

## BGUS TO CONDUCT 46TH SAMUHIK GANESH IMMERSION IN CITY

Hyderabad, Sept.5 : The Bhagyanagar Ganesh Utsav Samithi (BGUS) will conduct the '46th Samuhik Ganesh Immersion' on Saturday (Sept 6) with the participation of lakhs of devotees. Sri Sri Satyatma Theertha Swamiji, pontiff of Uttaradi Mutt and Sri Swami Bhodhamayananda, president of Ramakrishna Mutt, Hyderabad will be chief guest for the event.While Tripura Governor N Indra Sena Reddy will be guest of honour, and they will address the devotees at Charminar at 2 pm and MJ Market (3 pm). The Samithi, in a press release, also informed that Union home minister Amit Shah, due to official commitments, will extend his blessings through a 'virtual message' at MJ Market junction.

## Revanth appeals to teachers to come forward for reconstruction of Telangana



Hyderabad, Sept.5 Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy has appealed to the entire teachers fraternity to join hands with the state government for the reconstruction of Telangana state. The Chief Minister stressed that the proposed new education policy will bring many reforms in the education sector which helps to rebuild the state.Speaking at the Teachers Day celebrations at Shilpakala Vedika here on Friday, Revanth Reddy said that he was holding the education portfolio for the revival of the key sector which was completely ruined during the 10 year BRS rule in the state.

"Many Chief Ministers kept revenue, finance and irrigation departments under their control. I have been closely monitoring the education wing as an education Minister," he said.The Chief Minister said taking strong exception to some opposition leaders comments against him for holding an education portfolio. " My strong counter to them is I am already reviving the education sector by introducing a slew of reforms," he said.Revanth Reddy said the previous BRS government made the promise of providing free KG to PG education to the poor but not implemented. The teacher recruitment was also stopped in 2017, but the Congress government has recruited 11,000 teachers in just 55

## Komatireddy congratulates NAC trainer Snehalatha on winning national award



Hyderabad, Sept.5 (NSS): Minister for Roads & Buildings, Cinematography, and Vice Chairman of the National Academy of Construction (NAC), Komatireddy Venkat Reddy, on Friday congratulated NAC trainer Snehalatha for receiving the prestigious National Best Teachers Award from President Droupadi Murmu in New Delhi.

The award, instituted by the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, was conferred on Snehalatha for her outstanding contribution to vocational training, skill development, and employment generation among unem-

## Sridhar Babu invites Gulf entrepreneurs, NRIs to invest in ‘Rising Telangana’



Hyderabad, Sept.5 Minister for IT and Industries, D. Sridhar Babu has extended an invitation to Gulf-based entrepreneurs and Non-Resident Indians (NRIs) to partner in the State's growth story, 'Rising Telangana'.Participating in the South Indian Business Achievers Awards (SIBA), held as part of the South Indian International Weekend – Dubai 2025, the Minister highlighted Telangana's rapid economic strides and its emergence as a national leader in industrial development.Telangana, despite ranking 11th in geographical size and 12th in population, contributes more than 5 percent to the national GDP. In FY 2024–25, the State achieved a Gross State Domestic Product (GSDP) growth rate of 8.2 percent, surpassing the national average. Over the past 18 months, Telangana has attracted investments worth ₹3.28 lakh crore across sectors such as life sciences, electric vehicles, aerospace, logistics, artificial intelligence, and renewable energy, he said.Sridhar Babu said the global corporations, including Eli Lilly and other multinational firms, have chosen Telangana as their investment destination and

days of coming to power. Moreover, the last government did not enhance diet and cosmetic charges. The education sector has been promoted as a profitable business and the universities were completely non-functional by not appointing teaching staff. The famous Osmania University and Kakatiya Universities lost their glory in the last regime, he pointed out.

Praising the teachers for playing an important role during the Telangana movement, the Chief Minister said it was the teachers who took the slogan of Jai Telangana to every village of the Telangana region, and the teachers also influenced the parents during the intensified Telangana struggle. The people's government is always proactive to address the teachers' demands, he said.Revanth Reddy also highlighted the need to introduce a new education policy for which the government has already constituted an official committee. The efforts put in by the government are already giving desirable results. The enrollment of students in the government schools decreased in the past. After the people's government assumed power, the enrollment was increased by 3 lakhs. At present, 24 lakh students are studying in 27, 000 government schools. The number of students studying in 10,000 private schools is 34 lakhs, he said."The government teachers are highly qualified and socially responsible. Apart from giving salaries, basic amenities should also be provided in the government schools.The Self Help Groups were already entrusted with responsibility of the management of schools in the name of Amma Adarsh Schools and the government sanctioned Rs.130 crores for the management of schools," the Chief Minister said.Stating that education will only change the destiny of the students, Revanth Reddy said that teachers should play a key role in making a bright future for the students. He appealed to the teachers to have mid day meals with the children in the schools to rectify the mistakes, if any."

ployed youth across Telangana. She is among 13 recipients selected nationwide, and the only one from Telangana, hailing from Hanamkonda.The Minister personally conveyed his wishes over phone, praising her efforts in imparting skill training through NAC at Warangal, Karimnagar, and Jagtial, enabling youth to secure employment through certificate and vocational courses. He noted that her recognition is a matter of pride for Telangana.

Highlighting the government's vision, the Minister said Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy has been emphasising the creation of skill development centres across the State. Komatireddy Venkat Reddy also mentioned that he is personally focusing on strengthening the NAC to make it as a premier national platform for skill training with the aim of ensuring 100 percent employment opportunities for trainees."The achievement of Snehalatha is not just an individual honour, but also a reflection of the collective efforts of NAC faculty and staff. This recognition will inspire many more trainers to strive for excellence," the Minister said.He also congratulated NAC Director Shanti Sri for encouraging faculty members and appreciated the guidance of NAC Director General and State Special Chief Secretary Vikas Raj, who also extended his wishes to Snehalatha.

UAE investors alone have committed more than ₹2,000 crore, reflecting the strengthening trade and investment ties between Telangana and Dubai.The Minister underlined that the State views investors not just as business partners but as stakeholders in its development journey. Telangana is offering opportunities in artificial intelligence, emerging technologies, cybersecurity, fintech, digital economy, smart mobility, clean energy, life sciences, logistics, warehousing, trade infrastructure, food processing, EVs, aerospace, and defence manufacturing, he said.

## TBJP CHIEF RAO PAYS TRIBUTES TO SARVEPALLI RADHAKRISHNAN

Hyderabad, Sept.5 : On the occasion of 138th birth anniversary of Dr. Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan, which is celebrated as Teachers' Day, BJP state president N. Ramachandra Rao today paid floral tributes to the late leader's statue at Tank Bund in the city.Speaking to the media, the BJP leader recalled the invaluable contributions of Dr. Radhakrishnan, India's second President and Bharat Ratna awardee, who had brought global recognition to the teaching profession. He stressed that the teachers who shape future generations, should always be respected and honoured.On this occasion, Rao criticized the Congress-led Telangana government for alleged neglect of the education sector, by pointing out delays in payment of salaries to government teachers and pensions for retired staff.

## Hyderabad Police inducts women into mounted unit for first time

Hyderabad Police Commissioner CV Anand announced that ten women constables from the Armed Reserve, trained at the Goshamahal Mounted Unit, will now serve as mounted police officers. They will be deployed for bandobust, VIP security, and patrolling duties, marking a historic milestone in the country's policing system.The commissioner said the move aims to empower women and bring them to the forefront in all fields. For the first time, women mounted police personnel will be part of regular city patrols.Meanwhile, the police dog squad is being expanded from 34 to 54 dogs to reduce workload and enhance operational efficiency. The new dogs, trained at the Integrated Intelligence Training Academy, will be deployed for narcotics and explosives detection as well as criminal tracking.

## Nara Lokesh meets PM Modi, discussions on AP's development and central assistance



GNS News Agency, Sept 5

Andhra Pradesh State Education and IT Minister Nara Lokesh paid a visit to the national capital, Delhi, where he met with Prime Minister Narendra Modi for a

45-minute discussion on key issues affecting the state. During this meeting, Prime Minister Modi unveiled the YogaAndhra Table Book.

Minister Lokesh raised various topics, including the need for central government assistance to Andhra Pradesh, the status of pending projects, the implementation of central schemes, and the current political landscape. He also congratulated the Prime Minister on the recent rationalisation of GST slabs and the implementation of relevant reforms.Expressing gratitude, Lokesh thanked Modi for reducing taxes on a range of goods used in the education sector. He shared details regarding investments in Andhra Pradesh, the establishment of new industries, and the accomplishments of the AP team's recent visit to Singapore. Additionally, Minister Lokesh expressed his appreciation to the Prime Minister for the decision to set up a semiconductor unit in the state, highlighting its significance for local development.

## Telangana offers strong investment opportunities, Uttam tells Danish envoy



Hyderabad, Sept.5 Minister for Irrigation and Civil Supplies N. Uttam Kumar Reddy on Friday highlighted Hyderabad and Telangana as one of India's most attractive destinations for global investments during a detailed interaction with Denmark's new Ambassador to India, Rasmus Abildgaard Kristensen.

At the meeting held at his camp office in Hyderabad on Friday, Uttam Kumar Reddy presented a broad picture of Telangana's growth story, emphasising agriculture, information technology, pharmaceuticals, renewable energy, and food processing as areas of strength. He invited Danish companies to explore partnerships ranging from clean energy to dairy, noting that Telangana's policy framework, infrastructure and skilled workforce create an enabling climate for investors.

The Minister told the visiting diplomat that Telangana, India's youngest state, had quickly emerged as one of the country's fastest-growing economies. "Out of 29 states, we are probably the fastest growing and also among the most investor-friendly," he said, citing double-digit growth, the high-

est per capita income in India, and consistently high investment inflows.He pointed out that Telangana contributes around 5 percent to India's GDP with only about 2.9 percent of the country's population, giving it an enviably high per capita income. In the last financial year, the state registered a real growth rate of nearly 11 percent, placing it among the top performers nationwide. The Minister underlined the government's goal to transform Telangana into a \$1 trillion economy within a decade.

Given Denmark's global leadership in clean energy, discussions focused heavily on renewable opportunities. Uttam Kumar Reddy underlined Telangana's commitment to the green transition. "We want Hyderabad to become a net zero city by a declared date, and Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy has already initiated steps such as electrifying the city's bus fleet," he said. Ambassador Kristensen explained Denmark's "Impact Fund," backed by major pension funds and the government's AAA rating, which channels billions into clean energy, agriculture, water and healthcare projects worldwide. "India, and Telangana in particular, are already among the largest recipients of this fund," he revealed.

Kristensen noted that Telangana was emerging as a preferred alternative to Bengaluru, with Danish firms increasingly choosing Hyderabad for their global capability centres. "Carlsberg, for instance, has been here for years with a brewery and is now looking at further expansion," he said.Kristensen said several other Danish companies already have operations in Telangana, while more are actively exploring investment opportunities. Novo Nordisk, through its philanthropic arm, has also supported ICRISAT in developing climate-resilient crops such as sorghum and millet, he said.

## Three-trillion economy is our goal: Bhatti



Hyderabad, Sept.5 Deputy Chief Minister Bhatti Vikramarka said Telangana Rising–2047 envisions a three-trillion-dollar economy and the young state is racing ahead toward that goal.Bhatti Vikramarka addressed the gathering at the inauguration of the Motilal Oswal Executive Centre at the Indian School of Business (ISB), Gachibowli on Friday.He said the young state will compete with the world and appealed to ISB students to contribute to the state's development.The Deputy Chief Minister said the state government is investing in the education sector in ways unimaginable before. Investment in education, he emphasised, is the foundation for state-building, which the people's government fully believes in. To provide world-class education free of cost to students, the government is launching Young India Integrated Residential Schools. Each school is being built on 25 acres with an investment of ₹200 crore, and simultaneously, 104 schools have already been initiated across the state, he informed.Bhatti Vikramarka said the government is designing and implementing curriculum at the Skill University to ensure students secure jobs immediately after graduation and the syllabus has been designed in consultation with industry leaders. In memory of Chakali Ailamma, a woman fighter in the Telangana armed struggle, the government is spending ₹500 crore to construct buildings for a women's university, he said.He noted that Anand Mahindra has been appointed Chairman of the Skill University and requested ISB administrators to visit both Skill University and the Young India residential schools to provide guidance and suggestions, as they are still in their formative stage. Such inputs from ISB now, he said, will greatly

benefit the state's future.Calling ISB students fortunate, he said classrooms there were built with an investment of ₹1.5 to ₹2 crore each. Recalling his own humble beginnings, Bhatti Vikramarka said he studied in a single-teacher Telugu-medium government school from class I to V, where teachers had no slates for students and instead wrote letters in the sand. On this Teacher's Day, inaugurating such a grand educational facility at ISB was especially meaningful to him, and he expressed gratitude to all his teachers who helped him reach this position.

## Govt ensures smooth Ganesh immersion in Hyderabad: Ponnam

Hyderabad, Sept.5 Minister for Transport Ponnam Prabhakar announced that the State government has made thorough preparations for the grand celebration of Ganesh immersion in Hyderabad, set to take place on Saturday.Minister Prabhakar, alongside GHMC Mayor Gadwala Vijayalakshmi, Commissioner R.V. Karnan, MLC Balmoor Venkat, HMDA Commissioner Sarfaraz Ahmed, Khairatabad Zonal Commissioner Anurag Jayanthi, Hyderabad district collector Dasari Harichandana, and other officials, inspected the arrangements for the immersion at Hussain Sagar Crane 4 and 5 points on Friday. He instructed the officials to implement sufficient measures to ensure the immersion's success.In a media briefing, Ponnam Prabhakar, who also serves as the in-charge Minister for Hyderabad district, stated that under the leadership of Chief Minister Revanth Reddy, all departments are diligently working to facilitate a peaceful Ganesh celebration."We have put together detailed plans for the Maha Nimajjan on Saturday in collaboration with the Ganesh Utsav Samiti. Up to this point, 1.50 lakh idols have been successfully immersed within the GHMC limits. To facilitate a smooth immersion process, we have arranged for 40 cranes, including one Babubali crane, around Hussain Sagar. Working alongside the Ganesh Utsav Samiti, we will make sure that the Khairatabad Maha Ganapati Nimajjan is conducted promptly," Ponnam Prabhakar stated.

# Indian Chronicle

English Daily

## GST 2.0 good, but more reforms key to galvanise economy

The overhaul of the goods and services tax (GST) is a major reform that businesses and consumers have been waiting for. Ideally, there should have been a single GST rate, but then something is better than nothing. The GST Council has reduced the current four slabs - 5, 12, 18, and 28 per cent - to the two-rate structure of 5 per cent and 18 per cent. It has proposed a steep 40 per cent slab for a select few items such as high-end cars, demerit goods, and cigarettes.

Revenue Secretary Arvind Shrivastava said the move simplifies taxation, reduces the burden on essentials, and ensures fiscal sustainability. He clarified that the rationalisation, which is expected to have a revenue implication of Rs 48,000 crore, should not be termed as a revenue loss. Instead, he emphasised that lower taxes will put more disposable income in the hands of consumers, thereby boosting expenditure and fuelling economic activity. Compliance is also expected to improve under the new system. It is good to notice that revenue maximisation is not government policy. Daily essentials and food items, household and personal care items, stationery, footwear and textiles, healthcare and insurance, and transport and travel will be cheaper for common people when new GST slabs come into force from September 22. One major rationalisation has been on cement, which now will be taxed at 18 per cent, and not 28 per cent as is the case currently. Services like salons, barbershops, gyms, and yoga centres will now face only 5 per cent GST without input tax credit, which is much lower than 18 per cent. The restructuring of GST slabs marks one of the most significant reforms in the indirect tax regime since the introduction of GST.

## Call 1930 Immediately Or File A Complaint At Wankidi SI



“Indian Chronicle” kumrambheem, Asifabad. District Reporter Jade Srinivas. September, “05.” “Wankidi SI Mahender advised people to be vigilant against cyber crimes. He warned that if you click on links from strangers, your personal information on your phone could end up in the hands of cyber criminals. If anyone falls victim to cyber fraud, they should call 1930 immediately or file a complaint at the nearest PS without delay. If there is an accident in the village, they should immediately call 100 and provide information, he said.

## Teacher Found Sleeping In School Under The Influence Of School



“Indian Chronicle” kumrambheem, Asifabad. District Reporter Jade Srinivas. September, “05.” “Komuram Bheem Asifabad He fell down after drinking till he was drunk in broad daylight. All the children, whether they were teaching or not, were shocked. This incident took place in Komuram Bheem Asifabad district. Vilas, a teacher working as an SGT at Sukudpally Ashram High School in Jainur mandal, had come to duty after drinking alcohol. He entered the classroom and fell down at the table without teaching the children. The villagers who noticed all this complained to the higher authorities. Following this, the Utnoor Sanugra Tribal Development Organization project officials took up the investigation. Based on the report of the officials, SGT Vilas was suspended from duty on the orders of ITDA PO Khushboo Gupta. DD Ramadevi said that another teacher has been appointed in the school. The incident came to light after the Welfare Department recorded the incident on his mobile phone and sent it to the authorities.”

## Kerameri: Conditions Worsen As Culvert Washes Away

“Indian Chronicle” kumrambheem, Asifabad. District Reporter Jade Srinivas. September, “05.” “Kerameri: Conditions worsen as culvert washes away. The culvert between Babelhari and Gonduguda villages in Kerameri mandal has been washed away due to heavy rains. Due to this, Anganwadi and school students are facing difficulties in commuting, said Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) in-charge Kanaka Prabhakar.

## Sonalika hits all time high August Overall Sales of 10,932 Tractors driven by robust 28% Domestic Growth



Hyderabad: India's No. 1 tractor export brand, Sonalika Tractors has been aggressively moving ahead in FY'26 to strengthen its role as a true partner for farmers in India and has achieved a new landmark performance in FY'26. The company has recorded its highest ever August overall sales of 10,932 tractors that includes a robust 28% growth in the domestic market that reflects on its deep-rooted understanding of local farming needs. The company's sustained success is driven by its commitment to develop farmer centric heavy duty tractors that deliver complete peace of mind and drive agriculture growth.

Sharing his views on the incredible performance, Mr. Raman Mittal, Joint Managing Director, International Tractors Limited, said, “Sonalika's purposeful journey to deliver better productivity and earn farmer's trust has been revali-

dated with our new landmark achievement which is the highest ever August overall sales of 10,932 tractors in FY'26. This success is inspired by the power packed performance in the domestic market where we have registered a robust 28% growth. Sonalika Tractors made an unprecedented move of showcasing tractor prices on its official website three years back that continues to be the symbol of transparency in India agri ecosystem. Complementing its farmer centric ideology, the company has recently made a new landmark move of disclosing tractor service cost and prices of spare part required for service on its website to deliver a holistic solution and complete peace of mind to Indian farmers. Sonalika Tractors leverages its seamlessly integrated manufacturing, a responsive supply chain, and a foundation of strong relationships across verticals to deliver convenience and higher return on investment to farmers.

The recent reduction in GST applicable on tractors is a welcome move and should enable farmers to adopt better technology tractors that improve productivity. As a part of our commitment towards farmer's growth, we have taken a bold step in August to reveal tractor service cost and prices of spare parts required for service on our website to further stretch our lead of ensuring transparency in the Indian tractor industry. Making farming more profitable with our heavy duty tractors and farmer centric initiatives, we are taking every possible step that could reform a farmer's life forever.”

## Continental Hospitals Celebrates Onam with Grandeur



Hyderabad: Continental Hospitals, Nanakramguda, Gachibowli, Hyderabad, came alive with vibrant festivities

as the hospital celebrated Onam with great enthusiasm and cultural spirit. The celebrations were graced by Dr. Guru N Reddy, Founder and Chairman of Continental Hospitals, who attended as the Chief Guest. Speaking on the occasion, Dr. Reddy expressed his joy, stating that Onam has been celebrated at Continental Hospitals every year since its inception and continues to be one of the most cherished traditions. Doctors, nurses, and staff members actively took part in the festivities, making the occasion truly memorable. The event featured a wide range of cultural programs including dance, music, singing, and cooking competitions, which captivated the audience. Winners of these contests were recognized and presented with prizes by the hospital management. The grand Onam celebrations created an atmosphere of joy, unity, and festive cheer, bringing together the entire Continental Hospitals community in the true spirit of the festival.

## Milk Abhishekam to PM Modi's Portrait Celebrating GST Reduction and Exemptions



“NSR, Medchal - Malkajgiri Staff Reporter, Ghatkesar, September 5, Indian Chronicle: Following the directions of Medchal Rural District BJP President Buddi Srinivas, Ghatkesar Municipal Chairman Kommididi Mahipal Reddy led a program at Ambedkar Chowrasta, Ghatkesar, celebrating the Central Government's major reduction in GST

slab rates. With the GST cuts, prices of essential commodities have decreased, and GST on medical and life insurance has been completely removed. Marking this occasion, BJP leaders and activists from Ghatkesar Municipal conducted a milk abhishekam to the portrait of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, highlighting the relief provided to poor and middle-class families across the country. Singireddy Venkat Reddy attended the event as the chief guest. Other participants included District Vice President Kambham Laxmareddy,

Municipal Vice Presidents Gundla Ramateertha and Padigam Veeresh, Municipal General Secretary Challaka Sridhar, Mangu Radhika, Secretary Siddhiraj, Treasurer Medaboyina Naresh, senior leaders Palle Madhu, Mangu Srinivas Rao, Enugu Machender, Errolla Sriramulu, Jaipal Reddy, Bhanu Prakash, Bal Narsimha, Srinivas, Chilkamarri Mahesh, Yuva Morcha leader Surender Yadav, Kanukkurthi Manoj Kumar, booth presidents, and several party activists.

## Grand Ganesh Navaratri Celebrations at Shubhodaya Colony



“NSR, Medchal - Malkajgiri Staff Reporter, Charlapally, September 5, Indian Chronicle: Ganesh Navaratri festivities were held on a grand scale at Shubhodaya Colony Phase-3 in Charlapally Division. As part of the celebrations, the first Maha Prasadam laddu, weighing 11.5 kg, was auctioned and secured for ₹3,00,116 by Amanaganti Srinivas and his wife Kavitha of Manishree Engineering. The second laddu, weighing 9.5 kg, was won in a competitive bidding by Vanapalli Vishwaprasad and his wife Priya for ₹1,19,116. Colony President Tigulla Ramchander, Vice President Siddu Srinivas Goud, General Secretary Balagam Mallesh, Treasurer Krishna, Balraj, Secretaries Srikanth and Bhanu Naik along with commit-

tee members participated in the program.

## KCR IS SUPREME IN BRS PARTY - HARISH RAO

Hyderabad, Sept.5 Reacting to yesterday's sensational allegations made by BRS rebel MLC Kalvakuntla Kavitha, former minister and senior BRS MLA T Harish Rao on Friday reiterated that former CM K. Chandrashekar Rao remains the supreme leader of the party.

## KTR demands Revanth Reddy to apologise for administrative failures

Hyderabad: Holding Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy responsible for financial and agrarian crisis in Telangana, BRS working president KT Rama Rao demanded him to tender a public apology for the complete administrative failure of the Congress government. He said the Congress betrayed people's trust and pushed a progressive State like Telangana into turmoil, due to inefficiency. Welcoming several Congress leaders and cadre from the erstwhile Nizamabad district into the BRS fold at former Chief Minister K Chandrashekar Rao's Erravelli residence on Friday, Rama Rao said the Congress had neither implemented its pre-poll promises nor continued the flagship welfare schemes of the previous BRS government. “In just 21 months, the government has lost people's faith. Instead of governance, the Chief Minister spends his time chanting KCR's name at every possible occasion. Arrogance and reckless statements have only alienated the public,” he said. The BRS working president declared that byelections are inevitable in 10 Assembly constituencies within six months, notwithstanding the delay tactics deployed by the Congress in disqualification of the turncoat MLAs. He cited Supreme Court directives on disqualification of defectors, in this regard. “Speaker's silence won't save Pocharam Srinivas Reddy and any other turncoat MLA. Banswada voters will ensure his defeat. If needed, we will once again approach the Supreme Court for justice,” he declared. Rama Rao also tore into the government's fiscal management and its false narrative that the previous BRS government pushed the State into debt trap. Instead, he said the situation was completely opposite. “Our government borrowed Rs 2.80 lakh crore over a decade and created landmark development projects and implemented welfare schemes.

## Ganesh Navaratri Celebrations at Jai Sri Ram Colony, Chengicherla



“NSR, Medchal - Malkajgiri Staff Reporter, Chengicherla, September 5, Indian Chronicle: The residents of Jai Sri Ram Colony, Chengicherla, under Boduppal Municipal Corporation, celebrated the Ganesh Navaratri festival with devotion and enthusiasm. On this occasion, colony leaders and committee members actively took part in the festivities. Shilpa R.P. Goud, President of the colony committee, Rajender Reddy, Vice President, Venkat Reddy, Treasurer, Satyanarayana, General Secretary, and Damodar Reddy, Joint Secretary, along with committee members and local residents, participated in the celebrations and offered prayers. The event witnessed active involvement of children, women, and elders, making it a grand community gathering.

## Javeed Is The New MPDO of Wankidi Mandal



“Indian Chronicle” kumrambheem, Asifabad. District Reporter Jade Srinivas. September, “05.” “Wankidi, Khaja Ajajoddin Javeed took charge as the MPDO of Wankidi mandal. While the previous MPDO V. Praveen Kumar Retired, Chinthalamannepalle MPDO Sudhakar Reddy took over temporarily. Later, Javid was given additional responsibilities as the Wankidi MPDO. On this occasion, the Panchayat secretaries and employment guarantee staff honored the new MPDO Javid with a shawl and presented bouquets of flowers and wished him well. The new MPDO Javid said, “Whenever the district authorities give timely instructions, I will work for the development of Wankidi mandal in coordination with the Panchayat secretaries, office staff and employment guarantee staff.”

## Chit Fund Scam: Woman Absconds with 3 Crore



“NSR, Medchal - Malkajgiri Staff Reporter, Jawaharnagar, September 5, Indian Chronicle: Jawaharnagar police reported a chit fund fraud in which a woman allegedly fled with money collected from locals. According to officials, Swapna, a resident of Shantinagar for the past 14 years, had been running a chit fund business in the area. Recently, participants began pressuring her to re-

turn their money. Around 200 people claim that she collected nearly ₹3 crore from them before absconding. Victims expressed deep distress over the incident.

# Ganesh Navaratri Celebrations Held in Maruthi Nagar and Chengicherla Former Ex Corporator Padma Reddy Participates“



“NSR, Medchal - Malkajgiri Staff Reporter, Boduppal, September 5, Indian Chronicle: On the occasion of Ganesh Navaratri, former 5th Division Corporator of Boduppal Municipal Corporation, Singireddy Padma Reddy, visited Ganesh pandals in Maruthi Nagar Colony and Chengicherla under Boduppal Municipal Corporation limits. He took part in Ganesh puja and annadanam program along with

Medchal constituency Congress party in-charge Vajresh Yadav. DCP Padmaja, ACP Chakrapani, Medchal B Block President Mahesh Goud, Boduppal Municipal Corporation President Pogula Narasimha Reddy, B Block General Secretary Kotha Kishore Goud, Kotha Prabhakar Goud, former corporators Kotha Chander Goud, Suman Nayak, Padma Reddy, Sisa Venkatesh Goud and others also participated in the program.

# Congress Senior Leader Bojja Raghava Reddy’s 68th Birthday Celebrated Grandly“



“NSR, Medchal - Malkajgiri Staff Reporter, Kushaiguda, September 5, Indian Chronicle: The 68th birthday celebrations of Congress senior leader Bojja Raghava Reddy were held on Friday at Kamala Nagar Welfare Association Hall in Kushaiguda. Locals, followers, and leaders from various political parties attended the event in large numbers and extended their greetings. Speakers on the occasion recalled Raghava Reddy’s political and social service, describing him as a person who always stood at the forefront in addressing public issues. They added that his public life stands as an inspiration for the younger gen-

eration of leaders. The event was attended by former AS Rao Nagar Division corporator Pajjuri Pavani Manipal Reddy, BRS senior leaders Karipe Praveen Vanjari, Pencchala Surender Rao, Patti Kumar, Pathakoti Ramalingam, Singam Kiran, Bethala Balraj, Venkat Reddy, Pentayya, Dattu, Peddi Naveen Kumar, Ramachary, Sudhakar, Sahadev, Madhu Chary, Anjaneyulu, senior journalists Srinivas, Vemula Shankar, Vijay, Narsingi Goud and many others. Residents of the local colonies also participated in large numbers and made the celebrations a grand success. The program concluded with cake cutting, garlanding, and felicitation of Raghava Reddy.

# Annadanam program organized by NNBC Youth Association at Naik Nagar Banjara Colony““



“NSR, Medchal - Malkajgiri Staff Reporter, Kapra, September 5, Indian Chronicle: Medchal-Malkajgiri Agricultural Market Committee Vice Chairman Vithal Naik along with Naik Nagar Banjara Colony President Parvati Naik attended the Annadanam distribution program organized by NNBC Youth Association at Naik Nagar Banjara Colony in Kapra

Division. The organizers welcomed the guests and felicitated them. Speaking on the occasion, Vithal Naik said that NNBC Youth Association successfully organized the Annadanam program, which was attended by a large number of devotees and local residents who received prasadam. He appreciated the association members for not only conducting social activities but also actively taking part in spiritual events. He called upon the people of the division to celebrate Ganesh festival with devotion and unity. He further expressed gratitude to NNBC Youth Association members for giving him the opportunity to serve in such a sacred Annadanam program during Ganesh Chaturthi celebrations. He added that the association members are participating actively in social service activities beyond caste and religion and hoped that their services would expand further. The program was attended by Naik Nagar Banjara Colony President Parvati Naik and colony members including Vani, Koma, Bujji, Beena, Satish, Suman, Balaji, Narshima and others.

# KCR MOURNS PRATHAP REDDY'S MOTHER'S DEMISE

Hyderabad, Sept.5 (NSS): BRS party chief and former CM K. Chandrashekar Rao today expressed shock over the demise of Vanteru Vajramma, mother of the party’s Gajwel constituency in-charge Vanteru Prathap Reddy.

# Guru Puja Day was celebrated grandly under the auspices of the Lions Club.“

“Aswaraopet (5) NAGA MANOJ KUMAR: Guru Puja Day was celebrated grandly under the auspices of Lions Club. On the occasion of Sarvepalli Radhakrishna's birth anniversary, today on the occasion of Guru Puja, the Aswaraopet Lions Club honored the gurus from Aswaraopet and Dhammapeta mandals in a grand manner. The program was presided over by Lions Club President Lakkineni Narendra Babu. Under the chairmanship, teachers like US Prakash Rao and Addanki Lakshminarayana, Government Junior College Lecturer Arvind, Kothari Chalapathi Rao, and senior teachers Sadashiva Master Dhammapeta were felicitated and praised. Senior line members Kotagiri Mohan Rao, Balamuri Surya Rao, US Prakash Rao, Kotari Chalapathi Rao, Dara Mallikarjuna Rao, Aitham Venkateswara Rao, Brahma Rao, Durga Rao, and Dopukuntla participated in this program.”



# Sarvepalli's life is an example for today's generation.

““““Bhukya Ranjith Naik, Bhadradi Kothagudem Bureau, September 5, Indian Chronicle: PCC member Naga Seetharamulu and library chairman Veera Babu said that the life of Dr. Sarvepalli Radhakrishna should be an example for today's generation. On the occasion of Sarvepalli's birth anniversary, they garlanded his portrait at the local district central library and paid tribute. Speaking on the occasion, they said that his journey started from the teaching profession and went on to become the Vice President of India and then the President, and he left an indelible mark on Indian politics, and that the birth anniversary of such an educationalist will be celebrated as Teachers' Day. They suggested that Sarvepalli's life, which was full of subject knowledge, punctuality, eloquence, and excellent teaching skills,



Day. They suggested that Sarvepalli's life, which was full of subject knowledge, punctuality, eloquence, and excellent teaching skills,

should be a compass for today's generation and that the youth should take him as an example, study well, and reach high positions. On this

occasion, librarian G. Mani Mridula, who worked hard to shape the future of many students and get jobs, was honored.

# Development Works of Bhadrachalam Sri Rama Temple Set to Accelerate Soon“



““““Kranthi Kumar Dasari | pinapaka constituency | september 5 | Indian chronicle : The long-cherished dream of millions of devotees is finally taking shape, as the development works of the Sri Sitarama Chandra Swamy Temple in Bhadrachalam are gaining momentum. The Telangana State Government has initiated extensive measures to transform the historic temple and its surroundings. During his recent visit to Bhadrachalam, Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy reaffirmed the government's commitment to prioritising the development of the temple, which has infused fresh energy into the project. “Under the supervision of the Endowments Department, a team of expert architects and planners has prepared a comprehensive master plan that focuses on improving facilities for devotees, enhancing the temple's surroundings, upgrading parking spaces, preserving spiritual ambience, and maintaining the traditional architectural aesthetics. The state government

has allocated ₹350 crore for this ambitious project, which will be executed in three phases. Among the eight major temples selected for development across the state, the Bhadrachalam Temple holds a place of special significance. Land acquisition required for the project has already been completed. A total of 46 houses on the southern side of the temple premises were cleared, and ₹34 crore has been disbursed as compensation to the displaced families. Nearly one acre of land has been acquired, which will be officially handed over to the Endowments Department in the coming week, according to officials. The government has also prepared plans to provide modern amenities for devotees to ensure a hassle-free darshan experience, while carefully preserving the historical and cultural integrity of the temple. A review meeting was recently held at the Chitrakoot Mandapam in Bhadrachalam under the leadership of District Collector Jitesh V. Patil, where the master plan was examined in detail. The finalized proposal will soon be submitted to the state government for approval. Interestingly, K. Damodar Rao, who oversaw the land acquisition process in his previous role as the Revenue Divisional Officer, is now serving as the Executive Officer of the temple and is directly supervising the developmental works. “The Telangana government's ₹350-crore development project aims to restore the temple's grandeur while improving facilities for devotees. With this initiative, the iconic Bhadrachalam Sri Rama Temple is set to witness a remarkable transformation, fulfilling the long-standing aspirations of millions of Rama devotees and ushering in a new era of spiritual and cultural significance.

# Immersion of Ganesha idols“““

““““Shaik Sharief, Bhadrachalam, September 5, Indian Chronicle: As part of the Ganesh Navratri celebrations at Bhadrachalam, the Ganesh festival committees immersed Ganesha idols in the Godavari for 9 days. After the authorities set up a ramp at Godavari in Bhadrachalam and started the Ganesh immersion, the festival committees organized a procession of Ganesha idols from across the district. The Ganesha idols were immersed in the Godavari by boat and with the help of cranes in the presence of water swimmers, panchayat, and irrigation staff. So far, the organizers have provided and immersed hundreds of Ganesha idols. Due to the lunar eclipse on Sunday, more than 2,000 Ganesha idols are expected to reach Bhadrachalam for immersion by Saturday evening, and the authorities have made appropriate arrangements for this, and the organizers of the Ganesh Utsava Committee are completing the immersion and leaving for their hometowns in a hurry. In the wake of



the Ganesha immersion, there will also be traffic restrictions in Bhadrachalam on Saturday, and police officials have made appropriate arrangements. Research.

# Acharya MLC M Kodandaram’s 70th Birthday Celebrated“““

“NSR, Medchal - Malkajgiri Staff Reporter, September 5, Indian Chronicle: On the occasion of Acharya MLC M Kodandaram's 70th birthday, TUFF State Media Convener and former JAC Convener Dommoti Kiran Kumar Rao, along with others, felicitated him with a bouquet and a shawl, extending birthday greetings. Former JAC leader and TUFF State Convener Garika Sudhakar, Eruva Ashok, Veera Chari, and several others participated in the program.



# The teaching profession is very sacred ITDA PO RAHUL.



““Shaik Sharief, Bhadrachalam, September 5, Indian Chronicle: ITDA PO Rahul said that the teaching profession is very sacred, and you have a huge responsibility to bring out the gems in the soil from the tribal students. He participated in the Teachers' Day celebrations on Friday and spoke. First, he lit the lamp and garlanded the portrait of Radhakrishnan and paid tributes. Speaking on the occasion, the PO reminded all the teachers who encourage them to reach higher positions by recognizing the qualities and qualities of the students and reminding them that teachers are educators who shape them to live responsibly towards the society with quality education. He wished all the teachers a Happy Teachers' Day, as they are an irreplaceable force that sharpens the intellect of the students and awakens their inner talent. The PO felicitated the HMs and teachers of the schools who scored 100% marks in the tenth standard. Awards were presented to those selected as the best teachers. Special awards were presented to the wardens who provided assistance and cooperation in the design of Uddipakam-2 on the occasion of Teachers' Day. DD Manemma, ACMO Ramesh, Ramulu, ATDOs Ashok Kumar and Chandramohan, GCDO Alivelu Mangatayaru, DD Tribal Welfare staff, and others participated in the program.

# Grand Celebration of Teachers’ Day in Bhadradri Kothagudem “



dent and a teacher, highlighting how his mentors' guidance shaped his life and political career. District Collector Jitesh V. Patil congratulated all 57 award-winning teachers, calling each one of them an invaluable asset to the district's education system and acknowledging their tireless contribution to shaping young minds. District Library Chairman Pasupuleti Veerababu praised Telangana Chief Minister Revanth Reddy's visionary approach to education and his proactive reforms for academic improvement. DEO B. Nagalakshmi announced that special funds of ₹5,000 at the mandal level and ₹15,000 at the district level had been allocated for the celebrations and informed that the 57 selected teachers were honored with shawls, certificates, and mementos in recognition of their outstanding service. Trainee Collector Saurabh Sharma expressed his gratitude to District Collector Jitesh V. Patil, calling him his mentor and acknowledging the invaluable lessons learned under his guidance. As part of the event, principals from 23 schools across the district who excelled in the successful implementation of the seed collection drive were also felicitated. The program began with captivating cultural performances by students from various schools, adding a vibrant touch to the occasion. Several officials, including District Education Coordinators Nagaraj Shekhar, Saidulu, Satish, Annamani, Examination Officer Madhavrao, DCEB Secretary Neeraj, Kothagudem MEO Madhuravani, Headmasters Padmalatha and Ramadevi, along with organizers, teachers' association leaders, and many educators, attended the celebration. The event highlighted the invaluable role of teachers as pillars of society and underscored the significance of their relentless efforts in shaping the future of countless students, bringing new enthusiasm and hope to the educational landscape of Bhadradri Kothagudem.

# FTCCI welcomes GST rate cuts, flags concerns on Coal and Petroleum

Hyderabad, Sept.5 : Welcoming the major rate rationalisation announced at the 56th GST council meeting in New Delhi recently, the Federation of Telangana Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FTCCI) on Friday, however, flagged key concerns about coal taxation and the continued exclusion of petroleum products from the Goods and Services Tax (GST) framework.Addressing a press conference in Hyderabad, FTCCI President R Ravi Kumar termed the merging of the 12% and 28% slabs into 5% and 18% as a 'landmark step towards a simpler and more inclusive tax regime.'On this occasion, FTCCI senior vice-president KK Maheshwari, vice-president Srinivas Garimella and GST and customs committee chairman Mohd Irshad Ahmed outlined both opportunities and challenges arising from the tax reforms.The FTCCI representatives said that the new tax structure would bring relief across multiple sectors. The GST on cement was reduced from 28% to 18%, a move expected to cut construction costs, while the correction of the inverted duty structure in man-made textiles (with fibre and yarn now at 5%) is likely to benefit the textile industry.Similarly, GST on fertiliser inputs such as sulphuric acid and ammonia has been slashed from 18% to 5%, which the FTCCI said would ease costs for the agriculture sector. A uniform 18% rate on auto parts has also been introduced

to reduce disputes and improve compliance.Among other changes, exporters will now receive 90% provisional refunds in cases of inverted duty and exports, while low-risk MSMEs can avail GST registration in just three days. Cuts on essentials such as milk, paneer, butter, soaps, and toothpaste to 5% or nil, and a complete exemption for health and life insurance, were also welcomed as consumer-friendly measures.Another significant reform is that the amendment of the place-of-supply rules for intermediary services is a boost for Indian services exporters, effectively making such exports zero-rated.However, the FTCCI expressed reservations about certain decisions. The chamber said keeping petroleum products such as petrol, diesel, natural gas and ATF outside the GST continued to distort the tax system and fuel cascading levies, particularly for energy-intensive industries.The sharp hike in GST on coal from 5% to 18% is described as "worrisome" with fears that it would drive up energy costs for sectors such as steel, cement and aluminium, and potentially fuel inflation. Another concern is the reduction of GST on hotel accommodation up to Rs 7,500 per day to 5% without input tax credit (ITC). FTCCI warned that this could break the seamless credit chain and recommended optional dual-rate structures allowing ITC for business users.

# National Level Karate Championship Poster Released“

““NSR, Medchal - Malkajgiri Staff Reporter, Hyderabad, September 5, Indian Chronicle: The Victory Shotokan Karate Association India announced that the National Level Karate Championship will be held on September 14, 2025. The poster for the event was released under the leadership of PCC President and Telangana Sports Karate Association President Bomma Mahesh Kumar Goud. Speaking on the occasion, Mahesh Kumar Goud said that karate has been gaining international recognition and athletes from Telangana are at the forefront. He mentioned that for the past 15 years, he has been striving to bring greater recognition to the sport, with the support of the state government. He emphasized the importance of self-defense, especially for women, and noted that players from all states will participate in this championship with the presence of qualified officials. Senior karate master Mallikarjun Goud, who has been associated with karate for over 40 years, said he has known Mahesh Kumar Goud's efforts closely. He highlighted that Mahesh Kumar Goud has not only served as state president for more than 15 years but has also been the national vice president, dedicating valuable time to promote and develop karate across India. He confirmed that athletes from 12 states



will take part in the tournament, which will be held at Bommakku Balayya Gardens. He added that several political leaders, IAS and IPS officers, along with officials from various states and districts, will attend the championship. Chairman Sadashiv said that with the support of Narayana Institutions, they are working hard to encourage athletes and ensure the best facilities for the participants. Karate masters bodigem Srinivas Goud, M. Venkatesh, Srinivas, Kiran Naik, Koyyada Prasad Goud, Vignesh, and Jitender also participated in the program.

# Hyderabad police introduces women's mounted unit, expands dog squad

Hyderabad, Sept.5 In a historic move, the Hyderabad city police on Friday introduced a women's mounted unit.Hyderabad Police Commissioner C.V. Anand announced the decision to induct women horse riders into the force. Ten women constables from the Armed Reserve (AR) underwent two months of training at the Goshamahal Mounted Unit to become part of the mounted police force. This is a significant decision for the country, and these constables will be deployed for duties like bandobust (security arrangements), VIP movements, and patrolling, he said."This step has been taken to encourage women to come to the forefront in all fields. For the first time, these women mounted police officers will be part of the regular patrols," C.V. Anand said.

The Hyderabad city police is also expanding its dog squad. Currently, the 34 dogs in the unit are overworked, so the force has decided to increase the number to 54. The new dogs will be inducted after they complete extensive training at the Integrated Intelligence Training Academy (IITA). They will be used for detecting explosives and narcotics, and for tracking criminals, he said.To improve the quality of the dogs, a special committee has been formed. This committee will select high-quality dogs from breeders across the country. In the first phase, 12 dogs have been acquired, with more to be added in the future.In light of the new Osmania General Hospital (OGH) construction, the

mounted ground and stables at Goshamahal police stadium will be relocated to a new site, the city police chief said.He further stated that the State government has sanctioned funds for this new infrastructure, which will include new buildings for the city security wing, a vehicle impound yard, new horse stables, and a parade ground.A new dog kennel and mounted unit will be constructed over 11.5 acres, with facilities for 60 dogs. The tenders for this project will be finalised on September 8, he said.The Commissioner also announced that all arrangements for the Ganesh Idols final immersion, scheduled for Saturday, are complete. The immersion is expected to last for about 40 hours, with around 50,000 idols being immersed at Tank Bund alone. Strong police security measures have been put in place to prevent any untoward incidents. A total of 29,000 police personnel will be on duty in shifts. In addition to the existing CCTV cameras, an extra 250 cameras and 6 drones will be used to monitor the immersion routes, he said.The police commissioner stated that a ban on DJs has been imposed this year as they have caused multiple deaths and health issues for young people in previous years. He clarified that this is a matter of public health, not religion, and that the Bhagyanagar Ganesh Utsav Samithi has also agreed to cooperate with the police on this issue. C.V.Anand said that efforts are being made to complete the Khairatabad Ganesh immersion between

# T-Chip to train 1000 faculty in ts for India's semiconductor workforce

New Delhi /Hyderabad, Sept.5 The Technology Chip Innovation Program (T-CHIP), led by Sundeep Kumar Makthala, announced a major initiative at 'Semicon India 2025', inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, to address India's semiconductor talent shortage.The program will train 1,000 faculty members in Telangana through a Faculty Development Program (FDP). These trained educators are expected to equip thousands of engineering students with industry-ready semiconductor skills. The global semiconductor sector is projected to face a shortage of 1.5 million professionals by 2030, with India requiring over 85,000 skilled engineers and specialists.

Telangana, backed by T-CHIP's four-pillar strategy - Talent ? Design ? Manufacturing ? Applications, aims to position itself as the launchpad for bridging this gap.

On this occasion, SEMI University and foundation vice-president Shari Liss informed that the world is staring

at a shortage of 1.5 million semiconductor professionals by 2030, and India will need at least 85,000 of them. By training 1,000 faculty through this FDP in Telangana, we can create a multiplier effect that prepares thousands of young engineers for the industry.T-CHIP chairman and managing director Sundeep Kumar Makthala said Telangana will be the first to demonstrate how India can build a scalable semiconductor workforce model. This effort will directly contribute to Prime Minister Modi's vision of positioning India as a global semiconductor hub.IESA director Dr Viswanathan KG stressed the importance of academia-industry alignment. Upskilling faculty and preparing them with the latest tools and knowledge will give India an edge in the global semiconductor value chain. With this initiative, T-CHIP is not only strengthening Telangana's role in India's semiconductor journey but also setting a template for other states and nations seeking to build complete semiconductor ecosystems.

# CM's comments provoking farmers: BRS MLA Jagadish Reddy

Suryapet, Sept.5 (NSS): BRS MLA Jagadish Reddy on Friday accused Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy for allegedly provoking farmers with his 'statements' instead of resolving their problems. Not a single sector in the state is functioning properly. Hostels are in pathetic condition. Wardens are feeding the students from their own pockets as bills for eggs and groceries remain unpaid, he pointed out.

At a media conference, Reddy while referring to the farming sector, charged the government with negligence in ensuring timely supply of urea. "KCR had made urea available before every harvest for ten years. Today, the CM says it is available, while ministers blame the Centre. Farmers are suffering and cases are being filed when they demand urea. What could be more shameful?," he questioned.

The BRS MLA further alleged that only the police department is functioning in the state, and accused the state ministers in competing with each other in corruption. He



also criticised the government for handing over cases to the CBI. For 15 years Telangana police were number one in the country. Why humiliate them by surrendering to the CBI?," he quipped.

## Punjabi missing from boards in Ludhiana railway station, PAC warns protest on Sept 27



GNS News Agency, Sept 5

The Public Action Committee (PAC) has accused the Railways of violating the Punjab Language Act by excluding Punjabi from billboards and train announcements at Ludhiana as well as other Railway Stations of Punjab. It has announced a peaceful protest on September 27, World Tourism Day, at the Ludhiana Railway Station if no action is taken. The panel claimed that the issue remains unsolved despite repeated appeals and reminders to Railway Minis-

ter Ashwini Vaishnaw, Rail Seva and the Ferozepur range DRM. Even though the law requires Punjabi at the top of all signages, the Railways is currently displaying information only in Hindi and English, PAC members Kapil Arora and Kuldeep Singh Khaira said. The PAC said the Punjab Language Act clearly mandates that Punjabi — as the state's mother tongue — must appear at the top of all public boards. Ignoring this is not just negligence but a deliberate violation of statutory duty by the Railways, it said. The panel also said the exclusion of Punjabi is difficult for thousands of passengers, especially the elderly and rural travellers, who struggle to understand train information when it is displayed and announced only in Hindi and English. PAC members also said this is not a political issue but a matter of cultural dignity and linguistic rights, and the Punjabi community will not accept any compromise on the rightful place of its language. Other PAC members, Dr Amandeep Bains and Jaskirat Singh, said the issue had earlier arisen during renovation work by M/s Deepak Builders at Ludhiana, when PAC's intervention forced the authorities to correct the billboards. However, the boards have once again been intentionally replaced without Punjabi.

## ‘Will enrich and enliven Delhi’s cultural landscape’: Govt to organise Bhojpuri conference, invite foreign scholars

GNS News Agency, Sept 5

The Delhi Government will organise a Bhojpuri conference for the first time in the national capital to bring international recognition to Delhi's cultural diversity and strengthen ties with the global Indian diaspora. The Bhojpuri conference will be a major highlight of this year, and scholars, diplomats, and dignitaries from Mauritius, Fiji, and other countries will be invited. This will bring international recognition to Delhi's cultural diversity and strengthen ties with the global Indian diaspora, said officials.

Delhi Art, Culture and Language Minister Kapil Mishra held a meeting with secretaries and senior officials of the Sahitya Kala Parishad, Hindi Academy, Urdu Academy, Sindhi Academy, Sanskrit Academy, Maithili-Bhojpuri Academy, Garhwali-Kumaoni-Jaunsari Academy, Dr G G L S Prachya Vidhya Prathisthanam, and other institutions. According to officials, the objective of the meeting was to review preparations for upcoming cultural, literary, and artistic programmes and to develop a coordinated plan for the promotion of language and culture.

“Organising events alone is not enough; it is equally important to spread awareness and ensure active participation of the public. Only when more and more people join these programmes will there be a rise in public consciousness about art, culture and language,” said Mishra. “Delhi is a confluence of various languages, arts, and cultures. Our effort is not only to preserve our heritage but also to ensure



that the younger generation remains connected to it and feels proud of it. These programmes will enrich and enliven the cultural landscape of Delhi,” the minister said. During the discussion, it was decided that maximum public participation will be ensured in all major programmes organised by the academies. To this effect, the ACL Department signed Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) with each academy. Officials said these agreements ensure that the grants provided by the Delhi Government to the academies will be utilised only for their approved purposes. They added that this will not only enhance financial transparency but also ensure that public funds are directly invested in cultural programmes and creative activities.

## Haryana House recalls Guru Tegh Bahadur’s Haryana connect, resolves to commemorate martyrdom

GNS News Agency, Sept 5

“This House believes that the truest tribute to the sacrifice and memory of Guru Tegh Bahadur lies in spreading his immortal teachings to every citizen of Haryana, so that the state's glorious tradition of mutual cooperation and brotherhood remains intact for ever,” read the resolution. Reading out the resolution, Saini said that in November 1675, Guru Tegh Bahadur made the supreme sacrifice at Chandni Chowk in Delhi to defend the right to freedom of faith. He said this year marks the 350th martyrdom anniversary of the ‘Hind Ki Chaadar’. “His devotees — Bhai Mati Das, who was sawn alive; Bhai Sati Das, who was wrapped in cotton and burnt alive; and Bhai Dayala, who was boiled alive in a cauldron of hot water — also embraced martyrdom with unshakable faith. Their sacrifices are eternal epitome of courage, righteousness, and steadfast devotion,” Saini said.

Saini also recalled that Guru Teg Bahadur laid down his life to uphold the dignity of humanity and safeguard religious freedom. “When Kashmiri Pandits approached him at Anandpur Sahib seeking protection from forced religious conversions, Guru Sahib chose to sacrifice his life so that they might live with honour and preserve their faith,” Saini said. The CM further said that the Sikh guru shared a profound connection with Haryana. During his travels, he visited Kurukshetra, Pehowa, Kaithal, Jind, Ambala, Cheeka and Rohtak, sanctifying these places in the State with his presence and spreading the timeless message of truth, tolerance and fearlessness. “The sacred gurdwaras estab-



lished at these sites, such as Gurdwara Sri Dhamtan Sahib and Gurdwara Sri Manji Sahib in Jind, and Gurdwara Sri Sheeshganj Sahib in Ambala stand as enduring reminders of his blessings and teachings,” Saini said. The House expressed deep reverence for Guru Tegh Bahadur and solemnly resolved to commemorate his martyrdom in a dignified and befitting manner. Congress legislator Ashok Arora suggested naming one of the state universities after Guru Tegh Bahadur. Recently, the Haryana government had said that a big event will be organised in Kurukshetra on November 25 to observe the 350th martyrdom anniversary of Guru Tegh Bahadur. Four religious processions will be taken out from different parts of the state in the last week of October, which will conclude in Kurukshetra on November 25, it had announced.

## ED raids AAP’s Saurabh Bharadwaj in hospital construction case; party claims attempt to divert from Modi’s degree

GNS News Agency, Sept 5

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) Tuesday raided the home of Aam Aadmi Party Delhi unit president and former Delhi Health Minister Saurabh Bharadwaj in connection with alleged irregularities in construction of hospitals. A total of 13 premises, including offices of two construction companies — one in West Patel Nagar and the other in Kasturba Gandhi Marg — have also been raided, the ED said in a statement. A case was registered by Delhi's Anti-Corruption Branch (ACB) against Bharadwaj and former health minister Satyendra Jain in relation to allegations of cost escalations and corruption in the construction of hospitals across Delhi, in June. In a statement on Tuesday, ED said, “The Directorate of Enforcement (ED) is conducting search operations under Section 17 of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act, 2002 (PMLA) at 13 different locations across the Delhi-NCR. These searches are in connection with the... Delhi Hospital Construction Scam... against former Health Ministers of GNCT of Delhi, along with private contractors and unknown government officials.” It added, “The operations are based on material collected during the course of investigation and allegations contained in the FIR regarding large-scale corruption, unjustified cost escalations, unauthorised constructions, and misappropriation of funds in health infrastructure projects... The search teams have

covered the residential premises of Saurabh Bharadwaj, as well as the offices and residences of the private contractors involved in the projects, in order to trace evidence relating to diversion and laundering of public funds.” According to ACB officials, the construction and upgradation of 24 hospitals — 11 greenfield and 13 brownfield projects — was sanctioned for Rs 5,590 crore in 2018-19 by Jain who was the Health Minister then. The ACB said that not a single project was completed within the prescribed timeline, and substantial deviations and cost escalations, amounting to several hundred crores of rupees, were observed. The complaint in the case was filed by Delhi Assembly Speaker Vijender Gupta, last year, who at the time was an MLA from Rohini. Responding to the development, former Chief Minister Atishi posted on X, “Why was there a raid at Saurabh ji’s house today? Because questions are being raised across the country about Modi ji’s degree — is the degree fake? The raid was conducted to divert attention from this discussion. The case being cited pertains to a time when Saurabh ji was not even a minister. This means the entire case is baseless.” Atishi was referring to the Delhi High Court judgment that Prime Minister Narendra Modi's degree need not be disclosed to RTI applicants as it is personal information. Delhi BJP President, Virendra Sachdeva, meanwhile, said,

## Foodgrain transportation ‘scam’: Punjab files SLP in SC, challenges HC’s quashing of FIR against Ashu



GNS News Agency, Sept 5

The Punjab government has filed a Special Leave Petition (SLP) in the Supreme Court, challenging the Punjab and Haryana High Court's quashing an FIR/chargesheet against former Congress minister Bharat Bhushan Ashu and other officials filed by the Punjab Vigilance Bureau in connection with tenders awarded allegedly by manipulating the Punjab Foodgrains Labour & Cartage Policy 2020-2021, causing loss to the state exchequer to the tunes of crores of rupees.

The chargesheet was filed against Ashu and other officials in FIR No. 11/2022 — one of six FIRs registered by the Punjab Vigilance Bureau in connection with the alleged tender scam. The FIR number 11 was registered in 2022,

in which it was alleged that “contracts were given to selected contractors by manipulating the Punjab Foodgrain Labour and Cartage Policy 2020-21, causing loss to the tune of crores of rupees to the state exchequer”. A case was registered under sections 120-B, 409, 420, 467, 468, 471 of the Indian Penal Code (IPC) and sections of the Prevention of Corruption Act. It was alleged that “new contractors were excluded by imposing a condition of ‘minimum turnover’ and tenders were distributed by taking bribes”. The bench of Justice Mahabir Singh Sindhu allowed Ashu's plea and later quashed the FIRs, stating that “the amendment made in the policy was validated by the division bench of the High Court”. The high court stated that “the contracts were allowed with the approval of the Cabinet and the Finance Department, so the minister alone could not be held responsible”. Later, on December 27, a detailed HC order stated, “The launching of prosecution by complainant Gurpreet Singh (an unsuccessful bidder) is a glaring example of cloaking a contractual dispute related to the procurement and transportation of foodgrains as a criminal offence. This amounts to misuse of VB's authority, initiated solely to harass the petitioners.” Emphasising the misuse of power, the court highlighted that “the VB failed to verify facts before initiating the proceedings”. The court concluded that “the FIRs were a clear case of vindictive action initiated at the behest of the complainant.” The HC decision had caused embarrassment to the Punjab government at that time, prompting the state government to move to the top court.

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## Gave 100 pc board results, set up herbal garden: Meet Chandigarh teacher chosen for national award

GNS News Agency, Sept 5

Among the 45 teachers selected from across the country for the National Teachers' Award 2025, Chandigarh's Parveen Kumari, TGT (Social Studies) at Government Model Senior Secondary School, Sector 20-B, has made the city proud. Known for consistently delivering 100 percent board exam results, the 44-year-old educator will be felicitated at Vigyan Bhawan, New Delhi, on September 5. The award, conferred by the Ministry of Education, carries a certificate of merit, a silver medal, and a cash prize of Rs 50,000. The Chandigarh Education Department has called her selection a validation of its “innovative and transparent” process for nominating teachers for the national award. “The city's nominated teacher going on to win recognition at the national level shows our approach is effective and fair,” said Harshuhinder Pal Singh Brar, Director School Education, Chandigarh. “This success demonstrates that when we focus on the true essence of a teacher's contribution, their work with students, their innovations in classrooms, and their role in shaping society, we identify role models who can inspire at the national stage,” added Prerna Puri, Secretary Education, Chandigarh Administration.

For Parveen, the honour is deeply personal. “Aaj bhookh nahin hai (I am not feeling hungry tonight),” she said, overwhelmed with joy. Her parents, both retired teachers, were emotional too. “My daughter has always been first-class. She would get around 80 percent marks when marks were hard to get. She is MA in History and English and has done MPhil in English,” said her father, Pawan Kumar, 69, a retired Social Studies master from Kotra Khas village in Haryana's Yamunanagar district. “Saari umar mere husband ne cycle pe duty kari hai (My husband has been going to teach on cycle all his career). His hard work has paid off,” added her mother, Naresh Kumari, also 69. Her husband, Rajneesh Kumar, runs a pharmaceutical firm, while their son Parth is pursuing BTech and daughter Prachi studies in Class 9 at Air Force School. Parveen, an alumna of Kurukshetra University with an MA in English and History and an MPhil, has redefined classroom learning. Her initiatives include setting up a Herbal Nursery and a Lily Pond in the school for experiential learning in geography and economics. She established a Social Science Lab equipped with technology-driven resources and uses creative methods such as puppetry, role-play, dance, and music to make lessons engaging.

In the digital space, she runs two podcasts and a YouTube channel featuring interviews, moral stories, and conceptual lessons. She has contributed over 150 resources to national platforms like Diksha, PM Vidya, and Kishor Manch, focusing on inclusive education and Hindi-medium learners. Her specially designed FLN worksheets for children with special needs have drawn wide appreciation. Her role as Coordinator of the Student Police Cadet (SPC) Program since 2018 has empowered girls with training in self-



defense, horse riding, road safety, and first aid. As a Guide Captain leading 62 girls, she has taken students to national and international jamborees, fostering cultural exchange. Currently the State Training Commissioner (Guides) for UT Chandigarh, she trains teachers and principals to set up Guide units in schools. Beyond academics, she leads social awareness drives including “Go Green Diwali,” “Herbal Holi,” anti-tobacco campaigns, and “Nasha Mukh Bharat,” and organizes handicraft stalls to promote entrepreneurship among students. Parveen's work has earned her several awards, including the Commendation Award (2021), State Teacher Award (2022), Special Recognition Award (2024), and the Eco Warrior Award from Punjab Governor Gulab Chand Kataria this June. “She has done wonderful work as eco club incharge. I am proud of her,” said T.C. Nautiyal, former UT chief conservator of forests. Environmental commitment runs in the family. Her uncle Om Parkash, Principal Coordinator for Eco Clubs in Chandigarh schools, won the National Teachers' Award in 2011. “He has been a source of inspiration,” Parveen said.

## Three students hospitalised, officials suspended

JOGULAMBA GADWAL: Three students of Mahatma Jyothibha Phule Gurukul in Undavalli mandal were admitted to hospital after being bitten by rats.

The incident, which came to light belatedly, has exposed negligence at the school where students had repeatedly complained about the rat menace but their concerns were ignored. Along with the rat issue, nearly 20 students reportedly fell ill with viral fevers.

Just a few days ago, students had staged protests demanding basic amenities and proper sanitation, yet no corrective action was taken by the staff.

Following an inspection, District Collector B Santosh suspended two officials and issued memos to three other staff members, reports said.



# Australian police hunt gunman who shot dead two officers in rural town, media report



SYDNEY, GNS News Agency, Sept 5- Australian police are hunting a gunman who shot dead two officers and wounded another on Tuesday as they tried to serve a warrant for historical sex abuse allegations to a man at a rural property in the state of Victoria, local media said.In a statement on social media, Victoria police said they were attending an active incident in the alpine town of Porepunkah, about 300 km (186 miles) north-east of the city of Melbourne, and asked people to avoid the area.The Reuters Daily Briefing newsletter provides all the news you need to start your day. Sign up here.Local media outlet The Age reported that police visited the property to serve a warrant

for historical sex abuse allegations when two officers were shot dead and another wounded in an ambush attack.

The Age said heavily armed officers from the Special Operations Group were deployed to the scene and the gunman was now on the run with several family members, including children.

The Australian Broadcasting Corporation said police believe the shooter is a "sovereign citizen". Sovereign citizens believe the government is illegitimate.Australian Federal Police Commissioner Reece Kershaw said there were "grave concerns" for the police officers involved."Just from the police blue family, the wider family across Australia and overseas, our thoughts and prayers are with Victoria police right now," Kershaw said at a news conference.The town of Porepunkah is home to 1,000 residents and is located at the base of Australia's alpine ranges."Today has been a day of deep sorrow and shock for our community. We extend our heartfelt condolences to the families, friends, and colleagues of the two police officers tragically killed in Porepunkah," mayor Sarah Nicholas said in a statement.Local council's facilities across the town including libraries, information centres and depots would remain closed until further notice, Nicholas added.Porepunkah Primary School principal Jill Gillies told ABC Radio Melbourne that the school was forced to lockdown, with around 90 students sheltering indoors from 11.30 a.m. (0130 GMT). ABC has since reported that the lockdown had been lifted.

# US and Russian officials discussed energy deals alongside latest Ukraine peace talks

GNS News Agency, Sept 5  
LONDON, - U.S. and Russian government officials discussed several energy deals on the sidelines of negotiations this month that sought to achieve peace in Ukraine, according to five sources familiar with the talks. These deals were put forward as incentives to encourage the Kremlin to agree to peace in Ukraine and for Washington to ease sanctions on Russia, they said. The Reuters Power Up newsletter provides everything you need to know about the global energy industry. Sign up here.Russia has been cut off from most international investment in its energy sector and from striking major deals due to sanctions following the Ukraine invasion that began in February 2022.re-entering Russia's Sakhalin-1 oil and gas project, three of the sources said.

They also raised the prospect of Russia purchasing U.S. equipment for its LNG projects, such as Arctic LNG 2, which is under western sanctions, four sources said.None of the sources could be named because they were not authorised to speak publicly on the negotiations.Another idea was for the U.S. to purchase nuclear-powered icebreaker vessels from Russia, Reuters reported on August 15.

The talks were held during U.S. envoy Steve Witkoff's trip to Moscow earlier this month when he met with Russian President Vladimir Putin and his investment envoy Kirill Dmitriev, three of the sources said. They were also discussed within the White House with U.S. President Donald Trump, two of the sources said.These deals were also briefly discussed at the Alaska summit on August 15, one source said."The White House really wanted to put out a headline after the Alaska summit, announcing a big investment deal," said one of the sources. "This is how Trump feels like he's achieved something."

Trump and his national security team continue to engage with Russian and Ukrainian officials towards a bilateral meeting to stop the killing and end the war, a White House official said in response to questions about the deals. It is not in the national interest to further negotiate these issues publicly, the official said.Trump has threatened to impose more sanctions on Russia unless peace talks make progress and to place harsh tariffs on India, a major buyer of Russian oil. Those measures would make it difficult for Russia to maintain the same level of oil exports.Trump's dealmaking style of politics has been on display before in the Ukraine talks, when earlier this year the same officials explored ways for the U.S. to revive Russian gas flows to Europe. These plans have been stalled by Brussels, which put forward proposals to fully phase out Russian gas imports by 2027.The latest discussions have shifted to bilateral deals between the U.S. and Russia, pivoting away from



the European Union, which, as a bloc, has been steadfast in its support for Ukraine.On the same day as the Alaska summit, Putin signed a decree that could allow foreign investors, including Exxon Mobil, to regain shares in the Sakhalin-1 project. It is conditional on the foreign shareholders taking action to support the lifting of Western sanctions on Russia.Exxon exited its Russian business in 2022 after the Ukraine invasion, taking a \$4.6 billion impairment charge. Its 30% operator share in the Sakhalin-1 project in Russia's far east was seized by the Kremlin that year.

The U.S. has placed several waves of sanctions on Russia's Arctic LNG 2 project, starting in 2022 and cutting off access to ice-class ships that are needed to operate in that region for most of the year.

The project is majority-owned by Novatek, which started working with lobbyists in Washington last year to try to rebuild relations and lift the sanctions.The Arctic LNG 2 plant resumed natural gas processing in April, albeit at a low rate, Reuters reported. Five cargoes have been loaded from the project this year onto tankers under sanctions. A production train was previously shut down due to the difficulties in exporting given the sanctions.This project was intended to have three LNG processing trains. The third is in planning stages, with technology expected to be supplied by China.Washington is seeking to prompt Russia to buy U.S. technology rather than Chinese as part of a broader strategy to alienate China and weaken relations between Beijing and Moscow, one of the sources said.China and Russia declared a "no limits" strategic partnership days before Putin sent troops into Ukraine. Xi has met Putin over 40 times in the last decade and Putin in recent months described China as an ally.Reporting by Anna Hirtenstein and Marwa Rashad in London; additional reporting by Timothy Gardner in Washington and Sheila Dang in Houston; editing by Barbara Lewis

# Australia blames Iran for two antisemitic attacks, expels its envoy

SYDNEY,GNS News Agency, Sept 5 - Australia accused Iran on Tuesday of executing two antisemitic arson attacks in the cities of Sydney and Melbourne and gave Tehran's ambassador seven days to leave the country, in its first such ejection since World War Two.

Since the Israel-Gaza war began in October 2023, Australian homes, schools, synagogues and vehicles have been targeted in antisemitic vandalism and arson.The Reuters Daily Briefing newsletter provides all the news you need to start your day. Sign up here.Prime Minister Anthony Albanese said the Australian Security Intelligence Organisation (ASIO) had gathered credible intelligence that Iran had directed at least two attacks."These were extraordinary and dangerous acts of aggression orchestrated by a foreign nation on Australian soil," Albanese told a press briefing. "They were attempts to undermine social cohesion and sow discord in our community."Iran had sought to "disguise its involvement" in last year's attacks on a kosher restaurant in Sydney and the Adass Israel Synagogue in Melbourne, Albanese said. No injuries were reported in the attacks.Iran's embassy in Canberra did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

Australia's security agency said it was likely that Iran had directed further attacks, Albanese said, adding that Australia has suspended operations at its Tehran embassy and all its diplomats were safe in a third country.Albanese said his government would designate Tehran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps as a terrorist organisation.Foreign Minister Penny Wong said Ambassador Ahmad Sadeghi and three Iranian officials had seven days to leave, in Australia's first expulsion of an envoy since World War Two."Iran's actions are completely unacceptable," she told the briefing. The IRGC was directing people in Australia to undertake crimes, said Mike Burgess, director general of the security agency.They're just using cut-outs, including people who are criminals and members of organised crime gangs to do their bidding or direct their bidding," he added.Israel's embassy in Australia welcomed the action against its major rival Iran."Iran's regime is not only a threat to Jews or Israel, it endangers the entire free world, including Austra-

lia," it said in a statement on X.The two countries fought a 12-day air war in June, after Israel launched attacks on Iran's nuclear facilities.Iran's actions were an attack on Australia's sovereignty, said Daniel Aghian, president of the Executive Council of Australian Jewry (ECAJ), an umbrella group of more than 200 organisations."These were attacks that deliberately targeted Jewish Australians, destroyed a sacred house of worship, caused millions of dollars of damage, and terrified our community," he said on Tuesday.Two men have been charged over the December attack that set ablaze the synagogue, built in the 1960s by Holocaust survivors in the suburb of Ripponlea.Last week, police in the southeastern state of Victoria said they were examining electronic devices seized in a search of the home of one of the men, who is set to appear in court on Wednesday.

Police say three people broke into the synagogue and set the fire.Fire gutted the kosher restaurant in Bondi, Lewis Continental Kitchen. Media said the man arrested in January over that attack had links to a well-known Australian motorcycle gang. He denied the charges in court and was freed on bail.Ties between Israel and Australia have been strained since Canberra's centre-left government decided to recognise a Palestinian state on August 11.The move came after tens of thousands marched across Sydney's Harbour Bridge, calling for peace and aid deliveries to Gaza, where Israel began an offensive nearly two years ago after the Hamas militant group launched a deadly cross-border attack.Palestinian authorities say the conflict has killed more than 60,000 people in Gaza, while humanitarian groups say a shortage of food is leading to widespread starvation," thousands joined nationwide pro-Palestinian protests prompting the ECAJ to warn they were leading to an "unsafe environment".Some Jewish organisations in Australia have supported the rallies, however.Civil society group, the Islamophobia Register, recorded a 500% rise in Islamophobic incidents in workplaces, universities and the media since October 2023, with 1,500 incidents reported.Reporting by Christine Chen, Renju Jose and Kirsty Needham; Writing by Saad Sayeed; Editing by Christian Schmollinger and Clarence Fernandez

# Israel hits Gaza hospital, killing at least 20 people, including five journalists



GNS News Agency, Sept 5  
Israel struck Nasser hospital in the south of the Gaza Strip on Monday, killing at least 20 people, including five journalists who worked for Reuters, the Associated Press, Al Jazeera and others.Cameraman Hussam al-Masri, a Reuters contractor, was killed near a live broadcasting position operated by Reuters on an upper floor just below the roof of the hospital in Khan Younis in an initial strike, Palestinian health officials said.The Reuters Daily Briefing newsletter provides all the news you need to start your day. Sign up here.Officials at the hospital and witnesses said Israel then struck the site a second time, killing other journalists as well as rescue workers and medics who had rushed to the scene to help.

The journalists killed included Mariam Abu Dagga, who freelanced for the Associated Press and other outlets, Mohammed Salama, who worked for Qatar-based broadcaster Al Jazeera, Moaz Abu Taha, a freelance journalist who worked with several news organisations including occasionally contributing to Reuters, and Ahmed Abu Aziz.Photographer Hatem Khaled, also a Reuters contractor, was wounded.Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's office said Israel deeply regretted what he called a "tragic mishap". Israel valued the work of journalists and medical staff, he said, adding that Israel's war was with Hamas.Israel's military, the Israel Defense Forces, acknowledged striking the area of Nasser hospital and said the chief of the general staff had ordered an inquiry.

The IDF "regrets any harm to uninvolved individuals and does not target journalists as such. The IDF acts to mitigate harm to uninvolved individuals as much as possible while maintaining the safety of IDF troops," it said.A Reuters spokesperson said in a statement: "We are devastated to learn that cameraman Hussam al-Masri, a contractor for Reuters, was killed this morning in Israeli strikes on Nasser hospital in Khan Younis in Gaza. Moaz Abu Taha, a freelance journalist whose work had been occasionally published by Reuters, was also killed, and photographer Hatem Khaled, a Reuters contractor, was wounded.""We are urgently seeking more information and have asked authorities in Gaza and Israel to help us get urgent medical assistance for Hatem," the spokesperson added.U.S. President Donald Trump expressed his displeasure when asked for a reaction."When did this happen?" he asked a reporter in the White House. "I didn't know that. Well, I'm not happy about it. I don't want to see it. At the same time, we have to end that whole nightmare."

# US moves ahead with plans to impose 50 pc tariff on India, starting Wednesday



GNS News Agency, Sept 5  
Washington/New Delhi: The US administration has decided to raise tariffs on Indian imports, with an additional 25 per cent duty for purchasing Russian oil, which is set to take effect from August 27.This decision will push the overall tariffs to 50 per cent on Indian goods entering the US.The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) confirmed that the new measures will take effect from "12:01 am Eastern Daylight Time on 27 August as per their latest draft notice".According to the draft notice issued by the DHS,

the duties target India under the policy of countering "threats to the United States by the government of Russian Federation". "The duties set out in the Annex to this document are effective with respect to products of India that are entered for consumption, or withdrawn from warehouse for consumption, on or after 12:01 am Eastern Daylight Time on August 27, 2025," it stated."To address that unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security and foreign policy of the United States, Executive Order 14066 prohibited, among other things, the importation into the United States of certain products of Russian Federation origin, including crude oil; petroleum; and petroleum fuels, oils, and products of their distillation," the notice read.A wide range of Indian goods is covered under the new decision. The document made clear that the tariffs apply to any items arriving for use in the United States or released from warehouses after the cut-off time.Trump said the decision was linked to India's continued purchase of Russian oil, which Washington argues helps fund Moscow's war against Ukraine.Meanwhile, Sensex and Nifty slipped at the opening on Tuesday, amid worries over American trade measures after the US issued a draft notice proposing tariffs of as much as 50 per cent on Indian goods, starting Wednesday.

# Australia, Switzerland join India in suspending postal deliveries to US over new tariffs

GNS News Agency, Sept 5  
Sydney: Postal services in Australia and Switzerland have become the latest to announce a suspension of deliveries to the United States, joining a growing list of countries halting shipments in response to the Trump administration's sudden tariff changes. The move comes ahead of new levies set to take effect on Friday, August 29.Several other countries, including India, the United Kingdom, France, Sweden, Germany, Italy, and Denmark, had already declared similar pauses in shipping goods to the United States.Australia Post on Tuesday confirmed that it will "temporarily partially suspend postal sending to the United States (US) and Puerto Rico, effective 26 August 2025, until further notice."

The agency said the decision was necessary due to "recent significant changes the US Government has made to customs and import tariff rules for parcels sent to the US."It explained that the changes include the suspension of the De Minimis exemption for inbound goods valued below \$800 and a requirement that tariffs be prepaid before items arrive in the US.As a result, Australian businesses will be unable to send products to American customers using Australia Post from Tuesday onwards. Until now, parcels worth less than \$800 (about AUD 1,230) entered the US tax-free, a loophole heavily relied upon by Australian retailers selling abroad, according to local media reports.That exemption will formally end on August 29, when all low-value parcels will be subjected to tariffs or flat fees.The decision, laid out in an executive order signed on July 30, has left many postal services around the world scrambling

to comply.In a parallel move, Swiss Post of Switzerland announced it will no longer accept postal consignments destined for the United States, with the exception of urgent express mail such as official documents and certificates.The agency said on Monday that it would temporarily halt parcel deliveries, citing new US customs regulations that obstruct the regular shipping process. It added that the decision mirrors those taken by other European postal operators.Swiss Post noted that the US government's sudden removal of the \$800 exemption has created major uncertainty for global carriers.It is currently considering ways to allow limited consignments, such as gifts exchanged between private individuals valued at up to \$100, to resume.

The postal service is also exploring alternative methods outside traditional postal networks to keep some flows of goods moving.Recently, India also confirmed that it will suspend the majority of parcel shipments to the US beginning August 25, with exceptions only for letters and small gifts.France's La Poste complained that the abrupt policy shift gave them no time to reconfigure digital systems to handle the new customs requirements.Meanwhile, the United Kingdom's Royal Mail said it would suspend shipments starting Tuesday to ensure all deliveries cleared before duties come into force.According to CBS News, the new rules stem from a decree signed by President Donald Trump in July. Beginning August 29, all international parcels previously covered under the de minimis rule will be subject to import duties.The only exemptions will be for letters, books, documents, and small gifts worth less than \$100.

# A reset in India-China ties?



“The setbacks we experienced in the past few years were not in the interest of the people of our two countries,” said Wang Yi, China’s Foreign Minister, on August 19, after meeting Prime Minister Narendra Modi on August 19. “We are heartened to see the stability that is now restored in the borders,” Mr. Wang added, summing up the core message of his two-day visit. The visit was significant for several reasons. Both sides showed a willingness to downplay the boundary dispute and take steps towards strengthening overall bilateral relations, which hit the lowest point in decades following the 2020 Galwan clashes. India and China also announced a slew of tangible measures to improve ties, including resuming border trade at three points, restarting direct flights, expanding Kailash Manasarovar slots for pilgrims and relaxing visas. India wants China to ease export restrictions on rare earths, fertilizers and some machinery, while Beijing wants New Delhi to relax the scrutiny of Chinese investments—such discussions, along with the boundary question, will continue. Another significant development is Prime Minister Modi’s upcoming visit to Tianjin to attend the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) meeting, where he would meet Chinese President Xi Jinping.

What makes the rapprochement interesting is the larger foreign policy background in which it is unfolding. The India-U.S. relations are going through a rough phase due to the high tariffs U.S. President Donald Trump has imposed on India. The U.S. and India, after multiple rounds of talks, failed to reach a trade agreement, apparently because of differences in opening up India’s agricultural and dairy sectors. The Trump administration has imposed 25% tariffs on India after trade talks failed, and an additional 25%, which is expected to take effect this week, penalty tariffs over India’s energy ties with Russia. India believes the U.S. is singling out and attacking India over energy purchases from Russia, while China, the largest buyer of Russian oil, doesn’t face any penalty tariffs. The Trump disruptions in U.S.-India ties seem to have powered India’s pivot to the east, which was already in the works. On August 21, Chinese Ambassador in New Delhi Xu Feihong seemed to support India’s position against U.S. tariffs. China will “firmly stand” with India to uphold World Trade Organisation principles, said the ambassador. “The United States has long benefited greatly from free trade, but now it is using tariffs as a bargaining chip to demand exorbitant prices from various countries,” Mr. Xu added.

But a thaw in the relationship may not lead to a reset

as there are still unresolved structural problems. After wrapping up his India visit, Mr. Wang left for Kabul where he met Afghan and Pakistani senior officials to discuss the extension of the China Pakistan Economic Corridor, which is part of President Xi’s Belt and Road Initiative, to Pakistan—India is opposed to both projects. From Kabul, Mr. Wang went to Islamabad where he met a host of Pakistani officials, including military chief Gen. Asim Munir. “China’s diplomatic support to Pakistan after the Pahalgam attacks and during Operation Sindoor did not come up during Mr. Wang’s visit, but provide an ominous overhang to ties, as did Ambassador Xu’s contention that Pakistan too is a victim of terrorism,” writes The Hindu in this editorial. “While the U.S.’s attack on Indian trade and economy may be spurring New Delhi’s efforts, the reset with China must not come from a perceived position of weakness, and the next steps must be taken keeping in focus the strategic challenge.”Who is Wang Yi, the ‘silver fox’ of Chinese diplomacy? Read this profile of the Chinese Foreign Minister by Suhasini HaidarSri Lanka’s former President and six-time Premier Ranil Wickremesinghe was on August 22 arrested on charges misusing state funds during his Presidency. The 76-year-old leader was remanded in custody until August 26, 2025, when the next hearing is due, reports Meera Srinivasan from Colombo. Sri Lanka’s former President and six-time Premier Ranil Wickremesinghe was on Friday (August 22, 2025) arrested on charges misusing state funds during his Presidency. The 76-year-old leader was remanded in custody until August 26, 2025, when the next hearing is due. The arrest triggered sharp responses from former Presidents and members of the political opposition. Addressing a media conference in Colombo on August 24, they accused the National People’s Power (NPP) government, led by President Anura Kumara Dissanayake, of pursuing “political revenge”, contending that the charges against Mr. Wickremesinghe did not warrant arrest.

The visible warmth in the Trump-Putin exchanges did not result in a less chilling American tone towards India; the lesson for New Delhi is that it would need to take a firmer stance if it wants to get back its agency, writes Suhasini Haidar. There is no perfect way to flatten the surface of a sphere onto a rectangle, rendering every map a compromise, writes Vasudevan Mukunth.The U.S. Federal Reserve Chairman, who has come under constant attacks from President Trump, stands firm in protecting the autonomy of the central bank, writes Kunal Shankar. On July 19, 2025, an Indian man was assaulted in the suburb of Tallaght in Dublin, Ireland. Since then, there have been several attacks against Indians in the green isle, causing alarm in the immigrant community. With politicians there riding on anti-immigrant rhetoric, the situation has worsened. Priyanka Borpujari reports on how the transformation of Ireland as a major immigrant destination has brought many challenges, reports Priyanka Borpujari.Why did Sri Lanka’s prominent Tamil party, the Ilankai Tamil Arasu Kadchi, call a symbolic hartal? Is the presence of uniformed men visibly greater in the island nation’s north and east provinces? What has the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights said about the situation in these provinces? writes Meera Srinivasan.

# Children are dying in clinics from starvation in Gaza: WFP’s Carl Skau

With the The Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC), the institute that assess food insecurity, officially declaring famine in Gaza, the situation in the region is desperate and difficult, said Carl Skau, Deputy Executive Director of World Food Programme (WFP), in an interview to The Hindu in New Delhion Monday (August 25, 2025). Mr. Skau said there is international pressure on Israel to allow trucks carrying food to enter Gaza and the WFP is in constant touch with the Israeli Government.

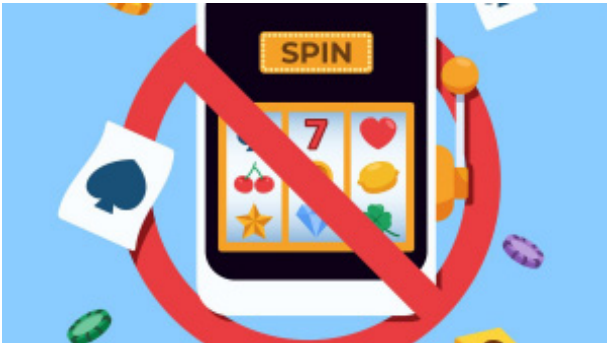
Mr. Skau, who visited the region recently, said malnutrition rates among children are spiking, and children and mothers are dying in clinics for starvation. “Right now, the situation is worse than we have ever seen it,” he said adding that the WFP has enough food on the borders to assist the entire population for over two months. “We have the capacity, the systems, the know-how to roll it out,” he said pointing that ceasefire is the only way to turn the disaster around. “We are in daily engagement with the Israeli authorities. At this point, approximately 60 to 100 trucks per day are entering, but that’s a drop in the ocean. We are talking about 2.1 million people. This is not a normal humanitarian situation. To reach 2.1 million people, you need at least 600-700 trucks per day and you need commercial sector to be able to bring in fruit and vegetables to broaden the intake of food to really be able to turn this trajectory of famine around,” he said.

Mr. Skau said the current trade war is a big concern as it is driving up prices, also for WFP’s supply chain activities. “We have seen a three fold increase in the number of acutely food insecure over the past five years. This year, we estimate around 320 million acutely food insecure, and at the same time, the funding is coming down. During the start of the Ukraine war and the pandemic, there were generous contributions to deal with the international ramifications. But right now, the resources available for any international work is coming down. For us at WFP, it’s around 40% less this year than last year,” he said.He said Sudan is the largest hunger crisis that the WFP has seen in decades, since the end of the 1980s in Ethiopia. “About 25 million people who are acutely food insecure, almost 10 million of those in the high category where you’re basically not eating every day. And we have 10 pockets of Sudan now where famine has been confirmed. That is dramatic,” he said.

Displaced Palestinian man Tayseer Obaid, who lives in a tent with his wife and eight children and has documented his struggle to obtain food and aid amid a hunger crisis, eats with his children outside their tent, in Deir al-Balah in the central Gaza Strip, nly, maybe between 10 to 20%, of the people that we would need to be reaching. Another challenge for us in Myanmar is that many of the hungry are in areas that are not fully controlled by government forces and here we have access challenges,” he said. In Afghanistan, where, WFP was assisting 10 million people two years ago, it is hard to reach two million people because of the funding cuts. On the Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh, he said about a million people are arriving the country from because of the intensified conflict. “We have money now until November this year, but there are no indications on new money following that,” he said.

He added that the WFP is are far behind on the goal of zero hunger by 2030. “We are struggling. If anything, we are moved in the wrong direction over the past five years, but we continue to be determined. From WFP’s point of view, we’re doing everything we can — to be the voice for the hungry, to bring global attention to food security and we mobilise resources beyond our traditional resources,” he said adding that WFP needs partnerships. He said India can add its capacity and resources to the international efforts of dealing with food insecurity. “India is also a source

# What does the new online gaming Act outline? | Explained



On August 20, the Lok Sabha passed the Promotion and Regulation of Online Gaming Bill, 2025 after seven minutes of discussion. The Rajya Sabha passed it the next day and the Bill became law after receiving Presidential Assent on August 22. Government data suggests that Indians are losing ~?15,000 crore every year due to “Real Money Games” (RMGs). The World Health Organization (WHO) has linked RMGs to compulsive behaviour, psychological distress, financial hardship, and an overall disruption of family life. Reflecting these dangers, 32 cases of suicide attributed to online gaming addiction have been reported in Karnataka in the past 31 months. The RMG industry says this ban may threaten more than two lakh jobs across 400+ companies.

What are the three segments of online games??

The Act has proposed three categories for online games — e-sports, social gaming and RMGs. While the Act aims to promote e-sports and social gaming segments, it seeks to ban all forms of RMGs and its advertisements. The Act defines an online money game as an online game played regardless of whether it is based on skill, chance or both, and is played after a fee-payment or with an expectation of wining money or other stakes (can include credits, coins, tokens, virtual money, etc. which can be converted to money). Under such a definition, variants of popular games like Poker, Rummy, Fantasy Cricket, and Ludo would be classified as RMGs. Several such platforms are represented by celebrities including Ranbir Kapoor and Aamir Khan (Dream11), M.S. Dhoni (WinZo), Hrithik Roshan (RummyCircle) and Sourav Ganguly (My11Circle).

With respect to e-sports, the Act defines them as games which are recognised under the National Sports Governance Act, 2025 and are registered with the proposed regulatory authority. It may include the payment of a registration or participation fee alongside performance-based prize money. Examples include games like Grand Theft Auto and Call of Duty.While there is no legal definition of social gaming, it is included in the broader category of online games defined as games played on an electronic or digital device and operated as a software through the Internet. Under Section 4 of this Bill, the government can facilitate the development and availability of online social games for recreational and educational purposes.

What does it say about regulation?

Offering online money games or engaging in transaction or authorisation of funds for the same will be punishable with imprisonment of up to three years, a fine of up to ?1 crore, or both. Unlawful advertisement will be punishable with imprisonment of up to two years, a fine of up to ?50 lakh, or both. Under the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS), 2023, offences shall be cognisable and non-bailable. The central government stated that the Indian Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT-IN) will be tasked with blocking or disabling apps that continue to provide banned money gaming services in India, and if needed, it may rope in Interpol to bring in offshore operators of money gaming platforms. IT Minister Ashwani Vaishnaw clarified in a statement that no penal action for players has been codified. The Act empowers the Central government to notify and constitute a regulatory authority to recognise, categorise, and register online games. In 2023, the IT Ministry amended the Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Amendment

Rules, 2021 , treating online gaming firms like intermediaries. The amended rules envisaged a system of self-regulated bodies with government oversight. Online gaming firms were required to comply with KYC norms, and uphold measures to safeguard children through measures for parental access control alongside age rating mechanisms based on the nature and type of content.The new Act makes no provisions to constraint minors from playing online social games or e-sports. It also provides for a budget allocation from the Consolidated Fund of India to promote online social gaming in the country.

Why has the government brought in the Act?

Mr. Vaishnaw said the Act was a response to complaints from users who had lost thousands of crores on online money games, and that it was not a knee-jerk reaction. He said that there is irrefutable proof that the algorithms of online gaming firms do not allow for any user to emerge as a net winner in the long run.A Parliamentary Panel Report (2023) stated that gaming portals have become agents for funding terror activities. A 2022 Financial Intelligence Report reported that online gaming firms had evaded tax of ?2,000 crore. Further, the Defence Ministry’s think tank found that the Chinese App, FIEWIN, has defrauded Indian users of ?400 crore, with an ED investigation finding evidence of use of mule accounts and cryptocurrency wallets. In yet another report, the government said that gaming companies were involved in GST tax evasion of ?30,000 crore.The current Act says that the unchecked expansion of RMGs is linked to financial fraud, money laundering, tax evasion and many other unlawful activities. It also states that gaming firms rely on opaque algorithms designed to manipulate user engagement, and that games can also be operated by bots or undisclosed agents undermining fairness and transparency. Additionally, the Act says that gaming firms operate from offshore jurisdictions bypassing domestic laws, undermining state level regulations and presenting significant enforcement challenges in terms of extra-territorial jurisdiction and interstate inconsistencies.? However, while the Act proposes to establish a robust legal framework, the same is not reflected in the contents of the Act. Gaming companies may still bypass restrictions through VPNs, information cash play, or other mechanisms.

What have courts said?

Entries 34 and 62 of the State List in the Seventh Schedule of the Constitution places the regulation and taxation of betting and gambling within the jurisdiction of State governments. And various State governments have taken regulatory actions before. In 2017, Telangana became the first State to ban all forms of online gaming including skill-based games. In 2020, Andhra Pradesh banned online gambling, and in 2022, Tamil Nadu banned games such as Rummy and Poker.In 2023, the Indian government reclassified GST brackets for online gaming along with casinos and horse racing, putting them in the same bracket as lotteries and betting. In October 2023, it imposed a uniform 28% GST on the entire entry fee/deposit, instead of platform commission. Gaming firms opposed this move, claiming that their platforms were skill based, and termed retrospective taxes as unfair and damaging. The Supreme Court (SC) this year granted a stay on notices issued to online gaming companies. The top court’s decisions on whether fantasy sports, poker and rummy should be treated as games of skills or gambling, and on retrospective tax for RMG firms, are awaited. The Central government has requested the SC for one more week to file submissions in the GST dispute on online gaming, with industry players arguing that games of skill cannot be equated with gambling.The SC had earlier said that games like Rummy and Fantasy Sports involved a substantial degree of skill and cannot be equated with gambling. This Act does not distinguish between games of skills and games of chance, leading critics of the Act to say that it erases the intelligible difference and is violative of Article 19 (1) (g) of the Constitution, giving a guaranteed Right to Trade and Occupation. If the matter is challenged, then the SC can step in to shield the gaming industry with interim relief or issue a notice to the government to explain the rationale behind such a law.

# ‘Let civil society breathe’: two voices on contemporary challenges

Reading Manoj Kumar Jha is like having a communication with your soul. He doesn’t befuddle you with cute phrases or awe you with smart wordplay. Page by page, sentence by sentence, he exposes the rough edges of our society, often wilfully indifferent to innate chasm and deep fissures.He brings into stark focus the politics of our times when almost every Indian stands up for Kashmir, few do it for Kashmiris. As Jha writes in his engagingly pieced together book, In Praise of Coalition Politics and Other Essays on Indian Democracy (Speaking Tiger Books), “If we believe Kashmir is ours, let us also believe that Kashmiris are not ‘others’.... Reopen the space for political dialogue. End the culture of suspicion and let civil society breathe again.”Much respected for his frank and fearless interventions in Parliament, Jha, besides being a Rashtriya Janata Dal representative in the Rajya Sabha, is also an academic at Delhi University. He brings the same qualities to his writing, some of which were initially published as condensed columns in the media. He takes a clear stand, be it on Kashmir or caste, Waqf or universities.

Politics of exclusionOn the waqf property issue, he uses a subheading titled, ‘A struggle between zulm (cruelty) and insaaf (justice)’, leaving no scope for speculation. “(Waqf) is not merely about property; it is about charity, legacy and community....It is one of the last standing architectures of self-determined care. To tighten state control over (waqf properties), without accountability or consent, is to sever a lifeline....From being denied housing and told what they can eat to being watched on college campuses, Muslim citizens find themselves and their ways of being more excluded than ever in India....The amended waqf law is an act of economic ruination and humiliation dressed in the language of procedure.”

With a little whisper here and rising above the din there, he builds his case as a formidable voice on contemporary challenges facing the country. As he writes in the introduction, “From a secular and civic version of nationalism, we have slipped into a nationalism that is violent, exclusionary and premises upon revenge. Religious majoritarianism combined with the use of brute state power against its citizens has endangered all the gains of democratic development of the last seven decades.”Among the vulnerable are those who speak up against such a tendency, those who distinguish between the nation and the government. With the boundaries between the two often blurring, Jha reminds readers, “We must have a football field of distance between ‘loving your government’ and ‘loving your nation’.”If Jha, a two-time MP, is a relatively new voice, former Rajya Sabha MP Shahid Siddiqui is a veteran, hobnobbing with parlia-



mentarians from the late 1970s. Often, he occupied a front row seat to the theatre of Indian politics.Now, as he completes 75 years, travelling from Ghalib’s Ballimaran to Edwin Lutyns’ New Delhi, he has allowed himself the luxury of a walk down memory lane with I, Witness (Rupa). Siddiqui clearly relishes his interaction with various Prime Ministers through the years. He happily shares his photographs with politicians of every hue. With some, like Rajiv Gandhi, he enjoyed rare trust and camaraderie, as evidenced in Siddiqui’s frank disclosure of Gandhi’s fondness for kebabs and phirni. Siddiqui paints a picture of Rajiv Gandhi as a man who tried to build bridges with the Muslim community following L.K. Advani’s violence-ridden Rath Yatra.Siddiqui takes off his velvet gloves when talking of Narasimha Rao and Atal Bihari Vajpayee. He holds the former “responsible for the demolition” of Babri Masjid; and writes in detail how Rao went intocommunicado when the mosque was demolished in Ayodhya on December 6, 1992. “Ram Mandir was to be his legacy. However, things didn’t work out the way he planned,” writes Siddiqui.On Vajpayee, he doesn’t leave much unsaid, noting, “Without him, the Bharatiya Janata Party wouldn’t have been what it is today....There would not have been an Advani or a Narendra Modi without the pragmatic and acceptable Vajpayee.”Between them, Jha and Siddiqui paint a picture of their respective times. At times Jha’s strokes are sharp and trenchant; he never sets out to lull the readers with a false rainbow. Of course, he backs it up with poetry, as Gopalkrishna Gandhi reminds us in the foreword: “In these writings, there is ‘Paash’. One also finds Firaq...One gets to meet several English writers.” At others, Siddiqui, a seasoned editor himself, tells us of another age when Prime Ministers gave time to journalists, MPs mingled freely and frequently, and there was often more than a sweet interchange of mutual praise. Siddiqui’s book is at times nostalgic, more so when he talks of Habib Tanvir and Hasrat Mohani in his haveli in Old Delhi.

# Airborne dangers: why breath should not be taken for granted



At the start of 2020, a small team of scientists tried and failed to convince public health organisations that COVID-19 was spread through the air we breathe. Until then, scientists thought that respiratory diseases spread through droplets, and that these droplets had a limited range. Coughed up, these droplets fell quickly to the ground, to use the disgusting terminology of the 1990s which health officials use while speaking about tuberculosis. In reality, however, breath has been a medium of transmission of most invisible things.

Such new insights into the living atmosphere were revealed courtesy of Carl Zimmer, through his book Air-Borne: The Hidden History of the Life we Breathe. The text follows the research of Louis Pasteur who caught germs from the air, and pursues groundbreaking experiments by Amelia Earhart and Charles Lindbergh. It warns the world about airborne infections, and chronicles the dark side of aerobiology designed to spread anthrax, smallpox, and an array of other pathogens. Rather than be taken for granted, the importance of the natural process of human breath is once again established. Protecting the most vital of all life processes calls for a well-thought-out strategy. Breath is in itself of immense value — one breath in and one breath out is the manifestation of life. A breath alone brings a newborn to life, the body turns pink as the first breath gets in. And, the last breath accounts for life. The power that ripples through the whole universe comes in the form of breath.

It is an intuitive act of inhaling and exhaling, which is repeated 25,000 times a day. This natural act, often taken for granted, is counted as a necessary biological activity. It is precious and more than just an exchange of oxygen and carbon dioxide. 'Breath,' says Prem Rawat, 'is the greatest mystery, out of nowhere it comes to nowhere it goes.' In his book, Breath: Wake Up to Life, Rawat writes that breath is the beginning of life, the sustaining of life, and when it ceases, it is also the end of life. Breath is an invaluable gift, but only if it is taken that way. Traditional practices related to breathing value breath and even try to prolong and pre-

serve it. Sage Patanjali has his pranayama practices that add value to age-old breathing practices that have gained popularity among the health conscious. Buddha counted breath as an essential link between the human body and consciousness. The breathing process has many hidden features that are gaining wide acceptance. That breath fuels all life forms and extinguishes it too, is a lived reality. The natural act of breathing, now counted as a biological privilege, is a precious gift given in abundance. Breathing must be correctively done because nine out of 10 people don't breathe correctly — aggravating a laundry list of chronic diseases, according to James Nestor. It is surprising that hospitals only deal with breathing emergencies related to specific maladies of the lungs. It is only in recent years that breathing as a branch of medical emergencies has been acknowledged.

The way to correct breathing is an individual responsibility, but to think that it is a pretty simple act that is well understood could be a fallacy. Only by following a tough breathing regime could four hours of daily snoring be just 10 minutes. For this incredible change to happen, one has to go through an awful experience of forcefully breathing through the mouth for the first 10 days, and revert to nasal breathing for another 10 days with lips sealed with a piece of tape. The longer one breathes through the nose, the nasal cavities get clearer and bigger, writes Nestor in his new book, Breath: The New Science of a Lost Art. Inhaling-exhaling techniques have been around for several millennia. Over the years, however, these techniques are being rediscovered and scientifically validated. "The fruits of this once-fringe, often forgotten research are now redefining the potential of the human body," explains Nestor. Limited but cutting-edge research in pulmonology, psychology, biochemistry, and physiology has already demonstrated that many modern maladies — asthma, anxiety, psoriasis — could either be reduced or reversed simply by changing the way we inhale and exhale.

Stories on the magical aspects of breathing abound in the world of yoga practitioners, as the popularity of yoga in the past two decades has brought a large number of huffing and puffing exponents in public spaces. Whether or not they are breathing better remains to be ascertained.

From alternate nostril breathing to breathing coordination, and from resonant breathing to Buteyko breathing — all techniques of breathing impact human health and longevity. Nestor raises hopes of revolutionising the health sector by generating a renewed interest in breathing techniques to act as a preventive medicine that helps in retaining balance in the body such that milder problems don't end up being serious health issues. However, modern medicine has yet to take serious note of this wisdom generated by Buddhist monks over two millennia ago. If face is the index of mind, breath is the indicator of human well-being.

# Why oil prices are increasing amidst Iran-Israel tensions | Explained

The story so far: Escalating tensions between West Asian nations Iran and Israel since last week sent prices of oil spiralling upwards with fears mounting about a potential disruption in oil supplies globally. The benchmark Brent crude futures had soared about 9% Friday (June 13) to \$75.65 for a barrel after it hit an intraday high of \$78.50/barrel — a near five-month high. The paradigm however sought to ease Monday when news reports suggested that Tehran has asked Qatar, Saudi Arabia and Oman to press U.S. President Donald Trump to help Israel agree for an immediate ceasefire. At the time of writing (about 8 p.m.), Brent crude futures were about 2.4% higher from Monday at \$74.98/barrel.

Why is the tension causing oil prices to rise?

At the centre of the entire paradigm is Iran's recurrent threats to close down the Strait of Hormuz. It is the chokepoint that connects the Persian Gulf with the Gulf of Oman and Arabian Sea. For perspective, chokepoints are narrow channels along widely used global sea routes that are utilised for transporting oil through sea. The closure of a chokepoint, even if for a temporary period, can translate to potential delays in supply, reduction in traffic and rise in shipping and insurance costs. All of it culminating into increased price of energy fuel. Though alternatives exist for some chokepoints, but they could entail significant increase in transit times. In fact, from the larger perspective of trade, Pankaj Chadha, Chairman of the Engineering Exports Promotion Council of India explained The Hindu last week that the escalation of the conflict in the Middle East would bar access to the Suez Canal and the Red Sea. "(This) will have a huge cost and time escalation for Indian exports by ship," Mr. Chadda held. U.S.' Energy Information Administration (EIA) in an analysis published Monday held that the Strait was "deep and wide enough" to handle the world's largest crude oil tankers. It further observed that the Strait facilitated transportation of an average of 20 million barrels each day (mb/d) in 2024. This is equivalent to approximately one-fifth of the global petroleum liquids consumption. Additionally, the Paris-based International Energy Association (IEA) attributed the Strait to have served as the exit route from the Gulf for approximately one-fourth of the global oil supply including from major oil-producing nations Saudi Arabia and United Arab Emirates alongside Kuwait, Qatar, Iraq and Iran itself. According to EIA's estimates, 84% of the crude oil and condensate alongside 83% of liquefied natural gas transported via the Strait headed to Asian countries in 2024. Primarily, this includes China, India, Japan and South Korea.

How is the world positioned to manage the uncertainty?

IEA indicated in their June outlook published Tuesday that oil markets in 2025 "look well supplied" in the absence of a major disruption. This is premised around expectations of supply being able to surpass demand. IEA forecasts world oil demand to increase by 720 thousand barrels a day (kb/d) this year whilst supply is projected to rise 1.8 mb/d to 104.9 mb/d. Additionally, it observed from preliminary data that global observed oil inventories have risen by 1 mb/d on an average since February, and 93 million barrels in May alone. However, it cautioned, "While the market looks comfortably supplied now, the recent events sharply highlight the significant geopolitical risk to oil supply security." Furthermore, JM Financial observed in their recent sectoral report that there could be a "huge upside risk" if Iran disrupts the supply from the Strait of Hormuz. However, it holds the scenario is "extremely unlikely" as in the past, for "U.S. and Western countries are likely to take strong measures against any such disruptions given the huge risk it can pose to global oil and gas prices and, hence, inflation." Imperative to note though that Iran's own production capacity may not have a significant bearing in the paradigm. This is owing to U.S. sanctions on import of Iranian crude oil. Tehran's major export destination is China. Refineries in the Asian country have particularly benefited from discounted fuel from the West Asian counterpart.



What does it mean back home?

Aditi Nayar, Chief Economist at ratings agency ICRA, observed that while crude oil prices have risen quite sharply over the past few days, it has been from "rather benign levels". She holds that should the price persist at the current levels, it may not lead to a "material revision" in ICRA's GDP forecast of 6.2% for the fiscal. "However, a sustained increase from the current levels would weigh on India Inc's profitability and the extended uncertainty may further delay private capex expenditure," Ms. Nayar told The Hindu. She summarised this could potentially translate to a downward revision in ICRA's GDP growth projections for the second half of the fiscal. Albeit in an unrelated context, Paras Jasrai, Associate Director at India Ratings and Research observed the conflict between Israel and Iran added "fuel to the global economic uncertainty" marred by tariffs-led volatility. "The crude oil prices are in the vicinity of \$75/barrel. If the conflict escalates further, then that could spring up wholesale inflation and have broader economic ramifications," he held. Mr. Jasrai adds that favourably though declining food prices have "given a cushion in keeping wholesale inflation at tepid levels". The primary concern with respect to India could potentially be about how things shape up at the Strait of Hormuz. This is because India does not import petroleum crude from Tehran. Amit Kumar, Partner and Energy and Renewable Industry Leader at Grant Thornton Bharat had told The Hindu last week, "India imports more than 80% of its crude oil needs. Hence, even if direct imports from Iran are minimal, global price spikes due to conflict will raise crude oil import costs." On the aspect of supply, imperative to note that Union Petroleum Minister Hardeep Singh Puri in a social media post on Monday has affirmed the India having diversified their import basket substantially are comfortably placed to meet their fuel supply needs.

# Medak bankers fall short of credit target; new lending goal set at Rs 6,517 crore

Medak: Bankers in Medak district achieved only 74.55 per cent of the lending target set by the district administration for 2024–25 fiscal.

District Collector Rahul Raj, who unveiled the Annual Credit Plan for the 2025–26 financial year, also announced the previous year's achievements. Bankers had extended Rs 1,603 crore for the agriculture sector against the target of Rs 2,267 crore, achieving just 70 per cent of the goal. Overall, they disbursed Rs 4,366 crore across all sectors, falling short of the total target of Rs 5,857 crore, thereby achieving 74.55 per cent.

Despite the shortfall, the district administration has increased the credit target for 2025–26 financial year to Rs 6,517.51 crore, up from last year's Rs 5,857 crore.

# Maharashtra makes Hindi 'general' third language in schools after backlash from Marathi language advocates



The Maharashtra government has issued a fresh order stating that Hindi will be taught as a third language to students in Marathi and English medium schools in the State from Classes 1 to 5. An amended government order issued on Tuesday (June 17, 2025) said Hindi will "generally" be the third language, instead of being mandatory, but gave an option to opt out if 20 students per grade in a school express the desire to study any Indian language other than Hindi.

While some Marathi language advocates accused the government of reintroducing the policy through the "backdoor" after initially backtracking, the opposition Congress accused Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis of "stabbing" the Marathi people in the chest. The Maharashtra School Education Department issued the government resolution (GR) on Tuesday as part of the implementation of the 'State Curriculum Framework for School Education 2024', aligned with the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020. Explained | How move to include Hindi from Class 1 has injected language politics into Maharashtra According to the GR, Hindi will "generally" be the third language for students from Classes 1 to 5 in Marathi and English medium schools. "Those who wish to learn any other language as an option to Hindi, should meet the expectation of 20 students from each standard in a school. In such a situation, a teacher for that particular language will be made available or the language will be taught online," the order stated. Watch: Imposing Hindi weakens India's pluralism | The Hindu Huddle 2025 Marathi will be a compulsory language in all medium schools, the GR said. Critics claimed the government's latest move contradicts earlier statements of School Education Minister Dada Bhuse that Hindi would not be mandatory for the primary classes.

Though the government order provides a conditional option for students to opt for another Indian language instead of Hindi, it stipulates that a minimum of 20 students per school must opt for the alternative. If a such demand arises, either a teacher will be appointed or the language will be taught online, the order added. The directive also mandates that in schools following other mediums of instruction, the three-language formula must include the medium language, Marathi and English. Three-language policy 'on hold' Earlier this year, the State government faced widespread backlash for its proposal to introduce Hindi from

Class 1. On April 22, Mr. Bhuse said Hindi would no longer be compulsory in Classes 1 to 5. Last month, the Minister at an event in Pune said, "The decision to introduce Hindi from Class 1 as a third language was taken earlier. However, many parents have suggested it be introduced from Class 3 instead. We will consider these suggestions before taking any further decision." He also said at the time that the three-language formula was "on hold" and schools would continue with the existing two-language system for now. Fresh opposition

But the latest order appears to contradict that assurance, prompting a fresh wave of opposition. "This is nothing but the backdoor imposition of Hindi," claimed Deepak Pawar of the Mumbai-based Marathi Bhasha Abhyas Kendra, working to preserve the Marathi language. "The government has betrayed the Marathi people. If we remain silent now, it will pave the way for dismantling the federal structure and the legacy of the Samyukta Maharashtra movement," he charged in a social media post, urging people to protest. Vasant Kalpande, former chairman of the Maharashtra State Board of Secondary and Higher Secondary Education, said it is unlikely to find 20 students in a class opting for a non-Hindi language. "The provision to make teacher available online is also an attempt to discourage opting for any other language than Hindi. Although, Marathi and Hindi have similar scripts, it will be too much for students of such young age to learn the nuances and differences between the scripts," he claimed. Hindi as a third language is not mandatory in (BJP-ruled) Gujarat and Assam, Mr. Kalpande pointed out.

'Imposing' Hindi: Congress Maharashtra Congress president Harshwardhan Sapkal said the fresh government order on the three-language formula was a planned plot to impose Hindi, and accused Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis of "stabbing" Marathi people in the chest. The public was "deceived" by saying that the compulsion of Hindi as a third language has been abolished. But what does the GR say, he mentioned in a post on X. Language is to be learned, the requirement is for at least 20 students. It's a show of giving an alternative and the planned plot to impose Hindi. This is BJP's anti-Maharashtra agenda and a conspiracy to eliminate the Marathi language, Marathi identity and Marathi people," Mr. Sapkal alleged.

This makes it clear that the loyalty of Fadnavis and Deputy CMs Eknath Shinde and Ajit Pawar is not with Maharashtra or the Marathi people, but with the people of Delhi, he charged. The Shinde (Shiv Sena) group, which repeatedly mentions (party founder) Balasaheb Thackeray's name, holds the education ministry and has taken the initiative to "kill Marathi in the same way that they stabbed Shiv Sena in the back," the Congress leader alleged. "Ajit Pawar is so desperate for power that he has nothing to do with Maharashtra, Marathi language, or whether Marathi people live or die. Ajit Pawar's policy is only to get the finance portfolio," he claimed. "We will not rest till the agenda of 'One Nation, One Language, One Culture' of the RSS and BJP is rejected," Mr. Sapkal added.

# The real challenges of foreign campuses

There has been much debate in India about attracting foreign university branch campuses since the University Grants Commission (UGC) established regulations in 2023. A few have set up shop: two Australian universities — Deakin University and the University of Wollongong — in Gujarat's GIFT City, and the U.K.'s University of Southampton in Gurugram, near Delhi.

The momentum has continued to grow in recent months. Last week, Letters of Intent (LOIs) were issued to five foreign institutions — the University of York, the University of Aberdeen, University of Western Australia, Illinois Institute of Technology, and Italy's Instituto Europeo di Design (IED) — to establish campuses in Mumbai. However, early indicators suggest that Deakin and Wollongong, which began classes last year, and the University of Southampton, which is going to welcome its first batch of students, may be moving too quickly. Admissions were announced often before essential details, such as information about the faculty and other key elements, were made publicly available. While this rapid pace may signal strong intent and enthusiasm, it also raises many concerns.

Globally, transnational education is navigating an increasingly uncertain landscape. This may be one of the most difficult global environments for universities to establish branches. The country with the largest number of overseas university branches globally, the U.S., is in complete disarray due to attacks on higher education from the Donald Trump administration. The last thing on the minds of most American university leaders is foreign initiatives. Therefore, the Illinois Institute of Technology's decision to establish a campus in India should be seen as an exception. Even institutions willing to enter the Indian market will have to



overcome numerous domestic challenges. A major issue is navigating India's highly competitive higher education landscape.

Most of the institutions seeking to enter the Indian market are not top-tier schools in their own countries. In India, they risk being seen as just one among several "elite" options available to students. These branch campuses follow a market-driven model, offering programmes in high-demand fields such as business, computer science, and data analytics. While this approach may be financially strategic, the narrow academic focus risks making them indistinguishable from India's better-performing private colleges and universities. Therefore, the real challenge is to establish a clear academic identity. Without this, they risk being perceived as little more than diploma mills, ultimately undermining the reputation of the very universities they represent. It is also relevant that most of the branches already established or planning to be established are not comprehensive universities with diverse offerings and research focus, but rather are small specialised schools. India already boasts renowned public institutions such as the Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs) and Indian Institutes of Management (IIMs), which are ac-

tively expanding their global engagement and research capabilities. Notable collaborations, such as IIT Delhi with the University of Queensland and IIT Bombay with Monash University, have set strong precedents for international research partnerships. Furthermore, a growing number of elite and semi-elite private universities in India now offer joint and double-degree programmes in collaboration with foreign institutions. In this dynamic environment, foreign branch campuses cannot rely solely on the strength of their brand.

A concerning trend among some international branch campuses already established in India is their disproportionate reliance on marketing strategies, often at the expense of academic investment. While marketing has its place, it cannot substitute for substance. Students and parents are increasingly discerning.

They examine publicly available information on faculty credentials, curriculum design, industry relevance, and student support systems. Flashy campaigns without academic depth or meaningful student engagement will not build lasting trust. Another key problem lies in students' perception and the reality of campus life. Early observations suggest that most of these branch campuses operate out of

vertical buildings, often renting space. While such structures may offer operational efficiency, they often lack the vibrancy, openness, and spatial identity characteristic of traditional Indian universities. If foreign universities wish to be perceived as full-fledged institutions, they must invest in essential "soft" infrastructure as well.

From the Indian perspective, selecting the right partner is important. Universities from the Global North are typically interested in branch campuses for several reasons. Host countries or institutions may offer major incentives in terms of facilities or funds. In many cases, the primary motivation is to earn money, as illustrated by several branches in Dubai.

Some wish to establish a presence in a country to recruit students to the home campus. Without major incentives, top global universities will seldom be attracted. India will need to carefully evaluate whether a particular branch proposal is suitable for local needs, and whether it is from a foreign institution that is attractive.

The establishment of foreign university branch campuses in India marks a significant milestone in the higher education landscape. However, if these ventures are rushed or poorly managed,

# How have Trump’s tariff tantrums impacted India’s Russian oil imports? Wait for September-October crude deliveries



Amid the US rhetoric against India’s Russian oil imports, the key question is whether Indian refiners will meaningfully cut their appetite for Russian crude. While July and August have already seen a decline in deliveries of Russian crude at Indian ports, industry insiders attribute that largely to shrinking discounts on Moscow’s oil, and not American pressure, as those cargoes would have been booked weeks before Donald Trump upped the ante against India in July and announced additional tariffs on Indian goods early August.

Russian oil deliveries scheduled for September and October would give a clearer picture on the impact of Trump’s tariff tantrums over India’s hefty imports of Russian crude. On that count, initial tanker data does suggest a slump in loadings of Russian crude to India—likely to be discharged at Indian ports in September and October—from July levels. Notably though, it may still be too early to say whether Trump’s pressure tactics have indeed led to a marked change in Indian refiners’ Russian oil imports. That is because a number of tankers laden with Russian crude are headed towards Egypt’s Port Said, which means that the possibility of these cargoes making their way to India cannot be ruled out.“Looking at the latest numbers, Russian crude loadings to India are currently tracking about 37 per cent lower month-on-month for August (as of August 24), at around 1 million bpd (barrels per day). However, this could still change. Several vessels are heading toward Port Said, Egypt, which typically indicates they will transit the Suez Canal. In the past, we’ve seen such ships update their final destinations while en route. All Russian flows to India in July passed through the Suez Canal, so it remains a key transit route,” said Sumit Ritolia, Lead Research Analyst, Refining & Modeling at Kpler, a global real-time data and analytics provider.“At a more granular level, up to August 24 we observed a notable increase in cargoes that have sailed from Russian ports without a declared discharge destination. Vessel tracking data shows that many of these tankers discharged their previous two to three cargoes at Indian refineries, suggesting India remains a strong potential outlet. However, it is also possible that some of these barrels could be diverted to other Asian buyers that continue to take Russian crude,” Ritolia said.

India’s public sector refiners have publicly stated that they have not received any directive or indication from the government with respect to their Russian oil imports, and their strategy on buying Moscow’s crude continues to be dictated by economic and commercial considerations. The Indian government continues to maintain that the country will buy oil from wherever it gets the best deal, as long as the oil is not under sanctions. Russian oil is not under sanctions, and is only subject to a price cap imposed by the US and its allies that applies if Western shipping and insurance services are used for transporting the oil.Indian refiners’ hefty imports of Russian crude have surfaced as a major irritant

## Trump goes ahead with plan to impose cumulative 50% tariffs on India citing Russian oil purchases

US President Donald Trump escalated trade tensions between the two countries by doubling tariffs on India to 50 per cent, the highest globally. The US order, however, has exempted tariffs on items such as passenger vehicles, iron and steel and copper items which already has 50 per cent tariffs

In a big setback for India’s exports, the US has formally notified 50 per cent tariffs on Indian products effective from Wednesday, after India-US ties deteriorated following the collapse of trade deal negotiations and US discomfort over India’s purchase of Russian oil amid the ongoing Russia-Ukraine war. In its notification, the US Customs and Border Protection (CBP) said the implementation of additional duties comes after US President Donald Trump determined that the “Russian Federation’s actions continue to pose an unusual and extraordinary threat to US national security and foreign policy, and India is directly or indirectly importing Russian Federation oil”. The legal authority for this order stems from statutes such as the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (IEEPA). CBP said.

The US order, however, has exempted tariffs on items such as passenger vehicles, iron and steel and copper items which already has 50 per cent tariffs. Pharma and electronic goods are also part of the exemption list. Trade experts said the imposition of a 25 per cent tariff on imports of goods from India into the United States will have a significant impact on the earnings of companies in sectors such as diamond polishing, shrimp, home textiles and

for the Trump administration. Earlier in August, Trump announced an additional 25 per cent tariff—over and above the 25 per cent tariff announced on Indian goods—as a penalty for India’s Russian oil imports. New Delhi has called the targeting of India over the purchase of Russian oil “unjustified and unreasonable” and said these imports began as its traditional supplies were diverted to Europe, with the US having “actively encouraged such imports by India for strengthening global energy markets stability”. The additional tariff has had no bearing on Indian refiners’ Russian oil import strategy, and purchases continue to be guided purely by economic and commercial considerations, according to top officials at India’s public sector refiners.

The renewed pressure from the US and other Western powers—pressuring India to cut down on imports from Russia—is aimed at forcing the Kremlin’s hand into ending the Ukraine war. For Trump, who wants the three-year-old Russia-Ukraine war to end within days, this is an opportune time to pressure India over its Russian imports, given the protracted trade pact negotiations between New Delhi and Washington have hit major roadblocks. When Russia invaded Ukraine in February 2022, Moscow’s share in New Delhi’s oil imports was less than 2 per cent. With much of the West shunning Russian crude following the invasion, Russia began offering discounts on its oil to willing buyers. Indian refiners were quick to avail the opportunity, leading to Russia—earlier a peripheral supplier of oil to India—emerging as India’s biggest source of crude within a matter of months, displacing the traditional West Asian suppliers. Russia now accounts for 35-40 per cent of India’s total oil imports by volume. August deliveries of Russian crude hold steady

As of August 24, India’s Russian oil imports for the month were 1.6 million bpd, flat on a month-on-month basis, but down 24 per cent from June levels, per vessel tracking data from Kpler. Industry insiders have attributed the decline largely to a significant erosion in discounts on Russian oil. Earlier this month, Bharat Petroleum Corporation’s (BPCL) Director (Finance) Vetsa Ramakrishna Gupta said in an investor call that the discount on Russian crude had contracted to just around \$1.5 per barrel, which had led to import volumes dipping a bit as Moscow’s oil lost much of its price advantage over competing crude grades. “So far in August, Russian crude imports into India have stayed relatively steady. But that’s less a sign of defiance and more about timing—most of these cargoes were likely locked in weeks earlier, in June or early July, well before any policy shifts came into play. If refiners do start to adjust their buying behavior in response to sanctions talk, we probably won’t see it reflected in the data until late September or October arrivals...for now, it’s business as usual for Russian crude imports by Indian refiners, but with increased caution,” Ritolia said, adding that unless there is a clear policy directive or a prolonged disruption in trade economics, Russian crude will likely remain a core part of India’s supply mix. New Delhi appears eager to increase import volumes from other suppliers to strengthen its energy security and keep dependencies on one or a small group of suppliers in check. According to industry watchers, there is a growing appetite for optionality on crude oil imports—not necessarily a move away from Russia, but a desire to keep other doors open as a hedge against potential disruptions and supply loss in case Russian oil indeed becomes unviable. In all, India’s oil import basket includes crudes from around 40 countries already, although a bulk of the supplies are from Russia and West Asia.



carpets. “The move to impose an additional 25 per cent tariff with effect from August 27, 2025, as a penalty for importing crude oil from Russia, will make Indian exports to the US unviable for the aforesaid sectors as well as others including ready-made garments (RMG), chemicals, agrochemicals, capital goods and solar panel manufacturing, which have sizable trade exposure to the US,” Crisil Ratings said.

The extent of the impact will vary depending on exposure, ability to pass on incremental costs to customers, and relative tariff disadvantage versus competing nations, experts said, adding that a potential second-order impact—including a slowdown in US demand and disparate tariffs across nations that could alter global trade dynamics—also warrants close monitoring.

representatives and export promotion councils of some of these key sectors. Malhotra also urged the industry to invest boldly and champion the entrepreneurial spirit that defines the country. “When balance sheets of banks and corporates are at their best, they should come together and drive the animal spirits to create an investment cycle which is so important at this juncture,” he said. His remark comes at a time when private capital expenditure has remained sluggish for the last many quarters. The corporate loan book of domestic lenders slowed down in the first quarter of FY26, as companies put off investment decisions. According to the Governor, 45 per cent of export items are outside the tax net and on the remaining 55 per cent there will be some potential impact. Some sectors like gems and jewellery, textiles, apparel, leather goods and MSMEs could face significant pressure. Malhotra said the higher tariff announced by US President Donald Trump on all goods imported from India is likely to have a ‘minimal’ impact. On August 7, Trump announced plans to impose additional 25 per cent tariffs on India for buying Russian oil.

# Surviving breast cancer, London teacher becomes life coach for children: How every affected parent must talk to their young about cancer



Before she became a life coach for children, helping them make sense of modern-day challenges and encouraging them to express themselves and ask questions, London-based Priyanka Pandya Bhatt had a hard time explaining to her daughter why she needed to go to hospital frequently. “In 2022, right in the middle of Covid and lockdowns, I was diagnosed with breast cancer, the kind that needed aggressive intervention. My eldest daughter was just four then and my youngest just two. As a young family, processing all of this was too much. And then my daughter had so many questions. Rather than pushing her to uncertainty and insecurity, I decided honesty was the best way out, and she became part of every stage of my therapy,” says Bhatt.

Although the diagnosis was life-altering for Bhatt, more challenging was dealing with the fear and anxiety of her four-year-old daughter. “Who would explain it to her if not myself? And in a language she understood. We prepare our children for the world ahead of them, make them aware about violence, substance abuse and predators. Why don’t we prepare them for dealing with cancer, which is age-agnostic and the incidence of which is going up?” asks Bhatt, who has just penned an educative book, ‘When Mummy Had Cancer,’ told through the innocent eyes of her four-year-old daughter.

Although the diagnosis was life-altering for Bhatt, more challenging was dealing with the fear and anxiety of her four-year-old daughter. Although the diagnosis was life-altering for Bhatt, more challenging was dealing with the fear and anxiety of her four-year-old daughter. “I hope it offers comfort and connection to other families and their children weathering a similar crisis,” says Bhatt of her graphic-heavy book, which is done in warm colours and written in simple language to lend affected children a voice. “Honesty works for children as it enables them to ask us about anything, build trust and confidence. Once you let them in on your truth, they won’t become secretive later in life,” she adds.

Bhatt got suspicious with a lump in her breast after which she was diagnosed with triple negative breast cancer, an aggressive and invasive type of breast cancer. Patients test negative for estrogen receptors (ER), progesterone receptors (PR), and the HER2 protein receptor. In the absence of these receptors, treatments that work for other breast cancer types are not effective. That’s why chemotherapy becomes the first line of treatment. Overwhelmed herself in a nuclear family, she began looking for some counselling support from her daughter’s school. “But they didn’t have a module of communication that could break down the complexities of a crisis to children and help them cope with it better. One year into the treatment, we changed her school, which had a better centre of family counselling. Meanwhile, the nurses also gave me a book on handling

queries of children and understanding their worries,” says Bhatt. But she realised that while the youngest took the book-reading sessions as part of a story-telling session, her elder daughter did not ask any questions. She gave her time and agency to ask questions, even asking her to write them out on a piece of paper. Bhatt spoke to a nurse about her daughter’s intention to learn about chemotherapy. So as not to frighten her, they showed her the infusion pump and the chair when the premises were empty, explaining to her what happens. “They introduced her to it in an age-appropriate manner and gave her cookies to ease her anxiety. I don’t know if the cookies did it but my daughter began to trust the nurses for my care rather than anybody,” says Bhatt, whose parents came over to support her and take care of her daughters.

Bhatt is all for educating a child about cancer and treatment protocols. Bhatt is all for educating a child about cancer and treatment protocols. Sometimes, when Bhatt was fragile after chemotherapy, her daughter would feel exasperated. “She hated it when I could not go out but I could not risk picking up an infection. All family hands were on the deck as I struggled but I made sure that whenever I had time, I spent it with her. I kept her informed about what was happening to me,” says Bhatt. Bhatt had bad days when her blood pressure dropped, her body temperature rose and she had to go back to the hospital because of the weakening of her immune system. Her daughter couldn’t quite adjust to these trips. “We both cried, released our emotions. That brought us together and we became a team ready to fight. In fact, I made sure to tell her that it was okay to tell me everything about what was going on inside, that it was okay to cry,” says Bhatt. Sometimes, her daughter made her laugh, too. Although Bhatt was apprehensive about her reaction to chemotherapy-induced hair fall, she was surprised when she shaved her head. “Mummy you look like a baby bird now. She even told her sister, ‘Look mummy has shaved her hair. Wait for the magic.’ Then when I put on my wig, she would say, ‘look, her hair has grown again.’ And when I took it off again, she would say, ‘look mummy has had another instant haircut’...so wearing the wig and taking it off became easier for me. We all had a good laugh. Sharing challenges with children always works because they help you out of your trough,” says Bhatt.

Bhatt is all for educating a child about cancer and treatment protocols. “First tell them it is nobody’s fault. Tell them things about the treatment as they proceed. I had chemo, then surgery. In fact, she herself simplified the surgery, saying, ‘The doctors had to cut mummy’s breast and scoop out any of the cancer that was still inside,’” she says. Analogies can help a parent break down the problem. Sharing every emotion makes a child resilient to crisis. “Besides children can lighten your mind and mood. They see things in a different light. And they always have hope, which is what all patients need. I became okay mostly because I saw my children being okay through the process,” says Bhatt. Unlike what we think, awareness about cancer is part of a child’s learning experience. “My daughter learnt empathy. Now she doesn’t seek gifts for her birthday but always asks people to donate to a nearby cancer unit. Today as a seven-year-old, she is thinking about other people who have cancer and may not have the access to resources, and she is learning to navigate choices,” says Bhatt. An awareness, she feels, is not about just developing a coping strategy. It is about building compassion. Bhatt says her daughter could understand the plight of a classmate who missed school because she had cancer and was undergoing therapies. “She could process it better than the others. We are educating everybody on everything, so why not this?” wonders Bhatt.

## US FDA suspends licence for chikungunya vaccine: Why was the shot withdrawn?

The United States Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has suspended the licence of one of the two chikungunya vaccines available in the country, following chikungunya-like illness in recipients of the shot. Chikungunya is a viral infection transmitted by the same mosquito that spreads dengue — many of its symptoms also mimic that of dengue such as fever, headache vomiting and rashes. However, its distinctive feature is severe and persistent joint pain. “This vaccine was initially approved by the FDA under the accelerated approval pathway in November of 2023... (The) decision is based on serious safety concerns related to the vaccine,” according to a statement from the regulatory agency.

What were the findings that led to the US FDA suspending the vaccine licence?

The IXCHIQ vaccine, which uses a live, weakened form of the virus to elicit an immune response, was initially approved for use in adults travelling to an area with a chikungunya outbreak and laboratory workers who might be exposed to the virus. This year in May, US FDA recommended a pause on the use of the vaccine in people over the age of 60 years after reports of serious adverse events in older individuals, including hospitalisation for cardiac and neurological complications. The pause was lifted earlier this month with an additional warning on adverse events in people aged 65 years and above with one or more chronic medical conditions. The US FDA decided to suspend the licence for the vaccine after reports of 21 cases of serious adverse events consistent with chikungunya-like illness and three deaths, of which one death with brain inflammation can be directly attributed to the vaccine. When the cerebrospinal fluid of the deceased was tested, it was found to be positive for the exact same strain of the virus as the vaccine. Additionally, the clinical benefits of the vaccine are yet to be verified by confirmatory clinical trials. The statement from the US FDA said: “FDA’s Center for Biologics Evaluation and Research (CBER) benefit-risk analysis broadly shows the vaccine does not have benefits outweighing risks, under most plausible scenarios. For these reasons, CBER believes this vaccine is not safe and that continued administration to the public would pose a danger to health.”

What is the other chikungunya vaccine and who is it meant for?

Called VIMKUNYA, the other chikungunya vaccine is approved for use in people over the age of 12 years. The vaccine uses a laboratory-made virus-like particle to elicit an immune response and is recommended for use in adults and adolescents travelling to areas with chikungunya outbreak and laboratory workers at risk of exposure to the virus. While the two vaccines received regulatory approval in the United States and several other countries, they are not yet widely available or used at present, according to the World Health Organisation. “WHO and external expert ad-



visors are reviewing vaccine trial and post-marketing data in the context of global chikungunya epidemiology to inform possible recommendations for use,” states WHO. While there is no specific treatment for the disease, severe symptoms and deaths are usually rare, occurring mainly in young babies or elderly people with co-morbid conditions.

Is there a need for a chikungunya vaccine in India?

India was one of the first few countries to record chikungunya outbreaks. The National Vector Borne Disease Control Programme — which maintains data on vector borne diseases such as dengue, malaria, kala azar among others — does not maintain figures on deaths due to the infection. There were 1,741 laboratory confirmed cases of chikungunya in the country till March-end, with 30,876 more suspected cases. Last year, there were 17,930 confirmed and 2.4 lakh suspected cases recorded in the entire year. There is at least one chikungunya vaccine in development by the Indian biotech company Bharat Biotech. Unlike the single-dose vaccines approved in the US, the Indian vaccine candidate has three escalating doses to be administered on Day 1, Day 29, and Day 57 as per trial details.

## vivo unveils first mixed reality headset and new imaging strategy at 30th anniversary

Hyderabad: Smartphone maker vivo celebrated its 30th anniversary with the vivo Vision Launch Event & Imaging Grand Ceremony, where it unveiled its first mixed reality (MR) headset, the vivo Vision Discovery Edition, alongside a major upgrade to its imaging strategy. The MR headset marks vivo’s entry into spatial computing and immersive technology. Developed over four years, the device weighs 398 g, making it 26% smaller than the industry average.

## Badminton World Championships: As Lakshya Sen exits Paris, a definitive sign that a major shakeup is needed to reboot his career



GNS News Agency, Sept 5

Lakshya Sen is no clueless American named Emily, but he definitely is 'on the precipice of the rest of his life' after a second failed stab at a medal in Paris, like the web series noted. That is to say, a major shakeup is necessary if Sen doesn't want to dawdle away a very promising career, waiting for medals to happen. Paris may or might not be the best place for singles. But don't try playing singles at a Badminton World Championships, with a doubles coach, who might not have the pin-point advice that can yank you out of a defensive quagmire, no matter how spectacular that diving retrieving looks. A 21-17, 21-19 scoreline for 54 minutes against World No Shi Yuqi is huge props for how well Sen fought to survive, but Korean coach Yoo Yong-sung would know he was nowhere close to even taking a lead against the Chinese World No 1. So it ended up as a Round 1 loss, borne out of not being equipped to win rallies, with not a smidgen of a bright idea visible as Sen faltered. He didn't even take breaks, or deploy a reset ritual, or slow things down to catch a breather, collect his thoughts, and think the next point through to flip the momentum, that could explain the 54 minutes. Only flashes

There were exactly two winners in that match, that offered a glimpse of how good Sen used to be, and where his game ought to go: those were to reach 15-17 in the second set, and then 16-17, and they were entirely Sen having had enough of his own misery, and breaking free with audacity. Everything else made him look like a stepping stone in Yuqi's march to world title ambitions, while reduced to reacting, with no play of his own.

There was an inevitability to the Yuqi straight smash, neatly landing next to the sideline. Sen, with plenty of back troubles, couldn't pivot fast enough to go across and get the backhand in each time. He might get to it 9 times, but there was always the 10th looming around the corner, that his torso couldn't torque up to. The mistake, of course, was on the previous return, giving Yuqi the elevation to smash

with gusto. But compulsive retrieving can't censor the lifts to that extent. Not even the best defensive shuttler could have staved off that 10th howitzer, grazing the lines. Compounding his problems was Sen's inability to find the lines precisely himself, as he sprayed his smash, and allowed Yuqi's lead to balloon. He was managing to push the Chinese back if he took control of the net, but he lingered too long and laboured too hard to finish the kills, and looked strangely lulled to take initiative. A sideways drift froze the shuttle for both players, making them tentative on net kills, but Sen — who can summon the sharpness — resisted the risk.

He almost needed to trail by a bunch of points to be jolted awake for starters. And then the point at 17-19 in the opener, perhaps led him down the wrong assumption that it was prolonged exchanges that would draw mistakes out of the Chinese. But Yuqi has won every three out of the four Super 1000 tournaments this year, and is 9/9 clutch in big finals over last 16 months. In a match full of 40+ shot long rallies, Sen 16-19 then cleverly decelerated with tosses to frustrate Yuqi to make it a 2-point set. But he was mistaken in believing Yuqi would fall for the same trap the next time. Long rallies, fantastic defense weren't the right answer to begin with. Coach and father DK Sen correctly judged after the first set that Yuqi was relying on his cross courts to upstage, tire out, and generally disorient Sen. Neither he nor Yong-sung had an antidote, though. Sen once again went from 7-11 to 9-14 to 13-15, using the last possible opportunity in long rallies to pick points, delaying the kill. And he once again awoke at 14-17 and played the OG Lakshya Sen game: a prancing, fast, explosive stride at the net to scythe for 15-17, and a reflex tap while on his knees to pass Yuqi that got him the applause. He had the lead whittled to 18-19 with another accelerated, speedy sizzle to the net, where he looked hungry to attack the shuttle. Deeply immersed in his defensive shift, Sen picked up a clearly bounced shuttle on the line, and the return sailed over the net. Yuqi couldn't challenge and was livid, replays showing it had bumped too. Sen knew. The Chinese, full of righteous rage, took the next two points with vengeance. And just like that, it was over in Paris for Sen. He seemed to clear the air with the Chinese when they shook hands on the bumped return, but not unlike the Olympics semifinal against Viktor Axelsen, or the bronze playoff against Lee Zii Jia, he will have to stay content with "Well played, better luck next time" platitudes. Sen over the last two years is visibly different; he doesn't jump higher, or move faster or walk with a swagger, like before. There's a dip just when he ought to have built upon the 4th place finish at the Olympics. Losses just don't cut it, even against the World No 1. To misquote Emily, "It's Paris. Everyone's serious (only) about the winner."

## Garry Kasparov is right about Gukesh's chess strength, but his scorn for teen's world championship title is way off the mark

GNS News Agency, Sept 5

Garry Kasparov is a man who drinks frequently from the deep river that is chess history. The man who became the 13th world champion is so enamoured by it in fact that he has authored a series of books running into five volumes — called My Great Predecessors — in honour of past legends of chess. Fittingly, Kasparov finds himself as arguably the greatest chess player in history, a title for which he has only some competition from the likes of Magnus Carlsen and Bobby Fischer. This, of course, also makes him an indisputable authority on chess and its history, and when he speaks, everyone in the sport inevitably listens. It is from this lofty vantage point earlier this week that he declared: "Magnus (Carlsen) ended the era of classical world champions. Gukesh's world championship title is very different. This is not exactly the title that I had or Anatoly Karpov had or Bobby Fischer had or Magnus had."

This is not the first time Kasparov has implied that Gukesh's crown as world champion carries lesser heft than the first 16 world champions. His reasoning? ("What Gukesh managed) is a phenomenal accomplishment. But I beat the strongest player in the world. Gukesh is in a different situation because Magnus is there. So Gukesh is the official world champion, there's no doubt about it, but there's somebody else (Magnus) who is widely considered, by all metrics, as a better player," Kasparov had reasoned in May this year. There is no denying that everything Kasparov said in May is accurate. Carlsen has been the world's best player for at least the past 12 years besides being the uninterrupted world no 1 for the past 15, a streak that is far from ending in the near future even though the Norwegian has admittedly lost his appetite to play classical chess and in the world championship. And no one is arguing that we have seen the best of Gukesh. He is, after all, still a teenager, with his peak in the sport possibly yet to come — a giddily exciting prospect for anyone that cares about the sport itself. Gukesh has plenty of room for improvement just like Kasparov did at the age of 21 when he played Karpov for the first time in a world championship in 1984. In such a scenario, where Carlsen isn't interested in the world championship, what are we expecting from the teenage Gukesh? That he personally cajole Carlsen into playing him? Why must the Indian teenager bear the burden if an opponent has simply had enough with a form of sport?

If Gukesh's world championship title is "not the same" as that of his predecessors because Carlsen is the best player in the world at the moment, should that same reasoning be applied to measure the weight of Anatoly Karpov's world championship credentials? He did after all become the world champion in 1975 by forfeit after Bobby Fischer refused to defend his title. It was by defeating Karpov that Kasparov became a world champion. If we get into the asterisks-adding business on world championship titles, should we add one of the titles that were retained due to the draw odds rule — the incumbent champion retains the title if the match ends in a tied score? That's how Karpov retained his title against Kasparov in 1984. So did Kasparov's great teacher Mikhail Botvinnik — twice! — once against David Bronstein in 1951 and then versus Vasily Smyslov in 1954. Kasparov himself retained his title in Seville in 1987 against Karpov thanks to a 12-12 tied score. Vladimir Kramnik too held off Peter Leko in 2004 with the draw odds regulation before it was changed. Garry Kasparov (left) greets Gukesh (right) before the teenager's match against Magnus Carlsen earlier this year at the Superbet Rapid & Blitz Poland tournament. (Photo Courtesy Lennart Ootes) Kasparov (left) almost seems to imply that the likes of Gukesh and Ding Liren will not be considered real world champions until they take on Carlsen mano a mano in a world championship



fight. (Photo: Lennart Ootes)

Since Kasparov mentioned the "era of classical world champions" ending should we add asterisks to world championship titles won in tiebreaks in rapid and blitz formats after the classical games proved inconclusive? That would cover titles won by Kramnik (2006), Vishy Anand (2012), Carlsen (2016 and 2018) and Ding Liren (2023). Kasparov almost seems to imply that the likes of Gukesh and Ding Liren will not be considered real world champions until they take on Carlsen mano a mano in a world championship fight. Has the headline of world champions always been as formidable as Kasparov seems to imply? Did all the world champions always "earn their right" to fight the battle and win it? As far as Gukesh earning his right to be world champion goes, he did battle it out in the eight-man Candidates tournament, one of the sternest tests of character on offer before securing his shot at the world championship. There, he prevailed over the likes of Ian Nepomniachtchi and Fabiano Caruana (both of whom have played in world championships before), Hikaru Nakamura (who has been second behind Carlsen for decades in the standings), Alireza Firouzja (Carlsen's handpicked heir apparent), Praggnanandhaa (a talent as promising as Gukesh) among others. Did all the world champions fight their way through the thicket of strongest contenders to earn a title shot? Before 1950, the world championship rules stipulated that any contender hoping to battle for the crown would have to negotiate directly with the reigning world champion and secure funding, besides playing a role in organising the match. This meant any player with financial backing could earn a shot — literally — at the world champion's throne. Alexander Alekhine — a man Kasparov calls his "first chess hero" in his books — earned a rematch against Max Euwe in 1937 not by winning a qualifying tournament. He earned a world championship shot by simply asking for it. On ChessHistory.com, Edward Winter notes a clause in the 1935 World Championship contract between Euwe and Alekhine that made their rematch two years later possible: "If Dr Euwe wins the match in accordance with Article 4, he is first of all obliged to play a return match against Dr Alekhine if the latter makes such a request within six months of the last game being played. Within a further six months thereafter Dr Alekhine must deposit 2,000 guilders with a bank." In the 1962 Candidates, a 19-year-old Fischer had ranted and raged about how the Soviet Union's players were playing out short draws against each other so that they could give their best against him, the American upstart threatening to challenge the Soviet hegemony. All of this is to say that Kasparov's assessment of Gukesh's chess strength is completely accurate. But he must reassess his uncharitable evaluation of the Indian's world championship title credentials. As a sidebar to the argument at hand, here are two anecdotes about mutual admiration blossoming between the bitterest of rivals simply because they belonged to the elusive fellowship of world champions. Kasparov himself might remember that when he was once jailed in Russia,

## ‘Hope both players and fans will remain disciplined and not cross the line’: Wasim Akram on India-Pakistan Asia Cup clash



GNS News Agency, Sept 5

With arch-rivals India and Pakistan set to clash on September 14 in Dubai in the Asia Cup, it will be the second time this year that the two nations will face each other in an international fixture. The last time the two cricketing nations faced each other was in this year's Champions Trophy in Dubai, when India recorded a six-wicket win over Pakistan in a group match. Since then, the two countries have seen hostilities following the Pahalgam terror attack and Operation Sindoor by India. Former Pakistan captain Wasim Akram has urged both teams and their fans to 'remain disciplined' and not cross the line. "I am sure these matches will be entertaining, just like all other Ind-Pak matches. But I hope both the players and the fans will remain disciplined and not cross the line. If Indians are patriotic and want their team to win, the same goes for Pakistani fans. India have been in better form recently and will start as favourites, but the team that handles pressure best on the day will win," Akram told Telecom Asia Sport.

Last week, the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports in India came up with guidelines clarifying India's position on

the sporting relations with Pakistan. According to the guidelines, Indian teams will not visit or host Pakistan for bilateral series, but the teams can compete in multi-nation tournaments involving Pakistan. In cricket, the two countries have not competed in a bilateral series since 2012. Pakistan visited India for a two-match T20I and three-match ODI series in 2012, with the visitors drawing the T20I series 1-1 and winning the ODI series 2-1. Since then, the two countries have only faced each other in ICC tournaments, including the ODI World Cup, T20 World Cup, Champions Trophy, apart from the Asia Cup. The two nations have faced each other in 15 bilateral Test series, with Pakistan's tour to India in 2007-2008 being the last time that the two nations faced each other in a Test series. Akram also urged the two countries to resume playing a Test series. "This Asia Cup will be a feast for fans worldwide. It's my wish that India and Pakistan also resume playing a Test series. It's been too long, and it would be a historic spectacle for fans on both sides," said Akram, who had taken a total of 45 wickets in 12 Tests against India during his Test career. India will be competing in the Asia Cup under the captaincy of Suryakumar Yadav. With Virat Kohli and Rohit Sharma retiring after India's title triumph in the T20 World Cup last year, it will also be the first time that India will face Pakistan in a T20I match without Rohit or Kohli. Former Pakistan cricketer Bazid Khan had shared how India will miss the intensity of Kohli and Rohit. "Look, all these players are high-class. There isn't anyone here you would say is not of that calibre. But the high intensity that Virat Kohli and Rohit Sharma brought to the game, that is something India will surely miss. Suryakumar scores runs against almost everyone but somehow against Pakistan he hasn't been effective. Whether it is the pace attack or some other reason, it remains an issue," Khan had told PTV Sports.

## ‘Virat Kohli made lot of runs because of him’: Ashwin requests for macho reels of ‘Walter White’ Cheteshwar Pujara's defence on social media

GNS News Agency, Sept 5

India spin legend R Ashwin has credited the now-retired Cheteshwar Pujara's impregnable presence at number three as a significant reason behind Virat Kohli's supreme success in terms of runs at number four for India in Tests over the last decade. Pujara, who retired after 20 years of professional cricket last Sunday, was the only batter to match up to Kohli among Indian batters in terms of Test run-making in the last decade. At his peak, the Saurashtra bulwark even surpassed Kohli in terms of averages in the sub-continent while enjoying success on two consecutive tours of Australia between 2018 and 2021. Ashwin recalled Pujara's epic contribution in the historic 2018-19 BGT tour, where India historically recorded their first series win in Australia, and labelled the right-hander as the 'White Walker' of the side, referring to the popular character from the Game of Thrones series. "The cricket-loving public definitely knows the contribution of Cheteshwar Pujara. If you guys have seen Game of Thrones, there is a character of a white walker. I termed Pujara a white walker. He walks slowly but never leaves the field," said Ashwin. Recalling the 2018 Wanderers Test in South Africa to underscore Pujara's unwavering solidity, Ashwin explained how the No. 3 only got off the mark on his 54th delivery, facing up against a menacing seam trio of Kagiso Rabada, Vernon Philander and Morne Morkel. Pujara resisted for 179 balls and his half-century alongside Kohli's on a dangerous batting strip pushed India to 187 before the Proteas responded with 194. "Pujara's contribution at No. 3, if you agree or don't, was instrumental in helping Virat Kohli also make a lot of his runs, and I have one such case as an example. In the final Test against South Africa at the Wanderers, where the pitch was deemed too dangerous at one stage, Pujara



played 53 balls before he got off the mark. A thankless job, a really, really, spiteful Wanderers pitch, the ball was going all over the place," Ashwin remarked in a tribute for Pujara on his YouTube channel. Though Pujara only returned 1 run in the second essay, India mustered a 241-run target for the hosts which would prove to be enough to record a win, thanks to Mohammed Shami's second-innings five-wicket haul. Ashwin lamented that Pujara's defence was seldom valued on social media, missing the glitzy reels with macho background scores that other star Indian cricketers enjoy on a frenzy. "Pujara is one such guy, when he bats it looks like a symphony. You may see reels on Instagram, edits like Virat's cover drive, Rohit Sharma's pull shot, MS Dhoni's Helicopter Shot, but Pujara's defense, even that has to be featured with music and all that," Ashwin said. "He is a Test legend, absolute massive legend of Indian cricket, his contribution is no less than anyone else. I would put my head on the block, his contribution is not less than anyone else, whether it be Virat, or Rohit, or anybody," he added.

## ‘Worst thing about New York’: Casper Ruud raises concern over cannabis smell at US Open, ‘Annoying to play near someone smoking marijuana’

GNS News Agency, Sept 5

Ruud, who paired up with Iga Swiatek for the US Open mixed doubles competition last week, opened up on the obnoxious feeling of having to play through a cannabis-filled environment. (AP) Ruud, who paired up with Iga Swiatek for the US Open mixed doubles competition last week, opened up on the obnoxious feeling of having to play through a cannabis-filled environment. Casper Ruud's 'rude' experience ahead of the first-round US Open 2025 singles contest has grabbed eyeballs, as the Norwegian 12th seed lamented the lingering cannabis smell at the courts at Flushing Meadows this season.

Ruud, who paired up with Iga Swiatek for the mixed doubles competition last week, opened up on the obnoxious feeling of having to play through such an environment. "For me, this is the worst thing about New York," Ruud reportedly told Norwegian media ahead of his singles first-round contest. "The smell is everywhere, even here on the courts. We have to accept it, but it's not my favourite smell." "It's quite annoying to



be playing, tired, and just meters away, someone is smoking marijuana, he went on. We can't do anything about it unless the law is reversed, but I have strong doubts that will happen. "Although smoking is banned at the US Open venue, the smell of cannabis has drifted into the area from nearby public spaces, including a large park. Usage was made permissible under New York's 2021 law, which allows cannabis consumption wherever tobacco smoking is legal. Sometimes cigarettes, sometimes weed

Ruud, is however, not the first high-profile player to flag the cannabis issue. During her first-round upset in the 2023 US Open, then No. 8 Maria Sakkari voiced her displeasure to the chair umpire over the lingering cannabis smell on court. "It was weed," Sakkari said. "The smell, oh my gosh. I think it's from the park." "Sometimes it smells food, sometimes it smells cigarettes, sometimes it smells weed," Sakkari said at the time. "It's something that we cannot control because we're in an open space. There's a park behind, people can do whatever they want. It's nothing

that we can control." Mercurial Australian star Nick Kyrgios had raised concerns during the 2022 US Open when he urged the chair umpire to ask the crowd to not smoke on courts. "It was f\*\*king marijuana," Kyrgios was heard telling the umpire then. "Obviously I'm not going to be complaining about food stuff. Obviously not." "People don't know. I'm a heavy asthmatic," Kyrgios would reveal later. "When I'm running side to side, I'm struggling to breathe, probably not something I want to be breathing in in between points."

## Frustrated by flops, being termed jinxed by Bollywood, this actor ‘yelled and shouted’ at God; had to mortgage car, house, office



Filmmaker and producer Rakesh Roshan was born to music director Roshan. While many might assume he had an easy entry into the Hindi film industry because of his father's connections in Bollywood, the reality was quite the opposite. In every sense, Rakesh Roshan is a self-made man. From facing a string of flops and being tagged as "jinxed" to eventually rising like a phoenix as a successful director-producer, his journey is nothing short of inspiring.

Rakesh Roshan was born as Rakesh Nagrath to music director Roshan and his wife Ira Roshan. At the time, Roshan was still struggling to establish himself as a music director. Recalling those early days, Rakesh said in an interaction with Mid-Day, "I was born in Bombay. I was born in a garage of a big music director Husnlal Bhagatram. My father came from Delhi to Mumbai, he stayed in their garage, so I was born in that garage. After my father started getting work, we shifted to Santacruz. My childhood was there." Rakesh later changed his surname from Nagrath to Roshan so that producers and filmmakers could recognize him as Roshan's son when he was struggling to find work as an aspiring actor. "As an actor I would introduce myself as Roshan's son to get appointment from top producers," he said. However, tragedy struck early when Rakesh lost his father at the age of 17. After his father's passing, he began working as an assistant director to support his family while still nurturing his dream of becoming a lead actor. Failed as a lead hero, played side/supportive roles. In 1970, Rakesh Roshan made his acting debut with the film Ghar Ghar Ki Kahani, playing a supporting role. He continued to appear in smaller roles before landing his first film as a leading man with Seema (1971). However, the film turned out to be a commercial failure, though its songs became popular. Most of Rakesh's films as a lead actor failed to leave an impact, including titles like Aankhon Aankhon Mein, Aankh Micholi, and others. Eventually, he shifted back to supporting roles in big films like Khel Khel Mein, Khattha Meetha, and Khubsoorat. Reflecting on this period, he said, "Those films never took me ahead, other actors' careers went ahead with them but not mine." Talking about doing 94 films as an actor, he said, "Out of the 94 films, 70 films I would have gotten because I would have called them asking them to take me in films. I couldn't reach where I wanted to, I had to constantly seek work." In the same interview, Rakesh admitted that he even accepted villainous roles out of desperation. "There was a dark tunnel for me, I didn't know where to go but I kept working as an assistant director or as an actor. I wanted to be in front of producers. I did side-roles, even villain roles because I wanted to be around. I didn't have a choice." Shifted into two-bedroom flat with parents, brother and his family of four. As work remained scarce, Rakesh struggled to sustain his growing family — his wife Pinkie, daughter Sunaina, and son Hrithik. In an old Filmfare interview, he recalled how, when he

couldn't afford rent, they had to move into a two-bedroom flat with his brother, his parents, and his own family of four. Sharing how his wife stood by him during this tough phase, he said, "She comes from a rich family where she lived in a bungalow; I took her to a two-room apartment where I lived with my parents and brother. She understood my frustrations. She went through the tough period with patience and was never demanding." Hrithik too recalled those tough days when he appeared on Rendezvous with Simi Garewal. "Until the time my dad could earn enough money to buy another house. And then we shifted into another house which was barely just walls and floors. We slept on gaddas, these mats and slowly got the furniture in," he shared. In the documentary series The Roshans, Rakesh revealed that during his struggling years, he often had to borrow money from friends to pay bills. He said, "Sometimes, it used to be like, 'How am I going to pay the monthly bills?' I would often approach a friend and ask them for a loan, saying, 'Could you give me Rs 5000? I don't have enough money to pay my bills.' I was ready to put in the hard work, but for some reason, I wasn't getting enough success."

Tagged 'jinxed', heroines refused to work with him. The 1977 film Priyatama was supposed to be Rakesh's big break. However, he was replaced at the last moment by his close friend Jeetendra, as distributors believed he was "jinxed." Even the film's lead actress Neetu Kapoor reportedly refused to work with him. Recalling the incident, Rakesh shared in the documentary, "One day the producer called and said to me, 'We want to cast someone else because the distributors and the film's heroine both have refused to work with you saying that if you are in the movie then it will never sell. The heroine refuses to work with you.' Then Basu da came to me and said, 'Wait, there is another good role in the film for you, Guddu.' Since it was Basu da, I couldn't refuse. But I was deeply hurt by that. 'Why did this happen?' I went up to our terrace. And started yelling at God. I kept yelling and cursing him. 'Why are you doing this to me? I am working so hard.' "Was asked to step aside in photos with Rishi Kapoor and Jeetendra. Rakesh maintained close friendships with superstars Rishi Kapoor and Jeetendra despite their different levels of stardom. However, he recalled a humiliating experience while appearing on Rendezvous with Simi Garewal. He revealed how, at parties, he and his wife Pinkie would be asked to step aside from group photos with Rishi Kapoor, Neetu Kapoor, Jeetendra, and Shobha Kapoor. "I never used to feel bad about me, I would feel bad about her (Pinkie) but I can't do anything about it," he said. In 1987, Rakesh took a bold step by pivoting from acting to filmmaking — a gamble that finally paid off. For his directorial debut Khudgarz, he mortgaged his house, car, and everything he owned. The film turned out to be a blockbuster. Having seen so much failure, he had become fearless about taking risks, and this time, it worked in his favour. His next film Khoon Bhari Maang (1988), starring Rekha, was another box office success and earned him his first Best Director nomination. From there, he continued his winning streak with films like Kishan Kanhaiya, Khel, and King Uncle. The biggest milestone of his career came in 2000, when he launched his son Hrithik Roshan in Kaho Naa... Pyaar Hai. The film became a massive hit and established Hrithik as a superstar overnight. The father-son duo then went on to create the hugely successful sci-fi and superhero series, starting with Koi... Mil Gaya (2003) and followed by the Krrish franchise (2006–2013).

## Suniel Shetty says ‘itni ghatiya mimicry nahi dekhi maine’ after Bhopal artist tries to ape him: ‘You sound like a child, I sound like a mard’



Suniel Shetty's signature dialogue delivery style lives rent-free in the heads of all '90s kids. While he's not acting in films as much as he was then, several mimicry artists continue to perpetuate that style by aping it in their shows even today. But Suniel was left unimpressed by a mimicry artist at a Bhopal event, and he even claimed he hasn't watched mimicry worse than that. In a video that's gone viral on Reddit, Suniel is seen telling a mimicry artist on the stage, "Ye bhaishab tab se alag alag dialogue bol rahe hain jo meri aawaz mein hain hi nahi. Itna ghatiya mimicry maine kabhi dekha hi nahi hai. Jab Suniel Shetty bolta hai tab ek mard ki tarah bolta hai. Ye ek bachche ki tarah bol raha tha" (This gentlemen has been saying several dialogues which aren't even in my voice. I've not seen worse mimicry than this. When Suniel Shetty speaks, he speaks like a man. This one is speaking like a child). "Jab aap mimicry karte ho toh achhi karni chahiye. Kharab nakal nahi karni chahiye kisi ki. (When you mimic, you should mimic well. You should not do bad mimicry of anyone)," he added. The mimicry artist then apologized and claimed he wasn't trying to mimic Suniel, to which the actor responded, "Koshish karna bhi mat, beta. Abhi Suniel Shetty banne mein bahut time hai. Baal baandhne se kuchh nahi hota" (Don't even try mimicking me, son. You have a long way to go before you can become Suniel Shetty. Just trying up your hair doesn't make you one).

Suniel then again called the mimicry artist a "bachcha," before adding, "Suniel Shetty ki action filmein dekhi nahi hai isne. Kabhi bole toh aazma bhi sakta hu" (It looks like he hasn't watched Suniel Shetty's action films. If you want, I

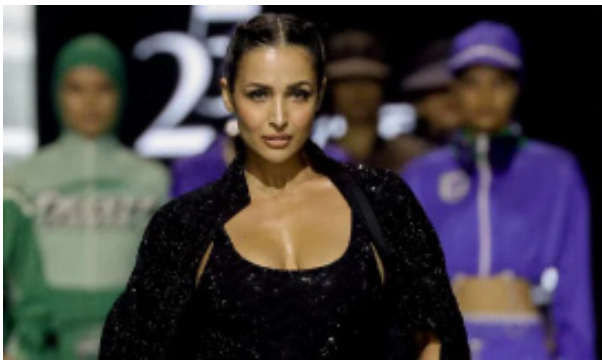
can demonstrate that too). The crowd at the event roared in response, as the mimicry artist continued to feel embarrassed at Suniel's feedback. Suniel Shetty, who started his acting career with Deepak Anand's 1992 action film Balwaan, has since appeared in memorable movies like Dilwale, Mohra, Gopi Kishan (1994), Border (1997), Hu Tu Tu (1999), Hera Pheri, Refugee, Dhadkan (2000), Awara Paagal Deewana (2002), Main Hoon Na (2004), Dus (2005), and Darbar (2020). He most recently appeared in the film Kesari Veer and in the Amazon MXPlayer show Hunter season 2. He'll be next seen in the comedies Welcome to the Jungle and Hera Pheri 3. Shetty recently came under fire online for suggesting that C-Section is an easier option than natural childbirth. "In a world where everybody wants the comfort of having a caesarean baby, she (Athyia Shetty, daughter) chose not to do that and had a natural delivery. I remember how every nurse and paediatrician in the hospital said that it's unbelievable how she went through the whole process," Shetty had said.

## Amitabh Bachchan calls time on 'KBC' floor 'special and poetic'

Mumbai: Megastar Amitabh Bachchan has recalled his busy schedule and the challenges of long shoots. However, he calls his time on the quiz-based reality show "Kaun Banega Crorepati" truly special and poetic. Amitabh took to his blog, where he shared pictures greeting his fans, whom he lovingly calls his extended family or EF, and wrote: "And the everlasting affection from all those that come even in inclement weather is a boon that shall never be forgotten .. you are so I am."

The thespian also shared some pictures from the sets of "Kaun Banega Crorepati" and wrote: "And the work schedules continue .. early calls and early starts and at times an early finish .. but the traffic on the return journey makes the time saved as waived. ... "However the time spent on the floor of KBC was special .. almost a poetic symposium of recitations and the understanding of each verse, both from the contestant and the one that presses the black squares now .. you are the ones that 'make the show', is something that I repeat and live each day on the sets .. it is the truth." "I am so humbled by the affection and love .. may I continue to be worthy of such love," he added.

## Own it means showing up as yourself, without apologies, says Malaika Arora



Mumbai: For Bollywood diva Malaika Arora, "own it" means showing up as yourself, without filters or apologies and said that her journey has been about fearlessly being herself. Asked what does "own It" mean to her personally, and how does it reflect her journey with confidence and individuality, Malaika told IANS: "To me, 'Own It' means showing up as yourself, without filters or apologies. My journey has been about fearlessly being myself, whether it was in fashion, fitness, or just the way I live life. Confidence isn't about perfection, it's about authenticity." The 51-year-old

glamorous star professed her love for lipsticks and said that it can instantly uplift the mood and boost confidence. Talking about how she believes lipstick can completely transform your mood and confidence, Malaika, who is the brand ambassador for HYUE, said: "Absolutely! Lipstick has that magical quality—it's an instant mood-lifter. The right shade can make you feel bold, confident, playful, or even romantic. It's such a small product, but it holds immense power in how it makes you carry yourself." The actress feels that the brand's effortlessness feels "plush, lightweight, and still so impactful." "I've always believed makeup should never feel heavy, it should just feel like a second skin. HYUE's VelvetKiss truly delivers that balance between comfort and glamour. Being the face of a product that marries sophistication with ease feels very natural to me," he said. Malaika was first selected as a VJ for MTV India. She then entered the modelling world, appearing in many advertisements, as well as album songs like Bally Sagoo's "Gur Naalo Ishq Mitha" opposite Jas Arora, and Bollywood chartbusters such as "Chaiyya Chaiyya" in the 1998 Bollywood film "Dil Se..." She was then seen in numbers such as Maahi Ve (2002), Kaal Dhamaal (2005) and Munni Badnaam Hui (2010). As an actress, she has starred in films like Kaante (2002) and EMI (2008).

## My mother's performance on Dance of Rage was full of aggression, internal struggle

Mumbai: Actress Janhvi Kapoor, who is currently promoting her upcoming film Param Sundari, recalled how her late mother, superstar Sridevi's iconic "rage dance" in the 1991 film Lamhe was filled with aggression and internal struggle. It was during her appearance on the show Super Dancer Chapter 5 that contestant Namish's performance reminded Janhvi of her mother's unforgettable act.

Complimenting the contestant, Janhvi said: "You changed the energy of the room the moment you started the performance. A lot goes into a good performance — expression, smile, movements. My mother's performance on Dance of Rage in Yash ji's film was full of aggression and internal struggle, and I always wondered how an artist could perform it. Today, watching you perform live made me connect with you completely. I got goosebumps."

Lamhe, directed and produced by Yash Chopra, starred Sridevi in a dual role opposite Anil Kapoor, alongside Waheeda Rehman, Anupam Kher, Deepak Malhotra, and Dippy Sagoo. The film narrates the story of Viren, who falls for Pallavi, but after her tragic death, finds himself drawn to her daughter, who grows up looking just like her mother. Janhvi was accompanied on the show by actor Sidharth Malhotra. Impressed by the act, Sidharth said: "This was an amazing performance. You are already a star, but after this performance you are a superstar for me." Her upcoming cross-cultural romance Param Sundari, slated for release on August 29, follows a love story between a North Indian man, played by Sidharth Malhotra, and a South In-



dian woman, filmed against the scenic backwaters of Kerala. According to producers Maddock Films, the film "promises a heartfelt tale of love, laughter, chaos, and unexpected twists."

## Bollywood actress rose to fame with Mithun Chakraborty's Disco Dancer, dated Danny Denzongpa, but was eventually typecast in glamour roles



For anyone who grew up on Manmohan Desai's films, it's hard to imagine not having watched his 1981 multistarrer Naseeb. And if Naseeb is part of your film memory, chances are you remember the kabaddi-themed number "Pakdo Pakdo Pakdo", featuring Rishi Kapoor and a then-new face: Kim Kashmalkar. Born in Beirut as Satyakim Yashpal to Yash and Wendy Yashpal, Kim had an early passion for dance. Determined to learn Kathak, she moved to Mumbai and began training under the noted dance maestro Gopi Krishna. It was during her time in his classes that she crossed paths with several film industry insiders, many of whom noticed her talent. At a party, Kim Yashpal met actor Shashi Kapoor, who introduced her to producer N.N. Sippy. Sippy was working on a horror film titled Phir Wahi Raat (1980), starring Rajesh Khanna and directed by Danny Denzongpa. Kim landed the lead role. Although Phir Wahi Raat didn't make waves at the box office, it brought Kim into the public eye, and sparked a relationship with its director, Danny Denzongpa, with whom she would be romantically linked for years. Danny reportedly encouraged her to take on more film roles. She went on to star in Bulundi (1981), where she starred opposite Danny again, alongside screen legends Raaj Kumar and Asha Parekh.

Her most prominent screen moment came with Naseeb. The song "Pakdo Pakdo Pakdo", with Rishi Kapoor, became immensely popular, giving her a mainstream breakthrough. But the turning point came a year later with Disco Dancer (1982), a film that launched Mithun Chakraborty to superstardom not just in India, but in countries like the USSR, China, and Japan. Kim, as the female lead, became instantly recognizable thanks to the iconic number "Jimmy Jimmy Aaja Aaja". It gave her a nickname — the "Jimmy Jimmy girl". While Disco Dancer was a game-changer for Mithun, Kim's career didn't see the same momentum. She appeared in films like Hum Se Hai Zamana (1983) and Andar Baahar (1984), but neither did much for her trajectory. A bikini scene in Hum Se Hai Zamana led to

her being typecast in glamour roles, and substantive parts dried up. In 1984, she played a double role in Dilawar, again with Danny Denzongpa, but the film failed at the box office. A brief comeback came with Commando (1988), directed by B. Subhash, where she was cast opposite Hemant Birje, while the lead pair was Mithun and Mandakini. However, most of her scenes were edited out, a decision that reportedly left her disillusioned with the industry. Her personal life also began to unravel around the same time. Her relationship with Danny Denzongpa came to an end, and there were reports suggesting that actress Parveen Babi's re-entry into Danny's life may have created difficulties for Kim. Professionally, though, they crossed paths once more in Suniel Shetty's debut film Balwaan (1992), performing together in the song "Dhin Tak Dhin Tak". Post-Commando, Kim's roles were limited to dance numbers. Notable among them was a "tapori" item song alongside a young Salman Khan in Baaghi (1990). Her final film appearance came in Priyadarshan's Muskurahat (1992).

## Sivakarhikeyan tells Anirudh: Continue to remain jolly and give us hit songs to vibe!

Chennai: Actor Sivakarhikeyan, who shares a close bond with music director Anirudh, recently joked about his friend's single status, saying that when given a choice between Anirudh's marriage or more hit songs, he chose the latter. Speaking at the trailer launch event of his film Madharaasi, directed by A R Murugadoss, Sivakarhikeyan opened up about his long-time collaboration with Anirudh and why their combination has been so successful.

In a lighter vein, he recalled how, like many others, he too had suggested that Anirudh get married—so that the music director would also have to answer to someone every night.

"Everybody keeps asking why Anirudh is not getting married. We too have told him, 'Ani sir, get married sir. Why should we alone be the ones getting calls once the clock hits 8 at night, answering questions like, 'Where are you?' or 'When will you come home?'" Sivakarhikeyan quipped.

He added, "This man (Anirudh), on the other hand, wakes up at 8 pm happily, wondering if he should work that day or not. On such occasions, I would ask him, 'Why are you not getting married?' and Anirudh would reply, 'Let it go, I am jolly (very happy).' Then I realised, if he is jolly, we get hit songs. So I thought, do we want songs or marriage? And I decided what we really want are hit songs." Turning to Anirudh, he concluded: "Therefore, you continue to remain jolly sir, and keep giving us hit songs to vibe."

On a serious note, Sivakarhikeyan added that Anirudh is a huge inspiration, "not just for success, but also for how to handle success."