

## Bajrang Dal activists thrash teacher for misbehaving with girl students in Bhupalpally

Bhupalpally: Bajrang Dal activists thrashed a physical education teacher who was allegedly misbehaving with girl students of a private school and harassing them on social media.The incident occurred at the Balaji Integrated Teaching School (BITS) in Bhupalpally district headquarters on Thursday. Speaking to the media, the activists said some of the students had complained to them about the harassment by a teacher, identified as Banoth Mohan.Later, the activists lodged a complaint with the Bhupalpally police seeking action against the teacher. They also asked the school management to dismiss Mohan and another teacher Kiran, who was also allegedly troubling the students.

## Telangana liquor licence deadline extension challenged in High Court

GNS News Agency, Oct 23  
Hyderabad: The Congress government's move to raise more revenue by extending the last date for filing applications for liquor shop licences will now come under legal scrutiny, with the Telangana High Court accepting a writ petition challenging the extension. The court has scheduled the petition (WP 32030/25) for hearing on Friday.The State government had extended the last date for filing applications from October 18 to October 23. In its orders, the Excise Department said the decision was taken after receiving appeals from a few officials that many applicants could not submit applications due to the BC bandh on Saturday and the resulting disruption of banking and public transport services.However, this was seen by many as a mere excuse, since the extension of the deadline was viewed as a move to get more applications, each with a non-refundable fee of Rs 3 lakh, thereby generating more revenue for the cash-strapped government.Those opposing the move pointed out that when the Andhra Pradesh government extended the last date for filing applications for bar licences in 2019, sev-



eral applicants had moved the court. After hearing arguments, the court had set aside the government orders, calling them arbitrary and against the rules.Now, with applicants in Telangana filing a writ petition, officials are keeping their fingers crossed.Till October 18, about 90,000 applications were filed, and after the extension, about 4,000 more were submitted till Wednesday evening. Thursday is the last date for filing applications.

## Telangana Cabinet Meeting Set for Key Decisions



GNS News Agency, Oct 23  
The Telangana government will convene for an important cabinet meeting today at 3 pm in the Secretariat, chaired by Chief Minister Revanth Reddy. The agenda

prominently features discussions on BC reservations and local body elections.Ministers will review the report submitted by a legal expert committee concerning BC reservations within these elections. Notably, an ordinance is expected to be introduced to repeal the existing 'two-child rule' currently applied to local body elections.Further discussions will encompass the revitalisation of the SLBC tunnel works, the design tenders for the revival of the Kaleshwaram project, and the construction of the Pranahita-Chevella project, along with the Munneru Vagu retaining wall. Among other topics, the cabinet will also deliberate on matters related to the Panchayat Raj and R&D departments.

Additionally, the cabinet is anticipated to approve the proposal to name former minister Ramreddy Damodar Reddy in connection with the SRSP Stage-2 project. Overall, today's cabinet meeting is poised to serve as a crucial forum for significant decisions aimed at the progressive development of the state.

## KTR promises burial ground for Muslims in Jubilee Hills after BRS returns to power



GNS News Agency, Oct 23  
Hyderabad: BRS working president KT Rama Rao assured that land would be provided for a Muslim burial ground in Jubilee Hills constituency within a week of BRS returning to power, taking personal responsibility to secure land even if private land had to be purchased for public use.“The Congress deceived Muslims with promises for a burial ground. We will force them to provide land, but if the Congress fails, BRS chief K Chandrashekhar Rao will sign a government order within a week of returning to power. If there is no government land, we will purchase a couple of acres of private land and allocate it. It is my responsibility to ensure it,” he said.Speaking at Telangana Bhavan after inducting Hyderabad Youth Courage (HYC) founder Salman Khan into the party on Thursday, Rama Rao accused the Congress of deceiving minorities and running a “Bulldozer

Raj” under Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy. “People gave the Congress ‘mouka’ many times, but it only gave ‘dhoka’ in return,” he remarked.He recalled that during Chandrashekhar Rao’s tenure, over 125 acres were allotted to Muslim and Christian communities in Ranga Reddy and Medchal districts for burial and cremation grounds, contrasting it with the present government’s repeated deception. “Revanth Reddy gave military land to Muslims, despite knowing it was restricted property. This is nothing but betrayal,” he said.The BRS working president questioned why the Revanth Reddy government had no Muslim Minister or even a legislator. He accused the Congress of sidelining minority leaders like Mohd Shabbir Ali and Mohd Azharuddin. “This is the only Congress government in India without a single minority minister,” he said, adding that an honest IAS officer, SAM Rizvi, was forced to take VRS due to political pressure over a Rs 500 crore tender dispute between the Chief Minister and the Excise Minister.Calling the Congress regime a “Bulldozer Raj” modelled after Gujarat, Rama Rao said Hyderabad’s real estate sector had collapsed under Revanth Reddy’s misgovernance, ruining livelihoods for many families dependent on it. “Rahul Gandhi says Gujarat’s model failed, yet Revanth Reddy is embracing it,” he said, alleging that the Congress was deploying bulldozers under the guise of HYDRAA to demolish the homes of the poor, especially from the Muslim community. He urged Muslims to teach the Congress a lesson in the Jubilee Hills by-election.On the occasion, Salman Khan accused the Congress of conspiring to block his nomination and attempting to buy him out.

## Jagan slams Naidu for stealing credit for Hyderabad’s rise, says YSR, KCR laid real foundation

GNS News Agency, Oct 23  
Tadepalli: Former Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy on Wednesday launched a sharp attack on his successor N Chandrababu Naidu, accusing him of habitually taking credit for others’ achievements, from Hyderabad’s IT growth to Visakhapatnam’s data centre project.Pointing to Naidu’s repeated claims about Hyderabad’s development, Jagan said the TDP leader had earlier taken credit for the Cyber Towers in Madhapur, which was actually initiated by former Chief Minister N Janardhan Reddy.“The real IT revolution came under Dr YS Rajasekhara Reddy between 2004 and 2009, when projects like the Outer Ring Road, PVNR Expressway and GMR International Airport were completed,” he said, adding that Hyderabad’s emergence as

an IT powerhouse was driven by YSR and later expanded by K Chandrashekhar Rao after he became the first Chief Minister of Telangana.“Under YSR, IT exports rose from Rs 5,660 crore in 2003-2004 to Rs 32,509 crore in 2008-2009, and by 2014 reached Rs 57,000 crore. Today, Telangana’s IT exports stand at Rs 2 lakh crore, a legacy built by YSR and KCR, not Chandrababu Naidu,” Jagan said.Turning to the Visakhapatnam project, he accused Naidu of misleading the public by projecting the Google-Adani Data Centre as a TDP initiative. “In November 2020, during the pandemic, our government allotted land to Adani Group to set up a 300 MW Data Centre in Visakhapatnam. The foundation stone was formally laid on May 3, 2023,” he said.Jagan said the Subsea Cable Project linking Singapore and Visakhapatnam, a 3,900-km undersea data corridor, was also initiated by the YSRCP government.

## Alert issued as low pressure system brings heavy rain to Andhra Pradesh

A distinct low pressure area in the southwest Bay of Bengal is expected to weaken gradually and transform into a low-pressure zone within the next 12 hours. Meanwhile, a surface circulation continues along the Andaman Sea coast, intensifying the likelihood of heavy rains across Andhra Pradesh over the next 24 hours. The Meteorological Department has issued a red alert statewide, warning of flash floods in Guntur, Prakasam, Nellore, Chittoor, and Kurnool districts, as well as in Yanam. Officials have cautioned fishermen against heading out to sea.As a result of the ongoing low pressure system, rain is affecting various regions across the state, with low-lying areas in Nellore district experiencing flooding.

## \$8 billion package to rejuvenate India’s maritime ecosystem is a signal of ambition: PM Modi

GNS News Agency, Oct 23  
New Delhi: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday highlighted that the country’s growing and resilient industrial base with the ‘Make in India’ impetus and efforts to modernise, mechanise and digitise ports, along the busy east-west trade route, have provided the country with a unique advantage.The Prime Minister, in a post on X social media platform, referred to an article by Union Minister Sarbananda Sonowal which states that the government’s \$8 billion package to rejuvenate India’s shipbuilding and maritime ecosystem is not a routine budget line, but a signal of ambition.“The minister has underlined that the shipping industry once dismissed as a laggard in the energy transition, is now confronting a point of inflexion. Heading to the call for climate action, global momentum to tighten emissions standards have gathered speed, while financiers are also redirecting capital towards zero-carbon vessels and fuels, and technology is advancing faster. In this swirl of change, India stands at a rare confluence of opportunity and capability.

He refers to this as “a quiet revolution gathering momentum across the world’s oceans” in the article titled: ‘India can lead the global shift to green shipping.’Sonowal further states that the PM Modi government has worked towards building a solid base for renewable energy which has in turn positioned India with one of lowest renewable energy costs globally.A growing and resilient industrial base



with ‘Make in India’ impetus, and efforts to modernise, mechanise and digitise ports along the busy east-west trade route have provided the country with unique advantage — moving from a position of whether our maritime sector can join the global green maritime transition meaningfully, to whether we can lead it decisively.The government’s recent approval of Rs 69,725 crore (\$8 billion) package to reimagine, revive and rejuvenate India’s shipbuilding and maritime ecosystem is not a routine budget line, but a signal of ambition. By investing at scale, the PM Modi government has sent a message that India shall take a meaningful role in the global shift to low-carbon shipping, Sonowal states.

## Unruly, uncouth and uncivilised: Indians abroad criticised for boorish behaviour



GNS News Agency, Oct 23  
Hyderabad: As Indians celebrated Diwali across the world, several videos and reports of disruptive and inconsiderate behaviour surfaced online, showing groups of people creating a nuisance in parts of the United States, Canada and the United Kingdom.In many videos that captured people at their worst, Diwali, the festival of lights, appeared to have turned into a display of unruly behaviour, with some individuals damaging public property and disobeying local laws in foreign countries.

Viral clips on social media show police and fire departments in cities such as London, New York and Dallas, among others, rushing to control crowds that lit fireworks late into the night, causing disturbance on the streets.The Police Department in Morrisville, North Carolina in the US, posted on its community page on Tuesday, the night after

Diwali celebrations: “Recently, illegal fireworks were set off at Church Street Park, damaging the cricket field and leaving behind a significant amount of litter. The incident jeopardises community safety and negatively impacts local sports programmes and park visitors.”The disregard shown by sections of the Indian diaspora for local regulations has sparked widespread reactions on social media. A video posted on the Instagram page ‘nri\_adda’, run by non-resident Indians, shows a house catching fire in Edmonton, in Canada’s Alberta province. The video lends weight to the local authorities’ repeated calls for strict adherence to safety guidelines during such celebrations.The Indian community’s disregard for rules and guidelines issued by local authorities is not restricted to festivals. Such boorish behaviour is often seen during the foreign releases of films featuring Indian superstars.Recently, screenings of the Pawan Kalyan films They Call Him OG and Hari Hara Veera Mallu had to be disrupted in a few places as fans threw confetti and created chaos inside theatres. Videos of such instances also show theatre staff urging moviegoers to behave responsibly.Other instances of such uncouth behaviour include loud and disruptive rallies taken out by followers of Indian political parties living abroad when their favourite leaders visit those countries to address expatriates.

Meanwhile, some NRI associations have urged Indians living abroad not to indulge in such behaviour, emphasising the importance of respecting local laws and cultures. Responding to the incidents,

## KTR tears into Congress for forcing senior IAS officer to take VRS



GNS News Agency, Oct 23  
Hyderabad: BRS working president KT Rama Rao unleashed a blistering attack on the Revanth Reddy government, stating that it was harassing bureaucrats, even forcing to seek voluntary retirement from service (VRS). He blamed Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy and Excise Minister Jupally Krishna Rao for forcing senior IAS officer Syed Ali Murtaza Rizvi to opt for VRS.He said even senior IAS and IPS officers were fleeing the system, forced to take voluntary retirement to escape the mafia-style governance being run by a Cabinet that behaves like a Dandupalyam gang.

“Fear has gripped even the most upright officials. They are saying they want nothing to do with the Congress’ corrupt affairs. This Dandupalyam gang of Ministers, under Revanth Reddy’s leadership, has made honest governance impossible,” he said at a press meet in Hyderabad.Citing the case of senior IAS officer Rizvi, who recently sought VRS despite a decade of service left, Rama Rao said the officer was hounded out of the system.“Rizvi is known for his integrity and honesty. But unable to withstand the political pressure in a Rs 500-crore tender fight between the Chief Minister’s son-in-law and Minister Jupally Krishna Rao’s

son, he was forced to quit,” Rama Rao alleged.He said the Congress had stooped so low that instead of accepting Rizvi’s resignation gracefully, Minister Jupally wrote to the Centre demanding it be rejected and that an inquiry be initiated against him.

## KVP Ramachandra Rao Meets V. Hanumantha Rao



“Vaddepalli Kishore, Uppal, October 23 (Indian Chronicle):”“On the occasion of the Diwali festival, former Rajya Sabha member KVP Ramachandra Rao paid a courteous visit to the residence of former MP V. Hanumantha Rao at Amberpet on Thursday. During the meeting, KVP Ramachandra Rao felicitated V. Hanumantha Rao and extended Diwali greetings to him.”The two leaders reminisced about their past memories and discussed political matters and well-being. Former State Youth Congress Secretary Gaddam Ravi Kumar also participated in the program.



# Indian Chronicle

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## Communalism and 'secular' Hindi cinema

On the one hand, Hindi cinema industry proudly calls itself the last resort of secularism, with a supposedly seamless co-existence of various religions and faiths to keep churning out potboilers, one after the other. On the other, vigilantes who keep a constant track on the goings-on in the world's largest film industry react vociferously, critically commenting on the 'selective equality' which the industry bigwigs practice. Two such incidents have once again had the social media circuit flapping about. One is the Diwali greetings of Shah Rukh Khan when he posed with a 'tika' on his forehead along with his sons; this led to his fans and detractors clashing with each other online. Obviously, questions were raised about the Islamic identity of Shah Rukh, who has a Hindu wife. Not surprisingly, the liberal, secular types led by Shabana Azmi quickly rushed to his defence, supporting him for his well-meaning extension of greetings to his Hindu fans, a part of the 'Ganga Jamuni Tehzeeb', which our country has seemingly adhered to for eons now. Shabana's rabble-rouser husband Javed Akhtar too raised the hackles of the conservatives on both sides when he referred to the famous scene in the 1975 blockbuster 'Sholay' when Dharmendra hides behind a statue of Lord Shiva, attempting to make his ladylove Hema Malini believe it is the Lord himself who is speaking to her. Akhtar doubted whether in today's times, he would dare to write such a scene again! Taking him on, Lucky Ali, the maverick singer-hero son of comedian Mehmood, pointed out that Akhtar had the gumption to tell the audience that the Hindus should not become like Muslims (read intolerant) and instead make the minority community like them (alluding to the tolerance levels of the majority community, one presumes).



## SRI HARSHITHA GOT NATIONAL 4TH PRIZE IN THE RANGOSTAV COMPITATION

"In the medak district veldurthy center nalacheruvu sriharshita got acheived 4th place to the rangostav compitation she is studying zphs govt high school veldurthy.



""Mandava Srisailam..Yadadri Bhuvanagiri District Bureau... (Indian Chronicle.. October 23):- Telangana State Government Whip Aleru MLA Beerla Ayiliah inaugurated the CC road works at Palugula Maisamma Temple in Turkapally Mandal of Yadadri Bhuvanagiri District."Telangana State Government Whip Aleru MLA Beerla Ayiliah inaugurated the paddy procurement centers in Veera Reddypalli and Madhapur villages of Turkapally Mandal.

## Lights, Camera, Abu Dhabi: Deepika Padukone Becomes Experience Abu Dhabi's Newest Brand Ambassador alongside Bollywood's Powerhouse Ranveer Singh



Hyderabad:Experience Abu Dhabi, the destination brand of the Department of Culture and Tourism – Abu Dhabi, has announced Deepika Padukone as the newest regional brand ambassador. Deepika joins her husband and Bollywood Icon Ranveer Singh, who has been Experience Abu Dhabi's brand ambassador since 2023, officially making them the first Bollywood power couple to represent the destination together. Together, they show how Abu Dhabi connects with travellers everywhere in ways that feel personal and real.

With her global appeal as a fan favourite to audiences in India and beyond, Deepika will share her journey through Abu Dhabi – showcasing the city as a destination rich in experiences, with something for everyone to see, do and

discover."Abu Dhabi is the ultimate family hotspot. They have it all: culture, adventure, beaches, entertainment, you name it," said powerhouse Ranveer Singh. "I am incredibly proud to have shared this city with the world over the years, and what makes me even happier is that I now get to experience this journey with my wife who joins in as a brand ambassador, Deepika. We are celebrating everything that makes Abu Dhabi so special – from its family friendly attractions to the warmth of Emirati hospitality, it is a place where people come to create memories for life."

As brand ambassador, Deepika will front upcoming campaigns spotlighting the emirate's vast experiences and seasonal offerings, including the festival of Diwali. Through brand films and storytelling, Deepika will invite audiences to explore Abu Dhabi. Whether opting for a slow, relaxing day kayaking in the mangroves or a jam-packed itinerary filled with adrenaline pumping adventures, there is something for everyone in Abu Dhabi.

Deepika Padukone said: "Travel is always more meaningful when it is with the people you love. Ranveer has explored and celebrated Abu Dhabi with so much passion over the last 3 years, and now I get to join him on this journey. I cannot wait to travel, explore, and experience everything this beautiful city has to offer – from its vibrant traditions to the warmth of being welcomed like family. Excited for what is ahead with Abu Dhabi!"

## Stovekraft Accelerates Growth with Target of 500 Exclusive Stores by 2027



Hyderabad: Stove Kraft Limited (NSE/BSE: Stovekraft), India's leading kitchen and home appliances company and the force behind popular brands such as Pigeon, Gilma, and BLACK+DECKER, has announced plans to significantly scale its retail footprint, targeting 500 exclusive stores by April 2027. The company's journey of consistent performance and sustained growth reached an important milestone recently with the successful launch of over 300th standalone Pigeon business exclusive outlets led by its flagship brand, Pigeon. This milestone signals Stovekraft's strong momentum, reinforcing its deep connect with households across India.

The company's retail expansion has been carefully designed to cater to the evolving needs of consumers

across India's diverse markets. With an emphasis on both metro cities and smaller towns, Stovekraft has already made significant inroads into Tier 1, 2, and 3 cities, and is now intensifying its focus on North and West India for the next year. In particular, states like Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, and Bihar are expected to see a proliferation of Stovekraft's retail presence as the company works to ensure its products are accessible to more customers.To support this ambitious retail expansion, Stovekraft is actively inviting franchise partners to join its growing network of exclusive stores.

Speaking on the occasion, Mr. Rajendra Gandhi, Managing Director, Stovekraft Limited, said, "We are proud to have crossed the 300-store milestone, but this is just the beginning". "Our goal is to expand to 500 standalone Pigeon business exclusive outlets by 2027, supported by our franchise model, which not only enables us to expand efficiently but also creates employment opportunities across regions. This model builds on our legacy of customer trust, ensuring that as we grow, we continue to uphold our promise of quality, satisfaction and long-term relationships with households across India," Mr. Gandhi added. The key differentiators of Stovekraft's exclusive retail stores include a wide range of products across multiple categories, from kitchen appliances to home essentials. Each store is designed to offer a superior shopping experience, with an emphasis on customer service and product knowledge.

## Philip Morris International's India Affiliate Expands 'Grow Talent Grow Business' to Strengthen Career Ownership and Coaching Culture



Hyderabad:Philip Morris International Inc.'s (PMI) India affiliate, IPM India, is accelerating its commitment to talent development with the expansion of its flagship initiative, Grow Talent Grow Business (GTGB). Built on two powerful enablers: the Career Ownership Growth Model, a reflective framework enabling self-driven career planning, and WeAce, a digital coaching platform that democratizes access to personalized development support. The program empowers employees to take charge of their careers while aligning personal growth with business priorities.

The Career Ownership Growth Model initiative provides employees with a platform to reflect on their aspirations, strengths, and development needs. It fosters agility, encourages feedback, and helps individuals stay relevant in a fast-changing business environment. This model not only serves as a tool but also enables a mindset shift empowering employees to lead their own development journeys with confidence and purpose.

Complementing this, the WeAce Coaching Platform democratizes access to development by offering one-on-one and group coaching at scale. With flexible formats and open access, the platform offers a unique opportunity for

the employees to wear the hat of a coach for anybody based on their readiness and aspirations, creating space for meaningful peer-to-peer development. With participation at 53% across India and other growth markets, WeAce is nurturing a culture of shared learning across both technical and leadership areas like Best-in-Class Merchandising, Commercial Acumen, Leading in Ambiguity and Service Leadership.Navaneel Kar, Managing Director, IPM India said, "With global shifts reshaping industries, continuous learning is not just an investment in individuals, it also drives business acceleration. Through GTGB, we are empowering our people to take ownership of their growth and contribute at their highest potential while driving meaningful impact for the business."

Kingshuk Das, Director – People & Culture, IPM India added, "At PMI, we believe that development must be inclusive, and driven by the impact it creates for individuals, teams, and the organization. GTGB is helping us unlock the full potential of our workforce making coaching is accessible, feedback is valued, and career ownership a shared responsibility. In India, this approach is not only enabling people reach highest potential but also building the leaders of the future."



ter Revanth Reddy graciously accepted the invitation and said he would attend the wedding to bless the newlyweds, according to Venkateshwara Reddy.

## Congress leader Janampalli Venkateshwara Reddy invites Chief Minister Revanth Reddy to his daughter's wedding

""VADDEPALLI KISHORE, Uppal, October 23 (Indian Chronicle): ""Senior Congress leader from Uppal constituency, Janampalli Venkateshwara Reddy, met Chief Minister Revanth Reddy on Thursday and invited him to attend his daughter Meghana Reddy's wedding, which is scheduled to take place on October 29 at BMR Convention, Sagar Road."Venkateshwara Reddy cordially invited the Chief Minister and presented the wedding invitation. Chief Minis-

## Peddapalli DCP and Ramagundam ACP Commend Potharaveni Kranti Kumar for Outstanding Commitment to Blood Donation on His" 50th Donation Milestone.



""P.S.ASHOKAN"Karimngar Bureo""On the solemn occasion of Police Martyrs' Week, an exemplary act of altruism was recognized under the auspices of the Indian Red Cross Society and the Lions Club of Manthani. Potharaveni Kranti Kumar, having selflessly donated blood 50 times, was felicitated with great honor and respect by Peddapalli District Deputy Commissioner of Police (DCP) Mr. Karunakar, Assistant Commissioner of Police (ACP) Mr. Madatha Ramesh of Ramagundam, alongside Manthani Circle Inspector Mr. Raju, Sub-Inspectors Mr. Ramesh and Mr. Sagar, Indian Red Cross Society Peddapalli Chairman Mr. Rajagopal, and Lions Club of Manthani President Mr. Medagoni Venkatesh.""The distinguished gathering presented Mr. Kranti Kumar with a ceremonial shawl as a token of appreciation for his unwavering dedication to the noble cause of blood donation. Over the years, he has contributed not only through 49 prior blood donations but also through 12 platelet donations, underscoring his extraordinary commitment to saving lives.""Notably, Mr. Kranti Kumar's humanitarian contributions have previously earned him accolades from the Governor of Telangana, further cementing his status as an inspirational figure in community service and philanthropy.

## Pool Singh Chauhan takes charge as Uppal Mandal MRO



""VADDEPALLI KISHORE, Uppal, October 23 (Indian Chronicle):""Pool Singh Chauhan has taken charge as the Mandal Revenue Officer (MRO) of Uppal. Previously, he served as the MRO of Bachupally and has now been transferred to Uppal, while Vanireddy, who worked as Uppal MRO, has been transferred to Bachupally."Chauhan has served as an MRO for nearly 12 years in the districts of Warangal and Jangaon. Speaking after assuming charge, MRO Pool Singh Chauhan said he would work diligently to protect government lands within the mandal's jurisdiction. He also assured that he would extend full cooperation to ensure better public services for the people of the mandal."He urged residents to approach him directly with any public grievances, assuring that he would bring such issues to the notice of the government and strive to resolve them. Chauhan appealed to everyone for their support and cooperation in his efforts.

## OBC Cell Congress Leader Takes Charge of Erragadda Campaign, Extends Full Support to Naveen Yadav in Jubilee Hills By-Election

""NARRA SRINIVAS REDDY (NSR), Medchal - Malkajgiri Staff Reporter, October 23, (Indian chronicle): In the Jubilee Hills by-election, I was given the responsibility of overseeing the campaign activities for the Erragadda division on behalf of the Congress Party OBC Cell. I sincerely thank the Congress Party and OBC Chairman Nuthi Srikanth Goud for trusting me with this important role. During the campaign, I actively worked with local leaders, volunteers, and party workers to strengthen the Congress presence in the area. Our efforts focused on reaching every voter and spreading the party's vision for inclusive growth and development. I also extend my full support to Congress candidate Naveen Yadav and contributed wholeheartedly to his campaign, striving to ensure his success in the election. I remain committed to working for the party's ideals and the welfare of the people in the days to come.





## Banjara Hills BJP Candidate Lankala Deepak Reddy's Campaign Gains Momentum in Borabanda



“VADDEPALLI KISHORE, Uppal, October 23 (Indian Chronicle):”“As part of the Jubilee Hills by-election cam-

paign, BJP candidate Lankala Deepak Reddy conducted an intensive door-to-door campaign in Borabanda on Thursday, accompanied by Corporator Bandaru Srivani Venkatar Rao and several party leaders. Speaking on the occasion, Corporator Bandaru Srivani Venkatar Rao said that Lankala Deepak Reddy is a dedicated leader committed to public service and that the people's confidence lies firmly with the BJP candidate. She expressed strong belief that the BJP would secure a resounding victory in this by-election. “She further added that the people of Jubilee Hills trust that Lankala Deepak Reddy will always remain accessible to them and work tirelessly for their welfare. The campaign has been receiving overwhelming support from the public across the area. Among those who participated in the campaign were District President Malla Reddy, former President Kantha Rao, former OBC Chairman Tadoori Srinivas, Uppal Constituency BJP Convener Balachander, Gaddam Sai Kiran, Tirupataiah, and several other BJP leaders.

## When talking about Chamala, don't talk too close..

Gadari Kishore:- Former Bhuvanagiri Municipal Chairman Barre Jangir

““Barre Jahangir warns former MLA Gadari Kishore”“Mandava Srisailam.. Yadadri Bhuvanagiri District Bureau... (Indian Chronicle.. October 23):- Congress party leaders, former Municipal Chairman Barre Jahangir, said that former MLA Gadari Kishore, who was defeated as Tungaturthi MLA in the 2023 assembly elections, is talking out of his mind. Speaking to the media on Wednesday, he said, "Has former MLA Gadari forgotten that Chamala Kiran Kumar Reddy won the Bhuvanagiri MP with a huge majority in the 2024 parliamentary elections..?" He made comments. Chamala Kiran Kumar Reddy did not get a hundred votes, and he He was furious that a cheater should know about his past before talking as he pleases. He was upset that even though the people of Tungaturthi constituency kicked him out in the last assembly elections, he was making derogatory comments about Bhuvanagiri MP Chamala Kiran Kumar Reddy and Congress party leaders to please KTR and KCR. He warned that he should stop talking in an uncivilized manner, otherwise the Congress party ranks will teach him a suitable lesson. Be careful, Gadari Kishore, if



you open your mouth, you will become a tsunami.. From now on, when you talk about Bhuvanagiri Chamala Kiran Kumar Reddy, keep your mouth shut and speak, warned former Bhuvanagiri Municipal Chairman Barre Jangir.



Mandava Srisailam..Yadadri Bhuvanagiri District Bureau... (Indian Chronicle..October 23):- Telangana State Government Whip Aleru MLA Beerla Ayilaiah participated in a morning program in Vasalamarri village of Turkapalli mandal of Yadadri Bhuvanagiri district. Later, Government



Whip MLA Beerla Ayilaiah, who is touring the field, inspected the progress of the construction of Indiramma houses and various issues in the village.

Yadadri Bhuvanagiri District Collector Hanumantha Rao participated in this program.

## Yadadri Bhuvanagiri District Collector Hanumantha Rao said that farmers should sell the grain harvested at the purchase centers only



““Mandava Srisailam..Yadadri Bhuvanagiri District Bureau... (Indian Chronicle.. October 23):- Yadadri Bhuvanagiri District Collector Hanumantha Rao said that farmers should sell the grain harvested at the purchase centers only. On Thursday, the District Collector conducted a surprise inspection of the IKP grain purchase center in Mallapuram village of Yadagirigutta mandal. “How many piles of grain arrived on Thursday? Are all the piles being checked for moisture content. He said that the moisture content should be immediately weighed and loaded into lorries and trans-



ported to the relevant mills without delay. He said that it is not possible to have grain storage in the purchase centers. When the farmers requested to provide electricity facility as there is no electricity facility in this purchase center, he immediately called the relevant electricity SE and ordered to provide electricity facility by the evening. He advised the farmers not to trust any outside brokers and sell the grain. He advised them to sell the grain in the purchase centers set up by the government. “The relevant officials participated in this program.

## Wankidi RTA Check Post Closure

"Indian Chronicle" kumrambheem, Asifabad, Dis-tribt Reporte,Jade Srinivas.October.23.”“Wankidi,RTA check conducted by the transport department in the state Orders were issued from the State Commissioner's Office to close the posts immediately. In this context, the Wankidi check post on the Maharashtra border was closed by 5 pm on Wednesday.

Under the leadership of District Transport Officer Ramchander, the boards and temporary sheds at the check post were removed. Plexiglass was installed in the premises to indicate that it was closed.

The computers, files and other equipment in the office were moved to the district center. Speaking on this occasion, the District Transport Officer said that from now on, vehicle inspections will be stopped. He said that the equipment related to the office will be moved to the district office and stored. He said that the staff will report to the Adilabad Deputy Commissioner's Office.



## Sardar Vallabhbhai Patil's 150th birth anniversary celebrations should be held grandly under the auspices of the Ministry of Youth Affairs, Government of India



Yadadri Bhuvanagiri District Collector Hanumantha Rao”“Mandava Srisailam..Yadadri Bhuvanagiri District Bureau... (Indian Chronicle..October 23):- Yadadri Bhuvanagiri District Collector M. Hanumantha Rao has released a brochure to organize the 150th birth anniversary celebrations of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patil in a grand and prestigious manner under the auspices of the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports, Government of India. “In this, hundreds of people will be selected from the padayatras of each district and will

participate in this grand padayatra. Along the route of this Mahayatra, film screenings, cultural programs, dancers, sportsmen, students, public representatives, people, and partners will be organized in a very beautiful way. In every district and in every parliamentary constituency, united padayatras will be organized from October 31 to November 25. These padayatras will be organized in 3 assembly constituencies in each district. A plan will be prepared at the district level to connect this padayatra, covering a distance of about 8 to 10 kilometers. In this, the district collector, officials, public representatives (MP, MLC, MLA), workers, youth and students, etc. will participate. On November 26, the national stage Maha Aikita Padayatra will be organized.

This program will start from Karamnad (Gujarat), the birthplace of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, and will cover 152 km. The procession will end at the statue of unity. Apart from this, essay writing competitions, quiz competitions, etc. will be organized online through (My Bharath Portal). Interested youth and youth should participate in the competitions online, said District Youth and Sports Officer K. Dhananjayulu. The organizers said that My Bharat Nalgonda in-charge Ganta. Rajesh, My Bharat Yadadri Bhuvanagiri district volunteer Pulepaka Ambedkar will participate in this program.

## Ghatkesar Firing Incident – Accused Arrested Within 12 Hours

““NARRA SRINIVAS REDDY (NSR), Medchal - Malkajgiri Staff Reporter, October 23, (Indian chronicle): Rachakonda police arrested the accused within 12 hours in the Ghatkesar firing case involving cow protection activist Bidla Prashanth Kumar alias Sonu Singh. The incident occurred on the evening of October 22 at Yamnampet, where an argument broke out after Prashanth stopped illegal cattle transportation. During the altercation, Mohammed Ibrahim Qureshi fired at Prashanth with a country-made pistol. The bullet struck his chest, and he was shifted from Medipally hospital to Yashoda hospital, where doctors reported his condition to be stable after surgery. Arrested Accused: Mohammed Ibrahim Qureshi (24, Bandlaguda) Kurva Srinivas (29, Shabad) Hasan Bin Mohsin (22, Kalapathar) Another accused, Mohammed Hanif Qureshi (34, Rajendranagar), is absconding. Seized Items: A country-made pistol, Swift car (AP-09 CK 4788), mobile phones, empty cartridges, and blood-stained clothes. Police investigation revealed that Ibrahim suffered a financial loss of nearly one crore rupees due to Prashanth's cow protection activities, which led to the dispute. Ibrahim also has previous cases under the Cow Slaughter Prohibition Act and



Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act. The operation was conducted under the supervision of Rachakonda Police Commissioner G. Sudheer Babu, with the guidance of Malkajgiri Zone DCP P.V. Padmaja, Additional DCP Venkata Ramana, and ACP S. Chakrapani. The Pocharam police team and Malkajgiri Special Operations Team jointly apprehended the accused near Shamshabad. Commissioner Sudheer Babu appreciated the police teams for their swift action in nabbing the culprits.

## Suresh Dental Clinic Inaugurated at Rampally Crossroads



““NARRA SRINIVAS REDDY (NSR), Medchal - Malkajgiri Staff Reporter, Nagaram, October 23, (Indian chronicle): A new dental clinic named Suresh Dental Clinic was inaugurated at Rampally Crossroads by Uppal MLA Bandari Laxma Reddy on Thursday. Speaking on the occasion, Dr. Suresh said the clinic was established with the aim of providing quality dental care with modern facilities to the public. Former Nagaram Municipal ex Commis-



sioner Kaukutla Chandra Reddy, BRS leader Nemuri Mahesh Goud, local representatives, officials, and residents attended the event. Among those present were Dr. Dheevath Suresh (BDS), D. Chander (Assistant Engineer, TSRTC), Dr. J. Pratap Kumar (Ph.D.), V. Harilol (Executive Engineer), Tarachand (Section Engineer), Dr. Vani, D. Chukkabai (ASI), J. Ramulu, D. Santosh, D. Babu Naik, D. Hanuman, and others.

## Preparatory Meeting Ahead of Jubilee Hills By-Election



““NARRA SRINIVAS REDDY (NSR), Medchal - Malkajgiri Staff Reporter, October 23, (Indian chronicle): In view of the upcoming Jubilee Hills Assembly constituency by-election, the BRS held a preparatory meeting under the leadership of party chief K. Chandrashekar Rao (KCR) to strategize for the victory of party candidate Maganti Sunitha Gopinath.

The meeting was attended by BRS working president K.T. Rama Rao (KTR), MLA and former minister T. Harish Rao, Uppal MLA Bandari Laxma Reddy, senior party leaders, in-charges of all divisions and clusters within the Jubilee Hills constituency, as well as former ministers, MLAs, MLCs, ex-MLAs, ex-MLCs, former chairpersons, senior leaders, local corporators, and former corporators. Party



leaders discussed election strategies, booth-level planning, and coordination among different wings to ensure a strong performance in the by-election.



# AE Narender and Anusha Felicitated for Success in Group Exams



“NARRA SRINIVAS REDDY (NSR), Medchal - Malkajgiri Staff Reporter, October 23, (Indian chronicle): Transco Metro East SE Lakshman Raju congratulated AEs Narender and Anusha, who recently secured jobs through

Group Service Examinations, and wished them great success in their future careers. He attended a felicitation program as the chief guest on Thursday at the Moulali Substation, organized under the supervision of DE Rajanarsu and ADE Dharma Bhiksham. AE Banoth Narender, who achieved a Group-1 rank and was selected as DSP in the Police Department, and AE D. Anusha, who secured a Group-2 rank and will soon take charge as ACTO at Bhongir, were felicitated by SE Lakshman Raju and DE Rajanarsu. During the program, AEs Kotagiri Srinivas and Jyothin Raju, who were recently promoted to the post of ADE, were also congratulated. DES C.H. Satyanarayana, T. Manohar, ADES Naveen, Venkatesh Balakrishna, Rajasekhara Reddy, Usha, and AEs Alekhya, Satyaprakash, Joshna, Mallesh, along with other staff members, attended the event.

# Welcome to the New Kapra Mandal Tahsildar, Baireddy Rajesh

“NARRA SRINIVAS REDDY (NSR), Medchal - Malkajgiri Staff Reporter, Kapra, October 23, (Indian Chronicle): Baireddy Rajesh has officially taken charge as the Tahsildar of Kapra Mandal, Medchal-Malkajgiri District. On this occasion, RTI Activists' District Convener Tadoori Gagan Kumar met the newly appointed officer and conveyed his best wishes. During the interaction, Gagan Kumar requested the Tahsildar to take proactive steps for the protection of government lands under the Kapra Mandal limits. He mentioned that the previous Tahsildar had installed government signboards and fencing around several survey lands to prevent encroachments and urged that all such lands continue to be safeguarded effectively. Responding positively, Tahsildar Rajesh assured that strict action will be taken against land grabbers and that his office will act immediately upon receiving any related complaints to ensure government properties are fully protected. Narsimha Chary and Nagesh were also present during the meeting.



# “Teachers Must Be Relieved from Midday Meal Responsibilities to Focus on Quality Education” – STU District President Merugu Satish



“P. S. ASHOKAN”Karimngar Bureo”Peddapalli, October 23.””” State Teachers Union (STU) Peddapalli District President Merugu Satish emphasized that to ensure uncompromised academic standards and holistic educational progress in government schools, teachers must be completely freed from all non-academic duties — particularly those related to the Midday Meal Scheme. He appealed to the government to entrust the implementation of the scheme to specialized agencies, allowing teachers to dedicate their time and energy exclusively to teaching and student development.””Addressing a large gathering of educators during the STU membership enrollment drive held in

Manthani Mandal, Satish noted that numerous teachers voiced serious concerns regarding the burden imposed by the Midday Meal responsibilities. They stated that managing meal distribution and related administrative tasks has significantly hindered their ability to focus on classroom instruction. Furthermore, they questioned the fairness of holding teachers personally accountable — even facing suspensions — for operational lapses in a scheme plagued by systemic and logistical challenges at the ground level.””Satish assured that the STU will vigorously present these grievances to the State Government, urging immediate reforms to safeguard teachers from undue administrative pressures. He further demanded the expeditious clearance of all pending bills, reiterating that the government must honor its commitment to release the second installment of Dearness Allowance (DA) announced for October without delay.””Highlighting another long-pending issue, Satish called upon the government to take prompt and decisive action regarding the implementation of Health Cards for teachers and employees, ensuring effective and hassle-free access to medical services.””The event saw the active participation of Mulkalla Rajasekhara, Manthani Mandal General Secretary; Boge Chandrasekhara, District Additional General Secretary; Kinnera Srinivas, District Vice President; Maddi Ramu, Mandal Vice President; along with several other executive committee members and local educators.

# Yadadri Bhuvanagiri District Magistrate V Madhavi Latha, Additional District Collector A. Bhaskar Rao, conducted a surprise inspection of the ST Inter and Degree Girls' Hostel in Singannagudem.



Mandava Srisailem.. Yadadri Bhuvanagiri District Bureau... (Indian Chronicle.. October 23):- The District Legal Services Authority, Yadadri Bhuvanagiri Secretary V Madhavi Latha, Additional District Collector A. Bhaskar Rao, conducted a surprise inspection of the ST Inter and Degree Girls' Hostel in Singannagudem and identified the lack of



facilities. After inquiring face to face with the students, the hostel in-charge was directed to take immediate action on the lack of facilities.”He directed the District Hostel Officer Sahitya, who was present during the visit, to provide breakfast, lunch, milk and other facilities to the students. They suggested reviewing and taking appropriate action.

# Sadar Utsav is a Symbol of Unity and Harmony“— Congress Incharge Parameshwar Reddy

Nacharam, Indian Chronicle, October 23: “Uppal Constituency Congress Party Incharge Mandamala Parameshwar Reddy stated that Sadar Utsav symbolizes unity and harmony. The Sadar celebrations were grandly organized at Annapura Colony, Nacharam, under the leadership of Vinod Yadav.”As the chief guest, Parameshwar Reddy witnessed the impressive bull performances and youth dances, which greatly entertained the audience.”Speaking on the occasion, Parameshwar Reddy said that under the leadership of Chief Minister Revanth Reddy, the Congress government is committed to the welfare of the Yadav community. He added that the government is sincere about implementing 42% BC reservations and criticized the BJP and BRS for deceiving the backward classes.”He extended his greetings to all Yadav brothers on the occasion of the festival.”



# Harassing teachers is wrong - Outa

“Indian Chronicle Tarnaka OU October23: The Osmania University Teachers Association (OUTA) general body meeting was held at the OU Science College Conference Hall on Thursday. Speaking on the occasion, OUTA President Prof. Manohar said that it is not right to harass teachers for various reasons. He said that the problems between non-teaching, teaching and students should be resolved. But he demanded that harassment of teachers should stop. The Vice Chancellor said that it is not right to file cases against teachers. They discussed various problems faced by regular teachers in the university at length. He mainly said that it is not right to use the recent CAS interview irregularities and SC/ST atrocity cases against OC teachers who are OUTA. The general body meeting was of the opinion that the cases already filed against teachers should be dropped and withdrawn. He said that OUTA will announce future action to resolve the problems of the university. Professors Nathaniel and Venkateswara Rao, and more than 100 faculty members participated in this meeting.



# Gayam Sridhar Reddy meets Chief Minister Revanth Reddy“

“Vaddepalli Kishore, Uppal, October 23 (Indian Chronicle):”””Habsiguda Reddy Association President Gayam Sridhar Reddy met Chief Minister Revanth Reddy on Thursday and extended Diwali greetings to him in a respectful manner. On this occasion, the Chief Minister warmly interacted with Sridhar Reddy and enquired about the current political situation as well as the developmental activities of the Habsiguda Reddy Welfare Association.”Expressing his gratitude, Gayam Sridhar Reddy thanked the Chief Minister for personally recognizing and greeting him with warmth. It is noteworthy that the Chief Minister also recalled and appreciated Sridhar Reddy's past services as the Chairman of the Habsiguda Temple Committee.



# GHMC Deputy Floor Leader Koppula Narsimhma Reddy Participates in DGP Office Protest Over Attack on Cow Protector Prashanth



“NARRA SRINIVAS REDDY (NSR), Medchal - Malkajgiri Staff Reporter, October 23, (Indian Chronicle): condemning the brutal attack on cow protector Prashanth near Pocharam Police Station limits under Ghatkesar, GHMC Deputy Floor Leader and Mansoorabad Corporator Koppula Narsimhma Reddy participated in a protest led by the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) at the DGP office on Wednesday. The protesters demanded stringent action against those responsible for the assault. Police were deployed in large numbers to prevent the siege, leading to tense scenes at the site. Koppula Narsimhma Reddy, along with several BJP leaders, was taken into police custody



and shifted to the Begumpet Police Station. Speaking on the occasion, Narsimhma Reddy said attacks on cow protectors are an attack on democratic values. He added that the assault on Prashanth is not just on an individual but on the values and beliefs associated with cow protection. He urged the government to take immediate action and ensure strict punishment for the culprits.

# Andhra speeds up Polavaram–Banakacharla project despite Telangana’s outrage



GNS News Agency, Oct 23  
Hyderabad: Andhra Pradesh is pushing ahead with its plans for the contentious Polavaram–Banakacharla Link Project, ignoring protests and formal pleas from Telangana to halt the work. The AP government has fast-tracked preparations for its Detailed Project Report (DPR), which aims to channel floodwaters from the Godavari River into the Krishna basin. Despite Telangana's repeated calls for the Centre's intervention, AP's efforts show no signs of slowing.

Telangana officials have been voicing concern over AP's plans, which they say violate interstate pacts, but their objections have made little impact on either the neighbouring State or the Central Water Commission (CWC). Andhra's Water Resources Department has issued a tender worth Rs 9.20 crore for consultancy services to prepare the DPR. The scope includes geological surveys, hydrological analysis and environmental studies, which are all key requirements for CWC approval. AP officials emphasise that, as the downstream riparian, the State has the right to utilise the 2,000–3,000 thousand million cubic feet (tmctf) of Godavari floodwater that flows unused into the Bay of Bengal each year. “This isn't provocation; it's a practical necessity,” a department source said. A pre-feasibility report is already in New Delhi, with AP aiming to complete the full DPR in three months. Indications are that the State could start diversions as early as 2027, with the project expected to redirect about 200 tmctf of surplus water from the Polavaram reservoir to the Banakacharla headworks in Kurnool district. The proposed diversion, presented as a plan to irrigate more than 2 lakh acres in the parched

Rayalaseema region, has caused heartburn in Telangana. At an estimated Rs 80,112 crore, AP claims the project will be integrated with India's national river-linking initiative. The move has reignited tensions between the two States, carved from a single entity just over a decade ago. Telangana views the link as a threat to its water share under the 2014 Andhra Pradesh Reorganisation Act and the Godavari Water Disputes Tribunal Award. On October 15, Telangana Irrigation Engineer-in-Chief Mohd Amjad Hussain wrote to the CWC and the Polavaram Project Authority opposing the PBLP. “The diversion goes beyond what is allowed in the Polavaram blueprint and could flood our lands with backwater,” Hussain stated, urging the Environmental Appraisal Committee to reject the pre-feasibility report at its next meeting. Andhra officials counter that the plan only taps excess flows and will not encroach on upstream rights. They are confident of proceeding once the DPR is finalised, given that the NDA government is in power both in the State and at the Centre. Tensions between the two Telugu States are escalating as work on the DPR gains momentum. The CWC's silence has only fuelled frustration in Telangana. “Their silence speaks volumes,” a senior State official remarked.



Newly appointed Kapra MRO Baireddy Rajesh was met by Indian Chronicle Medchal-Malkajgiri staff reporter Narra Srinivas Reddy (NSR) and Vartha Tarangalu district staffer Gangi Krishna at his office



## ‘Higher than Qutub Minar’: India’s ‘tallest’ watch tower in Howrah to open next year



GNS News Agency, Oct 23

According to engineer Ram Ratan Chowdhury, director of Panchadeep Construction, “The banquet hall can hold small functions like birthdays, ring ceremonies and rice-eating ceremonies for a maximum of 200 persons.” Construction began around seven years ago but was stalled for about two years during the Covid pandemic, he added. Speaking to The Indian Express, Chowdhury said, “I have roamed all around the world and saw that practically in all countries such towers are there. I felt that in India also there should be such a tall tower. If such a tower was built here in Calcutta, it would become a highlight for the country. I have given an additional feature, which is a revolving restaurant — in most towers there is no revolving restaurant.” The 400-foot watch tower will have two high-speed elevators to carry 24 people at a time. At the top, an open viewing deck will be equipped with telescopes to offer panoramic views — from Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose International Airport and the city’s two iconic bridges to the river Ganga. “One can see everything in a 20 km radius — from bridges to planes taking off. They will get a panoramic view of the city,” Chowdhury said.

Safety measures have been put in place, with tall railings, fire safety clearance, and structural safety permits. At

a time, 150-200 persons will be allowed on the top deck, with a maximum stay of 30 minutes. Beyond that, visitors will be charged extra. “There will be different coloured wristbands. One group will have yellow bands with time written on them, then the next group will have red bands. This way, we’ll know who is staying for how long. If anyone stays beyond half an hour, they’ll be charged extra. That’s how the entire thing will be controlled,” said Chowdhury.

The construction cost of the tower is around Rs 75 crore. It stands inside Bellilious Park, which is being developed with an amusement park, go-karting, water sports, and a toy train over an area of 20 acres, leased from the state government. “The 42 residential complex is 600 feet high, but that is only for residents — this tower is for the public. It will be an attraction for all. When people go up 400 feet, it will raise the hair on one’s body,” said Chowdhury.

The ticket price is expected to be Rs 100 on weekdays and Rs 150 on weekends. “We have to keep prices keeping in mind the purchasing capacity of the people here,” he said. According to Chowdhury, this will be India’s tallest tower accessible to the public, as physical entries are currently barred at monuments like Shahid Minar and Qutub Minar. “This monument is a gift or tribute from my side to this nation. It is a long-term thing for the next 100 years,” he said. The tower is more than twice as tall as the Biswa Bangla Gate in New Town, which stands at 55 metres (around 180 feet). Its foundation is 35 metres deep — over 10 storeys — with 169 pilings to make it earthquake-resistant. The diameter at the plinth level is 40 metres, narrowing to 22 metres at the top deck and 12 metres at the bottom shaft. Around 1,400 tonnes of steel have been used in its construction. Dr Sujoy Chakraborty, Board of Administrators, Howrah Municipal Corporation, said, “We had gone for an inspection. There is still work going on. Once complete, when it opens for the public, it will be an added feather of pride for the city and the state.”

## ATS raids houses, offices of 19 suspects in Pune in connection with 2023 ISIS terror-funding case

GNS News Agency, Oct 23

The Maharashtra Police Anti Terrorism Squad (ATS) Thursday raided homes and offices of 19 suspects in Kondhwa, Khadak, Wanavdi, Khadki and Bhosari areas of Pune in connection with the alleged ISIS terror funding and firearms supply case of 2023. ATS officers said that, based on leads obtained during further investigation into this case, multiple raids and searches were being conducted at various locations in Pune Thursday.

While ATS detained some of the suspects for questioning, it has, so far, not confirmed any arrests during the ongoing operation. A huge police force was deployed in locations where the raids were carried out. “The search operation and the investigation are on,” ATS said in a press statement about the searches being conducted since the early hours of Thursday. On July 18, 2023, policemen Amol Nakhur and Pradip Chavan nabbed three men in Pune city’s Kothrud area around 2.30 am on suspicion of vehicle theft. The police had then said that the suspects were identified as Mohammed Shah Nawaz Alam, 31, alias Shafi alias Abdulla of Jharkhand, Mohammed Yusuf Khan, 25, and Mohammed Yunus Mohammed Yakub Saki, 27, both from Ratlam in Madhya Pradesh, and were found to be living in Pune’s Kondhwa. While the police personnel were taking them for a house search in Kondhwa, Alam allegedly escaped, but was later arrested by the Delhi Police in October that year. Meanwhile, the house search led to the seizure of suspicious items like “drone material”, some white powder, a pistol pouch, and a live cartridge. Subsequently, an FIR was lodged against them at the Kothrud Police Station under sections 468 (forgery), 379 (theft), 511 (offence punishable with imprisonment), and 34 (common intention) of the Indian Penal Code, as well as sections of the Indian Arms Act and the Maharashtra Police Act.

The probe confirmed that Khan and Saki were members of the Al Sufa terrorist gang linked to ISIS. Both were “most wanted” by the National Investigation Agency (NIA) in a case relating to the seizure of explosives from a car in Rajasthan in March 2022. The ATS then took over the probe from the Pune police on July 22, 2023. Forensic investigation confirmed that the white powder seized from the accused by the police in Pune was an explosive substance. ATS invoked sections of the stringent Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA) against the suspects for their alleged involvement in terrorist activities, while posing as “graphic designers” in Pune. ATS also claimed to have seized bomb-making material such as “chemical powder, charcoal, thermometer, dropper, soldering gun, multimeter,



small bulbs, batteries, alarm clock,” from the men. It arrested a few more suspects, including Abdul Kadir Pathan, an IT engineer, S N Kazi, and Zulfikar Ali Barodawala, for allegedly providing shelter and funds.

ATS had seized maps, Urdu, and Arabic literature, and retrieved approximately 500 GB of data from the electronic devices of the accused, which contained images of various locations in Pune and other areas, including the Chabad House in Mumbai. Investigation was later handed over to NIA on August 8, 2023, which has said that all these accused are part of a separate ‘Pune ISIS Module’. The probe by NIA and ATS has revealed that three of the operatives in the Pune ISIS Module case — Saki, Alam and Zulfikar Ali Barodawala, 44, had conspired to loot a sari shop owner in Satara in April 2023. ATS arrested the three suspects in a separate case in March 2024, for allegedly threatening the Satara shop owner, Ashok Kumar, at gunpoint and robbing him of around Rs 1 lakh in cash. ATS had then submitted to the court that a part of the proceeds from the armed robbery in Satara was used by the suspects to purchase components to assemble a bomb and for terror funding.

Meanwhile, in November 2023, the NIA charge-sheeted seven accused, including Khan, Saki, Pathan, Kazi, Barodawala, Akif Nachan and Shamil Nachan in the Pune ISIS Module case. Further, in March 2024, a chargesheet was filed against Alam and three wanted accused: Rizwan Ali of Delhi, Abdulla Faiyaz Shaikh alias Daiperwala, and Talha Liyakat Khan of Kondhwa, Pune. Rizwan Ali was arrested by the Delhi Police’s Special Cell in August 2024. NIA took his custody in July this year for investigation. Before that, in May this year, NIA arrested Abdulla Shaikh and Talha, after they “were intercepted by the Bureau of Immigration at the Mumbai International Airport” when they returned to India from Jakarta, Indonesia, where they had been “hiding out”.

## After 25-minute chase to rescue 3-year-old kidnapped girl, Bengal Police return her to mother



Malda Police in West Bengal rescued a three-year-old girl within 25 minutes of her alleged abduction on Tuesday, intercepting two masked kidnappers after a high-speed chase near the Bengal-Bihar border.

GNS News Agency, Oct 23

Malda Police in West Bengal rescued a three-year-old girl within 25 minutes of her alleged abduction on Tuesday, intercepting two masked kidnappers after a high-speed chase near the Bengal-Bihar border. The incident occurred around 12:30 pm when the child was abducted while playing outside her maternal uncle’s house in Kotol, a small locality near the border. Two masked men on a Yamaha motorcycle allegedly snatched the child and sped away towards Chandipur. Once the alert reached Harishchandrapur

Police Station, officials “swung into action”. Checkpoints were set up across all exit routes, and a detailed description of the suspects and their motorcycle was circulated to nearby police units. The coordination paid off within minutes. A resident spotted the fleeing motorcycle near Chandipur and alerted the police, triggering a pursuit. Realising they were being chased, the kidnappers allegedly attempted to escape through Lakshmanpur towards Bhaluka Road — close to the Bihar border — but their route was soon blocked.

As the bike entered Islampur, it ran into an interception team led by SDPO Chanchal Somnath Saha and Sub-Inspector Mohammad Zakir Hossain. In a last-ditch bid to flee, the bikers lost control, and the motorcycle skidded off the road, officials said. The duo tried to abandon the child, but Hossain’s team moved in immediately, rescuing the girl and arresting one of the kidnappers on the spot. The arrested man was identified as Chhoton Nag, a resident of Harishchandrapur Sadar, who police said has a criminal record. The second accused managed to escape but, according to police, has been identified and will be arrested “soon.” The child, who sustained a minor head injury after being thrown from the moving motorcycle, was rushed to Harishchandrapur Rural Hospital, where she received treatment under the supervision of IC Monojit Sarkar and SDPO Saha. She was later reunited with her mother. Officials said the entire operation — from identifying the initial abduction to the rescue and arrest — was completed within 25 minutes. Police credited the rapid communication and coordinated effort of multiple teams.

## ‘Mohali drowning in garbage’: Mayor Jeeti Sidhu leads councillors’ delegation as city has no place to dump waste



GNS News Agency, Oct 23

Mohali is reeling under a severe garbage crisis, with heaps of waste piling up across streets and residential areas. Foul smell, flies, and rising health concerns have made life unbearable for residents. With the city’s dumping ground shut for nearly one and a half years, the municipal corporation has no designated place left to dispose of waste. In response to the worsening situation, Mayor Amarjit Singh Jeeti Sidhu, accompanied by Senior Deputy Mayor Amreek Singh Somal and a large group of councillors, met the director and secretary of the Punjab local government department in Chandigarh on Thursday. They submitted a memorandum demanding immediate intervention to resolve the crisis.

“The garbage problem in Mohali is getting worse each day, but the new dumping site at Samgoli has not been developed yet,” said Mayor Jeeti Sidhu. “The land was identified years ago, but no road, boundary wall, or departmental preparation has been completed.” Sidhu said the municipal corporation collects 100 to 150 tonnes of garbage daily, including about 50 tonnes from adjoining areas such as the Balongi, JLPL, TDI, and GMADA sectors. “This has put immense pressure on our system,” he said. Sidhu further stated that the earlier dumping site had to be shut down following orders from the National Green Tribunal and the

Punjab and Haryana High Court, leaving the city with no permanent disposal point. “Now garbage heaps are rising near residential areas, spreading stench and disease,” the mayor said. Despite several meetings with the municipal commissioner, deputy commissioner, and secretary of the local government department, no concrete solution has emerged, Sidhu said. “If immediate steps are not taken, the city’s sanitation and health situation will deteriorate further,” he added.

Emphasising the need for urgent government support, Sidhu said, “We urgently need funds and approval to develop the new dumping site.” Senior Deputy Mayor Amrik Singh Somal said it was shameful that a modern city like Mohali faced such dire conditions. “Unlike Zirakpur, Dera Bassi, and Kharar, which have surplus land, Mohali has none, making this issue even more challenging,” he said. Councillor Anuradha Anand pointed out that even green waste was being mixed with regular garbage due to the lack of a separate site. Councillor Jasbir Singh Manku said the municipal corporation’s job was to keep the city clean. “But no matter how well we manage cleaning, we still need a place to dump the waste, and there is none right now,” he said. Garbage dumped near Singh Shaheedan Gurdwara Councillor Harjit Singh Bholu raised serious concern about garbage being dumped near the historic Singh Shaheedan Gurdwara in Sohana, along Airport Road, saying it could spark public anger and possible road blockades. During the meeting, the delegation met Kulwant Singh, director of the local government department, and Deepti Uppal, CEO of the Punjab Municipal Infrastructure Development Company, and briefed them on the city’s dire situation. Both officials assured prompt action. Speaking to The Indian Express, Kulwant Singh said he would coordinate with departments concerned to ensure a dumping site is allotted to Mohali soon. Deepti Uppal, when contacted, said she had called a meeting with the municipal commissioner and would initiate urgent measures for waste management.

## PMC to build grade separator linking Pashan-Sus road with Mumbai-Bengaluru bypass

GNS News Agency, Oct 23

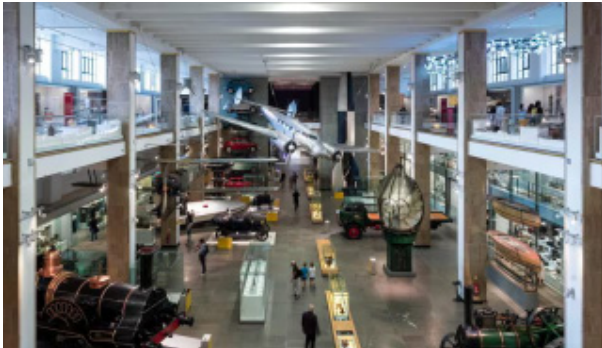
In a major relief to commuters travelling from Pashan to the Mumbai-Bengaluru bypass towards Chandni Chowk, the Pune Municipal Corporation (PMC) has announced plans to construct a grade separator. This project aims to alleviate traffic congestion and reduce the risk of accidents that occur when vehicles navigate the wrong way to avoid longer routes to the highway. The PMC has already built a flyover connecting Pashan to Sus across National Highway 48, which serves as the Mumbai-Bengaluru bypass, along with the service road. While the highway is accessible from both sides of the flyover to Sus, there is direct connectivity to Pashan only from one side.

“Vehicles travelling from Pashan towards Chandni Chowk via the highway must first cross the flyover, make a U-turn, and then enter a subway to access the service road. This detour adds several kilometres to their journey. To avoid the longer route, many drivers take the wrong side along a steep slope, which creates challenges for vehicles ascending the slope from highways and significantly increases the risk of accidents,” stated Pawan Mapari, Deputy Engineer of PMC. The PMC is moving forward with the construction of a grade separator from Pashan to the service road heading towards Chandni Chowk. “A retaining wall will be built alongside the service road, adjacent to the grade separator, with an estimated cost of around Rs 9 crore,” Mapari added. Additionally, the city police had also requested PMC to develop road infrastructure to resolve the traffic issue arising due to the unavailability of direct access to the service road or highway from Pashan, said Mapari. Residents from Pashan complain of the heavy traffic flow on the Pashan-Sus Road, which is making their commute from Hinjewadi to Pashan risky. “While ascending the road to Pashan, many vehicles enter from the wrong side at Pashan. If I have to travel towards Chandni Chowk, then I avoid the Pashan-Sus flyover road where there is a



traffic jam and instead take the road through Sutarwadi,” Suyash Patil, a Pashan resident, said. The Pashan-Sus road has witnessed rapid urbanisation in recent years, thanks to its proximity to Hinjewadi IT Park and several prominent educational institutions such as Symbiosis International University, Flame University, and Dhruv International School, LUPIN, a pharmaceutical company, and adventure park, Sunny’s World. Ajay Jadhav is an Assistant Editor with The Indian Express, Pune. He writes on Infrastructure, Politics, Civic issues, Sustainable Development and related stuff. He is a trekker and a sports enthusiast. Ajay has written research articles on the Conservancy staff that created a nationwide impact in framing policy to improve the condition of workers handling waste. Ajay has been consistently writing on politics and infrastructure. He brought to light the lack of basic infrastructure of school and hospital in the hometown of Maharashtra Chief Minister Eknath Shinde even as two private helipads were developed by the leader who mostly commutes from Mumbai to Satara in helicopter. Ajay has been reporting on sustainable development initiatives that protect the environment while ensuring infrastructure development.

## Serum Institute of India makes historic 8-figure donation to London’s Science Museum



GNS News Agency, Oct 23

The Science Museum is part of the Science Museum Group, the world’s leading group of science museums. In an official statement issued later, Poonawalla said that the company feels honoured to support the Science Museum’s unwavering commitment to fostering curiosity and discovery. “We have always been at the forefront of scientific discoveries and innovation. With this contribution, which will help in bringing in a transformation to this iconic space, we strive to inspire the future generations and celebrate the incredible journey of science that shapes our world,” Poonawalla said. Serum Institute of India is part of the Cyrus Poonawalla Group. The Science Museum is part of the Science Museum Group, the world’s leading group of science museums that share a world-class collection providing an enduring record of scientific, technological, and medical achievements from across the globe. Sir Ian Blatchford, Director and Chief Executive of the Science Museum Group, said in a statement, “Through our ambitious new Ages of Invention: The Serum Institute Gallery, we will create the most significant display of objects from the history of science anywhere in the world.”

scientific stories and exhibitions,” he said while preferring not to reveal the donation amount.

Poonawalla added that museums are great places to showcase stories, journeys, and innovations of mankind to children and adults. In an official statement issued later, Poonawalla said that the company feels honoured to support the Science Museum’s unwavering commitment to fostering curiosity and discovery. “We have always been at the forefront of scientific discoveries and innovation. With this contribution, which will help in bringing in a transformation to this iconic space, we strive to inspire the future generations and celebrate the incredible journey of science that shapes our world,” Poonawalla said. Serum Institute of India is part of the Cyrus Poonawalla Group. The Science Museum is part of the Science Museum Group, the world’s leading group of science museums that share a world-class collection providing an enduring record of scientific, technological, and medical achievements from across the globe. Sir Ian Blatchford, Director and Chief Executive of the Science Museum Group, said in a statement, “Through our ambitious new Ages of Invention: The Serum Institute Gallery, we will create the most significant display of objects from the history of science anywhere in the world.”

## Siddipet Police Commissioner vows to make district drug-free

Siddipet: Commissioner of Police SM Vijay Kumar on Wednesday said his top priority would be to make Siddipet a drug-free district and crack down on anti-social elements.

In his first media interaction after assuming charge as Commissioner of Police, Vijay Kumar expressed concern over the rising number of crimes against women in the district. He said the police would strengthen their outreach to women through Snehitha Support Centres at police stations and Bharosa Centres. He emphasised that maintaining law and order would remain Police Department’s foremost responsibility and warned of strict action against those organising gambling activities.



## Shut for a month after bird flu outbreak, Delhi zoo may reopen soon



GNS News Agency, Oct 23

According to senior zoo officials, the latest tests for avian influenza returned negative, clearing the way for reopening. According to senior zoo officials, the latest tests for avian influenza returned negative, clearing the way for reopening. The National Zoological Park in Delhi may open its gates for visitors soon as it has formally moved a proposal to reopen after remaining closed for over a month due to a bird flu outbreak, officials said on Wednesday. According to senior zoo officials, the latest tests for avian influenza returned negative, clearing the way for reopening.

## Rethink airport–Palam Vihar route, have old Gurgaon-Delhi alignment: RWA collective writes to CMs, Union minister Khattar

GNS News Agency, Oct 23

The decades-old demand for a metro rail alignment through the Samalkha–Kapashera–Udyog Vihar–Dundahera–Sadar corridor has been reignited with a residents’ collective in Gurgaon writing to the Delhi and Haryana chief ministers, as well as a Union minister Tuesday. Jaago Gurugram, a federation of Resident Welfare Associations (RWAs), residents, and professionals from the Old Delhi–Gurgaon Road area, has also opposed the proposed extension of the Airport Express Line of the Delhi Metro to Palam Vihar in Gurgaon. Instead, they are advocating for the extension to the old Gurgaon area.

The collective submitted a detailed memorandum to Union Minister for Housing and Urban Affairs Manohar Lal Khattar, Haryana Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini, and Delhi Chief Minister Rekha Gupta, along with the metro authorities in the two states. The organisation warned that the Palam Vihar alignment “would bypass Gurgaon’s true economic and mobility spine” and risk becoming “a costly white elephant — financially unviable and socially irrelevant, with little or no economic benefit”. It pointed out that connectivity to Palam Vihar via the Airport Line would duplicate existing expansion plans of the Delhi and Gurgaon Metro lines. “The corridor — from IGI Airport to Samalkha to Sadar Gurugram — is the beating heart of the city’s economy,” said Kundan Lal Sharma, chairperson of Jaago Gurugram and former joint secretary to the Government of India. “Ignoring it would be a monumental policy blunder. Every day, lakhs of workers and residents endure choking congestion and poisonous air. A metro line through this corridor would not just ease traffic but restore human dignity, improve productivity, and advance India’s climate goals.” He pointed out that the demand for metro connectivity along Kapashera, Dundahera, Udyog Vihar, and adjoining sectors had been pending for over two decades.

In 2023, too, RWAs from Sector 21 and adjoining areas submitted memoranda signed by over 10,000 residents to the then Union Minister for Housing and Urban Affairs and the chief minister of Haryana, but to no avail. “This is not a new plea; it is an overdue correction,” said Prakash Lamba, president of Sector 21 RWA. “The government knows the pain points; all we ask is that they listen to those

Delhi zoo director Sanjeet Kumar stated that the authorities have submitted a formal proposal to resume operations, which will be approved in line with regulatory guidelines. “The last sample, collected on October 1 and reported on October 7, tested negative. Following two consecutive negative results since the last positive case, we have moved the reopening proposal. The date will be announced once approval comes from the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC),” he added. The zoo was shut on August 30 after several birds, including painted storks and black-headed ibises, died owing to an avian influenza outbreak. Four samples had then tested positive for H5N1 avian influenza, with the last confirmed case recorded on September 1. Since then, random sampling across aviaries and enclosures has shown no further infections. This closure marked the third time the zoo has had to suspend operations due to avian influenza, with the previous shutdowns taking place in 2016 and 2021. In response to the avian influenza outbreak, Delhi zoo authorities had earlier stated that it had implemented stringent biosecurity protocols as per the guidelines issued by the Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying. These measures include enhanced surveillance and disinfection procedures to prevent the spread of the H5N1 virus among the zoo’s bird population.



who live this chaos every day.” Every day, over one lakh vehicles crawl through the Old Delhi–Gurgaon Road, sharing space with thousands of diesel autos ferrying workers and domestic staff between Delhi and Gurgaon, he added. “The outcome: suffocating air, endless jams, and lost human hours.” “What should be a 15-minute drive takes over an hour,” said Sunil Yadav of Dundahera. “We breathe diesel fumes all day. The air burns our eyes and throats.” A Kapashera-based entrepreneur said, “Our customers and staff are stuck in jams daily. The metro through this corridor is not a luxury — it is survival infrastructure.” A metro line from IGI via Samalkha, Kapashera, Dundahera, and Sectors 20–22 up to Sadar and Sector 10 would link Delhi’s airport and business districts with Gurgaon’s industrial core and the Central Secretariat, cut vehicular load and travel time, enhance logistics efficiency, sharply reduce emissions and fuel consumption, Jaago Gurugram argues. Dr Pooja Tarar, an active RWA member, said, “Thousands of factory workers, guards and other employees travel daily in unsafe, overcrowded autos. The right metro alignment can change their lives — replacing indignity with safety and opportunity.” Officegoers Aarti Singh and Soniya Yadav said, “We have to endure unwelcome touches and inappropriate behaviour in overcrowded DTC buses while travelling to our offices in Connaught Place. Every ride feels unsafe and humiliating.” The collective in its letter stressed that a failure to act now “would lock the region into years of congestion, wasteful expenditure, and lost opportunity”.

## Attack on BJP’s Khagen Murmu: Pleas filed in Calcutta HC seek national agency probes into ‘police inaction, involvement of infiltrators’



GNS News Agency, Oct 23

A Public Interest Litigation (PIL) and another plea were filed before the Calcutta High Court Thursday, seeking a probe by Central agencies into the assault on BJP MP Khagen Murmu in Nagrakata in West Bengal’s Jalpaiguri earlier this week. Murmu and BJP MLA Shankar Ghosh were allegedly attacked on October 6 when they entered Nagrakata in North Bengal to distribute relief materials in flood-affected areas. Their convoy was allegedly pelted with stones, sticks, and shoes, and both leaders were reportedly heckled. Murmu, who sustained critical injuries, was first taken to a state hospital and later shifted to a private hospital in Jalpaiguri, where he is currently admitted in the ICU.

Advocate Anindiya Sundor Das moved a PIL before the Calcutta High Court demanding an NIA probe and the inclusion of Scheduled Tribe (ST) and Scheduled Caste (SC) sections, as Murmu belongs to the ST community. The plea also argues that since the incident occurred close to an international border, investigators should examine whether any “infiltrators” were involved. The Calcutta High Court vacation bench of Justice Kausik Chanda and Justice Reetobrata Kumar Mitra allowed the matter to be filed, and it will be heard on October 14. Speaking to The Indian Express, Advocate Anindiya Sundor Das said, “We have asked for an NIA investigation into the matter as it has taken place in the border area. The court has allowed us to file the matter.” Meanwhile, a separate petition was filed before the single bench of Justice Om Narayan Rai by BJP leader Bijon Goswami, alleging police inaction in the Nagrakata

incident and also seeking a CBI and NIA probe. Counsel Mayukh Mukherjee submitted in court that “the police were not performing their duty, they had not taken any steps. All CCTVs have to be taken and culprits have to be identified and arrested,” he said, pressing for NIA and CBI investigations..

## Speeding SUV crashes into parked cars, motorcycle in Greater Noida, none injured

SUV accident noida According to the police, the vehicle, bearing an Uttar Pradesh registration number, was being driven by Sunit, a resident of Sector 100 in Noida, who has been taken into custody. A speeding SUV allegedly rammed into five parked cars and a motorcycle near Gulshan Mall trisection in Greater Noida late on Wednesday, the police said. However, no one was injured in the incident, they said. According to the police, the vehicle, bearing an Uttar Pradesh registration number, was being driven by Sunit, a resident of Sector 100 in Noida, who has been taken into custody. “Since the vehicles were parked and unoccupied, the incident did not result in serious injuries, though the vehicles sustained damage,” Vipin (who goes by a single name), Station House Officer, Expressway Police Station, told The Indian Express. The police said they received information about the accident around midnight. “Preliminary investigation suggested that the driver allegedly lost control of the Land Rover Defender while negotiating a busy intersection. Sunit works with a real estate sector,” Vipin said. The officer added that a detailed medical examination was conducted on the driver to determine if he was under the influence of alcohol or any other intoxicant at the time of the crash. The police also said that some eyewitnesses reported that the impact caused panic among commuters as the SUV collided with multiple vehicles in rapid succession before finally coming to a halt. “Traffic movement was briefly disrupted due to the pile-up but was restored within an hour,” said the police officer.

## ‘Decorated police officer and symbol of honesty, discipline’: as Haryana CM Saini meets family of Y Puran Kumar, his wife demands justice



GNS News Agency, Oct 23

Haryana Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini Thursday visited the family of senior IPS officer Y Puran Kumar, who was found dead in his Chandigarh home Tuesday, as his wife and IAS officer Amneet P Kumar, reiterated her demands seeking action against “powerful high-ranking officials” in his state, as well as permanent security cover for her family citing “serious threat and mental distress”. During her meeting with the Haryana chief minister, which lasted nearly an hour, Amneet P Kumar also handed over her representation to him.

“Immediate registration of FIR against all the individuals named in the suicide note and the accompanying complaint (lodged by her yesterday); immediate suspension and arrest of all accused persons to prevent interference, tampering of evidence, or influence over the investigation; provision of permanent security cover for her family, especially two daughters, who are under serious threat and mental distress; and protection of the family’s rights and dignity as we continue to face harassment and fear from those responsible,” she said in her representation. His tragic death caused deep sorrow and outrage’

Seeking Saini’s intervention, Amneet told him that even after 48 hours since her husband, Y Puran Kumar, died, the “Chandigarh Police are yet to register an FIR against those responsible for his death”. “The reason for no action being taken is that the powerful, high-ranking officials of

## Government or private: how Delhi’s preschools measure up on infrastructure, hygiene and safety

GNS News Agency, Oct 23

Government preschools in Delhi have better infrastructure than their private counterparts, while private preschools lead in hygiene. Anganwadi centres lag behind on almost all parameters, according to a new study by researchers from Jamia Millia Islamia, which has examined the quality of early childhood education across the Capital. The research, published in the Discover Education journal, assessed 45 preschools, including 15 Anganwadi centres, 15 government preschools, and 15 private preschools. The team evaluated them on physical infrastructure, hygiene and sanitation (WASH) practices, curriculum, classroom processes and child safety. Data was collected between January and March 2023. “The results of the data analysis revealed that, in terms of quality of physical infrastructure, government preschools performed better than private preschools, which exhibit mixed quality (good and average), and last Anganwadi centres,” the authors wrote. They explained that this was because “the government and private preschools were attached to primary section buildings or senior secondary section buildings on school premises with the availability of adequate resources (i.e., storage facilities, electricity, lighting, ventilation, adequate indoor and outdoor space etc.), which are harder for standalone and rented AWC/NGO to access”. The researchers added that in Anganwadi centres, “it was not sufficient” due to the absence of adequate indoor and outdoor spaces and proper ventilation.

Hygiene still ‘average’ across all, private preschools marginally edge ahead On hygiene and Water, WASH practices, the study found that “all the respected preschool modes showed mainly ‘average’ WASH practice quality,” but “improvements were observed in the category of private preschools” compared to government ones. Anganwadi centres again performed the weakest, with several showing poor sanitation and hygiene behaviour. The report attributed this to better attachment and management in private setups. “This could be due to the attachment of government preschools and private preschools with primary or senior secondary section buildings of schools, while Anganwadi centres attached to the Anganwadi hub, which provided most of the resources... However, checking personal hygiene, promotion of good sanitation, and hygienic behavior and practices were found missing, making the availability to the count but not the functionality.” Average classroom quality in Anganwadis, government teachers more engaged in classrooms

When it came to classroom processes, “the government preschools performed better than some private preschools which showed slightly mixed quality (good and average),” the study said. Anganwadi centres “mainly displayed average quality”, often because “teachers were not calling children by their names or not providing opportuni-

Haryana Police and Administration are accused in the case, and they are influencing the Chandigarh Police. There is serious apprehension in my mind that after this complaint, these high-ranking, powerful officials will try to malign me and my family and will also try to implicate me departmentally or otherwise,” Amneet wrote in her representation. She added that her husband was an “exceptional officer” and a “prominent representative and pillar of strength for the Scheduled Caste community”. “He stood as a source of inspiration and guidance for countless individuals from marginalised sections of society. His life and service gave hope and pride to millions who saw in him a symbol of empowerment and justice,” Amneet wrote in her representation to Saini. “His tragic death has, therefore, caused deep sorrow and outrage, particularly among the SC community, whose faith in equality and justice has been gravely shaken.” She added that Y Puran Kumar was a “decorated police officer, who was also a recipient of the President’s Medal for Meritorious Service, and throughout his illustrious career, he remained a symbol of honesty, discipline and fearless commitment to duty”.

Haryana Chief Minister Saini cancelled his press conference scheduled for Thursday, and visited the family of senior IPS officer Y Puran Kumar. Meanwhile, Amneet has yet not given her consent for the post-mortem examination of her husband’s body, and reiterated her demand seeking action against SS Kapur, Director General of Police, Haryana, and Narender Bijarniya, Superintendent of Police, Rohtak. She filed a police complaint seeking an FIR against Kapur and Bijarniya, alleging a “well-planned conspiracy” to implicate Kumar in a “frivolous and mischievous complaint by fabricating false evidence”. Amneet was part of the government’s official delegation to Japan since October 5, and returned to Chandigarh Wednesday. In a purported “suicide note”, Y Puran Kumar, 52, has named nine serving IPS officers of the Haryana Police, a retired IPS officer, and three retired IAS officers, and has alleged “caste-based discrimination, public humiliation, targeted mental harassment and atrocities”. Y Puran Singh, the 2001-batch IPS officer, was posted as Inspector General, Police Training Centre, Sunaria-Rohtak, on September 25.



ties to speak,” and “usage of the mother tongue was less common”.

The authors explained that activities in many preschools “were random and not based on a timetable, switching from one activity to another was not smooth, only indoor activities were performed, only 50-75 per cent were participating in activities (due to high teacher-child ratio), and less to no use of TLM (teaching learning materials) or activity-based learning and psychosocial activities and encouragement of good habits were limited”. Safety strong in government and private schools but weak in Anganwadis In terms of safety, “most of the government preschools and private preschools were good, whereas very few Anganwadi centers reported good quality in the safety of children”. Explaining the gap, the researchers wrote that “government preschools performed better than private preschools with a minute difference perhaps because government preschools and private preschools were attached to primary section buildings or senior secondary section buildings... which makes it necessary for authorities to maintain safety for children”. They noted that both government and private institutions “had requisites such as the availability of first-aid, handing over the child to parents, ensuring the safety of the building and maintaining cleanliness around the building,” whereas such safeguards “are harder for accessing in standalone and rented AWC/NGO to access”.

Out of 15 Anganwadi centres, two were rated “good,” 11 “average,” and two “poor.” In contrast, 14 government preschools and 13 private ones were “good,” and none fell below “average”. Summarising overall performance, the researchers noted, “government preschools and private preschools are working at good quality in terms of physical infrastructure, the safety of the children, and classroom process... On the other hand, Anganwadi centers are working majorly at average quality in all variables.” The authors concluded that “concerned authorities of all three modes of preschool extensively need to work on WASH practices... and on preschool education especially in curriculum transaction and child-friendly environment”.

## ‘Conspired by Canada-fugitive Arsh Dalla’: Moga court convicts 3, acquits 4 in 2022 hand-grenade attack on police

The Moga court of additional session judge Bishan Saroop Wednesday convicted three accused and acquitted four others in the 2022 hand-grenade attack on Moga police, allegedly “masterminded by Canada-based fugitive Arshdeep Singh Gill alias Arsh Dalla”. Moga police had registered an FIR in the case on January 6, 2022 at Mehna police station under the IPC Section 307 (attempt to murder), the Arms Act Sections 25(6) and 25 (7), and the Explosives Act Sections 3,4 and 5. Jaspal Singh Manjhpur, defence counsel in the case, said that on Wednesday, the court convicted Gurpreet, Baljit and Varinder, while acquitted Arshdeep Singh Arsh, Amandeep alias Mantri, Sagar Babu and Sunil Bhalwan of all charges. “Gurpreet, Baljit and Varinder have been convicted and sentenced for three years each along with a fine of Rs 2,000 each. While Gurpreet and Varinder have been convicted under Section 25 of the Arms Act, Baljit under Section 5 of Explosives Act. They have been convicted on all other charges including attempted murder and UAPA. Four others have been acquitted from all charges,” said Manjhpur.

Manjhpur said that Gurpreet is imprisoned, and Varinder and Baljit are out on bail. “All three have already undergone over three years of imprisonment in the case.” The police had arrested Gurpreet Singh, Baljit Singh and Varinder Singh — the three alleged aides of Canada-based designated terrorist and Khalistan Tiger Force (KTF) chief Arsh Dalla. The police claimed that the trio had tried to run over the police party at a checkpoint in Chogawan village. They also had thrown hand grenades with an attempt to kill the policemen, the police said. Later the police had also named Arsh Dalla in the case, and added the Sections 10, 11, 13, 16, 17, 18 and 20 of Unlawful Activities Prevention Act (UAPA) to the FIR. Arsh, Amandeep, Sagar and Sunil were also nominated as accused in the case later. The police had claimed that they seized one 9 mm pistol from Gurpreet alias Gopi of Shadiwala village and Varinder of Makhu and two hand grenades from Baljit of Fatehgarh Panitour village. According to Moga police, Dalla had provided the convicted trio with weapons and hand grenades, to “attack a church”.



# Hungarian 'Master of the apocalypse' Krasznahorkai wins 2025 Nobel Prize in Literature

GNS News Agency, Oct 23

won the 2025 Nobel Prize in Literature on Thursday "for his compelling and visionary oeuvre that, in the midst of apocalyptic terror, reaffirms the power of art".Laszlo Krasznahorkai is a great epic writer in the Central European tradition that extends through Kafka to Thomas Bernhard, and is characterised by absurdism and grotesque excess," the Swedish Academy, which awards the prize, said in a statement.Read about innovative ideas and the people working on solutions to global crises with the Reuters Beacon newsletter. Sign up here."But there are more strings to his bow, and he also looks to the East in adopting a more contemplative, finely calibrated tone."TRAVELS TO CHINA AND JAPAN LEFT DEEP IMPRESSION

The settings of his novels move across central Europe's remote villages and towns, from Hungary to Germany, before skipping to the Far East, where his travels to China and Japan left deep-seated impressions on Krasznahorkai.The American critic Susan Sontag crowned Krasznahorkai contemporary literature's "master of the apocalypse", the Academy said, "a judgement she arrived at after having read the author's second book Melancholy of Resistance".The second Hungarian to win the prize, worth 11 million Swedish crowns (\$1.2 million), after Imre Kertesz in 2002, Krasznahorkai was born in the small town of Gyula in southeast Hungary, near the Romanian border.

His breakthrough 1985 novel, Satantango, is set in a similarly remote rural area and became a literary sensation in Hungary."The novel portrays, in powerfully suggestive terms, a destitute group of residents on an abandoned collective farm in the Hungarian countryside just before the fall of communism," the Academy said.Across the region, collective farms had been set up when farming land was confiscated at the start of communist rule, and many had become symbols of mismanagement and poverty by the time it ended in 1989."Everyone in the novel is waiting for a miracle to happen, a hope that is from the very outset punctured by the book's introductory (Franz) Kafka motto: 'In that case, I'll miss the thing by waiting for it,' " the Academy said.Krasznahorkai has repeatedly referenced "The Castle" by Kafka as a key influence."When I am not reading Kafka, I am thinking about Kafka. When I am not thinking about Kafka, I miss thinking about him," he told the White Review in 2013.CRITICALLY ACCLAIMED SCREEN ADAPTATIONS

Krasznahorkai had a close creative partnership with Hungarian filmmaker Bela Tarr. Several of his works have been adapted into films by Tarr, including "Satantango", which runs to more than seven hours, and "The Werckmeister Harmonies". "When I read (Satantango), I knew it immediately that I must make a film based on it," Tarr told Reuters by phone. "I am very happy... it's hard to



say anything right now."Their collaboration has garnered critical acclaim. In 1993, he received the German Bestenliste Prize for the best literary work of the year for "The Melancholy of Resistance".Krasznahorkai's writing may resonate with readers immersed in news from Russia's war in Ukraine or the Palestinian-Israeli conflict."We seem to have entered the 21st century in a more hostile and bleak environment than we hoped for at the end of the 20th," said Jason Whittaker, Professor of Communications at the University of Lincoln."So actually ... some of the bleak and darkly comic elements of books such as Satantango actually will resonate with many more readers than previously."Established in the will of Swedish dynamite inventor and businessman Alfred Nobel, the prizes for achievements in literature, science and peace have been awarded since 1901.Past winners of the prize include French poet and essayist Sully Prudhomme, who bagged the first award, American novelist and short story writer William Faulkner in 1949, Britain's World War Two Prime Minister Winston Churchill in 1953, Turkey's Orhan Pamuk in 2006 and Norway's Jon Fosse in 2023.Last year's prize was won by South Korean author Han Kang who became the 18th woman - the first was Swedish author Selma Lagerlof in 1909 - and the first South Korean to receive the award.Over the years, the choices made by the Swedish Academy have drawn as much ire as applause.

In 2016, the award to American singer-songwriter Bob Dylan sparked criticism that his work was not proper literature, while Austrian Peter Handke's prize also drew criticism in 2019.Handke had attended the funeral in 2006 of former Yugoslav President Slobodan Milosevic, seen by many as responsible for the deaths of thousands of ethnic Albanians who were killed in Kosovo and the displacement of almost 1 million others during a brutal war waged by forces under his control in 1998-99.Prizegivers have also in the past been accused of ignoring some of the giants of literature, including Russia's Lev Nikolayevich Tolstoy, France's Emile Zola and Ireland's James Joyce.

# Pope Leo invokes criticism of Trump's policies in first major document



VATICAN CITY,GNS News Agency, Oct 23 - Pope Leo made an urgent plea for the world to help immigrants in his first major document, which was released on Thursday and invoked one of the late Pope Francis' strongest criticisms of U.S. President Donald Trump's anti-immigration policies.Leo's document, known as an apostolic exhortation, is focused on the needs of the world's poor. It calls for widespread changes to the global market system to address rising inequality and to help people living paycheck-to-paycheck.The Reuters Daily Briefing newsletter provides all the news you need to start your day. Sign up here.

The 104-page text started as a writing project by Francis, who was unable to complete it before his death in April after 12 years leading the global Church of 1.4 billion people. It was finished by Leo, the first U.S. pope."I am happy to make this document my own – adding some reflections – and to issue it at the beginning of my own pontificate," Leo writes at the beginning of the text.Cardinal Michael Czerny, a senior adviser to both Francis and Leo, said that

while the new document was started by the late pope it represents Leo's positions."This is Pope Leo's document," Czerny told a Vatican press conference.Elected in May to replace Francis, Leo has shown a much more reserved style than his predecessor, who frequently criticised the Trump administration.But Leo has been ramping up his disapproval in recent weeks, drawing heated backlash from some prominent conservative Catholics."The Church, like a mother, accompanies those who are walking," the pontiff writes in the document, titled "Dilexi te" (I have loved you). "She knows that in every rejected migrant, it is Christ himself who knocks at the door of the community.""Where the world sees threats, (the Church) sees children; where walls are built, she builds bridges," Leo says, referencing Francis' 2016 criticism of Trump as "not Christian" because of the president's plan in his first term to build a wall on the U.S.-Mexico border.The White House has said Trump was elected based on his many promises, including to deport "criminal illegal aliens".

The number of people living in poverty "should constantly weigh upon our consciences", the document said."There is no shortage of theories attempting to justify the present state of affairs or to explain that economic thinking requires us to wait for invisible market forces to resolve everything," it said."The poor are promised only a few 'drops' that trickle down, until the next global crisis brings things back to where they were."The document signals that Leo shares some of the same priorities of Francis, who shunned many of the trappings of the papacy and frequently criticised the global market system as not caring for society's most vulnerable people."The illusion of happiness derived from a comfortable life pushes many people towards a vision of life centered on the accumulation of wealth and social success at all costs, even at the expense of others," the text says.

# Israel, Hamas agree to ‘first phase’ of plan to end fighting, release hostages, Trump says

GNS News Agency, Oct 23

Israel and Hamas have agreed to the "first phase" of his peace plan to pause fighting and release at least some hostages and prisoners, U.S. President Donald Trump said on Wednesday (October 8, 2025) in announcing the outlines of the biggest breakthrough in months in the two-year-old war."This means that ALL of the Hostages will be released very soon, and Israel will withdraw their Troops to an agreed upon line as the first steps toward a Strong, Durable, and Everlasting Peace," Mr. Trump wrote on social media.Earlier on Wednesday (October 8), Mr. Trump said that he might travel this weekend to Egypt, where his envoys were in talks to try to seal the ceasefire and hostage-release agreement. "All Parties will be treated fairly!" Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said on social media, "With God's help we will bring them all home."Mr. Netanyahu and Mr. Trump spoke about the 'historic achievement' of reaching the deal, Israeli leader's office said.Benjamin Netanyahu said he would convene the government on Thursday (October 9) to approve the Gaza ceasefire agreement aimed at bringing home all the Israeli hostages.Palestinians follow the news on a television after the announcement that Israel and Hamas have agreed to the first phase of a peace plan to pause fighting, as they sit in a tent outside Al-Aqsa Hospital, in Deir al-Balah, in the

central Gaza Strip, .Palestinians follow the news on a television after the announcement that Israel and Hamas have agreed to the first phase of a peace plan to pause fighting, as they sit in a tent outside Al-Aqsa Hospital, in Deir al-Balah, in the central Gaza Strip, on Thursday, Oct. 9, 2025. | Photo Credit: AP"A great day for Israel," Mr. Netanyahu added in a statement following U.S. President Donald Trump's announcement that a deal had been reached between Israel and Hamas to end the two-year war in Gaza. The Israeli military said that Chief of Staff Eyal Zamir instructed forces to prepare strong defenses and be ready for any scenario and to prepare to lead the operation for the hostages' return with sensitivity and professionalism, following the announcement of the Gaza ceasefire agreement. Hamas to release all living hostagesHamas said separately that the deal would ensure the withdrawal of Israeli troops as well as allow for the entry of aid and exchange of hostages and prisoners. Hamas called on Mr. Trump and guarantor states to ensure Israel fully implements the ceasefire, it added in a statement.Hamas plans to release all 20 living hostages this weekend, people familiar with the matter told The Associated Press, while the Israeli military will begin a withdrawal from the majority of Gaza."We salute our great people in the Gaza Strip, in Jerusalem and the West Bank,

# China honing abilities for a possible future attack, Taiwan defence report warns

GNS News Agency, Oct 23

TAIPEI, Oct 9 (Reuters) - China is increasing military activities near Taiwan and honing its ability to stage a surprise attack, as well as seeking to undermine trust in the government with "hybrid" online warfare tactics, the island's defence ministry said on Thursday.Democratically-governed Taiwan, which China views as its own territory, has faced increased military pressure from Beijing over the past five years, including at least seven rounds of major war games around the island since 2022.The Reuters Daily Briefing newsletter provides all the news you need to start your day. Sign up here.

"The Chinese communists have adopted routine grey zone harassment tactics, combined with joint combat readiness patrols, targeted military exercises and cognitive warfare, posing a comprehensive threat to us," the defence ministry said in a report released every two years.Grey zone refers to non-combat operations designed to put pressure on Taiwan such as coast guard patrols, damage to undersea cables and flying balloons.China's coast guard is expanding its activities around Taiwan and may in future take "aggressive containment measures" in concert with the military while rehearsing attack scenarios, the report said.Beijing is also using "hybrid warfare" to weaken people's trust in the government and support for defence spending, and using artificial intelligence tools to weaken Taiwan's cybersecurity and to scan for weak points in critical infrastructure, it added."Through both conventional and unconventional military actions, it aims to test its capabilities for attacking Taiwan and confronting foreign forces," the ministry said.

China's defence ministry did not respond to a request for comment. China has never renounced the use of force to bring Taiwan under its control.A China Coast Guard vessel is seen on a giant screen showing news footage about the coast guard's law enforcement patrols in waters around Taiwan, outside a shopping mall in Beijing, China, April 1, 2025. REUTERS/Florence Lo Purchase Licensing Rights, opens new tabChina could also try to suddenly shift drills into active combat mode to catch Taiwan and its international supporters off guard, posing a significant threat to re-



gional peace and security, Taiwan's ministry added.

In recent years, China has been extensively using civilian roll-on/roll-off merchant vessels for military transport operations and continues to develop specialised equipment for beach landing operations, the ministry said.The report said China is using a "professional cyber army" to manipulate social media accounts and flood them with misinformation to sow division in Taiwanese society and weaken trust in the government.

Chinese state media outlets and collaborators have also worked to weaken the will to fight, it said.The ministry added China has also been using deepfake technology to make videos and utilising AI to "generate polarising political rhetoric".China considers Taiwan President Lai Ching-te a "separatist". Lai rejects Beijing's sovereignty claims, saying only the island's people can decide their future.Taiwan's government has embarked on a military modernisation programme and pledged to spend 5% of GDP on defence by 2030.The report was released one day before Lai gives his key national day speech. China last year held war games after that same event in what it said was a warning to "separatist acts".China's last formal war games around Taiwan took place in April, though its warplanes and warships operate almost daily in the skies and waters close to the island.

# EU's von der Leyen survives no-confidence votes in parliament



GNS News Agency, Oct 23

EU lawmakers rejected the two motions of censure with 378 members of the 720-strong parliament expressing support for von der Leyen in the first vote and 383 in the second.The Reuters Daily Briefing newsletter provides all the news you need to start your day. Sign up here.

Von der Leyen said in a post on X that she deeply appreciated the support and that her team of commissioners would work closely with the parliament to tackle

Europe's challenges.The results were slightly better for the EU executive chief than in July, when 360 lawmakers voted against a motion brought by mainly far-right lawmakers, although below the 401 votes for von der Leyen's re-election for a second term in July 2024.Although the motions of censure had almost no chance of reaching the two-thirds majority required to unseat von der Leyen, some lawmakers said they could expose more general disquiet over her leadership and destabilise the EU assembly, whose backing is required to pass legislation.Parties outside the mainstream have realised that previously seldom-used censure motions are easy to trigger after the 2024 elections swelled the far right to more than 100 lawmakers, with only 72 required to back one.Both censure motions criticised von der Leyen for accepting an unbalanced tariff deal with the United States and proposing a trade agreement with South American bloc Mercosur, which critics say threatens farmers and the environment.The U.S. and Mercosur deals will be put to votes in the European Parliament in the coming months, with the outcomes unclear.

# India-China flights to resume after five years from October 26



GNS News Agency, Oct 23

The Centre on Thursday (October 2, 2025) gave the green signal to resume direct flights between India and China after a gap of five years, with IndiGo's flights from Kolkata to the trading hub of Guangzhou set for take-off from October 26."It has now been agreed that direct air services connecting designated points in India and China can resume by late October 2025, in keeping with the winter season schedule," a statement from the Ministry of External Affairs said, adding that the move will "further facilitate people-to-people contact between India and China, contributing towards the gradual normalisation of bilateral exchanges."The statement was followed by IndiGo announcing daily flights between Guangzhou and Kolkata, adding that the trading city would be connected with New Delhi soon, "subject to regulatory approvals". Tickets for flights between Kolkata and Guangzhou will open for sale from Friday (October 3). Industry sources said Air India too expects to start flights to Shanghai "before the end of the year".In July, the Indian government had announced resumption of tourist visas to Chinese nationals.

Direct flights between India and China have been suspended since March 2020, when India halted all international travel amid the Covid-19 pandemic. While restrictions eased gradually for many countries, flights to China remained suspended due to heightened tensions along the Line of Actual Control.IndiGo's flights start on the first day of the winter schedule that begins on the last Sunday of October. The annual aviation timetable is divided into summer and winter schedules and allows airlines to plan and adjust flights. Summer schedule starts from the last Sunday in March.

On the resumption of flights by Chinese carriers such as Air China, China Eastern Airlines, China Southern Airlines, and Shandong Airlines, sources said there has been a delay in submission of their applications to the government. Air China is learnt to have sought permission to connect Beijing with Delhi and later Mumbai, said one industry veteran.Though all international flights were banned on March 22, 2020, as part of lockdown measures to curb the spread of Covid-19 pandemic, international flights gradu-

ally resumed from the first week of May 2020 through special air bubble arrangements until March 2022, when normal commercial international flights were once again permitted. But direct flights between India and China did not restart because of tensions in the relationship between the two countries following the Galwan Valley clash of June 2020.The disruption had especially impacted small traders. For over five years, travellers needing to move between India and China relied on connecting flights via third-country hubs such as Hong Kong and Singapore, resulting in increased travel time and costs.

The tourism industry welcomed the government's decision. "China is one of the world's largest sources for outbound tourism and has a significant contribution to inbound tourism for India. Resumption of air links between the two countries is welcome, especially as India hasn't yet reached pre-COVID levels of inbound tourists, which used to be at 11.5 million and today lags behind at 9.5 million," said founder-chairman of STIC Travel Group of Companies, Subhash Goyal.

# Canadian PM Carney visits Trump as relations between them remain at a low point

Washington: Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney will meet with President Donald Trump in the Oval Office on Tuesday at a time when one of the world's most durable and amicable alliances has been fractured by Trump's trade war and annexation threats.

Carney's second visit to the White House comes ahead of a review next year of the free trade agreement, which is critical to Canada's economy. More than 77 per cent of Canada's exports go to the US.Trump's talk of making Canada the 51st state and his tariffs have Canadians feeling an undeniable sense of betrayal. Relations with Canada's southern neighbour and longtime ally haven't been worse."We've had ups and downs, but this is the lowest point in relations that I can recall," said Frank McKenna, a former Canadian ambassador to the United States and current deputy chairman of TD Bank."Canadians aren't being instructed what to do; they are simply voting with their feet," he said. "I talk every day to ordinary citizens who are changing their vacation plans, and I talk to large business owners who are moving reward trips away or executive business trips. There is an outright rebellion." There is fear in Canada over what will happen to the US-Mexico-Canada Agreement. Carney is looking to get some relief on some sector-specific tariffs, but expectations are low.



# 25 and counting: Union ministers make a beeline for flood-hit Punjab, AAP calls it BJP’s ‘disaster tourism’



GNS News Agency, Oct 23

Following Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s visit to the flood-affected areas in Punjab on September 9, a series of visits by union ministers began. So far, 25 Union ministers have toured villages across the state, with more scheduled to come. These ministers are conveying a clear message: they have been dispatched by PM Modi to assess the situation and ensure that relief efforts effectively reach the affected families.Punjab experienced severe flooding in September due to unseasonal heavy rains and release of water from dams, leading to flooding in multiple districts. Thousands of hectares of cropland were submerged in over 2,000 villages, with houses damaged and livelihoods disrupted, particularly affecting small farmers and landless labourers. “The outreach aims to personally connect with at least 1.25 lakh households impacted by the floods. As of early October, over 51,000 houses have already received assistance in severely affected districts, including Amritsar, Gurdaspur, Ferozepur, Fazilka, Jalandhar, Hoshiarpur, Pathankot, Tarn Taran, and Kapurthala,” said Anil Sarin, state general secretary of the BJP.

“The ministers are actively meeting residents, taking ground reports from deputy commissioners, while local BJP leaders distribute flood relief material, including ration kits, folding beds, utensils, blankets, woollens, slippers, and other essential items to families whose homes were damaged, effectively assisting those starting life from scratch,” said Sarin.In addition to distributing relief, teams are keeping detailed databases of beneficiaries using forms collected in flood-affected villages. “This is being done to ensure aid reaches genuine recipients and no household is left out. A database is also being compiled from villages with agricultural fields underwater, fields swallowed by rivers, or damaged houses. Pamphlets are also being distributed to villagers about the central government’s share in crop damage, house damage, compensation for deaths, or land/houses swallowed by rivers, as you never know what story the ruling AAP will tell the flood-affected people,” said Kaka Kamboj, president of the BJP in Fazilka district.Sarin said the BJP has set up eight warehouses in Jalandhar, which are stocked with relief materials donated by various states in Punjab, transported by nearly 300 trucks. These warehouses act as hubs for coordinating ongoing relief and rehabilitation efforts.

Meanwhile, the ruling AAP accused the BJP of undertaking “disaster tourism”. AAP spokesperson Neel Garg said, “They are wasting the time of the officers in Punjab due to unnecessary protocols, as they are required to attend these meetings. However, they are not providing any real benefits to the public. They have yet to disburse the Rs 1,600 crore relief that Prime Minister Modi announced during his visit to Punjab on September 9.”“The Centre is rubbing salt into Punjab’s wounds. Instead of providing relief to flood-ravaged Punjab, the BJP is busy spreading lies about causes of floods.If the floods in Punjab are the fault of the Mann government, then who is responsible for the devastation in Himachal, Uttarakhand, and Jammu and Kashmir? The truth is that the BJP is misleading the people of Punjab. Punjab needs relief, not politics,” added Garg.

Union Minister of Agriculture Shivraj Singh Chouhan visited Punjab first on September 4, followed by Prime Minister Modi on September 9. Ministerial teams were then deployed to assess the damage, supervise relief efforts, and prepare for rehabilitation measures. These measures

# ‘H-1B move could be a win-win as more talent might return to India’

Amid evolving India–US relations, and growing concerns among students reconsidering plans for higher education in the US, Geoffrey Garrett, Dean of the USC Marshall School of Business and Jared Grusd, Adjunct Professor of Entrepreneurship at the institute told The Indian Express that despite the uncertainties, USC has seen a record number of Indian students enrolling across various programmes. They said while recent announcements around the H-1B visa may seem worrying at first, but once the details were fully understood, it became far less intimidating. Edited excerpts:

In recent times, changes to the H-1B visa have become a crucial factor for Indian students considering higher education in the US. How do you view the current regulatory environment around the H-1B visa?

Geoffrey Garrett (GG): One important clarification for students is they do not need the H-1B visa right away. There is a different system called Optional Practical Training (OPT), which allows students to work after graduation. If it’s a STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) degree — as all degrees from the Marshall Business School are — students can get up to three years of work experience through OPT.What we’re really concerned about, from a firm’s perspective, is the increasing hassle of getting an Indian student into the US workforce. That challenge has been growing for a while. However, I suspect that the bigger American companies, where most students aim to work, will absorb the cost. For them, the \$100,000 or so is spread over six years, which makes it manageable.I understand why Indian students are so concerned. But in practical terms, two things matter. First, the job pathways into big firms likely won’t be affected much. Second, several of the major users of H-1B visas were Indian companies operating in the US, so this shift could be a win-win — as more talent might now return to India.The signal these new regulations send is powerful and concerning. At universities like USC, where international students are our lifeblood, we have to take this seriously. One-third of our entire student body consists of first-generation migrants to the US. But when you unpack the details, the reality is less intimidating than it first appears. We will need to break this down clearly for people — otherwise, it will be a very big change to our business model.GG: At the business school, we had a record number of Indian students coming in, and

included desilting fields and restoring agricultural activities, starting from September 11.Union Minister of State for Defence Sanjay Seth visited the Amritsar constituency on September 11–12. During his visit, he covered several villages, including Raja Sansi, Motla, Nepal, Dhadal, Jasterwal, Kheryal, Shivashahpur, and Chunj.Shobha Karandlaje, Minister of State for Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises, as well as Labour and Employment, visited the Gurdaspur constituency on September 12–13. Her visit included stops in Chak Ram Sahe, Maaora Pattan, Maara Chonki, and Awen.B L Verma, Minister of State for Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution, and Social Justice and Empowerment, visited the Ludhiana constituency on September 12 and 13. During his visit, he covered the areas of Bholewal Kadeem, Thoker No. 5, Khaira Bet, Dolo Kalan, and Sasrali Colony. He assured the residents that all relief funds would be transferred directly to their bank accounts.

Ravneet Singh Bittu, Minister of State for Food Processing Industries and Railways, visited Fazilka constituency on September 12–13, covering Dharamkot Randhawa, Wariam Khera, Patti Bila, Dalmir Khera, Dhani Natha Singh Wala, and Jalalabad.Harsh Malhotra, Minister of State for Corporate Affairs and Road Transport & Highways, toured Kapurthala constituency on September 12–13, interacting with residents in Begowal, Dhillwan, Baupur, Amritpur, Bhaguwal, and Gurudwara areas of Saiflabad and Ahli Kallan.Dr L Murugan, Minister of State for Information and Broadcasting as well as Parliamentary Affairs, visited the Ropar constituency on September 13–14. During his visit, he covered the areas of Shahpur Bela, Nangal, and Hariwal.George Kurian, Minister of State for Minority Affairs, Fisheries, Animal Husbandry, and Dairying, returned to Gurdaspur on September 14–15. He focused on the Dera Baba Nanak region, the Shri Kartarpur Corridor, and nearby villages.Raksha Nikhil Khadse, Minister of State for Youth Affairs and Sports, visited the Patiala constituency on September 15 and 16. During this visit, he covered areas including Samana, Ghanaur, and Hansi Bhutana.Jitendra Singh, Minister of State for Personnel, Public Grievances, and Pensions, visited the Pathankot constituency on September 17 and 18, focusing on Kailashpur, Pangoli, and other nearby areas affected by flooding.Durgadas Uikey, Minister of State for Tribal Affairs, visited Patiala’s flood-affected villages on October 7–8, while Shripad Naik, Minister of State for Power and Non-Renewable Energy, conducted visits on October 6–7 in Kapurthala, having previously toured Ferozepur in September.Minister of State for Law and Justice Arjun Ram Meghwal visited Fazilka on October 7, emphasising a special strategy to provide relief to affected families.Outreach efforts coordinated with local authoritiesThe outreach programme signifies a change from previous BJP initiatives, such as the ‘BJP de Sewadar as Gaye Tuhade Dwar’. The Punjab government discontinued this program in August due to administrative concerns, and AAP leaders had accused it of data theft. The current ministerial visits are officially coordinated with local authorities, allowing Central government representatives to gather ground reports, maintain databases, and ensure the direct delivery of relief to affected households.Pritpal Singh Baliawal, state spokesperson of the BJP, said, “By October 16, 32 union ministers are expected to complete their visits across Punjab, with ongoing efforts to reach every flood-affected village. The outreach focuses on the Central government’s priority of rehabilitating affected households, assisting farmers, and ensuring that relief reaches the intended beneficiaries, while also highlighting administrative gaps in the state’s response.”

The BJP leaders also allege that this was a human-made flood by the state government and are distributing a “chargesheet” against the state government.Iqbal Singh Mallah, a nambardar (village head) of the Muthianwala block of Ferozepur, said, “In our village, around 230 forms were filled by BJP leaders and kits are being distributed. BJP ministers are visiting the area one after another. This time they are making sure to publicise enough about the Centre’s contribution and the share of the Centre in various heads. In the 2023 floods, we had got only Rs 6,800 per acre compensation, which was only the Centre’s share. Farmers got this information very late.”

I believe that was true across USC, at the UG level as well. We were initially concerned — not just about students from India, but about international students in general — because of visa-related hassles. We feared we might lose a significant number. But that actually didn’t happen. What I think is really happening is that at top-quality institutions, international students have a global outlook, understand the value of the education they are getting. It’s probably the second-tier American universities that will suffer, at least in the short term.That said, the recent news about H-1B visas is a big deal. From a business model perspective, I am less concerned about the UG programmes, because they are longer — the experience stretches over four years, and you can amortize the uncertainty over time.The part of our educational system that’s a bit more transactional is the one-year master’s programmes. For those students, this new environment makes the decision much harder: Do I pursue this degree with so much uncertainty around my employment prospects afterward? That’s a real concern, and we’ll need to think carefully about it.

It’s also another reason to seriously consider offering graduate education outside the US — not just as a strategic move, but because it might become a practical necessity.There’s a growing cultural fear among Indian students they may no longer be as welcomed in the US as before. In yor view, what is the one real fear and the one imagined fear they should keep in mind about the American campus?GG: I have two reactions to that. First, California is demographically different. If you walk down Trousdale Parkway in the middle of the day at USC, you don’t feel like you’re in some mythical version of white America from the 1950s. Southern California is even more cosmopolitan than the Bay Area.

Second, Indian Americans are incredibly influential today—not just as corporate CEOs, but also through the growing power of the Indian caucus in Congress. That should give people a sense of comfort. The success of Indian-Americans is remarkable...I think the real fear is not uniquely American — it’s global. I never imagined we would see such de-globalization, that the global economy would begin to fracture. I also never expected skilled migration to become such a politically charged issue in so many countries.The imagined fear, I believe, is around physical safety. The LA riots over the summer were a global news story.

# ‘Lost my entire sugarcane crop...without govt help, how will I live?’: Solapur farmers await relief as flood losses mount



GNS News Agency, Oct 23

“I have lost my entire sugarcane crop. The farm soil has been washed away, which means I will not be able to till the land in the future. If I do not get any government help, how will I live?”Kiran Lavate, a 26-year-old farmer from Maharashtra’s Solapur district, is at his wits’ end. Lavate hails from Undargaon village in Madha taluka, one of the worst-hit areas in the district ravaged by the recent floods. He owns a 10-acre farm and invested Rs 3.5 lakh to grow sugarcane, a popular crop sown in the region as it has high returns.

“In April, it took us one month to sow the sugarcane. In October, all the standing sugarcane crop was flattened. There is hardly anything we can salvage. The entire farm soil has been washed away,” says Lavate. Ninety per cent of the families in his village have suffered a similar fate. The unprecedented rainfall in the state and the resulting floods in Marathwada have wreaked havoc on the lives of farmers, inflicting widespread damage on standing crops. This year, crops were cultivated on 1.43 crore hectares in Maharashtra. Of this, crops on approximately 68.69 lakh hectares have been damaged.In Solapur, which is among the region’s eight districts, flood-hit farmers are anxiously waiting for “some kind” of assistance from the state government to help them rebuild their lives. While Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis has announced a Rs 31,628 crore package for the flood-hit regions of the state, the situation on the ground tells a different story. “No official has even turned up to conduct a panchnama (an official record documenting the damage to crops, property, etc),” claims Lavate.

In Solapur district, Madha taluka has been the worst hit by the floods, followed by Mohol and Barshi. Criss-crossing the length and breadth of Madha, The Indian Express spotted acres and acres of devastated farmland in and around several villages. Sugarcane, soyabean, grapes—virtually every crop has been flattened. In most villages, the topsoil has been washed away after the Seena River’s surge, first on September 24 and then on two other occasions.Infrastructure has also been hit. Bridges lie damaged, roads are riddled with potholes and craters, and there are no motorable roads. Electricity lines have snapped, poles have collapsed, and transformers have been damaged. Hundreds of livestock, which are like family members of the farmers, have died in the floods.The floods have not only thrown their lives into disarray but have also left them staring at an uncertain future, where they now have to rebuild their lives from scratch.

The rain, described by old-timers as unprecedented in this arid zone—something they say the region has not seen in 100 years—flooded houses close to the Seena River, washing away household items, grains, and in some cases, jewellery and cash.Undargaon and Wakav are among the hardest-hit villages in the region. In Undargaon, floodwaters damaged sugarcane crops spread across over 2,000 acres, while Wakav saw destruction on more than 6,000 acres of farmland.“I had one acre of land, where I had planted sugarcane two months ago. I had spent Rs 60,000 and was expecting at least Rs 2 lakh once the crop was harvested. When the Seena River surged last month, I lost my entire standing crop. Our livestock shed was damaged, killing our only Jersey cow. Four water-lifting motors have become non-functional,” says Ramchandra Thorat, 50, a farmer from Undargaon village.

When the Seena River breached its embankment, nearly 90 per cent of Undargaon village was inundated, with floodwater rising as high as 10 feet. Only those who stayed away from the village managed to save their houses and

belongings.Thorat has received Rs 10,000 as assistance from the government. “What will I do with Rs 10,000? I lost crop, soil, machinery, cow and Rs 60,000 on which I was expecting a big profit. We have not been informed whether we will get more money from the government. I hope the government will help us so that we can restart our lives,” he says.Barren lands (Photo by Manoj More ) In Solapur district, Madha taluka was the worst hit by the floods caused by the unprecedented rainfall in Maharashtra. Crops on approximately 68.69 lakh hectares were damaged—Photo by Manoj MoreLavate’s farm is located more than a km away from his home in Undargaon. Reaching the farm has become a daunting task with the roads slushy and damaged in most parts. Pointing to the flattened sugar crop, he says, “This is gone...The sugar factories will not buy them. What will I do with it?”Lavate says this was the first time they decided to invest so much in the crop. “Last year, we invested Rs 1.5 lakh and got a Rs 3 lakh profit on the sugarcane crop on 2 acres of land. So, this year, we used our entire 10 acres for the sugarcane crop and were expecting Rs 10 lakh in return. Now the situation is such that not only have we lost our entire investment, we have lost our crop, our cows and buffaloes, and the farm land has suffered irreversible damage,” he says.

The Lavate family is miffed at the government. “We thought that in a situation when 90 per cent of the village has taken a hit, the government would accord priority to conducting a panchnama in our village. But they are yet to turn up,” he says.Fadnavis and Deputy Chief Ministers Ajit Pawar and Eknath Shinde had recently toured flood-hit areas in Solapur district, but Undargaon was not on the itinerary. “Though we have been hit hard and our lives have been upended, neither the CM nor the deputy CMs thought it wise to visit us and comfort us. A few soothing words from them would have given us some relief,” he says, even as other farmers around him agree. ‘Never seen anything like this before’

Farmers from neighbouring villages like Sultanpur, Chavanwadi, Tandalwadi, and Darphal have similar tales to share. “Of the 500 houses in our village, at least 400 were underwater. While many villagers lost their household items and grains, some salvaged them by storing them on the terraces of their two-storied houses,” says Ruturaj Sawant, the sarpanch of Wakav village. Ruturaj is the nephew of Shiv Sena leader Tanaji Sawant.When the Seena River was in spate, Wakav was surrounded by water. “Our elders who are in their 80s or 90s told us that they have never seen anything like this before,” says Ruturaj.Vithoba Desai agrees. “I am 80 years old. In all these years, I do not remember flood water even touching the threshold of our village. My house and all household items have been damaged. The government keeps saying that it will extend help. But my question is, where is your help?” asks Desai.Ruturaj, who himself lost standing crop on 45 acres of land, says farmers have suffered an incalculable loss. “I do not think that sugar factories will purchase the sugarcane in the present condition. The crop has suffered huge damage. Farmers whose entire families are dependent on sugarcane will have a bleak future. It will be difficult for them to grow another crop unless they replace the entire soil, which is a costly proposition,” he says.“My family lost our entire sugarcane and maize crop on 45 acres of land. We had invested more than Rs 10 to Rs 15 lakh,” he adds.

Nana Shelar, another farmer from Wakav village, says many farmers are in a state of shock. “Some have taken bank loans, some have borrowed money from friends and relatives. If the government does not release adequate compensation, the farmers will struggle to cope. In Wakav, 90 per cent of the families, that is 400 homes, have been affected. We are comforting each other in the hope that bigger assistance from the government will arrive and we will be able to rebuild our lives,” he says.The aid is something that Machhindra Patil, 37, a farmer from Kevad village in Madha taluka, is also counting on. Though Patil is better off than most of his peers as the sugarcane crop on 6-7 acres of his land is unaffected, he is still counting losses from the crop damaged on 7 acres. “The soil has been washed away. This means, if I have to rebuild the farm, I will have to bring in fresh soil. For each acre of land, soil will cost more than Rs 1.5 lakh. Effectively, I will have to shell out more than Rs 5 lakh. Where will I bring the money from? I have already taken a loan of Rs 2.5 lakh from two banks,” he says.

# Cough syrup deaths: CDSCO seeks list of all manufacturers from state governments, initiates joint audit



The regulatory body also also informed the WHO that it has identified three contaminated cough syrups linked to the recent child deaths. It stated that none of the products were exported from India

Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation (CDSCO) has asked all State governments to submit a list of cough syrup manufacturers while initiating a joint audit of these companies, said a senior Health Ministry official on Thursday (October 9, 2025) following the deaths of over 20 children allegedly due to contaminated cough syrup in the past month.

CDSCO has also informed the World Health Organisation (WHO) that it has identified three contaminated cough syrups — Coldrif, Respifresh and ReLife —linked to the recent child deaths in India—as containing Diethylene Glycol (DEG). It stated that none of the products were exported from India.It added that the products have been re-

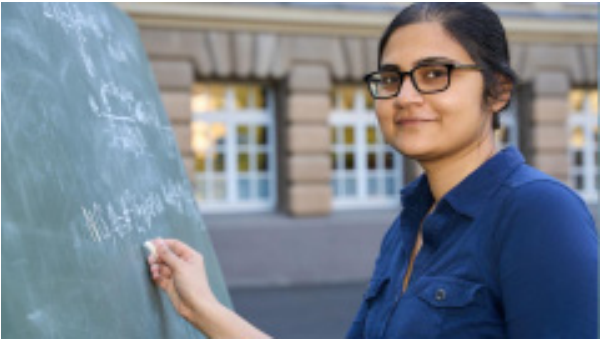
called and identified manufacturers have been ordered to stop production of all medical products.The WHO had contacted the CDSCO on October 1, seeking clarification regarding potential links to contaminated medicines and whether the products were exported to other countries.The United Nations health agency noted that the CDSCO had identified the three products as Coldrif from Sresan Pharma (Tamil Nadu) showing 48.6 percent DEG; Respifresh TR from Rednex Pharmaceuticals (Gujarat) that showed 1.342% DEG and ReLife from Shape Pharma (Gujarat) showing 0.616%.

The symptoms described were consistent “with acute renal failure and acute encephalitis syndrome, with suspected links to the use of oral syrup medicines,” it added.WHO added that it is “ready to support national authorities in investigating and responding to these tragic events,” adding that it hasn’t received any official information as to the source of the DEG contamination or if contaminated pharmaceutical material has been identified.

It also flagged the “regulatory gap in DEG/EG screening for domestically marketed medicines in India”, stressing the need to identify “the source of the contamination and identifying and removing any contaminated pharmaceutical material which may be in circulation.”Meanwhile a Health Ministry official said that Coldrif from Sresan Pharma (Tamil Nadu) wasn’t in the radar of the Central Government when it was first given license in 2011 and even when this was renewed in 2016. “The CDSCO has now recommended cancellation of the manufacturing license for the company. If the raw material and the finished product were tested, we could have avoided the situation,” added the official.He further explained that deaths of children in Rajasthan had no connection with contaminated cough syrup. “Child deaths in Rajasthan have been under scrutiny and have been medically attributed to meningitis, mucositis, and acute respiratory distress syndrome (ARDS),” said the official.



## 'It's like writing a poem': prize winner Rajula Srivastava on doing maths



When Rajula Srivastava was first notified about a prestigious prize, she was quick to dismiss it. All she got was a cryptic email from the personal email address of mathematician Terence Tao asking if she was free for a chat. Tao, a professor at the University of California, Los Angeles, is widely considered one of the most gifted mathematicians of our time. Srivastava couldn't think of a reason why he would want to talk to her. "I obviously thought it was a scam," she said.

But then she got a second email from him ten minutes later, asking to Zoom. After ascertaining that the email was not fake, she proceeded to cautiously respond. During their chat, Tao broke the news that she had won the Maryam Mirzakhani New Frontiers Prize, an initiative of the Breakthrough Prize in Mathematics, for her work in harmonic analysis and analytic number theory. She couldn't believe it. "I told him I thought it was a scam, and he found that very funny, [saying] 'maybe I want to scam a theorem out of you or something,'" she said with a laugh. "It was surreal, the way [the call] went." A fondness for puzzles

Srivastava, a Hirzebruch Research Instructor at the University of Bonn and the Max Planck Institute for Mathematics in Germany, grew up in a science-loving family. In school, mathematics happened to be the subject she enjoyed the most among all the sciences: because it involved the least amount of memorisation. "Once you understand the logic behind things, you don't have to memorize a lot of things ... beyond the multiplication tables in kindergarten," she said.

She also realised she didn't like doing lab work but she did enjoy solving puzzles. At the age of 15 she decided she wanted to be a mathematician and went on to do an integrated master's degree in the National Institute of Science Education and Research (NISER), Bhubaneswar, where she majored in maths. She then wrote her master's thesis in harmonic analysis, the study of functions and how they can be represented in terms of their frequencies — a topic she had begun to like. For her PhD, she chose to go to the University of Wisconsin-Madison mainly because of its big harmonic analysis group. Just like music can be broken down into harmonies, signals can be broken down into the frequencies that make them up. "But you need to be able to do it in a sensible way, so that the information you have in this breakdown should be such that you should be able to reconstruct your complicated signal once more from these pieces," Srivastava explained.

That's the basic idea of harmonic analysis, where one breaks down functions in terms of their frequencies or "harmonics" using a method called the Fourier transformation. One can imagine these frequencies to lie on a line, but you can also ask these questions in higher dimensions, Srivastava said. "Then it's also about geometry, about the patterns and the shapes in which these waves are arranged." To imagine a three-dimensional wave, picture a sound wave travelling in all directions via the molecules in air, or the ripples from an earthquake as it reverberates through the ground. In each case, there is a point at which the vibration originates, and the emanating waves then form the shape of a sphere. The vibrations travel radially outwards, perpendicular to the expanding wave. Her work mostly focused on waves in three or even higher dimensions. Spotting numbers on a line After her PhD, Srivastava went on to do her postdoctoral research in Germany, accepting a joint position between the mathematics department at the University of Bonn and the Max Planck Institute of Mathematics at Bonn. In her time there, from 2022 to 2024, she started diverging into problems at the interface of harmonic analysis and number theory.

Her husband, who is also a mathematician and a number theorist, first introduced her to counting problems. More than the potential applications of the number theoretical problems, however, Srivastava was motivated by sheer curiosity. With her expertise in harmonic analysis, she knew she had a bag of tools at her disposal. Could she now use

## Isabel Allende's feminist manifesto continues in new book, *My Name is Emilia del Valle*

When Isabel Angélica Allende Llona was around nine years old, she travelled with her grandfather to the Argentine Patagonia, where he had sheep. "We went by train from Santiago as far to the south as the train would go, continued by car, crossed the Andes on horseback, and on the other side, we were picked up by rangers," she writes via email. "That journey is engraved in my memory. That's Chile for me, the country I long for."

This deep longing and loss is present in every single book Allende, now 83, has written — from her bestselling debut *The House of the Spirits* (1982) to her latest, *My Name is Emilia del Valle* (translated by Frances Riddle, published by Bloomsbury), which is set mostly between San Francisco and Chile. From the moment she flew to Venezuela where she would remain for 13 years, Chile stopped being hers in the way it had till then, and everything changed forever. Over the years, Allende would keep interrogating the themes of displacement and identity, of memory and family, as well as the potent links between the personal and the historical, through her stories.

It started with *The House of the Spirits*, featuring the sprawling del Valle clan. A fantastically embellished history of her family, the book was inspired by Allende's maternal grandmother's family — "they were 12 siblings, all of them quite original, wonderful inspirations for extravagant characters." Did she know back then that she would keep returning to them, from *Daughter of Fortune* (1999), to *Portrait in Sepia* (2000), and now in *My Name is Emilia del Valle*? "I had no idea if that book was ever going to be published or that I would write other books. Of course, I didn't think that clan would intrude in other books," she says.

Allende explains that Emilia sprung into being because she needed a way to write about the 1891 Chilean Civil War with a neutral voice. "It had to be a foreigner, and I wanted a woman narrator." Like all of Allende's heroines, Emilia too is rebellious and intrepid, and way ahead of her time. The illegitimate daughter of a former novice nun, the Irish Molly Walsh, and a Chilean aristocrat, Gonzalo Andres del Valle,

them to count things? She offered a simple example. While positioning integers on the number line, we learn that rational numbers have an exact address on the line. Even if it is a fraction, like say  $5/7$ , the number line can be chopped up into smaller and smaller parts until we have an exact location for it. Irrational numbers don't have an exact address, but one can still make a well-educated guess. "We can say that it's between  $1/1,000,000$  and  $2/1,000,000$ , [for example] which is a very tiny part and use those fractions to approximate your point," she explained. "You're saying up to this error, it is between these two fractions."

But she worked on a similar question in higher dimensions. Instead of a line, imagine a three-dimensional shape like a sphere. Now if the point you want to map is somewhere on the manifold of this shape, what can you say about its approximability? "That's how the geometry comes in," she said. In higher dimensions, the fractions lie on a grid or lattice instead of being equally spaced on a one-dimensional number line. "So I have a lattice, and I have a shape inside the lattice. And then I'm asking: how close can points of this lattice get to points on the manifold?"

That's how the two ideas — of harmonic analysis and counting points in 3D space — converge. "If you know that your waves live on a nice shape, then you know something about those waves or [their] frequencies," she said. As both the wave frequencies and lattices are periodic, she worked on using the waves' periodicity to count points on a shape within a lattice. Working on these problems eventually went on to win her the Maryam Mirzakhani New Frontiers Prize. More conferences in India Even as one of only two women out of the 25 students doing maths in her department at NISER, she didn't feel any specific barriers to her progress during her integrated master's program in India. She was confident, doing well in her exams, and didn't have the need to constantly prove herself to others. But that changed when she went abroad: now she was not only a woman but she was also non-white. She eventually formed a community and received support from both men and women, but she still felt some alienation at the start when she moved out of India.

"You feel that you need to prove yourself more. You have less of a community to fall back on because there's just less of you," Srivastava said. "Sometimes if you're the only brown woman in the room, you also somehow feel that you're scrutinised more. Like, if you're asking a question, then it better be a good question, not something stupid." She thinks things are changing now, though, with more women of colour doing maths. Srivastava is coming full circle in her own career. Currently a visiting research fellow at the University of Edinburgh, she will soon move back to the University of Wisconsin-Madison and continue working on the intersection of harmonic analysis and number theory. She decided to move abroad long term because her husband is German and it was logistically easier to move to the US than to India for both of them. Another reason was more exposure to people and resources and being updated on new research developments, since many of the big conferences don't happen in India. "I feel like they should do more [conferences] in developing countries, not just India, but also other countries of the Global South," she said. Srivastava enjoys being part of a broader community: friends and associates who all speak the common language of maths and whom she was able to meet and collaborate with on problems once she moved out of India. But she's also grateful for her early education in India, and to how many Indian universities, including hers, invest a lot in their students with scholarships and low fees. But doing maths can also be very frustrating at times, she said. Like when one spends most of the time researching answers to a problem instead of being able to just sit down and solve it. "Sometimes you have the broad outline, that this is how it should work. But actually implementing all the steps might take time," she said. "Sometimes the ideas might come in a week, but just to write things might take months." The rewards from small victories, like penning down one small theorem as part of a larger proof, keep her going. She also greatly values the independence of not having immediate deadlines and not needing to rely on expensive resources to work on her research questions. The latter is often the case in other fields like biology. "In math, you pretty much just need pen and paper. You can be anywhere, and you can just start thinking about [the problem]," she said. "Maybe you need a board and chalk, and that's it." On a day-to-day basis, if she's really focused on a problem, maths is almost like meditation for Srivastava. She described how some think of it like a cross between art and science. "There's something which is just in your brain and then somehow you prove [it], and then it's true. Once it's true, it will always stay," she said.

who seduced and abandoned her, Emilia is raised in 19th-century San Francisco by her mother Molly and her husband Francisco Claro, the director of a local school, who dotes on her, and will support and encourage her empowerment. He is the reason she grows up with a desire to see the world and "experience everything intensely". This, coupled with a need to find out the truth about herself, her biological father, and a homeland she's never known, pushes Emilia, a columnist, to request a war correspondent position. But why would the newspaper, where she'd finagled a regular column writing under a male pen name, send Emilia to Chile? That's how she becomes Emilia del Valle, someone who speaks Spanish and has local family connections. Allende had to juggle the social mores of the time — so Emilia gets assigned the human-interest stories, while her male colleague, Eric Whelan, is given the more "serious" coverage.

Our focus naturally shifts to Allende's feminist manifesto, the veins of which run through all her work, and through her own life, from an age as young as five years old. "I was an angry little girl," shares Allende. "They (the women in her household — her mother and the maids) had no power, no money, no freedom as the men had. That was the beginning of a lifelong feminist struggle, which crystallised during my years at Paula (Chile's first feminist magazine co-founded by Allende around the time of the second feminist wave). Those ideals have not changed." Even through great tragedy, admirably. The Isabel Allende Foundation founded in 1996 is dedicated to the memory of her late daughter, Paula Frias, who died unexpectedly after a year spent in coma following a porphyria attack. Like everything else Allende does on the public stage, it is an extension of her feminism, offering support and empowerment to girls and women through education, knowledge about reproductive rights, protection from domestic and sexual violence. And the maverick shows no signs of flagging. "For me, writing is not a chore. I write because I love the process.

# India pauses plans to buy U.S. arms after Donald Trump's tariffs,



India has put on hold its plans to procure new U.S. weapons and aircraft, according to three Indian officials familiar with the matter, in its first concrete sign of discontent after tariffs imposed on its exports by President Donald Trump dragged ties to their lowest level in decades. India had been planning to send Defence Minister Rajnath Singh to Washington in the coming weeks for an announcement on some of the purchases, but that trip has been cancelled, two of the people said. Mr. Trump on August 6 imposed an additional 25% tariff on Indian goods as punishment for Delhi's purchases of Russian oil, which he said meant the country was funding Russia's invasion of Ukraine. That raised the total duty on Indian exports to 50% — among the highest of any U.S. trading partner.

The President has a history of rapidly reversing himself on tariffs, and India has said it remains actively engaged in discussions with Washington. One of the people said the defence purchases could go ahead once India had clarity on tariffs and the direction of bilateral ties, but "just not as soon as they were expected to." Written instructions had not been given to pause the purchases, another official said, indicating that Delhi had the option to quickly reverse course, though there was "no forward movement at least for now." Defence Ministry and the Pentagon did not respond to Reuters' questions. Delhi, which has forged a close partnership with America in recent years, has said it is being unfairly targeted and that Washington and its European allies continue to trade with Moscow when it is in their interest.

Reuters is reporting for the first time that discussions on India's purchases of Stryker combat vehicles made by General Dynamics Land Systems and Javelin anti-tank missiles developed by Raytheon and Lockheed Martin have been paused due to the tariffs. Trump and Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi had in February announced plans to pursue procurement and joint production of those items.

# As global universities set up shop in India, it's time for Indian B-schools to reinvent

As international universities from the U.K. and Australia steadily set up campuses across the country, India is an up-and-coming global education hub. This educational disruption follows the regulatory changes introduced in the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, which allows foreign universities to enter the Indian educational landscape due to eased regulations and the benefit of full control over their curricula and admission criteria. Given the saturation in the education industry, domestic universities, particularly business schools, will have stiff competition in the upcoming years.

A market ripe for growth With over 65% of India's population being under 35 and more than 43.3 million students in higher education, we are home to a booming education market that is predicted to have a sustained demand for higher education, particularly for premium degrees in Business, Technology, and Leadership. The tightening visa rules across the globe don't help, of course. With growing challenges in pursuing education abroad, it would not be surprising to see students opting for international branch campuses closer to home.

Given, as well, the increased demand for a future-ready workforce, companies are substantially seeking a holistically well-rounded workforce. The demographics, in addition to the aforementioned regulatory shifts and the high demand for skills and foreign degrees, lay the groundwork for the lucrativeness of branch campuses in India. Learn from global educational practices

Management education in India is at the cusp of change. In the coming years, we have the opportunity to redefine management education as we know it, enhance our pedagogical methods and initiate cross-industry collaborations to drive meaningful output and change. While Indian B-schools have grown in scale, they are still behind their global counterparts in terms of high-impact research output. Management education also cannot remain derivative – it must shape narratives on emerging markets, inclusive growth and innovation. Faculty exchanges and industry collaborations are key to elevating Indian B-school standings on a global level. International faculty members bring not only academic credentials but also diverse perspectives into the classrooms, fortifying pedagogy and the overall academic environment. This can be complemented by deepening industry linkages, ensuring curricula, research and placements remain aligned with and relevant to the industry. There is much to learn from global education practices, where academic institutions often have partnerships with industry to augment classroom learning with on-the-job experience, ensuring students develop theoretical understanding and practical skills. Such practices can lead to the inception of a globalised curriculum – where global business insights can be used for Indian markets. Furthermore, the introduction of flexible learning models such as part-time and distance learning MBAs allow for a wider scope of students.

The future of management education is shifting rapidly, Indian B-schools that fail to evolve risk becoming obsolete. We deal with outdated and oftentimes irrelevant curriculum that cannot keep up with the ever-evolving business landscape. If B-schools continue with the current transactional nature of management education, we will find ourselves overshadowed by the more agile and research-driven schools abroad. Without a proactive shift in mindset and method, many schools will be reduced to degree-dispensing institutions with little credibility, attracting neither the best talent nor industry attention. To thrive in this new landscape, Indian B-schools need to act decisively. We must embrace international best practices such as hybrid learning models that blend in-person, digital, and experiential components, making education more accessible, personalised, and future-ready. Emphasis should also be placed on curating niche learning programs in domains such as healthcare and sports management, given their popularity domestically and abroad. Fundamentally, Management education is about being ahead of the curve. Industry alli-

Singh had also been planning to announce the purchase of six Boeing P8I reconnaissance aircraft and support systems for the Indian Navy during his now-cancelled trip, two of the people said. Talks over procuring the aircraft in a proposed \$3.6 billion deal were at an advanced stage, according to the officials.

Boeing, Lockheed Martin and General Dynamics referred queries to the Indian and U.S. governments. Raytheon did not return a request for comment. India's deepening security relationship with the U.S., which is fuelled by their shared strategic rivalry with China, was heralded by many U.S. analysts as one of the key areas of foreign-policy progress in the first Trump administration. Delhi is the world's second-largest arms importer and Russia has traditionally been its top supplier. India has in recent years however shifted to importing from Western powers like France, Israel and the U.S., according to the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute think-tank. The shift in suppliers was driven partly by constraints on Russia's ability to export arms, which it is utilizing heavily in its invasion of Ukraine. Some Russian weapons have also performed poorly in the battlefield, according to Western analysts.

The broader U.S.-India defence partnership, which includes intelligence sharing and joint military exercises, continues without hiccups, one of the Indian officials said. India also remains open to scaling back on oil imports from Russia and is open to making deals elsewhere, including the U.S., if it can get similar prices, according to two other Indian sources. Trump's threats and rising anti-U.S. nationalism in India have "made it politically difficult for Modi to make the shift from Russia to the U.S.," one of the people said. Nonetheless, discounts on the landing cost of Russian oil have shrunk to the lowest since 2022. Petroleum ministry did not immediately respond to a request for comment. While the rupture in U.S.-India ties was abrupt, there have been strains in the relationship. Delhi has repeatedly rebutted Trump's claim that the U.S. brokered a ceasefire between India and Pakistan after four days of fighting between the nuclear-armed neighbours in May. Trump also hosted Pakistan's army chief at the White House in the weeks following the conflict. In recent months, Moscow has been actively pitching Delhi on buying new defence technologies like its S-500 surface-to-air missile system, according to one of the Indian officials, as well as a Russian source familiar with the talks. India currently does not see a need for new arms purchases from Moscow, two officials said. But Delhi is unlikely to wean itself off Russian weapons entirely as the decades-long partnership between the two powers means Indian military systems will continue to require Moscow's support, one of the officials said.



ances can produce meaningful outcomes for both the institution and students, such as co-designed curriculum, live projects and co-funded research. Leveraging their soft power is also necessary for Indian B-schools. Our access to the local market, cultural insight and demographics gives us the leverage to design management education that is not only globally relevant but also deeply rooted in the Indian context. Finally, meaningful transformation cannot happen without significant investment in faculty development. Investing in MDPs, interdisciplinary exchanges, allowing faculty sabbaticals in corporate setting is a must for curriculum and institutional relevancy. This is a defining moment for Indian B-schools, a chance to not just catch up, but to lead. Complacency is not an option as global campuses set foot in India and expectations keep evolving. Indian business schools must shed legacy mindsets, build global ambition and act with urgency. It is time to reimagine, not replicate the future of management education. If Indian institutions aspire to compete on a level playing field with their foreign counterparts, the time to get the act together is now.

## No ban on paracetamol, clarifies centre amid rumours

New Delhi: The Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation (CDSCO) has not banned the commonly used paracetamol drug in India, Union Minister of State for Chemicals and Fertilisers Anupriya Patel said on Tuesday.

In a reply in the Parliament, during the ongoing Monsoon session, Patel said that “the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare has informed that the Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation is not in receipt of information about rumours” of the regulatory body banning paracetamol. Noting that “paracetamol is not banned in the country”, Patel said that “various Fixed Dose Combinations including such combinations of paracetamol with other drugs, have been banned in the country”.

Further, the MoS noted that the government has rolled out the free drugs service initiative under the National Health Mission. "This aims to ensure availability of essential drugs and reduce out-of-pocket expenditure of patients visiting the public health facilities, including government hospitals and rural primary health centres," she added. For the provision of free essential medicines in public health facilities, the states are provided with financial support. Support is available for procurement of drugs and strengthening or setting up of robust systems of procurement, quality assurance, supply chain management and warehousing, prescription audit and grievance redressal, and for the dissemination of standard treatment guidelines and establishment of the information-technology enabled platform named Drugs and Vaccine Distribution Management System (DVDMs), which is used for monitoring the actual status of procurement and availability of essential medicines. Patel said that the Ministry of Health has also recommended a facility-wise essential medicines list to be made available at public healthcare facilities, including government hospitals and rural primary health centres.



# Exports register 4-5 per cent growth in last 6 months: Piyush Goyal



Piyush Goyal, Exports, Exports growth, Exports growth rise, Global Fintech Fest, Indian express business, business news, current affairsGoyal noted that international trade growth, by contrast, has fallen below one per cent according to World Bank figures.Union Minister of Commerce and Industry Piyush Goyal on Wednesday said India has achieved 4-5 per cent growth in exports over the last six months of the current financial year, despite global turbulence, highlighting the country's resilience.

"In the first six months of this year (April to Septem-

ber), we are on positive territory in exports, both in goods and services. That's India's resilience," he said while addressing the Global Fintech Fest in Mumbai.Goyal noted that international trade growth, by contrast, has fallen below one per cent according to World Bank figures."Technology has become a driver of inclusive growth. Every citizen today is empowered with digital tools. Having a billion-plus internet users is no mean achievement," he said, adding that trust has become India's defining strength, "the only currency that never depreciates, it only appreciates.""India is at an inflection point with strong macroeconomic fundamentals, expanding trade relations with developed countries around the world, and a focus on empowering customers with high quality and low taxes," he said.Citing India's leadership in renewable energy, Goyal said, "24-hour renewable energy is available at under 9 cents a kilowatt for data centres and for artificial intelligence applications." He added that clean and affordable power "will drive the world's most modern technologies from India for the rest of the world."On India's digital success, Goyal highlighted, "Today, UPI is becoming more and more prominent not only in India but across the world. Day before yesterday, I launched UPI in Doha and Qatar... Today, nine countries are using UPI."

## Action plan on quantum readiness in regulated ecosystem prepared, SEBI Chairman

Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi) Chairman Tuhin Kanta Pandey on Tuesday said that the markets regulator has prepared an action plan on quantum readiness for its regulated ecosystem.to address post quantum cryptographic issues, Sebi has prepared an action plan as well as capacity building initiatives on quantum readiness of its regulated ecosystem," Pandey said during his speech at the Global Fintech Fest 2025.

Cryptography is the practice of developing and using coded algorithms to protect and obscure transmitted information so that it may only be read by those with the permission and ability to decrypt it. "The traditional cryptography that we do now, with which we generate passwords, whether it is 128 encrypted or whatever, that will break with quantum computing, which means there will not be any security... Crypto-proof passwords are called post-quantum cryptography (PQC), or quantum key distribution (QKD). We will have to prepare for that. And gradually, in all the systems, we will have to look at where the passwords have been used. And then we will have to replace them," Pandey told reporters on the sidelines.With quantum computing poised to break conventional encryption methods, the need for quantum-resilient cybersecurity has become urgent.In July this year, the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY), the Indian Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT-In), and cybersecurity firm SISA jointly launched a whitepaper titled 'Transitioning to Quantum Cyber Readiness'.This whitepaper will be a guide for organisations across sectors to begin their quantum safe migration and prepare for quantum readiness.

Pandey added that every leap in technology brings its own set of risks. Cybersecurity threats have the potential



to create systemic disruptions. A single data breach or operational glitch can have cascading effects across interconnected systems."As market participants increasingly rely on third-party service providers and cloud-based platforms, new vectors of risk emerge — sometimes beyond traditional regulatory perimeters," he said.Sebi has been taking steps, including regulatory frameworks, continuous monitoring, capacity building, standard operating procedure for classification and handling of cybersecurity incidents. Under the comprehensive cybersecurity and cyber resilience framework for regulated entities, Sebi has prescribed measures to ensure the entities remain equipped with adequate cyber resilience measures and can withstand, respond to, and recover from cyber threats effectively."But resilience is not a one-time achievement; it is a continuous process — of learning, adapting, and anticipating," Pandey said.He, however, said that the resilience cannot be built by the regulator alone. It is a shared responsibility — among market infrastructure institutions (MIIs), intermediaries, fintech innovators, and indeed, all of us in this ecosystem.

## RBI introduces Unified Markets Interface to tokenize financial assets using wholesale CBDC

In a step towards asset tokenisation, Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has developed a Unified Markets Interface (UMI) which is envisioned as new next generation financial market infrastructure, its Governor Sanjay Malhotra said.Asset tokenization converts real-world assets into digital tokens on blockchain, creating fractional ownership and global trading opportunities. It offers new possibilities for the financial markets in expanding access, improving transparency and enhancing settlement efficiency through smart contracts.

"The Reserve Bank has conceptualized a Unified Markets Interface as a new next generation financial market infrastructure. This interface will have the capability to tokenize financial assets and settlements using wholesale Central Bank Digital Currency (CBDC)," Malhotra said at Global Fintech Fest 2025.He said that early results from the inaugural pilot has shown an encouraging signs of improving market efficiency.The governor said that there was a need to develop the digital public infrastructure for data integration to widen and deepen financial inclusion.

"The Account Aggregator (AA) framework is one such endeavor. It is empowering individuals to share their financial data safely with regulated entities," Malhotra said.Account Aggregator (AA) is a non-bank finance company (NBFC) engaged in the business of providing the service of retrieving or collecting financial information pertaining to the customer. Entities can enrol themselves on AA framework as Financial Information Provider (FIP), such as banking company, NBFC, asset management company, depository, depository participant, insurance company, insurance repository, pension fund. They can also enrol as Financial Information User (FIU) which is an entity registered with and regulated by any financial sector regulator.

Currently, there are 17 account aggregators, 650 FIUs, 150 FIPs, 160 million accounts being served, and 3.66 billion requests from FIUs."RBI is in the process of introducing standards designed to improve customer on boarding processes, enhance user interfaces, strengthen data security and increase transparency and awareness in consent management and data sharing under the account aggregator framework," the governor said.The account aggregator framework can help unleash the potential in this area by making available data from the providers to the users. However, its success will depend on two critical things — integrating with more financial information, especially information which is vital for assessing the financial status of an individual, and the interoperability across account aggregators.Malhotra also launched four new products — artificial intelligence-based UPI HELP — a Small Language Model (SLM); IoT Payments with UPI; Banking Connect — Interoperable Net Banking Solution; and UPI Reserve Pay.Developed in-house as a SLM trained extensively on payment data, UPI HELP currently supports English, with plans to expand to multiple domestic languages. The platform enables users to check transaction status, raise and track complaints, manage mandates, and provide contextual guidance, improving speed, accuracy, and overall experience.Banking Connect platform will address longstanding net banking challenges, including cumbersome navigation, fragmented integrations, and inconsistent mer-



chant on boarding, settlement, and dispute resolution processes. By removing these hurdles, customers can transact with greater ease and speed across online merchants using own bank app.UPI Reserve Pay will enable users to set aside (or block) a part of your credit card/pre sanctioned credit line limit to simplify repeat purchases across e-commerce platforms, food delivery apps, and cab aggregators by creating a seamless and native UPI experience.

## InGovern flags tax and royalty risks in LG Electronics India IPO

Mumbai: Governance advisory firm InGovern Research Services has raised several red flags for investors in LG Electronics India Limited's initial public offering (IPO), warning that the company's contingent liabilities, royalty payment structure, and related-party transactions could pose significant risks.According to InGovern, LG Electronics India has disclosed contingent liabilities worth Rs 4,717 crore — equivalent to nearly 73 per cent of its net worth — mainly due to disputed tax claims under litigation.The firm cautioned that any negative outcome in these cases could hurt the company's future earnings or force it to make large provisions. The warnings come even as LG's IPO has seen strong investor interest. The issue was fully subscribed on the first day of bidding and oversubscribed three times by the second day.The offer, which closes today, is entirely an offer-for-sale, meaning no new funds will be raised for the company. Most of the Rs 4,717 crore in contingent liabilities relate to disputed income tax, excise, and service tax demands.A large part of these disputes involves transfer pricing adjustments linked to royalty and technical service payments made to its South Korean parent company. LG has said it has not made provisions for these pending cases based on legal advice and ongoing appeals.The company currently pays a fixed royalty rate of 2.3 per cent of net sales for most products and 2.4 per cent for LCD TVs and monitors. Over the past three years, royalty payments have accounted for between 1.63 per cent and 1.9 per cent of revenue.However, InGovern noted that the promoter has the flexibility to increase royalty fees up to 5 per cent of the company's annual turnover from domestically manufactured products without shareholder approval.

## What Raghav Juyal's decision to purposely fail 9th-grade teaches us about teenagers coping with academic pressure: '4-5 ladko ne decide kar liya tha'



Academic pressure often pushes students to focus entirely on grades. However, sometimes the rebellion stems from simply choosing not to care. The Ba\*\*ds of Bollywood star Raghav Juyal recently shared in an interview with Yuva that he once failed his 9th grade on purpose, not out of inability, but as a conscious decision to break free from the stress of performing well.

"9th mein isiliye fail hua kyunki hum 4-5 ladko ne decide kar liya tha ki yaar fail hote hain iss baar, kuch alag karte hain (I failed in 9th grade because me and 4-5 other guys had decided, 'Let's fail this time and do something different),' Raghav recalled. "Toh humne kiya yaar bohut ho gaya yaar, 8 saal se hum lage pade hain pass hone mein. Maine kaha, 'Ab kya karna hai? Yaar fail hote hain.' Poore saal tension free rahenge, canteen mein khayenge, aayenge, teacher bahar bolegi bahar khade ho jayenge... fail hote hain yaar. Maine kaha haan yaar yeh toh kitna pyaara idea lagg raha hai (So we went ahead with it, man, enough is enough, we've been struggling to pass for 8 years. I said, 'What do we do now? Let's just fail.' We'll stay tension-free the whole year, eat in the canteen, roam around, if the teacher calls us out, we'll just stand outside... let's fail, man. I said, 'Yeah, man, this actually sounds like a really fun idea')."

He added that the decision brought an odd sense of relief rather than anxiety. "Ekdam se relaxed feel hua... aisa laga body se kuch bojh hatt gaya hai. 4-5 ladko ko

## On this Snake Island, over 4,000 vipers live



Brazil's forbidden island home to thousands of endangered golden lancehead vipers (Source: Wikimedia Commons)Snake Island is home to only about 2,400–2,900 golden lanceheads, making them critically endangered and found nowhere else on Earth.

Imagine stepping onto a seemingly serene island, only to find it swarming with snakes! The snakes so densely populate the region that even the Brazilian Navy won't let you approach. Welcome to Ilha da Queimada Grande, also known as Snake Island.About 337km off the coast of São Paulo, this tiny, 43-hectare island in the Atlantic hides a lethal secret. Its actual residents aren't palm trees or tropical birds, but between 2,000 and 4,000 golden lancehead vipers, making it one of the deadliest places on Earth.Separated from the mainland around 11,000 years ago, Snake Island became an evolutionary crucible. Cut off by rising seas, the resident pit vipers, descendants of Bothrops jararaca, evolved into the endemic golden lancehead (Bothrops insularis).

With no ground-level predators and limited mammalian prey, they adapted to hunt migratory birds, such as the

nirvana praapt ho gaya hai (Suddenly, I felt completely relaxed... as if a weight had been lifted off my body. It was like 4-5 of us had attained nirvana)."

When the host asked what the consequence was after he failed, Juyal replied, "Consequence yeh hua ki mujhe bohut bhi ek toh unn doston se alag rehne ko keh diya tha mummy-papa ne. Toh sabko doosre school mein admission dilaya gaya (The consequence was that I had to stay apart from those friends because my parents said so. So, everyone was admitted to a different school)."

So, what does this reveal about how stress and academic expectations can sometimes push students toward self-sabotaging or rebellious decisions?Sonal Khangarot, licensed rehabilitation counsellor and psychotherapist, The Answer Room, tells indianexpress.com, "Sometimes, constant pressure to excel leaves no room for authenticity or rest, and failure begins to feel like freedom. I am often told that we need an escape from our everyday life, a holiday or moving to an absolutely new country away from our lives."Psychologically, she mentions that such a decision isn't really about wanting to fail; it's about wanting relief from the endless cycle of expectations, comparison, and fear of not being "enough." In that moment, choosing to fail becomes an act of rebellion and self-preservation. It's the mind's way of reclaiming control in an environment that constantly measures worth by performance.

The healthiest way for parents to respond when their child deliberately underperforms or succumbs to peer pressureWhen a child deliberately underperforms or gives in to peer pressure, Khangarot states, the healthiest parental response is one "rooted in curiosity, not control." Instead of reacting with anger or disappointment, parents should try to understand the "why" behind the behaviour: what emotional need or pressure their child was responding to. "Open, non-judgmental conversations help rebuild trust and signal safety, which is essential for a teen to reflect and take accountability. Setting boundaries—like changing schools or friend circles—can help, but it must be balanced with empathy and involvement. The goal isn't punishment, but reconnection," concludes the expert.

Chilean elaenia. To take down fast-moving targets, their venom became three to five times more potent than that of mainland relatives."Explore Snake Island (Ilha da Queimada Grande)—Brazil's forbidden island home to thousands of endangered golden lancehead vipers. (Source: Wikimedia Commons) Separated from the mainland around 11,000 years ago, Snake Island became an evolutionary crucible (Source: Wikimedia Commons)

It's more than just a dangerous-sounding islandThe island is more a vital ecological haven than a scary story. Its snakes are listed as Critically Endangered, and their venom holds promise for medical research, including potential treatments for heart disease and hypertension drug development.Yet conservation is precarious. The snake population has fallen nearly 50% over 15 years, due to habitat clearing and illegal poaching for the black market (each snake can fetch up to \$30,000).If you're thinking of booking a trip, think again. Snake Island is strictly off-limits for everyone except a handful of researchers and Brazilian Navy personnel. Even they must obtain permits from the Chico Mendes Institute. No tourists or media are allowed.

Local lore is as menacing as the reality. Tales circulate about fishermen who landed and were found dead from venom, and the final lighthouse keeper whose family supposedly perished after vipers invaded their home. Even without official records, the venom's lethality, potentially causing death in under an hour, makes these stories chillingly plausible.Despite—or perhaps because of—its deadliness, Snake Island offers a rare glimpse into isolation-driven evolution. The golden lancehead's venom, behaviour, and survival strategies provide rich research opportunities. And while humans are strictly banned, the island continues to shed light on biodiversity, adaptation, and conservation in a world where even danger can hold scientific wonder.

## VJ Anuradha Menon aka Lola Kutty speaks about 'protein propaganda': 'Now my food feels so judged; whenever I eat dosa...'

VJ Anuradha Menon, better known as Lola Kutty, opened up about the emphasis on protein consumption, a topic that has gained popularity on social media. Taking to Instagram, she said, "Lately, my Instagram feed has just been protein propaganda. Every reel is like, 'Do you even exist without protein?' I can't even watch a cat video without some guy jumping in and saying, ' Your cat is shedding... lack of protein...' Apparently, if I don't eat 200 grams of protein a day, I will just collapse from protein shame."

Adding that the general perception is "protein fixes everything," she continued: "Bad skin? Protein. Tired? Protein. Unemployed? Have you tried protein? Now my food feels so judged...Whenever I eat dosa, where is the protein? If DDLJ was made today, Shah Rukh Khan would run through a mustard field and yell...Simran, did you have your protein shake?"In her typical sardonic way, she expressed, "I feel so underqualified because everyone's like I just took whey isolate, hydrolyzed, cold processed, lactose-free, grass-fed...I just ate two boiled eggs and a Parle G. Breakup? Probably low protein. You didn't lose love...you lost muscle mass. My neighbour doesn't want to get married because she hasn't hit her protein target. Chicken, paneer, dal, whey — Apparently, your diet has to look like Noah's Ark of protein sources. At this point, I don't need a gym membership. I just need a protein dealer...in some shady street."

Kanikka Malhotra, consultant dietitian and diabetes educator, concurred that there's a real "protein propaganda" in popular media and marketing today, making protein feel like the "new magic fix for all health goals". "It's important to remember that nutrition is not about chasing viral trends or celebrity statements, but about meeting individualised and evidence-based needs. While protein is a crucial nutrient for muscle repair, immunity, and overall health, most healthy adults require about 0.8 to 1 gram of protein per kilogram of



'Apparently, if I don't eat 200 grams of protein a day, I will just collapse from protein shame,' she said.

body weight per day; active individuals or those over 50 may need modestly more, but regularly exceeding 2 grams per kg per day may pose risks to kidney function and metabolic health for the average person," said Malhotra.For most people, a regular Indian diet with a mix of dals, dairy, nuts, and variety in whole foods suffices, said Malhotra, stressing that protein shakes and supplements are "rarely necessary unless directed for medical or athletic reasons".According to Malhotra, routinely consuming more than double the standard recommendation (over 2 g/kg/day) is "unnecessary for the majority and could be counterproductive in the long run, leading to digestive, kidney, or vascular problems".Trends may change, but the fundamentals — balance, moderation, and critical thinking — matter more. Simran would definitely not need that protein shake in every scene; more isn't always better, and moderation, real meals, and context (age, health, activity) matter most for wellness," expressed Malhotra.



## ‘In India he cover drives that for four’, says Michael Clarke on Virat Kohli’s dismissal



GNS News Agency, Oct 23

Virat Kohli’s familiar foe came back to roost him on Sunday at Perth as he tried to drive the ball outside the off-stump and was caught behind. Former Australian skipper Michael Clarke felt that it was the extra bounce that induced the edge, and if the shot was played in India, the chasemaster would have definitely creamed it for a boundary. “That muscle memory of just game after game, which he has done for 15 years, but then have six months off and play in very, very foreign conditions is hard. If his

first game back was in India, I think he’s straight back into it. But because he’s in Australia, that shot he played, in India he cover drives that for four,” Clarke said speaking on Beyond23 Cricket Podcast.

“Here, it bounced and hit him a bit higher on the bat, he’s out in front of himself and gets caught at backward point. So, their top three, for them to get out like that, sort of sums up their play throughout the game. Their bowlers tried to get their lengths right and some mixups in the running, so they were just underdone,” he added. Kohli will not allow the eight-ball duck on his return in India colours to haunt him for long, but would not tinker around too much with his game either before striding back into form, said former India assistant coach Abhishek Nayar. “Whatever time I have spent with him, he knows how to play in one way only, with passion and aggression. He will back himself. There will be a lot of discussions about him playing deliveries outside the off-stump. He will go back and visualise. He will meditate and come into his zone,” Nayar said on Star Sports. “He will try to get back the thought process of the old vintage Virat Kohli. He will try to get that mindset. He will try to play with freedom. The result is not in your hands. He will pay attention to the process. Whatever he has been known for, he will try to bring that Virat to the ground,” Nayar elaborated.

## ‘I don’t think Konostas has had the chance to prove himself at this stage so it is a bit of a risk...’: Greg Chappell on Sam Konostas chances as a test opener in Ashes

GNS News Agency, Oct 23

With all the talk happening about who will be the Australian openers in this year’s Ashes, the Australian team management would be looking to answer the questions regarding the form of openers like Sam Konostas. With Konostas having scored four, 14, zero and 53 for NSW in the two matches in the Sheffield Shield in recent days, the 20-year-old opener does not have the recent number to put weight behind his selection and former Australian captain Greg Chappell believes Australia should go with Matt Renshaw to partner for the opening wicket with Usman Khawaja for the opening Test of the Ashes against Australia starting at Perth on November 21 and it’s a risk playing Konostas in the opening Test against England. “It seems Khawaja is a lock for the first Test, so finding someone synergistic to bat with Khawaja (is important). I would go with Renshaw. He’s played a bit of Test cricket so he’s not a novice. (Jake) Weatherald coming into his first Test match is asking a fair bit, as they did of Konostas last Boxing Day. I don’t think Konostas has had the chance to prove himself at this stage so it is a bit of a risk taking him into the Test match. I certainly wouldn’t be tempted to experiment again with Labuschagne as an opener. He’s making runs, so he’s got



No.3 locked away. Renshaw is a much different, more mature cricketer from the one who played Test cricket years ago. They picked him in the one-day squad, so they must have him in mind somewhere and want him around the squad. Understanding a little bit of the way things have worked, they like to have players around the one-day squad going into the Test match to be around the group. I would find it strange if they didn’t pick him.” Chappell reported during the launch of his new book, The Chappell Chronicles.

## Aakash Chopra backs Harshit Rana: ‘Let’s not get carried away yet. He doesn’t deserve the hate’

GNS News Agency, Oct 23

Former Indian cricketer Aakash Chopra came to the rescue of Harshit Rana. The young fast bowler has come under criticism from a few former players and the netizens online, who questioned his position in the Indian squad. Chopra backed Rana and questioned his critique of how many bowlers in the current Indian fast bowling lot are considered all-format? “Let’s not get carried away yet. He doesn’t deserve the hate. It’s not his mistake. If you have to give hate, give it to someone else, and not to him, because he is not asking for him to be selected. You select him and he comes and plays. He tries to win the match, and whether he is able to do that or not is a separate issue,” Chopra said.

“When you see this list, it’s not like you have a dozen bowlers standing ready. That’s why the team feels they should back Harshit Rana” - Aakash Chopra “It will happen. Let’s make a long list of fast bowlers who are close to the Indian team – (Mohammed) Siraj, Prasidh Krishna, Harshit Rana at the moment, Arshdeep Singh, Jasprit Bumrah and Akash Deep. Who else? Mohammad Shami and Bhuvneshwar Kumar are not there,” Chopra said on YouTube.

“We have forgotten Umran Malik. Khaleel (Ahmed) can come, but he is not your Test kind of bowler. Deepak



Chahar, Shardul Thakur, Tushar Deshpande, Mayank Yadav, Prince Yadav, T Natarajan – whose name should I take? When you see this list, it’s not like you have a dozen bowlers standing ready. You don’t have that many. That’s why the team feels that they should back Harshit Rana if he has that game,” he added. “If someone has played more in front of a coach, captain or selector, they see more potential in him and want to back him. Sourav Ganguly also backed some players. Eventually some of them became the legends of the game. Similarly, Dhoni backed many players. They became legends of the game. Virat Kohli also backed someone. Now Shubman Gill will also back someone,” Chopra concluded.

## Pakistan’s Asif Afridi becomes oldest bowler to bag five wickets on Test debut, breaks 92-year-old record in Rawalpindi

GNS News Agency, Oct 23

Pakistan left-arm spinner Asif Afridi on Wednesday became the oldest bowler in Test history to bag a five-wicket haul on debut, achieving the feat on the third day of the second Test against South Africa in Rawalpindi. Afridi recorded the landmark when he dismissed South Africa spinner Simon Harmer leg-before on 10, reducing the visitors to 210 for seven in their pursuit of Pakistan’s first-innings score of 333.

Afridi broke a 92-year-old world record held by England’s Charles Marriott who picked two five-wicket hauls on debut against the West Indies on successive days at the Oval in 1933. Marriott was 37 years and 334 days old when he bagged the feat, nearly a year younger than Afridi who is 38 years and 301 days old as of Wednesday. Afridi surpassed the Pakistan record held by his current teammate Noman Ali, who claimed figures of 5/35 against the Proteas during his Test debut in 2021. The remarkable record for the oldest player to achieve a five-wicket haul in Test cricket belongs to the Australian spin bowler, Bert Ironmonger. He was 49 years and 311 days old when he accomplished this feat by taking 6 wickets for just 18 runs against South Africa in Melbourne on February 12, 1932. Afridi’s teammate Noman also continues to hold the record as the oldest bowler to achieve a five-wicket haul for Pakistan. The spinner was 39 years and 5 days old when he claimed 6 wickets for 112 runs against South Africa. He set this mark during the first innings of the ongoing series’ first Test, played at the Gaddafi Stadium in Lahore. Afridi’s selection by the PCB had raised eyeballs after the 38-year-



**PAK vs SA: Afridi broke a 92-year-old world record held by England’s Charles Marriott who picked two five-wicket hauls on debut against the West Indies on successive days at the Oval in 1933.**

old left-armner was once banned for two years for his involvement in spot-fixing in Pakistan’s domestic cricket. However, he was allowed to return after serving just over a year of the ban by the Pakistan Cricket Board, who had not given any reason for relaxing the suspension. This is Afridi’s first ever international appearance. He made his first class debut in January 2009 and has taken 198 wickets in 57 matches. Afridi has also taken 83 wickets in 60 List A matches and 78 wickets in 85 T20s.

## Are Rohit Sharma and Virat Kohli rusty? ‘Don’t think so,’ says India batting coach Sitanshu Kotak



GNS News Agency, Oct 23

India’s batting coach Sitanshu Kotak has said there is no sign of rustiness in senior batsmen Rohit Sharma and Virat Kohli, who got off the Australian tour on a low note in the first ODI at Perth. Both Rohit and Kohli, who are not part of the Test and T20Is teams, are featuring in their first series since announcing their retirement from other two formats. Having not played any competitive cricket since the IPL, there have been doubts as to whether Rohit and Kohli will be able to find form by just playing one format. After the Perth ODI, the questions got louder and on the eve of the second match in Adelaide, Kotak was asked if the two experienced stalwarts were rusty coming into the series. “I don’t think so,” Kotak replied when asked about rustiness. “They played IPL. The preparation has been very good. I think both of them have a lot of experience. Before

## Matt Short says Australia will continue their successful bowling tactic against Virat Kohli

GNS News Agency, Oct 23

Since the Border-Gavaskar Trophy towards the end of last year, Kohli’s mode of dismissals in Australia have been on similar lines, where he has edged deliveries outside the off-stump channel to the cordon. As Kohli gears up for the second ODI at Adelaide – his favourite hunting ground in Australia, where he has scored 5 centuries across formats – on Thursday, the focus very much remains on his struggles outside the off-stump. Even in the first ODI at Perth, he was caught at gully without opening the scoring as Australia took a 1-0 series lead in the three-match series. With the meeting in Adelaide on Thursday being a must-win fixture for India, all eyes are on Kohli as to whether the 36-year-old will find sparks at Adelaide Oval where he has also scored four half-centuries to go with 5 centuries and has an average of 65.

“I’m not in the fast-bowling meetings, but that seems to be the way he has been getting out recently,” Australian batter Matt Short told reporters on Tuesday in Adelaide. “Some of the guys like ‘Hoff’ (Josh Hazlewood) and ‘Starcy’ (Mitchell Starc), they have bowled a lot against him, they know what they’re doing. In Perth they sort of let the conditions do all the work, a bit of swing and nip on the wicket, so I’m sure they’ll do the same again,” Short added. Short also said he is looking forward to pick the brains of one ODI cricket’s all-time greats Kohli during the 50-over leg of the

coming to Australia, they had time in their preparations, and they have done it. I felt the weather in the first game definitely played a role. Because I think it would have been the same if Australia had batted. When you don’t know how many overs you are going to bat, it’s not easy to plan. Every 4-5 breaks we had, every 2 overs you are going in, coming out — it’s difficult,” he said.

Having announced their retirement from T20Is after winning the T20 World Cup last year, Rohit and Kohli Test career too came to halt ahead of the England tour. Before that they had a successful Champions Trophy campaign, where both played a key role in India’s title win. But in Perth, Rohit was dismissed for 8 off Josh Hazlewood’s bowling while Kohli was out for zero off Mitchell Starc. Since they haven’t had much of game time, it remains to be seen whether the two are in form or not. But Kotak said they are aware of their preparations. “See, we are very much aware of what preparations they are doing, what their fitness status is,” Kotak said. “They also go to the National Cricket Academy. What they are doing there, their videos... obviously, I would have [watched them]. But not always, to be very honest,” he added. As a batting coach Kotak said, he will have to find the time to intervene should he wishes to have a word or two with the two experienced players. “You have to find the time to intervene. I am a big believer in that. With such senior players, you don’t want to intervene if it’s not required. If they are doing things right and you’re still trying to get involved, it may not be the right thing to do always.”



series. “It’s pretty cool to share the field with such a legend of the sport. I’ll definitely get the chance to have a chat to him at some stage throughout the series. But it’s going to be a cool way for him to go out, especially with so many fans here in Australia. When Rohit or (Shubman) Gill got out the other day (in Perth), and then Kohli came on, just the cheer when he was walking on – you’d feel pretty bad as the batter walking off. It’s just an amazing experience,” Short said. Stay updated with the latest sports news across Cricket, Football, Chess, and more. Catch all the action with real-time live cricket score updates and in-depth coverage of ongoing matches.

## Have only seen Sam Konostas play ramp shot, can he cover drive or anything like that? Asks Allan Border



GNS News Agency, Oct 23

One of Australia’s all-time great batsman, Allan Border, has urged young opener Sam Konostas to ditch the ramp shot and has questioned whether the 20-year-old is capable of playing a cover-drive. With the Ashes around the corner, there is no certainty as to who will open alongside Usman Khawaja. While many have urged Cameron Green to open alongside the left-hander, Beau Webster and Matt Renshaw are in the fray. While Konostas’s aggressive style is being viewed as an X-factor against the Bazballers, there are still doubts whether the opener could apply himself and play long. And days after Konostas was dismissed playing a ramp shot in a 50-over fixture against Victoria, Border came down hardy on the opener.

“Sam Konostas – I’ve only ever seen him play a ramp shot,” Border told SEN. “Can he cover drive or anything

like that? I don’t know. We just haven’t seen it. He’s constantly trying to play this bloody ramp shot. It’s a handy shot to have in the kit bag, but I’d be leaving it there for a while until I’ve got a few on the board first. I’d be saying, ‘Just shelve the ramp shot, just give yourself a chance to get in and just [play] conventionally’. He’s good enough, from what I’m hearing, but I just haven’t seen it yet,” Border said. And Konostas wasn’t the only batsman who faced some harsh words from the Australian great. Even all-rounder Green, tipped to bat at No 3, faced questions from Border. “I’m just a bit concerned. They want him to bat at No.3 and I just don’t think his technique is suitable for that job. I just can’t see him batting at three,” he added. And instead of Konostas and Green, Border’s has pressed for the inclusion of fellow Queensland players – Khawaja, Renshaw and Marnus Labuschagne as Australia’s top-three for the first Test starting November 21 in Perth. “Webster has done nothing wrong since they picked him. That all-round ability, particularly going into Perth, you might need a bit of a back-up to the quickies over there. I’d be locking him [Webster] in at No.6 and Green misses out in my first instance. If Labuschagne opens, you could play Green and Webster – and that wouldn’t be a bad scenario – but whether they want to manufacture the openers [I don’t know].” Usman is a lock-in for the first couple of Tests at least. I’d be going Renshaw [to partner Khawaja]. He’s back in the one-day team and he’s been scoring runs pretty consistently over the last couple of years – red ball and white ball – and he’s been there, done that,” Border added.

## Cristiano Ronaldo ‘rested’, but elaborate security in place in Goa for football match involving star-studded Saudi team

Ending weeks of speculation, Saudi Pro League team Al-Nassr FC has confirmed that Portuguese superstar Cristiano Ronaldo will not be playing in Goa in Wednesday’s AFC Champions League Two group match against Indian Super League club FC Goa. The Saudi side arrived in Goa on Monday night ahead of the match that will be held at the Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium in Fatorda. At a pre-match press conference on Tuesday, Al-Nassr head coach Jorge Jesus said Ronaldo did not travel with the rest of the squad because he has been rested to manage his game time. Despite Ronaldo’s absence, the Saudi Pro League side could still field a star-studded lineup, boasting the likes of former Liverpool forward Sadio Mane, former Atletico Madrid attacking midfielder Joao Felix and former Bayern Munich winger Kingsley Coman. The match is expected to draw a massive crowd. At least 600 police personnel have been deputed as part of the security arrangements for the high-profile match. Harishchandra V Madkaikar, who holds additional charge as South Goa Superintendent of Police, said

a comprehensive security plan has been prepared. “The Anti-Terrorist Squad, the Pink Force, police control room (PCR) vans, and an IRB (India Reserve Battalion) platoon will be deployed. A control room with CCTVs has been set up. An evacuation plan has been prepared for any contingency,” said Madkaikar. It was in August that Al-Nassr and FC Goa were drawn in the same group in the second-tier competition of Asian club football. Since then, speculation has been rife regarding the potential for a first visit to India by Ronaldo, a five-time Ballon d’Or winner. At Tuesday’s press conference, the Al-Nassr head coach said. “Everyone loves Cristiano and he has a lot of fans. We decided to give him a little rest... when we play outside Saudi Arabia, because we need to keep him [ready] physically. I know he is very popular and everyone wants to meet him... But we chose to keep him in Riyadh to prepare for the next game.” Jorge Jesus, who is from Portugal, also spoke about his country’s links to Goa. “I have come here to Goa with great pride as a Portuguese coach. Portugal has a history in this city.



# John Lennon was a great musician, a bad bandmate, and an even worse husband, and we still celebrate him for it



There's this little spot in Pune I used to hit up all the time back in college, called The Hidden Place. This quirky painting called the 'Rock N' Roll Hall of Fame' was the restaurant's centerpiece. It had none other than John Lennon himself, casually strumming his guitar in front of a hookah, like he's mid-chat with Paul McCartney, probably debating and disagreeing in that iconic Lennon way. If you're just a casual rock fan — maybe still figuring out the mysteries of Pink Floyd's Dark Side of the Moon or realizing there's more to life than just Hotel California's legendary guitar solo — this painting probably seems cool, no big deal. But the fan who knows the story behind John's music, his inspirations and his behaviour every time he kept the guitar and plectrum down is likely to feel uncomfortable, knowing that the stories don't really portray the singer as a nice guy. And that's a vibe you can't really shake.

The Beatles are ubiquitous, almost omnipresent when it comes to music, 55 years after they broke up. Abbey Road is a masterpiece, Revolver is the album version of 'Layla' by Derek and the Dominoes in the sense of utter perfection, and the 'White Album', or 'The Beatles', is beautiful like Madhubala is breathtaking in Mughal-E-Azam (both are pieces of art). But the dream had to end sometime — after 12 studio albums, hundreds of smoked joints, millions of records sold, and many hearts broken, the band called it a day. It was the breakup of the century, and no one could believe why a group so prolific and successful would ever decide to stop making music.

There were several reasons for the breakup. The perfection of their art brought in fans who didn't just revere them but worshipped them. Their music became a movement, and very soon the four musicians found themselves running behind the crowd they were once leading. They couldn't keep up, and their manager Brian Epstein's death added further weight to their already strained bonds. Everyone dealt with things their own way — while Harrison kept writing extremely rooted lyrics without receiving the chance to showcase any of them, Lennon took succour in heroin; substance abuse took over his life and his career.

In the book 'The Lives of John Lennon', written by Albert Goldman, the author suggests that Lennon never truly came out of his tumultuous relationship with drugs. He was a heavy heroin user, which both his wives, Cynthia Powell and Yoko Ono, have talked about. The book highlights how his addiction could be credited to his natural laziness and dependence upon strong women. His eccentric mind and drugged-out cerebral cortex made for a dangerous combination, and while this state might have helped John pen some extremely powerful lines, it also pushed him to be a violent and irrational man. John's pen became caustic towards his ex-bandmates. His song 'How Do You Sleep?' was an attack on Paul McCartney, because John thought that Paul had taken shots at him on his album 'Ram'. It started with a 1970 interview with Rolling Stone, where Lennon carelessly talked about the dissolution of The Beatles and one of his songs, 'I don't believe in the Beatles'. He talked about how he had risen above several myths in his life, and that is what the Beatles were: "A myth." He said in the interview, "I don't believe in it. The dream is over. I'm not just talking about the Beatles; I'm talking about the generation thing. It's over, and we have to — I have to personally — get down to so-called reality."

He carried the same attitude to his partners. John al-

ways claimed that his relationship with his first wife, Cynthia, was over before he got involved with Yoko. In an open letter written to Cynthia dated November 15, 1976, John wrote, "As you and I well know, our marriage was long over before the advent of LSD or Yoko Ono... and that's reality!" Imagine coming back to your home, which you share with your husband, to find him and his muse in matching bathrobes, staring into each other's souls (The 'Imagine' is not incidental). Even though they got divorced later that year, Cynthia admitted in her 2005 memoir, 'John', that, "having tried to live an ordinary life for so many years since John and I parted, I have come to realise that I will always be known as John's first wife." The promiscuity didn't start with Yoko; John had been acting like a drunk sailor who has seen shore and a tavern for the first time in years, long before they even got married. Cynthia would often travel with the band during the initial days, and at the age of 22, she got pregnant, leading John to propose and marry her. However, the birth of their child, Julian, didn't necessarily fix things between them, mostly because Cynthia had no idea there was something to fix except for John's intrinsic habits surrounding jealousy and violence, and these were habits she had learnt to live with. Their manager Brian told Cynthia that she needed to stay back with Julian, as they had to maintain the illusion that he was still available. In the same memoir Cynthia wrote, "There was John, rapidly becoming famous and wealthy. And there was I, in a grim little five-pounds-a-week bedsit, with his son."

The storm kept on brewing, and as a last-ditch effort, Cynthia hoped that the band's trip to India would help calm things down. Everyone knows how that turned out, and Cynthia walked out of John's life soon after. From there began John's torrid relationship with Yoko, lined with activism and an alleged malignity that might not have shot The Beatles, but it loaded the gun and pointed it towards the band. The first ironic thing about this union is John and Yoko's 'Bed-In For Peace' movement. During the peak of the Vietnam War in 1969, the two artists decided to host two separate protests at the Hilton Hotel in Amsterdam and the Queen Elizabeth Hotel in Montreal. The two cashed in on the publicity that their marriage received and booked a suite for a week straight so that the media and fans could visit them, and they could relay the message of love and peace. The reason why this made no sense coming from Lennon is because he was himself a violent man. According to a damning letter written by John's housekeeper in 1968, John would hit his son Julian for small mistakes and minor transgressions. Many would argue that while John left his first wife to be with another woman, but it was all a part of a plan to find the perfect partner. Yoko was that person, until she wasn't, and after getting married, holding protests together, and fighting against her deportation, John began an affair with his assistant May Pang. The origins of this affair are even wilder. According to the documentary The Lost Weekend: The Love Story (named after the infamous period in his life), which highlights Pang's time with John, it was Ono who initially asked her to go out with her boss. She said, "Yoko walked into my office and said, 'John and I are not getting along. I want you to go out with him. I responded, 'Well, are you kidding? I can't do that; he's my employer, he's my boss. He's your husband.'" But in that same documentary, Pang admits that Ono never thought the affair would get so serious or that it would take so little work to get John to be unfaithful. Ultimately, Yoko "asked" for John back, and the two came together once again and even topped their reunion off with a vow-renewal ceremony. They remained married until he was assassinated in front of their New York house in 1980. John himself had a tough childhood, and dealing with his mother's death and father's abandonment made him vulnerable to all that took control of his mind and body. But none of it explains his out-of-pocket relationship with the people around him. He was rude, indecent and downright disrespectful to his own bandmates and wrote songs to insult Harrison and Paul. He was unfair to the people who kept him afloat, while his habits dragged him down into an abyss created by his own hatred. One needs to exercise caution while using the term 'legend' for him, because the musical 'genius' was also a broken, violent, envious, and questionable human being, who needs to be remembered with an asterisk floating over his name.

# One Direction's Louis Tomlinson admits he was 'furious' when Zayn Malik left: 'He should have talked to me, thought we were close'

From the get-go, boy bands in general have a very short shelf life. Apart from some outliers, such as The Backstreet Boys, who never officially disbanded, most groups run out of steam or keep in too much of it, leading to the breakup. One of the most notable breakups of the 2000s was singer Zayn Malik's exit from One Direction. The whole world was shocked to see the soprano go, and that too at the peak of the band's career. Bandmate Louis Tomlinson recently talked about the same and how he never saw this move coming, and neither did the others.

Louis recently appeared on the Life of a CEO podcast to discuss his solo career, personal struggles, family, and, of course, One Direction. When asked about his relationship with his former bandmates, he noted that he and Zayn were quite similar and distinctly different from the other three: Harry Styles, Niall Horan, and Liam Payne.

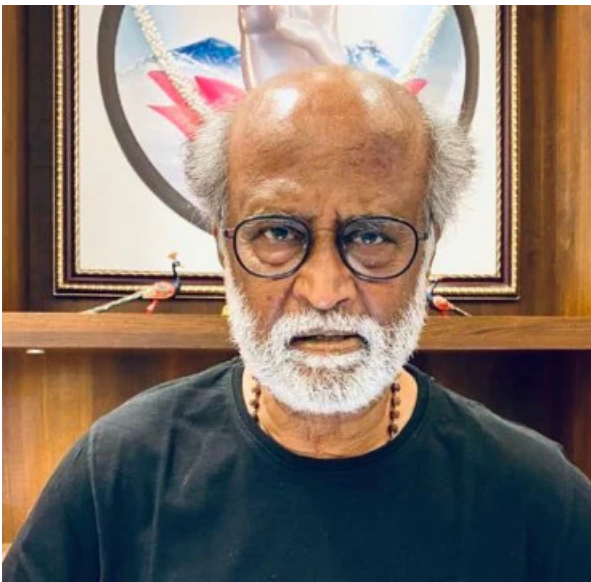


The host recalled a conversation he had with Liam about how their lives just consisted of hotels, flights and stages. Louis responded to this and said, "The way I and Liam both handled the work and the fame was quite different. I often think that me being the way I am was the reason why I was closer to Zayn. Neither of us are really rule-abiding, not in an utterly disruptive way, but we just had our own ideas. That helped alleviate a little bit of the pressure. On the other hand, Liam and the other boys

had an element of a little bit of fear." Going deeper into his friendship with Zayn Malik and his unfortunate exit, Louis Tomlinson said, "I was furious. It's not something that we have discussed enough, but again, it goes back to loyalty for me. Selfishly I think that he should have come and talked to me before leaving. I'll give you an example of the bond we share, and I hope Zayn would say the same. As a band, we had always decided that we would never have separate dressing rooms, but during

our last tour that changed. Everyone had a separate room, but I and Zayn shared. I thought that we had a relationship where he could have talked to me. If he had told me, I would have tried to stop him, and maybe that's why he didn't." Louis recalled how Zayn actually left the band and said, "The night before we found out, everything was normal. We were in the hotel room, and we were having a joint. Everything was cool; he left around 11 at night.

# Rajinikanth meditates at Mahavatar Babaji caves; poses for fan selfies.



As part of his annual tradition, Superstar Rajinikanth has embarked on a spiritual journey. Recently, he was spotted sitting outside the Mahavatar Babaji caves in Uttarakhand. Dressed simply in a jacket over a shirt and

white pants, with a cap and walking stick in hand, the actor appeared calm and contemplative in photos taken by fans. A few videos have also surfaced online showing the Coolie actor patiently posing for photographs with fans and listening to their excitement at meeting their idol up close. Rajinikanth can also be seen chatting with them amid the growing crowd. Earlier, the superstar had visited several ashrams with his friends.

Rajinikanth's spiritual getaway this year started at Rishikesh and Badrinath Dham, before moving on to the Mahavatar Babaji caves. Earlier, speaking about his spiritual journeys, Rajinikanth told ANI, "Every year I used to get new experience that made me continue my spiritual journey again and again. The whole world needs spirituality, as it's important for every human being. Being spiritual means experiencing peace and tranquility, and fundamentally, it involves believing in God." Also Read | Pradeep Ranganathan recalls quitting job to make films, hiding it from father for 1.5 years; he asked, 'You think you are Mani Ratnam?' Rajinikanth will resume filming the remaining schedules of Jailer 2 upon his return from the Himalayas. Directed by Nelson Dilipkumar, the film is slated for release next June and also stars Ramya Krishna, Suraj Venjaramoodu, Shrivrajkumar, and Nandamuri Balakrishna. The superstar has also confirmed an upcoming project with Kamal Haasan, to be produced under Raaj Kamal Films International.

# Saif Ali Khan never intended to have Kareena Kapoor's name tattooed on his arm: 'I wanted a subtle tattoo, I talked to her and next thing I know...'

Romance blossomed on the sets of the film Tashan, as actors Saif Ali Khan and Kareena Kapoor started a relationship that would ultimately lead to marriage and two kids. However, there was another star present at the party, who apparently witnessed the first chapter of one of Bollywood's most iconic real-life love stories. That was Akshay Kumar, and in a recent interaction, he and Saif recalled the start of the latter's relationship and the restless steps he took in the upcoming days.

While making an appearance on Twinkle Khanna and Kajol's new talk show Two Much, all four friends reminisced about their careers, love lives, and their journey to the very top. While talking about how Twinkle and he got married, Akshay pointed at Saif and said, "There was an astrologer who predicted his marriage to Kareena, and she (Twinkle) was also there to see it." Twinkle jumped in and said, "We were all there when this was going on, and you went ahead and got her name tattooed on your arm. That was a bit reckless."

Saif, who is known for being a bit of a troublemaker during his early years, defended his decision and said, "I was pretty sure that this is it, in that sense. See, I wanted a tattoo, and I decided that I am going to get one on my shoulder. I was wondering what I should get, and I was talking to her about it, and before I knew it, I had got a tattoo of her full name on my arm. I wanted something subtle on my shoulder."

Twinkle then asked Saif, "Wasn't Akshay the first person to know about you and Bebo?" To which the actor replied, "Well, I wouldn't be surprised." Akshay added, "It was because I used to get up early, and I saw him going some-



where, and I asked him, 'What the hell are you doing? Where are you going?' Saif admitted that his relationship with Kareena popped up out of the blue and said, "You know, honestly, I had no idea. When I went to Ladakh, I told myself that 'I don't want a relationship. It's time to focus on work and be single. We used to go on long walks, and she used to ask me questions about love. Then one day we came back to her room, and I thought she was going to invite me in for further conversation, and then her hairdresser opened the door, and she went and hid behind her." Twinkle added, "So one husband keeps it pretty private, and one treats his body like a billboard with tattoos," hinting that Akshay is the former one. Without skipping a beat, the Hera Pheri actor jumped in and said, "But I have your name tattooed as well."

# Ranbir Kapoor says people celebrate Kapoor family's successes, but there are many failures too: 'I am a product of nepotism'



Mumbai: Terming himself a "product of nepotism", Bollywood star Ranbir Kapoor on Thursday said he was always aware of the perks of being born into a film family but lineage never guarantees success. Ranbir, part of the fourth generation of the illustrious Kapoor family, said he had to develop an individualistic approach and prove his talent independently to sustain in the industry.

"I'm a product of nepotism and I got it very easy in my life but I always had to work hard because I realised that I come from a family like this and if I don't have an individualistic approach and if I don't make a name for myself, I'll not succeed in the film industry. You guys celebrate a lot of success of my family but there are a lot of failures also, and as much as you learn from the success, you learn from the failure also," the 43-year-old actor said. Ranbir, son of actors Rishi Kapoor and Neetu Kapoor, was speaking at a session, titled 'Tribute to legendary filmmaker Raj Kapoor and Guru Dutt', during the 'Celebrate Cinema 2025' festival at filmmaker Subhash Ghai's film institute Whistling Woods. "What do I feel about being born in this family, for me it was like any other normal family, I didn't know any better," said the actor, adding that he grew up watching music directors, singers and lyricist come to his house to create songs for grandfather Raj Kapoor's movies.

"There used to be a lot of arguments, but not of the domestic kind. They would debate over a scene or the cor-

rect lyrics of a song," he said. Ranbir, known for movies such as Wake Up Sid, Rockstar, Barfi, Yeh Jawani Hai Deewani, and Animal, said he learnt pretty early in his life that filmmaking is a team effort.

"Filmmaking is not dictatorship, it's a marriage of so many people and artists coming together, and believing in something, and believing in inspiring people," the actor said, recalling the words of his great-grandfather Prithviraj Kapoor. "What he said moved deeply 'Kala desh ki seva mein'. So whatever you can do, do it to inspire the next generation... If you can do that then there's nothing greater than that," the actor added.

Speaking about his approach to acting, the "Animal" star said his method of performing scenes varies from film to film and director to director. He recounted his experiences of working as an assistant director on filmmaker Sanjay Leela Bhansali's 2005 movie Black. Ranbir said he understood how an actor approaches a scene, when he saw the performances of senior stars like Amitabh Bachchan and Rani Mukerji. "When I saw him write scenes and how the actors perform, I was noticing, studying them. I was not trying to ape them but I would tell myself, 'How would I approach the scene?'. But once you become a working professional you start acting in movies, every film is different and there's no fixed method. As actors you've to be malleable. You can't say, 'I work only in this way'.