar. Arora was awarded the CM’s Gallantry Medal for Bravery and Heroic Action for his role. His work in Tamil Nadu earned him a Police Medal for meritorious service in 2004. Ten years later, he was awarded the President’s Police Medal for distinguished service. He was also part of the United Nations Peacekeeping Mission in Kosovo, for which he earned a UN Peacekeeping medal. He went on to serve as the director general of the ITBP and as the director general of the Sashastra Seema Bal (SSB) from 2021 to 2022.

# Delhi man kills 10-year-old son in revenge for wife leaving him due to his drug addiction

GNS News Agency, August 8

A man in Delhi’s Narela area allegedly killed his 10-year-old son Tuesday to take revenge on his wife who had left him to live separately with their two children due to his drug and alcohol addiction. The police said he called his wife to confess to killing their younger son. According to the police, the murder happened in the afternoon when the boy was returning home from his school. “The Narela police station received information regarding the recovery of the body of a 10-year-old boy with visible injury marks on the neck. The boy’s mother Komal made the call to the police control room, saying that her husband Narender called her and told her that he had killed their son and dumped his body,” a police officer said. According to the police, the couple used to have frequent fights due to Narender’s drug and alcohol addiction, and he had physically abused Komal on multiple occasions. Frustrated with her situation, Komal moved out with her children and began living in Om Vihar Colony in the Narela area, which angered Narender even more, said the police. He pleaded with her to return and even threatened her multiple times, according to the police. “On Tuesday, when his son was coming back from school, Narender got hold of him and took him away on the pretext of giving ice cream. He then took him to an undis-



closed location and strangled him to death,” a police officer said. In his call to her wife, Narender allegedly told her that he had killed their son because she was not coming back to him. The police filed a case under Section 103 (murder) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita at the Narela police station and began a search to trace Narender. This was the second Murder in Narela within hours of each other. A man allegedly pushed a 27-year-old woman from the sixth floor of a building in the area, leading to her death, in the early hours of Tuesday.

# Hackers wipe out Rs 384 crore from Bengaluru cryptocurrency firm Neblio Technologies; company says inside job



GNS News Agency, August 8

Bengaluru-based Neblio Technologies Private Limited, the parent company of cryptocurrency exchange platform CoinDCX, said it has lost Rs 384 crore due to hacking, in one of the biggest cyber crimes reported in the country. In a police complaint on July 22, Hardeep Singh, Vice-President, Public Policy and Government Affairs, Neblio Technologies, said that someone hacked into the company’s wallet to transfer cryptocurrency worth \$44 million (Rs 384 crore) at around 2.37 am on July 19 to six different accounts.

During an internal investigation, the company found that the laptop of an employee, Rahul Agarwal, was hacked, and Rs 15 lakh was remitted to his account. When questioned, Agarwal claimed he was engaged in a part-time job. A police officer said Singh alleged in the complaint that Agarwal was given a laptop for office work, and it had been strictly mandated that he was not allowed to use it for other purposes. However, Agarwal ignored the company’s mandate, he said. Singh suspected that Agarwal would have joined hands with some unknown persons to hack the cryptocurrency.

While speaking to The Indian Express, a spokesperson of Neblio said, “As the matter is currently under active investigation by the relevant authorities, we are unable to

share further details at this point to ensure the integrity of the process is not compromised. We urge the media and the public to avoid speculation or the circulation of unverified information, as it may impede the ongoing investigation.” The Whitefield CEN police have registered a case under sections 66 (computer related offences), 43 (penalty and compensation for damage to computer, computer system etc), 66(c) (identity theft) and 66(d) (cheating by personation by using computer resource) of Information Technology Act and 303 (theft), 316 (4) (criminal breach of trust), 318 (4) (cheating), 319 (2) (cheating by personation) of Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS).

# Dr Alok Kumar Rai takes charge as IIM Calcutta Director

Dr Alok Kumar Rai on Wednesday officially took over as the new Director of the Indian Institute of Management (IIM) Calcutta on Wednesday, becoming the fourth person to hold the post in the last three years.

The appointment was announced by Shrikrishna Kulkarni, Chairperson of the IIM Calcutta Board of Governors. “On behalf of the Board of Governors of IIM Calcutta and the entire IIM Calcutta community, it is my privilege to welcome Dr Alok Kumar Rai as our next Director,” Kulkarni said. “As the former Vice-Chancellor of the University of Lucknow, he comes to IIM Calcutta with a strong commitment to academic and research excellence, infrastructure development and good governance.”

Dr Rai began his academic career as a professor at Banaras Hindu University (BHU). During his tenure as Vice-Chancellor, Lucknow University had become the first institution in the state of Uttar Pradesh to receive an A++ grade accreditation from the National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC).



# Narrating the nation abroad



GNS News Agency, August 8

India’s decision to send diplomatic envoys and delegates to various countries to explain its position on the recent combats with Pakistan and the terrorist attack that triggered them raises an important question: is this display of proactive diplomacy a mark of strength or a gesture of reassurance?

On the surface, the move can be seen as a strategic effort to manage international perception, pre-empt misrepresentation, and reinforce India’s standing as a responsible global actor. Yet beneath that lies the more complicated reality of narrative legitimacy in a world where perception often outweighs fact, and international sympathy cannot be taken for granted. While much of the debate centres on the government’s domestic strategy in selecting members of the delegation and the political calculations behind it, the more important questions ought to concern the necessity, effectiveness, and anticipated outcomes of such a move. In the contemporary global order, it is no longer sufficient to act with self-justified conviction; states must constantly perform their legitimacy before an audience of allies, media, and institutions. India’s outreach can certainly be viewed as part of this performance. It aims to convince the international community that its military response is calibrated, directed at non-state actors, and rooted in the imperative to defend its sovereignty against terrorism — not as a pretext for escalating an old and unresolved national rivalry. From this angle, the move reflects a calculated strength: a confidence that India’s case, if communicated properly, can take the moral high ground and secure international solidarity. But at the same time, the very need for such an extensive exercise points to an underlying legitimacy deficit. If India’s position were entirely beyond reproach or universally acknowledged, would such explanation tours be necessary? The fact that India must engage in diplomatic clarification suggests a concern that its actions might be misread, misframed, or lost in the noise of global crises. In that sense, the effort reflects not just a desire to assert control over the narrative but also a tacit recognition of the fragility of international opinion. Crisis of credibility

This vulnerability is amplified in an era when misinformation travels faster than official briefings. Recent examples during the India-Pakistan conflict show how easily falsehoods become facts in the public imagination. Old video footage, unrelated disaster clips, and even scenes from digital war games have been circulated online and passed off as real-time evidence of military operations or civilian suffering. These are not state-sponsored manipulations alone; they are generated and shared by ordinary users. caught in a whirlwind of nationalist fervour, emotional reaction, or digital mischief. Both Indian and Pakistani social media users have shared sensational content that turns out to be fabricated.

AI-generated images and deepfakes complicate the picture, as they become harder to detect. In such a climate, India’s attempt to set the record straight may seem like swimming upstream, particularly when the people on both sides have already made up their minds based on viral clips and emotionally charged narratives.

What, then, is the implication of this collapse of credibility in the news? Does anyone care anymore about verifiable information as a public good? Or has the idea of news itself been absorbed into a larger game of affect and performance, where truth matters only insofar as it confirms one’s pre-existing bias? This erosion of trust poses a deep philosophical crisis. The old saying that “truth is the first casualty of war” was once confined to the logic of state secrecy — governments hiding facts from their citizens in the name of national interest. The Japanese emperor’s radio address at the end of World War II never mentioned the word “surrender” but instead said the war had “developed not necessarily to Japan’s advantage.” This was state-sanctioned euphemism, an elite strategy of softening reality. Today, however, the distortion of truth is no longer top-down alone — it is bottom-up, lateral, and participatory. Citizens actively produce the falsehoods they wish to believe, and in doing so, dissolve the very distinction between truth and illusion. This situation resonates powerfully with Jean Baudrillard’s provocative claim that “The Gulf War did not take place.” He did not mean that bombs were not dropped or that people did not die. Rather, he argued that the war was consumed entirely as spectacle — televised, mediated, edited — such that the reality of war was displaced by its simulation. In our time, that idea has become almost literal: the simulated now overrides the real in public perception.

In the realm of the humanities, where the pursuit of meaning, narrative, and ethical clarity is central, the end of credible news represents a profound loss. Without the possibility of shared facts, even argument becomes impossible. Disagreement presupposes agreement on the basic ground of what is happening. When that ground collapses, what remains is not debate but disorientation. In this sense, India’s diplomatic campaign is not just a strategic act of persuasion — it also represents a battle to restore the very conditions under which persuasion is meaningful. It remains unclear whether this effort signals an admission of vulnerability or a reassertion of strength — an attempt to reaffirm the nation’s authenticity, rooted in the accumulated legacy of the Non-Aligned Movement years. However, if this effort fails, then no amount of military precision or moral clarity will matter, because the audience will no longer be capable of distinguishing a justified action from a manufactured illusion. Hence, the deeper question is not whether India can explain itself to the world, but whether the world still retains a framework within which such explanations are heard as truth and not dismissed as just another version of the story.

# Google defeats Rumble’s antitrust lawsuit over video sharing market

GNS News Agency, August 8

Alphabet’s Google has persuaded a federal judge in California to reject a lawsuit from video platform Rumble accusing the technology giant of illegally monopolising the online video-sharing market. In a ruling on Wednesday, U.S. District Judge Haywood Gilliam Jr said Rumble’s 2021 lawsuit seeking more than \$2 billion in damages was untimely filed outside the four-year statute of limitations for antitrust claims. Rumble accused Google of violating antitrust law by rigging user searches to give preference to Google’s YouTube platform over Rumble. The lawsuit also accused Google of scheming with device makers to bar Rumble from being preinstalled on some Android phones. Google had no immediate comment, and Rumble did not immediately respond to a request for one. At the heart of its case, Rumble said there was “considerable direct evidence” that Google illegally was “self-referencing” its YouTube platform in web searches. Rumble claimed it lost out on billions of video views on its platform. Google has denied Rumble’s claims and had urged Gilliam to end the case before trial, which was set for July. Gilliam said Rumble failed to present evidence allowing a jury to find and apply an exception to the statute of limitations. The judge criticised Rumble for presenting “bare attorney argument lacking any evidentiary support.” Rumble, founded in 2013, had an average of 59 million global monthly active users in the first quarter of 2025,



the company said this month. The platform had recently expanded its trial team to include prominent litigator David Boies of law firm Boies Schiller Flexner. Rumble separately is suing Google over its digital advertising practices. The lawsuit, filed last year in California, accused the company of anticompetitive conduct relating to online advertising. Google has called Rumble’s claims in that case “simply wrong” and said Rumble uses “dozens” of competing ad services in addition to Google’s ad manager. Google faces other antitrust allegations by the U.S. government and groups of states that are challenging the company’s dominance in digital advertising and search markets. Google has denied the allegations in those cases.

# Murshidabad violence: High Court-appointed panel says local police were inactive, absent

Murshidabad violence, Murshidabad violence case, violence in Murshidabad, Murshidabad, Calcutta High Court, Indian express news, current affairs “Residents of Samserganj, Hizaltala, Shiulitala, (and) Digri came masking their faces. Local councillor, namely Mehoob Alam, came with the miscreants on April 11. The MLA was also present on Friday (April 11). He saw the vandalism and went away, but the violence continued on April 12, Saturday,” the report said. The three-member committee formed by the Calcutta High Court to look into last month’s violence in Murshidabad has said in its report that police were “completely inactive”. The report also mentioned local Trinamool Congress leader Mehoob Alam. “The attacks were directed by the local councillor Mehboob Alam. The local police were completely inactive and absent,” the report said of the violence that took place on April 11. The Calcutta High Court had last month directed the formation of a three-member committee to oversee the rehabilitation of those affected by the violence that broke out in Murshidabad between April 8 and 12 following protests against the Waqf Amendment Bill. The committee comprises Joginder Singh, Registrar, National Human Rights Commission; Satya Arnab Ghosal, member secretary, West Bengal Legal Services Authority; and Saugata Chakraborty, Registrar, WBJS. The

committee’s report said that miscreants destroyed a waterbottle shop and looted the cash box containing Rs 12,000-13,000. A shopping mall located in ward no 12 was also completely looted and closed, and 29 shops were affected in Ghoshpara, the report said. “Residents of Samserganj, Hizaltala, Shiulitala, (and) Digri came masking their faces. Local councillor, namely Mehoob Alam, came with the miscreants on April 11. The MLA was also present on Friday (April 11). He saw the vandalism and went away, but the violence continued on April 12, Saturday,” the report said. TMC spokesperson Joy Prakash Majumdar told The Indian Express, “We do not know anything about such a report. So, I would not like to make any comment.” The Calcutta High Court had on Friday directed the TMC government in the state to “remunerate and restore” all parties whose lives and properties were affected during the clashes in Murshidabad. The court was hearing a PIL in connection with the violence that broke out between April 8 and 12 in the Jangipur subdivision of Murshidabad, leading to the deaths of three persons, including a father-son duo. A Division Bench of Justices Soumen Sen and Raja Basu Chowdhury said, “Compensating the victims by giving each of them Rs 1.20 lakh under the scheme ‘Banglar Bari’ may not do justice to all as the damaged and destroyed houses, differing in size and constructional features

# Supreme Court grants interim bail to Ashoka University professor Ali Khan Mahmudabad

GNS News Agency, August 8

The Supreme Court on Wednesday (May 21, 2025) granted interim bail to Ashoka University Associate Professor Ali Khan Mahmudabad, but refused to stay the investigation against him for his social media posts on the Pahalgam terror attack, Operation Sindoor, and the sufferings caused by war. He was arrested by the Haryana Police on Sunday (May 18, 2025) after it filed two first information reports (FIRs) against him for his online posts.

A Bench headed by Justice Surya Kant made it a point to clarify that the interim bail was given to “facilitate” the investigation. The court directed the Haryana Director-General of Police to constitute a Special Investigation Team (SIT) within 24 hours of three senior, directly recruited IPS officers who did not hail from either Haryana or Delhi. The SIT would be led by an officer of the rank of Inspector-General. The other two investigators would be Superintendents of Police. One of the members would be a woman. Suspecting the academican of indulging in “dog whistling” through his social media posts, the court tasked the SIT with examining the language and checking the nuances of particular words used in the posts. The court said, prima facie, some of the words used by the Professor held a “dual meaning”. Justice Kant compared them to a “missile” seemingly shown as going in one direction but actually intended to travel the opposite way. “This is a matter of investigation,” Justice Kant remarked. The Bench directed Mr. Mahmudabad to join the investigation and cooperate with it fully.

The court also ordered the academican, represented by senior advocates Kapil Sibal and Siddharth Luthra and advocate Lzafeer Ahmad, to refrain from writing or speaking anything related to the posts. The court directed the petitioner to desist from expressing any opinions on the conflict recently faced by India in relation to the Pahalgam attack or Operation Sindoor. The court asked Additional Solicitor-General S.V. Raju, appearing for Haryana, to instruct the State not to register any further FIRs on the two posts. Mr. Raju submitted that the State was in “the process of unearthing more incriminating material”. The court gave the State liberty to place such material, if gathered, on record before it. Justice Kant, after Mr. Sibal took the Bench through the text of the social media posts, asked whether this was the time for his client to indulge in such talk. “The country



has faced a big challenge. Monsters came all the way from a different jurisdiction and attacked our innocent people. At a time when we are united... Why did you (Mahmudabad) try to create cheap popularity on this occasion?” Justice Kant asked. No criminal intent, says counsel Mr. Sibal said his client had no criminal intent. He was saluting and not denigrating the defence forces and people of India. “Everybody talks about freedoms, where is the duty to protect others? It is as if for the past 75 years the country is only distributing rights without telling what your duty to the nation is... The learned professor had no dearth of words... It is very, very unfortunate in a society where one is given freedom of expression, a choice of words is made deliberately to insult, humiliate or cause discomfort to others... This is called dog whistling,” Justice Kant observed orally. The court said the academican had a right to his opinion, but not at the cost of hurting others. “There was no criminal intent. He was obviously hurt by what was happening... He has not said anything against any woman officer,” Mr. Sibal responded.

# Why is India seeking to impose retaliatory tariffs on U.S.? | Explained



Retaliating to the U.S. imposing 25% tariffs on imports of steel and aluminium earlier in March, India notified the World Trade Organisation (WTO) last week of its intent to place tariffs on \$7.6 billion worth of imports from the country across the Atlantic. New Delhi held that the measure estimated to rack up \$1.91 billion in duties would mirror the impact on their exports of steel and aluminium because of Washington’s tariffs. The development transpired days before the two countries informed about having expedited progress towards the first tranche of the bilateral trade agreement. The reciprocal measures come into effect thirty days from the date of notification, that is, May 9.

What all has happened in the recent past?

Into his second term, U.S. President Donald Trump this March reinstated 25% tariffs on all steel and aluminium being imported into the country. This was alongside eliminating all country and product-specific exemptions. He argued the move meant to protect domestic industries being reportedly “harmd by unfair trade practices and global excess capacity”. The 45th U.S. President endowing paramount focus on pursuing protectionist policies is widely acknowledged and not anything new. Mr. Trump had earlier instituted tariffs on the two commodities back in March 2018 during his first term. Steel was subject to 25% tariffs whilst aluminium 10%. India first moved for retaliatory measures only in June 2019 when Washington removed it from their Generalised System of Preferences (GSP), citing unresolved issues. For perspective, GSPs are unilateral, non-reciprocal and non-discriminatory benefits extended by economically better economies to developing countries. Disapproving of the exclusion as “unfortunate”, India imposed retaliatory tariffs on 28 items of import (from the U.S.) as apples, walnuts and almonds, among others. Later in 2020, albeit unrelated to the prior development, U.S. expanded the scope of the regime to also cover derivatives of the two metals. The trade-related headwinds only sought to ease when Democrat leader Joe Biden assumed the North American country’s top administrative office in 2021. The formal steps were carved later during Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s visit to the U.S. in September 2023. Reciprocating India’s gesture to withdraw the duties imposed in 2019, the U.S. Dept of Commerce committed to ensuring greater market access to Indian steel and aluminium. Things however, reverted to the 2019 order with Mr. Trump’s return to the Oval Office this year. This time around, both aluminium and steel find themselves subjected to the same rate, that is, 25%.

What all issues have India highlighted?

The central point of contention is the nature of the American tariffs. The United States has maintained at the WTO that its measures are not safeguards but intended to pursue a “national security statute”. It argues that the tariff regime is in accordance with the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) 1994 and the Agreement on Safeguards (AoS), citing the redeemable exception for pursuing security interests in the covenant. However, as indicated in a WTO communication, the European Union, India, China and the U.K. disagree with the “characterisation of these measures, asserting that they are safeguards”. Further, India in its notice also stated that the mandatory consultations prior to attaining an acceptance of AoS had not taken place. Thus, it contended about reserving the right to “suspend concessions or other obligations” that are “substantially equivalent to the adverse effects of the measure to India’s trade”. India has indicated they intend to pursue the same by suspending concessions or other obligations.

How have our industries reacted to such develop-

ments?

The tariff revisions in 2018 had prompted concerns about Indian exports becoming “costlier and uncompetitive” in the U.S. market. Back then, the trade dynamics pitted India against countries accorded an exemption to the paradigm. The present regime, however, does not accord any exemption. Back then, according to data from the Joint Plant Committee tabled in parliament, finished steel exports to the U.S. declined 48.4% in FY 2019-20 and 46.7% in FY 2020-21. Furthermore, in response to a question on the same subject in February 2020, Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal told the house that the share of the U.S. in India’s steel exports came down to 2.5% in 2018-19 from 3.3% in 2017-18.

In the now concluded financial year 2024-25, provisional data indicated exports having increased 44.21% until February compared to a decline of 42.3% in FY 2023-24. Though the impact of the latest set of measures is yet to be ascertained, steel manufacturers have sought caution. In an investor call this February, the Steel Authority of India Limited (SAIL) held that the U.S.’ protectionist measures have raised concern among producers globally about “the potential retaliatory measures and (its) impact on the global trade pattern”. “The imposition of tariffs by the U.S. has also led to increased volatility in the global market. While U.S. steel market stock has surged in anticipation of gaining a competitive advantage, global producers are experiencing decline,” it observed.

Poignant to note, however, is that the protectionist policy of 2018 ironically did not cause much enthusiasm in Washington as well. An analysis by the U.S.’ Federal Reserve Board in December 2019 concluded the regime to have given a “small boost” to employment in the realm of manufacturing which was although offset by “larger drags” of rising input costs and retaliatory tariffs. Additionally, it attributed the increase in prices (for producers) to rising input costs.

What broader implications are we looking at?

Ajay Srivastava, founder of the Global Trade Research Initiative (GTRI), held that India’s latest WTO action could potentially cast a shadow over negotiations. He added that notwithstanding the same India’s “calibrated, rules-based approach” contrasts with the U.S.’ “unilateralism”, thus, positioning India as a “staunch defender of multilateral trade norms”. He further added that the move also indicated New Delhi’s tougher stance, especially in “politically sensitive sectors” as steel and aluminium, that aligned with its Make in India industrial strategy. Naveen Pant, Head of the Secretariat at the Aluminium Secondary Manufacturers Association (ASMA), told The Hindu that the step was necessary to protect the interests of the domestic industries. He further stated that being at par on the negotiation table would also help soften the impact of tariffs on steel and aluminium. “Earlier, they also had some arrangement through Mutually Agreed Solution (MAS) through which they got their agricultural products exempted in return for the exclusion of duty on steel and aluminium,” he explained. What happens next, though, according to Mr. Srivastava, would depend on Washington’s response. He observes that, should the U.S. engage in consultations or withdraw the contested measures, a solution could be attained. Failing which, India’s proposed reciprocal tariffs take effect in early June. “Either way, India’s move reflects a broader shift: a willingness to assert itself within global trade rules to protect its economic interests,” he argues.

# Bangladesh national held with fake passport at RGI Airport in Hyd

Hyderabad: A Bangladesh national was arrested by immigration officials for allegedly trying to travel to Italy with a fake Indian passport at the RGI Airport on Monday. As per available information, Das, a Bangladesh national, illegally crossed the country’s borders and entered Bhubaneswar in Odisha. He stayed there for some time and created fake identity documents and obtained an Indian passport in the name of Arfan Rai. He booked a ticket to Italy on Gulf Airlines GF-275 flight with the fake passport and reached the airport to board the flight.



# Probe ordered into West Bengal school cooking and serving midday meals separately to students of different religions



GNS News Agency, August 8

The school's present authorities and cooks claim the arrangement has been in place since 2000, when the mid-day meal scheme was introduced. The school has 72 students -- 29 Muslims and 43 Hindus. The school's present authorities and cooks claim the arrangement has been in place since 2000, when the midday meal scheme was introduced. A primary school in West Bengal's Purba Bardhaman district has been cooking and serving midday meals separately to students of different religions for years — a practice now under official scrutiny. At Kishoriganj Manmohanpur Primary School, located in Purbasthali I block about 150 km from Kolkata, meals are prepared by two separate cooks. The school uses separate utensils and kitchens, though on a single gas connection, and meals are served to students in separate classrooms based on their religion. The school's present authorities and cooks claim the arrangement has been in place since 2000, when the midday meal scheme was introduced. The school has 72 students — 29 Muslims and 43 Hindus. Once the issue came to the attention of the district administration, they ordered a probe, and the headmaster called a meeting of parents on Tuesday to address the situation. "We have sent an

enquiry team to the school. Action will be taken based on the report," said Ayesha Rani, District Magistrate of Purba Bardhaman. Speaking to The Indian Express over the phone, headmaster Tapas Ghosh said: "The students study together, sit in the same classroom, but the food is cooked and served separately. This has been the practice for years. I joined the school a year ago. I tried to intervene but failed. Today, I have called a meeting of parents and local panchayat members. We hope to resolve the issue." Cooks at the school confirmed the long-standing arrangement. "They won't eat food cooked by me. I've been cooking for Muslim students since the midday meal scheme began in 2000. The utensils and plates used are separate. The headmaster tried to change things, but couldn't," said Ranu Bibi, the cook assigned to Muslim students. "I cook for the Hindu students. The gas connection is shared, but everything else — from kitchen space to utensils — is separate. It's disheartening, but what can we do?" said Sonali Majumder. Former headmaster Govinda Bhadra, who served from 2002 to 2022, said the arrangement dates back to the early days of the scheme. "Initially, only one cook was employed. When objections were raised by one community, another cook was hired. I tried several times to end the practice and even informed the Block Development Officer and school inspector. But no action was taken," he said. Local panchayat leaders said they were unaware of the practice and that they will speak to residents of the village. "We were not informed of this. Now that we know, we will attend the meeting and ensure such a practice is stopped," said Kanan Burman, Pradhan of Nasratpur Gram Panchayat, under which the school falls. Mahbil Hussain Mondol, deputy pradhan of the same panchayat, added: "This is unacceptable. No such practice exists in other schools. The village has a 60:40 Muslim-Hindu population ratio. We will take steps to ensure this ends." "I don't know when the practice started, but it is unwanted and should be stopped," said Ganesh Gosain, a resident of the village.

# Gujarat govt begins process to bring state scholarship schemes under one portal

GNS News Agency, August 8

Gujarat scholarship scheme The proposed Gujarat Unified Scholarship Portal (GUSP) aims to consolidate multiple scholarship schemes into a single platform with an enhanced user experience through simplified application processes and automated status updates. (File photo) The third report of the Gujarat Administrative Reforms Commission (GARC), submitted to CM Bhupendra Patel on Monday, has recommended a unified portal to streamline all scholarships offered by multiple departments — Education, Tribal Welfare and Social Justice — of the state government.

Even as the report was released, the Education department had already begun to reform processes for admissions and scholarships in co-ordination with the Tribal Welfare department. While a centralised common exam was launched this academic session for admission to schools under these departments, they are working out a system to rope in the Social Justice and Empowerment department for scholarships. Principal Secretary of the state Education department Mukesh Kumar told The Indian Express, "Initial discussions on a common portal for scholarship schemes for students has already begun. The entire scholarship process has to be streamlined since there are different guidelines for schemes under the state government."

The GARC, headed by Hasmukh Adhia who is Principal Advisor to the Chief Minister, recommended creating the Gujarat Unified Scholarship Portal (GUSP) to enhance user experience through simplified application processes and automated status updates using a unique Child Tracking System (CTS) for student IDs. The commission suggests streamlining the process in Gujarat to enhance transparency, prevent duplication, and ensure that all deserving students receive appropriate support. "The departmental silo approach has created a complex web of eligibility criteria (caste, income, gender, merit, and domicile), application pro-



cesses, documentation requirements, and disbursement mechanisms that often overlap, contradict, or leave gaps in coverage", the GARC notes. It cites the "success" of underlying digital identity and DBT (data build tool) frameworks in other states for scholarships — Telangana, Odisha, Maharashtra and Kerala. The formation of the GARC was announced in the state's Budget (2025-26) on February 20 this year, followed by its constitution on February 25.

What scholarships do the state departments offer?

With a 75 percent share from the Central government, the Tribal Development department offers pre-matric scholarship to students from Scheduled Tribes (ST) studying in Class IX and X and postmatric scholarships including post-SSC scholarship for girls, boys, SEBC students in hostels, and merit-cum-means scholarship. The Education department offers Mukhyamantri Yuva Swavalamban Yojana (MYSY) to general category students with an income criteria and a percentile cut-off. The Social Justice and empowerment department offers pre and post matric scholarships, merit-cum-means scholarship, assistance for medical and engineering students, loan facility for students studying abroad, commercial pilot training, cycles for girls of class VIII, scholarships for MPhil and PhD, and tuition assistance for science students of Classes XI and XII among several others.

sought. According to the police, the robbers spoke in English and Hindi and seemed familiar with the house. They allegedly disconnected CCTV wires to prevent being captured on cameras. The duo also seemed to know where the cash and valuables were kept, the police indicated. The residents' welfare association in Cooke Town has urged the police to conduct a quick investigation to identify the suspects. The Pulakeshinagar police have registered a case of robbery between sunset and sunrise under section 309 (4) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita. The offence under 309 (4) entails an imprisonment of up to 14 years, unlike conventional robbery, which entails a prison sentence of up to 10 years.

# Speed limit for heavy vehicles in Bhore Ghat section likely to be increased to 50 kmph

GNS News Agency, August 8

Mumbai-Pune Expressway The concerns raised are valid as it is difficult for heavy vehicles to maintain such low speeds on the sharp downward slope." State Transport Commissioner Vivek Bhimanwar told PTI Tuesday. (A photo taken after a landslide in 2023) Authorities have said they are considering raising the speed limit for trucks and buses from 40 kmph to around 50 kmph on the Bhore Ghat section of the Mumbai-Pune Expressway between Khalapur and Lonavala after repeated complaints from transporters. Last month, officials of the Maharashtra State Road Development Corporation (MSRDC), highway police, transport department, and industry representatives carried out a detailed survey of the Bhore Ghat section, following complaints by the drivers on the "unscientific" speed restriction. "The concerns raised are valid as it is difficult for heavy vehicles to maintain such low speeds on the sharp downward slope," State Transport Commissioner Vivek Bhimanwar told PTI Tuesday.

# Pune BJP leader booked for 'sexually harassing' woman cop deployed near event attended by Union minister Nitin Gadkari



GNS News Agency, August 8

Woman cop harassed, BJP leader, Pramod Kondhre, Pune police, Pune The police have invoked provisions of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) against the accused. The Pune City police Tuesday night booked an office-bearer of the BJP's city unit on charges of sexually harassing a senior woman police officer and outraging her modesty near the venue of a programme attended by Union minister Nitin

Gadkari on Monday morning. The accused, Pramod Kondhre, is the general secretary of the city BJP unit and has been an officer-bearer of the party from the Kasba Peth area.

In a statement given to the police on Tuesday, he denied the allegations. Officers said the First Information Report (FIR) in this regard was registered at a city police station based on a complaint filed by the woman officer who was deployed on duty at the time of the incident. A senior police officer said, "As per the FIR, the incident took place near the venue of the programme organised by the BJP's city unit. Some people were having tea at the time at a tea stall nearby, including some BJP office-bearers." "It is alleged that Kondhre inappropriately touched the police officer at the time. The CCTV footage of the venue is being examined. A probe has been launched and statements of the people present at the site will be recorded. Kondhre has not been arrested yet," the officer added. The police have invoked provisions of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) against the accused, including section 74 (assault or use of criminal force to woman with intent to outrage her modesty) and 75 (sexual harassment).

# SAD leader Bikram Singh Majithia arrested after Vigilance raid, AAP MLA Kunwar Vijay Partap Singh cries foul



GNS News Agency, August 8

Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD) leader and former minister Bikram Singh Majithia was arrested in Amritsar Wednesday by the Punjab Vigilance Bureau after it conducted raids at his residence. Bikram Singh Majithia was taken into custody from his residence in Green Avenue, Amritsar, and is being taken to Mohali for further questioning. According to reports, a team of 15 officials, led by Vigilance SSP Lakhbir Singh, arrived at Majithia's residence in the morning to carry out a raid.

Following the raid, Majithia released a video showing a confrontation between him and the officials. His wife, Ganieve Kaur, alleged that the officers forcibly entered their house and physically pushed them during the operation. No official statement has yet been issued by the Vigilance Bureau regarding the case under which the action has been taken. Shiromani Akali Dal (Badal) president Sukhbir Singh Badal stated that the party firmly stands by Majithia, and described the action against him as a politically motivated move by the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) government. "The Shiromani Akali Dal stands like a rock with Bikram Singh Majithia. It is clear that Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann and his government are deeply rattled by Majithia's bold and outspoken exposure of their corrupt and dark dealings,"

Badal said in a statement. He accused the state government of misusing state agencies to suppress the voices of Majithia and other Akali leaders who are raising public issues. "This is not the first time that the Akali leadership has faced politically motivated actions. Such incidents have been occurring repeatedly, and we have always faced them head-on and will continue to do so," he said. Calling the registration of false cases a criminal act, he warned officials that all such actions carried out during the AAP Government's tenure would be subject to investigation at the appropriate time. "I appeal to police personnel to act within the framework of law, as only about a year and a half is left for this government," Badal added. Meanwhile, Kunwar Vijay Partap Singh, the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) MLA from Amritsar North, has also criticised the raid conducted at the residence of Bikram Singh Majithia. Known for his political rivalry with Majithia and as a prominent face of AAP during the Punjab Assembly elections, Singh's remarks have drawn attention for their tone and substance. In a statement, Kunwar Vijay Partap said, "Family dignity is a shared value — whether it concerns a politician, actor, rich or poor, friend or foe. Conducting a raid at someone's home early in the morning goes against ethical norms. After issuing a notice for questioning, a raid is being carried out at his home, which raises serious concerns, especially when it affects the honour and dignity of women in the household." Singh said almost every government misuses the police and Vigilance agencies for its benefit, "but such actions rarely yield meaningful outcomes". Addressing his differences with Majithia, Partap Singh stated, "I may have political or ideological disagreements with him, but when it comes to principles, ethics, and fairness, it is important to speak up." He also questioned the state's inconsistent approach to the legal proceedings against Majithia. "When Mr Majithia was in jail during the Congress government in a previously filed case, the Bhagwant Mann-led government neither took him on remand nor conducted any questioning. It was the same government apparatus that facilitated his bail," Singh said.

# Sub-committee asks Centre to expedite movement of grains

GNS News Agency, August 8

A four-member Cabinet sub-committee, set up by the state government to ensure timely paddy procurement, demanded that the Centre should ensure movement of at least 12 lakh tonne of rice per month so that space can be created for the crop by this season. The committee was created to prepare for smooth procurement in the paddy harvesting season. The committee comprising Agriculture Minister Gurmeet Singh Khuddian, Food and Supplies Minister Lal Chand Kataruchak, Water Resources Minister Barinder Kumar Goyal and Transport Minister Laljit Singh Bhullar held its first meeting in Chandigarh on Tuesday to address the issues that could create problems for the state government.

The state has been facing problems due to non lifting of grains from the godowns. The warehouses are full as the Centre has not been ensuring enough movement of grains to other states. The rice has to be stored in covered warehouses only and it cannot be kept in the open or in silos like wheat. At present, Punjab has a capacity of 120 lakh tonnes of grains in covered warehouses and it is completely full. Apart from this, 60 lakh ton grains are lying in open plinths. The ministers said that a coordination committee has already been formed so that there is no problem regarding



procurement. Food and Supplies Minister Lal Chand Kataruchak said that last year 173 lakh tons of paddy had arrived in the mandis, out of which 117 lakh tons of rice is yet to be produced. So far 100 lakh tons of rice has been given to FCI and 17 lakh tons of rice is still lying in the mills, the milling of which will be done by the end of July. He admitted that at present there is a shortage of covered godowns in Punjab in proportion to the grain. He said they have sent a proposal to the central government to build godowns with a capacity of 45 lakh tonnes. The proposal is awaiting clearance.

# New excise policy still being framed, only govt shops in Delhi can sell liquor for another few months

GNS News Agency, August 8

delhi excise policy Till the new policy is finalised and implemented, the government is planning to extend the old excise regime under which four government corporations run liquor shops. The current Delhi excise policy, under which only government departments and entities can open liquor shops in the city, is likely to be extended by a few more months as the much-awaited new policy is still being framed, officials confirmed. A high-level committee formed to develop the new excise policy is working on it, according to officials. "Discussions and deliberations are underway on the new policy... Policies implemented in the neighbouring states and cities are also being studied in a bid to implement a fool-proof policy to bring transparency and increase revenue," an official said. The committee will soon submit a preliminary report, officials added. Till the new policy is finalised and implemented, the government is planning to extend the old excise regime under which four government corporations run liquor shops. The current policy will expire on June 30. Delhi's excise policy has been under scrutiny since 2022, when the entire retail section was handed over to private players. The Central Bureau of In-



vestigation (CBI) and the Enforcement Directorate (ED) have alleged that the framing and implementation of the policy were suspect, with the then Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) government leaders reportedly taking kickbacks and tweaking clauses in the policy to favour a few businessmen. Several AAP leaders, including Arvind Kejriwal, Manish Sisodia, Sanjay Singh, and Vijay Nair, have since been arrested and released on bail, alongside businessmen.



# Only 900 speakers of the Sanna language remain. Now Cyprus' Maronites are mounting a comeback



GNS News Agency, August 8

KORMAKITIS, Cyprus — Ash dangled precariously from Iosif Skordis' cigarette as he reminisced with fellow villagers in a language on the edge of extinction, one that partly traces its roots to the language Jesus Christ once spoke. The 97-year-old Skordis is one of only 900 people in the world who speak Cypriot Maronite Arabic, or Sanna. Today, his village of Kormakitis is the last bastion of a language once spoken by tens of thousands of people across dozens of villages.

The tongue, an offshoot of Syrian Arabic that has absorbed some Greek, has been passed from generation to generation in this windswept community in Cyprus. Until less than two decades ago, there was no written script, or even an alphabet, since parents transmitted it to children in conversation. Only a handful of people are trained to teach it. Sanna is at risk of disappearing, according to the Council of Europe's minority language experts. One Indigenous language dies every two weeks, the United Nations estimates, diminishing the tapestry of human knowledge one strand at a time.

But the 7,500-strong Maronite community in Cyprus is pushing back. With help from the Cypriot government and the European Union, it has built schools, created a Sanna alphabet to publish textbooks and begun classes to keep the language alive and thriving. "Sanna ... is undoubtedly one of the most distinguishing features of our cultural identity," said Yiannakis Moussas, the Maronite community's representative in the Cypriot legislature. He spoke in the Kormakitis coffeehouse adorned with soccer trophies and banners emblazoned with a Lebanese cedar. "And it's striking evidence of our heritage. The fact that we speak a kind of Arabic over so many centuries makes it clear that we descend from areas of Syria and Lebanon." The language was brought to Cyprus by waves of Arab Christians fleeing persecution by invading Arab Muslim fighters in what is now Syria, Lebanon and Israel, starting as early as the 8th century. Sanna at its root is a semitic language that, unlike other Arabic dialects, contains traces of the Aramaic that was spoken by populations prior to the Arab invasion of the Levant, according to University of Cyprus linguistics professor Marilena Kariolemou, who leads the team responsible for the language's revitalization. That's because the Maronite community in Cyprus was isolated from other Arabic-speaking populations.

But as Maronites increasingly interacted with the

# White House slashing staff in major overhaul of National Security Council, officials say

GNS News Agency, August 8

President Donald Trump is ordering a major overhaul of the National Security Council that will shrink its size, lead to the ouster of some political appointees and return many career government employees back to their home agencies, according to two U.S. officials and one person familiar with the reorganization. The number of staff at the NSC is expected to be significantly reduced, according to the officials, who requested anonymity to discuss the sensitive personnel matter.

The shake-up is just the latest shoe to drop at the NSC, which is being dramatically made over after the ouster early this month of Mr Trump's national security adviser Mike Waltz, who in many ways had hewed to traditional Republican foreign policy. Secretary of State Marco Rubio has been serving as national security adviser since the ouster of Mr Waltz, who was nominated to serve as Mr Trump's ambassador to the United Nations.

The move is expected to elevate the importance of the State Department and Pentagon in advising Mr Trump on important foreign policy moves. But, ultimately, Mr Trump relies on his own instincts above all else when making decisions. The NSC, created during the Truman administration, is an arm of the White House tasked with advising and assisting the president on national security and foreign policy and coordinating among various government agencies. Mr Trump was frustrated in his first term by political appointees and advisers who he felt gummed up his "America First" agenda. There were roughly 395 people working at the NSC, including about 180 support staff, according to one official. About 90 to 95 of those being ousted are policy or subject-matter experts seconded from other government agencies. They will be given an opportunity to return to their home agencies if they want. Many of the political appointees will also be given positions elsewhere in the administration, the official said. The NSC has been in a continual state of tumult during the early going of Mr Trump's second go-around in the White House.

Mr Waltz was ousted weeks after Mr Trump fired several NSC officials, just a day after the influential far-right activist Laura Loomer raised concerns directly to him about staff loyalty. Ms Loomer has in the past spread 9/11 conspiracy theories and promoted QAnon, an apocalyptic and convoluted conspiracy theory centred on the belief that Mr Trump is fighting the "deep state," and took credit for the ouster of the NSC officials that she argued were disloyal. And the White House, days into the administration, sidelined about 160 NSC aides, sending them home while the administration reviewed staffing and tried to align it with Mr Trump's agenda. The aides were career government employees, commonly referred to as detailees.

This latest shake-up amounts to a "liquidation" of NSC staffing, with both career government detailees on assignment to the NSC being sent back to their home agencies and several political appointees being pushed out of their positions, according to the person familiar with the decision. A White House official who spoke on the condition of anonymity confirmed that the overhaul, first reported by Axios, was underway. Andy Baker, the national security adviser to Vice-President J.D. Vance, and Robert Gabriel, an assistant to the president for policy, will serve as deputy national secu-

island's majority Greek-speaking population and became bilingual, Sanna evolved to incorporate several Greek words, adding to its uniqueness among the many Arabic dialects. According to Kariolemou, Sanna contains five vowels similar to Greek and another three similar to Aramaic, while consonants whose sounds are formed in the back of the throat have diminished, likely because of the Greek influence. Sanna also adopted Greek syntax, she said.

Until the mid-1970s, the Maronite community was largely centered around four villages: Asomatos, Ayia Marina, Karpasia and Kormakitis as the cultural center. But the 1974 Turkish invasion that split Cyprus into a breakaway Turkish Cypriot north and a Greek Cypriot south, where the internationally recognized government is seated, saw most Maronites dispersed throughout the south. Asomatos and Ayia Marina are empty of Maronite inhabitants and are now Turkish army camps. Moussas, the community representative, said the consequences of 1974 were "catastrophic" for the Maronites as they gravitated toward the island's major cities, putting their culture and language at risk as children attended Greek-speaking schools and intermarriage with Greek Cypriots increased. It's said that currently, only one in five Maronite marriages are between members of the community.

That left Kormakitis as the linguistic "hive" for Cypriot Maronite Arabic, only spoken by residents over 50, according to retired teacher Ilias Zonias. Born in Kormakitis, Zonias is the only native Sanna speaker qualified to teach the language. Kormakitis was a closed society in which residents spoke Sanna, while their kids went to school not knowing Greek. That's how the language was preserved, Zonias said. Still, speakers after 1974 began to dwindle until around the turn of the millennium, when the Maronite community with the help of the Cypriot government increased efforts to save the language. Cyprus' 2004 membership in the EU was a milestone for Sanna as the bloc poured resources into safeguarding Indigenous minority languages, a designation that Cypriot authorities had bestowed. Kariolemou said her team in 2013 set up a recorded archive of spoken Sanna, some 280 hours long, for further study. A 27-letter alphabet was created in mostly Latin characters, thanks mainly to the work of linguist Alexander Borg. Grammar was formulated and refined, enabling the publication of books for teaching Sanna. Language courses are in their early stages, Skordis said, with about 100 children and adults in classes in Kormakitis and the Saint Maronas primary school in the Nicosia suburb of Lakatamia. A summer language camp for children and adults in Kormakitis has also been created. An initiative is underway for native-born speakers — primarily Kormakitis residents — to learn how to teach Sanna. At Ayios Maronas primary school, 20 kindergarten-age children are learning the language with books containing QR codes that can be scanned so students can follow an audio adaptation on school-provided tablets. But for Sanna to have a real future, there is no substitute for young families returning in large numbers to Kormakitis, where the language can be taught in the newly built, EU-funded school, Moussas said. Community leaders, however, aren't pleased with the low number of people expressing interest. Moussas said community leaders and the Cypriot government are looking into offering incentives, primarily to make it easier to find housing.



# The move is expected to elevate the importance of the State Department and Pentagon in advising Mr Trump on important foreign policy moves

ity advisers, according to the White House official. Mr Waltz, during his short tenure heading the NSC, came under searing criticism in March after revelations that he added journalist Jeffrey Goldberg to a private text chain on an encrypted messaging app that was used to discuss planning for a sensitive military operation against Houthi militants in Yemen. Mr Waltz has taken responsibility for building the text chain but has said he does not know how Mr Goldberg ended up being included. Ms Loomer had encouraged Mr Trump to purge aides who she believes are insufficiently loyal to the "Make America Great Again" agenda. She also complained to sympathetic administration officials that Mr Waltz was too reliant on "neocons" — shorthand for the more hawkish neoconservatives within the Republican Party — as well as what she perceived as "not-MAGA-enough" types, the person said. It wasn't just Ms Loomer who viewed Mr Waltz suspiciously.

He was viewed with a measure of scepticism by some in the MAGA world who saw the former Army Green Beret and three-term congressman as too tied to Washington's foreign policy establishment. On Russia, Mr Waltz shared Mr Trump's concerns about the high price tag of extensive U.S. military aid to Ukraine. But Mr Waltz also advocated for further diplomatically isolating President Vladimir Putin — a position that was out of step with Mr Trump, who has viewed the Russian leader, at moments, with admiration for his cunning in dealings with Mr Trump's predecessors. His more hawkish rhetoric on Iran and China, including U.S. policy toward Taiwan, seemed increasingly out of step with Mr Trump, who — setting aside belligerent rhetoric about taking over Greenland from Denmark — has tilted more toward military restraint and diplomacy in facing some of the United States' most challenging issues with adversaries.

# Trump administration puts new limits on reporters at Pentagon



GNS News Agency, August 8

U.S. Defence Secretary Pete Hegseth on Friday (May 23, 2025) issued orders that require journalists to have official escorts within much of the Pentagon building, the latest in a series of Trump administration restrictions placed on the press. The measures, which take effect immediately, bar credentialed reporters from most of the Department of Defence headquarters in Arlington, Virginia, unless they have an official approval and escort. "While the Department remains committed to transparency, the Department is equally obligated to protect CSNI (classified intelligence) and sensitive information - the unauthorized disclosure of which could put the lives of U.S. Service members in danger," Mr. Hegseth said in a memorandum. He called the protection of classified national intelligence information and operational security "an unwavering imperative for the Department."

The Pentagon Press Association, a membership organization representing the interests of the press corps covering the U.S. military, said the new rules appeared to be a "direct attack on the freedom of the press." "The decision is purportedly based on concerns about operational security.

# Engaging with U.S., China honestly a key priority, says Singapore PM Wong

GNS News Agency, August 8

A key priority for Singapore Prime Minister Lawrence Wong will be to deepen the trade-focused country's relations with the major powers, especially the U.S. and China, engaging with them honestly in a principled manner while not getting caught in their rivalry. Speaking after his newly re-elected government was sworn-in on Friday (May 23, 2025), Mr. Wong stressed, "Where our interests align, we will work with them (the US and China). Where they do not, we will stand firm and protect Singapore's security and sovereignty." He also added that the first priority would be to secure an "assured place" for Singapore in this "changed world".

Singapore, said Mr. Wong, will also seek new ties with countries in parts of the world, like Africa and South America, where it does not have much presence yet. "In a world of shifting alliances, we will be a steady and constructive partner, one willing and able to contribute to peace and stability, to advance dialogue and fraternity, and support a rules-based global order," he said. "Our goal is not just to navigate this uncertain world, but to help shape it for the better, by working with like-minded partners, and upholding shared principles and values, so that small nations too have a place under the sun," he said. The country's economic strategies will be reviewed and updated for the new landscape, he said, adding that the government will develop "a new economic blueprint for our next phase" to sustain Singapore's competitive edge and create good jobs for Singaporeans.

It will also help businesses, households and workers "weather the storm" as global growth slows in the near term, added 52-year-old Mr. Wong, who secured a landslide win

But the Pentagon Press Corps has had access to non-secured, unclassified spaces in the Pentagon for decades, under Republican and Democratic administrations, including in the aftermath of the Sept. 11, 2001 attacks, without any concern about OP-SEC from DoD leadership," the statement said. The Pentagon did not immediately respond to a Reuters request for comment on the press association's statement. Since President Donald Trump returned to office in January, the Pentagon has launched an investigation into leaks that resulted in three officials being placed on administrative leave.

It has also required legacy media organizations, including the New York Times, the Washington Post, CNN and NBC News, to vacate their Pentagon office spaces in a new rotation system that brought in others, including outlets generally friendly to the Trump administration such as the New York Post, Breitbart, the Daily Caller and One America News Network. The Trump administration says the move is intended to allow other media outlets the opportunity to report as resident members of the press corps. More broadly, the Trump administration has deployed lie detector tests to investigate unclassified leaks, with some Department of Homeland Security officials being told they could be fired for refusing polygraphs, Reuters reported on Friday (May 23, 2025). The White House says Mr. Trump will not tolerate leaks to the media and that federal employees who do so should be held accountable. Mr. Hegseth's Friday (May 23, 2025) order also requires members of the Pentagon press corps to acknowledge a responsibility to protect national intelligence and sensitive information, and says they will be issued with new credentials that more prominently identify them as members of the press. "We also anticipate a forthcoming announcement of additional security measures and enhanced scrutiny on the issuance of (credentials)," the memo said.



in the May 3 general election. Mr. Wong's first electoral outing as head of the country's fourth-generation leadership saw the ruling People's Action Party (PAP) taking 87 out of 97 seats in the country's 15th Parliament. Mr. Wong noted that when issues of race and religion surfaced in the recent election, "we did not allow them to divide us", a sign of how far multi-ethnic Singapore has come as a society, and a reminder that racial and religious harmony cannot be taken for granted. The government will also prepare Singapore for the future, particularly in speeding up the transition to cleaner energy and adapting to the realities of climate change, he said. "The international community and investors would have taken note of these outcomes. They would see a nation that is united, standing firmly behind its leaders, and placing confidence in a government with the strength and security to secure Singapore's place in an unpredictable world," he said. President Tharman Shanmugaratnam presided over the swearing-in ceremony of Singapore's new Cabinet at the Istana (Presidential Palace).

# Kyiv comes under large-scale Russian drone and missile attack; explosions heard throughout city

GNS News Agency, August 8

Ukraine's capital Kyiv came under a large-scale Russian drone and missile attack early Saturday (May 24, 2025) with explosions and machine gun fire heard throughout the city, forcing many Kyiv residents to take shelter in underground subway stations. The nighttime Russian attack came hours after Russia and Ukraine began a major prisoner exchange, swapping hundreds of soldiers and civilians in the first phase of an exchange that was agreed on by the two sides at a meeting in Istanbul last week. The agreement was a moment of cooperation in otherwise failed efforts to reach a ceasefire in the three-year-old war. The debris of intercepted missiles and drones fell in at least four city districts of the capital early Saturday (May 24, 2025), acting head of Kyiv military administration, Tymur Tkachenko, wrote on Telegram. According to Mr. Tkachenko, six people required medical care after the attack, two fires sparked at Solomianskyi district of Kyiv. Prior to the attack, city mayor Vitalii Klitschko warned Kyiv residents of more than 20 Russian strike drones heading towards Kyiv. As the attack continued, he said drone debris fell on a shopping mall and a residential building in Obolon district of Kyiv. Emergency services were headed to the site, Mr. Klitschko said. The prisoners swap Friday (May 23, 2025) was the first phase of a complicated swap involving the exchange of 1,000 prisoners from each side. President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said the first phase brought home 390 Ukrainians, with further releases expected over the weekend that will make it the largest swap of the war. Russia's Defence Ministry said it received the same number from Ukraine. As the freed men entered the medical facility Friday (May 23, 2025), people



holding signs and photos of their relatives shouted names or brigade numbers, seeking any news of a loved one. The returning men inspected the photos, and a serviceman said he shared a cell with one of those on the sea of portraits held out toward him. "Vanya!" cried Nataliia Mosych, among the gathered relatives, "My husband!" She hadn't seen her husband, Ivan, for almost two years, she said, beaming. "It is an unbelievable feeling. I am still in shock," Mosych said after he came outside to greet his family following registration procedures inside the facility. "I am really glad, and we were not forgotten, and we still mean something for Ukraine." The exchange, which would be the latest of dozens of swaps since the war began and the biggest involving Ukrainian civilians at one time, didn't herald any halt in fighting. Battles also continued along the roughly 1,000-kilometer front line, where tens of thousands of soldiers have been killed, and neither country has relented in its deep strikes.

# Microsoft fires employee who interrupted event to protest AI tech for Israeli military

Microsoft has fired an employee who interrupted a speech by CEO Satya Nadella to protest the company's work supplying the Israeli military with technology used for the war in Gaza. Software engineer Joe Lopez could be heard shouting at Nadella in the opening minutes Monday of the tech giant's annual Build developer conference in Seattle before getting escorted out of the room. Lopez later sent a mass email to colleagues disputing the company's claims about how its Azure cloud computing platform is used in Gaza. Lopez's outburst was the first of several Palestinian disruptions at the event that drew thousands of software developers to the Seattle Convention Center. At least three talks by executives were disrupted, the company even briefly cut the audio of one livestreamed event.

Protesters also gathered outside the venue. Microsoft has previously fired employees who protested company events over its work in Israel, including at its 50th anniversary party in April. Microsoft acknowledged last week that it provided AI services to the Israeli military for the war in Gaza but said it had found no evidence to date that its Azure platform and AI technologies were used to target or harm people in Gaza. The advocacy group No Azure for Apartheid, led by employees and ex-employees, says Lopez received a termination letter after his Monday protest but couldn't open it. The group also says the company has blocked internal emails that mention words including "Palestine" and "Gaza." Microsoft hasn't returned emailed requests for comment about its response to this week's protests.



# At 40, gym-goer had sudden cardiac arrest despite clean diet, no smoking and working out for 20 years: How doctors saved his life in 8 minutes and found out the reason



It was a regular morning on July 9 for Mohit Sachdeva (40), a resident of Delhi's Lajpat Nagar. Just like it was for the last 20 years when he would go to the gym at 7.15 am. However by 8.45 am, just half an hour later, his life changed. A realtor by profession, Mohit started getting dizzy and collapsed while doing 180 kg of leg press. He had had a sudden cardiac arrest. But the story doesn't end there. He lived to tell the tale. All because help was at hand within the eight-minute window that such a situation allows.Wife Ruby Sachdeva remembers the phone call from his gym friends saying that he had been taken to Medanta-Moolchand Heart Centre. "What saved him was the cardio-pulmonary resuscitation (CPR) that somebody in the gym gave him," she says. This procedure, involving chest compressions and mouth-to-mouth oxygen, can help save a life during cardiac arrest, when the heart stops beating or beats too ineffectively to circulate blood to the brain and other vital organs. In fact, many of the sudden cardiac arrests among young people in the country result in death because of a lack of CPR.

## HOW EARLY INTERVENTION WORKED

When Mohit was brought to the hospital, he still had no pulse. He had to be given advanced CPR, electric shocks and when a pulse showed up on the monitor, was put on the ventilator. "Every minute after a sudden cardiac arrest is critical because the brain starts dying in the absence of oxygenated blood flow. Then the organs shut down one by one," says Dr Abbas Ali Khatai, ER consultant.Once the heartbeats stabilised, Dr Tarun Kumar, interventional cardiologist at the Medanta Moolchand Heart Centre, administered drugs to help raise blood pressure. An electrocardiogram (ECG) and bedside echocardiogram later, doctors did an angiography and found that three of his heart vessels had been blocked. "Two arteries were completely blocked. We first did an angioplasty on the artery that had been blocked recently, a minimally invasive procedure to widen blood vessels, and put a stent, a mesh bridge to hold the walls apart and prevent them from narrowing again. Once the procedure restored blood flow in the arteries, the patient was then moved to the heart ICU, where he regained consciousness. We scheduled another procedure to open up his remaining arteries later so as not to destabilise a very compromised heart and the kidneys," says Dr Kumar.Mohit's recovery was impressive. Within 24 hours, he was taken off the ventilator and his blood pressure medicines were regulated. After three days, he was stable enough to go home, where he is currently following a cardiac care protocol before the procedure to open up his remaining arteries.

## CAN A HEART BLOCKAGE TRIGGER SUDDEN CARDIAC ARREST?

A heart blockage in a coronary artery disrupts blood flow to the heart muscle, potentially leading to a dangerous electrical malfunction in the heart, triggering irregular heart-

beats and eventual shutdown. "In Mohit's case, the blockage triggered his cardiac arrest," says Dr Kumar.Most fit youngsters, according to him, overlook getting tested for their underlying heart conditions. Some conditions like thickness of the heart muscle or hypertrophic cardiomyopathy are inherited, others may be genetically predisposed to blood clotting faster and yet others may have a family history of high cholesterol. "That's why all Indians need to get their cardiac tests done post-25 annually, especially those with a family history. And everybody should get a full cardiac workup and endurance test done before joining a gym," says Dr Kumar.What Mohit had ignored was the pain he felt in his left arm every time he exercised. "We found that he had been experiencing that dull pain during workouts for the past two years and had dismissed that as muscle strain. He experienced a similar kind of pain when he went to Vaishno Devi last year. But he neglected it as a result of a trek. What he thought was a muscle pull was actually an angina pain. This is the first indication of reduced blood flow to the heart. But he never consulted anybody," says Dr Kumar. And unknown to him, he had high blood pressure. "If only he had got a checkup done, then he would not have reached this crisis point," he adds.Do not neglect left upper limb pain, lower jaw pain, choking or a burning sensation and excessive fatigue.

## DID UNREGULATED PROTEIN POWDERS RAISE THE RISK OF BLOCKAGE?

Wife Ruby says Mohit has been an avid gym goer for the last 20 years, was fit and, therefore, had never got a cardiac check-up or evaluation done. "We never felt the need because Mohit kept to a discipline. He never ate junk food or ordered food from outside, ate healthy at home, never smoked and drank within limits only at social occasions. We never went to a restaurant more than once a month," she says. It was only after his heart episode that tests revealed that Mohit was hypertensive, had borderline high cholesterol and fatty liver. "But none of these conditions had manifested as symptoms," says Ruby.However, Mohit had recently started taking herbal supplements and protein powders in the gym. "He would spend about 1.5 hours in the gym doing cardio and strength training exercises," says Ruby. Consuming very high amounts of protein, especially from supplements, can strain the kidneys and potentially lead to dehydration, which can indirectly affect heart health.Also, high protein, that is beyond the tolerable limits of the body, encourages plaque build-up, according to mice studies. Researchers found that mice fed on a high fat, high protein diet had not just developed plaque, the build-up was worse than in the mice that had eaten the high fat, low protein diet. Besides, this plaque was found to be "unstable," the kind that breaks off the arterial wall easily, increasing the risk of blockages and, potentially, a heart attack.So if you are a gym-goer, consult a doctor first even with subtle symptoms, advises Dr Kumar. "If you indulge in heavy or strenuous activity without addressing them, then it can have catastrophic effects. It can lead to a sudden heart attack and sudden cardiac arrest," says Dr Kumar.

## WHY CPR?

Dr Abbas says CPR should be taught at the community level to save lives. "The timely administration by Mohit's gym friends helped him. Others are not as lucky. Besides, why wait for a cardiac arrest which can even lead to permanent brain damage with patients going into coma with a tube in their throat? It leads to a big strain on the family financially, emotionally and mentally," he says.

## WHAT ABOUT POST-CARDIAC REHABILITATION?

Once procedures are done, Dr Tarun says a post-cardiac arrest survivor should start walking for 10, 15 minutes and gradually increase to 20, 30 and 40 minutes over six weeks or a little more. "After that, we do a treadmill test before suggesting what he should do ahead. Physical activity does help in collateral formation, better fitness helps in better symptom control and all of this helps in controlling body weight," says Dr Kumar.

# Tracing the route of King Rajendra Chola's 1000-year-old Gangetic expedition



The gala celebrations of the millenary of Rajendra Chola - I's Gangetic expedition has turned the spotlight on how his mighty army traversed vast swathes of eastern and northern India in the 11th century CE, overcoming several powerful kingdoms along the way to reach the Ganges and fetch water for the monarch's glory.Contrary to the popular belief that Rajendra Chola personally marched towards the Gangetic plains, inscriptions on the Tiruvalangadu copper plates reveal that one of the ablest generals of the king had commanded the military expedition towards the Ganges. The monarch had stayed back on the banks of the Godavari.

With the help of voluminous historical works such as The Colas by K.A. Nilakanta Sastri, Pirkaala Sozhar Sarithiram (History of Later Cholas) by T.V. Sadasiva Pandarathar, and The Palas of Bengal by R.D. Banerji, The Hindu attempts to reconstruct the path traced by Rajendra Chola's army. These accounts reveal the Chola forces defeated kingdoms in the eastern Deccan, coastal Odisha, and eventually clashed with the Pala dynasty in Bengal.The actual campaign began not from the Chola's capital in the South, but from the northeast of Venginadu that spread across the Godavari and Krishna rivers. Venginadu, at that time, was ruled by kings (Eastern Chalukyas or Chalukyas of Vengi) loyal to the Cholas. Due to Vengi's close ties with the Cholas, and since all the regions to its south were already under Rajendra Chola's empire, the expedition began north of Vengi, with the first conquest in that campaign being Chakrakkottam.

Chakrakkottam is situated eight miles from Rajapura, on the southern bank of the Indravati River. In modern times, the place is known as Chitrakootam (Bastar region in present-day Chhattisgarh). After the fall of Chakrakkottam, the Chola army marched towards the green fields of 'Masuna Desam' or 'Masuni Desam' under the control of brave rulers of the Chindaka family, who identified themselves as belonging to the Naga lineage.Nilakanta Sastri, while citing a Tamil Prasasti, says the region of Maduramandalam, Namanaiikonam and Panchappalli, all fell under the 'Masuni Desam'. He said Maduramandalam was destroyed in a trice by the Chola army. Namanaiikonam with dense groves and Panchappalli, whose warriors bore cruel bows, were also conquered by Rajendra's commander.Following that, the Chola commander marched further northeast, defeated Indraratha at Adinagara, and captured the regions of Odda (Odisha). His campaign took a westward turn with the capture of the Kosala kingdom. The region of Kosala referred to here is Dakshina

(southern) Kosala, also known as Mahakosala.Having consolidated control over central-eastern India, the next target was Dandabhukti to the east, ruled by Dharmapala. Dandabhukti comprised the southern and southwestern parts of the Midnapore district in Bengal. Therefore, it likely stretched along both banks of the Subarnarekha River.

From there, the Chola forces advanced towards Bengal. After defeating Dharmapala, Rajendra's army marched towards Dakshinaradha (Takkana Ladam in Tamil), ruled by Ranasura. 'Radha' (also spelt as Ratta or Lada) was the ancient name of a part of Bengal, which was bounded on the north by the Ganges. Dakshinaradha refers to the area comprising today's Hooghly and Howrah districts in Bengal, while Uttarakadha (Uttara Ladam in Tamil) refers to the regions comprising Murshidabad and Birbhum districts.

## Ganges

With southern Bengal subdued, the commander passed eastwards, crossed the Ganges, and reached Vangala Desam (Eastern Bengal), which was then ruled by Govindachandra. Following the conquest of Eastern Bengal, Rajendra Chola's army turned westward and defeated Mahipala. The commander reached the Ganges, fetched water from the river, and brought it to his sovereign lord, Rajendra, whom he met on the banks of the Godavari during the army's retreat.Though the fetching of the Ganges water was perhaps part of the original objective, the true motive was undoubtedly an exhibition of the Chola empire's power and a demonstration of its strength to the rulers of northern India, says Nilakanta Sastri.Rajendra then returned to his kingdom with his victorious general. In great joy, the emperor accepted the sacred objects brought back. During his return journey, he visited various temples and made offerings, as mentioned in several inscriptions. One such inscription was found in Thriloki (modern-day Thirulogi near Thiruppanandal in the Thanjavur district), located about ten miles southeast of Gangaikonda Cholapuram, notes Sadasiva Pandarathar.According to the Annual Report on South Indian Epigraphy for the year ending March 31, 1932: "A fragmentary record engraved in Tiruloki makes an interesting reference to the incident of the king worshipping the sacred feet of the Lord at this village, which is only about 10 miles from Gangaikonda Cholapuram, while returning with the waters of the Ganges. (Rajendra-Choladevar Gangaikondur elundarulukinna idattu tiruvadi tolu[du])." The ancient name of this place was given as Trailokyamahadevichaturvedimangalam.According to Sastri, such expeditions were undertaken by all powerful monarchs in India and were enjoined upon them by the political code of the country. The aim of the expedition was not merely to bring down the water of the Ganges to the Chola capital, but to do so after establishing a right of way across territories outside the empire by a strong show of force. This becomes clear from the statement that at the end of the expedition, Rajendra erected a 'liquid pillar of victory' (jalamayam jayastambham) in his capital with the waters of the Ganges, in the form of the tank Cholagangam.Banerji says the invasion of the Chola king did not change the political divisions of the country, but it left one permanent mark in the shape of a body of settlers, who occupied the thrones of Bengal and Mithila as the Sena and Karnata dynasties during the latter days of the Palas.

# Why solar dried epipelagic fish has 70% protein, only 12% salt and long shelf life

If fresh fish is already a rich source of protein (17-19%) depending on the fish variety, dry fish with up to 70% protein is a far superior source of protein. Besides high protein content, dry fish is also a rich source of omega-3 fatty acid, calcium and iron. Since the protein content is high, a substantial amount of protein requirement can be met by consuming just 5 grams of dry fish. Epipelagic fish such as mackerel, sardine, anchovy, and ribbon fish are chosen for fish drying."Dry fish is a great source of protein. It can be a good supplement for Anganwadi and midday meals, especially in coastal fish-eating communities," says Dr. Soumya Swaminathan, Chairperson of MSSRF.

One of the major drawbacks of traditional drying of fish is the high salt content of over 30%, far exceeding the FSSAI limit of 15%. Together with high salt content, traditionally dried fish is often unhygienic by virtue of being dried in the open, and has a short shelf life of about two months. Researchers at M.S. Swaminathan Research Foundation (MSSRF), Chennai and Fish for All Research and Training Centre at Poompuhar, Tamil Nadu, which is a MSSRF hub of innovation, have turned to solar drying to successfully address these pain points.Cutting down salt content

"The salt content of solar-dried fish is about 12%. FSSAI has set a limit of 10-15% salt content for salted dried fish," says Ms. N.A. Anbu Vahini, Lead, Training and Development at MSSRF, Chennai. "Only about 3% salt is added to fresh fish, which becomes 12% when the fish gets dried. Traditionally dried fish has over 30% salt content."Fresh anchovies from the sea naturally contain around 1-2% salt. After drying, even when no salt is added, the natural salt concentration in the fish increases to around 5-7% due to moisture loss. "We have also studied the shelf life of unsalted fish dried under hygienic conditions and packed in aluminium foil. This method has provided a shelf life of up to nine months. However, according to FSSAI and CODEX standards, dried fish must have a minimum salt content of 12% to meet compliance requirements," she says.

Doubling the protein contentIf the protein content in traditionally dried fish is about 35-40%, it goes up to 70% in solar dried fish. "The low protein content in traditionally dried fish is because of high moisture content," Ms. Vahini says. The main reason why the moisture content is high in traditionally dried fish is because the fish is not dried fully to reduce the moisture content below 16% as specified by FSSAI. The moisture content is reduced from about 70% to about 35-40% during summer and over 45% in winter in traditionally dried fish. In contrast, moisture content in solar dried fish is 5-15% to achieve higher shelf life. But up to 16% moisture is permissible. "When the moisture content is high the shelf life is short. This is the reason why traditionally dried fish has a short shelf life of about two months," Ms. Vahini says. "The solar dried fish has a shelf life of nine to 12 months when moisture content is 5-7, and nine months when the moisture content is about 10-15%."Even during peak summer, it takes about 22 hours to dry anchovy fish with 18% moisture using open sun drying, whereas solar drying takes only nine hours and reduces the moisture to just 6%. The open sun-drying method relies on ambient conditions of 34 degree C and a relative humidity of 54%, whereas solar drying increases the temperature to 55-60 degree C and reduces the humidity to about 17%. This quickens the drying process, she says. In winter, it takes about a day to dry using a solar drier, achieving 23% moisture content, compared to three days with 39% mois-



ture content in the case of traditional open sun drying. "The solar drying method is 1.2 to 2.4 times faster compared with traditional sun drying, depending on the weather conditions," Ms. Vahini says.Importance of packagingShelf life depends not only on the moisture content but also on how the dry fish is stored post-drying. While no packaging material is used to store dried fish in the traditional method, people using solar driers use aluminium foil pouches or HDPE tray boxes to pack the dry fish. "Solar dried fish is stored in the containers and then packed using aluminium foil pouches. Vacuum packaging will make it airtight but then we don't recommend it because it's costly for small-scale fishers. Aluminium foil solves the problem when it is properly sealed. When correctly packed, the moisture content is about 5-7% and we have achieved 12 months of shelf life," Ms. Vahini says. Proper selection of fresh fish, thorough cleaning using potable water, solar drying, and packaging using aluminium foil ensure that the dried fish is hygienicAnother key reason traditional open sun drying results in inferior dried fish is the use of leftover or unsold fresh fish, rather than fish specifically selected for drying. In some cases, even poor quality or spoiled fish is used. Fisherwomen have now been trained on all aspects of the process, including the importance of using fresh, high-quality fish for drying, she says.Dry fish has a stronger smell than even fresh fish but can be reduced if care is taken at every step of the drying and packaging process. "The smell is greatly reduced when fish is washed properly prior to drying, following the correct salting process, maintaining hygienic conditions during the drying process, by increasing the rate of drying, reducing the amount of moisture in the dried fish, and proper packaging post-drying," Ms. Vahini says. "Smell can be further reduced if the dry fish is powdered."Solar drying not only accelerates the drying process but also ensures superior product quality, lower moisture content, reduced microbial contamination, and enhanced nutritional retention.Higher profitsAccording to Dr. S. Velvizhi from Fish for All Research and Training Centre, MSSRF, Poompuhar, traditionally dried anchovy sells at Rs.200-250 per kg, while solar dried anchovy sells for Rs.450-600 per kg. If the traditionally dried anchovy fish is bigger in size, it sells for Rs.300-400 per kg, while solar dried fish sells for Rs.750-800 per kg.MSSRF has trained the fishing community in Tamil Nadu around the Poompuhar region, Nagapattinam, Cuddalore, and Rameshwaram on every aspect of fish drying starting with selecting fish for drying to packaging. Besides housing a large solar drier at its centre in Poompuhar, MSSRF has also supplied 50 mini, portable solar dryers with a capacity of 25-30 kg per day to women in Mudasalodai in Cuddalore district so they can dry fish in their own place instead of coming to the centre. Dr. Velvizhi says the Tamil Nadu government wants MSSRF to replicate the project in some fishing villages in the State.

# Why the Gini Index is wrong about India

The Gini Index ranked India among the world's most equal societies, by giving the country a score of 25.5. This places India in a 'moderately low' inequality category. While this may be cause for celebration, the lived reality in India paints a very different picture. Inequalities, lived and those captured in statistics, permeate into everyday life in urban and rural India. The question that therefore arises is, on what basis can India be considered one of the world's most equal societies? While there is sufficient critique on the flawed methodology used in the Gini Index, this article highlights the general state of inequality that plagues India. While gender, economic, health, educational, and social inequalities have always been endemic to India, with technology and a modern ways of life, new forms of inequality such as digital and banking inequality have arisen.

Forms of inequalitiesOne of the fundamental forms of inequality is wealth inequality. A ride through any busy street in urban India in a luxury car which costs an average of ₹30 lakh, driven by a chauffeur who earns and supports a family on approximately ₹3 lakh per year, will highlight the stark wealth inequality that exists. Statistics also supports this reality. According to a study titled 'Income and Wealth Inequality in India, 1922-2023: The Rise of the Billionaire Raj', in 2022-23, 22.6% of the national income went to just the top 1% of the population. Further, the study mentions that data on wealth inequality is challenging to capture because of the large-scale prevalence of informal employment, low-income levels, and high thresholds for non-taxable incomes, which means that data on tax pertains to less than 10% of the adult population. The reason for the lack of data itself is indicative of inherent wealth inequality, as a large part of the population has to rely on the informal sector for employment, earning significantly less than those employed in the formal sector.

Gender inequality is another fundamental form of inequality in India. Women have historically been marginalised from the workforce and comprise about 35.9% of the worker population ratio. The number is starker at senior and middle management levels where women accounted for only 12.7% leadership roles as of 2024. While India has the third largest startup ecosystem in the world, women-run start-ups stand at only 7.5% of all active startups in the country. Social norms aggravate gender inequality in terms of spending family resources on the girl child, and in matters of inheritance.With rapid development of technology, access



to digital technology is crucial to broadly navigate through modern day life such as easily accessing formal banking channels. While India has made commendable progress in providing access to the Internet to a large part of the population, a careful analysis of the numbers points to a severe digital divide. Lack of access to the Internet and to digital technology exacerbates the digital divide, leading to lack of opportunities for a certain demography.For instance, only 52.7% schools have functional computers, and Internet is accessible in only 53.9% of schools across India. This contributes to the digital divide because only students from a certain socio-economic background, who have access to schools with functional computers and the Internet, will be adept in the use of technology and computers, a critical skill in today's times.Access to quality higher education and even basic entry-level jobs are difficult for students left behind. They are then pushed into employment that requires lower skills. This digital divide will continue to perpetuate the cycle of inequality at the household level.Other forms of digital technology also contribute towards fuelling educational inequality. For instance, combined access to broadband within households, encompassing both urban and rural areas, stands at 41.8%. This deepens educational inequality because when education becomes virtual, which is a routine occurrence in New Delhi when schools are closed during November and December because of severe air pollution, only those students in households with access to a broadband system and digital technology can continue with their education.Inequality in one realm often permeates into other realms. For instance, digital inequality severely affects the lower income demography.



# IMF upgrades India's FY26 GDP growth forecast to 6.4% as trade tensions ease



India's GDP is estimated to have increased by 6.5 per cent in 2024-25, the lowest growth rate in four years. The Reserve Bank of India (RBI), meanwhile, expects the GDP to grow by another 6.5 per cent in the current fiscal, with the Indian finance ministry estimating it in the range of 6.3-6.8 per cent. For 2026-27, the RBI on April 9 had forecast a growth rate of 6.7 per cent. Back in April, the IMF had cut its growth forecasts for India by 30 basis points (bps) to 6.2 per cent for 2025-26 and by 20 bps to 6.3 per cent for 2026-27 due to "higher levels of trade tensions and global uncertainty". Since then, the tariff war waged by the US has eased

# Brain cyst-causing tapeworm infection surges in Mumbai: Here is all you need to know about this monsoon malady

It is a leading cause of late-onset seizures in developing countries and can result in severe, sometimes irreversible, neurological damage. Symptoms depend on the number, size and location of cysts and the immune response of the infected person. "These include seizures and epilepsy (most common), debilitating headaches, persistent nausea and vomiting, confusion and neuropsychiatric issues, progressive cognitive decline or motor deficits and in severe



Treatment involves antiparasitic drugs (such as albendazole), anti-inflammatory medications (to control inflammation in the brain), anti-epileptic drugs (for seizures), and supportive care. "Surgery is sometimes needed for severe complications like hydrocephalus (fluid buildup in the brain)," says Dr Renjen.



# Microsoft

marketing companies. The company—formerly Essar Oil—was earlier part of the Essar group. It was renamed as Nayara Energy after a group of investors including Rosneft acquired it from the Essar group. Like Rosneft, Kesani Enterprises—a consortium led by Italy's Marettara and Russia-based United Capital Partners (UCP)—hold 49.13 per cent stake in the company. While owned by a group of international investors—mainly from Russia—Nayara maintains that it is an Indian company governed by Indian law. “While the sanctions originate exclusively from the EU, Microsoft—a US-headquartered corporation—has chosen to withdraw services from Nayara Energy without any legal requirement to do so under US or Indian law. This action has been taken unilaterally, without prior notice, consultation or recourse, and under the guise of compliance. Such moves signal a worrying trend of global corporations extending foreign legal frameworks into jurisdictions where they have no applicability,” Nayara Energy said in its statement Monday. “All of Nayara Energy’s operations are fully compliant with Indian laws and regulations, and the company remains in regular engagement with Indian authorities to ensure transparency and accountability... Despite these external challenges that Nayara Energy is currently facing, we remain fully committed to ensuring uninterrupted service and supply to India’s energy demands,” the refiner added.

## My patient has high blood sugar but loves cheese: Should he have it in his meals?

Eating cheese late at night isn't ideal if it's part of a heavy or oily dish. But if you're adding a little paneer to a salad or having a light meal, that's fine. Try not to combine it with high-fat meats or fried items. Vegan cheeses may be lower in saturated fat but they're not always healthy.



# Consistent line, early focus on bat and ball, faith from Gautam Gambhir: Washington Sundar's journey to becoming an integral member of the Indian team



In the lead-up to that year's Under-19 World Cup, as Washington was leaking runs in the preparatory fixtures in Kolkata, Sundar only found out what was wrong once he saw his son bowling at the venue. "He was tossing them up like a classical off-spinner would do. And Sarfaraz Khan hit him for three-four sixes over mid-wicket in one over. I couldn't believe what he was doing," he tells The Indian Express. That night, Sundar would drop in to the team hotel to have a quiet word or two to remind Washington what he originally is. "When he joined the team for the camp, they wanted him to flight the ball and toss it up. He is not Prasanna or (R) Ashwin. Washington's strength is constantly attacking the stumps and bowling in the same spot again and again and testing batsmen's patience. Now that Ashwin isn't around, you can't expect him to bowl like him. He is a great with over 500 Test wickets. Washington has to bowl like Washington..." Sundar pauses before completing the sentence: "And bat like Washington."

In India's ongoing tour of England, Washington has shown with the ball and bat why he would be an integral member of the national team squad going forward. At Edgbaston and Lord's, he has shown his off-breaks don't need favourable conditions and that he has enough guile to create opportunities. And on the final day at Manchester, his unbeaten 206-ball 101 showed why he deserves to bat up the order. With a strong defence as his base, he is capable of constructing innings like any other top-order batsman and that's one of the reasons why many in Tamil Nadu cricket have been harping, for long, that Washington's batting capabilities are being under-utilised. That may no longer be the case as Washington is emerging into a cricketer that Sundar has been dreaming of all along. "I wanted him to be the captain's go-to man across formats with bat and ball. When you are switching formats, I didn't want anything to be compromised. If your foundations are strong, you can manage everywhere. I have given Washy a strong base," Sundar says. For decades, Kamal Haasan has been the lone, bright shining star in Chennai's Eldams Road. Now, with the 25-year-old all-rounder's breakthrough performances in England, he has Washington for company.

The traits that Sundar spells out are what caught Stephen Fleming and MS Dhoni's attention in the 2017 IPL. In 2025, it is why India are counting on Washington every time they pick him in the XI, knowing he won't give away easy runs and can make telling contributions with the bat. It is precisely what Washington has delivered through the series, where he has left so much of a mark with the ball that Shubman Gill's captaincy came under sharp scrutiny for not bowling him till the 69th over of England's innings at Manchester. He may not be a conventional off-spinner, but the drift alone has caused England batsmen plenty of trouble. "Very early in his age, all that I would make him bowl was spot bowling. I would drop a handkerchief on the pitch just outside the off-stump line. Washington's job was to keep landing the ball repeatedly on it and hit the top of off-stump. With that line and the drift he was getting, I believed, he had more chances to succeed because he would constantly be bowling in the line of the stumps and even if it holds its line, then the outside edge will come in play. As a spinner, he can still test both the edges. And when he was also deceiving batsmen with his drift," Sundar says. Washington Sundar and Ravindra Jadeja Everything that the English and Indian cricketers had done showcased a perfect response to the perennial question asked of Test cricket: Why play a game that goes on for five days – 35 hours, sometimes more – and yet produces no result? (AP Photo/Jon Super)

Being tall, Washington's high-arm release and open-chested action mean he has the sight of batsmen at all

times, allowing him to make adjustments till the point of release. Those huge fingers, impart plenty of revs, which in turn enable him to get the drift. That has become the sucker punch for batsmen. "He has always had the drift," AC Pratheepan, who has been mentoring him of late in Chennai, says. "In the last few years, he has undergone a small tweak, where he wants to use the crease and angles more to create the illusion in the minds of batsmen that he is getting more turn than what is actually on offer." #WashingtonSundar reflects on how special it was to score his maiden Test century to help save the match and how he and #Ravindrajadeja planned the rescue act together.

If that drift left both New Zealand's Tom Latham and Rachin Ravindra squared up, in Manchester, it left Harry Brook in a different postcode. In all of it, apart from the drift, the angle causes an element of illusion. Pratheepan points out how Washington has slightly changed his grip on the ball, which enables him to impart more revs than before. "Actually we'd been working on these things for way too long. Unfortunately, he went through a lot of injuries in between, which delayed it a bit. But once he got fully fit, his bowling has just evolved. It might seem like he isn't doing much, but in terms of angles, speed and trajectory, he bowls a lot of variations that will make him effective across conditions," Pratheepan, who also mentors Varun Chakravarthy, adds. Stop-start comeback

In January 2021, when Washington left Brisbane, he had put his imprint on a famous Test series win. He would later name his pet dog 'Gabbu' and was full of hope. In the next two months, he would play three more Tests against England and had scores of 85\*, 0, 0, 96\*; only to be never picked again till the beginning of 2024. As India moved on from the Virat Kohli-Ravi Shastri era, it appeared they were doing so without Washington as well, going two entire World Test Championship cycles without considering him. Injuries (Two in his fingers and one in his shoulder and hamstring) also played their part, as every time he made a comeback, a lay-off seemed around the corner. Washington would change his diet plans, would go about improving his fitness, yet something seemed to hold him back. Washington Sundar India vs England India's Washington Sundar celebrates after scoring a century on the final day of the fourth cricket test match between England and India at Emirates Old Trafford, Manchester, England, July 27, 2025. (AP Photo/Jon Super) "It was definitely not an easy period," his father Sundar says. "It was difficult to see him because he looked stressed and down. Personally, I've never seen him like this and at home, we, as a family, tried everything to keep in a good frame of mind. Growing up, because of cricket, he has missed out on a lot of things that other kids get to experience. And since he always calls me a hard taskmaster (Sundar was Washington's first coach as well), at the ground, he was always fear-stricken when he saw me at home." During his stint as mentor of Lucknow Super Giants, Gautam Gambhir had told assistant coach Sridharan Sriram how Washington was being under-utilised in Indian ranks. Now in the hot seat as India head coach, at his first sight of distress during the New Zealand series, it was Washington that Gambhir turned to. When many expected Kuldeep Yadav to feature in the series – similar to the current circumstance in England – it was Washington who came in after a solid spell in the Ranji Trophy and got a spot in the XI. Washington's batting, despite his heroic efforts at Brisbane, Chennai and Ahmedabad, has gone under the radar. In Chennai cricket circles, many, including the reputed WV Raman, have always seen him as a top-order batsman who can bowl rather than a bowler who can also bat. In Washington's formative years, Sundar had ensured his son got equal attention to both facets of the game. The mornings would see him alternate every day between bowling and batting before it was fine-tuned at the MRF Pace Foundation. "When Sundar brought him, even as a 14-year-old he could face fast bowlers bowling with a full run-up. He wasn't afraid of facing them," M Senthilnathan, who coaches him at club level, says. "Even when he came here, he had a strong defence. When your defence is strong, you can add shots to your batting. He doesn't need to change his game based on the format. He has shots that go all around the park. If he constantly gets to bat higher up, you will see more from him as a batsman. With confidence, he would only get better," he says.

## 'We tend to take Mohammed Siraj for granted...': Parthiv Patel hails pacer's heroics in Anderson-Tendulkar Trophy



Siraj, who has played in all the Tests of the series, has taken 14 wickets in the series with an average of 39.71 in seven innings and has so far taken 114 wickets in 40 Test matches in his career. (AP Photo) Siraj, who has played in all the Tests of the series, has taken 14 wickets in the series with an average of 39.71 in seven innings and has so far taken 114 wickets in 40 Test matches in his career. (AP Photo)

Jasprit Bumrah could be rested for the fifth Test of the Anderson-Tendulkar Trophy while England captain Ben Stokes has been ruled out of it altogether. Through all of it, though, Mohammed Siraj is expected to feature yet again for India and lead the pace attack if Bumrah does sit it out. Former India wicketkeeper Parthiv Patel has stated that Siraj has almost been taken for granted while hailing the 31-year-old for his efforts throughout the series. Siraj, who has played in all the Tests of the series, has taken 14 wickets in the series with an average of 39.71 in seven innings and has so far taken 114 wickets in 40 Test matches in his career. While the BCCI medical team has recommended Bumrah not to be considered for the final Test at The Oval starting Thursday, Siraj will be leading the Indian bowling attack. Parthiv hailed Siraj's effort and termed it as 'commendable' "We tend to take Mohammed Siraj for granted. The effort he puts in, the intensity, and the smile

he wears — no matter the match situation — that's commendable," Parthiv said on the JioHotstar show Gameplan. "As for Bumrah, we're all aware of how carefully his workload is being managed. It was announced at the press conference that he would play only three Tests, so there are a lot of factors to consider — recovery, fitness, workload. But I would personally want to see him play the final one. Hopefully, the support staff travelling with the team can help him recover in time." India have kept Kuldeep Yadav out of their playing XI throughout the series. They stayed alive in it with all-rounders Ravindra Jadeja and Washington Sundar, along with earlier herculean efforts from Shubman Gill and KL Rahul, grinding out a draw in the fourth Test. With Bumrah expected to miss the last Test, Patel believes India should play Kuldeep Yadav as an 'attacking bowler'. "India should approach selection the way they've approached their batting — with confidence.

## AIFF sets up Benevolence Fund to aid football community

Hyderabad: In the Executive Committee meeting held on July 2, 2025, as a follow-up to an earlier meeting, AIFF president Kalyan Chaubey reiterated the decision to create a Benevolence Fund to support individuals associated with football — including ex-players, coaches, referees, match officials, support staff, and even football journalists. The fund will provide a one-time grant for medical purposes, with terms and conditions to be set by the relevant committees.

He cited recent instances where individuals sought financial help for serious medical conditions but found that the AIFF lacked a specific fund or policy to support such requests. To initiate the fund, the president announced a personal contribution of ₹1,00,001, which was matched by vice president NA Haris, bringing the initial total to ₹2,00,002.

# Manoj Tiwary on IND vs PAK clash in Asia Cup 2025: 'Operation Sindoor is still going on. How can we play a match with Pakistan?'



GNS News Agency, August 8

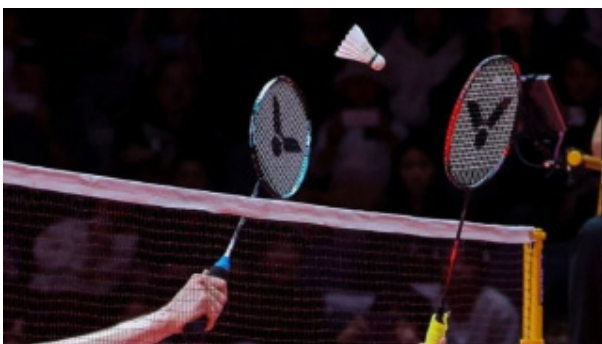
The Indian cricket team is scheduled to play a game against Pakistan in the upcoming Asia Cup 2025 in September. The tournament is set to be hosted in the UAE, and The Men in Blue will clash against The Men in Green on 14th September. Former Indian cricketer Manoj Tiwary questioned how India can play Pakistan after the Phalgam terror attack and with Operation Sindoor still going on. "The situation was so bad, how can we think of an India-Pakistan match? I feel that it should be considered again and the India-Pakistan match should not happen in such an environment," Tiwary said, speaking on ANI. This will be the first match between India and Pakistan since the at-

tack. Subsequently, Operation Sindoor was conducted by the Indian armed forces in Pakistan against terror emanating from that country.

"Our Prime Minister is saying that Operation Sindoor is still going on. How can we play a match with Pakistan?" Tiwary asked. The two sides were slated to meet in the Women's Asia Cup for emerging players last month. However, the BCCI withdrew from the tournament in the aftermath of the terror attacks and the consequent escalation in hostilities. The Indian cricket board even threatened the Asian Cricket Council (ACC) to shift their annual meeting from Dhaka to another country. The Indian Express learnt that they warned other countries not to attend the meeting in the Bangladeshi capital. However, with the BCCI officials and Sri Lanka Cricket chiefs attending the meeting through video conferencing earlier this month, the schedule for the September event was finalised.

Recently, a senior sports ministry official said the government will not stop India from playing against Pakistan in multi-nation tournaments. Confirming the dates and the host nation for the Asia Cup, ACC president Mohsin Naqvi, also the Pakistan Cricket Board president, posted on X: "I am delighted to confirm the dates for the ACC Men's Asia Cup 2025 in the UAE. The prestigious tournament will take place from September 9th to 28th. We look forward to a spectacular display of cricket! The detailed schedule will be out soon. #Cricketwins"

## How Chinese's love for pork is threatening badminton in France



GNS News Agency, August 8

France's badminton association should be very happy with the recent boom in the shuttle sport in their country but they are sweating over an unexpected problem: rising costs of the shuttlecock due to China's increased consumption of pork. The hike in prices of goose and duck feathers are the key factor as they are used in feather shuttlecocks, still the preferred choice compared to any synthetic alternatives. But what's China's culinary choice of pork got to do with it? It's a classic case of interconnectedness of supply chains and its disruptive effect in food production.

The declining pork prices in China have driven up consumer demand for the delicacy. This then makes fewer farmers keen to raise ducks and geese, which in turn makes their feathers — and hence the shuttlecocks — more expensive. China remains the main producer of feather shuttlecocks. "The clubs talk to me about it every day. We're

taking the full brunt of it, but we don't have control over the prices," Franck Laurent, the new president of the French Badminton Association told the sports newspaper L'Equipe.

"It's colossal. Over ten years, it's increased almost 100%. Boxes that we used to pay 13-14 euros for are now at 24-25 or more," Dimitri Vaginet, president of the Volant Bisontin, told L'Equipe. "And it's not over. Before, we had a raise once a year, now it's almost every three or five months." L'Equipe reports that on average, a French club uses nearly 600 shafts of 12 shuttlecocks per year. Each shuttlecock requires sixteen goose feathers — preferred because they are the strongest — or duck feathers. France is seeing a boom in popularity of badminton of late. It's not just a French problem of course, back in China too the same problem has been reported. people.cn quoted the owner of six training centres in Beijing last month. "We moved as quickly as we could to prepare the money and grab all the supplies we could get our hands on," said Li Taxi, who runs the company Poyan Sports' umbrella. "Each tube of midrange shuttlecocks costs 70 to 80 yuan (\$9.70 to \$11.10). With her players training up to 18 hours a week — many of them play six hours a day on weekends — the costs pile up quickly. We spend 100,000 to 200,000 yuan out of our own pocket every year to support the competitive classes (of players), and about 80 percent of that goes to shuttlecocks," she told people.cn. Badminton is China's most popular sport, with a mindboggling 250 million recreational players, according to the 2023 national sports participation survey released by the General Administration of Sport of China. "The supplier explains to us that there are fewer resources and that the priority for supply is directed towards Asia," Dimitri Vaginet said.

## 'The curator telling him to go away from pitch is not acceptable': Irfan Pathan on Gautam Gambhir's verbal spat with Oval curator Lee Fortis

GNS News Agency, August 8

Indian Head Coach Gautam Gambhir and Oval's Chief pitch curator Lee Fortis were seen in a verbal spat on Tuesday. The Indian batting coach, Sitanshu Kotak, speaking in the press conference later, confirmed that the Indians were not having any spikes on their shoes, which could damage the pitch. Former Indian cricketer Irfan Pathan supported Gambhir on the issue. "When Gautam Gambhir went to look at the pitch, he wore shoes without spikes. That does not cause any damage. That is okay according to the rules. But the curator of The Oval has had a way of being rude with many captains and coaches of overseas teams. This is not the first incident," Pathan said on his YouTube channel.

"But it is on in the media of making Gambhir a villain. This is going on for long. The curator telling him to go away from pitch is not acceptable. I will not accept this. How will you plan without seeing the pitch? It is a controversy for nothing," Irfan added. Gambhir's angry exchange with Fortis and his "you don't tell us what we need to do" comment that was caught on camera and went viral. "When we went to see the pitch, we were asked by someone to keep a 2.5-metre distance. This was surprising. The Test would be in a few days and we were wearing joggers. So it felt a bit odd.



We all have been on the ground enough, we have played so much cricket. Curators are possessive about the ground and the square but they need to understand that they are speaking to highly skilled and intelligent people," Kotak explained. "If you see, no bowler is wearing spikes... we also know the ground shouldn't be damaged. End of the day, it's a cricket pitch... it's not an antique that is 200 years old and can be broken. Today, we were wearing shoes with rubber soles and in a day's time, a batsman will be sliding to survive a run-out or a bowler will be sliding there to stop the ball," Kotak added.

## Having trained 1000 winners in horse racing, consistency is the hallmark of trainer Prasad

GNS News Agency, August 8

Hyderabad: For KSV Prasad Raju, life without being with the horses can be so different. Every day, when he gets up, he loves to be with them, or else, by his own confession, things don't work out the way he loves to. And, so when the 57-year-old Prasad Raju joined the 'select band' of trainers who have completed the fantastic feat of training 1000 winners in horse racing. "Well, I got fascinated with horses ever since I used to accompany my father, KRK Raju, to the Hyderabad Race Club, and once I got the trainer's licence in 1995, there was no looking back," says Prasad Raju in a chat with 'Telangana Today'. "In a career spanning three decades, I have had the pleasure of scripting winners in six Classics, including the prestigious 2017 Pune Derby (Lady In Lace), which also happens to be my first Derby winner.

The other big wins include the Indian 1000 Guineas at Mumbai, in addition to Juvenile Million, Fillies Championship and the 1000 Guineas at Hyderabad and Karnataka Mile Championship Cup in Bengaluru," he recalled with a justifiable sense of pride. "Yes, I am grateful to jockey Suraj

Narredur for playing a big role in my achievement as he won 280 races for me," he said. Consistency seems to be a hallmark of Prasad Raju, as he was also adjudged 'champion trainer' for four consecutive seasons from 2007 – 2010 in the Winter Season only.

For the record, in the list of the big achievers trainers, L D' Silva (about 1800 winners) tops it, followed by LVR Deshmukh, D Netto and Prasad Raju. The B.Com graduate from Badruka College said that racing had certainly become very expensive, especially with the soaring maintenance costs every month. "To be frank, unless the Central Government slashes the existing GST drastically, the future of racing looks very bleak," Prasad Raju said. "It seems racing as such is on the decline due to a combination of factors, and there are very few genuine buyers now," he added. "The biggest challenge, as they say in any sport, is learning every day. Definitely, I have seen the best of racing till pre-Covid era. Did you set any more targets? "No, nothing like that. I just thought of completing 1000 winners, and I am glad that I achieved it. And I repeat, thanks to Narredur, all the owners for their wonderful



# Sanjay Dutt’s drug addiction got him fired from Yudh; Sunil Dutt kept pleading for his son to be given another chance



Filmmaker Rajiv Rai said that he was best friends with actor Sanjay Dutt, but their relation soured when he cast the actor out from his movie Yudh, presumably because of his drug habit at the time. In an interview, the filmmaker said that he should probably get the credit for ‘changing his life’, because it was only after Sanjay was fired that he got the ‘shock’ he needed to get his life back on track. He was sent to the United States for rehab, but his father, the legendary Sunil Dutt, never stopped worrying about him. He even requested Rajiv Rai and his father, Gulshan Rai, to reconsider removing Sanjay from the film, but they wouldn’t budge because they knew that they couldn’t afford to delay their film.

Rajiv said that it is a sin to criticise actors for being unprofessional, because they always work with the producer’s best interests in mind. He also claimed that Sanjay was never a no-show in the time that he worked on Yudh. “I shot 14 reels with Sanjay Dutt. In my heart of hearts, he’s still my best friend. I can never forget those days, because they were the best days of my life. My father was best friends with Dutt saab; we were very close to the family. There were issues...” He continued, “Sanju was not well. He needed rehab in Florida. I spoke to his father and told him to get him out of this... Whatever this is... I was very concerned. I’m not sure how he took it, but I think I changed his life. If I had not taken this drastic step then, he wouldn’t have made the changes in his life. I had to forgo my friend-

ship with him.” Rajiv said that ‘fire’ is a very ‘ugly word’, but he admitted that he had a conversation that led to him being removed from the movie.

He added, “I spoke to him every day, and I told him that he should take care of his health. I asked for his kind permission to carry on with the film and find somebody else. I had nobody.” He said that their families ‘go back a long way’, and that Sunil Dutt’s first cheque was cut by Gulshan Rai, and that both he and his father were in New York for a significant period of time when Sanjay’s mother, Nargis, was undergoing treatment for cancer. He said, “Things didn’t work out professionally between me and Sanju, and it was for his own good. He may love me for it or hate me for it, but I don’t know, because we’ve never spoken about it... I have nothing bad to say about it. I’ve been tortured by this. I could sense that both he and his father were very upset with me, but I don’t know for sure. If I was in their place, I would definitely be upset. I would sit with Dutt saab, and he didn’t want Sanju to be removed. He’d keep requesting me to give him another chance. He was very upset about the situation as well. But I told him that he needs the electric shock.” Sanjay Dutt returned from rehab and resumed his career, but his troubles didn’t end. Some years later, he was convicted in connection with the Mumbai blasts, and years after that, he was diagnosed with cancer. A film based on his life was released in 2018, with Ranbir Kapoor in the role of Sanjay.

## GenZ reacts to Kyunki Saas Bhi Kabhi Bahu Thi: I finally understand why it ruled the screens, take a bow

Ranking right up there with questions such as ‘Why did Kattappa kill Baahubali?’ and ‘Is Kajol the killer?’ is ‘Will everyone in the family remember Baa’s birthday?’ Decidedly less violent and more in the zone of the Great Indian Joint Family. Ekta Kapoor’s iconic TV show Kyunki Saas Bhi Kabhi Bahu Thi continues to hold special place in the annals of Indian television. I, a GenZ, decided to sit through three episodes of a serial which aired when I was just a one-year-old baby. It was peak Indian television nostalgia, with the melodramatic music and the famous title song “Rishton Ke Bhi Roop Badalte Hain”. With a reboot of the show releasing soon, here’s my GenZ review of the first three episodes of the original that launched the saas-bahu genre in Indian small screens.

Too good to be true

As soon as Baa aka late actor Sudha Shivpuri entered in the first episode with her liquid eyes, I knew I was in for a ride. Her character specifically felt too good to be true, at least in the first three episodes. She is that flawless mother-in-law who just doesn’t exist today. Besides her, even the other characters were straight-up black and white, no one operated in the grey area. But now, the character development is better and it is shown that people keep changing with time. Moreover, I almost forgot that there was a time when Smriti Irani aka Tulsi wasn’t even married in the Virani house. She looked unrecognisable for in my blurry memory of the show, she was always Mihir’s wife since the very beginning.

In KSBKBT, the drama was imbibed in the layers of storytelling, instead of the screenplay. The show felt organic, natural as the focus was on acting, and not the over-the-top edits. However, in today’s TV serials, for example Rupali Ganguly’s Anupamaa, which is one of the top TRP spinners, every scene and dialogue is emphasised in post-production. However, one factor that remains the same in television serials throughout generations is the exaggeration in every scene. However, the production quality — at least the ones I watched on Jio Hotstar — left a lot to desire. At one point, it almost felt like I was watching my parents’ wedding video — the background music was so poor that it overwhelmed the dialogues, making them inaudible in places. In this day and age of digital media and OTT platforms, it is hard to even imagine simpler times. While being a GenZ, I embrace the accessibility brought about by technology, it was refreshing to see Mihir sending an audio CD by post from America to wish his ageing grandmother. It was a sweet reminder of simpler times that I have mostly heard about from my parents and grandparents. Our fast-paced lives leave us with no time to pause and breathe. Besides OTT, even television serials nowadays have complicated storylines, forgetting the simplicity of little things. Happy or bickering, but the way the joint family stayed under one roof with their wives, kids, and parents is a surprising concept to see. That joint family structure is long gone in Indian cities — both in real life, and on modern TV shows. It is a classic example of how families used to live together when there weren’t any smart TVs, mobile phones, and OTT subscriptions. Indian homes don’t look like that today and it felt as fantastic as Game Of Thrones to watch that dynamic now. There were more characters in the first 30 minutes of KSBKBT than in a Marvel crossover film. There’s no deny-



ing that there was something ironically iconic about it. As an older GenZ, I wouldn’t mind going back in time and living the nostalgia with my parents to bingewatch Kyunki Saas Bhi Kabhi Bahu Thi.

## After learning Instagram, Big B jokes he’s ‘forgotten how it works’

Mumbai: Megastar Amitabh Bachchan, who on July 29 shared that he was learning how to use Instagram, hilariously shared that he has “forgotten how it works”. The octogenarian took to the popular application and posted a video on July 29, where he was heard saying, “So, I am just getting educated on how to use Instagram and I hope it works.”

Talking about the “downside”, the thespian wrote: “But the downside is that have forgotten how it works .. ok tomorrow is another day (sic)!” The cine icon is an avid user of social media and keeps his fans, whom he lovingly calls his extended family or “EF”, updated about his day to day life. He mostly uses his blog on Tumblr and X, formerly called Twitter, to communicate his thoughts. On July 29, Big B showcased his admiration for young actors and their dedication to preparation for a role, which he says is something he didn’t witness in his early days.

He took to his blog and wrote: “The expression ‘prep’ is heard often by me when in the exalted presence of the younger generation actors and actresses of our Film World .. It has reference to ‘preparation’ for the role they are about to play in a film, and the kind of reverence they show towards it, leaves me with immense admiration (sic).”

# Twinkle Khanna jokes about her dog’s ‘least impressed’ attitude

Mumbai: Former actress and author Twinkle Khanna took to social media to share a lighthearted post featuring her pet dog. In a post on Instagram, she reflected on how her furry companion remains the most unimpressed co-star she’s ever had. With a mix of humor and charm, Twinkle gave a glimpse into her everyday life with her four-legged friend. On Tuesday, the Mela actress posted her two images, where she is seen posing holding her pet dog in her arms.

For the caption, the Mrs Funnybones author wrote, “I’ve shared the spotlight with humans, egos posing as humans, and even a python once. But this one is by far the least impressed with me, the camera, or life in general. When does your dog make you feel like you’re the pet?.” Notably, Twinkle Khanna often shares glimpses of her bond with her pet dog on social media. Back in April, she posted heartwarming images of herself cuddling him and affectionately referred to him as the “lightbulb in all our hearts.”

“The lightbulb in all our hearts. Are you a dog person? Tell me the cutest thing your furry friend does in the comments below,” Khanna wrote as the caption. Meanwhile, Twinkle Khanna recently grabbed attention with the announcement of her upcoming chat show alongside actress Kajol. Titled “Two Much with Kajol and Twinkle,” the show will be co-hosted and directed by the duo. It promises unfiltered, lively conversations and a star-studded lineup, fea-



turing some of the most prominent names from Bollywood and the entertainment industry. Speaking about the show, Nikhil Madhok, Director and Head of Originals, Prime Video, India, said in a statement, “We are very thrilled to announce Two Much with Kajol and Twinkle—a first-of-its-kind talk show, hosted by two of the sharpest voices in Indian entertainment, who are set to reinvent the genre. With a mix of charismatic celebrities on the guest list, Kajol and Twinkle will bring their signature blend of wit, feistiness, and unparalleled insights to sparkling conversations that are humorous, unfiltered, and unapologetic. Joining forces with Banijay Asia, we are creating something truly bold, fresh, and unforgettable for our audiences.”

## Sidharth Malhotra, Janhvi Kapoor’s ‘Param Sundari’ to now release on August 29

Mumbai: The makers of “Param Sundari” on Wednesday unveiled the motion poster of the upcoming film and announced that the cross cultural romance movie will hit the big screen on August 29. Janhvi, Sidharth and Maddock in a collaborative post on Instagram unveiled the motion poster featuring the two stars. In the poster, Sidharth is seen looking handsome in a shirt paired with jeans along with a bag on his shoulder. The actress looks every inch an Indian beauty as she does a classical dance form dressed in a saree. In the motion poster the two can be seen crossing paths.

The motion poster concludes with: “In cinemas worldwide. 29th August 2025. A Maddock Films Production.” It also mentioned that its first song “Pardesiya” will be out on Wednesday. The video is captioned as: “Dinesh Vijan brings to you the Biggest Love Story of the Year #ParamSundari arrives in cinemas on 29th August And in just 1 hour, feel its soul with the year’s most heartfelt song — #Pardesiya.”

The film was earlier scheduled to release in July 25, 2025. The film centers on a love story between a North Indian played by Sidharth and a South Indian girl, filmed in Kerala. The film “promises a heartfelt tale of love, where two worlds collide, and sparks are bound to fly. Set against the breathtaking backwaters of Kerala, this love story is a rollercoaster of laughter, chaos, and unexpected twists you won’t see coming,” per a description provided by Maddock. “Its like those films that Mani-sir (Mani Ratnam) used to do like ‘Saathiya’ (the Hindi-language remake of Tamil drama-romance film ‘Alai Payuthay’),” Maddock chief Dinesh Vijan had said. “The kind of music it has and Janhvi playing a South Indian is interesting. Sid’s playing a Northern Delhi boy and the conflict is very cool. It’s like maybe taking ‘Teri Baaton Mein Aisa Uljha Jiya’ forward — there’s a high tech idea in there. But we are going into the ‘Kantara’ world of sorts — we are going a little more than that.”



## ‘David Dhawan made Sarkai Lo Khatiya vulgar’: Lyricist Sameer defends Govinda song, blames Madhuri Dixit’s ‘Choli ke Peeche’ for boom in ‘double-meaning’ Bollywood songs

The classic Indian film format focused equally on the narrative of the film and the songs that go along with it, with some songs transcending the film itself. On the other hand, some songs get flagged for being problematic in nature, and in an era where awareness and sensitivity are non-negotiable requirements, many films and their songs have not aged well. Renowned lyricist Samir Anjaan talked about this particular phenomenon and how many of his songs have been questioned for their lyrics and the underlying meaning behind them, especially the song ‘Sarkai Lo Khatiya’ from the film Raja Babu, directed by David Dhawan. Another of his songs, ‘Khambe Jaisi Khadi Hai’, has been in the crosshair with director Sandeep Reddy Vanga questioning Aamir Khan for doing songs that objectified women. While talking to BBC Hindi, Samir quickly cleared himself of all blame for writing songs containing vulgar and inappropriate themes. He instead blamed another very famous track written by Anand Bakshi for starting a trend of sorts, and he blamed the censor board for letting it happen. “All of this talk about vulgar songs started from Choli Ke Peeche. There was so much chaos, and people were ready to set fires;



Anand-Bakshi and Subhash Ghai were being abused. Ultimately the song got passed by the censor board, people heard it all over the country and loved it.” He added that he never truly understood “how the censor board was okay with that song” and why the people in power did not comment on the amount of backlash it got.

Coming to his own music, Samir talked about ‘Sarkai Lo Khatiya’ from the film Raja Babu. The song was picturised on Govinda and Karisma Kapoor, and just like ‘Choli Ke Peeche,’

received flack for its messaging. Samir defended himself and said, “Sarkai lo khatiya” was born out of the practice of musicians and dancers who used to travel from village to village to perform. I have seen my elders listen to the whole song, and I took that song and just remade it for the movie. I didn’t write it myself, and I didn’t think there was anything vulgar in it. The way David Dhawan shot it, though, was problematic. He pictured it in a very seductive and vulgar way, so people thought it was a song with a double meaning to it.” He stated that people seem to have a problem with everything, and he

never intentionally wrote a song with inherent vulgar messaging. “I have never written a single vulgar song, but still people accuse me of doing so. Should I only write religious and feel-good songs? The writers of today are writing things much worse than what was going on before, and songs like ‘Khambe Jaisi Khadi’ are nothing compared to that.” The song Samir is making a reference to is from the Aamir Khan film Dil, which was sung by Udit Narayan. Just like the aforementioned tracks, ‘Khambe Jaise Khadi’ has also become a point of contention, with people debating whether the