

## Ganesh immersion route inspected by top Hyderabad officials

Hyderabad: An all-department route inspection was conducted on the Ganesh procession route from Balapur to Hussainsagar on Wednesday. The inspection team included Hyderabad Commissioner of Police CV Anand, Hyderabad District Collector Harichandana Dasari, HYDRAA Commissioner AV Ranganath, GHMC Commissioner RV Karnan and others. Speaking to the media, CV Anand advised Ganesh idol organisers to be cautious in view of electrocution-related deaths reported in the city. He said the police and concerned departments had made elaborate arrangements for the smooth conduct of the processions in the coming days.

## NDA slams Oppn over remarks against Modi's mother; Cong recalls abuses directed at Sonia Gandhi

GNS News Agency, Sept 3

New Delhi: The war of words continued on Wednesday between the ruling NDA and the Opposition INDIA bloc over the use of derogatory words against Prime Minister Narendra Modi's late mother during the 'Voter Adhikar Yatra'. The BJP-led NDA denounced the opposition for allegedly making derogatory statements about PM Modi and his late mother. Such remarks, according to the BJP and its allies, are an "insult to every mother in the country" and demonstrate the opposition's "falling standards".

The Congress, however, pushed back, accusing the BJP of double standards and recalling several instances where leaders, including Congress parliamentary party leader Sonia Gandhi, had been subjected to derogatory remarks by the ruling party leaders. BJP leader Ram Kadam said the Opposition had crossed all limits of decency. Speaking to IANS, Ram Kadam said, "The level of the Opposition's language and rhetoric is falling rapidly, and this is disgusting for the country. Prime Minister Modi's statement is absolutely correct—the Opposition must improve its language and maintain dignity." Col. (Retd.) Rajyavardhan Singh Rathore, Rajasthan Cabinet Minister and BJP MLA from Jhotwara, described the remarks as "unfortunate and shameful".

"Congress and RJD workers have insulted the mother of the Prime Minister of India. It reflects their mentality. Even after it has been investigated and found that the comments came from their own camp, they are running away from responsibility," he said. "The attack on PM Modi's mother is not just personal—it is an insult to every mother of this country. This is the true identity of the Congress and the RJD.

## Even three months may be too long, Governors must decide on Bills 'forthwith': Opposition-ruled States in SC

GNS News Agency, Sept 3

Opposition-ruled States argued in the Supreme Court on Wednesday (September 3, 2025) that even a three-month deadline given in the Tamil Nadu Governor case judgment may be too long, State Bills presented to Governors for clearance must be assented to by these "titular heads" forthwith. West Bengal, Karnataka and Himachal Pradesh said the will of the people, which the proposed laws manifest, cannot be sacrificed on the altar of the whims and fancies of Governors. They said sitting over Bills was actually a quiet disguise for denying assent, but without necessarily having to return the proposed laws back to the State legislature for reconsideration. The three States contended that if the Centre wanted them to presume that a high constitutional authority like the Governor would act with integrity while dealing with Bills, the same courtesy must be extended to State Legislatures who happened to be also high constitutional authorities. Appearing before a five-judge Presidential Reference Bench headed by Chief Justice of India B.R. Gavai, senior advocate Kapil Sibal, for West Bengal, said Article 200 required the Governor to return a Bill to a State Legislature "as soon as possible" in case he disagreed with it. Mr. Sibal interpreted 'as soon as possible' to mean 'forthwith or immediately'. "Forthwith" must apply to Governors and President, who is actually the Union government, while dealing with grant of assent to proposed laws. Bills cannot wait," Mr Sibal submitted. The Governor had no business questioning the constitutionality of State Bills. He was bound to grant assent if the legislature re-passed them. Later, once the

## BJP, CONG TARGETING KCR WITH POLITICAL VENDETTA: KTR



Hyderabad, Sept.3 : BRS Working President and MLA KT Rama Rao today alleged that both the BJP at the Centre and the Congress in Telangana were indulging in political vendetta against BRS chief and former CM K. Chandrashekar Rao. If KCR builds the world's largest Kaleshwaram lift irrigation project to provide water for agriculture and industries, and for drinking water purpose, now the ruling parties are trying to file CBI cases against him," he alleged and termed the CBI inquiry as a political conspiracy.

Addressing a gathering at the joining of Congress leader U Prabhakar Rao and his associates from Khammam district into BRS, Rama Rao said that 'overconfidence' had cost the party in the 2023 Assembly elections and the BRS had failed to highlight the developmental works done under KCR's leadership. Citing irrigation and agriculture growth, he praised the Kaleshwaram project as a lifeline for Telangana. Meanwhile, former minister Jagadish Reddy also accused the Congress government of hatching a conspiracy against KCR. He said the people have lost faith in CM Revanth Reddy's leadership and predicted the downfall of the Congress beginning with local body elections. He ex-



Their so-called 'Voter Adhikar Yatra' has turned into a 'Voter Ananya Yatra,' spreading falsehoods and targeting Indian culture, Indian women, and Indian mothers. Especially in Bihar, the land of women's strength, this kind of language will not be tolerated. The women of Bihar will give them a befitting reply," she said. BJP MP Praveen Khandelwal highlighted the emotional impact of the remarks on the Prime Minister. "If someone's mother is insulted, naturally, emotions will arise. We all know how deeply PM Modi was influenced by his late mother and the struggles she endured while raising him. Yesterday, the Prime Minister's pain was visible in his words. Those who used such language from their stage should be ashamed," Khandelwal added. From the Janata Dal (Secular), Nikhil Kumaraswamy also expressed disapproval. "No society accepts this kind of rhetoric. Unfortunately, personal attacks have become common in today's politics. PM Modi is a leader of great stature, and such remarks cannot be justified or appreciated," he said.



Bills are notified as laws, citizens could test their constitutionality in court, the senior lawyer said. He drew attention to Article 167, which made it the Chief Minister's duty to apprise the Governor of laws being contemplated by the State Cabinet. This was done as a part of the pre-legislative process. The senior lawyer said the Chief Minister would meet the Governor for an informal interaction to discuss the crafting of a law and taking in suggestions. Later, once the Bill was passed by the legislature, the Governor was expected to give his assent. Besides, Mr. Sibal pointed to the proviso of Article 254(2) of the Constitution which allowed the Parliament to neutralise a repugnant State law by "adding to, amending, varying or repealing" it. Mr. Sibal replied there was a presumption of constitutionality associated with Bills passed by the legislature. References to the President by Governors were rare instances in the past."

pressed confidence that BRS would return to power and KCR would become Chief Minister again.

## ED arrests Capital Protection Force COO Aryan Singh in Rs 792-crore fraud

GNS News Agency, Sept 3

Hyderabad: The Enforcement Directorate (ED) has arrested Aryan Singh, Chief Operating Officer of Capital Protection Force Pvt Ltd, in connection with the Rs 792 crore Ponzi scheme disguised as an invoice discounting platform. ED, Hyderabad Zonal Office, arrested the accused under the provisions of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA), 2002, in connection with an ongoing investigation against Capital Protection Force, Amardeep Kumar and others. Aryan Singh was produced before the Special PMLA Court, which remanded him to 14 days' judicial custody. ED said in a statement on Wednesday that it initiated an investigation on the basis of three FIRs registered by the Economic Offence Wing, Cyberabad, wherein it was alleged that Amardeep Kumar, Capital Protection Force and others fraudulently cheated gullible investors on the pretext of high returns on their investments. The investigation by the Central agency revealed that Capital Protection Force, in the name and style of 'Falcon invoice discounting scheme', lured investors on the pretext of providing funds for invoice discounting in exchange for promising returns based on the invoices discounted, but failed to repay their invested amounts.

## Telangana govt declares holiday on September 6 in Hyderabad, other districts

Hyderabad: The State government on Wednesday declared September 6 (Saturday) as a general holiday for all government offices, schools and colleges in and around Hyderabad, Secunderabad, Rangareddy and Medchal-Malkajgiri districts. The decision was taken in view of the Ganesh idol immersion procession scheduled for Saturday.

Consequently, October 11, which is a second Saturday, has been declared a working day for all government offices, schools and colleges in these districts. This will be in lieu of the general holiday on September 6.

## Experts question Telangana govt's Tummididi Hatti barrage plan under PCSS

GNS News Agency, Sept 3

Hyderabad: The Telangana government's renewed push to construct a barrage at Tummididi Hatti as part of the Pranahita-Chevella Sujala Sravanthi (PCSS) project has sparked skepticism among irrigation experts, who question its technical feasibility. They challenge the Congress government's claims of a gravity-based water supply system. Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy reiterated the plan at the YS Rajasekhara Reddy Memorial Award event, but engineers and critics highlighted challenges including design complexities, environmental concerns and the need for substantial infrastructure investment. Originally proposed in 2007 by the erstwhile Andhra Pradesh government, the PCSS project aimed to harness water from the Pranahita River to irrigate drought-prone areas in Telangana. The Tummididi Hatti barrage, initially estimated at Rs 609 crore (later revised to Rs 1,742 crore), was intended to divert water via a gravity canal to the Yellampalli reservoir. Experts dismiss the claim that gravity flow alone can eliminate the need for electricity-intensive pumping, citing topographical and engineering constraints. The proposed barrage, spanning 56.4 kilometres with 3.7 kilometres of concrete construction and 100 to 110 gates, faces unprecedented design challenges. Engineers note that the barrage would require a 45-degree skew angle due to geographical constraints, a design considered unsafe and untested in engineering practice. Topographical challenges further undermine the gravity-flow claim. The Pranahita River at Tummididi Hatti and the Godavari at Yellampalli are at different elevations, necessitating two pumping stations to lift water 48 metres over a 116-km canal. At the 30-km mark, a pump house with 12 pumps of 30 MW capacity would lift water 29 metres through large-diameter pipes and tunnels.

A second station at 92 km would lift water an additional 19 metres. Even beyond Yellampalli, lifting would be



required to irrigate higher-altitude areas like Karimnagar, Warangal and Chevella, relying on the Kaleshwaram Lift Irrigation Scheme network of canal systems and reservoirs. The Central Water Commission's (CWC) 2015 assessment slashed water availability estimates at Tummididi Hatti to 165 TMC (including Maharashtra's share), compared to 282.3 TMC at Medigadda, prompting critics to argue that Tummididi Hatti's yield (as low as 44 TMC) will be insufficient for large-scale irrigation. The 2016 Telangana-Maharashtra agreement capped the barrage's full reservoir level at 148 metres with a 1.85 TMC storage capacity to minimise submergence in Maharashtra. However, any canal to Yellampalli would require renewed consent from Maharashtra, given the shared river. Environmental concerns also loom large. The project's original plan faced criticism for inadequate clearances, with risks of submerging Maharashtra's forests and tribal villages. A revived project must address these issues to ensure minimal ecological disruption. The Chatral Wildlife Sanctuary in Maharashtra poses a major regulatory hurdle, as obtaining environmental clearance for submergence in forest would be difficult.

## Kavitha resigns from BRS, MLC post

GNS News Agency, Sept 3

Hyderabad: A day after her suspension from BRS for indulging in anti-party activities, MLC K Kavitha has quit the party and also the legislative post with effect from Wednesday. Kavitha sent the resignation to the Legislative Council Chairman in the prescribed format, with a single sentence reading, "I hereby tender my resignation of my seat in the House with effect from 03-09-2025."

She also tendered her resign from the BRS primary membership in a letter addressed to the party chief K Chandrashekhara Rao, urging him to accept her resignation. Kavitha was elected to the Council from Nizamabad Local Authorities Constituency in October 2020 and her term will expire next year.



## CM REVANTH REJECTS TIES WITH KCR FAMILY MEMBERS



Hyderabad, Sept.3: Chief Minister Revanth Reddy responded to comments made by BRS MLC Kavitha, asserting that he would not collaborate with individuals involved in corruption. On Wednesday, the Chief Minister participated in the launch event for a new unit of SGD-Corning Technologies private limited in Vemula village, located in the Moosapet mandal of Mahabubnagar district. During his speech, he remarked that while the BRS party was in power, Congress leaders were imprisoned on unlawful charges in

an attempt to eliminate the party. "In the KCR family, there is infighting among members. Some claim that I am manipulating Harish Rao and Santosh Rao, while others suggest I am behind Kavitha. I ask, why would I associate with such corrupt individuals? I am a leader who stands at the forefront, and I will always align myself with my constituents," stated Revanth Reddy. "Today, the family members of Kalvakuntla Chandrashekar Rao are embracing one another while metaphorically bearing the weight of betrayal. There is a struggle over the distribution of ill-gotten gains that is causing discord within the family. Their conflicts are deep, as if they are harming themselves from within. Wrongdoings do not simply vanish; those transgressions will continue to haunt them, and they will inevitably face the consequences, he stated. The Chief Minister urged the KCR family to refrain from involving the public in their internal conflicts, emphasising that the people have no interest in their issues. "The people have rejected the KCR family for a long time. The BRS party is akin to a worthless currency. Nature will ultimately take its course, and it will deliver justice for their actions," he concluded.

## CM SLAMS BRS LEADERSHIP; VOWS COMPREHENSIVE PALAMURU DEVELOPMENT

Mahbubnagar, Sept.3 , Sept 3: Telangana Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy came down heavily on the BRS leadership, accusing the party of dragging his name into its ongoing internal family feud. The BRS leaders are stabbing each other and claiming Revanth Reddy is behind Harish Rao, Santosh Kumar or Kavitha. Today, the BRS leaders are fighting each other and are backstabbing for political power. They were clashing with each other in the distribution of their share of amassed wealth obtained through illegal means. I appeal to them to stop mentioning my name in your internal crisis. BRS is an expired currency note, already rejected by the people. We are not interested in your family politics", CM remarked. Addressing a gathering at the "Furnace Lighting event of SGD – Coming Technologies Pvt. Ltd." in Vemula of Mahbubnagar district, Revanth Reddy declared that the Congress government is committed to the comprehensive development of Palamuru and will not allow political forces to obstruct its progress. Referring to the ongoing crisis in BRS, he alleged that BRS leaders

who had once foisted false cases on several Congress workers are today facing the consequences of their own "big sins" clashing over ill-gotten wealth. Nature itself has the power to punish such disgruntled political forces, he quipped and criticised opposition parties for stalling the Uddandapur project by approaching the Green Tribunal. "If we block development for political reasons, we will be writing our own death warrant", he cautioned. With regard to development agenda for Palamuru, the chief minister called himself as the 'son of Palamuru soil' and announced major initiatives for Mahbubnagar district which included - development of the district as a hub of new industries, creating employment opportunities for local youth; fast-tracking Palamuru irrigation projects through a green channel to overcome delays; establishing 14 Advanced Training Centres (ATCs) along with new engineering, law and degree colleges; sanctioning of an IIIT and construction of "Young India Integrated Residential Schools" across 14 constituencies with an outlay of Rs.2,800 crore; and promotion of tourism at irrigation project sites to attract international visitors.



# Indian Chronicle

## English Daily

### France 'seeking' IMF bailout has a lesson for every nation

Always live within your means; don't spend more than you earn; save money for a rainy day—these are time-tested, universally accepted pearls of wisdom. They hold relevance to humans as much as they do for governments. When the latter adhere to such pragmatism, they are fiscally responsible. When they don't, it is a disaster—irrespective of whether the country is rich or poor. So, France—a member of G7, a nuclear state—may soon have to seek a bailout from the International Monetary Fund (IMF). Prime Minister François Bayrou said on August 25, "Our country is in danger because we are on the brink of over-indebtedness."

Finance Minister Eric Lombard added that IMF intervention is "in front of us." The country's debt-to-GDP ratio stands at 114 per cent. In comparison, India's ratio is 80 per cent, which the IMF projects would fall to 75.8 per cent in 2030. Decarbonisation requires significant additional investment in the next decade. Although these are necessary expenditures, they add enormous strain to an already burdened fiscal system. Besides, social spending has soared in the last few years, rising from 28.4 per cent of GDP in 2006 to 30.65 last year, and peaking to 34.9 per cent in the pandemic-hit 2020. To make matters worse, illegal immigration in France has been rising alarmingly; many immigrants depend on welfare benefits. France's annual bill for state-funded healthcare for migrants is reported to be over ₹1.2 billion. These expenditures not only strain public finances but also fuel social and political tensions, complicating any attempt at reform. Yet perhaps the most intractable challenge is political. Left-leaning parties remain influential and are ideologically opposed to structural economic reforms.

### BJP PROMISES A CORRUPTION-FREE GOVT IN TELANGANA: RAMCHANDER RAO

Hyderabad, Sept.3 Telangana BJP President N Ramchander Rao on Wednesday assured the public that the BJP aims to establish a government free of corruption and meet their expectations once in power. He encouraged citizens to allow the BJP the opportunity to deliver a transparent administration, highlighting their experiences with the previous corrupt BRS government and the current ineffective Congress government, which has not honored its electoral promises.

Speaking at a gathering of polling booth presidents, secretaries, and district party workers in Karimnagar, the state BJP leader emphasised his party's commitment to serving the community and promoting the welfare of the citizens. In contrast, he criticised the opposition parties, BRS and Congress, for being involved in corruption and misleading the people. Ramchander Rao expressed his joy over the significant turnout of party members at the meeting, noting that this reflects the growing strength of the BJP. He voiced optimism that the party would secure victories in all MPTC, ZPTC seats, and local ward member positions in the upcoming elections. He criticised the Congress government for its inability to hold local body elections, suggesting that this apprehension stems from their fear of electoral defeat, as the public has become aware of their past errors and is now turning to the BJP for a change.

Rao lamented that the Revanth Reddy administration has requested the court for an additional two months to organise local body elections. He also commended the contributions of senior party leader and Union Minister Bandi Sanjay towards the development of the Karimnagar district. We have established a new status for the Telangana region to uphold our dignity and serve the people's interests," he stated, claiming that only one family, that of former Chief Minister KCR, has benefited and has misappropriated government funds. He also noted that the corruption within the BRS party has been revealed by their own MLC, K Kavitha. The Telangana BJP chief accused both the BRS and Congress parties of deceiving the public.

He asserted that while BRS leaders are engaged in corrupt practices, the Congress party has failed to fulfill its six commitments and 420 promises. Criticising Revanth Reddy's regular trips to Delhi, he suggested that the Chief Minister should be focusing on state administration instead of frequently traveling between Hyderabad and Delhi. The BJP state president urged party members to visit every village to inform the public about the development and welfare initiatives of the Modi government, while also highlighting the ineffective functioning of the state Congress government and the corruption within the BRS party.

### CONSPIRACY HATCHED AGAINST KCR - ALLEGE FORMER MINISTER JAGADISH REDDY

Hyderabad, Sept.3 Former minister Jagadish Reddy on Tuesday alleged that a conspiracy is being hatched against BRS chief and former Chief Minister K. Chandrashekar Rao. False allegations are made to tarnish the image of KCR, he remarked.

Referring to the state government's decision seeking a CBI probe against KCR, Jagadish Reddy, talking to newsmen, said the people were already unhappy with the rule of Chief Minister Revanth Reddy. The BRS would prove its strength and teach a lesson to the Congress government. "If allegations are being made against KCR, it is CM Revanth who should bow his head. Only time will reveal the truth," he remarked, and exuded confidence that the BRS would return to power and that KCR would once again take oath as Chief Minister. Jagadish Reddy claimed that people had lost faith in CM Revanth Reddy and realized that Congress had come to power with "fraudulent promises". He said the downfall of the Congress would begin with the upcoming local body elections.

### Nidhi Bhanushali and Sunakshi Grover Feature In Instagram's New Microdrama Series



Hyderabad: Get ready to witness the journey of two flatmates, filled with friendship, quirky vibes, and adorable moments of drama—all packed into bite-sized reel episodes! Instagram has just released 'Party of Two', a microdrama series to inspire Gen Z to take creative risks and bring them together. This fresh, 7-episode reels series will premiere exclusively on @instagram and @metaindia, delivering relatable stories in a dynamic, cinematic format designed for today's fast-paced, mobile-first audience.

'Party of Two' follows the lives of two Gen Z roommates with contrasting personalities as they navigate friendship and the ups and downs of life, which all percolate onto Instagram.

Leading the cast are Nidhi Bhanushali (@\_ninosaur), known for her memorable roles in Taarak Mehta Ka Ooltah Chashmah and Sisterhood, and Sunakshi Grover (@sunakshigrover) of FLAMES fame. Together, they feature in this innovative storytelling format for a generation that craves quick, engaging content. "The way we see and consume stories is changing every day. We're no longer just watching on big screens; our phones have also become a medium to explore and enjoy intimate stories, and vertical media is shaping the way stories are told. To be a part of 'Party of Two' with Instagram is incredibly exciting! It's a format that speaks directly to how people my age experience stories. As a creator, I'm always looking to experiment, and the themes of friendship and self-expression felt very close to my own content, which made this role even more special," said Nidhi Bhanushali. "Being a part of this has been such a fun ride. The format is super fresh, the storytelling is quick but still hits home, and I love how it captures the real ups and downs of friendships today. I think people are really going to vibe with it!" said Sunakshi Grover. A spokesperson from Meta shared, "We hope the bite-sized nature of microdramas, hosted on reels, and combined with a storyline that appeals to Gen Z, encourages them to tap into their own everyday experiences and share them creatively on Instagram."

### Unveiling of Poster for 'Heartfelt Felicitation to Farmers' Former MLA Bakkani Narasimhulu and Ashok Kumar



Hyderabad: Founder of Youth for Anti-Corruption, Rajendra Palnati, stated that with the objective of protecting and honoring farmers, the organization is conducting a program titled "Heartfelt Felicitation to Farmers."

As part of this, the poster related to the program was unveiled on Tuesday by former MLA Bakkani Narasimhulu and former Agriculture Officer Ashok Kumar, who attended as chief guests. Speaking on the occasion, they said that the number of food providers is not increasing in proportion to the growing population, and in today's society, farmers

are left without proper support. They emphasized that farmers must be protected and young farmers should be encouraged, which is the main purpose of this initiative.

Rajendra informed that the program will be held on Sunday, the 14th of this month. Farmers from both Telugu states are being selected for this event. Former CBI Joint Director Lakshminarayana, director R.P. Patnaik, and several vice-chancellors will be attending as chief guests. The event was also attended by retired principal scientist Dr. B. Srinivas Rao, Varikuppala Gangadhar, Pasiganti Vamsikrishna, Nagendra, Naresh

### Oppose the reduction in cotton import duties.\*



Foreign Trade Agreements that are damaging the agricultural sector should be cancelled. SKM leaders demand. "S NAGA MANOJ KUMAR Ashwaraopet, September (03) Indian Chronicle: As part of the SKM call, copies of the agreement were burnt in Ashwaraopet on Wednesday, 03-09-2025. Addressing the program held on this occasion, State Vice President of the Agricultural Workers' Union Gokinapalli Prabhakar and CPI District Leader G. Ramakrishna said that the Indian farmers will suffer severely due to the central government's decision to cancel the foreign trade agreement that is causing serious damage to the agricultural sector. "They demanded that the central government pay Rs. 10.075 per cotton quintal as per MSP and pay Rs. 25 lakh to the families of farmers who committed suicide. "Mass Line Mandal Secretary Vasam Buchiraju, PYL Division Secretary Badisa Lakshmana Rao, United Farmers Association Mandal Secretary Gondi Lakshmana Rao, Farmers Association Leaders Kargala Kannayya, and TUCI Leaders Kumaraswamy J Srinivasa Rao, N Chilakarao, I Maheshwarao, CPI Town Secretary

Nookavarapu Vijaykanth, Women's Association Leader Cheepurla Satyavati, and Agricultural Workers Association Leader Gadda Surya Kumari P. Rohini, Town Assistant Secretary Jakkam Balaram, Farmers Association Leader Nookavarapu Venkataramana, AITUC Leader Muthu, and others participated in this program to address the pressing issues faced by local farmers. They discussed strategies for improving agricultural practices, enhancing crop yields, and securing fair pricing for their produce, aiming to empower the farming community in the region.

### Urea shortage triggers protests, farmers burn pass-books, lock up PACS staff

Warangal/Khammam: Farmers here are fuming with anger over the shortage of urea that has been making them wait in long queues at PACS offices and stage protests against the Congress government's failure to ensure an adequate supply of urea. Farmers have burnt photo copies of pattadar passbooks and Aadhaar cards at Narsimhulapet PACS in Mahabubabad district as a mark of protest against society officials who failed to issue urea tokens even after they waited for long hours. Niranjan Reddy backs Harish Rao, slams Revanth's stand on sharing Godavari water with Andhra. Nithagudem, during Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy's visit.

### Special Pooja Conducted at Vigneshwara Mandap in Ramanthapur



Hyderabad, Sept.3 Indian Chronicle: Special pooja rituals were held at the Vinayaka Mandap set up by Sri Lakshmi Ganapathi Friends Association near D-Mart on Ramanthapur Main Road under the leadership of Kameshwar Rao and Venkat Rao. Senior Congress leader Janampalli Venkateshwar Reddy, former state Youth Congress secretary Gaddam Ravikumar, and Ramanthapur Congress in-charge David Boyina Giribabu participated in the program. After the rituals, the organizers felicitated them. Speaking on the occasion, the leaders expressed that the blessings of Lord Vigneshwara should be upon everyone. They also stated that the state government has made the required arrangements for the Ganesh immersion.

### MINISTER SEETHAKKA SLAMS KCR FAMILY OVER KAVITHA'S SUSPENSION

Hyderabad, Sept.3 Terming the suspension of BRS MLC Kalvakuntla Kavitha as a 'family drama', State minister Seethakka today launched a scathing attack on former CM K. Chandrashekar Rao and his family members and alleged that the ongoing feud within the KCR family is rooted in corruption, particularly surrounding the Kaleshwaram project. She said Kavitha herself admitted that thousands of crores worth of corruption took place, and that the fight within the family was over the "distribution of illegal money."

Talking to newsmen, Seethakka questioned whether KCR, who often calls himself the "father of Telangana", is now in such a weak position that he could not resolve his own family disputes. "If KCR cannot sit with four of his family members and settle the matters, how can he claim to lead a state?", she asked.

The minister recalled Kavitha's accusation that former MP Santosh Rao amassed hundreds of crores through benami Pochampally Srinivas Reddy, who had allegedly spent huge amounts to defeat her in Mulugu. Despite these serious allegations, TRS remained silent. Would Kavitha be suspended if KTR was not behind it?", she remarked. She further said that Kavitha's suspension was a political stunt. "It is unfortunate that KCR's own daughter's effigy was burnt. As a father and brother, KCR and KTR could not even prevent this disgrace", she said and accused KCR's family of prioritizing their own interests over the party and Telangana activists. "Kavitha was given the MLC post despite the sacrifices of many Telangana activists. Now the same family is humiliating her in public", she noted. On this occasion, the minister targeted Harish Rao linking him directly to corruption in the Kaleshwaram project. "If they are serious about proving innocence, why not allow a CBI probe into Kaleshwaram?", she challenged the BRS leadership.

### BGUS PARTICIPATES IN JOINT INSPECTION OF GANESH IMMERSION ROUTE

Hyderabad, Sept.3 The representatives of Bhagyanagar Ganesh Utsav Samithi (BGUS) today participated in the joint inspection of the Ganesh immersion route starting from Balapur to Necklace Road, Hussainsagar lake. The joint inspection is organized by the Hyderabad Police commissionerate with the participation of all three commissionerates, GHMC, HYDRA, HMDA, Ranga Reddy district collectorate and other departments concerned. The inspection is intended to assess the readiness of the route and to identify issues requiring rectification.

The joint inspection covered the stretch from Balanagar temple, coming under Balanagar police station limits in Rachakonda Commissionerate, to People's Plaza, Necklace Road. The BGUS team was led by general secretary Dr. Ravinuthala Shashidhar, secretary Kowdi Mahender and other members. The BGUS team while expressing gratitude to Hyderabad police commissioner for this initiative, highlighted certain issues identified along the route and requested that they be addressed at the earliest. The officials responded positively and assured the BGUS that necessary steps would be taken to resolve the issues.

### GITAM SCHOOL OF PHARMACY SECURES PCI APPROVAL

Hyderabad, Sept.3: The GITAM School of Pharmacy, Hyderabad, has received the Pharmacy Council of India (PCI) approval to increase its B.Pharm intake strength from 60 to 100 seats, starting from the academic year 2025-26. Principal Prof. G. Shiva Kumar announced that the PCI also approved the continuation of M.Pharm programs with 15 seats in Pharmacokinetics, Pharmacodynamics, and Pharmacology. Welcoming this approval, GITAM management, including Pro Vice-Chancellor Prof. D.S. Rao and Resident Director DVVSR Varma, said that the expansion would create more opportunities for students and help to meet the growing demand for pharmacy professionals.

For admission details, interested candidates can visit GITAM website "www.gitam.edu" or contact 08455-221401 / 402.



## Uppal MLA Participates in Ganesh Immersion at Kapra Lake



“NSR, Medchal - Malkajgiri Staff Reporter, Kapra, September 3, Indian Chronicle: Bhagyanagar Ganesh Utsav Samithi, Kapra (third time convenor Regalla Satish Reddy), invited Uppal MLA Bandaru Laxma Reddy to Kapra Lake, where he was felicitated with a shawl. The MLA later held discussions with officials from various government departments regarding the arrangements at Kapra Lake. He also took part in the immersion of Ganesh idols at the lake's pontoon. Former corporator Kotha Ramarao, along with Kapra division members of the Bhagyanagar Ganesh Utsav Samithi including Pisari Malla Reddy, Sriramulu, Nagaraju Gupta, Shivarama Krishna, Pavan, Sarita, Bhanumathi, Amit, Suresh Naik, Jai Ni Rajeshwar Gupta, Bikshapathi Goud, Roshan, Sarita, and Srikanth, participated in the program.

## Ganesh Navaratri Celebrations and Annadanam in Boduppall Division



NSR, Medchal - Malkajgiri Staff Reporter, Boduppall, September 3, Indian Chronicle: Ganesh Navaratri celebrations are being held across Boduppall Municipal Corporation limits. As part of the festivities, annadanam programs were organized under the leadership of women in NIN

Colony, Free Village Colony, and NIN Colony Temple in the 5th Division. Former corporator Singireddy Padmareddy visited Ganesh pandals at the FCI Building Junction, offered special prayers, and later participated in the annadanam program. Local association members, youth, and women from the colonies also took part in the event.

## DR RAJA NARSING RAO TO ATTEND BOA CONF IN LONDON

Hyderabad, Sept.3 : It's an honour for Hyderabad's senior consultant Dr Raja Narsing Rao for being invited to address the global experts on Anaesthetising low-birth-weight babies. Dr Rao who is renowned for his expertise in anaesthetising extremely low-birth-weight babies, was invited to address the two-day "British Ophthalmic Anaesthesia Conference (BOAC)" at the Royal society of medicine, London scheduled on Sept 4, 2025.

Dr Rao who is presently serving as consultant at LV Prasad Eye Institute (LVPEI) and EMRI, is also President of the World Congress of Ophthalmic Anaesthesia (WCOA), the Association of Indian Ophthalmic Anaesthesiologists (AIOA) and the Indian Association of Physician Assistants (IAPA). He will deliver a speech on "Challenges with Newborns and Ex-Prem Babies." BOAC has been a pioneer in promoting high-quality ophthalmic anaesthesia through evidence-based practice, education and international collaboration. Similarly, the AIOA - with the high-

est number of ophthalmic anaesthesiologists worldwide- has been playing a leading role in advancing this field. Highlighting the urgency of the issue, Dr. Rao said premature babies must undergo an eye exam within 30 days of birth to prevent blindness. India records 3.6 million preterm births annually, with 10% at risk of vision loss. He credited LVPEI's pioneering work in Retinopathy of Prematurity (ROP) treatment, led by Dr. Subhadra Jalali and her team, with saving thousands of infants' eyesight. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), preterm babies are those born before 37 weeks of gestation, further classified as: Extremely preterm: under 28 weeks; Very preterm: 28–32 weeks; Moderate to late preterm: 32–37 weeks. Most ophthalmic complications occur in very low-birth-weight babies, under 1200 grams. Anaesthetising these fragile infants is one of the biggest challenges, but our team has gained significant expertise over the years," Dr. Rao explained.

## Lovlina Borgohain and Nikhat Zareen lead India's boxing team at World Championships

Hyderabad: Olympic medalist Lovlina Borgohain and two-time World Champion Nikhat Zareen will lead a 20-member Indian boxing contingent at the inaugural World Boxing Championships 2025 in Liverpool, set to take place from September 4 to 14 at the M&S Bank Arena. This biennial event will bring together the finest amateur boxers from across the globe, with India heading into the competition in strong form after a successful outing at the World Boxing Cups in Brazil and Kazakhstan earlier this year. At the World Boxing Cup in Brazil, the Indian team clinched six medals, including a gold from Hitesh and a silver from Abhinash Jamwal, along with four bronze medals. At the World Boxing Cup in Kazakhstan, India added 11 more medals to its tally, including three golds. The country also showcased its strength across various categories, with Nupur Sheoran winning gold in the heavyweight division. "Our preparation in Sheffield has been nothing short of exceptional. This team is a powerful mix of seasoned campaigners, who have

stood on the podium before, and a new wave of incredibly talented young boxers who are ready to make their mark," said Dharmendra Singh Yadav, coach of the men's team. Dr. Chandralal, coach of the women's team, emphasized the dedication of the athletes, saying, "The hard work and commitment I've seen from this team are truly inspiring. We've laid the groundwork, and now we are ready to showcase the true fighting spirit of Indian women's boxing." The Indian squad for the World Boxing Championships features the experienced and decorated Lovlina Borgohain (75 kg) and Nikhat Zareen (51 kg), who bring technical mastery and global exposure. The team also includes medal-winning athletes such as Hitesh (70 kg), Abhinash (65 kg), Nupur (80+ kg), Pooja Rani (80 kg), Minakshi (48 kg), Sakshi (54 kg), Jaismine (57 kg), Sanju (60 kg), Neeraj Phogat (65 kg), and T. Sanamacha Chanu (70 kg). In addition to these established stars, the squad is reinforced by emerging male talents like Jadumani Singh Mandengbam (50 kg),

## 30K POLICE TO BE DEPLOYED FOR SMOOTH GANESH IMMERSION PROCESSION

Hyderabad, Sept.3 : Hyderabad Police Commissioner CV Anand today said that tight security arrangements were being made for the Ganesh idol immersion to be held on Saturday (6th) as part of Vinayaka Navratri celebrations.

On Wednesday, CV Anand along with GHMC Commissioner RV Karnan, Rachakonda CP Sudheer Babu, Additional CP Vikram Singh Mann, Hydra Commissioner AV Ranganath, Hyderabad Traffic Joint CP Joel David, Hyderabad Collector Harichandana Dasari, have jointly inspected the route map of Balapur Ganesh immersion procession at the field level. They inspected the procession routes of Balapur, Charminar Circle, Mozamjahi Market and Telugu Thalli Flyover which are key points on the procession route, and made several suggestions based on the vehicles carrying the idols and their height. The immersion arrangements were inspected at the Necklace Road People's Plaza. The officials discussed the idol processions, police security, waste removal, uninterrupted power supply, traffic diversion, emergency medical services and other issues.

On this occasion, CP Anand said that 30,000 police personnel will be deployed for making security arrangements to ensure that the Ganesh immersion procession in the city takes place in a peaceful atmosphere. Special attention will be paid to ensure that the procession in

Khairatabad and Balapur are completed on time. All arrangements have been completed in coordination with the relevant government departments, he noted. GHMC Commissioner RV Karnan said that the arrangements have been made for the Ganesh idol immersion in 20 major lakes in Greater Hyderabad city and 72 artificial pools are specially set up under the auspices of the GHMC. About 134 fixed cranes and 259 mobile cranes have been set up in all the major lakes in the city. About 56,187 temporary lights are set up in coordination with the Hydra and Tourism Department and that 9 boats with DRF teams and 200 experienced swimmers are kept ready in Hussain Sagar lake. 13 control rooms have been set up with the help of the police. Besides, 160 Ganesh action teams had been deployed to ensure smooth immersion of the Ganesh idols along the 30 km main procession route, he explained. The Commissioner further said that 14,486 sanitation workers have been working 24 hours a day in three shifts to ensure cleanliness during the celebrations. Till yesterday (2nd), about 1,21,905 Ganesh idols had been immersed across the city. It was estimated that about 50 thousand idols would be immersed on the 6th of this month, he noted. Hyderabad Collector Dasari Harichandana said that in coordination with all government departments in Hyderabad district, they were ensuring that the Ganesh immersion takes place smoothly.

## SAMMAKKA-SARAKKA JATARA IS A SYMBOL OF TELANGANA'S SELF-RESPECT : MINISTERS ASSERT

Hyderabad, Sept.3 Telangana ministers Konda Surekha, Dhanasari Seethakka and Adluri Laxman Kumar today asserted that the "Sammakka-Sarakka Jatara" is considered as the symbol of Telangana's self-respect and should be celebrated on a grander scale and cross borders. At a review meeting on the "Medaram Master Plan" held in the State Secretariat here on Wednesday, the ministers directed the officials to complete maintenance and modernization works before the Maha Medaram Jatara besides respecting the opinion of the priests. Earlier, the priests have requested that the height of the "Ammavari gaddelu" be increased for the convenience of devotees, and that the shrines of Sammakka, Saralamma, Pagididdaraja and Govindaraja be aligned in a single row to avoid delays in darshan. On this occasion, the ministers stressed the need for better volunteer support for devotees, development of Medaram surroundings in line with tribal traditions, permanent infrastructure to manage the

growing footfall of devotees from India and abroad and improved vehicle management during the fair. They recalled that the government allocated Rs 150 crore for the upcoming Maha Medaram Jatara - unprecedented in the event's history and assured that more funds would be arranged if necessary. Further, Rs 236.2 crore Medaram Master Plan would be placed before Chief Minister Revanth Reddy for approval. Temple premises should highlight the sacrifice and greatness of Sammakka and Saralamma, they noted. The senior officials informed that the responsibility of managing the master plan had been entrusted to an organization experienced in conducting 'Kumbh Melas'.

The ministers examined the proposed redesign of the Medaram temple premises, suggested by 'Sammakka-Saralamma priests', and recommended some modifications. Endowment principal secretary Shailaja Ramaiyar, Mulugu Collector Diwakar and other officials attended the review meeting.

## BANDI QUESTIONS THE PURPOSE OF KAVITHA'S RESIGNATION

Hyderabad, Sept.3 : Reacting to suspension of BRS MLC K Kavitha from the BRS and her resignation to state legislative council, BJP MP and Union Minister Bandi Sanjay today questioned the very purpose of Kavitha's resignation. "What will the people gain from this? This is nothing but a drama staged jointly by the Congress and BRS to divert attention from the Kaleshwaram irrigation project scandal", he alleged.

Talking to newsmen, the Union minister claimed that people of Telangana are watching the ongoing 'political tactics'. If elections are held today, the BJP will come to power. The BRS is neck-deep in corruption, he noted

and said it was his responsibility to ensure the victory of BJP candidates in upcoming local body elections. "If BJP candidates win in Karimnagar Parliament constituency, I will ensure Central funds for development. I promise Rs 5 lakh if an MPTC wins and Rs 10 lakh if a ZPTC wins. The state government is deliberately delaying local body polls because it fears of losing access to Central funds", he noted. Criticising the Congress government for allegedly diverting funds released by the Centre, he questioned the state government as to why the sensational phone tapping case has not been handed over to the CBI and why no action is being taken regarding irregularities in power purchases.

## Illegal Shed Constructions Rampant in Cherlapally – Kapra Municipal Officials Remain Silent“

“NSR, Medchal - Malkajgiri Staff Reporter, Cherlapally, September 3, Indian Chronicle: Cherlapally is witnessing unchecked illegal shed constructions, raising serious concerns over the blatant violations of building norms. Massive sheds are being built without proper permissions, yet the Kapra Municipal Corporation authorities continue to turn a blind eye. Despite repeated complaints from locals, no action has been taken against these unauthorized constructions. Residents allege that negligence and inaction from the municipal officials is encouraging builders to carry out such illegal activities without fear. The half-built sheds with iron structures and high walls are clear evidence of large-scale violations. Instead of enforcing rules, the Kapra Municipal authorities appear indifferent, allowing illegal encroachments to flourish in broad daylight. People demand immediate intervention from higher authorities to put an end to this open misuse of land and to hold negligent municipal officials accountable for failing to perform their duties.



## CBI PROBE AGAINST KCR IS A DISGRACE : KTR

Hyderabad, Sept.3: BRS Working President K.T. Rama Rao on Tuesday strongly condemned the Congress government's move to seek a CBI probe against former Chief Minister K. Chandrashekar Rao, by calling it as an insult to the people of Telangana. "Telangana witnessed its golden era under KCR's leadership. He secured Hyderabad's drinking water needs for 50 years and transformed the state through irrigation projects like Mallanna Sagar and Kondapochamma Sagar. Targeting such a leader with baseless allegations is a disgrace," KTR claimed.

Welcoming Congress leader Prabhakar Rao and his followers from Manuguru of Pinapaka constituency, into the BRS, Rama Rao accused the ruling Congress of double standards, recalling how Rahul Gandhi once dubbed the CBI as "Modi's pocket organization," while CM Revanth Reddy now praises it. "This hypocrisy exposes the miserable state of Congress," he remarked.

KTR claimed that no leader in Indian politics had delivered as much progress in a decade as KCR. Through mega projects like Kaleshwaram, Sitarama and Palamuru-Rangareddy, Telangana moved from 14th rank in agriculture in 2014 to becoming a major food producer in the country. Kaleshwaram alone lifts 2 TMCs of water daily, irrigat-



ing lakhs of acres and supplying drinking water to countless villages," he noted. The senior BRS leader accused Congress and BJP for allegedly conspiring to defame KCR because they cannot digest the people's affection for him. "In just 21 months, Congress rule has thrown Telangana into chaos. Farmers are forced to stand in long queues, leaving their shoes behind, just to purchase Urea," he charged.



# Telangana Roller Skating Association Announces Dates for 2025 District Roller Skating Championship“



“Kukatpally, September 3 (Aruna Prabha):“The Telangana Roller Skating Association has officially announced the dates for the 2025 District Roller Skating Championship. The championship will be held across ten districts of the state during September.”“District-wise schedule:”“Adilabad – September 7”“Khammam – September 7 & 8”“Hyderabad – September 12 to 14”“Ranga Reddy – September 12 to 14”“Karimnagar – September 13 & 14”“Nizamabad – September 13 & 14”“Warangal – September 13 & 14”“Mahbubnagar – September 19 to 21”“Medak – September 20 & 21”“Nalgonda – September 20 & 21”“On this occasion, Telangana Roller Skating Association General Secretary M.V. Ramakrishna stated:”“Players who excel in the district-level competitions will be selected for the Telangana State Roller Skating Championship 2025. The best talent from each district will be given the opportunity to represent at the state level.”“Association President M. Raj Gopal, General Secretary M.V. Ramakrishna, and Organizing Chairman Tanguturi Nagaraju added:”“The Association is committed to providing all necessary facilities to athletes and to nurturing roller skating talent across the state.”“They further informed that official letters, circulars, email communications, and updates have already been shared through the Association’s website [www.telanganaskate.com](http://www.telanganaskate.com) as well as on social media platforms.”“

# Rabies Is Fatal!.. There Is No Treatment“

““Indian Chronicle” kumrambheem, Asifabad.District Reporter Jade Srinivas.September,“03.”“Asifabad district If you are bitten by an animal like a dog, cat, monkey or even a snake, get vaccinated immediately. If you are bitten deeply, you should take rabies immunoglobulin treatment. Don't think it's nothing. Don't wait until the symptoms of the disease appear. If the symptoms appear once, death is certain. That is the most terrible death. Vaccination immediately after the bite is the only way. Not all vaccines are the same.Rabies vaccine is the real vaccine..



# The Protection Of Women And Children Is The First Priority Of The Police Department...!

“““Indian Chronicle” kumrambheem, Asifabad.District Reporter Jade Srinivas.September,“03.”“Women can approach them without fear on their issues.”“Awareness seminars on laws for women and children are being held in the district through the She Team.If women are subjected to ragging, teasing, or violence, contact the District She Team: District SP Kantilal Patil IPS.Asifabad District SP said in a statement on that women and young girls in the district can contact the police without fear if they are subjected to violence. He said that SHIT team, Anti- Women Trafficking Team and Bharosa Centers are working for the protection of women and children. He said that students and women should not be afraid when they are subjected to injustice, and if they come forward with courage to complain, action will be taken against the accused. He informed that awareness programs are being conducted for the students of Kalashas and schools on ragging, EV teasing, FOCSO, SHIT team, Anti- Women Trafficking through She Team, Bharosa Team and the concerned police station officials.

He informed that if women are subjected to any violence at their workplaces, they should contact the She Team. He informed that in the month of August, 83 hotspots were identified by the SH team across the district, 25 awareness programs were conducted, and 08 people were caught red-handed, 03 FIRs were filed out of 11 complaints, and counseling was provided in 08 cases. He said that the police department would take strong measures for the protection of minor children and women. He advised women to be very careful while using social media like Facebook, WhatsApp, and Instagram, and to take all kinds of safety measures regarding personal safety while posting photos and videos. He informed that if any women or children are subjected to harassment, those who cannot contact the police directly should contact the SH team. He said that two SH teams are working across the district. The SP said that information should be provided to Asifabad Division She Team number 8712670564, Kagaznagar Division She Team number 8712670565 or dial 100, and the details of those who provide information will be kept confidential.”[

# Measures Should Be Taken To Ensure That Public Transport Does Not Face Any Problems:District Collector Venkatesh Dhotre“



““Indian Chronicle” kumrambheem, Asifabad.District Reporter Jade Srinivas.September,“03.”“Asifabad Public transport problems in the district District Collector Venkatesh Dhotre said that steps should be taken without any problems. On Tuesday, the internal roads and sewers in Kasabwadi ward in the district headquarters were inspected along with the municipal officials. Speaking on the occasion, the District Collector ordered the municipal officials to immediately repair the potholes formed on the roads due to the recent heavy rains. He said that the people and motorists should be ensured that there is no problem, the sewers should be cleaned regularly to prevent the development of mosquitoes, oil balls and bleaching powder should be sprayed, and garbage should be collected every day. Later,

he inspected the Vinayaka immersion site in Peddavagu at Godavelli. He said that the Vinayakas of the town will be brought here for immersion, the road should be paved without any problems for devotees and Vinayaka Shobhayatra vehicles, and arrangements should be made to ensure that vehicles can circulate at the immersion site. He said that lights should be installed so that there is continuous light and a crane should be installed for the immersion of the Ganesha idols. He said that necessary arrangements should be made under the auspices of the municipal department so that the devotees do not face any difficulties on the day of immersion. Asifabad Municipal Commissioner Gajanan, officials of the concerned departments and others participated in this program.

# Along With Education,Meals Should Be Provided According To The Menu : District Collector Venkatesh Dotre“



““Indian Chronicle” kumrambheem, Asifabad.District Reporter Jade Srinivas.September,“03.”“Quality education for students in government schools and welfare hostels”District Collector Venkatesh Dhotre said that along with education,nutritious food should be provided as per the menu.On Tuesday,a surprise inspection was conducted at the Tribal Welfare Girls' Home School in Wankidi Mandal

Center of the district and the kitchen, mid- day meal quality, cooking supplies, vegetables, classrooms and attendance records were examined. Speaking on the occasion,the District Collector said that students in government schools should be provided with quality education and nutritious food as per the menu.He asked the principal to find out the details of the attendance percentage of the students and said that students should not be absent from school and special attention should be paid to students who have not attended school for a long time. He said that teachers should teach in a way that is understandable to the students, provide complete understanding to the students on the subjects of Mathematics,English and Science, and pay special attention to the students who are backward in the class.He said that 10th class students should be prepared for the annual examinations from now on. He said that the school surroundings, bathrooms and toilets should be kept clean and the students should be explained about the importance of personal hygiene. He said that the health worker should be available 24 hours and should review the health of the students from time to time. The students were asked several questions in the classrooms and their learning abilities were tested.District Tribal Welfare Department Officer Ramadevi, school principals and teachers participated in this program.”

# Dharna To Pay Pending Wages“

““Indian Chronicle” kumrambheem, Asifabad.District Reporter Jade Srinivas.September,“03.”“Dharna to pay pending wages.CITU District President Rajender said that 104 employees across Telangana state have 5 months of salaries pending and the government is not paying attention to them despite their requests. ASF organized a dharna in front of the Collectorate on Wednesday. Speaking, he alleged that they are facing severe difficulties due to non-payment of salaries. They were angry that the workload has been increased but salaries are not being paid.



# Offerings To Ganesh And Worshipping At Hanuman Temple With Devotion““

“Indian Chronicle” kumrambheem, Asifabad.District Reporter Jade Srinivas.September,“03.”“A large number of devotees participated in the worship of Lord Ganesh at the Hanuman Mandir of Sivakesha Temple in Wankidi Mandal Center. After that, a beautiful program began. In this program, a large number of community leaders, caste leaders, street leaders, people and devotees participated and received the food.

# Delhi HC denies bail to man impersonating as Amit Shah’s nephew, cheating businessman

The Delhi High Court has denied bail to a man, accused of cheating a businessman of ₹3.9 crore by impersonating as the nephew of Union Home Minister Amit Shah.Justice Girish Kathpalia dismissed the bail plea of accused Ajay Kumar Nayyar, considering the nature of the allegations against him.”Considering the nature and expanse of the allegations against the accused/applicant (Nayyar) coupled with the pending consideration of amendment in charge to include the offences under Section 467/ 471/120B IPC, punishable with life imprisonment and also keeping in mind the antecedents, at this stage, I do not find it a fit case to grant bail to the accused,” the September 1 order said.The man allegedly assured the complainant that get a ₹90 crore tender from the central government for the supply of leather for renovating the President’s estate.According to the prosecution, the complainant was introduced to the accused through a family friend at Jalandhar Gymkhana Club when Nayyar represented himself as Mr. Shah’s nephew, Ajay Shah and assured to get the complainant the tender for the government contract.The complainant was subsequently shown a demand draft of ₹90 crore in favour of his company and asked to pay ₹2.5 crore as processing fees, it alleged.

After several rounds of meetings with the accused, ₹3.90 crore was paid to him by the complainant through cash and RTGS on different occasions towards the tender, the prosecution said, but Nayyar showed a photo of another demand draft of ₹127 crore, stating that the cost of



tender had been increased from ₹90 crore to ₹127 crore.When the complainant sensed he was being cheated, he got a police complaint filed, following which the accused was arrested in December 2021.Nayyar sought bail on the ground that charges were framed in 2022 and the trial would take a long time to conclude.The prosecutor opposed the bail saying the prosecution was considering to amend the charge and add charges for relevant offences, including criminal conspiracy and those relating to use of forged cheques by the accused given as security to the complainant and the same being punishable with life imprisonment, the ground of being under detention for four years lost significance.The prosecutor said the accused was also allegedly involved in a similar cheating case, which he settled by paying ₹75 lakh to the complainant.

# Judge who performed special poojas for Ganesha:“ Devarapalli fame Chandrika Reddy“Here,

Indian Chronicle September 3:“ Judge Devarapalli Keerthi Chandrika Reddy visited the Ganapathi, which was organized by the Sri Lakshmi Ganapathi Utsavam Committee in the court area of ??the town. Subsequently, under the auspices of the ceremonial committee, the judge was honored with the Shaluwa. The event was attended by Judge Gary, President of Bar Association, Kammampally Umamaheshwara Rao, General Secretary Keerthi Karthik, Senior Lawyers, former 24th Ward Councilor Wankudoth Tara and Sri Lakshmi Ganapathi Ceremony. Lulu, CH Ramesh, T. Srinu, Bipin, Chandra Shekhar and committee members participated.





## Dharmasthala case twist: Complainant denies daughter went missing, recants later



GNS News Agency, Sept 3

In a major twist to the alleged secret burials case at Dharmasthala, a woman who had filed a police complaint saying her daughter had gone missing at the Karnataka temple town has now said that her statement was fabricated. Hours later, she changed her words again, alleging that she was forced to make these statements after some people promised to help her get justice. "Some people came to me and asked me to make these allegations. Due to this, I had to say it," Sujatha Bhat told a YouTube channel, which uploaded the clip Thursday evening.

In a complaint filed with the Dakshina Kannada police last month, Sujatha had requested the police to find the skeletal remains of her daughter, Ananya Bhat, who has been missing since 2003. Sujatha had blamed influential people from Dharmasthala for her disappearance. However, when asked by the channel whether she had a daughter, Sujatha said no. She also accused right-wing activist Girish Mattannavar and T Jayanth, another complainant in the case, of coercing her to make the charges. Sujatha had filed her complaint on July 15, days after the police registered a

case into the alleged secret burials at Dharmasthala following claims made by a whistleblower. Recently, Sujatha and her lawyer had issued a video statement and 'released' a photograph, which she had claimed was of her daughter. "That was fake," she has now said. She said she raised this issue due to a property dispute with authorities at Dharmasthala, and due to the "pain" she endured as a "Hindu temple was under Jain tradition". On Thursday evening, she told reporters she was forced by the YouTube channel to claim that she had filed a complaint due to the property dispute. "They promised to help me," she said. On her claims that she did not have a daughter, she said that she was compelled to say so. "Ananya Bhat is my daughter. Please stop this. I will make my statement with the SIT," she said. Sujatha said that a lawyer promised to save her if she made these statements.

"The property issue is different. Do not link it to this case. Yes, there is a dispute with regard to property. But, I have not done this for property," Sujatha added. The 'secret burials' case The Dharmasthala 'secret burials' case has taken the state by storm after allegations were first made by a whistleblower, a former sanitation worker, in July this year. He had alleged that he was forced to bury several bodies and was threatened against approaching the police. Following his complaint, the Dharmasthala police had registered an FIR on July 4. A Special Investigation Team (SIT) formed on July 19 is currently investigating the case. The SIT, which exhumed 16 locations, found two skeletal remains and collected soil samples from all sites to check for the presence of human DNA. Recently, a forum including writers, lawyers, activists, and others had alleged that complainants and witnesses in the case were being threatened. "Attempts are being made to intimidate complainants and witnesses and to discredit them publicly," it had said in a statement.

## How CHAKRA is paving the way for a state-led network of Centres of Excellence in Maharashtra

GNS News Agency, Sept 3

Maharashtra University of Health Sciences (MUHS), Nashik, is undergoing a major transformation with construction underway for an apex Centre of Excellence. Plans are also in place for a new hostel dedicated to the Faculty Development Academy, a simulation lab for students, and other verticals as part of the overarching umbrella of the Centre for Health Applied Knowledge and Research Autonomy (CHAKRA). Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis laid the foundation stone for the centre in June this year. Lt Gen (retd) Madhuri Kanitkar, Vice-Chancellor, MUHS, who completes her tenure in October, has been working according to a time plan, finishing all projects and ensuring that a sustainable roadmap is in place. In an interview with The Indian Express, Kanitkar spoke about the unique concept that will pave the way for the first-of-its-kind state-led network of Centres of Excellence.

What is the purpose of CHAKRA? What is the role of the Maharashtra government in supporting it? Lt Gen (retd) Madhuri Kanitkar: CHAKRA has been established as a Section 8 (non-profit) company for promoting medical research, clinical trials, documentation and bringing advancements to the whole field of medical education and research. This is a Rs 150-crore project that has been supported by the Asian Development Bank through the Government of Maharashtra.

The aim is to create a hub at MUHS and spokes at various medical colleges for coordinating research and development. The board comprises the medical education secretary as the Chairman and includes the MUHS V-C, the state Medical Education Commissioner, and the Director of the Department of Medical Education and Research as members. Lt Gen Kanitkar: While the hub is at MUHS, the Centres of Excellence have been identified at Pune's BJ Medical College; Gene Health Lab of MUHS; Government Medical College at Chhatrapati Sambhaji Nagar; Government Dental College, Mumbai; Government Medical College, Nagpur; and so on. For instance, at BJ Medical College, the focus of the Centre of Excellence will be on newborn care and at Gene Health Lab, the aim is to look at tests for cancer markers and congenital diseases for poor patients.

What challenges did you face while initiating and executing such a bold initiative? What has been the progress so far?

Lt Gen Kanitkar: A postgraduate institute and a Centre of Excellence are like Siamese twins. They are inseparable. A Centre of Excellence is not meant to be a mere showroom, and initially it was a challenge to convince the state. Over time, red tape has crept in, and processes often become complicated, slowing down things. So this approach emphasises less government control and more effective governance. The aim is to serve a real purpose and the Centre cannot become a white elephant. In an interview with The Indian Express, Kanitkar spoke about the unique concept that will pave the way for the first-of-its-kind state-led network of Centres of Excellence. (Express Photo by Arul Horizon) Having inculcated a set of values and with over 40 years of experience in the Armed Forces, I saw the university as a fertile ground to implement these ideologies. Work is underway on fostering external partnerships to develop the Centre of Excellence Network. The eventual goal is to make the network self-sustaining. Tie-ups have been planned with renowned organisations like IITs to leverage public and private talent towards important research and patient care.

During your tenure, there was resistance to the automated examination system. How did you tackle that? What were the other challenges?

Lt Gen Kanitkar: The effort was to get the state government to agree to bring in an automated examination system, and the challenge was in convincing several people along the way. There was resistance, and I can understand that as there was a concern if it would work out. One of the colleges was directed to stop scanning the answer sheets and as it was a pilot project, I sent vehicles to collect the answer sheets, brought them to MUHS, got it scanned here, and showed how results can be brought out in a transparent manner in a week's time. In another instance, we picked up a major corruption case. A thorough departmental inquiry was conducted to ensure that money amounting to Rs 70 lakh was refunded to the varsity. There was immense pressure to file an FIR against the varsity employee. We chose to follow the process as the priority was to ensure accountability and recover the funds. While involving the police could have initiated a formal investigation, it could have delayed the corrective action and resolution.

You also started the KulGuru Katta to facilitate interactions between the V-C and students. What has been the impact?



Lt Gen Kanitkar: The biggest problem arises when students feel unheard. For example, we initially proposed daily exams with shorter durations instead of long breaks. However, students raised concerns about having to travel long distances and then appear for exams the very next day. We listened to their feedback and adjusted the schedule accordingly. Initially, festivals like Spandan and Avishkar were held only at one regional centre of MUHS. Students from other regions found it difficult to travel. In response, we made a policy decision to hold these events across multiple regional centres to make participation easier. We have held 11 VC-Kattas across Maharashtra, starting with regional centres in Pune, Kolhapur, and Mumbai.

What is your personal philosophy or guiding motto in work and life?

Lt Gen Kanitkar: There are three types of people who can never be "goody-goody" — a mother, a teacher, and an administrator. I embody all three, and I am certainly not "goody-goody." What matters most is focusing on processes and outcomes. But once that is addressed, what truly counts is the one-on-one relationship that follows. This relationship must be nurtured and understood for it to be truly accepted, and that is the core of my philosophy. If a task is not done, I won't hesitate to call it out. But that criticism is always about the work, never about the person. My belief is simple: rule with your head, but lead with your heart. You cannot effectively lead a team using logic alone — you need empathy and care. That is what drives me every day.

## From Ms. Freshers to Miss Universe India: Teachers recall DU student Manika Vishwakarma's journey



GNS News Agency, Sept 3

Three years ago, the auditorium of Delhi University's Mata Sundari College for Women was alive with anticipation. The college was hosting its annual Ms. Freshers event, where the newest batch of students introduced themselves on stage. Among the many young women adjusting their clothes and nervously rehearsing their lines, one figure stood out. Tall, poised, and luminous, Manika Vishwakarma walked into the spotlight. "She wasn't just beautiful, she was confident, graceful, magnetic," remembered Sirtaj Kaur, a faculty member and her cultural advisor in college, who first saw her that evening. That same presence carried Manika, now 22, far beyond the college auditorium. Earlier this month, she was crowned Miss Universe India 2025 and will represent the country at the global competition in Thailand later this year. Born in Sri Ganganagar, Rajasthan, and raised in Delhi, Manika is in her final year — she's pursuing a BA Programme in Political Science with Economics. She trained in classical dance and painting. Her work was recognised by the Lalit Kala Akademi and the JJ School of Arts. In 2024, she won the Miss Universe Rajasthan crown. When asked during the pageant to choose between advocating for women's education or providing economic aid to poor families, she chose education. "

## 'Targeting...makes for sceptical, unsure judges': Telangana HC judge after accepting apology from petitioner, advocates



GNS News Agency, Sept 3

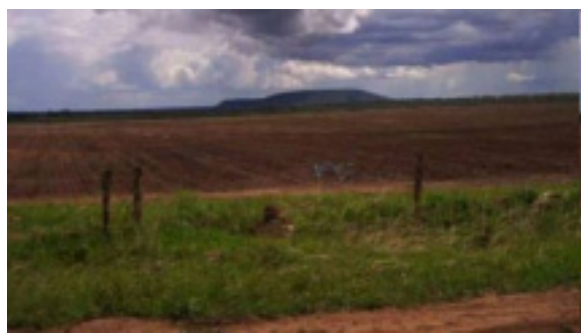
Telangana High Court judge Justice Moushumi Bhattacharya on Friday stated that attacks on judges irrevocably dent the dignity of courts as impartial arbiters of justice and affect public trust and confidence in the judiciary. The judge was dealing with a Supreme Court-directed petition that ordered a litigant and his two lawyers to tender an unconditional apology to her for "scurrilous and scandalous allegations" made against her in a transfer petition filed before the top court. In her order, accepting the apology from the three contemnors, Justice Bhattacharya underscored that while criticising a judgment is part of the legal process, personal attacks on a judge based on allegations of bias or "collateral motives" disrupt the trust between the court and its officers.

## Haryana to buy 35,500 acres for six projects under e-Bhoomi Policy

GNS News Agency, Sept 3

The Haryana government on Friday announced that it has invited fresh proposals to buy 35,500 acres from landowners which is required for six new projects in different parts of the state under its e-Bhoomi Policy. The deadline for submission of proposals is August 31 this year. An official spokesperson said that the e-Bhoomi (purchase of land voluntarily offered to the government for development projects policy), first notified in 2017 and revised on July 9, 2025, replaces the controversial practice of compulsory land acquisition under the 2013 Central Act. The spokesperson informed that unlike the old system, the e-Bhoomi Policy ensures that farmers hold the final decision.

He clarified that the system also prohibits the purchase of land for private colonizers, developers, or industries. "Land is accepted only for public purposes, whether for state-level infrastructure or central government projects. This provision directly addresses farmers' long-standing grievances that their land was being diverted for private profit," said the spokesperson. The spokesperson added, "To ease participation, the government has introduced land aggregators, who assist farmers in uploading land details on the portal free of cost. So far, 353 aggregators have been registered. Farmers also have the freedom to independently list their land and quote prices. According to government data, farmers have voluntarily offered 1,850 acres of land through the



portal so far." The state government has also insisted that under the e-Bhoomi Policy, not a single inch of land has ever been taken without the free will of farmers. Meanwhile, criticising the e-Bhoomi policy, senior AAP and national media in-charge Anurag Dhanda said that the scheme is designed to benefit politicians of a particular party and their corporate allies. "Farmers owning less than 10 acres have been excluded from any direct participation in the policy. Farmers, whose land would be bought, will have no ownership, share, or participation in the development projects built on their lands. No plots or developed sections will be allocated back to them. They will only be paid a one-time compensation," Dhanda said.

## No specific area, relief package will be for all disaster-affected places in Himachal: Sukhu



GNS News Agency, Sept 3

Chief Minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu Friday said the Natural Disaster Relief Package (NDRF) will be implemented throughout the state where ever disasters caused destruction and not in any specific area. Sukhu announced this while concluding the debate on Natural Disaster under Rule 62 wherein the opposition has also urged to declare Seraj Assembly constituency as a Natural Disaster Affected Area. He said, "We want to bring all areas, which received losses due to the natural disasters under the relief package."

Presenting statistics pertaining to the recent disasters, Revenue Minister Jagat Singh Negi said, "Mandi recorded 94 per cent excess rainfall this monsoon, while Shimla saw 69 per cent above normal in July 2025 alone. This isn't merely climate change—it's anthropogenic destruction, intensified over 13 years due to 14 specific contributing factors. We have increased compensation for disaster-related

fatalities to rs 7 lakh—higher than NDRF norms—but the scale of destruction demands national acknowledgment," he said. Sharing his own experiences from past rescue operations, Negi said, "In 2023, I walked behind JCBs through the night to rescue stranded tourists in Lahaul-Spiti. In Seraj today, our operations are being obstructed by local elements, which further justifies invoking the Disaster Act's provisions." Meanwhile, Speaker Kuldeep Singh Pathania said, "The house discussed the matter brought under Rule 67 for at least 12 hours and 10 minutes in total five settings. At least 40 members of the House participated in the discussion. Suggestions were noted down."

The Assembly on Friday expressed serious concern over the alarming rise in cancer cases across the state. Responding to a question raised by Congress' Gagret MLA Rakesh Kalra, Sukhu said the state currently has the second-highest number of cancer cases in the country, after the northeastern states. Sukhu pointed to environmental and agricultural factors behind the spike. "Excessive use of urea and sub-standard pesticides is among the primary reasons for the rise in cancer cases. The government has consulted leading cancer specialists and is planning to establish a state-of-the-art cancer institute in Hamirpur at Rs 300 crore. We will take steps to regulate and monitor the sale of such harmful chemicals," he said. Meanwhile, health minister (Col) Dhani Ram Shandil shared data which showed that cancer cases in the state saw a decline. While the state saw 2,428 cancer cases in 2022, it was 2,362 in 2023, and 1,836 in 2024. Shimla recorded the highest number of cases in 2024 with 493, followed by Mandi (425), Kullu (210), Solan (128), Chamba (124), Sirmaur (116), Hamirpur (101), Kangra (90), Bilaspur (72), Kinnaur (38), Una (26), and Lahaul & Spiti (13).

## Case lodged against Tejashwi Yadav in Maharashtra over derogatory post on PM Modi

GNS News Agency, Sept 3

The Maharashtra Police on Friday lodged a case against former Bihar deputy chief minister Tejashwi Yadav for allegedly making defamatory and socially divisive remarks against Prime Minister Narendra Modi on social media. The First Information Report (FIR) was lodged at Gadchiroli police station following a complaint by Maharashtra BJP MLA Milind Ramji Narote.

Narote, who represents the Gadchiroli Assembly constituency, stated in the FIR that some of his party workers had informed him about posts on Yadav's official X account (@yadavtejashwi) on Friday. The posts, he said, described the Prime Minister as a "liar" and accused him of making false promises, the FIR said. The MLA claimed in the FIR that he had personally verified the posts, which also included a song critical of Modi, alleging that he "lies morning and evening". According to Narote's complaint, these messages were "defamatory, derogatory and socially divisive" and intended to create fear and insecurity among citizens.

"Such propaganda has caused resentment among sensible citizens of Gadchiroli and is aimed at disturbing peace and harmony," the MLA said in his complaint. He further alleged that Yadav had been making such comments repeatedly on social media, and the present posts amounted to a criminal act. Narote also submitted screenshots of the posts as evidence. A case has been registered under sections 196(1)(a) (use of words, signs, visible representations, or electronic communication to promote hatred or ill-will), 196(1)(b) (involve acts that are prejudicial to the maintenance of harmony between these groups), 356(2) (derogatory or defamatory statements against the government with the intent to cause public mischief), 356(3) (repeated acts of such derogatory statements or publications), 352 (causing public mischief) and 353 (2) (attempts to spread disharmony or hatred through written, spoken, or digital communication, including social media) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita.



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Narote, who represents the Gadchiroli Assembly constituency, stated in the FIR that some of his party workers had informed him about posts on Yadav's official X account (@yadavtejashwi) on Friday. The posts, he said, described

# Lawyer refuses to argue citing strike, Delhi court says he has ‘forsaken right’

GNS News Agency, Sept 3

Delhi government, delhi Anti-Corruption Branch, delhi high court, Rouse Avenue Court, Rouse Avenue Court judge transfer, judge transfer, Indian express news, current affairsThe coordination committee of all district court bar associations, via a circular issued on Thursday, had stated that there would be a complete abstention of work in all the district courts of Delhi on August 22 and 23. (Photo: Praveen Khanna)A Delhi court on Friday said that a lawyer was deliberately avoiding arguments after he refused to argue despite being given multiple opportunities, saying that a strike was on.

“The court has no reason to comment on the validity of the purported ‘strike’ by lawyers...the court forms the clear conclusion that the Id. Counsel is deliberately avoiding arguments,” Special Judge Vishal Gogne of Rouse Avenue court said in an order. “It is also disconcerting that despite the counsel being available online and thus being in a position to advance arguments in the hybrid mode, the said opportunity is not sought to be availed,” he added. The co-ordination committee of all district court bar associations, via a circular issued on Thursday, had stated that there would be a complete abstention of work in all the district courts of Delhi on August 22 and 23. The committee had taken this step in response to an August 13 notification by Delhi Lieutenant Governor V K Saxena, which allowed Delhi Police to provide evidence to court via videoconferencing from police stations, as opposed to the standard practice that requires them to be physically present in court. “Moreover,

# AI era should not lead to breaking of link with our soil: Maharashtra School Education Minister Dada Bhuse

GNS News Agency, Sept 3

At a textbook development workshop under the National Education Policy 2020, Maharashtra school education minister Dada Bhuse on Thursday said care must be taken to ensure links with culture are not broken in the era of Artificial Intelligence. Bhuse said, “With devices like mobiles, TV, e-mediums, the coming era will be of AI, but we should take care that our connection with our soil and culture is not broken. This should be thought about, I request you Mr Rekhwari (Director of SCERT). My granddaughter is three years old and when her mother feeds her, she does not eat without looking at a cartoon on the mobile. If you ask me, Balbharti textbooks should be such that instead of the mobile she should look at the textbooks and have food.” Children not eating food without devices might be the story of every household today, he said. At the same event, Sachindra Pratap Singh, Commissioner of School Education, said, “The culture of reading books is decreasing. With the advent of devices like mobiles and TVs, we need to create new books that children and parents like. This curriculum will be a guide for the future of Maharashtra. I believe that the textbooks in Maharashtra will be the best in India.

Rahul Rekhwari, Director of SCERT said, “Since the National Education Policy 2020 came into effect, there have

# How a Konkani pujari gave Mumbai Prakash and its iconic sabudana vadas, loved by Raj Thackeray and Sachin Tendulkar

GNS News Agency, Sept 3

In the Konkani village of Hedavi, the Dashabhuj Lakshmi Ganesh Mandir has stood since the days of the Peshwas, watched over by the Joglekar family for generations. In the early 1900s, when hardship struck, a young Shivram Govind Joglekar made a difficult choice — to leave for then-Bombay in search of work. Before leaving, he sought the deity's blessing, promising to return one day and restore the temple if fortune favoured him.

In Mumbai, Shivram did a string of odd jobs, including selling milk door to door, before setting up a small roadside eatery in Girgaon. “Impressed by his grit, the owner of the building, Dr Bhale Rao, allowed my grandfather to construct a shop in front of the premises, and that's how Prakash Dughd Mandir started in 1946,” recalled Ashutosh Joglekar, 50, the third generation custodian running the eatery. The 15-seater — named after Shivram's eldest son who died when he was only two years old — served simple fare like piyush, sabudana vada, misal, poha, and khichdi, all without onion or garlic. Their crispy, fist-sized round sabudana vada, served with peanut and curd chutney, became a signature, drawing fans like Raj Thackeray and Sachin Tendulkar. Express photo by Akash patil Their crispy, fist-sized round sabudana vada, served with peanut and curd chutney, became a signature, drawing fans like Raj Thackeray and Sachin Tendulkar.

The business flourished, and true to his word, Shivram

the Prime Minister as a “liar” and accused him of making false promises, the FIR said. The MLA claimed in the FIR that he had personally verified the posts, which also included a song critical of Modi, alleging that he “lies morning and evening”. According to Narote's complaint, these messages were “defamatory, derogatory and socially divisive” and intended to create fear and insecurity among citizens. “Such propaganda has caused resentment among sensible citizens of Gadchiroli and is aimed at disturbing peace and harmony,” the MLA said in his complaint. He further alleged that Yadav had been making such comments repeatedly on social media, and the present posts amounted to a criminal act. Narote also submitted screenshots of the posts as evidence. A case has been registered under sections 196(1)(a) (use of words, signs, visible representations, or electronic communication to promote hatred or ill-will), 196(1)(b) (involve acts that are prejudicial to the maintenance of harmony between these groups), 356(2) (derogatory or defamatory statements against the government with the intent to cause public mischief), 356(3) (repeated acts of such derogatory statements or publications), 352 (causing public mischief) and 353 (2) (attempts to spread disharmony or hatred through written, spoken, or digital communication, including social media) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita.



this court, being a designate court for trial of cases pertaining to MPs/MLAs, is mandated to provide expeditious hearing,” Judge Gogne added. He was hearing arguments on charge in the land-for-jobs corruption case lodged by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) against former Bihar chief minister Lalu Prasad Yadav and his family. The judge had granted two opportunities for the counsel to advance arguments, stating that 92 of the 99 accused had already presented their cases. “It is especially highlighted from the said orders that adjournment can only be granted in exceptional circumstances. With the option of online arguments being consciously rejected, the grounds for adjournment are entirely self-serving and completely unexceptional,” the judge said. “The court is constrained to record that the Id. Counsel...does not intend to advance arguments on charge and has therefore forsaken the right to argue on their behalf,” he added.



been major changes in the education sector and the state of Maharashtra is at the forefront of making those changes. I believe that these changes will bring about revolutionary changes in the education department. We all have a big responsibility, we need to pay attention to how to make the textbooks of the highest quality. Principal Secretary School Education Ranjit Singh Deol, Director of Education (Primary) Sharad Gosavi, Director of Education (Secondary and Higher Secondary) Dr Mahesh Palkar, Director of Education (Planning) Krishnakumar Patil, subject officers, curriculum development members, as well as dignitaries from the education sector were also present at the workshop.

returned to Hedavi in 1956 to renovate the dilapidated temple. “It had no light, it was in ruins. He restored it completely,” Ashutosh shared. While Girgaon did well, it was the 1971 opening of their Dadar outpost that truly cemented Prakash's place in Mumbai's culinary map. Parked on Gokhale Road near Sena Bhavan and Shivaji Park, Prakash Shakahari Upahar Kendra became a haunt for politicians and cricketers alike. Their crispy, fist-sized round sabudana vada, served with peanut and curd chutney, became a signature, drawing fans like Raj Thackeray and Sachin Tendulkar. “My grandfather was told a restaurant there wouldn't work,” laughed Ashutosh, “but the secret behind everything was him. He was a natural in the kitchen. He created all the recipes from scratch, and we still follow them to the T.” By 1973, Shivram had created enough stability to return to his village permanently, to fulfil his duty as pujari to the temple. The reins of Prakash passed on to the family, who continue to run both outlets — Girgaon, which started as a modest 250 sq ft eatery, is now spread across 1000 sq ft, and has added a few new items including Jain sabudana vada. Parked on Gokhale Road near Sena Bhavan and Shivaji Park, Prakash Shakahari Upahar Kendra became a haunt for politicians and cricketers alike. Parked on Gokhale Road near Sena Bhavan and Shivaji Park, Prakash Shakahari Upahar Kendra became a haunt for politicians and cricketers alike. Across both outlets, the kitchens fire up at 5.30 am, shutters open by 7.30, and stay busy till 10.30 pm. Of the 30 dishes on the menu,

# Panjab University Student Council Elections on Sept 3, poll code imposed



GNS News Agency, Sept 3

Panjab University (PU) on Friday announced the schedule for the Campus Student Council Elections, which will be held on September 3, with polling beginning from 9.30 am onwards. Professor Amit Chauhan, Dean Students' Welfare (DSW), said this election is for office bearers, department representatives and the executive committee. This year, according to the PU authorities, car rallies on campus are completely banned with no vehicles allowed in the campus without a sticker. With the administration implementing the code of conduct, no demonstration will be allowed on campus.

The process of nominations will begin on August 27, followed by scrutiny. The list of candidates will be displayed by 12 noon, with the filing of objections and provisional list and objections to be submitted to the DSW by 2:30 pm. The approved list of candidates, withdrawals and final list will be displayed on August 28. After the end of polling in each department on September 3, counting of votes for officer bearers will begin at 12 noon and the results of officer bearers will be declared, at the Gymnasium Hall. The Executive Election is scheduled for September 11, and participation will be restricted to only department representatives and office bearers. The Punjab Students Union (Lalkaar) on Friday announced its participation in the upcoming student council elections, to be held on September 3, and named Jobanpreet from the Philosophy Department, Panjab University, as its presidential candidate. Jobanpreet described PSU (Lalkaar) as a revolutionary student organisation. He said that while his party's philosophy addresses the real issues faced by students, the opposition politics is driven by money, power and influence of political parties. “We aim to counter organisations that promote flashy politics or create a communal atmosphere,” Jobanpreet said, adding that

# Municipal Corporation approves project to redesign Mohali's busiest shopping stretch — Phase 11 to 6

GNS News Agency, Sept 3

The General House of the Mohali Municipal Corporation on Friday gave a green signal to the project to redesign the city's busiest shopping stretch from Phase 11 to Phase 6, turning the road into a modern commercial zone with walking and cycling tracks, LED lights, ornamental greenery, organised parking, and improved drainage. The project is part of a pilot scheme covering Ludhiana, Jalandhar, Amritsar and Mohali. A consultant will design the plan before tenders are floated, according to officials. Welcoming the move, Councillors said it would boost both the city's aesthetics and trade.

However, the House rejected the proposal to introduce mechanical cleaning for the city's internal roads (C roads) by a majority vote, despite Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) councillors pressing for its implementation and recording their dissent. Currently, only 'A' and 'B' category roads are cleaned mechanically, a system that has “failed to satisfy” both officials and councillors. A sharp exchange between former deputy mayor Manjit Singh Sethi and incumbent Deputy Mayor Kuljit Singh Bedi turned the meeting tense briefly, but order was restored after senior members intervened. The House also cleared a revised estimate for solid waste management (SWM) in the city after collecting door-to-door garbage professionally. An earlier estimate of Rs 20.79 crore,

# Aggressive dogs to be kept at two centres, feeding spots to be marked soon: MCD after SC's new order



GNS News Agency, Sept 3

stray dogsHundreds of dogs, who were picked amid preparations for the Independence Day celebrations, are expected to be released in a day or two from the ABC centres after they are vaccinated (Archive)Designating feeding spots in all 250 wards, marking shelters for aggressive canines, and stepping up the ABC (animal birth control) programme — the Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) is all set to implement the Supreme Court's revised order on stray dogs in a stepwise manner, officials said on Friday.

Hundreds of dogs, who were picked amid preparations for the Independence Day celebrations, are expected to be released in a day or two from the ABC centres after they are vaccinated, said sources, adding that a circular in this regard will soon be released. In a meeting held with officials and dog lovers, MCD Standing Committee Chairperson Satya Sharma directed that a concrete action plan be immediately prepared to ensure large-scale sterilisation of the strays.

In its Friday order, a bench of Justices Vikram Nath, Sandeep Mehta, and N V Anjaria of the Supreme Court said that dogs will not be removed from the streets — as directed earlier by a two-judge bench on August 11 — and instead be picked up, sterilised, vaccinated and released at the original site. The order goes in line with the current Animal Birth Control Rule (ABC) 2023. The directions, however, will not apply to dogs infected with rabies or suspected to be infested with rabies, as well those displaying aggressive behaviour. Such dogs have to be kept in shelters. But the Capital has no dedicated shelters for strays at present, and only nonprofits run such centres.

“We are ready to follow every direction of the apex

the goal is also to revive student-centric and progressive politics. He also said his party is working towards preserving the university as a public institution.

One of the senior members of the party, Manika, said that they are continuously highlighting the concerns raised by the students that include fee hikes, failure to uphold hostel rights and recruit professors, attacks on scholarship rights, increase in canteen rates, and increased police presence and mandatory affidavits further curbing students' freedom of speech. Manika, who also stood for the presidential post previously, said every year one of the many fees — tuition fees, examination fees or any other — is increased by 5 to 7.5 per cent or more. Apart from this, she said, there is also a severe shortage of hostels, forcing students to live outside and pay exorbitant rents. According to available information, UGC has sanctioned 1,334 faculty posts for the university, of which only 681 are filled. The senior member said many professors will retire soon and some are on extension. With this faculty crunch and several research scholars taking classes, the quality of education has gone down in several departments. Violence on campus, dissolution of the senate and FIRs against protesting students are some of the other concerns that students have voiced, Manika said.

Jobanpreet also added: “With the implementation of the New Education Policy, the number of self-financed courses has increased, and in this atmosphere, the role of student council elections becomes extremely significant.” “The aim is to reclaim the democratic space, reduce rising fees, fulfil the infrastructural needs and dismantle muscle-powered organisations,” he said. Jobanpreet concluded by quoting Bhagat Singh and said: “The sword of revolution is sharpened on the whetstone of ideas.”

The Students Organisation of Panjab University (SOPU) received a major boost when senior student leader Deep Somal, along with his colleagues from the Gandhi Group Students Union (GGSU), joined the organisation on Friday, a SOPU statement said. Welcoming them into the organisation, SOPU president Balraj Sidhu said, “This is not just an addition of numbers, but a strengthening of the student movement to restore issue-based politics in Panjab University. SOPU secretary general Karanvir Singh Kranti said, “SOPU has always stood with students and will continue to fight for their rights and welfare.” Meanwhile, ahead of the elections, the Student Organisation of India announced its panel at the Students Centre on the Panjab University Campus



which was revised to Rs 22.13 crore last month, was further enhanced to Rs 30.57 crore, but the chief engineer finally approved Rs 29.93 crore after a scrutiny. The new plan includes one mini-tipper truck with a driver and helper for every 700 households, e-rickshaws for patrolling and a mobile-app barcode system for monitoring garbage collection. Councillor Sarabjit Singh Samana suggested sending a delegation to Indore and Varanasi to study their advanced cleaning system and replicate best of their practices in Mohali. The House unanimously approved several development projects, including a Rs 2.5-crore boundary wall on the MC land in Sector 74.

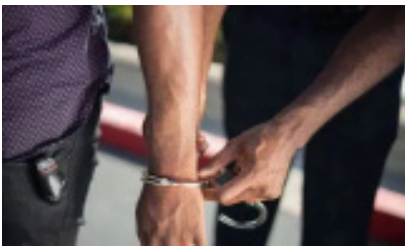
court. We will continue to shelter the aggressive dogs in a phase-wise manner as and when we receive complaints from the RWAs,” an official of the MCD's Veterinary department said. Sunder Singh, chairman of the sub-committee formed by the MCD to solve the issue, said: “We will shelter these dogs in the ABC centres located in Bela Road ABC and Dwarka's Sector 29 since we have a space of around 2-2.5 acres, which can house around 3,000 dogs.” A meeting, he added, will be held on Monday to decide the plan of action.

The feeding areas, the official added, will be identified within two-three days following site inspection, and budget estimation even as there are concerns about budget allocation. Meanwhile, Mayor Raja Iqbal Singh welcomed the decision of the apex court. “It is a good decision taking everyone into consideration. We will collaborate with the RWAs and dog feeders to demarcate the feeding spots,” he asserted, and underlined that the civic body has adequate staff in each ward.

# Four held in a raid on gambling den in Hyderabad; Rs 19,000, two cars siezed

Hyderabad: The Cyberabad Special Operations Team raided a house at Mailardevpally and caught four persons who were found gambling. The police seized Rs. 19,000 in cash and two cars from the place.

On a tip off, the police raided the house located at Bandlaguda and found that the four persons were playing cards and playing three card games. The four persons along with the property were handed over to Mailardevpally police station for further action.





# Trump threatens ‘massive sanctions’ for Russia if Ukraine conflict doesn’t end



GNS News Agency, Sept 3

U.S. President Donald Trump said Friday (August 22, 2025) he would make an “important” decision in two weeks on Ukraine peace efforts — specifying that Moscow could face massive sanctions or he might do nothing.Mr. Trump told reporters in the Oval Office that he was “not happy” about a Russian strike on Thursday (August 21, 2025) that hit a U.S.-owned factory in Ukraine “and I’m not happy about anything having to do with that war.”But he said he wanted to see whether Russian President Vladimir Putin and

Ukraine’s Volodymyr Zelenskyy would meet first.“I think I’ll know. I think I’ll know the attitude of Russia and, frankly, of Ukraine. It takes two,” Mr. Trump said when asked what he would do at the end of a two-week timeframe he set for assessing the state of peace talks.“Then I’m going to make a decision as to what we do and it’s going to be a very important decision,” he said.“That’s whether or not it’s massive sanctions or massive tariffs or both. Or do we do nothing and say it’s your fight?” he added.Mr. Trump — who showed off a picture of him and Mr. Putin at their recent Alaska summit, which he said had been sent by the Kremlin leader — has repeatedly announced timescales of around two weeks for decisions on Ukraine and other issues. Many of those deadlines have failed to materialise.Russia on Friday (August 22, 2025) ruled out an immediate meeting with Mr. Zelenskyy, despite Mr. Trump saying on Monday (August 18, 2025) after meeting with the Ukrainian and European leaders that he was arranging a summit.Mr. Trump said Friday (August 22, 2025) that setting up a Zelenskyy-Putin summit was as hard as mixing “oil and vinegar.”“We’re going to see if Putin and Zelensky will be working together. You know, it’s like oil and vinegar, a little bit. They don’t get along too well, for obvious reasons,” he told reporters.

# Canada to lift counter-tariffs on US goods under free trade deal

GNS News Agency, Sept 3

Ottawa: Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney said that the country will lift its counter-tariffs on US goods specifically covered under the Canada-US-Mexico Agreement (CUSMA) starting September 1.Carney made the announcement on the prime minister’s website, one day after he spoke by phone with US President Donald Trump on Thursday.

“Canada will retain our tariffs on steel, aluminum and autos as we work intensively with the US to resolve the issues there,” according to the statement.Canada and the United States have been in a trade war since the United States announced sweeping tariffs on Canadian goods in February, Xinhua news agency reported.Carney said the move to drop some counter-tariffs is meant to match US levies by implementing a carve-out for goods covered by CUSMA.The two leaders discussed on Thursday current trade challenges and opportunities, sharing priorities in a new economic and security relationship between the two countries.Canada had placed a 25 per cent levy on about



C\$30billion (£16bn; \$21.7bn) worth of US goods on an array of products, including orange juice and washing machines.The tax hike was in retaliation to US tariffs on Canada, which as of August are valued at 35 per cent on all goods not compliant with the countries’ existing free trade deal.

# Kilauea erupts again: Lava fountains soar in Hawaii for 31st time since December

GNS News Agency, Sept 3

Honolulu: Hawaii’s Kilauea volcano resumed erupting Friday by shooting an arc of lava 30 metres into the air and across a section of its summit crater floor.It was Kilauea’s 31st display of molten rock since December, an appropriately high frequency for one of the world’s most active volcanoes.The north vent at the summit crater began continuously spattering in the morning, and then lava overflowed a few hours later. The vent started shooting lava fountains in the afternoon.The eruption was contained within the summit crater, and no homes were threatened.A few lucky residents and visitors will have a front-row view at Hawaii Volcanoes National Park. If the past is a guide, hundreds of thousands more will be watching popular livestreams made possible by three camera angles set up by the US Geological Survey.Whenever she gets word the lava is back, Park Service volunteer Janice Wei hustles to shoot photos and videos of Halemaumau Crater — which Native Hawaiian tradition says is the home to the volcano goddess Pele. She said that when the molten rock shoots high like a fountain, it sounds like a roaring jet engine or crashing ocean waves. She can feel its heat from over a mile away.

“Every eruption feels like I am sitting in the front row at nature’s most extraordinary show,” Wei said in an email.Kilauea is on Hawaii Island, the largest of the Hawaiian archipelago. It’s about 320 kilometres south of the state’s largest city, Honolulu, which is on Oahu.Here’s what to know about Kilauea’s latest eruption:

A lower magma chamber under Halemaumau Crater is receiving magma directly from the earth’s interior at about 3.8 cubic metres per second, said Ken Hon, scientist-in-charge at the Hawaiian Volcano Observatory. This blows the chamber up like a balloon and forces magma into an upper chamber. From there it gets pushed above ground through cracks.Magma has been using the same pathway to rise to the surface since December, making the initial



release and subsequent episodes all part of the same eruption, Hon said.

Many have featured lava soaring into the air, in some cases more than 300 metres. The fountains are generated in part because magma — which holds gases that are released as it rises — has been travelling to the surface through narrow, pipelike vents. The expanding magma supply is capped by heavier magma that had expelled its gas at the end of the prior episode. Eventually enough new magma accumulates to force the degassed magma off, and the magma shoots out like a Champagne bottle that was shaken before the cork was popped.This is the fourth time in 200 years that Kilauea has shot lava fountains into the air in repeated episodes. There were more episodes the last time Kilauea followed this pattern: The eruption that began in 1983 started with 44 sessions of shooting fountains. Those were spread out over three years, however. And the fountains emerged in a remote area, so few got to watch.

# Trump nominates aide Sergio Gor as next US Ambassador to India

GNS News Agency, Sept 3

Washington: US President Donald Trump has announced the nomination of longtime aide and trusted political strategist Sergio Gor to serve as the next United States Ambassador to India, as well as Special Envoy for South and Central Asian Affairs.In a statement posted on Truth Social, Trump praised Gor’s loyalty, organisational talent, and deep involvement in his political and governmental operations.“I am pleased to announce that I am promoting Sergio Gor to be our next United States Ambassador to the Republic of India, and Special Envoy for South and Central Asian Affairs,” Trump wrote.He continued, “As Director of Presidential Personnel, Sergio and his team have hired nearly 4,000 America First Patriots across every Department of our Federal Government in RECORD time — Our Departments and Agencies are over 95% filled! Sergio will remain in his current role at the White House until his confirmation.”

Trump highlighted Gor’s wide-ranging contributions to his administration and campaign, saying, “Sergio is a great friend who has been at my side for many years. He worked on my Historic Presidential Campaigns, published my Best Selling Books, and ran one of the biggest Super PACs, which supported our Movement.”

“For the most populous Region in the World, it is important that I have someone I can fully trust to deliver on my Agenda and help us, MAKE AMERICA GREAT AGAIN.

Sergio will make an incredible Ambassador. Congratulations Sergio!” said Trump.Gor responded with gratitude in a post on X, writing, “Beyond grateful to @realDonaldTrump for his incredible trust and confidence in nominating me to be his next US Ambassador to India and Special Envoy for South and Central Asian Affairs! Nothing has made me prouder than to serve the American people through the GREAT work of this Administration! Our White House has achieved historic results in MAKING AMERICA GREAT AGAIN! It will be the honor of my life to represent the United States!”The nomination drew praise from top Trump administration officials. Vice President JD Vance wrote, “Sergio is a great guy and will make a fantastic ambassador for our country to India. So much of our success over the last few months was due to Sergio’s hard work. I’m grateful to POTUS for giving him this new role.”

Secretary of State Marco Rubio also weighed in: “I am excited about the President’s decision to nominate @SergioGor to be our next Ambassador to India. He will be an excellent representative of America in one of the most important relationships our nation has in the world.”FBI Director Kash Patel added his support, posting simply, “Congrats @SergioGor, outstanding pick for Ambassador to India.”

The 38-year-old Gor quickly rose in conservative politics, becoming one of the most powerful, albeit low-profile, aides in the White House. His task was to vet around 4,000 appointees to ensure their utmost loyalty to Trump

# Dutch Foreign Minister resigns after failing to secure sanctions against Israel



GNS News Agency, Sept 3

Dutch Foreign Minister Caspar Veldkamp resigned evening, after he failed to secure new sanctions against Israel over the war in Gaza.Mr. Veldkamp had informed the country’s Parliament he intended to bring in new measures in response to Israel’s planned offensive in Gaza City and other heavily populated areas but was unable to secure the support of his coalition partners.

The 61-year-old former Ambassador to Israel told reporters he felt he was unable “to implement policy myself and chart the course I deem necessary”.Following Mr. Veldkamp’s resignation, the remaining Cabinet members of his center-right New Social Contract party also quit, leav-

ing the Dutch government in disarray.“In short we are done with it,” party leader Eddy Van Hijum said, calling the Israeli government’s actions “diametrically opposed to international treaties”.The Dutch Government already collapsed in June when anti-Islam lawmaker Geert Wilders pulled out of the country’s four-party coalition over a fight about immigration.The three remaining parties stayed on in a caretaker Government until elections could be held in October.Prime Minister Dick Schoof was set to address Parliament later Friday evening over the crisis.

The world’s leading authority on food crises said earlier on Friday the Gaza Strip’s largest city is gripped by famine, and that it’s likely to spread across the territory without a ceasefire and an end to restrictions on humanitarian aid.The Netherlands’ Parliament had repeatedly delayed a debate on sanctions against Israel, a discussion that was already postponed from Thursday, as the Friday afternoon Cabinet meeting dragged on.“There’s a famine, ethnic cleansing, and genocide going on,” Kati Piri of the merged Green Left/Labour parties told Parliament, “And our cabinet has been deliberating for hours about whether to take any action at all. Shameful.” Mr. Veldkamp had proposed a ban on imports from Israeli settlements in the occupied Palestinian territories in response to the planned military escalation.Opposition politicians had called for a no-confidence vote for the Minister, frustrated at what they saw as a lack of action against Israel.

# North Korea says South Korea fired warning shots at its soldiers; Seoul says troops crossed border

GNS News Agency, Sept 3

South Korea fired warning shots at North Korean soldiers that briefly crossed the heavily fortified border earlier this week, Seoul said Saturday (August 23, 2025) after Pyongyang accused it of risking “uncontrollable” tensions.South Korea’s new leader, Lee Jae Myung, has sought warmer ties with the nuclear-armed North and vowed to build “military trust”, but Pyongyang has said it has no interest in improving relations with Seoul.Seoul’s military said several North Korean soldiers crossed the border Tuesday (August 19, 2025) while working in the heavily mined Demilitarised Zone (DMZ) separating the two Koreas.The incursion prompted “our military to fire warning shots”, Seoul’s Joint Chiefs of Staff said in a statement, adding, “the North Korean soldiers then moved north” of the de facto border.Pyongyang’s state media said earlier Saturday (August 23, 2025) that the incident occurred as North Korean soldiers worked to permanently seal the frontier dividing the peninsula, citing a statement by Army Lieutenant General Ko Jong Chol.

Calling the event a “premeditated and deliberate provocation”, General Ko said Seoul’s military used a machine gun to fire more than 10 warning shots towards the North’s troops, according to the official Korean Central News Agency.“This is a very serious prelude that would inevitably drive the situation in the southern border area where a huge number of forces are stationing in confrontation with each other to the uncontrollable phase,” General Ko said.Sealing the border

The last border confrontation between the arch-rivals was in early April when South Korea’s military fired warning shots after around 10 North Korean soldiers briefly crossed the frontier.North Korea’s military announced last October it was moving to totally shut off the southern border, saying it had sent a message to U.S. forces to “prevent any misjudgment and accidental conflict”.Shortly after, it blew up sections of the unused but deeply symbolic roads and railroad tracks that connect the North to the South.General Ko warned that North Korea’s Army would retaliate against any interference with its efforts to permanently seal the border.“If the act of restraining or obstructing the project unrelated to the military character persists, our army will regard it as



deliberate military provocation and take corresponding countermeasure,” he said.‘Restore trust’Under Mr. Lee’s more hawkish predecessor, relations between the two Koreas had sunk to one of their lowest points in years.After Mr. Lee’s election in June, he pledged to pursue dialogue with the nuclear-armed North without preconditions, saying last week his government “will take consistent measures to substantially reduce tensions and restore trust”.

Even so, South Korea and the United States began annual joint exercises on Monday (August 18, 2025) aimed at preparing for potential threats from the North.Mr. Lee described the drills as “defensive” and said they were “not intended to heighten tensions”.North Korea — which attacked its neighbour in 1950, triggering the Korean War — has long been infuriated by such exercises between the U.S. and the South, decrying them as rehearsals for invasion.Hong Min, a senior analyst at the Korea Institute for National Unification, said Pyongyang was again accusing Seoul of pursuing a “dual approach” with its latest outburst — calling for dialogue while in its view raising military tensions.Pyongyang’s leader Mr. Kim called earlier this week for the “rapid expansion” of the North’s nuclear weapons capability, citing the ongoing U.S.-South Korean military exercises that he claimed could “ignite a war”.His powerful sister has since said Seoul “cannot be a diplomatic partner” of the North and that Mr. Lee “is not the sort of man who will change the course of history”.

# Epstein’s former girlfriend told Justice Department she did not see Trump act in ‘inappropriate way’

GNS News Agency, Sept 3

Jeffrey Epstein’s imprisoned former girlfriend repeatedly denied to the Justice Department witnessing any sexually inappropriate interactions with Donald Trump, according to records released Friday (August 22, 2025) meant to distance the Republican President from the disgraced financier.The Trump administration issued hundreds of pages of transcripts from interviews that Deputy Attorney General Todd Blanche conducted with Ghislaine Maxwell last month as the administration was scrambling to present itself as transparent amid a fierce backlash over an earlier refusal to disclose a trove of records from the sex-trafficking case.The records show Ms. Maxwell repeatedly showering Mr. Trump with praise and denying under questioning from Mr. Blanche that she had observed Mr. Trump engaged in any form of sexual behaviour.The administration was presumably eager to make such denials public at a time when the president has faced questions about a long-ago friendship with Epstein and as his administration has endured continued scrutiny over its handling of evidence from the case.The transcript release represents the latest Trump administration effort to repair self-inflicted political wounds after failing to deliver on expectations that its own officials had created through conspiracy theories and bold pronouncements that never came to pass.By making public two days of interviews, officials appear to be hoping to at least temporarily keep at bay sustained anger from Mr. Trump’s base as they send Congress evidence they had previously kept from view.After her interview with Mr. Blanche, Ms. Maxwell was moved from the low-security federal prison in Florida to a minimum-security prison camp in Texas to continue serving a 20-year sentence for her 2021 conviction on allegations that she lured teenage girls to be sexually abused by Epstein.Her trial featured sordid accounts of the sexual exploitation of girls as young as 14 told by four women who described being abused as teens in the 1990s and early 2000s at Epstein’s homes.Neither Ms. Maxwell’s lawyers nor the federal Bureau of Prisons have explained the reason for the move, but one of her lawyers, David Oscar Marcus, said in a social media post Friday that Ms. Maxwell was “innocent and never should have been tried, much less convicted.”“I actually never saw the President in any type of massage setting,” Ms. Maxwell said, according to the transcript. “I never witnessed the President in any inappropriate setting in any way. The President was never inappropriate with anybody. In the times that I was with him, he was a gentleman in all respects.” Ms. Maxwell recalled knowing about Mr. Trump and possibly meeting him for the first time in 1990, when her newspaper magnate father, Robert Maxwell, was the owner of



the New York Daily News. She said she often had been to Mr. Trump’s Mar-a-Lago estate in Palm Beach, Florida, sometimes alone, but hadn’t seen Mr. Trump since the mid-2000s.Asked if she ever heard Epstein or anyone else say Mr. Trump “had done anything inappropriate with masseuses” or anyone else in their orbit, Ms. Maxwell replied, “Absolutely never, in any context.” Ms. Maxwell, a one-time socialite who was convicted in 2021 of helping lure teenage girls to be sexually abused by Epstein, was interviewed over the course of two days last month by Mr. Blanche at a Florida courthouse.She was given limited immunity, allowing her to speak freely without fear of prosecution for anything she said except for in the event of a false statement.Meanwhile, the Justice Department on Friday began sending to the House Oversight Committee records from the investigation that the panel says it intends to make public after removing victim’s information.The case had long captured public attention, in part because of the wealthy financier’s social connections over the years to prominent figures, including Prince Andrew, former President Bill Clinton and Mr. Trump, who has said he had a falling-out with Epstein years ago and well before Epstein came under investigation.Ms. Maxwell told Mr. Blanche that Clinton was initially her friend, not Epstein’s, and that she never saw him receive a massage — nor did she believe he ever did. The only times they were together, she said, were the two dozen or so times they travelled on Epstein’s plane.”



# What has been the impact of ethanol blending?



E20 petrol, which contains 20% ethanol and is being sold by Indian oil refiners, has been much in the news lately. India has achieved its target to blend 20% ethanol per litre of fuel five years ahead of the target under the National Policy on Biofuels. Ethanol blending in India rose from just 1.5% in 2014 to 20% in 2025, backed by the government's strong fiscal incentives to the sugarcane industry. While the government says ethanol blending achieves a range of goals such as cutting greenhouse gas emissions, bolstering farmers' incomes and reducing India's oil import bill, its benefits to the environment require closer scrutiny.

How are vehicle owners reacting to this change?

Vehicles sold in India from 2023 came with E20 stickers, indicating compatibility with 20% ethanol blended petrol. Additionally, manufacturers have addressed the concerns of those who own older vehicles. Hero Motocorp says in its website, "The material composition such as rubbers, elastomers and plastic components that are directly exposed to fuel also need to be changed to E20 compatible materials." However, according to LocalCircles, two in three petrol vehicle owners are against the E20 mandate. Only 12% of the 36,000 people surveyed across 315 districts are in favour of the switch. Critics cited a drop in mileage and increased maintenance costs. The survey urged the Union government to allow consumers to choose the type of fuel they want. While the Centre admitted to a "marginal drop" in engine efficiency, it said this "can be further minimised through improved engine tuning and use of E20-compatible materials." Minister Hardeep Singh Puri has called the consumer angst a "vilification campaign" facilitated by "vested, economic interests". While the Union government attempts to defend its E20 policy, its own think tank, the NITI Aayog, has urged the government "to compensate the consumers for a drop in efficiency from ethanol blended fuels", by way of "tax incentives on E10 and E20 fuel". According to the Minister, "since 2014-15 India has already saved more than ₹1.40 lakh crore in foreign exchange through petrol substitution." But has the benefit been passed to the end consumer? An analysis by The Hindu showed that Coal India Ltd, Oil & Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC), Indian Oil Corporation (IOC), Bharat Petroleum Corporation (BPCL), and Gas Authority of India Ltd collectively contributed ₹1.27 lakh crore, or 42.3% of the total ₹3 lakh crore dividends the Union government received from non-banking Public Sector Undertaking (PSUs) between 2020-21 and 2024-25. IOC and BPCL together saw a 255% rise in their dividend payouts since 2022-23 and a 65% decrease in oil prices. However, the two PSUs only passed on a 2% decrease in petrol prices to the public.

What about the impact on agriculture?

Sugarcane-based ethanol supply has grown from 40 crore litres in FY14 to nearly 670 crore litres, derived from about 9% of total sugar output, in FY24. The Union government says it has paid "over ₹1.20 lakh crore to farmers" since FY15. But how environmentally friendly is India's dependence on sugarcane for ethanol? About 60-70 tonnes of water is required to cultivate one tonne of sugarcane. Many sugarcane growing regions in India do not receive the 1,500 to 3,000 millimetre rainfall that is necessary for the crop's optimal growth. This leads to groundwater extraction and unsustainable irrigation methods. A 2023 Central Groundwater Board report says that sugarcane growing districts in

Maharashtra extract more groundwater than nearby regions. Distress among sugarcane growers in that State has been widely reported. Unsustainable agriculture practices accelerate land degradation. The Desertification and Land Degradation Atlas of India 2021 found that almost 30% of India's land is degraded. The water intensive nature of sugarcane and the impact on ground water reserves at a time of extreme weather has been absent from the discussion on ethanol-blended petrol.

The Centre, however, says it is looking to diversify ethanol supplies. The Food Corporation of India's rice allocation for ethanol jumped to a record 5.2 million metric tonnes, which is about 3.6% of output, from less than 3,000 tonnes allocated last year. Similarly, in 2024-25, over 34% of corn output was diverted for ethanol production. This diversion forced India to import about 9.7 lakh tonnes of corn during 2024-25 — a six-fold increase over the previous year's 1.37 lakh tonnes. Despite diversification efforts, area under sugarcane cultivation this year is estimated to be 57.24 lakh hectare against 57.11 lakh hectare last season. The assured payment mechanism for sugarcane, the Fair and Remunerative Pricing, is the key reason farmers bet on the crop as a source of stable income. While this rise is marginal, an analysis by the OECD-FAO says that 22% of India's sugarcane will be used for ethanol production by 2034. India's booming ethanol economy has also come under the gaze of the U.S. The Trump administration is pushing India to relax restrictions to its ethanol imports. The 2025 National Trade Estimate report noted India's policy as a significant "trade barrier." Import relaxation could potentially undermine years of investment and capacity building in ethanol production. The Indian Sugar Mills Association has urged the government to maintain the restrictions.

Will it affect the transition to EVs?

The Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas said the shift to ethanol-blended petrol "has helped India reduce carbon dioxide emissions by 700 lakh tonnes." Shifting to EVs, however, will achieve far higher rates of emissions reductions and speed up transport's decarbonisation, which is the third largest carbon emitting sector globally after energy and industry. The success of cities like Beijing in cutting air pollution is mainly due to the rapid adoption of EVs. Of course, this switch has to be backed by renewable energy rather than coal, to aid in decarbonising transport. Adoption of EVs has been much slower in India when compared to other large economies like the U.S., the European Union and China. About 7.6% of vehicle sales in 2024 was electric. Sales of EVs have to increase by over 22% in the next five years to reach the government's own target of 30% by 2030.

Another challenge to wider EV adoption in India is its dependence on Rare Earth Elements (REE). According to the Ministry of Mines, before China's export curbs were imposed, only 2,270 tonnes of REEs and compounds of REEs were imported in 2023-24. But this relatively lower level is critical for the industry to sustain the current level of EV production. The production and processing of many REEs is geographically concentrated in China, making global supply vulnerable to several risks. The automotive industry has also sounded alarm bells about the disruption in rare earth supply. India's largest carmaker Maruti Suzuki reduced its near-term production targets for its new EV, e-Vitara, attributing it to delays in receiving rare earth magnets. Other manufacturers too are bracing themselves for disruptions. Crisil Ratings Senior Director Anuj Sethi has said, "The supply squeeze comes just as the auto sector is preparing for aggressive EV rollouts." The recent detente in bilateral relations with China might help the industry to address the crisis in the short term. The Union government is engaged in diplomacy with Beijing to address the rare earth supply crunch, mainly germanium. Going forward, there is uncertainty on whether the Centre wants to push ahead with ethanol blending beyond 20%. While Minister Puri said the government will push for blending beyond 20%, the Union government in March said that there has been no decision yet.

# Aadhaar alone cannot get one enrolled as voter, says BJP



The BJP on Sunday (August 24, 2025) accused the Opposition of indulging in propaganda after the Supreme Court said that voters excluded during the ongoing SIR exercise in Bihar can submit Aadhaar along with other documents, asserting that the apex court did not say Aadhaar alone can be a valid document to get voting rights. Aadhaar is only proof of identity and residence and it does not establish citizenship, BJP's IT department head Amit Malviya said, adding that nowhere in the judgment did the Supreme Court even suggest that it should be used as a valid document for the Special Intensive Revision (SIR). The Election Commission of India has justified its ongoing Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls in Bihar saying it adds to the purity of the election by "weeding out ineligible persons" from the electoral rolls. The affidavit filed by the poll panel in a plea challenging June 24 order directing SIR of electoral roll pan-India starting from Bihar said despite legal concerns, Aadhaar, voter card and ration card were already being considered by the commission for the limited purpose of identity during the SIR-2025 exercise. | Video Credit: The Hindu

The Opposition is spreading propaganda over the issue, he said.

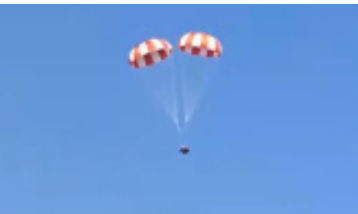
The Representation of the People Act states that a person will be disqualified from registration in electoral roll if he is not a citizen of India, declared by a competent court to be of unsound mind or is disqualified under law relating to corrupt practices or offences in elections, Mr. Malviya said. The Aadhaar Act, he added, says it is only proof of identity and residence, and does not establish citizenship. "Asking the Election Commission to include Aadhaar as a document for automatic voter enrolment would render Section 16 of the RP Act and the Aadhaar Act meaningless. In fact, this very bench, on August 12, held that Aadhaar is not a legal document to prove citizenship," Mr. Malviya said. Attributing to the Supreme Court what it

has not said is contempt of court, he said in a swipe at the opposition parties. "The truth is simple: SIR is intact, Aadhaar alone cannot get you enrolled, dead, fake, Bangladeshi and Rohingya names will be removed and only Indian citizens will elect the next government — not foreigners," he said. Mr. Malviya also claimed that 65 lakh names removed from the draft voter roll in Bihar included fake, dead, and Bangladeshi and Rohingya names. While the Supreme Court asked the list of deleted names to be published so that the affected persons can reapply, Mr. Malviya said only 84,305 objections have been filed so far, which is barely 1.3 per cent of the total deleted names. It is well below the standard margin of error, he said.

# ISRO completes first air-drop test of Gaganyaan parachute system

Bengaluru: ISRO on Sunday successfully carried out the first Integrated Air Drop Test (IADT-01) to validate the parachute-based deceleration system for the upcoming Gaganyaan mission. An ISRO official told PTI that the end-to-end demonstration was conducted near Sriharikota in Andhra Pradesh.

The exercise was jointly executed by ISRO, the Indian Air Force, Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO), the Indian Navy and the Indian Coast Guard. The Gaganyaan project aims to demonstrate India's capability to send humans into space and safely return them to Earth. Planned as the country's first human space flight programme, it will also involve precursor unmanned missions to test systems critical for crew safety. The parachute-based deceleration mechanism is a key component to ensure the safe recovery of the crew module during re-entry and landing.



# When a lone gunman murdered an elderly couple in Panaiyur in 2009



On the evening of August 24, 2009, an unidentified man drove his car into the sprawling premises of a sea-facing bungalow in Panaiyur, off East Coast Road (ECR). The residents of the house had no idea of the tragedy that was about to unfold within minutes. Inside the bungalow lived retired naval captain K. Elangovan, 69, his wife Ramani, 63, their daughter-in-law Vasanthi, 38, and her two children, aged 12 and 8. Her husband, Vidya Shankar, 42 — Elangovan's son — had gone to the airport to see off a friend.

Elangovan had been trying to sell a property on the outskirts of the city, and Vidya Shankar, who worked in France, had returned to India on a short holiday with his family to visit his parents. They were scheduled to fly back to France in a few days. At around 5 p.m., the lone intruder, armed with a gun, entered the house and opened fire. Ramani was shot at close range, followed by Elangovan. They were both killed. Vasanthi was also injured in the attack and collapsed, unconscious and bleeding.

"I had never seen him [the accused] before in my life... my father-in-law also did not know who he was," Vasanthi told investigators later, while undergoing treatment at a private hospital. "He asked us to open all the cupboards and looked for cash. We told him the money was kept inside [bank] lockers. He would not believe us. 'I will not leave you alone, I will shoot you,' he said." She added: "Finally, he found some cash and said, 'You lied to me.' After shooting me, he shot my daughter Priyanka, who was just eight then, and injured her. After the bullets got over, he went to the kitchen and brought a knife. He attacked my 12-year-old son Praveen with it, injuring him." An eyewitness explaining to CB-CID officials how the suspect in the double murder case was nabbed at the scene of the crime. DIG G. Venkataraman (left) and SP A. Arun (right), are in the picture. FileAn eyewitness explaining to CB-CID officials how the suspect in the double murder case was nabbed at the scene of the crime. DIG G. Venkataraman (left) and SP A. Arun (right), are in the picture. File | Photo Credit: M. Karunakaran

Assuming that the elderly couple and their daughter-in-law were dead, the accused began to leave the premises. Before doing so, he told the boy, Praveen, to remain indoors and not to call the police. He also threatened to return and check. Soon after he left, Vasanthi regained consciousness, locked the door, and alerted her relatives in Kottivakkam by phone and through the driver. The driver arrived within minutes and saw the man standing in front of the house, with bloodstains on his clothes. When he asked the gunman who he was, the suspect pointed the gun at him and confined him within the compound wall of the house. "He probably came back to look for more money. It appeared that the accused opened fire without any provocation. Almirahs and cupboards in the house were ransacked. He was probably searching for something," a se-

# Kalaighar Magalir Urimai Thogai scheme in Tamil Nadu: crediting care work by women heads of families

For S. Maheswari, 45, receiving ₹1,000 a month under the Kalaighar Magalir Urimai Thogai scheme means being able to afford her diabetes medicines. "It's very difficult to run a family of four with just my monthly earning of ₹10,000. I have to ensure the education of two children, look after my disabled husband, and do the household chores. My health takes a back seat," says the resident of Mahabalipuram, who runs a tea stall. The medicines cost about 1,500. She started taking the pills only after the scheme was introduced because she finally had enough money to spend on necessities.

Introduced in September 2023, the scheme is aimed at recognising women for doing the domestic work in their household that has historically fallen on the women's shoulders. The government gives ₹1,000 a month to women heads of families earning less than ₹2.5 lakh a year. With the scheme, Tamil Nadu became the first State in the country to recognise women's unpaid domestic and care work to society and compensate them for it. Since then, many other States have followed suit. Among them are Karnataka, Maharashtra, and Jharkhand. About 81.5% women take part in unpaid domestic work, compared with 27% men, in India, according to the Time Use Survey 2024 released in February. In a day, women spent, on an average, 289 minutes on unpaid domestic services for household members, while men spent 88 minutes. Women also spent 137 minutes a day caring for their household members, compared with 75 minutes for men. As the scheme nears its second anniversary, women across the State say that the modest sum has not only helped them buy household items but has also given them financial independence and enabled them to save for education, get increased access to healthcare, and start businesses. The scheme benefits more than 1.14 crore people. However, it is not without shortcomings: many women report that they have been left out of the scheme or have received benefits only sporadically in the last two years. "This ₹1,000 might seem to be a very small amount, but it gives me the confidence that I can handle emergencies without borrowing. The monthly support isn't just a financial benefit, it's a source of dignity and independence," says V. Malar, a domestic worker in Tiruchi. A recent study on the scheme, 'A Right to Care, A Right to Welfare: A Study of the Kalaighar Mahalir Urimai Thittam' — done by a team of researchers who are part of the Laws of Social Reproduction project, Dickson Poon School of Law, King's College London — showed that 49% of the women spend the money on household items. The researchers were led by Prabha Kotiswaran, professor of law and social justice, Dickson Poon School of Law.

Pachayee, 60, of Pudur village in Erode, is a worker under the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS). She says the aid enables her to buy essentials for which she earlier had to rely on her husband. She adds that along with the government's free bus travel scheme, the monthly assistance has allowed her to save a small portion of her earnings, for the first time. 'A

nior police officer had said. It was only when some of the driver's friends and relatives arrived that the accused became frightened and attempted to flee. However, they overpowered him and tied him to a tree. He was roughed up by locals before being handed over to the police. The armed suspect was identified as Shanmugasundaram alias Rajan, 35, of West Saidapet. A .32 mm pistol was recovered from him. The Neelangarai Police registered a case and recovered ₹2.5 lakh in cash and six sovereigns of gold jewellery from the accused. Rajan was reportedly involved in the real estate business. Another country-made pistol was recovered from his house. Gunman's death The day after the murder-robbery, the police said the lone accused "fainted during interrogation" and was declared dead after he was taken to a private hospital at 3 a.m. Then Commissioner of Police T. Rajendran said the motive behind the crime appeared to be murder for gain. Two days later, the Crime Branch-CID took over the investigation, and a special team led by then Superintendent of Police, CB-CID, A. Arun (who is at present the City Police Commissioner), visited the scene of the crime and recorded statements of family members and a few eyewitnesses who helped apprehend the suspect. The police found that the suspect had bought the two pistols in Bihar, and the ammunition (made by ordnance factory) was sourced through an agent. He had used a fake number plate on the car he had come in. The CB-CID further confirmed it was a "clear case of murder for gain." "Rajan was a total stranger to the family. His only intention was to rob. The modus operandi indicated the possibility of his involvement in other serious crimes, including a triple murder in Ashok Nagar and a double murder in Velachery," the police said.

Political allegations Desiya Murpoku Dravidar Kazhagam (DMDK) leader (late) Vijayakant then issued a press statement that there was suspicion among the public that Rajan had revealed the names of some ruling party members before his death in custody. Subsequently, the CB-CID police summoned Vijayakant seeking information on the case, but he refused to appear. (Late) Jayalalithaa, who was then AIADMK general secretary, said an inquiry by a sitting judge of the Supreme Court would "resolve the mystery shrouding the double murder case." Two weeks later, the CB-CID confirmed that only one person was involved in the case. The investigation ruled out the involvement of any politician and found no evidence suggesting a property dispute as the motive. In a press release, the CB-CID revealed that the Hyundai i10 car used by the accused had been reported stolen on June 24. The vehicle belonged to Kanagathara Flat Promoters of Kodambakkam. A duplicate car key with the original remote was recovered from the accused by members of the public who apprehended him and handed him over to the police. The stolen car had been found abandoned near the house. All eyewitnesses confirmed that no one else was seen accompanying or assisting the accused. Although the family owned land in Chennai and other locations, there were no disputes related to any of their property transactions. The investigation further revealed that the accused, Rajan, had traveled to West Bengal, Bihar, and Uttar Pradesh in May and June 2009, where he was suspected to have procured the weapons. There were also indications that he might have been involved in other criminal cases. Mr. Arun and his team recovered bus tickets with Bihari script from Rajan's residence and scrutinised them. These tickets provided a crucial lead that helped the CB-CID arrest a gang — Neeraj Kumar Nirala, 19, Dev Chader Kumar, 20, and Mohammed Pallu, 33 — from Munger district in Bihar, on charges of illegally supplying firearms to Rajan.

safety net' A. Pushpa, a domestic worker from Chennai, calls the aid a safety net. "By the 15th of every month, our salary would run out. We would be worried about how to pay for essential items like gas cylinder, which now costs almost ₹900. But, with this money, we are now able to manage the affairs with some ease," she says.

A. Durga Devi, a single mother from Madurai, and A. Mariammal, 47, a farmworker from Thappathi village in Ettayapuram taluk of Thoothukudi, saved the money for their children's education. Ms. Mariammal did not have a regular income for years until the sum under Kalaighar Magalir Urimai Thogai started reaching her bank account a few years ago. "I saved the amount for months, and with some additional money, I paid my son's college fees." Ms. Mariammal notes that the amount has given women the hope that they can borrow from others in times of emergencies and repay the loans. A common problem

The ability to repay debts is a common thread in the lives of women. The Hindu spoke to across the Cauvery delta districts. "I have taken out five loans from different microfinance companies," says Indira G., an agricultural worker of the Parasanallur panchayat in Mayiladuthurai. "For one of the loans, I pay ₹50 daily to an agent who comes to my home, for another, I pay ₹500 weekly, and for the rest, I pay ₹1,600 monthly. Agricultural work is available for only three months a year. For the rest of the time, we sit at home and the debts keep mounting." K. Manimala, 60, of Pallapatti in the Salem Corporation, says the money helped her travel in autorickshaws in times of emergencies. "It [₹1,000] may be nothing for the middle class or the rich. But, for women like me, it means independence. Earlier, if I wanted to give money to my grandchildren when they visited me, I had to ask my husband for it. Now, I am able to give them money." M. Eshwari, 38, of Tiruchi started a snacks shop with the money she received under the scheme. "Earlier, we used to depend entirely on my husband's daily wages, which were uncertain. But, after receiving the ₹1,000, I saved a little every month. Eventually, I bought a gas stove, some utensils, and ingredients. It may seem insignificant, but for me, it's a new beginning. I feel proud to earn on my own and contribute to my family." Many say that they have applied for the aid up to three times, but the money still hasn't reached them. "There has been no SMS regarding the rejection of our applications. Just a message that I have registered [myself]. Nobody is telling me what went wrong," points out A. Deepa, a domestic worker from Chennai. Some receive the money infrequently. "I applied when the scheme was announced. I did not get it for two months and then I got it for the next three months. It's unpredictable..." says B. Radhika, another domestic worker, who earns ₹6,000 a month. Professor Kotiswaran says Tamil Nadu is one of the few States that makes a mention of unpaid domestic work in its notification. "It put the recognition on the table. However, there is a need for the scheme to go beyond recognising and reducing unpaid work too. Right now, caregivers are being punished."



# The path to ending global hunger runs through India



With global chronic undernourishment now on a downward trend, the world is beginning to turn a corner in its fight against hunger. The United Nations' newly released The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World 2025 reports that 673 million people (8.2% of the world's population) were undernourished in 2024. This is down from 688 million in 2023. Although we have not yet returned to pre-pandemic levels (7.3% in 2018), this reversal marks a welcome shift from the sharp rise experienced during COVID-19. India has played a decisive role in this global progress. The gains are the result of policy investments in food security and nutrition, increasingly driven by digital technology, smarter governance, and improved service delivery.

Revised estimates using the latest National Sample Survey data on household consumption show that the prevalence of undernourishment in India declined from 14.3% in 2020–22 to 12% in 2022–24. In absolute terms, this means 30 million fewer people living with hunger — an impressive achievement considering the scale of the population and the depth of disruption caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. At the centre of this progress is India's Public Distribution System, which has undergone a profound transformation. The system has been revitalised through digitalisation, Aadhaar-enabled targeting, real-time inventory tracking, and biometric authentication. The rollout of electronic point-of-sale systems and the One Nation One Ration Card platform have made entitlements portable across the country, which is particularly crucial for internal migrants and vulnerable households.

These innovations allowed India to rapidly scale up food support during the pandemic and to continue to ensure access to subsidised staples for more than 800 million people. Now progress on calories must give way to progress on nutrition. The cost of a healthy diet in India remains unaffordable for over 40.4% of the population in 2024, driven by high prices of nutrient-dense foods, inadequate cold chains, and inefficient market linkages. That said, India has begun investing in improving the quality of calories. For example, the Pradhan Mantri Poshan Shakti Nirman

(PM POSHAN) school-feeding scheme, launched in 2021, and the Integrated Child Development Services are now focusing on dietary diversity and nutrition sensitivity, laying the foundation for long-term improvements in child development and public health.

New data in the UN report also shows progress the country has made in making healthy diets more affordable despite food inflation. What is happening underscores a larger structural challenge: even as hunger falls, malnutrition, obesity, and micronutrient deficiencies are rising. This is especially so among poor urban and rural populations.

The agrifood system needs transformation. India can meet this challenge by transforming its agrifood system. This means boosting the production and the affordability of nutrient-rich foods such as pulses, fruits, vegetables, and animal-source products, which are often out of reach for low-income families. It also means investing in post-harvest infrastructure such as cold storage and digital logistics systems, to reduce the estimated 13% of food lost between farm and market. These losses directly affect food availability and affordability. In addition, India should further strengthen support for women-led food enterprises and local cooperatives, including Farmer Producer Organizations (FPOs), especially those cultivating climate-resilient crops, as these can enhance both nutrition and livelihoods. India must continue to invest in its digital advantage to drive the transformation of its agrifood systems. Platforms such as AgriStack, e-NAM, and geospatial data tools can strengthen market access, improve agricultural planning, and enhance the delivery of nutrition-sensitive interventions. A symbol of hope: The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) notes that the progress of India in agrifood system transformation is not just national imperatives; they are global contributions. As a leader among developing countries, India is well-positioned to share its innovations in digital governance, social protection, and data-driven agriculture with others across the Global South. India's experience shows that reducing hunger is not only possible but that it can be scaled when backed by political will, smart investment, and inclusion.

With just five years left to meet the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), including SDG 2 (Zero Hunger) on ending hunger, India's recent performance gives this writer hope. But sustaining this momentum will require a shift from delivering sustenance to delivering nutrition, resilience, and opportunity. The hunger clock is ticking. India is no longer just feeding itself. The path to ending global hunger runs through India, and its continued leadership is essential to getting us there. Maximo Torero Cullen is Chief Economist, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)



In July this year, the Kerala High Court published a set of guidelines for Artificial Intelligence (AI) use by the district judiciary ("Policy Regarding Use of Artificial Intelligence Tools in District Judiciary"). As the first policy in the country directly addressing AI use in judicial processes and setting out strict safeguards, it is timely. AI tools, from document translation to defect identification in filings, are expected to improve speed and efficiency, which are attractive incentives for a court system which has five crore pending cases. There are issues

But seemingly innocuous tasks such as AI-enabled translations and transcription are not without risks. For example, a Supreme Court of India judge reported the translation of 'leave granted' into 'chhutti sweekaar (holiday approved)' in Hindi. In the case of Noel Anthony Clarke vs Guardian News & Media Ltd. (2025) EWHC 550 (KB), an AI-transcription tool repeatedly transcribed the claimant's name, "Noel", as "no". OpenAI's Whisper, an AI-powered speech recognition system, was reported to occasionally make up or "hallucinate" entire phrases and sentences, especially when people spoke with longer pauses between their words. Search engine bias in AI-enabled legal research could nudge users toward results influenced by user patterns, potentially 'invisibilising' relevant precedents. A study published in the Journal of Empirical Legal Studies found that legal Large Language Models (LLM) can make up case laws and cite incorrect sources to substantiate claims. At a more structural level, AI risks reducing adjudication into rule-based inferences, overlooking the combination of human judgment, specific context, and relevance of precedents that impact judicial decision-making.

Some market tools are currently being used in courts on a non-commercial test basis, such as transcription of oral arguments and witness depositions. Without specified time-frames, success parameters, or framework for access, storage, and use of non-public, sensitive or personal data, such pilots warrant careful consideration. AI tools offered to courts on a test basis risk creating dependencies without clear pathways to sustainable adoption. Moreover, new technological paradigms demand essential infrastructure such as reliable Internet connectivity and hardware. A quick analysis of publicly available tenders for AI services across courts shows that even if adoption is cautious, courts are not necessarily designing risk management frameworks

to address ethical and legal risks. While human checks and balances, such as manual vetting of AI-translated judgments by retired judges, advocates and translators are in place, AI systems learn from available data, with a possibility of error as they encounter new information in new contexts. Scholars note that hallucinations in LLMs are a feature, and not a bug, requiring human oversight and careful adoption in high-risk scenarios.

As courts increasingly integrate AI use in their daily work, the combination of AI's ethical risks and the complexity of the legal system require effective guardrails to mitigate risks. Since the majority of court procedures remain paper-based, any transition to advance AI deployment must not further debilitate an already imperfect system. First, there is a need for critical AI literacy among judges, court staff and lawyers. In addition to capacity building to use AI tools, programmes are also required to understand the limitations of the systems deployed. Judicial academies and bar associations, in collaboration with AI governance experts, are well placed to facilitate such capacity building.

Second, guidelines are needed to shape individual use of generative AI for research and judgment writing. If AI is used in the adjudication process, litigants must have a right to be informed. Similarly, litigants and lawyers have a right to know if AI is being used in certain courtrooms. Given the potential for errors arising from AI use, courts should examine whether litigants may be permitted to opt-out of pilots or fully-deployed AI if they have any concerns about safeguards or human oversight. Third, courts need to adopt standardised procurement guidelines to support the evaluation of a proposed AI system's reliability and suitability for the task at hand. Pre-procurement steps will also help courts diagnose the exact problem and whether AI is the best solution. Procurement frameworks can guide assessment of technical criteria around explainability, data management and risk mitigation. On the eCourts project

These frameworks will enable decision-makers to monitor vendor compliance and performance, which may be beyond the routine expertise of judges and the registry. The Vision Document for Phase III of the eCourts Project (e-Committee, Supreme Court of India) acknowledges the need to create technology offices to guide courts in assessing, selecting, and overseeing the implementation of complex digital solutions, including infrastructure and software. Such scaffolding to aid and assist decision-making on AI use and adoption is one way to overcome gaps in technical expertise. Dedicated specialists can give courts clearer guidance in adopting AI tools as part of comprehensive planning. As courts inch towards AI adoption, it is important not to lose sight of the ultimate purpose of AI in the system — to serve the ends of justice. In this rapidly evolving technological landscape, clear guidelines on the use and the adoption of AI in courts are essential to ensure that the drive for an efficient court system does not eclipse the nuanced reasoning and human decision-making that is at the heart of the adjudicatory process. Leah Verghese works at DAKSH, Bengaluru. Smitta Mutt works at DAKSH, Bengaluru. Dona Mathew works at Digital Futures Lab, Goa

# Reviving civic engagement in health governance

The 'Makkalai Thedi Maruthuvam (Medicine at people's doorstep)' scheme, introduced in Tamil Nadu in August 2021, and the Karnataka's Gruha Arogya scheme, launched in October 2024 and expanded to all districts in June 2025, aim to deliver health care at doorsteps for persons with non-communicable diseases.

Several other States are implementing similar programmes. While such initiatives represent significant strides toward proactive health care, they also prompt a profound question: as the system strives to reach people's doorsteps, to what extent are citizens themselves able to reach, engage with, and influence health governance at different levels formally? The subject of citizen engagement

Health governance, once a government-led function, now includes diverse actors such as civil society, professional bodies, hospital associations and trade unions. It operates through formal and informal social processes, with power dynamics shaping participation and influence. Public engagement in health policy processes is essential because it affirms self-respect, counters epistemic injustice and upholds democratic values by enabling people to shape decisions affecting their health and health-care services. Inclusive participation strengthens accountability, challenges elite dominance and reduces corruption. Without it, health governance risks becoming oppressive and unjust. Moreover, engaging communities fosters collaboration with frontline workers, improves service uptake, and supports better health outcomes. It also builds mutual understanding and trust between communities and providers. The National Rural Health Mission (NRHM), launched in 2005, institutionalised public engagement in India's health governance through platforms such as Village Health Sanitation and Nutrition Committees (VHSNCs) and Rogi Kalyan Samitis. These were designed to be inclusive, particularly of women and marginalised groups, and supported by untied funds for local initiatives. In urban areas, key platforms for civic participation include Mahila Arogya Samitis, Ward Committees, and non-government organisation-led committees. Despite their potential, in some areas these committees have not been established, while in others where they do exist, they face persistent challenges such as ambiguous roles, infrequent meetings, underutilisation of funds, poor intersectoral coordination, and deeply rooted social hierarchies.

Where the problem lies A major challenge in India's health system lies in the prevailing mindset toward public engagement. Policymakers, health administrators and providers often view communities as passive recipients of care rather than as active participants in shaping health systems. Programme performance is typically measured through target-based metrics, such as the number of "beneficiaries" reached, with little reflection on how programmes are implemented or experienced on the ground. The use of the term "beneficiaries" itself signals a deeper issue: it frames citizens as objects of intervention, not as rights-holders or co-creators of health systems. Although the National Health Mission promotes bottom-up planning, including community participation in Programme Implementation Plans, such engagement is rare in practice.

Health governance spaces remain dominated by medical professionals, predominantly trained in western biomedical models. Health administrative leadership, across national, State, district, and sub-district levels, is typically held by doctors who are expected to learn public health administration on the job. Promotions are often based on seniority rather than public health expertise, reinforcing a medicalised and hierarchical system that remains disconnected from community realities. Scholarly work on health policy suggests that resistance to public engagement often stems from concerns over increased workload, greater accountability pressures, regulatory capture by dominant medical and capitalist interests, and the absence of a level



playing field in governance processes.

In the absence of functional or inclusive engagement platforms, citizens often resort to alternative channels, such as protests, media campaigns, and legal action to make their voices heard. These responses reflect a deep and unmet need for participation, voice and accountability in health governance in India. The need for a shift: A fundamental mindset shift is needed among governance actors. Community engagement must no longer be seen as merely to achieve programme targets. Treating people as instrumental to health outcomes is not only reductive but also deeply disrespectful to their agency and dignity. Participatory processes are as important as the outcomes they seek to achieve.

To enable meaningful community engagement in health governance, we must adopt a two-pronged approach. First, this involves actively empowering communities: disseminating information about health rights and governance platforms; fostering civic awareness early; making intentional efforts to reach marginalised groups; and equipping citizens with knowledge, tools, and resources needed to participate effectively in health care decision-making processes. Second, we must sensitise health system actors to move beyond framing poor awareness as the sole reason for low health-seeking behaviour and health-care utilisation among people. This narrow approach risks individualising blame, further victimising already vulnerable populations, and ignoring the structural determinants of health inequities. True transformation requires that health professionals view communities as partners, not passive recipients, and that they work collaboratively to address root causes. Establishing platforms for public engagement is a necessary starting point, but these platforms must be activated, strengthened, and made meaningful.

# What has NOTTO said about organ donations to women? | Explained

The story so far: The National Organ and Tissue Transplant Organisation (NOTTO) recently issued a direction stating that women patients and relatives of deceased donors will receive priority in organ allocation. This is part of a 10-point advisory aimed at addressing gender disparity in organ transplants and encouraging donations.

Is there a gender disparity? An article titled 'India's organ transplant paradox: women donate the most and receive the least' published in the British Medical Journal noted that as per data released by NOTTO, 63.8% of all living organ donors from 2019 to 2023 were women. Yet men received the most donated organs, accounting for 69.8% of the recipients. The data further said that in the past five years women made 36,038 of the 56,509 living organ donations in India, yet only 17,041 were transplanted into women, while 39,447 went to men.

What laws oversee organ donation?

The Central Government has established NOTTO as the apex government body to oversee organ donations. Each hospital of the country which engages in transplant activity, whether in retrieval or transplant, must link with the NOTTO. Organ transplantation and donation is covered under the Transplantation of Human Organs Act 1994, which has allowed organ donation by live and brain-stem dead donors. In 2011, an amendment to the Act also brought in donation of human tissues. As per the Act, buying/selling of organs in any way is punishable and has a significant financial as well as judicial penalty. In its recent advisory, the NOTTO has asked State governments to create permanent posts for transplant coordinators at hospitals that perform organ transplantation or retrieval. "It is advised that you develop facilities for organ and tissue retrieval in all trauma centres and register them as organ retrieval centres," the letter said, while calling for training emergency responders and ambulance staff to identify potential deceased donors early, particularly among victims of road traffic accidents and stroke patients.

What is the status of organ donation?

Globally, the World Health Organization (WHO) estimates that over 1,30,000 solid organ transplants are performed each year, but this meets only about 10% of the worldwide need. Countries with higher awareness and



streamlined donor systems have achieved significantly better outcomes, showing what is possible when organ donation becomes a social norm. An organ donor can be anyone whose healthy organs are transplanted to a patient in urgent need. These organs, donated after brain or cardiac death, can be preserved and transplanted to save multiple lives. "Every year, over 1.8 lakh Indians develop end-stage kidney disease, yet only about 12,000 kidney transplants take place across the country. Even a small increase in organ donation rates could help thousands of patients get a second chance at life," said Sushanth Kulkarni, senior consultant urologist, laparoscopic and renal transplant surgeon at CARE Hospital, Telangana. Doctors note that lack of awareness, cultural myths, and hesitation to discuss organ donation within families remain the biggest obstacles. But with modern transplantation techniques and effective medicines, recipients can live long and healthy lives. A single donor can save up to eight lives through organ donation and enhance many more through tissue donation such as corneas and skin.

Are appeals made for organs?

According to information released by the Central Government, any special appeal usually results in more people agreeing to become donors. However, family appeals will not result in an organ immediately becoming available for the person on whose behalf the appeal was made. The patient will still be on the waiting list, just like everyone else, and the rules that govern the matching and allocation of donor organs to recipients still apply.

# Who gets to own the moon? India is uniquely positioned to answer

At around 6 pm IST on August 23, 2023, the Vikram lander of the Chandrayaan-3 mission of the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) gently touched down on the moon. Thus, India became only the fourth country with a national space agency that had executed a controlled lunar landing. In honour of the occasion, Prime Minister Narendra Modi designated August 23 as National Space Day. From mythology to lullabies, from religious symbols to Bollywood, dreams of building homes on the moon have long been part of Indians' inner worlds. Today, those dreams are coming to life — not as poetry but through space missions, billion-dollar mining ventures, and legal clauses. Suddenly, a very human question arises: who gets to own the moon? The bedrock of space law is the Outer Space Treaty (OST), signed at the height of the Cold War in 1967. Article 1 of the

treaty declares that "the exploration and use of outer space, including the Moon and other celestial bodies, shall be carried out for the benefit and in the interests of all countries ... and shall be the province of all mankind." However, while the OST bars national sovereignty over lunar territory, it is silent on the extraction of resources. This has given rise to competing interpretations: the extraction and private utilisation of resources are permissible as long as they do not constitute a territorial claim, and permitting such activities violates the spirit of the treaty and risks undermining the principle of non-appropriation. Unpopular idea To address these gaps, the 1984 Moon Agreement proposed that lunar resources be the "common heritage of mankind," akin to the U.N. Convention on the Law of the Sea. It called for equitable benefit-sharing and international regulation. Article

11 states: "States Parties to this Agreement hereby undertake to establish an international regime, including appropriate procedures, to govern the exploitation of the natural resources of the Moon as such exploitation is about to become feasible." The Moon Agreement failed to gain traction, however. Only 17 countries have ratified it to date, none of which are major spacefaring nations, including the U.S., China, Russia, and India. Its provisions are vague, idealistic, and economically unviable. The absence of enforcement mechanisms and the lack of incentives for private companies further diminish their effectiveness. New legal paradigm Launched by the U.S. in 2020, the Artemis Accords represent a set of non-binding bilateral agreements that outline principles for peaceful, transparent, and cooperative space exploration.



# Reciprocal airspace closure enters fifth month: India extends ban on Pakistan’s airlines, aircraft till September 24 morning



India late Friday extended the ban on Pakistani airlines and aircraft from entering Indian airspace by a month till the early morning of September 24, according to a fresh notice to airmen (NOTAM) issued by India’s aviation authorities. The new notice comes two days after Pakistan’s NOTAM extended the closure of its airspace for Indian aircraft and airlines for the same period. With these extensions, the neighbours’ airspace closures for each other’s aircraft are set to enter their fifth month. With a deterioration in relations between New Delhi and Islamabad after the Pahalgam terror attack in April, Pakistan initiated an airspace closure on April 24. Initially for one month, this ban prohibited Indian aircraft and airlines from overflying Pakistani airspace. India responded on April 30, closing its airspace to Pakistani aircraft and airlines. Since then, both nations have extended these closures by issuing NOTAMs on a monthly basis. Notably, while India and Pakistan have banned each other’s airlines and aircraft, their respective airspaces remain open for overflying by airlines and aircraft from other countries.

Pakistan had issued its latest NOTAM extending the airspace closure on Wednesday (August 20), a few days before the August 24 expiration of the earlier closure notice. After this extension by Pakistan, India was also likely to extend the closure of its airspace beyond August 24, when the earlier Indian NOTAM was also set to expire. The new NOTAM issued by India is similar to the previous notices, except for the effective duration of airspace closure. India will keep its airspace closed to Pakistani airlines and aircraft, including military flights, till 5:29 India time on September 24. The latest NOTAM from Pakistan on airspace closure has the same expiration date and time.

With Pakistan’s airspace unavailable, approximately 800 weekly flights operated by Indian airlines have been affected. These flights, which typically travel from North India to destinations like West Asia, the Caucasus, Europe, the UK, and eastern North America, are forced to take longer routes. This leads to several operational challenges like increased flight durations with journeys extended by anywhere

from 15 minutes to several hours depending on the destination, in addition to higher fuel consumption, and increased complexity in crew and flight scheduling. Ultimately, these factors contribute to a rise in operational costs for the airlines. In contrast, the impact of India’s airspace closure has been rather insignificant on Pakistan. This is largely because Pakistan International Airlines (PIA), the country’s main carrier, has a limited international presence and is currently struggling, unlike India’s rapidly expanding aviation sector. According to data from aviation analytics company Cirium, only about six PIA flights per week—those traveling between Kuala Lumpur (Malaysia) and Lahore or Islamabad—routinely flew over India. For Indian airlines, the situation is quite different. All major Indian carriers operate international flights to countries west of India, and many of these previously utilised Pakistani airspace. Air India serves destinations across West Asia, Europe, the UK, and North America. IndiGo flies to West Asia, Turkey, the Caucasus, and Central Asia. The airline was forced to suspend flights from Delhi to the Central Asian cities of Almaty and Tashkent because these routes are now beyond the operational range of its narrow-body aircraft fleet. Air India Express, Akasa Air, and SpiceJet also operate international flights primarily to West Asia.

According to data from Cirium, almost 400 weekly international departures from North Indian airports are currently impacted. These westward flights from Delhi, Amritsar, Jaipur, and Lucknow traditionally flew over Pakistan. Considering that all these flights also have return legs, the total number of affected flights reaches approximately 800 per week. Delhi’s Indira Gandhi International Airport is expected to be the most severely affected, accounting for about 640 of these flights. Additionally, a few ultra-long-haul flights originating from other Indian cities, such as Mumbai, are also impacted if their routes historically crossed Pakistani airspace. The financial implications for Indian airlines are substantial. When Pakistan previously closed its airspace for over four months in 2019, Indian carriers collectively incurred estimated losses of around Rs 700 crore. These costs were primarily due to increased fuel expenses and operational difficulties resulting from the mandatory longer routes. Air India was the most severely affected at that time, as it operated more west-bound international flights and was, and remains, the sole Indian airline with ultra-long-haul services to North America. Air India, now part of the Tata group, had informed the government that the ongoing Pakistani airspace closure is projected to cost the airline approximately \$600 million on an annualised basis. In recent years, other Indian airlines, particularly IndiGo, have also expanded their international networks, utilising their existing fleets of narrow-body jets to serve various destinations. Notably, IndiGo is the only Indian airline that provides flights to Central Asia, the Caucasus, and Turkey.

# Branded as a social evil, banned gaming companies stare at a tough road ahead

On the evening when the online gaming Bill received the Cabinet’s nod, an unusual gathering happened in Delhi. Employees, consultants and lobbyists from rival gaming companies — many of whom had spent years undercutting each other’s arguments in the corridors of power — found themselves in the same room. Old adversaries frantically compared notes and scoured the Bill’s language, searching for cracks in the definition of what exactly was being prohibited. Could there be an exemption, a loophole, a shred of ambiguity that might yet keep a corner of the industry alive? For one evening, at least, bitter rivals were bound by something greater than market share or policy battles: survival.

With The Promotion and Regulation of Online Gaming Act, 2025, now having been notified, it’s official that all kinds of real money gaming platforms — Dream11, Winzo, MPL, My11Circle and the likes — are illegal in the country and can not offer games where users can wager money. “People are sad, they are crestfallen,” a lawyer working with some online gaming companies said. The companies have sought meetings with Home Minister Amit Shah, however, have not yet been successful in that. There is widespread belief in the industry that even though the bill was introduced by the IT Ministry, the Home Ministry has played a crucial role in its formulation. On Thursday evening, some companies are learnt to have met senior officials in the IT Ministry, where they were asked to comply with the law at the earliest.

Companies such as Dream11, Winzo, MPL, My11Circle, and Probo have stopped their real money gaming operations, bringing the curtains down on what was one of startup India’s most successful sectors, financially, with three startups having a valuation of over \$1 billion. Some are already pivoting to new revenue streams. Dream11, for instance, is launching a new gold loan app under a new service called Dream Money. Dream11, the country’s biggest fantasy sports app and the Indian cricket team’s main jersey sponsor, which had also recently shifted its domicile from the US to India, posted a revenue of Rs 6,384 crore in FY23, according to its financial disclosures and had a profit of Rs 188 crore. Winzo reported an operating revenue of Rs 1,055 crore in the fiscal year ending March 2024, and a profit of Rs 315 crore. Games24x7 had a revenue of Rs 1,988 crore in FY23, but posted a loss of Rs 199 crore. For all of them, revenue from online gaming was the biggest chunk of their earnings, as high as 90-95 per cent.

For long, the online gaming company operated in a legal grey zone, with both the Centre and several state governments trying to regulate the sector, with calls for a national level law. And for an industry which focused extensively on policy engagement with the government through various lobby channels, the news of an outright blanket ban came as a big surprise, as work on the Bill happened without their knowledge or inputs. Historically, the sector had succeeded in favourable judgements at the Supreme Court, where formats like fantasy sports and rummy were categorised as games of skill. However, the Bill applies to all online money gaming platforms irrespective of whether they are games of skill or chance, a distinction the industry had lobbied hard for in the past.

That there will be a legal challenge against the law is clear. Companies and their associations have been on constant calls since they have learnt of the bill to prepare a legal roadmap, with multiple considerations. One of those is for the industry to pool money for one company which will raise the challenge in court, this paper has learnt. However, even if the companies manage to get a favourable judgement from the court, the road ahead looks murky. A senior executive said that if the case drags on for anything more than six months, a victory would amount to



very little as the financial hit in that time would be too much to bear. And because the government has clearly branded real money gaming as some sort of a social evil, the industry fears that they would anyway be burdened with significant tax obligations, which would also make their offerings lukewarm to users. The fact that these companies have been banned as they are being essentially seen as a threat to public health and India’s “social ethos” is something that many in the industry are finding hard to swallow. “There was no consultation done with us, we had no idea that the government was planning such a drastic action. There are problems in the sector, but we were implementing safeguards constantly. We should have been given a chance to be heard,” a senior policy executive of a gaming company said. As per the industry, it pays over Rs 20,000 crore annually in direct and indirect taxes. The sector has attracted foreign direct investment of over Rs 25,000 crore till June 2022, and currently supports over 2 lakh direct and indirect jobs. Many of those could be at risk.

# Fantasy gaming apps suspend paid contests after Online Gaming Bill

New Delhi: India’s leading real money gaming (RMG) companies, including Dream Sports, Gameskraft, Mobile Premier League (MPL) and Zupsee, have started suspending games involving real money on their platforms, after the government passed the ‘Promotion and Regulation of Online Gaming Bill 2025’. The bill banned all online money games, where players stake money with the expectation of financial returns, regardless of whether they are skill-based or chance-based. Further it granted authorities the power to search any premise and arrest without a warrant any person under suspicion of violation. Dream Sports has suspended all ‘Pay to Play’ contests on Dream Picks, its new fantasy sports app and also its casual RMG app, Dream Play. The fantasy sports major launched both apps in recent months. “In view of the recent development pertaining to ‘The Promotion and Regulation of Online Gaming Bill, 2025’, we are pausing all ‘Pay to Play’ Fantasy Sports contests on our platform. Your account balance is safe and available for you to withdraw from the Dream11 app,” according to a notice on the app. Zupsee, another RMG platform focused on board games, announced that it has suspended all “paid games” on the platform but “remains fully operational”. A Zupsee spokesperson said, “Zupsee remains fully operational and our players can continue to enjoy their favourite games on the platform. In line with the new Online Gaming Bill 2025, we are discontinuing paid games, but our hugely popular free titles like Ludo Supreme,

# India recorded at least 84 heatstroke deaths in 2025 summer: Study



The report, ‘Struck by Heat: A News Analysis of Heat-stroke Deaths in India in 2025’, by non-profit HeatWatch claimed that India’s true heat toll is being masked by diagnostic “blind spots”, weak enforcement of worker protections, and outdated heatwave alerts that fail to reflect the combined impact of temperature and humidity on human health.

In comparison, data obtained by PTI under the Right to Information (RTI) Act showed that the National Centre for Disease Control (NCDC) reported 7,192 suspected cases of heatstroke and only 14 confirmed deaths between March 1 and June 24 this year. The HeatWatch analysis, based on a systematic review of national and regional media reports in multiple languages, found that Maharashtra reported the highest number of deaths at 17, followed by Uttar Pradesh and Telangana with 15 each.

Gujarat recorded 10 deaths, Assam six, while Bihar, Punjab and Rajasthan recorded five deaths each. Odisha reported three deaths, while Kerala, Tamil Nadu and Chhattisgarh reported one death each. The report found that most of the victims were elderly, outdoor workers and daily wage labourers, with incidents ranging from farmers collapsing in their fields to children and teenagers succumbing during school trips or while playing outdoors.

A 13-year-old student in Navi Mumbai, who died on February 26, marked one of the earliest fatalities of the season, underlining how heatwaves are arriving earlier and lasting longer in India. Andhra Pradesh reported the highest number of illnesses at 700 cases, followed by Odisha (348), Rajasthan (344) and Uttar Pradesh (325). In total, the HeatWatch dataset captured 2,287 cases of heat-related illness across the country during the period, though it claimed the actual number is likely to be much higher due to “underreporting”.

The findings echo concerns flagged by experts and a PTI investigation in June, which revealed that India’s reporting of heat-related illnesses and deaths is fragmented,

# Report recommends restoring State autonomy in health and medical education for better outcomes

A report by Ezhilan Naganathan, MLA, Thousand Lights Constituency, Chennai, and part-time member of State Planning Commission, has highlighted the increasing centralisation of the health and medical education sectors and has called for restoring constitutional and operational State autonomy. According to the report, submitted to the High-Level Committee on Union-State Relations, set up by the government of Tamil Nadu, there are six key areas where the Union government has encroached upon the State’s functioning, overriding State-specific needs and State-specific delivery of healthcare.

The first is medical education, originally in the State List and then brought to the Concurrent List. This arrangement, where the Union government frames policy for healthcare and medical education while the State delivers the healthcare services, creates a policy-implementation gap, it says. The report recommends restoring medical education to the State List and allowing States to be the sole authority for public health and medical education. The second area is replacing the Medical Council of India (MCI) with the National Medical Commission (NMC), a move that, the report argues, limited the States’ role in framing curricula and guidelines. It also flags concerns with NEET and NEXT (exams for admission to medical college and for licensing practice), pointing out that NEET heavily favours the CBSE/NCERT syllabus and that it has led to a massive coaching class industry, not to mention leading to a decrease in government school students being able to secure admission. It recommends abolishing the NMC, bringing back the MCI, and allowing States to decide on admission procedures and examination systems.

One other area the report deals with is organ transplantation programmes: it notes that recent moves by the Union government to centralise organ allocation and data management through the National Organ and Tissue Trans-

with different agencies presenting widely varying figures. For 2015-2022, the NCDC recorded 3,812 heat-related deaths, the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) reported 8,171, and the India Meteorological Department (IMD) reported 3,436 deaths. HeatWatch said that despite the new national forensic guidelines allowing autopsies to classify heatstroke as a cause of death even without direct temperature records, doctors rarely apply them. As a result, many cases are attributed to cardiac arrest, dehydration or stroke, erasing the role of heat. The report also criticised the IMD’s heatwave warning system for being based almost entirely on air temperature thresholds while excluding the Wet Bulb Globe Temperature (WBGT), which measures combined heat and humidity stress. It cited several instances of fatalities on “non-alert” days, such as workers collapsing in Telangana, Gujarat and Maharashtra when no official warnings were in place. “India’s heat crisis is structural, not just seasonal. Early-warning and alerts are limited and offer no real protection to the workers who are collapsing in fields, markets and construction sites without any protection. Our report makes clear that incremental fixes won’t cut it.” “We urgently need robust, hyperlocal monitoring and effective early-warning systems coupled with enforceable worker protections,” Apekshita Varshney, Founder, HeatWatch, and the report co-author, said. “We are recognising the dangers of rising heat, but recognition alone isn’t enough. What’s missing is a health-centred approach, one that counts every case, prepares hospitals, protects workers and builds cooler cities. These systemic steps are what will truly save lives in a warming climate,” Shivani Das, report author, said.

The organisation called for a national legislation mandating mid-day work bans, shaded rest areas, hydration access and legally enforceable work-rest cycles, in line with countries such as France, Japan, Singapore and the UAE. It also urged that every case of heatstroke be counted and reported in a centralised, publicly available registry, unlike the restricted-access Integrated Health Information Platform. Experts, including former World Health Organization chief scientist Soumya Swaminathan, have previously warned that India is “most likely undercounting heat-related deaths” and that the official figures represent only the “tip of the iceberg”.

This year’s extreme summer saw the mercury in parts of Rajasthan touching the 48-degree Celsius mark, while even regions historically considered less vulnerable, such as Assam and the Himalayan states, reported fatalities. The report said that without urgent reforms in heat alert systems, public health preparedness and occupational safety, India’s ability to protect its most vulnerable populations against intensifying heatwaves will remain gravely inadequate.



plant Organisation (NOTTO) “have raised serious concerns about efficiency, fairness, and federal balance,” especially as Tamil Nadu has been a pioneer in this field. The report, among other things, recommends a dual-tier system, with State-led allocation for intra-State matches, and NOTTO’s role limited to inter-State sharing when no State recipient is available; and ensuring Central rules cannot override State policies that protect socioeconomically disadvantaged patients. The report also examines the centralisation of drug regulation, focusing on the role of the Central Drug Standard Control Organisation and its impact on States; the operational model of Centre-funded health schemes, which often come with conditions; the imposition of uniform parameters that fail to reflect State-specific health priorities; and what it terms ‘cultural centralisation’. According to the report, this refers to the standardisation of health communication, public campaigns, and even medical curricula “in ways that undermine linguistic plurality, regional identity, and locally evolved practices.” The report points out that centralisation “risks flattening diversity into inefficiency” and urges that States be empowered financially and institutionally for better health systems.

# Success story in Kannapuram model of cancer control

A community-based cancer-control initiative which focused on sustained awareness campaigns, culturally sensitive communication and formation of a women volunteers’ squad to help patients navigate the rigmarole of cancer treatment has evolved as a successful model for encouraging more women towards screening and early detection of breast cancer. The “Kannapuram model”, named after the Kannapuram grama panchayat in Kannur district, where the community-based initiative was tested out, is a success story writ by the grama panchayat in association with the Malabar Cancer Centre. The successful experiment has now found a place in the latest issue of WHO South-East Asia Journal of Public Health.

Following sustained, planned community-level cancer awareness activities, 96% of the women above 30 years in the panchayat underwent breast cancer screening. Of the 6.2% referred for follow-up, 66.5% underwent further investigations. Breast cancer detection rate was 0.96 per 1,000, all in the early stages, who have all been treated and are now cancer-free. In women, the breast cancer incidence has gone up 300 fold in Kerala in the last 25 years and accounts for 34% of all cancers in women. It is a sad reality that two-thirds of breast cancer cases are reported to hospitals at Stages 3 and 4. Lack of awareness or misconceptions about risk factors and symptoms, fear of cancer diagnosis, social stigma, fear of catastrophic health expenditure are some of the reasons that affect women’s participation in early screening programmes, making late-stage presentations

and high mortality, the face of breast cancer in Kerala

“We first did a baseline house-to-house study in 3,800 houses to understand the general health aspects of the people in the gramapanchayat. But the response from the people was lukewarm. We understood then that we had to first engage with the community, win over their trust and rid them of their fear before we could actually get them to participate in any screening programme,” says Neethu A.P., Department of Preventive and Community Oncology, MCC, who led the project in phase 1, the effort was to sensitise all stakeholders on the importance of screening, early detection and lifestyle modification for cancer prevention by doctors from MCC, following which, a phased plan of community engagement over three years (2017-19) was drawn up in phase 2, sustained multifaceted public awareness programs were planned under the guidance of MCC, in collaboration with other social service organizations, and the Health department. Every social, religious, cultural gathering was used as opportunities to push health messages on how early cancer screening and detection can save lives. Cancer survivors’ meet was organised to reduce the fear about cancer treatment. Food festivals were organised to encourage people to include seasonal, locally available and pesticide-free fruits and leafy vegetables in the diet in phase 3, the Kannapuram gramapanchayat organised a mega 10-day breast cancer screening programme for women above 30 years. The programme gained publicity as a women’s health empowerment movement.



# Why tennis needs entertainer and outlier Daniil Medvedev and how the in-betweeners from Russia hasn't got his due



GNS News Agency, Sept 3

For world tennis to stay healthy, Daniil Medvedev needs to get well soon. The perennial anti-hero, that almost 2 meters tall high-hurdle that the history-chasing stars across generations face in their pursuit of greatness, is facing a career-threatening slump. Now a World No. 13, he has slipped from the Top 10 this year and has won just one round in the last three Grand Slams. For tennis to retain its reputation as a storied sport at this US Open, it needs the giant-slayer Medvedev as much as it needs giants Novak Djokovic, Jannik Sinner and Carlos Alcaraz. Medvedev is just 29 and he has it in him to ensure that tennis doesn't become a boring Alcaraz-Sinner duopoly in years to come. This US Open, Djokovic, desperate for a last dance, would be worried if he finds Medvedev in his path. Another epic, featuring Medvedev can be expected. The two have a history. It's only Medvedev who can inspire Djokovic to give his best one last time. The Russian once dealt a blow the GOAT would never forget.

The year was 2021, Djokovic was playing near-perfect tennis, and dismissing every player he faced with disdain. He had won the Australian Open, French Open and Wimbledon, next was the US Open. After Rod Laver's 1969 Calendar Slam, history was about to get repeated. It didn't happen. Medvedev won and that day the Russian multiplied his enemies. Medvedev stomped Djokovic's Calendar Slam bid in 2021 at the US Open. The following year, at the 2022 Australian Open final, he almost spoiled the crowd favourite Nadal's comeback. Leading 0-2, he lost in five sets. As if cursed for spoiling Djokovic's party, Medvedev again squandered a 2-0 lead in the Australian Open final in 2023 and gifted Sinner his first Slam. But it was the Nadal loss in 2022 that broke Medvedev's heart. He had poured his pain at the press conference. Enough was enough, he couldn't keep the angst of being unpopular, for no fault of his, inside him any longer.

"Today a kid stopped dreaming," he would say. "From now on I'm playing for myself, for my family, to provide for my family, for people that trust in me, of course for all the Russians because I feel a lot of support there. If there is a tournament on hard courts in Moscow, before Roland Garros or Wimbledon, I'm going to go there even if I miss Wimbledon or Roland Garros or whatever. The kid stopped dreaming. The kid is going to play for himself. That's it. That's my story." That didn't melt many hearts. After winning a tough five-setter at US Open once, where he used the constant heckling from the stands to motivate himself, Medvedev would use subtle sarcasm to belittle the partisan crowd. "If you were not here, guys, I would probably lose the match because I was so tired.... I want all of you to know when you sleep tonight I won today because of you," he said. The star-obsessed hecklers had killed the compulsive enter-

tainer in Medvedev. Where are those who used to support the underdog and outlier?

Daniil Medvedev says from now on he will be playing for himself and his family, after being disappointed by the lack of support from the crowd at a number of major tennis tournaments. #AusOpen #tennis pic.twitter.com/IJ7TzRES8f Medvedev stands out on the circuit. He doesn't travel with an entourage, nor does he have a role model — "they ask me 200 times but my answer will always be the same ... 'I don't have an idol, I just want to be myself'." He has a unique playing style. For several decades now, players have banked on top-spin to play percentage tennis. It helps them to clear the net with a safe margin and also makes the ball climb after bouncing. But Medvedev is a throwback to the wooden racket, he has the flattest strokes on the tour.

He also has a very practical method to deal with the modern-day heavy top-spinners. He stands way too far from the baseline so by the time the ball reaches him, it is reasonably down and at the perfect height to hit his flat strokes. Medvedev also comes up with unusual angles. He knows several routes to send the ball racing past the sidelines or to set-up the winner that kisses the baseline precisely where he wants. His rival Stefanos Tsitsipas summed up the degree of difficulty in facing the odd ball tennis player. "He has a very weird game. It's very sloppy, but a good sloppy ... He has this completely different way of playing, flat and low, without giving you much angle to work with. It can be very disturbing to play against him. He can make you miss without understanding why you missed." The Russian has had a history of ugly on-court outbursts but he is no Nick Kyrgios. He confessed to being an idiot, and a clown, on court. He once threw coins at the umpire at Wimbledon to hint that he had been bribed by his opponent. He unleashed a kick on an on-court broadcast camera as he bumped into it when scampering on the baseline. He has snatched the towel from a ball boy's hands and showed a middle finger to an umpire. On most occasions, it is the manifestation of his frustration brewing inside, the sudden outpouring of emotions by a player who rightly feels that he has been wronged.

Except for the few times he has crossed the line, Medvedev comes across as more human than the many poker-faced robots smashing the yellow fuzzy ball into a pulp. The Russian is the answer to all those who have moaned about the death of 'characters' in tennis. If he were British, they would have built Mount Medvedev for him at Wimbledon. If he were an American, his every transgression would be painted as a virtue.

His nationality hasn't helped. In these times, even before Vladimir Putin's attack on Ukraine, the world is in no mood to celebrate anything Russian. Playing Nadal, he had to suffer shouts of 'Go back to Russia' from the stands. At the Australian Open quarter-final, his opponent Felix Auger-Aliassime was asked to up his game and "Do it for Ukraine". Medvedev looked puzzled. He was a tennis pro, not Putin. The world needs to make an effort, to try to understand and appreciate a very important tennis player of our times. He is the first 90s-born player to beat Djokovic in a Slam final. And just when you thought Medvedev would finally have his time, Alcaraz would have his breakout year in 2023 and soon Sinner would emerge. Medvedev is a topic for a PhD, someone needs to sit with this 'in-betweeners' to get a first-hand account of how the two great generations played the sport. In a different geopolitical vintage, the mercurial Marat Safin was appreciated for his combustions and not blanket-ly cancelled for being Russian. Maybe, if Medvedev were born in a different era, or probably in a different country too, he would have got his due.

"I remember like, this was so nerve-racking. I walked in and there was Sachin Tendulkar, Zaheer Khan, Jayasuriya. I am a 24-year-old lighty and I was saying 'hello, hello'. It was so intimidating. I said, 'hi, hi, hi' and went straight to the back of the bus. Now obviously, you have the high price tag as well expectation. We won the game and I didn't particularly perform well. The season was okay. The team didn't do particularly well, but I thought I did relatively okay. The highest run-scorer for our team," Duminy said on 'Biggest Man in Cricket' podcast.

"If I think back to actually being in my first IPL, which was the 2009 version in South Africa, we had just finished a South African series against Australia. The IPL started the next day after the last ODI. So, the last ODI was in Johannesburg, the next day in Cape Town was the first match, our opening game. I flew that morning, landed, and went straight to the hotel where the Mumbai Indians were staying. I actually didn't even make it to the team meeting. I walked straight onto the bus," he added. From 83 IPL games, Duminy has scored 2029 runs at an average of 39.78 and a strike rate of 124.02. With the ball, he managed to scalp 23 wickets at an economy of 7.38.

a T20 five-wicket haul as captain and is the first man to achieve the feat in his forties. Tahir eclipsed the record feat previously held by Malawi captain Moazzam Ali Baig with his five-for against Cameroon in September 2004. Aged 46y 148d during the North Sound fixture, Tahir is also the second-oldest man ever to bag a five-wicket haul in all recorded T20 cricket, behind Tomakanute Ritawa's 5/19 against Fiji in 2022. Having featured in 435 T20s in career since 2006, Tahir is one short of registering 550 wickets and stands fourth on the all-time charts. Tahir's fifth five-wicket haul in T20 cricket also placed him joint-second on the all-time T20 bowling charts, equalling the likes of Lasith Malinga, Bhuvneshwar Kumar, Shaheen Afridi and Shakib. Only David Wiese (7) has bagged more five-wicket hauls in men's T20 cricket.

# 'I don't enjoy them': Novak Djokovic slams top tennis players for silence on two-week Masters events before US Open return



GNS News Agency, Sept 3

Novak Djokovic has slammed top players for not questioning the two-week Masters events when the decisions for a move were being made. (Reuters) Novak Djokovic has slammed top players for not questioning the two-week Masters events when the decisions for such a move were being made. Heading into the US Open without any match practice since his stinging straight-sets semi-finals defeat to world no. 1 Jannik Sinner at Wimbledon in early July, 24-time Grand Slam champion Novak Djokovic has elaborated on his changing priorities as an ageing professional while also criticising other top players on their silence over the burgeoning tennis calendar, crammed with newly-styled two-week Masters events. '12 Grand Slams in a year'

Djokovic, 38, who has been on the run for a historic 25th Slam since his US Open win in 2023, voiced his displeasure about having to contend with nearly a dozen Slam-level events a year. "To be quite frank with you, I don't enjoy

the two-week Masters events.. I'd like to play more of the other tournaments, but we have currently, unofficially, 12 Grand Slams a year when you think about it. I mean, a Grand Slam is two weeks and the other Masters events are almost two weeks as well," Djokovic told reporters in New York ahead of his US Open first-round match on Sunday. Djokovic questioned the silence from the top players while the proposal and decisions for two-week events were being made outside the Slams. "I have noticed that a lot of top players have been quite opposing the new change of the almost two-week Masters events. I support the players, but at the end of the day, when the players needed to be active and when there was a time of negotiations and decision-making, players weren't participating enough. "This is an ongoing story of the players, particularly top players. They express their feelings, but then when you really need to put in the time and the energy into conversations, meetings, which I know it's very difficult. I have been there, trust me, many times. But it's necessary because then, you know, you're doing something not only for yourself but for future generations, and you're making the right moves, the right steps and contributing," the Serb added. 'Cold in terms of matches..' Though he admitted to turning up 'cold' at Flushing Meadows without match practice, Djokovic aligned his stance to his changing priorities. "[I may be] 'cold' in terms of the matches, official matches... but I have put in a lot of training in last three, four weeks. I decided not to play because I wanted to spend more time with my family," he explained. "I'm not chasing the ranking, not collecting points, not defending anything, etc. I just don't think about it anymore. What's important is where I find motivation and joy," the four-time US Open champ remarked.

# How did Jasprit Bumrah increase bowling speed without unique action sacrifice? 'Gave up pizzas, milkshakes overnight,' reveals Bharat Arun

GNS News Agency, Sept 3

The debate around workload management and his selective representation on the recent Anderson-Tendulkar Trophy tour to India has blighted Jasprit Bumrah's contributions over the past few months. Returning for his first major Test series since suffering a grave injury setback during the Border-Gavaskar Trophy earlier this year, the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) and the team management had stated that Bumrah would only feature in three of the five matches on tour, irrespective of the results and the series scoreline. Even before India dramatically levelled the series 2-2 on the fifth day of the Oval Test in early August, pace spearhead Bumrah was released from the squad after fulfilling his quota of three matches, picking up 14 wickets, including two five-fors. While Bumrah has contended with his injury concerns and a quirky bowling action for a major part of this decade, the Gujarat pacer's association with problems arising from his unique action dates a long way back. Former India bowling coach Bharat Arun recently revealed how it was almost a 'milkshake vs bowling action' conundrum for Bumrah to improve his pace, back in 2013, three years before he broke into the Indian team. 'Love for burgers, pizzas and milkshakes'

"In 2013, Bumrah had come to the NCA for an Under-19 camp and pitched for selection. He couldn't make the team, but he was in the 30-member camp at the National Cricket Academy," Arun said on an episode of Bombay Sport Exchange. Arun revealed that the NCA coaches had attempted to remodel Bumrah's action to improve his pace and though the resultant action was great, he could not generate adequate pace. "In all fairness, we also tried to change Bumrah's action. He was remodeled, but then the action was great, the ball was not going quick. What's the point in having a great action if the balls aren't effective?," Arun said. "He could bowl quick, and so we discussed with the physio and the strength and conditioning coach. We said, I wouldn't want to touch his action because it's very unique and generates a lot of pace. But it also puts him under stress." Arun said that the onus was on Bumrah to forsake his love for junk-food and transform his body to generate



power and the speedster responded in a jiffy. "We called him and told him: to take the impact of fast bowling, you need to be like a bull. That comes down to diet, exercise, and sacrifices. In all fairness, Bumrah instantaneously changed. He started eating healthy, he was working in the gym. Like Virat Kohli, he was extremely dedicated. He loved burgers, pizzas, milkshakes. He gave up everything overnight. A Punjabi boy living in Gujarat—but his love for bowling was greater than any food craving," Arun remarked.

Agarkar defends Bumrah's workload management Bumrah will return to T20I cricket for the first time in over a year since the World Cup win in Barbados after he was named in India's 15-man squad for the Asia Cup earlier this week. Chairman of selectors Ajit Agarkar reiterated Bumrah's invaluable presence, defending his workload situation. "Clearly, we want him available for all the big games," Agarkar said. "Most fast bowlers are monitored, but with him there's extra attention because of how unique and special he is," Agarkar told reporters in Mumbai. Career record In only nine years into his international career, Bumrah has already stamped his legacy as arguably the greatest pacer to represent India. Bumrah is already the ninth-highest wicket-taker among Indian bowlers across formats, recording 457 scalps from 207 matches at a 20.63 average and 33.77 strike rate, leading both metrics among bowlers who have acquired as many wickets as him.

# 'When did they retire?': BCCI vice-president Rajeev Shukla dismisses Rohit Sharma-Virat Kohli farewell series talks



BCCI vice-president Rajeev Shukla has dismissed talks of a farewell series of sorts for India ODI captain Rohit Sharma and Virat Kohli when they gear up for an Australia 50-overs tour in October, adding that 'we will cross the bridge when we get there'.

GNS News Agency, Sept 3

BCCI vice-president Rajeev Shukla has dismissed talks of a farewell series of sorts for India ODI captain Rohit Sharma and Virat Kohli when they gear up for an Australia 50-overs tour in October, adding that 'we will cross the bridge when we get there'. Rumour

mills and reports post India's recent Test tour to England suggested that the team management could take a call on the future of the two batting stalwarts post the three ODIs in Australia between October 19 and 25. However, Shukla dismissed all such talks and affirmed that both Rohit and Kohli remain very much in the 50-

over scheme of things as the Men in Blue charter their plans for the next ODI World Cup in late 2027.

'Already arranging a farewell!'

"They haven't retired, haven't they? Rohit Sharma and Virat Kohli are both playing One-Dayers. They haven't taken retirement, so why are you talking and wor-

rying about their farewell? Retirement from two formats, that's the phases, but they are still playing ODIs. Don't worry this much. BCCI policy is quite clear; we won't ask anyone to retire, they have to make their decisions themselves. He has to take that call, and we respect that," Rajeev Shukla said in a video shared by the UPT20 League.

"We'll cross the bridge when we come to it. You are already arranging their farewell! Virat Kohli is very fit, and Rohit Sharma plays very well. Why are you worried about their farewell?" Shukla said in response to the hosts' query on a potential farewell match. Rohit and Kohli last represented India during the victorious Champions Trophy competition in the United Arab Emirates. While Kohli played a match-winning knock in the semi-finals against and racked up a century against Pakistan in the group-stage, Rohit lit up the final against New Zealand in Dubai, with his sparkling 76 leading India to their first ICC ODI title win in 12 years.

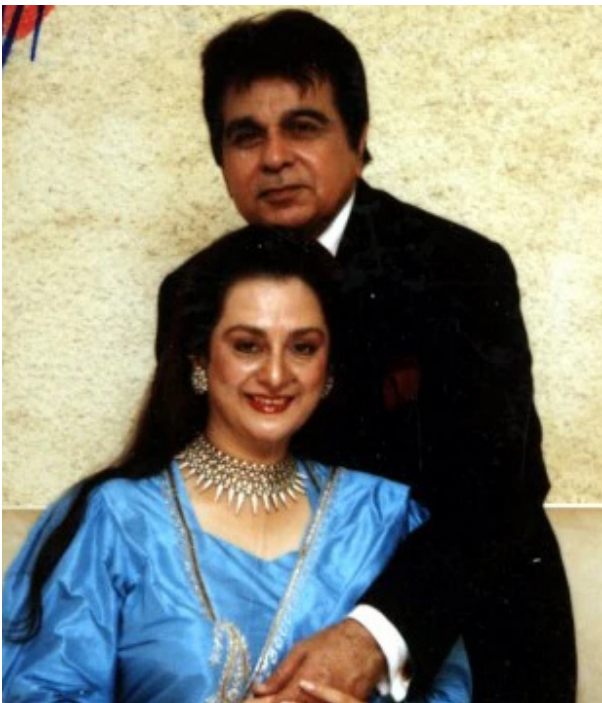
GNS News Agency, Sept 3

Imran Tahir just keeps going on and on with relentless enthusiasm. On Saturday, the Guyana Amazon Warriors' captain's spin sorcery floored the Antigua and Barbuda Falcons as he broke multiple T20 records in a massive 84-run win for his side. Defending a whopping 211-run total of his side, Tahir weaved magic starting with his first delivery outside the Powerplay as he dismissed Shakib Al Hasan stumped. The former South Africa leggie and Warriors skipper then went on a tear as he trapped his counterpart Imad Wasim for a four-ball duck in the same over before trapping Shamar Springer lbw in his next. Tahir returned to wipe out the tail, casting the No. 9 and 10 batters to claim a special feat in T20 cricket.

The 46-year-old Tahir became the oldest man to record



## ‘Fell in love with Dilip Kumar at 12, don’t remember a thing about Madhubala,’ Saira Banu recalls meeting late husband on Mughal-E-Azam set



Dilip Kumar was the biggest Indian movie star, and some might say, the most eligible bachelor, when he married Saira Banu in 1966. He was 44, and she was 22. While he fell in love with her when she made her way into the movies, she had been in love with him since she was 12, and had first laid eyes on him while watching a movie. Saira grew up in London but would visit Mumbai every year and it was during one of these visits that she visited the set of Mughal-E-Azam that she met Yusuf saab. Such was his impression on her that she couldn’t even remember looking at the gorgeous Madhubala who was also present there. Dilip Kumar and Madhubala had broken up by then, and just a few years later, Dilip married Saira.

Yes. So grateful to the Almighty that I’m here to look after his things, to try and mend whatever is broken, trying to uphold everything that he upheld in his life, trying to do the kind of things that would always make him happy. I tried in my marriage also, to change myself totally to what he wanted. Didn’t you miss being a star after marrying Yusuf saab? There was no duress about it. I wanted to be as he wanted me to be. And I had a whole lot of happiness in that. If he said, ‘Come and wear saris, you look good in saris.’ I immediately did that. If he didn’t like my pinks that I wore, coral color or red colors or flamboyant colors, I stopped using colours. He always preferred white, you know, very

subtle colors. I changed to that. I changed to fluffy cottons to make me look a little more, you know, meaningful. I was a very thin girl at that time, at the time of my marriage. I have beautiful memories, beautiful memories.

What is the best gift Yusuf saab ever gave? Oh my God, you can imagine that my most wonderful gift in life, a birthday gift or a best gift in life is Yusuf saab himself, for whom I had clamored to God since I was 12 years old. Let Allah give me this man as my husband. Do you remember when you first met him? How can I ever forget? I was as young as 12 because I had seen him in a film for the first time in my childhood in London when I was studying, and that was it. I had seen that and I lost my heart to him. And in my holidays, when I would come here to India, to Mumbai, because my mother always brought us back home. My mother and my grandmother wanted us siblings to have our desi culture.

So you met the man of your dreams as a school girl?

When I came to India, we would run into Yusuf saab, and then my mother’s friends from America arrived and they wanted to see the shooting of Mughal-e-Azam. I think Mughal-e-Azam must have been winding up at that time with the Sheesh Mahal set. And I saw him there and I don’t remember a thing about the Sheesh Mahal. I don’t remember a thing about the gorgeous, beautiful Madhubala as Anarkali.

Dilip Kumar Dilip Kumar and Madhubala in a still from Mughal-e-Azam.

All eyes for your real life Salim?

I just remember looking at Yusuf saab, standing there in a white shirt and pants. He had folded his arms and he called my mother Aapaji. He was ever so respectful of Aapaji and ever so fond of my family. So the best gift ever?

So, the best birthday gift that you ask, is Yusuf saab himself. I have learned everything that I have learned from him, from my mother, from my grandmother, from my brother. And I’ve been so blessed with such a closed-knit family, just four of us, you know.

One last question, there is so much speculation about your health?

There is a lot of speculation about my health, that has always been there the past 40 years. God forbid there were such terrible rumors. And now my health factor, of course, is disturbing because unfortunately, my blood pressure goes up and down and I have pain in my knees. My life is good. My life is spent in meditation. My life is spent in helping others, whatever I can. And my life is spent in the beautiful memory of my gorgeous husband and my gorgeous, wonderful family. I live here in my old house and this is what makes me happy.

## Prince Harry and Meghan Markle in talks for a big blow to royals with Princess Diana’s documentary: ‘Netflix will bite his hand off’



Netflix is reportedly in talks with the Sussexes about extending their partnership. Over the past few weeks, rumours of bankruptcy have surrounded the estranged royals, with claims of failed OTT projects being axed. But according to The Sun, after their original £100 million and five-year deal with Netflix wrapped up this year, Prince Harry and Meghan Markle are now believed to be working on a proposal that could have the streamer “biting their hands off” to seal the deal.

Prince Harry and Meghan working on Princess Diana’s doc

As part of the talks, a Princess Diana documentary is on the list of possible shows. The plan is to release it in 2027, marking 30 years since Diana’s death in Paris. According to a report by The Sun, nothing has been finalised yet, with several proposals still on the table. Under the new deal announced earlier this month, Netflix holds the first rights to any shows Harry and Meghan propose, while also covering the running costs of their production company, Archewell Productions, including staff and online content. Meanwhile, the OTT platform will begin airing the second part of Meghan’s lifestyle series, With Love, Meghan, from Tuesday. The show had received negative reviews during its first season, but still managed to pull in stronger viewership than many other titles, which secured its return. In addition, the platform has also announced plans for a holiday special in December, alongside a short documentary on Ugandan orphans titled Masaka Kids: A Rhythm Within. It is being reported that Harry is open to working on Diana’s documentary. If he signs on, Netflix bosses are convinced it would be a hit. One insider even claimed, “If

Harry wants to do it, Netflix will bite his hand off.” Experts have long pointed out that the Sussexes’ first Netflix hit only worked because the couple went all in on trashing the royals, airing insider drama for the world to binge, which in turn pushed them further out of the family circle, a rift that made brothers (William and Harry) enemies. The Sussexes’ later projects with the streamer fell flat as Netflix was reportedly chasing that same level of intensity. Now, with Diana’s story on the table, a documentary could land as the next big blow to the monarchy.

Harry was especially close to his mother Diana. He was just 12 when the princess died in the tragic accident. Since then, he’s been fiercely critical of the media circus, calling it the biggest reason he broke away from the royal family, to protect Meghan and their kids from meeting the same fate. He’s often spoken about how deeply her death scarred him. Harry still keeps her memory alive, staying close to his mother’s side of the family, keeping a photo wall of her at home, giving Lilibet the middle name Diana, and recalling moments like walking behind her coffin in 1997. In his memoir Spare, he even revealed a medium once told him, “Your mother is with you... You’re living the life she wanted for you.

Netflix bosses, including content chief Bela Bajaria, have praised the Sussexes, saying they are “influential voices whose stories resonate globally.” Meghan herself recently said she’s “proud to extend the partnership” with Netflix. “My husband and I feel inspired by our partners who work closely with us and our Archewell Productions team to create thoughtful content across genres that resonates globally, and celebrates our shared vision,” Meghan said in a press statement earlier this month.

## Pavitra Rishta veteran recalls horror stories about abusive father, says he attacked her with machete, beat brother unconscious

Actor Usha Nadkarni, who is best known for her role in the hit TV series Pavitra Rishta, spoke about her youth in Mumbai, growing up with a strict mother and an even stricter father. Although she didn’t describe him as abusive, she described several incidents of suffering physical abuse at his hands when she was a child. Appearing on Bharti Singh and Haarsh Limbachiya’s podcast, Usha said that her father would beat her and her two siblings with whatever object he could lay his hands on. He once beat her brother unconscious, and attacked her with a ‘koita’ knife (machete).

Usha said that her father was an Air Force officer, and her mother was a teacher. There would be hell to pay even if the newspaper at home wasn’t folded perfectly after being read. “If he found the newspaper to be crumpled or crooked in any way, he would lose his temper and tear it up. If he saw that our schoolbooks weren’t kept in neat rows, he would tear them up in anger. My mother would tell him that he’d only have to buy new ones, so he shouldn’t tear them,” she recalled.

Remembering her father’s temper, she said, “He was a very violent man, we were terrified of him. One of us would be beaten up, and the other two would run. Once, my brother was being beaten up for some reason, and I tried to stop him. He attacked me with a ‘koita’. You know, one of those knives with a curved edge? I got injured on my arm, and I had a play the next day. I went to perform with the injury.”



She also revealed that her father once beat her brother unconscious, and was immediately horrified at his temper. “He would bring us special ice cream after a particularly bad beating,” she said in an earlier interview with Pinkvilla. Usha said that both her parents were against the idea of her becoming an actor. When she first broached the subject, her mother threw all her clothes out into the street and kicked her out of the house. She left, and stayed with a friend until her father came to visit her and brought her back after a week. She said that she was so terrified of him, she ran away and hid when some of her friends came over unannounced, to ask permission for her to accompany them on a picnic. Usha, 79, lives by herself in Mumbai. She said that her brother, who was her biggest support, died earlier this year.

## ‘Govinda wanted a son, I told the doctor to save the child even if I die in the process’: Sunita Ahuja recalls giving birth to son Yashvardhan

Govinda, who marked his acting debut in 1986, secretly married his now wife Sunita Ahuja in 1987. The very next year, they welcomed their daughter Tina and after nearly a decade, the couple welcomed their son Yashvardhan. In a recent interview, Sunita recalled the birth of her son and how she had told the doctor to save her son instead of her when she saw Govinda howling. Talking to the YouTube channel Eat Travel Repeat, Sunita was asked to share a real-life filmy moment from her life, when she quickly recalled the birth of her son. Sunita shared, “When I was delivering my son Yash, I was 100 kgs. I had gained a lot of weight. I thought I will die. Looking at me, Chi Chi (Govinda) started to cry. During those days, sex detection test was legal. We knew we were having a son. I dramatically told the doctor, ‘Doctor, my husband wants a son. Please save the child, it is okay if I die in the process.’ This made Govinda cry even more. He was howling. This was extremely filmy moment for all of us.” She laughed as she recalled the moment.

On Friday, Hutterly reported Sunita Ahuja has filed for divorce in the Bandra Family Court, and the couple is currently undergoing court mandated relationship counseling. However, Govinda’s lawyer, Lalit Bindra told NDTV that it is an old matter, which has been settled between the couple. Their divorce rumours started to surface online after Sunita in several of her interviews hinted at Govinda’s



infidelity and implied that they live separately. In one of her interviews, she also mentioned that for the past 12 years, she has been celebrating her birthday all by herself. In another incident, she was seen spending Valentine’s Day with her son Yash. In a casual conversation with the photographers, she joked, “Govinda apne Valentine ke sath gaya hai (Govinda has gone with his valentine).”

## Not BTS or EXO, this legendary K-pop group started the lightstick and mini album trend; 19 years later, they proudly claim, ‘we’re still the origin’



BIGBANG just marked their 19th anniversary, and the members took the chance to look back on their long, chaotic journey. In a new video on Daesung’s YouTube channel ZIP Daesung (posted August 22), Taeyang, G-Dragon and Daesung, the remaining members of BIGBANG, spent time in a “memory room” filled with old group relics, including early albums, fan sign photos, lightsticks, and other keepsakes. K-pop mini albums, concerts packed with glowing lightsticks, etc., all the things that define the craze today aren’t exactly new. Ever since acts like BTS and BLACKPINK exploded worldwide, fans have argued over who really set the staple trends of the industry. While those debates have gone on for years, it was a full-circle moment for fans to see the legendary idols finally step in and claim how the trends they started have now become the blueprint for how the world sees K-pop. In the memory room, G-Dragon wandered around looking at the items and joked, “Aren’t these artifacts now?” He added, “Not to brag, but we were the first to release mini-albums,” making everyone laugh. Then he went on to claim that the group also started the lightstick trend. Taeyang interrupted, pointing out that singer Se7en also says he started the lightstick idea. G-Dragon just laughed it off, saying, “Yes, Se7en has his Se7en-bong. But the origin of the lightstick trend is us.” While the topic has long been debated, BIGBANG is widely credited with

revolutionising fan culture. Before official lightsticks, fans supported first-generation K-pop groups like H.O.T. and g.o.d in the 1990s using colourful balloons and raincoats matching the group’s official colours. This was the first way “fan oceans” were created at concerts. BIGBANG’s innovation came with their uniquely designed lightstick, the Bang Bong, the very first artist-specific official merchandise topped with the group’s signature crown, representing their fandom V.I.P. This allowed fans to preserve memories for a longer time and shifted fan culture from generic items to a collective identity. The success of this trend led other K-pop groups to release their own lightsticks. BIGBANG is also credited with popularising the mini-album trend or extended play (EP), in K-pop. While the concept existed in the industry before as well, the group’s 2007 EP Always was a game-changer. The format allowed the K-pop group to belt out albums frequently. BIGBANG’s 19th anniversary was marked by familiar faces like CL, Go Kyung Pyo, Vince, SEVENTEEN’s Hoshi, and the Kwon twins, who arrived as guests on the show. “Nothing has ever gone according to plan over these 19 years,” Taeyang said at one point. He continued, “Over the course of our 19 years in the music industry, not a single thing has gone according to plan,” and added, “Even today, nothing went as planned either. And maybe that’s what best represents our 19th anniversary.” While the singer might be referring to the group’s journey, fans were quick to interpret that he subtly shaded some of the members who are no longer part of the group because of their controversies. BIGBANG started in 2006 under YG Entertainment with five members: G-Dragon, Taeyang, Daesung, T.O.P, and Seungri. But, as massive as the group’s popularity was, so were the scandals. Seungri left the industry in 2019 after the infamous “Burning Sun” scandal. T.O.P., who got entangled in drug cases, officially left the group in 2023.

## Regina Cassandra wraps first schedule of Madhur Bhandarkar’s ‘The Wives’

Mumbai: Actress Regina Cassandra, who is known for her work in the period streaming series ‘Rocket Boys’, has wrapped up the first schedule of her upcoming movie ‘The Wives’.

Regina recently hinted at the schedule wrap on social media, sharing a candid behind-the-scenes picture from the set, dressed in a sleek black outfit while holding a clapperboard that read ‘The Wives’.