

Man ends life over death of wife, unborn children

Hyderabad: A man who was allegedly upset over the loss of his pregnant wife and his unborn twin children allegedly died by suicide at his house in Shamshabad on Monday.M Vijay (40), a private employee and his wife Shravya, residents of Shamshabad, were expecting their twin babies this year, with Shravya already in her eighth month of pregnancy.As per available information, on November 16, Shravya complained of stomach pain, was she was shifted to a hospital in Attapur by her mother. The doctors who examined her said that the babies in her womb had died, and Shravya's health condition was also critical. For better treatment, Shravya was shifted to another hospital in Attapur, where she died on Monday morning.

Disqualification of turncoat MLAs: SC issues notice to Telangana Speaker, calls it 'grossest kind of contempt'

GNS News Agency, Nov 17

Hyderabad: The Supreme Court on Monday issued a contempt notice to Telangana Assembly Speaker Gaddam Prasad Kumar for not complying with its direction to decide disqualification pleas against 10 Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS) MLAs who had defected to the ruling Congress after the last Assembly polls.On July 31, top court bench headed by Chief Justice BR Gavai had directed the Speaker to decide in three months the matter of the disqualification of the 10 BRS MLAs. The CJ-led bench termed the non-compliance of its earlier directions as the 'grossest kind of contempt' while issuing notices to the Speaker and others on the pleas filed by BRS leaders. The bench, however, exempted the Speaker and others from personal appearance before it till further orders. The bench also issued notice on a separate plea filed on behalf of the Office of the Speaker seeking extension of time by eight more weeks to decide the disqualification pleas. Senior advocates Mukul Rohatgi and Abhishek Singhvi, appearing along with lawyer Sravan Kumar for the Office of the Speaker, said they were seeking extension of time. The hearing on four disqualification pleas are complete and in three cases, recording of evidence has concluded, said one of the lawyers

"This should have been concluded ... Finish it by next week or face the contempt. We have already held that he doesn't enjoy constitutional immunity when considering matters under the Tenth Schedule ... This is the grossest kind of contempt...It is for him to decide where he wants to celebrate his New Year's Eve," the CJ said.The bench has now posted the matter for further hearing after four weeks. Rohatgi assured the bench that he would personally convey the feelings of the Court to the Office of the Speaker and hopefully, decisions would be taken in four weeks.On November 10, the apex court had agreed to hear on November 17 the petition seeking contempt proceedings against the Telangana Speaker. The contempt plea stems from the apex court's July 31 judgment, delivered by a bench of the CJ and Justice AG Masih, in a batch of writ petitions filed by BRS leaders KT



Rama Rao, Padi Kaushik Reddy and KP Vivekanand. The Supreme Court had directed the Speaker to decide the disqualification petitions as expeditiously as possible and in any case within three months, also setting aside a Telangana High Court ruling that no time limit could be imposed on the Speaker.With the Speaker's continued delay triggering political unrest in Telangana, BRS working president KT Rama Rao had recently said the party was prepared to approach the Supreme Court once again to ensure the defected MLAs are unseated, insisting that by-elections in the constituencies had become inevitable.Earlier in August, a group of BRS MLAs had even submitted a disqualification petition at the Mahatma Gandhi statue on the Assembly premises after failing to meet the Speaker.The 10 MLAs, Danam Nagender (Khairatabad constituency), Tellam Venkat Rao (Bhadrachalam), Kadiyam Srihari (Station Ghanpur), Pocharam Srinivas Reddy (Banswada), M Sanjay Kumar (Jagtial), Arekapudi Gandhi (Serilingampally), T Prakash Goud (Rajendranagar), B Krishna Mohan Reddy (Gadwal), G Mahipal Reddy (Patancheru) and Kale Yadaiah (Chevella) had defected to the Congress last year, and have been working for the ruling party ever since, campaigning for it and participating in party programmes. However, as the threat of disqualification got closer to reality, they have started denying the same, with some insisting that they had not joined the Congress, and that they were 'technically still' with the BRS.

Single-digit chill grips Hyderabad outskirts



GNS News Agency, Nov 17

Hyderabad: The intense winter season has set in across Telangana with multiple locations in districts and outskirts of Hyderabad recording single-digit temperatures. The dry and cold winds are expected to continue and further intensify, as the Indian-Meteorological Department (IMD), Hyderabad forecast on Monday indicated a drop of about 2 degree Celsius to 3 degree Celsius in minimum temperatures across the State.

Hyderabad Police expose iBomma piracy network; 21,000 films, Rs 3 crore seized



GNS News Agency, Nov 17

Hyderabad: Hyderabad Police on Monday revealed explosive details about the scale of digital piracy run by Ravi, the mastermind behind the illegal movie website iBomma, who allegedly uploaded nearly 21,000 films ranging from Hollywood's 1972 classic 'The Godfather' to the latest Tollywood release 'OG'.Police Commissioner V.C. Sajjanar said Ravi not only operated the massive piracy network but simultaneously promoted online betting platforms, creating a dual criminal ecosystem."He set up 65 mirror websites. Our teams recovered nearly 21,000 movies from his hard disk. He earned close to Rs 20 crore through piracy, and we've seized Rs 3 crore from his accounts so far," he said.

Given the multi-layered fraud and the huge flow of illegal funds, the Commissioner said the case will be escalated to CBI and Enforcement Directorate, as Ravi's operations include international links and a subscriber base of nearly 50 lakh users."Piracy is illegal, but behind it lies a

much bigger racket. Your data lands in the darknet. It can be misused," Sajjanar cautioned.Relentless domain hopping:Investigators found that Ravi focused heavily on keeping the piracy network alive. He bought 101 domains and switched between them whenever one was blocked.He even leaked films released on major OTT platforms and used covertly recorded camera prints from theatres. The content was pushed to users through Telegram channels.Shift to betting promotion:Ravi later diverted iBomma traffic to online betting apps, sharing APK files that exposed subscribers to cyber fraud. "We have already taken down iBomma and Bappam websites and are tracing how much each person gained from this racket," Sajjanar said.The Commissioner noted that Ravi had earlier "challenged the police to catch him", but is now behind bars. Police intend to seek custody again for deeper investigation into the network.Sajjanar also issued a stern warning that meme creators targeting police with derogatory content will face strict action.

KCR condoles deaths of pilgrims in Saudi Arabia bus accident

HYDERABAD: Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS) chief K Chandrashekhara Rao on Monday expressed shock over the death of pilgrims from Telangana in the bus accident in Saudi Arabia.

The BRS chief expressed his grief and condoled the loss of 42 people, who were travelling in a bus going from Mecca to Medina as part of the Umrah pilgrimage.

CV Anand clarifies emoji reply controversy involving Balakrishna

Hyderabad: Telangana Special Chief Secretary, Home Department, C.V. Anand has issued a clarification on Friday after an old emoji reply from his social media account triggered arguments between fans of actor Nandamuri Balakrishna (Balaiah) and his critics.CV Anand explained that the post, made nearly two months ago, was not authored by him but by a social media handler who was assigned to manage routine updates on X and Instagram.

He stated that the emoji reply to a post related to Balaiah garu was totally unnecessary and done without his knowledge.Upon learning about the controversy, the DGP rank officer had deleted the post, gathered details, and personally messaged Balakrishna to convey his respect and apologise if the post had caused any hurt.

Eighteen members of family from Hyderabad killed in Saudi pilgrimage crash

GNS News Agency, Nov 17

Hyderabad: The family of retired railway official Naseeruddin (65) was wiped out in the deadly bus accident in Saudi Arabia, claiming the lives of 18 members who were on a long-awaited pilgrimage.Naseeruddin, his wife, his son and daughter-in-law, his three daughters, and their respective children embarked on the Umrah pilgrimage on November 9, departing from their family home in Nallakunta.The only son who survived the tragedy resides in the United States and did not join the journey. While Naseeruddin and his son lived in Nallakunta, his daughters resided in Malakpet, Musheerabad and Moosarambagh.Naseeruddin, his wife, his son and daughter-in-law, his three daughters, and their respective children embarked on the Umrah pilgrimage on November 9, departing from their family home in Nallakunta. The only son who survived the tragedy resides in the United States and did not join the journey. While Naseeruddin and his son lived in Nallakunta, his daughters resided in Malakpet, Musheerabad and Moosarambagh.

Relatives told reporters that the family had been planning the Umrah pilgrimage for a long time. Among those tragically killed were more than half a dozen children."The family was excited about performing the holy ritual together after a long wait. The children were too excited," a relative



shared. "A day before the incident, they informed us that they had performed Umrah in Mecca and would be heading to Madina for the next phase of the pilgrimage."Upon hearing the news of the ghastly accident, relatives made frantic calls to acquaintances and friends, desperately seeking information about the family's fate. They later contacted the helpline number provided by the government and are now anxiously awaiting more details.Local residents described the family as kind and respectable. The community is in a state of shock over the road accident, with members of the local mosque committee visiting the Nallakunta home to offer support.

BRS objects to Revanth Reddy giving contracts worth Rs.1500 crore to Nellore-based firm



GNS News Agency, Nov 17

Hyderabad: The Bharat Rashtra Samithi raised objections over the Congress government offering contracts worth crores to Nellore-based KLSR Infratech Limited, alleging that petitions were filed against the company in the Supreme Court.BRS spokesperson Manne Krishank, addressing a press conference here on Monday, said the company had earlier offered a Land Cruiser car as a gift to Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy when he was the PCC president, and that the vehicle was later registered

in the name of Revanth Reddy's brother A Kondal Reddy."In return, Chief Minister Revanth Reddy handed over contracts worth Rs 1500 crore to KLSR Infratech Limited. The Young India Integrated Schools construction contract was also offered to the company," he alleged, adding that when an RTI application was filed seeking details of the company, officials responded that no cases were registered against KLSR Infratech Limited from 2014 to 2025. However, a petition against the same company was admitted for hearing in the Supreme Court two days ago, Krishank said."There are different allegations, including financial instability and bankruptcy, against KLSR Infratech. Despite these charges, why is Revanth Reddy giving contracts to the company," he asked.Recalling that the Enforcement Directorate had earlier stated that KLSR was a benami company of Revanth Reddy, Krishank questioned the agency's silence now and pointed out that a judge had recused himself from hearing a case due to alleged pressure on him to act in favour of the company. An investigation was underway based on the judge's allegations.Krishank also took strong exception to the Chief Minister's remarks at a programme in Ramoji Film City on Sunday, saying Revanth Reddy had spoken disparagingly about the awards presented at Ravindra Bharathi."Revanth Reddy should apologise for his comments made at Ramoji Film City," Krishank demanded.

Senior TDP leader, NTR loyalist Kalyadapu Agaiah dies of heart attack in Karimnagar

GNS News Agency, Nov 17

Karimnagar: Senior TDP leader and staunch follower of former Chief Minister NT Rama Rao, Kalyadapu Agaiah died of a heart attack here on Monday.Agaiah, associated with the TDP since its formation, maintained close ties with NTR's family members.

He remained committed to the party's ideology even as several prominent leaders shifted loyalties during the separate Telangana agitation. Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu, along with Hindupur MLA and actor Balakrishna, had felicitated Agaiah during the party's recent Mahanadu meeting. Chandrababu Naidu expressed deep grief over Agaiah's death. Remembering his services to the party, the AP Chief Minister said Agaiah was a role model for every TDP worker, and conveyed his condolences to Agaiah's family members.



Election Commission orders 'Special Revision' of voter list in Assam

GNS News Agency, Nov 17

The Election Commission (EC) on Monday (November 17, 2025) announced a special revision of electoral rolls in Assam, where Assembly polls are scheduled to be held next year.The poll body is notably not conducting special intensive revision (SIR) of electoral rolls in the State, pending status of the National Register of Citizens (NRC).

The 2019 NRC list in Assam had excluded nearly 19.6 lakh persons from the list of 3.3 crore applicants, but no final notification has followed till date. The Assam government has challenged the NRC in its current form in the Supreme Court.While announcing the second phase of the national SIR on October 27, Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar had said: "Under the Citizenship Act, there are separate provisions for citizenship in Assam. Under the supervision of the Supreme Court, the exercise of checking citizenship is about to be completed. The June 24 SIR

order was for the entire country. Under such circumstances, this would not have applied to Assam".The special revision of voter lists in Assam though will have heightened scrutiny as compared to the routine annual special summary revision (SSR), according to a senior EC official.Under this, Booth Level Officers (BLOs) will do house-to-house checks but voters would not have to fill any enumeration forms as in the SIR.Instead the BLOs would carry three forms, named Statement 1-3, according to the EC order sent to the Assam Chief Electoral Officer on Monday.The Statement -1 would be a pre-filled register to be carried by the BLOs containing the details of existing electors in their respective part. The household will be the basic unit for conducting the house-to-house survey and to get the said details verified and corrected from the electors.The details of D Voters or "Doubtful" voters shall be carried forward without any change and any modification, including deletion or removal.

Indian Chronicle

English Daily

on India and the WHO's Global Tuberculosis Report 2025

The World Health Organization's Global Tuberculosis Report 2025 was a mixed bag for India. While the tuberculosis (TB) incidence had the highest decline rate, globally, by 21% from 237 per lakh population in 2015 to 187 per lakh population in 2024, India remains among the countries with the highest rates of TB, bearing 25% of the world's burden. This also means that India recorded the maximum number of cases of TB in 2024. Within the country, Uttar Pradesh has the highest number of cases, followed by Maharashtra, Bihar and Madhya Pradesh. Delhi has the highest TB infection prevalence rate, though its actual case numbers are not that high. As far as multidrug-resistant TB (MDR-TB) is concerned, the scenario seems quite challenging. India, as per the report, also recorded the highest number of drug-resistant TB cases in 2024 — accounting for 32% of global MDR-TB and rifampicin-resistant (RR-TB) cases. With a treatment success rate for new and treated cases hovering at 90%, and at 77% for MDR/RR-TB cases started on second-line treatment, the saga of the mixed bag continues. India's TB mortality rate dropped from 28 deaths per one lakh population in 2015 to 21 deaths per one lakh population in 2024. Despite this improvement, the figure is still over three times higher than the government's elimination target. India has missed the target it set for itself, having advanced for itself the aim to eliminate TB — by 2025, five years before the global target of 2030. While incremental gains have not shored up to a dramatic result, this indeed has meant several million lives saved over the years. In this then, there is hope for a successful TB control programme in a country that has been battling TB for decades.

Giri Pradakshina Around Velugu Gutta Today: Temple EO Peddigari Srikanth



“KISHORE VADDEPALLI, Uppal, November 17 (Indian Chronicle): “On the occasion of the holy Kartika month, the temple priests and Temple Executive Officer Peddigari Srikanth announced that a ceremonial procession of the deity will be taken out around the Velugu Gutta temple in Uppal. Priests Komallapalli Phani Sharma and others informed that on Tuesday, the day of Masa Shivaratri, the procession and Giri Pradakshina will be conducted from 6:00 p.m. onwards around the hill. They appealed to devotees to participate wearing traditional attire and to perform the pradakshina barefoot while chanting “Om Namah Shivaya”. They stated that the Kartika month is highly auspicious, and performing Giri Pradakshina at the sacred Velugu Gutta—considered the golden abode for devotees—will help fulfill their wishes. “They urged devotees to take part in large numbers and receive the divine blessings of Lord Parameshwara. The temple authorities also requested residents to offer mangala harathi when the procession arrives near their apartments. Devotees may also offer prasadam during the event.

Solve problems in Subhash Nagar: MA Khuddhus”



“K Sadanand Malkajigiri. “Malkajigiri, November 17: Sdhanika located in Maulalisubash Nagar. “Colony president MA Khuddhus asked to solve the problems. “In a public address held by him at Malkajigiri circle office on Monday “Deputy Commissioner Zakia Sultana handed over the petition along with Jaimandali GM Sunil Kumar. “On this occasion, Khuddhus said that the problems of UGD, CC road and 6 street lamps in Subhash Nagar are still unresolved and requested to take appropriate action.

Thummala asks Centre to relax cotton procurement norms

Hyderabad: Agriculture and Marketing Minister Thummala Nageswara Rao appealed to the Centre to procure 11 quintals of cotton per acre and scrap the seven-quintal norm in the interest of farmers. In a video conference with Central officials on Monday, the Minister said the Cotton Corporation of India had initially procured 11 quintals per acre. However, the CCI was now procuring only seven quintals per acre, which was subjecting farmers to severe distress.

Uppal Corporator Rajitha Parameshwar Reddy Distributes Sewing Machines to Trained Women



“KISHORE VADDEPALLI, Uppal, November 17 (Indian Chronicle): “Under the aegis of Lavanya Foundation, certificates were awarded to women who completed sewing

machine training at Vijayapuri Colony, Uppal. In a lucky draw conducted on the occasion, sewing machines were distributed to the winners by Uppal Corporator Rajitha Parameshwar Reddy. Speaking on the occasion, Rajitha Parameshwar Reddy said that the Telangana Government is implementing several welfare schemes for women. Key among them are free bus travel for women, the Maha Lakshmi scheme that provides LPG cylinders at ₹500, and the Udyogini scheme that offers interest-free loans to women entrepreneurs running small businesses. She emphasized that the government is committed to women's empowerment and is undertaking numerous initiatives to ensure women excel in all fields. “Lavanya Foundation founder Lavanya, Uppal A-Block Mahila President Amareshwari, teachers Vani, Madhuri, Vijayapuri Colony President Lingareddy, Salla Prabhakar Reddy, Sunku Shekhar Reddy, Ramulu, Bodge Mallesh, Anwar Basha, and several others participated in the program.

Justice Should Be Given To The Victims Of Fraudulent Pattas: Former MPTC Praveen”

“Indian Chronicle” kumram bheem, Asifabad, District Report, Jade Srinivas. November, 17. “Wankidi Mandal Former MPTC of Khamana Praveen demanded that the then MRO Madhukar, who illegally issued pattas for the land in Survey No.285 in the names of others, and the current MRO Kavitha, who showed negligence in this matter, should also be suspended immediately. Expressing his grievances in front of the MRO office on Friday, he said, “The victims' land was illegally and fraudulently issued pattas. Issuing pattas while the DS is pending is illegal. It is sad that no action has been taken against these irregularities committed by the then MRO Madhukar. Even after complaining to the current MRO Kavitha, he has not implemented it so far, saying that justice will be done within two days. The two officials should be suspended immediately,” he demanded. The people of Khamana village are also expressing



concern over this incident and are demanding that the higher authorities take immediate action to ensure justice to the victims.

Corporator Bannala Geetha Praveen Inspects CC Road Works Worth 56 Lakhs in Chilukanagar Division

“KISHORE VADDEPALLI, Uppal, November 17 (Indian Chronicle): “Chilukanagar Division Corporator and former GHMC Standing Committee member Bannala Geetha Praveen Mudiraj on Monday inspected the ongoing CC road construction works being taken up at a cost of ₹56 lakh. She was accompanied by GHMC officials, Bank Colony and Raghavendra Nagar Colony Association members. “Speaking on the occasion, Corporator Geetha Praveen instructed the GHMC Engineering Department officials to ensure strict supervision during the CC road construction. She directed the contractor to maintain quality standards without any compromise. She further added that all necessary measures must be taken to ensure that residents of the colonies do not face any inconvenience during the execution of the works. She warned that strict action would be taken if there is any negligence or delay in following quality norms. “Those present at the program included GHMC EE Harilal, DE Vineel Goud, AE Radhika, Work Inspector Kedar, BRS state leader Bannala Praveen Mudiraj, senior leaders Eddula Kondal Kokonda, Kokonda Jagann, Palle Venu Goud, Balakrishna Goud, Shyam, Banti



Goud, Chinna, Bank Colony Association President Gafur, GS Sandeep Bhushan, Venkateshwara Rao, Bala Goud, Raghavendra Nagar Colony Association President Jagadishwar Reddy, members Ravi Verma, Krishna Reddy, VBSK Bhaskar Rao, Satyanarayana, Gousuddin, and others.

“State 9th Ranker Dr. Sahana Reddy Felicitated with Grandeur at Manthani”



“P.S.ASHOKAN “KARIMNGAR BUREAU “In a ceremonial gathering marked by pride and recognition, Dr. Moola Sahana Reddy, who secured the 9th rank at the Telangana State level in PG General Medicine, was felicitated with great honour on Sunday evening at the Manthani Reddy Welfare Association Building. The event was orga-

nized under the leadership of Reddy Sangham President Musukula Surender Reddy. “Speaking on the occasion, Surender Reddy lauded Dr. Sahana's exceptional academic achievement, describing it as a testament to her unwavering dedication and discipline. He expressed confidence that she would continue to scale greater heights in the medical field and emerge as an inspiration to many. “He urged the youth to emulate Dr. Sahana's determination and strive for excellence in their academic pursuits. Recalling her journey, he noted that Sahana had nurtured high ambitions from a young age and worked relentlessly to fulfil them. He also highlighted the distinguished reputation of her family—her father Moola Purushotham Reddy, a respected farmers' leader, and her mother Moola Sarojana, a former ZPTC member of Manthani, both known for their service and integrity. “The program witnessed the participation of several leaders and members of the Reddy Sangham.

“Heartfelt Tributes Paid to Uttapatala Satish on His Death Anniversary



“P.S.ASHOKAN “KARIMNGAR BUREAU “Profound tributes were paid on Monday to Sri Srirambhatla (Uppatala) Satish, senior Congress leader and former Ward Member of the Manthani Major Gram Panchayat, on the occasion of his death anniversary. “Leaders and well-wishers recalled Satish as a warm-hearted and socially committed individual who maintained cordial relations with everyone. They noted that his absence has created an irreplaceable void in the community. “Kaleshwaram Project General Manager Elishetty Venkateshwarlu expressed deep grief, stating that

Satish's untimely demise at a young age was immensely painful and a great loss to society. “Friends, relatives, and admirers conveyed their heartfelt condolences to the bereaved family. To honour his memory, the family organized an annadanam (food donation programme), reflecting Satish's values of service and compassion.

Deep excavation damages five-storeyed building in Goshamahal

Hyderabad: Ongoing deep excavation works in the vicinity resulted in visible cracks appearing in a five-storey building at Chaknawadi in Goshamahal on Monday afternoon. Panicked residents reported the issue after noticing massive cracks along the walls and ceilings. The incident occurred at around 4 pm.

The deep excavation carried out for the construction of a new building next door caused the five-storey structure to show signs of sinking.

Not looking for development



“Koukurpark “K Sadanand Alwal “Alwal, November 17 :- “GHMC Park in Kaurur under Alwal GHMC is becoming useless due to lack of development. “Especially with lack of maintenance, the art will look bad. “The colonists complained that snakes were roaming in the thickets of madder trees and coming into the houses. “As the GHMC park is deteriorating due to the negligence of the authorities, the squatters have turned a blind eye to it. “Residents are expressing concern that some roads are encroaching on the park land. “The locals want the GHMC board to make it a park and the authorities to make it pleasant. “Residents of the colony say that if the Naina authorities pay more attention to the development of this park, it will be good for the elderly and adults to come and sit here and for children to play. “Locals want to develop this park” wanting.

One Person Committed Suicide After Consuming Insecticide, Died On The Way



“Indian Chronicle” kumram bheem, Asifabad, District Report, Jade Srinivas. November, 17. “Rebbena Mandal News Munjam Santosh, a resident of Gangapur mandal, attempted suicide by consuming pesticide on Sunday. His family members immediately rushed him to Rebbena Government Hospital. From there, he died on the way to Bellampalli Government Hospital, police said. They said a case has been registered and an investigation has been launched into the incident.

Janampalli Venkateshwar Reddy conveys birthday wishes to Corporator



Bonthu Sridevi “KISHORE VADDEPALLI, Uppal, November 17 (Indian Chronicle): “On the occasion of the birthday of Charlapally Division Corporator Bonthu Sridevi, wife of former Hyderabad Mayor Bonthu Rammohan, senior Congress leader of the Uppal constituency Janampalli Venkateshwar Reddy met the couple on Monday, felicitated them with respect, and extended warm birthday greetings. “He conveyed his wishes praying that Bonthu Rammohan and his wife be blessed with long life and good health, and expressed special birthday wishes to Bonthu Sridevi.

Uppal Youth Congress President Akarapu Arun Patel Participates in Protest Against Voter Fraud

“KISHORE VADDEPALLI, Uppal, November 17 (Indian Chronicle): Under the leadership of “National Youth Congress President Uday Bhan Chhib and Telangana State President Jakkidi Shiva Charan Reddy, a protest was organized at Gandhi Bhavan on Monday against voter fraud. Uppal Youth Congress President Akarapu Arun Patel took part in the program. “Speaking on the occasion, Arun Patel said that the protest was held in support of the voter fraud



resistance movement initiated by senior Congress leader Rahul Gandhi. He stated that there is an urgent need to prevent electoral malpractice. Police reportedly stopped several Youth Congress leaders who were participating in the protest. He warned that the

Youth Congress would organize large-scale agitations against voter fraud in the coming days. “Youth Congress leaders Vasu, Sachin, Jayanth, Prashanth, General Secretary Vinesh, Pasha, Bhanu, Bhaskar, Nani, Shiva, Azem, Intiyaz and several others participated in the program.

Kerala Model School, Sultanabad Celebrates Self-Government Day: Students Embrace Leadership by Assuming Teacher and Administrative Roles.



“P.S.ASHOKAN”KARIMNGAR BUREAU“Kerala Model School, Sultanabad, commemorated Self-Government Day on 14th November, coinciding with Children’s Day, by upholding an inspiring academic tradition in which students symbolically assume the roles of teachers and administrators. The event aimed to foster leadership acumen, self-confidence, and a profound appreciation for the responsibilities upheld by educators.”The programme was overseen by School Correspondent Mr. Siju S. Nair and Principal Mrs. Smitha, who is also the spouse of Mr. Nair.

Together, they motivated the student–teachers, applauding their poise, diligence, and exemplary participation throughout the celebration.”Principal Mrs. Smitha, in her address, articulated that Self-Government Day offers students a rare and meaningful opportunity to step into the shoes of educators—an experience that nurtures discipline, patience, pedagogical insight, and effective communication skills. She emphasized that such initiatives help mould students into conscientious citizens and future visionaries.”Correspondent Mr. Siju S. Nair lauded the young participants for conducting classes with commendable maturity, composure, and instructional clarity. He noted that Self-Government Day significantly enhances student involvement, allowing them to experience both the fulfilment and challenges inherent in the teaching profession. He extended appreciation to the faculty for offering guidance while simultaneously granting students the freedom to express their creativity, leadership, and organisational abilities.”Throughout the day, student–teachers adeptly managed classrooms, delivered academic lessons, oversaw activities, and maintained discipline—transforming the school into an environment buzzing with vibrant energy, intellectual enthusiasm, and collaborative learning. Their efforts were warmly appreciated by both educators and peers.”The event concluded with the presentation of certificates of appreciation to the student–teachers, marking the celebration as not only memorable but profoundly enriching for the entire school community.

‘Ayaan 2025’ Paddy Variety Showcases Impressive Performance at Puttapaka: Farmers Celebrate Exceptional Yield.

“P.S.ASHOKAN”KARIMNGAR BUREAU““A highly successful field demonstration of the innovative paddy variety ‘Ayaan 2025’ was conducted at Puttapaka village in Manthani Mandal, organized under the stewardship of Annadata Fertilizers & Seeds in collaboration with Genex Company. The event drew enthusiastic participation from local farmers eager to explore advanced and high-yielding crop varieties.”Local farmer Sri Chattlapalli Rajayya cultivated the Ayaan 2025 variety across eight acres of his farmland. On Saturday, representatives from Genex, accompanied by several farmers, visited the site and carried out an extensive field evaluation.”Speaking on the occasion, Rajayya expressed his delight, stating:“Cultivating Ayaan 2025 has enabled me to achieve remarkably high yields without the need for any pesticides. This outcome has brought me immense satisfaction and confidence in the variety.”Genex representative Sri Rajashekar highlighted the company’s unwavering commitment to providing high-quality, high-yielding paddy varieties to empower farmers. He further encouraged farmers to prioritise Genex Seeds’ forthcoming premium varieties—‘Raja’ and ‘Top Singh’—in



the upcoming agricultural season.”The field demonstration witnessed a robust turnout of local farmers, many of whom showed keen interest in adopting this promising new paddy variety, recognising its potential to significantly enhance productivity.

A Model Act of Philanthropy: Essential Educational Kits Donated to ZPHS–Arenda Students in Memory of Late Smt. Edulapalli Vijayalakshmi.



“P.S.ASHOKAN”KARIMNGAR BUREAU““A commendable and inspiring philanthropic initiative is underway in Manthani Mandal, where essential academic materials are being distributed to students of government schools with the support of benevolent donors. As part of this noble endeavour, students of Zilla Parishad High School, Arenda,

received ties, belts, ID cards, house-representation badges, sports T-shirts, and trousers on Friday.”This thoughtful contribution was made by the Headmaster of ZPHS–Arenda, Sri Edulapalli Narasimharao, in cherished memory of his late mother, Smt. Edulapalli Vijayalakshmi. Addressing the gathering, he recalled that he had previously undertaken similar charitable activities in memory of his late father, Sri Edulapalli Satyanarayana Rao, by donating various materials and equipment to the Primary Upper School in Chillapalli. Continuing this family legacy of service, he stated that it was his privilege to extend his support once again, this time in honour of his mother.”He expressed that offering such assistance—though modest—to economically disadvantaged students studying in government schools brings him profound satisfaction and personal joy.”The gesture was warmly appreciated by CRP Mallayya, teachers B. Sriatha, Suvarta, Srivani, Giyazuddin, Sahender, Mamatha, G. Sriatha, Aman, A.A.P.C. Chairperson Premalatha, as well as by local villagers and students, who praised the act as inspirational and worthy of emulation.

Orphaned Elder Jagadeeshwar Reddy’s Final Act of Grace: Mortal Remains Donated to Prathima Medical College as per His Noble Wish.



“P.S.ASHOKAN”KARIMNGAR BUREAU““An orphaned and ailing elder, Sri Jagadeeshwar Reddy, breathed his last today in Karimnagar. In accordance with his profoundly noble final wish, his mortal remains were donated to Prathima Medical College for the advancement of medical education and scientific research.”This humanitarian act was carried out under the stewardship of noted social

activists Burugu Srinath Goud (District President, Unified Karimnagar Hindu Temples Protection Committee) and Davu Santosh Kumar (District President, SC Reservation Protection Committee), with the support of Sadashaya Foundation.”Senior leaders including BJP leader Dhoolam Kalyan, Sadashaya Foundation National President T. Shruvan Kumar, National Chief Lingamurthy, and National Secretary Dr. Merugu Bhishmachari extended their heartfelt commendations.”For several months, the late Jagadeeshwar Reddy had been living in Karimnagar without familial support, enduring illness and harsh weather. During this difficult period, social worker Burugu Srinath provided essential care, including food and medical assistance. During his final days, Reddy explicitly expressed that, upon his demise, his remains be donated to a medical institution for the benefit of future generations.”Honouring this solemn wish, Burugu Srinath and Davu Santosh, in collaboration with Sadashaya Foundation National President T. Shruvan Kumar and National Secretary Dr. Merugu Bhishmachari, formally handed over the body to Dr. Kishan Reddy, Head of the Anatomy Department at Prathima Medical College.”Paying homage to the late donor, Prathima Medical College’s Anatomy Department Head Dr. Kishan Reddy and the institution’s management conveyed profound gratitude to Burugu Srinath, Davu Santosh, Dhoolam Kalyan, T. Shruvan Kumar, Dr. Merugu Bhishmachari, Kyatham Malleshham, and Merugu Sarangam for their committed efforts in fulfilling this virtuous and altruistic deed.

“Children Are the Custodians of Their Elderly Parents’ Welfare: Senior Civil Judge V. Bhavani Reaffirms Legal and Moral Mandate”

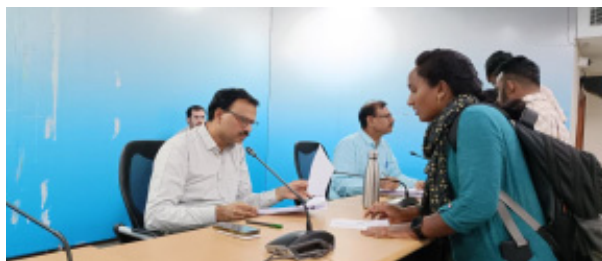


“P.S.ASHOKAN”KARIMNGAR BUREAU““In a significant initiative to reinforce awareness on elder welfare, Senior Civil Judge and Mandal Legal Services Authority Chairperson, Smt. V. Bhavani, convened an insightful orientation programme on the Maintenance and Welfare of Parents and Senior Citizens Act, 2007 at the Manthani Court premises.”Addressing the gathering, Judge Bhavani underscored that children bear an unequivocal legal and ethical obligation to maintain their elderly parents aged above sixty years. She firmly stated that children who abandon or neglect their parents’ welfare forfeit their claim to the par-

ents’ property. Furthermore, she highlighted that even if parental assets have already been transferred, the law empowers the reinstatement of ownership rights back to the parents in cases of neglect, as explicitly enshrined in the Act.”Bar Association President KVLN Haribabu, in his remarks, advised that senior citizens facing negligence or ill-treatment may formally approach the local RDO to secure statutory maintenance rights guaranteed under the legislation.”Adding to the discourse, Vice President K. Raghottam Reddy said that the duty of caring for parents is deeply rooted not only in legal doctrine but also in moral conscience. He expressed concern over the declining familial value systems in contemporary society and stressed that safeguarding these traditions is a collective responsibility of every citizen.”The programme witnessed the presence of several eminent personalities, including Bar Association General Secretary M. Sayender Reddy, Senior Advocate S. Chandrasekhar, State Government Pensioners’ Association General Secretary Chandupatla Sudhakar Reddy, Singareni Collieries Pensioners’ Association President Poreddy Venkat Reddy, and advocates Ku. Satyanarayana, Katakam Srinivas, Shashi Bhushan Kache, and Vyas Kumar.

Confusion Over Kailasagiri Colony Elections““Complaint Filed With Collector Seeking to Stop the Elections

“Women Allegedly Denied Representation for 16 Years”NARRA SRINIVAS REDDY (NSR), Medchal - Malkajgiri Staff Reporter, November 17, (INDIAN CHRONICLE): “Residents of Meerpet Housing Board Colony, Fourth Division, report that for the past 16 years, the Kailasagiri Welfare Association has not given any representation to women in its colony elections. The association, registered under number 91/2009 at the Medchal District Registrar Office, is allegedly controlled by a group of residents who refuse to offer key positions to women. According to several colony residents, women are being told they can be included only as members but will not be given leadership posts. They claim these individuals oppose bringing new practices into the association and believe women should not hold central positions. Although the government has allotted land titles and plots in the names of women, these same women are being denied roles in the colony welfare leadership. Residents say that in previous years, a few women attempted to contest, but their nominations were not even accepted. Using the excuse that basti areas are not suitable for women to take leadership roles, they are being sidelined. Women question why other welfare asso-



ciations in surrounding colonies have women leaders, while Kailasagiri Colony continues to exclude them. Women state that in a generation where women are reaching space, discriminating against them in colony elections is unacceptable. They warn that if women are not given representation in the upcoming elections, they will create a separate welfare association. Several women expressed anger, stating that the situation feels like a system of suppression and exploitation. They are demanding that the colony elections be conducted fairly, ensuring proper representation for women and allowing them an active role in colony development.

Two Wheelchairs Donated to Divyang Woman at Jawahar Nagar



“NARRA SRINIVAS REDDY (NSR), Medchal - Malkajgiri Staff Reporter, November 17, (INDIAN

CHRONICLE): “Under the leadership of Telangana Vikalanga Hakkula Sadhana Samithi state president Kiran Guttikonda and state general secretary Merugu Shivakrishna, two wheelchairs were handed over to Sumalatha Krishna, a divyang resident of Jawahar Nagar Disabled Colony.

The distribution was done with the support of Pawan Babu Mohan Charitable Trust. As per the instructions of Trust Chairman Babu Mohan, Trust coordinators K. Bhanu Reddy and Vijayvardhan Reddy provided the two wheelchairs, worth Rs. 20,000. TVHS president Kiran Guttikonda, Merugu Shivakrishna, colony residents Nagaraju, Apparao, and Suguna participated in the program.

Third Phase of Rythu Annadanam Held Under Telangana Rythu Parirakshana Samithi

“NARRA SRINIVAS REDDY (NSR), Medchal - Malkajgiri Staff Reporter, November 17, (INDIAN CHRONICLE): “The third phase of the Rythu Annadanam, organised every Monday under the Telangana Rythu Parirakshana Samithi, was held on Monday at the Medchal–Malkajgiri District Collectorate. Visitors from different parts of the district made use of the food distribution programme and expressed happiness. Telangana Rythu Parirakshana Samithi president Indrapala Bhavani said that hundreds of people from various areas come to the Collectorate every Monday for the Prajavani grievance-redressal programme. She stated that the organisation was happy to provide food to at least some of those visitors. She added that it would be helpful if the government also arranged a five-rupee meal programme at Collectorates across the district every Monday. She said a representation will soon be submitted to the District Collector in this regard. Organisation general secretary Indrapala Satyanarayana said that for the past three weeks they have been providing food to nearly one hundred people with their available resources. He expressed satisfaction over the programme and said that if more donors come forward and extend support, the organisation will be able to serve a larger number of people. Donors can contribute through PhonePe or Google Pay to the number



90320 88236. For the third phase of the Annadanam programme, Jawaharnagar Municipal Corporation ex-cooperation member Mohammad Farooq and social activist Rachana Reddy extended support.

The organisation conveyed thanks to them. Organisation member Arun Kumar said that participating in the Monday Annadanam gives them great satisfaction. He added that the happiness expressed by beneficiaries motivates them even more. Members Ambala Mallesh, MD Rahiman and others took part in the programme.

Festive Atmosphere at Corporator Sridevi’s Birthday Celebrations



“NARRA SRINIVAS REDDY (NSR), Medchal - Malkajgiri Staff Reporter, November 17, (INDIAN CHRONICLE): “The birthday celebrations of Charlapally Division Corporator Bonthu Sridevi Yadav were held with

grandeur at Chakripura Reddy Colony on Monday. The event drew a massive turnout from residents, party workers, and local leaders. Corporator Sridevi, widely known for her accessibility, grassroots presence, and continuous efforts toward resolving civic issues, has built a strong connect with the community. Her consistent focus on public welfare and development initiatives has earned widespread appreciation across the division. A large number of people gathered at the venue to extend their birthday wishes, turning the event into a vibrant community celebration. Medchal–Malkajgiri District President Hari Vardhan Reddy, ex-MLA Mynampally Hanumantha Rao, ex-MLA Bethi Subhash Reddy, Uppal Congress in-charge Mandumula Parameshwar Reddy, corporators, ex-corporators, division presidents, women Congress leaders, party workers,



Government Whip Aleru MLA Sri Beerla Ayilaiah performed special pujas at Bondugula village pond ""(Mandava Srisailam.. Yadadri Bhuvanagiri District Bureau... Indian Chronicle.. November 17):- Telangana State Government Whip Aleru MLA Sri Beerla Ayilaiah performed pujas at the Bondugula village pond in Rajpet mandal of Yadadri Bhuvanagiri district. After that, fish seeds were released in the pond under the auspices of the Fisheries Department... The people and farmers there expressed happiness as the Bondugula pond filled up.

Medipally HUDA Layout Residents Submit Representation to HMDA



“NARRA SRINIVAS REDDY (NSR), Medchal - Malkajgiri Staff Reporter, November 17, (INDIAN CHRONICLE): ""The Joint Metropolitan Commissioner of HMDA, Srivatsava IAS, received a representation from the Medipally HMDA Colony Welfare Association regarding several pending development works in the Medipally HUDA Layout. Residents highlighted issues including illegal pig rearing in the area, the need for setting up an electrical substation, construction of an overhead drinking water tank, and development of a bank sump. After reviewing the concerns, Srivatsava IAS directed the concerned departments to submit a detailed report within a week. The Medipally HMDA Colony Welfare Association stated that the residents welcomed the prompt and positive response to their grievances.

Government Whip Aleru MLA Beerla Ayilaiah performed bhoomi puja for various development works in Rajapet Mandal Center “



“(Mandava Srisailam..Yadadri Bhuvanagiri District Bureau... Indian Chronicle..November 17):- Telangana State Government Whip Aleru MLA Beerla Ayilaiah performed bhoomi puja for various development works in Rajapet Mandal Center of Yadadri Bhuvanagiri District. As part of this, he laid the foundation stone for the construction of Gouda Kula Sangha Bhavan and Golla Kuruma Kula Sangha Bhavan in Rajpet Mandal Center.



Government Whip MLA Beerla Ayilaiah performed special pujas at several Shiva temples""(Mandava Srisailam.. Yadadri Bhuvanagiri District Bureau... Indian Chronicle.. November 17):- A scene of Telangana State Government Whip Aleru MLA Beerla Ayilaiah and Beerla Foundation Chairperson Anita performing special pujas at Sri Veerabhadra Swamy Temple in Saidapur village of Yadagirigutta mandal of Yadadri Bhuvanagiri district and at the Shiva temple in Rajpet mandal center on Monday morning.

Umrah pilgrimage dreams turn tragic for sisters, their families

Hyderabad: Sixty-year-old Rayeezunnisa and her sister Shajahan Begum had long dreamed of performing Umrah together. Nearing the age of sixty, they decided to go as soon as possible.When they discussed their plans with their families, their children decided they did not want to miss the opportunity to accompany their mothers on the pious ritual and chose to join them.Rayeezunnisa was joined by her two sons, Saif ur Rahman, who resides in Dubai, and Shoeib ur Rahman, who lives in the city. Shahjahan Begum was accompanied by her daughter, Sara Mahmood.

Illegal Constructions Rampant in Malkajgiri“Collusion Between Builders and Officials



“NAC Engineers and Chainman Kumar Accused of Facilitating Violations Malkajgiri”“K Sadanand Malkajgiri “November 17:-“Malkajgiri “Illegal constructions are rapidly increasing in the Malkajgiri Circle. In Neredmet, Yapral, Moula Ali, and Vinayak Nagar divisions, several buildings are being constructed in open violation of rules, but no official seems bothered. Instead, officials themselves are allegedly supporting such illegal constructions. Along with them, NAC engineers are reportedly collecting huge amounts from builders. Despite hundreds of illegal structures and multiple complaints, officials are allegedly ignoring them and focusing only on extracting money from on-

going illegal constructions. Many buildings are being raised far beyond GHMC permissions, yet the Town Planning department is accused of turning a blind eye and encouraging violations. Section Officer Accused of Running a Money Wheel Residents allege that the Section Officer is openly promoting illegal constructions in Malkajgiri Circle. People complain that files won't move without paying large sums. Builders say that as soon as construction starts, officials begin demanding money. When questioned, they simply direct people to talk in the section office, say victims. Under the Section Officer's supervision, illegal constructions are reportedly flourishing. Only when media or newspapers highlight these issues are token notices issued to show formal action, after which officials wash their hands off the matter. Citizens say that when a complaint is filed, outsourcing staff are sent to seize construction material, and later the builder is called to the office for negotiations. Across various divisions, additional floors are being constructed on old buildings, but officials are not inspecting or acting on them. Instead, they delay action under the pretext of issuing notices, allowing the illegal construction to be completed. Town Planning officers are allegedly providing full support to builders violating rules. Even commercial structures are being raised under the label of residential buildings, yet the department has taken no action, further strengthening allegations of collusion. People are demanding that higher authorities intervene immediately and take strict action against illegal constructions. When contacted, “Deputy “Commissioner Zakia Sultana said that notices were issued to those involved in illegal constructions and that demolition drives would be initiated soon.

BJP is the future in Telangana “SECUNDERABADCANTONMENT,NOVEMBER.17

. (Indian Chronicle):“Malkajgiri MP Eetela Rajendar said that even though the Congress BRS had started election activities in the Jubilee Hills by-elections since the last six months, BJP was defeated in Jubilee Hills due to the late announcement of its candidate. In this regard, MP Etela Rajender organized a media conference with Banuka Narmada, a civilian nominated member of the Cantonment Board, at Diamond Point Gayatri Garden on Monday in Secunderabad. He reminded that after the formation of Telangana state, 9 by-elections were held, out of which the ruling party won seven times and BJP won in two. He said that the ruling party won the Jubilee Hills election by distributing money and sarees and committing abuse of power. He said BJP's victory in Bihar is historic. He said that the Ministers have not conducted a single review of vacant two-bedroom houses for two years in Medchal Malkajgiri district.A ten-minute journey takes an hour as the roads in the city are damaged. Roads with potholes are dying. They demanded that the Congress government should repair these roads on a war footing.Charlapally railway station has been set up at a cost of 450 crores. But there is no road to go there. This made the station unusable. He said that the state government is not paying attention and is not against the free bus, auto drivers are suffering. Moreover, huge challans are being written on them. They demanded to stop it. They are not controlling the traffic but focusing on the trains. It is natural for the ruling party to win the by-elections. In the Huzurabad election, Dharmawon the election of injustice to justice.Self-respect to pride.. All the Telugu people all over the world were waiting for that election. He



said that KCR himself came and declared dalit bandhu but he could not win Bihar elections are a success and triple talaq has worked. We are all taking responsibility for the result of the Jubilee Hills election. People are voting for BJP all over the country because of serving the people. If BJP wins, they say they have done something to EVMs.Did you manage EVM in Jubilee Hills? Have you registered stolen votes? You won in Telangana and Karnataka too and did you do the same there? If you win, it's justice.. If we win, will you call it vote theft? Tell people what to do and ask for votes. He said that such allegations are not This is why our democratic party has been ruling in Gujarat for many years. It is because of the development and upholding of India's self-respect that people are rooting for BJP. Nidarshanam said the victory of 25-year-old Maithili Tagore in a constituency where the population is more than fifty percent Muslim. BJP leaders Banuka Mallikarjun, bn Srinivas, Mallareddy, Ajay Kumar Goud, Rakesh, Srikanth, Topi Shankar, Vijay Anand, Prateek Jain and others participated in the program.

Students should study books well in the library and get high-level jobs: Yadadri Bhuvanagiri District Education Officer Satyanarayana



“(Mandava Srisailam..Yadadri Bhuvanagiri District Bureau... Indian Chronicle..November 17):- Students should study books well in the library with discipline and get high-level jobs, said Yadadri Bhuvanagiri District Education Officer Satyanarayana. As part of the 58th National Library Week, an elocution and singing competition was organized

at the District Central Library on Monday, the 4th day. Before this program, the program was inaugurated by lighting the lamp and garlanding the portrait of Saraswati Devi. The meeting was presided over by District Library Association President MD. Awais Ur Rehman Chisti. The chief guests of this program were District Education Officer, K. Satyanarayana, District Audit Officer S Venkata Aditya, CPM leaders Maya Krishna, Vallepu Anjaiah, Vanam Raju, State PCC Executive Committee members Tangallapalli Ravikumar, K Sridhar, Kura Sivakumar, Akkinapalli Narasimha Rao,“All the guests addressed the program. In this program, students of government and private schools participated in speech and song competitions. In this program, teachers from all government and private schools, teachers of Bhagayath School. M Purushottam, Narasimha Srinivasa from BC Gurukul, Bikhshapati from Minority Gurukul, K Keerthana from Happy Meadows School, M Swarnalatha from Presidency School, participated. In addition, prominent people of the city, library employees, readers and others participated in this meeting.

A Divine Glow Welcomes Ayyappa Maha Padi Puja in Bhadrachalam Today



“By Kranthi Kumar Dasari | Pinapaka Constituency | November 17| Indian Chronicle : Bhadrachalam wakes up today wrapped in a soft, misty charm along the Godavari, glowing with the serene blessings of Lord Rama. The gentle breeze carries the chant “Swamiye Saranam Ayyappa”, filling the temple town with a sweet spiritual warmth as it prepares for the grand Ayyappa Maha Padi Puja. Organised for the second year by the Bhadradri Ka Maharaju Committee, the event at the Marketing Yard has already begun drawing waves of devotees. The devotional buzz, the fragrance of incense and the rhythmic chants have turned the

entire Bhadradri region into a vibrant spiritual canvas. For Ayyappa devotees, especially those observing Mandala Deeksha, the Padi Puja is not just a ritual but a heartfelt moment of surrender. Preparing the Irumudi, offering the Pada Puja and climbing the symbolic 18 steps—all of it marks a sweet reaffirmation of faith. The atmosphere today is expected to be nothing short of divine. The Maha Padi Puja will be led by Bhadrachalam Ayyappa Temple Chief Priest Arun Ramachandran. The schedule includes the sacred 18 Steps Puja, special homams and soulful cultural programmes that promise a deeply moving experience for every devotee. The organisers have transformed the Marketing Yard into a festive spiritual arena—beautiful lights, flower decorations and continuous Ayyappa bhajans create a calm yet joyful ambience. Prominent personalities, public representatives and members of several spiritual organisations are set to attend. Over four thousand Ayyappa Mala devotees and more than two thousand general devotees are expected to participate. Sharing his joy, organising committee representative Kuppala Sai Vamshi Teja said that hosting the Maha Padi Puja for the second time is a divine blessing. He expressed hope that every devotee attending today receives the loving grace of Lord Ayyappa and returns home with peace-filled hearts.



(Mandava Srisailam.. Yadadri Bhuvanagiri District Bureau... Indian Chronicle.. November 17):- Bhuvanagiri MLA Kumbham Anil Kumar Reddy laid the foundation stone for the expansion of road works at Jagadevpur intersection in Bhuvanagiri town on Monday. Yadadri Bhuvanagiri District Additional Collector Bhaskar Rao, Yadadri Bhuvanagiri District Library Chairman Aves Chisti, former Municipal Chairman Pothamsetty Venkateswarlu, DCC Delegate Tangallapalli Ravikumar and others participated in this program.



Green Peace Environment & Water Harvesting Foundation Meets GHMC Chief Horticulture Officer""NARRA SRINIVAS REDDY (NSR), Medchal - Malkajgiri Staff Reporter, November 17, (INDIAN CHRONICLE): ““The president of Green Peace Environment & Water Harvesting Foundation, Bairi Srinivas Goud, met Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation Chief Horticulture Officer Dr. N. Sunanda (Group-1 senior cadre officer). As part of the Vanamahotsavam initiative, the foundation presented a plant to Dr. N. Sunanda on behalf of Green Peace Environment & Water Harvesting Foundation.

Government Whip MLA Beerla Ayilayya participated in the housewarming ceremony of Indiramma's house in Rajpet Manda



I ""(Mandava Srisailam.. Yadadri Bhuvanagiri District Bureau... Indian Chronicle..November 17):- Telangana State Government Whip Aleru MLA Beerla Ayilayya participated in the housewarming ceremonies of Indiramma's houses in several villages in Rajpet Mandal of Yadadri Bhuvanagiri District.“In Renikunta village of Rajpet Mandal, Boddu Lakshmi, in Parupalli village.. Raoula Siddamma, Swami., in Kurraram village, Nila Veeraiah Balamani, the beneficiaries of the housewarming ceremony of Indiramma's houses were handed over to them as promised.

“The honour of recognising poets and artists goes to Chief Minister Revanth Reddy”“— Nemali Anil Kumar



““Nacharam, Indain Chronicle, November 17: “““Greater Congress senior leader Nemali Anil Kumar praised Andesri, describing him as a great warrior who transformed his words into fuel during the Telangana movement and ignited continuous awareness among the people.“Anil Kumar participated in the Andesri Memorial Meeting organised under the leadership of Dalit Ratna Dr. P.G. Sudarshan at Sri Sai Vidyaniketan High School in Nagalakshmi Nagar Colony, Mallapur Division, and paid rich tributes to Andesri.“Speaking on the occasion, Anil Kumar said that the credit for recognising poets and artists goes to Chief Minister Revanth Reddy. He said that the death of Andesri, the people's poet, is an irreparable loss to the literary world.“Participants in the programme included Katta Nagaraju, Anantharam, CH. Mallesham, Sai, Ranga Reddy, T. Naveen Goud, Koyalakonda Rajesh, K. Mahesh, Srinivas Reddy, Ravinder Reddy, P. Prasad, M. Raghu, Yadagiri, K. Sai Goud, Shiva, Chinni, Ganesh, Kumar, and several others.

Arrangements should be made to purchase every grain.?Farmers should not suffer by resorting to middlemen.??Purchase centers should be established accessible to farmers.??? MLA Kunamneni inaugurates paddy purchase center in Chathakonda



“Kukkadapu Naresh Kumar, Kothagudem constituency, November 11, Indian Chronicle: Kothagudem MLA Kunamneni Sambasiva Rao said that the authorities should arrange a way to purchase every grain grown by farmers and that no inconvenience will be tolerated. He inaugurated the paddy purchase center set up by the Primary Agricultural Cooperative Society, Kothagudem, in Chathakonda village under Lakshmidhevipalli mandal on Monday. Speaking at the farmers' meeting held later, Kunamneni urged farmers to take advantage of these purchase centers set up by the cooperative society without resorting to middlemen. He instructed the officials to complete the process promptly without any laxity in the matter of paddy purchase,

without troubling the farmers in the name of quality standards, and without imposing cuts in the name of depreciation. He assured the farmers that if any problems arise in the management of the purchase centers at the field level, they should be brought to their attention and efforts would be made to resolve them immediately. In particular, he advised the officials to take steps to ensure that there is no delay in moving the bags of purchased grain and that they reach the mills on time. He also asked them to deposit the cash from the farmers in their accounts quickly. He said that it is the responsibility of the officials to ensure that there is no shortage of tarpaulins, weighing equipment, and suitable bags. He said that with the establishment of this new center, farmers from Chathakonda and surrounding villages will no longer have to travel far to sell their grain, which will save them time and transportation costs. The program was attended by association president Mande Hanmantha Rao, vice-president Kuchupudi Jagan, director Chandragiri Srinivasa Rao, tehsildar Sirisha, MPDO Ankubabu, MPO Srinivasa Rao, agriculture department AE Rakesh, civil supply DT Mahesh, electricity department AE Raghuramaiah, housing AE David, RI Sivakrishna, CPI leaders Deeti Lakshmi pathi, Nunawat Govindu, Manda Gabriel, Kodi Lingaiah, Varsa Lakshmaiah, Madhavarao, Mankena Prasad, Krantibhushan, AEOs, and farmers.

Awareness program on the management and welfare of the elderly



District Legal Service Authority Yadadri Bhuvanagiri President.. District Chief Justice A Jayaraju“(Mandava Srisailam... Yadadri Bhuvanagiri District Bureau... Incharge Indian... Chronicle November 17) :- As per the instructions of the District Legal Service Authority Yadadri Bhuvanagiri President and District Chief Justice A Jayaraju, the organization's secretary V Madhavi Latha organized an awareness program on the management and welfare of parents and elderly at the Sahridaya Elderly Home. Speaking at the event, the judge said that the elderly are not alone and that all rights for their welfare have been included in the law. He said that not only the government but also the welfare associations and citizens who provide services to the elderly should take responsibility and protect their rights. He said that a special tribunal has been formed by the Bhuvanagiri and Chhotuppal Revenue Division officials to resolve disputes regarding the welfare of the elderly and maintenance of parents and a District Collector Tribunal has also been established to provide services. He said that special facilities should be provided to the elderly in every of-

fice, hospital, bank and temple and services should be provided quickly. He said that District Welfare Officer Narasimha Rao and Bhuvanagiri Revenue Division Officer Krishna Reddy have made special departmental efforts to provide Aadhaar cards to those who do not have them and that they will also be provided with government schemes according to their qualifications. He informed and said that for legal services and advice, they can be contacted on 15100. Bhuvanagiri Revenue Division Officer Krishna Reddy said that disputes related to the elderly are being resolved quickly through the tribunal with the tireless services of the members, and that extensive services will be provided across the district to provide legal services to the elderly, and those who do not have Aadhaar cards in the ashram have been provided in coordination with the district administration department. District Welfare Department Officer Narasimha Rao said that his department is providing services with special focus on the welfare of the elderly and is expanding the services, and said that the ashrams providing shelter to the elderly must follow the rules, and the facilities provided to them should not be neglected in other health matters. District Mental Health and Health Medical Officer Dr. Preethi Swarup said that those suffering from mental illness in the ashram should be provided with treatment as prescribed by the doctors, and the district medical department is providing free services to them through medical camps. Yadadri Bhuvanagiri District Elderly Welfare Association President Venkatesham, members Baleshwar, Anjaiah, Chandrasekhar and others participated in the program and said that they are providing their full services to the elderly and will provide services with a special plan in the future. Fruits were distributed to those in the ashram during the program.

Yadadri Bhuvanagiri District Collector Hanumantha Rao said that the grain purchase process should be expedited“



“(Mandava Srisailam.. Yadadri Bhuvanagiri District Bureau... Incharge Indian... Chronicle November 17) :- Yadadri Bhuvanagiri District Collector Hanumantha Rao said that the grain purchase process should be expedited. On Mon-

day, the District Collector conducted a surprise inspection of the IKP grain purchase center located in the market yard at the Choutuppal mandal center of Yadadri Bhuvanagiri district. Speaking on the occasion, the District Collector said...the grain purchase should be completed quickly. He asked how much grain has been purchased so far and whether the tab entries for the purchased grain have been completed and should be completed on time. He asked whether the money has been deposited in the farmers' accounts until the purchase. He said that the lorries are waiting at the millers and that they should be loaded as soon as the lorries arrive and sent to the purchase centers. He said that additional lorries should be sent if necessary. The District Collector warned that action will be taken if farmers are inconvenienced in the purchase process. The concerned officials participated in the program.

Contractors should send enough lorries to the purchase centers.. Otherwise, action will be taken



Yadadri Bhuvanagiri District Collector Hanumantha Rao “(Mandava Srisailam.. Yadadri Bhuvanagiri District Bureau... Incharge Indian... Chronicle November 17) :- District Collector Hanumantha Rao has warned that contractors should send enough lorries to the purchase centers, otherwise, action will be taken. On Monday, the District Collector conducted a surprise inspection of the Sangem IKP grain purchase center in Valigonda mandal of Yadadri Bhuvanagiri district. Speaking on this occasion, the District Collector said... How many heaps of grain were purchased today and how many more heaps of grain were still wet. He ordered that no matter how late it was, light should be set up and the grain with wet percentage should be purchased.“He instructed the Civil Supply officials to ensure that 4 lorries reach the center every day to transport

the purchased grain to the mills. They warned that if sufficient lorries are not sent, criminal action will be taken against the contractor. The millers should unload the grain from the lorries through porters as soon as it arrives. The concerned officials participated in the program.



(Mandava Srisailam.. Yadadri Bhuvanagiri District Bureau... Indian Chronicle.. November 17):- Nuyadadri Bhuvanagiri District Collector Hanumantha Rao examined the applications received in Bhu Bharati at the Choutuppal RDO office in Yadadri Bhuvanagiri district. He said that there is no possibility of applications being pending in Bhu Bharati. District Collector Hanumantha Rao ordered that the plain names should also be examined and cleared from time to time.

The process of purchasing grain with moisture content should be completed more quickly



- Yadadri Bhuvanagiri District Collector Hanumantha Rao“(Mandava Srisailam.. Yadadri Bhuvanagiri District Bu-

reau... Incharge Indian... Chronicle November 17) :- Yadadri Bhuvanagiri District Collector Hanumantha Rao said that the process of purchasing grain with moisture content should be completed more quickly.“The District Collector, who made a surprise inspection of the PACS grain purchasing center in Nelapatla village of Choutuppal mandal on Monday, said that the grain with moisture content today should be purchased that day. He said that the grain available in the centers should be purchased on a regular basis and there should be no delay.“He asked whether enough lorries were coming or not. When the organizers asked to increase the number of lorries, he instructed the officials to send 2 more lorries than the lorries that arrive daily. The concerned officials participated in this program.

Public Auction of Ammavaru Sarees from 28th of This Month: Temple EO Peddigari Srikanth

“KISHORE VADDEPALLI, Uppal, November 17 (Indian Chronicle).““The public auction of sarees belonging to Goddess Durga Devi at Velugu Gutta Sri Mallikarjuna Swamy Temple, Uppal, will be held from the 28th of this month to December 26th, announced the temple Executive Officer, Peddigari Srikanth, in a statement.“He informed that the sarees adorned to Goddess Durga Devi and those offered as gifts by devotees will be auctioned. The auction will be conducted on five consecutive Fridays — November 28, December 5, 12, 19, and 26 — at 10:00 AM in the temple premises.“EO Srikanth appealed to devotees and interested persons to participate in the auction and contribute to the development of the temple. The terms and conditions of the auction will be read out at the time of the event.“For further details, devotees may contact Temple Executive Officer Peddigari Srikanth at 9912490641.



Officials instructed to examine and resolve applications received in Prajavani



Yadadri Bhuvanagiri District Local Bodies Additional Collector Bhaskar Rao, Revenue Additional Collector Veera Reddy“(Mandava Srisailam.. Yadadri Bhuvanagiri District Bureau... Indian Chronicle.. November 17):- Revenue Ad-

ditional Collector Veera Reddy and Local Bodies Additional Collector Bhaskar Rao have instructed the relevant officials to examine and resolve applications received in Prajavani. “In a Prajavani program held at the Collectorate Conference Hall on Monday, Revenue Additional Collector Veera Reddy and Local Bodies Additional Collector Bhaskar Rao received 41 applications from people from different areas.

The applications received in Prajavani should be examined and resolved by the concerned officials at the field level from time to time without any pending issues. It was informed that 29 applications were received from the Revenue Department, 4 from SC Welfare, 2 from District Panchayat, Employment Team, Fisheries Department, Marketing, RTC, Chief Planning and Police Departments. The concerned officials were instructed to examine the applications received by various departments immediately and resolve the problems of the people.“DRO Jayamma, ZP CEO Shobharani and district officials of various departments participated in this program.

Deputy Mayor Expresses Shock Over Death of 18 Umrah Pilgrims; ““5 Lakh Ex-Gratia Announced“



“Indian Chronicle, Secunderabad — November 17“Deputy Mayor Sriatha Shobhan Reddy Condoles Death

of 18 Umrah Pilgrims from Vidyanagar“Greater Hyderabad Deputy Mayor Mothe Sriatha Shobhan Reddy expressed profound shock and grief over the tragic death of 18 Umrah pilgrims from Vidyanagar, who lost their lives in a road accident in Saudi Arabia.“Upon learning about the incident, the Deputy Mayor personally reached out to the families of the deceased, listened to their anguish, and conveyed heartfelt condolences.

She gathered details of the tragedy and assured that the government is extending full support to the bereaved families.“She stated that the Telangana Government has announced an ex-gratia of ₹5 lakh for each affected family. Special officials have also been deputed to coordinate with Saudi authorities, while efforts are underway with the Central Government to expedite the repatriation of the mortal remains.“Calling it a deeply painful tragedy that has plunged Vidyanagar and the city into mourning, the Deputy Mayor conveyed her deepest sympathies to the families of the victims.

Utilize CMRF: MLA Marrirajasekhar Reddy “““K Sadanand Malkajgiri.



“Malkajgiri, November 17: Malkajgiri MLA Marri Rajasekhar Reddy said that the poor who are suffering from illness should use the CMRF. “The Chief Minister of Telangana State, Enumula Revanth Reddy, who examined this, granted the CMRF and stood by the victims. “Among them Chukka Mallesh got Rs 60,000, Mehunisa Begum got Rs 15,000 and Nandu Kumar got Rs 27,000. “Checks for a sum of Rs.1,02,000/- ““On Monday, MLA Marri Rajasekhar Reddy along with ex-corporator Jagdish Goud distributed to the beneficiaries at Boin Pallilonithana camp office.

“Speaking later, the MLA said that the CM's Welfare Relief Fund will help the poor when they suffer from illness. “Beneficiaries thanked Telangana State Chief Minister Enumula Revanth Reddy for sanctioning the CMRF, recognizing their dedication.

“The family members of the beneficiaries thanked Malkajgiri MLA Marri Rajasekhar Reddy for helping them in this matter. “Senior leaders in this program Badham Parasuram Reddy, Anil Kishor , Janardan, Karamchand, Balakrishna, Suresh Ani

BJP raises Panjab University funding gap, says Centre gave Rs 3,229 crore, state govt just Rs 538 crore



GNS News Agency, Nov 17

BJP state spokesperson S.S Channy, state vice-president Dr Subhash Sharma, state media advisor Vineet Joshi (left to right) addressing mediapersons at Chandigarh. (Express Photo)BJP state spokesperson S.S Channy, state vice-president Dr Subhash Sharma, state media advisor Vineet Joshi (left to right) addressing mediapersons at Chandigarh. Welcoming the Centre's move to withdraw its controversial decision to dissolve the Senate of Panjab University, the Punjab unit of the BJP on Friday criticised the ruling Aam Aadmi Party (AAP), pointing out that while the central government has provided ₹3,229 crore in grants to the university since 2014, the state government has contributed just ₹538 crore. "The Centre continues to contribute its full 60 per cent share, but the Punjab government is providing only 20 per cent instead of 40 per cent," state BJP vice-president Dr Subhash Sharma said at a press conference. He was accompanied by state BJP media head Vineet Joshi and state party spokesperson S S Channy.

Sharma said that currently, ₹250 crore from the Punjab government is outstanding towards the university, which includes pensions, hostel expenses, and scholarship grants. He said the AAP government must stop politicising the is-

sue and fulfil its financial responsibility by immediately releasing the pending amount.A state university in Chandigarh, Panjab University, is funded by both central and state governments. The Centre, in a notification issued on October 28, amended the Panjab University Act, 1947, sought to reduce the size of the Senate to 31 members, abolish elections to the Syndicate, and remove the graduate constituency. The notification was rolled back after it was criticised across party lines. "While the AAP government tried to mislead the public on this issue, in reality, it was the Punjab BJP that conveyed the sentiments of Punjabis to the Centre," Sharma said, adding that the BJP's stand has always been that Punjab's rights and the interests of Panjab University will not be compromised.Sharma further pointed out that Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann and Education Minister Harjot Singh Bains are ex officio members of the Senate of Panjab University, yet have never attended a single meeting. The two MLAs nominated by the Assembly, too, did not attend meetings, he alleged.Sharma said that the reform process had begun during the tenure of former vice-chancellor Professor Arun Grover under the Congress government. Pointing out that a committee formed at that time had Punjab government representatives as well, he questioned: "What was the stand of the Punjab government in those meetings? Did they oppose the reforms or support them? For three years, neither was any letter sent to the Centre nor did anyone meet the President to convey any objection."Sharma said that just as Panjab University has a democratic Senate and Syndicate structure, similar democratic governing bodies must be established in other universities, such as Guru Nanak Dev University in Amritsar, Punjabi University in Patiala, Panjab Agricultural University in Ludhiana, and technical universities to ensure real participation of students.He said that Mann and Bains should answer why they failed to fulfil their responsibilities for the past three years, and when they would release the pending 250 crore.

Delhi HC delivers split verdict on Engineer Rashid's plea to waive travel costs to attend Parliament



GNS News Agency, Nov 17

A division bench of the Delhi High Court on Friday delivered a split judgment on a plea by Baramulla MP Abdul Rashid Sheikh alias Engineer Rashid seeking a waiver on the costs borne by him on his security and travel arrangements to attend Lok Sabha proceedings.The matter was heard by a bench of Justices Vivek Chaudhary and Anup Bhambhani. The verdict was reserved in August.Pronouncing the verdict in open court, Justice Chaudhary said he has rejected Rashid's plea while Justice Bhambhani has allowed it.Justice Bhambhani orally added that the bench has "not been able to concur" and, thus, the bench is rendering "two separate judgments, they're divergent and discordant".The matter will now be placed before the Chief Justice of the Delhi HC for appropriate directions.In March this year, the HC, while allowing the MP to attend Parliament during the Budget session, had imposed the condition that he bear the expenses for travel and other arrangements while he is in the state's custody.When the same condition was imposed on him a second time to attend the Monsoon Session of Parliament,

Rashid — through his advocate Vikhyat Oberoi — challenged it before the HC.While the court was hearing the matter earlier this year, the Delhi government furnished a cost break-up: it was submitted that Rashid's Parliament escort party comprised an assistant commissioner of police, an inspector, a sub-inspector, an assistant sub-inspector, and eight head constables.In a notification on November 12, 2024, the Delhi government had fixed the charges for deployment of "additional police on payment, to private persons, commercial establishments and for other duties" as per provisions of the Delhi Police Act and Delhi Police (Miscellaneous Matters) Rules.A statement from the office of the DCP, Nyayik Abhiraksha Vahini, Delhi Armed Police (NAV DAP), from July 23 reads, "As per instructions from the Govt of NCT of Delhi, NAV DAP is charging Rs 7,039 for each ACP, Rs 7,176 for each inspector, Rs 5,739 for each SI, Rs 4,783 for each ASI, Rs 4,232 for each HC (head constable) and Rs 3,658 for each constable per shift i.e., per day of five hours and per night of four hours for the deployment of police guard to private persons on payment basis. As such, (considering) 10 hours in a day, then total 2 shifts will be calculated and the estimated cost of custody charge will come to Rs 1,44,795," for Rashid.Rashid had defeated National Conference leader Omar Abdullah, who is currently the Chief Minister of Jammu and Kashmir, in the Baramulla seat by over 2 lakh votes in the 2024 Lok Sabha polls.The National Investigation Agency (NIA) has accused him of allegedly using various public platforms to "propagate the ideology of separatism and secessionism". He was arrested under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act in the NIA case, lodged in 2017 against Lashkar-e-Toiba (LeT) founder Hafiz Saeed and other "secessionist and separatist" leaders. A special NIA court in Delhi framed charges against Rashid in March 2022.

As Punjab govt plans to sell properties to shore up funds, row over 50 acres of PSPCL land identified for sale

GNS News Agency, Nov 17

Short of funds, the Punjab Government is planning to generate resources by selling its properties, and it has identified 26 sites for sale in Ludhiana alone, spread across 124.34 acres, of which 50 acres belong to the State Power Corporation Limited (PSPCL).The land parcels are being sold under the Optimum Use of Vacant Government Lands (OUVGL) Scheme. However, the sale of PSPCL properties has triggered a row after power engineers objected to the government's move.Over the last week, the government has taken action against two senior PSPCL officials. While Harish Sharma, the chief engineer of Guru Gobind Singh Thermal Plant at Ropar, was suspended, PSPCL director (generation) Harjit Singh was terminated from service. Though the government has stated that this was because the power generated by the two state-run plants was more expensive than private thermal plants, it is alleged that the action comes after the engineers resisted the move to sell PSPCL land.10 PSPCL properties identifiedAs per the minutes of the meeting held by Chief Secretary K A P Sinha on October 1, PSPCL decided to give away 10 pieces of its land in different locations, measuring a total of 50 acres, to the Greater Ludhiana Area Development Authority (GLADA). The sites include Power Colony Number 2 in Sarabha Nagar (21.04 acres), GT Road (13.25 acres), Power Colony Number 1 in Sarabha Nagar (11.12 acres), CMC Division (2.92 acres), land at BRS Nagar (1.189 acres), land at Pakhowal Road (0.698 acres), and a three-storey building near Fountain Chowk (0.225 acres), among others. The engineers have been stating that these lands are worth crores and the department would never be able to purchase such properties in the future amid skyrocketing property prices. The government has, however, directed the department to hand over the property to GLADA, stating that these lands were unutilised or underutilised.The properties discussed in the meeting included 8.18 acres of land belonging to the Water Resources Department in front of the Deputy Commissioner's office in Ludhiana. Additionally, colonies under the Public Works Department (PWD) — 3.51 acres and 1.7 acres near the Commissioner's office —



are also being considered.'Govt's actions could endanger existence of PSPCL, PSTCL'In 2010, the Punjab State Electricity Board (PSEB) was split into two separate entities: the PSPCL, which handles power generation and distribution, and the Panjab State Transmission Corporation Ltd (PSTCL), which manages the state's transmission network.

The PSEB Engineers' Association, led by Jasvir Singh Dhiman, said they have taken a unanimous decision to oppose the move to sell or lease valuable lands and assets of the power sector. "It has been decided that all employees, engineers, and officers will oppose this move to sell properties in the name of monetisation, where our power houses, offices, stores are situated, and some vacant lands that would otherwise be used for the department's future growth for providing electricity services to the public." "These actions could endanger the very existence of PSPCL and PSTCL. Demonstrations would also be held against the government's attempt to sell off valuable lands of the power sector under the name of monetisation. The leadership of all unions has issued a warning that if any attempt is made that may cause harm to the department's properties or assets, then all unions across Punjab will launch immediate protests," Dhiman added.Other properties on the listOther properties identified to be sold include the seed farm in Ladhowal, the total area of which remains to be calculated, and land belonging to the Veterinary Hospital in Barewal, which will be shifted to another location.

Calcutta HC asks Centre to resume 100-day work under MGNREGA in West Bengal: 'No impediment for implementation'



GNS News Agency, Nov 17

In a major relief for the West Bengal government, the Calcutta High Court on Friday directed the Centre to immediately resume work under the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) — the 100-day work scheme — in the state. The scheme has remained suspended in Bengal for nearly three years. The state government has repeatedly alleged that the Centre withheld funds for the project, leading to its halt.

A division bench of Acting Chief Justice Sujoy Paul and Justice Partha Sarathi Sen, while hearing the matter, observed that MGNREGA work should start in West Bengal without delay. The bench said, "As accepted by all the parties that there exists no impediment for implementing MGNREGA with prospective effect, we deem it proper to implement the MGNREGA scheme forthwith."During the hearing, senior state counsel Kalyan Bandhopadhyay submitted that arrears due to workers must also be released. "Disbursement of wages of the labour and starting of MGNREGA — the Central Government is to pay the wages, but the State Government has already disbursed some. There is around Rs 4,500 crore in arrears," he said. Additional Solicitor General Ashok Chakraborty, appearing for the Centre, argued that there had been "absolute misappropriation of funds by the State," and said that an enquiry had already been conducted against it. The court directed the Centre to file its affidavit in opposition within four weeks regarding disbursement of wages, while the petitioners have been given two weeks thereafter to file their affidavit in exception. The matter will be listed for further hearing after that.

Earlier in June this year, a division bench comprising then Chief Justice T S Sivagnanam and Justice Chaitali Chatterjee (Das) had ordered the relaunch of MGNREGA

in West Bengal, which had been stalled for three years following allegations of corruption. The court had directed that work be resumed from August 1. The Centre later challenged that order before the Supreme Court. A bench of Justice Vikram Nath and Justice Sandeep Mehta dismissed the Centre's plea, thereby upholding the Calcutta High Court's directive. Subsequently, a plea was filed in the High Court seeking enforcement of the order for immediate implementation.Wages under the scheme have not been paid since December 2021. The petitioner in the case, the West Bengal Agricultural Workers' Association, had sought a settlement of outstanding wages amounting to Rs 2,76,484, along with interest at 0.05 per cent per day on the pending amount. Opposition BJP leader Suwendu Adhikari had then filed a case, requesting the court to order a CBI investigation. The Centre stopped funds to the state in March 2022, citing powers under Section 27 of the MGNREGA Act. The state's Advocate General had told the court that an action-taken report would be submitted on February 2, 2023. In June 2023, the Centre's lawyer said that the decision to stop the project was taken after examining this report. The court then ordered that complaints regarding this project should be taken from block to block in the state. In January 2024, the Secretary of the state Panchayat and Rural Development Department stated in an affidavit that a central audit team had found irregularities worth Rs 613 crore, of which the state had recovered Rs 210.35 lakh. A four-member committee — comprising representatives from the Centre, the state, the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG), and the Accountant General — had been formed to verify beneficiaries and review records.Between 2016 and 2022, Bengal was allocated Rs 50,593 crore under MGNREGA. Allegations of irregularities were linked to work worth Rs 9.2 crore, against which action was reportedly taken. According to officials, all related records have been submitted to the Ministry of Rural Development.From 2022-23 to 2025-26, the state was to receive allocations for 1 lakh to 1.2 lakh labour days annually. The last allocation was made in 2021-22 for 27 crore labour days, of which wages worth at Rs 3,500 crore were withheld by the Centre. In 2020-21, the allocation had stood at 41 crore labour days. In a statement welcoming Friday's order, the Paschim Banga Khet Mazdoor Samity said, "Today's order marks a decisive judicial intervention to ensure that this constitutional and statutory right to work is no longer denied to Bengal's rural poor. The Samity reaffirms its commitment to monitor implementation of the order on the ground and continue its struggle for the rights and dignity of rural workers."

Gandhi Shilpa Bazaar inaugurated at Shilparamam, Hyderabad



17 November, 2025:The Gandhi Shilpa Bazaar (GSB), an all-India handicrafts exhibition organised under the Comprehensive Handicrafts Cluster Development Scheme (CHCDS) of the Development Commissioner (Handicrafts), Ministry of Textiles, was inaugurated today at Shilparamam, Madhapur, Hyderabad. Smt. Shruti Patil, I.I.S, Additional Director General (ADG), Press Information Bureau & Central Bureau of Communication, Hyderabad, graced the ceremony as the Chief Guest.

During her address, Smt. Patil highlighted the Government of India's commitment to strengthening the handicrafts sector by expanding market linkages and enhancing national visibility for artisans. She noted that exhibitions like GSB are vital for promoting traditional craftsmanship, sup-

porting livelihood generation, and preserving India's cultural heritage, and encouraged citizens to support artisans by choosing authentic handcrafted products. The event was attended by Sri K. Madhukar Babu, Joint Director (MSME), Directorate of Industries, Government of Telangana; Sri G. Kishan Rao, I.A.S (Retd), Special Officer, Shilparamam; Sri A. Lakshman Rao, Regional Director, Southern Region, Development Commissioner (Handicrafts), Chennai; Smt. M. Suvarchala, Assistant Director, Handicraft Service Centre, Development Commissioner (Handicrafts), Hyderabad; Sri K. Lakshma Reddy, In-charge Coal Sector & Standing Committee Member on Safety, Ministry of Coal, Government of India; and Sri Puli Raja Reddy, Hon. Treasurer, Andhra Pradesh Productivity Council (APPC).

Artisans from Kashmir, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana and Delhi have been provided free stalls to display their traditional handicrafts and promote sales, thereby supporting rural livelihoods and encouraging the continuation of traditional skills. Speaking on the occasion, Dr. T. Srinivas Raghu, Director General of the Andhra Pradesh Productivity Council (organising body), expressed confidence that visitors would attend in large numbers and extend their support to the wide variety of handicrafts that showcase India's cultural diversity and artistic excellence. The exhibition is open to the public from 16th to 25th November, offering an opportunity to explore and purchase unique handcrafted products created by skilled artisans from across the country.

Continental Hospitals Hosts National Conference & CME on Advanced Laryngology

Hyderabad:The Department of ENT & Head and Neck Surgery at Continental Hospitals successfully organised a two-day National Conference and CME in Laryngology, held at Continental Hospitals, Gachibowli, Hyderabad on 15th and 16th November 2025, which concluded today. The conference focused on the latest advancements in managing unilateral vocal fold paralysis, early glottic cancer, and new-age surgical techniques for laryngeal disorders. The programme featured globally acclaimed faculty, including Prof. Carsten Palme from Chris O'Brien Hospital, Sydney—an internationally renowned laryngeal surgeon—and Dr. Jayakumar Menon from Trivandrum, who shared their expert insights and clinical excellence with attending delegates.

Unilateral vocal fold paralysis is a condition where one vocal fold loses mobility, causing persistent hoarseness and, at times, swallowing difficulty. Timely medical intervention is crucial to restore normal voice function. Early glottic cancer, if not detected promptly, may spread locally and complicate treatment. Individuals who smoke, consume alcohol, or experience hoarseness lasting more than three weeks are strongly advised to undergo early laryngoscopic evaluation. Early detection significantly improves the chance of cure, especially with CO2 laser-assisted tumour excision.

A highlight of the event was a live CO2 laser surgical demonstration on a patient with vocal fold cancer, which received tremendous appreciation from participants for its educational value and precision. Continental Hospitals' state-of-the-art Laryngeal and Voice Centre, led by Dr. Dushyant Ganesan along with a strong team of consultants, speech pathologists, and rehabilitation specialists, continues to offer cutting-edge care. The centre specialises in advanced procedures such as injection laryngoplasty, Type 1 thyroplasty, and CO2 laser surgery. Addressing the gathering, Dr. Guru N. Reddy, Founder and Chairman of Continental Hospitals, reflected on his decades of experience in the United States and how they helped shape Continental's world-class laryngology department. He highlighted global advancements in ENT, Head & Neck sur-



gery and encouraged young ENT surgeons to embrace emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence, tissue regeneration, 3D printing, biologics, and robotic techniques to advance clinical excellence.

From Protecting Health to Preventing Progress: How the WHO's Tobacco Treaty Went off Course

Hyderabad:As governments prepare for COP11 to the WHO FCTC, a recent webinar hosted by the Taxpayers Protection Alliance (TPA) under its Good COP 2.0 initiative reignited debate on the treaty's direction. With growing discussions in India and globally around tobacco harm reduction, Dr. Derek Yach—one of the original architects of the FCTC and Martin Cullip, TPA's International Fellow and harm reduction advocate, called for urgent reform of the FCTC to reflect the realities of modern science and innovation. The event explored the treaty's 20-year history and current direction, with both speakers expressing concern that the FCTC — once a groundbreaking framework for reducing global smoking rates, has failed to adapt to scientific and technological advances that could save millions of lives.

China seeks to project power far beyond its coast with new Fujian aircraft carrier



GNS News Agency, Nov 17

Bangkok: China has commissioned its latest aircraft carrier after extensive sea trials, state media reported Friday, adding a ship that experts say will help what is already the world's largest navy expand its power farther beyond its own waters.Fujian had been commissioned Wednesday at a naval base on southern China's Hainan island in a ceremony attended by top leader Xi Jinping.The Fujian is China's third carrier and the first that it both designed and built itself. It is perhaps the most visible example so far of Xi's massive military overhaul and expansion that aims to have a modernised force by 2035 and one that is "world class" by mid century — which most take to mean capable of going toe-to-toe with the United States.With it, Beijing takes another step toward closing the gap with the US Navy and its carrier fleet and network of bases that allow it to maintain a presence around the world.

"Carriers are key to Chinese leadership's vision of China as a great power with a blue-water navy," or one that can project power far from its coastal waters, said Greg Poling, director of the Asia Maritime Transparency Initiative at the Centre for Strategic and International Studies.China wants to contest waters as far as Guam

For China's navy, one goal is to dominate the near waters of the South China Sea, East China Sea and Yellow Sea around the so-called First Island Chain, which runs south through Japan, Taiwan and the Philippines.But deeper into the Pacific, it also wants to be able to contest control of the Second Island Chain, where the US has important military facilities on Guam and elsewhere, Poling said.

"A carrier doesn't really help you in the First Island Chain, but it's key to that contest, if you want one, with the Americans in the wider Indo-Pacific," Poling said.China's "increasingly capable military" and ability to "project power globally" is one of the reasons the Pentagon in its latest report to Congress continued to call it "the only competitor to the United States with the intent and, increasingly, the capacity to reshape the international order." At the same time, it is Beijing's right to "transform its navy into a blue-water strategic navy commensurate with China's national strength," said Song Zhongping, a Hong Kong-based military affairs expert.

"China's carriers cannot just operate near home, they must operate in the distant oceans and far seas to carry out various training and support missions," Song said. "China is a great power and our overseas interests span the globe; we need to be globally present." The Fujian is a step in that direction.One possibility that raises concerns in foreign capitals is a possible blockade or invasion of the democratically self-governed island of Taiwan, which China claims as its own territory and which leader Xi Jinping has not ruled out taking by force.Though the island sits right off of China's coast, if China had the ability to position an aircraft carrier group or groups around the Second Island Chain — between Taiwan and the US Pacific Fleet headquarters in Hawaii — that could delay possible American military assistance in the event of a Chinese attack.

"They want those aircraft carriers to play a part in kind of extending the strategic perimeter farther out from China, and one of the important things that an aircraft carrier can do is extend the range of China's domain awareness to keep an eye on activities in the air, on the sea, and below the sea," said Brian Hart, deputy director of CSIS's China Power ProjectWith Fujian, China's warplanes can deploy far from its shoresChina's first aircraft carrier, the Liaoning, was Soviet made and its second, the Shandong, was built in China but based on the Soviet model. Both use older-style

ski-jump type systems to help planes take flight.

The Fujian skips past the steam catapult technology used on most American carriers to employ an electromagnetic launch system found only on the latest US Navy Ford-class carriers.The system causes less stress to the aircraft and the ship, allows for more precise control over speed and can launch a wider range of aircraft than the steam system. Compared to the ski-jump system, it gives China the ability to launch heavier aircraft, with full fuel loads, like the KJ-600 early warning and control plane, which it successfully tested during its sea trials.

Its latest J-35 stealth fighter and J-15T heavy fighter were also launched from the Fujian, giving the new carrier "full-deck operation capability" according to the Chinese navy.The ability to carry its own reconnaissance aircraft means unlike its first two carriers, it won't be operating blind when out of the range of land-based support, giving it the ability to operate its most advanced aircraft far afield including the Second Island Chain."The Fujian carrier is a big leapfrog for China in terms of the capabilities of its aircraft carriers compared to the first two," Hart said.China's carriers aren't nuclear powered

Still, Hart noted, China's navy lags behind the US in several significant ways.Numerically it only has three carriers compared to the US Navy's 11, and while China's carriers are all conventionally powered, the US's are all nuclear powered which means they can operate almost indefinitely without being refuelled — dramatically increasing their range.The Ford-class carrier, of which only one is currently in service but more are being built, is also larger, can carry more aircraft on its flight deck, and has a third elevator that means it can move more aircraft from lower deck hangars in less time.China also lags behind the US in guided missile cruisers and destroyers, which are critical in providing air and submarine defence and support for larger naval groups, as well as nuclear-powered submarines.The US is also ahead in vertical launching system cells — basically the systems for holding and launching missiles from ships — which is a measure of how much firepower vessels can carry, though China is increasing that capacity, Hart said.Beyond just equipment, China lacks the network of overseas bases that the US has, which are critical for re-supplying carriers and also providing alternative runways should aircraft not be able to return safely to the carrier.China is working on expanding its foreign bases, however, and has a nuclear propulsion system for a carrier in development.

There's also evidence that China is already building another carrier. Chinese shipyards have the capabilities to build more than one at once and have also been churning out other new vessels at a pace the US can't currently come close to matching."Really across the board, China's closing the gap," Hart said."They're fielding and building more aircraft carriers, they're fielding more nuclear-powered subs, they are fielding more, larger destroyers and other vessels that carry a larger number of missiles. So they're really catching up."Fujian is just one of China's latest military assetsChina has happily shown off its new military assets, releasing video of the KJ-600, J-35 and J-15T test flights from the Fujian.A World War II Victory Day parade at the start of September showcased all three aircraft along with hypersonic glide vehicles — whose high-speed, manoeuvrability and other attributes make them more difficult to intercept than traditional ballistic missiles — aerial and underwater drones and electronic warfare systems.Sophisticated new equipment does not necessarily translate to military readiness, however, said Singapore-based analyst Tang Meng Kit, who noted that China hasn't fought a war since 1979 and that the carefully choreographed parade was good at "amplifying perceptions of strength." "It is possible that China's capabilities are overstated, as real-world operational readiness lags behind its showcased arsenal," he told the AP.He also cautioned in a recent analysis for the S Rajaratnam School of International Studies in Singapore that it would be a mistake to see China's military modernisation as simply geared toward a possible Taiwan invasion, which he said is only one part of a "larger mosaic." The parade "signalled China's broader strategic intent, which is to deter major powers, pressure regional actors, expand its global influence, and reinforce its domestic legitimacy," he said.

US President Trump says he could travel to India next year



GNS News Agency, Nov 17

New York/Washington: US President Donald Trump said he could travel to India next year, emphasising that Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi "wants" him to visit while calling him a "great man" and a friend."He's (PM Modi) a friend of mine, and we speak... He wants me to go there. We'll figure that out. I'll go. I will have a great trip there with Prime Minister Modi, he's a great man. And I'll be going," Trump said at the Oval Office on Thursday in response to a question.When asked if he is planning to go to India next year, Trump said, "It could be, yeah." India will host leaders from Australia, Japan, and the United States for the Quad summit in New Delhi after the 2024 summit was held in Wilmington, Delaware.

However, the dates for the summit in India are yet to be announced.Meanwhile, President Trump once again claimed that India has stopped buying from Russia."It's great, going good. He (PM Modi) stopped... Largely he stopped buying oil from Russia," Trump said in response to

a question on how talks with Modi and trade discussions with India are progressing.Trump imposed 25 per cent reciprocal tariffs on India and an additional 25 per cent levies for Delhi's purchases of Russian oil, bringing the total duties imposed on India to 50 per cent.India had described the US action as "unfair, unjustified and unreasonable" while maintaining that its energy policy is guided by its own national interest.In his remarks before the press, Trump also reiterated his claim that he stopped the war between India and Pakistan in May using trade."Of the eight wars I ended, I would say five or six were ended because of tariffs. I'll give you an example. If you take a look at India and Pakistan, they started to fight, they are two nuclear nations... They were shooting each other. Eight planes were shot down. It was seven. Now it is eight, because the one that was sort of shot down is now abandoned. Eight planes were shot down."And I said, 'Listen, if you guys are going to fight, I'm gonna put tariffs on you'. And they both went, you know, they were not happy about that. And within 24 hours, I settled the war. If I didn't have tariffs, I wouldn't have been able to settle that war," Trump said.The president also termed tariffs a "great national defence".

Since May 10, when Trump announced on social media that India and Pakistan had agreed to a "full and immediate ceasefire" after a "long night" of talks mediated by Washington, he has repeated his claim over 60 times that he "helped settle" the tensions between the two neighbouring countries.India has consistently denied any third-party intervention.India launched Operation Sindoor on May 7, targeting terror infrastructure in Pakistan and Pakistan-occupied Kashmir in retaliation for the April 22 Pahalgam attack that killed 26 civilians.India and Pakistan reached an understanding on May 10 to end the conflict after four days of intense cross-border drone and missile strikes.

Multiple explosions shake mosque in Indonesian high school, injure 54



GNS News Agency, Nov 17

Multiple explosions shook a mosque at a high school during Friday prayers in Jakarta, Indonesia's capital, injuring at least 54 people, mostly students, police said.Witnesses told local television stations that they heard at least two loud blasts around midday, just as the sermon had started at the mosque at SMA 27, a state high school within a navy compound in Jakarta's northern Kelapa Gading neighbourhood. Students and others ran out in panic as gray

smoke filled the mosque.

Most of the victims suffered minor to severe injuries from glass shards. The cause of the blasts was not immediately known but they came from near the mosque's loudspeaker, according to Jakarta Police Chief Asep Edi Suheri.Indonesian military Combat Engineering Detachment (Denzipur) personnel carrying explosive detection equipment arrive after an explosion occurred at a school complex in Jakarta, Indonesia, on November 7, 2025. Indonesian military Combat Engineering Detachment (Denzipur) personnel carrying explosive detection equipment arrive after an explosion occurred at a school complex in Jakarta, Indonesia, on November 7, 2025. | Photo Credit: ReutersPeople were rushed to nearby hospitals. Some were soon sent home but 20 students remain in hospital care, three of them with serious injuries, the police chief said.Mr. Suheri said an anti-bomb squad that was deployed at the scene found toy rifles and a toy gun near the mosque."Police are still investigating the scene to determine the cause of the blasts," Mr. Suheri said, and urged against speculation that the incident was an attack before police investigation is completed."Let the authorities work first," Mr. Suheri said. "We will convey whatever the results are to the public."

Typhoon Kalmaegi brings rain and destruction to Vietnam as death toll nears 200 in Philippines



GNS News Agency, Nov 17

At least five people died in Vietnam after typhoon Kalmaegi pummeled coastal regions with destructive winds and heavy rain, officials said onfollowing the storm's deadly passage through the Philippines, where it killed at least 188 people.The storm made landfall in central Vietnam late on Thursday (November 6, 2025), uprooting trees, damaging homes, and triggering power outages, before weakening as it moved inland. Authorities warned of continuing heavy rainfall of up to 200 millimetres (8 inches) in central Provinces from Thanh Hoa to Quang Tri, and said rising river levels from Hue to Dak Lak could trigger flooding and landslides.

In the Philippines, President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. is

expected to visit affected areas on Friday (November 7) to assess the damage and oversee recovery efforts, with officials saying 135 people remained missing and another 96 had been injured.In Vietnam, the disaster management agency said seven people were reported injured, and around 2,800 homes were damaged. About 1.3 million people were without electricity, it said.The State-run Vietnam News Agency said the railway in Quang Ngai had been damaged. Photos and videos on social media showed ripped-off roofs, flooded homes, and streets littered with fallen trees and debris.A man walks past an uprooted tree in Dak Lak, Vietnam, on November 7, 2025, after Typhoon Kalmaegi lashed the country with fierce winds and torrential rains. The government said it had mobilized more than 268,000 soldiers for search-and-rescue operations and warned of flooding, which could affect agriculture in the Central Highlands, Vietnam's main coffee-growing region.Kalmaegi is the 13th typhoon to form in the South China Sea this year. Vietnam and the Philippines are highly vulnerable to tropical storms and typhoons due to their locations along the Pacific typhoon belt, regularly experiencing damage and casualties during peak storm seasons.The Philippines' civil aviation regulator has placed all area centres and airport operations under heightened alert in preparation for another typhoon, Fung-wong, which is forecast to intensify into a super typhoon before making landfall in the northern Philippines on Sunday (November 2, 2025) evening or early Monday morning.

US “pretty close” to trade deal with India, Trump says tariffs will come down

GNS News Agency, Nov 17

New York/Washington: The US is "pretty close" to reaching a "fair trade deal" with India, President Donald Trump has said, adding that he will lower the tariffs imposed on New Delhi "at some point." "We're making a deal with India, much different deal than we had in the past. So right now, they don't love me, but they'll love us again," Trump said on Monday.He made the remarks during a ceremony in the Oval Office, where Sergio Gor was sworn in as America's Ambassador to India by US Vice President J D Vance."We're getting a fair deal, just a fair trade deal. We had pretty unfair trade deals. They're very good negotiators, Sergio, so you have to take a look at that, if you would please," Trump said."But we're getting close. Scott, I think we're pretty close to doing a deal that's good for everybody," Trump said to Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent, who was present in the Oval Office for the swearing-in ceremony. "That's right," Bessent responded to Trump.

"In the old days, do you think (former US President Joe) Biden would ask that question? I don't think so. 'How are we doing with India?' He didn't know about India. He didn't know a damn thing. That's okay," Trump said.Trump was asked about the trade deal with India and whether he is willing to consider lowering the current tariff rate imposed on Delhi."Well, right now the tariffs are very high on India because of the Russian oil, and they've stopped doing the



Russian oil. It's been reduced very substantially. Yeah, we're going to be bringing the tariffs down," Trump said."At some point, no, at some point, we're going to be bringing them down. Without tariffs, this country would be in such trouble as they were for many years." Relations between New Delhi and Washington have been reeling under severe stress after Trump imposed 50 per cent tariffs on India, including 25 per cent for New Delhi's procurement of Russian oil.India had described the US action as "unfair, unjustified and unreasonable" while maintaining that its energy policy is guided by its own national interest.Five rounds of talks have been completed so far for the first phase of the bilateral trade agreement between the US and India.

Typhoon Kalmaegi kills 5 people in Vietnam as Philippines prepares for new storm

GNS News Agency, Nov 17

Dak Lak: Typhoon Kalmaegi brought fierce winds and torrential rains to Vietnam on Friday, killing at least five people and leaving widespread damage across the country's central provinces, days after the powerful storm battered the Philippines and left scores dead or missing.As floodwaters receded, recovery work began in battered towns and industrial zones, with local authorities and residents clearing debris and repairing roofs to millions affected across the central Vietnam.

Five people were killed — three in Dak Lak and two in Gia Lai provinces — while three others remained missing in Quang Ngai, according to state media. Six people were injured.Fifty-two houses collapsed and nearly 2,600 others were damaged or had their roofs blown off, including more than 2,400 in Gia Lai alone. Power outages affected more than 1.6 million households.In the Philippines, where Kalmaegi made landfall earlier this week, President Ferdinand Marcos Jr declared a state of national emergency on Thursday as the country braced for another potentially powerful storm, Typhoon Fung-wong, known locally as Uwan.

The weather bureau said Fung-wong could expand to an estimated 1,400 km in diameter before making landfall late Sunday or early Monday in northern Aurora province, potentially affecting the densely populated capital region of Manila.Kalmaegi left at least 188 people dead and 135 missing in the Philippines, according to the Office of Civil Defence, displacing more than half a million people. Nearly 450,000 were evacuated to shelters, and over 318,000 remained there as of Thursday.Many areas in Vietnam reported uprooted trees, damaged power lines and flattened buildings as Kalmaegi weakened into a tropical storm and moved into Cambodia on Friday.Factories lost their roofs and equipment was damaged because of flooding in Binh Dinh province. In hard-hit Quy Nhon, residents woke up to find corrugated metal roofs and household items scattered along the streets.As the skies cleared and sunlight broke through on Friday morning, residents in Dak Lak province stepped out to assess the wreckage left behind.Streets were littered with fallen branches and twisted sheets of metal, and muddy water still pooled in low-lying areas where the river had surged to record heights overnight.Shopkeepers



Typhoon Kalmaegi battered central Vietnam after devastating the Philippines, killing at least five people and leaving massive destruction in Dak Lak, Gia Lai, and Quang Ngai. The storm damaged thousands of homes, cut power to millions, and followed weeks of severe regional flooding

dragged out waterlogged goods to dry in the sun, while families swept mud from their doorsteps and patched together missing roof tiles.

Kalmaegi struck Vietnam as the country's central region was still reeling from floods caused by record-breaking rains. Authorities said more than 537,000 people were evacuated, many by boat, as floodwaters rose and landslides loomed.The storm was forecast to dump up to 24 inches of rain in some areas before moving into Laos and northeast Thailand later Friday.Three fishermen were reported missing Thursday after their boat was swept away by strong waves near Ly Son Island off Quang Ngai province. Search efforts were later suspended due to worsening weather, state media said.The Philippines experiences about 20 typhoons and storms each year and is among the world's most disaster-prone countries.Vietnam, which is hit by around a dozen storms annually, has endured a relentless series this year. Typhoon Ragasa dumped torrential rain in late September, followed by Typhoon Bualoi and Typhoon Matmo, which together left more than 85 people dead or missing and caused an estimated \$1.36 billion in damage.Scientists warn that a warming climate is intensifying storms and rainfall across Southeast Asia, making floods and typhoons increasingly destructive and frequent.

AI can’t live off free art forever



Every dataset that powers machine intelligence is built on human creativity. To treat that work as free fuel is to erode the very culture that makes intelligence, artificial or otherwise, worth having. Every dataset that powers machine intelligence is built on human creativity. To treat that work as free fuel is to erode the very culture that makes intelligence, artificial or otherwise, worth having. Australia isn’t known for building world-leading artificial intelligence systems. But the island nation might just become the moral compass for how the rest of the democratic world approaches them. Last week, Australia took a stand on what may become the defining issue of the AI age: how machines learn, and at whose expense. The story begins with a think tank most people barely know: Australia’s Productivity Commission. In August, it released a dense report titled ‘Harnessing Data and Digital Technology’. Buried in it was a radical idea to give AI companies a free pass to mine copyrighted content. The commission called it a “text and data mining exception,” which simply means that books, journalism, songs, and art could be scraped to train AI models without asking permission or paying for it. The commission’s reasoning sounded pragmatic: AI needs tomes of data to improve, and removing copyright barriers were aimed at helping the island nation catch up in the global tech race. But that logic misses a moral, and an economic, truth that AI can’t live off free art forever. Every dataset that powers machine intelligence is built on human creativity. To treat that work as free fuel is to erode the very culture that makes intelligence, artificial or otherwise, worth having. Predictably,

Karnataka’s menstrual leave policy: progressive step or symbolic gesture?



Karnataka has become the first State in the country to approve one day of paid menstrual leave per month for all women employees, covering both government and private sectors. Odisha and Bihar have similar policies for government employees, while Kerala has implemented this in universities. Cleared recently by the Karnataka Cabinet, the policy is being hailed as a progressive measure recognising menstrual health as a legitimate workplace concern. The leave, amounting to 12 days a year, applies to women in government offices, educational institutions, factories, and private organisations. While the move has received widespread appreciation, it has sparked debate on whether a single day of leave is sufficient and whether it will achieve its intended purpose.

How it came about Describing the decision as a “momentous occasion,” Sapna S., associate dean and head, school of law, Christ (Deemed-to-be) University, said it marks a progressive step towards gender equity and aligns with the principles of affirmative action enshrined in the Constitution. Dr. Sapna, who chaired the 18-member committee that drafted the policy, said it resulted from extensive consultations and comparative studies. “We reviewed global practices from countries such as Finland and Japan. The committee included gynaecologists, psychiatrists, professors, employers, employees, NGOs, and trade unions. Though there were suggestions to reduce the leave to half a day or change the name, our persistence paid off, and the government approved 12 days, aligning with our original proposal,” she said.

On concerns of misuse, she said that a sub-committee will frame implementation guidelines for the policy. “Misuse can occur with any law. But accommodating menstrual leave can boost productivity and employee well-being in the long run.” She also emphasised the need for sensitisation programmes to prevent stigma or discrimination, adding, “Female-intensive workplaces should have these provisions intact, as they reflect the true spirit of gender equity.” Citing global research, Dr. Sapna said menstrual pain was a serious health concern. “A 2018 Quartz article quoted John Guillebaud, a reproductive health professor at University College London, as saying patients described menstrual cramps as ‘almost as bad as having a heart attack.’ That itself underscores the need for understanding and supportive policies,” she noted.

Gynaecologists note that menstrual experiences vary widely, from mild discomfort to debilitating pain. Some women may experience fatigue, mood swings, migraines, or heavy bleeding, while others may have minimal symptoms. Hema Divakar, division director at Well Women Healthcare, International Federation of Gynaecology and Obstetrics (FIGO), said conditions such as adenomyosis, endometriosis, fibroids, or hormonal imbalances can cause severe pain or heavy bleeding and require medical treatment. “Instead of blindly asking for a day’s leave, girls and women should undergo a wellness check to identify and address root causes. Many of these issues can be fixed,” she said.

While welcoming the policy, she cautioned that menstrual leave may be more symbolic than practical. “Menstruation is a recurring physiological process affecting each woman differently. Pregnancy leave allows the mother’s body to recover and facilitates bonding with the newborn. Granting a one-day leave for menstruation may not make much sense,” she said. She also warned that mandatory menstrual leave could inadvertently reinforce workplace bias. “From an employer’s perspective, there may be hesitation in assigning women critical roles or leadership responsibilities if they are perceived as taking frequent leave. This could deepen gender inequity,” she noted.

Stating that menstruation was no longer a “hush-hush” subject thanks to greater awareness through education and social media, Dr. Divakar said: “Prevent illness, promote

the reaction was fierce. Authors, artists, and news organisations accused the government of handing their life’s work to Big Tech for nothing. The outrage reached Canberra, and Attorney General Michelle Rowland drew a line in the sand. “Australian creatives are not only world class — they are the lifeblood of Australian culture,” she said. “Technology’s advance must not come at their expense.”

With that, the government scrapped the proposal and set up the Copyright and AI Reference Group (CAIRG), tasked with designing new licensing models to ensure creators are paid when their work trains AI. A technical tweak on paper, but a seismic shift on the ground. Australia has become the first major democracy to say, unequivocally, that human creativity is not public property just because it’s online. It’s a stance that will reverberate far beyond its borders. World democracies must take a stance on how AI companies can train their models using “text and data” from copyrighted material. If AI systems depend on human-generated content, who controls that input, and how are the profits shared between parties?

Data is critical to AI, and restricting access can slow innovation. And today’s AI models have already consumed most of the internet’s text, art, and music. What’s left are the works of art and literature that are yet to be produced. It is high time that governments around the world wake up and put up a working mechanism in place where human creativity is fairly compensated by AI companies that unethically scrape the web to train their AI models. By rejecting unrestricted scraping, Australia forces AI companies to grow up. If they want high-quality, up-to-date data, they’ll have to negotiate, license, and pay. That’s not a roadblock, but the next stage of evolution: a shift from extraction to cooperation. The AI industry stands at a crossroads. It can keep hovering up culture in a legal grey zone, inviting lawsuits and public distrust, or it can build something sustainable through an ecosystem where innovation is built on consent and compensation. Australia’s move offers a blueprint for other democracies to follow. It shows that protecting creators isn’t anti-innovation. It’s how innovation earns legitimacy. Ultimately, the future of AI depends on not just processing power, but human creative input that enable machines to learn. And no matter how clever the machines get, they can’t live off free art forever.

wellness should be the mantra. The focus should be on helping women manage menstrual discomfort effectively rather than offering a symbolic one-day off.” Suhasini Inamdar, senior consultant obstetrician and gynaecologist at Motherhood Hospitals, Bengaluru, said menstrual leave was a woman’s right. “In ancient times, women took four days off from household work purely for rest, to preserve physical and emotional well-being, not as a sign of impurity. The original intent has been lost over time,” she said. Calling the policy a “welcome and much-needed step,” Dr. Inamdar said it recognises menstrual health as integral to overall well-being. “Many women experience discomfort, fatigue, or pain that affects concentration and productivity. Offering a day’s paid leave acknowledges this reality,” she said. Severe menstrual pain, or dysmenorrhea, affects women of all ages, particularly younger women or those with gynaecological conditions. Stress, lack of exercise, and poor sleep can further aggravate symptoms. Persistent pain should be medically evaluated rather than dismissed as normal, Dr. Inamdar emphasised. For mild to moderate discomfort, simple measures such as hot compresses, hydration, light exercise, and rest can help. Over-the-counter pain relief may also be used. For severe or recurrent pain, consultation with a gynaecologist is essential. “Conditions like endometriosis or fibroids require targeted treatment, which could include hormonal therapy or lifestyle adjustments,” Dr. Inamdar noted.

For women living with painful periods or conditions such as endometriosis, adenomyosis, fibroids, or PCOS, menstrual leave can make a significant difference, said Sunitha Mahesh, medical director and senior consultant gynaecologist at Milann Birthing Hospital, Bengaluru. “These conditions can cause severe cramps, heavy bleeding, and exhaustion, making it difficult to get through daily life. Having the option to take a day off allows women to rest without using their regular sick leave,” Dr. Mahesh said. However, she emphasised that severe or unusually heavy periods should not be dismissed as normal. “It’s important to consult a gynaecologist to identify the underlying cause and receive appropriate treatment - whether through medication, a procedure, or lifestyle changes - to make future cycles easier to manage,” she said. Dr. Mahesh highlighted the need for greater awareness among women, noting that many assume intense pain or heavy bleeding is normal and therefore delay seeking medical help. “Learning about these conditions and consulting a doctor can help women stay active and productive,” she said. While menstrual leave can offer temporary relief, Dr. Mahesh underlined that addressing the root cause is key for long-term well-being. She also called for workplace policies that are flexible, optional, and free from stigma. “Every woman’s cycle is different, and symptoms can vary widely. Policies should be sensitive, and no one should feel pressured to disclose personal details or fear that taking leave will affect their performance,” she said. With greater awareness, access to healthcare, and

Flat out of reach: The pain of soaring apartment prices in metro cities



When COVID-19 hit the world in 2020, Akanksha Agarwal had a realisation — not a health-related one, though there was that too. “Working from home showed me two things,” says Agarwal, a 32-year-old banker in a prominent private sector bank in Delhi. “The first is that I needed a house that allowed me to work from home, and the second is that working from home itself had led me to accumulate quite a lot of savings.”

She hoped to deploy these savings in a few years to buy a house, if not in Delhi itself, then in Gurugram, Delhi’s corporate suburb in Haryana; or even Noida, another extension of the National Capital Region, in Uttar Pradesh. When the time came in 2024, and she had accumulated enough to make a down payment on what had been a ₹1.8 crore house she had been eyeing in Gurugram’s Sector 24, she found that she was woefully short of what was required. The price was now ₹3.2 crore, a 77.8% increase. Agarwal says her salary has gone up by an average of 10-12% every year for the last several years. “That’s the standard hike in the banking sector. But the thing is, even my friends in other cities have been saying that houses have just become unaffordable. This was the story everywhere,” Agarwal laments.

The “everywhere” nature of her story extends across eight major real estate markets in India: Mumbai, Delhi, Chennai, Kolkata, Pune, Bengaluru, Ahmedabad, and Hyderabad. In these cities, the price rise in housing has outstripped the growth in salaries. A dream out of reach

The Housing Price Index, developed jointly by the real estate brokering firm Housing.com and the Srinji Raju Centre for IT and the Networked Economy (SRITNE), a technology research centre at the Indian School of Business (ISB), measures the change in house prices on a monthly basis for all the major housing markets. For ease of comparison, the index starts off with a value of 100 in January 2017 and each subsequent month’s prices are pegged to that value. So, for example, the index increased to 103.8 by January 2018, and 107.8 by January 2019, a growth of around 3.8% each year, over the course of 2017 and 2018. Just before the COVID-19 pandemic in January 2020, the index stood at 110.6, a growth of 2.6%. In other words, the Housing Price Index grew 10.6% between January 2017 and January 2020. It is after this that the real acceleration in housing prices took place. By June 2025, the index stood at 139.6. So, while the index grew a cumulative 10.6% in the three years pre-pandemic, it grew a further 26.2% over the years since. The data also show that the prices of 3BHK (bedroom-hall-kitchen) houses have grown far faster than those of smaller houses. The index for 3BHKs had grown by about 10% in the three years pre-pandemic, but then accelerated by 33.5% in the years that followed, up to June 2025. The post-pandemic growth in the price of 2BHKs stood at a relatively lower 26.8%, while that for 1BHKs was 19.3%. The city-wise data also reveals the stark reality of housing prices in the metros. In Delhi-NCR, for example, the average housing price grew a staggering 122% between January 2020 and June 2025, with the price of 3BHKs rising by 125% over this period.

This blistering growth in home prices comes at a time when real wages, after adjusting for inflation, have fallen. Government data from the Periodic Labour Force Survey show real wages fell by 1.7% between the April-June 2019 quarter and the April-June 2024 period, the latest quarter for which there is data. In short, while wages have fallen, home prices have skyrocketed. A home to work from

This rise in 3BHK prices also goes back to demand. “After COVID-19, anybody who owned a two-bedroom or three-bedroom house felt the need to go in for one more room. Earlier, there used to be study rooms for children. Now, parents need one too,” explains Jatul Anand, executive director at PNB Housing Finance. So, this third room needed to be the size of a bedroom to accommodate additional books and gadgets.

Sheeshram Yadav, managing director of the real estate company Yugen Infra, explains that where buyers had the choice of buying houses in the 2,000-2,500-square-foot range in markets like Delhi-NCR and the Mumbai Metropolitan Region (MMR), now a chunk of the construction is four-bedroom apartments in the range of 3,500-4,000 square feet. He, too, says COVID-19 changed the way people looked at home spaces. “If you were staying in a 3-bedroom house pre-COVID-19, there is now a requirement for an extra room or space. So, the demand for bigger sizes rose after COVID-19,” Yadav said.

One direct ramification of this increased preference for larger houses is that developers, too, are increasingly choosing to build larger apartments rather than smaller ones. This has led to a paradox of sorts in the housing

market. Developers are selling fewer houses, but are nevertheless saying the market is growing. Data from Anarock Property Consultants show that housing sales in the top 7 cities actually fell 9% in the July-September 2025 quarter. However, developers made more money than earlier because each unit they sold was at a much higher price. “Despite a dip in overall sales volume, the total sales value in the period rose by 14%, from approximately ₹1.33 lakh crore in Q3 of 2024 to approximately ₹1.52 lakh crore in Q3 of 2025. This suggests high volume sales in the luxury and ultra-luxury segments,” Anarock said in its report.

The data from Anarock further show that as much as 70% of the new supply of apartments in Delhi in the July-September 2025 quarter was added in the luxury segment (costing between ₹1.5 crore and 3 crore). A huge 87% of the new supply in Hyderabad was added in the premium (₹50 lakh to 1.5 crore), luxury, and ultra-luxury (over ₹3 crore) segments. The other major markets saw similar trends. There is no real consensus around the definitions of the terms ‘luxury’, ‘ultra-luxury’, or ‘affordable’ (less than ₹50 lakh). However, looking at the metrics of various real estate companies and consultancies, these are the broad bands. An upward shift in the metros There is a structural shift that is taking place in the real estate market in the metros, according to D. Lakshminarayanan, managing director of Sundaram Home Finance, a major home loan player. “From a builder’s perspective, or a developer’s perspective, the composition of sales has changed,” he said. SRITNE and Housing.com have also come up with a Housing Quantity Index. This index shows that while the supply of 3BHKs across the country was about 18% higher in June 2025 than in January 2017, the supply of 2BHKs was 9.9% lower, and 1BHKs was 11.6% lower, showing the increasing preference for larger houses. However, with incomes not rising fast enough, this has meant that people are now forced to take larger loans to finance their home purchases, a fact that buyers like Mehul Verma, a 45-year-old interior designer based out of Gurugram, say has meant other financial goals have had to be set aside.

“I am now the father of two growing children and need a bigger house. So, I have purchased a 4-bedroom apartment in Sector 104 in Noida. But this has put a strain on my retirement fund. I was hoping to have a decent nest egg by the time I turned 65. But a lot of that has gone into this house now,” says Verma, adding that Noida is still somewhat cheaper than Gurugram. According to Anand of PNB Housing Finance, one of the biggest players offering housing loans, the company’s average loan size has grown about 15-20% in the last few years to about ₹35 lakh. Lakshminarayanan also says that the “sweet spot” of his company’s target customer has shifted upwards. “Two to three years ago, I would have said the sweet spot for a developer and a finance company would be a ₹60-lakh to ₹1-crore apartment,” Lakshminarayanan says. “Someone buying a ₹75 lakh apartment on the periphery of the city is typically a middle-income customer, and that is who you want to finance. Today, that number has moved to the ₹1-2 crore range. On the outskirts of Chennai or Bengaluru, you typically are talking about ₹1.3-1.4 crore for an apartment of a reasonable size, and in a reasonable place,” he said.

The increased demand for larger houses has also meant that it is increasingly difficult to find smaller 1- or 2-bedroom houses in the big cities and their surroundings. Lakshminarayanan says it is easier to sell 3-4BHKs. “A builder would rather go and build a 3-4 bedroom, because there is a market for this especially in the bigger cities,” he says, adding that profit margins are higher because the people, who can afford to buy a ₹3-4 crore house, are also looking at the location being close to markets and schools; and amenities like a club house and 24-hour power back-up. Factors driving up prices

Demand is not the only factor driving up house prices in the metros. Other factors are at play. One positive is that government regulation has greatly improved in the real estate sector, with the enactment of the Real Estate (Regulation and Development) Act, 2016 (RERA Act). The Act brought with it several rules and regulations relating to the financing of projects by developers, and also increased scrutiny on their operations.

Anshuman Magazine, chairman and CEO for India, South-East Asia, the Middle East, and Africa at the American real-estate firm CBRE, explains that the primary objective of the RERA Act was to protect the customers. “We are in a better place on that than we were in the past. Consumers do have more confidence because every project is registered, there is more transparency. There are restrictions on taking funds from one project to the other, among other rules,” he says. The other advantage of RERA, he says, is that it gave financiers confidence to provide institutional funding for more expensive projects. “So RERA has been really good and it really has made a difference to the industry,” Magazine says. The other reason driving up the price of finished apartments is normal inflation and the increase in the cost of construction, Yadav of Yugen Infra explains. One big factor that should come as some relief for builders and eventually customers is that the rate of Goods and Services Tax (GST) on cement, a vital input in construction, was brought down to 18% from the earlier 28% as part of the GST rate revamp in September 2025. “In real estate, the input prices are likely to go down for developers. For buyers, it may take some time before the benefit reaches them due to the relatively longer gestation period in the sector,” Magazine says.

The actual Taj story: how a monument’s history has been warped

A little over 60 years ago, Purushottam Nagesh Oak slept and dreamt. He woke up and claimed that the Taj Mahal in Agra was actually a Hindu palace going back all the way to 4th century. Friends of Mr. Oak, an English teacher-turned-lawyer-turned-journalist but never a historian, told him that the Taj Mahal couldn’t have been a fourth century structure as the technology employed in building the Taj in the 17th century didn’t exist back then. The fantasist turned a pragmatist, and Oak brought his argument forward by a few centuries. The Taj was now claimed to be a Hindu temple. This was in 1989. He wrote articles and a book too, but found no support from historians. Even the Supreme Court dismissed his claims as “a bee in his bonnet” in 2000. But post-2014, history is like a revolving door, you enter and exit at your ease and pleasure. You pick and choose, you circumvent and invent. Dress it up as a movie and claim you are looking at history anew. That is how we get a movie like Tushar Amrishi Goel’s The Taj Story, starring former BJP MP Paresh Rawal; just like we had The Kashmir Files and The Bengal Files, starring Anupam Kher and Mithun Chakraborty, all ideological partners of the

Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP). With The Taj Story, Goel goes where no historian has gone. Proof, evidence and knowledge amount for nothing as the director makes a case for the Mughal monument being actually a Hindu temple, much like the BJP leader Sangeet Som who called it alternately a Shiva temple and a monument built by a man who incarcerated his father. Mr. Som obviously couldn’t make out a Shah Jahan from an Aurangzeb and hence got mixed up. Much like Oak, oops, Goel, who sees no difference between history and mythology, facts and fantasy.

Talking of facts, the Taj Mahal was built by the Mughal emperor Shah Jahan after his favourite wife Arjumand Bano Begum breathed her last after bearing the last of their 14 children. Its chief architect was Ustad Ahmed Lahori. The land for her last resting place was procured from Mirza Raja Jai Singh of Amber who had inherited it from Raja Man Singh, a celebrated general of Akbar, who was Shah Jahan’s grandfather. Shah Jahan compensated Jai Singh with four havelis from the royal property for the massive haveli in which rests Mumtaz Mahal. His firm to Jai Singh, the latter’s agreement and the Mughal emperor’s subsequent letter of grant-

ing him four havelis in lieu of one, are all part of history; unlike the claim of The Taj Story which talks in terms of a massacre and genocide of the locals for fulfilling the wishes of an emperor and his consort!

The work on the tomb started in 1632 with the finest craftsmen from across the country and West Asia. The chief mason was Mohammed Hanif from Baghdad who earned ₹1000 a month for his efforts. The pinnacle was built by Qayam Khan of Lahore and its Quranic inscriptions were done by Amanat Khan Shirazi. The mosaic work was done by local Hindu workers. Above all, some 20,000 workmen toiled for 22 years to build the monument to love. Its white marble came from Jaipur, lapis lazuli from Sri Lanka, crystal from China and coral from Arabia. The monument uses the double dome technique, previously seen only in the Humayun’s tomb in Delhi, and never seen in the country before the arrivals of the Turks.

Over the years, many have tried to appropriate credit for its beauty and majesty. In the 17th century, it was claimed by many in the West that the architect of the Taj was Venetian Geronimo Veroneo, a jeweller by profession.

Not a smooth walk: Underused foot overbridges in Bengaluru pose safety risks



Donning bright white lab coats, students dart across the road in front of St. John's Medical College and Hospital in Koramangala. Lunch time has descended upon them and they are making a dash for the canteen on the other side of the road. The median is stunted. Just a facile jump would do. Given this, a foot overbridge (FOB), 50 metres from the hospital gate, stands ignored. Hunger pangs could readily be blamed for this risk-taking behaviour. But while on a full stomach, students have brushed the FOB off curtly as if it were an uninvited guest. Built around five years ago for the benefit of students and patients, this facility near Gate 2 of the hospital remains underutilised, being used only when the medical students take the stairs to film short videos. Even a slightly older segment of the pedestrian population gives the FOB the cold shoulder. And seniors give the FOB a wide berth, as it is divested of its lifts. People use the foot over bridges near a metro station at Majestic through a lift in Bengaluru. People use the foot over bridges near a metro station at Majestic through a lift in Bengaluru. | Photo Credit: Sudhakar Jain

There is no dearth of underused FOBs in Bengaluru. On the same road, three kilometres away in Jakasandra, an FOB is a picture of desertion and neglect, its metal walkway displaying signs of corrosion.

Sometimes, FOB-avoiding behaviour is fuelled by the lack of lifts or escalators or the lack of faith in them, when they are functioning. In a post on Instagram earlier this year, the Bengaluru City Police described the harrowing experience of a 50-year-old woman being stuck in a lift near the skywalk at Nagarabhavi bus stand in Chandra Layout police station jurisdiction. A citizen had called the emergency helpline of the Bengaluru City Police Namma 112 seeking help. The iron wires on top of the lift had to be yanked out to rescue the woman. According to Bangalore Traffic Police, a total of 4,784 road accidents cases were reported in 2024, in which 893 people were killed and 4,052 people were injured. Of this, more than 200 killed involved pedestrians. Did some of those pedestrians lose their life because they decided in favour of crossing the road without the help of an FOB nearby, only because it was not user-friendly? A vast majority of humanity wants to expend minimal energy while seeking to have its goals realised. That is an umbrella truism and it covers FOBs as well. An FOB, even that which comes complete with lifts or escalators, looks uninviting if one has to cover considerable ground to reach it. Therefore the location of an FOB matters as much (if not more) as its user-friendly, physical features. FOBs and skywalks are often proposed as indispensable aids to safe pedestrian crossing in any metro, but the ground reality proves otherwise. Of the 82 skywalks in the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) limits, more than 20 are under different stages of completion. As per data shared by the Traffic Engineering Cell of BBMP, a majority of the facilities that came up after 2007 were provided with a lift or escalator. A good number of the operational FOBs are built under public private partnership and come with a close circuit television camera and watchman. But the current status of these skywalks leave a lot to be desired. Officials say the big challenge they face includes acts of vandalism on lifts. Repairing them following every such act is an avoidable cost to the recurring expenditure of maintaining these facilities. More infrastructure projects A vast chunk of the budget proposed by BBMP was directed towards infrastructure development — skywalks featuring in them. Before fresh tenders are called for constructing new skywalks, can various stakeholders involved in such projects keep behavioural insights in mind from the design stage to increase the patronage of these facilities?

Prakash Sharma, a Behavioural Strategist and co-founder of 1001 Stories, says the challenges in using sky-

Why is environmental surveillance important? | Explained

The story so far: Pathogens (usually bacteria and viruses) that cause diseases in humans and animals, can be tracked in samples taken from the environment, for example, by sampling sewage through wastewater surveillance. This can provide early warnings for potential disease outbreaks.

How does this work?

Samples taken from sewage treatment plants, effluents from hospitals and from public spaces such as railway stations and toilets in airplanes, can be studied to see how the pathogens they contain change from day-to-day. It works because pathogens of interest are shed in the stools or urine of infected individuals. Diseases transmitted by parasitic worms such as roundworms and hookworms can also be monitored through wastewater and soil samples, providing information about the burden of the disease and the effectiveness of control measures. Rigorous protocols inform the collection of samples. These protocols detail how samples must be collected and processed, and how pathogens are detected and analysed. By following these protocols, comparisons of pathogen load become possible, and whole-genome sequencing enables the identification of variants of the same pathogen.

Why is this important?

Traditionally, the only way to figure out levels of infection in a community was to detect infections in patients, called clinical case detection. However, not all infected people might show symptoms, or might not choose to be tested if symptoms are mild. The number of people who are tested might not reflect the true numbers of those infected. Environmental surveillance can thus provide important early warning signals of an impending outbreak. It is now known that the levels of pathogen in wastewater can precede, often by more than a week, a rise in infections.

Why do early-warning signals matter?

Understanding how many infected people there are is important for public health planning. The more the amounts of pathogen that circulate, the more likely it is that people will be infected. Preparing for a disease outbreak becomes much easier if there's more notice. Wastewater-based epidemiology has been used for over 40 years to track sev-

walks are behavioural, socio-cultural and holistic. A footbridge at Cantonment Railway Station in Bengaluru. Experts say civic body must regularly study factors that make certain skywalks popular or why some are avoided. If these three can be better understood when designing such infrastructure projects, then it can enhance design, user experience, improve safety and help in promoting desired behaviours. Talking about how skywalks can enhance the safety of pedestrians in a metro, Prakash says it is easier to get people to use them, if comfort is the hook, rather than safety. "For instance, skywalks should be aesthetic. The steps should not look intimidating when you design such a project. The walls of the escalator, especially on the walkways, should not be covered from top to bottom — openness signals safety. One also needs clear nudges to inform the public that an FOB is located within a certain distance." He suggested making the access points leading to the skywalks appealing. "Finally, people interpret things in context — an FOB doesn't make sense and will be ignored in the absence of the larger context of ample walking spaces and usable, decent footpaths," says Prakash. In the past, The Ugly Indians faced black spots near skywalks leading to Old Airport Road, Marathahalli and Domlur. Design standards Arun Pai, who along with Deepesh Agarwal initiated the #BLRFootpath Challenge in 2024 to rate footpaths across the city and flag any issue, positions an FOB as a component in the larger pedestrian infrastructure and a solution created for faster and safer traffic movement. "In many localities, FOBs block the footpath, and the area below the FOB stairs is used as a mini-dump" Arun Pai. #BLRFootpath Challenge

"We are asking civic authorities to make pedestrians the focus of our planning. Today it is an afterthought and FOB is an even bigger afterthought. FOBs are built after the footpath is made, so we need standards while designing such facilities so that such infrastructure projects do not block movement of people," says Arun. A good footpath should not be ruined by constructing an FOB. "In many localities, FOBs block the footpath, and the area below the FOB stairs is used as a mini-dump," says Arun. Officials from the traffic engineering cell say a need analysis is done with multiple stakeholders, including traffic police and citizen groups, before deciding on the location of a skywalk. At many arterial roads where skywalks are provided, the civic administration also makes it a point to increase the height of the median so as to prevent people from darting across the road. Proposal to GBA Joint Commissioner of Police (Traffic) Karthik Reddy said that the Bengaluru Traffic Police have submitted a proposal to the Greater Bengaluru Authority (GBA) for construction of 78 skywalks across the city. These locations were identified based on areas where pedestrians currently take 20 to 30 seconds to cross the road. At such points, vehicular traffic often has to stop for 200 to 300 metres, leading to congestion. The idea behind the proposal is that building skywalks at these specific locations could reduce traffic slowdowns caused by pedestrian crossings. Some of the key areas where the traffic police have suggested skywalks include ITPL Road, Outer Ring Road, Varthur to Old Airport Road, Whitefield Main Road, Cubbon Road, Kanakapura Road, Sarjapur Road, Bannerghatta Main Road, Dr. Rajkumar Road, among other key areas. However, Reddy clarified that the Traffic Police's role is limited to identifying problem areas and that they do not handle or suggest on the engineering or design aspects of the skywalks. Their concern is strictly the congestion caused by pedestrian crossings and how it could potentially be eased through the construction of skywalks. Officials from the GBA, including one of the zonal engineers, noted that the proposal has not yet been in discussions. "One of the reasons is that building skywalks involves financial implications for the GBA, which prefers to construct such projects through a public-private partnership (PPP) model. In a PPP model, private partners are responsible for funding, design, and construction. Since the proposal is still at an early stage, it has not yet reached the level where design or construction decisions have been made," the official added. At-grade crossing

But are FOBs really the best option for pedestrian crossing? Those working on transport and development policies are of the view that in an area owing to location or poor facilities must be tweaked to incorporate amenities that are favoured by pedestrians. If retrofitting or shifting location of skywalks is an option then it must be tried. FOBs may after all remain a big necessity.



eral diseases such as measles, cholera and polio. Such disease surveillance in India, through wastewater, was first initiated in Mumbai for polio in 2001. During the COVID-19 pandemic, similar surveillance programs for COVID-19 were started in five cities, and they continue to this day.

What is India doing?

The Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) has recently said that it will initiate wastewater surveillance for 10 viruses across 50 cities. This will enable public health surveillance to pick up any increase in viral load within community settings. This extends ICMR's involvement in establishing environmental surveillance for viruses, including avian influenza virus, particularly in areas with outbreaks. However, there is scope for improvement. The sharing of data and protocols across institutions and reaching common agreements on templates for surveillance frameworks that are disease-specific is important. Programmatic approaches, rather than project-driven approaches, must be developed that integrate waste-water and other environmental surveillance with routine disease surveillance. Developing a national wastewater surveillance system for India is important. Moreover, new methodologies are emerging — audio samples of people coughing in public places can be used to examine the prevalence of respiratory conditions, through refined machine learning methods. Thus, the possibilities of environmental surveillance are ever-increasing. Gautam Menon is Dean, Research and Professor of Physics and Biology, Ashoka University. Views expressed are personal and not of his institution.

The origin story of corals in the ocean



When you hear the word 'corals', your mind's eye probably comes up with images of colonies of spectacular hues and bizarre shapes in the shallow parts of the ocean. But do you know how these beauties of the oceans reproduce? Corals consist of microscopic organisms called polyps that live inside those bizarre shapes made of calcium carbonate. They need the right cues to begin an elaborate process of reproduction. On a full moon night, when the water is warm enough, the polyps produce bundles of male cells called sperm and female cells called eggs. Around four nights later, a strange drama unfolds. The older polyps inside the coral colony shoot out thousands of these bundles, almost like a dazzling fireworks show. The shallow part of the ocean turns into a soup of colorful specks. The tiny bundles open up and the sperm cells fuse with the eggs, giving birth to a planula. The tiny bundles open up and the male cells fuse with the female egg cells, giving birth to

It would be a shame if India found supplying weapons to Israel: Navi Pillay



In a ground-breaking report released on September 16, the United Nations Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Occupied Palestinian Territory concluded that Israel's actions in Gaza constitute genocide. Chaired by former UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Navi Pillay, the Commission spent two years meticulously collecting and verifying evidence, documenting over 60,000 Palestinian deaths — including 18,000 children — and the systematic destruction of civilian infrastructure, healthcare facilities, and Gaza's largest fertility clinic.

In this exclusive interview with Muneef Khan, Ms. Pillay discusses the Commission's findings, the legal and moral obligations of the international community, the risks posed by high-profile diplomatic initiatives, and the urgent steps states must take to prevent further atrocities and ensure accountability. By concluding that Israel is committing genocide in Gaza, your report has set one of the highest possible legal thresholds. What should the international community take from this finding, and what are its immediate implications?

Thank you for acknowledging the importance of the report. It took us two years of collecting, verifying, and checking evidence before reaching these conclusions. First, the international community need not wait for a report from a UN body like the Commission, nor for a ruling on genocide by an international court, such as the ICJ. Third states have an obligation under international law not only to punish genocide but also to prevent it, a duty triggered at least since January 2024 through the first provisional measures ordered by the ICJ in the South Africa application against Israel. This Commission report is the most authoritative UN body report to date. We applied a stringent standard, similar to that used by the ICJ, regarding the specific intent element of the Genocide Convention. Therefore, the report should be treated by the international community as a strong indicator that they must act now to stop the ongoing genocide in the Gaza Strip. This is a pre-emptive obligation on every state to prevent and punish genocide. The Commission has also provided concrete recommendations, which should be taken seriously and implemented without delay. U.S. President Donald Trump's 20-point plan for Gaza has just broken. How do you view this plan in relation to your Commission's findings, and more importantly, are you concerned that such high-profile diplomatic initiatives, often driven by power politics rather than international law, could marginalise or eclipse the work of UN accountability mechanisms like your Commission? Our recommendations coincide with global public demands for an immediate ceasefire and a solution. I am not recommending a two-state solution, though the UN does, and the participation of Palestine is crucial. The recent recognition of Palestine as a state at a high-level summit is significant. We are wary when political leaders gather in private to devise solutions; such processes should be open to scrutiny by the media, NGOs, and the public. This report, with its documented facts and findings, must be considered in negotiations. To reiterate, do you feel that high-profile diplomatic initiatives could overshadow your Commission's findings, for instance because global attention has shifted to this 20-point plan for Gaza?

That is precisely why I emphasise the expectations of the world's public. They align with our call to investigate and prosecute genocide. There must be not only peace but justice and accountability. Negotiations risk producing a superficial or temporary peace that could collapse if they do not take the report's findings into account. The Commission verified over 60,000 Palestinians were killed, including more than 18,000 children and nearly 10,000 women. What do these figures indicate about who was targeted? More than 50% of those killed in Gaza were women, children, and elderly persons — civilians, not combatants. The Commission analysed methods of warfare and the types of weapons used by Israeli security forces, revealing a consistent pattern intended to cause widespread casualties. The claim that Israel was conducting operations to destroy Hamas, defend itself, or secure hostages is unjustified and unreasonable. The mass killings and resulting serious bodily and mental harm demonstrate a consistent pattern showing the intent to physically destroy Palestinians in Gaza as a group.

Research cited in your report shows Gaza's life expectancy collapsed by almost 35 years in one year, from 75.5 to 40.5. Why is this demographic collapse a critical

planula, the earliest stage in the life of corals. The tiny bundles open up and the male cells fuse with the female egg cells, giving birth to a planula, the earliest stage in the life of corals. | Photo Credit: FlickrThe little planula swim about, until they find a suitable place to settle on: a rocky outgrowth from the ocean floor or the roots of mangrove plants or even a shipwreck. Once they fix themselves on to a suitable substrate, they change into baby polyps that are no longer mobile. Instead, they acquire a cup-like shape, with microscopic finger-like tentacles. These baby polyps allow minuscule colourful algae called zooxanthellae to live inside them; a win-win situation for both. The algae produce food for the polyps while the latter give the former shelter. The polyps start absorbing calcium carbonate from the ocean water and create the outer skeletons in the weird shapes they admire. Of course, not all those millions of planula get to become polyps. Fish and other marine animals make a meal of many. Fight it outNow, what if the different coral colonies expanded so much that they become overcrowded? The answer lies in yet another thrilling story. Two different species of corals will wage a silent war along the borders of their colonies. At night, long filaments shoot out of their mouths and slowly digest the enemy colony's tissues. These slow and deliberate attacks will continue until dawn. The only sign of battle will be patches of dead corals. Unfortunately, corals can survive only in very specific conditions. With climate change and rising temperatures, the corals cannot tolerate the warming and expel the algae inside them. This means less food and colour, leading to the death of many colonies. However, alongside large swaths of dead and bleached corals, there is also hope, as people have found ways to cultivating corals artificially.

indicator of group destruction?

The Commission cited this data to show the direct link between Israeli actions and the steep decline in life expectancy since October 7, 2023. Killings, limited access to healthcare, starvation, and malnutrition have contributed directly to this collapse. Such conditions are shocking and indicate a deliberate creation of circumstances leading to the death of Palestinians, which supports the finding of genocidal intent.

In December 2023, an Israeli strike destroyed Gaza's largest fertility clinic, wiping out approximately 4,000 embryos and 1,000 sperm samples. How does this act fall under the Genocide Convention's prohibitions regarding the prevention of births within a group? The clinic was the only fertility centre in Gaza, known for its stored reproductive materials. Israeli forces launched a tank shell that hit the clinic, causing five liquid nitrogen tanks to explode, destroying all reproductive material stored for future Palestinian births. The law does not require actual prevention of births to qualify as genocide; the act must be intended to prevent births with the intent to destroy a group. Experts confirmed that the destruction of the IVF clinic will have repercussions for generations. The Commission found that Israeli authorities knew the site's function and intentionally destroyed it, fulfilling the elements of genocide in part.

Since May 2025, at least 1,373 Palestinians have been killed seeking food, including 859 at humanitarian distribution sites and 515 along routes. Why did the Commission consider these killings central to its analysis of genocidal policy? Genocidal intent can be inferred from the totality of evidence, including patterns of conduct and statements by political leaders. The killings at humanitarian sites were considered part of this totality. Medical professionals provided testimony about children, including a one-and-a-half-year-old girl, shot while in her mother's arms. The widespread and systematic targeting of civilians, especially children, was found to be part of a strategy to destroy the Palestinian group.

On March 23, 2025, 15 first responders were killed at Tal as-Sultan, and ambulances were bulldozed into mass graves. What did your investigation conclude about this incident and Israel's methods of warfare? Videos contradicted Israeli false narratives. The Commission found that first responders were intentionally shot over an extended period, indicating intent to kill and knowledge that the victims were Palestinians. This attack fits a broader pattern of targeting healthcare workers and destroying Gaza's medical system, which further evidences genocidal intent. The Commission determined that Israel committed four underlying genocidal acts: killings, serious harm, destruction of living conditions, and preventing births. What was decisive in distinguishing genocide from other international crimes? Genocidal intent requires proof that acts were committed with the aim of destroying, in whole or in part, a protected group. This can be shown through direct evidence, such as statements by authorities, and circumstantial evidence, including patterns of conduct. Our analysis found multiple indicators: deliberate killing of civilians, systematic attacks on cultural and educational sites, starvation and blockade, destruction of healthcare systems, widespread sexual and gender-based violence, and systematic targeting of children. Together, these constitute a clear intent to destroy Palestinians in Gaza. You highlighted statements by Benjamin Netanyahu, Isaac Herzog, and former Defence Minister Yoav Galant as direct incitement. Why are these legally significant? These statements provide direct evidence of intent. Mr. Netanyahu, on October 7, 2023, pledged "mighty vengeance" on Gaza, instructing residents to leave while targeting the entire city, implying the civilian population was also a target. Mr. Galant announced a complete siege and dehumanised Palestinians, promising total destruction. Mr. Herzog stated the entire nation was responsible. These statements demonstrate policy and intent, justifying the recommendation to investigate these individuals for genocide. Your report warns that states supplying arms or political support risk breaching their duty to prevent genocide. What concrete steps should governments take?

States must ensure Israel implements ICJ provisional measures, prevent conduct that may constitute genocidal acts, including arms transfers, and cease the transfer of equipment or items like jet fuel if they could facilitate genocide. States must investigate and punish genocide domestically, ensure corporations or individuals within their jurisdiction are not complicit, impose sanctions, facilitate ICC investigations, and support ICJ proceedings like South Africa versus Israel. India should be proud that they have a judge from India on that court. So, it is a matter of shame if India is found to be complicit with Israel by selling or giving them arms. You recommend that the ICC pursue genocide charges. Which acts should prosecutors prioritise? All underlying acts of genocide — killings, serious harm, destruction of life conditions, and prevention of births — should be investigated. The ICC prosecutor must respect the independence of the office while investigating crimes documented by the Commission, which demonstrate a consistent pattern of genocidal intent.

Red flags in Govt: Can GenAI models track prompts of officials, leverage citizens’ data?



What happens when a government officer uploads an internal note to an AI chatbot for a quick summary? When a police department asks an AI assistant to optimise CCTVs across a city? Or when a policymaker uses a conversational model to draft an inter-ministerial brief? Can the AI system analyse such prompts at scale, identify the user, infer their role, draw patterns across queries and predict strategic intent?These questions are being debated in sections of the Union government, The Indian Express has learnt, amid growing concern about the rapid proliferation of generative AI (GenAI) platforms in India, especially those run by foreign firms, often bundled as free services with telecom subscriptions.Senior officials say the core issue is not only data privacy but inference risk: whether these systems can derive sensitive insights indirectly from users' behaviour, relationships, and search patterns.

Two broad areas are under discussion. First, whether queries made by top functionaries — senior bureaucrats, policy advisers, scientists, corporate leaders and influential academics — could be mapped to identify priorities, timelines, or weaknesses.“We don't know what the level of tracking is on these services, and whether they are able to identify the significance of a user's prompts to make inferences from it. For now, the foreign LLMs are most popular, and there can be more safety in running them directly on a computer rather than on a server. But, of course, the most secure way would be to use locally made LLMs which are currently being developed. Until we have that, we are keeping a close eye on these issues,” a senior government official said.Another top official indicated that a debate is on within the government over this issue.The IT Ministry did not respond to a formal request for comment.Some of these anxieties have led to specific directions from at least one major government department to not use AI services on official workstations. In February, the Finance Ministry directed its employees to “strictly” avoid use of such tools “like ChatGPT and DeepSeek” in office computers and devices over concerns pertaining to confidentiality of official documents and data.“It has been determined that AI tools and AI apps (such as ChatGPT, DeepSeek etc.) in the office computers and devices pose risks for confidentiality of Govt data and documents,” the memo by the ministry

said.Some departments have already moved to limit exposure. In February, the Finance Ministry issued a directive prohibiting the use of GenAI platforms such as ChatGPT and DeepSeek on official workstations and devices, citing risks to “confidentiality of Government data and documents.”Generative AI platforms can draw deeper inferences about users from their prompts because every input reveals intent, tone, preferences, and context in real time. Besides, some AI companies have signed distribution deals with telecom operators and their free subscription is usually linked to phone numbers.

The concerns come at a time when India is funding the development of indigenous large language models (LLMs) under its Rs 10,370-crore India AI Mission. At least 12 LLMs and smaller domain-specific models are being developed with government support. One of these, led by Bengaluru-based start-up Sarvam, is expected to roll out by year-end, targeting governance and public sector use cases.The debate intersects with a larger political push.The government has consistently urged the use of swadeshi digital tools instead of foreign platforms, a message that's grown sharper amid strained trade ties with the United States over tariffs and H-1B visa caps. Globally dominant US-based platforms — ChatGPT, Gemini, WhatsApp, YouTube, Instagram, Gmail, X — shape much of India's digital communication and information environment.Last month, in a meeting with top Secretaries, the Prime Minister is understood to have flagged the need for domestic digital platforms in communication and knowledge ecosystems, not just in payments and identity. IT Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw publicly shifted to Zoho's Indian office suite, and Home Minister Amit Shah announced that his official email would move to Zoho Mail.

Over the last six months, at least three GenAI companies have rolled out free access to user groups in India. OpenAI's basic ChatGPT Go plan will be made available free to consumers in India for a year while Alphabet's Gemini Pro will be offered to each of Reliance Jio's over 500 million subscribers for 18 months. Perplexity AI will offer its Pro version to Bharti Airtel's 350 million users.There is some history to this. At the height of its sour relationship with X (then Twitter) in 2021, several government officials tried propping up Koo as an alternative. The app failed and shut down operations last year. After border clashes with China in 2020, India had banned several popular apps such as TikTok, citing national security concerns.Incidentally, a subcommittee formed by the IT ministry under the IndiaAI Mission submitted its report Wednesday on governance guidelines for AI companies, which among other things, recommended the creation of an India-specific risk assessment framework that reflects real-world evidence of harm. It also advised a “whole of government approach” where ministries, sectoral regulators, and other public bodies work together to develop and implement AI governance frameworks.

India needs a lot of big and world-class banks, will sit and discuss with RBI: FM

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Thursday said that the government is in discussions with the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) for the creation of an ecosystem for nurturing world-class banks.“India needs a lot of big and world-class banks, and for that, of course, we will have to sit and talk with the Reserve Bank and also with the banks themselves to see how they want to take it forward and also discuss with the RBI about how they have an idea of building larger banks,” Sitharaman said when asked if the government was looking at further consolidation in the banking sector. She was speaking at a Banking and Economics Conclave organised by State Bank of India (SBI).

The Finance Minister said a lot of prior work is needed before a final decision is taken, but the work in this direction has already commenced.“We are discussing with the RBI and banks. It is not by creating from among those which exist today just by amalgamation... that can also be one of the routes, but you need an ecosystem and also an environment in which more banks can operate and operate to grow. That environment is actually well established in India but I need it to be a bit more dynamic. Some work is happening on it,” Sitharaman said.The first phase of PSB consolidation began in 2017 when five of its associate banks and Bharatiya Mahila Bank were merged with the State Bank of India. In 2019, Vijaya Bank and Dena Bank were merged with the Bank of Baroda. This was followed by the merger of 10 PSBs into four large banks in 2020.When asked about India's growth rate momentum amid prolonged uncertainty and rising protectionism, Sitharaman said, “I don't want to sound too ambitious or also giving a statement of overconfidence, but I can very clearly see that India has shown its capability, markets and also the way in which, in spite of the global uncertainties, people of India have responded to the next generation GST reforms.”The government implemented next-gen goods and services tax (GST) reforms effective September 22, with a simplified two-slab structure of 5 per cent and 18 per cent. The move has helped in spurring domestic demand.

“I think (the impact of) GST (reforms) shows in terms



of small, medium and large purchases, the readiness of the people to respond to the public policy. Indians have always responded to governments which are responsive and I must thank the GST Council for having seen this point in unanimously coming out with next generation (GST) reforms and that is showcasing how the economy is bringing out the best in it,” the Finance Minister said.Driven by lower GST rates and robust festive demand, consumer spending witnessed a rise, with bank credit surging by over 100 per cent during the September-October 2025 period compared to the same period a year ago.Between September 5 and October 17, 2025, bank loans increased by Rs 4.1 lakh crore to Rs 192.19 lakh crore from Rs 188 lakh crore, the RBI's fortnightly data showed. During the coinciding festive period of the previous year, advances had increased by Rs 1.91 lakh crore to Rs 172.38 lakh crore in the fortnight ended October 18, 2024, from Rs 170.47 lakh crore during the fortnight ended September 6, 2024, the data showed.On private capex, Sitharaman said earlier the industry used to say that the consumption outlook was uncertain, but from September 22, there are signs of its strengthening, indicating growing demand.“It was waiting to come out like an arc before you. It has come out and I am also seeing a good many private sector capacity building and also equally credit going out of banks. So, it has kickstarted the biggest virtuous cycle for India,” the Finance Minister added.

Mahindra sells entire stake in RBL Bank for Rs 678 crore

New Delhi: Mahindra & Mahindra (M&M) on Thursday said it has sold 3.53 per cent stake in RBL Bank for Rs 678 crore, representing a 62.5 per cent gain on the investment.On July 26, 2023, the Mumbai-based diversified firm had announced the acquisition of a 3.53 per cent stake in RBL Bank as a treasury investment at a cost of Rs 417 crore.“In furtherance to above, we would like to inform you that the company has today sold its entire stake in RBL Bank for a consideration of Rs 678 crore representing a 62.5 per cent gain on the investment,” M&M said in a regulatory filing.According to the block deal data available on the National Stock Exchange (NSE), M&M offloaded 2.11 crore (2,11,43,000) shares or a 3.45 per cent stake in RBL Bank. The transaction was valued around Rs 677.95 crore, and was executed at an average price of Rs 320.65 apiece.

At the end of September quarter, M&M held a 3.45 per cent stake in RBL Bank, as per the shareholding data on the BSE.Meanwhile, Aditya Birla Sun Life Mutual Fund (MF), SBI MF, Kotak Mahindra MF, HSBC MF, HDFC Standard Life Insurance Company, Citigroup Global Markets Mauritius, BofA Securities, Goldman Sachs, Morgan Stanley, Societe Generale, and Abu Dhabi Investment Authority were the entities that purchased shares of RBL Bank.



Shares of RBL Bank rose 0.51 per cent to close at Rs 325.50 apiece on the NSE.On Wednesday, RBL Bank reported a 16 per cent rise in its net profit to Rs 160 crore for the second quarter ended September 2025. The private sector lender had recorded a net profit of Rs 138 crore in the same quarter a year ago. Its total income increased to Rs 1,458 crore during the quarter under review from Rs 1,064 crore in the same period of the last year, RBL Bank said in a regulatory filing.

From romance to remorse: As Twinkle Khanna jokes about tattoos outlasting marriages, many open up about erasing their ex’s name



In the latest episode of Two Much, hosted by Kajol and Twinkle Khanna, Akshay Kumar and Saif Ali Khan appeared as guests, leading to a lively and candid conversation filled with humour and personal revelations.During the chat, Akshay shared that he has permanently inked his wife Twinkle's name on his shoulder and also tattooed his children's names on his back, as a gesture of love and devotion. When Twinkle was playfully asked whether she had reciprocated the gesture by getting a tattoo of Akshay's name, she quickly dismissed the idea with a laugh, saying she would “never do that.”

As Kajol teased Twinkle over this, the latter responded with her signature wit: “Nothing is permanent in life. Tattoos are, marriages are not. I don't want any tattoo — later I'll have to change it,” leaving everyone on set in splits.While the exchange drew laughs, Twinkle's words struck a chord with many who have learned this lesson the hard way — through painful tattoo removals, expensive cover-ups, and the emotional weight of carrying the name of an ex on their body.When Ponaxi Nunisa, 27, got her partner's name tattooed, it seemed like the ultimate romantic gesture. “It felt romantic at the time, like something people in love do. I wasn't being dramatic; just thought it was a sweet, permanent kind of gesture,” she recalls. Then comes the punchline: “Spoiler: permanence and relationships don't always go hand in hand.”She's not alone. Across tattoo studios in India, artists are witnessing a steady stream of clients seeking to erase inked declarations of love that did not stand the test of time. What begins as a symbol of eternal devotion often ends up as an uncomfortable reminder of relationships past — one that many are eager to remove or transform.

Mumbai-based Denzil Clement, director of Denzil Art Services, sees this pattern regularly. “It's surprisingly common — at least five to eight clients come in every month wanting a partner's name covered or removed. Over the years, I have seen more cover-ups than new name tattoos,” he says. “Earlier, it was mostly young boys after breakups. Now, it's men and women of all ages. Social media trends and celebrity influences play a big role in both getting and regretting such tattoos.”

Yogesh Pai, who runs Psy Tattoos in Mumbai, offers a slightly different perspective: “Less than 5 per cent of the tattoos we do are couple tattoos or dedicated tattoos wherein clients ink their partner's name. With the arrival of fast dating and dating apps in recent years, the trend has definitely seen a dip.”Both artists nevertheless confirm that when such tattoos do get inked, regret often follows — sometimes with dramatic consequences.

Tattoo artist Yogesh Pai shared an image of his client's tattoo, where he did 3 cover ups Tattoo artist Yogesh Pai shared an image of his client's tattoo, where he did 3 cover ups (Source: Yogesh Pai)Path to regretFor Shobhit Tripathi, 29, the decision came early in his relationship. “I got her name tattooed just two months into the relationship. At that time, it felt genuine and heartfelt. Looking back, maybe it was impulsive, but there was no show-off. It was just love, plain and simple.”The tattoo's meaning evolved as the relationship progressed. “When things were good, I was proud of it. It felt like proof of how real our bond was. During fights, it reminded me of why we were together,” Shobhit says. “But after we broke up, that same tattoo started feeling out of place. The same friends who once said it was romantic began calling it stupid. That stung, but I could see their point.”For Ponaxi, the shift was equally jarring. “Back then, I thought it was cute. After the breakup, not so much. It started feeling like I was stuck in a rerun of a show I didn't want to watch anymore.”The decision to remove the tattoo became inevitable. “Honestly, seeing it every day felt like reading old texts you should have deleted. Covering it up was more about peace of mind. The laser hurt less than the breakup, so that's saying something,” she adds.Beyond the personal pain, there is often a social dimension to these tattoos. Shobhit's family dynamics added another layer of complexity: “My family has never been okay with tattoos, so I used to hide it under my watch when I visited home. They were disappointed when they found out. My college friends, on the other hand, thought it was the most romantic thing ever. Now they tease me about it and call it my ‘life lesson in ink.’”Ponaxi faced her own share of commentary. “Oh, everyone had something to say. My friends roasted

Bitcoin dips below \$100,000 amid global sell-off; crypto market enters correction phase

Mumbai: Bitcoin prices fell sharply on Wednesday, briefly dipping below the \$100,000 mark amid heavy selling in the spot market.The fall came as part of a broader global sell-off in risk assets, with investors increasingly worried about overvalued markets and fading risk appetite.The world's largest cryptocurrency dropped 3.7 per cent to trade at \$101,822 after touching an intra-day low of \$99,010.06 — its weakest level since mid-June.

Other major digital assets also traded lower, with Ethereum sliding 6.76 per cent to \$3,331.65, Solana down 3.16 per cent at \$157.66, XRP declining 3.16 per cent to \$2.24, and Dogecoin slipping 1.47 per cent to \$0.165.Bitcoin has now officially entered bear market territory, falling more than 20 per cent from its record high of \$126,186 reached in early October.According to data from analytics firm CoinGlass, more than \$1.27 billion worth of leveraged crypto positions were liquidated earlier this week, most of them being long positions as traders betting on further price gains faced steep losses.In total, nearly \$2 billion in crypto positions were wiped out in the past 24 hours, although the scale was smaller compared to the \$19 billion liquidations seen during last month's crash.

Reports suggest that open interest in Bitcoin futures remains subdued, while options traders are increasingly betting on further downside, with several targeting the

me for weeks. My sister gave me that classic ‘you never listen’ look. I deserved both, to be fair.”Atul Sharma shares a particularly harrowing story about his friend's experience. The tattoo itself was inked through sheer pressure: “He was madly in love with that girl. One of our friends got the name of his dog tattooed on his arm, and when this girl got to know about it, she said, ‘Look at him. He has the name of his dog. What would you do for me?’ And the next day, he got a carpet design on his arm. It was a huge one with a fairy and her name covering his arm.”

Much later, the process of removing the tattoo turned into a nightmare. “It could have gone off in four-five sittings, but he developed an infection and it got worse. He could not work due to it and had to quit his job. He was emotionally down when all this happened. He was depressed and had to seek medical help,” Atul says. “A skin condition did not allow him to cover it. He was homebound for a year as the doctor told him to avoid going outside due to the risk of infection.”The emotional impact was even more profound. “He was fixated on the tattoo because of the pain it caused him physically, and it also amplified his emotional pain. His perception of women changed a lot, and he only believed in one-night stands after that. He has had some casual relationships but could not bring himself to trust anyone,” says Atul, adding, “He does not like to talk about it at all, and we respect that.”

Not all cover-up stories end in trauma. Clement has witnessed some creative solutions. “One client turned her ex's name, Rahul, into a cute puppy. She later joked that her dog turned out to be her real true love. Another wanted to transform a matching couple tattoo into a phoenix rising from the ashes, symbolising a new start.”Then there's the humorous mishap: “A boy wanted his ‘mom's’ name tattooed. A few days later, his furious parents stormed in. Turns out, the name wasn't his mother's at all, but his teacher's! He had a huge crush on her. Later, we had to cover it with his actual mother's name.”Pai has his own memorable case: “A client who has done three cover-ups with us.”Calendar of regret

Both artists confirm that tattoo removal requests follow seasonal patterns. “Certain times of the year see a clear spike. February and March, after Valentine's Day, are peak regret season,” Clement notes. “There is also an uptick post-wedding season when relationships fall apart. Around New Year's, many come in seeking a ‘fresh start,’ and removing a name tattoo is often part of that emotional reset.”Pai agrees: “Definitely, Valentine's Day, partners' birthdays, pre-wedding season, etc, are times when these requests spike.”For Shobhit Tripathi, 29, the decision to get his partner's name tattooed came early in his relationship. For Shobhit Tripathi, 29, the decision to get his partner's name tattooed came early in his relationship. (Source: Shobhit Tripathi)Tattoo artists have developed strategies to handle these emotionally charged sessions. “Most clients start off emotional or embarrassed but end up relieved. Some even laugh about their choices,” says Clement. “For many, the cover-up brings closure. It is a way to reclaim their body and story. You can almost see the weight lift off their face once the new design takes shape.”

Pai emphasises creating a safe space: “It is very subjective. It depends on how the couple split. In either case, we create a judgment-free zone and try to keep our customers as comfortable as possible. A lot of them end up sharing their stories. It is almost a therapy session for them.”Both artists also try to steer clients away from name tattoos. “I always advise people to think twice before getting a partner's name tattooed. Go for something symbolic — initials, coordinates, or a design that represents the bond. Some listen, but love makes people impulsive. Proof of love should be love itself, not a tattoo,” Clement advises.Pai takes a similar approach: Some take our advice, some don't. If they insist, we try to convince them either to get a symbolic tattoo instead of the name itself — sun tattoo if your partner's name is Suraj — or something else altogether.”Today, both Ponaxi and Shobhit view their experiences with mixed emotions. “It was a mistake when I got it, a lesson when I removed it, and now just a funny story I tell to remind myself that I have evolved, or at least, I like to think so,” says Ponaxi.Shobhit is also moving towards closure. “It was a mistake because it was rushed, a lesson in thinking long-term, and a memory of a time when I loved without overthinking. I have decided to get it removed on my birthday this year. Feels like the right time to let it go.”“After the breakup, it became a constant reminder of something that had ended. I knew I had to move on. Keeping her name didn't make sense anymore, especially when I think about building a new life with someone else. Getting it removed feels like a clean break, emotionally more than physically,” Shobhit adds.Perhaps Twinkle Khanna was onto something with her witty remark. The lesson here isn't just about tattoos — it is about the difference between love as a feeling and love as a permanent mark. In the end, the best proof of love might just be love itself, not the ink that tries to capture it.



\$80,000 level through put contracts. The latest slide in Bitcoin coincided with weakness across global equity markets. Fears of an artificial intelligence–driven bubble in tech valuations and concerns about stretched stock prices sparked broad selling on Wall Street.On Tuesday, the Dow Jones Industrial Average fell 251.44 points, or 0.53 per cent, to 47,085.24. The S&P 500 declined 80.42 points, or 1.17 per cent, to 6,771.55, while the Nasdaq Composite plunged 486.09 points, or 2.04 per cent, to close at 23,348.64.Analysts said the correction in crypto mirrors the growing caution across global markets, as investors brace for a potential pullback after months of rapid gains driven by optimism over AI and digital assets.

South Africa’s Iron Man with a giant heart, undefeated and unbroken, leads from the front at Eden Gardens for famous win



GNS News Agency, Nov 17

Forty thousand eyes stayed fixed on Temba Bavuma for 40 seconds that felt like 40 hours. And Bavuma’s were fixed on the ragged, discoloured ball, lost in the pale blue skies. He ran sideways, took a step to his left, then to his right, before he stationed under the ball to swallow the catch that would bring his team within a blow to winning the Test. The ball calmly dropped in his palms. Forty thousand eyes shut in despair. Bavuma blew a kiss into the skies. An hour later, he was asked to narrate the feeling that tossed in his mind when he ran for the catch. “Well, nothing. Just to catch the ball. I didn’t have time for other thoughts!” With such a straight face and placid eyes, but humour ringing in his tone, that he had the hall in splits. Among contemporary captains, he is the doyen of deadpan humour. He is also the Iron Man of South Africa, the small man with a giant heart, as coach Shukri Conrad described, and arguably the most important South African cricketer since their reintroduction to the cricket field, a metaphor of his country’s socio-cultural transformation. Pouching the match-winning catch and grafting the match-turning knock were straightforward chores for a man who has worn heavier burdens. The first black batter to score a Test hundred, the first black captain, the first to steer them to the elusive shores of the world champions. The heavier the burden, the tougher he becomes. So he was not to drop the catch or get out feebly. Not for his life. Undefeated, unbroken

In his moment of joy, he seemed like the little boy from Langa, all vivid eyes and burning desire. He let the moment soak and bubble, contained his emotions like an almost implacable Buddha, soft-edged, calmly accepting of the fates, whether they swing for him or against. It was how he battled, too, an undefeated 55, where he remained unbeaten in spirit as well. Nothing flustered him; he put behind the two whipper snappers from Jasprit Bumrah, those that flew off hard length. He did well enough to evade the bat in time. Ravindra Jadeja’s deliveries hissed past him; Kuldeep Yadav’s whirred. But his concentration remained unbroken. He is a paradox; he might look nervous as he

lines up for the ball, a visual treachery of his alignment falling apart. But when the ball nears him, he rearranges the rebelling parts into a congruous whole. He is calm, even soporific, a square silhouette of perfection. The seedy streets of Langa shine in him still. He faced older boys bowling down the slope in the corners of a street they called ‘Karachi,’ ‘Lord’s’ and ‘MCG’. At night, he listened to the crackle of gunshots. He was made to remain unbroken.

Festive offer Bavuma’s 55 not out would remain special, not because of the volume but because of its match-influencing quality. (Express Photo by Partha Paul) Bavuma’s 55 not out would remain special, not because of the volume but because of its match-influencing quality. (Express Photo by Partha Paul) Block by block, sometimes with a measured blow-by-blow, he built his innings. At times, in his hands, the bat resembled a surgeon’s scalpel; sometimes a giant slab of granite. “I am a guy who backs my defence. My game is that simple, I just look to play around my defence. It was more a case of just playing what is in front of you. Keep your nerve, but importantly keep the belief that the result will go our way,” he recollects. He obeyed simple fundamentals. He built an invisible cage around him and played within it. He didn’t poke or lunge; he did not swipe across; he resisted preemptions, and he compressed his world into his small, secure space. The stray mistake was difficult to avoid on a pitch where he couldn’t have even trusted his shadow, but he quickly dragged it to the recycle bin. The minimalistic back-lift equipped him to deal with the grubbers. Anything that soared was adeptly left. The low centre of gravity perhaps helped him to deal with low-fliers better than some of his taller teammates. His strides are short, but quick and definite. The 55 not out would remain special, not because of the volume but because of its match-influencing quality. It doesn’t surprise coach Shukri Conrad. “Didn’t I tell you he is one of the finest batsmen in the world (on current form)?” He averages 38.42 in Tests, but in his last 17 innings, he has notched up three hundreds and six half-centuries. He batted through the pain of a strained hamstring in the WTC final and stitched a crucial 147-run second-innings stand with Aiden Markram. An equally staggering record is that he has not lost a single Test he has captained (10 wins and a draw). Under his quiet leadership, Conrad reflects, South Africa looks a well-knit side, enjoying each other’s success. “They look like a bunch of mates. They are a mix of diverse cultures, which the team has embraced. It’s a culture that has developed organically,” he elaborates. As obsessed as he is about winning, he doesn’t miss the larger perspectives of life. “You have ambitions and expectations, but you also know that life can happen. Cricket can happen,” he said on the match’s eve. Life happened, cricket happened, and the man from Langa cast his giant shadows on the ground. Forty thousand eyes wouldn’t wither the little boy who woke up to gunshots.

Siddhesh Lad’s career-best 170 puts Mumbai on top against Puducherry

GNS News Agency, Nov 17

For many seasons since making his Ranji Trophy debut in 2013, Siddhesh Lad has been labelled the crisis man of Mumbai cricket for dragging his side out of a hole and taking them to safety. Once in a while, however, even nature can tend to help such cricketers by giving a relaxed scenario to ply their trade. It was one such instance for the 33-year-old right-hander in the ongoing Group D encounter against Puducherry, where all the stars seemed to have aligned for him to have a day out with the bat. An eased-out pitch, a fast outfield and a tiring, listless attack meant that Lad could finally keep his mind at peace and blaze away to a career-best 170 off 285 balls on Day 2 on Monday.

The early signs that he could be in for the long haul were seen on Sunday, when he ended Day 1 on 80 not out. On Monday, he carried on from where he left, unleashing an exquisite cover drive and straight drive off Aman Khan in the 91st over to get closer to his hundred. That landmark arrived a few overs later, when he flicked Sabhay Chadha for four and celebrated with Sarfaraz Khan at the other end. The carnage, however, was only beginning as the right-hander used the long handle to great effect soon after reaching the landmark, peppering the off side and straight boundaries to leave the Puducherry captain Sagar Udeshi and its bowlers searching for ideas to get him out. The assault forced Udeshi to set defensive fields, and at one stage, he opted to come from over the wicket with no slip and men



patrolling the boundaries. The field setting had no effect on Lad as he reached his 150 with a straight six off Aman. On Saturday, Sarfaraz had touched upon the grass covering on the Wankhede Stadium pitch as Mumbai readied itself to play a first-class match at the venue since the 2023-24 Ranji Trophy final against Vidarbha. However, when he walked out to bat on Sunday he would have known that the green tinge was merely to hold the surface together. It also meant that he had a chance to cash in against Puducherry, and he grabbed the opportunity with both hands, registering his first half-century of the season. Apart from all the shots in his innings, what stood out was his celebration after getting to his fifty, when he removed his helmet and raised his arms, as one would after notching a hundred. He fell for 67, caught behind off Aman.

Arjun Erigaisi’s battle with Wei Yi in Chess World Cup quarterfinal ends in quick draw



What began with an hour and 30 minutes for both sides on the clock ended up with 1 hour, 35 minutes and 3 seconds for Arjun, who gained over five minutes after 60 minutes of play. Both sides came up with a risk-free approach and were flawless in their moves. Arjun’s accuracy was astonishing, 99.5% with dark pieces, while Wei played an equally solid game and concluded with 99% accuracy with white pieces.

GNS News Agency, Nov 17

Arjun Erigaisi held China’s Wei Yi to a draw with black pieces in their first quarterfinal game of the FIDE Chess World Cup 2025, taking place in Resort Rio Convention Centre, Goa, on Monday. The last remaining competitor from the host nation, Arjun, wrapped up the game in just 31 moves and 59 minutes. What began with an hour and 30 minutes for both sides on the clock ended up with 1 hour, 35 minutes and 3 seconds for Arjun, who gained over five minutes after 60 minutes of play. Both sides came up with a risk-free approach and were flawless in their moves.

Arjun’s accuracy was astonishing, 99.5% with dark pieces, while Wei played an equally solid game and concluded with 99% accuracy with white pieces.

The idea behind Arjun playing a solid draw against an extremely challenging opponent like Wei would likely be to wait for his chances with light pieces, denying any risk in the Classical round. A win would all but assure Arjun of a Candidates’ spot, which he missed just by a whisker in the 2024 cycle. Where the likes of Vidit Gujrathi, R. Praggnanandhaa and D. Gukesh qualified for the prestigious tournament, and Gukesh even went on to win the Candidates Tournament in Toronto to become the youngest winner of the event and later the youngest ever World Champion after beating China’s Ding Liren.

The match-up against Wei is perhaps the steepest challenge Arjun would face in the Goa event. Should he topple the Chinese wall, the Warangal Wunderkind will take on the winner of the Andrey Esipenko vs Sam Shankland match. Earlier, an unprecedented 24 Indians featured in the 206-player FIDE World Cup. The first two rounds saw 14 Indians (seven in each round) getting knocked out of the event. The third round accounted for five more players from the host nation, while three more Indians — R. Praggnanandhaa, Pranav V and Karthik Venkaraman — fell in Round 4. Pentala Harikrishna reached Round 5 alongside Arjun but lost to Jose Eduardo Martinez Alcantara in the tiebreaks. 1. e4 e5 2. Nf3 Nc6 3. Bb5 a6 4. Ba4 Nf6 5. O-O Be7 6. Re1 b5 7. Bb3 d6 8. c3 O-O 9. h3 Be6 10. d4 Bxb3 11. Qxb3 h6 12. a4 Qd7 13. axb5 axb5 14. Rxa8 Rxa8 15. Qxb5 Nxd4 16. Nxd4 exd4 17. Qxd7 Nxd7 18. cxd4 Bf6 19. Be3 Rb8 20. Nd2 Rxb2 21. Rc1 Bxd4 22. Bxd4 Rxd2 23. Rxc7 Rd1+ 24. Kh2 Rxd4 25. Rxd7 Rxe4 26. Rd8+ Kh7 27. Rxd6 Re2 28. Kg1 Re1+ 29. Kh2 Re2 30. Kg1 Re1+ 31. Kh2

‘Sab darr ke khel rahe hain’: Former India batter claims insecurity within Test team under Gautam Gambhir



GNS News Agency, Nov 17

Former India batter Mohammed Kaif said insecurity over playing spots has stalled the progress of the Test batters in home conditions under the current team management helmed by Gautam Gambhir. On Sunday, India’s batters put on an abject display on a crumbling Eden Gardens pitch in Kolkata against South Africa in the first Test that they proceeded to lose by 30 runs. Opting for four spinners, including two all-rounders in Washington Sundar and Axar Patel, India moved away from a specialist batter, Sai Sudharsan, at number three for the match. Though Sundar put on an impressive and stoic show in his new slot, Kaif called out the instability over playing XI selections, with batters being rotated quite often.

Citing a lack of support for batters such as Sarfaraz Khan, who has been demoted from the national radar, Kaif

said on his YouTube channel: “Whichever players are playing, they don’t have a feeling that someone is standing for them. Koi backing nahi hai, sab darr ke khel rahe hain. (There is no backing; everyone is playing with fear.) Sab dar ke khel rahe hain, koi khul ke nahi khel raha (Everyone is playing in fear, nobody is playing with freedom).” If Sarfaraz Khan’s place is not confirmed after 100 scoring a hundred. Even after scoring 100, he’s not able to make a comeback. Sai Sudharsan scored 87. He doesn’t play the next Test match. I think there is a lot of confusion in this team.” Kaif said that with positions under scrutiny, batters could find themselves jittering further when the management opts to play on turning tracks.

“Players ko apne pe belief kam ho gaya hai, thoda insecurity bhi aa gyi hai (Players are not believing in themselves, there is insecurity as well). When there is insecurity and you come to play at turning tracks, you won’t be able to do well,” he added. Kaif added that Sundar manoeuvred the conditions better than his peers because of his upbringing in Tamil Nadu, playing more often than not on turners. “Why did Sundar play well? He comes from Chennai. He has grown by playing on turning tracks. He knows how to use his feet and which balls to play with soft hands. How to keep the bottom hand.” “Sai Sudharsan also comes from Chennai. If he were there at No. 3 and Sundar at No. 8, you would have won this Test match. He plays spin very well. Sudharsan comes from Chennai. He’s in form and scored 87. He’s not there in the playing XI,” Kaif added.

‘I feel to be a better player than last year’: Jannik Sinner after ATP Finals win over Alcaraz to cap ‘amazing season’



GNS News Agency, Nov 17

Italian Jannik Sinner continues to get closer to becoming a modern-day great as he concluded his 2025 season with a win over arch-rival Carlos Alcaraz and retained his ATP Finals Title at Inalpi Arena in Turin on Sunday. After ending the season on a high note, Sinner remarked he was a better player in 2025 compared to the previous years. “It’s (an) amazing season... This year, making four Grand Slam finals, coming here, winning here, having this big streak in end of the year, it’s amazing. But mostly I feel to be a better player than last year, I think this is the most important. It’s

all part of the process. I always say and believe that if you keep working and trying to be a better player, the results they’re going to come. This year it was like this,” Sinner said after his win.

The 24-year-old beat Spanish Alcaraz 7-6(4), 7-5 in straight sets in front of a packed home crowd. In 2025, Sinner reached the finals of all Grand Slams and ended up winning the Australian Open and Wimbledon, while he lost to Alcaraz in the French Open and US Open in summit clash. Sinner is yet to lose a match in the season-ending tournament since being beaten in the 2023 final by Novak Djokovic. “I was thinking about a lot and at the same time not a lot. There was a lot of tension because if I lost that point, we go into a tie-break, and then it becomes a different match. But in that moment, I was probably more relieved about the end of the season. I had a similar feeling last year, but it was different. This year, it was a more powerful feeling for a variety of reasons. It was a really emotional moment,” he added. The win on Sunday brought to a close a year in which the Italian had to bounce back from a three-month ban, which chopped out a large chunk of his season despite the World Anti-Doping Agency accepting that the Italian was accidentally contaminated with the banned substance clobetol in March 2024.

‘Australia will get under his skin, but Stokes can answer with his performances’: Andrew Strauss on England skipper ahead of Ashes

GNS News Agency, Nov 17

With just a few days left for the high-octane Ashes series between arch-rivals Australia and England, the pressure continues to mount on Ben Stokes’ travelling side, who are looking for their first Ashes win Down Under since 2010/11. Former England captain Andrew Strauss has hailed Stokes, calling him a phenomenal cricketer who has pushed English cricket forward alongside Kiwi head coach Brendon McCullum. “I think he’s phenomenal, Stokesy. I love his approach; I love how clear he is in his thinking and I love the fact he really doesn’t care what any of us think about what they’re doing,” Strauss said on the Sky Sports Cricket Podcast.

“He’s pushed English Test cricket forward quite a substantial way, alongside (head coach Brendon) McCullum. While Strauss praised the 34-year-old Stokes, he also pointed out his vulnerabilities, calling him “an emotional guy” who will be targeted by the Australians. “He (Stokes) has got vulnerabilities, Stokes. We know he’s an emotional guy. And I think the Australians, as a nation, they’re going to really try and get under his skin over the course of these five Test matches,” Strauss was quoted as saying by Sky Sports. “As a captain, you need to be able to suck that up and almost show that you’re unaffected. I think



Stokes is going to find that difficult to do, but what he can do, and what he’s done very well in the past, is answer with his performances on the pitch – those incredible, inspired performances, some of England’s greatest performances of all time, with bat and ball,” he added. Strauss said that while Stokes has all the abilities to tackle any situation, if England start this tour on a sombre note, then things might be too challenging to handle. “He has the ability to do that, but it’s going to be very draining for him, mentally. If England lose a Test match or two early, that’s going to be a real challenge for him.”

‘When Virat Kohli was captain they used to score big..’: Gautam Gambhir’s India leaving too much to chance, says ex-IPL teammate

GNS News Agency, Nov 17

India’s abject display on a below-par pitch at the Eden Gardens in Kolkata during a 30-run defeat to South Africa on Sunday has raised severe criticism over head coach Gautam Gambhir and his tactics to leave the skills of his batters and bowlers to chance. Defending India’s decision and request to play on such an improbable surface, Gambhir had lamented the poor batting of his side as the solitary reason behind the defeat. However, former Australia wicket-keeper Brad Haddin said that India’s reliance on rank turners are back-firing for the second time under Gambhir. Last year, India similar failed to chase down a 147-run target against New Zealand in Mumbai, culminating with an ignominious 0-3 series whitewash for the first time in history. Haddin recalled the captaincy days for Virat Kohli when dominated for nearly six years at home, suffering negligible losses while piling on heavy runs on the board before the spinners took over. “Twice now under Gambhir...” “When Virat Kohli took over as captain back then, they batted long and put scoreboard pressure. They are leaving too much to chance. It brings ordinary spinners into the game. You just

have people who can throw the ball and the wicket will do the rest. I heard that Gambhir came out and said we are happy with the surface we are playing on. This cost them against New Zealand as well,” Haddin said on the Willow Talk podcast. “They’ve done it twice now under Gambhir. They play their best cricket when, its not about turning wickets but building scoreboard pressure with their runs. They have taken their world-class batters out of the game. I just think they are leaving too much to chance. India play their best cricket when they put a big total on the board and then they make the opposition claustrophobic with their fields. Their spinners are better than anyone on that surface but their batters are actually not that good players of spin on a surface like that,” added Haddin, who has shared the Kolkata Knight Riders dressing room with Gambhir. South Africa pace legend Shaun Pollock also lambasted the poor mindset of the Indian batters on such tricky pitches. The 124-run target is the lowest ever that India have failed to gun down in a Test match at home. “I think on that surface the mindset had to be where can we score from time to time, how can we look to be positive. I thought the intensity went through the roof when Jadeja got to the crease.

Maharani Season 4 review: Huma Qureshi show needs sharpness, brevity



Maharani Season 4 review: Season 4 of Maharani is largely a mix of the old laced with a bit of new, in terms of actors joining the ensemble. But the tone of the series, created by Subhash Kapoor, and directed this time by Puneet Prakash, is the same: wily netas double-crossing each other mainly in Delhi and Patna with sidebars in other state capitals, family feuds, and personal and professional rivalries. It's tempting to speculate if the new season has dropped just in time with the on-going elections in Bihar: whatever, it does inject a bit of spice into a show in which tonal similarity and the length of each episode is becoming a challenge. The addition of Darsheel Safary and Rajeshwari Sachdev lends a bit of freshness, the latter written with a little more zest than the former.

She plays the paramour of Prime Minister Joshi (Vipin Sharma) who hates Bihar CM Rani Bharti's (Huma Qureshi) guts even more than before, and like all smart women who know when to speak and when to stay silent, Sachdev's character is all about smart moves. Safary is to be seen in London, sitting on a bench with headphones-and-laptop, denoting a serious student, and Rani Bharti's good beta, as opposed to bad beta Jay (Shardul Bharadwaj) who is up to his usual tricks back in Patna, having been shocked and disappointed by his mom's decision to hand over the reigns of the state to his 'badi behen' (Shweta Basu Prasad), who gets to mouth a filmi dialogue — 'ma see baat karne se pehle beti se baat karo!' Yes, we see what the writers did there. It's an open secret that the two main characters are based on Atal Behari Vajpayee and Rabri Devi, with Qureshi's naive homemaker being foisted as a placeholder for her jailed husband, something we witnessed in the first season. But the lines are very much borrowed from this era, with Sharma's PM reading off a teleprompter, and characters using phrases like 'washing machine rinse dry', 'jumblebaazi', and, yes, even this one, 'Rani Bharti kaun?' Haha. Said Rani Bharti is now a 'doordrishti neta', thinking of how to keep the state within the family, and setting her sights on the nation's biggest gaddi in Delhi. One of the reasons I enjoy watching the show, whose characters work hard, sometimes too hard, to keep the accent and body language intact, is Kani Kusruti: this time around, this faithful aide to Rani Bharti has personal ambitions of her own. Pramod Pathak, as the statesman-like figure who wants to do the right thing, keeps the balance. Amit Sial, plotting away in jail, doesn't have much to do. Qureshi is familiar but still leads from the front and one of her ma-beta scenes with Shardul Bhardwaj is among the better parts of the show. This season has come to an end, without an end in sight: clearly there will be more. Brevity and sharpness is the need of the hour.

Katrina Kaif's father was 'not an influence, not a part of family', she learnt to be 'completely non-judgemental' from mother: 'I have never met him since'



Katrina Kaif and Vicky Kaushal welcomed their baby boy on Friday, November 7. Katrina and Vicky shared the joyous news on social media, where they were bombarded with congratulatory messages. The couple tied the knot in 2021 after years of dating each other, and soon became one of the most loved couples in Bollywood. While Vicky grew up in Mumbai with his action director father Sham Kaushal and homemaker mother Veena Kaushal, Katrina had an unconventional childhood. She grew up with single mother Suzanne Turquotte, who worked as a lawyer, but then got involved with international charity work. Her work required her to travel across many continents, and so, Katrina, along with her seven siblings travelled the world with her. Amid all this, her father was absent as he left the family when Katrina was quite young.

In a 2008 interview with Shoma Chaudhury, Katrina said that her father was not an influence in her life. "My

father is not an influence, he was not part of our family; my parents separated when I was very young and I have never met him since," she said, when asked about her early years. Talking about her mother, she said, "The biggest thing I learnt from her is to be completely non-judgemental."

During these years, Katrina was in a relationship with Salman Khan, but until then, she had never spoken about it openly. Back then, at the age of 25, Katrina felt that the absence of a father figure drew her to older men. Salman was 43 at the time. "I am sure if some psychoanalyst lay me on a couch and probed hard and long, they could prove I was sad, but actually, at most, the lack of a father means I am drawn to older men, men who have lived life and have some experience," she said. However, a few years later, Salman and Katrina broke up. She was then in a relationship with Ranbir Kapoor, which also lasted for around six years. She is now married to Vicky, who is five years younger than her. In the same chat, Katrina spoke more about her childhood as a globetrotter. As per the interview, she lived in Hong Kong, Japan, China, Ukraine, Romania, France, USA, Poland, Belgium, Austria, South Africa, England, and was homeschooled for the most part. She shared that her childhood prepared her for every kind of situation. "We never lived anywhere for more than two years and we did not have a great deal of stability, or physical security and comfort, but we led a very culturally diverse life. That's an unbeatable way to be prepared — I don't think you can't get a better education than that. I have seen so much and lived in so many cultures, nothing shocks me. You can throw me anywhere and I will adapt," she said. But, when asked about specific details about her childhood, Katrina just said, "I'll have to ask my sister," she says. "All I can immediately remember is being snowed in for months in Japan, and being terribly sea-sick on a long ship-ride to Europe." Katrina has been a part of Indian films since 2003. She has been working in movies for over 22 years now and is most notably known for her work in films like Namastey London, Jab Tak Hai Jaan, Zindagi Na Milegi Dobara, Ajab Prem Ki Ghazab Kahani, Tiger series among many others. She was last seen in Sriram Raghavan's 2024 film Merry Christmas.

Archana Puran Singh is shocked to learn the price of Rs 35,000/kg asafoetida: 'We won't buy gold, just this'

Archana Puran Singh's YouTube channel has crossed one million subscribers and in their latest vlog, the family was on a trip to Udaipur where they tried different kinds of local kachoris famous in the city. Kachori is a deep snack pastry with a savoury stuffing, and here, the family tried kachoris with heeng (asafoetida).

As Archana, her husband Parmeet Sethi and son Aaryamann Sethi tried a kachori, they were shocked to find out the price of the heeng that goes into the making of the dish. They learnt that the heeng used there costs around Rs 25,000/kg, but shocked them even more was that the best quality of heeng available here costs Rs 35,000/kg. Archana joked, "Iss Dhanteras, humne sona nahi khareeda, hum heeng khareedenge. (On



Dhanteras, we won't buy gold, we will buy asafoetida.)" As the family went from one location to another, Parmeet cracked some signature dad-jokes. It is over the course of these vlogs that Parmeet's jovial personality has been introduced to the audience. Listening to his father, Aaryamann said, "I have got

a new dad because of you," he told the audience, and added, "The one who jokes, laughs so much." Parmeet responded, "I had some traumas in life but now I don't care about anything." Archana joked, "After getting married to me..." and Parmeet finished her sentence as he said, "Now I say, the worst has hap-

pened." Archana finished her thought and said, "Why did I ask this question? Only to get insulted." Towards the end of the video, the family shared that they will soon share a special video celebrating their one million subscribers, but they will only do so once Ayushmaan, who is presently in Paris, returns from his travels.

Ayesha Takia left Main Hoon Na 2 weeks before shoot began, panicked Farah Khan cast Amrita Rao on Gauri Khan's suggestion: 'Like Sridevi'



It was 2004. Farah Khan was all set to make her directorial debut with Main Hoon Na. The cast was locked — Shah Rukh Khan, Zayed Khan, Sushmita Sen, and newcomer Ayesha Takia. The locations in Darjeeling were booked, costumes were finalised, and the team was ready to roll. But just two weeks before the shoot, Farah got a shock that threw her into panic mode, film's second lead Ayesha Takia backed out. In a recent episode of her YouTube vlog, the filmmaker-choreographer revisited the chaotic days before her debut film went on floors and revealed how Amrita Rao eventually came on board. Farah, accompanied by her longtime cook Dilip, visited Amrita Rao's home for a nostalgic chat.

As they settled down, Farah asked Dilip, "Have you seen Amrita in Main Hoon Na?" He nodded. Farah quipped, "What role did she play?" Dilip answered confidently, "The girl who was running behind Lucky." Farah burst out laughing. "Did you hear that? Your role was to be behind Lucky!" she joked, before correcting him. "That was Rakhi Sawant! You got out of here," she teased. Ayesha Takia left Main Hoon Na for Socha Na Tha

The conversation then turned serious as Farah recalled the chaos that led to Amrita's casting. "My shoot schedule was fixed, places in Darjeeling were booked — but I didn't have a heroine," Farah said. "We had first cast Ayesha Takia as Sanjana, but she went to shoot for some Imtiaz Ali film. She told me she would be gone for four days, but she didn't return for two months. She was shooting Socha Na Tha." Panicked, Farah started calling Ayesha. "I told her, 'You haven't done costume trials or rehearsals — how will we shoot?' She said, 'Sorry ma'am, I can't come. Imtiaz sir

hasn't finished the shoot.' I was devastated. It was my first film, and my heroine had disappeared. That's when her producer and Shah Rukh Khan's wife Gauri Khan stepped in to save the day. "Gauri told me, 'Why don't you check with this girl? She's done a Bru ad.' That girl was Amrita Rao," Farah recalled. "But honestly, she didn't look like my character at all. She came to meet me wearing a kurta and jeans, while Sanju was supposed to be a goth, rebellious girl. I couldn't see it." Still, on Gauri's insistence, Farah decided to audition her. "I asked Amrita to do the emotional scene where she breaks down and confesses everything to SRK. The moment I saw her through the lens, I was stunned. She looked completely different — magical. It reminded me of Sridevi. Even when Sridevi's rehearsals seemed okayish, she would light up once the camera rolled." RJ Anmol, who joined the conversation, chimed in: "I have always heard this story from Amrita's side, but hearing it from you makes it even more amazing." Farah continued to praise her actress. "Luckily, she could dance! Chale Jaise Hawaien was a one-shot song, and she nailed it. Other dancers were fainting due to the cold and oxygen drop, but she kept going." However, Farah shared one funny behind-the-scenes confession — Amrita had lied about knowing how to ride a bicycle. "We were about to shoot the scene where SRK and Zayed are on cycles, and just five minutes before the shot, Amrita told me, 'I don't know how to cycle.' I went hyper — it was my first film! Then Shah Rukh, being Shah Rukh, stepped in and said, 'Don't worry, put her on my cycle.' If you watch that scene closely, you'll see she looks terrified," Farah laughed.

Amrita, meanwhile, disagreed about Farah being "hyper." "You were actually very chilled out on set. Such a sweetheart," she said. "I remember shooting a scene where I had to look up at the roof and sigh in relief while wiping away a tear. You came running and said, 'I'm so glad I got you on board.'" Farah replied with a smile, "I had my reasons. None of her costumes had reached the set — the truck never arrived! We had to borrow clothes from the dancers, cut them up, and style her like a hobo," she laughed. Despite all the chaos, Main Hoon Na went on to become a blockbuster, and Amrita Rao's portrayal of Sanjana remains one of her most memorable performances. Farah fondly concluded, "Amrita was already doing six other films then and wasn't even giving me dates!" Amrita, laughing, replied, "No, no — I was just sandwiched between three films!"

The Girlfriend movie review: Rashmika Mandanna elevates the film with grace and vulnerability



The Girlfriend movie review: There's a strange echo of Sukumar's Arya (2004) in Rahul Ravindran's Rashmika Mandanna-starrer The Girlfriend, even if the link between the two films might be purely inadvertent. Both films are set in a college and are about first loves, as it were, that are problematic, icky and revelatory at once. Both films pit a passive woman against decisive men who like to take charge of her life under the pretence of love, be it through manipulation or a kind of clinging benevolence. Both films bring the woman's autonomy under the spotlight, but while the former comforts itself and its viewer in its state of denial, the latter inverts the perspective and turns confrontational in a way that is disquieting as well as refreshingly disarming.

It is, then, not far-fetched to see Bhooma, the character played by Rashmika Mandanna in The Girlfriend, as a narrative counterpart of Arya's Geetha. If Geetha finds herself caught in between two men of varying emotional intelligence and needs, so does Bhooma. If Geetha feels repressed to assert her thoughts and disagreements in a world surrounded by a male shrill, so does Bhooma. The idea of love, be it of the romantic kind or the nurturing kind, being forced and burdened upon them is another unmistakable parallel between the two women. What fundamentally separates them, though, is the factor of accountability that one overlooks and the other accepts the onus of, highlighting the saviour syndrome that Indian cinema often employs to smooth over its gendered creases. As a result, The Girlfriend becomes a matter of pertinence as it goes about studying the skewed nature of the gender dynamics around us, and for all its other shortcomings, it still beams bright for opting to pursue its study from really up close. It is Bhooma's story all the way.

Take into account, most importantly, the duality with which she is made to navigate her life. On the first day of her M.A. Literature studies, she announces coyly, to her professor that she wants to be a novelist one day. She wants to relay magic to others the way she felt while reading books growing up, she says, feeling mildly insecure about not knowing authors like Marquez or Hemingway. Yet, a defiance shows through fleetingly. At the same time, certain forces lurk around her that constantly put her in a place of discomfort, from where her suppressed fierceness couldn't surface at all. Not a day goes by in her life that her father (Rao Ramesh) doesn't remind her that he has had to sacrifice a lot to raise her as a single parent; there's a great chance that if he forgets to do so, she will reiterate to herself without fail. Her boyfriend in college, Vikram (Dheekshith Shetty),

is another kind of in-charge of her psyche, but seemingly cut from a similar cloth. The first time they meet, he tells her in his self-styled alpha way that he can "have her", if he were to choose to do so. A few months later, he announces to the entire college that he kissed her in his hostel room. He decides if she can pay for herself at a mall, when she must meet his mother as part of their future marriage plans, and even has a say about the costume she wears in a college play she fares very well in. In turn, she gets to be his 'mother', the emblematic caring figure that boys like him are wired to fall in love with, who shall do his laundry, clean up after him and so on.

It is fascinating to note that The Girlfriend represents an India that is predominant as part of our discourses today, yet whose idea of love and ambition is skimmed over at best. Rather, it represents an India where getting to choose their life partner is still seen as the pinnacle of a "modern" woman's sovereignty. The film is set in a time and place where self-worth, as a concept, is still remote, and the women, in particular, approach it with a heavy sense of self-reproach and futility. It shows in the way Bhooma is never able to voice her dreams to Vikram, who feels superior to the men of the previous generation only because he wouldn't physically harm his partner. It shows in the way she feels a shiver of disgust and discomfort every time he lays his "manly" hands on her, caresses her without any idea of consent, and reinforces again and again that he, after all, is both her lover and protector. It also shows in the way she comes mighty close multiple times to tell him what she truly feels about him, but almost always backs out to save feelings. The Girlfriend isn't visually snazzy, and one gets the feeling that it is intentional in its design, even when it veers towards being overemotional. Instead, it allows its protagonist to guide us through the myriad emotions she endures concurrently, and it is in this inspired portrayal that Rashmika Mandanna reveals her own evolution as an actor. Her Bhooma is a spectator of her own life's proceedings, and the dichotomy of her existence constantly oscillates in her eyes; Mandanna doesn't overstate much when the writing is asking her to, and the charm lies in that restraint with which Bhooma is etched.

Dheekshith Shetty, in the same vein, is able to suffuse his Vikram with a personality and make him immature, entitled and real at the same time. Vikram, the way he is imagined, also runs the risk of being one-toned in that he sounds throughout the film as though he is trying very hard to communicate to us about the kind of guy he is. His insecurities, his rage and his emotional range, in general, are on the nose, no doubt, but the stuntedness of his character feels measured on the part of Rahul Ravindran's writing. Anu Emanuel, in the role of the urban, on-trend Durga, is an interesting device to explore the core of the story. But the character is positioned for a defined purpose, which inhibits her from being more complex and realistic.

In fact, the handling of Durga further emphasises the slightly lacklustre world-building of The Girlfriend. Certain parts of the film feel a bit too literal for their own good: for instance, the walls closing in on Bhooma could have remained a subtle part of the subtext, as could the consequences of her interaction with Vikram's mother. There is also a dearth of natural rhythm and cadence in the way the dialogues are written and spoken, as well as in the way the rest of the cast and the many bit players contribute to the authenticity of the storytelling. On the one hand, it is apparent that the film wants to isolate Bhooma from her own setting so that it all feels apathetic and predatory to her. Yet, it would have benefited all the more featuring characters that are small in length, but also highly recognisable. The Girlfriend is still an engaging watch because of its thematic richness.